

# *Death toll climbs above 50,000 in Turkey and Syria earthquakes*



**Death toll climbs above 50,000 in Turkey and Syria earthquakes???**

Ankara, February 25 (RHC)-- The number of people killed by the earthquakes that struck Turkey and Syria earlier this month has now passed 50,000, according to the latest figures from both countries. In Turkey alone, 44,218 people died as a result of the earthquakes, the country's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) said on Friday, while the latest announced death toll in Syria was 5,914.

The first earthquake on February 6th that hit southeastern Turkey and northern Syria measured a magnitude of 7.7 and a second, a little later, measured 7.6. The region has been rocked by more than 9,000 aftershocks since, according to the AFAD.

Nearly 240,000 rescue workers, including volunteers, continue to work in the 11 quake-hit provinces in Turkey. Some of the areas affected by the quakes were initially difficult to access but recovery efforts continue and casualty numbers are rising as they progress. There have been no reports of survivors being rescued in recent days.

Nearly 530,000 people have been evacuated from the disaster area in Turkey alone and the Turkish government has said that 173,000 buildings have so far been recorded as collapsed or severely damaged, with more than 1.9 million people taking refuge in temporary shelters or hotels and public facilities.

Some 20 million people in Turkey have been affected by the quake, while the United Nations estimates 8.8 million people have been affected in Syria. Less information has come from Syria where many people were already living in precarious conditions after years of civil war.

Many survivors have left the parts of southern Turkey hit by the quake or have been settled in tents, container homes and other government-sponsored accommodation.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has pledged to rebuild homes within a year, although experts have said the authorities should put safety before speed. Some buildings that were meant to withstand tremors crumbled in the latest earthquakes.

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