

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
JOINT MEETING OF THE TASK FORCES ON
CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS AND AUSTERITY & RESTRUCTURING OF GOVERNMENT

Date: **Saturday, 14th September, 2019**
Time: **10:00 am to 5:00 pm**
Venue: **Prime Minister's Office, Islamabad**

The **14th meeting** of the *Task Forces on Civil Service Reforms and Austerity & Restructuring of Government* was jointly held at the Prime Minister's Office, Islamabad under the chair of Dr. Ishrat Husain. Following is a re-cap of the key areas of discussion and decisions.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	DECISIONS
<p>Progress Review & Work Plan + Initial Discussion</p>	<p>The Chair apprised the participants with the Prime Minister’s direction for an update on the work of the two Task Forces for which a presentation was made to the PM on the 20th of August. The Chair shared a summary of the progress made so far and the future work plan with the participants.</p> <p>The recommendations/ proposals of the Task Force on Civil Service Reforms (CSR) so far approved by the Cabinet include summaries on security of tenure, process of postings of the Secretaries, selection process of the Chief Executives of 65 autonomous bodies, corporations etc., appointment of Technical Advisers to ministries and monetization of transport allowance. The Chair stated that new procedure for hiring chief executives of the autonomous bodies and corporations has been serving the government well. This selection process will allow for the maintenance of merit in the selection of all chief executives of the 65 entities. On the subject of technical advisers, the Chair stated that for this new post to be requisitioned, a post within the respective ministries has to be relinquished. Only once this is done can the new post for Technical Adviser be created. The slow progress on this matter is a result of the reluctance of ministries to relinquish existing posts. Regarding monetization of transport allowance, the Chair stated that there was much concern about the misuse of government cars. A summary has been approved by Cabinet in this regard.</p> <p>Recommendations of the Task Force on CSR that are currently under preparation for Cabinet approval include those on induction and recruitment, training strategy, performance management, career progression and promotion policy. To make possible the induction of more technical experts into these ministries, it has been proposed that direct induction be carried out at BPS 20 and 21 on available resources.</p> <p>Topics currently under consideration of the Task Force on CSR include compensation and benefits, retirement policy, National Executive Service and internal accountability mechanism. Proposals on retirement policy were initially delayed with the view that once the value chain of the civil service was completed and fixed, only then would the retirement policy be tabled for decision before the Task Force. However, the KP provincial government unilaterally made a decision to increase the retirement age for their civil servants with other provinces considering the same. In this light, the Prime Minister has constituted a committee headed by the Chair to consider this policy and present its findings and proposals in the coming 3 weeks.</p> <p>Similarly, it has been decided by the members of the task force to consider the creation of the National Executive Service once work on all the other aspects of the value chain of the civil service has been completed. On the matter of internal accountability mechanism, it was initially proposed that cases of graft above the threshold of Rs. 500 million should fall under the jurisdiction of NAB whereas all others should be handled internally in effect strengthening internal accountability within the civil service. However, the task force did not want any special treatment for civil servants and those outside the civil service were also not satisfied with this proposal arguing that no special exemptions should be made on this matter. Keeping this in mind it has been</p>	

proposed that a screening committee be formed that should be applicable to everyone. Only once the committee has considered a case and referred it to NAB should the latter take any steps on that case.

Proposals of Task Force on Austerity & Restructuring of Government (ARG) that have been approved by Cabinet include the revitalization of the Secretaries Committee, road map for E-governance, public financial management (delegation of financial powers), reorganization of 441 federal government organizations and the transfer of the offices of certain ministries to the Kohsar Secretariat building. After an initial delay in the advertisements for the post of CEO of the NITB a selection has been made of a competent individual from Silicon Valley. Similarly, the Chief IT Officer who is a former employee of Google has also been notified. With competent individuals at the helm of affairs, progress is expected on the issue of e-governance. The Public Financial Management Act with an updated delegation of financial powers has been passed and circulated to members of the Task Force as well. With regards to the work on reorganization, the Chair stated that the number of government entities have been proposed to be brought down from 441 to 324 with attached departments transformed to executive departments and all other entities falling under autonomous bodies hence allowing for a leaner, more coherent government structure. The Implementation Committee working on re-organization meets regularly. Lastly, certain ministries have been recently shifted to the Kohsar Secretariat building. The government had been spending millions to rent office buildings for various ministries some of which have now been shifted to the Kohsar Secretariat, reducing the cost of government.

The topic of merger of ministries/divisions of the federal government was initially deferred by the Cabinet Committee and the Prime Minister. However, the PM has recently asked that work on this be restarted. Proposals of the Task Force on ARG relating to issues of amendment in the Rules of Business and the appointment of dual nationals have been submitted for Cabinet approval. Both are currently with the Law Division and response from the division is solicited for further work on the matters.

The topics under preparation for Cabinet approval include strengthening of the Auditor General of Pakistan and the restructuring of CDA. With regards to the former, after direct consultation with the AGP office a report has been prepared with proposed changes to strengthen the AGP. The restructuring of the CDA is an ongoing process. Currently, too many roles some of which fall within the purview of the Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad (MCI) are being fulfilled by the CDA not allowing it to focus on its primary responsibilities. It is proposed that for better dispensation of responsibilities, CDA may be tasked with master plan, town planning, building control and zoning functions only while the residual functions of municipal services may be transferred to MCI.

Lastly, two topics currently under consideration by the Task Force on ARG are that of upgradation of Establishment Division into a Human Resource Management Division for the entire federal government and the restructuring of FBR which is being done under the supervision of the PM. On the former subject, the Establishment Division is currently working on its upgradation and the IRC is assisting on the matter. With regards to the restructuring of FBR, the PM is working closely with Chairman FBR and a World Bank project is ongoing to assist in the restructuring. There is a plan to form an integrated data portal to create greater transparency in the recording of tax information. Concluding the presentation, the Chair

noted that the Prime Minister has asked that work on civil service reforms be expedited. The Chair went on to open the floor for discussion.

It was also proposed that the government should look towards a cashless economy which would make the exchange of money within the country far more transparent than it is currently. The widespread use of digital debit cards can make this possible. The Chair stated that there are more than a thousand major malls and stores that have formed a link with the FBR. An example of a high end restaurant in Karachi was also provided which provides a 15% discount to customers who pay by card. It was agreed that while a digitized system across the country would create greater transparency, it was important also to consider that it may not be possible to correctly implement this system everywhere at this point or bring the vast majority of citizens from all corners of the country on board.

It was noted that every decision made by the government must be made keeping in mind the two pronged aim of enhancing efficiency and austerity. The Chair stated that proposals are soon to be tabled before Cabinet for linking pay to performance whereby the salaries of officers will be dependent on their evaluation and performance rank.

A participant raised the point that despite ranking lower than Pakistan on the Corruption Index, having a lower tax to GDP ratio with lower total public expenditure, Bangladesh was growing faster than Pakistan. The Chair noted that for Pakistan to be able to replicate Bangladesh's example it must simultaneously assist private sector growth, reduce the import/export gap and correct its revenue-expenditure mismatch. It was noted that the secret to the success of economies such as Turkey, India and Bangladesh was stability and sustained economic policy. While private businessmen often express contentment with taxes levied on their businesses, they in turn expect steady policy to plan effectively for the long term whereas policymakers are often indifferent to the impact of changing policy on businesses. The Chair noted that the government is responsive to the private sector which recognizes improving accessibility to this government.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	DECISIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Discussion on draft of Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill, 2019</p>	<p>The discussion on the draft of Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill 2019 featured on the more poignant aspects of the alterations suggested including the expansion in the definition of service dispute, definition of civil servants and on the role of the Appellate Tribunal. Mr Salman Akram Raja initiated the discussion.</p> <p>Mr Raja stated that the definition of service dispute according to the amendments proposed has been expanded to include ‘fitness to hold position’. So far cases concerning an individual’s fitness to hold a position were beyond the purview of the Service Tribunal. Such cases would hence go straight to the High Court in the form of writ petitions. He argued that the detail on the kind of disputes that have now been defined under the term service dispute is much more comprehensive than before and should be accepted. The representative from the Establishment Division stated that the expansion of this jurisdiction and the definition of service dispute emanate from an expansion in the definition of civil servants as detailed in clause 2a. Mr Raja clarified that the expansion of the definition of civil servants and that of service dispute are two separate topics and should be considered as such. The expansion in the latter can be accepted without any changes to the former. The participants of the meeting overwhelmingly agreed that clause 2 (aa) that elaborates on the expanded areas of jurisdiction under the FST in the amended bill should be accepted. It was further proposed that the time given for the resolution of each case be reduced from 90 days to 30 days for a more quick dispensation of duties. A participant also cautioned against giving the FST too much power stating that a fairly large number of people in provincial governments are currently functioning on stay. Subjects such as superannuation and postings should not be challenged as these are the governments prerogative and taking away this authority from the government will only encourage a constant rise in cases, in effect stunting the executives ability to perform well.</p> <p>The Establishment Divisions opinion on the matter was stated in that it does not endorse the expansion in the definition of civil servants as outlined in the proposed amendments. It was brought to light that variations of clause 2a had previously been added to the law to bring employees of autonomous bodies and public corporations into the fold of civil servants. A Supreme Court judgement, however, set aside that alteration and ordered to go back to the original definition. Hence, it was argued that such an attempt may not be made again. Members agreed that as long as the jurisdiction of the FST can be expanded through the amendment in the concept of service dispute there would be no need to alter the definition of civil servant. For this provision, a few laws may have to be partially amended including the Civil Servants Act, 1973. On the subject of the definition of civil servants, although some</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original definition of civil servants should be maintained and clause 2a should not be made part of the amended Bill. • The amended definition of service dispute which includes a comprehensive list of topics included in the proposed amendments should be accepted as proposed in the draft. • A separate appellate division within the Tribunal is not warranted as it is likely to create an additional layer between the FST and the Supreme Court. It will only prolong the time taken to resolve cases and is unlikely to reduce the burden of appeals on the Supreme Court. • A separate framework ought to be considered to address the grievances or disputes of individuals who work within the government but do not fall within the definition of civil servants. This framework is meant to reduce the burden of cases on the Hight Courts and the Supreme Court. • It was recommended that improvements in departmental remedies ought to be considered to change the culture of approaching the FST on decisions made by the executive. In this regard, proper

participants called for a possible expansion in the definition, the final consensus was on accepting the definition of civil servants as it exists in its current form.

Participants also inquired what recourse if any exists for those who do not fall within the definition of civil servants. They would continue to approach the High Courts on these matters. It was suggested by members that a separate but similar framework be put into place that provides non civil servant employees of the government to challenge decisions with an authority that functions along the same lines as the FST.

The Chair questioned whether the expansion in the jurisdiction of the FST will have the desired effect of reducing writ petitions in the High Courts. Mr Raja clarified that whenever writ petitions are heard in the High Courts, judges often inquire from the petitioner why the FST was not contacted on the matter. The reason always cited is that the FST does not deal with the subject concerned. After the expansion of the FST's jurisdiction, petitioners will have to approach the FST as their petitions will not be entertained in the High Court. In effect, this is likely to reduce the number of writ petitions filed in high courts and shift the burden towards the FST.

A participant stated that Article 199 of the constitution allows a citizen to approach the High Courts and increasing the jurisdiction of the FST may not be reason enough for them to avoid approaching the High Court. The Chair inquired that since the Constitution is above any individual law, would this be a possible hurdle? It was noted that while Article 199 does grant citizens this right, the FST has the sanction of Article 212 of the Constitution so once the juridical expansion is accepted, petitioners will have no choice but to approach the FST.

A member argued that the very need for such fora as the FST exists because the system has overtime degenerated to such an extent that there is no recourse for people but to approach the courts or the FST. There ought to be departmental remedies in place and also a more open system of access. Today, it is increasingly difficult to gain access to Chief Secretaries to voice concerns regarding a possible miscarriage of duties etc. In times when departmental remedies existed many issues would be resolved internally without the need to refer cases to higher fora. It was stated that alongside these changes, it is also important to consider ways to improve internal departmental functioning and access to higher authorities such as the Chief Secretaries and Secretaries. Provincial representatives concurred that the volume of cases depends greatly on how the executive is perceived. If a CS is considered to be fair in their decisions, often issues stand resolved internally. If the confidence in the executive is weak as is the case today, cases will continue to multiply. The Chair stated that there is a need to create a balance

documentation should be done during decision making in service matters so that cases can be properly advocated at the FST and courts.

between the rights of aggrieved parties and the authority of the executive branch where the latter can continue its work but where there is an infraction, there can be a recourse to the FST.

The Chair questioned why the FST currently gives a majority of verdicts against the government stating that the governments decision making process may be in need of reform. A member stated that the government fails to properly record the cogency of its decisions on postings, transfers and removals. There used to be files on promotion and transfers that clearly documented these issues previously. FST existed then as well but the number of verdicts against the government were lower. There needs to be a revamp in the way that the government records its decisions so that if cases are brought to the FST, the executive can provide cogent reasons for the decisions taken. The Chair stated that further discussion and brainstorming was needed to understand how the government can improve the decision making process and defend its decisions in front of the FST.

Discussion was also held on the status of the Appellate Tribunal. It was argued that appeals against the FST will be brought to the Supreme Court. Access to the Supreme Court will remain and hence the creation of an Appellate Tribunal at the FST will not affect the volume of cases taken to the Supreme Court nor reduce burden on the SC. Given this fact, the existence of an Appellate Tribunal will only create an additional layer of bureaucracy. Upon the Chairs inquiry on whether an additional layer should be made between the FST and the Supreme Court, the participants overwhelmingly agreed that the path from FST to SC should be direct and an Appellate Tribunal should not exist.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	DECISIONS
<p>Internal Accountability Mechanisms and NAB Ordinance</p>	<p>Mr Salman Akram Raja shared his thoughts with the Task Force on the subject of Internal Accountability Mechanism and the NAB Ordinance. Mr Raja stated that as of now the internal accountability mechanism in the government was fairly weak. The role taken on by the NAB in the past few years had further undermined the need for effective internal accountability. However, there is now a renewed interest in strengthening this mechanism. Any step towards strengthening it will have to be accompanied by effectively empowering the internal process.</p> <p>Ministries and divisions can be empowered to look into cases relating to their employees and if this process reveals crime then action must be taken. There should be a case assessment committee that decides whether a case is legitimate or not and should be further investigated. If so, the committee can refer the case to NAB and if not, that shall be the end of investigation on the matter. This process would only work if NAB respects the decision of the committee and complies with it. Where criminality is suspected, cases will still go to NAB and FIA. Mr Raja noted that it is still worth considering whether this barrier between NAB and civil servants would be acceptable to the government as opposition to the idea has been voiced before. It has been argued that this would be synonymous to creating an exemption particularly for civil servants whereas all others would be a target of NAB scrutiny directly.</p> <p>The Chair informed the participants that an earlier proposal to create a supervisory committee that would approve investigation/ filing of reference against civil servants faced opposition and was interpreted as an attempt to protect the bureaucracy. He stated that there should hence, be a neutral oversight committee which should consider cases of all parties including civil servants, politicians, businessmen etc. and then refer cases where wrongdoing is suspected to the NAB. The comments that accompanied this proposal have been sent to the Task Force already for the review of the members. And this shall in the coming weeks go to the Cabinet for further discussion.</p> <p>The Chair stated that the final decision on this matter is now up to the Cabinet.</p>	<p>There should a neutral oversight committee that ought to consider all cases of individuals/parties within and outside the civil service to decide whether the relevant case should be taken up and further investigated by the NAB or dismissed.</p> <p>Permission of arrest can only be given by this oversight committee.</p>

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	DECISIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Update on Implementation of PFM Law by Finance Department</p>	<p>Additional Finance Secretary, Mr. Arshad Mehmood made a presentation to the participants to apprise them regarding the progress on the implementation of the Public Financial Management Law. The AFS stated that copies of the act have been distributed among all PAOs and the provincial finance departments.</p> <p>An oversight committee to monitor the implementation of the Act has been approved by the Federal Cabinet and notified on September 3rd. The first meeting of this committee was held on the 18th of September. Implementation of Treasury Single Account policy is currently underway with the broad fundamentals of the policy already approved by the Cabinet. Work on rules for operationalisation of the TSA is in process and the SOPs are also being made with consultation from stakeholders. Meetings have been held with the heads of autonomous bodies for retrieval of amounts to TSA. The 441 federal entities are being divided into profit bearing entities and operational entities to be approached separately on the matter of TSA. The complete application of TSA-1 is expected to be complete by 30th November.</p> <p>There are four primary areas of consideration for the implementation of the Act. Update of rules and regulations across government entities is required on the subjects of GFR, treasury rules, new accounting model, system of financial control and budgeting and the manual for development projects. Work is being done on these fronts currently and is likely to take 2 to 3 months. A budget manual is also being prepared with detailed budget making, presentation, reporting and monitoring procedures, as well as forms and letters. The first draft of the manual is projected to be completed by Mid-November. An approach paper is being developed for the purpose of clarifying delegation of financial control modalities including the role of the CF&AO and Internal Auditors. Given the changes made in the process of budgeting and the devolution of powers to individuals, some changes will be needed in the structure of the Finance Division itself. The budget and expenditure wings require strengthening and the harnessing of new capacities in the areas of fiscal policy, treasury and management. On this matter, positions have been identified and work is underway.</p> <p>The AFS outlined progress made on six different key initiatives. The first relates to the creation of an Internal Audit Charter the draft of which has been submitted by the CGA to the Finance Division. Under the charter, an Internal Audit Policy Board is to be created tasked with policy and standard setting as well as updating the Charter. The post of a Chief Internal Auditor is to be created, who will report to the PAO along with the Policy Board. The Auditor will be tasked with the identification of risks and gaps in financial records and procedures and will advise the PAO on any issues noted. The AFS clarified that while the Auditor is meant to work with the PAO he/she will be independent because they will be receiving direction from the Board. It was inquired if there will be an Internal Audit Wing in every ministry. The CGA stated that the decision on this is still awaited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AFS along with his team currently working on the Internal Audit Charter will take assistance/guidance from Mr Asad Ali Shah and Mr Abdullah Yusuf on the matter. • FABS may store the data on domestic and external debt entirely instead of the Finance Division and the EAD which can only fulfil the requirement separately in a fragmented manner. • Coordination between FABS and EAD and Finance Division to be improved. • Restructuring of the departments with regards to the CFAO scheme should be considered again with assistance from Mr Abdullah Yusuf and Mr Asad Ali Shah. • First draft of Budget Manual to be complete by Mid-November • Complete application of TSA-1 by November 30th. • Approach paper to be developed to clarify financial control modalities

Participants urged that the Internal Audit Wing should have a good rotational policy which should ideally be drafted at this time as it is still in the formational stages. A member also argued that the government should look to reduce the layers of work by limiting excessive controls. He argued that while the pre-audit system checks all transactions the internal audit would look at a random sample of about 5% of transactions and hence may not be entirely useful. It was further urged that the number of paras should be reduced and the quality of work on this matter needs improvement. The CGA added that the internal auditor will also advise on the risks and will not limit their work to just the financial side in effect playing a supporting role to the PAO. A participant commented that to maintain the highest standard in this work, technical specialists will be required and should be engaged. Other members stressed the need for specialists from different fields other than just accounts giving the example of the Government Accountability Office in the US. The need for heavy automation which can offer opportunities for oversight from a distance should be fulfilled. The AFS requested that since the process is still in its formative stages it may greatly benefit those working on it if assistance could be taken on the subject from Mr Asad Ali Shah and Mr Abdullah Yusuf. The members readily agreed.

The second initiative concerns the implementation of PFM reforms through an enhanced usage of FABS. The AFS stated when PIFRA was launched it was done with the purpose of looking at the full array of financial management functions including payroll, debt management and commitment accounting but the only aspect given proper attention was the expenditure side. The government now aims to correct this issue by utilising FABS. A three year plan for enhanced FABS usage was included in the presentation whereby the entity will make possible integrated monitoring of domestic and external debt as well as daily reporting of fiscal deficit and the maintenance of fixed asset registers for ministries/departments. Ministries will be able to do their annual budgeting on the FABS system. Additionally, cash forecasting, pension forecasting previously done by EAD alone can be done through FABS which will require some integration between the two departments. E-procurement can also be recorded on the system. The existing portfolio of the government should be recorded on the integrated database. The AFS stated that to counter the issue of statistical discrepancies there needs to be greater emphasis on coordination between government agencies. Linkages are being strengthened, data sharing is being done between FBR and FABS and a data warehouse has been designed. A member stated that if FABS is offering to record the domestic and external debt completely then it may be advisable to hand over this responsibility to them instead of maintaining a fragmented fulfilment of this task by Finance Division and EAD.

The third initiative involves the corporatisation of FABS and its conversion into an IT company (government owned autonomous entity). The summary for the conversion has been sent to Finance Division by CGA office and on the subsequent approval of the summary the Board of Directors will be notified and the FABS set up will be registered through SECP as an IT company. The human resource requirements of the company are to be met in the subsequent years in a phased manner. A member inquired if NITB and FABS could be merged to which

to all ministries/departments.

- Maintenance of fixed assets registers of projects on FABS.
- FABS to be used for annual budgeting, cash forecasting, pension forecasting and e-procurement.
- FABS to be used for output based budgeting and performance monitoring.
- FABS to be converted into an IT company (government owned autonomous entity).
- Payment function of CF&AOs to be piloted at 2 ministries in the coming 3 months.
- Firm to be selected for implementation of Accrual Accounting.

the representative of FABS replied that it may not be a feasible idea since the work that FABS does is specialised in a certain field and hence the mandate of the two is vastly different.

Fourthly, the budget manual is being currently developed. The Manual is structured in a way to provide guidance of financial management matters and provide a blueprint on the way to carry out budgeting in light of the PFM law. There is currently no single booklet that is able to fulfil this purpose. This is likely to create uniformity in practice which will make financial management more transparent and easier for the government. The CGA currently has a team working to develop chapters of the budget manual, seven of which are so far complete.

The fifth initiative aims to re-direct the pre-audit functions at ministries as well as to implement the CFAO scheme. The CFAO will now be looking at the functions of payment of all non-ERE claims, budgeting, loan and advances subject to bifurcation of budget by Finance and pay roll statements. The payment function of the CF&AO will be implemented in a phased manner with implementation in 2 ministries in the first 3 months and an additional 8 ministries in the six months and roll out to all ministries in 9 months. The CF&AO will be using the SAP system to process vendor payments of the ministry/attached departments, record assets and record budgetary commitments. FABS is in the process of developing an online bill submission solution to avoid/minimise manual submission. A concern was highlighted by a member about increasing the workforce when the aim of the exercise was to cut the number of people involved in the financial management process. The CGA clarified that financial burden will not be added. If there is a cut in the number of the people at the AGP there will be an increase in the number of people at individual ministries hence the overall bill of the government and the overall number of people will not be affected. If the net productivity and public service delivery of the government is improved then in the short term it should be acceptable to set aside the aim of downsizing government. It was also stated that the number of people needed will vary by ministry and hence smaller ministries may not need too much man power.

The sixth and last key initiative pertains to implementing accrual accounting. An Expression of Interest (EOI) has been invited for revision of New Accounting Model and presenting an implementation plan for transition to accrual accounting. The firm selected will undertake development of plan in consultation with stakeholders at FD, AGP, CGA etc. It was stated that a gap analysis has been completed. The aim behind this exercise is to adopt international best practices and since this is a new and technical field the government is trying to harmonise teams and find the best talent for the job. It was urged by the members that accrual accounting has to be implemented and should be done in a timely fashion since there is generally a 10 year time frame for implementation. Members stated that they would be eager to assist in any way needed.

AGENDA ITEMS	DISCUSSION	DECISIONS
<p>Update on implementation of E-Governance reform by Secretary IT</p>	<p>Secretary IT and CEO National Information Technology Board (NITB) updated the Task Force on the implementation of E-governance reform. CEO NITB made a presentation in which he provided an update for the past 90 days on goals achieved by the Board, the future work plan along varying themes and the roadblocks facing the reform process.</p> <p>Prior to the start of the presentation, Secretary IT noted that despite efforts he had made over the past months, Rs 1.4bn pledged towards e-governance reform by the Cabinet had not been released to date. It was agreed by the representative of the Finance Division to find a middle path acceptable to both the MoITT and the Division. Participants stressed that this initiative is of immense importance and other reforms currently being considered by the Task Forces depend on the success and progress on the matter of e-governance reforms hence a solution to this issue is imperative.</p> <p>Following this discussion, the CEO NITB commenced his presentation. The first matter for the Board to consider was the creation of charter to define the functions the Board ought to possess. A three pronged approach was finalised whereby the responsibilities of the Board would be to use technology to :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eliminate corruption 2. Extend the tax base 3. Increase foreign revenue <p>The CEO outlined a few roadblocks in the way of achieving these aims. Firstly, financial resources are required to properly start work and secondly, in the current scenario the NITB faces the issue of a low skill set which cannot be used to push forward the agenda of the NITB. The participants were informed that the Board of Governors comprised individuals of equal number from both the private and the public sector with four federal secretaries representing the latter.</p> <p>An architectural revamp of the E-Office has been completed and the Next Generation version is now being deployed. Additionally, a mobile app is being developed which will provide messenger, email, video and office so that much of official work will be accessible from a mobile phone. 28 out of 42 divisions are on e-office, 16 of which have been enabled in the past 90 days. A few road blocks were identified by the CEO. In addition to the lack of funds for procurement, it was stated that the NITB faced a lack of internal support from the government. Ministers and heads of departments/divisions will have to push for the changes needed to create a more e-friendly system of government and that support is currently wanting. Furthermore, it was stated that the movement of some ministries to the</p>	<p>The following decisions / recommendations were made with regards to the update on e-governance reforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Division was requested to release the funds allotted to NITB so that work on e-governance can continue unhindered. • Case against e-office parent company filed by MoITT to be taken back from FIA following recommendation from NITB Board. • Special Secretary Cabinet to bring together the administration from NITB and NTISB to resolve the issue regarding Wireless connectivity for e-office. Sub-committee formed under Special Secretary Cabinet for the resolution of the above mentioned issues. • Manual of Secretariat Instructions to be updated in keeping with NITB proposals. • NITB is to contact Mr. Rehan Akhtar at Karandaaz with regards to the subject of digital gateways. • An Enterprise Resource Planning system should also be made for the Gwadar Port Authority.

Kohsar Secretariat has created a delay in bringing all ministries on to the e-office platform which will continue once the transfer is complete. An additional issue brought to light is that of a case filed in the FIA by the MoITT against its e-Office parent company for selling to the ministry an older, less advanced version of the software upon which the e-Office is based. This was done despite the fact that at the time of the purchase, the parent company was in possession of a newer and more advanced version of the same software. This litigation has slowed down the rollout process. Lastly, the CEO apprised the members with opposition the Board is facing from the National Telecommunication and Information Technology Security Board (NTISB) on the matter of Wireless connectivity for e-Office. The NTISB contends that the current connectivity should remain intact alongside the new platform being introduced by NITB. To resolve this issue the Secretary IT suggested that the Special Secretary Cabinet could assist with bringing together senior administrations of both entities together to find an amicable solution to the issue.

The CEO NITB informed that close to 40% of government websites are hosted on non-government bases. The MoITT has written to all such ministries who have their websites hosted outside government to ensure that they are brought to the official base for reasons of security.

The NITB is currently in the process of creating a website for the Kamyab Jawan Program which will provide a centralised portal and data application and also make possible the automation of 6 different initiatives. The portal is scheduled to be complete by mid of October whereas the automaton of the six initiatives will be complete by 30th December. Similarly, the Board is also spearheading the website development for the Ehsaas program which will include a monitoring system. The website shall be ready for use by 30th September.

A Tasks Tracking System will also be made which will be in the form of a dashboard for display in front of the PM during Cabinet meetings and otherwise. This dashboard will contain information on the status of tasks given to different ministries and the deadlines set for them all. Furthermore, the NITB is working on a revamp of all federal government websites which will also ensure standardization so that citizens who visit those websites can rely on a familiar interface ensuring ease of access and public use.

Enterprise Resource Planning systems are also being developed. Currently, this is being developed for the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and its subsequent departments/entities including KPT, PNSC and PQA. The Chair stated that the same should be done for the Gwadar Port Authority. This system will provide a ministry focused application and make management more transparent. The ERP systems will provide in dashboard form information relevant to HR, Asset Management, Operational

- On the subject of the Centralised Data Center, the NITB may talk to the PITB to consider the method in which the Urban Unit was developed in Punjab.
- Website development and monitoring system for Ehsaas Program to be completed by September 30th 2019.
- Application development and executive dashboard for the Tasks Tracking System to be completed by September 30th 2019.
- Federal Websites Revamp Project to be completed by September 30th 2019. Cash Management System development for Attorney General of Pakistan to be complete by October 15th 2019.

Management, Finance etc. Executive Decision Making Dashboards will be made available as well. Heads of divisions and ministers will be able to easily oversee the work of different entities and provide decisions on matters that require their approval without having to be at the relevant station in person.

Work is also underway to make the provision of end-point security possible to all ministries and departments. This will be done through End-Point security encryption deployment on every device. VPN providers similar to Semantic, Microsoft or Kaspersky are being considered. To ensure security, email and websites are also to be in official control. All federal government websites are to be migrated to federal intranet and all official communication by ministries/departments is to be done gov.pk emails which are already available but seldom used.

The creation of an e-Procurement system is underway as presentations from suppliers have begun and a World Bank funded project is also assisting on this matter. A road block being faced at this time derives from a lack of functional ownership by PPRA HQ itself. It was noted that a more proactive approach from PPRA may create greater ease in this process.

The Presidential Secretariat is also going to be automated alongside ministries for which the tender has been floated already.

The NITB hopes to bring a Digital Payment Gateway to Pakistan, work on which is currently in progress and is projected to be completed by the start of 2020. For the success of this endeavour it is important to attract firms with brand equity that the public can trust. Hence, firms such as PayPal are being considered. If PayPal does not come to Pakistan, the P3 Digital Payment Gateway will be approached instead.

Lastly, the CEO of NITB outlined a plan to create a Centralised Data Center for which an RFP has already been published. This will include a Federal Data Integration Program which will bring together data from all major government databases including NADRA, FBR, PBS etc and make access to this data easier. The grant for this program is currently being negotiated with the EXIM Bank. Since the volume of this data will be very large this will have to be a Tier-4 Data Center, which will also provide the required security to the system. A participant added that for data sharing at such a scale, data protection policies and security policies will also be required. It was confirmed that a security policy has already been devised and subsequent policies are being made. The example of the Urban Unit in Punjab was shared which was the first of its kind to automate land records and can prove useful as a case to follow and build upon. The Chair stated that the NITB can talk to those at PITB who spearheaded the development of the Urban Unit as that may provide a point of reference.

	<p>The CEO of NITB ended the presentation stating that the agenda given to him requires much support from all quarters of the government including the Task Forces. The agenda includes many changes to the government system which will take time and the cooperation of ministers and heads of divisions. The participants along with the Chair pledged their support to the NITB and offered their assistance where ever it may be required.</p>	
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The Chair stated that the next meeting of the Task Forces on Civil Service Reforms and Austerity & Restructuring of Government will be convened the following month in the week of 14th October, 2019.