Over 1,000 people have died after a huge earthquake hit Turkey and Syria.
The 7.8-magnitude quake was centred in the town of Pazarcik in Kahramanmaras province, about 20 miles from the city of Gaziantep, at a depth of six miles and there were several powerful aftershocks according to reports.
With thousands injured, the death toll is expected to increase as rescue workers search the rubble.
On both sides of the border, residents were jolted from their sleep and rushed outside on a cold, rainy and snowy winter night as buildings fell around them and strong aftershocks continued.
“I have never felt anything like it in the 40 years I’ve lived,” said Erdem, a resident of Gaziantep. “We were shaken at least three times very strongly, like a baby in a crib.”
The quake heavily damaged Gaziantep’s most famous landmark, a historic castle perched atop a hill in the centre of the city. Parts of the fortresses’ walls and watch towers collapsed, with other parts heavily damaged, images showed.
At least 20 aftershocks followed the quake, the strongest measuring 6.6, according to Turkish authorities.
Rescue workers and residents worked through tangles of metal and giant piles of debris in their search for survivors.
Turkish broadcaster RTR showed rescue workers in Osmaniye province using a blanket to carry an injured man from a collapsed four-storey building – he was the fifth to be pulled from the rubble, it said.
Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Twitter that “search and rescue teams were immediately dispatched” to the areas hit by the quake.
“We hope that we will get through this disaster together as soon as possible and with the least damage,” he wrote.
Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay declared a “level 4 alarm” that calls for international assistance.