

Ministry fast-tracks security clearance

Overseas investment proposals are getting the nod in 40 days as against nine months

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Among foreign countries, the maximum investment proposals in critical sectors like telecom and defence that was cleared by the Home Ministry in 2017, were from China, United Kingdom, U.S. and Mauritius.

The Ministry said it has given security clearance to more than 5,000 investment proposals, including for Foreign Direct Investment, in the last four years.

A senior Ministry official said that earlier the time taken for security clearance for a project was eight-nine

Evaluating threats

The objective of the national security clearance is to evaluate potential threats in proposals received by the home ministry and to provide a national risk assessment

- 1071 proposals in critical sectors like telecom and defence were given security clearance by Ministry of Home Affairs in 2017
- Of these, proposals related to I&B was 390 (community radio station, uplinking and downlinking)
- Civil aviation -235
- Commerce and industry-146
- Miscellaneous- 152 (defence and telecom have been put in this category)
- FDI proposals cleared-46

months on an average. This has been brought down to 40 days since last year.

The Ministry had formulated a new national security

clearance policy in 2015 after the government decided to speed up projects, which were stuck for lack of approval by Intelligence Bureau

(IB) or other agencies including the State police.

15 parameters

The policy has 15 parameters on which inputs from security agencies are sought. Once it has got an application from an investor, the Ministry decides on the status of security clearance to the company within 4-6 weeks.

The Ministry granted security clearance to 815 investment proposals in 2014, 1,201 proposals in 2015 and 1,260 in 2016, an official said.

In 2017, security clearances were given to around 1,071 proposals, he said. In addi-

tion, 543 proposals were automatically cleared in 2015 due to implementation of the revised policy guidelines.

Of these proposals, 390 pertained to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 235 related to civil aviation and 46 FDI proposals.

Among the foreign countries, U.S., China (including Hong Kong), Mauritius, U.K. has received the green signal for the maximum number of projects at 10 each, followed by Germany 6, Bangladesh 3 and two each for Italy, Israel, Netherlands and Switzerland.