

Subject:- **Security Threat Posed by VPN Software (Advisory No. 9) May, 2015**

Virtual Private Network (VPN) is a network technology that creates a private network connection over public network. As various websites are blocked in Pakistan, therefore different VPN softwares (free and paid) are used such as hotspot shield, spot flux etc to access blocked websites.

2. With the hype that has surrounded popularity of VPNs there are serious threats posed by VPN software, which include:-

- a.** VPN software exposes a system to cyber attacks. A system infected with malware will continue to be under attack / espionage as VPN software bypasses security mechanism implemented at national, organizational or personal level.
- b.** Free VPNs usually redirect user to different ads and obscene content etc, which are sometimes used to serve malware to track the user.
- c.** Free VPNs usually deploy adware program on system so that browsing habits of user can be recorded.
- d.** As traffic of VPN exits from specific nodes, so tapping of those nodes can be performed by hostile intelligence agencies to monitor online activities of the users.

3. Keeping above in view, it is recommended that VPN softwares (especially free VPNs) may not be used by users of sensitive organizations.