

China quake death toll surges to 51,151

by UPI

BEIJING -- The soaring death toll from southwestern China's devastating earthquake jumped nearly 10,000 to 51,151 Thursday, government officials reported. The official count raised the injury total from the 7.9-magnitude quake to 288,431 with another 29,328 people missing. CNN reported that domestic and international donations to help quake recovery, as of midday Thursday, had reached a reported \$3 billion. Meanwhile, China announced it would cut government spending by 5 percent this year so it can set aside \$10.14 billion for reconstruction in the nation's quake-devastated regions. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, who has been directing the massive relief program since the May 12 disaster in Sichuan province and surrounding areas, promised to provide more in the next two years, Xinhua reported.

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