

QUETTA VOICE

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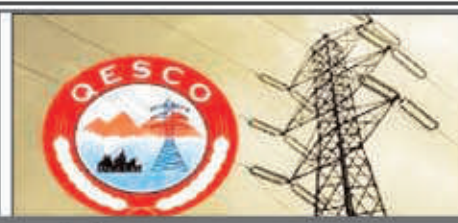
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PM Shehbaz orders immediate restoration of Wikipedia



Transmission test of 100 MWs from Iran to Gwadar completed

Over 2600 dead as powerful earthquake jolts Turkey and Syria

News Desk

Earthquake of magnitude 7.9 struck central Turkey and northwest Syria affecting millions of people

Over 2600 people were dead and thousands injured when a powerful earthquake jolted various cities in Turkey and Syria on Monday morning. A major earthquake of magnitude 7.9 struck central Turkey and northwest Syria affecting millions of people. The quake, which hit in the early darkness of a winter morning, was also felt in Cyprus and Lebanon.

"I have never felt anything like it in the 40 years I've lived," said Erdem, a resident of the Turkish city of Gaziantep, near the quake's epicenter, who declined to give his surname. "We were shaken at least three times very strongly, like a baby in a crib."

Death toll around 1,651 in Turkey, more than 700 in Syria

More than 1,651 people have been killed and thousands were injured in Turkey and Syria after a magnitude 7.8 earthquake hit southern Turkey early Monday.



Rescuers are now frantically searching for survivors after the powerful quake shook the region, causing multiple aftershocks and sending tremors as far away as Lebanon and Israel.

Videos widely shared on social media show women and children running from the collapsed buildings chanting slogans of Allah o Akbar (God is great). Videos show high buildings collapsing. The Hue and cry of the victims can be heard. The earthquake has sent shock waves across the globe with people fearing aftershocks.

Rescuers hunt for untold numbers trapped in rubble

"We were shaken like a cradle. There were nine of us at home. Two sons of mine are still in the rubble. I'm waiting for them," said a woman with a broken arm and injuries to her face, speaking in an ambulance near the wreckage of a seven-storey block where she had lived in Diyarbakir in southeast Turkey.

In Turkey, the death toll stood at 1,498, the disaster agency said. At least 968 people were killed in Syria, according to figures from the Damascus government and the United Nations.

Poor internet connections and damaged roads between some of the worst-hit cities in Turkey's south, homes to millions of people, hindered

efforts to assess and address the impact.

Temperatures in some areas were expected to fall to near freezing overnight, worsening conditions for people trapped under rubble or left homeless. Rain was falling on Monday after snowstorms swept the country at the weekend.

Highest death toll from an earthquake in Turkey since 1999

It is already the highest death toll from an earthquake in Turkey since 1999, when a tremor of similar magnitude devastated the heavily populated eastern Marmara Sea region near Istanbul, killing more than 17,000.

Historic disaster and the worst earthquake to hit Turkey since 1939

President Tayyip Erdogan, who is preparing for a tough election in May, called it a historic disaster and the worst earthquake to hit Turkey since 1939, but said authorities were doing all they could.

"Everyone is putting their heart and soul into efforts although the winter season, cold weather and the earthquake happening during the night makes things more difficult," he said.

Over 300 buildings constructed in violation of Earthquake code in Quetta

Syed Ali Shah

In Quetta, over 300 shopping malls, markets, plazas and shops have been constructed in violation of building code. The British rulers had fixed 30 feet height for all buildings in the aftermath of the deadliest earthquake of 1935 that razed the mountains-ringed city to the ground.

Most of the buildings have been constructed against the code of Earthquake in quetta

Most of the buildings have been constructed in the heart of Quetta city, with no proper check by the Quetta Metropolitan Corporation (QMC) during construction work. "We have currently taken action against 40 building owners", Muhammad Qasam, the Chief of QMC's anti-encroachment cell told the daily Quetta Voice.

Building code has been violated by highly influential people and they have also greased the palm of QMC's architect-engineer responsible for passing maps of plazas and shops in the city prior to any construction work. Geologists warn of high-intensity earthquakes in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan in the future. "Quetta is located in a red-zone when it comes to the earthquake", Dr. Din Muhammad Kakar, a well-known geologist says.

Quetta and almost all parts of Balochistan are prone to natural disasters in general and



earthquakes in particular. Keeping in view the future dangers of earthquakes, the British immediately fixed the building code in Quetta to avoid future human losses in the case of any natural calamity. During English era, people strictly followed the building code. However, gradually, its violation started with no check on the part of the concerned quarters. "If you have money, you can pass map for construction", Haji Salam, a well-known businessman lamented. Tall buildings have been constructed in congested streets and roads of the city, having no parking and other basic facilities. It is very difficult for pedestrians to walk in those streets as they are always crammed with people. "QMC is gradually taking on all influential people", Qasam claimed. During the last two decades, earthquakes have caused human and property losses in Ziarat, Awaran and Mashkail towns of Balochistan.

PM Shehbaz orders immediate restoration of Wikipedia

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday ordered the immediate restoration of popular online encyclopedia Wikipedia that was banned by the telecom regulator last week for not "blocking/removing sacrilegious content".

Wikipedia is a free, crowd-sourced, editable online encyclopedia often used as a starting point by millions across the world for basic information.

On February 4, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) banned Wikipedia for not "blocking/removing sacrilegious content" within the 48-hour deadline given in a move that was widely condemned.

Prior to the ban, the PTA had degraded Wikipedia services countrywide for not complying with its directives.

A handout issued today by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), a



copy of which is available with Dawn.com, said that the matter was placed before the premier.

The statement said that the prime minister then constituted a committee comprising the law, economic affairs and information ministers for "preliminary examination of the matter".

It added that the committee held a meeting during which the members of the committee highlighted how Wikipedia was a useful web-

site supporting the "dissemination of knowledge and information for the public, students and the academia".

"Blocking the site in its entirety was not a suitable measure to restrict access to some objectionable content," the PMO statement said. "The unintended consequences of this blanket ban, therefore, outweigh its benefits."

Based on the body's recommendations, PM Shehbaz ordered the immediate restoration of the website and also constituted a separate cabinet committee headed by IT Minister Aminul Haque and comprising the law, information, commerce, and communication ministers.

The PMO handout defined the cabinet committee's terms of reference, saying that it would "review the suitability" of the PTA's move to block Wikipedia. Web Desk

Transmission test of 100 MWs from Iran to Gwadar completed

News Desk

The test to transmit 100 Mega Watts of electricity from Iran to Gwadar was successfully completed. The testing was conducted by National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) after completing the transmission line for importing more than 100 megawatts of electricity from Iran.

On the instructions of the Prime Minister and the Energy Minister, NTDC completed the project within the stipulated period. It has been reported that after the testing of the transmis-



sion system, the supply of more than 100 megawatts of electricity to Gwadar will start in

the next few days. The completion of the project will improve the power supply in Gwadar

and Makran divisions. The governments of Pakistan and Iran signed an agreement in June 2022 to supply 100 megawatts of additional electricity to meet Gwadar's power needs.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, during his visit to Gwadar last year, directed the concerned authorities to complete the project in a short period of time. Gwadar relies on imported electricity from Iran and the construction of the 132 KV line will connect the coastal city to the national grid for the first time.

All Parties Conference on terrorism rescheduled for Feb 9: information minister

Information Minister Mairiyum Aurangzeb said on Monday that the government has rescheduled the All Parties Conference (APC) in Islamabad — called to discuss important challenges being faced by Pakistan — for February 9, Thursday.

She did not mention why the meeting originally slated for February 7 was moved

In a tweet, the information minister said that a joint strategy to combat terrorism and other challenges faced by the government will be discussed in the meeting. The National Action Plan will also be reviewed.

Aurangzeb added that the entire political and national leadership of the country has been invited to the moot.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had decided to convene the multi-party moot last week in a move that was seen as significant development amid rising political temperatures in the country.



The invitation for the meeting was also extended to PTI chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan, which was formally delivered to party leaders Pervez Khattak and Asad Qaiser by former speaker and federal minister, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq.

However, PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry has claimed that the PTI has not received an official invitation for the conference yet.

The All Party Conference comes as the country is facing an uptick in terrorist activity. On January 30, a suicide bombing at a mosque in Peshawar Police Lines area claimed the lives of at least 101 people, mostly police officials.

At the same time, the country is also facing trouble on the economic front. Foreign exchange reserves have gone down to \$3.09 billion, which analysts say covers less than three weeks of imports.

The country is locked in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to release much-needed money under a stalled bailout programme. A successful outcome with the IMF would also help to release money from other platforms that are looking for a greenlight from the lender. Web Desk

Country needs solidarity now, Imran Khan not ready for it: Ayyaz Sadiq

ISLAMABAD: PML-N senior leader and All Parties Conference (APC) convener Ayyaz Sadiq has said that country needs solidarity at present and Imran Khan is not ready for it.

He said this while talking to media men here Monday.

He went on to say the PTI allegation regarding invitation for APC is baseless.

He held he has extended invitation to Pervez Khattak, Asad Q. Aisar and Ijaz Shah for APC

during his meetings and contacts with them. I said to these leaders to convey this invitation to Imran Khan too. "we have not sent invitation in writing to any one. We invited them through meeting or by telephone.

The allegation by PTI on not extending formal invitation to participate in the APC is based on falsehood.

It is good if former speaker National Assembly does not talk of attitudes, he said adding PTI has done every thing

with PPP and PML-N through FIA and NAB.

Country needs solidarity now and Imran Khan is not ready for it, he remarked.

He held he has extended invitation to Pervez Khattak, Asad Q. Aisar and Ijaz Shah for APC during his meetings and contacts with them. I said to these leaders to convey this invitation to Imran Khan too. "we have not sent invitation in writing to any one. We invited them through meeting or by telephone. INP



Quetta: A meeting of metropolitan officers is being held under the chairmanship of Administrator Quetta Jabbar Baloch and also Officers of all departments are present.

Containers of goods from China on way to reach Khunjerab Pass

ISLAMABAD: A number of containers of goods needed for Pakistan are on their way to reach Khunjerab Pass. Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

Khunjerab Pass on the China-Pakistan border is a strategic point on the Karakoram Highway, which links China's northwest Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region with Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan region.

The Chinese side has agreed to Pakistan's request for the temporary opening of the Khunjerab Pass and the facilitation of customs clearance for supplies from Jan 30 to Feb 10, 2023.

The Customs works round the clock to facilitate customs clearance.

On January 30, 11 loaded containers carrying goods urgently needed by the Pakistani side such as auto parts, polyester cloth, garments, utensils, roll paper, and tape arrived at Sost Dry Port.

It is pertinent to mention that Khunjerab Pass is temporarily open from Jan 19 to 20 for the first time this year to transport goods from China to Pakistan.

During this period, a total of 40 vehicles transported \$15.9916 million worth of goods including machinery, cloth, walnuts, hard disks, etc.

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Al-Ghazi Tractors revenue up 73% to Rs26bn in 9MCY22: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited's revenue increased 73% to Rs26 billion in the first nine months of calendar year 2022 from Rs15 billion in the corresponding period of 2021, whereas the company's cost of sales rose by 86% to Rs21 billion during the two comparable periods.

Despite growing import costs resulting from higher global commodity prices and less favourable local currency exchange rate, the gross profit of the company increased 31% to Rs4 billion in 9MCY22 from Rs3 billion in 9MCY21.

The profit-before taxation during 9MCY22 increased to Rs3.8 billion from Rs3.1 billion in 9MCY21, showing a growth of 23% year-on-year.

However, the profit-after taxation decreased 1% to Rs2.1 billion in 9MCY22 from Rs2.2 billion in 9MCY21, reports WealthPK.

Throughout the period under review, the company continued to operate in a challenging economic and business environment as the economy slowed due to devastating floods, policy contraction, and efforts to tackle fiscal and external imbalances.

Despite these challenges, the company produced 19,008 tractors and sold 18,891 of them in the first nine months of CY22 compared to production of 12,547 units and sales of 13,759 units over the same period in CY21.

Earnings growth analysis

The earnings per share of the company kept increasing from 2019 onwards and stood at Rs51.03 in 2021.

As the government has begun post-flood rehabilitation efforts with support from the UN and other donor agencies, the company is optimistic about the sales of its tractors. The business now focuses on enhancing the quality of its products and working to increase its market share.

Industry comparison

Pakistan Cables Limited, Millat Tractors, Pak Elektron Limited, and Hino Motors are regarded as rivals of Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited.

The price/earnings (PE) ratio of Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited stands at 5.38 with its market value clocking in at Rs15.6 billion.

Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited is not overvalued when compared to its rivals, while Millat

Tractors is the most overvalued business.

Profitability

The net profit margin and gross profit margin of Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited serve as indicators of its profitability. Both the profits kept fluctuating from 2018 to 2021, but remained in the positive territory.

Al-Ghazi Tractors Limited was incorporated in Pakistan under the Companies Act, 1913 (now Companies Act, 2017) as a public limited company in June 1983. The company is principally engaged in manufacture and sale of agricultural tractors, generators, implements, and spare parts. It also provides irrigation solutions. The company is a subsidiary of Al-Futtaim Industries Company LLC, UAE.

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The profit-before taxation during 9MCY22 increased to Rs3.8 billion from Rs3.1 billion in 9MCY21, showing a growth. INP



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with the foreign military officers currently undergoing training at Command and Staff College, Quetta, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Faisal expresses reservations over absence of Infor Minister in committee meetings

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Senator Faisal Javed on Monday expressed serious reservations over the continued absence of the Minister for Information and Broadcasting in the committee meetings.

The chairman of the committee said that the representatives of the relevant journalistic and media organizations/bodies will be invited to the committee meeting to look into the problems faced by the journalists and after hearing the views of all the stakeholders, a plan of action will be formulated to deal with the threats to the well-being of the journalists and the freedom of expression.

The meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on

Information and Broadcasting was on Monday at Parliament Lodges with Senator Faisal Javed in Chair.

PTV officials gave a detailed briefing to the committee on the issue raised by Senator Fida Muhammad regarding the approval of service structure of PTV news correspondents recruited on contract basis in 2015/16.

MD PTV apprised the committee that news correspondents were recruited on contract basis while there were no approved permanent positions available in PTV News. The matter was referred to the HR committee of PTV, recommendations of which were presented in the PTV board meeting held four days ago.

Decision has been taken by the board to regularize the services of these news correspondents and they will be

regularized soon after the minutes of the meeting are compiled.

The Chairman Committee instructed to keep the Committee and Senator Fida Muhammad informed about all the details in this regard. Issue of delay in payment of pension to the employees of Radio Pakistan was discussed in detail in the committee. DG Radio Pakistan told the committee that Radio Pakistan needs about six and a half billion rupees annually for expenses and currently it is getting four and a half billion rupees. Due to the shortfall of two billion rupees, the institution is facing difficulties in paying the pension and medical bills of the employees.

The chairman of the committee said that the pension payment of poor retired employees should be the first priority. INP

Abolish the ministries of law, information if every thing has to be done by court: IHC

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) has given time to ministries of information and law till Friday February 10 in connection with electronic media legislation.

The petitions filed by High Court Journalists Association (HCJA) and others on legislation for electronic media came up for hearing before IHC bench led by Chief Justice (CJ) Amir Farooq Monday.

Information secretary Shahira Shahid and law secretary appeared in the court.

The CJ IHC while expressing displeasure over the attitude of ministries of law and information remarked there is time till next Friday. Do it what you can do otherwise he will give decision. If you cannot do it then I summon law minister and information minister.

Information secretary told the court when court gives directives we will do work according to it.

The court remarked "abolish the ministries of law and information if every thing has to be done by the court. Then it is said that the courts interfere in the affairs of executive. The reason for it that executive does not do respective job. You are saying if the court gives directives then you will do the work. if it is so then I will write whatever I have to write. Then no should complain.

The information secretary told the court we did not know this proceedings is continuing in IHC.

The court remarked "I give order to information ministry to

set up another ministry to give information to information ministry. Media is being called 4TH pillar and government is not ready to give basic rights to the journalists. These journalists are stake holders. They move tribunal for one lac rupees if they are not paid salary. No such forum was existing for the journalists of electronic media.

The Additional Attorney General (AAG) requested the court to give them some time. I will inform the court after obtaining directives.

The court remarked "I am going to retire in 1931. Should I give time till that time. If parliament and executive do their job then these things will not come here. Information secretary told the court PEMRA sees electronic media matters. INP

SC dismisses petition to dissolve CII

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday dismissed the petition filed to dissolve the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII). Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umer Atta Bandial, a two-member bench of the apex court heard the petition filed for dissolution of CII.

The petitioner Advocate Khawaja Ahmed Hussain was of the view that under the Article 230(4) of the Constitution, the Council had to review the laws of country under teachings of Islam. The Council considered the past laws under Islamic teachings and in this connection the CII had presented detailed report to Parliament in 1996.

He further stated that the Federal Shariat Court can now review the future laws in the light of Islamic teachings. Therefore, after presentation of report in the Parliament, the CII should be dissolved, he maintained. The SC bench after hearing both parties dismissed the petition.

Chief Justice Umer Atta Bandial in his observation stated that the CII was a constitutional institution to review future laws of the country in the light of Islamic teachings. INP



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf along with Zahid Akram Durrani Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly presenting shield dot Naeem Arshad Security Assistant on his farewell ceremony at Parliament house.

Rashakai SEZ to start operation in March as construction advances

Islamabad: Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) will start operation in March as construction advances. Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

According to the report, it a sunny day on the Rashakai SEZ project. With a white helmet on, Engr. Samee Ullah is on his routine inspection of the project site with Chinese colleagues, reviewing daily progress and discussing possible on-site electricity-related issues.

The Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) is a flagship project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), jointly developed by Chinese and Pakistani companies.

A spokesperson from CRBC Pakistan, the Chinese undertaker of the SEZ, told China

Economic Net (CEN) that construction work of the first phase of the Rashakai SEZ will be completed in March.

The spokesperson noted an important part of Rashakai SEZ Phase I construction is power transmission and transformation, and that construction work is in full swing.

"The construction work is nearing completion. This is our achievement and a moment of excitement for all project team," said Engr. Samee Ullah, electrical engineer and external affairs director at the Rashakai SEZ project and recipient of the award for outstanding Pakistani staff in CPEC projects 2022.

In his role, Engr. Ullah is mainly responsible for overseeing the construction of a 132kV grid sta-

tion and 11kV distribution network at the Rashakai Special Economic Zone.

At the initial stage, the power transmission and transformation work hit snags due to inadequate information about the local power grid, causing a delay in the compilation of the System Study Report, which required a detailed plan of project design and construction.

However, Engr. Samee Ullah quickly stepped up to the challenge after joining the project team in May 2021. "I collected and studied a large amount of project data, and actively discussed with the project team on the response plan using my own learning and experience," Samee Ullah told CEN proudly. "I also worked closely with the local. INP

Pros and cons must be considered before promoting EVs: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Electric vehicles (EVs) have grabbed customers' attention in almost all developed countries, and people in Pakistan are also awaiting the arrival of this technology.

Leading economists and automotive experts are of the view that Pakistan needs to consider all issues and concerns ahead of promoting EVs as expensive vehicles will be an additional burden on the import bill. To switch consumers towards EVs, the western governments have announced lucrative monetary incentives to motivate the public to

adopt these vehicles ahead of shifting from conventional petroleum and gasoline vehicles.

"Amidst prevailing economic difficulties in Pakistan, importing vehicles, either EVs or alternatives, may be a difficult exercise," said Dr Ahsan-ul-Haq, Senior Economist at Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE).

Dr Ahsan told WealthPK that the western world is shifting towards EVs on account of visible challenges of global warming and climate change. He said that owing to the availability of cheap electricity

through solar and wind turbines, Pakistani users are taking interest in EVs simply being the latest trends in the automobile markets worldwide.

World's leading EVs giant Tesla is made successful owing to the lucrative monetary subsidies announced on part of the governments of the US and Canada to make the vehicle affordable for the consumers.

"From a Pakistani's point of view, major drawbacks of EVs include expensive cost and limited driving mileage, and to address these issues, EV manufacturers in western

countries established their free-of-cost charging facilities to make products attractive for consumers. On the other side, any such factor has yet to become a priority of potential importers and users of EVs in Pakistan," Dr Ahsan pointed out.

Few days back, the government while announcing the national energy conservation plan vowed to introduce electric bikes in the country citing \$3 billion fuel import bill solely for motorcycles annually in the country.

Dr Ahsan suggested that contrary to luxurious

EVs, small vehicles like rickshaws and motorcycles, if replaced with electricity driven vehicles, will surely benefit the lower-income segments of society.

Pakistan's fuel import bill can be reduced if fuel-based vehicles are converted to electricity charged vehicles, and charged through solar panels.

A senior official from the Ministry of Industries and Production told WealthPK that foreign car manufacturing companies regularly increase prices. The import of car parts is causing increase in import bill. INP



HYDERABAD: Federal Minister for IT and Telecom Syed Aminul Haque addressing during the inauguration ceremony of New Digital School, construction and organized by Telecom Foundation at Latifabad.

Filing of nomination papers on 8 vacant NA constituencies of KP begins

ISLAMABAD: Filing of nomination papers for by-polls on eight vacant National Assembly (NA) constituencies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa began on Monday. According to the Election Commission of Pakistan, candidates will be able to file their nomination papers by Wednesday.

The initial list of all candidates would be published on Thursday which will be scrutinized by Monday. Polling for the by-polls on eight National Assembly constituencies will be held on 16th of next month.

It was worth mentioned here that the ECP had earlier announced a by-election on 8 vacant National Assembly seats of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The vacant National Assembly constituencies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa included NA-4 Swat, NA-17 Haripur, NA-18 Swabi, NA-25 & NA-26 Nowshera, NA-32 Kohat, NA-38 D.I. Khan and NA-43 Khyber. These seats were declared vacant after acceptance of the resignations of the PTI legislators by the Speaker National Assembly. INP

Sindh cabinet approves Rs22b to finish development projects

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah the meeting of the provincial cabinet held in Karachi on Monday during which approval was given for releasing 22 billion rupees to culminate the 243 development projects work on which was stopped due to floods. Extending the scope of Rapid Response Force to all parts of the province and establishment of a Crowd management unit was also approved during the meeting. It was also decided in the provincial cabinet meeting that Sindh police will provide security to the Sindh House. The Sindh cabinet also approved release of an amount of eleven million rupees for registration and other related works of 75 acres. INP

