

# News Digest

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1998

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But there was no one. No one saw me."*

## Teacher survives 6 days at sea

TRUJILLO, Honduras (AP) — Flushed out of her village by Hurricane Mitch's raging floodwaters and drifting for six days far into the Caribbean Sea, Laura Isabel Arriola de Guity was alone.

Her husband and three children were dead. All she had was a makeshift raft, the sea below her, the sun in the day and the moon at night. There was no land in sight.

On the sixth day, she spotted a duck near her raft. Hours later, she was spotted by an airplane looking for a yacht that had disappeared during the storm. A British helicopter rescued her.

The 36-year-old schoolteacher is recovering from dehydration, sun exposure and hypothermia at a hospital in the northern Honduran city of Trujillo. She is expected to be released soon.

In an interview in her ward, Arriola tried in vain to hold back tears as she described six days of terror and miracles, surviving a storm officials say killed at least 10,000 people in Central America.

Arriola and her family lived in the village of Barra de Aguan, near the mouth of the Aguan River. Normally her house was about two miles from the sea on one side and more than a mile from the river on the other. But when Hurricane Mitch stalled over the Honduran coast Oct. 28, the sea and the river merged into what seemed like a single body of water.

Arriola's house was quickly swept away, so her family took refuge at a neighbor's home. They briefly found shelter in one room, but a wall there also caved in, and the river tore through the house. Arriola clutched her 4-year-old son, Andersson Moises, and shouted at her husband and brother-in-law to grab the other two children: Frances Elizabeth, 8, and Ricardo Gerson, 10.

She tried to hold on to her son, but the river ripped them apart.

"I tried to float so I could see over the water," she said. "I swam and swam, trying to save him, trying to get to somewhere dry. And then I realized I was already in the sea."

She never saw her family again.

Arriola, a strong swimmer, clung to some floating palm branches for four hours. Using debris in the water, she made a 4-foot-by-4-foot raft out of tree roots, branches and a motorboard.

"I was thinking, I was begging God to let someone find me and rescue me," she said. "But there was no one. No one saw me."

Debris littered the sea. Arriola spotted the corpse

*"I cried every day. I was crying more than I was quiet. Day and night I cried and screamed. I was praying, worshipping. I did it all."*

LAURA ISABEL ARRIOLA DE GUTTY  
flood survivor

of a child, along with several dead animals. But she also found coconuts, which gave her milk, as well as pineapples and oranges.

On the second day, she spotted two islands in the distance, which she believed were Roatan and Utila — about 100 miles from her home. But the sea and winds pushed her in the other direction.

Arriola slept little. Rough seas made it difficult to rest, and she was knocked off the raft several times.

"I cried every day. I was crying more than I was quiet. Day and night I cried and screamed. I was praying, worshipping. I did it all. The only thing I couldn't do was run, because there was no place for me to run to."

Her prayers bore fruit Nov. 2, when she saw a plane flying by and waved at it. It turned and passed over her again.

"I was trying to stand up on the raft, but a wave threw me in the sea," she said.

She climbed back on the raft. The plane passed again, this time dropping something in the water that exploded. It was likely intended to mark the spot, but Arriola was scared she was being bombed.

The plane descended and passed again. This time, she could see two people inside who gestured at her.

About half an hour later, she saw something in the air that she thought was a bird. It turned out to be a British helicopter coming to rescue her. A crewman was lowered to the raft and placed Arriola in a harness before she was pulled on board.

"I told him, thank God you have saved me. Thank God," she said.

## Mitch survivors still wait for aid after mudslides

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Aid shipments poured into Central America on Sunday as workers struggled to get food, water and medicine to flood victims before more died in regions battered by Hurricane Mitch.

Assisting a beleaguered Honduran Red Cross, the American Red Cross on Sunday was delivering enough food to feed 1,000 families for a month in the southern city of Choluteca, which was cut off from the rest of Honduras until Saturday. Forty tons of water-purification chemicals and antibiotics were also on the way.

Red Cross trucks filled with aid also began rumbling Sunday morning into Posoltega, Nicaragua, where an estimated 2,000 people were killed in a mudslide.

But refugees there complained that the aid had not yet reached them.

"We heard on the radio that aid is coming, but we're still eating rice," said Ann Soto, 19, at a refugee shelter in Posoltega.

Foreign relief officials toured Tegucigalpa for a firsthand look at aid needs. They found residents seeking safe water and medicines.

"We have nothing to drink," Argentina Giron, 30, told Hugh Farmer, coordinator of the U.S. Agency for International Development effort, at a high school serving as a shelter.

She said she doesn't know where she was picked up, but news accounts said it was 25 miles north of Guanaja Island — about 75 miles from her home.

Arriola says she'll likely live with relatives after being discharged from the hospital. The bodies of her husband and daughter have been found. The other two children are presumed dead.

With her family and home gone, she doesn't know what she'll do with the rest of her life.

"I have nothing. I have nowhere to go," she said. "I lost it all."

## Killings said to violate cease-fire agreement

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) — The killings of five ethnic Albanian rebels by Serb police are violations of the cease-fire established last month under an accord to end violence in Kosovo, a rebel said Sunday.

Sebadin Cena, who described himself as the Kosovo Liberation Army doctor at its regional headquarters in Retinje village, said one of the victims was commander of two brigades in the region.

The five died Friday on a road near Opterusa in central Kosovo. Police described the encounter as a shoot-out and said the KLA guerrillas fired first. Foreign observers reported a similar account.

## Bangladesh assassins sentenced to death

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — A judge convicted and sentenced to death 15 former military commanders in the 1975 assassination of the country's first prime minister, bringing an end to a trial delayed for years by Bangladesh's bitter and often bloody politics.

Bangladeshis welcomed the convictions, which marked a rare instance of the nation resolving a violent episode in its past though the orderly exercise of justice.

Four other defendants, including a former junior minister for information, were acquitted in the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman because of insufficient evidence.

## Glenn back to normal after return from space

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — After a shaky reintroduction to gravity, John Glenn was "95 or 98 percent back to normal" Sunday, walking briskly, telling jokes and urging old folks to follow their dreams.

"I feel very elated that things went well. We got a lot of the data we were looking to get and worked very hard up there," NASA's 77-year-old geriatric test subject said his first morning back on Earth.

"Obviously, we'd like to ... go right back up again, but that's not to be. And so a sense of accomplishment I guess I feel and a little bit of letdown that the whole thing is over, maybe, but nothing serious."

## Clinton calls for closing of loophole in Brady law

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton set in motion Saturday a tightening of the Brady law aimed at stopping 5,000 gun shows around the nation from becoming "illegal arms bazaars" for criminals and gunrunners.

Clinton ordered the Treasury and Justice departments to recommend executive actions within 60 days that will close a loophole in the Brady gun-control law.

The government estimates that 5 million people a year attend gun shows, typically held in convention centers, school gymnasiums or fairgrounds. The Brady law requirement for five-day waiting periods and background checks does not currently apply to gun-show purchases.

## Daily Nebraskan

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Fax number: (402) 472-1761  
World Wide Web: www.unl.edu/DailyNeb  
The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during the summer session. The public has access to the Publications Board.  
Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.  
Subscriptions are \$55 for one year.  
Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.  
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## Netanyahu calls for outlaw of extremists

■ Chaos and terrorism in Israel continue to test the land-for-security peace accord.

JERUSALEM (AP) — With Israeli soldiers fanning out Sunday in search of a militant Islamic leader, Israel demanded that Palestinian authorities outlaw the military wings of two radical groups.

Implementation of the new Mideast land-for-security accord, signed Oct. 23 in Washington, was supposed to have begun last week, but has hit various snags.

Most recently, Israel's Cabinet put off a vote to ratify the accord after a suicide bombing Friday in Jerusalem that killed the two assailants and injured 21 Israelis. The radical group Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

Sunday, the Israeli army set up roadblocks, forbade residents from leaving their homes for several hours and searched the West Bank village of Kabatiya for a leader of the militant group.

The Israeli army said troops had fired at a fleeing terrorist suspect

there and soldiers found a pistol and fake Israeli identification cards in the suspect's abandoned car.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday there would be no withdrawal from the West Bank until the Palestinians proved their crackdown on terrorism was serious.

"They're not fighting (terrorism) hard enough," Netanyahu said at a political rally outside Tel Aviv. "If they fight, they'll get (land). If they don't fight, they won't get," Netanyahu said.

David Bar-Illan, a top aide to Netanyahu, said Israel expects Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to formally outlaw the military wings of Islamic Jihad and the larger group Hamas.

Hassan Asfour, a senior Palestinian official, said those groups were outlawed by the Palestinian Authority in 1996. But Bar-Illan said the Palestinian legislature had never passed such a law.

A Palestinian security official said on condition of anonymity that joint meeting of Israeli and Palestinian security officials were held Saturday night to discuss security in the wake of Friday's attack.

## No decision reached about force in Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton on Sunday put off a decision on whether to use force to try to reopen Iraq's weapons sites to U.N. inspectors.

In a two-hour meeting with senior advisers, Clinton directed them to weigh military and diplomatic strategies for a few more days.

Among the considerations was that Iraq might respond to an attack by permanently banning the international search for illegal chemical and biological weapons.

And yet, over seven trying years, diplomacy has failed to compel Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to comply completely with the U.N. Security Council's attempt to ensure the elimination of all potential weapons of mass destruction.

Eight days ago, Saddam declared a halt to cooperation with the U.N. special commission that conducts searches for chemical and biological weapons.

Fifteen U.N. weapons inspectors, some of them experts on missiles, left Baghdad on Saturday as the United Nations began to reduce its presence in Iraq.