

work on April 10. According to the owners of the house in which he stayed, he had cleared all his dues on the 17th and was last seen near the bus stand that very morning. Since then he is missing and even to this day nothing is known about his whereabouts. His luggage, etc. is lying there intact. But he is not to be found nor his body. A foul play is also suspected at Delhi on the 17th. A team of Delhi journalists, his friends and others, went to Mussoorie and searched the whole area and went to the hospitals and the police stations, but it was of no avail and he could not be found. A foul play is also suspected. An application was made to the Dehra Dun on 21st April and a FIR was lodged at Mussoorie on the 22nd April and also at the Tilak Marg police station in New Delhi. A representative delegation of Delhi journalists met the Union Home Minister, Mr. Buta Singh, and submitted a memorandum. He promised quick action. But so far nothing more has been heard about it and no headway has been reported to us.

Sir, the journalistic community is very much worried about the delay in finding out his whereabouts. The Government must take special interest in his matter and should take immediate measures to find out his whereabouts.

Central Intelligence Officers should be sent to Mussoorie for this purpose. Other machinery at the disposal of the Government also should be pressed into service. This is not the first case of this kind. A few months ago, Mr. Bhardwaj, the husband of a journalist working in one of the Delhi's biggest newspapers was found missing and nothing has been heard about him. A few months have passed and even now he is untraced. What I would impress upon the Government is that until and unless the journalists are assured of their security in discharging their duties fearlessly, without let or hindrance, it would be very difficult to serve the

society in a manner expected of them. I hope the Government's intervention will be effective enough to solve the mystery about the two missing persons and their whereabouts. Thank you.

FAREWELL TO THE RETIRING MEMBERS

MR. CHAIRMAN: As the hon. Members are aware, some of our colleagues are retiring in July, 1987, and it may probably be the last session that they will be attending. Therefore, I want to convey the good wishes of the House to those Members.

As the House is aware, six Members from the State of West Bengal, Shri Samar Mukherjee, Shri Dipen Ghosh, Shri Debendra Nath Barman, Shri Makhan Paul, Dr. R. K. Poddar and Shri Ramnarayan Goswami will be retiring on completion of their term of membership of this House on the 9th July, 1987. Today being the last day of the current Session and perhaps by the time their term ends, we will not be in Session, I thought I should take this opportunity to bid them farewell. Though Shri Samar Mukherjee, the Leader of the CPI (M) in the House has been with us for a very short time, he is a veteran legislator and a devoted political worker. His presence has added to the dignity of the House. We will certainly miss, Shri Dipen Ghosh, who as one time the Leader and currently the Deputy Leader of the CPI(M) has significantly contributed to the proceedings of the House. All others also have contributed to the enrichment and liveliness of the proceedings of the House by their valuable interventions. Some of them may come back and that will be our gain. If some others do not, they will, I am sure, have other avenues and opportunities to serve the country in the areas of their choice.

On behalf of the House, and on my own behalf, I extend to the retiring

[Mr. Chairman]

members the best wishes of this House.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is true that some of us may come back and some of us may not come back. I thank you for the farewell address which you have given here commending our services. I am here for a very short period of time though I was in Lok Sabha for a long period. Hearing this appreciation, we very much feel it and parting from this company is also painful to us.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY (Karnataka): Are you really parting?

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: I am not talking on my behalf alone. I am talking on behalf of my colleagues who are retiring. We will remember this very cordial and friendly atmosphere in which we are functioning in the Rajya Sabha. I have got the impression that the atmosphere is so friendly and so cordial in the Rajya Sabha. This is very much helpful in the functioning of the House. That is why on behalf of all of us who are retiring, I pay my compliments and the compliments of my colleagues particularly to the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman. We also convey our thanks for the compliments you have paid to us.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): Sir, I join in the sentiments expressed by you and Shri Samar Mukherjee about the retiring Members who are leaving us now. And it was actually a matter of joy for all of us to associate with the Members who are retiring and their contributions to this House are really valuable. And our relationship was friendly and very co-operative. And I wish them well, Sir.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Re. Enhancement of rate of Interest on Employees Provident Fund

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI

P. A. SANGMA): Hon. Members are aware that under the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, the Central Government has to declare the rate of interest to be credited to the account of the provident fund subscribers every year. The rate of interest has to be determined keeping in view the earnings from the provident fund investments. The investment pattern of the provident fund was liberalised with effect from 1.4.1986 and with this, the interest earnings have slightly picked up. The Government has, therefore, decided to declare the rate of interest of 11.5 per cent for the year 1987-88 as against 11 per cent for the year 1986-87. I hope that the Members would welcome this measure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now clarifications—Shri Narayanasamy.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has said that the rate of interest to be credited to the account of the provident fund subscriber for the year 1987-88 is 11.5 per cent as against 11 per cent for the year 1986-87. I would like to know whether the interest will be compound in nature or it is simple interest because the amount is lying there as a deposit. I would like to have a clarification from the hon. Minister whether it will be treated as a compound interest or not.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, the Minister can certainly take credit that the interest rate is being enhanced in the context of the fact that generally the interest rates in the economy have been reduced. But, Sir, the question remains that when the cost of living is rising at the rate of 9 per cent, whether or not 11.5 per cent is adequate in real terms. Even the Chakravarty Committee reported that the real return should be some what