



BAL BHARATI PUBLIC SCHOOL, PITAMPURA, DELHI – 110034

CRITICAL THINKING WORKSHEET

Class IX

Assignment – 2

NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION

Dear Students,

- Reading newspaper makes you well informed. It enables you to take part in every discussion pertaining to the world's current events.
- Reading newspapers will improve your knowledge in general and it will be easy for you to relate to other people who often talk about current events and politics.
- Through newspapers, you will have a clear idea and understanding of what is happening in your country and the whole world.

Please read the following article published on ndtv.com on 23rd July 2020 and answer the Questions that follow.

"If Over 45 Countries Use Pegasus, Why Target Just India?" Says BJP

New Delhi:

Amid the tumult over reports of snooping in multiple nations through Israeli spyware Pegasus, former Union IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has questioned why only India is being "targeted" for the use of the spyware when 45 nations are using it. Mr Prasad, who handled the IT ministry in 2019 when news of surveillance through Pegasus first broke, had defended the government. This time too, the Centre had stuck to its position that "no unauthorised interception" has taken place.

The former minister added a fresh angle to the mix this evening. "If more than 45 nations are using Pegasus, like NSO has said, why is only India being targeted?"

"The NSO, which is the manufacturer of Pegasus, has clearly said that its clients are mostly Western nations. So why is India being targeted in this matter? What is the story behind this? What is the twist in the tale?" he added.

Most of the numbers identified in the alleged list of possible targets are from India, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Morocco, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, news portal "The Wire" has reported.

Questioning the timing of the reports, Mr Prasad also questioned if “some people (were) deliberately trying to break the news” before the Monsoon Session to “build a new atmosphere”.

“Some people” he made it clear, included the opposition Congress. “Some people were brought in and their names were dropped,” he said, citing former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, whose name was allegedly on the list.

“Can we deny that bodies like Amnesty have an anti-India agenda?” he said, referring to the Amnesty International which had released the lists along with Paris-based media non-profit Forbidden Stories, on which multiple media organisations in India and abroad had conducted detailed investigations.

Denying any role of government yet again, Mr Prasad said, “There not a shred of evidence in the entire Pegasus story that there is any linkage of the government or the BJP”.

The question of government involvement had come up following the categorical statement from NSO since beginning -- that they supply their software only to “vetted governments” and their agencies.

In 2019, when WhatsApp had alleged that many of its user's accounts had been compromised by the use of Pegasus, Mr Prasad had termed the allegations of government involvement an “attempt to malign” its image.

“The government is committed to protecting the fundamental rights of citizens, including their right to privacy,” he had added.

The government has been under pressure since the first explosive revelations on a list of prospective targets.

Today, the portal reported that Congress's Rahul Gandhi and his two aides were on the list. So was election strategist Prashant Kishor, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's nephew Abhishek Banerjee and former Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa.

Based on the above news article, attempt the following questions:

Q1) List the function of Pegasus and name the agency that supplies it.

Q2) How has the BJP been involved in the use of Pegasus?

Q3) Do you think its justified for the Indian government to use a spying software on its key opponents? Comment.

Q4. State the defense used by the Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad against the accusation that the BJP government has been using Pegasus to spy on its own people.

Q5." The government is committed to protecting the fundamental rights of its citizens, including their right to privacy". Do you think the government has succeeded in its objective stated here?