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Title: Need to provide pension to fishermen above the age of 50 years.

SHRIMATI BOTCHA JHANSI LAKSHMI (VIZIANAGARAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to raise an urgent matter of public importance regarding the inclusion of fishermen above 50 years for pension.

Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government, through this august House, the health problem being faced by the fishermen who venture into the sea for fishing to eke out their livelihood.

As per the 2005 Census, there are about 2,002 fishermen villages across the country. About 7,56,212 families, nearly 3.5 million population depend on the fishing activity. As soon as they reach the middle age, they become too old to take up any other job than fishing. This is their main occupation. At the age of 15 fishermen venture into the sea for fishing. After reaching the age of 40, his eyesight is badly affected due to constant wind speed of salty water and ultraviolet rays.

They become victims to keratopathy, a corneal disease. They become partially blind and about 45 per cent of their eyesight gets affected.

In view of this, I would request the Government of India to include the fishermen, who are aged 50, who are partially blind under the social security scheme on the lines of pension to physically challenged persons. Fishermen, who are 45 per cent blind, may be given relaxation in the rules in order to become eligible for pension under the social security scheme.

I would request the Government of India to evolve a national policy towards fishermen, who are partially blind.