

Emergence of FM in India

FM broadcasting has become popular in India and other foreign countries within a very short time. Its objective is to bring about qualitative improvement in broadcasting. Since FM signals do not interfere beyond a certain area it is possible to operate several stations on the same frequency. There is hardly any disturbance from other radio station. Another important feature of FM broadcasting is that it provides paging services along with the main channel.

Paging is one way communication which is becoming more and more popular among institutions like Bank. Radio data service is also available on FM.

Another feature of FM broadcasting is that the quality of this broadcast is uniform during day and night in hills or deserts and the quality is not disturbed due to extraneous factors.

Private FM

FM Radio was first introduced by AIR in 1972 at Madras and later in 1992 at Jalandhar. But it was only the arrival of private FMs that changed the broadcasting scenario in the country. After economic reforms of 1991, the FM broadcasting sector was also opened for private players. In the phase one of license distribution, the government sold airtime blocks on its FM channels in Madras, Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Goa to private operators, who developed their own programme content. These were followed by stations in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Jaipur and Lucknow. But, the government's attempts to privatization did not materialize as was expected. Most of the private players bid heavily and most could not meet their commitments to pay the government the amounts they owed. 2nd Phase of license distribution rules were eased 3rd Phase more private players were attracted. (One time entry fee for 10 years OTEF, annual license fee – 10 % of reserve price or 4% of revenue share, TRAI recommendation to increase FDI limit 26% to 49%)