

(c) The potential of the gene regarding increased yield in a crop plant is not yet evaluated. However, to assess the utility of the gene in other crop plants, efforts are being made to introduce this gene in tomato and rice.

Scientific Institutions in country

1767. DR. K. KASTURIRANGAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of peer reviewed research papers from scientific institutions in India has remained virtually static over the last decade while many other similarly placed countries have considerably improved their contributions,

(b) whether Government are aware of a recent study wherein only three Indian Universities found the place among the top 500 universities across the world, that too with ranking below 250; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take to ensure India's prominent position in scientific research?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Comparison of research papers based on Science Citation Index (SCI) database has limitations as the number of journals covered for different countries is not uniform. However, the number of Indian Research papers published in absolute terms has increased from 11,319 in 1994 to 15,699 in 2003, as per the SCI database.

(b) Yes sir

(c) In order to give further impetus to science & technology, the Government have taken several initiatives such as raising the level of investment on Science and Technology to at least 2% of Gross National Product (GNP) by the end of 10th Plan with enhanced participation in R&D investment by industry, the 10th Plan S&T outlay for scientific agencies has been increased from Rs.12022.17 crores in 9th Plan to Rs.25243.00 crores, strengthening infrastructure in universities and higher educational institutions including establishment of several centres of excellence in frontline areas of science & technology, sophisticated analytical instrument facilities, nano materials science & technology initiative, fast-track schemes for young scientists manpower development programmes and various fiscal incentives for promoting R&D in industry