

S. Korea media ownership bill delayed

by UPI

SEOUL - A parliamentary vote on controversial measures to allow simultaneous ownership of print and broadcast media in South Korea will be delayed, lawmakers said.

In a dramatic, last-minute compromise in South Korea's National Assembly between the ruling Grand National Party and the main opposition Democratic Party, bitterly disputed media industry reform bills will be set aside for 100 days for further discussions followed by a plenary session vote, the South Korean news agency Yonhap reported.

A political stalemate had developed over the weekend between the GNP, which favors the bill to allow media consolidation on competitiveness grounds, and the DP, which along with media industry workers oppose it, contending the changes would lead to a monopoly of the media by a handful of companies, Yonhap said.

The compromise to delay the vote was reached after National Assembly Speaker Kim Hyung-o warned he would invoke his authority to arbitrarily put the media bills, along with other economy-related bills, directly to a vote at the plenary session later in the day, the news agency said.

The measure would allow media conglomerates and newspapers to own up to a 20 percent share of local terrestrial broadcasting markets, Yonhap said.

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