

policy announcement made by the Prime Minister a few days ago that the Members of Parliament and central agencies would be associated in monitoring the implementation of IRDP and other programmes in various States. What steps are you taking in order to give a concrete shape to this policy statement of the Prime Minister? Secondly, in your written statement it is said that a number of studies have been made about the performance of IRDP in various States and not all. I would like to know whether the state of Meghalaya has the poorest and dismal record in the implementation of IRDP. Are you going to constitute a study about it?

SHRICHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR :

Taking the last question first, in fact, the performance in Meghalaya is not so good as we wanted.

The Prime Minister has been meeting the beneficiaries directly and talking to them. Thereby we have also thought that it is the responsibility of all so that a better monitoring system would be there. And we are evolving a very very effective monitoring system.

SHRI G.G. SWELL : In that will you be associating the MPs.

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR :

We will be associating various groups.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI : I would clarify part of that remark.

What I said was that IRDP programme has not been able to give enough benefit to the poorest beneficiaries and this is something which we have learnt from experience. The beneficiaries, who were not the very poor, have received benefit and have been able to rise above the poverty line, but the poorest like the hon. Minister has just said was not able to rise above the poverty line with one doze of the programme; and that is why we have modified the programme to enable the poorest people to rise above the poverty line with just one doze of the programme.

[Translation]

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : Mr Speaker, Sir, the schemes under the N.R.E.P. and R.L.E.G.P. are going on in rural areas. Under these programmes, there is a provision to give each labourer one kilo of foodgrains. It is now more than five to six months, that they have not been given foodgrains in Madhya Pradesh. Through you, Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister how he is going to remove this mismanagement. My second supplementary is that the foodgrains are also available with the F.C.I. But there is a provision of distribution of foodgrains through LAMPS also. Sometimes, F.C.I. people say that they do not have foodgrains, but even the LAMPS is not doing the distribution properly. Foodgrains have not so far been distributed in the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh under these two programmes. I want to know the time by which you will make the foodgrains available there?

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR :

So far as distribution of foodgrains under R.L.E.G.P. and N.R.E.P. is concerned, the Food Corporation is not to blame. We allot foodgrains directly to the States. Whatever quantity of foodgrains is being allotted to the states under these two programmes, they have to make use of the same. As you have said, it was one kilogram earlier, but now it has been raised to 2 kilograms. Under these two programmes more foodgrains can be supplied to the States if required. Therefore, they will not have any shortage of foodgrains. So far as the question of distribution is concerned, if the hon. Member specifically tells me the name of any village or block where foodgrains have not been given for the last five to six months, I shall certainly look into it and inform you myself. . . . (Interruptions)

Special Facilities to Journalists

*291 **SHRI R.P. SUMAN :** Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state : (a) whether Government are considering to provide some special facilities to

journalists and if so, the outlines thereof; and

(b) the facilities provided by Government to journalists during the past three years and whether those are being extended to them fully and if not, the reasons therefor?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL : (a) and (b) A statement is given below

Statement

The Government has been Providing Following Facilities to Accredited Press Correspondents to Help them in Carrying out their Functions

1. Supply of Press Information Bureau's Press Material.
2. Arranging interviews with authoritative policy sources.
3. Invitation to Press Conferences/Briefings.
4. Use of Press Lounge and Library for consulting books of reference & Newspapers.
5. Inclusion in Press Conducted Tours & exchange of journalists under the Cultural Exchange Programmes.
6. Inclusion of correspondents in the President's/Prime Minister's visits abroad.
7. Use of Press Rooms set up on the occasion of the visits of VVIP's/International Conference, Trade Fair etc.
8. Facilities during important functions like swearing-in-ceremony, Republic Day/Independence Day and other important events where President/Prime Minister is present.
9. Issuing of Press Accreditation Cards.
10. Forwarding of applications for allotment of telephones on priority basis.
11. Provision of accommodation from Govt. Press Pool accommodation if available. (For Indians only).
12. Issue of certificates for grant of Railway concession coupons for professional visits.
13. Assistance in expediting procedure relating to issue of visas including multi-journey visas, release of foreign exchange in the case of correspondents undertaking journeys on journalistic work.
14. Arrangements for visits of projects in different States through Branch offices of the Bureau and/or State Governments.
15. Arrangements for facilitating work of correspondents and cameramen during the visits of VIP's.
16. Assistance in obtaining import licence for raw films and customs clearance in the case of cameramen.
17. Facilities to watch the proceedings of Parliament from the Press gallery.
18. Import of foreign cars for foreign correspondents who are accredited at the headquarters of the Govt. of India.
19. Forwarding of applications to Central Secretariat Library for membership.
20. Through a notification issued on 4.3.85 the Central Govt. has extended to the accredited Press Cameramen the facility of exempting photographic cameras, cinematographic cameras and lenses, filters, flash light apparatus and exposure

meters required for use with such cameras, from whole of duty of customs leviable thereon on their import into India provided the total value does not exceed Rs. 30,000/- during the period of validity of the notification which is upto 31.3.88.

The Government are not considering the provision of any new facilities at present.

[*Translation*]

SHRI R.P. SUMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Journalists have a great contribution in the making of a healthy society and in dissemination of information relating to the achievements to the masses. From the Statement placed on the Table by the hon. Minister, it appears that 95 per cent of these facilities are being availed of by the Journalists working in big cities. The Journalists working at Tehsil Block and District level and in the interiors are not getting these facilities. I want to know whether you would make these facilities available to the Journalists working in the countryside; so, if by when and how?

[*English*]

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : Sir, some of the facilities that are made available to the journalists or pressmen in the rural areas and small towns. It is true that the facilities like housing pool are made available only in big cities where there is housing problem, but the facilities of supply of materials, photographs, blocks and various other things are also at present made available to the small newspapers in rural areas at small places.

[*Translation*]

MR. R.P. SUMAN : My second supplementary is that the work of a Journalist carries a big responsibility and in proper discharge of this task, sometimes such things happen, may be unintentionally, which give size to the question that there should be a code of conduct for this also. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, through you,

whether any such code of conduct is under the consideration of Government or whether Government is coming forward with any such suggestion to the Journalist friends ; if so, the details thereof and the time by which it will be implemented ?

[*English*]

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : I am thankful to the hon. Member for raising this issue because there has been some misunderstanding. When the Conference of State Information Ministers was held, it was preceded by a meeting of Secretaries of Information Departments of various State Governments and Directors of Publicity. One of the recommendations they brought to the Ministers was that the Central Government, in consultation with the State Governments, should prepare a draft code. I myself rejected that suggestion and I said that neither the State Government nor the Central Government, no Government should take initiative in this. My formulation was that the initiative for the code should come from the Press. The possible forum can be the Press Council because in the Press Council Act there is almost a mandatory provision that the Press Council should help in evolving the code.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what facilities have been given by his Ministry to the journalists who are working at village or Tehsil level and who want to cover the functions under the facilities given by the Central and State Governments for attending such functions, as from the Statement it appears that there are no adequate facilities for them ? The rural people are not at all aware of these facilities. It is only when they become journalists, they come to know about it. Therefore, what do Government propose to do in this regard ?

[*English*]

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : Under certain circumstances and conditions, there are facilities given by the Railway Ministry which are extended for journalists and these

are already existing. I have already given the details.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER : Do you have some desire even after your becoming a recluse.

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I want to know from the hon. Minister that on the one hand he talks about giving facilities and on the other he is giving to completely close down two Hindi News Agencies—Samachar Bharati and Hin Just in Samachar; therefore, what is the latest and revised decision in this regard? My second supplementary is that in spite of all these facilities, the journalists are being beaten in the villages. Can the Central Government intervene in such a situation; if so what do Government propose to do in the matter?

[*English*]

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : So far as the latter portion of the question is concerned, that comes within the domain of the State Government. All that we do is, we advise them, guide them and obtain information from them whether any journalists have been involved and what protection has been given. As far as the first part of the question is concerned, the question does not arise. I may take this opportunity to inform the House that the question of Hindi News Agency is a very complicated question. On the one hand, Government is clear that the Government does not want to start any agency nor want itself to get involved in the management or working off any Hindi or any other agency. At the same time the nation must have a Hindi or language agency. So, what is it that should be done? The Second Press Commission has recommended that similar to PTI, the owners and editors of Hindi dailies, weeklies, and others, should come forward and form an organisation. Taking a clue from that I myself took a little initiative, called all the leading owners and editors of Hindi and other language papers; I held a meeting with them. They themselves constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. Ramnath Goenka and they have submitted a report. I will not

go into the details. It briefly states that to start a news agency they will require Rs. 3 crores and they are not in a position to raise this money. Now, I am considering that report. If that is the position, what is the next alternative, we will decide this later on. But at present the position is, they are not willing to raise the money.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : The Minister has talked about a code of conduct for the journalists. This has become a very live issue. This subject has been agitating the Press and the public also. I would like to know this from the Minister : Does he favour a code of conduct for the journalists? Has there been any move on the part of journalists themselves and Press council to evolve such a code of conduct?

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : Sir, my opinion is not very relevant. This august House has passed an Act called the Press Council Act, which casts a responsibility on the Press Council to evolve a Code. But as I said, the Government should not take initiative in the formulation of the Code.

SHRI H.N. NANJE GOWDA : would like to know whether it has come to the notice of the Government that some State Governments like Karnataka are giving pensions to the retired journalists because we expect too much from the journalists, but when they are aged and retired, they are put to a lot of difficulties. I would like to know whether the Government will consider giving pensions to the journalists after retirement and if not, whether the Government would assist in supplementing the State Governments who come forward to give pensions to journalists.

SHRI V.N. GADGIL : Sir, at this stage I can only say this that I have got some material from the Kerala Government and from a first hurried reading it seems to be that the scheme they have evolved is a very good scheme. After studying that scheme and schemes of other State Governments, possibly I can suggest to all State Governments to adopt such a scheme of pension for journalists.