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Pakistan Army Bolsters Fleet with Z-10ME Helicopters

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The Pakistan Army has enhanced its aerial combat capabilities by inducting the advanced Z-10ME attack helicopters, a move aimed at modernizing its aviation fleet.

The Pakistan Army has officially integrated the Changhe Z-10ME (Zhishengji-10 Modified Export) attack helicopters into its Army Aviation Corps, marking a significant step in strengthening its aerial combat capabilities. The induction ceremony, held on August 2, 2025, at the Multan Army Aviation Base, was overseen by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, who also observed a live firepower demonstration at the

Muzaffargarh Field Firing Ranges, according to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). The Z-10ME, a Chinese-made, all-weather helicopter, is equipped with advanced radar, electronic warfare suites, and a 23mm chain gun, enabling precision strikes day or night.

Designed for anti-tank warfare and close air support, the Z-10ME features upgraded WZ-9G engines with 1,200 kW power, enhanced armor, and a missile approach warning system (MAWS), making it a formidable asset for Pakistan's military operations. The helicopter can carry up to 16 HJ-10 anti-tank guided missiles, rocket pods, and TY-90 air-to-air missiles, offering versatility in engaging ground and aerial threats. The ISPR stated that this induction significantly enhances the army's battlefield response and capacity to counter adversaries effectively. The exact number of helicopters acquired remains undisclosed, but reports suggest Pakistan may procure up to 40 units to replace its aging Bell AH-1F/S Cobra fleet.

The acquisition follows years of challenges in securing modern attack helicopters. Previous attempts to procure Turkish T129 ATAK and U.S. AH-1Z Viper helicopters were stalled due to export restrictions on U.S.-made engines. The Z-10ME emerged as a viable alternative, customized to meet Pakistan's operational needs, particularly in rugged terrains and high-altitude regions like the Karakoram ranges. Defense analyst Fu Qianshao, quoted by Global Times, noted that the helicopter's firepower and flexibility make it ideal for anti-terrorism and border security missions.

This move underscores Pakistan's deepening defense ties with China, reducing reliance on Western suppliers amid regional security concerns. The Z-10ME's advanced systems position it as a counter to India's AH-64E Apache fleet, enhancing Pakistan's deterrence capabilities along contested borders. The induction reflects a strategic shift toward modern, self-reliant defense solutions, ensuring the Pakistan Army remains prepared for evolving threats.