श्रम मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती रामदुलारी) सिन्हा: (क) जी, हां ।

(ख) 1971 की जनगणना के अनुसार, नियोजित बालकों की कुल संख्या का अनुमान 10.7 लाख है । राष्ट्रीय नमूना सर्वेक्षण के आधार पर मार्च, 1978 में काम कर रहे बालकों की संख्या का अनुमान 1·63 लाख है । 1981 की जनगणना के पश्चात् नवीनतम आंकड़ों का उचित मूल्यांकन उपलब्ध होने की सम्भावना है ।

बाल श्रमिकों की समस्या देश में विद्यमान सामाजिक व आर्थिक परिस्थितियों के कारण पैदा हुई है । उन बच्चों के कल्याण को जिन्हें गरीबी के कारण काम करना पड़ता है, सुनिश्चित करना सरकार का प्रयास है । सरकार का यह विचार है कि यदि ऐसी परिस्थिति होती है जिनमें अभिभावक यह महसूस करते है कि उनके बच्चों को काम करना पड़े, तब यह सुनिश्चित किया जाए कि बाल श्रमिक इस प्रकार से काम करें ताकि उनके स्वास्थ्य या उनके भविष्य पर बुरा प्रभाव न पड़े । इस सम्बन्ध में आवश्यक उपाय किए जा रहे हैं ।

†[THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to 1971 census the total number of children employed was estimated to be 10.7 million. Based on the National Sample Survey, the number of working children in March, 1978 was estimated at 16.3 million. A proper assessment of the latest figures is likely to be available after the census in 1981.

The problem of child labour is the product of the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the country. It is the endeavour of Government to ensure the welfare of such of the children, as have, of necessity, to work. The Government is of the view that if there is a situation in which parents feel that their children must work then it should be ensured that they work in such a way as not to impair their health or their future. Necessary measures are being taken in this regard.

†[ ]English translation.

Non-traditional sources of Energy

@*449. SHRI HARVINDAR SINGH HANSPAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether her attention has been drawn to the fact that keeping in view the energy crisis all over, some countries have started producing briquettes from waste material which burns as good as coal;

(b) if so, whether sugarcane, lagasse, rice-husk, saw-dust, and even civic garbage which are abundantly available in the country are proposed to be made use of to manufacture briquettes as replacement of coal etc.; and

(c) if so, the nature of plans in this regard?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c). Government is aware of the work done in this country and abroad on the production of briquettes from waste material. In India, Regional Research Laboratory (RRL), Hyderabad, Central Fuel Research Institute, (CFRI) Dhanbad National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) Limited, New Delhi, a Government of India Undertaking, and some others, have done considerable work on fuel briquettes. At NSIC, the technology

@Previously Starred Question No. 289 transferred from the 8th December, 1980.

for converting saw-dust, forest waste, rice-husk, etc. into fuel briquettes has been tried and evaluated; suitable machinery for their production on large scale is being developed. Rodolph Gunnerman (USA), one of the pioneers in this field, developed the technology to convert cheap fibrous wastes into pellets capable of producing as much energy as coal with less pollution. These pellets are being produced on pilot scale in U.S.A., Sweden, Canada, Philippines, etc. In India, pilot plants have been installed at RRL, (Hyderabad), and CFRI, (Dhanbad), to produce fuel briquettes from coal dust, rice husk and some agricultural residues.

Considerable work is in progress in this country to develop technologies to convert agricultural residues and civil garbage by fermentation and bioconversion processes into fuel and feed stock such as biogas and ethanol. Aspects relating to the effective and large scale utilization of agricultural residues and civil garbage for purposes of energy are under examination taking into account availablity, present usage pattern and economics that are involved.

Tarapore Atomic Power Station

*450. SHRI HARISHANKAR BHABHRA:

SHRI JAGANNATHRAO JOSHI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the Tarapore Atomic Power Station, there have been chronic problems associated with the Boiling Water Reactors and hazards of Radiation Exposure for workers;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and what is the number of incidents of exposure at the Power Station till now; and

(c) what steps Government are taking for the safety of workers?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). All workers who are required to work in radiation areas are inevitably exposed to radiation. All possible precautions are being taken to ensure that the exposures are within the levels permitted by the International Commission on Radiological Protection. Some of the more important precautions are:

(i) Steps are always taken to ensure speedy removal of radioactivity from working systems.

(ii) Continuous recordings of exposure of workers are monitored on a fortnightly basis in order to ensure that no one receives doses in excess of permissible limits.

(iii) Workers are subjected to whole body monitoring on a regular basis in order to ensure that, in the unlikely event of ingestion of radioactive substances, corrective steps could be taken immediately.

(iv) All radiation areas are subjected to regular monitoring to assess radiation effects.

(v) Radiation safety measures are controlled and supervised by the Health Physics Unit which works independently of the Management of the Station.

As a result of these measures, the average annual exposure of the workers at the Station has been much less than the levels permitted by ICRP.