GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1360
(TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.08.2024)

COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS

1360. SHRI SANJAY SETH

Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) the current status of initiatives for Community Radio Stations (CRS) including the number of operational community radio stations;

(b) the objectives and key components of Government policies and programs supporting Community Radio Stations;

(c) the criteria and process for granting licenses to new community radio stations, including eligibility requirements and regulatory compliance; and

(d) the impact assessment of community radio in fostering community engagement, promoting local culture, and disseminating information in rural and remote areas?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
(Dr. L. MURUGAN)

(a) The Government of India has taken a number of initiatives to promote the Community Radio sector. These, inter-alia, include:-

(i) Provisioning of a complete online process for grant of permission for setting up of Community Radio Stations (CRS);

(ii) Revision of the Policy Guidelines for setting up Community Radio Stations (CRS), wherein initial period for Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA) is increased from five to ten years, the maximum duration of advertisement is increased from seven to twelve minutes per hour of broadcast and any eligible organization/ institution that operates in multiple districts are allowed to set up a maximum of six CRS in different districts of operation provided it fulfils few conditions;

(iii) Revision of the Central Sector Scheme "Supporting Community Radio Movement in India" wherein the financial assistance to new CRS was increased from Rs 7.50 lakhs to Rs 10 lakhs and to the new CRS in North-East region the same was increased to 12 lakhs;

(iv)   Organizing community radio awareness workshops, webinars, community radio regional sammelans and capacity building workshops.

As on date, after revision of the scheme, a total of 34 webinars, 7 workshops and 2 regional sammelans have been conducted and financial assistance has been granted to a total of 75 CRS. The above initiatives have led to a significant growth in the number of CRS. As on date, there are 502 CRSs across India.

(b) The objectives and key components of Government Policies and programmes supporting Community Radio Stations are as under :-

(i)   The objective of the Policy is to provide a platform to community based organization to air programmes that should reflect the special interests and needs of the local community. The programmes should be of immediate relevance to the community. The emphasis is on developmental, agricultural, health, educational, environmental, social welfare, community development and cultural programmes. The policy mandates that at least 50% of content shall be generated with the participation of the local community.

(ii)   The objective of the Scheme "Supporting Community Radio Movement in India" is to strengthen new and existing CR Stations with resources, capacity and technology, promote growth of Community Radio Stations, especially in remote and rural areas and to promote socio-economic and cultural development of communities.

(c) The Policy guidelines for setting up of CRS contain provisions relating to the criteria and the process for granting licenses to new CRS including eligibility requirement and regulatory compliance. The said Policy Guidelines, as amended from time to time, are available on the website of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting at URL:- **https://mib.gov.in/broadcasting/community-radio-stations.**

(d) The Government carried out an impact assessment of community radio in the year 2017 and the report titled "Study on Listenership, Reach and Effectiveness of Community Radio Stations in India" was published on 23.08.2018. As per the report, the Community Radio has played prominent role in fostering community engagement, promoting local culture, and disseminating information in rural and remote areas. The report is available on the website of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting at URL:-**https://mib.gov.in/broadcasting/community-radio-stations.**

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