

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, a telecom provider has recently launched 4G services and is providing facilities like free data, free voice calling, free SMS upto December, 2016.

(b) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has not yet launched the 4G services.

Upgradation of postal banking system

1979. SHRI K. G. KENYE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to tie up with banking institutions to upgrade the Postal Banking System, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether expressions of interest have been received from different financial institutions therefor; and

(c) whether Government proposes to associate with public sector banks to strengthen the public sector and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes Sir. Cabinet has approved the proposal for setting up of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) under the Department of Posts. The IPPB, once operationalized, proposes to tie-up with banks, insurance companies, mutual funds houses, international money transfer operators, pension products providers and other permitted third party financial service providers to address the lack of access to basic financial services for citizens in rural and under-served areas.

(b) No Sir. While the Department is in various stages of discussions with various financial institutions, no formal expression of interest has been received.

(c) As per RBI's mandate for payments Bank and the approval of the Union Cabinet, India Post Payments Bank may act as Business Correspondent of banks (including Public Sector Banks) for furthering financial inclusion in the country.

Disinvestment of BSNL and MTNL

1980. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal of disinvestment of BSNL and MTNL;

(b) whether any communication has been received by the Ministry on this matter from NITI Ayog; and