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Sunday, January 20, 2008

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Govt to set up earthquake studies centre

* Project to be completed in three years
* Centre will establish links with international research centres

By Irfan Ghauri

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to establish a National Centre for Earthquake Studies in collaboration with the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission near Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

The project presented in a recent Central Development Working Party (CDWP) meeting will be completed in three years at an estimated cost of Rs 145.65 million.

The Planning Commission (PC) working paper for the project said that the seed money of Rs 20 million had already been reserved for the project while a plot near the National Centre for Physics had been reserved for the building.

At present, there is no such research/training facility available in the field of earthquake forecast in the country. In the aftermath of October 2005 earthquake, the project was proposed to initiate measures for the development of local capability in the emerging field of earthquake forecast.

The proposed facility will consist of seismic studies division, geotectonic division, instrumentation and IT division and remote sensing from space.

According to the working paper, the centre will provide advanced training in specialised areas and particular target groups would be junior faculty, college teachers and younger workers in research organisations not having adequate opportunity for going abroad.

It is also planned that the centre would establish links with international research centres like Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, International Institute for Earthquake Prediction, Moscow, Russia, The Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, USA and NASA Solid Earth Science Working Group USA.

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