

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5261

ANSWERED ON:08.05.2012

NEWS ON FM RADIO

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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has decided to allow broadcast of news and current affairs through FM radio channels;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which such decision is likely to be implemented; and
- (c) the details of licences issued/permission granted for operating FM radio stations /channels in the country, so far, State-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. JATUA)

(a) & (b): Cabinet, in its meeting held on 7.7.2011, has approved the Policy guidelines on Expansion of FM radio broadcasting services through private agencies (Phase-III). As per the Policy, the permission holder will be permitted to carry the news bulletins of All India Radio in exactly same format(Unaltered) on such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed with Prasar Bharati. Further certain categories of broadcast like information pertaining to sporting events, traffic, weather, coverage of cultural events, festivals, topics pertaining to examinations, results, admissions, career counselling will be treated as non-news and current affairs broadcast and will therefore be permissible. Broadcasting pertaining to availability of employment opportunities and public announcements pertaining to civic amenities would also be covered under the non-news and current affairs.

As per time schedule for implementation of Policy Guidelines on expansion of FM radio broadcasting through private agencies, (Phase-III), ascending e-auction process is to be initiated for issuing permission of FM radio channels in batches over a period of 3 years with the approval of Hon'ble Minister in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. However, no exact time frame has been mentioned in the Policy for implementation of the decision regarding broadcasting of news & current affairs by the existing permission holders.

As far as All India Radio (AIR) is concerned, news bulletins/news updates and current affairs programme are also being broadcast on its FM transmitters.

(c): Presently, under the Policy on Expansion of FM radio broadcasting services through private agencies (Phase-II), 245 private FM radio channels are operational in 85 cities.State-wise details of these channels are at Annexure.