

[TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE]

A

INTRODUCED ON 19.05.2025

BILL

further to amend the Indecent Advertisements Prohibition Act, 1963

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Indecent Advertisements Prohibition Act, 1963 (XII of 1963) for the purposes hereinafter appearing;

It is hereby enacted as follows: -

1. Short title and commencement. - (1) This Act may be called the Indecent Advertisements Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 2025.

(1) It shall come into force at once.

2. Amendment of section 2, Act XII of 1963.- In the Indecent Advertisements Prohibition Act, 1963 (XII of 1963), hereinafter referred to as the said Act, in section 2, for clause (a), the following shall be substituted, namely:-

"(a) "advertisement" includes any visual, audio, or multimedia content created to promote a product, service, or idea with the intent to influence consumer behaviour, drive sales, rentals, or engagement, or shape public perception;"

3. Insertion of section 2A, Act XII of 1963.- In the said Act, after section 2, the following new section shall be inserted, namely:-

"2A. Broadcasting Standards and Ethical Guidelines.- All licensed broadcasters must adhere to the following principles to ensure responsible and ethical content dissemination. The broadcasters shall not air any content that:

- (a) contradicts Islamic values, the ideology of Pakistan, or the vision of the nation's founding leaders, including Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal;
- (b) contains language, visuals, or remarks that insult any religion, sect, or community, or promote sectarian, racial, or ethnic divisions;
- (c) uses derogatory or offensive language to incite hatred or discrimination against individuals or groups based on race, caste, nationality, ethnicity, language, color, religion, sect, gender, age, or physical/mental disability;
- (d) includes indecent, obscene, or sexually explicit material;
- (e) contains defamatory statements, as defined by the prevailing laws; and
- (f) depicts smoking, alcohol consumption, betting, drug use, or narcotics in a manner that portrays them as glamorous or socially acceptable. If such content is necessary for educational or dramatic purposes, a clear disclaimer regarding its harmful effects must be displayed."

4. Amendment of section 4, Act XII of 1963.-In the said Act, in section 4,-

- (i) in paragraph (a), for the phrase "six months" the phrase "one year" shall be substituted; and
- (ii) in paragraph (b), for the phrase "one year" the phrase "two years" shall be substituted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Indecent Advertisements Prohibition Act, 1963 was enacted to regulate advertisements containing indecent, obscene, or morally inappropriate content. However, with the rapid evolution of media and broadcasting technologies, it has become necessary to modernize and align the law with contemporary trends. The Electronic Media Code of Conduct, 2015 provides fundamental principles for ensuring decency, respecting moral and religious values, and adapting media practices to modern advancements. However, the existing legal framework does not comprehensively address new forms of advertising, including digital and multimedia content, nor does it impose adequate penalties to deter violations.

In light of these challenges, the proposed amendments aim to expand the definition of advertisement to include all modern forms of media, establish ethical broadcasting standards to prevent the spread of indecency and immorality. Additionally, the amendments enhance penalties to ensure stricter enforcement and compliance with the law. These changes are essential to maintaining responsible media practices, upholding public morality, and ensuring alignment with global standards.

- 2. This bill is aimed to achieve the above-said objective.

SENATOR DR. AFNAN ULLAH KHAN
MEMBER IN CHARGE