

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 742
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.07.2026**

EXPANSION OF PRIVATE FM RADIO NETWORK.

742. SHRI I. S. INBADURAI:

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

- (a) whether Government will ensure transparent e-auction preventing media monopolies in 730 FM channels and clarify safeguards to protect small regional broadcasters from corporate dominance in newly added 234 cities;
- (b) the number of direct and indirect jobs to be created through FM expansion;
- (c) the mechanisms to ensure genuine promotion of local languages, culture and community participation in programming;
- (d) the concrete steps which will ensure FM rollout in aspirational and LWE districts is timely, secure and beneficial; and
- (e) the manner in which Government will measure its impact on awareness, governance outreach and misinformation control?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
(DR. L. MURUGAN)**

(a) to (e) :

The Government conducted e-auctions for 730 FM channels across 234 new cities on July 9–10, 2025 through a transparent system. It was widely published in print and electronic media before the auction. During this cycle, there were 18 successful bidders including 9 new entrants to the FM radio sector. There are 386 operational private FM radio channels.

Under the Private FM Radio policy, every broadcaster must ensure that at least 20% of its daily broadcast content is in the local language of the city and promotes local content, including programmes on local culture, traditions, and folk music.

The Private FM Radio Phase-III policy permits broadcasters to access Prasar Bharati towers and sites, wherever available, for faster rollout. The Government issues Letters of Intent (LOI) and executes Grant of Permission Agreements (GOPA) with clearly defined timelines for operationalisation especially in LWE and aspirational districts.

The Government follows a multi-pronged approach by tracking the broadcast of public service announcements and government schemes. It maintains close coordination with broadcasters for timely dissemination of verified information during emergencies and key campaigns.
