

Camps getting food; lack medical care

UZUMLU, Turkey - Three weeks after the Kurdish exodus from Iraq, an international relief effort has succeeded in feeding most of the refugees camping in the Turkish mountains, say relief officials and refugees.

But water shortages and medical care remain serious problems for the 800,000 Kurds along the border.

"They have basic food. In that sense, there was a turning point reached last week," said Constantin Sokoloff, a field officer for the U.N. high commissioner for refugees.

"Psychologically, people are getting better, they're settling down," he said.

Still, scores of refugees are dying each day on the border from preventable diseases, relief workers and government officials say. Dehydration and the resulting severe diarrhea have killed many infants.

"Sanitation really is the main thing," said Dr. Sandra Allaire of Canada, who is working with the International Committee of the Red Cross at Uzumlu, a camp of about 50,000 people in a mountain basin on the border.

Meanwhile, the situation for an estimated 1 million Kurdish refugees in Iran remains "critical," the U.N. refugee office said.

Omar Bakhet, head of the office's field operations in Iran, said some supplies are getting through, but only slowly — and not enough.

Iran, rather than the international community, continues to bear the main burden of the relief effort, estimated to cost \$10 million a day, Bakhet said.

Four Belgian transport planes left Brussels on Sunday for Ourumieh in western Iran with tents and blankets for 3,000 refugees, and a medical team aboard, officials said.

Allaire said disease would continue to spread rapidly in the Turkish camp at Uzumlu unless it had clean water and toilets. The stench of excrement wafts through the air.

The camp is the worst-supplied of the three main refugee settlements on the Turkish border.

U.S. soldiers and Turkish workers have begun digging latrines at some camps. But Uzumlu

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still lacks any facilities.

Women at the camp roll out pita bread on wooden boards and cook beans and noodles over campfires. The rubbery brown wrappers from U.S. military Meals-Ready-to-Eat carpet the ground.

"The Americans and the British send us very good things," said a 23-year-old medical student who identified herself only as Kurdistan.

But there is little sign of water. And distribution of food remains uneven, with the strongest refugees often able to grab the most packages parachuted onto the hillsides by U.S. and British aircraft.

Special Forces troops and Red Cross workers on Sunday were investigating ways to pipe stream water to the refugees at Uzumlu. The U.S. troops also will provide desperately needed medical care to the camp.

Refugees continue to storm trucks carrying bread and milk to the camp. One refugee was killed and five were injured Sunday when Turkish troops fired into a crowd to stop a riot at a food distribution point near Cukurca, another major camp.

"The food is OK, but there's no milk," complained Khayria Ramadan, cradling her sunburned, 1 1/2-month-old baby next to her campfire.

Gautier Lambot, a logistics director of the aid group Doctors Without Borders, said the dirt road to the Uzumlu, which frequently became a nearly impassable sea of mud, had prevented supplies from getting through.

Gorbachev has another tough week ahead

MOSCOW - President Mikhail Gorbachev, just back from a difficult and disappointing Asian trip, faces an even tougher week at home.

A strike by coal miners demanding his resignation enters its eighth week and more walkouts are threatened by workers blaming their economic woes on the policies of Gorbachev's government.

Hard-line legislators are increasing their pressure on Gorbachev, seeking to convene a special session of the national parliament to examine his performance.

And the Communist Party Central Committee meets to discuss the nation's deepening economic and political crisis. It is expected to have a spirited discussion of Gorbachev's six-year tenure as party chief.

Gorbachev returned Saturday from an Asian trip on which he managed only mixed success. South Korea promised to participate in a multibillion-dollar natural gas project in the Soviet Far East, but Gorbachev failed to win a commitment from Japan for substantial financial aid.



Before he landed in Moscow, grim economic statistics published in Soviet newspapers indicated the gross national product fell 8 percent in the first quarter and labor productivity dropped by 9 percent.

"Can we go on living and working this way and call ourselves citizens of a great country if with our own hands we are pushing the nation into an abyss?" asked a commentary in the Communist Party newspaper Pravda.

Members of the hard-line Soyuz group of Communist lawmakers,

meanwhile, said at a weekend conference that Gorbachev should resign. They considered ways to convene a special session of the Soviet parliament to try to recall him as president.

On Monday, Gorbachev is due to give an accounting of his Asian trip before Supreme Soviet legislators. His prime minister, Valentin Pavlov, is expected to outline an "anti-crisis program" for rescuing the Soviet economy. In the evening, Gorbachev will take time out to celebrate the 121st anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Lenin.

Baker waits for Israeli word

JIDDAH, Saudi Arabia - Secretary of State James Baker said Sunday he's not putting pressure on Israel to compromise its stand on peace talks with the Arabs, but made it clear there should be "an international characteristic" to any negotiations.

While Baker waited to hear from Jerusalem, he flew here to discuss a sharply limited role for the oil-rich kingdom in resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute.

"I do not anticipate that they would be there in the context of the political discussions between Israel and her Arab neighbors and the political discussions between Israel and Palestinians," he said at a news conference in Cairo.

In Jiddah, Baker was to hold talks with Saudi King Fahd and Prince Saud, the foreign minister. Baker met Saturday with Jordan's King Hussein and Sunday with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

In the meantime, Baker's strategy seemed geared to placing the onus on Israel to keep his peace mission from disintegrating.

"We have not heard responses to the suggestions that we made in

my last visit," Baker said.

He has refused to spell out the proposals he left Friday with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy.

But Baker has said the Soviets should co-sponsor the peace talks with the United States and he's leaning publicly in the "direction of Arab and European demands for an international conference."

"There is an international characteristic to any meetings that would involve five, or six, or even seven countries from different parts of the world," Baker said in Cairo.

Baker said he called Shamir on Saturday, not to get answers but to "give him my own personal debriefing of my visit to Jordan."

"We do not intend to press or obviously to pressure for an answer," Baker told reporters.

Israel agreed nearly two weeks ago to negotiate with the Arab states and representatives of the 1.7 million Palestinians who live on the West Bank in Gaza. But Israel wants to restrict the Soviets to a limited role, bar members of the Palestine

Liberation Organization and keep all outside powers except the United States on the sidelines.

The Israeli cabinet took up those issues Sunday, but delayed any decisions until later in the week.

Baker's aides told reporters Saturday that he would not return to Jerusalem after he ends his tour of Arab countries in Syria on Tuesday. But Levy was quoted in Jerusalem as saying Baker would return Tuesday night and hold meetings there Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Israeli newspapers reported Baker had asked Shamir and Levy if they would allow the United Nations and the European Community to participate in peace talks. Baker, the newspapers said, also asked the Israeli leaders if they would try to exclude Palestinians with links to East Jerusalem.

Shamir and Levy want to deal directly with the Arabs. They don't want even a symbolic suggestion that East Jerusalem, which became part of Israel's capital after the 1967 Mideast War, should be handed over to the Arabs.

Palm Beachers upset over public attention

PALM BEACH, Fla. - There's a For Sale sign just a few doors down from the Kennedy estate. But, no, an international scandal in the neighborhood isn't driving away the always preened, sometimes prim and usually private residents of this island of wealth.

Indeed, while many longtime Palm Beachers express disapproval — even suggesting it's the Kennedys who should move out — feelings among the Rolls-Royce set are mixed about the Kennedy case and all the attention it's brought their town of 12,000 residents.

"Except for the ones who are titillated, the rest are embarrassed," said Kathryn Robinette, editor of Palm Beach Today, a newspaper that chronicles charity parties and gallery openings and appears twice weekly during the Thanksgiving-to-Easter social season, weekly the rest of the year. Easter social season, weekly the rest of the year.

"It's a terrible thing for Palm Beach," said Esther Elson, who like other longtime residents, worries that publicity surrounding a woman's allegation that she was raped at the

Kennedy estate will further change the town.

"It's going to ruin our beautiful town," she said. "We'll be getting a lot of trash here."

On the surface, Palm Beach — with its marble mansions surrounded by tall walls and hedges pruned to perfect straightness — seems safely shielded from any change that it doesn't want, and some locals say the latest of many society scandals shouldn't concern their neighbors.

"That's just apprehension on their part," said George Lewis Jr., a past president of the town's Board of Realtors.

"Henry Flagler used to do a lot worse things than that," he said, referring to the developer who helped found Palm Beach 80 years ago by extending a railroad to fill his hotels about 70 miles north of Miami.

Many older Palm Beachers remember a world even more cloistered and set apart and say they're adjusting reluctantly to many changes — some subtle, some less so — that have come to their town.

Medicare proposal urges cost analysis

WASHINGTON - A proposed rule calling for cost-benefit analysis of new types of medical care for the elderly could put additional burdens on Medicare recipients, critics said Sunday.

"I find it a little paradoxical that a program designed to protect senior citizens against cost now may be stepping back from its public obligations to protect them just because something may be too expensive," Gordon Schatz, a lawyer who specializes in health care issues, said Sunday.

The rule, which is awaiting adoption, would require the federal government for the first time to compare costs and benefits of specific types of

care in deciding whether to pay for them.

Schatz, who is familiar with the proposal, said the regulation is evidently a response to budgetary restraints brought on by the federal deficit.

Horace Deets, a top official of the American Association of Retired Persons, said he wasn't familiar with the rule but worried that it, like other proposals to deal with health costs, would merely "shift the cost perhaps from the government to individuals."

The New York Times said in its Sunday edition that Gail Wilensky, head of the Health Care Financing Administration, sent the proposal to Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan.

Wilensky was at a conference Sunday and could not immediately be reached for comment.

Previous rules have called for considering safety and effectiveness in determining whether Medicare would pay for new services and procedures such as liver transplants and magnetic resonance imaging. The new rule also provides for considering whether those procedures would be more or less cost effective than alternatives already approved.

About 34 million elderly and disabled people are enrolled in Medicare. The overall cost of the program tripled in the last decade, and is expected to reach \$104 billion this year.

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