

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2541

ANSWERED ON:06.02.2014

BAN ON PRIVATE COMMUNITY RADIO CHANNELS

Gaikwad Shri Eknath Mahadeo;Ganeshamurthi Shri A.;Mandlik Shri Sadashivrao Dadoba

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes or has any proposal to lift ban on private and community radio channels:
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor:
- (c) whether the Government has consulted all stakeholders in the matter and if so, the details thereof:
- (d) whether the Government proposes to create infrastructure to monitor the interests of radio channels including those community radio stations run by Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in remote areas; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof including the funds allocated for the purpose and the time by which the ban likely to be lifted?

Answer

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

a) to c) Grant of permission to set up Community Radio Stations is a continuous process. Ministry has so far permitted 461 organisations to set up Community Radio Stations across the country, 163 stations are already operational.

At present 243 private FM radio stations (including 21 stations operationalised under Phase – I scheme) are functioning in the country under Policy of expansion of FM Radio Broadcasting services through private agencies (Phase-II).

The policy on expansion of FM Radio broadcasting services through private agencies (Phase-III) was approved by the Cabinet on 7th July, 2011. Phase-III policy will result in coverage of all cities with a population above one lakh (as per 2001 census). In addition, private FM radio channels will be set up in North East (NE) Region and Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and Island territories, in border Town even where the population is less than 1 lakh. Under Phase-III policy, 839 FM channels will be permitted in 294 cities through an ascending e-auction process.

d) & e) Under the Plan Scheme namely "Strengthening of Electronic Media Monitoring Centre" Rs.90.00 Crores have been allocated to set up a mechanism to monitor FM and Community Radio Stations through a centralized monitoring mechanism.