



ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರದೇಶ ತೊಗರಿ ಬೆಳೆಗಾರರ ಸಂಘ (ನೂಂ.)
KARNATAKA PRADESH RED GRAM GROWERS ASSOCIATION (Regd.)

Regd. No. 132/2003-2004

Regd. Offi. : 'SHIV SHANTHI' No. 1-9-28/D, Khuba Plot, GULBARGA-585 103

Eec. Offi. : Nanda Complex Lalgeri Cross, GULBARGA-585 103

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BASAVARAJ INGIN

President

To:

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

In the case of Aruna Rodrigues Vs. Union of India

(Writ Petition (Civil) No. 260 of 2005)

Sub: In Support of the Court-appointed TEC's recommendations in its interim report

Karnataka Pradesh Red Gram Growers Association (Regd.) is a registered body of Red Gram Growers in Karnataka state. The Associations is register under Registration No. 132/2003-04 by the Register of Society Gulbarga. The main object of the Association is to reduce the cost of input, Produce more Red Gram and other pulses for which the nation is facing acute shortage to Cater the need of the people since pulses are the more nutritious food for the majority of the nation's population and also get remunerative benefits farming. The another important object is to Grow safe food and feed the nation with poison free food and also to preserve ecological balance.

The interim report of the Technical Expert Committee appointed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the aforementioned case is accurate and detailed in its analysis of the current risk assessment regime in India and the lack of monitoring and other capabilities of the regulators in the country. We welcome the report and believe that the Court will now pass appropriate orders after accepting the interim report's recommendations in Toto.

One of the primary concerns of the Red Gram Growers Association is the issue of environmental release of Genetically Modified Organisms. Available scientific evidence shows that the technology of genetic engineering is imprecise, unpredictable and uncontrollable and that there are risks to health and environment by deployment of this technology. Field trials constitute the release of untested and unknown new organisms into the environment and given that this is a living technology with a capacity to proliferate by itself once released into the environment, open air field trials themselves constitute a major threat of contamination. Evidence and analysis in India shows very clearly that there are no capabilities in our regulatory system to monitor and contain the organisms in a way that contamination can be prevented, as one of the SC orders in the said PIL already requires.



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Further, given that this technology goes hand in hand with rigid and monopolistic IPR systems over the most critical input in agriculture – Seed, there is an added risk from this technology to our farmers and their livelihoods. On the technical front, contamination jeopardizes native diversity in addition to posing trade security threats. This is apparent from the losses incurred by American farmers in the case of Liberty Link Rice contamination when export consignments were rejected in a massive way elsewhere.

What is surprising is that despite the many issues raised during the public debate in the case of Bt brinjal, no improvements have taken place and field trial violations have been reported subsequently too. One of the important things raised by the Bt brinjal moratorium decision note is also related to the very need of such crops when successful alternatives exist.

We welcome the TEC report, which echoes the recommendations made by other such inquiry processes including the all-party Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture, asking for an immediate stoppage of all field trials. In fact, the one approved GM crop in the country – Bt cotton - was approved by regulators after the illegal spread of the crop made it into a fait accompli. This itself showcases the regulatory incapability that we want to draw the notice of the learned Bench to.

We urge the Hon'ble Supreme Court once again to pass orders on the basis of the recommendations of the TEC.

Sincerely,

Basavaraj Ingin
State President