

# Chechens cautioned to evacuate

DOLINSKY, Russia (AP) — Russian planes dropped leaflets on Chechnya's besieged capital yesterday, warning residents and rebels to flee before federal forces launch a massive attack to smash Grozny into submission.

The Russian military has been raining bombs and artillery on the city for weeks but has been hesitant to risk storming it, for fear that street battles would cause the kind of heavy casualties that Russia suffered in Grozny in the 1994-96 war.

Now the Russians are threatening to unleash their biggest artillery and air bombardment on the city so far. Russian forces dumped leaflets on Grozny yesterday telling rebel fighters and civilians that they had until Saturday to flee. The fliers said a safe corridor would be open until Dec. 11 to let civilians escape.

"Persons who stay in the city will be considered terrorists and bandits and will be destroyed by artillery and aviation," the leaflets read. "There will be no further negotiations. Everyone who does not leave the city will be destroyed."

It was unclear who could or would leave. Most of the civilians in Grozny — the Russians estimate between 15,000 and 40,000 remain — are old or infirm.

"We had to flee when they made such an ultimatum during the previous war," Zina Ferzauli, a refugee from Grozny staying in the village of Dolinsky, nine miles to the northwest, said. "Last time they also said that those who stayed in the city were militants. It turned out that many of them were elderly people who had nowhere to go, and exactly the same thing will happen now."

## Last chance for Grozny residents

Russian planes dropped fliers over the Chechen capital telling residents to leave by Saturday or be destroyed by massive air attacks. A corridor for citizens to escape will remain open until Dec. 11.



AP/Wm. J. Castello

## Yeltsin leaves hospital, plans China trip

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin returned to the Kremlin yesterday after a week of hospital treatment, and his aides said he would visit China this week.

Yeltsin, 68, fell ill this month with what the Kremlin said was bronchitis. Doctors sent him to the Central Clinical Hospital on Nov. 29 after diagnosing possible pneumonia.

Yeltsin left the hospital yesterday and met with Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma in the Kremlin. The Russian leader then left for his country residence outside Moscow to continue his recovery, the presidential press service said.

The Kremlin later announced that the president would visit China tomorrow.

# Orissa government offers cyclone relief

BHUBANESWAR, India (AP) — The new chief minister of India's Orissa state promised to get relief operations back on track yesterday as thousands of homeless people waited for food and shelter in the cyclone-ravaged region.

After a brief swearing-in ceremony, Hemanand Biswal directed senior officials to quickly distribute plastic sheets and blankets to the 2.5 million homeless people still camping out in 10 coastal districts battered in the Oct. 29 cyclone.

Biswal replaced Giridhar Gamang as chief minister of the southeastern Indian state. Sonia Gandhi, president of the Congress party that rules Orissa, fired Gamang Sunday for his slow response to the devastating cyclone that killed nearly 10,000 people and destroyed thousands

of mud and thatch huts. The government's relief efforts have drawn widespread criticism.

**"My government's first priority is to streamline relief operations..."**

— Hemanand Biswal  
Orissa chief minister

At a press conference in the state capital, Bhubaneswar, Biswal told reporters that his government had ordered that all victims be compensated and all damaged schools and hospital buildings be repaired by the end of the month.

"My government's first priority is to streamline relief operations and ensure that it reaches the affected people," he said.

S.B. Mishra, the state's former chief minister, said the government's relief efforts were grossly inadequate for the number of people affected.

He said the Orissa government was ordering two million blankets and hoped to distribute them among the homeless by Dec. 31.

More than 200 trucks carrying plastic sheets for use in tents against the elements were to Bhubaneswar 10 days after the government refused to let them enter the city because of sheets met government standards. Experts were testing sheets for quality.

# Pakistani police search for serial killer

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP) — While on the trail of the killer of 100 children, Pakistani police have detained two men who admitted they had sex with many of the alleged serial killer's victims.

Police are hunting for a man who identified himself as Javed Iqbal in a letter he sent to police last week in which he said he killed the children, then disposed of their bodies in acid.

Police spokesperson Ashiq Marath said yesterday that police in the eastern city of Punjab

have two men in custody who say that they sexually assaulted 25 of the children, but denied killing their captives, according to a member of the police.

Many of the children, who ranged in age from 7 to 16 years old, were among the country's poorest and worked on the streets in Punjab's provincial capital, Lahore.

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