

# SHARIF'S CABINET TAKES OATH IN PAKISTAN AFTER SEVERAL DELAYS

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Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's 34-member Cabinet — a mix of experience and fresh blood — was sworn in on Tuesday after several days of delay, with Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani administering the oath to new Ministers after President Arif Alvi once again excused himself from the ceremony.

The ceremony was scheduled to be held on Monday, but President Alvi refused to administer the oath to the lawmakers, compelling the government to postpone it.

The Cabinet includes 31 Ministers and three Ministers of the state and its first meeting has been summoned in the evening by Prime Minister Sharif.

The new Cabinet is a mix of experience and fresh blood cobbled up together after stiff tradeoffs behind the closed-door meetings of the coalition partners of Mr. Sharif, also president of the Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz (PML-N). His PML-N got 13 ministries and Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) got nine. Four ministries were allotted to Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) and two to Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P).

Other coalition partners including Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) and Jamhuri Watan Party (JWP) got one ministry each. Out of the three Ministers of the state, two belong to PML-N and one to PPP.

At least 20 Ministers are the first-timers in the federal Cabinet.

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