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iCube-Qamar unveils first image of Moon from lunar orbit

ISLAMABAD

STAFF REPORT

The iCube-Qamar, Pakistan's inaugural lunar satellite mission, unveiled the premiere snapshot of the moon taken within its lunar orbit, announced by the Institute of Space Technology on Friday.

Previously, the satellite relayed an image while traversing the lunar orbit.

This marks a significant milestone as per the IST, with Qamar being Pakistan's pioneer satellite to venture into lunar orbit, completing a full rotation every 12 hours.

"The iCube-Qamar will capture images of the lunar orbit from a vantage point 200 kilometers above the moon's surface," stated the IST.

It added that the signals of iCube-Qamar will be received on Earth by covering a distance of 360,000 to 400,000 km.

iCube-Qamar has made three rounds around the moon," the IST said.

The first image was received two days after IST announced that the satellite was successfully deployed in orbit on May 8 at 1:14pm Pakistan time.

The scientist termed the development "a great success overall".



Following its deployment, the satellite will take images of the desired lunar surfaces in a carefully selected 12-hour elliptical orbit.

The iCube-Qamar was launched on board China's Chang'e-6 from Hainan, China, on May 3.

Ahead of the launch of the satellite last week, Dr Khurram said that the Pakistani satellite will take different pictures of the surface of the moon after which Pakistan will have its own satellite images of the moon for research.

The satellite was designed and developed by the Islamabad-based Institute of Space Technology (IST) in collaboration with China's Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU) and Pakistan's national space agency Suparco.

iCube-Qamar orbiter carries two optical cameras to image the lunar surface. Following successful qualification and testing, the orbiter was integrated with China's Chang'e6 mission — the sixth in a series of lunar exploration missions.