

GMO Biotech Companies and Compliant Politicians. India does not need Genetically Modified Food

Targeting India Using Baseless Claims and Deception

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Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#)

A study of GMOs over a four-year plus period by India's multi-party Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture recommended a ban on GM food crops, stating they had no role in a country of small farmers.

The Supreme Court appointed Technical Expert Committee recommended an indefinite moratorium on the field trials of GM crops until the government devised a proper regulatory and safety mechanism.

As yet, no such mechanism exists, but open field trials are being given the go ahead. GMO crops approved for field trials include rice, maize, chickpea, sugarcane and brinjal.

Politicians in India and elsewhere continue to ignore the evidence (and in India's case, expert advice) pertaining to GMOs. If they fail to sanction GMO trials in India, politicians have a habit of being replaced until they do (see [here](#)).

Backed by the US State Department (see [here](#)) and what appears to be parts of the Indian political(-intelligence) elite (see [here](#) and [here](#)), the GMO biotech sector has gained a strategic and influential foothold in India and many of its national public bodies (see [here](#) and [here](#)). It threatens to destroy Indian agriculture and recast it (and thus Indian society, given that hundreds of millions depend on it for a living) according to its own needs (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

A recent article by OP Rana in India's Frontier Weekly Journal exposes the bogus claims being made by supporters of GMOs, including the myth that they are needed in a place like India, which is rich in biodiversity and could easily feed itself without GMOs, and outlines the real intent behind the pro-GMO drive.

The 3,000-plus word article (the link to which is provided at the end of this piece) discusses many important issues, of which just a handful are highlighted below. In his piece, OP Rana makes the following points:

Bogus statements on the efficacy and safety of GMOs

A statement like "there is no scientific evidence to prove that genetically modified (GM) crops will harm soil, human health and the environment" by India's Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has gone unopposed in the mainstream media. The scientifically illiterate statement of Javadekar came in response to a question over the recent controversial decision of granting approval for experimental field trials of 12 GM crops. (Similar bogus

claims are being made in the UK and Europe as officials work hand in glove with the GMO biotech sector to force GMO technology on a public that does not want it - see [here](#) and [here](#))

India does not need GM food

No one in India, where farmers are the most neglected group of society, has asked why people need to genetically engineered crops instead of helping farmers, through policies and funds, to grow enough food grains, vegetables and fruits to meet the demands. (India is already food self-sufficient in many areas - see [here](#) - despite the negative impacts of global trade policies that undermine this - see [here](#)).

In a highly biologically diverse country, allowing GM crops is like committing hara-kiri

Ten companies control about 67 percent of the global seeds trade and once they get a stranglehold on Indian agriculture, which Indian politicians, ruling and opposition as well want them to, they will spell the death of farming as Indians know it.

Indigenous salt-resistant seeds regenerated agriculture in the Sunderbans - not GMOs

Cyclone *Aila* left a devastating trail in India and Bangladesh, especially the Sunderbans, in 2009. *Aila* inundated huge tracts of farmlands with salt water from the sea making them infertile. Nothing that the GM seed companies offered could revive farming in the saline soil. This should have opened the eyes of Indian politicians to the impotence of GM seeds and superiority of indigenous varieties.

Corporate oligopoly

The top five GM seed makers - Monsanto, DuPont, Syngenta, Groupe Limagrain and Land O' Lakes - control about 57 per cent of the global seed market. Since the mid-1990s, Monsanto, Syngenta and DuPont, along with Bayer and Dow, have bought up more than 200 other companies to become dominant players in the seed market. Can there be a better example of oligopoly?

Not science but profit and control

GM seeds, controlled by multinational companies, are less science and more commerce. They are not being promoted to feed the world's hungry but to earn profits. Such companies have spent billions of dollars to genetically modify the seeds. Now, they are forcing poor farmers to pay them back with very high rates of interests. And governments in the developing world seem more than eager to help the GM seed companies in their dirty designs.

Read OP Rana's article at Frontier Weekly [here](#).

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