

IMPORT OF RAW SISAL

*1650. **Shri G. L. Chaudhary:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state how much raw-sisal was imported from East Africa during 1953-54?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): Import of raw sisal is allowed under Open General Licence. Since imports of raw sisal are not recorded separately in the Customs Returns, it is not possible to furnish information with regard to import of this commodity from East Africa during 1953-54.

REGIONAL NEWS BULLETINS

*1651. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) which A.L.R. stations broadcast regional news bulletins; and

(b) whether there is any proposal to have such bulletins broadcast from all the radio stations in India?

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): (a) Regional news bulletins are being broadcast from Lucknow and Nagpur. Similar service will be started at Bombay from 15th of April, 1954 and at Calcutta and Madras from the 1st of May, 1954.

(b) Yes.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know when the benefits of this service will be extended to the other radio stations in India?

Dr. Keskar: Very soon, I expect. This service was first started only as an experimental measure, because we did not want to invest a lot of money and start a service, which, at the initial stage, might take, from want of experience, some kind of readjustment. We therefore began it only in one or two stations, and the experiment has succeeded. We have now proposed to open three or four more such regional news bulletin centres,

and I hope very soon it will be extended to all the stations which are State headquarters.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Is it not a fact that in these regional news broadcasts, more attention is given to local and sectional news, rather than to news of all-India importance?

Dr. Keskar: Not to sectional news, but certainly to regional news, because the regional news bulletin is meant for the regional news. News of an all-India character is broadcast in all languages from here, and it is picked up by most of the stations concerned.

Shri K. K. Basu: May I know whether these news items are collected through A.I.R.'s own organisation, or through the news agencies, or through other governmental sources?

Dr. Keskar: We propose to have our own people at most of these centres. They have not yet been appointed, but wherever we have these centres, we propose to have our own men. We have, for instance, one correspondent at Lucknow, and another at Nagpur. At the other three centres that we propose to have, we intend appointing our own men. In addition, the local agency coverage will also be used.

GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

*1652. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Geographical Society of India is planning an expedition to the northern frontiers of India in order to map the uncharted parts of that region; and

(b) if so, when that expedition is likely to be undertaken?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shri Anil K. Chanda): (a) and (b) Government have no information about this expedition.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Are Government aware of the recent map