

## Mudslide ravages Chilean village, kills at least 61

ANTOFAGASTA, Chile (AP) — A mudslide slammed into hillside slums of this northern desert city early Tuesday, sweeping away scores of wooden shacks and killing at least 61 people, officials said.

About 750 people were injured in the disaster, which was triggered by five hours of rare, torrential rains in this port in the Atacama desert region, considered one of the most arid areas of

the world. Interior Minister Enrique Krauss, speaking in the capitol of Santiago before flying here, gave the death toll as 61 but said it would almost certainly climb steeply.

Rescue crews searched through scores of wooden shacks swept away by the avalanche in the northern edge of the city of 200,000, about 900 miles north of Santiago. Police said at least

1,000 people were left homeless in 10 slum neighborhoods. The mudslide cut off the Pan-American Highway, which runs along the Pacific coast of this South American nation.

The local government in Antofagasta said the avalanche that slammed the slum in the northern edge of the city was swollen by the water of four large water storage tanks that were swept away by the mass of mud.

Water and power supplies were cut off in several neighborhoods, and roads to the city were blocked.

The mud spread to other parts of the city, including the downtown area, where vehicles were seen stuck in the streets, partly covered by up to two feet of mud.

The government's National

Emergency Office reported that shelters for the homeless were being set up in schools and other government buildings. Authorities suspended classes.

The National Emergency Office dispatched a C-130 Hercules plane to Antofagasta carrying food, medicine, clothes and blankets.

The rare storms were reported

in several other Atacama desert towns.

Calama, in a copper mining region 135 miles east of Antofagasta, was hit by strong winds, rain and snow.

To the south, traffic along a main highway between Santiago and the Argentine city of Mendoza was shut down near a frontier because of severe snowstorms in the Andes.

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## U.S., Soviets progress on START

### Bush, Gorbachev 'narrowing differences' on arms treaty

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. (AP) — President Bush said Monday he had received a "very positive" letter from Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev narrowing some of the last differences on a major treaty to slash long-range nuclear weapons. "I'm a little more optimistic now," he said.

"I'd say it's a narrowing of differences and we're in agreement here where it's 96 percent concluded," Bush said. Yet, he said, "I'm afraid we haven't solved it all."

"I wouldn't say 'breakthrough' but I think it's 'progress,'" the president said, adding that he was eager to

hold a summit with Gorbachev this summer even before the final technical language of a treaty is written.

While saying the two sides are not widely apart, Bush said that "some of the differences that remain are fairly difficult." Negotiators have been working for nearly a decade on an accord to reduce the deadliest weapons in the superpowers' arsenals.

Gorbachev's letter, delivered Saturday night, was the latest step in the mutual drive to wrap up a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. Secretary of State James A. Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh are due to meet on the issue in Berlin, probably Thursday, in a follow-up to a similar session in Geneva less than two weeks ago.

Bush revealed the receipt of Gorbachev's



George Bush

## Baker plans trip to Yugoslavia to discuss ethnic problems

BERLIN (AP) — Secretary of State James Baker said Monday he would go to Yugoslavia at this "sensitive and delicate" time to lead for the preservation of its national sovereignty in the face of ethnic divisions.

Baker, arriving here for a conference of 34 foreign ministers from Europe, Canada and the United States, also said he would travel to Albania later this week to encourage its hesitant transition from communism to democracy.

Before leaving Berlin on Thursday, Baker also is scheduled to meet with Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh to try to overcome remaining obstacles to a treaty reducing both sides' long-range nuclear arsenals by 30 percent or more.

Baker said that over the next few days he would study a response from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to some ideas proposed by President Bush earlier this month for resolving the treaty disputes. He declined to discuss Gorbachev's response, which Bush, while traveling in the United States, described to reporters as "very positive."

Baker's stops in Yugoslavia and Albania underline the administration's strategy of drawing Eastern Europe closer to the West in order to foster democracy in the once-communist nations, and prevent the continent's slide into the kind of bickering that ignited World War I.

Administration officials say they are worried that the cauldron of ethnic unrest in Yugoslavia could spill over into neighboring countries just as they are testing the waters of democracy.

The first ministerial meeting of the 34-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe had on its agenda a wide-ranging discussion of methods for ensuring European peace, in the face of emerging nationalist and ethnic rivalries unleashed by the lifting of communist authority.

Part of the debate is expected to focus on whether mechanisms to resolve disputes among member nations could also be used to resolve civil strife within countries such as Yugoslavia.

## AIDS rate growing in Asia, Africa, U.N. agency reports

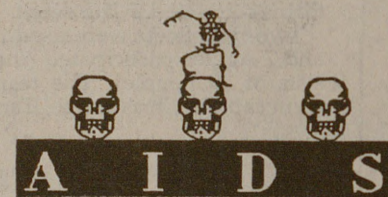
FLORENCE, Italy (AP) — The AIDS epidemic is likely to peak in the United States and Western Europe midway through the decade, but the rate of infection is rising at alarming rates in Africa and Asia, according to a U.N. report released Monday.

The opening of Eastern Europe to the outside world also has raised the potential for an AIDS epidemic there, a Soviet official said in a separate report at the annual AIDS conference.

Dr. James Chin, chief of the AIDS forecasting unit at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, reported the encouraging news for North America and Western Europe.

"Epidemiological data indicate that in industrialized countries, where extensive spread of HIV began in the late 1970s or early

1980s, the majority of HIV infections occurred during the first half of the 1980s," he said. "As a



result, peak incidence for AIDS cases and deaths is expected to occur around the mid-1990s."

As of the end of March 1991, the federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta had recorded a cumulative total of 171,876 cases of AIDS in the United States, with 108,731 deaths.

Chin said the expected peak of AIDS in the West in the mid-1990s could prompt a dip in commitment to fighting the disease in Africa and Asia.

Infection with the HIV virus, spreading faster than first forecast in Africa, and in Asia the disease "has come up rapidly and this is the major concern," he said.

Chin said statistics on just one week ago showed 500,000 AIDS cases in Asia, but data from a new study put the number at more than 1 million.

Efforts to map an overall AIDS strategy in Eastern Europe are complicated by the different ways the virus is spreading in each country, said Alexander Gromyko, a WHO official from the Soviet Union.

## Sandinistan rebels overtake city hall, rightist radio station

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (AP) — Militants seized control of a radio station and the city hall Tuesday to protest a move to revoke laws that gave thousands of Sandinistas free property in the final months of their decade of rule.

No one was seriously hurt in the takeovers at Radio Corporacion, a rightist station, and at the capital's city hall. In both cases masked men identifying themselves as Sandinistas forced their way into the buildings and vowed to remain inside.

The takeovers were the latest in a series of Sandinista challenges to the authority of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, who is struggling to get Nicaragua's economy functioning again after more than a dozen years of war.

While the Sandinistas pressure de Chamorro to leave intact the revolutionary changes they made, former Contra rebels and rightists are demanding Sandinista policies be overturned, pushing her government in conflicting directions.

The giveaway laws the Sandinistas were trying to protect were approved by the leftist government after it lost the February 1990 election but before center-right President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro took office two months later.

The measures specified that anyone using confiscated property became the immediate owner, and enabled city governments to give vacant property

away to almost anyone who asked.

Sandinista officials and followers got cars, office supplies, computers and small farms or houses. Higher-ranking officials got luxurious homes seized from Nicaraguans who left the country after the 1979 revolution.

The National Assembly had scheduled a bill revoking the law for debate on Tuesday. With 39 Sandinista deputies absent in protest and three government legislators also absent, the 50 remaining deputies voted unanimously to send the bill to committee. It will likely be two to three weeks before it returns for a vote.

Sandinista leaders had warned of chaos if the giveaway proposal was questioned. The Sandinistas remain the country's largest party and control most labor unions, allowing them to force major concessions through devastating strikes.

Radio Corporacion is controlled by conservatives who have accused Chamorro of allowing herself to be blackmailed by Sandinista threats of violence.

Masked men armed with sub-machine guns kicked down the glass front door of the station and herded journalists out of the building at gunpoint, the journalists said in an interview later on the Radio Catolica. After the takeover, the station continued playing popular music.

## WORLD/NATION BRIEFS

From wire reports

### Shots fired at site near Carter

MIAMI — Gunshots ripped through a construction site where former President Carter and hundreds of volunteers were building low-income housing Monday, leaving one man slightly wounded. Carter was a block away from the shooting and was unhurt.

### Soviet republics to vote on treaty

MOSCOW — President Mikhail S. Gorbachev and leaders of seven republics agreed Monday on a draft of a new Union Treaty and sent it to the parliament and the republics' legislatures for consideration, news agencies reported. Adoption of the document would mark a historic shift in the country's uniting document. Nine of the 15 republics are expected to sign the new treaty. Soviet officials have said failure to sign the new Union Treaty would not automatically leave the six republics out of the Soviet Union.

### Hussein orders release of prisoner

LONDON — Iraq's President Saddam Hussein has ordered the release of an imprisoned British engineer, former Prime Minister Edward Heath said Monday. Douglas Brand, 51, was arrested in September when he tried to leave Iraq after the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. Brand, who had been clearing mines, was convicted of spying and sentenced to life imprisonment last month.

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