

[AS PASSED BY THE SENATE]

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Bill

further to amend the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 (XVIII of 1999), in the manner and for the purposes hereinafter appearing:

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. **Short title and commencement.-** This Act shall be called the National Accountability (Amendment) Act, 2026.

(2) It shall come into force at once and shall be deemed to have taken effect on and from the commencement of the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 (XVIII of 1999).

2. **Amendment of section 4, Ordinance XVIII of 1999.-** In the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 (XVIII of 1999), hereinafter referred to as the said Ordinance, in section 4, in sub-section (6), in clause (a), after the word "trials" the comma and word ", appeals" shall be inserted.

3. **Amendment of section 5, Ordinance XVIII of 1999.-** In the said Ordinance, in section 5, in clause (o), after the word "rupees", the comma and words ", which shall be adjusted for each financial year starting from the 1st day of July, 2022, based on inflation index published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics" shall be inserted.

4. **Amendment of section 6, Ordinance XVIII of 1999.-** In the said Ordinance, in section 6, in sub-section (b), in clause (v), for the expression "non-

extendable term of three years and shall not be eligible for subsequent appointment as Chairman”, the words “term of three years which may be extended once for a further period of three years by the Federal Government” shall be substituted.

5. **Amendment of section 9, Ordinance XVIII of 1999.-** In the said Ordinance, in section 9, for sub-section (b), the following shall be substituted, namely:-

“(b) A Court established under this Ordinance and the High Court having the jurisdiction in the area shall have the power to grant bail or order release of the accused under sections 439, 496, 497 and 498 of the Code.”.

6. **Insertion of section 32A, Ordinance XVII of 1999.-** In the said Ordinance, after section 32, the following new section 32A shall be inserted namely:

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"32A Second Appeal.- Any person convicted or the Prosecutor General Accountability, if so directed by the Chairman NAB, aggrieved by the decision made by the High Court under section 32, may prefer a second appeal to the Federal Constitutional Court within a period of thirty days.”.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The National Accountability (Amendment) Bill, 2026 seeks to amend certain provisions of the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 (XVIII of 1999) with the objective of improving procedural clarity, strengthening accountability mechanisms, and introducing additional safeguards in the appellate and administrative framework of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The Bill proposes amendments relating to jurisdiction, financial thresholds, tenure of the Chairman NAB, bail powers of courts, and the introduction of a second appellate forum.

2. The Bill proposes an amendment to section 4 of the Ordinance concerning the jurisdiction and functions of accountability courts. The amendment inserts the word “appeals” after the word “trials” in sub-section (6), clause (a). This change clarifies that the relevant procedural provisions apply not only to trials but also to appellate proceedings, thereby ensuring broader procedural application and reducing ambiguity in the interpretation of the law.

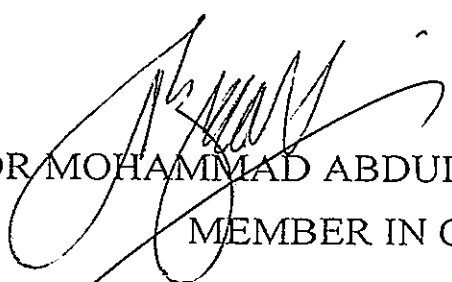
3. The Bill further proposes an amendment to section 5, which contains definitions used in the Ordinance. Under the proposed change, the monetary threshold specified in clause (o) will be adjusted annually in accordance with the inflation index published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. This measure ensures that the financial limits prescribed under the law remain realistic and relevant over time and are not diminished due to inflation.

4. The Bill also amends section 6 regarding the tenure of the Chairman NAB. Currently, the Chairman serves a non-extendable term of three years and is not eligible for reappointment. The proposed amendment allows the Chairman to serve a three-year term which may be extended once for a further period of three years by the Federal Government, thereby providing administrative continuity and flexibility in leadership.

5. Furthermore, the Bill amends section 9 by substituting sub-section (b) to clearly empower both accountability courts and the relevant High Courts to grant bail or order release of the accused under sections 439, 496, 497, and 498 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

6. Finally, the Bill inserts a new section 32A providing for a second appeal to the Federal Constitutional Court against decisions of the High Court within thirty days, thereby strengthening judicial oversight and the right of review in accountability matters.

7. The Bill has been designed to achieve the aforesaid objects.


SENATOR MOHAMMAD ABDUL QADIR
MEMBER IN CHARGE