

Use of Information Technology (I.T.) in Courts

An overview presented
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Use of Information Technology (I.T.) in Courts

- Information Technology (IT) has captured unprecedented importance at national as well as global level as one of the vital factors for growing and sustainable economy, good governance, and administration of justice.
- In Pakistan, the Government as well as the Judiciary, especially the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee, headed by Mr. Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, is according a very high priority to this sector.
- One of the prerequisites for ensuring sustained growth of the above mentioned areas is the provision of a definite framework consisting of I.T. policy, plan and strategy including technical, administrative, auditing, legislative, financial, and operational guidelines.

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- Automation has been introduced by developed as well as developing countries in their judicial sector as an enabler towards accelerating process, delivering a higher level of service to the litigant public, bench, bar, law enforcing agencies and other stakeholders.
- It also enables easy access to information, increased transparency and accountability while lowering costs.
- In developing countries (including Pakistan) it has been recognized as an essential catalyst, which enables judiciary, as well as other sectors of society, to speedify their business processes while striving to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

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- That is why, the National Judicial Policy Making Committee (NJPMC) of Pakistan has given a significant importance to automation and has established a separate sub-committee to exclusively implement I.T. projects and monitor their progress. The Committee is now named as National Judiciary Automation Committee (NJAC) and is presently headed by me.
- A Judicial Policy is already formulated with an effective framework of actions to address the perennial twin problems of “backlog” and “delays” in the pending cases.
- A similar automation policy and effective framework of actions is in process to achieve expeditious disposal of cases, better administration of justice and other goals of the judiciary.

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- Having inherent transparency and accountability, the automation will also help in eradication of corruption in the judiciary, which is another important factor of the National Judicial Policy.
- As judiciary of Pakistan has been facing shortage of funds to implement its plans for better administration of justice, the same is the fate with the automation sector of the judiciary.
- Though efforts have been made to better utilize the existing resources, shortage of funds has been the main factor, which has delayed the establishment of basic hardware/software infrastructure in the Courts, especially in the district judiciary.

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- Efforts are being made to have a separate head of fund for the automation of judiciary at the Supreme Court, High Courts and the District Judiciary level, which is the grassroots of the judiciary.
- The government as well as other national and international forums are being approached for allocation of necessary funds for the purpose.
- Besides policy and plans, an effective monitoring is being done so that the desired results may be achieved out of the efforts made and funds invested in this regard.

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- Recently, the NJAC (National Judiciary Automation Committee) has prepared a PC-1 (short term plan) to improve existing automation and implement new installations in the Justice Sector Institutes (i.e. the Supreme Court, Federal Shariat Court, Ministry of Law, Law and Justice Commission, all the High Courts, and 05 Model Districts of each Province.
- Procurement of funds is in process and the implementation of the PC-1 will be completed within one year.
- The remaining Institutes and the Districts will be covered under the Long-Term Plan after successful implementation of the short-term plan.

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- Continuing the previous efforts and following the current NJPMC guidelines, the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Federal Shariat Court and the High Courts of Provinces have developed and implemented various I.T. projects to automate the functions of the Courts as well as their Subordinate/District Courts.
- Some of the important projects that have already been implemented are listed and briefly described on the next pages.

Software Applications Running at Various Courts in Pakistan

Name of Application	Main Features	Working at the Courts
Case Flow Management System (CFMS)	Maintains case information including case institution, case fixation (cause lists), online court proceedings (OCP), case law (CLMS), etc., with Search Engine on Intranet as well as on the Website.	-Supreme Court -Lahore High Court -Peshawar High Court -Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet)
Online Court Proceedings (OCP) an important module of CFMS	Maintains instant information regarding case proceeding status on the large TV/Monitor screens installed in the Court Premises as well as on the Websites.	-Supreme Court -Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet) Demo (Website)
Case Law Management System (CLMS) - an important module of CFMS	Maintains information regarding case judgments/orders with powerful search engine on Intranet and website.	-Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet/Website)

Software Applications Running at Various Courts in Pakistan (continued...)

Name of Application	Main Features	Detail
Case Record Management System (CRMS) - an important module of CFMS	Maintains information regarding disposed cases in the Record Branch. Archiving of the disposed cases is also in process at some Courts.	-Supreme Court -Lahore High Court -Balochistan High Court -Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet)
Case Information for Public Information Desk - an important module of CFMS	Free information regarding case fixation, hearing, etc. is provided to the public and advocates in person or even on phone and particularly the concerned advocates are provided with the same information through SMS alerts and emails .	-Supreme Court -Lahore High Court -Balochistan High Court -Sindh/Peshawar H.C. Demo Intranet/Website
Case Information for SHC Bar - an important module of CFMS	Free information regarding case fixation, hearing, etc. is provided to the Bar Office for Cause List printing and distribution.	-Supreme Court -Lahore High Court -Balochistan High Court -Sindh High Court Demo

Software Applications Running at Various Courts in Pakistan (continued...)

Name of Application	Main Features	Detail
Library Management System (LMS)	Maintains particulars about the books of library with Search Engine.	-Supreme Court -Lahore High Court -Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet)
Human Resource Management System (HRMS)	Maintains personal information of Court staff and Judicial Officers including their transfers/postings, seniority, complaints, leaves, ACRs, etc. with Search Engine.	-Supreme Court -Lahore High Court -Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet)
File Tracking System (FTS)	Maintains information regarding movement of official files from one branch to other with Search Engine (partly developed/implemented yet)	-Lahore High Court -Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet)

Software Applications Running at Various Courts in Pakistan (continued...)

Name of Application	Main Features	Detail
Accounts Management System (AMS)	Maintains accounts information of the Accounts and Nazir Branches (partly developed/implemented yet)	-Sindh High Court Demo (Intranet)
Websites of some Apex Courts	Maintain information regarding Cases, Cause Lists, Case Law, Transfers/Postings & Seniority Lists of Judicial Officers, etc. with Search Engines.	- Supreme Court (demo for the sites requires Internet) - Lahore High Court - Sindh High Court - Peshawar High Court - Balochistan High Court

Software Applications Running at some District Courts of Pakistan

Name of Application	Main Features	Detail
Case Flow Management System for District Courts (CFMS-DC)	<p>Maintains case information including case institution, case fixation (cause lists), etc., with Search Engine.</p> <p>Presently working in the following Districts of Sindh: Karachi East, Karachi South, Karachi Central, Karachi West, Malir, Thatta, Hyderabad and Larkana.</p> <p>Also working in some Districts of Punjab.</p>	<p>Demo of CFMS for the District Courts of Sindh. Demo (Intranet)</p>
Websites of some District Courts	<p>Maintain case information including case institution, case fixation (cause lists), etc., with Search Engine.</p> <p>Note: Demo of the websites requires Internet Connection.</p>	<p>Karachi Central, West, South, Thatta Karachi East Malir Data on SHC website</p>

Scalability / Customization of the Software Applications

- All the above mentioned software applications can easily be scaled/customized to implement at different hierarchies of Courts, i.e. District Courts, High Courts and Supreme Court, provided necessary hardware infrastructure is installed and local I.T. staff is appointed/trained to maintain it.
- CFMS is also installed by Sindh High Court at the Peshawar High Court on their request.
- The Caselaw Management System (CLMS) is accessible through the websites of Supreme Court of Pakistan (www.supremecourt.gov.pk), Lahore High Court (www.lhc.gov.pk), Sindh High Court (www.sindhhighcourt.gov.pk), Peshawar High Court (www.peshawarhighcourt.gov.pk), High Court of Baluchistan (www.bhc.gov.pk) and District Courts (www.agehi.org) that contain judgments/orders, respectively and other allied information.

List and Brief of new I.T. Projects/Schemes to be Implemented in near Future

- Case Trial through Video Conferencing (V.C.):
 - at the Supreme Court.
 - at 07 District Courts and 03 ATC Courts of Sindh.
 - Note: V.C. is already being used at the Lahore District Court of Punjab.
- Archiving of Case Files:
 - at the Supreme Court.
 - at the High Court of Sindh.
- Case Flow Management System, Computer Networking and other I.T. Infrastructure at 05 Model Districts of each Province:
 - In addition to the existing automated Districts, 05 more model Districts will be automated in each Province.

List and Brief of new I.T. Projects/Schemes to be Implemented in near Future (Continued...)

- e-Court System (like e-Courts of Singapore)
 - Case filing, fixation, notices, etc. will be done electronically.
 - at the Supreme Court.
 - at the High Court of Sindh.
 - Later in other Courts also.
- Computerized Public Complaints Management System:
 - at the Sindh High Court and its Circuit Courts.
- Workshops/Seminars for legal awareness of public:
 - at all the Apex Courts.

List and Brief of new I.T. Projects/Schemes to be Implemented in near Future (Continued...)

- Implementation of Pendency Reduction Plan (by Introducing I.T. in the Courts):
 - at 02 Districts of Sindh (Karachi Central and Sukkur)
- Basic I.T. Training for the Court Staff and Advance I.T. Training for the I.T. Staff:
 - at the Sindh High Court and District Courts.
- Establishment of e-Class Room for I.T. Training of Judicial Officers and Staff:
 - at the Sindh Judicial Academy.
- Other Misc:
 - Multiple other schemes regarding Purchase/installation of Licensed Software, Networking, Laptops, Power Generators, Personal Computers, etc. will be implemented soon.

Questions ?

Answers !

Thanks...