

RAHBAR KISAN INTERNATIONAL

PTA downplays Whatsapp disruptions, attributes it to 'technical glitch'

Published on July 23, 2024

Document Date: Mon, Dec 23 2024 07:59:05 pm

Category: ,English,Latest - ,Literature -

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Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has downplayed ongoing issues with WhatsApp services, attributing them to a possible “technical glitch.” Starting on July 20, numerous users across Pakistan reported difficulties in sending and receiving media files, such as voice notes, photos, and videos, on the popular messaging application while using their mobile networks.

Complaints included delays or failures in downloading media files, with some users receiving error messages from WhatsApp. Downtdetector, a global platform that monitors problems with websites and online applications, has continued to receive reports regarding WhatsApp outages in Pakistan over the past 24 hours. While speaking at a local private news channel, representatives of two telecom operators had confirmed the issue but stated there were no problems from their side. Malahat Obaid, the spokesperson for the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), denied any issues with WhatsApp or other social media apps, attributing any disruptions to a technical glitch. She did not elaborate on the cause of the glitch. Meanwhile, Usama Khilji, the director of Bolo Bhi, an advocacy forum for digital rights in Pakistan, suggested that the disruptions could be linked to the installation of a government firewall intended to exert more control over internet and communication technologies. Khilji stated that the lack of transparency regarding the firewall system was “criminal.” The PTA and telecommunications companies are continuing to investigate the issue to ensure uninterrupted services for users. According to the World Population Review, there are 52.3 million WhatsApp users in Pakistan.