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[TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE]

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further to amend the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the purposes hereinafter appearing;

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. Short title and commencement.-(1) This Act may be called the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2021.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

2. Insertion of Article 17A in the Constitution. - In the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, hereinafter referred to as the Constitution, after Article 17, the following new Article shall be inserted, namely:-

"17A. Right to vote.- Every citizen of Pakistan shall have the right to vote, and such right shall not be denied or abridged by the Federal Government, the Provinces, or any person on account of race, religion, caste, gender, economic status, residence, or place of birth."

3. Amendment of Article 51 of the Constitution. - In the Constitution, in Article 51, in clause 2,-

(a) for the words "A person", the words "A citizen of Pakistan", shall be substituted; and

(b) paragraph (a), shall be omitted.

4. Amendment of Article 106 of the Constitution.- In the Constitution, in Article 106, in clause 2,-

(a) for the words "A person", the words "A citizen of Pakistan", shall be substituted; and

(b) paragraph (a), shall be omitted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The UN Assembly in 1948 resolved that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his/her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. In this context, the Right to Vote is widely recognized as a Fundamental Human Right worldwide. However, this right is not fully enforced for many in Pakistan. Consistently women, people from rural areas, minorities, those who commit crimes, the homeless, disabled persons, and many others who lack access to the voting procedures for a variety of reasons including cultural and social discrimination, poverty, illiteracy, intimidation, and unfair election processes. By acknowledging the importance of elections and Right to Vote, this amendment aims at the provision of the Right to Vote as a Fundamental Right for all citizens of Pakistan.

SENATOR SAADIA ABBASI
Member in charge