



## 16 bodies recovered in Vietnam helicopter crash

BY TINI TRAN  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**THANH TRACH, Vietnam** — Rescuers on Sunday recovered the bodies of nine Vietnamese and seven Americans who died in a helicopter crash while searching for the remains of U.S. soldiers missing in action from the Vietnam War.

Witnesses said the helicopter was weaving in the air before it plowed into a mountainside in central Vietnam on Saturday.

"I heard the helicopter flying very low. The engine made a big noise, and then we heard a big explosion. It was very foggy, so we couldn't see very much," said Nguyen Van Minh, 45.

"It was like during the Vietnam War again when we ran to see if we could help anyone from the crash. There was

only one man who was still alive. He told us he was with the MIA team," Minh said. The man, who was Vietnamese, died shortly afterward.

Those killed were the advance team for a 95-member Hawaii-based American group that was scheduled to begin work at six MIA recovery sites in Vietnam in early May, said Army Lt. Col. Franklin Childress, spokesman for the MIA task force.

The bodies were carried down on stretchers from the mountain in Bo Trach district in Quang Binh province, about 280 miles south of Hanoi.

The identities of the victims weren't released, pending notification of their families. Their bodies were taken to Hanoi, and the Americans were to be repatriated to Hawaii later this week.

Among those believed to be on

board were the commanding officer of the MIA team in Hanoi as well as the deputy commanding officer and the incoming head of the Hanoi team.

Officials were investigating the cause of the accident. A local official said the team had called earlier Saturday to say they were canceling a stop in Dong Hoi, the capital of Quang Binh province, because of bad weather.

The helicopter — a chartered Vietnamese military aircraft — was on its way to the town of Hue when it smashed into the mountain. A tattered rotor blade jutting from the hillside served as a grim marker over a valley of emerald-green rice paddies.

Local police secured the area and confiscated the camera of an Associated Press photographer. Curious villagers watched from the valley as officials

recovered wreckage from the mountain.

Childress said no decision had been made about whether the MIA mission would go on. U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said the overall program of accounting for MIAs and recovering their remains will continue.

"We've been flying in this type of helicopter for a number of years, and this is the first accident," Childress said in Hawaii. "Every mission is a dangerous mission. It's a very difficult area to operate in."

Vietnam's Foreign Ministry called the accident "a huge loss to Vietnam as well as to the United States" and sent condolences to the U.S. government, people and families of the victims.

The Joint Task Force-Full Accounting, based in Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii, has searched for MIA remains

from the Indochina War in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and southern China since 1992, and in recent years has expanded operations to include World War II and Korean War MIA recovery cases.

The United States spends up to \$6 million each year conducting regular searches, which often involve helicopter flights carrying both U.S. and Vietnamese military personnel and civilians into remote areas.

Since 1973, the remains of 591 American service members formerly listed as unaccounted for have been identified and returned to their families. There are 1,992 Americans still unaccounted for from the war in Southeast Asia, including 1,498 in Vietnam.

## WORLD BRIEFS

### California utility gave bonuses hours before bankruptcy

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** — The parent company of a California utility awarded about 6,000 bonuses and raises to midlevel managers and other employees hours before the utility filed for bankruptcy, a newspaper has reported.

PG&E Corp. Chairman Robert Glynn issued an internal memo late Thursday announcing the bonuses and raises for eligible employees of Pacific Gas and Electric Co., the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported Saturday.

The payments were made in time for many of the bonuses to be deposited into workers' bank accounts before the utility filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy Friday morning, according to the *Chronicle*, which obtained a copy of the memo.

Gov. Gray Davis issued a brief statement Saturday in response to the report, saying, "PG&E's management is suffering from two afflictions: denial and greed."

### Tiger Woods gets sweep of majors

**AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP)** — Slam or not, Tiger Woods was simply grand.

With a heart-stopper at Augusta National, Tiger Woods claimed the greatest feat in modern golf Sunday by winning the Masters, giving him a clean sweep of the four professional majors in a span of 294 days.

He punctuated it with an 18-foot birdie, raising both arms in triumph as a breathless gallery roared its approval. Woods doffed his cap to cover his tears as he left the green and walked into the arms of his father, who trained him to be a champion from the time he was in a high chair.

Woods closed with a 68, steady down the haunting back nine of Augusta National as David Duval and Phil Mickelson failed to harness the magic that has carried Woods to five of the last six majors.

### Man accused of attacking lawyer to postpone trial

**PANAMA CITY, Fla. (AP)** — A defendant attacked a prosecutor during a hearing in an unsuccessful attempt to stop his trial from starting Monday, authorities said.

Mitchell Aguiniga, 30, said at the hearing Friday he wouldn't stand trial on charges of home invasion, rape, kidnapping and armed robbery.

"And just how do you intend to stop the trial?" Judge Dedee Costello asked.

Witnesses said Aguiniga responded by running toward Assistant State Attorney Nancy O'Conner and pushing her into a wooden railing in front of the jury box. He then jumped on O'Conner and put his hands on her throat, authorities said.

A sheriff's deputy grabbed Aguiniga in a chokehold so O'Conner could escape, witnesses said.

"Well, I guess I stopped the trial," Aguiniga said as officers dragged him from the courtroom.

But the trial was not delayed. It was scheduled to begin as scheduled Monday.

### Siamese twins' operation taking longer than expected

**SINGAPORE (AP)** — A risky operation to separate 11-month-old Siamese twins from Nepal was taking longer than expected and might stretch into a fourth grueling day, a hospital spokeswoman said Sunday.

The girls are joined at the top of their heads, facing in separate directions. They share a single skull cavity, and their brains are partially fused.

"The operation is still going on. We expect it to be a long haul, to take until tomorrow," Singapore General Hospital spokeswoman Ho Lai Fung said.

The twins were doing fine when the surgery passed the 48-hour mark Sunday, Ho said.

Doctors had hoped to finish in 24 to 40 hours.

## Cheney warns of veto if Congress loads budget

BY MARTIN CRUTSINGER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**WASHINGTON** — With President Bush preparing to release the point-by-point details of how his \$1.96 trillion budget would rein in government spending, Vice President Dick Cheney said Sunday that Bush will not hesitate to veto spending bills he considers excessive.

Democrats, still celebrating an initial victory in trimming Bush's tax cut, awaited Monday's release of the full budget so they could see which government programs were targeted for deep reductions.

They said opposition to those proposed cuts will help as they seek to hold the line on the administration's \$1.6 trillion, 10-year tax cut.

In Bush's first major defeat, the Senate last week voted to reduce the tax cut by one-quarter to \$1.2 trillion, an action that must now be reconciled with a House resolution endorsing the president's original request.

"When people see the budget, they're going to say, 'Oh, my God, I wanted a tax cut, but I didn't know what you were going to do to health care and to Medicare and national defense,'" Sen. John Breaux, D-La., said on ABC's *This Week*.

Cheney defended the administration's budget decisions, arguing that spending has gotten out of control since 1998, when the first of a series of budget surpluses began.

"This president is eager to veto appropriations that come in over budget," Cheney said on ABC.

The administration's budget is proposing to limit the growth in

discretionary spending — everything outside of mandatory benefit programs such as Social Security — to a 4 percent increase this year, far below the 8.7 percent rise former President Clinton won in his last budget.

The new administration is proposing outright cuts or no increases in discretionary spending at 12 of the government's 25 major departments, with the sharpest reductions occurring at the departments of Agriculture and Transportation.

Those cuts are balanced against increases in priority areas, including education. A senior Education Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Sunday that the agency's increases would include \$375 million to support charter schools and \$320 million for a new initiative to help states develop reading and math assessment programs. All are Bush campaign issues.

Documents obtained by The Associated Press showed that among the cuts in Bush's budget are reductions in rural health, disease prevention, mental health and support for training doctors at children's hospitals.

A Justice Department official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, told the AP that the popular Community Oriented Policing Services program, a Clinton effort to put 100,000 new police officers on the streets, would be cut by 17 percent to \$855 million, down from \$1.03 billion budgeted for this year.

The Bush budget also will propose cuts in several other Clinton initiatives, including efforts to combat nuclear proliferation, coordinate health care for the uninsured, promote energy conservation and boost economic development in poor communities.

## China's generals benefit from U.S. spy plane crisis

BY JOHN LEICESTER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**BEIJING** — A crippled American spy plane that landed at one of their airfields was a gift from the sky for China's generals.

It isn't clear how much information they've extracted from the U.S. Navy EP-3E. But the crisis over its in-flight collision with a Chinese fighter has given them a new way to press Washington for an end to spy flights and to pry more money out of their own civilian leaders.

"This is a God-given chance for the Chinese military to claim greater relevance in Chinese politics," said Yu Maochun, a China expert at the U.S. Naval Academy. "It's like a crouching tiger."

The intense secrecy shrouding Chinese politics has made it hard to know precisely what's going on during the crisis. But analysts suggest that the already influential People's Liberation Army, or PLA, might be partly responsible for the continued confinement of the U.S. crew.

The 21 men and three women began their second week in captivity Sunday, with no indication when they might be released.

The crew is being held on Hainan island in the South China Sea, where they made an emergency landing after the collision April 1. U.S. officials say the crew managed to destroy at least some of the plane's supersensitive equipment, although it isn't clear how much.

"The principal organization in charge of this whole affair has been the PLA,

at least in the early stages," said Bates Gill, director of the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution in Washington.

Signals from Beijing have been confusing.

For two days after the collision, there was almost complete official silence, widely interpreted as a sign that Chinese leaders couldn't agree on what to do.

Then President Jiang Zemin demanded an apology. U.S. officials responded with statements of regret, which China said were a step in the right direction. U.S. officials then reported that negotiations were making headway.

But this weekend, China ratcheted up the pressure.

China's top diplomat said statements of regret were unacceptable. China's defense minister, Gen. Chi Haotian, said the 2.5-million member PLA would not allow Washington to "shirk responsibility" for the collision. Chi said China must "build a stronger country and a stronger military."

"We must convert our anger at hegemonism into a huge motivating force," said the defense minister, a veteran of the 1950-53 Korean War, when Chinese soldiers fought beside North Korean troops against American-led U.N. forces.

The military's foremost newspaper, the *Liberation Army Daily*, declared Sunday that China is entitled "to fully and thoroughly investigate" the spy plane and "the people in charge of it."

Few outcomes could do more damage to already uneasy U.S.-Chinese relations than for China to prosecute the crew as spies.

## Minorities seek more political power following Census

BY ROBERT TANNER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**PATERSON, N.J.** — When Pepe Mercado's father opened a luncheonette 31 years ago, he offered a taste of home for fellow Puerto Ricans who were streaming into a city of Italians, Irish and blacks.

Now, for the first time, Hispanics from many countries outnumber all other groups in this one-time industrial center; new Census numbers show Hispanics make up 50.1 percent of Paterson's 149,922 residents.

Mercado's son, looking past plates of spicy chopped liver and stewed pig ears, thinks government ought to catch up and reflect the faces at the diner's counter. "It's our time," he says.

The same cry is being heard throughout the nation as political maps everywhere must be redrawn in the once-in-a-decade process of redistricting.

Explosive population growth has given Hispanics, Asians and other ethnic groups a shot at a political voice — a new Asian congressman for California, perhaps, or the first Hispanic state senator in New Jersey.

At the local government level, there's a chance for Indians, Palestinians, Vietnamese and other groups to elect representatives. But for several reasons — party politics, court decisions and conflicts between minorities — it won't

be easy. Redistricting follows the release of Census numbers. Maps must be redrawn so political districts are equal in size at each level of government.

New Jersey and Virginia, which have state legislative elections this autumn, are redistricting first. Other states, with elections in 2002, won't need to finish redistricting for months.

Party politics always play a major role in redistricting, and in Virginia, the Republicans are in control. The GOP-controlled legislature decides on the maps, and the governor, Republican Jim Gilmore, must agree.

Hispanics don't figure to gain much, if anything, there. Gilmore has reached out to Hispanics in northern Virginia, though their numbers are still too small to ensure a Hispanic representative. Blacks are struggling to maintain the gains they've achieved in the past.

New Jersey, like a handful of other states, has tried to reduce political infighting by putting redistricting in the hands of a 10-member commission — half appointed by Democrats, half by Republicans.

It hasn't helped. The commission deadlocked, and with a decision due Monday, a judge has appointed a political science professor as a tiebreaker.

Hispanics in New Jersey want representation equal to their 13 percent

statewide population. That would mean 10 Hispanics in the state Assembly (there are now five) and five senators (none currently).

With the commission working behind closed doors, it's hard to say whether their goal will be achieved. But it won't be for lack of trying. Late last month, Hispanic lawmakers presented a proposed map of their own for commissioners to consider.

"Power is never voluntarily given up; you're never invited to get a seat at the table," said New Jersey Assemblyman Wilfredo Caraballo, a Democrat. "You have to almost take the seat yourself."

Minorities' arguments can be lost in the bigger battle that shadows all redistricting efforts: politics. Each party hopes to gain the advantage for the coming decade.

Democrats have promised to spend \$13 million on redistricting this time around; Republicans are more circumspect. Analysts say the stakes could be a 10-seat swing in the U.S. House.

"This is up close and personal," said Tom Hofeller, a redistricting expert for the Republican National Committee. "It's a very, very political activity."

And the rules for redistricting are changing along with the nation's cultural mix.

The 1965 Voting Rights Act and subsequent court decisions gave tools to

minority groups seeking equal representation, bringing sweeping changes, particularly for blacks in the South. But recent decisions from the U.S. Supreme Court seem to have diminished the importance of race in redistricting.

Now, race and ethnicity are considered as just one factor. The

geography of a community, its interests, and its history all must be weighed, redistricting experts say.

The new approach, however, has yet to be tested, says Laughlin McDonald, a voting rights expert with the American Civil Liberties Union in Atlanta. "Nobody knows what the rules are; they're very conflicting."

### CENSUS 2000

Race and Hispanic or Latino	Population
<b>Total U.S. Population</b>	281,421,906
<b>RACE</b>	
White	211,460,626
Black or African American	34,658,190
Asian	10,242,998
Other race	18,233,864
Two or more races	6,826,228
<b>HISPANIC OR LATINO</b>	
Hispanic or Latino	35,305,818
Not Hispanic or Latino	246,116,088

According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Office of Management and Budget, Hispanic or Latino origin is defined as "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race."

Source: U.S. Census Bureau