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Amendments of the 1973 Constitution

Constitution is referred as a living, dynamic document capable of responding to the needs of the future. The Constitution has been amended 26 times.

1st Amendment:

- May 4, 1974
- Under tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
- Expanded the scope of Articles 1, 8, 17, 61, 101, 127, 193, 199, 200, 209, 212, 250, 259, 260 and 272 concerning political parties, restricting their activities mainly to prevent foreign influence alignments
- Redefined Pakistan's boundaries and eliminated references to East Pakistan

2nd Amendment:

- September 17, 1974
- Under tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
- Expanded the scope of articles 106 and 260, defining a Muslim, and designating Ahmadis as a minority and 'non-Muslim'

3rd Amendment:

- February 18, 1975
- Under tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
- Broadened the scope of articles 10 and 232 and increased the period of preventive detention without trial from two to three months

4th Amendment:

- November 21, 1975
- Under tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

- Widened the scope of articles 8, 17, 19, 51, 54, 106, 199, 271, 272 and 273 additional seats for minorities and removed the judicial power to grant bail to anyone held under preventative detention.

5th Amendment:

- September 5, 1976
- Under tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
- Expanded the provisions of articles 101, 160, 175, 179, 180, 187, 192, 195, 196, 199, 200, 106, 212, 260 and 280, and increased the restriction on high court

6th Amendment:

- December 22, 1976
- Under tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
- Broadened the scope of articles 179, 195, 246 and 260, and Stipulated that the chief Justice of the supreme court would retire at the age of 65, while high court would retire at 62.

7th Amendment:

- May 16, 1977
- Under tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
- Provisions for a national referendum to affirm the government's policies
- Expanded the scope of articles 101, 245 and added Article 96A

8th Amendment:

- November 11, 1985
- during General Zia-ul-Haq's tenure
- most significant and drastic change in constitution's structure
- Extensive power upon the President including the authority to dissolve the national assembly
- Zia martial law tipped the balance of power towards President and demolish the role of parliament

- Broadened the scope of articles 48, 51, 56, 58, 59, 60, 75, 90, 91, 101, 105, 106, 112, 116, 130, 144, 152 and 270

9th Amendment:

- Proposing the imposition off Shariah law at the supreme law of the land was passed by the Senate but failed by the National Assembly due to its dissolution.
- This bill sought to expand the scope of Article 2 and 203

10th Amendment:

- March 25, 1987
- during General Zia-ul-Haq's tenure
- procedural aspects concerning the length of parliamentary session
- National family session at 130 days thereby broadening the scope of article 54 and 61

11th Amendment:

- August 28, 1989
- during Ben Benazir Bhutto's tenure (02-12-1988 To 06-08-1990)
- Reestablish parliamentary dominance by limiting the president's power

12th Amendment:

- July 28, 1991
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (06-11-1990 To 18-04-1993)
- special court for terrorism and swear client

13th Amendment:

- April 4, 1997,
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (17-02-1997 To 12-10-1999)
- Revoked the president authority to dissolve the National Assembly reinforcing parliamentary sovereignty

14th Amendment:

- July 3, 1997
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (17-02-1997 To 12-10-1999)
- bolstered political parties by mandating party discipline and restricting defections thereby tightening party leaders clip on their members (stopping floor crossing)

15th Amendment:

- August 28, 1998
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (17-02-1997 To 12-10-1999)
- Aimed to establish Shariah law as the land's supreme law but was not enacted

16th Amendment:

- July 27, 1999
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (17-02-1997 To 12-10-1999)
- Extended the duration of quota system stipulated in 1973 constitution from 20 to 40 years

17th Amendment:

- December 31, 2003
- under general Pervez Musharraf regime
- Restore the president's power to dissolve the National Assembly undoing Nawaz Sharif's efforts
- Reflected the military's dominance over civilian institutions and restrained a semi presidential system

18th Amendment:

- April 19, 2010,
- during the Pakistan people's party (PPP) tenure, Asif Ali Zardari as President (25-03-2008 To 25-04-2012)
- A significant milestone in Pakistan's constitutional journey
- Overturn numerous alterations imposed by military regime reinstated parliamentary supremacy transferred considerable authority to the provincial government
- Amendment was a move toward fortifying democracy and addressing local concerns thus Serving the populace by fostering federalism and diminishing central control

19th Amendment:

- January 1, 2011
- during the Pakistan people's party (PPP) tenure, Asif Ali Zardari as President (25-03-2008 To 25-04-2012)
- Focused on judicial reforms

20th Amendment:

- February 28, 2012
- during the Pakistan people's party (PPP) tenure, Asif Ali Zardari as President (25-03-2008 To 25-04-2012)
- Concentrated on guaranteeing free and impartial elections
- These Amendments (19th and 20th) signified the democratic government commitment to reinforcing the institutional framework for a more open and accountable political system

21st Amendment:

- January 7, 2015
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (05-06-2013 To 28-07-2017)
- In the wake of a gruesome attack on innocent children in Army Public School (APS) Peshawar military courts were established for speedy trials of terrorists and their sponsors.

22nd Amendment:

- June 8, 2016
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (05-06-2013 To 28-07-2017)
- ECP's powers were deputed to the Chief Election Commissioner

23rd Amendment:

- March 30th, 2017
- Under tenure of Nawaz Sharif (05-06-2013 To 28-07-2017)
- Re-established the military courts for further 2 years till 6 January 2019
- End of this period amendment were to expire automatically

24th Amendment:

- December 22, 2017,
- under PML-N Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as PM
- Reallocated national Assembly seats among federation units (provinces)
- Permitted election authorities to revise constituency boundaries based on the provisional outcomes of the 2017 census of Pakistan.

25Th Amendment:

- May 31, 2018
- under PML-N Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as PM
- Integrated the Federally Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA) into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

26th Amendment:

- October 20, 2024
- under Shahbaz Sharif as PM
- Aimed at enhancing the governance structure and addressing key political reforms
- Strengthening democratic institution by introducing measures to ensure greater accountability, transparency and efficiency within the government
- Provisions for judicial reforms strengthening the role of election Commission and increasing parliamentary oversight over executive actions

- decentralization by granting more autonomy to provincial government ensuring a more balanced distribution of power