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DEATH EVERYWHERE

Panic, looting, prayers and pleas for help in wake of Haiti quake.

BY JONATHAN M. KATZ
The Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Dazed survivors wandered past dead bodies in rubble-strewn streets Wednesday, crying for loved ones, and rescuers desperately searched collapsed buildings as fear rose that the death toll from Haiti's devastating earthquake could reach into the tens of thousands.

The first cargo planes with food, water, medical supplies, shelter and sniffer dogs headed to the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation a day after the magnitude-7 quake flattened much of the capital of 2 million people.

Tuesday's earthquake brought down buildings great and small — from shacks in shantytowns to President Rene Preval's gleaming white National Palace.

Hospitals, schools and the main prison collapsed. The capital's Catholic archbishop was killed when his office and the main cathedral fell. The head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission was missing in the ruins of the organization's multistory headquarters.

Police officers turned their pickups into ambulances to carry the injured. Wisnel Occilus, a 24-year-old student, was wedged between two other survivors in a truck bed headed to a police station. He was in an English class when the earth shook at 4:53 p.m. and the building collapsed.

"The professor is dead. Some of the students are dead, too," said Occilus, who suspected he had several broken bones. "Everything hurts."

Other survivors carried injured to hospitals in wheelbarrows and on stretchers fashioned from doors.

In Petionville, next to the capital, people used sledgehammers and their bare hands to dig through a collapsed shopping center, tossing aside mattresses and office supplies.

Nearby, about 200 survivors, including many children, huddled in a theater parking lot using sheets to rig makeshift tents and shield themselves from the sun in 90-degree

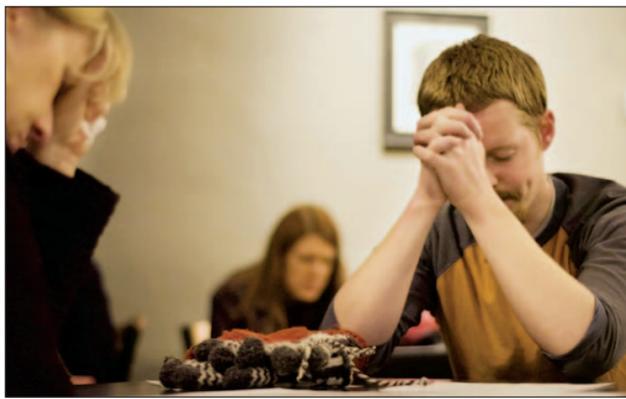
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JORGE CRUZ/The Associated Press

Injured people wandered the streets of Port-au-Prince in Haiti on Tuesday after a major earthquake rocked the island nation, causing widespread devastation and what is estimated to be tens of thousands of deaths.

LOCAL PRAYERS



ERIN DUERR/Lincoln Journal Star

Ben Welstead, 29 (right), prays for relief for the people devastated by the earthquake in Haiti, as well as those there to help them, during a vigil at Grace Chapel on Wednesday evening. "For me it's just overwhelming, almost too painful to dig for information," Pastor Mike Hsu told the 30-plus people gathered for the vigil. Nevertheless, he updated his blog (www.hsumike.blogspot.com) with news from people in Haiti who are connected to the church.

Officials check reports of 3 U.S. deaths

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The State Department is checking into reports that at least three Americans were killed in Haiti's earthquake.

State Department Spokesman P.J. Crowley said Wednesday that officials were still trying to confirm the reports. He added that only 100 of the estimated 45,000

Americans living in Haiti had been able to communicate with U.S. officials and verify they were safe.

The United Nations said 16 of its personnel were killed in the quake and 150 still are unaccounted for, including the mission chief, Hedi Annabi of Tunisia, and his chief deputy, Luis Carlos da Costa.

U.S. rushes to get aid to the stricken

BY STEVEN THOMMA
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — Racing to help save lives, U.S. ships and planes are rushing to the Caribbean as President Barack Obama vows that the United States will give its "unwavering support" to the people of earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

"I have directed my administration to respond with a swift, coordinated and aggressive effort to save lives," Obama said at the White House after he canceled a trip to nearby Maryland to spend more time on responding to a tragedy he called heart wrenching.

"The people of Haiti will have the full support of the United States in the urgent effort to rescue those trapped beneath the rubble and to deliver the humanitarian relief — the food, water and medicine — that Haitians will need in the coming days."

The White House set up an information page on how to help at the Web site www.whitehouse.gov/HaitiEarthquake.

Obama said the priorities for the United States are:

- Accounting for U.S. Embassy
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How to help

Organizations accepting donations:

- InterAction has a list of agencies responding and how to donate to them; www.interaction.org/crisis-list/earthquake-haiti
- To donate \$10 to the American Red Cross, text Haiti to 90999. The amount will be added to your next phone bill. The organization is also accepting donations through its International Response Fund; www.redcross.org.
- To donate \$5 to Wyclef Jean's Haitian Yele charity, text 501501. The money will be added to your next phone bill.
- To find out how to help the International Rescue Committee, visit www.theIRC.org or call toll-free (877) REFUGEE.
- To donate through Oxfam's emergency appeal, visit www.oxfam.org.uk.

Local organizations

- Sheridan Lutheran Church will hold a prayer vigil for Haiti at 7 tonight. For more information and to learn how to help, go to: sheridanlutheran.org/haiti.
- Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska has started a relief fund. Make checks payable to Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska, with "Haitian Relief Fund" in the memo margin. Send to: Catholic Social Services, 2241 O St., Lincoln, NE 68510.
- The Salvation Army is accepting monetary donations via its Web site at www.salvationarmyusa.org, via phone at (800) SALARMY and via mail at: The Salvation Army, 2625 Potter St., Lincoln, NE 68503. Note "Haiti Earthquake" in the memo line.
- The United Methodist Committee on Relief has created a special advance fund for earthquake relief in Haiti. Checks should be made payable to GCFA ADVANCE, with "Haiti Emergency, UMCOR Advance #418325" on the memo line. Mail them to: GCFA, P.O. Box 9067, GPO, New York, NY 10087-9068. Credit card donations can be made by calling (888) 252-6174. On-line donations can be made at new.gbgn-umc.org/umcor.

Volunteers

Contact the Center for International Disaster Information at www.cidi.org.

— The Associated Press

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■ **Slide show:** See more images from the quake's destruction in Haiti (some may contain graphic content).

Lincoln man left Haiti just before quake struck

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Local woman's dad handles Salvation Army services on island

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Insurers: There aren't many policies in poverty-stricken Haiti

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A look at the fault lines and the science behind the earthquake

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Bankers apologize for risky behavior but say exec pay still likely to rise



Proposals would extend types of fireworks allowed and when they could be used.

BY JOANNE YOUNG
Lincoln Journal Star

The types of fireworks Nebraskans use — and when they could use them — could change this week under bills introduced in the Legislature.

Bills introduced by Sen. Kent Rogert of Tekamah, one on behalf of retailers and one for the state fire marshal, would eliminate most state testing requirements be-

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More legislative action.

cause fireworks already are tested by a U.S. laboratory and approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

That, in turn, would expand the supply

See **FIREWORKS**, Page A5

Local/B1: Nebraska farmer says 'you better at least try' getting into the cornfields now

The (402) 411/D1: New Playhouse director faces biggest challenge of his career

Nation/A3: Men's Y chromosomes are evolving quickly on the genetic front, new research finds

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