

Quake causes 300-km-long fissure

NDTV ONLINE

Researchers have found a 300km rupture caused by two powerful earthquakes near the Turkish-Syrian border.

The first 7.8 magnitude earthquake on Monday was followed by 7.5 magnitude quake.

Scientists from UK's Centre for the Observation and Modelling of Earthquakes, Volcanoes and Tectonics (COMET) discovered the ruptures on February 6 by comparing images taken by the European Earth-observing satellite Sentinel-1 before and after the devastating earthquakes.

The longer of the two ruptures stretches 300 kilometres (190 miles) northeast from the Mediterranean Sea's northeastern tip.

According to a tweet from COMET on Friday, the second crack, measuring 125 kilometers (80 miles) long, opened during the second earthquake, almost nine hours after the first earthquake.

The striking lengths of these two fissures is evidence of the large quantity of energy that the earthquakes released.

Shoot down of object over Alaska was 'success': Biden

CNN ONLINE

President Joe Biden has told CNN that the shoot down a "high-altitude object" hovering over Alaska "was a success," shortly after his national security officials disclosed that the commander-in-chief gave the US military approval to take the action.

The announcement comes after the administration was subjected to a slew of questions about the timing of Biden's decision to shoot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon off the coast of South Carolina last Saturday. This time, the president took more decisive action to swiftly take down the object near Alaska, but key questions about the origin of the object and its functionality remain unanswered.

The president was first briefed Thursday night "as soon as the Pentagon had enough information," on the object, National Security Council coordinator for strategic communications John Kirby said, adding that at the recommendation of the Pentagon, Biden ordered the military "to down the object – and they did."



Rescuers help 16-year-old Hediye who survived a deadly earthquake in Kahramanmaraş, Turkey. She was rescued 5 days after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that devastated parts of Syria and Turkey.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Nearly 26m affected by Turkey-Syria quake: WHO

AFP, Geneva

Almost 26 million people have been affected by the deadly earthquake that ravaged Turkey and Syria this week, the WHO said yesterday, warning that dozens of hospitals had been damaged.

As the death toll from the quake rose above 25,000, the UN health agency launched a flash appeal Saturday asking for \$42.8 million to help it address the immediate, towering health needs.

The World Health Organization, which has already released \$16 million from its emergency fund, had previously said up to 23 million people could be impacted.

But yesterday, that rose to nearly 26 million, with 15 million affected in Turkey and nearly 11 million in war-torn Syria.

Among them, more than five million people were considered to be particularly vulnerable, including close to 350,000 elderly people and over 1.4 million children.

WHO estimated that in Turkey, where more than 4,000 buildings have collapsed in the quake, 15 hospitals had suffered partial or heavy damage.

In Syria, where the health care system had already been ravaged by 12 years of civil war, at least 20 health facilities across the hard-hit northwest, including four hospitals, had sustained damage.

This is making it all the more difficult to help the tens of thousands of people who have been injured in the disaster.

And while emergency medical services have

been overwhelmed with trauma patients, essential health services have been severely disrupted, WHO warned.

The UN agency said there was a dire need for immediate trauma care, post-trauma rehabilitative care, essential medicines, prevention and control to prevent disease outbreaks and



access to mental health support.

The agency added that it had flown 37 metric tonnes of trauma and emergency surgery supplies to Turkey on Thursday, while 35 metric tonnes had arrived in Syria on Friday.

"These life-saving supplies will be used to treat and care for 100,000 people as well as for 120,000 urgent surgical interventions in both countries," it said.

Russia likely lost half its heavy tanks in Ukraine

Claims US

AFP, Washington

Half of Russia's main battle tanks have likely been destroyed or captured by Ukraine, a senior US defense official has said.

Russia "has probably lost half of its main battle tank stock in combat and through Ukrainian capture," Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Celeste Wallander said during an event on Friday.

Ukraine is set to receive an influx of heavy Western tanks from its supporters.

Britain has said its Challenger 2 tanks will be deployed in Ukraine in March, while Germany and its allies aim to get a battalion of Leopard 2 tanks to Kyiv by April.

Mob storms kills man accused of blasphemy

REUTERS, Lahore

A mob in eastern Pakistan yesterday stormed a police station and killed a man under custody and accused of blasphemy, police said, in the latest incident of religion-linked violence in the Islamic republic. Yesterday, Muhammad Waris, a man in his early 20s, was taken into police custody after a mob attacked him for allegedly desecrating the Quran, police spokesman Muhammad Waqas told Reuters. However, the mob stormed the station, located in the city of Nankana Sahib, took Waris out of the premises, beat him to death and attempted to set his body on fire, Waqas added. "Police could not resist them because a handful of officials were present in the police station," he said, adding that police reinforcements were able to stop the mob from setting the body alight, and were readying action against the crowd.

Palestinian killed by settler in West Bank

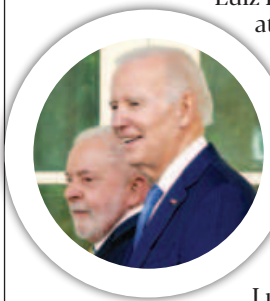
REUTERS, Jerusalem

A Jewish settler fatally shot a Palestinian in the occupied West Bank yesterday, Palestinian officials said. A number of Jewish settlers carrying pistols and one with a rifle had approached the village of Qrawat Bani Hassan and one fired a shot, killing 27-year-old Mothqal Rayyan, a Palestinian witness told Reuters. According to the witness, the Israeli military arrived but only protected the settlers. The Israeli military said its soldiers had been dispatched to the scene after riots erupted between dozens of Palestinians and Israelis. It said the soldiers had responded with riot dispersal measures and shooting into the air, after which the confrontation had ended.

Biden, Lula vow to defend democracy in Americas

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden and his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said Friday at the White House that the two biggest countries in the Americas have successfully seen off attacks on their democracies and will now work together on fighting the climate crisis. "Both our nations' strong democracies have been tested," Biden told Lula, and "both in the United States and Brazil, democracy prevailed." Meeting in the Oval Office, Biden and Lula expressed solidarity over their similar paths. Biden defeated Donald Trump in 2020. In Brazil, Lula defeated right-winger Jair Bolsonaro. "We have some issues on which we can work together," Lula told Biden. "First is to never again allow" the anti-democratic mob attacks.



No more delay

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DUI members will observe a token hunger strike on February 15 in front of the Jatiya Press Club and submit a memorandum to the home ministry, he added.

After Sagar and Runi were killed at their flat in the capital's West Rajabazar on February 11, 2012, then home minister Sahara Khatun said the suspects would be arrested in 48 hours.

DRU Vice-President Dipu Sarwar, Organising Secretary Saiful Islam, Office Secretary Kawsar Azam, and Women Affairs Secretary Moriom Mony Sejuti spoke among others.

Meanwhile, family members of the slain couple held an exhibition titled "Crime Scene, Do not Cross" at the flat of Runi's brother Nawsher Alam on Indira Road.

Biden to mark

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they defend their freedom and democracy," she said.

Biden's trip will coincide with a state of the nation address in Moscow by Russian President Vladimir Putin on February 21.

Poland is the main hub for refugees and the funneling in of Western military aid, much of it coming from the United States. However, Biden is considered unlikely to visit neighboring Ukraine, due to security concerns.

Numerous European leaders have visited the Ukrainian capital Kyiv. Biden's wife, First Lady Jill Biden, made a surprise visit in May 2022 to western Ukraine.

Scientists find

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Researchers also found that the youngest participants in the sample – minimum age 19 – slept the most.

Based on the data, they say sleep duration likely declines throughout people's 20s and early 30s before plateauing until their early 50s and increasing again.

Death toll likely

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A border crossing between Armenia and Turkey opened for the first time in 35 years yesterday to allow five trucks carrying food and water into the quake-hit region.

Turkey's disaster agency said over 32,000 people from Turkish organisations are working on search and rescue efforts. In addition, there are 8,294 international rescuers.

In Syria, where years of conflict have ravaged the healthcare system and parts of the country remain under the control of rebels, aid has been slow to arrive.

World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus took a flight full of emergency medical equipment into the quake-stricken city of Aleppo yesterday.

Tedros toured damaged areas of the city tweeting: "I'm heartbroken to see the conditions survivors are facing – freezing weather and extremely limited access to shelter, food, water, heat and medical care."

The Syrian government said it had approved the delivery of

humanitarian assistance to quake-hit areas outside its control in Idlib province. A convoy was expected to leave today.

The winter freeze has left thousands of people either spending nights in their cars or huddling around makeshift fires that have become ubiquitous across the quake-hit region.

In Turkey, five days of grief and anguish have been slowly building into rage at the poor quality of buildings as well as the government's response to the country's worst disaster in nearly a century.

Officials in the country say 12,141 buildings were either destroyed or seriously damaged in the earthquake.

"Damage was to be expected, but not the type of damage that you are seeing now", said Mustafa Erdik, a professor at Istanbul-based Bogazici University.

Turkish police yesterday detained 12 people, including contractors, over collapsed buildings in the southeastern provinces of Gaziantep and Sanliurfa, local media reported.

Help more girls, women

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given to girls to carry out research in agriculture, industry, health, science, art, information technology – all fields in Bangladesh.

Hasina said her government has established science and technology universities across the country to give boys and girls easy access.

Hi-tech parks have created an inclusive environment where our girls can thrive alongside boys in the country, she added.

Hasina wished to see women and girls fulfil their potential for innovation and creativity in science. "We must bridge the gaps in opportunities available to them in developed and developing countries. We want our girls to have their full share in building smart, knowledge-based societies." The PM

congratulated all the women and girls on this International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

The 8th International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly was held aiming to bridge between the international community and women in science through linking their knowledge and expertise and its applications in a systematic, critical way for the 2030 agenda and its 17 global goals.

The Royal Academy of Science International Trust, and co-organising member states celebrated the International Day of Women and Girls in Science at the UN Headquarters.

The theme of the assembly was "Innovate. Demonstrate. Elevate. Advance. (I.D.E.A.) to bring communities forward for sustainable and equitable development."

Indian regulator probes Adani's links

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Hindenburg has alleged one Adani private entity had a small ownership stake in Monarch – which has previously worked as a bookrunner for the group – saying "this close relationship seems to pose an obvious conflict of interest." The short-seller also alleged that a Mauritius-based fund of Elara has invested 99% of its market value in three Adani stocks.

Adani has said Monarch was selected for previous share sales "for their credentials and ability to tap into the retail market". On Elara, Adani has said "innuendoes" that the firm was in any manner related to the conglomerate founders were incorrect.

When contacted before publication of this story, Monarch referred Reuters to an exchange disclosure on Feb. 3 that said an Adani entity has held "an insignificant", 0.03%, stake in the company since 2016. Reuters was unable to confirm this from public records.

After the story was published, Monarch said in a stock exchange filing that it had not invested in the Adani share offering before its cancellation and there was "absolutely no question

of any conflict of interest".

In the filing, Monarch said the Reuters report "comprises half-truths that paint an incorrect picture." The company did not respond to requests seeking details of the alleged inaccuracies in Reuters' reporting.

Elara did not respond to a request for comment on the regulator's probe and Hindenburg's allegations.

MEETING WITH MODI'S OFFICE

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the market regulator, told India's top court at a hearing on Friday about investor losses following the publication of the Hindenburg Research report that "SEBI is on top of the matter."

Shares in Adani Enterprises extended their losses to 5% in Friday afternoon trade following Reuters' report, having previously been down 2.5% earlier in the day. The stock ended the day down 4.1%.

In recent days, the fallout of the allegations by Hindenburg, which stood to profit from the fall in the value of Adani Group assets, has come up repeatedly as a cause for concern at the national level, including at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office, two

government officials said.

Opposition parties have protested in parliament to call for an independent probe into Hindenburg's allegations.

The federal corporate affairs ministry, responsible for regulating Indian businesses, has briefed officials in Modi's office and been in touch with SEBI, the market regulator, one of the officials said. Reuters could not determine the specific details of these discussions, which have not been previously reported.

The ministry launched a review of Adani's past financial statements on Feb. 2.

Modi's office and India's Ministry of Corporate Affairs did not respond to requests for comment about the regulatory probe into Adani after publication of the Hindenburg report.

The conglomerate has previously said Hindenburg's allegations of stock manipulation had "no basis" and stemmed from an ignorance of Indian law. It has said it has always made the necessary regulatory disclosures.

India's Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan on Saturday described the Adani issue as a "storm in a teacup" from a macroeconomic perspective.

Daily Star.

Prof Imtiaz Ahmed of Dhaka University said nearly 20 million people living along the Teesta have been suffering for years as Bangladesh doesn't get its due share of water.

Contacted last night, NRCC Chairman Manjur said, "Whatever I told The Telegraph is my personal opinion. I did not say it as the chairman of the commission. I have several write ups from 2011 to 2012 where I have shown that India will in no way share Teesta water with Bangladesh."

"The issue was dropped at the last prime minister-level talks. The issue of water sharing is no longer in discussions."

He added that The Telegraph did not publish his comment in full.

He didn't give a direct answer when this correspondent asked whether his speech went against Bangladesh's interest.