

(e) whether Government have received a memorandum in this regard from 'Bhartiya Patita Uddhar Sabha'; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the policy being adopted by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT) (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE) : (a) and (b) Government of India is implementing a number of schemes and programmes for the upliftment of women and children under which grants-in-aid are released to voluntary organisations. In most of the cases grants are released to the State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations for further disbursement to the voluntary organisations. In some cases, proposals for grants-in-aid recommended by State Governments and Union Territory Administrations are considered and funds released to eligible organisations in accordance with the schematic pattern prescribed under different schemes. Grants-in-aid are also released directly to some national level voluntary organisations and other autonomous bodies registered under Societies Registration Act under control of the Government. This is in addition to programmes being run by the Government in the Central and the State Sectors.

(c) to (f) A proposal has been received from the 'Bhartiya Patita Uddhar Sabha' New Delhi which inter-alia contains suggestions for prohibition of prostitution and rehabilitation of prostitutes and their children. However, the subject matter 'Social Defence' falls in the State Sector. Government of India is not proposing to construct shelters (Ashrams) for prostitutes. However, a scheme for Strengthening of Protective Homes run under the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act in the States/Union Territories was formulated as part of observance of 1990 as the SAARC Year of the Girl Child. A sum of Rs. 18.56 lakhs was released as a one-time assistance to the Central Social Welfare Board for strengthening 16 Protective Homes in 11 States and the Union Territory of Delhi.

[*Translation*]

#### AREA UNDER FOREST IN BIHAR

114. SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the area under forest in Bihar;

(b) whether some part of the forest land has been used for developmental purposes;

(c) if so, the area of forest land in the state which has been converted into irrigated land; and

(d) the steps taken for the conservation of forest land in Bihar ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) Recorded forest area in Bihar is 29232 Sq. Km.

(b) and (c) Information is available in terms of the diversion of forest land for various non-forest purposes, including for development projects, irrigation projects etc. According to information readily available 2981 hectares of forest land was diverted for non-forestry purposes in Bihar since the enactment of the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. Out of this an area of 382 hectares related to irrigation projects, including submergence under impounded waters.

(d) Among the various steps being taken/initiated in Bihar for conservation of forests are more stringent enforcement of the provision of the Indian Forest Act and the Forest (Conservation) Act, implementation of Social Forestry or agro-forestry projects to meet increasing demand for fuel and fodder and timber so as to reduce pressure on forests, implementation of afforestation programmes to improve tree cover in degraded forest lands, increased patrolling by mobile armed squads and constitution of village committees for forest protection and management.

#### *Employment Card to Labourers*

115. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to issue employment card and provide pro-