

Some highlights in the history of Pakistan Television

The News 25-11-84

Nov. 26, 1964: Rahbar Television Station, set up by Nippon Electric Co. (NEC), Japan, begins pilot transmission live, from a tent in Lahore — the first television project in the sub-continent. Crowds gather around television sets placed at shops and street corners; traffic comes to a halt in the city.

Feb. 15, 1965: Board of Directors of the Television Promoters Company (TPC) hold their first meeting, presided over by Secretary Information and Broadcasting Altaf Gauhar, paving the way for television to be set up on a permanent basis in Pakistan.

Feb. 25, 1965: TPC formally takes over Rahbar Television Station in Lahore from NEC Television Group. 60 per cent of the total share was owned by the Pakistan government, 30 per cent by NEC, and 10 per cent by Thomson Television International.

Sep. 1965: The importance of television is felt by both government and the masses, as the country goes to war with India. Central Television Institute (CTI) set up in Rawalpindi late that year by the government of Pakistan in collaboration with the Federal Republic of West Germany, which gifted

the necessary equipment.

Apr. 1967: A joint venture of PTC and a West German company, Asian Television Service (ATS) starts functioning, providing newsreels which gave a great boost to news coverage.

May 29, 1967: In an extra-ordinary general meeting, Television Promoters Company Ltd. is converted to into Pakistan Television Corporation Ltd.

Nov. 2, 1967: Karachi Centre commences transmission; the first full-fledged station housed in its own building and properly equipped.

Jan. 15, 1967: Rawalpindi-Islamabad Centre goes on air.

Mar. 1968: For the first time thousands of viewers witness the Hajj pilgrimage, when Karachi television station screens a dramatic documentary of the event.

Aug 18, 1968: Full length Pakistani feature film telecast for the first time, from Karachi Centre —but the songs were

cut out by the TV Censor Board.

Dec. 1968: Permanent transmitter installed at Lahore Centre.

May 9, 1969: Murree Hills Booster installed for Rawalpindi transmissions. The same year, main Urdu news broadcast was re-named 'Khabarnama' instead of 'Khabrain'.

Jan. 20, 1970: Coverage to political events initiated, in accordance with carefully framed guidelines to ensure impartiality.

Dec. 7, 1970: 35 hour non-stop transmission to convey minute-by-minute election results and news. Despite limited resources, this ambitious plan was successfully completed. The exercise was repeated ten days later for the provincial elections.

Jan. 1971: War in East Pakistan. Number of news bulletins increased; special arrangements made with the ISPR

(Inter Services Public Relations), PAF, Ministry of Defence and PIA for newsfilm to be flown in regularly. Special cameramen deployed at Dhaka to cover the fighting. However, the coverage of the war proved to be a dark period in the history of PTV —for upto December 14 viewers were told all was going well, only to learn on December 15 that the war had been lost, and the country split into two.

1972: Outdoor reporting of international events started with the coverage of a visit to Moscow by prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Mar. 1973: A programme entitled 'News Show' starts as part of the Sunday morning transmission.

1973: PTV arranges special bulletins to bring the latest news of the devastating floods to viewers all over the country. Separate division of Current Affairs established (earlier it was part of the programmes division).

Aug. 14, 1973: Live coverage of National Assembly pro-

ceedings when the new constitution came into effect, followed by President's and Prime Minister's addresses to the nation. Transmission extended until early morning of Aug. 15 1973.

Feb. 1974: Staff and facilities from all TV centres mobilised to cover the Islamic Summit. Special arrangements made for news bulletins in French and Arabic, alongside a series of interviews of Islamic leaders and detailed reports on the Summit. PTV also provides technical facilities to teams from other countries to produce newsfilms of the Summit.

1974: National Bureau for News and Current Affairs set up at the Rawalpindi-Islamabad centre, to centralise the process of news gathering and broadcasting. Regional language bulletins continue to be produced by each centre individually.

Nov. 1974: Quetta Centre begins transmission.