

Television

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 *16. { Shri Shree Narayan Das:
 Shri Pratap Keshari Deo:
 Shri Sraddhakar Supakar
 Shri D. C. Sharma:

Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 363 on the 27th November, 1956 and state the progress so far made in the setting up of Television station at Bombay and in the experimental investigation at Delhi?

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): The plan for the main television unit at Bombay is included in the Second Five Year Plan. Some preliminary work in that connection, regarding a suitable site, has also been carried out. However, the question of any specific date to take up this project is dependent upon the availability of foreign exchange. This question is at present under immediate consideration of Government.

The proposal for a pilot television unit for experimental and educational purposes is being actively pursued. Some equipment for this Unit has already been obtained and efforts are being made to get further necessary equipment and training. Though it is difficult to fix a definite date, there is every hope that we will be able to get other essential equipment for this Unit soon, enabling it to function.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: What is the estimated expenditure of this pilot project to set up a television unit in Delhi?

Dr. Keskar: We have formulated this pilot project on the strength of some equipment that we got as a concession. I am not able to give the price of that concessional equipment, but we will probably have to spend about Rs. 5 lakhs more in order to make it function.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: May I know the name of the country from

which this machinery is to be obtained at a concessional rate?

Dr. Keskar: The original equipment that we got was given by Messrs. Philips who had got a small television unit here for the Industrial Exhibition. We have had talks with the UNESCO authorities after their session here and they are prepared to give, or arrange to give, us certain equipment for this purpose.

Shri Biren Roy: Would the hon. Minister in charge consider, in view of the importance and popular nature of Calcutta and also its cosmopolitan character, locating a station at Calcutta also, along with Bombay, at the time a television station is proposed to be set up.

Dr. Keskar: It is not possible to start television stations simultaneously at many places in India due to the question of cost; otherwise we will be very glad to do so.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): I would naturally hesitate to contradict my colleague, but some of us are not anxious to go ahead with television.

Mr. Speaker: No. 17—absent No. 18.

श्री बाजपेई: अध्यक्ष महोदय, प्रश्न संख्या १७ के सम्बन्ध में मुझे यह निवेदन करना है कि

Mr. Speaker: He is not the hon. Member against whom the question stands. The Member is absent; therefore, I have called the next question.

Consul-General's Office, New York.

*18. Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Consul-General's office in New York keeps in touch with private merchants who come there and if so how;