



The Miami Herald

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50 CENTS
107TH YEAR, NO. 122 ©2010

MiamiHerald.com

THURSDAY, JAN. 14, 2010
FINAL EDITION

DESPERATION

THOUSANDS FEARED DEAD

RESCUERS FINDING BODIES
IN COLLAPSED BUILDINGS

ARCHBISHOP KILLED

A NATION IN NEED
SUFFERS SPIRITUAL LOSS

FAMILIES WAIT, WORRY

ACROSS SOUTH FLORIDA,
ANXIETY RUNNING HIGH



PATRICK FARRELL/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

HEARTBREAKING LOSS: A woman's lifeless body is removed from the rubble. President Barack Obama called the earthquake an 'especially cruel' tragedy.

SOUTH FLORIDA

With communications out, people looking for loved ones hope for best

BY ELINOR J. BRECHER,
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Nearly 24 hours after a devastating earthquake struck Haiti's capital, anxious Haitian Americans trooped through Sant La, Miami's Haitian neighborhood center, desperate for word on the fate of relatives and friends back home — and having no luck at all.

But the person they had turned to for help, Sant La's executive director, Gepsie Metellus, could do little for

them.

All day, Metellus herself had been trying to reach her mother, Ghislaine Pinchinet, 72. Time and time again, the phone at the family's home in Petionville — a hard-hit Port-au-Prince suburb — offered a disheartening "this mailbox is full" message.

Across South Florida's thickly populated Haitian communities, similar scenes of helpless anguish were repeated over and over Wednesday.

With phone service and

•TURN TO WAITING, 13A



CHARLES TRAINOR JR./MIAMI HERALD STAFF

PRAYER IN MIAMI: Juselie Deus, 8, pauses at a Mass for earthquake victims Wednesday at St. Mary's Cathedral. 'Some of the students were very sad,' one of the teachers at the Mass said.

DISASTER ZONE

Food, medical supplies begin to arrive as aftershocks shake a stunned nation

BY JACQUELINE CHARLES,
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PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Rescue workers dragged corpses from collapsed buildings, dazed homeless wandered the streets and the death toll climbed Wednesday as dozens of aftershocks from a massive earthquake rattled this capital city.

The city's Roman Catholic archbishop was dead. The top U.N. envoy remained missing. And politicians and police struggled to keep the nation from descending into

chaos, led by President René Prével, who described stepping over bodies and hearing the cries of those trapped under the rubble of the national Parliament.

It was a day of unfolding calamity.

"I have probably seen 30 or 40 bodies today, but that is just one street," said Benjamin Hopp, a missionary with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

He was gathering bodies and putting them in a pickup truck, a snapshot in suffering

•TURN TO DISASTER, 12A

INSIDE:

Geologists had warned Haiti was vulnerable to major quake, **18A**.
Port-au-Prince archbishop, many priests perish in quake, **19A**.
Leonard Pitts: 'Sometimes, the earth is cruel,' **20A**.
Scores of local, national and worldwide groups rush to help, **22A**.
U.S. government suspends deportation of Haitians, **23A**.

ONLINE:

Connect with loved ones on Haiti Connect. View photo galleries and updated news.

ON THE AIR:

"Devastation in Haiti: A WLRN/Miami Herald News Special," 11 a.m. Thursday on WLRN (**91.3-FM**).

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

FPL rate hike request is turned down

■ Regulators denied FPL's request to raise rates \$ 1.3 billion, granting the utility only a fraction of that figure.

BY MARY ELLEN KLAS
Herald/Times Tallahassee Bureau

TALLAHASSEE — Florida Power & Light, which spent \$6 million and 10 months lobbying state regulators to raise the rates its customers pay by \$1.3 billion,

on Wednesday got virtually nothing.

The Public Service Commission unanimously rejected the company's request to raise its base rates 30 percent, allowing an increase of only \$75.4 million

— about 75 cents a month on a 1,000-kilowatt-hour bill. The commission dismissed nearly every major issue FPL raised, saying that in a better economy the company might have done better. "Utilities are just going to have to make do in these difficult economic times," said Commissioner Nathan Skop.

Because of a reduction in fuel costs, FPL's 4.5 million customers will pay about \$13 a month less for 1,000 kilowatt hours in 2010 than they did in 2009 for the same amount of electricity. The savings take effect this month, potentially offering respite to

•TURN TO FPL, 2A

'Today, politics trumped economics because there is no economic case for the decision that this commission has made.'

ARMANDO OLIVERA,
FPL chief executive officer

