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HURRICANE KATRINA: 5 PAGES INSIDE



AP/M. SCOTT MAHASKEY

In New Orleans, relief workers face urban warfare; Washington sending 30,000 troops and \$10.5 billion in relief to Gulf states

'A desperate SOS'



AP/MICHAEL AINSWORTH

Evacuees from the Superdome in New Orleans scream and shove Thursday as they line up shoulder to shoulder to take a bus to the Houston Astrodome.

Chaos reigns as storm survivors fear for their lives in riot-torn streets

By ALLEN G. BREED
 Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — New Orleans descended into anarchy Thursday as corpses lay abandoned in street medians, fights and fires broke out, cops turned in their badges and the governor declared war on looters who have made the city a menacing landscape of disorder and fear.

"They have M-16s and they're locked and loaded," Gov. Kathleen Blanco said of 300 National Guard troops who landed in New Orleans fresh from duty in Iraq. "These troops know how to shoot and kill, and they are more than willing to do so, and I expect they will."

Four days after Hurricane Katrina roared in with a devastating blow that inflicted potentially thousands of deaths, the fear, anger and violence mounted Thursday. "I'm not sure I'm going to get out of here alive," said Canadian tourist Larry Mitzel, who handed a reporter his business card in case he goes missing. "I'm scared of riots. I'm scared of the locals. We might get caught in the crossfire."

The chaos deepened despite the promise of 1,400 National Guardsmen a day to stop the looting, plans for a \$10 billion recovery bill in Congress and a government relief effort President Bush called the biggest in U.S. history.

New Orleans' top emergency management official called that effort a "national disgrace" and questioned when reinforcements would actually reach the increasingly lawless city.

About 15,000 to 20,000 people who had taken shelter at New Orleans convention center grew ever more hostile after waiting for buses for days amid the filth and the dead. Police Chief Eddie Compass said there was such a crush around a squad of 88 officers that they retreated when they went in to check out reports of assaults.

"We have individuals who are getting raped, we have individuals who are getting beaten," Compass said. "Tourists are walking in that direction and they are getting

"We have individuals who are getting raped, we have individuals who are getting beaten. Tourists are walking in that direction and they are getting preyed upon."

New Orleans Police Chief
Eddie Compass

See **KATRINA** — A10

As hunger, thirst take hold, is looting for food justifiable?

By ERIN McCLAM
 Associated Press

As New Orleans has descended into chaos, desperate residents have stolen ramen noodles, loaves of bread, cases of soda — basic survival needs in a painfully empty city. Others have taken jewelry, TVs and even guns.

The devastation left behind by Hurricane Katrina has raised difficult questions of ethics: When, if ever, is looting OK? When is it acceptable to break the law — and what happens when law itself breaks down?

In New Orleans Thursday, Monica Laguard sobbed almost uncontrollably as she placed items she had taken from a store's shelves into plastic garbage bags to transport them to her shelter in a nearby school.

She was taking children's clothing and snack foods. She could not find water.

"I've got to get back to my children," she said. "I've got to get back to my children."

Ethicists and social psychologists said in interviews

See **ETHICS** — A10



AP/DAVE MARTIN

Earl Baker carries hygiene products taken Thursday from a New Orleans pharmacy. Looters say they have no other recourse.

'Picture Concord Mall gone, you can't imagine'

Veteran Del. volunteer tries to help

By BETH MILLER
 The News Journal

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Sally Palmer is an experienced volunteer.

The 52-year-old from north Wilmington has worked with the Delaware Hospice, the Armed Forces Emergency Services and for the American Red Cross last summer during the worst hurricane season in Florida's history.

But it's nothing compared to what must have happened earlier this week when Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast.

"Picture driving down 202, near AstraZeneca, and everything you used to see there has been flattened," said Palmer, who volunteered with the Red Cross again after the storm hit earlier this week.

"The Rollins building is a pile of bricks. Concord Mall is gone. If you see the pictures on TV, you still can't imagine the massiveness of it."

Palmer is one of the hundreds of Delawareans who have

See **PALMER** — A12

YOU CAN HELP

For a list of organizations accepting donations to help hurricane victims, turn to **B3**

ONLINE

Find more on Katrina's devastation, see photos and interactive graphics, and read blogs as we follow Delawareans aiding relief efforts at www.delawareonline.com.

ECONOMIC HIT

From gas stations to grocery stores, farms to factories, Hurricane Katrina is confronting consumers and businesses with higher prices and logistical dilemmas. **B7**



RACIAL DIVIDE

Amid all the tales of drama and survival on Thursday, the larger reality was that those escaping New Orleans, and those still trapped there, were all black people. **A9**

ANALYSIS

At every turn, political leaders failed Katrina's victims. They didn't strengthen the levees. They ceded the streets to looters. They left dead bodies to rot or bloat. **A12**

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TODAY'S FORECAST

HIGH 88 LOW 63

Details on A4

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