

## Marketing News



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## Quota cop is coming your way

### *Govt Wants Data On SC/ST Recruitments By India Inc*

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THE controversy over reservation of jobs in the private sector refuses to die down. The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has asked India Inc to incorporate data of SC/STs recruited from January 1, 2007 onwards in their annual reports for the financial year ending March '07. If the department is not convinced with the quantum of voluntary affirmative action by companies, it will enact a legislation for mandatory reservation in first quarter of 2007-08.

DIPP feels that incorporation of this data will reveal the seriousness of private sector on their commitment to affirmative action. The government had desisted from mandatory reservation following a commitment on voluntary affirmative action from by industry bodies like Assocham and CII.

ET has learnt that DIPP has obtained legal opinion from the law ministry on a legislation for reservation in the private sector. "Once companies submit their reports, DIPP will conduct an independent study aimed at gauging the extent of affirmative action taken by various corporates. If it is not satisfied, a legislation is inevitable," a source said.

In a letter to industry bodies, DIPP argues that quantitative targets prepared by the CII for capacity building in private sector is too small and "symbolic" and the proposed timelines need to be reduced significantly. Says the communication from DIPP secretary Ajay Dua: "The code on affirmative action (AA) need to be made more operational, both content-wise and inclusion of intended actionable points. Member companies need to be told by the chambers in more specific terms about the ways and means of promoting AA."

Some other important instructions made by the DIPP include better utilisation of infrastructure of ITIs by the private sector, setting up of entrepreneurship development institutes at district level and compilation of baseline data on SC/ST employment in the private sector for ascertaining industry-wise progress.

When contacted, Assocham secretary-general DS Rawat said: "There is no disagreement on the observation that the code on promoting inclusiveness of SCs and STs needs to be made operational and action oriented."

### **Industry bodies line up affirmative action plans**

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Commenting on the latest government initiative Assocham secretary-general DS Rawat said: Much grassroots-work has to be done to create appropriate awareness and sensitisation across the board to engage industries in the entire exercise in a voluntary mode. Meanwhile, we have already entered into an MoU with Mumbai-based Anarde Foundation to start work and provide a platform to the industries to join and contribute to the cause of entrepreneurship development, vendor development and other skilled based training for SCs & STs."

A CII spokesperson said: "We are well on track on our commitments made in the affirmative action plan. We are working through our network of regional offices on areas of employment, education and entrepreneurship. Baseline data compilation of SC/ST employment in private sector is underway. We expect to complete it by mid-year."

Last year, PM Manmohan Singh had asked the private sector to come forward and voluntarily carve out space for SC/STs. Minister for social justice Meira Kumar had also sounded off India Inc that failure to act on their own would make them face a legislation. She had even proposed amendment to the constitution or a new a law that could be placed in the Ninth Schedule, but it could not pass muster in Parliament.

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