

## **IS THIS WHAT INDIANS SHOULD BE TRUSTING?**

### **- The story of the Expert Committee that recommended Bt Brinjal for commercial cultivation in India**

On October 14<sup>th</sup> 2009, the apex regulatory body for GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) in India - the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) under the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF), gave a go-ahead for the commercial release of Bt Brinjal, the first ever such Genetically Modified (GM) food crop anywhere in the world with the toxin-producing Bt gene in it. The GEAC based its decision, with some dissenting voices recorded, on the recommendations of an Expert Committee (referred to hereafter as EC2, specifically referring to this expert committee on Bt Brinjal, as opposed to EC1, another Expert Committee constituted in 2006-07).

### **EXPERT COMMITTEE 2 ON BT BRINJAL**

When independent reviews of Mahyco's biosafety data started coming in, in the month of January 2009 (after the data was put up on the Indian regulators' official website in October 2008 after a protracted Right To Information struggle and after the Supreme Court passed orders to this effect), the GEAC in its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009, decided to set up an Expert Committee (a Sub-Committee, as it was called at that time). The decision in this 91<sup>st</sup> meeting of the GEAC was recorded as under:

*"5.1.4 After detailed deliberations, the Committee decided to set up a Sub-committee comprising of representatives from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, NIN, ICMR, CFTRI, CCMB, IIVR, NDRI, CFIE, MoEF, DBT, TNAU and UAS Dharwad with the following terms of reference:*

- to review the adequacy of the biosafety data on Bt brinjal*
- to review the adequacy of the toxicity and allergenicity protocols*
- to suggest further studies, if any, based on the review of the international practices in biosafety assessment and representations received by the GEAC*
- based on such reviews make suitable recommendations for consideration of the GEAC".*

On February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 2009, many faxes were sent from civil society groups across the country asking GEAC to review the mandate for the Sub-Committee and to remove conflicting interests in the committee.

As per an Office Memorandum dated 29/5/2009, the GEAC constituted an Expert Committee consisting of 16 members, headed by Prof Arjula R Reddy, Vice Chancellor of Yogi Vemana University, Hyderabad and currently also the Co-Chair of GEAC.

Interestingly enough, the Terms of Reference for this Committee were:

- to review the findings of the data generated during the large scale trials ;
- to review the biosafety data of Bt brinjal in light of the available scientific evidence, reports from international/national experts and representations from NGOs and other stakeholders;
- to make appropriate recommendations for consideration of the GEAC based on the above review.

***One could argue that this new ToR itself is a departure from the decision taken in the January meeting of the GEAC, with regard to the rationale for the constitution of the committee. Further, it has to be noted that the large scale trials' findings along with***

***findings from pollen flow, soil impacts and crossability studies were put in the public domain only on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2009, a full month after the Expert Committee came up with its recommendation and this did not go through any independent analysis or review.***

On and around the 30<sup>th</sup> of July, soon after the office memorandum was put up in the public domain, civil society groups once again wrote to the GEAC pointing out to the need to change the mandate of the Expert Committee as well as the inclusion of conflicting interests in the constitution of the Expert Committee (Annexure 1). In addition, on 2<sup>nd</sup> September and on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2009, in email communications sent to the Hon'ble Minister for Environment & Forests, these issues have been raised with him too, to update him and seek his intervention.

It has to be noted here that an earlier Expert Committee (EC1) set up in 2006 also presented similar issues for the country, when a GM crop developer was asked to head that Committee. It was only in the second meeting of this EC1 that the GM crop developer was replaced by another scientist.

### **“EC 2 DESIGNED TO APPROVE BT BRINJAL”**

The EC2 had 16 members including the following:

1. Prof. Arjula R. Reddy, Vice Chancellor, Yogi Vemana University, Hyderabad and Co-chairman, GEAC (Chairperson of the EC2).
2. Dr Vasantha Muthuswamy, Former Chief (BMS), ICMR, New Delhi: Member
3. Dr. B. Sesikaran, Director, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad: Member
4. Dr. Lalitha R. Gowda, Scientist, CFTRI, Mysore: Member
5. Dr. N. Madhusudan Rao, Deputy Director, CCMB, Hyderabad: Member
6. Dr. C. M. Gupta, Former Director, Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow: Member
7. Dr S. B. Dongre, Director (F&VP), Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSA), New Delhi - (Representative of MoH&FW): Member
8. Dr. Dhir Singh, ADG (PFA), FSSAI - (Representative of MoH&FW): Member
9. Dr. K. Satyanarayan, Scientist G, ICMR, New Delhi: Member
10. Dr. Dharmeshwar Das, Director, Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar: Member
11. Dr. A. K. Srivastava, Director, National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal: Member
12. Dr. Dilip Kumar, Director, Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai: Member
13. Dr. Mathura Rai, Director, Indian Institute of Vegetable Research, Varanasi: Member
14. Dr. P. Anand Kumar, Project Director, NRCPB, IARI, New Delhi: Member
15. Dr. K. K. Tripathi, Adviser, DBT, New Delhi: Member
16. Dr R Warriar, Director and MS GEAC: Convener

### **A re-look at the EC2**

#### **1. Prof Arjula Reddy, the Chair of the Committee:**

In a phone conversation to Dr Pushpa Bhargava, Prof Reddy is supposed to have told Dr Bhargava, sometime in the first week of October (?):

- that eight of the tests that Dr Bhargava said should be done on Bt Brinjal and with which Prof Reddy agreed, had not been done;
- that even in the case of tests that have been done, many have not been done satisfactorily and adequately;
- that he (Prof Reddy) was under 'tremendous pressure' to clear Bt Brinjal and had calls from 'Agriculture Minister, GEAC and industry'.

Attached is a note/affidavit from Dr Bhargava on this matter (Annexure 2). Prof Reddy has also been quoted in a Tehelka article on Bt Brinjal recently in the following manner:

*When asked if there was any proof Bt brinjal was safe, he replied, "What we require is long-range research done over many years. That does not exist (for Bt brinjal)." Then why give the clearance if the required research is absent? "All the approved protocols by the government has been fulfilled by the developers and the public institutions [that participated in the safety assessment]."*

Source: Uber Gene, *Tehelka Magazine, Vol 6, Issue 44, Dated November 07, 2009* at [http://www.tehelka.com/story\\_main43.asp?filename=Ne071109uber\\_gene.asp](http://www.tehelka.com/story_main43.asp?filename=Ne071109uber_gene.asp)

However, these views are not reflected in the final report of the EC2, indicating that Prof Reddy succumbed to pressure.

## **2. Dr K K Tripathi, Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation, Dept of Biotechnology**

A complaint is pending against Dr K K Tripathi with the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) (complaint dated 6/6/09 from Nuziveedu Seeds, and Central Vigilance Commission Complaint No. 780/09/6, being examined in the Commission – Annexure 3), for "abuse of power". This complaint, filed by Nuziveedu Seeds Ltd, points out that Dr Tripathi has been exercising undue discretionary powers to promote interests of certain companies of his choice (Mahyco specifically) and harm others. The CVC complaint lodged points out the following:

*"The RCGM, MEC and GEAC are independent committees meant to act as checks and balance for each other and prevent any one individual from influencing their decision. However, the presence of one person (Dr. K K Tripathi) on all three committees and in the capacity of Member Secretary on two key committees besides his administrative powers as Advisor DBT, has given him a chance to manipulate the decisions in these committees to further his vested agenda by misinforming and misrepresenting facts in these committees".*

Dr Tripathi was also part of the EC2! It violates any principle of fair inquiry to have him in this committee when investigations are pending against a complaint for his excessive favouring of Mahyco when the EC2 was considering a Mahyco application for Bt Brinjal commercialization!

Further, Dr Tripathi was the one who signed off on various protocols and permission letters for testing Bt Brinjal's biosafety and efficacy and obviously thought this was adequate and appropriate, while the Expert Committee was supposed to be reviewing the concerns expressed on these very protocols and studies!

## **3. Dr Mathura Rai, Director, Indian Institute of Vegetable Research (IIVR)**

He/IIVR is part of the ABSP II project (more details in Annexure 4). ***This project is funded by USAID, which in turn gets funded by Monsanto for certain projects and funds Monsanto for certain other projects.*** ABSPII is "supporting Mahyco in gaining regulatory approval for the technology"... says a project document on the official website (<http://www.absp2.cornell.edu>).

USAID funding of this project goes expressly into activities like: ***"Support Mahyco's efforts to complete regulatory approval"***!

Dr Mathura Rai also acted as the lead investigator, so to speak, on the large scale trials of Mahyco's Bt Brinjal in the past two years. He directly supervised all the trials as recommended by the Expert Committee (EC1 led by Dr Deepak Penthal/Dr C R Babu) and generated findings.

He not only did these studies even though he is part of ABSPII but he also reviewed his own findings by being part of the Expert Committee set up "to review findings from large scale trials and other biosafety tests"! Incidentally, the EC2 itself is called the "Expert Committee to review the findings of Large Scale Trials and other related biosafety studies on Bt Brinjal"...

#### **4. Dr Ananda Kumar, Project Director, NRCPB, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), Delhi**

Dr Ananda Kumar is a Bt Brinjal developer himself. Given that his own product is in the pipeline of development and commercialization, his inclusion in the Expert Committee once again violates principles of fair inquiry and brings in conflicting interests.

Amongst the 16 members of the Committee, both the above (Dr Mathura Rai and Dr Ananda Kumar) are agriculture scientists and both are involved in Bt Brinjal development and were made part of this Expert Committee!

In the above context, it may be noted that the Expert Committee has denied that India is a Centre of Origin of Brinjal, even though the crop developer also accepts this fact along with other agencies like National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources!

#### **5. Dr Dilip Kumar, Director, Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai**

The Central Institute of Fisheries Education had taken up a Mahyco-sponsored study on Bt Brinjal and the Director was now sitting in the Expert Committee to review his Institute's findings amongst other findings!

#### **6. & 7. Dr Vasantha Muthuswamy and Dr B Sesikeran, Director, National Institute of Nutrition**

These two members played a lead role in the recasting of regulatory guidelines for safety assessment of GM foods in India, *with the funding of USAID under the South Asia Biosafety Programme (SABP)*. Dr Muthuswamy is a GEAC member while Dr Sesikeran is an RCGM member.

On the grounds of harmonizing the Indian regulatory regime with Codex Alimentarius guidelines, this exercise not only ignored all the many important tests and procedures being prescribed by Dr Pushpa Bhargava, the Supreme Court observer in the GEAC and others, but threw out many tests that were hitherto being conducted in India.

Incidentally, the ABSPII, (funded by USAID) "works collaboratively with the [Program for Biosafety Systems](#) (PBS) and the [South Asia Biosafety Program](#) (SABP)<sup>1</sup>" (funded by USAID). The official website states the following in this context:

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<sup>1</sup> (<http://www.absp2.cornell.edu/aboutabsp2/index.cfm>)

*"ABSPII will identify and support other USAID initiatives to promote safe and effective agricultural biotechnology in Africa and Asia. For example, successful commercialization of bio-engineered crops will depend upon satisfactory biosafety regulation".*

USAID, meanwhile, states that one of its roles is to "integrate GM into local food systems"<sup>2</sup>.

Also interesting to note is a KIA Board Meeting (5<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of Indo-US Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture, the bilateral deal signed along with the Indo-US nuclear deal, to bring in the so-called second green revolution into the country) expressly refers to the fact that "guidelines are being drafted for the safety of GM foods for the Government of India" under a section titled "related activities undertaken by other US agencies".

Dr Muthuswamy and Dr Sesikeran were key members of the drafting committee for the new guidelines. It is of little surprise then that the EC2 report repeatedly resorts to comments like "as per the recently adopted guidelines, such studies do not form part of safety assessment" or that something is "not required" as per the new guidelines.

Thus, with USAID's interference through the SABP project, unscientific safety testing guidelines and processes have become the criteria for the safety assessment of Bt Brinjal and GM crops rather than rigorous scientific risk assessment and hazard identification. Further, a scientific evaluation of Bt Brinjal is not about conformity to guidelines (newly adopted or otherwise) even as the EC2 report takes a recourse to this often.

#### **8. & 9. Dr Dhir Singh and Dr S B Dongre, "representatives of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare"**

These two members of the EC2, drawn from the Food Safety and Standards Authority, were expressly designated in the EC2 as "representatives of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare". From conversations with the FSSA Chairperson and one of these members, it is gleaned by civil society members that these members carried a brief of being present in the EC2 as "observers" and did not take part in the deliberations.

In effect, this implies that no health-related questions were being asked on behalf of the public by any Health Ministry representative in the Expert Committee!

#### **10. Dr C M Gupta, Former Director, Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow**

Dr Gupta, who is also a GEAC member, did not attend both the meetings of EC2.

#### **11. Dr Ranjini Warriar, Member-Secretary, GEAC & Convenor, EC2**

It is to Dr Warriar that various communications were sent by many civil society groups about the constitution and mandate of the Expert Committee, right from February 2009. It is obvious that no notice was paid to the objectionable processes being run and that justified demands from citizens were not taken on board.

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<sup>2</sup> USAID Announces International Biotech Collaboration. US Department of State, June 2002  
<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/develop/02061207.htm>

## **EXPERT COMMITTEE & SUBSEQUENT PROCESSES**

The Expert Committee met twice, on July 30<sup>th</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup> 2009 reportedly for a few hours each, and came up with its 105-page report. In these two meetings, thousands of pages of biosafety dossiers of Bt Brinjal in addition to independent reviews and other feedback were apparently perused by the Committee for finalizing its report!

The GEAC did not address the issues raised by civil society groups about the constitution and mandate of this Expert Committee.

Further, information on attendance in the two meetings of the EC2 (Annexure 5) shows the following:

- 12 out of 16 members attended the first meeting; 11 out of 16 members attended the second meeting.
- Dr Lalitha Gowda of CFTRI and Dr C M Gupta did not attend both the EC2 meetings.
- Dr Dharmeshwar Das of IVRI, Dr A K Shrivastava of NDRI and Dr K Satyanarayana of ICMR attended only the first meeting. Dr Satyanarayana is incidentally part of the RCGM, the GEAC as well as the EC2!
- Dr S B Dongre and Dr Dhir Singh of the MoH&FW attended only the second meeting.

Civil society members' interactions with a few of the EC2 members reveals that at least two of them were not even aware that the EC2 report was finalized and was going to be discussed on October 14<sup>th</sup>, when met on October 12<sup>th</sup>!

The GEAC meeting which cleared Bt Brinjal seemed to have functioned with just about half of its members being present for the meeting (this appears to be the case from the Minutes of this meeting, though the minutes do not record the names of all the people present); the clearance also came amidst some dissent and a few concerns expressed.

## **IS THIS WHAT WE SHOULD BE TRUSTING, THEN?**

- It is very clear from the documents related to ABSPII and SABP projects and the actual happenings in the Indian regulatory regime that American interests are driving the decision-making processes in India; it will also not be an exaggeration to say that it is American corporate interests, seeking markets and acceptability for GM seeds, that are driving the agenda here and Indians are being made into lab rats in this irresponsible, irreversible and completely unneeded experiment!
- To suit a pre-decided agenda, the processes are being rigged up to come up with a particular, predictable and dangerous outcome and this is being thrust on the country by the highest authorities in India.
- The Expert Committee which recommended Bt Brinjal for India is clearly:
  - unethical in its functioning (the Chair buckling under pressure, one member against whom a CVC complaint is pending for excessive favouring of Mahyco in an Expert Committee considering Mahyco's product, members not being aware of the report being ready, a very short time taken to prepare the report making some experts wonder if this was a pre-written report by the crop developer....);

- designed for recommending Bt Brinjal (given its constitution, functioning, mandate and attendance);
- unscientific (as initial comments from some experts already indicate but as reflected in responses like “this is not required as per the newly adopted guidelines” etc.). Detailed responses from all over the country in the coming days will certainly showcase the details and extent to which the EC2 has been unscientific.

Further, GEAC was undemocratic in not taking on board genuine issues and concerns with the constitution and mandate of the Expert Committee. To this day, for instance, there is no convincing answer on why we need Bt Brinjal in this country!

It is based on this Expert Committee’s recommendations that the GEAC cleared Bt Brinjal for commercial cultivation in India and right now, the Minister for Environment & Forests, Government of India, is seeking public feedback on this very Expert Committee’s report.

**Is this fair and trustworthy?** Do you want to rest your faith with regard to your health, environment and that of your future generations in the hands of these Committees?

If NOT, write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Environment & Forests, asking them to withdraw the Expert Committee report immediately.

1. Mr. Jairam Ramesh,  
Hon’ble Minister of State (Independent charge)  
Ministry of Environment & Forests (MOEF)  
Paryavaran Bhavan  
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road  
New Delhi - 110003, India  
Email: [mosef@nic.in](mailto:mosef@nic.in)  
Tel: +91-11-24361727  
Fax: +91-11-24362222

2. Dr Manmohan Singh,  
Hon’ble Prime Minister of India,  
# 7, Race Course Road,  
New Delhi 110001.  
Phone: 011-23018939/23011156;  
Fax: 011-23015603, 011-23019545,  
011-23016857, 011-23014255  
Email: [pмосb@pmo.nic.in](mailto:pмосb@pmo.nic.in),  
[pmindia@pmindia.nic.in](mailto:pmindia@pmindia.nic.in), [manmohan@sansad.nic.in](mailto:manmohan@sansad.nic.in)

You may also submit your comments/observations to Minister for Environment & Forests, via MoEF website: <http://moef.nic.in/modules/contact-ministry/contact-ministry/>

**Annexure 1:**

To: "Dr Ranjini Warriar" <[warrier@nic.in](mailto:warrier@nic.in)>

Date: Thursday, 30 July, 2009, 2:43 PM

To

Dr Ranjini Warriar,

Member-Secretary,

Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC),

Ministry of Environment & Forests, Paryavaran Bhawan,

CGO Complex, Lodhi Road,

New Delhi 3.

Dear Dr Ranjini Warriar,

Greetings!

This is with reference to the constitution of the Expert Committee dated 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009 to review the findings of Bt Brinjal large scale field trials and biosafety studies, and the notification for the same put up on the GEAC website.

While we are convinced that there is no need for Bt Brinjal, that we should not experiment with GM Brinjal in India, being the Centre of Origin/Diversity and that the independent analysis so far has already shown that Mahyco's Bt Brinjal is unsafe and this therefore requires the GEAC to reject outright the commercial release application by Mahyco, we would like to point out the following with regard to the process that the GEAC had set into motion to address some issues around Bt Brinjal:

**1. We strongly object to the presence of certain members in the Committee who bring in conflicting interests into the process since they were also involved in conduct of the studies which are being reviewed or are GM crop developers themselves.**

This includes Dr Mathura Rai, Director, IIVR under whose coordination the large scale trials happened in the first instance. It is understandable that he makes a presentation on the trials and findings but it is not acceptable that he is part of this Committee.

Similarly, the Central Institute of Fisheries Education was involved in conducting a study as part of the biosafety testing of Bt Brinjal for Mahyco. It is not acceptable that the Director of this Institute is part of this Committee.

Dr P Anand Kumar of NRCPB, IARI is involved in GM crop development himself and decisions taken here could very well affect his own project. This does represent conflicting interest to that extent and he should therefore not be part of this review.

The GEAC cannot say that there is a dearth of independent scientists who will not represent conflicting interests in the process and justify the inclusion of these experts into this review process – we demand that you immediately re-constitute this committee by addressing our concern. We also demand that you re-look at the remaining members too and pro-actively ensure that no conflicting interests are present.

**2. We are also concerned that the terms of reference and the mandate for this committee have not gone beyond the tests and trials done so far.**

If you recall, the very first recommendation of the Supreme Court's Observer into GEAC, Dr Pushpa Bhargava talks about the availability of alternatives and the establishment of the very need for a GMO having to be the first guiding principle before considering the release of any GMO. We have also brought up with you several times in the past larger impact assessment issues beyond biosafety (Centre of Origin, safer alternatives, trade security, consumer rights to choices, impact on Indian Systems of Medicine etc.).

Furthermore, the Terms of Reference of this Committee are also limited to the review of data of field trials and biosafety studies undertaken by the crop developer Mahyco. There has been no independent safety assessment nor any attempt to resolve this. Problems therefore also arise with the gaps in risk assessment which are apparent in the Bt brinjal dossier. All these aspects indicate a grave error of judgment by the Regulators in how to assess the safety of any crop and a massive conflict of interest, which negates the safety assessment.

We therefore insist that the review must address these issues comprehensively and *also* take place within a larger impact assessment framework and with reference to the specific recommendations by Dr Bhargava, which are well attested. All of these must be incorporated into the ToR.

3. Given that the Committee has been constituted fairly recently, after obtaining formal acceptance letters and so on, **we would like an assurance that the tenure of three months will be extended so that a complete and comprehensive review takes place without any undue haste.**

4. In addition to Prof Seralini's and Dr Carman's independent analyses of Mahyco's Bt Brinjal biosafety dossiers and particular studies, two other analyses were submitted to you for inclusion into this review process by Aruna Rodrigues which you confirm having received : a. Gene flow studies' analysis by Dr Doug Gurian-Sherman and b. Molecular characterization and genomic analysis by Dr Jack Heinemann. These must be included in the review process.

Finally, it is required that the review report be posted on the Ministry's website.

We hope that all the above points will be taken on board. Thank you.

Sincerely,

## **Annexure 2:**

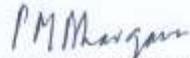
Annexure 2:

### **TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN**

***Regarding the clearance given to Bt Brinjal by GEAC on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009 based on the report of the committee called ECII set up by the GEAC to review the criticisms of the safety tests done by Monsanto on its Bt Brinjal:***

The Chairman of EC-II, Dr Arjula Reddy, whom I have known for decades called me some two weeks ago to say that he was making a totally confidential call to tell me that eight of the tests that I had said should be done on Bt brinjal and with which he agreed, had not been done. He added in this telephone call (which can be easily traced as it was made from his cell number +919885843003) that even in the case of tests that have been done, many have not been done satisfactorily and adequately. He was, however, under 'tremendous pressure' to clear the Bt brinjal and had calls from 'agriculture minister, GEAC and industry'. He indicated to me that he was in a dilemma. My advice to him was to follow his conscience.

Since I heard nothing from the GEAC about his Committee's report and knowing that the next meeting of the GEAC was scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> October, I called him on the morning of Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup> October, to find out if his report was ready. He seemed flustered on the phone and said he was going to the M Chenna Reddy HRD Institute and will call me later, which he never did. In retrospect, the only conclusion is that he "succumbed". Knowing Monsanto's record, and our own, it can be surmised as to how he was brought around.



(P M BHARGAVA)

Supreme Court Nominee in GEAC

**Annexure 3:**

Central Vigilance Commission  
Status of Complaint Lodged

Dated: 18/11/2009

**Status of Complaint No: 780/09/6**

Date: 18/11/2009

**Sent to CVO for Investigation/Action Taken Report on date : 23/6/2009**

**CVO Report Received on date : 30/10/2009**

**Being examined in the Commission**

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009/DBT/001/47254  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
CENTRAL VIGILANCE COMMISSION

\*\*\*\*\*

"Satarkta-Bhawan", Block-"A",  
General Pool Offices Complex,  
INA, New Delhi,  
Dated the 18.06.2009

To

Shri S V R Rao  
Sr. Vice President  
(Coordination & Strategic Planning)  
Nuziveedu Seeds Pvt. Ltd.  
NSL ICON  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Road No. 12, Banjara Hills  
Hyderabad – 500 034

Sub: Complaint against Dr. K.K. Tripathi, Advisor & Nodal Officer, D/o Bio-Technology regarding abuse of Power.

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Sir,

Your complaint dated NIL has been registered as complaint No. 780/09/6 and have been forwarded to D/o Bio-Technology (Smt. Prachi Saroop, Dy. Secy.&CVO) Room No. 723, Block No. 2, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110 003, for investigation and submission of a report.

2. The report from the department is awaited. However, if you wish to see the status of your complaint, you may log on to the Commission's website <http://www.cvc.nic.in> and by entering the complaint number given above in the field 'complaint status', the current status of your complaint would be displayed on the screen.

Yours faithfully,

  
(Rameshwar Dass)  
Section Officer

## **ANNEXURE 4:**

EXTRACTS FROM [www.absp2.cornell.edu](http://www.absp2.cornell.edu) WEBSITE ON ABSP II PROJECT

- ABSP II is funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
- ABSPII works collaboratively with the [Program for Biosafety Systems](http://www.absp2.cornell.edu/aboutabsp2/index.cfm) (PBS) and the [South Asia Biosafety Program](http://www.absp2.cornell.edu/aboutabsp2/index.cfm) (SABP) (<http://www.absp2.cornell.edu/aboutabsp2/index.cfm>).
- ABSPII will identify and support other USAID initiatives to promote safe and effective agricultural biotechnology in Africa and Asia. For example, successful commercialization of bio-engineered crops will depend upon satisfactory biosafety regulation. ABSP II collaborates closely with USAID's Program for Biosafety (PBS) project, which focuses on strengthening national and regional capacities in biosafety. (<http://www.absp2.cornell.edu/aboutabsp2/scopeandactivities.cfm>)

### INDIA

Partners Within the Country: Indian Institute of Vegetable Research (IIVR), Varanasi; Mahyco Seed Company, India; Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU); Sathguru Management Consultants, India; University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad (UAS-D)

Planned Activities and Milestones:

- ***Support Mahyco's efforts to complete regulatory approval.***
- Initiate communication and outreach efforts.
- Provide public institutions access to the technology in order to extend it to varieties that are accepted by and accessible to lower income farmers.
- Provide assistance to public institutions as they seek regulatory approval, licensing and development of additional resistant varieties.
- Market and distribute the new varieties through private seed companies. Development of other varieties used by poor farmers will be done by public research and academic institutions who are engaged in developing and propagating varieties.

Source: <http://www.absp2.cornell.edu/projects/project.cfm?productid=2>

### **SOUTH ASIA BIOSAFETY PROGRAM:**

Supported by USAID, implemented by AGBIOS, Canada ([http://www.agbios.com/sabp\\_main.php](http://www.agbios.com/sabp_main.php))

South Asia Biosafety Program, led by AGBIOS and IFPRI:

#### **New food safety guidelines adopted in India**

- SABP led a needs assessment: comprehensive food safety assessment process and guidelines needed
- Long term roadmap, ICMR lead with BCIL and SABP support
  - International conference and stakeholder input
  - Drafting team for food safety guidelines
  - Expert and stakeholder input into guidelines
  - Committee addresses input and reviews guidelines
    - Guidelines officially adopted into India regulatory system

## **ANNEXURE 5**

**List of members who attended the first meeting of the Expert Committee on Bt brinjal held on 30.7.2009.**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Name of the Chairman/ Member</b>
1.	<b>Prof. Arjula R. Reddy</b> , VC, Yogi Vemana University, & Co-chairman, GEAC.
2.	<b>Dr Vasantha Muthuswamy</b> , Former Chief (BMS), ICMR, New Delhi
3.	<b>Dr. B. Sesikaran</b> , Director, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad.
4.	<b>Dr. N. Madhusudan Rao</b> , Deputy Director, CCMB, Hyderabad.
5.	<b>Dr. K. Satyanarayan</b> , Scientist G, ICMR, New Delhi.
6.	<b>Dr. Dharmeshwar Das</b> , Director and VC, Deemed University, IVRI, Izatnagar.
7.	<b>Dr. A. K. Srivastava</b> , Director, National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal.
8.	<b>Dr. Dilip Kumar</b> , Director, Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Fisheries University Road, Versova, Mumbai.
9.	<b>Dr. Mathura Rai</b> , Director, Indian Institute of Vegetable Research, Varanasi.
10.	<b>Dr. P. Anand Kumar</b> , Project Director, NRCPB, IARI, New Delhi.
11.	<b>Dr. K. K. Tripathi</b> , Adviser, DBT, New Delhi.
12.	<b>Dr. Major Singh</b> , Principal Scientist, IIVR, Varanasi
13.	<b>Dr R Warriar</b> , Director and MS GEAC

Note: No. 12 above, Dr Major Singh, is not an Expert Committee member

**List of members who attended the second meeting of the Expert Committee on Bt brinjal held on 31.8.2009.**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Name of the Chairman/ Member</b>
1.	<b>Prof. Arjula R. Reddy</b> , VC, Yogi Vemana University, & Co-chairman, GEAC.
2.	<b>Dr Vasantha Muthuswamy</b> , Former Chief (BMS), ICMR, New Delhi
3.	<b>Dr. B. Sesikaran</b> , Director, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad.
4.	<b>Dr. N. Madhusudan Rao</b> , Deputy Director, CCMB, Hyderabad.
5.	<b>Dr. Dilip Kumar</b> , Director, Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Fisheries University Road, Versova, Mumbai.
6.	<b>Dr. Mathura Rai</b> , Director, Indian Institute of Vegetable Research, Varanasi.
7.	<b>Dr. P. Anand Kumar</b> , Project Director, NRCPB, IARI, New Delhi.
8.	<b>Dr. S. B. Dongre</b> , Director (F&VP), Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSA), New Delhi - (Representative of MoH&FW),
9.	<b>Dr. Dhir Singh</b> , ADG (PFA) , FSSAI - (Representative of MoH&FW)
10.	<b>Dr. K. K. Tripathi</b> , Adviser, DBT, New Delhi.
11.	<b>Dr. Major Singh</b> , Principal Scientist, IIVR, Varanasi
12.	<b>Dr R Warriar</b> , Director and MS GEAC

Note: No. 11 above, Dr Major Singh, is not an Expert Committee member.