

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:338
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2010
FOREIGN COMPANIES IN MEDIA SECTOR
Agarwal Shri Rajendra;Sampath Shri Anirudhan

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

- (a) the current policy of the Government regarding foreign participation in the Media sector;
- (b) whether the Government has any proposal to allow more foreign participation in the same;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the number of media companies in the country in which foreign partnership was allowed during each of the last three years and the current year?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.338 TO BE ANSWERED ON 17/08/2010 REGARDING FOREIGN COMPANIES IN MEDIA SECTOR

In the print media sector, foreign investment upto 100% is allowed in the non-news, i.e. Speciality/technical/scientific sector of the print media whereas foreign investment upto 26% is allowed in the Indian entities publishing newspapers and periodicals dealing with news and current affairs. However, foreign investment upto 100% is allowed in case of foreign publishing houses bringing out facsimile edition of their own newspapers through wholly owned subsidiary.

In the Broadcasting sector, upto 49% foreign investment is allowed in Direct-to-home, Teleport, IPTV, Multi Service Operators and Local Cable operators whereas this limit is 74% for Headend-in-the-sky (HITS). In respect of private satellite TV channels, foreign investment upto 26% is permissible for uplinking of news and current affairs TV channels whereas for downlinking of all TV channels and uplinking of non-news and current affairs channels, 100% foreign investment is allowed. In the private FM radio sector, foreign investment upto 20% is allowed.

At present, there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to increase the foreign investment limits in the print media. However, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has made some recommendations regarding revision of existing foreign investment limits in Broadcasting sector. The recommendations of TRAI are under examination.

The number of print media companies which have been granted permission to have foreign equity is 10 in the year 2007, 16 in year 2008, 13 in year 2009 and 3 during the current year till date. There are 56 media companies with foreign equity which have been permitted to uplink/downlink satellite TV channels during the last three years including current year. In the private FM Radio sector, only 6 companies with foreign equity till date have been permitted.