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BILL

further to amend the Islamabad Capital Territory Food Safety Act, 2021

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Islamabad Capital Territory Food Safety Act, 2021 (L of 2021) for the purposes hereinafter appearing;

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. Short title and commencement.-(1) This Act may be called the Islamabad Capital Territory Food Safety (Amendment) Act, 2025.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

2. Amendment of section 2, Act L of 2021. - In the Islamabad Capital Territory Food Safety Act, 2021 (L of 2021), hereinafter referred to as the said Act, in section 2, in sub-section (1),-

(i) After paragraph "(xvi)", the following new paragraphs shall be inserted, namely:-

(a) "(xvia) **"High-Caffeine Beverage"** means any beverage containing more than 32 milligrams of caffeine per 100 milliliters;

(b) "(xvib) **"High-Sugar Beverage"** means any beverage containing more than 6 grams of sugar per 100 milliliters;"

(ii) After paragraph "(xxvii)", the following new paragraph shall be inserted, namely:-

"(xxviiia) "soft drink" includes carbonated drinks, energy drinks and flavored beverages that fall under the definitions of High-Sugar or High-Caffeine Beverages;"

3. Amendment of section 4, Act L of 2021.- In the said Act, in section 4, in sub-section (1), after paragraph (j) the following new paragraphs shall be inserted, namely:-

"(ja) establish maximum permissible limits for sugar and caffeine content in beverages sold within the Islamabad Capital Territory. Beverages exceeding these limits shall be classified as "unsafe" and removed from the market;

- (jb) collaborate with beverage manufacturers to promote the production and distribution of low-sugar and sugar-free alternatives. Tax incentives may be granted to manufacturers producing beverages with sugar content below 3 grams per 100 milliliters;
- (jc) designate officers to monitor compliance with the provisions of this Act, for regulating and restricting the sale of high caffeine and high sugar beverages and soft drinks through monthly inspections of retail outlets and schools;
- (jd) launch campaigns in educational institutions as well as through social media, television, radio and print media in order to educate the young persons and public about the health risks associated with High-Sugar and High-Caffeine Beverages and soft drinks;".

4. Insertion of section 11A, and 11B, Act L of 2021. - In the said Act, after section 11, the following new sections shall be inserted, namely:-

"11A. Prohibition on sale in educational institutions.- Any person or food business operator who sells or distributes High-Sugar and High-Caffeine Beverages to any educational institution shall be punished with a fine of not less than one hundred thousand rupees for the first offense and two hundred thousand rupees for subsequent offenses.

11B. Age Restrictions.- Any person, food business operator, or vendor who sells High-Caffeine and High-Sugar Beverages to individuals under the age of 18 or without verifying the age of purchaser through his/her Identity Card, shall be punished with a penalty of fifty thousand rupees for the first offense and one hundred thousand rupees for subsequent offenses."

5. Insertion of section 20A, Act L of 2021. - In the said Act, after section 20, the following new section shall be inserted, namely:-

"20A. Mandatory Health Warnings.- (1) The manufacturers of High-Sugar Beverages, High-Caffeine Beverages and soft drinks shall clearly display health warning on their packaging, covering at least 20 percent of the label, stating " Excessive sugar consumption may lead to obesity, diabetes and dental issues, and high caffeine content is not recommended for children, pregnant women, or individuals sensitive to caffeine."

(2) Any person who violates of provision of sub- section (1) shall be punished with penalty of half million rupees for the first offence, followed by cancellation of license in case of subsequent offence."

6. Amendment of section 36, Act L of 2021.- In the said Act, in section 36, for the expression "may," the expression "shall," shall be substituted, and thereafter, after the expression "Gazette," the expression "within a period three months after coming into force of the Islamabad Capital Territory Food Safety (Amendment) Act, 2025 (Act No. of 2025)," shall be inserted.

7. Amendment of section 37, Act L of 2021.- In the said Act, in section 37, for the expression "may," the expression "shall," shall be substituted, and thereafter, after the expression "Gazette," the expression "within a period of three months after coming into force of the Islamabad Capital Territory Food Safety (Amendment) Act, 2025 (Act No. of 2025)," shall be inserted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The amendments proposed through this bill aim at protecting public health by regulating the availability and consumption of the high-sugar and high-caffeine beverages and soft drinks in Islamabad educational institutions, particularly among vulnerable populations such as children and adolescents. By imposing restrictions and promoting healthier alternatives, the Islamabad Food Authority should strive for creating a safer and healthier food environment for all residents. Incorporating these provisions would align the Islamabad Food Safety Act with its core objective of safeguarding public health. By addressing the consumption of potentially harmful products like Sting, Redbull etc., the Act would not only prevent the serious health risks after consuming these so called energy drinks, but also set a benchmark for food safety standards in ICT. Hence, recognizing the adverse health effects of excessive sugar and caffeine consumption, particularly among children and adolescents, and in alignment with the objectives of the Islamabad Capital Territory Food Safety Act, 2021 to ensure the availability of safe and healthy food products, the amendments have been proposed through this bill.

2. This Bill has been designed to achieve the said purpose.

**SENATOR SAMINA MUMTAZ ZEHRI
MEMBER-IN-CHARGE**