

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1980-81)

(SEVENTH LOK SABHA)

SIXTH REPORT

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-third Report of the Estimates Committee (Sixth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting—Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity.



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE	(iii)
COMPOSITION OF THE STUDY GROUP 'H'	(v)
INTRODUCTION	
CHAPTER I REPORT	I
CHAPTER II Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government	11
CHAPTER III Recommendations which the Committee do not desired to pursue in view of Government's replies	44
CHAPTER IV Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee	52
CHAPTER V Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are awaited	58
Appendices	58
I Advertising Policy of the Government of India	65
II Analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations Contained in 23rd Report of EC (Sixth Lok Sabha)	

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

(1980-81)

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COMMITTEE**

(1980-81)

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9. Shri D. P. Yadav

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Sixth Report on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-third Report of Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting—Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity.

2. The Twenty-third Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 22 December, 1978. Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report between November 1979 and February 1981. The replies were examined by Study Group 'H' of Estimates Committee (1980-81) at their sitting held on 27 December, 1980. The draft Report was adopted by the Estimates Committee (1980-81) on 9 March, 1981.

3. The Report has been divided into following chapters:—

I. Report.

II. Recommendations that have been accepted by Government.

III. Recommendations that the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies.

IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.

V. Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

4. An analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-third Report of the Estimates Committee (Sixth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix II. It would be observed therefrom that out of 61 recommendations made in the Report, 44 recommendations i.e. 72.1 per cent have been accepted by the Government and the Committee do not desire to pursue 6 recommendations i.e. 9.8 per cent in view of Government replies. Replies have not been accepted in respect of 4 recommendations i.e. 6.5 per cent. Final replies of Government in respect of 7 recommendations i.e. 11.6 per cent are still awaited.

NEW DELHI.

March 11, 1981

Phalguna 20, 1902 (Saka)

S. B. P. PATTABHI RAMA RAO,

Chairman,

Estimates Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-third Report (6th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting—Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity—which was presented to Lok Sabha on 22 December, 1978.

1.2. The action taken notes have been received in respect of all the recommendations contained in the Report.

1.3. Action taken notes on the recommendations of the Committee have been categorised as follows:—

- (i) Recommendations that have been accepted by Government.

Sl. Nos. 1, 3 to 10, 15, 16, 18 to 23, 26, 27, 29, 30 to 37, 39 to 41, 43 to 45, 47 to 49, 51 to 53, 55, 56, 57 and 61.

(Total 44—Chapter II)

- (ii) Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies.

Sl. Nos. 14, 25, 46, 50, 58 and 59.

(Total 6—Chapter III)

- (iii) Recommendations in respect of which action taken replies have not been accepted by the Committee.

Sl. Nos. 2, 24, 38 and 54.

(Total 4—Chapter IV)

- (iv) Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

Sl. Nos. 11 to 13, 17, 28, 42 and 60.

(Total 7—Chapter V)

Media List

Recommendation No. 2 (Para 2.10)

1.4. The Committee had examined the procedure laid down for inclusion of newspapers in the media list maintained by the Direc-

torate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), for the purpose of release of advertisements. The Committee felt that it would be better if instead of leaving the question of inclusion of a newspaper in, or its deletion from, the media list to be decided by an individual officer (Deputy Director or Director), the system was institutionalised and a departmental body consisting of Director of Advertising and Visual Publicity, a representative of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Principal Information Officer and Registrar of Newspapers in India constituted to draw the media list.

1.5. In their action taken reply (29 November, 1979) the Ministry have stated that the existing process of scrutinising the applications for advertisements is "considered adequate." The Ministry have further stated that "all newspapers/periodicals are eligible to receive DAVP advertisements if they satisfy the requirements relate to circulation, print area and regularity and are, therefore, objective in nature. There is no scope for misinterpretation of these requirements and the whole process is rather mechanical. Moreover, the newspapers/periodicals found ineligible to receive DAVP advertisements are informed about the reasons under which they could not be included in DAVP'S media list. This gives to them an adequate opportunity to represent their case to the higher authorities in the Ministry."

1.6. The Committee are unable to agree with the Ministry's contention that the existing process under which an individual officer is empowered to decide the question of inclusion of a newspaper in, or its deletion from media list, is adequate. They reiterate that the system should be institutionalised and that a departmental body consisting of Director of Advertising and Visual Publicity, a representative of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Principal Information Officer and Registrar of Newspapers in India should be constituted to draw up the media list.

UPSC—Advertisements

Recommendation No. 24 (Para 2.129)

1.7. The Committee noted that UPSC advertisements were being published in 134 newspapers/periodicals of various languages in the country. They also noted that the UPSC advertisements were likely to cost Rs. 75 lakhs to the exchequer during 1978-79. The Committee were informed by the representative of the Ministry during evidence that in the case of UPSC advertisements "there is an element of trying to extend advertisements to as large number

of papers as possible" and that "an element of treating, nursing and helping the smaller newspapers is very much there" in the case of these advertisements. From this the Committee concluded that the expenditure on UPSC advertisements was so high because UPSC advertisements were being published to nurse and help small newspaper even though it might not be necessary to do so on merits. This, the Committee felt, was contrary to the advertising policy of Government according to which "Government advertisements are not intended to be a measure of financial assistance". The Committee opined that the expenditure on the UPSC advertisements which was high, could be greatly reduced without affecting the range of publicity if the selection of newspapers was made on merits and with the aim of covering all areas and all language groups, while at the same time keeping in mind the need to avoid over-publicity in any language or area. They desired that the Government should review the media list for UPSC advertisements from this angle and reduce the number of newspapers on this list to the minimum required to carry the advertisements in all parts of the country.

1.8. In their reply (August 1980), the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have stated that the UPSC media list is drawn up in consultation with UPSC keeping in view their requirements in regard to coverage of the different language groups and remote outlying areas and that "the expenditure of the order of Rs. 75 lakhs per year on UPSC advertisements is not considered very large because the Government has an obligation to ensure that widest publicity is given to different categories of jobs sought to be advertised." According to the Ministry "any reduction in the media list will adversely affect the publicity objective."

1.9. The Ministry have also stated that the "DAVP does not include newspapers in the media list to give them financial support; the sole consideration is the message and the audience it has to reach. It is therefore not desirable to make any changes at this stage in the policy adopted for UPSC advertisements."

1.10. The Committee are unable to appreciate the Ministry's argument that any reduction in media list for UPSC advertisements will adversely affect the publicity objective. The Committee had found that UPSC advertisements were published in papers which were not even included in the main media list of DAVP, as brought out in para 2.131, of their 23rd Report (6th Lok Sabha). It was also admitted during evidence that in the case of UPSC advertisements "there is an element of trying to extend advertisements to as large number of

papers as possible” and that “an element of teating, nursing and helping smaller newspapers is very much there” in the case of such advertisements. This approach in selecting newspapers for UPSC advertisements in contrary to advertising policy of Government which laid down that “Government advertisements are not intended to be a means of financial assistance.”

1.11. While the Committee are not opposed to the giving of UPSC advertisements to small newspapers consistent with the Advertisement Policy of Government, they do feel that such advertisements should be given only to those newspapers which are on the approved media list of DAVP and which are considered suitable and essential by DAVP for carrying the advertisements to all parts of the country keeping in mind the need to avoid expenditure not commensurate with results and over publicity. The Committee would like the UPSC media list to be reviewed from this angle.

Parity of Advertisement Rates between English and Language Newspapers:

Recommendation No. 31—(Paras 3.38 & 3.39)

1.12. The Committee noted that the Fact Finding Committee on Newspaper Economics had observed that the rates offered by the Government should be non-discriminatory and there is no reason why a Government advertisement issued in an Indian language paper should earn less for the paper than is earned by same advertisement appearing in an English language paper with the same level of circulation. The Ministry had informed the Public Accounts Committee (50th Report, -1977), that no “discrimination in the rates of advertisements is made on the ground of language of the paper/periodical”. But inspite of this assurance the fact remained that the advertisement rates paid to Indian language newspapers were lower than those paid to English newspapers with comparable circulation. Explaining the reasons for giving lower rates to Indian language newspaper, the Ministry had stated that “the cost of production of language papers is less as compared to English newspapers. Language newspapers themselves charge lower commercial rates than their counterparts in English”. The Committee were not convinced by the argument advanced by the Ministry in justification of giving lower rates to language newspapers.

1.13. The Committee felt that the Government should view this question from a larger angle of encouraging the growth of national languages newspapers and end rate discrimination against them

to help them come at par with the English press in the matter of production standards. The Committee noted that Government had decided to give them 15 per cent weightage in rates over and above the economic rate worked out under the new rate structure but this seemingly generous step had not gone far enough to give them even their commercial rates in all cases, let alone matching rates with the English newspapers. The Committee strongly urged the Government to take a bold initiative to undo this wrong to the language press at the earliest.

1.14. In their reply (August, 1980), the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have stated that a Committee was constituted by the Ministry to review the provisions of Advertising Policy and other concerned issues including parity of rates between English and language newspapers. The Committee submitted its recommendations in July, 1980 which were accepted by the Ministry with certain modifications. The new Advertising Policy was announced by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting on September 18, 1980 and was made operative from October 1, 1980. The new policy *inter alia* provides for achieving the parity of rates between English and language newspapers. Notwithstanding this, the rates of language newspapers/periodicals upto a circulation of 10,000 copies which as per the Rate Structure were slightly more than than the English newspapers/periodicals for the same circulation have been kept as they were and have not been reduced to bring at par with the English newspapers. To achieve parity of rates for language newspapers having circulation above 10,000 copies, the weightage has been given or the existing weightage increased for the language papers to bring their rates at par with the rates of English newspapers.

1.15. The Committee are glad to note that the rate discrimination against national languages newspapers has at last ended and the new Advertising Policy of the Government provides for parity of rates between English and language newspapers. The Committee have no doubt that this step will go a long way in encouraging the growth of language newspapers and help them come at par with the English press in the matter of production standards.

Execution of DAVP Jobs through Govt. Presses

Recommendation No. 38 (Paras 4.16 & 4.17)

1.16. The Committee were informed that for printing of publicity material like posters, pamphlets, booklets etc., DAVP is first required to refer all the printing jobs to the Directorate of Printing

and the jobs can be assigned to private printers only if the Directorate of Printing is unable to accept them for execution through Government of India Presses. The Committee took serious note of the fact that nearly 99 per cent of the DAVP jobs were entrusted to private printers during 1975-76 to 1977-78 at a time when Government presses were working below capacity. They desired that the circumstances in which the jobs were entrusted to private printers in the last 3 years, be investigated with a view to fixing responsibility.

1.17. In their reply the Ministry have stated that:

“the jobs handled by the DAVP are generally of an urgent nature, time bound and related to specific campaigns or observance of events like “Army Day”, ‘Air Force Day’, ‘Handloom Week’ and similar events. Government Departments approach the DAVP at very short notice for producing pamphlets, brochures and other material. Recently, the Ministry of Finance wanted three pamphlets on the Budget 1979-80 to be brought out in the course of just 2 or 3 weeks. Even in these cases, a reference is invariably made to the Director of Printing according to the revised procedure introduced under a Joint Note presented by the DAVP and the Directorate of Printing to the Estimates Committee referred to in para 4.8 of the Committee’s Report. Proper arrangements have been made to ensure that each job is referred to the Directorate of Printing and their reply is received. Every effort is made to ensure that the jobs involving simple printing and in which the time factor is not very important are got done through the Government of India Presses. But from October 1978 to March 1979 they accepted only seven of the 157 jobs referred to them. Even here, the experience has been that there is delay and the cost is much higher than the lowest tender received from private printers.”

“A detailed discussion with the Directorate of Printing has already been held. It would be DAVP’s efforts to achieve a more workable and effective relationship between the two organisations so that whatever the Directorate of Printing can handle is entrusted to them provided the deadlines are met and no additional cost is involved.

“Considering all these factors we feel that an investigation covering the past 3 years may not be necessary.”

1.18. The Committee take note of the arrangements now made by DAVP to ensure that each job is first referred to the Directorate of Printing and that now whatever the Directorate of Printing can handle promptly and efficiently will be entrusted to them.

1.19. The Committee are however, unable to accept the view of the Ministry that an investigation of the circumstances in which 99 per cent of the DAVP jobs were entrusted to private printers during the three years from 1975-76 to 1977-78 with a view to fixing responsibility as recommended by the Committee, "may not be necessary". The Committee reiterate that the investigation should be carried out with a view to fixing responsibility.

Duplication in the Functions of DAVP, Directorate of Field Publicity, and RNI.

Recommendation No. 54 (Para 5.16)

1.20. The Committee noted that studies made by the Ministry had revealed that there was over-lapping in regard to certain functions performed by DAVP like bringing out of publications and other printed material, organisation of exhibitions and work connected with circulation statistics of newspapers and other allied work. Thus, both the DAVP and the Publications Division of the Ministry were engaged in bringing out publications and other printed publicity material. Similarly, exhibitions were organised by both the DAVP and the Directorate of Field Publicity. The work connected with circulation statistics of newspapers and other allied work was also being looked after both by Registrar of Newspapers for India and the DAVP. The Ministry had stated that the question of entrusting in depth studies to departmental or outside agencies to enable the Government to take a final decision in the matter was under examination. The Committee felt that when the fact of over-lapping of functions had been established and admitted by the Ministry, the reported move to undertake further "in depth studies" through departmental or outside agencies before taking action looked like a dilatory step and was not at all necessary. The Committee desired that the Ministry should take a decision in the matter without further delay and so re-allocate the work among various Departments that there should be only one agency to do a particular job.

1.21. In their reply (Nov., 1979) the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have stated that as regards duplication reference has been made to the areas of (a) exhibitions; (b) printed publicity material and (c) circulation check up. The DAVP's exhibition units

are complete professional units which put up fully integrated exhibitions in special erected pavilions or in halls. The designing, script etc. for these exhibitions is provided by the Exhibition Division of the DAVP which has the necessary staff of visualisers, artistes, designers and allied work-shop facilities. Against this, the basic function of the Directorate of Field Publicity is to communicate the message through the medium of films and inter-personal communications. The Directorate course, puts up exhibition small kits for display but this can be regarded merely as an activity to supplement the main exhibition activity of the DAVP, particularly as the Exhibition kits for Directorate of Field Publicity are supplied by DAVP itself. DAVP does not go to rural areas while the reach of DFP kits is right down to interior areas.

1.22 The Ministry have further stated that:

“In the matter of bringing out publicity material the role of DAVP and Publication Division are clearly defined. The DAVP is required to undertake the printing and distribution of unpriced publications, usually in the form of pamphlets, brochures booklets etc. whereas Publications Division undertakes the production of priced publications only. In the matter of circulation also, there is no overlapping in the function of DAVP and RNI. One of the statutory functions of the Registrar of Newspapers is to collect and maintain statistics relating to circulation, periodicity etc. of newspapers. This work becomes relevant in the context of allocation of newsprint also. The DAVP require circulation data of newspapers within view to deciding the advertisement rates at which advertisements can be released to a newspaper. The DAVP do not have any machinery of their own to verify the circulation claim of newspapers. For their limited purpose, they depend upon the certificate given by such institutions as ABC etc., and Chartered Accountant's certificates which are required to be produced by newspapers applying for DAVP advertisements. It is only in cases of doubt that DAVP make efforts to verify the circulation but then it is done only through the agency of RNI.”

1.23. The Committee are surprised at the contention now put forward by the Ministry that there is no duplication/overlapping of functions of DAVP, Directorate of Field Publicity, and Registrar of Newspapers for India, particularly when on the basis of the studies

made by the Ministry themselves it was earlier admitted by them before the Committee that there was duplication in the functions of these organisations.

1.24. This runs counter to the frank admission made by the representative of the Ministry during evidence before the Committee that "I am personally of the view that there is some over-lapping and it has to be properly sorted out ." (Para 5.13, 23rd Report of Estimates Committee, 6th Lok Sabha). This also goes against the facts brought out in the Ministry's own studies which were brought to the notice of the Committee (Para 5.14, *ibid*). The Committee deplore the delay in reallocation of work among various departments so as to avoid duplication and over-lapping. They reiterate that action to implement their recommendation should be taken without any further delay.

Evaluation of DAVP's Publicity Campaigns.

Recommendation No. 57 (Para 5.31)

1.25. The Committee had noted that although the DAVP was established more than two decades ago, so far no evaluation of advertising and other publicity work done by DAVP was carried out on a regular basis. DAVP had been receiving some information in the nature of feed back from its field exhibition units and from the field units of the Directorate of Field Publicity but as admitted by the Ministry, all this was inadequate and did not represent in any manner a proper evaluation of the effectiveness of DAVP's publicity. The Committee were informed that the Indian Institute of Mass Communication had conducted a survey of the reach and impact of DAVP advertisements in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and it was conducting a similar study in Kerala. Some more studies were proposed to be entrusted to the aforesaid institute. Further there was a scheme in the Rolling Plan for evaluation on a regular basis of the impact of the DAVP campaigns both departmentally and extra-departmentally by independent research organisations. The Committee welcomed the move, though belated, to have the effectiveness of DAVP's publicity evaluated through an independent agency. The Committee desired that such an evaluation of DAVP's publicity campaigns should be made on a regular basis and follow-up action to improve the reach and impact of the publicity campaigns taken promptly in the light of the evaluation reports.

1.26. In their action taken reply November, 1979 the Ministry have stated that the "recommendation is accepted."

1.27. The Committee take note of the fact that the Ministry have accepted their recommendation to have an evaluation of DAVP's publicity campaigns made on a regular basis. They hope that follow-up action will be taken by DAVP promptly in the light of evaluations already made and those to be made hereafter to improve the reach and impact of the publicity campaigns.

1.28. The Committee would like to emphasise that they attach the greatest importance to the implementation of the recommendations accepted by the Government. They would, therefore, urge that Government should keep a close watch so as to ensure expeditious implementation of the recommendations accepted by them. In cases where it is not possible to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee in time with reasons for non-implementation.

1.29. The Committee regret to note that even though more than two years have elapsed, the Ministry have not so far been able to take a final decision on seven recommendations. All these recommendations have been included in Chapter V of the Report. The Committee desire that final replies in respect of these recommendations may be furnished to the Committee within six months.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATION THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation Sl. No. 1(Para 2.9)

The Committee note that for release of advertisements to newspapers, the DAVP maintains a media list containing the names of newspapers/periodicals which satisfy the various standards laid down in the advertising policy of Government. Newspapers borne on the media list are asked every year to apply afresh with necessary media particulars along with a certificate from a Chartered Accountant, or Audit Bureau of Circulation in support of their circulation. Each case for inclusion in the media list is decided at the level of the Deputy Director or the Director, DAVP. A newspaper which is not included in the media list is informed of the reasons for non-inclusion of its name in the list. The newspaper is also advised that the case could be reconsidered if it comes up to the standard within a period of six months. The Committee suggest that the qualifying standards prescribed by DAVP for inclusion of names of newspapers etc. in the media list should be widely publicised. This would help the newspapers/periodicals to make self-assessment and remove deficiencies before applying to DAVP for inclusion in the media list and also to maintain the standards to continue to be in the list.

Action Taken

Adequate steps have been taken to inform the newspapers/periodicals about the requirements as laid down in the Government's Advertising Policy. Thus, all newspapers/periodicals borne on DAVP's media list as also the fresh applicants are provided with copies of the Advertising Policy. As an additional measure, it is proposed to advertise the contents of the Policy by placing suitable insertions in newspapers in about December every year.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5|3|79-MOC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 3 (Para 2.11)

According to the Ministry, the media list is not published at present, but there is nothing secret about it. The publication of the list, the Ministry feel, might create more problems than it might

solve. The Committee feel that it should suffice if the media list as amended from time to time is kept in the office of DAVP to be made available to newspapers/periodicals for reference purposes.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. The Media List would be kept in the Office with the Deputy Director (Advertising), where it could be consulted by accredited representatives of newspapers|periodicals.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5|3|79-MOC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 4 (Para 2.39)

The Committee note that one of the conditions laid down in the new advertising policy is that the newspapers|periodicals to be eligible for Government's advertisement should have a minimum paid circulation of not less than 2000, with a few exceptions, and it should have uninterrupted and regular publication for a period of not less than one year. The regularity of publication of newspapers journals other than daily newspapers is checked by physical verification by DAVP; but in the case of daily newspapers DAVP has no machinery of its own to verify the regularity of publication and it depends, for this purpose, on the certificates of Chartered Accountants|Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC). The Committee notice that the Registrar of Newspapers for India who has a statutory duty in this regard also does not have an adequate machinery or arrangement to check the regularity of publication of newspapers etc. Press Information Bureau who is under mutual arrangement responsible to furnish certificates of regularity of publication of newspapers in languages other than English, Hindi, Urdu, Sindhi does not furnish such certificates to the Press Registrar regularly.

The Committee would like that a regular system of checking the regularity of publication of newspapers etc., should be evolved and the responsibility for checking the regularity of publication of daily newspapers may be categorically placed on RNI and PIB and their areas of responsibility clearly and precisely defined and arrangements made to ensure that each agency discharges its responsibility promptly and furnishes the necessary certificates to the DAVP|RNI at regular intervals.

Action Taken

Regularity of publication during the six months preceding a contract year is one of the prerequisites for release of advertisements in a newspaper|periodical. This is verified physically as all newspapers|periodicals, barring a few big newspapers, are required

to furnish copies of their issues during the past six months before rate contract is finalised with them.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5|3|79-MOC dated 29-11-1979]

Further information asked for

The Committee had recommended that a regular system of checking the regularity of publication of newspapers etc. should be evolved and the responsibility for checking the regularity of publication of daily newspapers may be categorically placed on RNI and PIB and their areas of responsibility clearly and precisely defined and arrangements made to ensure that each agency discharges its responsibility promptly and furnish the necessary certificates to the DAVP|RNI at regular intervals.

Please state the specific action taken in this regard.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 29|2|1|EC|79 dated the 13th February, 1980]

Further reply of Government

Though the necessity of a system to check the regularity of publication has always been felt by the Government, it has not been found practically possible to do so. However, the Advertising Policy has an in-built safety valve to check the regularity of publications in that while deciding the eligibility of a publication for receiving Government advertisements, the regularity of publication is physically verified by checking consecutive issues for the preceding period (specified in Advertising Policy). The panel is revised every year. Further, if on checking the certificate of the Chartered Accountant is found incorrect, the release of Government advertisements is stopped besides taking other actions deemed fit by the Government. For this, the Government, through the circulation teams of RNI, conduct random checks.

[Ministry of Information & Broadcasting O.M. No. 5|3|79-MUC, dated the 18th February, 1981]

Recommendation Sl. No. 5 (Para 2.40)

The Committee also note that DAVP does not have any machinery to check the correctness of circulation figures certified by Chartered Accountants of Audit Bureau of Circulation. Under the advertising policy, for big and medium newspapers|periodicals, the circulation is acceptable on the basis of certificates from a professional and reputed body or institution and in the case of small newspapers|periodicals the circulation figures are required to be certified by registered Chartered Accountants. According to the

Fact Finding Committee on Newspapers Economics (1975) the circulation figures of newspapers were often found inflated by the publishers of the newspapers to attract advertisements. The Registrar of Newspapers for India also assesses the circulation of various newspapers from time to time on his own or on reference received from the DAVP for the purposes of cross check. But even the RNI, according to his own admission, does not have adequate machinery to verify the circulation figures. It is seen that out of 14531 newspapers|periodicals on the records of RNI at the end of year 1977, RNI verified the circulation figures of only 799 papers in 1975, 888 papers in 1976 and 483 papers in 1977. The RNI discovered that in the case of 120 newspapers, etc. in 1975, 106 in 1976 and 25 in 1977 the circulation figures certified by the Audit Bureau of Circulation or Chartered Accountant were found to be higher. In view of this the Committee feel that the DAVP should not depend merely on the certification of Audit Bureau of Circulation or Chartered Accountants. As there are only 1236 newspapers|periodicals on the approved media list of DAVP (1978) and the RNI appear to have machinery to verify circulation figures of 800—900 newspapers|periodicals every year, the Committee see no difficulty in RNI being charged with the responsibility of verifying the circulation figures of all or most of the newspapers etc. on the media list of the DAVP every year on priority basis. The Committee suggest that a separate cell may be created in RNI under a sufficiently senior officer with audit background for conducting the verification of circulation figures of newspapers and periodicals.

Action Taken

Recommendation is accepted. Verification of circulation figures is made by RNI to the extent possible. Till such time as RNI develops the capacity to carry out hundred per cent verification and that too at short notice Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity will have to depend on the certification of circulation of newspapers|periodicals by ABC and Chartered Accountants.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5|3|79-MUC dt. 20-8-1980]

Recommendation Sl. No. 6 (Para 2.41)

The Committee are concerned to note that in a good number of cases the circulation figures certified by the Audit Bureau of Circulation and the Chartered Accountants were not found correct. They would suggest that all such cases should be pointedly brought to the notice of the Executive Body of Audit Bureau of Circulation and the Institute of Chartered Accountants and they should be asked to take suitable action in the matter.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5|3|79-MOC dated 29-11-1979]

Further information asked for

The Committee had recommended that the cases where the circulation figures certified by the Audit Bureau of Circulation and Chartered Accountants were not found correct should be brought to the notice of the executive body of the Audit Bureau of Circulation and the Institute of Chartered Accountants and they should be asked to take suitable action.

Please state the steps taken in pursuance of the Committee's recommendations.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 29|2|1|EC|79, dated 13th Feb., 1980]

Further reply of Government

The circulation figures of some 600 newspapers are checked every year by the Government. These figures are compared with the certificate of the Chartered Accountant filed by the Publisher. Cases noticed so far were of a marginal difference in figures and, therefore, it was not considered necessary to point this out to the Audit Bureau of Circulation or to the Institute of Chartered Accountants. However, as and when, a major discrepancy is noticed, this shall be reported to the concerned Executive Body of the Audit Bureau of Circulation|Institute of Chartered Accountants for taking suitable action.

[Ministry of Information and Broadcasting O.M. No. 5|3|79-MUC, dated the 18th February, 1981]

Recommendation Sl. No. 7 (Para 2.42)

The Committee find that contrary to guidelines laid down in the advertising policy that for big and medium newspapers/periodicals the circulation should be acceptable on the basis of certificates from a professional and reputed body or institution, the DAVP has, in the case of 5 big and 68 medium newspapers, accepted the certificates of circulation issued by Chartered Accountants and has not insisted on production of certificates from a professional body like Audit Bureau of Circulation. This is not proper. The Committee would like that in the case of such big and medium newspapers as are unable to produce certificates from a professional body like ABC, DAVP should have a cross-check made through RNI on a priority basis before accepting the circulation figures of such newspapers.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted in principle. However, the claim certified by Chartered Accountants in such cases will be accepted subject to verification by RNI within a reasonable time. It would not be practicable to hold up release of advertisement to a particular newspaper till RNI is in a position to verify its circulation.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29-11-1979].

Recommendation Sl. No. 8 (Paras 2.52 and 2.53)

The Committee note that the new advertising policy (November, 1977) provides that political affiliations of newspapers/periodicals will not be taken into account in placing Government advertisements and Government advertisements will not be intended to be a measure of financial assistance. They find that the advertising policy in force prior to April, 1977, also contained similar provisions. But in spite of that during the Emergency, as pointed out by the Shah Commission, "contrary to the policy enunciated by Government on the floor of the Parliament political considerations were taken into account while releasing advertisements" and that "Government during this period utilised its advertising policy as a source of financial assistance or denial of financial assistance to newspapers etc."

The Committee cannot over emphasize the fact that the primary objective of Government advertising should be to secure the widest possible publicity coverage and the Government advertisements should not be released or denied on political or financial considerations. What is vital is that these norms should be scrupulously followed in letter and spirit in actual practice and newspapers etc., should be selected for the release of Government advertisements only on merits and not for political patronage. In order to guard against any covert or overt attempt to deviate from these wholesome norms in future, the Committee would like, that if any newspaper/periodical is ever removed from the approved media list of DAVP on any ground, its name together with reasons for removing it from the list should be published in the Annual Report of the Ministry for the information of Parliament.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted.

It may, however, be emphasised that the Advertising Policy lays down rigid criteria for selection of newspapers for release of advertisements. These are strictly followed and there is no scope to with-

hold advertisements from any newspapers on political or other extraneous considerations.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29-11-1979].

Recommendation Sl. No. 9 (Para 2.54)

The Committee note that during Emergency, newspapers were excluded from the media list on "oral" instructions from the Minister of Information and Broadcasting or the Ministry. This should never happen. Having set up a professional body like DAVP and having laid down a comprehensive advertising policy for the guidance of the DAVP, the Committee see no justification why the Ministry should pressurise the DAVP, and that too covertly, into favouring or punishing individual newspapers. The Committee strongly recommend that the Ministry should not issue "oral" instructions to the DAVP in regard to matters falling within the latter's jurisdiction and DAVP should not act on such "oral" instructions, if ever issued, unless these are confirmed in writing.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted in principle. There are, however, already standing instructions on communication of "oral" instructions required to be observed in all Government Departments alike. These instructions make it necessary to confirm in writing the "oral" instructions given to government servants.

There would, therefore, not arise any need to lay down separate guidelines for DAVP.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29-11-1979].

Recommendation Sl. No. 10 (Para 2.55)

The Committee note that during the Emergency the DAVP released advertisements to souvenirs at exorbitant rates as a result of which expenditure on souvenirs went up from Rs. 1.94 lakhs in 1974-75 to Rs. 5.48 lakhs in 1975-76 and Rs. 5.60 lakhs in 1976-77. The new advertising policy, however, provides that 'House magazines and souvenirs shall be excluded' for placing Government advertisements. This is a step in the right direction and the committee hope that the DAVP will follow this guideline in letter and spirit while releasing advertisements.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. The provisions contained in the Advertising Policy are strictly followed.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29-11-1979].

Recommendation Sl. No. 15 (Para 2.89 and 2.90)

The Committee note that while there is general appreciation of the need to encourage small and medium newspapers, opinion is divided on the method of encouraging and assisting them. A section supports weightage in allocation of space for language newspapers of small and medium circulation as, "they reach the masses of the people and their per copy readership is generally larger than the high-brow readership of English papers." Another section feels that "advertising policy is not an appropriate vehicle to channelise assistance to small and medium newspapers". Instead of giving them subsidy direct or indirect through Government advertisements, it has been suggested that small papers should be given "encouragement of lasting value by means of loans for technical inputs, consultancy services on better management and improvement of editorial skills and so on."

The Committee feel that, as the primary objective of Government advertising is to secure "the widest possible publicity or coverage" and not to render "financial assistance to newspapers, selection of newspapers etc. for publication of Government advertisements should be made with the aforesaid objective of securing the widest possible publicity coverage" and not for any other consideration. Where the underlying objective of achieving widest publicity for Government campaigns or other advertisements can be achieved through newspapers of any of the three categories (small, medium or big) consideration should be given to small and medium newspapers.

Action Taken

There is no contradiction in the primary objective of Government advertising which is to secure "the widest possible publicity coverage" and weightage and consideration being given to small and medium newspapers. In advertising we are not guided primarily by the need to encourage small and medium newspapers but, taking the realities of the situation, it has to be recognised that there should be some weightage and consideration to the small and medium papers which would otherwise be forced out of existence by the groups and chains which control the big papers, many of whom have the backing of big business houses. Even small and medium papers, with whatever clientele they have, serve a stated section of the readership and use of papers does ensure that the message reaches these section.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29-11-1979].

Recommendation (Sl. No. 16, Paragraph 2.91)

The Committee are of the opinion that small and medium newspapers, particularly language newspapers, have an important role to play and are the most effective media of publicity for certain

types of Government campaigns (like family welfare, fertilisers) etc. But the selection of small and medium newspapers should be made on their suitability and capacity to carry the message to the target audiences and not simply because they are small or medium, otherwise the real purpose of advertisement will be lost and the Government advertisement would become an instrument of financial assistance in the hands of officers of D.A.V.P. which is liable to be misused.

Action Taken

The Committee's observations have been noted and are, in fact, being borne in mind. The small and medium papers are chosen, for release of advertisements not because they are small and medium but because they also serve a sizable section of the newspaper readership. Advertisements are not treated as a measure of financial assistance and the selection of newspapers is made to serve the large audience.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29-11-1979.]

Recommendation No. 18 (Paragraph No. 2.94)

The Committee are not satisfied with the arguments advanced by the Ministry for assuming powers under the Advertising Policy to give weightage or consideration to any other category of papers which Government may consider appropriate for special and bona-fide reasons. Needless to say, such wide discretionary powers in the hands of officers are liable to be misused to show favours to newspapers in the matter of release of Government advertisements and grant of higher rates. The Committee suggest that the Advertising Policy should clearly specify all the categories of newspapers/periodicals to whom weightage is intended to be given and should not leave any scope for misuse of powers of grant of weightage which is inherent in the aforesaid provision of the Policy.

Action Taken

The earlier Advertising Policy has since been revised by the Government and a new policy made effective from 1st October, 1980. The Policy is clear and specific and no loopholes have been left. The categories of newspapers and the exact quantum of weightage to be given keeping in view the Government's declared policy of encouraging the growth of small, medium and language newspapers have been laid down and there is absolutely no scope of discretion with the authorities. Thus the present policy does not leave any scope for misuse of power.

[Ministry of Information and Broadcasting O.M. No. 5/3/79-
(MUC dated the 26th February, 1981.)]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 19, Paras 2.102 & 2.103)

The Committee note that the amount of expenditure on advertisements issued to English newspapers was higher than that on advertisements published in any other language group of papers and accounted for more than one third of the total advertisements outlay (36.76 per cent) of the D.A.V.P. during 1976-77. Even the number of "Insertions" in English newspapers was more (27.81 per cent) than that in any other language group of papers. Explaining the reasons for the English newspapers getting more share of advertisements in terms of money and insertions, the Ministry have stated that, this is due, among other things, to more classified advertisements like tender notices, recruitment notices, being published in the English newspapers because of their wide circulation in metropolitan and urban areas and higher rates. The Committee are informed by an unofficial expert in newspapers economics that full or half page advertisements on agricultural insecticides and irrigation purposes had been published in top class English newspapers and such insertions according to him were "merely a waste". This is borne out by the case study made by the Committee (para 2.109—1.110) in regard to the issue of an advertisement on "use of fertilisers".

The Committee strongly feel that bias in favour of English newspapers, just because they have wider circulation in metropolitan areas, should cease and advertisement which are not intended or useful for English readership should not be published in English newspapers. Recognising the growing importance of Indian languages, it will be in the fitness of things if the language newspapers get their due Share of Govt.'s advertisements as a matter of course. The Committee recommend that clear guidelines should be laid down in regard to the types of advertisements which should be issued to English newspapers and those which should go to language newspapers.

Action Taken

We accept the approach of the Committee and there has been a continuous and conscious effort to make the maximum possible use of the Indian language papers and reduce the use of the English papers, consistent with the needs of publicity. In actual practice it becomes difficult to reduce the use of the English papers because many classified advertisements of Government Departments like employment notices for highly skilled jobs or purchase of sophisticated machinery and equipment have to be addressed to the pro-

per target audiences only through the English press. Since the DAVP's advertising budget is dominated by classified advertisements (about 67 per cent of the total) the share of the English papers correspondingly becomes larger. Unless, therefore, the total advertisements budget is so stepped up as to make the display component predominant, the share of the English papers cannot be substantially reduced. All the same, messages of family planning, savings, prohibition, communal harmony, untouchability and similar educative campaigns are predominantly placed with the Indian language press. It may not, however, be possible to strictly segregate the types of advertisements which should or should not go to English papers.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov, 1979.]

Further information asked for

The Committee had recommended that clear guidelines should be laid down in regard to the types of advertisements which should be issued to English newspapers and those which should go to language papers. Please state whether these guidelines have been issued. If so, a copy of the instructions may be furnished.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 29/2/1EC/79, dated 13th Feb, 1980.]

Further reply of Government

Practically it is not possible to precisely demarcate among various advertisements, their suitability either for English or language papers. However, Advertising Policy in force (copy enclosed) contains the broad guidelines for selecting newspapers/periodicals. It lays emphasis on the use of small and medium newspapers, the bulk of which belong to Indian language category. English newspapers/periodicals falling in these categories have an equal claim on Government patronage. Another provision of the current Advertising Policy giving parity of rates between English and language papers having comparable circulation has further improved the position of language papers *vis-a-vis* English newspapers, in monetary terms.

[Ministry of Information and Broadcasting O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC, dated the 18th February, 1981]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 20, Para 2.104)

As far back as 1962 the Estimates Committee in their 158th Report had suggested that, in order to allay any misgiving on the part of the public or the Press about distribution of advertisements,

the Ministry might include details regarding the number of papers used for advertising, the space consumed and the expenditure incurred (language-wise) for classified and display advertisements separately in their Annual Report. The Committee are unhappy to note that although the recommendation was accepted by Government, the required information is not being shown in the Annual Report of the Ministry. The Committee desire that the reasons for not implementing the accepted recommendation should be investigated and necessary steps taken to include this information in the Annual Reports of the Ministry regularly in the future.

Action Taken

The omission to publish details regarding the numbers of papers used for advertising, the space consumed etc. in the Annual Report on some occasions is regretted. The recommendation has now been noted for strict compliance. In fact, in the Annual Report for the year 1978-79, the required information has been given.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC, dated 29th Nov., 1979]

Recommendation S. No. 21 (Para 2.116)

The Advertising Policy provides that in selecting newspapers in placing advertisements, one of the considerations should be to reach the specific sections of the people, depending upon the message of advertisement. It has been brought to the notice of the Committee that in a number of cases, selection of newspapers for release of Government's advertisements had not been made in accordance with the aforesaid basic consideration. The advertisement relating to "use of fertilizers", which one would expect to be published in papers having rural readership was strangely enough published in as many as 12 English newspapers (out of 35 newspapers used for this campaign) and over 70 per cent of the expenditure on this advertisement was on papers from metropolitan towns. This clearly shows that the system of selection of newspapers for release of Government's advertisements by D.A.V.P. leaves much to be desired.

Action Taken

The recommendation has been noted. In the case of 'fertilizers' advertisement, it was, however, brought to the notice of the Committee during oral evidence that the particular advertisement related to the lifting of fertilizer stocks by traders and the message was accordingly directed to stockists more than the farmers. This made it necessary to adequately cover the urban centres where stockists are predominantly located.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 6 (Para 2 119)

The Committee note that there are no guidelines laid down either by the Ministry or by D.A.V.P. in regard to selection of newspapers for the various types of Government's advertisements. The Committee would like that comprehensive guidelines should be laid down by D.A.V.P. for the benefit of its officers so that they do not select newspapers for release of Government's advertisements on an *ad-hoc* basis or at random but do so, as specified in the advertising policy, in a systematic manner to reach the target audience.

Action Taken

It is reiterated that advertisements are not released on *ad-hoc* basis or at random. Selection of newspapers for a particular campaign is made in a systematic manner determined by the nature of the message target audience and availability of funds.

Further information asked for

The Committee had recommended that comprehensive guidelines should be laid down by D.A.V.P. regarding selection of Newspapers for various types of Government advertisements. Please state whether these guidelines have been laid down by the Government. If so, a copy of the guidelines may be furnished.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 29-/2/1/EC-79 dated 13th February, 1980].

Further reply of Government

Practically it is not possible to precisely demarcate among various advertisements, their suitability either for English or language papers. However, Advertising Policy in force (copy enclosed) contains the broad guidelines for selecting newspapers/periodicals. It lays emphasis on the use of small and medium newspapers, the bulk of which belong to Indian language category. Another provision of the current Advertising Policy giving parity of rates between English and language papers having comparable circulation has further improved the position of language papers *viz-aviz* English newspapers in monetary terms. In other words, adequate guidelines have been laid down for the selection of newspapers for release of Government advertisements.

[Ministry of Information and Broadcasting O.M. No. 5/3/79-
MUC, dated 18-2-1981].

Recommendation Sl. No. 22 (Para 2.120)

The Committee regret to note that even though they had made a recommendation as far back as in 1962, in their 158th Report, that readership survey of newspapers used for Government's advertisements should be arranged to be carried out by D.A.V.P., no such survey has been carried out so far. It is only recently that a readership survey has been entrusted to the Indian Institute of Mass Communication which is carrying out a sample survey in the States of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Kerala only. Its report was expected to be received by the end of 1978. The Committee are of the view that no advertising agency, much less than D.A.V.P. can do justice to the task of selecting newspapers for any publicity campaign on behalf of its clients without having full knowledge about the reach and class of readership of the newspapers on the media list. The Committee hope that, in the interest of planning better and more systematic publicity campaigns, D.A.V.P. will make full use of the results of readership survey being carried out by the aforesaid Institute in drawing up the media list for release of Government advertisements. They would also like that after the report of survey being made in the States of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Kerala is received and evaluated, the Ministry should have similar surveys made in other States also. The Committee hope that the readership surveys will be scientific and comprehensive and Government would give the Institute adequate support.

Action Taken

The recommendation has been noted. Extension of similar survey to other States will, however, be determined by the availability of funds.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 23 (Para 2.121)

The Committee are informed that the selection of the newspapers for the release of advertisement on "use of fertilizers" was based on the discussion held with the client Ministry. In the opinion of the Committee, D.A.V.P. being an expert and professional organisation in this field, it should not take orders in the matter of selection of newspapers for release of advertisements from the client Ministries/Departments who may not have adequate knowledge about the reach or readership of various newspapers. The client Ministries should be asked to indicate the target audience or areas whom they would like their advertisements to reach. The actual selection of newspapers for each advertisement should be made by D.A.V.P. in the light of target audience and areas indicated by the advertisers

and in doing so it should be guided solely by its own professional skill and experience and seek to get the widest publicity within the allotted funds and the best value for the public money.

Action Taken

We are in full agreement with the Committee's recommendation and are bringing this to the notice of Central Government Ministries and Departments.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 26 (Para 2.131)

The Committee are informed that whereas, by and large the Ministry are following the advertisement policy approved by Government of India in regard to publication of Government advertisements, "Special consideration" is given to the recommendation of the U.P.S.C. because of its constitutional status and functions regarding coverage of U.P.S.C. advertisements in special areas/languages. According to the procedure, settled by U.P.S.C., it is seen that if and when any changes are required to be made in the media list for U.P.S.C. advertisements, these are to be made by D.A.V.P. after consultation with the Commission. The Committee find that the UPSC has been recommending names of individual newspapers for inclusion in the media list for its advertisements. From its letter dated 4th March, 1978, addressed by Secretary, UPSC to Director, Advertising and Visual Publicity, it appears, that, at the meeting held with DAVP on 20 January, 1978, the Commission, desired three Urdu dailies from Patna to be included in the media list for UPSC advertisements. The Committee find that these three papers do not find a place even in the main media list drawn up by DAVP in accordance with norms laid down in Advertising Policy. The Commission had asked the DAVP to indicate the circumstances in which these three papers were not included in the media list for UPSC advertisements. The Committee feel that it will be in the fitness of things if instead of suggesting names of individual newspapers for inclusion in the media list, which course is fraught with the risk of including even such papers in the media list—as may not even qualify for inclusion in the general media list of DAVP (as is borne out by the aforesaid example) the UPSC identifies the areas which in its opinion are not covered adequately by the existing media list and thereafter leaves it to the professional expertise of DAVP to suggest suitable newspapers for inclusion in the list. This will be in consonance with the procedure suggested by the Committee for selection of newspapers for any campaign or advertisement by DAVP on behalf of other Ministries and Departments (Para 2.121).

Action Taken

Not all newspapers which qualify as per requirements of advertising policy are on the U.P.S.C. media list. Depending on the audience to be reached and the funds available a selective list is drawn up which is reviewed periodically in consultation with U.P.S.C. while considering the suggestions made by U.P.S.C. in regard to the use of newspapers, care is taken not to include newspapers, in the U.P.S.C. list if they are not otherwise eligible.

[Min. of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 20-8-1980].

Recommendation Sl. No. 27 (Para 2.138)

The Committee are glad to learn that on occasions of national calamities or whenever it was necessary for a national cause, newspapers have displayed a high sense of patriotism and have published 'social or national purpose' advertisements free of charge and they are agreeable to the suggestion to publish such advertisements in the future also. In order that the generous response of newspapers in this regard is channelised and availed of systematically, the Committee suggest that the Ministry should, in consultation with the representative associations of newspapers, define the broad parameters of 'social or national purpose' advertisements and determine the frequency of and space for such advertisements and other modalities to give effect to this commendable suggestion. Such campaigns should be organised with the voluntary cooperation of newspapers.

Action Taken

It would not be necessary to define any broad parameters of any social or national purpose. The experience has shown that when the occasion demands newspapers have volunteered to publish appropriate messages free of cost. In these matters it is helpful to rely on the sense of social conscience of the press.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Further information asked for

The Ministry have stated that experience has shown that when the occasion demands, newspapers have volunteered to publish appropriate messages (social purpose advertisements) free of cost. Please state whether social purpose advertisements were published in newspapers free of cost during the last three years (1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80) and if so, on how many occasions and in how many papers.

[L.S.S., O.M. No. 29/2/1/EC-79 dated 13th February, 1980].

Further reply of Government

During 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80 the publication of advertisements free of charge was made on the following occasions. The number of papers used is shown against each:—

Year	Occasion cause	No. of papers donating space
1977-78 .	Teacher's Day	144
1978-79 .	Teacher's Day Flood Relief	171 1150
1979-80 .	Teacher's Day	24

[Ministry of Information and Broadcasting O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC, dated 18-2-1981].

Recommendation Sl. No. 29 (Para 3.24)

The Committee note that the rate structure which was introduced with effect from February, 1977, (since replaced) gave wide powers to the Ministry to give patronage to those newspapers which supported the Government. The Committee are glad to note that the flaw in that rate structure was removed and the new rate structure brought into force with effect from May, 1977, does not give any discretionary power to the Ministry or the D.A.V.P. to discriminate for or against any newspaper on political grounds. The Committee stress that even in future, before making any changes in the rate structure, if and when necessary, it should be ensured that the rate structure lays down only uniform criteria applicable to all newspapers regardless of political affiliation and that it does not vest any discretion in any executive officer to raise or reduce advertisement rates on political or other extraneous considerations.

Action Taken

The recommendation has been noted for strict compliance.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 30 (Para 3.25)

The Committee are informed by the Ministry that advertisement rates of seven newspapers were increased in February, 1977 under instructions from the then Minister of Information and Broadcasting.

The Committee feel that it was not proper. The Ministry should issue clear policy guidelines for the benefit of D.A.V.P. and leave the question of fixation of rates of individual newspapers to be dealt with by the Director of Advertising and Visual Publicity in the light of the guidelines. The Ministry should take cognizance of the matter only if there is any complaint of discrimination or favouritism.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. It may, however, be clarified that the rates allowed to individual newspapers by the D.A.V.P. are not "fixed" but are "offered" for acceptance or otherwise of the newspaper concerned.

The guidelines on the basis of which the advertisement rate is offered to individual newspapers are contained in the Rate-Structure formulated for the purpose on scientific and rational grounds. D.A.V.P. offer the rates on the basis of these guidelines and the Ministry reviews the cases only where individual newspapers represent against the rate offered by D.A.V.P.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 31 (Para 3.38 and 3.39)

The Committee note that the Fact Finding Committee on Newspaper Economics had observed that the rates offered by the Government should be non-discriminatory and there is no reason why a Government advertisement issued in an Indian language paper should earn less for the paper than is earned by same advertisement appearing in an English language paper with the same level of circulation. The Ministry had informed the Public Accounts Committee (50th Report, 1977), that no "discrimination in the rates of advertisements is made on the ground of language of the paper/periodicals". But in spite of this assurance the fact remains that the advertisement rates paid to Indian language newspapers are lower than those paid to English newspapers with comparable circulation. Explaining the reasons for giving lower rates to Indian language newspaper, the Ministry have stated that "the cost of production of language papers is less as compared to English newspapers. Language newspapers themselves charge lower commercial rates than their counterparts in English". The Committee are not convinced by the argument advanced by the Ministry in justification of giving lower rates to language newspapers. It is a matter of common knowledge that they ask for lower rates because they know higher rates will not be accepted and they have no other option to accept lower

rates for advertisement without which they cannot subsist even if these be at lower rates. The Committee are also not convinced by the argument advanced by the Chief Cost Accounts Officer of the Ministry of Finance that introduction of parity between rates of English and language newspapers "would create another problem for the Government to tackle" in the sense that "bulk of the benefit will only go to (big groups of) newspapers which are already making large profit" and "therefore the real benefit will not go to the small newspapers group.....". This, in the opinion of the Committee, is not much of a problem as it can and should be ensured at the state of selection of media list for any campaign that large groups of papers do not monopolise allocation of Government advertisements to the detriment of small and medium papers.

The Committee feel that a time has come when instead of justifying perpetuation, even in the changed circumstances, of the practice of inequality of rates on the ground of lower production costs, Government should view this question from a larger angle of encouraging the growth of national languages newspapers and end rate discrimination against them to help them come at par with the English press in the matter of production standards. The Committee are aware that Government have decided to give them 15 per cent weightage in rates over and above the economic rate worked out under the new rate structure but this seemingly generous step has gone far enough to give them even their commercial rates, in all cases, let alone matching rates with the English newspapers. The Committee strongly urge the Government to take hold initiative of undo this wrong to the language press at the earliest. While introducing parity of rates, it may be ensured that where the same advertisement is published in both English and language newspapers and where the translated version of advertisement in language paper occupies more space than the English version, the amount payable for the advertisement published in a language paper does not exceed that for the same advertisement in an English newspaper with similar circulation and standard.

Action Taken

A Committee was constituted by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to review the provisions of Advertising Policy and other concerned issues including parity of rates between English and language newspapers. The Committee submitted its recommendations in July, 1980 which were accepted by the Ministry with certain modifications. The new Advertising Policy was announced by the

Minister of Information and Broadcasting on September, 1980 in a Press Conference and was made operative from October 1, 1980. The new policy *inter alia* provides for achieving the parity of rates between English and language newspapers. Notwithstanding this, the rates of language newspapers/periodicals upto a circulation of 10,000 copies which as per the Rate Structure were slightly more than the English newspapers/periodicals for the same circulation have been kept as they were and have not been reduced to bring at par with the English newspapers. To achieve parity of rates for language newspapers having circulation above 10,000 copies, the weightage has been given or the existing weightage increased for the language papers to bring their rates at par with the rates of English newspapers.

As regards second part of the recommendation at para 3.39 (*i.e.* same amount may be paid for the same space consumed in advertisement published whether in English newspapers in language newspapers) has not been found capable of implementation (except in the case of display advertisements) as the language papers do occupy larger space in the same advertisement matter as compared to English newspapers.

[Min. of I. & B., O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 20-8-1980].

Comments of the Committee

Please see Paras 1.12 to 1.15 of Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 32 (Para 3.42)

The Committee find that although the rates are normally required to be finalised within a period of three months, in 15 per cent of the cases the advertisement rates effective from May 1, 1977, were not finalised even till June, 1978. The delay in the approval of the rates has been attributed to the fact that the new rate structure was ready only in December, 1977. They hope that, as assured, all the rates for 1978-79 have been finalised by now. The Committee desire that it should be ensured that the applications for revision of rate are disposed of within the prescribed period of three months and rates applicable during the ensuring financial year settled well before the commencement of the year. The Committee would like that in case the D.A.V.P. is unable to finalise the advertisement rates of any newspaper within the prescribed period of 3 months, it should apprise the paper of the reasons for delay at the earliest.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. Every effort is being made to settle the rates and communicate them to the newspapers in time subject to submission of media particulars and other relevant data by the newspaper concerned.

[Ministry of I. & B. O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 33 (Para 3.50)

The Committee note that there have been delays in making payments of bills by DAVP. Although, according to DAVP, the payment is generally made in 60 days, as on 1 June, 1978, there were 216 bills for Rs. 89,647 pending for more than two months, 44 of which are pending for over six months. Certain corrective measures are stated to have been taken by the Directorate to improve the position. The Committee suggest that periodically, say, once a month, all cases which payment of bills is not made within the period of two months should be reviewed by the Director, DAVP, so that the bottlenecks, if any, in making payment of bills could be identified and remedial measures taken at higher level to overcome them.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. The position regarding payment of bills for advertisements is being kept under continuous review and procedures are being improved to achieve speedy disposal of the bills. Consequently, the position has improved. Only where the bill preferred by the newspaper are incomplete, the payment gets held up for obvious reasons.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-77-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 34 (Para 3.51)

The Committee would like that in case of delay for more than the normal period of 60 days, the reason for delay should be communicated to the newspaper concerned so that the paper can also take such remedial steps not only in the case of bills pending at that time but also for future to ensure expeditions payment.

The recommendation is accepted.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 35 (Paras 3.56 & 3.57)

The Committee find that there have been large number of cases in which the bills of newspapers for advertisements were rejected on the ground of late insertion of advertisements by newspapers. They note that the late publication of advertisements has been due to inadequate time allowed to newspapers to publish such advertisements. Though it is stated by the Ministry that there is time gap of 4-5 days for publication of an advertisement after its receipt by the paper, it is noticed that out of 54 cases in 1977-78 in which the bills of newspapers were rejected on this ground in 40 cases the time gap between the date of release order in DAVP's office and the date on which the advertisement was required to be published by the paper was less than 5 days. In 20 cases the time gap was 2 days or even less; these included cases of newspapers published from farflung places like Imphal and Jorhat. Such instances lead the Committee to the conclusion that the date of publication of an advertisement is indicated on the release order in a mechanical manner without caring to calculate whether the text of the advertisement would reach the newspapers in time for it to publish it in the issue of the specified date.

The Committee have been informed that certain remedial measures have been taken to give ample notice to the newspapers in respect of advertisements issued by DAVP. The Committee would like DAVP to review the entire system of release and despatch of advertisements so as to ensure that, in indicating the date of publication of an advertisement, a reasonable time-gap making due allowance for transit time is given between the date of release and the date of expected receipt of the advertisement in the newspapers office and that there is proper scheduling in the despatch of advertisements so that the advertisements intended for newspapers in far off areas are despatched first.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. The system followed in the DAVP, with modifications made recently, provides adequate time to newspapers for publication of advertisements. Every effort is made to allow to reasonable time gap and advertisements are despatched as soon as possible. In cases where the advertisements cannot be despatched to all the newspapers on the same day, advertisements to newspapers located at distant places are despatched first and proper scheduling is observed. Advertisements to newspapers in the Eastern Region are despatched by Air Mail.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 36 (Para 3.58)

The Committee emphasise that newspapers should be allowed adequate time to publish advertisements after their receipt and in the case of time bound advertisements, not only dead-lines for publishing these advertisements should be invariably indicated in the release order but it should also be ensured that these are released and despatched well in time.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted and is being followed.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 37 (Para 3.59)

The Committee would like that all those bills which have been rejected during 1977-78 or after on account of alleged late insertion of advertisements should be reviewed with a view to ensuring that no newspaper is penalised for late publication of advertisements for no fault on its part.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 39 (Para 4.18)

The Committee find that it was only after loopholes in the procedure had been pointed out by them during evidence that the procedure was revised and now references are required to be sent to a designated officer in Directorate of Printing by name and the Directorate of Printing is also required to send replies in all cases by name to a designated officer in DAVP. The Committee regret that the procedure in this regard was not reviewed by DAVP of its own accord even when it was known to DAVP that almost all the jobs (1196 out of 1213) during the last 3 years had gone to private printers. They would like the Ministry/DAVP to keep all such procedure under constant review and plug the loopholes as soon as these come to notice.

Action Taken

The recommendation has been noted for action.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 40 (Para 4.19)

The Committee would like to emphasise that practice of making a reference to Directorate of Printing should not be viewed as a mere formality but followed in all seriousness. Directorate of Printing should be given the prescribed time in every case to scrutinise the job and to send reply. A job may be entrusted to a private printer only after the Directorate of Printing intimates that it cannot take it up for execution in a Government Press within the time available. Both the Directorate being in Delhi, in case of delay in reply, it should not be difficult for DAVP to take up the matter at the highest level with the Directorate of Printing before concluding that the Government presses are unable to do the job.

Action Taken

Committee's observations have been noted. References are now made to the Directorate of Printing regularly and that Directorate is given the prescribed time for scrutinising each job for reply. Only after a negative reply is received from them, the job is entrusted to a private printer. A meeting has already been held with Directorate of Printing to streamline the procedure and monthly meeting will now be held regularly.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 41 (Para 4.20)

The Committee would like that all such jobs as are not accepted by Directorate of Printing for execution through Government presses should be brought to the notice of the Ministry of Works and Housing at periodical intervals for their review and for such remedial measures as may be considered necessary.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 43 (Para 4.22)

The Committee are informed that it has not been the practice of DAVP to approach State Governments for printing of material in regional languages through recently it has approached the Orissa Government for a job. The Committee would like the

DAVP to ascertain the ability and spare capacity in State Government's printing Presses to execute DAVP's jobs in regional languages and draw up a panel of available Presses for the purpose. They would suggest that if found feasible and time permits, the State Government's presses on the panel should also be consulted before awarding any regional language job to a private printer.

Action Taken

The recommendation has been noted. Efforts are being made to contact the State Governments to achieve the objective.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Sl. No. 44 (Para 4.25)

The Committee attach great importance to the quality of the publicity material printed and distributed by the DAVP. The Committee feel that the objective of carrying the message to the people through such material can be served only if not only the script but also the quality of printing and production is of high order. As the quality admittedly suffers if adequate time is not given by the client departments to DAVP for designing and printing, the Committee would like DAVP to impress upon all the departments concerned the need to give it due time for planning, designing and printing a job in the interest of better quality production and not to ask it to do the job in a rush. Except in a case of real urgency, DAVP should generally not agree to do a job under pressure in the interest of its own reputation.

Action Taken

DAVP continuously emphasises upon the client Ministry/Department the need for advance planning and adequate notice for designing and printing of their printed publicity jobs as well as for preparation of the script. This is done through direct contact and periodical meetings with the Departments concerned. It, however, is correct that the client Ministries/Departments do not always approach the DAVP in time to take up the printed publicity job. The recommendation of the Committee in this regard is being brought to the notice of the client Ministries/Departments.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUS dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 45, Paragraph 4.26)

The Committee note that the operational groups set up on an experimental basis to go into all aspects of production from planning stage to execution have been wound up as they did not serve

the purpose, and the system of internal group discussion between technical officers to ensure quality of production has been introduced. The Committee feel that unless a careful watch is kept at every stage of a job and unless a system of monitoring of the printed material by a panel of experts not directly connected with the production of the material is followed and lessons learnt from such monitoring DAVP may find it difficult to bring about any significant improvement in the quality of production of printed material. In the opinion of the Committee something more serious than mere "internal group discussions" is required to be done to ensure that material produced by DAVP is consistently of high standards.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. Efforts are being made to set up a small Planning Cell at the headquarters under the supervision of a senior officer to assist DAVP in planning and monitoring of printing programmes and for adoption of long term measures to improve quality and effect economies.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 47, Paragraph 4.33)

The Committee are not happy to note that there is delay of several months between the production of material in English, Hindi and the printing in regional languages. They have not been informed as to what extent the time-lag has been cut short by the shifting of type-setting unit in four regional languages from Madras to Delhi and other measures reported to have been taken. The Committee would like the problem to be studied by the Ministry/DAVP and ways and means found to ensure that material in regional languages is produced without any delay.

Action Taken

The time-lag between the production of material in English and Hindi and the printing of this material in the other languages arises due to several factors including time required in the translation of the English script the need to obtain quotations from presses in the regional centres, the necessity of producing additional blocks for the printing of the language editions. Under the DAVP's plan scheme for opening Regional Offices and setting up Units to supervise printing at State levels, efforts will be made to reduce the time-lag between the English and Hindi editions and other language editions.

[Ministry of I & O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 48, Paragraph 4.47)

The Committee find that the DAVP undertakes distribution of over 6 crore copies of various kinds of publicity material annually and at present, has a mailing list containing over 8 lakh addresses. It is, however, surprising that no review has ever been made by the DAVP to ascertain whether the material does in fact reach the target audience and is found to be useful by them. The Committee feel that the DAVP should not only draw up mailing list for each category of material keeping in view the target audience but it should also satisfy itself that the material is actually received by the addresses and they are interested in it. They, therefore, suggest that the DAVP may, through the suggestion card system, ascertain periodically from the persons/institutions concerned their reaction to the material sent to them and their suggestions to improve the quality or distribution of the material. DAVP should also try to find out through this system whether or not all those individuals/institutions who are on the mailing list for a particular category of publications, are still actively interested in receiving the publication and drop those names from the list which may not send any response to the enquiry. The Committee would also urge that if this system is to serve any useful purpose, there is need to take proper and prompt follow up action in the light of the reactions and suggestions of the readers.

Action Taken

The recommendation has been noted. It may be stated that the "suggestion card system" can be applied, only in a limited number of cases as it would otherwise generate a huge volume of work necessitating a large contingent of staff. Because of such limitations this "system" is sparingly used by all organisations engaged in production and publicity of informative material. The DAVP have, however, introduced "an inquiry promptor" in their pamphlets with a view to obtaining the reaction of the readers. Under this system the readers are invited to send their names and the names of their acquaintance who may be interested in getting informative material from the DAVP. Introduced only recently, the "Inquiry Prompter" has resulted in a good response from the readers, which provides some evidence to establish that the material despatched by DAVP is not only reaching the addresses but also many of them carefully peruse the material and are interested in continuous supply of the material. This has filled to some extent the communication gap that existed so long.

[Ministry of I & C.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 49, Paragraph 4.48)

The Committee note that another media unit of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, namely, the Directorate of Field Publicity, with its 221 mobile field Units, spread all over the country, is stated to be engaged in publicising the Government policies and programmes at the grass root level. Field units undertake tours of rural, semi-rural tribal and border areas and organise film shows, group discussions, seminars, exhibitions and song and drama programmes. The Committee consider that the services of Field Publicity Units can be utilised with advantage for the distribution of printed publicity material.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. As a matter of fact all the Field Publicity Units of Directorate of Field Publicity are on DAVP's mailing list. Not only pamphlets, booklets, leaflets, brochures and folders but also posters are despatched to these Units in bulk. In fact, these Units are among a very few categories of recipients which are given bulk supply, as the DAVP's entire system is essentially based on individual mailing. The Field Publicity Units display DAVP publicity material wherever they organise film shows or group meetings. This practice is also followed by the Field Exhibition Units of DAVP. At exhibitions organised by these Units, the printed publicity material is handed out to the public and also displayed.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79 MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979.]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 51, Paragraph 4.50)

The Committee are informed that updating and review of addresses on the mailing list is a continuous process and this task is undertaken for each category of addresses from time to time. It is seen that DAVP propose to increase the mailing list from 8 lakhs at present to 15 lakhs by 1983. The Committee are informed that this calls for strengthening of the organisation and a proposal to have a net work of field agencies in the Sixth Plan is under the consideration of the Ministry. The Committee would like that before opening new regional centres for distribution of publicity material, the Ministry should examine as to what extent the re-development of present distribution staff, re-organisation of the existing distribution machinery and streamlining of the existing procedure can meet the requirements of additional work load and also to what extent the service of the field officers of the Directorate

of Field Publicity can be utilised for distribution of publicity material.

Action Taken

For further streamlining of the working of the distribution, achieving the goal of 15 lakh addresses at the end of the Sixth Plan and for obtaining continuous feed back from the recipients so as to improve DAVP's distribution system, the position would be reviewed thoroughly. The creation of Regional Centres, as visualised under a proposed Plan Scheme of DAVP, would be a step in the right direction for achieving efficient distribution and fulfilling the goal of reaching the target audience.

The observations of the Committee would be kept in view while re-organising the existing distributing machinery.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 52, Paragraph 4.57)

The Committee note that the DAVP produces wall newspapers in English, Hindi and ten regional languages and it was proposed to publish it in other regional languages in the Sixth Plan. The expenditure sanctioned for the production of wall newspapers during 1977-78 was of the order of Rs. 2.66 lakhs. It is, however, surprising that even though the wall newspaper is being published for the last 8 years, no review has been made so far to determine whether this publication is fulfilling the objects for which it was started. The Committee feel that it is high time that a proper valuation is made of the pattern and impact of the wall newspapers on the target audience with a view to making improvements.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted, and an evaluation of the scheme would be undertaken.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 53, Paragraph 5.11 & 5.12)

The Committee note that one of the functions of DAVP is the release of classified as well as display advertisements to newspapers/periodicals on behalf of the Ministries and Departments of Government of India (except Railways) and their attached and subordinate offices. A view has been expressed before the Committee that

"DAVP should revert to the original role of being an advertiser's representative the advertiser in this instance being Government. It should cease to be an advertising agency because this service can be provided at much less expense to the Exchequer, by private agencies.", It has also been suggested that instead of centralising the release of advertisements in DAVP all commercial advertising emanating from Government should be left to be handled direct by the respective Departments. The Ministry have, however, pointed out that the DAVP provides this service at lesser cost to the client Ministries/Departments, as unlike private agencies. DAVP renders services like preparation of advertisement copy and art work free of cost. Further, as an advertising agency, it takes advantage of the commission that newspapers pay. After meeting its administrative expenses, there is net saving to the DAVP out of the commission it receives. The centralisation of advertising work in DAVP also enable Government to invest in required skills and professional expertise to produce works of quality. Individual Ministries would neither be able to afford nor would have the aptitude to do that.

11

The Committee feel that all Government advertisements should continue to be handled and processed by a Government organisation, as at present, and the services of private agencies need not be used for the purpose. They also feel that balance of advantage lies in centralising the work in an expert body like DAVP rather than leaving it to each Ministry/Department to deal with newspapers directly in the matter.

Action Taken

The recommendation is noted. DAVP handles the entire advertisement work of all Ministries/Departments of Government of India except that of Railways.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 55, Paragraphs 5.24 & 5.25)

The Committee find that another function entrusted to DAVP is accreditation of advertising agencies. The purpose of accreditation is to ensure technical competence, expertise and financial stability of the private advertising agencies which handle the publicity business of public undertakings, nationalised banks, statutory bodies, railways and autonomous corporations. It has been suggested to the Committee by some non-official organisations and experts that advertising agencies are already accredited with a Government recognised body, viz. Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society (IENS) and there is no usefulness or purpose of a further

accreditation by DAVP. It has also been suggested that public sector undertakings should be able to choose advertising agencies on their own. The Ministry have, however, pointed out that the accreditation by IENS is confined to their member advertising agencies where as the DAVP accreditation is aimed at ensuring professional standards and fair practices by all advertising agencies who deal with Central and State Governments as well as public undertakings.

The Committee feel that there is nothing wrong if the Government makes an independent evaluation of the technical competence and financial stability of private advertising agencies before allowing them to handle publicity business of public sector undertakings, Railways and autonomous corporations. Nor is there anything wrong if such an evaluation, which is what accreditation means, is required to be done by a Department like DAVP which has the necessary skill and expertise in this field. In fact the centralised procedure of accreditation, as at present, simplifies the task of advertising agencies in as much as they do not have to prove their credentials before each of the large number of public sector undertakings and other corporations but are accepted by them on the basis of the accreditation granted by the Central body.

Action Taken

The recommendation is noted.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 56. Paragraph 5.26)

The Committee feel that, as recommended by them in regard to drawing up of an approved media list of newspapers (para 2.10), in this case also, it will be better if instead of leaving the question of grant of accreditation to an advertising agency to an individual officer of DAVP, at present, the system is institutionalised and a Accreditation Council consisting of representatives of DAVP, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, user organisations (Railways, public sector undertakings etc.) and non-official experts is set up to consider the applications of the advertising agencies for accreditation.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted. A non-official may, however, not be included in the Council as any such person will be from the advertising field and there may be a clash of interests. The

Council could consist of DAVP and an officer each from Ministry of information and Broadcasting and Bureau of Public Enterprises.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 20th Aug., 1980]

Recommendation Sl. No. 57 (Para 5.31)

The Committee regret to note that although it is now more than two decades that the DAVP was established, so far no evaluation of advertising and other publicity work done by DAVP has been carried out on a regular basis. It has been receiving some information in the nature of feed back from its field exhibition units and from the field units of the Directorate of Field Publicity, but as admitted by the Ministry, all this is inadequate and does not represent in any manner a proper valuation of the effectiveness of DAVP's publicity. The Committee have been informed recently, at the instance of the Ministry, the Indian Institute of Mass Communication has conducted a survey of the reach and impact of DAVP advertisements in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and it is conducting similar study in Kerala. Some more studies are proposed to be entrusted to the aforesaid Institute. Further there is a scheme in the Rolling Plan for evaluation on a regular basis of the impact of the DAVP campaigns both departmentally and extra-departmentally by independent research organisations. The move to have the effectiveness of DAVP's publicity evaluated through an independent agency, though belated, is welcome. The Committee would like that such an evaluation of DAVP's publicity campaigns should be made on a regular basis and follow-up action to improve the reach and impact of the publicity campaign taken promptly in the light of the evaluation reports.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979]

Comments of the Committee

Please See Paras 1.25 to 1.27 of Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 61 (Para 5.57)

The Committee would also like to point out that as the importance of Radio and television is fast growing as powerful and popu-

plar media of advertisements, D.A.V.P. would do well to develop professional expertise to design and produce advertisements for these media

Action Taken

The recommendation is noted.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

The Advertising Policy of Government provides that "the primary objective of Government advertising is to secure the widest possible publicity coverage.... The Government advertisements are not intended to be a measure of financial assistance." After making this general statement, the Advertisement Policy also lays down that "in pursuance of broader social objectives of Government, however, weightage or consideration will be given" to small, medium, language, specialised, technical papers or papers being published specially in backward, remote or border areas. There is an obvious ambivalence in the Advertisement Policy of the Government inasmuch as the idea of "weightage or consideration" does not seem to harmonise with the primary objective of Government's advertisement which is stated to be "to secure the widest possible publicity coverage" and that Government's advertisement "are not intended to be a measure of financial assistance."

According to the Policy the "weightage or consideration" is sought to be given "in pursuance of broader social objectives of Government." Elaborating the "broader social objectives of Government", the Ministry have stated that the objectives are "to encourage the growth of healthy journalism which seeks to enlighten the people in all walks of life and the backward and remote areas." The Committee feel that this is too vague a description of "broader social objectives" as it does not indicate any relationship between "growth of healthy journalism" and release of Government advertisements.

Action Taken

There is no contradiction in the primary objective of Government advertising which is to secure "the widest possible publicity coverage" and weightage and consideration being given to small and medium newspapers. In advertising we are not guided primarily by the need to encourage small and medium newspapers but, taking the realities of the situation, it has to be recognised that there should be some weightage and consideration to the small and medium newspapers which would otherwise be forced out of existence by the

groups and chains which control the big papers, many of whom have the backing of big business houses. Even small and medium papers, with whatever clientele they have, serve a stated section of the readership and use of papers does ensure that the message reaches these section.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29th Nov., 1979.]

Recommendation

The Committee note that the Advertising Policy has specified the relaxations which are to be shown to small and language papers in the matter of release of Government advertisements. The minimum qualifying circulation figure in the case of certain small and language newspapers has been fixed at a much lower level than that for other papers and concessions have also been given in production standards to certain papers. The Committee note that besides giving the relaxations outlined in the Policy itself, a "built-in-weightage in the rate structure" has been provided to small, medium and language newspapers etc. While the Advertising Policy has recommended weightage or consideration to such papers in general terms, it has not indicated the exact nature and extend of weightage or consideration that should be given to them. Whether weightage should be in selection of newspapers for release of Government advertisement, or in the allocation of advertisement space or in the matter of rates is left to be determined by DAVP or the officers of the Ministry in their discretion. This, in the opinion of the Committee, is not advisable as such an unregulated discretion can lead to misuse and may not serve the underlying object.

In the light of what has been stated above the Committee feel that the Advertising Policy of the Government leaves many loopholes and contains ambiguous and conflicting statements. They recommend that the Policy should be spelt out in comprehensive and clear terms and the nature, extent and range of weightage laid down in precise language so as to guard against the possibility of any misinterpretation or distortion at implementation stage.

Action Taken

The Advertising Policy lays down the basis on which weightage is to be given to newspapers. This weightage is built into the Rate Structure on the basis of an arthmatical formula and is applied uniformly

As for the selection of newspapers, the advertising policy lays down the minimum circulation figures but not all newspapers thus qualifying would get Government advertisements. Placing of advertisements is guided by clause 4 of the policy. The Committee have not suggested any alternate method of selection of papers. A certain amount of discretion is in-built into any executive action and in the absence of suggestion of any alternative foolproof method by the Committee this will continue to be exercised by DAVP consistent with the provisions of the Advertising Policy.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 20th Aug., 1980]

Recommendation Sl. No. 23 (Para 2.130)

The Committee would like the Government to examine whether the purpose of giving adequate publicity to UPSC advertisements cannot be achieved economically and effectively as follows:—

- (i) Detailed versions of UPSC advertisements may be published only in Employment News (English) and its language editions. For this purpose the Employment News should be published in various regional languages and given wide publicity.
- (2) In other newspapers on the media list (as revised and reduced in the light of the Committee's recommendations in the preceding para), only an outline of each advertisement, which may contain names, number and pay scales of posts advertised, may be published alongwith a reference to the issue of the Employment News in which full details of posts appear.

Action Taken

U.P.S.C. advertisements can reach a wider audience only when these appear in newspapers of different languages. Publication of these advertisements in Employment News only will not provide an all-India coverage needed for wide-spread dissemination of U.P.S.C. vacancy notices. A journal like Employment News is only a supplement to other newspapers and perhaps cannot replace them completely with its present circulation and coverage.

At present Employment News is published only in three languages; Hindi, English and Urdu, and is being used to the maximum

extent possible. In fact, newspapers carry only an abridged version of the U.P.S.C. advertisements in a display advertisement form but are published in full in the Employment News.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 20th Aug., 1980]

Recommendation (Serial No. 46, Paragraph 4.32)

The Committee find that in order to reduce the time lag between the production of publicity material in English/Hindi and the South Indian languages, setting up of a type setting unit at Madras for the four South Indian languages was approved in 1973-74. It was, however, subsequently decided to move the type setting unit to Delhi. The unit has started functioning in Delhi only recently. The Committee are informed that now a proposal to decentralise the production of regional language version of publicity material produced by DAVP is under consideration of the Government. In the circumstances, the Committee wonder whether the earlier decision to shift the type setting unit to Delhi was taken after careful consideration of all the aspects. The Committee would like the Ministry to go into the merits of the original proposal to locate the type setting unit in Madras, its subsequent shifting to Delhi and the fresh proposal on decentralisation of this work and see that the location of regional language units is decided in the interest of expeditious production of material and high standard of printing in regional languages with the minimum of time lag and not on any extraneous considerations.

Action Taken

The decision to shift the type-setting unit from Madras to Delhi was taken after discussions at the appropriate level. This unit is now being fully utilised in Delhi for advertisement, exhibition, outdoor publicity and other connected jobs in the Directorate.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 20th Aug., 1980.]

Recommendation (Serial No. 50, Paragraph 4.49)

The Committee note with regret that there was a large increase in postal expenditure on sending publicity material during 1975-76 and 1976-77 as instead of sending it by ordinary post, resort to Air Mail despatch was made "as per instructions of the Ministry and" verbal instructions from the ex-Director resulting in phenomenal increase in postal expenditure from Rs. 1.35 lakhs in 1974-75. to Rs. 13.68 lakhs in 1976-77. The Committee desire that the Minis-

try may review the circumstances in which they instructed DAVP to despatch publicity material by air mail/freight in such a large quantity and see whether such a high expenditure on air mail/freight was at all justified. The Committee would like the Ministry to inform them of the reasons and circumstances necessitating despatch of material by air mail at such cost. They would like the Ministry to draw lessons from the past experience and lay down guidelines to ensure that utmost economy is exercised by DAVP in the matter.

Action Taken

Air-lifting of publicity material during the emergency was adversely noticed in the White Paper on Misuse of Mass Media. No purpose, however, is likely to be served now by conducting an inquiry into the matter. The practice has been stopped and in very rare cases only where the air-lifting of the material is inescapable will be resorted to, if at all.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov. 1979]

Recommendation (Serial Nos. 58 & 59, Paragraphs 5.42—5.45)

The DAVP has been entrusted with numerous functions of divergent nature. It acts as an advertising agency for the Ministries and Departments of the Government in which role it earns a commission of 15 per cent from newspapers on display advertisements which according to the information given to the Committee, is more than the expenditure incurred on the advertising wing of the DAVP. This obviously is a commercial function which this Department performs. At the same time it has certain non-commercial and regulatory functions like production and distribution of printed publicity material on behalf of Government, carrying out of outdoor publicity, organisation of exhibitions and accreditation of advertising agencies.

It has been brought to the notice of the Committee that DAVP has been used in recent years "to develop the ruling party's image through Governmental activities". The White Paper on Misuse of Mass Media (August 1977) referred to cases (pages 52 to 54) in which certain papers were unduly favoured in the matter of quantum of Government advertisements and advertisement rates under instructions from the Ministry. Shah Commission has also mentioned in its Interim Report I (para 6.58) that "newspapers and journals which were critical of Government policies were denied advertisements whereas others.....which were regarded as being supporters of Government policies were given advertisements

beyond their legitimate due". It has been suggested to the Committee by a non-official witness that "with a view to reducing abuse of power and improve its output, DAVP must be made an autonomous corporation and function on commercial lines like any agency". Opposing the suggestion to convert DAVP into an autonomous corporation the Secretary of the Ministry stated during evidence that ordinarily if it were only a function of advertising, as an advertising agency as compared with private advertising agencies, the alternative of an autonomous corporation could have been seriously thought of.....DAVP cannot be expected to look at itself as the commercial organisation because primarily its purpose is to publicise the policies and programmes of Government through this particular medium." Subsequently the Ministry in a note stated that "an autonomous structure would deprive the DAVP of the close-to-skin proximity essential to acquire comprehension of a continuously evolving Government ethos....." The Ministry added that a Government message "must go down as a Government message to gain acceptance. The Government message conveyed through an autonomous agency may have a smooth and acceptable passage but it would lack the force and impact of the Governmental stamp in the consciousness of the people". The Ministry, however, admitted that there are "constraints in a departmental set up. But over the years the constraints are being overcome to, an extent, by innovations."

After giving a careful thought to the matter, the Committee have come to the conclusion that if the Advertisement Wing of the DAVP which performs purely commercial function of handling publication of Government advertisements in newspapers on commission basis has to fulfil the role assigned to it efficiently and objectively and get the best value of Government money spent on advertisements, it should be separated from other wings of the DAVP which perform purely non-commercial functions of arranging publicity to Government policies and programmes and set up as an autonomous organisation headed and staffed by competent professionals with full autonomy in day-to-day working within the overall policy framework laid down by the Government. This arrangement will not only insulate the Advertisement Wing from political and official pressures and ensure against its possible misuse for political purpose but also give it the necessary freedom from the constraints inherent in a departmental set up which, in the opinion of the Committee, is very vital for the success of a commercial activity like the one in which this Wing is engaged in. This arrangement will also not disturb the "close-to-skin proximity"

considered essential to compared "Government ethos" by the other wings of DAVP or dilute the "force and impact of the Government stamp" on the campaigns launched by these Wings to publicise the policies and programmes of Government as these Wings will, even after separation of Advertisement Wing, continue to function as a Government Department under the existing set up.

The Committee would like this autonomous organisation to handle all the advertising business of the Government departments as at present. The Committee have no doubt that a stage would come when after the proposed organisation proves its professional competence, it would be able to compete with other advertising agencies in the field and progressively extend its reach to the Railways, other Government organisations and public sector undertakings.

Action Taken

The Committee's suggestion for separating the Advertising Wing of the DAVP from the rest of the organisation is based on three premises:

- (i) It will be able to fulfil the role assigned to it efficiently and objectively and get the best value for Government money spent on advertisement;
- (ii) This will insulate the Advertisement Wing from political and official pressures and ensure against its possible misuse for political purpose; and
- (iii) It will give the Advertisement Wing the necessary freedom from the constraints inherent in a departmental set up which is very vital for the success of a commercial activity in which the Wing is engaged.

As regards, (i) the Committee's report has not brought out anywhere that the Advertisement Wing of the DAVP or the organisation as a whole is not fulfilling the role assigned to it efficiently and objectively in regard to Government advertisements. DAVP has come to be recognised as a premier advertising agency and DAVP advertisements have acquired a good status in the advertising field. Individuals and organisations have, however, criticise DAVP on various scores and sometimes vague charges are made about professional competence of DAVP officials. In fact, DAVP is manned by competent media men and their performance has been satisfactory. On many occasions, the quality of advertisements issued by DAVP

received acclaim. For example a DAVP single advertisement for the ONGC on Independence Day, 1978 attracted attention of all advertising agencies and many public sector enterprises praised it. Therefore, it may not be reasonable to argue that conversion of the Advertisement Wing into an autonomous organisation and its separation from the rest of the DAVP would help it "to fulfil the role assigned to it" more efficiently and objectively than what the Wing is doing at present.

Coming to the point (ii), it is agreed that there should be no political or official pressure on DAVP's advertisement activities. This can be ensured by laying down a proper policy and framework of guidelines by the Government which should be followed in letter and spirit. DAVP officials have been instructed to strictly abide by the policy and the guidelines and not yield to any pressures. Merely by converting the Advertising Wing into an autonomous body, the objective of insulating these activities from political and official pressures and ensuring against its possible misuse for political purpose may not be fully achieved. Our officials have been trained to work according to rules and those who operate within the framework of their media culture. On this score Government see no advantage in converting the Advertising Wing into an autonomous body.

In regard to point (iii), it may be stated that turning the advertising wing of DAVP into an autonomous body will not alter the situation as such autonomous bodies also have to work under the same constraints imposed by financial and administrative requirements.

At present, DAVP functions as an integrated organisation and the Advertisement Wing derives visualization copywriting and production support from the common team of copywriters, studio artists and the printed publicity wing. If the Advertising Wing is separated from the present organisation the proposed autonomous corporation will have to be equipped with its own complement of copywriters, studio artists and visualisers and production staff. This will be a very costly proposition and at the same time, the work will also perhaps not be properly and efficiently handled.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 20th Aug., 1980.]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Serial No. 2, Para 2.10)

The Committee feel that it will be better if instead of leaving the question of inclusion of a newspaper in, or its deletion from, the media list to be decided by an individual officer (Deputy Director or Director), as at present, the system is institutionalised and a departmental body consisting of Director of Advertising and Visual Publicity, a representative of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Principal Information Officer and Registrar of News papers in India constituted to draw the media list.

Action Taken

The existing process of scrutinising the applications for advertisements is considered adequate.

All newspapers/periodicals are eligible to receive DAVP advertisements if they satisfy the requirements prescribed in the advertising Policy. These requirements relate to circulation, print area and regularity and are, therefore, objective in nature. There is no scope for misinterpretation of these requirements and the whole process is rather mechanical.

Moreover, the newspapers/periodicals found ineligible to receive DAVP advertisements are informed about the reasons under which they could not be included in DAVP's media list, This gives to them an adequate opportunity to represent their case to the highest authorities in the Ministry.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979]

Comments of the Committee

Please see para 1.4—1.6 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 24 Para 2.129)

The Committee find that UPSC advertisements are published in 134 newspapers|periodicals of various languages in the country. They

also find that the UPSC advertisements are likely to cost Rs. 75 lakhs to the exchequer in the current year (1978-79) which means an average expenditure of Rs. 1½ lakhs on each advertisement every week. The Committee were informed by the representative of the Ministry during evidence that in the case of UPSC advertisements "there is an element of trying to extend advertisements to as large number of papers as possible" and that "an element of treating, nursing and helping the smaller newspapers is very much there" in the case of these advertisements. From this the Committee cannot but conclude that the expenditure on UPSC advertisements is so high because UPSC advertisements are being published to nurse and help smaller newspapers even though it may not be necessary to do so on merits. This, the Committee feel, is contrary to the advertising policy of Government which lays down that "Government advertisements are not intended to be a measure of financial assistance". In the opinion of the Committee, the expenditure on the UPSC advertisements which is rather high, can be greatly reduced without affecting the range of publicity if the selection of newspapers is made on merits and with the aim of covering all areas and all languages groups, while at the same time keeping in mind the need to avoid over-publicity in any language or area. They would like that the Government should review the media list for UPSC advertisements from this angle and reduce the number of newspapers on this list to the minimum required to carry the advertisements in all parts of the country.

Action Taken

The UPSC media list is drawn up in consultation with UPSC keeping in view their requirements in regard to coverage of the different language groups and remote outlying areas. The expenditure of the order of Rs. 75 lakhs per year on UPSC advertisements is not considered very large because the Government has an obligation to ensure that widest publicity is given to different categories of jobs sought to be advertised. Any reduction in the media list will adversely affect the publicity objective.

DAVP does not include newspapers in the media list to give them financial support; the sole consideration is the message and the audience it has to reach. It is therefore not desirable to make any changes at this stage in the policy adopted for UPSC advertisements.

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 1.7 to 1.11 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 38 Paras 4.16 and 4.17)

The Committee note that for carrying out publicity through printed material, DAVP gets material like posters, folders, pamphlets, booklets, etc. published through Government presses as well as from private printers on their panel. As per rules, the DAVP is required to refer all the jobs to the Directorate of Printing and jobs can be assigned to private printers only if the Directorate of Printing is unable to accept these for execution through Government of India Presses. The Committee find that, during 1977-78, out of 216 references stated to have been made by DAVP to Directorate of Printing, 27 references were not received in the Directorate of Printing; these were stated to have been "either lost in transit or misdelivered etc." In a number of cases, the time given to Directorate of Printing for reply, which under the existing procedure should be 10 days in the case of normal jobs and 2-3 days in the case of urgent jobs, was not sufficient, in some cases the references were received by the Directorate of Printing after the last date had expired and in some others; the time allowed was less than 24 hours. In the absence of reply within the prescribed time, the procedure provided that it was to be presumed by DAVP that Government of India Presses were not in a position to undertake the jobs.

Against the background of this procedure when it is seen that during the last 3 years as many as 1196 jobs (costing over Rs. 190 lakhs) were got executed through private printers, as against only 17 done by Government Presses, and this happened at a time when Government Presses were working below capacity, the Committee cannot but feel that there is something seriously wrong in the way references were made by DAVP to Directorate of Printing and orders placed with private printers. It is rather strange that communications sent by one Government office to another at the same place (Delhi) were lost in transit or misdelivered or received by the latter too late for reply. The Committee cannot but take serious note of the fact that nearly 99 per cent of the DAVP jobs were entrusted to private printers at a time when Government presses were working below capacity. They would like that the circumstances in which the jobs were entrusted to private printers in the last 3 years, be investigated with a view to fixing responsibility.

Action Taken

The jobs handled by the DAVP are generally of an urgent nature, time bound and related to specific campaigns or observance of events like "Army Day" 'Air Force Day', 'Handloom Week' and similar events. Government Departments approach the DAVP at very short

notice for producing pamphlets, brochures and other material. Recently, the Ministry of Finance wanted three pamphlets on the Budget 1979-80 to be brought out in the course of just 2 or 3 weeks. Even in these cases, a reference is invariably made to the Director of Printing according to the revised procedure introduced under a Joint Note presented by the DAVP and the Directorate of Printing to the Estimates Committee referred to in para 4.8 of the Committee's Report. Proper arrangements have been made to ensure that each job is referred to the Directorate of Printing and their reply is received. Every effort is made to ensure that the jobs involving simple printing and in which the time factor is not very important are got done through the Government of India Presses. But from October 1978 to March 1979 they accepted only seven of the 157 jobs referred to them. Even here, the experience has been that there is delay and the cost is much higher than the lowest tender received from private printers.

A detailed discussion with the Directorate of Printing has already been held. It would be DAVP's efforts to achieve a more workable and effective relationship between the two organisations so that whatever the Directorate of Printing can handle is entrusted to them provided the deadlines are met and no additional cost is involved.

Considering all these factors we feel that an investigation covering the past 3 years may not be necessary.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MOC dated 29th Nov., 1979.]

Comments of the Committee

Please see paras 1.16 to 1.19 Chapter I.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 54 Para 5.16)

The Committee are informed that studies made by the Ministry have revealed that there is over-lapping in regard to certain functions performed by DAVP like bringing out of publications and other printed material, organisation of exhibitions and work connected with circulation statistics of newspapers and other allied work. Thus, both the DAVP and the Publications Division of the Ministry are engaged in bringing out publications and other printed publicity material. Similarly, exhibitions are being organised by both the DAVP and the Directorate of Field Publicity. The work connected with circulation statistics of newspapers and other allied work is also being looked after both by registrar of Newspapers for India and the DAVP. The Ministry have stated that the question of entrusting indepth studies to departmental or outside agencies to enable the Government to take a final decision in

the matter is under examination. The Committee feel that now when the fact of over-lapping of functions has been established and admitted by the Ministry, the reported move to undertake further "in depth studies" through departmental or outside agencies before taking action looks like a dilatory step and is not at all necessary. The Committee would like that the Ministry should take a decision in the matter without further delay and so re-allocate the work among various Departments that there should be only one agency to do a particular job.

[Para 5.16 of the Estimate Committee's 23rd Report (6th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

As regards duplication reference has been made to the areas of (a) exhibitions; (b) printed publicity material and (c) circulation check up. The DAVP's exhibition units are complete professional units which put up fully integrated exhibitions in special erected pavilions or in halls. The designing, script etc. for these exhibitions is provided by the Exhibition Division of the DAVP which has the necessary staff of visualisers, artistes, designers and allied work-shop facilities. Against this, the basic function of the Directorate of Field Publicity is to communicate the message through the medium of films and inter-personal communications. The Directorate of course, puts up exhibition small kits for display but this can be regarded merely as an activity to supplement the main exhibition activity of the DAVP, particularly as the Exhibition kits for Directorate of Field Publicity are supplied by DAVP itself. DAVP does not go to rural areas while the reach of DFP kits is right down to interior areas.

In the matter of bringing out publicity material, the role of DAVP and Publication Division are clearly defined. The DAVP is required to undertake the printing and distribution of unpriced publications, usually in the form of pamphlets, brochures booklets etc. whereas Publications Division undertakes the production of priced publications only. In the matter of circulation also, there is no overlapping in the function of DAVP and RNI. One of the statutory functions of the Registrar of Newspapers is to collect and maintain statistics relating to circulation, periodicity etc. of newspapers. This work becomes relevant in the context of allocation of newsprint also. The DAVP require circulation data of newspapers with a view to deciding the advertisement rates at which advertisements can be released to a newspaper. The DAVP do not

have any machinery of their own to verify the circulation claim of newspapers. For their limited purpose, they depend upon the certificate given by such institutions as ABC etc., and Chartered Accountant's certificates which are required to be produced by newspapers applying for DAVP advertisements. It is only in cases of doubt that DAVP make efforts to verify the circulation but then it is done only through the agency of RNI.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para 1.20 to 1.24 Chapter I.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT ARE AWAITED

Recommendation Serial Nos. 11—13 (Paras 2.66—2.68)

The new advertising policy lays down *inter alia* that advertisements will not be issued to newspapers and periodicals which incite communal passions or preach violence or offend socially accepted conventions of public decency and morals. A similar provision was made in the advertising policy in force during the Emergency. The Committee note that during the Emergency on the ground of "alleged obscene writing" the use of eight newspapers for Government advertisements had been discontinued with effect from 2nd August, 1976 under instructions from the Ministry. After the Emergency, it was found that these eight newspapers had been singled out "for political reasons" and advertisements were thereafter resumed to them (excepting to one Malayalam monthly which had ceased publication then).

There are, however, no clear cut parameters laid down to evaluate the newspapers/periodicals from this angle. Besides, the machinery at DAVP's disposal for a continuous monitoring of the newspapers from this point of view is admittedly 'nil'. In order to avoid the possibility of misuse of this provision, the Committee suggest that the guidelines as to what constitutes objectionable matter of communal or obscene nature should be spelt out precisely in easily intelligible language not only for the benefit of the newspapers but also for the guidance of the official machinery which may be called upon to pronounce its opinion on such matters.

The PIB should be made responsible for furnishing information to DAVP about such newspapers etc. as are, *prima facie*, found to be indulging in objectionable writings of communal or obscene nature. On receipts of such information from PIB or State Governments or through its own sources, DAVP should place it before the Departmental body consisting of representatives of DAVP, RNI, PIB and Ministry, as recommended in para 2.10 for their considered opinion and take action in the light thereof.

The Committee also recommend that the paper which is denied advertisements on this ground should have the right of appeal to an independent body to be designated by the Government.

Action Taken

The recommendation is under consideration.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Recommendation Serial No. 17 (Paragraph 2.92)

The Committee are glad to note that a number of facilities are being provided in the matter of newsprint allocation and Press Information Bureau's services (Appendix III) and a proposal to offer financial help to small and medium newspapers on easier terms is stated to be under consideration. The Committee would like the Government to study the difficulties of small and medium newspapers, particularly those relating to printing machinery, skilled personnel, newsprint, credit needs and PIB Services, and give them encouragement and assistance of lasting value in resolving these difficulties with a view to strengthening their competitiveness and facilitating their growth from small to medium and medium to large category and enabling them to stand on their own feet in due course.

The Committee would suggest that finance corporation be set up for meeting the credit needs of small newspapers. The nationalised banks may also be advised to help the small newspapers in meeting their short and long term financial needs.

Action Taken

It is not Government's policy to finance newspapers directly or indirectly. However, at the instance of the Government it has been decided by the Industrial Development Bank of India to grant financial assistance to newspaper industry and hence it should now be possible for newspapers to approach lending Institutions for securing financial assistance.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79 MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979.]

Further information asked for

The Committee had recommended that study of the difficulties of small and medium newspapers, particularly those relating to printing machinery, skilled personnel etc., should be made and

necessary encouragement given to them for overcoming these difficulties. Please state whether this study has been undertaken; if so, the results thereof, and the follow-up action taken.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 29/2/1/EC/79, dated 13th Feb., 1980.]

Further reply of Government

To make a study of the difficulties of small and medium newspapers, particularly those relating to printing machinery, skilled personnel etc., following two specific points have already been included in the Terms of Reference of the Second Press Commission:

- (i) Economics of the newspaper industry; newsprint, printing machinery and other inputs for newspapers,
- (ii) Growth of small and medium papers and of the language press.

2. Further action in this regard will be taken after the recommendations of the Press Commission are received.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC, dated the 18th Feb., 1981]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para 1.29 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Serial No. 28, Paragraphs 3.20—3.23)

The Committee note that in a statement in Parliament in 1967, it had been stated that "the newspapers are free to fix their rates. DAVP will make use of such organs whose rates are suitable and acceptable from the point of publicity requirements". However, till February, 1977, DAVP had been negotiating appropriate economic rates for advertisements with various newspapers because some newspapers whose commercial rates were not found reasonable or suitable agreed to accept cut rates.

Representatives of newspapers organisations and a number of other non-official witnesses who appeared before the Committee expressed the view that DAVP instead of fixing its own rates should accept the lowest commercial rates of the newspapers. The Ministry, have, however, contended that it has been found in actual practice that newspapers often charge exorbitant rates, disproportionate to their circulation. The Fact Finding Committee on Newspapers Economics had also observed that certain dailies "presumably fixed its rates based on what the traffic can bear". "There was no

evidence to show that these rates were based on reasonable costs of production and distribution and a fair rate of return."

The Committee note that this matter was also examined by the Public Accounts Committee (1974-75) which in their 73rd Report recommended that the Government should examine the entire question of fixing the miller rate keeping in view the size of newspaper/periodical with reference to its circulation, language, place of publication and the impact which it has on public mind and lay down uniform rates for newspapers/periodicals published from the same station in the same language and having more or less the same circulation. Pursuant to this recommendation and following the persistent demand by newspapers for a general increase in the rates, the Government constituted a Rate Structure Committee in 1976 to study the existing rate structure and suggest improvements. The rate structure recommended by this Committee was enforced from February, 1977 but as the provisions of this rate structure had according to the Ministry, been misused during Lok Sabha elections (1977), the Rate Structure Committee was asked to study the matter afresh. A new rate structure as suggested by this Committee was brought into force from May, 1977 and this is the rate structure in vogue at present. The rate structure laid down by the Committee is meant to be only for guidance of the DAVP to judge whether the rate quoted by newspaper is reasonable or not. On the basis of these guidelines the DAVP has worked out the rates for individual newspapers. The rate structure provides for weightage of Rs. 2.50 p.c.cm. to all small and medium newspapers and a 15 per cent additional weightage to all Indian language papers upto a circulation of one lakh. It takes into account the level of circulation, cost of production, including the principal cost relating to newsprint and provides for a 10 per cent of margin of profit. According to the Ministry the DAVP does not determine or fix rates for advertisements but makes offers of advertisement rates to newspapers/periodicals which they are free to accept or reject.

The Committee understand that a writ petition has been filed before the Calcutta High Court by one of the newspapers challenging the competence of the DAVP to offer any advertisement rates for Government advertisements. As the matter is sub-judice the Committee would not like to comment at this stage on the question of advertisements rates offered by DAVP to newspapers/periodicals.

Action Taken

Noted.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79 MUC dated 29th Nov., 1979.]

Further information asked for

Please state whether the Calcutta High Court has given its judgement on the case relating to the rates fixed by DAVP. If so, the gist of the judgement and the follow up action taken.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 29/2/1/EC/79, dated 13th Feb., 1980.]

Further reply of Government

The judgement of the Calcutta High Court is still awaited.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. 5/3/79-MUC, dated the 18th Feb., 1981.]

Comments of the Committee

Please see para. 1.29 of Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 42 (Para 4.21)

The Committee have been informed by the Directorate of Printing that except for some special types of jobs, Government of India presses can undertake printing of all kinds of jobs like booklets, brochures, folders, leaflets, posters, publication forms, etc., in mono or multi colours both by letter press and off-set processes. The Committee suggest that if the present capacity and equipment of the Government of India Presses are found to be inadequate to undertake the printing jobs of the DAVP, the question of improvements in Government of India presses for this purpose may be considered keeping in view the relative cost and quality of work by Government of India Presses and the private printers.

Action Taken

The recommendation is being brought to the notice of Ministry of Works and Housing.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29th Nov. 1979]

Further information asked for

The Ministry have stated that the recommendation of the Committee regarding improvements to be made in the Govt. of India Presses, have been brought to the notice of the Ministry of Works and Housing. Please state the action taken by that Ministry on the recommendations of the Committee.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 29/2/1/EC 79 dated 13th February, 1980]

Further reply of Government

The recommendation has been referred to Ministry of Works and Housing for their consideration, their comments still awaited.

[Ministry of Information and Broadcasting O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 18th February, 1981]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para 1.29 of Chapter I.

Recommendation Sl. No. 60 (Paras 5.54 to 5.56)

The Committee find that non-official experts in the field of advertisement have doubts about professional skill and expertise available in the DAVP to carry out the functions entrusted to it. It has been suggested that instead of the present policy of manning the Directorate with people drawn from other apparently allied departments (like Press Information Bureau), the Government should locate a Central Cadre of qualified, trained people to man the key DAVP posts.

The Ministry have stated that out of about 1000 posts in DAVP as many as 950 are manned on a regular basis by officers who are experienced in the various wings of the organisations and who have grown with DAVP. The officers belonging to Central Information Service, at present, numbering 37, by the nature of their recruitment, training and expertise, are fitted to perform professional functions within the scheme of governmental publicity and they are "posted for a sufficiently long time". As regards the quality of work done by DAVP, the Committee have been informed that a DAVP advertisement has been selected as an advertisement of the month" by a professional journal and DAVP produced material has also won awards.

The Committee feel that the Government should have a close look at the quality and standard of the professional staff working in DAVP and identify the areas in which there is deficiency of professional expertise and initiate measures like training of existing personnel and induction of professional experts according to a well planned programme so as to upgrade the level of efficiency of work and quality of output. Such an upgradation of efficiency and quality will be all the more necessary in the advertisement wing will have to function in competition with private agencies for the expansion of its business after it is converted into an autonomous organisation.

Action Taken

The recommendation is accepted in principle.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC dated 29-11-1979]

Further information asked for

The Committee had recommended that Government should have a close look at the quality and standard of professional staff working in DAVP and identify the areas in which there is deficiency in professional expertise and initiate measures like training of existing personnel and inductions of professional experts according to a well planned programme.

Please state the action taken in this regard.

[L.S.S. O.M. No. 27/2/1/EC/79 dated 13th Feb., 1980]

Further reply of Government

These recommendations are under consideration.

[Ministry of Information and Broadcasting O.M. No. 5/3/79-MUC, dated 18th February, 1981]

Comments of the Committee

Please see para 1.29 of Chapter I

S. B. P. PATTABHI RAMA RAO,

Chairman,

Estimates Committee e.

New Delhi;

March 11, 1981.

Phalguna 20, 1902 (Saka).

APPENDIX I

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

ADVERTISING POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Effective from October 1, 1980

'A' Preamble

1. The Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity places advertisements in various newspapers/journals on behalf of various Ministries and Departments of the Government of India. A number of autonomous bodies and Public Sector enterprises channelise their advertising through the DAVP.

2. The primary objective of Government advertising is to secure widest possible coverage through newspapers which circulate news or comments on current affairs and standard journals on science, art, literature, sports, films, cultural affairs etc. While giving advertisements, political affiliations or editorial policies of the publication concerned are not taken into account. However, advertisements would not be issued to newspapers/journals which incite or tend to incite communal passions, preach violence, offend the sovereignty and integrity of India or socially accepted norms of public decency and morals.

'B' Policy guidelines

1. Keeping in view Government Policy, publicity requirements and availability of funds, a balanced and equitable placing of advertisements is aimed at. Government advertisements are not intended to be a measure of financial assistance to newspapers/journals. In pursuance of broad social objectives of the Government, and in order to achieve parity of rates between various categories of newspapers appropriate weightage/consideration may be given to:—

- (a) Small and Medium newspapers/journals;
- (b) Specialised, scientific and technical journals;
- (c) Language newspapers/journals; and
- (d) Newspapers/journals published especially in backward, remote and border areas.

2. Small, medium and big newspapers/journals are categorised as under:—

- (a) *Small*—Upto a circulation of 15,000 copies per issue.
- (b) *Medium*—Circulation between 15,000 and 50,000 copies per issue.
- (c) *Big*—Circulation above 50,000 copies per issue.

3. In selecting newspapers/publications for placing Government advertisements the following considerations may be taken into account:—

- (a) Coverage of readership from different walks of life, particularly in case of national campaigns.
- (b) Reaching specific sections of people depending upon the message to be conveyed. Small and Medium newspapers will get their major consideration in motivational/educative campaigns.
- (c) Any other category of newspapers/journals/publications which Government may consider from time to time appropriate for bonafide reasons.
- (d) House journals, house magazines and souvenirs will not ordinarily be used for Government advertisements.

4. The DAVP will use newspapers/journals with a minimum paid circulation of not less than 1,000 copies. Relaxation, however, may be made in the case of the following:—

- (a) Specialised/Scientific/technical journals with a paid circulation of 500 copies per issue.
- (b) Sanskrit newspapers/journals and newspapers/journals published in backward, border or remote areas or in tribal languages or primarily meant for tribal readers, with a minimum paid circulation of 500 copies per issue.

5. Newspapers/journals should have an uninterrupted and regular publication for a period of not less than four months and should comply with the provisions of Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 before they qualify for consideration for placing Government advertisements. For Quarterly journals, they have to bring out at least two issues before they are considered.

6. Newspapers/journals should have the following minimum print area to be acceptable for Government advertising:—

<i>Periodicity</i>	<i>Print area not less than</i>
Dailies	760 Std. Col. cms.
Weeklies & Fortnightlies	480 Std. Col. cms.
Monthlies and other periodicals	960 Std. Col. cms.

Exceptions might be made in the case of newspapers/journals published in tribal language or primarily for tribal readership.

7. Circulation of all newspapers/journals should be certified by a Chartered Accountant or by a professional and reputed accounts body or institution. However, newspapers having a circulation upto 2,000 copies per issue may submit a certificate from a Chartered Accountant or from the concerned District Magistrate. The circulation figures, if found incorrect at any time, will render the papers/journals ineligible for advertisements, besides any other action which Government may deem appropriate.

'C' Advertisement Rates

The Rate-structure for Government Advertisements will be worked out by DAVP on the basis of the principles enunciated above. The DAVP will enter into appropriate rate contracts with individual newspapers/journals.

APPENDIX II

Vide Introduction to the Report)

Analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 2nd Report of Estimates Committee (Sixth Lok Sabha).

I	Total number of recommendations	61
II	Recommendations which have been accepted by Government: <i>Vide</i> Recommendations Sl. Nos. 1, 3, to 10, 15, 16, 18 to 23, 26, 27, 29, 30 to 37, 39 to 41, 43 to 45, 47 to 49, 51 to 53, 55, 56, 57 and 61.	
	Total No.	44
	Percentage	72.1%
III	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies <i>Vide</i> Recommendations Sl. Nos. 14, 25, 46, 50, 58 and 59.	
	Total No.	6
	Percentage	9%
IV	Recommendations in respect of which action taken replies have not been accepted by the Committee. <i>Vide</i> Recommendations Sl. Nos. 2, 24, 38 and 54.	
	Total No.	4
	Percentage	6.5%
V	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited <i>Vide</i> Recommendations Sl. Nos. 11 to 13, 17, 28, 42 and 60.	
	Total No.	7
	Percentage	11.6%