

Multi-Lingual National News Agency

3815. SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) how far Government have been successful in working towards encouraging Multilingual National News Agency ; and

(b) the reaction of the proprietors and editors of the language press ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) : (a) and (b). It is not the Policy of the Government to start any agency and nor do the Government want to get involved in the management or internal functioning of any such agency. Further, recognising the need to have a news agency capable of providing satisfactory to services the language papers, I convened two meetings of the leading editors and proprietors of language newspapers on 25th & 26th June, 1985.

As a result of these meetings, the general consensus arrived at was that it is not possible to revive the existing Hindi News Agencies, namely, Hindustan Samachar and Samachar Bharati. The meeting was of the unanimous view that it is for the proprietors and editors of the newspapers themselves to establish and operate such a news agency service. For an indepth examination of the alternatives, a Committee of leading newspapermen was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri R.N. Goenka. This Committee has made the following specific recommendations :

(i) The creation of a fullfledged news agency with adequate technological back up will require at least Rs. 3 crores for capital expenditure and, in addition, recurring expenditure of Rs 1 crore per year. The Indian language newspapers are not at all in a position to raise even 50% of this capital. Further the running

cost of Rs. 1 crore per year cannot be recovered from Hindi/Indian language subscribers.

(ii) On the other hand, if Indian Languages service is added to the infrastructure of an existing news agency, the additional annual cost will be only Rs. 50 lakhs per year. There will be practically no capital cost. This level of annual expenditure can be managed both newspapers and other subscribers like AIR and Doordarshan. If however there is still any deficit, the news agency concerned can bear it.

The Government has not yet taken a final view on these recommendations.

World Bank Assistance for inland fisheries in Orissa and West Bengal

3816. SHRI K. PRADHANI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of World Bank assistance received for inland fisheries project for bringing areas in the State of Orissa and West Bengal under Scientific Pisciculture ;

(b) the areas brought under pisciculture in these two States ;

(c) whether sizeable funds allocated for this project for Orissa are being diverted to West Bengal ; and

(d) if so, the approximate amount involved and the reasons for such diversion thereof to West Bengal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR) : (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.