

Beat: Politics

BARACK OBAMA AND HURRICANE KATRINA ON NEW ORLEANS 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

DISASTER RECOVERY-EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

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USPA NEWS - When the levees protecting New Orleans failed in August 2005, approximately 80% of the city was flooded. The storm displaced more than a million people in the Gulf Coast region. It resulted also in the deaths of at least 986 Louisiana residents...

When the levees protecting New Orleans failed in August 2005, approximately 80 % of the city was flooded. The storm displaced more than a million people in the Gulf Coast region. It resulted also in the deaths of at least 986 Louisiana residents. The major causes of death include drowning (40%), injury and trauma (25%) and heart conditions (11%). Nearly half the victims were over the age of 74. The total damages from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita were \$ 150 billion (\$ 135 billion from Katrina and \$ 15 billion from Rita. (The Data Center)

"America failed the people of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast long before that failure showed up on our television sets," Barack Obama, then a senator and presidential hopeful said two years after the storm ravaged the region "America failed them again during Katrina. We cannot "" we must not "" fail for a third time" (NBC News)

"Longtime residents of New Orleans were used to grappling with nature, but man was a harsher beast...

...Over 1,800 people across five states died as a result of the crisis in 2005, many because they were stuck in their homes. Thousands more suffered for days inside the Superdome before help arrived. The devastation that came after the storm was man-made : a combination of racism, opportunism, corruption and ignorance that has impaired the quality of life in this city for the past 10 years." (Newsweek)

Experts say the city's black and white populations returned at different rates. White people returned more quickly, while black people returned at a slower but steadier pace.

Elizabeth Fussell, a professor of population studies at Brown University, said low income people who left faced tougher challenges in returning. There was less rental property available, which puts rents up, businesses had shut, and government pay-outs benefited people who owned their own homes more than those who rented. (Independent)

Because of lessons learned from Katrina, new legislation has enhanced FEMA's preparedness, response and recovery capabilities. The agency has expanded temporary disaster housing and its capacity to assist businesses and individuals affected by disasters. It also now has the authority to pre-stage personnel and resources in anticipation of disasters. (Katrina 10)

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.

3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168

Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA

(702) 943.0321 Local

(702) 943.0233 Facsimile

info@unitedpressassociation.org

info@gna24.com

www.gna24.com