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"The government of India is following a policy of case by case approval of genetically modified (GM) crops. The extensive evaluation and regulatory approval process takes place before any GM crop is approved for commercial cultivation. This includes generation of relevant biosafety information, its elaborate analysis to ensure food, feed and environmental safety. A final view on the commercialization of GM crop plants is taken only when there is a clear economic and technical justification besides suitability for environment and human consumption." This was stated by Tariq Anwar, minister of state for agriculture and food processing industries in the Lok Sabha on August 13, 2013.

Giving the example of Bt cotton, Tariq explained further, "Bt Cotton is the only Genetically Modified (GM) crop that has been introduced for commercial cultivation in the country.Since its inception, there have been objections from some of the Non-Governmental Organizations besides Civil Society on Agriculture, etc., on the grounds that (i) Biosafety assessment of Bt Cotton before its introduction and post release monitoring of Bt cotton is not adequate; (ii) Bt cotton is not suitable for cultivation in rainfed areas, (iii) Cattle death and farmers' suicides have been attributed to introduction of Bt cotton in some regions such as Warangal and Vidarbha."

The minister also said that objections have been very speculative, without any reasonable assessment of the technological strengths of Bt-cotton. "In spite of the controversy regarding Bt cotton, the ground reality is that during the last decade, area under cotton cultivation (approx. 12 million hectares, of which 90% is under Bt cotton) and productivity of cotton has gone up significantly. During the post Bt cotton era, Indian economy has benefited as India is the second largest exporter of cotton. There is no scientific evidence to show that Bt cotton has adversely impacted the biodiversity or human/cattle health," he explained.

Adding further on the objectives behind the introduction of BT cotton, he said, "The main purpose of Bt cotton was to control bollworms to enhance yield and production of cotton in the country. Bt cotton effectively control bollwsorms, especially Helicoverpa armigera, thus preventing yield losses from an estimated damage of 30% to 60% each year in India. The biggest gain from the technology is in the form of reduced insecticide usage for bollworm control. Yields are estimated to have increased at least by 30% due to effective protection from bollworm damage."