

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):

(a) Yes, but most applications are from sugar mills.

(b) Government propose to issue permits for import of raw sugar for refining purposes only.

(c) It is difficult to say at this stage how much will be actually imported.

Shri Kasliwal: Is this sugar imported as anticipatory to short production due to a further fall in sugarcane acreage?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Not at all. We want to employ the idle capacity of the sugar mills. Some of them work for only two or three months, and during the rest of the period they lie idle. We want to import some sugar and give it to them for refining purposes, so that they may have work during the other times also. But in the present context, it may be said that because of sugar shortage also we are thinking of all these things.

Shri Kasliwal: Have Government fixed any quota or target for import of sugar during 1954, and if so, whether the import of this sugar is included in that quota or is over and above that quota?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The target for sugar has been announced on the floor of this House. We fell short of our sugar requirements last year and had to import sugar. This year also we will have to import sugar. We expect the consumption to be about 17 lakh tons whereas the production this year may be 10½ lakh tons. If required, the rest of the sugar will have to be imported.

Shri Bogawat: May I know the rates allowed for refining this raw sugar?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: It depends upon the price of raw sugar outside.

Shri Bogawat: Is there no fixed rate?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: No.

TELEPHONE MESSAGE RATE SYSTEM

*1583. **Sardar Hukam Singh:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the message rate system has been extended to any other stations during 1953-54; and

(b) what has been the income of Delhi Telephones from Telephone Number '94' since it was metered?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes; it was extended to three exchanges:

- (i) Allepey
- (ii) Kottayam
- (iii) Quilon in 1953.

(b) The estimated revenue is about Rs. 4,20,000 upto 15th March, 1954 from the date of metering which is 1st September, 1952.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Has the introduction of the message rate system affected the income on account of telephones from the stations that have been brought within its operation?

Shri Raj Bahadur: There is not any significant change. If anything, it has shown an upward trend.

Sardar Hukam Singh: May I know whether the decision to meter Telephone Number '94' was taken purely on account of financial considerations or on any other grounds as well?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It was taken in the interests of efficiency of service also. We were getting during the busy hours as many as 4,000 to 5,000 calls per hour.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Have Government ever considered the advisability of cutting off this meter for at least one hour in the morning to help the subscribers to adjust their watches in the morning?

Shri Raj Bahadur: That is a suggestion we shall bear in mind.