

[AS PASSED BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY]

A

BILL

*to make provisions for raising alert, response and recovery of missing
and abducted children*

WHEREAS the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan recognizes the inviolability of life, liberty and dignity of a person as fundamental right;

AND WHEREAS, in recognition of the Constitution's fundamental rights, it is necessary to make provisions for the protection of missing and abducted children under the age of eighteen years, that includes raising alert, responding and recovering of missing and abducted children;

AND WHEREAS it is obligatory on the Government of Pakistan to make provisions for ensuring the right to life and protection from violence, abuse, neglect, abduction or exploitation of children under the age of eighteen years, as envisaged under various national and international laws, conventions, covenants and instruments, relating to the rights of children;

AND WHEREAS it is a matter of national concern that children under the age of eighteen years, who are abducted, are at high risk of violence, exploitation, abuse, trafficking, rape or death. It is thus essential to legislate providing for an institutional response at the level of such areas in the Federation as are not included in any Province, complementing the functions of the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act, 2018(XXI of 2018);

AND WHEREAS it is urgent and necessary to introduce systems with respect to raising alerts, as well as the response and recovery of missing and abducted children, so that incidents such as that of a seven-year old Zainab, resident of district Kasur, who was abducted, raped and murdered in January, 2018, do not occur again in future;

AND WHEREAS it is in the interest of efficacy and avoidance of duplication of efforts that the ZARRA established pursuant to this Act will work supporting and complementing the mandate of the Child Protection Institute established pursuant to the said Act XXI of 2018, following receipt of complaints through the helpline, operating under the mandate of the Division concerned or such other designated helpline in this regard.

It is hereby enacted as follows: -

PART I

1. **Short title, extent and commencement** (1) This Act may be called the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2020.
 - (2) It extends to the Islamabad Capital Territory
 - (3) It shall come into force at once.

2. **Definitions.** - In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,-
 - (a) "Act" means the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act 2019;
 - (b) "alert" means any notification raised by ZARRA after receiving any information or complaint about missing children on any media;
 - (c) "alert system" means an alert system established under this Act;
 - (d) "abduction" means,-
 - (i) whoever by will or force, threat, violence, coercion or by any deceitful means induces any child under eighteen years of age to move from one place to another and includes kidnapping as defined in the Pakistan Penal Code 1860 (Act XLV of 1860); or
 - (ii) whoever has un-lawful custody of a minor or removing a child from the custody of his parents or lawful guardianship;
 - (e) "abductor" means a person, a group of persons or an organization who kidnaps, traffics or abducts a child;
 - (f) "Board" means the ICT Child Protection Advisory Board established under the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act, 2018 (XXI of 2018);

- (g) **“child”** means anyone who has not attained the age of eighteen years at the time of commission of an offence or when reported to be missing or abducted;
- (h) **“Code”** means the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (Act V of 1898);
- (i) **“Government”** means the Federal Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- (j) **“missing child”** means any child for whom a complaint is lodged with the police or in respect of whom information is given to any ZARRA office or any other relevant authority assigned under this Act as missing because his whereabouts are not known to his parents or legal guardians or is a runaway child regardless of circumstances and causes of disappearance or time elapsed since the child went missing;
- (k) **“organization”** means any group, combination or body of persons acting under a distinctive name;
- (l) **“rape”** means any forcible and non-forcible sexual conduct with a child by another person;
- (m) **“recovery”** means all those required actions that may include, but not limited to search, investigation, forensics, coordination and dispatch of specially trained teams to rescue, recover, to provide psycho-social support and bring the missing or abducted child to safety;
- (n) **“response”** means all those actions that must be taken by the ZARRA office, police, local government, telecommunication companies, state and privately-owned media channels, airports, railway stations, highway authorities, missing child response and recovery teams or any other organization or individual that is assigned a task under this Act; and
- (o) **“ZARRA”** means Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency established under this Act of Missing and Abducted Children;

PART II

3. Establishment of Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency.- (1) The Government shall, by notification in the official Gazette, establish Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency of Missing and Abducted Children (ZARRA).

(2) The ZARRA shall consist of a Director General who shall be appointed by the Prime Minister in such manner and in such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by rules and such other officers and employees who shall be appointed by such authorities in such manner and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by rules.

(3) The management staff of ZARRA shall be suitably equipped with skills of managing databases, conducting planning and monitoring of programs, analyzing data, preparing reports and coordinating with all other offices. The qualifications and experience of staff for their appointment shall be prescribed by rules.

(4) Standard operating procedures (SOPs) shall be devised to ensure the safety and protection in the hands of authorities of the recovered missing or abducted child.

(5) The ZARRA shall work closely with the helpline 1099 or such other helpline operating under the mandate of the Division concerned. In this regard, the helpline shall forward complaints relevant to the mandate of ZARRA, which shall be acted upon in partnership between the ZARRA and the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC) established under the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act, 2017 (XXX II of 2017).

4. Superintendence and administration of ZARRA.-(1) The superintendence of the ZARRA shall vest with the ICT Child Protection Advisory Board.

(2) The administration of the ZARRA shall vest in the Director General.

(3) The Director General shall exercise such powers and perform such functions as may be prescribed.

5. Powers and functions of ZARRA.- The following shall be powers and functions of ZARRA that shall be performed under the administration of the Director General, namely:-

- (a) to activate Zainab alerts, when there is a missing or abducted child, at the Federal Capital level, which shall include information on the physical characteristics of the missing or abducted child as well as any other data that would help in the child's identification, so as to inform the public at large and all concerned agencies to whom these alerts shall be issued;
- (b) to coordinate with Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for issuance of Zainab alert SMSs, MMSs, with Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) for tickers on television channels and announcements on radio stations and alerts on social media as well as postings on relevant websites or online, print media or any other available medium to report abductions;
- (c) to define procedures for how, when, with what frequency and in which geographical territory the missing or abducted child alert shall be raised;
- (d) to provide nation-wide telephonic toll free hotline number 1099 or such other number where any person may report a missing or abducted child and such

number may be used by any member of public who has any information relating to the missing or abducted child;

- (e) to maintain online data base both in ZARRA and Division concerned and of every reported incident of a missing or abducted child, the actions taken, the current status of the case and its final outcome. This database shall be monitored for accuracy and shall be kept updated at all times. The database shall cover all territories of ICT and shall be accessible to public on ZARRA website in English and in Urdu;
- (f) to define procedures for who, how and when an incident of missing or abducted child shall be brought on to the ZARRA database. NCRC and Division concerned shall have the responsibility to maintain the database. To maintain proper record for each case, coordinate any information on missing children with local law enforcement agencies, detect criminal patterns in a geographical area, issue monthly public reports on missing and abducted children on its website, introduce procedures and key performance indicators that will improve and measure the effectiveness of ZARRA;
- (g) to ensure that the concerned stakeholders perform their duties in accordance with the prescribed rules;
- (h) to introduce a user friendly cellular mobile application linked with the main database for reporting of any missing child and for updated information of any child abducted or recovered;
- (i) to initiate, refer or take action for proceeding against any non-cooperation or non-compliance by any organization or stakeholder in accordance with the rules as may be prescribed under this Act;
- (j) to ensure that full real-time information is being received in ZARRA office;
- (k) to provide such administrative arrangements as may be necessary and appropriate to secure the safe return of any such child;
- (l) to facilitate the provision of legal aid or advice, where circumstances so requires;
- (m) to coordinate and cooperate, in case of missing or abducted child who has been wrongfully removed to, or retained in Pakistan, with the concerned authorities of the country where the child was habitually residing; and

(n) to do any other task necessary to perform the functions of ZAARA.

6. Powers and functions of the ICT Child Protection Advisory Board for the purposes of this Act.- Without prejudice to the business allocated to the Division concerned, the following shall be powers and functions of the ICT Child Protection Advisory Board for the purposes of this Act, namely:-

- (a) to analyze the performance of ZARRA, to evaluate the effectiveness of ZARRA functions and to take actions to continually improve the performance of ZARRA;and
- (b) to provide governance and oversight in order to ensure that all actions relating to ZARRA that are initiated, from registration of FIR to safe recovery of child and referral for rehabilitation of a recovered child, are performed efficiently.

7. Coordination between ZARRA and Local Police Stations. (1) The police station where a case of missing or abducted child is reported shall, immediately and not later than two hours after the complaint is lodged, through any available means of communication call, fax, electronic email or ZARRA mobile application, inform the ZARRA of the missing child incident and keep providing latest status of the case and all available details. The missing or abducted child database shall be shared on online database, maintained by the ZARRA office in accordance with the prescribed rules. The police officer shall ensure that the required information in Schedule A to this Act, is made part of the complaint.

(2) The ZARRA shall on receipt of information under sub-section (1) take an immediate action and launch, with the help of local police, the investigation, search, rescue, recovery and rehabilitation operations.

(3) In case ZARRA office receives a direct complaint of a missing or abducted child, it shall coordinate immediately with the local police station and other ZARRA offices to ensure all actions relating to ZARRA are initiated. This includes registering of a complaint at the concerned police station on behalf of the complainant.

PART III

8. Punishment under this Act.- Any police officer who does not comply with the provisions of section 154 of the Code in case of missing or abducted child or any other public officer who willfully delays or hinders in providing or processing the information in accordance with provisions under this Act, shall be punished with imprisonment as provided under section 182 of Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 (Act XLV of 1860).

PART IV

9. **Power to make rules.**- ZARRA in consultation with the Minister-in-charge may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules within six months of the commencement of this Act to carry out the purposes thereof.

10. **Power to amend Schedule A to this Act.**- ZARRA in consultation with the Minister-in-charge may amend the Schedule A to this Act so as to add thereto or omit therefrom or amend therein any entry.

11. **Financing of ZAARA.**-(1) The remuneration payable to the Director General, other employees, staff and administrative expenses of the ZAARA shall be made from funds allocated by Federal Government.

12. **Director General, officers and employees deemed to be public servants.**-The Director General, officers and employees of ZAARA shall be deemed to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Pakistan Penal Code 1860(Act XLV of 1860) and shall be subject to all the relevant provisions of sections 161 to 169 of the said Act XLV of 1860.

PART V

13. **Kidnapping or abducting a person under the age of eighteen years.**- For the purposes of this Act, whoever kidnaps or abducts any person under the age of eighteen years in order that such person may be murdered or subjected to grievous hurt, or slavery, rape, or that such person may be so disposed of as to be put in danger of being murdered or subjected to grievous hurt, or slavery or rape shall be punished with imprisonment for life or with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to fourteen years but shall not be less than ten years.

14. **Kidnapping or abducting child under eighteen years with intent to take moveable property from its person.**- Whoever kidnaps or abducts any child under the age of eighteen years with the intention of taking dishonestly any moveable property from the person of

such child, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to fourteen years, and with fine of one million Rupees.

15. **Application of Code.**- The provisions of the Code shall apply to the proceedings under this Act, except in the case of juveniles who will be dealt under the Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018.

16. **Procedure for the information which relates to the commission of abduction or missing child.**- In respect of the information which relates to the commission of offence of abduction or missing child, an officer incharge of a police station shall compulsory reduce it to writing by him or under his direction, and be read over to the informant and every such information, whether given in writing or reduced to writing as aforesaid, shall be signed by the person giving it and the substance thereof shall be entered in a book to be kept by such officer and also ensure that the required information in Schedule A to this Act, is made part of the complaint.

17. **Completion of trial.**- The trial under this Act shall be completed within three months.

18. **Act to override other laws.**- Subject to section 15, the provisions of this Act shall have overriding effect notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force.

-(a) Basic information about the missing child:-

- (i) Full name;
- (ii) Date of birth;
- (iii) Birthplace;
- (iv) Nicknames, if any;
- (v) Current and previous addresses. Who else lived there? and
- (vi) Current and former employers;

(b) Physical description of the missing child:-

- (i) Height;
- (ii) Weight;
- (iii) Age;
- (iv) Build;
- (v) Hair Color and Length of Hair;
- (vi) Eye color;
- (vii) Any distinguishing marks – such as tattoos, birthmarks, scars, etc.;
- (viii) Beard, mustache and sideburns; and
- (ix) Most recent photo of the missing child;

(c) Habits and personality of missing child:-

- (i) Does the child have any personal or emotional problems?;
- (ii) Any addiction drug or smoking;
- (iii) What level of education or training does the child have? ; and
- (iv) Does the child visit frequently any particular areas or places of interest? ;

(d) Clothing that the missing child was wearing the last time seen:-

- (i) Style and color of wearing cloths;
- (ii) Style and color of jacket or outerwear ;
- (iii) If applicable, type of headwear;
- (iv) Type of glasses;
- (v) Type of gloves; and
- (vi) Type and color of footwear;

(e) Trip plans of the missing child the day he went missing:-

- (i) What were the missing child's plans and activities on the day he went missing?;

