

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:868

ANSWERED ON:27.02.2015

NEW FM CHANNELS .

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

- (a) whether the Government has approved number of new FM radio channels especially for North Eastern (NE) region and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K);
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise including J&K and NE States;
- (c) the objective for launching these FM channels;
- (d) whether Government has relaxed the cut-off population required for introducing new radio FM channels, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the other steps taken/being taken by the Government to open up new FM channels in different States?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
(COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE(Retd.))

(a) & (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that as far as All India Radio (AIR) is concerned 243 nos. of new FM transmitters (channels) have been approved for installation in the country including North Eastern (NE) region and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). State-wise details are given in Annexure-I(A&B). As regards Private FM, State-wise list of approved new FM Channels is at Annexure-I(C).

(c) These new FM transmitters (channels) are launched with the objective of providing better sound quality programme to the listeners, increasing number of listeners and enhancing FM coverage in shadow zones and in border areas to counter cross border propaganda.

Expansion of Private FM industry will offer new areas for creating employment, increased choice of FM radio stations to listeners and has the potential to generate revenues for the Govt. by efficiently utilizing the frequency radio spectrum earmarked for FM radio services.

(d) & (e) AIR does not have any criteria related to the population of a place for setting up FM transmitters. Expansion of AIR FM takes place in a phased manner.

As regards Private FM in Phase-III, besides vacant channels of Phase-II cities/towns, all other cities/towns with a population of above one lakh as per 2001 census, unless they are getting covered by adjacent cities/towns, are to be covered. In addition, 11 cities in border areas of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and NE States (even though they are having the population of less than one lakh) are also included in the list. Under the Policy guidelines for expansion of FM Radio broadcasting services through private agencies (Phase-III) notified in July 2011, Government has decided to e-auction 135 channels in 69 existing cities/towns as the first batch of FM Phase-III.