

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 256
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 21.07.2023

IMPORTANCE OF RADIO FEATURE IN MOBILE

256. SHRI JAGGESH:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state:

- (a) whether communication links between the authorities and people in remote areas is very important during the time of natural disasters;
- (b) whether FM Radios which have high bandwidth and low frequency are good communication links and able to reach areas where mobile connectivity is difficult;
- (c) whether disabling of FM radio features in phones or where this feature is not included by default will impact communication links during natural disasters;
- (d) if so, whether Government has taken steps to ensure inclusion of FM radio features in phone by default; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof, if not, reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a): Yes. The electronic means of communication become important to reach people in the affected areas during the time of natural disaster when a natural disaster site becomes inaccessible by physical modes of communication.

(b): The FM Radio is one of the communication links between the authorities and people in remote areas during natural disasters in addition to other electronic means of communication *inter-alia* including cellular communication using mobile phones and Television broadcasting. The coverage of All India Radio FM transmitters in the country is 59% by geographical area and 68% by population. Whereas, as informed by industry, mobile phone network has a geographical area coverage of approx. 95% and a population coverage of approx. 98%.

(c) to (e): The electronics industry has informed that most of the feature phones have FM Radio feature and about 60-80 million feature phones are sold in a year which have FM capability. Further, most of the smartphones does not have FM tuners capability, but in smart phones, the FM feature can be used by downloading the FM App from the App Store.

MeitY has issued an advisory on 28.04.2023 regarding the “Inbuilt FM Radio receiver feature in mobile phones”, whereby it has been conveyed to the mobile phone manufacturers / brands that it should be ensured that wherever the mobile phone is equipped with an inbuilt FM Radio receiver function or feature, that function or feature is not disabled or deactivated but is kept enabled / activated in the mobile phone. Further, it has been advised that if the FM Radio receiver function or feature is not available in the mobile phones, it may be included.
