

(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 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.