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भारत सरकार
सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्रालय
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली-110001
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
SHASTRI BHAWAN, NEW DELHI - 110001

D.O. No.104/103/2013-CRS

8th January, 2014

Dear Mr Khullar,

As you are aware, the "Guidelines for setting up Community/Radio Stations in India" were issued on 02.12.2006. The Ministry has so far issued 438 Letters of Intent (LOI) for setting up Community Radio Stations (CRS) in various parts of the country. Till date 194 LOI holders have signed Grant of Permission Agreement (GOPA) with the Ministry, in accordance with Clause 3(vii) of the Policy Guidelines for Setting up Community Radio Stations in India, 2006.

2. Clause 4 of the Policy Guidelines deals with Grant of Permission Agreement conditions. Clause 4(i) mentions that "The Grant of Permission Agreement period shall be for five years". Since permissions were issued to some CR stations under 2006 Policy Guidelines for five years, their GOPA validity has expired. It is mentioned that 55 CR Stations would complete 5 years term by June 2014. The Policy Guidelines are silent on the course of action to be adopted after the expiry of five years of GOPA.

3. The issue has been extensively discussed in the Ministry for quite some time now. An informal discussion was also held with senior officials of TRAI on 4th October, 2013. Permissions to operate CR stations are given to educational institutions and Not-for-Profit organizations. The Policy Guidelines had not envisaged any levy of fees or sharing of any income from the Community Radio Stations. Therefore, Government does not earn any income from CR stations. A decision, however, needs to be taken about the renewal of GOPA of CR stations.

4. TRAI, vide its letter No.24-01/2013-B&CS, dated 11th September 2013, with regard to extension of DTH license period, had suggested that during the interim period, the DTH licensees may be allowed to continue their operations/services on the existing terms and conditions subject to renewal of existing bank guarantee and submission of an undertaking by the licensee. On the similar lines, can the Ministry allow CR stations to continue their operations? If so, then what should be the period of interim extension and on what terms and conditions?

5. The Authority is requested to examine these issues arising out of the expiry of the period of GOPA and provide its recommendations to the ministry as per Section 11(1)(a)(ii) of the TRAI Act, 1997 on the following issues:

- i) Whether permission of CR stations be renewed after expiry of GOPA. If yes, for what period and what terms and conditions.
- ii) In the interim whether CR stations can be allowed to continue their operations. If yes, for what period and under what terms & conditions.

Warm regards

Yours sincerely,


(Bimal Julka)

Shri Rahul Khullar
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