

Taiwan holds nationwide mourning for quake victims

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Taipei: Taiwan on Monday held nationwide mourning for the 116 people who were killed in a 6.4-magnitude earthquake that hit the southern city of Tainan on February 6.

At buildings in the capital Taipei and across Taiwan the national flag was lowered to half mast in memory of those who lost their lives in the disaster, EFE news reported.

The earthquake rocked Tainan, toppling several of the city's buildings.

The worst affected was the 17-storey Wei Guan residential building, where all except two of the 116 casualties were found.

Authorities ended the search for survivors on Saturday, announcing that they would now focus on taking care of survivors, distributing donated funds and prosecuting those responsible for the building's collapse.

Three developers have been detained for using shoddy materials and only half of the required steel frames in the construction of the complex.

President Ma Ying-jeou has asked authorities nationwide to enact stricter construction rules and to conduct safety checks on old buildings.

The southern port city of Kaohsiung has announced that it will soon begin a city-wide inspection of old apartment buildings.

- IANS