

**Exploitation of Children**

3266. SHRI JANARDHANA  
POOJARY: Will (the Minister of  
HUMAN RESOURCE

DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report of a group of NHRC according to which at least 15% of commercial sex workers in Bombay, New Delhi, Madras, Calcutta, Hyderabad and Bangalore are children;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken/proposed to take any effective steps to save such children from exploitation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R.BOMMAI): (a) As per the finding of the survey on prostitution conducted by Central Social Welfare Board in six metropolitan cities 14.9% of prostitutes were below 15 years of age at the time of entry into the profession.

(b) and (c) Apart from stricter enforcement of the existing provisions of the following laws:

(i) The Indian Penal Code;

(ii) The Immoral Traffic Prevention Act; and

(iii) The Juvenile Justice Act, the Government has referred to the Law Commission certain amendments in the major criminal laws to tackle sexual abuse of children, recommended by the National Commission for Women. The Government has also set up a Central Advisory Committee for an ongoing review and recommendations of both legal and non-legal approaches to the rescue and rehabilitation of children in prostitution. In addition, the Government is attempting to bring about an overall improvement in the status of children, especially girl children, through better education, health care and empowerment of women.

**"Exemption from forest (conservation) Act, 1980"**

3267. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: DR.  
MAHESH CHANDRA SHARMA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that strict observance of the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, often cause avoidable delays in implementation of developmental projects/programmes in Rajasthan and other States in the country; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to exempt such projects/programmes from the provisions of the said Act by delegating powers to the State Governments wherein forest land is less than 50 hectares and is required specifically for public purpose, namely hospitals, school buildings, laying of pipelines, transmission lines, telephone lines, etc., if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) and (b) To avoid delays in implementation of developmental projects/programmes, the Government of India has simplified the guidelines issued under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 on 25.10.1992. The powers have been delegated to the Regional Offices of the Ministry to dispose off all proposals including decision regarding violation of the Act upto 5 ha. except in respect of proposals for regularisation of encroachments and mining. In respect of proposals involving diversion of forest area above 5 ha. and upto 20 ha. and all proposals for regularisation of encroachments and mining upto 20 ha., the proposals are examined by the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests/ Conservator of Forests in consultation with State Advisory Group and proposals are sent to this Ministry alongwith views of the Advisory Group for considering