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Title: Need to constitute a Wage Board for media.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN : Madam, my 'Zero Hour' submission is in respect of constituting the Wage Board for the working journalists and non-journalists working in the print and electronic media.

The wage and conditions of service of the working journalists and the non-journalists working in the print media are governed by the Working Journalists Act, 1955. Under those provisions a wage board is being constituted and the wages and conditions of service of the journalists are revised once in five years. Though the stipulation under the Journalists Act of 1955 is, the wage condition should be revised once in five years, the wages and condition of service have not been revised. The last Wage Board Committee was constituted 16 years past. Madam, 16 years have elapsed since the last Committee was constituted. You may kindly see that most of the newspaper industry in India has not even implemented the recommendations of the Majithia Wage Board.

I urge upon the Labour Ministry to immediately constitute a wage board to revise the wages and conditions of services of the working journalists and non-journalists who are working in the print media.

The Working Journalists Act was enacted in the year 1955 and was amended in 1956, 1957 and 1979. But in the year 1979 there was no visual media or electronic media. Thousands and thousands of journalists are working in the electronic media. They do not come under the purview of the Wage Board and the Journalists Act. Media is the fourth estate of our democratic system. Definitely, their interest has to be protected. So, the working journalists and non-journalists, who are working in the visual and electronic media, should also be brought within the purview of the Working Journalists Act and also within the purview of the Wage Board so that their wage will be protected.

Most of the newspapers are mercilessly retrenching the journalists and non-journalists without observing the labour laws and rules. I would urge upon the Minister to ensure stringent enforcement of the labour laws in the newspaper industry and in the media industry. With these words, I conclude. Thank you very much.

HON. SPEAKER: S/Shri Mullappally Ramachandran, Sankar Prasad Datta, Md. Badaruddoza Khan, P.K. Biju, Jitendra Chaudhury, M.B. Rajesh, Jose K. Mani, Adv. Joice George, Dr. Mamta Sanghamita, and Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri N.K. Premachandran.