

East Coast digs out of weekend weather conditions

Search continues for teen-agers in Appalachians

Rescuers searched for 24 teenage campers missing in the snow-covered southern Appalachians on Monday after dozens of others made it to safety. Highway crews strained to reach thousands snowbound at home and in shelters by the weekend blizzard, and the death toll rose to 149.

In addition to the deaths, 32 crewmen were missing after a freighter sank Monday off Nova Scotia, and 16 mariners were missing in waters around Florida.

Most major airports moved back toward normal operations. But because of delays in the East, "Normal won't be here until Tuesday or Wednesday," said Mary Francis Fagan of American Airlines at Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

Teams from North Carolina and Tennessee searched the mountains of Great Smoky Mountains National Park for remaining members of a group of 117 teen-agers, teachers and parents from a Detroit-area private school who had been hiking when the storm struck.

Officials at the Cranbrook Kingswood Upper Middle School in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., said 93 of the sophomores on an annual spring break trek were accounted for by Monday afternoon. One faculty leader was in critical condition at a North Carolina hospital, while the seven to nine members of his group were being examined, school officials said in Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

One group of 20 students emerged from the woods as scheduled Monday afternoon, schools spokesman Ray Carson said. "They had no idea there was a problem,"

he said.

West Virginia authorities searched for six horseback riders from Ohio missing since Friday in the rugged Cranberry Glades wilderness area, said Andy Ridenour of the state Office of Emergency Services. The area got up to 44 inches of snow, and drifts were up to 16 feet.

In the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia, six teen-agers and their two adult leaders from the Rectory School in Pomfret, Conn., were found early Monday huddled along a path and were being led out to safety. Drifts were 10 feet high.

"They are all healthy and in good condition," park spokesman Sandy Rives said. "Which is pretty remarkable considering we have had zero-degree nights and just a lot of snow."

Canadian rescuers searched the sea off Nova Scotia for 32 British and Chinese crew members of a freighter that sank early Monday in 60-foot seas.

Calmer weather allowed helicopters to search for some of 16 people missing along Florida's coast after what Coast Guard officials called the busiest rescue weekend in at least 50 years.

Serb forces attack, seize second enclave

Up to 40 people dying in Bosnia from cold, snow

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Serb forces backed by armor reportedly seized another Muslim enclave in eastern Bosnia on Monday, then rumbled after fighters desperately defending the village's fleeing civilians.



Many Muslims from Konjevic Polje were headed southward to Srebrenica, another Muslim enclave, but a U.N. official said up to 40 people already were dying there daily for lack of shelter from the cold and snow.

Laurens Jolles, a U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees official who left Srebrenica on Sunday, said: "I have seen scenes I would never have expected in the 20th century."

He said in Srebrenica, 15 miles southwest of Konjevic Polje, there were "thousands of women and children living together in the snow, with-

out any shelter, huddled around fires. Most have not eaten for four to five days."

Reports said the U.N. commander in Bosnia left Srebrenica for a meeting with the Bosnian Serb military commander to press demands that Serbs fighters allow aid convoys and the evacuation of wounded.

Murat Efendic, an eastern Bosnian official in Sarajevo, said he heard by ham radio that Konjevic Polje fell to Serbian troops after fierce clashes. Efendic said 11 tanks and 10 armored vehicles were pursuing retreating Muslim defenders, who were fighting a rear-guard action to protect civilians fleeing toward Srebrenica.

Efendic spoke of many casualties but gave no details. Gen. Philippe Morillon, head of U.N. peacekeepers in Bosnia, has set up operations in Srebrenica. Unconfirmed ham radio reports from the area said he left for a meeting with Bosnian Serb Gen. Ratko Mladic and later returned.

Morillon told two French TV stations that he is demanding the Serbs allow aid convoys in and permit evacuation of scores of sick and wounded. He also wants U.N. military observers stationed in the area.

But an official at U.N. headquar-



ters in Zagreb, Croatia, said the Bosnian Serb military command rejected those demands as long as Morillon stayed in Srebrenica.

A U.N. statement released in Sarajevo stressed Morillon has every intention of "remaining in the Srebrenica area for the foreseeable future."

The fall of Konjevic Polje will likely worsen conditions in Srebrenica. Srebrenica's population already has been swelled to over 60,000 by refugees fleeing a Serb offensive that began two weeks ago.

After routing Muslims from a string of villages in the region that borders Serbia, Bosnian Serbs now have artillery trained on Srebrenica.

Salvadorans told to look beyond heinous crimes

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador — Salvadoran leaders pleaded with the nation Monday to look ahead and not to the past, after a commission named those responsible for the worst abuses of a 12-year war that killed more than 75,000 people.

The Commission on the Truth in El Salvador released findings of a seven-month probe that blamed both military and rebel commanders for a long list of abuses. It said the majority were committed by the armed forces.

The United States backed a series of rightist governments against leftist rebels.

"We are going to turn our back on a sad page of our history," President Alfredo Cristiani said on TV Sunday night. He asked for amnesty to "close the door to all temptations of revenge or reprisals."

The 84-member National Assembly probably would approve an amnesty.

The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, or FMLB, rejected any immediate amnesty.

The Front was formerly the rebel army. It became a political party under terms of the formal peace imposed last Dec. 15.

It said that first an investigation should be completed of rightist death squads blamed for killing thousands of suspected leftists, and the report's recommendations should be carried out.

The U.N.-appointed commission asked for the immediate removal of all military officers cited for human rights violations, and said all violators should be banned from political office for at least a decade.

"The army, security forces and death squads linked to them committed massacres, sometimes of hundreds of people at a time," the report read. The panel of U.S., Colombian and Venezuelan jurists was set up under the auspices of the January 1992 peace accord that ended the war.

An FMLB statement said the report's linking of the late Roberto d'Aubuisson to the 1980 murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero "proves that the rightist Republican Nationalist Alliance is a party with roots in the death squads and committed grave crimes."

Cristiani said Monday that he had not decided whether to accept the resignation Friday of Defense Minister Gen. Rene Emilio Ponce.

Lawmakers take more power from Yeltsin

MOSCOW — The Communist-dominated Congress whittled away more of President Boris Yeltsin's powers Thursday and canceled a national referendum he had sought to cement his authority.

The criticism was so biting that Yeltsin walked out of the Grand Kremlin Palace before the Congress of People's Deputies adjourned its second day of an emergency session.

The votes cutting his power were preliminary but potentially damaging to Yeltsin, who has haggled for months with Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov over who should wield

supreme power: the president or parliament.

Without his present power to issue decrees, Yeltsin loses the ability to implement market reforms over the heads pro-Communist lawmakers. And without the threat of the proposed April 11 referendum, lawmakers may try to attack Yeltsin further.

Yeltsin's supporters in the Congress claimed the restrictions, if given final approval, could make Yeltsin a lame-duck president. The resolution could be presented for a final vote Friday.

"After this Congress, the reforms

could be finished," said Leonid Gurevich, a pro-Yeltsin lawmaker.

In Washington, Secretary of State Warren Christopher expressed confidence Yeltsin could emerge in a stronger position.

"It's a very dynamic situation," Christopher said. "The end of the story has not been written."

Yeltsin took the podium in Congress on Thursday morning.

"I favor strong presidential power in Russia, not because I am the president, but because I am convinced that without it, Russia shall not survive and rise again," Yeltsin said.

Sixth body found in trade center bombing

NEW YORK — More than two weeks after a bomb ripped through the basement of the World Trade Center, authorities recovered a sixth body in the rubble Monday.

The victim was identified as Wilfredo Mercado, 37, a building worker who was last seen in the basement parking area where the bomb exploded Feb. 26. The first five victims were found within hours of the explosion at the 110-story twin towers.

Specially trained dogs had gone

into the blast area eight times over the weekend searching for Mercado, an employee of the center's Vista Hotel.

Workers searching the debris in the underground parking garage first saw a boot sticking out of the debris, and then dug up the body, said Mark Marchese, spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which owns the complex.

Mercado's wife, Olga, has been notified, Marchese said. The couple have two children, Yvette, 10, and Heidi, 3. Thousands of tons of rubble

sit at the bottom of the huge bomb crater. The debris was being removed slowly, in shoebox-size containers.

Three people have been arrested in the bombing, which injured more than 1,000 people. Published reports said authorities were looking for at least three more suspects.

A former cab driver reputedly sought in the bombing was said by a neighbor Monday to have "carried himself like a militant sort of guy" and dressed in military fatigues and army boots.

WORLD WIRE

Rabin: Israel is 'ready for compromise'

WASHINGTON — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin emerged from a meeting Monday with President Clinton "ready for compromise" and offered to surrender part of the Golan Heights to Syria.

Rabin said Israel would not negotiate a pullback in the strategic territory without knowing Syria's peace terms.

Clinton endorsed Rabin's de-

mand. He said peace must include open borders and full diplomatic relations. And he pledged to maintain Israel's military edge over the Arabs as an inducement for a compromise settlement.

The statements by the two leaders after a 3 1/2-hour Oval Office meeting set the stage for a resumption of Arab-Israeli peace talks here April 20.

Aspin says closings tailored to 'share pain'

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Les Aspin claimed Monday that his proposed military base closings were tailored to share the pain of losing 81,000 jobs rather than to protect political allies.

"We believe they are fair, and that no particular state was singled out," Aspin told the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

The Pentagon chief recom-

mended on Friday closing 31 installations and realigning or scaling back 134 others. Coastal states such as Florida, California and South Carolina were hard hit by the Navy's efforts to reduce its force.

The list spells bad economic news for thousands of local communities that will lose a total of 24,000 military jobs and 57,000 civilian jobs. Some 140,000 workers will be moved.

China's premier pushes economic reforms

BEIJING — Premier Li Peng urged China's legislature Monday to push ahead with market reforms and high-speed economic growth, as the country prepares to enter a new era of leadership without revolutionary elders.

But he made it clear that the Communist Party has no plans to ease its authoritarian rule, and de-

nounced efforts to expand democracy in Hong Kong before it reverts to Chinese rule in 1997.

Li, known as cautious, was uncharacteristically bullish on economic development in his speech to the National People's Congress. He called it the nation's central task.

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