Question 1
Examine with reference to the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 whether the following companies can be treated as foreign companies:

(i) A company incorporated outside India having a share registration office at Mumbai.

(ii) Indian citizens incorporated a company in Singapore for the purpose of carrying on business there.

Answer

Section 2(42) of the Companies Act, 2013 defines a “foreign company” as any company or body corporate incorporated outside India which:

(a) Has a place of business in India whether by itself or through an agent, physically or through electronic mode; and

(b) Conducts any business activity in India in any other manner.

According section 386 of the Companies Act, 2013, for the purposes of Chapter XXII of the Companies Act, 2013 (Companies incorporated outside India), expression “Place of business” includes a share transfer or registration office.

Accordingly, to qualify as ‘foreign company’ a company must have the following features:

(a) it must be incorporated outside India; and

(b) it should have a place of business in India.

(c) That place of business may be either in its own name or through an agent or may even be through the electronic mode; and

(d) It must conduct a business activity of any nature in India.

(i) Therefore, a company incorporated outside India having a share registration office at Mumbai will be treated as a foreign company provided it conducts any business activity in India.

(ii) In the case of a company incorporated in Singapore for the purpose of carrying on business in Singapore will not fall within the definition of a foreign company. Its incorporation by Indian citizen is immaterial. In order to be a foreign company it has to have a place of business in India and must conduct a business activity in India.
Question 2

(i) As per provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, what is the status of XYZ Ltd., a Company incorporated in London, U.K., which has a share transfer office at Mumbai?

(ii) ABC Ltd., a foreign company having its Indian principal place of business at Kolkata, West Bengal is required to deliver various documents to Registrar of Companies under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013. You are required to state, where the said company should deliver such documents.

(iii) In case, a foreign company does not deliver its documents to the Registrar of Companies as required under section 380 of the Companies Act, 2013, state the penalty prescribed under the said Act, which can be levied.

Answer

(i) In terms of the definition of a foreign company under section 2 (42) of the Companies Act, 2013 a “foreign company” means any company or body corporate incorporated outside India which:

   a. Has a place of business in India whether by itself or through an agent, physically or through electronic mode; and
   b. Conducts any business activity in India in any other manner

According section 386 of the Companies Act, 2013, for the purposes of Chapter XXII of the Companies Act, 2013 (Companies incorporated outside India), “Place of business” includes a share transfer or registration office.

From the above definition, the status of XYZ Ltd. will be that of a foreign company as it is incorporated outside India, has a place of business in India and it may be presumed that it carries on a business activity in India

(ii) The Companies Act, 2013 vide section 380 requires every foreign company is required to deliver to the Registrar for registration, within 30 days of the establishment of office in India, documents which have been specified therein. According to the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, any document which any foreign company is required to deliver to the Registrar shall be delivered to the Registrar having jurisdiction over New Delhi.

(iii) The Companies Act, 2013 lays down the governing provisions for foreign companies in Chapter XXII which is comprised of sections 379 to 393. The penalties for non filing or for contravention of any provision for this chapter including for non filing of documents with the Registrar as required by section 380 and other sections in this chapter are laid down in section 392 of the Act which provides that if a foreign company contravenes the provisions of this Chapter, the foreign company shall be punishable with a fine which shall not be less than ₹ 1,00,000 but which may extend to ₹ 3,00,000 and in the case of a continuing offence, with an additional fine which may extend to ₹ 50,000 for every day
after the first during which the contravention continues and every officer of the foreign company who is in default shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine which shall not be less than ₹ 25,000 but which may extend to ₹ 5,00,000, or with both.

Question 3

Joel Ltd. was incorporated in London with a paid up capital of 10 million pounds. Mr. Y an Indian citizen holds 25% of the paid up capital. X Ltd. a company registered in India holds 30% of the paid up capital of Joel Ltd. Joel Ltd. has recently established a share transfer office at New Delhi.

(1) The company seeks your advice as to what formalities it should observe as a foreign company under Companies Act, 2013.

(2) State briefly the requirements relating to filing of accounts with the Registrar of Companies by the foreign company in respect of its global business as well as Indian business.

Answer

In terms of the definition of a foreign company under section 2 (42) of the Companies Act, 2013 a “foreign company” means any company or body corporate incorporated outside India which:

a. Has a place of business in India whether by itself or through an agent, physically or through electronic mode; and

b. Conducts any business activity in India in any other manner.

According section 386 of the Companies Act, 2013, for the purposes of Chapter XXII of the Companies Act, 2013 (Companies incorporated outside India), “Place of business” includes a share transfer or registration office.

Further, section 379 states that where not less than 50% of the paid-up share capital, whether equity or preference or partly equity and partly preference, of a foreign company is held by one or more citizens of India or by one or more companies or bodies corporate incorporated in India, or by one or more citizens of India and one or more companies or bodies corporate incorporated in India, whether singly or in the aggregate, such company shall comply with the provisions of this Chapter and such other provisions of this Act as may be prescribed with regard to the business carried on by it in India as if it were a company incorporated in India.

In the case given in the question, the following facts are given:

a. Joel Ltd. was incorporated in London and has a place of business (share transfer office) in India, hence, it is a foreign company.

b. Its shareholding comprises of 25% held by Y who is a citizen of India and 30% by X Ltd. which is a company registered in India. Together the two Indian shareholders hold 55% of the share capital of Joel Ltd.
Therefore, although Joel Ltd. is a foreign company, due to the holding of more than 50% of its share capital by two Indian entities, it will be covered under section 379 and will be treated as a company incorporated in India or as an Indian Company.

However, it may be noted that under section 379, the application of the Companies Act, 2013 on Joel Ltd. will be only in respect of business carried by it in India and not in relation to its business anywhere outside India.

The Companies Act, 2013 under Chapter XXII does not require a foreign company to file any documents in relation to its global business.

(1) Under section 380 of the Act, a foreign company is required to file for registration within 30 days of the establishment of a place of business in India the following documents with the Registrar:

(a) a certified copy of the charter, statutes or memorandum and articles, of the company or other instrument constituting or defining the constitution of the company. If the instruments are not in the English language, a certified translation thereof in the English language;

(b) the full address of the registered or principal office of the company;

(c) a list of the directors and secretary of the company containing such particulars as may be prescribed;

In relation to the nature of particulars to be provided as above, the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, provide that the list of directors and secretary or equivalent (by whatever name called) of the foreign company shall contain the following particulars, for each of the persons included in such list, namely:

(1) personal name and surname in full;
(2) any former name or names and surname or surnames in full;
(3) father’s name or mother’s name and spouse’s name;
(4) date of birth;
(5) residential address;
(6) nationality;
(7) if the present nationality is not the nationality of origin, his nationality of origin;
(8) passport Number, date of issue and country of issue; (if a person holds more than one passport then details of all passports to be given)
(9) income-tax permanent account number (PAN), if applicable;
(10) occupation, if any;
(11) whether directorship in any other Indian company, (Director Identification Number(DIN), Name and Corporate Identity Number (CIN) of the company in case of holding directorship);

(12) other directorship or directorships held by him;

(13) Membership Number (for Secretary only); and

(14) e-mail ID.

d) the name and address or the names and addresses of one or more persons resident in India authorised to accept on behalf of the company service of process and any notices or other documents required to be served on the company;

e) the full address of the office of the company in India which is deemed to be its principal place of business in India;

f) particulars of opening and closing of a place of business in India on earlier occasion or occasions;

g) declaration that none of the directors of the company or the authorized representative in India has ever been convicted or debarred from formation of companies and management in India or abroad; and

(2) According to section 381 of the Companies Act, 2013:

(i) Every foreign company shall, in every calendar year,—

(a) make out a balance sheet and profit and loss account in such form, containing such particulars and including or having attached or annexed thereto such documents as may be prescribed under Rules 4 & 5 of the Companies(Registration of Foreign Companies)Rules, 2014, and

(b) deliver a copy of those documents to the Registrar.

Question 4

DEJY as Company Limited incorporated in Singapore desires to establish a place of business at Mumbai. You being a practising Chartered Accountant have been appointed by the company as a liaison officer, for compliance of legal formalities on behalf of the company. Examining the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, state the documents you are required to furnish on behalf of the company, on the establishment of a place of business at Mumbai.

Answer

Under section 380(1) of the Companies Act, 2013 every foreign company shall, within 30 days of the establishment of place of business in India, deliver to the Registrar for registration the following documents:
Companies Incorporated Outside India

(a) a certified copy of the charter, statutes or memorandum and articles, of the company or other instrument constituting or defining the constitution of the company. If the instruments are not in the English language, a certified translation thereof in the English language;

(b) the full address of the registered or principal office of the company;

(c) a list of the directors and secretary of the company containing such particulars as may be prescribed;

In relation to the nature of particulars to be provided as above, the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, provide that the list of directors and secretary or equivalent (by whatever name called) of the foreign company shall contain the following particulars, for each of the persons included in such list, namely:

(1) personal name and surname in full;

(2) any former name or names and surname or surnames in full;

(3) father's name or mother's name and spouse's name;

(4) date of birth;

(5) residential address;

(6) nationality;

(7) if the present nationality is not the nationality of origin, his nationality of origin;

(8) passport Number, date of issue and country of issue; (if a person holds more than one passport then details of all passports to be given)

(9) income-tax permanent account number (PAN), if applicable;

(10) occupation, if any;

(11) whether directorship in any other Indian company, (Director Identification Number(DIN), Name and Corporate Identity Number (CIN) of the company in case of holding directorship);

(12) other directorship or directorships held by him;

(13) Membership Number (for Secretary only); and

(14) e-mail ID.

(d) the name and address or the names and addresses of one or more persons resident in India authorised to accept on behalf of the company service of process and any notices or other documents required to be served on the company;

(e) the full address of the office of the company in India which is deemed to be its principal place of business in India;

(f) particulars of opening and closing of a place of business in India on earlier occasion or occasions;
(g) declaration that none of the directors of the company or the authorised representative in India has ever been convicted or debarred from formation of companies and management in India or abroad; and

(h) any other information as may be prescribed.

According to the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, any document which any foreign company is required to deliver to the Registrar shall be delivered to the Registrar having jurisdiction over New Delhi.

**Question 5**

*X Inc is a company registered in UK and carrying on Trading Activity, with Principal Place of Business in Chennai. Since the company did not obtain registration or make arrangement to file Return, the State VAT Officer having jurisdiction, intends to serve show cause notice on the Foreign Company. As Standing Counsel for the department, advise the VAT Officer on valid service of notice.*

**Answer**

Service of notice on foreign company (Section 383 of the Companies Act, 2013):

According to section 383 of the Companies Act, 2013, any process, notice, or other document required to be served on a foreign company shall be deemed to be sufficiently served, if addressed to any person whose name and address have been delivered to the Registrar under section 380 of the Companies Act, 2013, and left at, or sent by post to, the address which has been so delivered to the Registrar or by electronic mode. Hence, the VAT Officer may serve the show cause notice by following the above provisions.

[Assumption: It is assumed that X Inc is a foreign company within the meaning of section 379 of the Companies Act, 2013]

**Question 6**

*ABC Limited, a foreign company failed to deliver some desired documents to the Registrar of Companies as required under Section 380 of the Companies Act, 2013. State the provisions of penalty prescribed under the said Act, which can be levied on ABC Limited for its failure.*

**Answer**

If a foreign company fails to deliver documents to the Registrar of Companies as required under section 380 of the Companies Act, 2013, the foreign company shall be punishable with a fine which shall be not less than ₹ 1,00,000 but which may extend to ₹ 3,00,000 and in the case of a continuing offence, with an additional fine which may extend to ₹ 50,000 for every day after the first during which the contravention continues. Also, every officer of the foreign company who is in default shall be punishable with an imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with a fine which shall not be less than ₹ 25,000 but which may extend to ₹ 5,00,000 or with both. The penalty is provided in section 392 and thus ABC Ltd. is liable for the contravention of section 380 of the Act.
Question 7

Robertson Ltd. is a company registered in Thailand. Although, it has no place of business established in India, yet it is doing online business through telemarketing in India. Whether it will be treated as a Foreign Company under the Companies Act, 2013? Explain.

Answer

According to section 2(42) of the Companies Act, 2013, “foreign company” means any company or body corporate incorporated outside India which –

(a) has a place of business in India whether by itself or through an agent, physically or through electronic mode; and

(b) conducts any business activity in India in any other manner.

According to the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, “electronic mode” means carrying out electronically based, whether main server is installed in India or not, including, but not limited to –

(a) business to business and business to consumer transactions, data interchange and other digital supply transactions;

(b) offering to accept deposits or inviting deposits or accepting deposits or subscriptions in securities in India or from citizens of India;

(c) financial settlements, web based marketing, advisory and transactional services, data base services and products, supply chain management;

(d) online services such as telemarketing, telecommuting, telemedicine, education and information research; and

(e) all related data communication services whether conducted by e-mail, mobile devices, social media, cloud computing, document management, voice or data transmission or otherwise.

Looking to the above description, it can be said that being involved in business activity through telemarketing, Robertson Ltd., will be treated as foreign company.

Question 8

Galilio Ltd. is a foreign company in Germany and it established a place of business in Mumbai. Explain the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and rules made thereunder relating to preparation and filing of financial statements, as also the documents to be attached alongwith the financial statements by the foreign company.

Answer

Preparation and filing of financial statements by a foreign company:

According to section 381 of the Companies Act, 2013:
Every foreign company shall, in every calendar year,—

(a) make out a balance sheet and profit and loss account in such form, containing such particulars and including or having attached or annexed thereto such documents as may be prescribed, and

(b) deliver a copy of those documents to the Registrar.

According to the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, every foreign company shall prepare financial statement of its Indian business operations in accordance with Schedule III or as near thereto as possible for each financial year including:

(1) documents that are required to be annexed should be in accordance with Chapter IX i.e. Accounts of Companies.

(2) The documents relating to copies of latest consolidated financial statements of the parent foreign company, as submitted by it to the prescribed authority in the country of its incorporation under the applicable laws there.

The Central Government is empowered to direct that, in the case of any foreign company or class of foreign companies, the requirements of clause (a) of section 381(1) shall not apply, or shall apply subject to such exceptions and modifications as may be specified in notification in that behalf.

If any of the specified documents are not in the English language, a certified translation thereof in the English language shall be annexed. [Section 381 (2)]

Every foreign company shall send to the Registrar along with the documents required to be delivered to him, a copy of a list in the prescribed form, of all places of business established by the company in India as at the date with reference to which the balance sheet referred to in section 381(1) is made.

According to the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, every foreign company shall file with the Registrar, along with the financial statement, in Form FC3 with such fee as provided under Companies (Registration Offices and Fees) Rules, 2014 a list of all the places of business established by the foreign company in India as on the date of balance sheet.

According to the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014, if any foreign company ceases to have a place of business in India, it shall forthwith give notice of the fact to the Registrar, and as from the date on which notice is so given, the obligation of the company to deliver any document to the Registrar shall cease, if it does not have other place of business in India.

According to the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014,
(a) Further, every foreign company shall, along with the financial statement required to be filed with the Registrar, attach thereto the following documents; namely:-

(1) Statement of related party transaction
(2) Statement of repatriation of profits
(3) Statement of transfer of funds (including dividends, if any)

The above statements shall include such other particulars as are prescribed in the Companies (Registration of Foreign Companies) Rules, 2014.

(b) All these documents shall be delivered to the Registrar within a period of 6 months of the close of the financial year of the foreign company to which the documents relate.