

(c) The courses which will be run have not yet been finalised. For the basic courses, which are being run at present, there will normally be 24 trainees in each course. Details of the instructional staff are given in the statement placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 12.]

(d) Trainees must have sound physical fitness with capacity for grasping the essentials of the syllabus. As regards trainers, no minimum qualification has yet been prescribed and selections have been made on an *ad hoc* basis.

FIRE IN I.A.F. STORE AT KHERIA

*555. **Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a store room of the Indian Air Force at Kheria (Agra) caught fire in the month of October, 1954;

(b) if so, what was the total loss as a result of this fire;

(c) whether the cause of the fire has been ascertained; and

(d) if so, what was the cause?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Shri Satish Chandra): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). A Court of Inquiry has been ordered to investigate the cause of the fire and assess the loss. The findings of the Court are awaited.

TRIPURA JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION

*556. **Shri Dasaratha Deb:** Will the Minister of States be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representation has been made by the Tripura Journalists' Association to the Government complaining that no Press Conference is being called by the Chief Commissioner of Tripura, though it was assured by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs on the floor of the Council of States in April 1954;

(b) whether the said Journalists' Association has demanded any sub-

sidy on air charge for importing newsprint; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative, what steps Government intend to take in the matter?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): (a) and (b). The Government of India have received copies of certain resolutions passed at the first annual conference of the Tripura Journalists' Association which relate to the holding of regular press conferences and reduction of air freight charges on newsprint.

(c) Government do not consider that there is justification for the grant of subsidy for the air-lifting of newsprint into Tripura as it can be brought by surface route *via* Pakistan. As regards the decision relating to the holding of press conferences in Tripura, the Chief Commissioner will convene such conferences as and when necessary.

बेतन की उच्चतम सीमा

*५५७. श्री बी० पी० सिंह : क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार अपने कर्मचारियों के बेतन की कोई उच्चतम सीमा निश्चित करने की बात सोच रही हैं ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो वह निश्चित रकम क्या होगी ?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri M. C. Shah): (a) and (b). Based on the recommendations of the Central Pay Commission, Government have already fixed a maximum limit of Rs. 3,000 as pay for their employees under the Revised Pay Rules.

U.S. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AID AGREEMENT

*558. **Sardar Iqbal Singh:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians who were sent to U.S.A. during the year 1953-54