

Title: Need to broadcast programmes in Bishnupriya Manipuri language by AIR and Doordarshan centres at Silchar in Assam.

SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIDYA (KARIMGANJ): 'Bishnupriya Manipuri' – a linguistic minority community – constitutes a sizeable portion of the population of Assam and Tripura. The approximate population of the community only in Barak valley districts exceed 3 lakhs besides a substantial number in other adjoining areas.

'Bishnupriya Manipuri' with their very rich cultural heritage specially in their classical dance and music have been further enriched by being included in the Indian mainstream in the form of dance, music and drama. They greatly contribute to the richness and variety of Indian culture. The Bishnupriya Manipuris Gurus played a significant part in propagating the Indian Manipuri Dance since long throughout the world.

As an outcome of prolonged struggle by the community, the Government of India, vide its Notification No. 13/73-B-(P) dated 29.4.1975 issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, was pleased to decide in principle to introduce broadcasting through AIR daily programmes of 15 minute 'Bishnupriya' through AIR, Silchar in 1975.

However, the community failed to welcome the decision because of non-inclusion of 'Manipuri' being suffix with 'Bishnupriya' although it has been corroborated in the Census Report of 1981 and onwards. The Government of Tripura and Assam have already introduced Bishnupriya Manipuri language in 1995 and 2001 respectively in elementary level of education.

I request the Hon'ble Minister of Information and Broadcasting to take suitable action for broadcasting programmes in Bishnupriya Manipuri language through AIR and Doordarshan centres at Silchar in Assam.