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Title: Need to set up a price regulatory mechanism to monitor and control the rising price of cement in the country.

SHRI S. SEMMALAI (SALEM): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to express my thanks to you for permitting me to raise the issue of regulating the cement price.

Sir, there has been an unprecedented rise in the price of cement with no regulation whatsoever. But there has been no rationale behind the surge in the price of cement. There is also no appreciable increase in the price of inputs. Then, why is the price of cement rising? There is a widespread feeling that the industry has formed a cartel which is creating an artificial scarcity and hiking the price then and there.

At present the production has also increased but the prices have not come down appreciably.

I fear that if this present trend continues and unchecked, the construction activities will come to a grinding halt. The construction workers are suffering due to the halt in the construction activities. Even the middle class families' dream of constructing a small house gets dashed because of the price rise. Not only the price of cement but also the price of sand and bricks are also in an upward trend.

I am unable to understand the failure of the price mechanism and demand and supply equation in so far as cement is concerned.

So, I would like to make an appeal to the Government to set up a price regulatory mechanism to monitor and control the price of cement.

It will be more appropriate to refer this issue to the Competition Commission of India to prevent the formation of this cartel. I would request the Government to pay serious attention to this issue.