Beat: Business

Russia;s state-run news agency revives Soviet name

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USPA News - Russia`s state-run news agency Itar-Tass, which is one of the world`s largest international news agencies, returned to its Soviet-era name on Wednesday by re-branding itself as TASS, which previously stood for the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union. The move was called for in March by an organizing committee for the agency`s 110th anniversary last month, but the Russian government had to approve the name change.

The agency announced its new name on early Wednesday morning in a short article on its website, saying it would re-brand itself as TASS, effectively immediately. The agency dates back to September 1904 when it began operating as the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency (SPTA), making it the first official news agency of the Russian Empire. The news agency became the Russian Telegraph Agency (ROSTA) in September 1918 after the formation of the Soviet Union, which led to a second change in July 1925 to make ROSTA the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS). Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a presidential decree to change the name of TASS to become the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia (ITAR-TASS). But despite the previous references to the Soviet Union, ITAR-TASS said its new name TASS is not an abbreviation. "The brand of the oldest Russian news agency is a symbol of professionalism, enthusiasm and commitment to maintain and develop its best traditions," ITAR-TASS said in Wednesday`s article. "The name TASS and its new brand will be used in the Internet, in printing, in advertising materials and souvenir products." TASS said it expects that the transition will be completed by the end of 2015. With more than 70 bureaus across Russia and 68 offices in 63 other countries, TASS is one of the world`s largest news agency, providing news content to more than 5,000 subscribers around the world, including 1,000 news organizations, 200 diplomatic missions, and around 250 financial companies. The agency issues products in six languages - Russian, English, French, German, Spanish and Arabic.

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