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Title: Rise in prices of construction materials.

SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN (ADOOR): Sir, I wish to raise a very important matter regarding unaffordable prices of construction materials. To have a house is an ambition of everybody. But now-a-days, as far as the low income group in the society is concerned, construction of a house has become a dream only. This is due to unaffordable prices of construction materials such as steel, cement, sand, etc. The price of steel has increased by Rs. 10/- per kilogram within a period of one month. The price of cement has increased by Rs. 10/- to Rs.15/-within a period of four months. There is no justification for the abnormal increase of price in these materials since there is no increase in the production cost. All the attempts made by the Government to decrease the price did not find any result. While the production cost of one bag of cement comes to Rs. 60/- only, the consumers are compelled to pay Rs. 265/- per bag. The major cement manufacturers in the country paid 175 per cent dividend to the shareholders for the last year. So, the profit of the companies comes to 250 per cent. In view of these facts, there is no justification for increasing the prices of construction materials arbitrarily.

So, the only solution which I would suggest is that the system of levy cement may be reintroduced in the country so that the low income group people in the country can get cement at a subsidized price. The Union Government may kindly consider the suggestion seriously and come forward with a helping hand to the common people in the country so that they can get the building materials at a reasonable price.