

EZ - אקטואליה

Hurricane Katrina / Fear and confusion in New Orleans as body count remains uncertain

by Shmuel Rosner

NEW ORLEANS - The more the days pass and the water is pumped out, the greater the number of refugees starting to talk about when - not if - they will return home. The more time that passes, the louder the question echoes, to which no one has a good answer right now: How many people were actually killed in the great disaster in the southern United States?

Until the bodies are buried and an exact count is made, this question will impact the national mood, and the officials who did not respond fast enough will face castigation.

Everyone agrees that rescue efforts were too slow. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, on her visit to the region, admitted that the force of the storm had overwhelmed them. If everyone agrees, the only question that remains is who to blame - government workers or elected officials - making this an unbeatable opportunity for a political battle. But that is another story, one that belongs to Washington and not to Louisiana.

When the water is drained and the dead are counted, it will be an "ugly sight," warned the Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff. By Sunday it was reported that a number of police officers and firefighters could not stand the emotional pressure. Two committed suicide.

In the coffee shops and on the radio, there was a new "sport" - comparing disasters. Remembering hurricanes like Betsy and Ivan, the cholera epidemic that took 6,000 souls in 1828, the great Johnstown flood of 1889 that killed 2,000 people.

Fear and confusion are mixed in the stories. Moses Heatron from Virginia, who was visiting relatives in New Orleans, managed to get away after the storm, but his relatives stayed behind at their home in Jefferson Parish. Maybe they survived. They

may be in a shelter, in San Antonio or Houston. But he has no way of knowing.
"Maybe they're just floating out there, and nobody's found them yet," he said
anxiously.

Officials try to convince people who refuse to evacuate that they should, but they are still not forcing them. Lieutenant General Russell Honore, directing the National Guard deployment, said there may still be people hiding in their homes, and they may yet decide on a forced evacuation.

Confusion – בלבול	drained – מנוקז
body count - ספירת גופות	ugly sight - מראות מכוערים
uncertain - לא ברור, מפוקפק	firefighters - מכבי אש
pumped out- נשאב החוצה	emotional pressure - לחץ נפשי
refugees - פליטים	committed suicide - התאבדו
echoes – מהדהד	Comparing – משווים
disaster - אסון	epidemic – מגפה
southern – דרומי	souls – נפשות
Buried – קבור	flood - שטפון
exact count - ספירה מדוייקת	relatives – קרובי משפחה
impact – השפעה, פגיעה	Survived - שרדו
Mood – מצב רוח	shelter - מחסה, מקלט
To respond - להגיב	floating - צף, צפים
will face - יעמדו בפני	anxiously – בחרדה, בדאגה
officials - בכירים, נושאי משרה ציבורית	convince – לשכנע
castigation - ענישה חמורה	refuse - מסרבים
rescue efforts - מאמצי חילוץ	To evacuate - לפנות
Region – אזור	deployment - (במקרה הזה פריסת כוחות)
admitted – הודה (כמו: הודה בטעות)	directing - מנהל
overwhelmed – המום	National guard – המשמר הלאומי
blame – אשמה	(כוח שאינו צבאי, אך בעל סמכויות נרחבות יותר מהמשטרה)
elected officials	forced evacuation - פינוי בכפייה
unbeatable opportunity - אפשרות שאין לעמוד בפניה	
battle – קרב	