

(b) and (c) DSIR's recognition procedure ensures that all the recognized SIROs conduct research. SIROs are conducting research in the areas of communicable diseases (e.g. malaria, tuberculosis, AIDS, etc.), non-communicable diseases (e.g. cancer, diabetes, heart diseases) and other areas of medicine and surgery including work in surgical, medical, therapeutics and diagnostics, involving biochemical methods, gene characterization, new drug development, clinical trials and rehabilitation etc.

#### **Entry of GM seeds in food production**

2228. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of countries that admit genetically modified seeds in food crops;

(b) whether a number of foreign countries have taken decisions relating to the admission of GM seeds on the basis of data prepared by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee in India; and

(c) the effect of the decision taken by Government to put a moratorium on entry of GM seeds in food products on the decision taken in other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN) : (a) Government of India does not maintain database on the status of genetically modified seeds in food crops approved for commercial use in different countries. According to Bio Track database of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and database at Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) of UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), GM crops have been approved for use in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, European Union, India, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Paraguay, Philippines, Russia, South Africa, USA and Uruguay. According to the 2009 report of International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Application (ISAAA), countries like Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Egypt, Honduras, Portugal, Poland Romania, Slovakia and Spain are also known to have approved GM crops for commercial use.

(b) Each country has its own legal regulatory framework for elaborate food and environmental safety assessment of GM crops before commercial use. As per international practices, some countries consider food safety data generated in another country to save cost and time. According to information received from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, Philippines has considered for their approval process, the food/feed safety data of insect resistant brinjal (Bt brinjal) particularly on the toxicology and allergenicity aspects generated in India as available with the Genetically Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC).

(c) The Government of India has taken a decision to impose moratorium only on commercial cultivation of Bt brinjal. Research and biosafety assessment of many other crops is in pipeline. Since the regulatory framework of GM crops is country specific, the decision taken in one country has no impact on the decision taken in other country.

#### **Jobs for disabled persons**

2229. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently taken any steps for creating jobs for disabled persons, to improve their condition and life expectation in the country, State-wise;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of disabled persons likely to be benefited in the country particularly in the districts of Mehsana, Surat, Rajkot, Bharuch and Amreli of Gujarat State;

(c) whether Government has issued any directions to private sector also to create jobs for disabled persons; and

(d) if so, the response Government has received from private sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON) : (a) The Government has launched self-employment and wage employment programmes for the people in the Rural areas including for Persons with Disabilities. The Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act creates opportunities for wage employment in Rural sector. Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY) is a self-employment programme which aims at providing assistance to the BPL rural poor for establishing micro-enterprises through bank credit and Government subsidy to acquire an income-generating asset. Under SGSY 3% of the swarozgaris should be Persons with Disabilities. A subsidy of Rs. 10,000 is given in case of persons with disabilities. The Persons with Disabilities Act provides for not less than 3% reservation for employment in Government establishments for persons with disabilities.

(b) The programmes are demand driven, therefore, the persons likely to be benefited cannot be estimated.

(c) and (d) A Scheme of Incentives to the Private Sector for Employment of Physically Challenged Persons has been launched, w.e.f. 01.04.2008. Under this Scheme, the Government of India provides the employer's contribution for Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and Employees State Insurance (ESI) for 3 years, for employees with disabilities employed in the private sector on or after 01.04.2008, with a monthly salary upto Rs. 25,000. Details are given in the statement indicating the state-wise number of persons with disabilities benefited under the scheme are given in the Statement.