

Earthquake, Tsunami Aftermath

Death toll approaches 150,000; Thousands of Americans missing

western coast of Sumatra, which was closest to the quake, show it was hit much harder than previously thought. Scores of villages were flattened, and in some areas few survivors have been seen.

Powell said about 4,000-5,000 Americans remain

(AP)—The main airport at Indonesia's tsunami-battered Sumatra island was closed for much of the day Tuesday after a relief plane hit a herd of cows, hampering the world's still-fragile efforts to get aid to victims of the disaster.

In a startling tale of survival, an Indonesian man swept off the shore by last week's tsunami was found afloat on tree branches and debris, the second person to be found alive on the high seas days after the disaster, officials said Tuesday.

World leaders, meanwhile, headed to southern Asia to get a firsthand glimpse of the damage from the Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami that killed at least 139,580 people. Secretary of State Colin Powell - who was in Thailand on Tuesday - pledged America's full support.

Relief workers said they expect the death toll to soar by tens of thousands because surveys of the



unaccounted for in the disaster, but he believed that the number would drop as people contacted relatives and consular officials. At least 15 are confirmed dead.

Rushing aid to anyone still alive has proved difficult, with roads and sea jetties washed away.



Former Presidents Lead Relief Effort

President Bush calls on former Presidents George H.W. Bush (left) and Bill Clinton (right) to head up efforts to raise money for the massive relief operation in the tsunami-battered regions of the Indian Ocean. Monday's announcement came as the White House has been scrambling to repair an image battered by perceptions that U.S. aid for the tsunamis lagged behind other countries. (AP photo)

Baghdad Governor Assassinated

Americans killed in other attacks

(AP)—Insurgents assassinated the highest-ranking Iraqi official in eight months Tuesday, gunning down the governor of Baghdad province and six of his bodyguards, and a suicide truck

bomber killed 10 people at an Interior Ministry commando headquarters, the latest in a string of violence ahead of Jan. 30 elections.

Five American troops were slain in three separate attacks, officials said, in the deadliest day for the U.S. military in Iraq since a suicide bombing at a mess tent in Mosul on Dec. 21 killed 22 people,

including 14 U.S. soldiers and three American contractors.

The militant group of Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, Al-Qaida in Iraq, claimed responsibility for killing Gov. Ali al-Haidari and his bodyguards, according to a statement posted on a website known for carrying such claims.

Iraq's insurgents repeatedly have tar-

geted government officials and security forces, saying they are allies of the U.S.-led coalition.

More interim Iraqi government officials are saying the elections should be postponed to ensure a higher Sunni voter turnout, a sign the ongoing campaign of violence might be taking its toll on Iraqi resolve.



A bullet riddled vehicle sits in the aftermath of an insurgency attack in Iraq Monday that killed the governor of Baghdad. (AP photo)



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