



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL-PAKISTAN

4-C, Mezzanine Floor, Khayaban-e-Ittehad, Phase VII,
Defence Housing Authority, Karachi.
Tel: (92-21) 35390408, 35311897-8,
Fax: (92-21) 35390410
E-mail: ti.pakistan@gmail.com
Website: www.transparency.org.pk

26th November, 2018

TL18/2611/11A

Mr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui
Federal Minister for Information Technology & Telecom,
Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication,
Evacuee Trust Building 4th Floor, F-5/1,
Islamabad

Contact: +92519219971
Email: info@moitt.gov.pk

Sub: Complaint on award of unsolicited Contract by National Information
Technology Board, to Brando Marketing.

Dear Sir,

Transparency International Pakistan has received complaint on award of unsolicited Contract by National Information Technology Board, to Brando Marketing.

The complainant has made the following allegations;

That;

1. On 15th November 2018, “Brando Marketing” a digital media services company has been awarded contract by National Information Technology Board as the “Official Digital Media Partner of the Govt of Pakistan for powering government projects.
2. No tender for “Official Digital Media Partner” was posted by the NITB, National Information Technology Board.
3. No due process was conducted before offering such a partnership to a virtually unknown company in Pakistani IT and digital media industry.
4. Brando Marketing now handles the official page of PTI Chairman and Prime Minister of Pakistan.
5. The Director of Brando Marketing is one Farhan Javed who manages Special Assistant to PM, Mr. Zulfiqar Bukhari’s social media presence.
6. In addition to this personal business with Mr. Bukhari, M/s Brando has also involved itself in the management of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis social media without any contract or bidding.

7. Allegedly, Mr. Javed also runs Association of Overseas Pakistanis (aop.org.pk) which is a non-government private organization yet claims on social media to be the “Official channel to facilitate overseas Pakistanis here in Pakistan”.

8. Another person who is the founding member of AOP, is Shafer Akbar, who collected data about overseas Pakistani from the purported ‘official channel for overseas Pakistanis’ and used the data to sell real-estate to same overseas Pakistanis via Graana.com, a newly launched real-estate portal.

9. According to Mr. Farhan Javed, CEO and spokesperson for Brando Marketing, there was no wrongdoing involved in signing of the MoU between NITB and Brando. Mr. Javed stated that Brando Marketing, AOP, and Graana.com are all separate companies and while Graana.com and AOP are paying clients of Brando, they have been providing their services free of cost to Ministry of Overseas Pakistani. In the same vein, the MoU in question does not mention any financial transaction and the company will provide all service free of cost to the NITB. Mr. Javed, according to him, manages Imran Khan’s official page since 2016 in his personal capacity, similarly he manages Zulfi Bukhari’s social media presence in his personal capacity.

The complaint has been examined. According to PPRA Rules 2004, for awarding any contract, following are mandatory requirements:-

- i). Project must be advertised on PPRA website in annual procurement plan as required under Rule 8 & 9. <http://ppra.org.pk/doc/sample.pdf>
- ii). As per Rule 11, Approval mechanism, All procuring agencies shall provide clear authorization and delegation of powers for different categories of procurement and shall only initiate procurements once approval of the competent authorities concerned has been accorded.
- iii). All procuring agencies must follow Rules 5. Pre-qualification of suppliers and contractors. Rule 16, Pre-qualification process, Rule 20. Principal method of procurement.-, Rule 21. Open competitive bidding, Rule 23. Bidding documents.-, Rule 29. Evaluation criteria, and Rule 7. Integrity pact.-

In case this is true as reported by the complainant, that the company has admitted that this contract is awarded a zero cost, the allegation 1, 2 and 3 are prima facie has been accepted by the company.

The allegation 4,5,6,7 and 8 needs the minister’s inquiry for their correctness.

According to PPRA, open competitive bidding is mandatory to select a service provider, in order to assess the credibility, experience, financial & technical capability/ capacity, and also give equal opportunity to all available service providers, as such contracts are advantageous for firms indirectly both in financial and credibility gains to qualify for other such Projects.



The Minister is requested to take immediate action to check the allegations of the complainant, and if the allegations are found correct, and PPRA Rules are violated in the illegal award of unsolicited contract, action may be taken to cancel the contract, and also on corruption by the department and officers as well as against the beneficiaries under NAO 1999.

With Regards,

Justice Zia Perwez
Former Judge of Supreme Court of Pakistan and High Court of Sindh
Trustee- TI-Pakistan

Copies forwarded for the information with request to take action under their mandate to:

1. Secretary to Prime Minister, Islamabad.
2. Chairman, PMIC, PM Office, Islamabad
3. Registrar, Supreme Court of Pakistan, Islamabad.