

Letters to the Editor

May 8, 2018

Dear Prof. Roy,

Thank you for publishing my article “Marketing of Science”, in the March-April issue of *Science and Culture*. I am grateful to your editorial staff for the improvements made in my article, specially the drawings.

This excellent issue is very informative indeed. Of particular interest were your editorial on GM crops and the article by Kesavan and Swaminathan on the same subject. While you talked about the gains of farmers in many countries through GM crops you have also talked about absence of a sound risk assessment system and cost/benefit valuations. The article by Kesavan and Swaminathan raises more doubts when they write, “the genetically engineered crops should be avoided as these are now known to produce ‘unintended effects’ and these are neither pro-nature, nor pro-poor, nor pro-women—etc”.

Some ten years ago the Indian Association for Productivity, Quality and Reliability, Kolkata had organized an event on this subject in the National Library premises, financially supported by the DBT. Among over 200 delegates the majority were inquisitive farmers and representatives of the farming community. The then Minister of Agriculture and his Secretary who attended the workshop supported the case of GM seeds as did several speakers. However, there were others who strongly opposed. Most vocal were some NGOs and activists who while raising some valid questions said a lot of irrelevant things too. There were many questions to which nobody could give an answer (some were like what you have mentioned, ‘what will happen after 14 generations ?’) One said that if insects were repelled from a field with GM crops then the neighboring non-GM crops will be more severely attacked by the insects. The blanket opposition raised doubts in the minds of many and discussions remained inconclusive.

The March-April issue presented both sides of the debate so very well but, rightly, offers no firm conclusion. Eventually, the last word will come from the farmers only.

I could say somethings more in appreciation of the other articles also but in order to avoid this letter being too long I will stop here.

With warm regards,

Professor Hem Shanker Ray

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From the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

May 22, 2018

Dear Prof. S. C. Roy Ji

Namaste !

We wish to acknowledge the receipt of your complimentary copies of the March-April 2018 issue of the *Science and Culture* journal (Vol.84), its Supplement (Vol. 84) and the Cumulative Subject and Author Index for the year 2017 (Vol. 83).

His Holiness the Dalai Lama wishes to thank you for your kindness in sending them to him.

Please accept His Holiness’ prayers and blessings for your good health, success and happiness. Kindly keep up with your good work of educating people so that they could serve humanity better with the sense of global responsibility based on the understanding of the oneness of humanity and compassion which is the pillar of world peace which must come through peace of mind within each and every individual no matter which country or religious tradition they belong to.

With warm regards,

Sincerely

Tsepas

Relg. Interpreter to H. H. the Dalai Lama
Office of H. H. the Dalai Lama

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May 31, 2018

Dear Prof. Roy,

Thanks very much for sending a copy of the recent issue of Science and Culture. Incidentally, my tenure as PSA to Government of India ended in the first week of last month. I am now DAE Homi Bhabha Chair Professor in BARC.

As you say about yourself, I am also physicist. But I felt that your editorial is very well-written and balanced and reference to Canola Oil (based on genetically modified rapeseed with the same genes added as in DMH-11) which is sold in India, is appropriate. If good research has been done (as in the case of DMH-11 by Prof. Deepak Pental's group) and clearance has been given by GEAC, I do not understand why objections continue to be raised. The Academy of Agricultural Sciences, I understand, has also supported introduction of DMH-11.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

R. Chidambaram

(R. Chidambaram)

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