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THE SHAHEED BENAZIR BHUTTO INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND FEDERALISM ACT, 2024.

SINDH ACT NO. III OF 2025.

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[24th February, 2025.]

An ACT to establish an Institute known as the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Institute for Democracy and Federalism to advance the principles of democracy, federalism and social justice as envisioned by Shaheed Mohatarama Benazir Bhutto.

WHEREAS it is expedient to establish an Institute known as the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Institute for Democracy and Federalism to advance the principles of democracy, federalism and social justice as envisioned by Shaheed Mohatarama Benazir Bhutto, and to deal with matters ancillary thereto.

Preamble.

It is hereby enacted as follows :-

PART-I PRELIMINARY

1. (1) This Act may be called the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Institute for Democracy and Federalism Act, 2024.

Short title and commencement.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

2. In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context -

Definitions.

- (i) “Board” means the Board of Governors constituted under section 8;
- (ii) “Chair” means the Benazir Bhutto Chairs established in, and/or functioning in, the University of Karachi, the University of Sindh, Jamshoro and the Shah Abdul University, Khairpur;
- (iii) “*Chairperson*” means the *Chairperson* of the Board;
- (iv) “Executive Director” means the Executive Director of the Institute;
- (v) “Fund” means the fund of the Institute;
- (vi) “Government” means the Government of Sindh;

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- (vii) “Institute” means the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Institute for Democracy and Federalism;
- (viii) “Member” means a member of the Board;
- (ix) “prescribed” means prescribed by rules or regulations;
- (x) “regulations” means regulations made under this Act;
- (xi) “rules” means rules made under this Act.

PART-II ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INSTITUTE

3. (1) There shall be established an Institute to be known as the Benazir Bhutto Institute for Democracy and Federalism for carrying out the purpose of this Act. **Establishment of the Institute.**

(2) The institute shall be a body corporate, having perpetual succession and a common seal, with power, subject to the provisions of this Act, to acquire and hold property, both movable and immovable, and shall be its name sue and be sued.

(3) The headquarters of the Institute shall be at Karachi.
4. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, the following shall be the constituent Chairs of the Institute and shall, on commencement of this Act, be maintained and administered by the Institute:- **Constituent Chairs of the Institute.**
 - (i) Benazir Bhutto Chair in the University of Karachi.
 - (ii) Benazir Bhutto Chair in the University of Sindh ***Jamshoro.***
 - (iii) Benazir Bhutto Chair in the Shah Abdul ***Latif*** University ***Khairpur.***

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PART-III FUNCTIONS, POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE INSTITUTE

5. (1) The powers and functions of the Institute shall be as follows:- **Functions, Powers and duties of the Institute.**

(a) **Institutional Development:**

- (i) to develop and implement a five-year strategic plan for the Institute and the Benazir Bhutto Chairs, outlining core programs, themes, and objectives;
- (ii) to establish and maintain the necessary infrastructure for the Institute and the Chairs, including office spaces, conference facilities, and resource center or library and research equipment;
- (iii) to establish a well-equipped tangible and digital research and resource centre with a collection of materials related to socio-political subjects, focusing on those championed by Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, or her speeches, interviews, articles, and other significant materials;
- (iv) to secure funding from Government and other sources to ensure the Institute's sustainability and effective functioning;
- (v) to incur any expenditure approved in the budget necessary for carrying out the purposes of this Act;
- (vi) to create posts for researchers, fellows, training, consultancy, administration, and other related purposes and to appoint persons thereto and make provision for research, consultancy, and advisory service independently or jointly with other public and private bodies under prescribed conditions;

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- (vii) to recruit qualified staff and provide ongoing training and development opportunities to enhance their skills and expertise;
- (viii) to acquire, hold, control, administer and dispose of the property and the funds of the institute;
- (ix) to enter into perform all such contracts as it may consider necessary;
- (x) to arrange for the audit of the accounts of the Institute;
- (xi) with the previous approval in writing of Government, to raise funds and borrow money on such terms as may be approved by Government;
- (xii) to seek and obtain advice and assistance for the preparation or planning a scheme for the execution of any schemes from any agency and such agency shall give the advice and assistance sought by the Institute to the best of its liability, knowledge and judgement, and any expenditure, if any, involved in giving such advice or assistance shall be borne by the Institute;
- (xiii) to develop and maintain a website and blog to promote the Institute's research, publications, and events.

(b) Promotion of Federalism and Democracy:

- (i) to conduct and promote comprehensive research in the field of democracy, federalism, governance, and related disciplines such as political science, philosophy, law, public policy, sociology, cultural studies, gender studies, and related socio-political disciplines;

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- (ii) to focus research on the life, struggle, and political vision of Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, emphasizing her contributions to democracy, federalism, and social justice;
 - (iii) to undertake analysis and evaluation of the existing laws, rules, regulations and policies and for the purpose of their impact on society, providing recommendations for reforms that align with democratic principles, social justice, equity and human rights;
 - (iv) to develop and implement programs to strengthen political parties, enhancing their organizational capacity and democratic functioning.
- (c) Promotion of Gender Equality and Diversity:**
- (i) to promote gender equity, equality, and cultural inclusivity through research, advocacy, and public education, focusing on the empowerment of women and marginalized genders;
 - (ii) to foster a culture of inclusivity and peaceful coexistence by celebrating diversity through intercultural dialogue (through conferences, seminars etc.) aimed at de-radicalization and the prevention of extremism.
- (d) Publications and Dissemination:**
- (i) to publish research papers, articles, monographs, books, journals, periodicals and other educational material to advance the understanding of democratic values and federalism;
 - (ii) to disseminate research findings and updates on the Institute's activities through an annual report and promotional material (pamphlets, handouts, etc.);

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- (iii) to publish books and anthologies on the life and work of Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and on broader themes related to democracy and social justice;
 - (iv) to develop and maintain digital archives of Benazir Bhutto's speeches, interviews, articles, and other significant materials;
 - (v) to organize national and international conferences; host seminars, workshops, book reviews, and panel discussions on issues in democracy, federalism, to foster dialogue and collaboration among national and international scholars, policymakers, and activists;
 - (vi) to promote awareness and understanding of democratic tenets, constitutional rights among the general public through constitutional awareness;
 - (vii) to advocate for peace, human rights, and social justice through public campaigns, seminars, and workshops whether on its own or in collaboration with any Government organization or non-governmental organization (NGO);
 - (viii) to utilize social media platforms to engage with a broader audience and disseminate information about the Institute's activities through digital advocacy campaigns to raise awareness on democracy, federalism, and human rights;
- (e) **Strengthening Engagement through Training and Alliances:**
- (i) to implement training and establish capacity-building initiatives to enhance the involvement of public officials, leaders, civil society, youth, and women in politics and civic activities;
 - (ii) to develop training resources with the help of expert research scholars;

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- (iii) to collaborate with domestic and global organizations and academic figures for research and educational advancement to bolster the Institute's efforts in research and advocacy; and
- (iv) to launch exchange programs, especially within South Asia, to collaborate on joint research and advocacy projects with other entities and promote the sharing of knowledge and cooperative studies.

(2) Without prejudice to the powers mentioned under subsection (1), the Institute shall do all such other acts and things, whether incidental to the powers aforesaid or not, as may be necessary in order to further the objectives of the Institute as a place of education, learning, research, and consultancy.

PART-IV ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE INSTITUTE

6. (1) The general direction and administration of the Institute and its affairs shall vest in the Board, which may exercise all powers and do all acts and things which may be exercised or done by the Institute. **Administration and Management of the Institute.**
- (2) The Board in discharging its functions shall act on sound principles to achieve the purpose of this Act and shall be guided on questions of policy by such directions as Government, may from time to time, give.
- (3) If any question arises as to whether any matter is a matter of policy or not, the decision of Government shall be final.

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7. (1) The Board shall consist of -

**Constitution of the
Board.**

(i)	Chief Minister or any person nominated by him from amongst the members of the Board.	Chairperson
(ii)	A family member of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto or any person nominated by the family member of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto	Member
(iii)	The Minister for Universities & Boards Department or his nominee;	Member
(iv)	Secretary to Government of Sindh, Universities & Boards Department	Member
(v)	Chairman/ Secretary Sindh Higher Education Commission	Member
(vi)	Four members from academia and intelligentsia with expertise from the disciplines of political science, law, sociology, economics, public administration, and such other disciplines, to be nominated by the Chief Minister from a panel of individuals	Members
(vii)	Three members from civil society organizations working in the field of democracy and federalism, to be nominated by the Chief Minister from a panel of individuals.	Members
(viii)	The Executive Director of the Institute.	Member / Secretary
(ix)	Secretary to Government of Sindh, Law Department	Member

(2) The Chief Minister may nominate any Member of the Board to be the Vice-Chairperson of the Board.

(3) In the absence of Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall act as Chairman.

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(4) The members, other than ex-officio members shall, unless Chief Minister otherwise direct, hold office for a period of three years.

(5) Any person ceasing to be a member of the Board by reason of the expiry of the term of his office shall be eligible for re-appointment for another term of three years or for such shorter term as Chief Minister may decide.

(6) No act proceeding of the Board shall be invalid merely on the ground of the existence of any vacancy in, or any defect in the constitution of, the Board.

(7) Any member other than an ex-officio member may by writing under his hand addressed to Government, resign his office.

(8) The Board may co-opt any person as its member for particular purpose or for specified period.

(9) The Members of the Board shall be paid such honoraria for attending its meetings as may be determined by the Board.

8. (1) The Chairperson and members shall discharge such duties and perform such functions as are assigned to them by or under this Act. **Duties and functions of the Chairperson and Members.**

(2) Until the Board is duly constituted, the Chairperson shall, exercise the powers, discharge the duties and perform the functions of the Board.

9. (1) The meetings of the Board shall be regulated as may be prescribed by regulations but until such regulations are framed, the Board shall meet at least quarterly in a year with a gap of at least three months on the dates to be fixed by the Executive Director in consultation with the Chairperson: **Meetings of the Board.**

Provided that the Chairperson may convene a meeting at any time either by requisition made by not less than six members or on his own motion to consider a matter of urgent nature.

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(2) The Chairperson shall preside over the meeting and in the absence of the Chairperson, the meeting shall be presided over by the Vice-Chairperson and in the absence of both, by the member appointed by the members present in the meeting; provided that the Member(s) of the Board may take part in a meeting by using communication equipment and such member(s) shall be deemed to have participated in a meeting.

(3) The quorum for a meeting shall be one-half of the total number of members, a fraction being counted as one, but no quorum shall be necessary for the meeting held in lieu of the meeting which was adjourned for want of quorum.

(4) The Chairperson shall have and exercise a casting vote in the case of a tie.

(5) The Executive Director being the Secretary of the Board shall record the minutes of meeting which shall be submitted by him at the next meeting for confirmation.

10. (1) The Board shall, subject to the provisions of this Act and rules or regulations, exercise administrative and financial powers in respect of the Institute as may be necessary for its proper and efficient functioning. **Powers and Functions of the Board.**
- (2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the forgoing provisions, the Board shall have the powers –
- (i) to hold, control and administer the property, funds and resources of the Institute and borrow or raise money for the purpose of the Institute;
 - (ii) to exercise supervision and over all control over the Institute;
 - (iii) to acquire and administer the properties of the Institute both movable and immovable;
 - (iv) to consider and approve annual research programme, annual reports and audit statements of account of the Institute;
 - (v) to create, suspend or abolish such administrative and technical posts of the Institute as may be necessary;

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- (vi) to create and fill temporary posts for a period not exceeding six months to achieve the purpose of this Act, rules and regulations;
- (vii) to appoint and prescribe terms and conditions of the services of the officers and staff of the institute and to prescribe the powers and duties of the officers and staff of the Institute;
- (viii) to determine the terms and conditions of the service of the officers and staff of the Chairs;
- (ix) to consider and approve annual and revised budget estimates and to re-appropriate funds from one major head of expenditure to another and to appoint auditors and submit the same to Government;
- (x) to cause proper books of accounts to be kept for all sums of money received and expended by the Institute and for assets and liabilities of the Institute as determined by the Accountant General Sindh and in consultation with Government;
- (xi) to enter into the agreements and/or arrangements with other public or private organizations for the purpose of dialogue, research, workshops or any other form of scholarly engagement and activities;
- (xii) to lay down its own rules of procedure;
- (xiii) to frame rules and regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act;
- (xiv) to appoint committees or sub-committees as deemed fit for carrying out the purpose of this Act; and
- (xv) to delegate any of its powers to the Executive Director, excepting the approval of budgetary estimates.

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**PART-V
APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF**

11. (1) There shall be a Executive Director of the Institute who shall be eminent academic or scholar in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences to be appointed by the Chief Minister, ***and recommendation of the Board*** for a period of four years, which may be extended for one more term on such terms and conditions as the Chief Minister may determine. **Appointment and duties of the Executive Director.**
- (2) The professional and academic qualifications and experience for the post of Executive Director shall be such as follows:-
- (a) **Educational Qualifications:** A Ph.D. in a relevant field of humanities and social sciences, including Political Science, Public Policy, International Relations, Philosophy, Law, Economics, Sociology, or a related discipline from a recognized and accredited institution;
 - (b) **Professional Experience:** At least 15 years of progressive leadership experience non-profit organizations, academia, research institutions, international organizations or government agencies, with a significant portion of this experience at a management or executive level.
- (3) The Executive Director shall be the Head of the Institute and, subject to the general supervision, control and direction of the Board, shall exercise such administrative and financial powers as the Board may delegate to him or as may be prescribed.
- (4) The Executive Director may resign from his office by serving thirty days' prior notice or on payment of thirty days' pay in lieu of the notice.
- (5) Government may remove the Executive Director by serving thirty days' prior notice or on payment of thirty days' pay in lieu of the notice.

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(6) The Executive Director shall manage the affairs of the Institute in accordance with the provisions of this Act, rules and regulations and shall have the following powers and functions:-

- (a) to be the Principal Accounting Officer of the Institute;
- (b) to exercise administrative control over the day-to-day functioning of the Institute including management, financial management, human resource management and management of social protection social entrepreneurship and poverty;
- (c) to conduct the official correspondence of the Agency for implementation of all the decisions and other business of the Board;
- (d) to run the affairs of the Institute for attaining its objectives through the executive tier;
- (e) to ensure that all grants are to be deposited in the Fund in efficient manner;
- (f) act on behalf of the Board in any emergency, subject to the obligation to report such action to the Board at its next meeting;
- (g) to keep in custody the record and seal of the Institute;
- (h) to undertake and authorize payment of monthly salaries and allowances to the employees or the persons working in the Institute;
- (i) to sanction or re-appropriate an amount not exceeding two lacs (two hundred thousand) rupees during the fiscal year for an unseen item not provided in the budget and submit report to the Board in this behalf in its next meeting for ratification;

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- (j) to prepare budget estimates and supplementary budget estimates and place the same before the Board for approval and subsequently its submission to Government;
- (k) to pass payment of bills, under any head of the budget duly approved and authorized;
- (l) to issue notices of meeting of the Board and its committees in consultation with the Chairperson or in his absence, the Vice Chairperson; and to prepare and maintain minutes and record and proceedings of the meeting;
- (m) to take steps for the implementation of decisions of the Board and submit report thereof to Government;
- (n) to carry on all the correspondence of the Institute;
- (o) to execute deeds and documents on behalf of the Institute; and
- (p) to exercise such other power and perform such other function as may be assigned to him by the Board or Government.

(7) The Chief Minister shall, in case of allegation of gross misconduct, inefficiency, corruption, violation of budgetary provision, moral turpitude, maladministration and mismanagement, remove the Executive Director, on the basis of substantiated findings of an enquiry committee after giving him an opportunity of show cause against such removal.

(8) The Executive Director may avail leave with the permission of the Chief Minister or any other authority duly authorized by the Chief Minister in this behalf.

(9) The Executive Director shall not except with the previous approval of the Board in each case or unless already approved in the budget, allow expenditure on items of civil works, capital expenditures equipment or automobiles.

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(10) At any time, the office of the Executive Director is vacant or the Executive Director is absent or is unable to perform the functions of his office due to illness or some other cause, the Chief Minister shall nominate any officer of the Institute to perform the functions of the Executive Director in his absence.

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| 12. | There shall be established a full-fledged organizational tier of the Institute under the Executive Director in such manner and with such functions as may be determined by the Board. | Organizational Tier. |
| 13. | (1) The Institute may, for efficient performance of its functions, appoint such officers and staff possessing such professional, technical or ministerial qualifications and experience in such manner and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by rules. | Director Administration & Finance. |
| | (2) The Board may engage such consultant or experts as it considers necessary for efficient performance of the functions of the Institute. | |
| 14. | The Director of Research & Publication shall be a whole-time officer of the Institute and shall be appointed by the Chancellor from a panel of three candidates recommended by the Board of Governors on such terms and conditions as it may determine. He shall possess such qualification and experience and perform such duties as may be prescribed. | Director Administration & Finance. |
| 15. | The Director of Research & Publication shall be a whole-time officer of the Institute and shall be appointed by the Chancellor from a panel of three candidates recommended by the Board of Governors on such terms and conditions as it may determine. He shall possess such qualification and experience and perform such duties as may be prescribed. | Director Research & Publication. |

CHAPTER-VI FINANCE

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| 16. | (1) There shall be established a separate fund of the Institute which shall consist of Government grants, donations, sale-proceeds of movable or immovable property including books and publications of the Institute and other sums receivable and loan obtained by the Institute. | Fund of the Institute. |
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(2) The fund of the Institute known as the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Institute for Democracy and Federalism Fund which shall be non-lapsable Fund except the single line annual grants by Government which shall form part of the Fund and shall be lapsable.

(3) The Fund shall consist of –

- (a) single line annual grant received from Government;
- (b) grants received from the Federal Government, other Provincial Governments and Local Governments;
- (c) donations endowments and deposits;
- (d) income from investment and deposits;
- (e) loans raised or aid obtained by the Institute;
- (f) fees, royalties on publications of the Institute and other charges for services rendered by the Institute;
- (g) all moneys received from any donor agency of Pakistan or foreign origin.

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| 17. | The Budget shall be prepared and approved in the manner as may be prescribed by rules. | Budget. |
| 18. | The amounts credited in the Fund shall be deposited in any Scheduled Bank approved by the Board. | Crediting of the funds. |
| 19. | The Board may invest its Fund in any security of the Federal Government or Provincial Government or any other security approved by Government. | Investment of Funds of the Institute. |
| 20. | (1) The Board shall cause the accounts of Institute to be maintained properly in respect of each financial year in such a form and manner as may be prescribed or in such manner as may be specified by Government, showing the estimated receipt and current expenditure and the sums to be required from Government during next financial year. | Maintenance of accounts and audit of accounts. |

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(2) The accounts of the Institute shall be audited once a year by one or more Auditors who are Chartered Accountants within the meaning of the Chartered Accountants Ordinance, 1960 (X of 1961) appointed by the Board.

(3) The annual statement of the accounts and audit report thereon shall be submitted by the Auditor for consideration of the Board for such action as deemed necessary.

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| 21. | Government may require the Institute to furnish to it any information, return statement or statistics regarding any matter concerning the Institute and the Institute shall comply with such requisition. | Requisition of Government. |
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PART-VII MISCELLANEOUS

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| 22. | The Institute at the close of every financial year shall prepare and publish annual report of its activities and performance and submit the report to Board within a fortnight of its publication. | Annual Reports. |
| 23. | The Government or Board may, by general or special order, delegate all or any of its powers, functions and duties, to the Chairperson, member or any officer of the Board. | Delegation of powers. |
| 24. | All person acting or purporting to act in pursuance of any provision of this Act shall be deemed to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Pakistan Penal Code. | Public servants. |
| 25. | No Court shall have jurisdiction to grant any injunction or make any order or entertain any proceedings in relation to anything done or intended to be done under this Act. | Jurisdiction barred. |
| 26. | If any difficulty arises in first implementation of the provisions of this Act, Government may, on the recommendation of Chairperson or otherwise, give appropriate direction to remove such difficulty. | Removal of difficulty. |
| 27. | No suit or legal proceedings shall lie against Government, Institute, or any other person in respect of anything done or intended to be done under this Act. | Indemnity. |

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| 28. | Government may make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act. | Power to make rules. |
| 29. | Subject to the provisions of this Act, and the rules, the Institute may make regulations for carrying out the purposes of this Act. | Power to make regulations. |