

(c) For economic development of minorities, including Muslims, the National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation, a Public Sector Undertaking under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, has been set up. The objective of the Corporation is to provide concessional credit to weaker sections amongst minorities for starting self-employment ventures.

Participation of handicapped team in the World Summer Games

2821. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that recently a team of 105 handicapped/mentally retarded children, coaches and managers went to Dublin, Ireland to participate in the World Summer Games;

(b) whether the team won 110 medals out of which 34 were gold; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government to reward the children who have brought credit to the nation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL) : (a) to (c) The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment was requested by a Special Olympics, Bharat for financial assistance and it sanctioned Rs. 20 lakh as a grant in aid, to facilitate participation of an Indian team of 103 mentally challenged children, coaches and managers in the World Summer Games held in June 2003 at Dublin, Ireland. It has been reported by Special Olympics, Bharat that the team has won 110 medals including 34 gold. The Ministry has no plans to provide any further assistance.

Criteria for senior citizens

2822. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are different criteria at different places for senior citizenship;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to put a uniform criteria for the senior citizens; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?