

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Section 77 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 was amended by Ordinance No. 13 of 1974 in view of the recent judgment of the Supreme Court in the case of Kanwarlal Gupta Vs. Amar Nath Chawla and others which had given a wider interpretation to the expression "incurred or authorized" so as to include within its scope expenses incurred not only by the candidate or his election agents, but also by a political party. By the amendment effected by the said Ordinance, the intention underlying section 77 of the Act has been clarified by providing that in computing the maximum amount under that section, any expenditure incurred or authorised by any other person or body of persons or political parties should not be taken into account, since otherwise candidates who had fought elections on the basis of the provision, as then understood in the light of earlier judicial decisions would have suffered undeserved hardship.

(c) No, Sir. However, Government are thinking of holding a meeting with the leaders of major political parties to discuss electoral reforms, including measures to cut down election expenses.

(d) Does not arise in view of answer to (c) above.

Statement of Minister of Supply and Rehabilitation on changes in Electoral System

1147. SHRI S. N. MISRA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Minister for Supply and Rehabilitation has stated in Poona that suitable changes in Electoral system with simultaneous

changes in the constitutional framework are likely to be made;

(b) if so, the nature of changes likely to be made; and

(c) the time by which Electoral system will be changed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI):

(a) to (c). The question presumably relates to a technical discussion in the 'Symposium on Future of Indian Democracy', organised by the Academy of Political and Social Studies in Poona on the 19th October at the S. P. College, in which Shri R. K. Khadilkar, Union Minister for Supply and Rehabilitation, was participating as its President. It is not uncommon on such occasions that questions of academic interest are posed and speakers express opinions thereon in their individual capacities. Even so, in the present case, it would seem that certain observations made by the Minister have been quoted out of context so as to create an impression that the Minister was giving the views of the Government on any aspect concerning "suitable changes in electoral system with simultaneous changes in the Constitutional frame work".

It may, however, be mentioned that a Bill to amend the Election Law, namely, the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 1973 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on the 20th December, 1973, and is pending in the House.

Restoration of full quota of kerosene oil to States

1148. SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has restored full supply of kerosene oil to the States;

(b) if so, from which month;

(c) whether some States are still facing acute shortage of kerosene; and

(d) if so, the demand of each State and the extent of present shortage?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI C. P. MAJHI):

(a) to (d). Although kerosene quotas to the States have been increased from November onwards, they have not been restored in full. Some economy in the consumption of petroleum products, particularly kerosene which is an item of personal consumption is necessary in view of the heavy burden placed on country's foreign exchange resources for import of petroleum products at steeply increased prices. In the past kerosene quotas to the States were reduced in some months by as much as 30 per cent. In November, State quotas have been fixed in such a manner, as to achieve a reduction in overall consumption to the extent of only about 10 per cent. States consuming small quantities of kerosene, below 500 tones per annum are, however, subjected to no cuts in their monthly quotas. Cuts in allocation to the other States are determined after giving due consideration to the extent of electrification and availability of other alternative fuel in the the States. No state has been subject to a cut of more than 15 per cent.

World Oil Meet at Baghdad

1149. **SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN:**
SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India attended the world oil meet held at Baghdad in October, 1974;

(b) if so, how many countries attended; and

(c) broad outlines of the subjects discussed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI K. R. GANESH):

(a) An international seminar on oil and raw materials was held at Baghdad from 1st to 4th November, 1974 for which Minister of Petroleum & Chemicals and a representative of Indian Oil Corporation were invited. However, Minister of Petroleum & Chemicals had expressed his inability to attend. The Managing Director of the Indian Oil Corporation (Marketing Division) had participated in the said seminar as a representative of IOC.

(b) and (c). The required information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Progress in oil drilling at Bakultala in West Bengal

1150. **SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE:**
SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in drilling for oil at Bakultala in 24 Parganas District of West Bengal; and

(b) when Government expect the first well to be ready?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI C. P. MAJHI):

(a) and (b). The land for the purpose has been acquired. Civil construction and other preliminary arrangements are in hand to take up drilling at Bakultala by about March 1975.