UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
Newspaper's Agri Clippings
For more information visit University Library Website
Web - uasbagrilibindia.org
E-mail- librarian@uasbangalore.edu.in
Saturday
13-06-2026

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿವಿಯಿಂದ ಕೃಷಿ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನ

■ **ವಿಕ ಸುದ್ದಿಲೋಕ** ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯವು ರಾಜ್ಯ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಹಾಗೂ ತಾಲೂಕು ಮಟ್ಟದ ಅರ್ಹ ರೈತ, ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಸ್ತರಣಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಕರ್ತರಿಂದ ವಿವಿಧ ಕೃಷಿ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಿದೆ.

ಅ. 15 ರಿಂದ 18 ರವರೆಗೆ ಜಿಕೆವಿಕೆ ಆವರಣದಲ್ಲಿ 'ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯ ಕೃಷಿ: ಮುಂದಿನ ಪೀಳಿಗೆಗೆ' ಎಂಬ ಘೋಷ ವಾಕ್ಯದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಹಮ್ಮಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿರುವ 'ಕೃಷಿ ಮೇಳ-2026'ರ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರದಾನ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಾಜಿ ಪ್ರಧಾನಮಂತ್ರಿ ಎಚ್.ಡಿ. ದೇವೇಗೌಡ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ರೈತ/ ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿ, ಡಾ. ಎಂ.ಎಚ್. ಮರಿಗೌಡ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ತೋಟಗಾರಿಕಾ ರೈತ/ ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿ, ಕೆನರಾ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ರೈತ ಮತ್ತು ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿಗಳು, ಡಾ. ಆರ್. ದ್ವಾರಕೀನಾಥ್ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ರೈತ/ ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿ, ಡಾ.ಆರ್. ದ್ವಾರಕೀನಾಥ್ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ವಿಸ್ತರಣಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಕರ್ತ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಮಟ್ಟದ ಪ್ರಗತಿಪರ ರೈತ ಮತ್ತು ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿಗಳು (ಒಟ್ಟು 6), ತಾಲೂಕು ಮಟ್ಟದ ಯುವ ರೈತ ಮತ್ತು ಯುವ ರೈತ ಮಹಿಳೆ ಪ್ರಶಸ್ತಿಗಳ (ಒಟ್ಟು 35) ಗಳಿಗೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ನಿಗದಿತ ಅರ್ಜಿ ನಮೂನೆಗಳು ಆಯಾ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗಳ ಜಂಟಿ ಕೃಷಿ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರ ಕಚೇರಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ಜಿಕೆವಿಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಣಾ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರ ಕಚೇರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ www.uasbangalore.edu.in ನಲ್ಲೂ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿದೆ.

ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಜುಲೈ 31ರ ಒಳಗೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

V-karnataka pg 04 & 04

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದಿಂದ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ | ಮುಂಗಾರು ಹಂಗಾಮಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿತ್ತನೆಗೆ ಲಭ್ಯ

ಸುಧಾರಿತ ನೂತನ ತೊಗರಿ ತಳಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ

■ **ಎಚ್.ಪಿ. ಪುಣ್ಯವತಿ** ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು
punyavathi.hp@timesofindia.com

ಮುಂಗಾರು ಹಂಗಾಮಿನಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಗರಿ ಬಿತ್ತನೆ ಮಾಡುವ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಅಧಿಕ ಇಳುವರಿ ಕೊಡುವ ಹಾಗೂ ರೋಗ ನಿರೋಧಕ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಸುಧಾರಿತ ತೊಗರಿ ತಳಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯವು 'ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ' ಸರಣಿಯ ಸುಧಾರಿತ ತೊಗರಿ ತಳಿಗಳನ್ನು ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದೆ. ಇವು ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಹವಾಮಾನಕ್ಕೆ ತಕ್ಕಂತೆ ತರಕಾರಿ ಮತ್ತು ಬೇಳೆ ಬಳಕೆಗೆ ಸೂಕ್ತವಾದ ತಳಿಗಳಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿವಿ ಜಿಕೆವಿಕೆಯ ಅಖಿಲ ಭಾರತ ಸುಸಂಘಟಿತ ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ಪ್ರಾಯೋಜನೆ- ಬೀಜ (ಬೆಳೆಗಳು) ವಿಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಧಿಕ ಇಳುವರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಸುಧಾರಿತ ತಳಿಗಳ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟದ ಬೀಜಗಳು ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಲಭ್ಯವಿವೆ. ತೊಗರಿಯು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಬೆಳೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಇದನ್ನು ಬೇಳೆಗಾಗಿ ಹಾಗೂ ತರಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿ (ಹಸಿ ಕಾಳು)ಯೂ ಬೆಳೆಯಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-1, ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-2, ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-3, ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-4 ಹಾಗೂ ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-5 ತಳಿಗಳ ಬೀಜಗಳು ಲಭ್ಯವಿದ್ದು, ತೊಗರಿ ಬೆಳೆಗಾರರಿಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ತಳಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆಯೂ



ಇದೆ. ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಹವಾಮಾನಕ್ಕೆ ತಕ್ಕಂತೆ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಿಗಳು ಕಟ್ಟುನಿಟ್ಟಿನ ಸಂಶೋಧನೆಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ತಳಿಗಳ ವಿಶೇಷತೆ: ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-1 ಮತ್ತು ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-3 ತಳಿಗಳು ತರಕಾರಿ ತಳಿಗಳಾಗಿ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-1 ದಪ್ಪ ಕಾಳುಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದು, ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಸಕ್ಕರೆ ಅಂಶದಿಂದಾಗಿ ಸಿಹಿಯಾಗಿ ರುತ್ತವೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ, ಇದು ತರಕಾರಿ (ಹಸಿ ಕಾಳು) ಬಳಕೆಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸೂಕ್ತ. ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-3 ತಳಿಯು ತರಕಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಬೇಳೆ ಎರಡಕ್ಕೂ ಸೂಕ್ತವಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಎಕರೆಗೆ 7-8 ಕ್ವಿಂಟಾಲ್ ಇಳುವರಿ ನೀಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಸೊರಗು ರೋಗ ಮತ್ತು ಗೊಡ್ಡು/ಬಂಜೆ ರೋಗಕ್ಕೆ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ನಿರೋಧಕ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಹೊಂದಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-2, ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-4 ಮತ್ತು ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-5 ತಳುಗಳು ಬೇಳೆಗಾಗಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಮೀಸಲು. ಇವು ಬಿಳಿ ಕಾಳುಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದು, ಬೇಳೆ ಮಾಡಲು ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ವಾಗಿವೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಕಾಯಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬಿಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-5 ತಳಿಯು ಸೊರಗು ರೋಗ ನಿರೋಧಕ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಮಧ್ಯಮಾವಧಿ ತಳಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-4 ಕೇವಲ 150 ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಯ್ಲಿಗೆ ಬರುವ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ತಳಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಗಿಡದ ಎತ್ತರ ಕಡಿಮೆಯಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ತಡವಾಗಿ ಬಿತ್ತನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಯಂತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕ ಕಟಾವು ಮಾಡಬಹುದು ಎಂದು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿವಿ ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕ ಡಾ. ಮೂಡಲಗಿರಿಯಪ್ಪ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

300 ಕ್ವಿಂಟಾಲ್ ದಾಸ್ತಾನು

ಈ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಮಾನದಂಡ ಮತ್ತು ಬೀಜ ಮಾನದಂಡ ಅನುಸರಿಸಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಬೀಜೋತ್ಪಾದನಾ ತಾಕುಗಳ ಬೀಜವನ್ನು ತಜ್ಞ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಿಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಬೀಜ ಪ್ರಮಾಣೀಕರಣ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮೇಲ್ವಿಚಾರಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣೀಕರಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಈ ಬೀಜಗಳ ಮೊಳಕೆ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯ, ಶುದ್ಧತೆ ಹಾಗೂ ರೋಗ ನಿರೋಧಕ ಗುಣ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ಮಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ರೈತರ ಬೇಡಿಕೆಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-1 ರಿಂದ ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ-5 ರವರೆಗಿನ ದೃಢೀಕೃತ ತೊಗರಿ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು 300 ಕ್ವಿಂಟಾಲ್‌ನಷ್ಟು ಉತ್ಪಾದಿಸಿ ದಾಸ್ತಾನು ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿವಿ (ಬೀಜ ವಿಭಾಗ) ವಿಶೇಷ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ಡಾ. ಕೆ. ವಿಶ್ವನಾಥ್ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

ರೈತರು ಈ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಜಿಕೆವಿಕೆ ಆವರಣದ ಬೀಜ ಮಾರಾಟ ಕೇಂದ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ ನೇರವಾಗಿ ಖರೀದಿಸಬಹುದು. ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ದೂರದ ಊರುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆಸಿರುವ ರೈತರು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಖರೀದಿಸಬಹುದು. ಬೀಜಗಳ ಬೆಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು www.uasgkvkseeds.org ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ಗೆ ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಪ್ರತಿ ಕೆ.ಜಿ. ತೊಗರಿ ದರ 145 ರೂ. ದರವಿದ್ದು, 5 ಕೆ.ಜಿ. ಬ್ಯಾಗನ್ನೇ ಖರೀದಿಸಬೇಕು.

ರೈತರ ಆದಾಯವನ್ನು ದ್ವಿಗುಣ ಗೊಳಿಸುವ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯವು ತರಕಾರಿ (ಹಸಿ ಕಾಳು) ಹಾಗೂ ಬೇಳೆ ಎರಡಕ್ಕೂ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಸೂಕ್ತವಾದ 'ಬಿಆರ್‌ಜೆ' ಸರಣಿಯ ಸುಧಾರಿತ ತೊಗರಿ ತಳಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದೆ. ರೈತರು ರೋಗ ನಿರೋಧಕ ಶಕ್ತಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಈ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮ ಗುಣಮಟ್ಟದ ಬೀಜಗಳನ್ನು ಸಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಖರೀದಿಸಿ, ತಮ್ಮ ಕೃಷಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು.

-ಡಾ. ಎಸ್.ವಿ. ಸುರೇಶ್
ಕುಲಪತಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಕೃಷಿ ವಿವಿ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಮುಂಚೂಣಿ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಗರಿ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ದ್ವಿದಳ ಧಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿದ್ದು, ದೇಶದ ತೊಗರಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಜ್ಯವು ಮುಂಚೂಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ದೇಶದ ಒಟ್ಟು ತೊಗರಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆಯ ಸುಮಾರು ಶೇ.30ರಷ್ಟು ಪಾಲನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಹೊಂದಿದೆ. ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಭಾಗದ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯನ್ನು ತೊಗರಿಯ ಕಣಜ ಎಂದೇ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಮಾರು 9 ಲಕ್ಷ ಹೆಕ್ಟೇರ್‌ಗೂ ಅಧಿಕ ಪ್ರದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಗರಿ ಬೆಳೆಯಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಸುಮಾರು 10.2 ಲಕ್ಷ ಮೆಟ್ರಿಕ್ ಟನ್ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಒಟ್ಟು ತೊಗರಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯೊಂದೇ ಶೇ.60ರಷ್ಟು ಪಾಲನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದೆ. ತೊಗರಿ ಬೆಳೆಯುವಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲಬುರಗಿ ನಂತರದ ಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾದಗಿರಿ, ಬೀದರ್ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಜಯಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗಳಿವೆ.



A farmer sprays pesticides in a paddy field on the outskirts of Hyderabad. NAGARA GOPAL

The human cost of a deadly weed killer

In March, Telangana banned paraquat, one of the world's most widely used and highly toxic weedicides, becoming only the third State in India to do so. The herbicide is responsible for hundreds of deaths each year, most of them suicides and some accidental. **Serish Nanisetti** *reports on the campaign that led to the ban and why much more remains to be done*

At 50, Banoth Goud (name changed) has lived to tell a tale. "I may look normal, but I become breathless when I climb stairs or even walk more than five minutes. The doctor says my lungs got affected," he says.

About three years ago, on a sweltering afternoon, Goud opened his refrigerator, took out a small plastic bottle labelled with a popular juice brand, and took a sip. The drink did not have the sweet, tart apple flavour that he was used to; instead, it tasted flat. He began vomiting.

Goud did not know that he had drunk paraquat, a highly toxic herbicide and one of the most effective weed killers in the world. Paraquat, a colourless and tasteless liquid, is most often fatal for both humans and animals.

It was a mistake that resulted in Goud fighting for his life. "I had asked my nephew to get the *gaddi mandu* (the local term for the weedicide) to clear weeds in front of our house," he recalls. "He kept the bottle on a table inside the house. My wife thought it was a cool drink and placed it inside the fridge." While wholesale traders store paraquat in drums, farmers and others often fill up stray bottles with the weedicide.

TELANGANA Hyderabad

Goud was rushed from his house in Paloncha to a hospital in Kothegudem, about 11 kilometres away. The doctors were sure he would die.

Being an employee of TSGENCO (Telangana State Power Generation Corporation Limited), Goud had an ESIC (Employee State Insurance Corporation) card, necessary for workers below a certain salary level to access free medical care and financial benefits at ESIC dispensaries and hospitals across the State. He was quickly ferried in an ambulance to a tertiary-care facility in Hyderabad, roughly 285 km away.

Dr. Verrana Addanki, a General Medicine practitioner, noticed that Goud had a 'paraquat mouth' – the severe, corrosive damage that occurs when a person swallows or is exposed to paraquat – and put him on continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT). Over the next 40 days, Goud's condition slowly improved.

"His family had given up on him," remembers Dr. Addanki. "But we persisted and he had the will to survive too. Now, he has photographs of his family as his WhatsApp display picture."

On March 31, 2026, Telangana banned the sale, distribution, manufacture, and use of paraquat, to protect the safety and health of people, especially farmers. It became only the third State to do so, after Kerala and Odisha. The Government Order was issued days after intense lobbying by doctors, clinicians, and public representatives calling for the ban of the weedicide, which has been often used for self-harm. Neighbouring Andhra Pradesh followed suit in May.

> A ban by one State without the involvement of e-commerce sites is just a ban on paper. It is ineffectual.
>
> **DILEEP KUMAR**
> Pesticide Action Network

Bans and bust-ups

Paraquat wreaks havoc due to its immense potential for harm, easy availability, low price (₹280 per litre), and widespread use in India. The only law to regulate hazardous chemicals such as paraquat is the Insecticides Act, 1968.

Goud's story is an exception: the weedicide has killed thousands of people, as is evident from autopsy reports from hospitals across the world. Paraquat is banned in 74 countries. In India, Kerala became the first State to ban it in 2011. However, in February 2022, the Kerala High Court overturned the ban following a plea by a cardamom growers' collective. While the Kerala Agriculture Department's notification specifically named the chemical along with 13 others, the High Court struck down the ban on the technical ground that the State did not have the authority to enforce it beyond 60+30 days (as per Section 27 of the Insecticides Act).

In October 2022, Kerala was rocked by the murder of Sharon Raj, who was allegedly poisoned with a paraquat-laced drink by his fiancée, Greeshma. He died at the Medical College Hospital in Thiruvananthapuram, triggering a public uproar as details of the case quickly emerged in the public domain.

"We can still order it online," says Dileep Kumar of Pesticide Action Network, a global coalition of over 600 NGOs, institutions, and individuals across 90 countries dedicated to eliminating hazardous chemical pesticides. "A ban by one State without the involvement of e-commerce sites is just a ban on paper. It is ineffectual," he points out.

Kumar adds that the country needs stronger laws and regulations to manage the crisis. "Even the Bhopal gas tragedy [in 1984] did not lead to new laws to regulate pesticides," he says.

The problem is not just limited regulation of pesticides, weedicides, and insecticides; it is also low awareness about safe use. According to a statement by the Minister of State for Agriculture in the Lok Sabha, 79,185 farmers were made aware of the safe and judicious use of pesticides between 2020 and 2026. This is a low share in a country where 46.1% of the population is dependent on agriculture, as per the Economic Survey of 2025-26.



Ambulance vans stand outside the Gandhi Hospital mortuary in Hyderabad, where 217 paraquat victims were brought in for postmortem examination between 2024 and 2025. NAGARA GOPAL

As per the Act, the ban in Telangana was for 60 days and can be extended by 30 more days. On the day that the Telangana issued a Government Order imposing a ban on paraquat, the Legislative Assembly passed a bipartisan resolution asking the Central government to ban the chemical across the country.

Lobbying for a ban

On the afternoon of February 12, Dr. Marri Mahesh Reddy, the founder of a grassroots movement called Doctors Against Paraquat, called for a gathering of farmers in Potharam village in Karimnagar. The emerald green village, with endless paddy fields, is on the eastern side of the Sriramsagar flood flow canal that carries water from the Godavari river. This whistle-stop tour and meeting with farmers was part of a campaign by Dr. Reddy.

"If we don't use this, can't we do agriculture?" Dr. Reddy said, addressing the gathering. "Didn't we do agriculture before this? Brush-cutter *leva, vere mandulu leva. Dina valla yavaruki upogam?* (We have brush-cutters, sickles, and other chemicals. Why use this toxic substance?)"

He explained what made paraquat particularly dangerous. "I used to get emergency cases of snake bites and poisoning," he said. "There were antidotes for snakebites and the venom was not always so toxic. But paraquat is in a different league. It destroys the cell structure and there is no antidote."

Doctors Against Paraquat comprises 202 doctors drawn from different parts of Telangana, who lobbied with politicians, farmers, and bureaucrats relentlessly for a ban on paraquat. Using social media and personal connections, Dr. Reddy reached out to the Telangana Chief Minister's Office, the Maharashtra Chief Minister's Office, the Prime Minister's Office, and politicians.

Yet, Potharam and other farming villages have found paraquat useful. As labour shortage is rising and the cost of hiring farm workers is increasing, farmers use paraquat, which is labelled and sold as non-selective contact herbicide (meaning, it does not differentiate between one plant and another), to clean up residual plants and weeds. Paraquat imports to India rose from 8,598 tonnes in 2019-20 to 20,786 tonnes in 2022-23, according to the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2542 under the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare in 2025.

"Without any oversight or intervention by officials from the agriculture department, there is a runaway use of paraquat in most parts of the country. There are many accidental deaths due to careless use as well," says Kodanda Reddy, Chairperson of the Telangana Agriculture Farmers Welfare Commission, who has also worked to get the ban imposed in the State.

"Currently we are working with e-commerce companies as well as cyber crime officials to ensure that the product is not available in online stores," he adds. This lobbying appears to have paid off, as two big e-commerce sites – Flipkart and Amazon – no longer list the chemical in Telangana. However, it is easily available from smaller agriculture commerce sites.

A rush to save patients

Bodies are constantly wheeled in and out of the Department of Forensic Medicine, Toxicology and Autopsy Complex at Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad. Families wait in grief and the police mill around. There is an overpowering odour of bleach, urine, and putrefying flesh.

> Without any oversight or intervention by officials from the agriculture department, there is a runaway use of paraquat in most parts of the country.
>
> **KODANDA REDDY**
> Chairperson of the Telangana Agriculture Farmers Welfare Commission

The toll of paraquat poisoning is evident here. According to Dr. Atmudi Vivek Sai Ram's Doctor of Medicine dissertation, 'An autopsy based study on deaths due to Paraquat poisoning in Gandhi Hospital', the facility recorded 217 cases of paraquat poisoning in 2024 and 2025. Of these, 54% of the patients were farmers and 16% students. Of the 100 cases studied for the dissertation, 94% were suicide cases and 5% were accidental.

"There is no treatment for paraquat poisoning, no antidote. We only receive clues from the family when bottles with labels are found near the victim or there is an oral statement," says Dr. Krupal Singh, the head of department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology. He is also part of Doctors Against Paraquat.

"All we can do is symptomatic treatment," Dr. Singh adds. "As a result, treatment remains largely supportive, focusing on early gastrointestinal decontamination, organ support, and prevention of further oxidative damage. If the patient is put on a ventilator, the progress of the chemical is accelerated, with multiple organ failure and fibrosis of lungs being irreversible."

Inside the nephrology ward of the century-old Osmania General Hospital in Hyderabad, patients sit in rows. "Every month, we get 4-5 paraquat-related cases. Most of the patients die within days," says Dr. Manisha Shenoy, Head of the Nephrology Department, who is the first doctor to be called in once a patient suspected of imbibing paraquat is wheeled into the hospital.

"The prognosis is bleak even with advanced treatment like CRRT," she explains. "The chemical causes rapid damage, first to the kidneys, then the liver, and eventually the lungs. Intubation of a patient on a ventilator accelerates damage to the lungs." She does not remember any survivors.

Poor regulatory efforts

While the dangers of paraquat and its misuse have drawn global attention, regulatory efforts in India have largely escaped public scrutiny.

Paraquat's origins date back to the 1880s, when it was first developed as a chemical dye. *Its herbicidal properties were discovered in the 1950s, and Imperial Chemical Industries began marketing it as Gramoxone in the 1960s. Concerns about its toxicity surfaced early in India. In 1989, G. Vijaya Rama Rao, a doctor from Siddipet, raised the issue in the Lok Sabha, but the Agriculture Minister said the government had received no reports of harmful effects.*

However, Imperial Chemical Industries documents suggest the company was aware of the risks. An agenda paper by the company dated November 19, 1987, and accessed by *The Hindu*, noted: "Suicidal abuse of the product will not be eliminated." According to the paper, the company also chose not to dilute the chemical to make it safer, calculating that this would increase packaging size fivefold. It noted that "usage by farmers would reduce significantly because of bulk inconvenience/higher prices."

During these years, Imperial Chemical Industries was earning significant revenues from paraquat. In 1987, sales of the product reached 15,000 tonnes, generating £192 million, according to a document from October 4, 1988, and accessed by *The Hindu*.

In August 2025, the Lok Sabha was informed that there are 1,503 licensed manufacturers of paraquat in the country. While Telangana banned the herbicide on March 31, on April 16, the Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee, at its 471st meeting, cleared seven applications for formulation under indigenous manufacture as "satisfactory."

India has not been a passive player in the regulation of paraquat; it has also, at times, been an enabler in its continued use. In May 2013, India joined Guatemala in opposing the listing of paraquat as a "severely hazardous pesticide formulation" under Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention, a multi-lateral environmental agreement. Such a listing would not have led to a banning of the chemical, but it would have required exporting countries to notify and obtain prior consent from importing countries before shipment. The proposal was supported by 118 countries but did not go through because the treaty's voting rules require complete consensus.

CropLife India, representing 17 agro-chemical companies, said to *The Hindu*, "Sudden restrictions on paraquat dichloride and carbosulfan, just as kharif sowing begins, could raise input costs, disrupt crop protection, and deepen farmer vulnerability." Paraquat is used on nearly 80 lakh acres in India and remains a low-cost weed-control option for small farmers, it added.

In Karimnagar, however, the ban has already had a visible impact. "Deaths due to paraquat have dropped from around 30-50 per month before the ban to 3-5 now, according to data from pulmonologists and nephrologists," says Dr. Reddy. "We can reach zero deaths if the ban is imposed across the country and the chemical is removed from shelves and online stores. All doctors will breathe easier if that happens."

Those in distress or having suicidal tendencies could seek help and counselling by calling any of the following numbers: 1Life - 78930-78930

serish.n@thehindu.co.in