

providing interest subsidy on loans for acquisition of deep sea fishing vessels and assistance for diversified fishing, are being implemented. Moreover, under new deep sea fishing policy announced in March, 1991, Indian entrepreneurs are permitted to introduce deep sea fishing vessels for exploitation of resources under the schemes on joint ventures, Leasing and Test fishing.

(c) and (d) Financial assistance for exploitation of fishery resources from the coastal areas are given under the schemes on motorisation of traditional crafts. Introduction of plywood craft and introduction of intermediate type of craft for off-shore pelagic fishing and for setting up of artificial reefs and sea farming projects etc. as Central/Centrally sponsored schemes. The State Governments have their own plan schemes, such as Assistance to fishermen for procurement of craft and gear, Assistance to fishermen for mechanisation, Development of infrastructural facilities for fish processing, marketing and distribution etc.

12.00 hrs.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY SPEAKER

Presentation of the General Budget

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to inform the House that the House would adjourn at 4 p.m. today to reassemble at 5 p.m. for the presentation of the General Budget.

12.01 hrs.

**RE: DEMAND OF NEW WAGE
BOARD FOR THE JOURNALISTS**

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow): Mr Speaker, Sir, both the Parliament and the Press are complementary to each other. In the absence of the Press, the Parliament won't be able to function effectively and in the absence of the latter the former will also not be able to fully discharge its responsibilities. It will experience difficulties. Budget is about to be presented in the House. Press employees are on a one day token strike demanding constitution of a new Wage Board. The Bachawat Wage Board was constituted in 1982 which made its recommendations on the basis of prevailing prices. However, now the conditions have altogether changed. Proposal to constitute a Wage Board is pending before the Cabinet. I feel that such matters should be decided without delay. Setting up of a new Wage Board is a just and reasonable demand. The Government should accept it without delay. It is not good that both the Press and the Government should lock horns. Especially, for the Parliament, this state of affairs is deplorable.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV (Madhepura): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the issue raised by Shri Vajpayee, I would like to submit that journalists and press employees staged a demonstration on the 26th instant. The hon. Prime Minister had given an assurance to constitute a new Wage Board. Only three days ago they again came out on the roads. The Government promised that the Prime Minister is about to give his approval for

[Shri Sharad Yadav]

the constitution of a new Wage Board. Sir, today is the day for the presentation of the Budget. On this day a section which makes the House full and lively is absent. This is the first occasion that the Press is boycotting the presentation of the Budget. Sir, through you, I would like to submit that demand for the new Wage Board does not pertain to journalists alone but also to the press employees. It is being postponed time and again after the constitution of the Bachawat Commission.

Shri Vajpayee rightly said that the situation has totally changed beyond comprehension. Sir, this is a serious issue. Therefore, the presentation of Budget be deferred till a decision is taken on the strike, otherwise the presentation of Budget will not be so interesting. With great hesitation, we want to raise the issue as to the direction to which the country is proceeding now. When a section which provides information about the happenings in the Parliament remains absent, we lose our total strength.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to submit that the Government should give an immediate reply in this regard, because the whole of the journalist fraternity feels that there is nobody to raise their issue. Their case is being deferred continuously. Even when they come out on the roads, nobody raises their issue. Therefore, through you, I would like to submit that the Government should give a reply in this regard or otherwise it will be better if today the presentation of Budget is deferred.

[English]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA
(Bankura): Sir, for the first time, the entire

press of our country will remain absent when the Budget is presented in the Lok Sabha today. We have been raising the problems of the newspaper workers, correspondents and reporters and demanding that a new Wage Board be constituted for them because the Bachawat Award, which was given in the year 1988, was given on the basis of the prices prevalent in 1982. There have been many changes. The demand for a new Wage Board is a justified demand. I think this demand is the demand of the entire House.

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting is here. I would request that immediately he should come forward with a Statement, before the presentation of the Budget, that the Government will constitute a Wage Board so that they would also decide on their course of action. So, I would request the Government... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: One request is enough please.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sir, I would request that the Minister should immediately come forward with an announcement because this is the demand of the entire House.

[*Translation*]

SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH (Mainpuri): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the entire opposition is united on this issue, but we do not know what stand the ruling party does take. The press is considered the fourth pillar or the Fourth Estate of a democracy everywhere. This is what Dr. Lohia also said. Shri Vajpayee said that

the matter is pending with the Cabinet. However, in English the word cabinet has two meanings. Therefore, the hon. Minister should clarify about the cabinet with which it is pending.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): Sir, this matter has been under the consideration of the Government for some time. Actually the Labour Minister has given an assurance to the journalists' representatives, who met him in this regard. I can assure the House and the journalist friends that within thirty days this matter will be considered by the Cabinet and a decision will be taken in this matter. We know the difficulties that are being faced by the working journalists and journalist friends and also other related difficulties. Therefore, wide-ranging talks have taken place. I would like to assure the House and our journalist friends that within thirty days, that is within the month of March, we shall take a decision in the matter and I hope it will be satisfactory to everybody in the House.

12.08 hrs.

RE: ISSUING OF PHOTO IDENTITY CARDS TO VOTERS FOR ELECTORAL PURPOSES

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards a very serious matter for which I have been giving notices for the past 4-5 days. The Election Commission has decided that elections would not be conducted in the

States where photo identity cards are not issued by the 30th November. In this regard I would like to make a few submissions.

Firstly, I would like to make a submission about the expenditure. The Election Commission has estimated that Rs. 1100 crore would be needed for the same. As per the formula worked out by the Commission, required funds could be mobilised if the members of Parliament decide not to draw their salaries for a year. They are asking for donations. I fail to understand the logic as to how can the identity cards check booth capturing. I fear, it will go up on the contrary. Village head men will collect the identity cards of all and stamp the ballot papers in the morning. This issue has two ramifications. One is of money and the other is political. Elections in Bihar and Orissa are slated for March and it will be difficult to issue identity cards by 30th of November. It means that elections will not be held in Bihar and Orissa, and President's Rule will be imposed there, which means Shri Shuklaji will rule these states. The poor in the country do not have shelter even. Banjaras keep on moving from one place to another. Where will they keep the identity cards in safe custody? Will the Central Government or the Election Commission provide them steel boxes with double lock. ? (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): Everybody is aware of the problems you are talking of. Please suggest some solutions to them.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: I would request the Government to call a meeting of all political parties; rather they have already done so. First of all, the