

11.08 hrs.

**STATEMENT RE. RE-STRUCTURING
OF NEWS AGENCIES**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
(SHRI VIDYA CHARAN
SHUKLA):** Hon'ble Members are aware of the consideration being given for some time to the role and set-up of news-agencies in the country. I now take this opportunity to apprise them of the latest developments.

Opinion has been growing that a well-equipped single news agency is necessary in order to provide to the newspapers of the country as well as to the world media an adequate and objective coverage of events in India. Multiplicity of news agencies has resulted in duplication of effort and waste of resources. Many areas of the country are not covered at all by the news reporting system and, in any case, coverage of developmental activities in rural areas has been meagre. The dynamic changes taking place in all areas of activity with the full co-operation of the people, have not been reflected adequately. A proper image of the country has not been projected to the world media either. Consequently, much unfair and motivated criticism has been heaped upon us in the world press from time to time.

These views are shared by all responsible sections in the community of journalists and press-men. The managements of the main news agencies have themselves given serious thought to these considerations. The need for a single news agency, which can be developed into an adequate medium to communicate the trends and events in national life, has been accepted unanimously. Recognising these national considerations, the managing boards of the four teleprinter news agencies, PTI, UNI, Samachar Bharati and Hindustan Samachar, have, during December and January, passed resolutions extending support to the idea of a single national news agency in the country. The

employees unions of these four agencies, who represent the journalistic profession, have also similarly expressed themselves in favour of such an agency. It has also been stressed that such an agency should be brought into existence voluntarily and should function independently.

On 24 January, a Society named Samachar was registered under the Societies Registration Act on an application made by seven persons who are leading representatives of the Indian press. The aim of the Society is to develop a news organisation which will cover all aspects of the national life and project these adequately on the national and world media. The managing boards of the four news agencies have now entered into agreements with the Samachar under which they would, for the present, perform all functions on behalf of the Samachar, pending further integration. Such intergration is to take place through mutual negotiations which are in progress. With effect from the 1st February, all news-coverage by these agencies is already under the bye line of the Samachar.

It is hoped that these developments would result in the creation of a strong and well-equipped news agency for the country. Government have no doubt that these efforts would lead to the emergence of a national agency which can adequately fulfil the role of a news-medium befitting the size, the complexity and the richness of activities in our country.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): Whether the Samachar will be handed over to the old members of PTI and UNI or there will be new Members?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: I have explained this in my statement. For the time-being, the news agencies have given their full cooperation and have entered into agreements so that while they function as they were functioning before 1st February, 1976, they will use the bye-line of Samachar and

Sanschar will undertake to do this work. About new Members, this is an interim committee; this has to be re-constituted after a while but the constitution will take place after other process of integration have taken place.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the amendment made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

The motion was adopted.

11.11 hrs.

DELHI LAND HOLDINGS (CEILING) AMENDMENT BILL

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): I beg to move:

That the following amendment made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill further to amend the Delhi Land Holdings (Ceiling) Act, 1960, be taken into consideration:—

Enacting Formula

That at page 1, line 1, for the word 'Twenty-sixth' the word 'Twenty-seventh' be substituted."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

That the following amendment made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill further to amend the Delhi Land Holdings (Ceiling) Act, 1960, be taken into consideration:—

Enacting Formula

That at page 1, line 1, for the word 'Twenty-sixth' the word 'Twenty-seventh' be substituted."

The motion was adopted.

Enacting Formula

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

That at page 1, line 1, for the word 'Twenty-sixth' the word 'Twenty-seventh' be substituted."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: I beg to move:

"That the amendment made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

11.15 hrs.

REGIONAL RURAL BANKS BILL

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN-CHARGE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE): I beg to move:

That the following amendment made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill to provide for the incorporation, regulation and winding up of Regional Rural Banks with a view to developing the rural economy by providing, for the purpose of development of agriculture, trade, commerce, industry and other productive activities in the rural areas, credit and other facilities, particularly to the small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans and small entrepreneurs, and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto, be taken into consideration:—

Enacting Formula

That at page 1, line 1, for the 'Twenty-sixth Year' the words 'Twenty-seventh Year' be substituted."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

That the following amendment made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill to provide for the incorporation, regulation and winding up of Regional Rural Banks with a view to developing the rural economy by providing, for the purpose of development of agriculture, trade, commerce, industry and other productive activities in the rural areas, credit and other facilities, particularly to the small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans