Subject: **Hacking of WhatsApp (Advisory No.10)**

1. **Introduction.** Recently, malicious actors are utilizing different approaches including phishing links, spoofed calls and social engineering attempts to compromise social media, OTT (Over the Top) apps and email accounts with high success rate. Due to lack of privacy measures and multi-factor authentication, people are falling prey to this scam rapidly. Internet users are advised to be mindful of these attacking techniques and report such emails for further processing.

2. **Summary**

   a. **Spreading Mechanism.** Social Engineering, Phishing Links, Emails, SMS.

   b. **Indicators of Compromise**

      (i) Blocking / hacking of social media or email accounts.

      (ii) Unexplained financial transactions.

      (iii) Identity theft.

      (iv) Revealing of organization specific sensitive information publicly.

   c. **Pakistan Cyberspace.** Following cyber scams are widely reported:-

      (i) Fake Corona virus Information Apps.

      (ii) Malicious Chatting Apps.

      (iii) Phishing Emails.

      (iv) Fake Game Shows / Government Income Support Progamms.

3. **Recommendations / Mitigations.** In this regard following is recommended: -

a. It is mandatory to utilize 2 factor authentication on all social media, OTT apps, email and banking accounts to deter these attack. 2 factor authentication for major platforms are as follows: -

   (1) **Gmail Security Settings**

      (a) Login to Gmail Account and Go to Setting >Manage your account > Security > 2 Factor Verification and click on Getting Started.

      (b) Select Google Prompt and then click "Try it Now". After that google will ask for mobile number for further verification.

      (c) After entering the mobile number, google will send a text message to verify your mobile number.

      (d) Enter the code received and click enable.

(2) **Facebook Security Settings**

    (a) Make sure that your Facebook Account is registered using 2 factor enabled Gmail account.

    (b) Go to your Security and Login Settings by clicking in the top right corner of Facebook and clicking Settings > Security and Login.

    (c) Scroll down to Use two-factor authentication.

    (d) Choose the SMS security method and follow the on-screen instructions.

    (e) Confirm mobile number and enter received code for verification.

    (f) Enter the received code and click Enable.

(3) **WhatsApp Security Settings**

    (a) In WhatsApp Account, Go to settings and click on Account.

    (b) In account go to Two-Step Verification and click enable.

    (c) WhatsApp will ask for 6 Digit Pin alongwith backup email account for extra security.

    (d) Enter multi-factor authentication enabled Gmail account and then continue to enable WhatsApp authentication.

b. **Install and update Antivirus** software on all systems.

c. Don't open **links from Social Media / OTT Apps / Email senders** and inform this office on receipt of same.

d. **Never forward OTP (One Time Password)** received to anyone.