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Nov. 18, 1999

MSC 201

7 PM

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Kuumba (Creativity) Imani (Faith)

Umoja (Unity) Kujichagalia (Self-Determination)

Ujamaa (Cooperative economics) Nia (Purpose)

WORLD

Page 14 • Wednesday, November 17, 1999

Troops tighten around two Chechen towns

Human rights advocates condemn settlement attacks

GROZNY, Russia (AP) — Russian troops tightened the circle around two large Chechen towns yesterday, sending civilians fleeing, and human rights advocates condemned what they said were indiscriminate attacks against settlements.

Troops were just over a mile from the town of Achkhoy-Martan, 15 miles southwest of the capital Grozny; surrounded Argun, nine miles east of the capital, and pressed in on Grozny itself from strategic heights to the east.

They appeared intent on repeating the strategy used last week to conquer Gudermes, Chechnya's second-largest city: shelling it into submission and then sending in ground troops.

The Russian military demanded yesterday that the inhabitants of Argun force out the militants or face shelling, Khasan Gapurayev, press secretary of the Chechen parliament, said.

He said residents of Argun were fleeing south toward the mountains.

Maj. Gen. Vladimir Shamanov, a top Russian commander, denied that any ultimatum was made. He said his men would conduct negotiations with elders in the town, "so they can drive the rebels out of their villages themselves."

Another top military official, Maj. Gen. Vadim Timchenko, said of Achkhoy-Martan: "We have not attempted to storm the city and are not planning to."

Russian troop movements along the main highway leading from Grozny to the west slowed the flow of refugees into the neighboring Russian republic of Ingushetia.

Some 1,000 people crossed into Ingushetia

yesterday, about one-quarter of the number who have been crossing each day recently.

Nearly 210,000 Chechens have fled to neighboring regions, the Federal Migration Service said.

Russian airstrikes were slowed yesterday by poor weather, as well as by increased resistance from rebels, the Interfax news agency reported.

It said that militant bands had attacked Russian forces with small arms-fire and mortars along the heights to the north and east of Grozny, as well as in the Urus-Martan area, 12 miles southwest of the capital.

Chechen officials have said more than 4,000 civilians have been killed since Russia launched its offensive in September.

In Moscow, the Russian human rights group Memorial issued a statement protesting "indiscriminate aviation, rocket and artillery strikes against populated areas of Chechnya."

Oleg Orlov, the president of Memorial, said the Russian army has closed many escape routes for refugees.

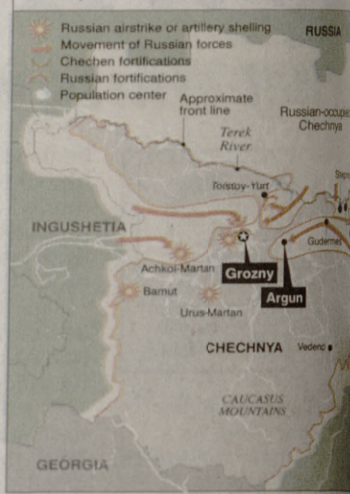
"Roads in general are being shot up. There are no humanitarian corridors. Any road is dangerous," he said.

He added that Chechen refugees had reported that Russian planes dropped leaflets warning people not to use the roads in Chechnya's mountainous south.

When refugees manage to cross into neighboring Russian regions, troops and police screen them to try to determine if they have been fighting or if they are connected with the Wahhabis, an Islamic sect, Orlov said.

Noose tightens around Chechen towns

Russia vows it will not back off its ground assault on rebel fighters as they are wiped out. On Wednesday, Russian territory in the east and west, fighting their hold...



During the 1994-96 Chechen war, rights advocates claim thousands of were tortured and beaten at such camps.

Criticism came from other quarters. The World Council of Churches yesterday letter to Russian Orthodox Patriarch, condemn "the disproportionate and use of force employed by the Russian forces, which is contributing to a crisis of the utmost seriousness."

Turkey turns attention to oncoming winter

DUZCE, Turkey (AP) — With some rescue teams already gone and others leaving soon, hopes of finding more survivors from Turkey's latest earthquake are fading and thoughts are turning to helping the newly homeless face winter's bitter chill.

The 72-hour window after which people usually cannot survive beneath rubble lapsed at 7 p.m.

Some rescuers said there was no point in staying.

"It's finished. You can't find live people after 72 hours," Belgian fireman Jean Paul Dezutter said, who stopped by the American rescuers' camp for a ritual exchange of T-shirts and caps before leaving Monday afternoon.

Friday night's 7.2-magnitude quake killed at least 547 people, the government said yesterday.

Thousands have been left homeless in temperatures that have plunged to below freezing each evening.

Jean-Phillipe Jutzi, a Swiss rescuer, said there was little chance of anyone surviving in the rubble after the freezing temperatures of the last three nights.

Many must have died of hypothermia, he said.

A rescue team from Fairfax, Va., came equipped with 100,000 pounds of equipment. The team had planned a week's stay.

"Some people have started asking preliminary questions about leaving," Rekha Chalasani, the team's spokesperson said. She said the team would consult with the U.N. rescue coordinators about what to do.

A total of 23 international teams arrived in Turkey after the tremor, anticipating devastation like that of an August quake that killed over 17,000 people.

The significantly lower numbers of casualties this time has left some rescuers with little work. Some teams are switching their efforts from rescue to relief, reaching out to homeless people who spend cold nights in tents.

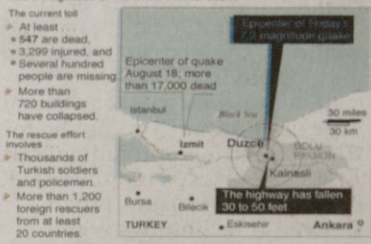
Nusret Miroglu, the governor of Bolu province said about 300 buildings had collapsed and about 80,000 people were sleeping in the streets.

He said the death toll could still rise.

His estimate of the homeless was based only on city counts, he noted — "we have no information from

Assessing the damage in Turkey

Temperatures in the region have plunged below freezing, reducing the chances of survival for people trapped beneath the rubble. The quake had a magnitude of 7.2 on the Richter scale.



the villages." He appealed to international charities for assistance, saying there were not enough tents to go around.

Bus stations were flooded with residents fleeing the zone to other regions of Turkey.

Among those who stayed, men shored earth up against improvised shelters to keep the rain waters out.

The Israeli team is set to distribute 2,000 sleeping bags in Duzce.

An Israeli field hospital also is in place, relieving staff at the municipal hospital in Duzce, which was forced to move patients into its yard after the quake made the wards unsafe.

Lawyers for Nazi-era laborers threaten walk out on talks

BONN, Germany — Lawyers for Nazi-era laborers were threatening to walk out on settlement talks yesterday, many raised its other attorneys said.

There were signs that would boost the \$3.7 billion offered with some of the largest companies, Edgar, one of 12 lawyers representing people forced to work for many during World War II.

A settlement figure of \$5.3 billion was proposed even that would not satisfy attorneys' demands, Fagan reported, but he did not elaborate.

"The majority of the laborers is ready to walk out on talks," he said.

This sixth round of talks, tabling a fund to pay for labor victims has stalled on much money survivors should get.

A German envoy thought there was little chance of a two-day talks, which began Monday, would result in a settlement.

"I am certainly not pessimistic," German government negotiator Otto Lamsdorff said, "but I don't know what will come out of this."

Lamsdorff, speaking on German Radio, called on laborers to compromise. But lawyers said they would not accept their demands for more money.

Meanwhile, German laborers and the government have argued over who should pay for the money.

German companies have argued under the pressure of litigation lawsuits in the United States.

The companies want settlement to protect them from possible lawsuits in the United States brought on behalf of the slave and forced laborers.

But as the negotiations dragged on, lawyers said it might be better just to let cases in court.

Fagan yesterday blamed many of the settlement proposals as "posteriorous," even after the government said Monday it would raise its part of the offer to 10 percent, to \$1.6 billion.

The companies have \$2.1 billion but said they have trouble raising the amount.

Lawyers unveiled an independent study Monday showing German industry made a 10 percent day equivalent of \$100 billion using Nazi slave and forced labor.

Lamsdorff dismissed the study, saying it was "not accurate and doesn't get us anywhere."

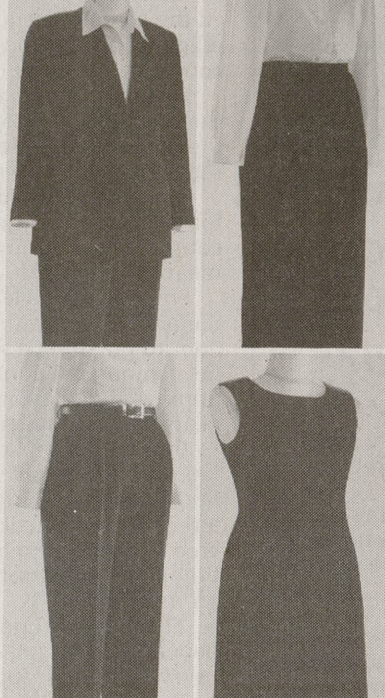
The fund, so far including German firms, aims to compensate about 235,000 slave or people whom the companies tended to work to death in concentration camps but still alive.

Also eligible for compensation would be the hundreds of thousands of forced laborers, non-Jews from Eastern Europe, though those numbers are in dispute.

From 1.5 million to 2 million people ultimately could be paid.

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