

has been received in the National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC) for financing schemes under Artisans Assistance Project. The National Corporation has requested the A.P. Backward Classes Corporation to submit schemes as per the guidelines and keeping in view the allocation of funds during the current financial year.

Benefits to Retired Government Servant

1941. SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the pecuniary and non-pecuniary benefits provided to retired Government servant;

(b) the steps taken to ameliorate conditions for old people;

(c) whether the Government propose to increase in the income tax exemption limit in view of the present price hike;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps taken to provide assistance to the senior citizens for their medical treatment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be placed on the table of the House.

[Translation]

Expansion of Mumbai Metropolitan

1942. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to expand the jurisdiction of Mumbai Metropolitan city;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have allocated funds for the development of surrounding area of Mumbai; and

(d) if so, the name of the areas identified therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA: (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of (a) above question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Under the Centrally sponsored Scheme of Infrastructural Development in Mega Cities, a central assistance of Rs. 102.48 crore has been released from 1993-94 till date to Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority for infrastructure development in Mumbai Urban Agglomeration area. The areas of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC), Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) and Kalyan Dombivli Municipal Corporation (KDMC) are covered under the Mumbai Mega City Programme.

[English]

Task force on Science and Technology

1943. SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the report of the Inter-Ministerial "Task Force on Science and Technology in Independent India" has recommended allocation of two percent of GNP for Science and Technology during the Ninth Plan; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) An Inter-Ministerial Sub Group on Policy and Approach for the S&T sector for the 9th Five Year Plan recommended allocation of 2% of GNP for Science & Technology in the Ninth Plan period.

(b) According to the latest available statistics, the expenditure on S&T in India has hovered around one percent of GNP. This statistics does not include the expenditure incurred by the entities including business houses and companies which have not applied for recognition by the Ministry of Science & Technology. According to an estimate, if the contribution by such entities, business houses and companies are included, India's R&D expenditure as percentage of GNP would be around 2%. The expenditure made by Central