

since then they were able to commission it and run-down of the way the mills have worked would give some information. In 1977, 57 per cent of the installed capacity was utilised. In 1978, 62 per cent was utilised. In 1979, 46 per cent was utilised. And in 1982 only 15 per cent was utilised. At this point of time it would be very difficult for us to come to an assessment whether any funds were really diverted at the inception. The honourable Member is trying to draw the attention of the House to what happened at that point of time. He has given some useful information and we will look into it.

SHRI RAMANAND YADAV: I have put a specific question—whether the proprietor, Mr. Thakur, diverted large amounts of money from Samastipur paper concern to his shipping corporation at Bombay of which also he was the proprietor.

SHRI S. M. KRISHNA: You would appreciate that the shipping corporation does not come under the Ministry of Industry. That is why I made a submission that he has given some information and we would look into it.

SHRI RAMANAND YADAV: Are you prepared to make an inquiry about the diversion of funds by the proprietor?

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: His question was if money was given to the Paper Mills by the Government, whether that money was diverted and what happened...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the House would like to be informed after you have looked into this matter. That is all. I don't think it is necessary to linger over this any more.

Rise in cement prices

*2«B. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cement Manufacturers' Association

has recently approached Government for yet another rise in cement prices;

(b) if so, what is the extent of rise in prices asked for by them and approved by Government both in the case of Levy and non-Levy cement; and

(c) what are the reasons for such a demand for a rise in the price of cement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH): (a) to (c) Request have been received by the Government for allowing escalations in ex-works retention and F.O.R. price of Levy cement. Increase in ex-works prices amounting to Rs. 26.96 per tonne of levy cement so far sought by the industry is intended to compensate the producers for escalations in manufacturing costs upto June 1982. These requests are under examination of the Government. Non-levy cement being free from price and distribution control, its prices are not fixed by the Government.

SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: May I know from the honourable Minister the number and reasons for asking for increase in price and quantum both in levy and non-levy cement under the Govt. sector? Despite all these concessions to the cement industry, cement which is a scarce commodity, is not only being adulterated by the dealer but is also sold at a high premium. May I know what steps the Government propose to take for easy availability of cement, particularly non-levy cement, at a fixed price, and to prevent adulteration? I would also like to know the break-up of the figure of Rs. 26.96 per tonne upto June 1982 which the honourable Minister has indicated.

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: In June 1982 the Cement Manufacturers Association—the CMA—requested the

Government to permit an increase in the ex-factory retention price of levy cement by Rs. 26.96 per tonne.

The hon. Member has asked for the reasons. The CMA has indicated that they have sought an increase in the price to meet the cost escalation on account of increase in the price of coal and freight, on account of increase in labour cost, on account of D.A. and interim wage award and increase in power cost. So far as the breakdown of 26.96 is concerned, Es. 6.63 is on account of labour cost including increase in D.A. and interim wage award, Rs. 6.75 is on account of increase in power cost, Rs. 0.65 is on account of increase in coal freight and Rs. 4.94 is on account of increase in coal price.

So far as price of levy cement is concerned, it is controlled and as long as Government do not agree to increase its price, which is fixed by the Government, the manufacturers on their own cannot increase it.

The hon. Member has asked about adulteration of levy cement. I may point out that this is a matter which is always under the consideration of the Government. We have received sometimes complaints about adulteration of cement, whether levy or non-levy cement. This matter has been brought to the notice of the manufacturers and the manufacturers have also, in many cases, taken steps against the dealers who have indulged in this malpractice. The State Government have also taken action in this matter.

It is our constant endeavour to see that cement is supplied to the consumer at reasonable prices and the cement so supplied is not adulterated.

SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: I would like to know whether the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices have gone into the matter and also whether the Cement Controller has made any recommendation to increase the P.O.R. price of cement.

Have the Government at any stage got the cost audit of the manufacturers' cost of cement, both by the new and old units, to determine the margin of profit of the manufacturers and, if so, what is the profit per bag for the manufacturers and the commission charged by the dealers, both for levy and non-levy cement? What steps have been taken by the Government to ensure that the benefit of frequent rise in prices is passed on to consumers and the commodity is made easily available and its blackmarketing checked? Lastly,—this is also part of this question—I would like to know one thing more. If somebody registers his name today for non-levy cement, by what time he will be able to get it?

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: The request for increase in the retention price made by the CMA was referred to the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices in June 1982. The BICP has since given its recommendation which is under the consideration of the Government.

The hon. Member has asked whether the Cement Controller has made any recommendation regarding increase in F.O.R. price of cement. We have received some recommendations from the Cement Controller and these are also under the consideration of the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about the time factor?

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: He asked how long it will take for a consumer to get non-levy cement. So far as non-levy is concerned, there is no Government control on the price and distribution of non-levy cement in the country. As the honourable House knows, there is a shortfall of production in the country. Our demand far exceeds the supply of cement and it is because of this that we have also resorted to the import of cement from abroad and we hope that the consumers ordinarily would not have to wait very long for cement.

श्री जे० के० जैन : सभापति महोदय, मैं मन्त्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सरकार सीमेंट की ड्यूअल प्राइसिंग से संतुष्ट है। क्योंकि जब ड्यूअल प्राइसिंग सिस्टम इंट्रोड्यूस किया गया तो बहुत सी नकली सीमेंट बाजार के अन्दर बिकने लगी जिसकी वजह से आधे दिन यह समाचार सुनने को मिलते हैं कि कोई भवन बनते बनते गिर गया और सरकार को उस के अपराध का उसके दोष का भागी बनना पड़ता है। तो कितने केसेज ऐसे हैं कि जिसमें नकली सीमेंट कामामला सरकार की नजर में आया। कौन सी फैक्टरियां नकली सीमेंट निकालती हैं और क्या उन फैक्टरियों की जानकारी सरकार को है? यदि जानकारी है तो क्या ऐसी सीमेंट फैक्टरियों के खिलाफ अभी तक कार्यवाही की गयी है या नहीं।

एक चीज और पूछना चाहूंगा कि दिल्ली के अन्दर बहुत से गरीब लोग छोटे-छोटे मकानों में रहते हैं और यह ड्यूअल प्राइसिंग सिस्टम इंट्रोड्यूस होने के बाद उन गरीब लोगों को जो लेवी का सीमेंट है वह शायद एक या दो बोरी ही मिलता है तो क्या सरकार इस और ध्यान देगी और कुछ ऐसा कोटा बढ़ा देगी जिससे गरीब लोग वह लेवी सीमेंट लेकर अपने मकानों की मरम्मत करा सकें।

श्री नारायण दत्त तिवारी : श्रीमन्, सम्मानित सदस्य ने यह द्वेत् प्रणाली सीमेंट के वितरण और बिक्री के लिये जो हमने निर्धारित की है इसके संबन्ध में अपने विचार व्यक्त किये हैं तो यह अभी समय से पूर्व होगा कि हम इस नीति पर कुछ सभ्य निर्णय कर सकें। कि यह नीति असफल रही है या सफल रही है। प्राज्ञदर्शन में यह नीति असफल नहीं रही है और आम तौर पर जो ब्लैक मार्केट की कालेबाजार की कीमतें पहले थीं जब

कि एक और नीति थी, उस समय से आज सारे देश में कीमतें कम हुयी हैं, खुले बाजार में सीमेंट के आने से जो उपलब्धता बढ़ी है तथा जो पहले सीमेंट मिलती नहीं थी अन्य परेशानियां थीं, वह अब मिलने लगी है। सारे देश में, इसकी वजह से बल्कि अधिकांशतः इस नीति का स्वागत किया गया है।

श्री भा० दे० खोबरागड़े : भावकितना कम हुआ है यह भी बताइये।

श्री नारायण दत्त तिवारी : श्रीमन्, खुले बाजार में जो भाव है वह देश के भिन्न-भिन्न भागों में, भिन्न-भिन्न नगरों, क्षेत्रों, शहरों में भिन्न-भिन्न है। जहाँ पर सीमेंट की उपलब्धता अधिक होती है खुले बाजार में, वहाँ दाम नीचे आ जाते हैं। जहाँ पर सीमेंट की मांग जैसे केरल है, वहाँ सीमेंट की मांग बहुत बढ़ गयी है क्योंकि वहाँ निर्माण कार्य ज्यादा हो रहा है, वही खुशी की बात है—लेकिन अधिकांशतः जो सीमेंट का अधिक उत्पादन होता है तमिलनाडु में, वहाँ बिजली की कमी की वजह से कम पैदा हो रही है, जबकि जो मुख्य सीमेंट उत्पादन करने वाले राज्य हैं जैसे कि तमिलनाडु, मध्य प्रदेश या राजस्थान, अगर वहाँ बिजली सीमेंट फैक्टरियों को कम मिलती है तो अनिवार्यतः उत्पादन कम होता है। जब उत्पादन कम होता है तो खुले बाजार में माल कम जाता है। जब माल कम जाता है तो दामों पर असर पड़ता है। इसके लिये हम पूरा प्रयास करते हैं कि बिजली की कटौती न हो तो इसलिये हमारा यह निरन्तर प्रयास है कि...

डा० भाई महावीर : 90 रुपये तक भाव गये हैं, यह जानकारी आपको है... (व्यवधान)

श्री नारायण दत्त तिवारी : मैं यह कह रहा था श्रीमान् कि यह मैं समझता हूँ कि अगर बिजली सीमेंट के फैक्टरियों को पूरी मिलती रही तो जैसे वह मिलती रही फिर फौरन उस क्षेत्र में काम कम हो गये हैं। तो हमारा निरन्तर प्रयास रहा है कि सीमेंट फैक्टरियों को बिजली मिले और राज्य सरकारें इसमें कटौती न करें। यह हमारा प्रयास रहा है। इसके लिये मैं सदन का ध्यान आशोधित चाहूँगा कि यह स्थिति बनी रहे। जहाँ तक दूसरा प्रश्न है नकली सीमेंट का...

श्री समापति : कहाँ से आता है।

श्री नारायण दत्त तिवारी : नकली सीमेंट के संबंध में श्रीमान्, आप जानते हैं कि यह सारा अधिकार, इस प्रकार की कार्यवाही करने का राज्य सरकारों के हस्त में है। सम्मानित सदस्य जानते हैं कि दिल्ली प्रशासन ने भी इस सम्बन्ध में प्रयास किया है। मैं इस बारे में दिल्ली प्रशासन से सूचना मंगा कर अवश्य सदन को भेज कर रख दूँगा।

जहाँ प्रश्न है कि इस सम्बन्ध में क्या कदम उठाये गये हैं, जैसा मैं पहले ही अवगत कर चुका हूँ, इस संबंध में यह योजना बनाई गयी है कि वेग लेवी और नान-लेवी के कलर किए जायें। दूसरे जो सीमेंट ग्राइंडिंग इस्टीमेट है और सीमेंट कंट्रोल आर्गनाइजेशन है वह इस संबंध में लगातार क्वालिटी मेंटन करने के बारे में देखता है, उनका कार्य है। इस संबंध में और भविष्य में चुस्ती रखी जायेगी ताकि सीमेंट का क्वालिटी कंट्रोल और अधिक नियन्त्रित किया जाय। सीमेंट कंट्रोल आर्गनाइजेशन इसका पूरा प्रयास करेगा। जो छोटे मकान बनाने वाले हैं उन के लिये

लेवी सिस्टम में है, लिखा हुआ है, जिन के मकानों का प्लिनथ एरिया 100 मीटर तक का है उनको लेवी सीमेंट मिलता है। दिल्ली प्रशासन को भी हम कहेंगे कि छोटे मकान बनाने वालों को जो सहुलित हमने दे रखी है वह दे।

श्री जे० के० जैन : मैंने रिपेयर्स के बारे में पूछा था। जो 100 मीटर का प्लिनथ एरिया है वह तो है। मैंने रिपेयर्स के लिए पूछा है।

श्री समापति : एक बोरी के बदले में दो बोरी, यह भी इन्होंने कहा था, उस के बारे में भी देख लीजिएगा।

श्री सदाशिव जागईतकर : इन्होंने बताया कि इन की संस्था जांच करती है। इन की संस्थाओं ने पिछले तीन सालों में जांच करके क्या नतीजे निकाले वह टेबिल पर रखें। नकली सीमेंट की जांच आपने करवाई है अपनी संस्थाओं की माफ़त, उसके नतीजे क्या हैं उस से सदन को अवगत कराइये।

श्री नारायण दत्त तिवारी : सम्मानित सदस्य इस बात को जानते हैं कि यह कार्य राज्य सरकार का है। (अवधान)

श्री सदाशिव जागईतकर : अगर राज्य सरकार का काम है तो राज्य सरकारों से सूचना मंगा कर अवगत करा दें। इसमें क्या दिक्कत है?

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: Sir, the Minister in his reply has stated that the increase in the price of cement bags is completely due to increase of price of coal and increase in wages in between. Sir, in the year 1980 the cement price was Rs. 29 per bag. Then it was increased to Rs. 81 for non-levy cement. Then, within

two or three months, again, it wai raised to Rs. 71 per bag. Last week, it was reduced from Rs. 71 to Rs. 66. That means, within one and a halt years the cement price was increased from Rs. 29 to Rs. 66 that is to say, showing an increase of more than 150 per cent than what it was just one and half years ago. Sir, there are reasons for this increase, but not to this extent. The increase in the price of coal and increase in the wages of the employees is not without limitation. These are the answers given by the Minister. I would like to know one thing. He has just now stated that there are two varieties of cement, levy and non-levy, and different colours also. Actually speaking, the price quoted for non-levy cement is more than the levy cement, and the actual consumers are given only non-levy cement. By the time it reaches the hands of actual users, they have to pay or they are expected to pay Rs. 66 but they actually have to pay Rs. 90 or Rs. 95. So, I want to know what are the real reasons—I do not want to know the exact reasons given by the Minister, I want to know the real reasons—for the increase in the price of cement from Rs. 29 to Rs. 90 or Rs. 95 per bag, according to the position of different States, and what exactly is the stage at which the matter stands at present. Unless and until the price is reduced from Rs. 71 to Rs. 29 or at the maximum to Rs. 40 per bag, you cannot expect hereafter in India a middle-class man to construct a- house. Cement alone costs 50 per cent of the total estimated cost in the construction of a building. So, *my* specific question *ia* what steps the Government have taken so far to reduce the price of cement. The price should be at least a minimum of Rs. 40 to Rs. 45.

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, the f.o.r. price of levy cement has been fixed by the Government. And so far as the retail price is concerned, it differs from State to State because while arriving at the retail price, local taxes, excise and other things are also added on to this. And

o far as the price of non-levy cement if concerned, as I said earlier, w« have no control on the distribution and the price of non-levy cement. But the CMA had conveyed to th» Government that they would be fixing Rs. 60 per bag in Maharashtra, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala and th« North Eastern States, and Rs. 56 per bag in all the other States and Union Territories. Sir, there have been reports of a spurt in the price of non-levy cement which were, as hac already been pointed out by my hon. senior colleague, due to the constraint in production, shortage of supply and greater demand. But , I may tell you, Sir, that the current prices of non-levy cement as reported by the Cement Controller at major consuming centres for the week ending 12th March 1983, are: Delhi—Rs. 64.56; Chandigarh—Rs. 64.56; Jaipur— Rs. 64.56; Bombay—Rs. 65 to Rs. 75; Ahmedabad—Rs. 64 to Rs. 79; Raj-kot^- Rs. 64 to Rs. 70; Madras—Rs. 64 to Rs. 78; Trivandrum—Rs. 68 to Rs. 8W; Bangalore—Rs. 64 to Rs. 78; and *so on*. And the increase in prices has been largely due to the shortage in production, caused by the power cut... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is what are you doing to bring down the price.

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, the only way to bring the prices down effectively is to increase production, and (*interruptions*).

SHRI B. D. KHOBRAGADE: Art you admitting your failure in controlling the prices?

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: It is an elementary principle of economic* that if you want to reduce the pric* you have to increase production.

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, I have not yet completed my answer.

AN HON. MEMBER: What •bo«t imported cement*

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, I have already said that there is no statutory control on the prices and distribution of non-levy cement. Though the Cement Manufacturers Association have indicated certain prices which they want to maintain and which they have maintained in two zones as indicated by them, there have been occasional spurts in the price of non-levy cement due to the factors which I have just enumerated. Government is keeping a constant watch on this matter and we are having a dialogue with the cement manufacturers also. And it is our endeavour to see that the cement prices are maintained at a reasonable level keeping in view the cost factors.

SHRIMATI USHA MALHOTRA: Sir, in spite of the dual system of pricing in cement which was actually brought in to discourage black-marketeering ...

SHRI AMARPROSAD CHAKRABORTY: It has encouraged.

SHRIMATI USHA MALHOTRA: It has not encouraged. Sir, I feel that a proper distribution system is the answer. Production is there. Cement is there. But there is something wrong somewhere in the distribution system which has got to be geared up to cater to the needs of the people. Is the Government aware that there is a shortage of cement in Delhi and there is adulteration at the dealer level? I would like to know whether any dealership has been cancelled after complaints have been received in that regard. In the context of adulteration I am saying this because it is being said that Jamuna sand is being mixed with cement over here. I would like the hon. Minister to kindly let me know whether any dealership has been cancelled on the basis of complaints received so far regarding adulteration of cement. Then, is he aware of the fact that cement is available to people who are

able to pay more? If so, what deterrent measures are being taken to discourage this malpractice?

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, I would not deny that there is no black-market in cement in the country. There are some unscrupulous elements who are taking advantage of the shortage. But as and when these people are apprehended, action is taken against them under the relevant law of the country. So far as the contention of the hon. Member that there is plenty of production of cement in the country is concerned, and that there is only the question of distribution, I may say that it is not a fact, may point out...

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Where is the black market? (Interruptions). There is no statutory control. You have legitimised all that.

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: I may say, Sir, that in 1982-83 there was a demand of 32.64 million tonnes of cement in the country. As against that, the production was 23 million tonnes and we imported 1.3 million tonnes. Still there was a shortfall of more than 8 million tonnes. In the year 1983-84, the demand is estimated to be 35.25 million tonnes. The domestic production is estimated to be 28 million tonnes and we expect to import 2 million tonnes of cement and the estimated shortfall of cement is 5.25 million tonnes. (Interruptions),

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: Who is the biggest consumer of cement? According to me, the EPI is the biggest consumer. (Interruptions)

आप ऐक्स्ट्रेक्ट क्यों बोल रहे हैं। आप बता दीजिए कि सबसे बड़ा कंज्यूमर सीमेंट का कौन है ?

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: I am saying everything. I am replying to the question raised by the hon. lady

Member. The hon. Member has also asked the question how many dealers have indulged in blackmarketing or are not supplying cement at stipulated price*. As has been stated, Sir, these matters are occasionally reported to the State Governments and the State Governments have taken action against such people whenever these matters are reported. But, we in the Central Government are keeping the entire situation under review. We are constantly watching the situation and we are impressing upon the State Governments to see that all cases involving blackmarketing... (Interruptions)

SHRI B. D. KHOBRAGADE: We want the figures.

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: involving supply of spurious cement, are properly dealt with.

SHRI B. D. KHOBRAGADE: How many cases have been detected and in how many cases has there been conviction? (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order. Please sit down. Everybody, please sit down. Mr. Minister, have you finished?

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, the hon. Members have asked so many things. Sir, should I reply...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Only about distribution.

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, so far as the question of the hon. lady Member is concerned, I have replied it but there have been so many other interruptions. Should I reply to them also?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, please distinguish between the person who has asked the question and those who have disturbed the proceedings. (Interruptions)

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: When he says that there is black market in

cement, we want to know what is the definition because on non-levy cement there is no price control...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You know the distinction of blackmarket as well as anybody else knows.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Black market is said to be there, Sir, when that if there is a statutory control on price and if it is sold beyond that controlled price then only can we say there is black market. But presently they have no control. So, even if it is sold at Rs. 90 or Rs. 100 a bag, there is no 'black market' as such.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Last question.

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Mr. Chairman, the House knows well that cement is an essential commodity, very susceptible and vulnerable to blackmarketing. Reasons have also been given. But what I find from the Budget is that the Government is going to impose additional excise raising it from Rs. 135 to Rs. 205. This will, in turn, have its own effect on the spiralling prices unless the Government watches the supply position very carefully. One of the reasons given is shortage of power. And that is a very basic reason. I would like the hon. Minister to tell the House whether the Government has a scheme of providing encouragement and incentive for the factories to set up captive power plants so that they do not have to depend on external power.

SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI: Sir, whatever formulation the hon. Member has made I fully agree with it. We have already given incentive to all those factories which set up captive plants and which installed D.G. sets on or after 28-2-1982. I have already laid the Notification in this connection on the Table of the House.