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Title : RSS outfits oppose GM crop trials

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Two RSS-linked associations on Tuesday claimed that the clearance given by the central biotech regulator for field trials of genetically modified (GM) crops had been put on hold, even as the government said it has not taken any decision on this contentious issue.

Government's stand was articulated by environment minister Prakash Javadekar after his meeting with representatives of Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) and Bhartiya Kisan Sangh (BKS).

Treading cautiously on the issue, Javadekar said the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) had cleared some field trials of GM crops but the government had not acted upon it. Though SJM convener Ashwani Mahajan tweeted that the minister assured farmers' bodies of putting the decision of field trials of GM crops on hold, Javadekar said the government would not take any decision in haste.

"All stakeholders will be consulted before taking any (accepting or rejecting) decision on the recommendations of the GEAC," he said.

Representatives of SJM and BKS apprised Javadekar about their concerns over GEAC's recent clearance to field trials of 15 varieties of GM crops including rice, mustard, cotton, chickpea and brinjal. The committee has in the past four months cleared field trials of as many as 60 varieties of transgenic crops.