

boats, is under consideration of the Government.

[*Translation*]

Multi-Lingual National News Agency

64. DR. A.K. PATEL :
SHRI C. JANGA REDDY :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3815 on 19 August, 1985 regarding multi-lingual national news agency and state :

(a) reaction of Government on the recommendations of Goenka Committee on merger of Indian Languages service with existing news agencies and the details of steps being taken in this regard; and

(b) the policy of Government and the measures proposed to be taken to ensure that all journalists and employees working in the news agencies of Indian languages are absorbed in corresponding posts ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) :

(a) The Government's reaction is favourable.

(b) The Government will help to the extent possible the absorption of these employees in sister organisations.

Implementation of Desert Development Programme

65. DR. A.K. PATEL :
SHRI C. JANGA REDDY :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government had started the Desert Development Programme during 1977-78 in accordance with the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture;

(b) if so, the details of upto-date achievements of this programme;

(c) whether resources position has deteriorated in desert areas and if so, how and to what extent indicating the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether the above programme is being reviewed and reformulated, if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A large number of Scheme relating to Sand Dune Stabilisation, Shelter belt plantation, Afforestation, Minor Irrigation, Soil Conservation, Live-Stock Development, Dry Land Farming Demonstration, etc. have been implemented in areas covered under the Programme. A total expenditure of about Rs. 73.55 crores was incurred on Desert Development Programme during the Sixth Five Year Plan alone. As for physical achievements during Sixth Five Year Plan, 53867 hectares were covered under plantation; about 12086 hectares of Sand Dunes were stabilised; 32611 running kilometers of shelter belt plantations were raised; irrigation potential of 7880 hectares was created; soil survey was undertaken over 82528 hectares; 161 veterinary dispensaries and 24 wool extension centres were established, and wage employment of about 8.8 million mandays was generated.

(c) and (d) The Desert Development Programme is being financed with available resources at present. A more favourable funding pattern for this programme is contemplated in the Seventh Plan.

Surplus Land in the Country

66. DR. A.K. PATEL :
SHRI C. JANGA REDDY :

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the area of surplus land in acres which have come under the possession of