Emergency Alert Messages in Cell Phones

Recently, the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** mandated that all **feature phones** in India must support **auto-readout of emergency messages** in Hindi and English. This order has raised concern among mobile manufacturers.

- **Feature phones** provide **more features than basic cell phones** but are **not as advanced as smartphones**.
- **Key Provision of DoT Order:**
    - **All phones** sold in India must **support auto-readout of emergency messages** in Hindi and English, with manufacturers required to **add support for four additional Indian languages each year** until full language support is achieved.
    - **Alert signals** (sound, vibration, light) must last for **30 seconds** under standard conditions and **15 seconds** for auto-read messages or until the user acknowledges them.
- **Concerns of Phone Manufacturers:**
    - Feature phones **lack sufficient memory** for text-to-audio conversion.
    - New requirements will **increase production costs**.
    - Redesigning phones will **affect production timelines.**
    - Smaller Indian brands may **face challenges in complying** with **Indian Wireless Telegraphy (Cell Broadcasting Service for Disaster Alerts) Act, 2023,** risking their market position.
        - The Act mandates that **no smartphone or feature phone** can be manufactured or sold in India **without cell broadcast capabilities**.

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