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GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
LAW AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

NOTIFICATION

11 February 2026

No. Legis:13-01/2025.- The following Ordinance promulgated by Governor of the Punjab is hereby published for general information:

THE PUNJAB CHILD MARRIAGE RESTRAINT ORDINANCE 2026

(I OF 2026)

An

Ordinance

to restrain the solemnization of child marriages in Punjab.

It is necessary to restrain the solemnization of child marriages in Punjab and for the matters connected therewith and ancillary thereto.

Provincial Assembly of the Punjab is not in session and Governor of the Punjab is satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary to take immediate action.

In exercise of the powers conferred under clause (1) of Article 128 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Governor of the Punjab is pleased to make and promulgate the following Ordinance:

1. Short title, extent and commencement.- (1) This Ordinance may be cited as the Punjab Child Marriage Restraint Ordinance 2026.

(2) It shall extend to whole of the Punjab.

(3) It shall come into force at once.

2. Definitions.- In the Ordinance:

(a) "child" means a person, male or female, who is under eighteen years of age;

(b) "child marriage" means an act of *Nikah* or solemnizing marriage where both or either of the contracting party is a child;

(c) "Code" means the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (V of 1898);

(d) "contracting party" means either of the party whose *Nikah* or marriage is, or about to be performed or solemnized;

(e) "Court" means the Court of Session as provided under the Code;

(f) "Government" means Government of the Punjab;

(g) "guardian" means a natural guardian or a guardian appointed under the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890 (VIII of 1890); and

(h) "Ordinance" means the Punjab Child Marriage Restraint Ordinance 2026.

3. Registration of child marriages.- (1) No *Nikah* registrar shall register a child marriage.

(2) Whoever contravenes the provision of sub-section (1), shall be liable to be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year and with fine of one hundred thousand rupees.

4. Punishment for marrying a child.- Whoever, being an adult above eighteen years of age, contracts a marriage with a child, shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to three years but shall not be less than two years and shall be liable to fine which may extend to five hundred thousand rupees.

5. Child abuse and its punishment.- (1) Any form of cohabitation, before attaining the age of eighteen years, with or without consent, resulting from a child marriage shall be the child abuse under the Ordinance.

(2) Any person who induces, forces, persuades, entices or coerces any child bride or child groom to engage in child abuse or commits child abuse shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years but shall not be less than five years and with fine which shall not be less than one million rupees.

6. Child trafficking and its punishment.- (1) Any person who induces, forces, persuades, entices or coerces any child and compels such child to leave or takes such child beyond the territorial boundary of Punjab for the purpose of defeating and evading the provisions of the Ordinance for child marriage, shall commit the offence of child trafficking and shall be

punished with imprisonment which may extend to seven years but not less than five years and with fine which may extend to one million rupees.

(2) Any person who recruits, harbours, transports, provides or obtains any child for the purpose of child trafficking shall commit an offence under the Ordinance which shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three years and with fine which may extend to five hundred thousand rupees.

7. Punishment for guardian involved in a child marriage.- Where a guardian or any other person in any capacity, lawful or unlawful, does any act to promote the child marriage, child abuse or permits child marriage to be solemnized, or intentionally or negligently fails to prevent it from being solemnized, shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to three years but shall not be less than two years and shall also be liable to fine which may extend to five hundred thousand rupees.

8. Jurisdiction under the Ordinance.- Notwithstanding anything contained in section 190 of the Code, no court other than the Court of Session shall take cognizance of or try any offence under the Ordinance.

9. Power to issue injunction.- (1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in any other law, the Court may, if satisfied with the information laid before it through an application that a child marriage is going to be arranged, issue an injunction:

Provided that where any person has laid the information before the Court and requests to keep his identity hidden from the contracting parties or from the parent or guardian of the contracting parties or other parent, the Court shall adopt appropriate measures to protect the identity of such person.

(2) No injunction under sub-section (1) shall be issued against any person unless the Court has previously given notice to such person, and has afforded him an opportunity to show cause against the issuance of the injunction:

Provided that the Court may dispense with notice if it deems necessary.

(3) The Court may, either on its own motion or on an application of any person, rescind or alter any order made under sub-section (1).

(4) Where an application under sub-section (3) is received, the Court shall afford an opportunity for the applicant to appear before it either in person or by pleader and if the Court rejects the application wholly or in part, it shall record in writing its reasons for so doing.

(5) Whoever, knowing that an injunction has been issued against him under sub-section (1), disobeys such injunction, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or fine which may extend to one hundred thousand rupees or with both.

10. Offences to be non-bailable.- Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code, an offence punishable under the Ordinance shall be cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable.

11. Trial of offences.- The Court shall, on taking cognizance of a case, proceed with the trial and conclude it within ninety days.

12. Applicability of the Code.- Subject to the provisions of the Ordinance, the provisions of the Code shall *mutatis mutandis* apply.

13. Power to make rules.- The Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Ordinance.

14. Repeal and savings.- (1) The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (XIX of 1929) is hereby repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding the repeal of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (XIX of 1929), all orders made and decisions taken under the repealed Act, shall be deemed to have been validly made and taken under the Act.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

This Ordinance aims to restrain the child marriages in the Punjab and for the matter connected therewith and ancillary thereto. It shows a push towards modernizing child protection laws to remove gender-based age distinction and discrimination while setting minimum marriageable age for both male and female as eighteen years. This Bill penalizes persons promoting child marriages, causing child trafficking and child abuse for the purpose of child protection. Hence this Ordinance.

(SARDAR SALEEM HAIDER KHAN)
GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB

Dated: 10/02/2026

(MUHAMMAD ASIF BALAL LODHI)
Secretary
Government of the Punjab
Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department