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Punjab Government Set to Launch E-Taxi Service Soon

July 17, 2025

– Categories: Politics & Government



The Punjab government, led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, has launched the Punjab E-Taxi Scheme 2025, aimed at introducing electric taxis to promote sustainable urban transport and generate employment. The initiative will begin in Lahore with plans to expand to other major cities, reflecting the government's vision for modernizing mobility while addressing environmental concerns.

Announced in January 2025, the scheme plans to deploy 1,100 electric vehicles (EVs) in Lahore, supported by 200 to 250 solar-powered charging stations. Expansion to Faisalabad, Multan, and Rawalpindi is targeted by mid-2025. The government has partnered with Dewan Motors and the National Radio & Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC) to supply EVs at subsidized prices ranging from PKR 4 to 5 million. Financing options include zero-interest installment plans up to PKR 6.5 million through the Bank of Punjab.

Transport Minister Bilal Akbar highlighted the program's environmental benefits and job creation potential for unemployed youth. Applications opened in February 2025 via an online portal and require applicants to have a valid driving license, Punjab residency, and a clean driving record.

The scheme aims to reduce carbon emissions and fuel costs by integrating EVs with ride-hailing platforms for 24/7 service. Secretary Transport Ahmed Javed Qazi emphasized the importance of high-quality vehicles and comprehensive driver training during a seminar in Lahore.

Despite the promising outlook, some critics express skepticism regarding the government's capacity to implement the project effectively. Concerns include insufficient charging infrastructure, maintenance challenges, and the government's previous record of stalled projects such as the Yellow Line transit. These issues raise questions about the long-term viability of the scheme.

With urban air pollution rising in Pakistan, the E-Taxi Scheme has the potential to ease environmental stress if executed properly. The government's collaboration with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and plans for tehsil-based quotas are intended to ensure wide

accessibility. Ultimately, robust oversight and effective implementation will be crucial to building public trust and achieving the initiative's goals.