

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:122
ANSWERED ON:16.07.2014
NEWS BROADCAST ON PRIVATE FM CHANNELS
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the existing guidelines do not permit the broadcast of news on private FM channels;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to allow private FM channels to broadcast news with contents from multiple sources including AIR;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which fresh guidelines in this regard are likely to be issued; and
- (e) the other steps taken by the Government for spread of FM radio coverage in various parts of the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING, ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (e) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.122 FOR ANSWER ON 16.07.2014. Private FM channels have not been permitted to broadcast news under the existing FM Radio (Phase-II) policy guidelines. Under the Guidelines approved for FM Radio Phase-III, permission holders shall be permitted to carry the news bulletins of All India Radio in exactly same format, on such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed with Prasar Bharati. No other news and current affairs programmes are permitted under FM Phase-III policy. However, Broadcast pertaining to the certain categories like information pertaining to sporting events excluding live coverage, live commentaries of sporting events of local nature, information pertaining to Traffic and Weather, coverage of cultural events, festivals, coverage of topics pertaining to examinations, results, admissions, career counseling, availability of employment opportunities, public announcements pertaining to civic amenities like electricity, water supply, natural calamities, health alerts etc. as provided by the local administration will be treated as non-news and current affairs broadcast and will therefore be permissible.

However, in view of the dynamic nature of news, the policy is reviewed from time to time. Government has taken various steps for spread of FM radio coverage in various parts of the country. As per the approval of the Cabinet dated 07.07.2011, Foreign investment cap in FM radio sector has been enhanced to 26% from the earlier level of 20% under the Phase III Policy. Operators have been allowed to own more than one channel in a city subject to provisions in the Guidelines. Networking of channels too has been made permissible within a private FM broadcaster's own network across the country.

Upgradation of Infrastructure for AIR's FM Service in the country is a continuous phenomenon aimed at maximizing its reach and listenership.