

ernment has not built up buffer stocks for the remotest areas—which is very important for Tripura during the rainy season. I came to know from Mr. Sukh Ram, in reply to a question of mine, that allotment of foodgrains for the State of Tripura is far short of the requirements of the people of Tripura. Not only that. The State Government is not lifting the full quantity of allotted foodgrains from the FCI. Prices of essential commodities are rising every day. Projects like SREP, NREP and RLEGP are stopped. The Nehru Rozgar Yojana has not been even started. By this time more than 21 people have died of starvation. At least seven tribal mothers have sold out their offspring just to save them from starvation death. Tribal people from some areas have started leaving the State in search of food and work in the neighbouring areas. Particularly, no less than 150 gram panchayats out of 700 are in a very, very distressed condition.

Madam, the people of Tripura are not sitting idle. They have been trying their level best to draw the attention of the Government to this problem. Innumerable mass deputations have gone to the appropriate authorities, including the District Magistrates, SDOs and BDOs. In most of the cases, officials have expressed that they were not in a position to meet the situation on their own. Only on the 30th of June, in six block headquarters, thousands of people took part in a civil disobedience movement for food and jobs. Not less than 20,000 people got arrested. But the pity was that, at least in two places, hungry people were not spared by the police. They resorted to lathi-charge, fired teargas shells and injured about 40 people, including an old man of 70 years.

Madam, this is how the Government in Tripura, in the name of Rajiv Gandhi, works. When the people of Tripura are starving, the State's Ministers are roaming around the country with their family members

and friends at the cost of the State exchequer. Under these circumstances, the Central Government cannot shirk its responsibility to help people who have been suffering from starvation for want of food and jobs for month together.

Therefore, Madam, I strongly demand a judicial probe into the incident on the 27th of July at Damchara. Secondly, the Central Government should come forward to help the starving people, particularly, the very, very distressed tribal people of Tripura. They should instruct the State Government to declare 130-150 panchayats, which are populated mostly by tribals—as distressed and ensure free distribution of food grain in those panchayats at least for the next three months and, during these three months, at least 45 days of work for each family should be ensured within the distressed panchayats. Thank you, Madam.

#### **Demand for setting up of an Electronic Telephone Exchange in Goa**

**SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES** (Goa): There is an urgent need to have an electronic telephone exchange installed in the City of Vasco Da Gama, Goa. Besides being the most important commercial city, this city has a naval installation, an international airport, which is also catering to domestic flights, and the Marmagao harbour. The telephone exchange is so outdated that often its communication system is paralysed. The Goa Government has already made land available to construct a new exchange building, which was very long back, but it is awaiting the arrival of the electronic exchange equipment. In spite of repeated requests from the State Government, the Defence, the Port Trust and the Airport authorities there seems to be no response from the Telecommunications Department. I earnestly request the Communications Ministry to look into this matter and see that the new telephone exchange is installed as early as possible.