

## **US media honchos call for speedier digitisation of Indian system**

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**New York:** Describing India as the “biggest market”, America’s media honchos have called for speedier digitisation of the Indian system, including early expansion of the 4G network, during a one-of-its kind meeting with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

During the meeting wherein the focus was on the role that the media and entertainment industry can play in development and generation of employment opportunities in the country, CEOs of the top media houses appreciated Modi for “energetic and dynamic leadership” and expressed optimism about the future of India, a statement said.

“The CEOs” representing 40 per cent of the world’s entertainment industry “were enthusiastic about the digital transformation that is taking place in India through the “Digital India” initiative.

They said that the current strong trajectory of the Indian economy makes it at a unique moment to accelerate growth in this sector. The CEOs present include Rupert Murdoch, Executive Chairman of News Corp and 21st Century Fox; James Murdoch, CEO, 21st Century Fox; Robert Thompson, CEO, News Corp; Uday Shankar, CEO, Star India; David Zaslav, President and CEO, Discovery Communications, and Michael Lynton, CEO, Sony Entertainment.

Others present at the round table were Michael Roth, CEO, Interpublic Group of Companies; Shane Smith, CEO, Vice Media; Martin Sorrell, CEO, WPP; Jeff Bewkes, CEO, Time Warner; Nancy Dubuc, CEO, A&E Networks; Anthony Pratt, Chairman, Visy Industries; William Duhamel, Route One Investment Company, and Jeff Ubben, CEO, ValueAct Capital.

“All of them said India is the biggest market for them in terms of the phenomenal growth of the entertainment channels, in terms of the youth in India wanting more such content. They asked for speedier digitisation of the Indian systems,” External Affairs Minister spokesperson Vikas Swarup told reporters.

Shane Smith for instance said that he wanted as soon as possible rolling of the 4G systems. This is the bandwidth that they need for their programme contents to be rolled out and to reach people as fast as possible.

All the CEOs said that India is already a big market for them and they do not have any issues with the existing norms. “What they wanted was speedier expansion of broadband infrastructure,” he said.

- PTI