(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to revamp Rashtriya Mahila Kosh and scrap Women Self Help Groups: and

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT(SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI): (a) and (b) It has been decided to extend skill development/capacity building for livelihood creation activities through training/ workshop besides lending credit to women through Intermediatary organizations (IMOs) for their empowerment with a view to strengthen and revamp RMK. However, there is no proposal to scrap Women Self Help Gorups.

**Rehabilitation of sex workers**

†414. DR. SANJAY SINH : Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to legalise the prostitution, if so, the details thereof:

(b) whether Government is also willing to rehabilitate sex workers, if so, whether Government intends to amend Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 for them;

(c) whether Government has also made an assessment of the enforcement of the above law and its impact on the lives of sex workers; and

(d) If so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Government is implementing 'Ujjawala' — a comprehensive scheme for prevention of trafficking and rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation since 04th December, 2007. The scheme is envisaged for women and children who are vulnerable to trafficking and those who are victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. Sex workers who wish to be rehabilitated can also avail of rehabilitation services provided under this Scheme.

Further, the Government is implementing a number of programmes/schemes for welfare and economic empowerment of women. Sex workers who fulfil the criteria laid down in the respective programmes / schemes can avail the benefits under them. There is no proposal to amend the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 for this purpose.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, with a view to improving the effectiveness in tackling the crime of human trafficking and to improve the responsiveness of the law enforcement machinery, exhaustive and consolidated advisories are issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in consultation with the Ministry of Women & Child Development to all States/UTs. These Advisories have a lasting impact on the law enforcement agencies across the country and have conveyed the seriousness and gravity of the crime.

**Plan to check menace of beggary**

†415. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of beggars has been growing day by day in different cities of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action plan to check begging by these beggars and to provide primary education to their children and home for them; and

(c) whether it is a fact that different papers and magazines have reported that there are many such secret agencies in operation who compel the beggars for begging by rendering them physically handicapped, whether the Government has taken cognizance of it and if so, the schemes made by the Government for its remedy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI VIJAY SAMPLA) : (a) No authentic data is available in this regard.

(b) and (c) The states are responsible for taking necessary preventive and rehabilitative steps. As per available information, 20 States and 2 Union Territories have enacted their own anti beggary legislation or adopted legislation enacted by other States/UTs. Presently, there is no Scheme of the Central Government on Beggary. National Consultation Meeting were held with the representatives of Central/State Governments, NGOs, Institute and Individual Experts in the field of Beggary to discuss the issues related to Beggary. In these meetings, it was inter-alia, recommended to explore the feasibility of framing a Central Scheme for rehabilitation of Beggars. Accordingly, a Scheme for Rehabilitation of Beggars/ Destitutes is under formulation.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.