

Subject: **Ban on Use of Whatsapp / Likewise Means for Sharing of Official Letters / Information (Advisory No. 2).**

It has been reported that Hostile Intelligence agencies have developed technical capabilities and means to gain access to sensitive information stored mobile phones of officials of Government Departments / Institutions / Ministries in country. These spyware companies are using hacking softwares / applications such as "Chat Line" and "Pegasus" malware on whatsapp Account of target mobile phone (IOS and Android) to gain access of sensitive information stored on mobile phone. The malware is capable to infect any mobile phone (iOS and Android) only by generating missed call on target WhatsApp number. This "Pegasus" malware has infected approximately 1400 senior government and military officials in twenty countries including Pakistan. Hostile spyware companies such as **Israel based NSO Group** have been sued by WhatsApp / Facebook in the US court of San Francisco for "violating both US and California laws as well as the WhatsApp Terms of Service".

2. Although advisory on the subject has also been issued to all government departments / ministries by NTISB, Cabinet Division, however in order to minimize the possibility of any infection by Pegasus malware, senior government officials holding sensitive portfolios / dealing with national security matters are advised to consider following:-

- a. No official / classified information be shared on WhatsApp or similar application being highly insecure.
- b. WhatsApp be upgraded to latest version (version 2.19.112 for iOS and 2.19.308 for Android as of 4 November 2019).
- c. All mobile phones purchased prior to 10 May 2019, be immediately replaced.