

- XI. A Central Sector Scheme namely **'Promotion and Strengthening of Agricultural Mechanization through Training, Testing and Demonstrations'** is in operation under which sowing equipment like planters and seed drills etc. are provided through State Government for the awareness of farmers.

Development of Bt. Cotton variety-Bikaneri Narma

479. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur had developed a Bt. Cotton variety-Bikaneri Narma in 2005; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and why this seed is not being distributed to farmers at cheaper rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): (a) Bikaneri Narma Bt. (BNBt.) cotton variety was developed by University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Dharwad with collaborative effort of National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology (NRCPB), New Delhi. The Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur commercialized the BNBt. cotton variety.

(b) The field performance of BNBt cotton variety was not found satisfactory as reported by the farmers. It was also reported to contain Monsanto's Mon 531 event. Hence, the seeds could not be distributed further to farmers.

Selling of GM crops seeds by foreign companies at exorbitant prices

480. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Monsanto and other foreign seed companies are selling GM crops seeds to farmers at very high prices;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government does not have any price control mechanism over foreign seed companies; and