

[AS PASSED BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY]

A

BILL

further to amend the Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020.

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020 (XVI of 2020), in the manner and for the purposes hereinafter appearing;

It is hereby enacted as follows: -

1. **Short title and commencement.** – (1) This Act shall be called the Legal Aid and Justice Authority (Amendment) Act, 2024.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

2. **Amendment of section 5, Act XVI of 2020.** – In the Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020 (XVI of 2020), hereinafter referred to as the said Act, in section 5, in sub-section (1), in clause (a) for the words “Human Rights”, the words “Law and Justice” shall be substituted.

3. **Amendment of section 7, Act XVI of 2020.** – In the said Act, in section 7, for sub-section (4), the following shall be substituted, namely: -

“(4). Where the Director General is absent or unable to perform his functions due to any reason or the post of Director General is vacant pending appointment of a regular incumbent, the authority may authorize any officer to perform temporarily the functions of Director General, for a period not exceeding ninety days.”

Statement of Objects and Reasons

The Law and Justice Division has administrative control of the Law and Justice Commission Ordinance, 1979, courts and tribunals in respect of Federal areas and the offices of the Attorney General and other law officers of the Federation. The mandate of Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) is also consonance with the business allocated to the Law and Justice Division under the Rules of Business, 1973. It would be more appropriate and in the best public interest to shift administrative control of the Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) from Ministry of Human Rights to the Ministry of Law and Justice, the institutional linkages of the Ministry of Law and Justice with other Law Officers and Commissions of the Federation that are under the administrative control of Law and Justice Division and with Bar Councils and Associations will enable LAJA to fulfil its mandate more effectively.

The Bill is designed to achieve the said object.

Sd/-
MINISTER-IN-CHARGE