

the country is generated by the decennial census. According to the 1991 census, the number of working children in India is 11.28 million. The figures of the 2001 census have not been published. Industry wise figures of child labour are not maintained.

(b) Appropriate Governments are responsible for enforcement of the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. Employees found employing children in occupations and processes prohibited under the Act are prosecuted under the provisions of the Act which *inter-alia* provides for punishment with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three months but which may extend to one year or with fine which shall not be less than Rs. 10,000 but which may extend to Rs. 20,000 or with both. During the last four years from 1997—2001 9,35,737 inspections were conducted resulting in 21,420 prosecutions.

(c) The Government has noted the contents of the news-item referred. According to an independent survey conducted in 1998, 1350 children were found to be working in Jalandhar District of Punjab. These children are being rehabilitated through 27 special schools of 50 children each being run under the scheme of National Child Labour Projects. A Special check conducted by the State Government and NGOs, in February, 2002 in the sports goods industry did not find any child labour in the premises of the 23 establishments randomly checked.

Amendment in the Minimum Wages Act

970. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are proposing to bring amendment in the Minimum Wages Act for more stringent provisions; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) With a view to make the legal and penal provisions more stringent Government is exploring the possibilities to amend certain provisions of the Minimum Wages Act. However, given the steps and procedure involved, it is not possible to specify a definite time-frame.