


# EoDB offices to be set up at federal, provincial levels

 [paper.brecorder.com/2019/01/10/1-page/757821-news.html](http://paper.brecorder.com/2019/01/10/1-page/757821-news.html)

January 9, 2019

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Wednesday chaired a meeting in which it was decided that dedicated Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) offices would be set up at the federal and provincial levels for the purpose of removing bottlenecks and facilitating investors in the smooth business operations. It was also decided that the Prime Minister would chair the regular EoDB meetings with participation of the chief ministers and provincial chief secretaries.

The meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office to review progress on improving the EoDB was attended by Finance Minister Asad Umar, Advisor to the PM on Commerce Abdul Razzak Dawood, Advisor to the PM Dr Ishrat Hussain, Board of Investment (BoI) Chairman Haroon Sharif, Special Assistant to the PM Iftikhar Durrani and senior government officials, PM Office media wing in a press release said.

The BoI Chairman briefed the Prime Minister about the progress on various indicators related to EoDB.

On the issue of number of tax payments, it was informed that the number of payments had been brought down from 47 to 21 while efforts were underway to introduce e-payments of social security contributions in Sindh and Punjab.

He said a new system of VAT refunds would be in place by March 31, which would significantly reduce time in obtaining VAT refund.

The BoI Chairman further informed that efforts were also being made to improve risk-management system to reduce number of physical audits.

About the ease of starting business, the Prime Minister was informed that the integration of Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) with provincial portals and the EOBI had been completed in Punjab however, efforts were being made to expedite launch of the portal in Sindh.

On ease in getting electricity, the Prime Minister was informed that significant progress had been made to facilitate provision of power and timely information to the businesses.

Besides availability of required documents on website, full online application system was being rolled out and advance notifications were being ensured about change in tariff, etc.

In the area of getting credit, it was informed that the Registrar would be appointed by the end of this month and rules under Secured Transaction Act were being finalized by the Ministry of Finance.

The BoI chairman also briefed the meeting about steps being taken to facilitate trading across borders and reducing clearance time in imports and exports.

He also identified various issues mostly related to the Sindh province in the integration of SECP and EOBI with the provincial portal, end to end automation of construction permits and availability of complete electronic database of property registry.

The Prime Minister emphasized upon the need for greater focus towards addressing EoDB issues related to Sindh since Karachi was the financial hub of the country.

Briefing the meeting about various positive developments with regards to investment facilitation, it was informed that a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on industrial cooperation had been signed with China last month. An MoU with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was expected to be signed during the current month whereas Investment Framework MoU with the United Arab Emirates was likely to be inked in February.—APP