

Is the new Seeds Bill tilted against farmers' interest and biased in favour of seed companies? Analyse

As new Seeds Bill is introduced in the parliament, it encourages seeds replacement rate, specify registration standards of seeds & enforce registration from all stake holders. While these are praise worthy, some of the provisions deviate from Protection of Plants Variety & Farmers' rights Act 2001 ^(PPVFR), which protects farmers rights

Dilution of farmers rights

1) Compensation for farmer's role in development of a seed variety

PPVFR Act ⇒ Provides farmers & community compensation if they involved in the evolution of seed varieties

Seeds Bill ⇒ dilutes this provisions & private companies are free to claim the rights of seeds

2) Compulsory registration of seeds

PPVFR Act ⇒ Voluntary registration of seeds by breeders

Seeds Bill ⇒ Compulsory registration, may lead to exclusive marketing rights to breeder _{author}

3) Compensation In case of failure of seeds

PPVFR Act $\Rightarrow$ provides for compensation in case of failure under PPVFR authority

Seeds Bill $\Rightarrow$ In case of failure, farmers has to be compensated under 'Consumer Protection Act 1986' which is hardly friendly to anyone to approach to.

4) Ambiguous provision for Compensation

Seeds Bill $\Rightarrow$ Compensation to farmers only if seeds fails to give expected results under "given condition"

$\Rightarrow$ This given condition is not defined & can be misused & exploited by seed companies

In favour of Seeds Companies

5) Seed Registration $\Rightarrow$ even after its validity period. May lead to exorbitant hike in seeds price

6) Seed Pricing $\Rightarrow$ seeds Bill's vague provisions gives ways to fix prices by seed companies without any oversight.

The ambiguities & dilutions can be fixed by involving public institution, to denot profit motive, to develop seeds varieties. It will uphold the farmers' rights as well as push private companies into a healthy competition.