

(c) India is a member of Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in Southwest Asia (SWAC, FAO) and regularly coordinates with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The member countries, FAO and of the United Nations (UN) have adopted a preventive control strategy that relies on early warning and early reaction. The FAO Desert Locust Information Service (FAO DLIS) operates an early warning system that monitors weather, ecological conditions, and locust infestations in the potentially affected area on a daily basis. Information provided by FAO DLIS to National Locust Centres (NLCs) is used to plan survey and control operations in the field and prepare for swarm invasions by pre-positioning resources and teams. Besides, timely alerts issued by FAO about likely invasion of desert locust are analyzed by the Locust Warning Organisation of India for effective mobilization/deployment of survey and control teams for timely and effective response to check desert locust invasion.

(d) As informed by the State of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana, no losses are reported by the State Governments due to the locust attack.

(e) As informed by the States, no records are available regarding losses caused by locust attack in 1993.

#### **Sowing of GM cotton seeds in Maharashtra**

3829. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether large number of farmers have sowed Genetically-Modified (GM) Herbicide-Tolerant (HT) cotton seeds on their farm land despite ban and nearly 11 lakh hectares of land is already under cultivation using HT cotton seeds in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto;

(c) whether farmers organisations/Sangatana are pressing for free access to the latest technology in farming, including Genetically Modified (GM) seeds in the country; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) and (b) As per State Government of Maharashtra, no instances of illegal cultivation of Genetically-Modified (GM) Herbicide-Tolerant (HT) cotton have come to notice. However some cases of sale of illegal Bt. cotton seeds (HTBT) have been reported in the districts of Nagpur, Chandrapur,

Parbhani, Nandurbar, Yavatmal, Bhandara and Gadchiroli of Maharashtra State during this season. These seeds have been seized by State authorities.

(c) There was report in the press that 'Shetkari Sangatana' is advocating free access to the latest technology in farming, including Genetically Modified (GM) seeds in the country.

(d) The Government is committed to spread awareness regarding use of approved technology of seeds only.

#### **Engagement of private insurance companies under PMFBY**

3830. DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has engaged various insurance companies including the private insurance companies to implement Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY);

(b) if so, the details of insurance companies that have been engaged by Government, State-wise;

(c) whether Government has received any complaints regarding non-payment of compensation by insurance companies including the private insurance companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) and (b) 18 general insurance companies have been empanelled for implementation of crop insurance schemes namely, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS). Specific company is selected by the concerned State Government for a specific season/year, cluster(s) through transparent bidding process and the company quoting the lowest premium rate (L-1) is selected for implementation of the scheme. Therefore, companies vary from season to season and cluster to cluster in a State. Names of empanelled companies are given :-

#### **Public Sector Insurance Companies**

(i) Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd.

(ii) National Insurance Company Ltd.