

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3548

ANSWERED ON:19.03.2013

COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS

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

- (a) the details of guidelines/criteria formulated by the Government to set up/operate Community Radio Stations (CRS) and the number of such stations functioning in the country including the North Eastern Region so far, location-wise;
- (b) the funds allocated, released and utilised for the development and promotion of CRS during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT and organisation/institution-wise.
- (c) The details of applications/requests received by the Government from the Educational Institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the number of applications cleared/ pending during the said period along with the time by which the pending applications are likely to be cleared, NGO/Institution-wise;
- (d) whether the Government has increased/proposes to increase the annual royalty charges of CRS substantially;
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the problems being faced by the CRS and the action/ steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (f) whether the Government proposes to grant permission to provide news service through CRS, and if so the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY FOR INFORMATION & BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI)

(a) Permission to set up Community Radio Stations (CRS) is granted to Not-for Profit organizations like Educational Institutions, Registered Societies/NGOs and Krishi Vigyan Kendras etc., subject to fulfillment of eligibility criteria as laid down in the Policy Guidelines for setting up of Community Radio Stations in India and mandatory clearances from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Wireless Planning and Coordination wing as the case may be. These guidelines are available on Ministry's website www.mib.nic.in. 144 Community Radio Stations are presently operating in the country, including North Eastern Region. Location-wise details of functional CRSs are at Annexure.

(b) Ministry does not provide any financial assistance to Community Radio Stations. However, awareness workshops are being organized by the Ministry. In four years, including the current year, Ministry has organized 36 awareness workshops throughout the country and 3 National Sammelans in Delhi, under the Plan Scheme "IEC Activities or Community Radio Stations". Details of funds allocated, released and utilized are as below:

(Rs. in Lakhs)
Year Allocated Released Utilized

2009-10 80 60.22 60.22

2010-11 80 72.25 72.25

2011-12 125 125 125

2012-13 200 124.3 124.3
(Till 15.03.2013)

(c) From 2010 onwards, 541 applications have been received from various organisations for setting up of Community Radio Stations. Out of these permissions have been issued to 114 organisations while 205 applications have been rejected. 223 requests are under consideration in the Ministry at various stages. No time frame can be prescribed to clear all these proposals, as several internal Ministerial clearances are required to grant permission to set up community radio station.

(d) & (e) Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Wing of Department of Telecommunications has informed that based on order issued in March 2012, annual royalty charges were revised upwards for establishment of CRS w.e.f 01.04.2012. Further, the royalty charges of Rs.19,200 is being levied on provisional basis for establishment of CRS, which is same as the royalty charges payable before 01.04.2012. This is applicable up to 31.03.2013. There has been no change in the license fee which is charged at a rate of Rs.500 per station and Rs. 500 for standby equipment.

(f) Extant policy guidelines for setting up community radio stations do not allow broadcast of News & Current affairs and programmes of political nature through CRS. At present, no proposal is under consideration to grant permission to provide news services through community radio stations.