

to provide for the establishment of the mass transit system in the Islamabad Capital Territory

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the establishment, operation and maintenance of a modern mass transit system in the Islamabad Capital Territory in order to ensure safe, efficient and affordable public transport for the residents of Islamabad;

AND WHEREAS it is necessary to empower the Capital Development Authority to plan, construct, operate and maintain the Metro Bus System and to make provisions for free travel for children, students and senior citizens in the public interest;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to regulate matters connected therewith and ancillary thereto;

It is hereby enacted as follows:-

1. Short Title, extent and commencement.- (1) This Act may be called the Islamabad Metro Bus Service Act, 2024.

(2) It shall extend 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) **"Ancillary facilities"** includes all supporting structures, equipment and services provided for the operation of the Metro Bus System, including but not limited to stations, depots, bridges, escalators, elevators, automated fare collection systems, passenger information systems, surveillance systems, generators and other related infrastructure;

(b) **"Authority"** means the Capital Development Authority established under the Capital Development Authority Ordinance, 1960 (Ordinance No. XXIII of 1960);

(c) **"Corridor"** means a dedicated road, lane or track designated for the operation of the Metro Bus System;

(d) **"Eligible persons"** means—

(i) children under the age of twelve years;

(ii) students enrolled in recognized educational institutions; and

(iii) senior citizens who have attained the age of sixty years;

(e) **"Fund"** means the Islamabad Metro Bus Fund established under section 7 of this Act; and

(f) **"Metro Bus System"** means the urban mass transit system operated and maintained by the Authority under this Act, including buses, corridors, stations, depots and ancillary facilities.

3. Administration of the Metro Bus System.- (1) The planning, construction, operation, maintenance and expansion of the Metro Bus System within the Islamabad Capital Territory shall vest in the Authority.

(2) The Authority shall exercise all such powers and perform all such functions as may be necessary to ensure the efficient, safe and effective operation of the Metro Bus System in accordance with this Act.

4. Powers and functions of the Authority.- Without prejudice to the generality of section 3, the Authority shall have the power to,—

- (a) own, control, maintain and develop corridors, stations, depots and ancillary facilities of the Metro Bus System;
- (b) plan and execute future extensions, feeder routes and related facilities;
- (c) enter into contracts, agreements, leases, concessions or service arrangements for the operation, maintenance or expansion of the Metro Bus System;
- (d) acquire, hold, lease or dispose of movable and immovable property for the purposes of this Act;
- (e) determine and collect fares from passengers other than those exempted under section 5, subject to approval of the Federal Government;
- (f) regulate and issue directions to public or private transport operators to prevent interference with or operation of competing transport services along designated Metro Bus corridors; and
- (g) ensure the safety, security, cleanliness and efficient functioning of the Metro Bus System.

5. Free travel for children, students and senior citizens.-(1) Travel on the Metro Bus System shall be free of charge for the following categories of persons, subject to verification in the prescribed manner:-

- (a) children under twelve years of age;
- (b) students enrolled in recognized educational institutions; and
- (c) senior citizens of sixty years of age or above.

(2) The Authority may issue special passes, cards or digital tokens to facilitate free travel for eligible persons.

6. Fares for other passengers.- The Federal Government, in consultation with the Authority, shall determine and notify the fare payable by passengers who are not entitled to free travel under section 5.

7. Islamabad Metro Bus Fund.- (1) There shall be established a fund to be known as the Islamabad Metro Bus Fund, which shall vest in and be administered by the Authority.

(2) The Fund shall be utilized to meet all expenses and charges incurred in connection with the operation, maintenance, expansion and improvement of the Metro Bus System and to provide for the cost of free travel under this Act.

(3) The Fund shall consist of-

- (a) grants and allocations made by the Federal Government;
- (b) donations, endowments and contributions from any lawful source;
- (c) income generated from advertising, commercial activities or other ancillary services of the Metro Bus System; and
- (d) any other receipts as may be prescribed.

8. Offences and penalties.- (1) Any person who-

- (a) willfully damages, destroys or misappropriates any property of the Metro Bus System;
- (b) obstructs or interferes with the operation of the Metro Bus System; or
- (c) travels without paying the prescribed fare, where applicable;

shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with a fine which may extend to fifty thousand rupees, or with both.

(2) An offence under this Act shall be non-cognizable and shall be triable by a Magistrate of the First Class.

9. Power to make rules.- The Federal Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

10. Regulations.- The Authority may, subject to this Act and the rules made thereunder, frame regulations for,—

- (a) the operation and maintenance of the Metro Bus System;
- (b) the procedure for verification and issuance of free-travel passes or tokens;
- (c) the appointment, terms and conditions of service of officers, staff and service providers engaged for the Metro bus System; and
- (d) any other matter necessary to give effect to the provisions of the Act.

11. Act to override other laws.- The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in any other law for the time being in force.

12. Removal of difficulties.- If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Federal Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, make such order, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as may appear to it to be necessary for the purpose of removing the difficulty.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The purpose of this Bill is to provide a comprehensive legislative framework for the operation, maintenance and expansion of the Metro Bus System in the Islamabad Capital Territory.

At present, the Metro Bus Service in Islamabad operates under administrative arrangements without a dedicated statute to regulate its management, financing and expansion. In order to ensure continuity, financial transparency and efficient service delivery, it is necessary to vest clear legal authority in the Capital Development Authority (CDA) for the planning, operation and maintenance of the Metro Bus System.

This Bill further seeks to advance the principles of social welfare and equitable access to public transport by guaranteeing free travel on the Metro Bus System for children under twelve years of age, students enrolled in recognized educational institutions, and senior citizens aged sixty years or above.

The Bill provides for the establishment of an Islamabad Metro Bus Fund to finance the system's operations, future expansion and the cost of free travel for eligible persons. It empowers the CDA to collect fares from non-exempt passengers, regulate competing transport services along Metro Bus corridors, and protect Metro Bus property through prescribed penalties.

Enactment of this law will enable the Federal Government to provide a safe, efficient and sustainable public transport service for the residents of Islamabad, reduce traffic congestion, promote environmental benefits, and ensure that vulnerable and deserving segments of society can travel without financial burden.

2. This bill is aimed at achieving the above-stated objectives.

SENATOR SARMAD ALI
Member-in-Charge