

considerably damaged paddy. The farmers have been sitting in the mandis for the past 20 days with the produce but the official agencies are not making any purchase. The officials of these agencies go to the market and purchase a few hundred bags and leave the market. The purchase is made just to mark their presence in the mandis. The rice sellers are also not making much purchase as they are awaiting that the farmers would be compelled to make distress sale of their produce. This is a very serious matter. The Government should take immediate steps for the purchase of paddy by official agencies in Punjab.

- (ix) **Need to enact legislation for acceptance of human bodies after death for promoting medical research and popularising life-saving organ transplants**

SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI (Berhampur): In ancient India, during the days of Charaka and Susruta, anatomical science had made tremendous advancement. The year 1832 is also significant, when Jeremy Bentham, the utilitarian philosopher, donated his body for medical research. In India, the first body donor was Panduranga Apte, the Gandhian teacher, in 1952.

Today, pledging of one's body for donation upon death, popularly known as cadaver donations, for organ transplants and medical research, is not an uncommon practice in the West. However, in our country, superstitions and taboos override even the routine practice of postmortem, much less organ and body donations. "Ganadarpan," a Calcutta-based voluntary organisation since 1985, has meritoriously been campaigning for donations to popularise organ transplants and promote medical research.

Till now, over 400 individuals have pledged to donate their bodies after

death, through "Ganadarpan". Thus, the need of the hour is to make prompt arrangements, essential in making successful cadaver donations for corneal grafting, kidney and heart transplants, skeletons for medical research etc. The imperative safeguard to be exercised in this regard is the strict banning of illicit-cum-lucrative trade in kidneys. Unrelated donor transplants, leading to gross misuse of its very purpose, should be totally banned while a vigorous campaign for cadaver donations started forthwith.

I would urge the Government of India for passing suitable legislation expeditiously, to allow acceptance of bodies after death for the noble causes of not only popularising life-saving organ transplants, but also promoting vital medical research.

- (x) **Need to regularise the services of Extra Departmental Employees**

SHRI GOVINDA CHANDRA MUNDA (Keonjhar): Sir, there are thousands of employees working in the Department of Posts & Telegraphs who are called Extra Departmental employees. They have been working at a low rate of wages since long. They do not have service conditions like those of permanent employees of the Department. - They are called "Runner" in Orissa. They carry mail bags to and from the Head or Sub-post offices from Branch post offices. They also deliver the letters, Money Orders and Parcels to the addressees. Most of them are either Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. It is unfortunate that the employees who are doing the real work in the rural areas do not have any regular service conditions.

I request that the services of Extra Departmental employees of the Postal Department of Orissa and other States should be regularised. They should also be given other benefits like Provident Fund, gratuity and bonus etc.