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Title: Need to check rise in the price of cement in the country.

SHRI D. VENUGOPAL (TIRUVANNAMALAI): The dreams of thousands of lower middle class people still continue unrealized as they are not able to construct houses due to high price of construction materials. The cement price rise has hit them hard. This has resulted in reduced job generation and non-fulfillment of an essential need, the shelter to dwell. Increased duty on coal and enhanced oil prices has, of course, added up, to the cost of cement production. But according to economists the increase can be only about Rs. 8 per bag of 50 Kilogram. But to the contrary, the price of cement has increased considerably high throughout the country.

Union Government must take steps to ensure that the middle class people could get cement at a regulated price for house construction. When cement factories can sell cement to big construction companies at a reduced price, they can also sell it at the same reduced price to the deserving middle class people constructing houses themselves.

Similar to the open quota system for sugar production, cement must be distributed at a regulated price through district administrations all over the country. Else the Government must pay subsidy to the lower middle class people who go in for constructing houses thereby giving a boost to our economy. Hence, I urge upon the Government to evolve a national policy to check cement price rise.