

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:341
ANSWERED ON:20.03.2015
E AUCTION OF FM RADIO CHANNELS
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin;Shewale Shri Rahul Ramesh

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

- (a) whether the Government has initiated process of e-auctioning of first batch of Private FM Radio Phase-III channels in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has issued the Information Memorandum for the purpose and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has invited comments of various stake holders before finalization of said Memorandum and if so, the details thereof; and ;
- (d) whether operators are permitted to carry All India Radio (AIR) news bulletins and information related to sports, traffic, weather, careers, etc. under the proposed policy and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.341 FOR ANSWER ON 20.03.2015

The Government on 16.1.2015 approved the e-auction of 1st batch of 135 channels in 69 existing cities based on the reserve price formula approved by Cabinet in 2011. A list of 135 channels to be auctioned in 1st batch is at Annexure 'A'.

The Information Memorandum (IM) was issued on 21st January,2015 and was uploaded on the Ministry's website (www.mib.nic.in). Thereafter, a pre-bid conference was held on 28th January, 2015 with the representatives of the stakeholders and prospective bidders for clarifying their queries and to seek suggestions. Replies to their queries have been uploaded on the website of this Ministry on 17.2.2015. Subsequently, a Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for bidding for the first batch was issued on 2nd March, 2015.

Private FM channels are not permitted to broadcast news under the existing FM Radio (Phase-II) policy guidelines. However, 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.

However, The broadcast pertaining to the following categories will be treated as non-news and current affairs broadcast and will therefore be permissible:

- a) Information pertaining to sporting events excluding live coverage. However live commentaries of sporting events of local nature may be permissible;
- b) Information pertaining to Traffic and Weather;
- c) Information pertaining to and coverage of cultural events, festivals;
- d) Coverage of topics pertaining to examinations, results, admissions, career counseling;
- e) Availability of employment opportunities;
- f) Public announcements pertaining to civic amenities like electricity, water supply, natural calamities, health alerts etc. as provided by the local administration;
- g) Such other categories not permitted at present, that may subsequently be specifically permitted by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting from time to time.