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Grief-stricken village buries avalanche victims

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KANGIQSUALUJJUAQ, QUE. - After two days of delay due to a blizzard, funeral services were finally held for the nine avalanche victims in Northern Quebec.

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Four adults and five children were killed during New Year's Eve party, when an avalanche struck the school in the small Inuit village of Kangiqsualujjuaq. Hundreds of people were inside the school celebrating.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien, Quebec Deputy Premier Bernard Landry and Quebec Liberal leader Jean Charest all attended the memorial in the remote Quebec village.



Rescue operations

The three men also toured the site of the New Year's avalanche.

Charest called it a dramatic sight that drove home the loss of life.




On Tuesday, Chretien sent his condolences to the community by radio. He said the federal government may offer aid to the community, which must figure out where its children will attend school.

The school, which also serves as the community centre, was destroyed when the avalanche smashed through its walls.

A 1995 report recommended the installation of snow barriers on the hill above the school. It wasn't acted upon. The local school board commissioned the study following an avalanche in the same location.

The Royal Bank in Iqaluit told CBC News Online that a Kangiqsualujjuaq Disaster Fund has been





established. Donations can be made with the Royal Bank by calling **867-979-5344**.

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