

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:444
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2010
FOREIGN SHAREHOLDERS OF TV CHANNELS
Singh Shri Ijyaraj

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

- (a) whether the number of foreign companies holding shares in the TV channels operating in the country are on the rise;
- (b) if so, the details in terms of the number and percentage and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the increasing foreign share holders in these channels is likely to pose a threat to the economy and also the social ethos of the country;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) to (e) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.444 FOR ANSWER ON 27.04.2010

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): As per Guidelines for Uplinking from India issued on 2.12.2005, Foreign Equity holding including FDI/FII/NRI investments should not exceed 26% of the paid up equity of the applicant company desirous of uplinking a News & Current Affairs TV channel. There is no equity restriction on the companies applying for permission to uplink non-News and Current Affairs TV channels. Further, there is no equity restriction on the companies applying for permission to downlink foreign-uplinked news & current affairs as well as non-news & current affairs TV channels in India.

As on date, 232 companies have been permitted to uplink/downlink 540 TV channels as per uplinking/ downlinking guidelines.

Out of total 232 companies, 68 companies have varying degree of foreign investment within the permissible limit as prescribed in the uplinking/downlinking guidelines. The Ministry ensures that the total foreign equity holding including FDI/FII/NRI investment is within the permissible percentage. The list indicating the number of such companies along with percentage of foreign equity in them, as per available records, is placed at Annexure.

(c): No such report has been brought to the notice of this Ministry. However, before granting permission to any company, security clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs is obtained. Clearance from Department of Revenue is also obtained with respect to proposals for permission for downlinking of foreign-uplinked TV channels in India.

(d) & (e): Does not arise.