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# ***10th, April, 2022***

## ***Topic: Punjab Agriculture***

### ***Importance: Punjab PCS Prelims and Mains***

#### ***What is the news?***

- BT cotton seed price hiked, Punjab farmers miffed.
- Center increases cost of 450 gm packet from Rs767 to Rs810.

#### ***Challenges:***

- Already grappling with losses suffered due to pink bollworm infestation last year, cotton growers now have been dealt with another blow as the Central government has increased prices of Bt cotton seed from Rs 767 to Rs 810 (Rs 43 increase) per packet of 450 gm recently.
- Cotton growers said the government kept on increasing the cotton seed prices every year which add up to their

already high input cost. The government had also hiked prices of Bt cotton seed last year from Rs 737 to Rs 767, registering an increase of Rs 80 a packet in just two years.

- Farmers are advised to break away from traditional wheat-paddy cycle by opting for crop diversification. When they start cultivating other crops, there is barely any support from the state and central governments.  
–Saroop Singh Sidhu, BKU (Lakhowal)
- Cotton farmers rued that they had barely recovered from losses suffered due to pink bollworm infestation that damaged the crop in large area in the region and now recent hike in prices of Bt cotton seed would put extra financial burden on them. On an average, cotton cultivation in an acre land requires a minimum of three packets of Bt cotton seed.
- Bhartiya Kisan Union (Lakhowal) state general secretary Saroop Singh Sidhu said, “Unlike 2020-21 season, when there was a bumper crop, the overall production of cotton has dwindled in 2021-22. But owing to the rising demand in the international market, private players purchased cotton produce way above than the MSP. In some mandis, cotton sold for as high as Rs 12,000 per quintal basis (Rs 6,025 MSP). Farmers in many villages even held their produce back in the hope of a better deal in the future. But unfortunately, not many farmers could benefit as pest attack damaged their crop substantially.”
- Balkaran Singh, a leader of the Punjab Kisan Union, said, “Instead of providing relief to cotton farmers who suffered losses due to the infestation by lowering prices of input material, the government is rather increasing prices of seeds to burden them further. The area under cotton cultivation has increased sizably in the Malwa region over the past few years. However, owing to poor handling or anticipation to tackle infestations and constant hike in input material would discourage

farmers from continuing with the crop in future.”

- In the Malwa region, cotton is grown on a large scale in Bathinda, Mansa, Faridkot, Abohar, Ferozepur, Barnala, Muktsar and Fazilka districts among other areas.

### ***What is BT Cotton?***

- Bt cotton has been genetically modified by the insertion of one or more genes from a common soil bacterium, *Bacillus thuringiensis*. These genes encode for the production of insecticidal proteins, and thus, genetically transformed plants produce one or more toxins as they grow.

*(Source: Punjab Tribune)*

## ***Topic: Border Security***

### ***Importance: Punjab PCS Mains***

#### ***What is the news?***

- Punjab's Governor Banwarilal Purohit and Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann reviewed the security situation in 6 border districts during a meeting with the Sarpanchs and Panchas of border villages as well as the officials of Central and State Government agencies.
- The Chief Minister said he will meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah on April 12 and raise an issue of providing ultra-modern technological equipment to the Punjab police to combat the threat of cross-border smuggling.
- The Chief Minister further said that the state

government is looking at bringing industry in border areas apart from schools, colleges and skill development institutions so that the youth of the region can be provided with employment opportunities.

## Punjab PCS Quiz: Check Your Rank

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