

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3428
ANSWERED ON:23.08.2011
TV CHANNELS/PRINT MEDIA RUN BY FOREIGNER
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there are some TV channels and print media in the country that are owned/run by Rupert Murdoch;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, channel/media-wise;
- (c) whether there are reports of illegal activities undertaken by these print media and TV channels in the country and abroad;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has undertaken any preventive measures so that such TV channels and print media do not indulge in unlawful activities in the country; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING (SHRI C. M. JATUA)

(a) and (b) Newscorp is a public listed company in which Rupert Murdoch is one of the shareholders. He is also the Chairman & CEO of Newscorp. Newscorp has a wholly owned subsidiary in India i.e. Star India Pvt. Ltd, a company incorporated under the Indian Companies Act 1956.

As per the Guidelines for Uplinking/downlinking of Private Satellite channels, the applicant seeking permission to uplink/downlink a TV channel should be a company registered in India under the Companies Act 1956. Hence the permission is only issued to a company registered under the Company's Act and not to a person/owner.

Star India has 11 Non-News and Current Affairs (NCA) channels operating in India under permission from the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting i.e. Star Plus (Hindi), Star One (Hindi), Star Utsav (Hindi), Star Gold (Hindi), Star World (English), Star Movies (English), Channel V(Hindi), Star Vijay (Tamil), Asianet (Malayalam), Asianet Plus (Malayalam), Suvarna (Kannada).

Star India also markets and distributes the National Geographic Channels & the Fox International channels in India. The companies that hold the permissions for telecasting these entertainment and infotainment channels are National Geographic India Pvt. Ltd & Fox Channels (I) Pvt. Ltd., both being companies registered under the provisions of the Indian Companies Act 1956.

Star India has a 26% minority stake in Media Content & Communication Services (I) Pvt. Ltd. (MCCS) partnering with Anand Bazaar Patrika (ABP) group, who own, control and manage the Star News (Hindi), Star Majha (Marathi) & Star Anando (Bengali) channels. The Uplinking/downlinking permissions for these channels are being held in the name of MCCS and they have all the necessary clearances under Indian laws.

In accordance with the print media policy to allow publication of facsimile editions of the foreign newspapers in India, permission has been granted to M/s Wall Street Journal India Publishing Pvt. Ltd. to publish facsimile editions of the foreign journals 'Wall Street Journal Asia' and 'Wall Street Journal' in India. The company is a wholly owned subsidiary (WoS) of M/s Dow Jones & Company Inc., New York, USA. M/s Dow Jones & Company is a division of M/s News Corporation (NewsCorp), owned by Rupert Murdoch.

(c) and (d) The Government is broadly aware of the issues /allegations pertaining to phone hacking leveled against News of the World newspaper and its senior executives in UK from the various articles and stories that have been carried on various TV Channels and print mediums

(e) and (f) The issues and allegations raised in UK against Mr. Murdoch pertain to the newspaper i.e. the News of the World publication which has been closed. As regards India, there have been no allegations or concerns raised regarding the same.

All the private satellite television channels have to adhere to the Guidelines for Uplinking/Downlinking issued by this Ministry. Whenever, any violation of these guidelines is noticed, necessary action is taken as per the provisions of the Policy Guidelines.