

LOK SABHA DEBATES

2

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, December 10, 1980/
Agrahayana 19, 1902 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Shortage of Cement

+

*327. SHRI KUMBHA RAM ARYA:
SHRI CHHANGUR RAM:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be
pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware
of the acute shortage of cement in the
country and the high premium at
which it is being sold in the black
market;

(b) if so, the extent of shortfall in
the production of cement since Jan-
uary, 1980 stating the major factors
responsible for the shortfall in pro-
duction; and

(c) the steps taken by the Govern-
ment to step up the production of
cement and to meet the gap between
demand and supply?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI
CHARANJIT CHANANA): (a) There
is a shortage of availability of cement
in the country. In such circumstances,
possibility of black marketing cannot
be ruled out.

(b) As against the norms of utilisa-
tion of capacity of 85 per cent for the
cement industry as accepted by the

Working Group appointed by the plan-
ning Commission, the production dur-
ing the period January to October,
1980 was of the order of 71 per cent
on an average. This has mainly been
on account of external constraints in
regard to supply of adequate coal and
power to cement industry.

(c) Every effort is being made to
make available adequate coal and
power to the cement industry to step
up indigenous production, besides
sanctioning new capacities and allow-
ing imports.

श्री कृष्णा राम आर्य: मंत्री महोदय का
कहना है कि कमी की वजह से ब्लैक में
नकारा नहीं जा सकता है। मैं जानना
चाहता हूँ कि ब्लैक की रोक-थाम के लिए
सरकार ने क्या-क्या कदम उठाये हैं।

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: The
first thing that we are trying to do is
to remove these constraints which are
there which are known as infrastruc-
tural constraints. We are monitoring
the processes of supply of power, sup-
ply of coal and supply of transport to
the industrial units from unit to unit.
The export of cement outside has been
banned except to Nepal and Bhutan.
Secondly, a Cabinet Sub-Committee is
currently considering various measures
adopted for conservation of cement.
(3) Cement is being imported. In fact,
in the pipeline, we have an import
commitment of 2 million tonnes for
the year 1980-81. (4) The govern-
ment has already granted assistance to
the cement industry for the use of
captive power for the production of
cement during the period of power
cuts. Then the production of the exist-
ing units is also closely monitored to
ensure better capacity utilization. Im-
port of precastinated technology has
been permitted to enable increase in
production. The construction of on-

[Shri Charanjit Channa]
going projects is reviewed and expedited. Then the government have also decided to encourage the setting up of cement plants at the site or near steel plants to utilize the slack. Now, the government have also decided to encourage the setting up of a large number of mini cement plants and mini cement plants are those which have installed capacity for the manufacture of cement not exceeding 200 tonnes per day. As on 1-9-1980 the total capacity approved by way of registration in the mini cement sector is 3.784 million tonnes shared by 85 units.

श्री कृष्ण राम आर्य: मैंने जो प्रश्न पूछा है, मंत्री महोदय ने उसका जवाब नहीं दिया है। मैंने पूछा है कि जब वह ब्लॉक से इन्कार नहीं करते हैं, तो उसकी रोक-थाम के लिए उन्होंने क्या कदम उठाये हैं।

श्री चरणजीत चानना: ब्लॉक का रीजन मैंने बताया है कि शार्टेज आफ सीमेंट है और शार्टेज को दूर करने के तरीके भी बताये हैं। जहां तक ब्लॉक का ताल्लुक है, ब्लॉक में सीमेंट बेचना एक क्राइम है। अगर इस बारे में कभी भी कोई रिपोर्ट की जाये, तो

That is taken as a criminal offence. It is a question of law and order. The government is taking necessary steps. चूंकि सीमेंट को ब्लॉक में बेचना एक क्राइम है, इस लिए जो कोई यह क्राइम करता है, उसके खिलाफ वही कार्यवाही की जाती है, जो एक कानून तोड़ने वाले के खिलाफ की जाती है।

भा.आर्य. भगवान बबे: राजस्थान में सीमेंट सम्बन्धी पत्थर पर्याप्त मात्रा में मिलता है, तो सीमेंट की कमी को दूर करने के लिए क्या राजस्थान में कोई नई फ़ैक्ट्री स्थापित करने के लिए सरकार ने कुछ विचार किया है? यदि किया है तो कहाँ-कहाँ और कौन-कौन सी फ़ैक्ट्री खोलने की इजाजत सरकार ने दी है?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are two States which are very rich in limestone and the Government promotes and encourages the setting up of cement plants both in Rajasthan as

well as in Madhya Pradesh. 26 proposals are under consideration for both these States.

SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULEKAR: Some months back we have passed the Preventive Detention Act for black-marketeers and hoarders. I would like to know from the hon. Minister how many persons have been arrested for indulging in blackmarketing in cement. Secondly, the Minister said that unless the constraints are removed, the blackmarketing cannot be checked. Are we to take it that the blackmarketing will continue till the constraints are removed and how long it will take to remove the constraints?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: I will answer the second question first. I have not said that blackmarketing can be eliminated by additional production. I only said, one of the reasons for blackmarketing is shortage of cement. We are making all efforts to reduce the shortage of cement. Regarding the first part, data on crime on account of blackmarketing in cement, it is a State subject. If he wants, the data will have to be collected.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: We are more in number; they are less in number. You cannot give more opportunities to the opposition. It has to be on the basis of the strength in Parliament. (Interruptions).

श्री कृष्ण बत्त: हिमांचल प्रदेश में चम्बा, पोंटा, राजबन और विलासपुर में सीमेंट के कारखाने लगाने का प्रावधान किया जा रहा है, मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि पोंटा में जो फ़ैक्ट्री है उस का सारा उत्पादन हिमांचल प्रदेश में नहीं दिया जा रहा है, उस का क्या कारण है? साथ-साथ मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि चम्बा और विलासपुर का जो प्रोजेक्ट है वह कब तक पूरा हो जायेगा?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: Both the projects are under consideration. The H. P. Chief Minister and myself had a meeting last morning to discuss this thing. We have asked for some details from them. As soon as those

details come, we will give full consideration to these two project applications.

SHRI P. NAMGYAL: May I know what is the present position regarding availability of cement in the country and what steps Government propose to take for timely supply of cement to the land-locked areas like Ladakh where because of road blockade, we are not getting timely supply of cement?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: I can only give you the figures of production for the last few months from July, 1980—July 14.46, August 15.13, September 15.29 and October 16.17

(अवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय: अब बहुत हो गया, 10 मिनट हो गए हैं।

(अवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय: आप इसमें ज्यादा करते हैं तो हाफ एन आवर डिस्कशन रखो।

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: As far as transport bottleneck in Ladakh area is concerned, we are taking all measures to see that cement is supplied to them. This is a priority area and we give top priority to it.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: There are several factors responsible for the shortage of cement. I would like that the shortages are minimised to the extent possible and the distribution system of cement is streamlined. I would like to know whether he has got any information that the manufactures of cement have appointed their own agents for distribution. Will the Minister consider taking over the distribution system throughout the country and see hat the distribuion of cement is sreamlined? Then only he can minimise the shortages at least by 150 per cent.

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: We will give due consideration to the suggestion of the hon. member.

Special Cell for development of North Eastern Region

*328. **SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN-DEV:** Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India propose to start a 'Special Cell' in its Industry Department to boost up the economic and industrial development of the North Eastern region; and

(b) if so, what are the "Industrial Units" to be taken up by the proposed Cell?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA): (a) & (b) No, Sir. Government have however decided to set up a special Group to deal with the problems relating to small, scale industrial units located in the industrial estates in the States and Union Territories of the North-East region, with a view to identify the problems of individual units, their raw meterial and financial requirements and make such arrangements as are necessary to enable these units to function well as early as possible.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: I am neither surprised nor shocked at the answer of the Minister, because my question has a background. In this House, when we had occasion to discuss the Assam budget on three occasions, all members, irrespective of their parties, said that the one of the reasons for the present turmoil in Assam is economic backwardness and all demanded that there should be industrial development there. After taking oath as Member of Parliament, I wrote letters to the Minister on 5th April, 14th May and 3rd July. One of them was forwarded by the Prime Minister to the Minister for action. All of them are being looked into and I have received no reply as yet. In view of this, I feel the Minister has no time to look after the interets of the north-eastern region. So, I say that there should be a special cell for looking after the industrial development of the north-eastern region. Either the Minister should give an assurance that