

- (b) if so, details of heads under which the fees have been increased;
- (c) whether the students have launched an agitation against the said fee hike; and
- (d) the names of the universities in the country witnessing an increase in fee structure alongwith the details on the quantum of increase against each head?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'): (a) and (b) Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has informed that in order to meet the increased expenditure on the maintenance of hostels and to run them on no profit no loss basis, it has increased room rents after about, forty years. The details are given below:

Particulars	Existing charges in Rs.	Revised charges in Rs. for all students including BPL category students with JRF, SRF and other equivalent scholarships/ fellowships	Revised charges in Rs. for eligible BPL category students
Room Rent Double	10/- per month	300/- per month	150/- per month
Room Rent Single	20/- per month	600/- per month	300/- per month
Utility and Service Charges	Nil	1000/- per month	500/- per month

- (c) The students of JNU launched an agitation against the said fee hike.

(d) It is pertinent to mention here that Central Universities, including JNU, are autonomous institutions and governed by the respective Acts and the Statutes and the Ordinances made there under. All administrative and academic decisions including fee revision are taken by the University with the approval of its statutory bodies, such as Academic Council, Executive Council and Court. However, no information is maintained centrally in this regard.

#### **NSO spyware scandal**

1951. DR. ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of all the steps taken after the NSO Pegasus spyware scandal;
- (b) whether the Ministry is aware of all the companies that sell such software or provide services; and
- (c) what steps the Ministry has taken to ensure the bulwarking of such spywares in the country?

THE MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) On 31st Oct., 2019, there was news in Indian media reporting breach of data of few Indians *via* WhatsApp through a spyware named Pegasus developed and marketed by an Israel based company namely NSO. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) took cognizance of the news reports and sought a report from the WhatsApp through an email sent to them on 1st November and seeking WhatsApp response by 4th November. WhatsApp responded on 2nd November 2019 communicating the aspects relating to exploitation of a vulnerability in their platform by a spyware called Pegasus, developed by Israeli agency named NSO. Once the official response was received from WhatsApp, the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) issued a notice on 9th Nov., 2019 and sought clarifications from WhatsApp. WhatsApp had responded to the initial notice on 18th Nov 2019. CERT-In has also issued a notice to NSO group. The response from WhatsApp was received on November 18, 2019 and further clarifications and technical details were sought on 26th November, 2019. CERT-In has also sent a notice to NSO Group on 26th November, 2019 seeking details about the malware and its impact on Indian users.

- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) is tracking cyber threats affecting users and issuing advisories to users regarding best practices to be followed for protection of information while using Social Media and securing mobile devices.

**Misuse of data by companies to manipulate/electoral process**

1952. SHRI S. MUTHUKARUPPAN: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that companies are misusing data of India to manipulate the electoral process;