



## **A month on, termite infestation still not cleared from JNU's state-of-the-art lab, claim researchers, JNUSU**

Termite infestation had allegedly destroyed rare samples from the lab. The situation of the lab is still the same, they say

The researchers at JNU's Centre for the Study of Regional Development claim that the university administration hasn't taken the initiative to clear the termite infestation and damage caused to its TL/OSL (thermoluminescence/optically stimulated luminescence) laboratory. Over a month ago, the researchers had shared photographs of the lab, which was locked since March, owing to the nationwide lockdown. Most parts of it, along with the equipment and the samples that the researchers had collected were destroyed, after being exposed to seepage and termite infestation.

A few researchers whom we spoke to at the time had said that they had lost their entire PhD research work owing to this and would be forced to start their work from the scratch. A major reason for the damage, according to them was a large amount of scrap left on top of the building by its previous occupants. "The JNU administration had told us that it doesn't have enough money to clear the mess and restore the laboratory. Now, our supervisor has moved a some of the equipment from the terrace, spending money out of his own pocket," says Ishita Manna, a fifth-year PhD researcher. "However, the lab's condition is still the same.

It is impossible to work there now," she says.

She adds that the researchers are now working on collecting samples outside the lab as much as they can. In December, the researchers and the JNU Students' Union had written a series of emails and had met the authorities seeking appropriate action. The JNUSU President Aishe Ghosh had then claimed that a rector had promised speedy action to solve the situation soon. "However, the administration has remained mum uptill now. No one from the administration is ready to meet us nor are they responding to our emails," she says.