

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER RE-
QUESTION OF FIXATION OF IN-
TERIM RATES OF WAGES IN
RESPECT OF WORKING JOUR-
NALISTS AND NON-JOURNA-
LIST NEWSPAPER EMPLOYEES.**

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI LOKANATH MISRA): There are two minutes left. Shri Ravindra Varma, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Labour, has to make a statement. Yes, Mr. Varma.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR
(SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): Sir,
a statutory Wage Board for non-
journalist newspaper employees was
constituted by the Central Govern-
ment on the 11th June, 1975, under
section 13C of the Working Journa-
lists and Other Newspaper Em-
ployees (Conditions of Service) and
Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955.

2. A similar Wage Board for work-
ing journalists was also constituted
under section 9 of the Act, on the
6th February, 1976. The Central
Government, being of the opinion
that it was necessary to fix interim
rates of wages both in respect of non-
journalist employees and working
journalists, sought the advice of the
two wage boards in the matter. The
advice of the Wage Board for Non-
journalists as well as that of the
Wage Board for Working Journalists
was made available to the Govern-
ment in June and October, 1976, re-
spectively. Both the Wage Boards were
of the view that non-journalists and
working journalists should be given
relief from the 1st June, 1975. The
Wage Boards also proposed further
enhancement in the quantum of relief
from 1st January, 1976. An imme-
diate decision should have been taken
in view of the urgency of providing
relief to the employees. Unfortu-
nately, the then Government took no
decision in the matter and kept the

question pending. Government have
now taken a decision to fix imme-
diately the interim rates of wages
under section 13A and 13D of the
Act on the basis of the advice ten-
dered by the Wage Board for the
Non-journalists and the Wage Board
for Working Journalists. Govern-
ment have also considered carefully
and sympathetically the question of
grant of relief from the 1st of June,
1975, as proposed by the two Wage
Boards. While the Government can
well understand the case for ret-
rospective fixation of interim wage
rates, they have to consider the
matter within the framework of the
law. Whereas sub-section (3) of sec-
tion 12 of the Act, enables final re-
commendations of Wage Board being
brought into operation retrospectively,
there is no such provision in the
existing Section 13A relating to the
fixation of interim wage rates. The
law as it stands, therefore does not
clearly empower the Government to
fix interim wage rates retrospectively.
Government, therefore, propose to
take early action to examine in de-
tail whether Section 13A of the Act
needs to be changed to give clear
power to Government to fix interim
rates of wages with retrospective
effect.

I am glad to announce that with-
out delaying the matter further,
Government have decided to take ac-
tion to fix the interim wage rates,
according to the recommendations of
the two Wage Boards, to come into
immediate effect from the date of
notification.

I am also glad to inform the House
that as a result of the fixation of the
interim wage rates there will be in-
crease in the existing emoluments of
non-journalist employees ranging
from Rs. 23/- to Rs. 85/- p.m. depend-
ing upon the class of newspapers,

weeklies, periodicals etc. to which they belong. In the case of working journalists the increase will similarly range from Rs. 85/- p.m. to Rs. 131/- p.m. Relief is also being given to part-time correspondents.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI LOKANATH MISRA): The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. on Monday, the 4th April 1977.

The House then adjourned at one minute past five of the clock on Monday, the 4th April 1977.