

# Death toll across Turkey-Syria crosses 34,000

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**Online Desk:** The death toll from the earthquakes in Turkey and northwestern Syria has gone past 34,000 as rescue efforts continue, reported CNN. It reached at least 34,179 on Sunday (local time). The death toll in Turkey has reached 29,605, said the Turkish Emergency Coordination Center SAKOM.

The confirmed death toll in Syria is 4,574. That number includes more than 3,160 in opposition-held parts of northwestern Syria, according to the health ministry of the Salvation Government governance authority. As rescuers scoured debris to look for survivors after a massive earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria in one of the region's worst disasters for a century, Turkish authorities sought to maintain order across the disaster zone and began legal action over collapsed buildings.

The building quality in a country that lies on several seismic fault lines has come into sharp focus in the aftermath of the quake. Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay said as many as 131 suspects had so far been identified as responsible for the collapse of some of the thousands of buildings flattened in the 10 affected provinces. As Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan prepares for his national election, his political future is really on the line for the first time in two decades.

Facing questions over his response to the earthquake, the President said the government will deal firmly with looters. Residents and aid workers who came from other cities cited worsening security conditions, with widespread accounts of businesses and collapsed homes being robbed. In a central district of one of the worst hit cities, Antakya in southern Turkey, business owners emptied their shops on Sunday to prevent merchandise from being stolen by looters.