

## India: GM rice rakes up controversy, Agro-Biodiversity committee wants pro-GM chairman out

The new genetically engineered rice named as “Designer Rice” is raking up fresh controversy. The difference of opinion has already started widening chasm among the members of the country’s watchdog on biodiversity, the Expert Committee on Agro-Biodiversity.

P V Sateesh Kumar, an expert committeemember who also heads the Pastapur-based Deccan Development Society, has found fault with group chairman E A Siddiq for supporting the cause of the Designer Rice and has demanded his resignation as the head of the committee. In a letter sent to Siddiq, Sateesh wondered how he could continue to be the chairman of a committee assigned the task of advising us on protecting and preserving the country’s rich agro-biodiversity which was facing a grave threat from aggressive promotion of the GM technology. “It clearly shows conflict of interests,” he said.

Siddiq, while speaking at a recent international conference on “Designer Rice”, at ICRISAT had said, “The Designer Rice can be a possibility for the future generations and research is going on to produce the same.

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