

[TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY]

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BILL

to provide for the establishment of a commission for the rehabilitation and welfare of the persons with disabilities.

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the establishment of a commission for the rehabilitation and welfare of the persons with disabilities and for the matters connected therewith.

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. Short title, extent and commencement.- (1) This Act may be called the National Commission for persons with Disabilities Act, 2018.

(2) It extends to the whole of Pakistan.

(3) It shall come into force at once.

2. Definitions.- In this Act unless the context otherwise requires.-

(a) "Commission" means the National Commission for persons with disabilities established under section 3;

(b) "disabled person" means a person who, on account of injury, disease or congenital deformity, is handicapped for undertaking any gainful profession or employment in order to earn his livelihood, and includes a person who is blind, deaf, physically handicapped or mentally retarded;

(c) "Government" means the federal government; and

(d) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act.

3. Establishment of National Commission for Persons with Disabilities.- (1) The government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, establish a National Commission for persons with disabilities with its headquarter at Islamabad.

(2) The National Commission shall consist of the following members, namely:-

(a) a Chairperson, who has been, or is qualified to be, a judge of the Supreme Court or a person having demonstrable knowledge of, or practical experience in, matters relating to human rights who shall be appointed by the Government;

(b) one member from each province, FATA and Islamabad Capital Territory having demonstrable knowledge of, or practical experience in, matters relating to human rights;

(c) chairpersons of the National Commission on Human Rights and National Commission on the Status of the Women;

(d) one member from minority communities;

- (e) a representative representing the associations and voluntary organizations engaged in welfare of the blind, the physically disabled and the mentally retarded;
- (f) two members of the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament), one each from the National Assembly of Pakistan and Senate of Pakistan.;

- (3) the Commission shall meet at least once in every six months, and;
- (4) the Commission may establish its offices at other place or places in Pakistan as it may consider appropriate.

4. Functions of the Commission.- It shall be the duty of the Commission to:-

- (a) evolve a national policy for the rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities;
- (b) lay down programmes, operate services and pilot projects for the rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities by way of issuing instructions and directions to federal government agencies for implementation thereof;
- (c) lay-down guidelines for rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities;
- (d) review the facilities available to the persons with disabilities from time to time; and
- (e) ensure implementation of the laws in force for welfare of persons with disabilities and provision of this Act effectively.

5. Rules.- The Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

Persons with disabilities are as much integral to the nation as any other able-bodied citizen. Hundreds of thousands of persons suffer from one disability or the other and yet most of them are well talented provided suitable opportunity and support is afforded to them. Even the mentally retarded deserve the nation's support to help them develop their ability and contribute their mite for the nation and live a life with dignity.

While some efforts on the part of the Government and the society is seen for providing opportunities, though inadequate, for physically handicapped, the mentally handicapped are simply consigned to their lot. Experts in psychiatry and medicine maintain that a large percentage of the mentally retarded and handicapped persons too can well be rehabilitated enabling them a life with dignity, if suitable and is given to them, which includes a large measure of support from the society.

There is a pressing need for constituting a National Commission to evolve and implement a national policy and program for the resettlement of the persons with disabilities and to co-ordinate and oversee the activities of different agencies functioning in this field.

Sd/-
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