

Bush tours tornado-ravaged Tennessee

by UPI

LAFAYETTE, Tenn. -- President George Bush toured tornado-ravaged areas of Tennessee Friday and was told at least 31 twisters were recorded in the state Tuesday. Bush, accompanied by state officials and federal emergency personnel, walked among toppled vehicles, uprooted trees and craters where homes once stood -- the aftermath of killer tornadoes that struck five states. Bush had already declared a "major disaster" in both Tennessee and Arkansas. Bands of tornadoes ripped across the U.S. South Tuesday, killing 56 people -- 32 in Tennessee, 13 in Arkansas, seven in Kentucky and four in Alabama. Twisters also touched down in Mississippi, but officials reported no fatalities. "People have got to understand that a lot of folks around here need American care for them now," Bush said in Lafayette, Tenn. "There is no doubt in my mind that this community will come back better than before." Bush was briefed by state and federal officials about the emergency response to date. James Bassham, director of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, said 31 touchdowns in two waves were sighted.

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