

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) No, Sir. The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in telecom services sector is already 100% since August, 2013. While FDI is 100% under automatic route in telecom manufacturing, FDI upto 49% is permitted through automatic route and beyond 49% through Government route in telecom services.

(b) to (e) Question Does not arise in view of the above.

4G services by BSNL

2935. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any decision on the demand for spectrum by BSNL to launch 4G services; and

(b) whether the Centre is aware that the delay in launching 4G services will hamper the growth prospects of BSNL and give undue advantage to private players?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) To improve its customer base and to compete with private Telecom Service Providers, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has initiated process for introduction of 4G services and has requested for allocation of one 5 MHz slot in 700 MHz Band for pan-India (excluding Delhi and Mumbai) through equity fusion route or an allocation for 5 MHz slot in 2100 MHz band temporarily for one year on payment. The request of BSNL is under process.

Internet connections to Gram Panchayats

2936. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has been able to lay optical cable network to 1 lakh Gram Panchayats in the first phase;

(b) whether in spite of that, the Ministry is able to provide internet connection to only 22,000 Gram Panchayats;

(c) whether the target fixed was March, 2015, and even after more than two years, the Ministry has not been able to achieve its target, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the status of providing internet to Gram Panchayats in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, District-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.