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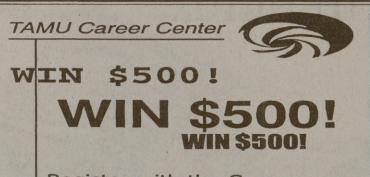
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Bush signs executive order giving religious group services funding

dent Bush, challenging traditional notions about separation of church and

state, opened the door Monday for religious groups to receive government money for their work aiding addicts, prisoners, the homeless and more. "We will not

fund the religious activities of any group, but when people of faith provide social services, we will not discriminate against them," Bush said.

By his signature on a pair of executive orders, Bush created a White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives — with counterpart offices in five Cabinet-level departments — that will facilitate competition by religious groups and charities for a share of the billions of dollars that the government pays out for social services.

On Tuesday, during a visit to northeast Washington's Fishing School, a spiritual youth center, Bush planned to unveil the legislation he every 10 black voters in November, as-

federal grant programs to participation by religious groups. His proposals will also include tax incentives and liability protection to encourage more charitable giving, aides said.

"Problems like addiction and abandonment and gang violence, domestic violence, mental illness and homelessness - we are called by conscience to respond," Bush said during Monday's signing ceremony in the White House's Indian Treaty Room.

"As long as there are secular alternatives, faith-based charities should be able to compete for funding on an equal basis and in a manner that does not cause them to sacrifice their mission.'

Religious leaders of varied faiths and political backgrounds - a Catholic nun in her blue habit, a Muslim imam in his turban, an Orthodox Jew in his yarmulke - surrounded Bush for a smiling photo. Among them were ministers Walter Fauntroy and Floyd Flake, both of them prominent black Democrats.

In a private meeting beforehand,

sessed the group and, according to several participants, joked: "If this was about politics, this room would be kind of empty, if you know what I mean."

Carol Porter, executive director of the Houston-based Kidcare, a 16year-old "meals on wheels" program for children, told Bush in that meeting that the only condition tied to federal money for religious groups should be: "No proselytizing.

"I don't think the religion of anyone should be shoved down anyone else's throat as a prerequisite for service. Jesus didn't do that," Porter told a reporter afterward.

Bush put University of Pennsylvania political science professor John J. DiIulio Jr. in charge of the new White House office and asked former Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith to watch over the initiative from a seat on the board of the Corporation for National Service.

The idea of religious participation is not entirely novel. The 1996 welfare overhaul signed by President Clinton — and implemented in Texas by then-Gov. Bush — allowed religious groups to help the government move people off welfare and into Texas are now being sued by American Jewish Congress Texas Civil Rights Project challed ing the constitutionality of s 'charitable choice.'

At the Washington-based Am cans United for Separation of Ch and State, the Rev. Barry Lynnal Bush's planned expansion an as on constitutional principle that only lead to more litigation.

The First Amendment wa tended to create a separation tween religion and government a massive new bureaucracy unites the two," said Lynn, and ney and United Church of Cr cer-i minister.

Another opponent, Rep. Chel on the wards, D-Texas, said he was at from that religious organizations, with tight regulation, could discrime between in a way federal programs nomi would not countenance.

"I don't want Bob Jones Un sity to be able to take federal do for an alcohol treatment program put out a sign that says no Cathi or Jews need apply here for at ingneally funded job," Edwards said

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Rescue efforts continue in India

Survivors say lack of equipment hindering search for bodies BHUJ, India (AP) — The discov- that confusion and a lack of equip- million. However, officials in Gujarat

ery of a living 8-month-old baby covered in his dead mother's blood but cradled in her lap — on Monday captured the heartbreak and the singular miracles of India's killer earthquake.

The rescue was rare cause for hope following the earthquake, which killed at least 6,200 people and caused damage estimated at up to \$5.5 billion. India's prime minister acknowledged Monday that his country was ill-prepared for disasters.

In the case of the miracle baby, doctors said the warmth of his mother's body helped him survive three days in the ruins of a collapsed building in Bhuj's Kansara Market.

'We saw the baby in the mother's lap, we saw some movement from the baby," said R.K. Thakur, a Border Security Forces assistant commandant. "I took the baby in my hand and I found it was alive.

The boy, Murtza Ali, was rushed to a medical center, surviving relatives were found, and the child was conscious and smiling, Thakur said, adding: "It was miraculous."

There are few even partly happy

ment were hampering rescue efforts. Rescuers lacked cranes and bulldozers, and many units did not even have generators, making night work impossible without lights. Soldiers hunting for survivors began work at first light and stopped when the sun went down.

I'm here to express my solidarity with the Indian people."

> — Atal Bihari Vajpayee Prime Minister

The hope of finding many more survivors "is dwindling hour by hour, but as long as there is hope, we won't give up," said Joachim Ahrens, who represents a Swiss rescue team in Bhuj.

In the first estimate of damage, the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Secretary hospitals, clothing, volunteers to General Amit Mitra said quake loss-Survivors complained Monday sides a daily production loss of \$111 equipment.

state, epicenter of Friday's magnitude 7.9 quake, put the figure at \$2.17 billion.

A grim-faced Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who toured Gujarat on Monday, said he was forming a national disaster agency to ensure immediate response to emergencies.

"The country is not ready to face such disasters," Vajpayee told reporters in Ahmedabad, Gujarat's economic hub. He also announced federal grants totaling \$108 million for the state. The prime minister noted that

when a cyclone killed 10,000 people in the eastern state of Orissa two years ago, his government had trouble responding. He said it was facing similar problems now.

"I'm here to express my solidarity with the Indian people," Vajpayee said. "They are not alone in this

In New Delhi on Monday, Agriculture Minister Bhaskar Barua appealed to private aid groups for field put up tents and prepare and disfibute food, and cranes and other

- News in Brief-Minister pleads guilty to sexual abuse of childre

GREENWOOD, S.C. (AP)minister and former elemen school aide who videot himself molesting ch pleaded guilty Monday to: ally abusing nearly two do youngsters and was sente to 60 years in prison.

The Rev. Fernando Garcia, pleaded guilty to 47 counts. admitted molesting the 23 v tims ages 5 and 13 athisch office and at the school After his plea, the B

minister stared at the room floor while the mot two of the victims, boys 10 12 at the time, called Ga "this evil incarnate" and her family would never be

Garcia, who grew up in Ne co, said that as a boy he abused by a Roman Catho

"Your kids need special or seling. I don't know what I do to help," he said. "What are seeing here is the resul somebody who never took chance to be counseled

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