

बाहें तो वह लिखकर भेज दें, उस का पूरा उत्तर उन को मिल जायगा। हवाई तरफ से कोई उत्तर नहीं देने की बात नहीं है . . .

श्रीमती तारकेश्वरी लिहा : अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह तरीका नहीं है . . .

Mr. Speaker: The same thing got us into trouble in the beginning. Of course he has said that it is happening. It is not the first time; a number of times information has been given to the hon. Members when they write. Suppose he has not got full information with him, he can say that if hon. Members write, he will supply it. It is not that I am supporting anybody. Now, therefore, we should go to the next question.

Shri Shrichand Goel: Sir, one question.

Mr. Speaker: There are a number of questions which are very, very important, such as those on the Vivian Bose Commission, Hazari report and so many other things. I know the hon. Member's question is important; he gets up and says it is important. But I have given 20 minutes for this question alone. Next question.

Shri Tenneti Viswanatham: May I submit that if this question is left at this stage, the intransigence of Pakistan will increase.

Mr. Speaker: It does not matter. There are other methods of meeting it. Next question.

Shrimati Lakshminathanamma: Sir, I have a request to make. It is about the statement relating to this question. In the Notice Office, by the time we go and ask them, they have very few copies with them; the copies are exhausted by that time and they do not give us. So, it is very difficult to get the statement and read it. Let there be more copies.

Mr. Speaker: We will increase the number of copies. **Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait:**

Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait: I have not got a copy of the statement and so I am unable to put a question.

An hon. Member: The Minister should read the statement.

Mr. Speaker: I have no objection.

Price of Cement

*92. **Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait:**
Shri M. Rampure:
Shri S. Supakar:
Shri Chintamani Panigrahi:
Shri N. K. Sanghi:
Shri Ramachandra Veerappa:
Shri Ram Kishan Gupta:

Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the manufacturers of cement to increase the cement price in the country;

(b) whether Government have considered this demand; and

(c) if so, the result thereof?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (**Shri Bhann Prakash Singh**): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. I shall read it.

The Cement Allocation and Coordinating Organisation of the Cement Industry has sought the approval of the Government to bring about uniformity in the retention price payable to cement producers. The industry proposes to achieve uniformity gradually by utilising whatever funds that are available with it towards upgrading the retention price upto Rs. 88 per tonne in respect of the producers who are in the lower groups. For this purpose, it would not seek any increase in the selling price of cement.

Instead, it has asked those producers who are using oil to switch back to the cheaper fuel of coal, so that the money spent on using oil would become available for bringing about a uniform retention price. Some of the producers who may not be able to switch back to coal immediately have volunteered to forgo the extra price for using oil with effect from 1st April, 1967 in the interest of achieving a uniform retention price.

The industry has also sought the approval of Government to increase the selling price of cement by Rs. 2.80 per tonne to meet the increased cost of transportation of the commodity over longer distances to feed scarcity pockets and also to export some quantity of cement incurring a loss. The industry has also proposed to increase the retail price of cement by Rs. 4 per tonne to provide for increased costs of retail distribution and a higher profit margin to stockists.

All these proposals are under the examination of Government at present.

The industry's representatives have also intimated that the costs of production have gone up considerably since decontrol and that the industry is at present engaged in making a detailed study of the extent to which it would be necessary to increase the retention price. They propose to submit a memorandum in July, 1967.

Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sahi: May I know from the Government, in view of the policy of the Government to keep down the prices of essential commodities, whether the Government will refuse the demand of the industrialists and not raise the cement prices?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F. A. Ahmed): As has been indicated in the reply, the entire matter is under examination. But I can inform the hon. Member that so far as the question of increasing the commission to retail dealers or stockists by about Rs. 4 per tonne is concerned, it has been proposed by the producers.

I have already indicated to them that if the commission has to be raised for the purpose of giving any benefit to the retail dealers it can be done by the producers without increasing the price for the consumers.

Shri Supakar: Last year, when the control was lifted after giving the cement manufacturers a lot of concessions with the hope that they would not raise the prices, but so soon after that they have come with a proposal for raising the price not merely on the ground that the cost of production is more but also on the plea that they want to export some cement at a loss and recoup the loss by raising the price. I do not know how far the Government can agree to such an absurd proposal. I want a definite answer to this question.

Shri F. A. Ahmed: I may inform the hon. Member that cement was decontrolled with effect from 1st January, 1966. After that, when this organisation came into existence, they took the responsibility of maintaining the price as well as the supply, and no prices have been increased since then. But they have been approaching the Government from time to time for price increase because of freight payable on cement which has to be taken from one place to another and, in case of a longer distance, and the pool collected for the purpose of equally distributing the incidence is not adequate. As the freight collections are not sufficient to meet the actual expenditure, and so, the Government have allowed them the increase for which they are actually not responsible.

Shri Kandappan: There has been a persistent demand from the producers to increase the price of cement after decontrol. I would like to know from the Minister the special circumstances that warrant the producers to make such an insistent demand to increase the price.

Shri F. A. Ahmed: There are at present three groups prevailing.

namely, the low production group, the medium production group and the high production group. For these different rates are there. Recently there has been a difference of opinion about this among the producers and they have approached the Government for approval of a uniform retention price. That proposal is also under our examination, but the condition attached to that is that so far as the consumer is concerned, it will not result in an increase in the price. I have already indicated that they were also anxious to increase the profit or the commission to retail dealers, by Rs. 4 per tonne. I have also already indicated that if they want to give it to the retail dealers they can do so, but not at the cost of the consumers.

Shri Shashi Ranjan: Due to the variation in the retention price, which are the companies which are benefited by it and which are the companies which suffer from it?

Shri F. A. Ahmed: Retention prices are three in number, as I have said. So far as the low cost category is concerned, the retention price is Rs. 90.50; in the case of the middle category it is Rs. 93.50 and so far as the high cost category is concerned, it is Rs. 96. Now they want to have the uniform price of Rs. 96. So, the low cost group and the middle cost group will benefit, but, at the same time, there is a suggestion that whatever additional benefit will be derived by them that will be put for the purpose of development and they will not be allowed to increase the dividend to their shareholders.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: When the price of cement was increased last time, it was mentioned before the House that this increased amount will be used for constructing or establishing new factories and for the modernisation of the cement plants and for improvement in production also. I would like to know whether that has been done by the private sector and, if not, what steps are the Government contemplating

ing to take to see that the money is properly utilised by them?

Shri F. A. Ahmed: We are having this matter examined, whether the increase in the price allowed to them on a previous occasion has been actually put by them in the fund for the purpose of development. If we find that no such action has been taken we shall see how that can be implemented.

Shri S. S. Kothari: Is it a fact that during the last decade the cement industry did not develop sufficiently because of inadequate return on the capital employed?

Shri F. A. Ahmed: That is a question of opinion. We feel there is plenty of scope for the development of the industry even under the existing prices.

श्री प्रकाशचारी शास्त्री : सीमेन्ट पर मे कन्ट्रोल हटने के बाद उपभोक्ताओं को अधिक मे अधिक मात्रा मे सीमेन्ट नती मिल रहा था— इस के सम्बन्ध मे पत्रले उद्योग मंत्री श्री श्रीवास्तव ने एक कागज यह बनाया था कि नये बेगन्ड पूरी न मिलने मे सीमेन्ट का इधर उधर जना पूरा सम्भव नहीं हो पा रहा है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ अब उपरोक्त स्थिति क्या है? क्या अभी भी सीमेंट में सीमेन्ट का भारी बोझ में स्टॉक जमा है?

श्री ए० ए० बहवर : सीमेन्ट कार्गो है जोर जहा मक भरी इन्कमेंशन है किसी एरिया मे कम्प्लेंट नहीं पाई है कि उन एरिया में सीमेन्ट नती पहुंच रहा है।

श्री बदल बिहारी साकसेवी : गांधी में सीमेन्ट अभी भी नहीं पहुंच रहा है।

Foreign Collaboration Rules

*93. Dr. Ramen Sen:

Shri Dhireswar Kalita:

Shri K. M. Abraham:

Shri F. P. Bhatnagar: