

Dangerous Goods Code ignorance increases risk

CONTAINERSHIPS remain at serious risk from dangerous cargo accidents despite an international code that was aimed at tightening up safety procedures.

Insurers are attempting to rally all sides of the industry as intense maritime trade continues with the east, heightening the peril.

TT Club, the top insurance mutual association in the field for ship operators, ports, logistics providers and container lessors, has expressed concern at what it says seems to be widespread lack of awareness of changes in the legal status of the International Maritime Organisation's International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code.

Unaware

When the club hosted a number of awareness seminars on the code, it found that too many cargo originators were unaware of their responsibilities, and of the fact that the code became mandatory worldwide from the beginning of 2004.

The club is anxious because many such organisations still think that the code merely represents guidelines for

good practice, as used to be the case in some jurisdictions until the end of 2003.

Andrew Webster, director of loss prevention at the club, said: "Since 1998 we have witnessed about two incidents a year of large containerships being seriously damaged by major fires or explosions arising from packaged dangerous goods.

Emanating

"With the current huge surge in the volume of containerised goods, largely emanating from China and other parts of Asia, we are very concerned that the chances of further incidents increase."

"Naturally we consider the safe shipment of dangerous goods to be an issue of the highest priority," said Mr Webster.

TT Club is highlighting four main problem areas:

- deliberate non-declaration or mis-declaration;
- ignorance resulting in negligent non-declaration;
- lack of properly trained and experienced staff leading to defective

documentation and marking, labelling and placarding;

- improper stowage and incorrect cargo segregation.

"Our message through the seminars is primarily directed at forwarders and non-vessel operating carriers," said Mr Webster.

Legal duty

"If undeclared, dangerous goods create a problem, and the vessel operator is likely to hold its customer responsible as the latter is under a strict legal duty to warrant that cargo as fit for carriage. If a forwarder or NVOC is the shipper of record, it is no defence for him to say that it was his client's fault.

"As far as the shipowner is concerned, the contractual liability stops with the NVOC. This could leave the NVOC exposed to a potential multi-million dollar claim."

The club has pledged to carry on its educational drive on the issue, in co-operation with the industry, throughout 2005.

Lloyd's List Editorial

Summary of Major Cases in this week's issue of Lloyd's Casualty Week

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>BANDIRMA</i>	passenger	TUR	TU	3,213	963	1976	Had engine breakdown Nov 5 and towed to Canakkale.
<i>BATHITA</i>	fishing	DNK	—	—	—	—	Had fire in the engine-room Nov 2. Fire extinguished. Towed to Thorsminde.
<i>DA QING HE</i>	container	PAN	NK	9,475	12,570	1996	In collision with Xin Fuda in foul weather, at Tianjin, Oct 31, causing dangerous chemicals to fall into the sea. Containers being unloaded. Sailed Keelung Nov 6.
<i>HEIDI KATRINE</i>	trawler	—	—	—	—	—	Experienced a heavy leak in the engine-room, off Denmark, Nov 2 and sank. All three crew rescued.
<i>HULSIG</i>	trawler	—	—	—	—	—	Caught fire Nov 2. Fire extinguished. Towed to Skagen. No injuries.
<i>MANSON</i>	tug	CAN	—	44	—	—	Sank while towing 2 barges off Texada Island, about 80 km NW of Vancouver(CAN), in about 250 metres of water, Nov 6. Search for the two missing crew called off Nov 7. Barges removed from site.
<i>SCM ATHINA</i>	general	ATG	GL	6,170	7,734	2000	Struck unmanned natural gas platform off Galveston Nov 5, setting platform ablaze. Anchored off Galveston for investigation. Minimal damage to superstructure. Arrived Houston Nov 6, & in port Nov 8.
<i>SHER HIND</i>	general	IND	—	—	—	—	Sank after colliding with a sunken vessel near Socotra Island Nov 8. Nineteen crew on board, 9 safe.
<i>SUEHIRO MARU NO.55</i>	fishing	JPN	—	—	—	—	Sank after collision with mv <i>Myoetsu Maru No.18</i> off Tomamae, Sea of Japan, after leaving Tomamae for fishing grounds, Nov 6. Four of the 8 crew rescued, 3 missing, master dead.
<i>TINA</i>	general	GRC	—	490	950	1956	Reported Nov 3 semi-sunk at long lay up area of Ampelakia, Salamis. To be lifted.
<i>VASCO DA GAMA</i>	fishing	CHN	—	—	—	—	Abandoned by crew due fire on board in about lat 03S long 05E, Nov 5. Reported afloat and smouldering Nov 7.
<i>WHITE STAR</i>	yacht	CYM	AB	499	426	2004	Crew rescued Nov 9 after calling for help following engine-room fire. Drifted towards shoal water. US navy ship towed vessel out of area & tug to tow vessel into harbour for repairs.

CONTENTS

Reports appear in alphabetical order under the following headings and relevant page number:

Marine, including Overdue & Missing Vessels	1
Piracy	9
Port State Control	10
Seizures & Arrests	10
Pipeline Accidents	10
Weather & Navigation	10
Earthquakes	12
Volcanic Activity	13
Political & Civil Unrest	13
Labour Disputes	21
Awards & Settlements	22
Railway Accidents	23
Miscellaneous	24
Fires & Explosions	25
Aviation	27
Product Recalls	31
Port Conditions	32
Port Conditions charts	33

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



AL BOURAIQA (Cambodia)

Aden, Nov 10 — Crude oil tanker *Al Bouraiqa* is still at Aden outer harbour anchorage fully loaded with a cargo of crude from Ras Isa. Understand that repairs are expected to be completed in about two weeks. — Lloyd's Agents.

AL SHARE-E-HIND

See *Sher Hind*.

AL TAWFIK (Georgia)

Novorossiysk, Nov 10 — General cargo *Al Tawfik* sailed from Novorossiysk on Nov 8, bound for Tripoli. — Lloyd's Agents.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Rijeka, Nov 9 — Passenger ro/ro *Alexander the Great* was sold at auction on Nov 8 to Dido Steel Corporation S.A. Monrovia. — Lloyd's Agents.

ANASTASIS (Malta)

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated Nov 5, states: Under the direction of an African marine pilot, the Garden Valley-based mission ship *Anastasis* (11701 gt, built 1953) sustained damage to its bow and a forward water tank when it made contact with a docking pier in Benin, this morning, officials with Mercy Ships said. *Anastasis* is scheduled to be in Benin for four months. "There will be no delays in providing free life-changing surgeries and community development projects to the people of Benin," said Don Stephens, president of Mercy Ships, in a press release. An internal investigation is under way to assess the damage and determine the cause of the accident, said Jon Fadely, safety officer for marine operations for Mercy Ships. Jim Paterson, Mercy Ships vice president of marine operations, will fly to the vessel on Nov 18 to complete the assessment and plan repairs. "We lost steel, but no lives," said the ship's executive director, Daslin Small. The 51-year-old, 522-foot *Anastasis* is insured, but the amount of damage does not begin to reach the deductible," Fadely said.

London, Nov 6 — A press release, dated Nov 5, issued by Mercy Ships, states: The Mercy Ship *Anastasis* arrived today in Cotonou, the commercial capital of Benin. After a successful sail from Europe, *Anastasis* made contact with the dock while manoeuvring in Cotonou. The hospital ship sustained damage to the bow and a forward water tank. A Lloyd's surveyor will also assess the damage and determine what will be necessary to make repairs.

Cotonou, Nov 9 — Mission ship *Anastasis* arrived Cotonou Nov 5 for co-operation between two states regarding the treatment of the health of the population. The vessel will stay at

Cotonou for about four months. Sick people will be able to go on board the vessel to receive care. — Lloyd's Agents.

ANTONINA NEZHDANOVA (Russia)

See "Typhoon 'Tokage'" under "Weather & Navigation."

ATLANTIK FRIGO (Croatia)

Rijeka, Nov 9 — Four workers died from suffocating and three were injured in a small scale fire on board ref *Atlantik Frigo* (10366 gt, built 1989) at Trogir Shipyard today. The vessel arrived at Trogir on Nov 4 for repairs. An investigation is under way. — Lloyd's Agents.

BALTIC CARRIER (Dominica)

London, Nov 6 — General cargo *Baltic Carrier* arrived at Szczecin on Nov 5.

BANDIRMA (Turkey)

Istanbul, Nov 5 — Passenger ro/ro *Bandirma* (3213 gt, built 1976), Gokceada for Canakkale, with passengers, had an engine breakdown today and was towed to Canakkale by tugs. — Lloyd's Agents.

BATHITA (Denmark)

Gothenburg, Nov 4 — Fishing *Bathita*, home port Thorsminde, had a fire in the engine-room around 1100, Nov 2. The fire was put out and then towed to its home port. — Westax Marine Services AB.

BBC CHINA (Antigua & Barbuda)

Rotterdam, Nov 5 — The general cargo *BBC China* fuel removal operation has made good progress in favourable weather conditions since the beginning of this week and it is now deemed that all remaining heavy fuel oil has been removed, with a total of approximately 70 tonnes pumped off *BBC China* to date. Divers were able to gain access to the engine-room in order to open manholes and vents so as to allow any trapped oil to come to the water's surface, where it is being skimmed off in an effort to ensure that all pollutants are recovered. Now that all heavy fuel oil has been removed from *BBC China*, thereby significantly reducing the threat posed to the environment by the wreck, salvage personnel will concentrate on removing the remaining 60 tonnes of gasoil (diesel) and 8 tonnes of lubricants. At midnight Oct 26 the vessel's owners declared *BBC China* a 'Constructive Total Loss'. It is understood by all parties that it will not be possible to refloat *BBC China* and in consultation with local leaders and local authorities the relevant authorities are investigating the most effective means of reducing the casualty's impact on the environment. A decision in this regard will be made in due course and all parties will be meeting early next week to finalise details. — SMIT Salvage BV.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A decision on the fate of wrecked general cargo *BBC China* will be made at the end of November after an environmental

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impact assessment. In a statement today, a "joint response committee" said marine biologists and independent experts would first conduct the assessment. This was decided at a meeting of salvors, the department of environmental affairs and the South African Maritime Safety Authority. "A final decision is expected by the end of November once initial environmental impact assessment reports have been submitted and following a process of consultation with local authorities and local leaders," read the statement. The method employed would have to have the least impact on the environment and should ensure that the wreck was not attractive to local inhabitants, tourists and adventure seekers whose safety could be compromised if they should investigate the wreck. The vessel's owners have declared it a "constructive total loss". It will not be possible to refloat it. Good progress has been made since the beginning of last week in removing fuel from the ship, with the majority of the heavy fuel oil gone.

BERGSTRAUM (NIS)

Le Havre, Nov 9 — Chemical/oil carrier *Bergstraum* sailed Le Havre Nov 2. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Bergstraum* subsequently arrived Emden Nov 7 and sailed Nov 8.)

CANADIAN OLYMPIC (Canada)

London, Nov 8 — At 2144, Nov 4, while at anchor in Whitefish Bay, Lake Superior, in lat 46 43.30N, long 84 59.49W, bulk *Canadian Olympic* (22887 gt, built 1976) lost its port anchor. At the time there were strong north-west winds, 35-45 knots.

CAPO MANUELA (Italy)

Rijeka, Nov 11 — Lpg *Capo Manuela* is still at the Shiprepairers at Sibenik. It is understood that the vessel has been abandoned. — Lloyd's Agents.

CELTIC PIONEER (U.K.)

London, Nov 8 — General cargo *Celtic Pioneer* (1892 gt, built 1984) was detained by Port Surveyors following a slight collision with a bunkering tanker which was alongside the North Mole, Gibraltar, behind the berth that it was going to at 1000, Nov 7. Very slight damage was sustained to both vessels but *Celtic Pioneer* was discovered to have other deficiencies and was arrested at 1700, same day, by Supreme Court. The arrest by the court has nothing to do with the detention order by the Port Surveyor.

CELTIC PIONEER (United Kingdom)

London, Nov 9 — Understood general cargo *Celtic Pioneer* was in contact with product tanker *Vemaol XXV* (3586 gt, built 1993) at Gibraltar on Nov 7. (See issue of Nov 9.)

CHRISTA KERSTIN (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Nov 5 — General cargo *Christa Kerstin* arrived Rotterdam 0325 today.

CRISTOFORO COLOMBO (Belgium)

Rotterdam, Nov 5 — The operation to refloat hopper dredger *Cristoforo Colombo* began on Nov 1. In its present location *Cristoforo Colombo* is resting on a rocky seabed surrounded in water depths of approximately 2 metres. The normal draught of the vessel is approximately 5 metres. SMIT Salvage removed all heavy equipment, materials and remaining oil products from the vessel to diminish the vessel's weight. Cutter suction dredger *J.F.J.De Nul* will construct dams around the vessel to set up a kind of dock. By dredging a channel towards the vessel, constructing a bund with the dredged materials and raising the water level in the created basin *Cristoforo Colombo* will be refloated by its own buoyancy. Then it will be shifted into the dredged channel, the water level will be lowered again, the bund will be opened and finally it will be towed to deeper water and further on to dry dock facilities for repairs. The time required for completing these operations is estimated to be between two and three weeks. It is very important to be able to start these operations as soon as possible in order to make sure the vessel can be removed from its grounding location before the storm season starts. — SMIT Salvage BV.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The erection of a special dam around hopper dredger *Cristoforo Colombo* stranded in the port of Kholmok is nearly complete, said the officer on duty in the city department of civil defence and emergency situations. Five vessels, including a special vessel of the Sakhalin Search and rescue Centre Rubin, are taking part in the operation. A dam is erected three sides of the ship to ease it off the rocks. After that, the ship will be towed via a special canal to the sea.

DA QING HE (Panama)

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated Nov 2, states: Panamanian container vessel (c.c. *Da Qing He*, 9475 gt, built 1996) was in collision with a Chinese cargo ship (*Xin Fuda*) in foul weather on Sunday (Oct 31) in the port of Tianjin causing dangerous chemicals to spill into the sea, according to port sources. At 2200 Sunday, in heavy rain and dense fog, the Panamanian vessel loaded with containers was in contact with an internal-trade ship while waiting in the sea-lane for suitable weather to sail towards Japan. The "tip" of the Chinese vessel damaged containers filled with furfuryl alcohol, a toxic and flammable chemical, on the second deck of the Panamanian vessel. It was immediately washed into the sea. Furfuryl alcohol is used in industrial processes and is an irritant that can, in strong enough concentrations, cause tumors and genetic mutations. Port workers are still unloading the containers from the Panamanian vessel, and the condition of the tainted sea-lane is being closely monitored.

London, Nov 5 — Following received from Berijing MRCC, timed 0830, UTC: C.c. *Da Qing He* and vessel *Xin Fuda* were in collision at Tianjin Oct 31.

London, Nov 10 — C.c. *Da Qing He* was reported departing Keelung Nov 6.

DAMAGE TO FLOATING PRODUCTION STORAGE AND OFFLOADING VESSEL, NORTH SEA

London, Nov 9 — A damaged riser on Petroleum Geo Services' Varg floating production storage and offloading vessel has reduced output from the Varg field in the North Sea by 40%. The Norwegian contractor said oil output from the field and FPSO was down to 15,000 barrels per day because a riser linked to the wellhead platform was damaged and would need repairing. Production was halted late on Friday after damage to the main riser and the vessel was briefly shut down before restarting at lower rates through other risers.

DONA NINA

Buenos Aires, Nov 5 — Sand vessel *Dona Nina* completed repairs on Oct 29 and on Oct 30 it returned to service with its usual "course" between Buenos Aires and Paran· Guaz'. — Lloyd's Agents.

DORTHE DALSOE (Denmark)

Gothenburg, Nov 4 — General cargo *Scot Explorer* was in collision with Danish fishing *Dorthe Dalsoe*, homeport Fredrikshavn. *Dorthe Dalsoe* started to leak, but extra pumps were placed onboard and the vessel was towed to Strandby. *Scot Explorer* experienced only scratching damage and proceeded to Varberg, where it currently remains. — Westax Marine Services AB.

ENCHANTMENT OF THE SEAS (NIS)

See *Huey L. Cheramie*.

FAIR MARE (Liberia)

London, Nov 9 — Crude oil tanker *Fair Mare*, believed in tow of tug/supply *Neftegaz 67*, left Fujairah Oct 27 for Gadani Beach.

FEDERAL BAFFIN (Barbados)

London, Nov 8 — At 0840, Nov 6, while berthing at Section 46, Montreal, bulk *Federal Baffin* (27078 gt, built 1995), struck the wharf causing minor damage to the vessel's starboard side.

FENGHUI 6

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: One person is dead and four are missing after vessel *Fenghui 6* sank, attempting to assist a dredger heave an anchor in Qingdao on Monday (Nov 8). The five people fell into the sea in the incident. Officials from the local maritime safety bureau said they had dispatched divers to search for the missing four, but no one has been found because of the unclean water. Salvage of the ship was underway.

FESCO VOYAGER (Cyprus)

Tianjin, Nov 11 — C.c. *Fesco Voyager* arrived at Xingang, Tianjin on Oct 17 and dry-docked at Xingang shipyard, at 2400, local time, Oct 22. First undry-docked at 2100, on Oct 23, and now alongside Xingang shipyard, awaiting the replacement and making of shell plating. Next dry-docking is estimated around Nov 18. Repairs are estimated to be completed around the end of November. — Lloyd's Agents.

FREEDOM (U.S.A.)

London, Nov 9 — Vehicle *Freedom* sailed Bremerhaven Oct 22 and subsequently arrived Baltimore Nov 7.

FUKUSHO MARU (Japan)

See *Heung-A Bangkok*.

GODDESS (Singapore)

Yokohama, Nov 4 — C.c. *Goddess* arrived Nagoya Nov 2 from Qingdao and sailed same day for Osaka, where arrived Nov 3 and sailed Nov 4 for Lianyungang. — Lloyd's Agents.

GOLD I (Tonga)

Rijeka, Nov 8 — General cargo *Gold I*, flying the Comoros flag, arrived at Split on Nov 7, from Sfax. — Lloyd's Agents.

GREAT HARBOUR CAY (Bahamas)

Freeport, Nov 11 — Tug *Great Harbour Cay* once refloated, was found to be in remarkably good basic overall condition. A large hole was found to have been "punched" through the hull on the port side, aft, in way of the machinery space and well below waterline level. The anticipation of major damage to the main engines appears to have been unfounded. Shortly after reloading it appears the tug was sold to local interests (price not known) and it has since been placed on dry-dock at Grand Bahama Shipyard for hull repairs. New owners have reported the main engines have been flushed through with new oil and are turning over freely on the air-start system. New owners plans for the vessel are not known. — Lloyd's Agents.

HEDY JAEGER

London, Nov 8 — At about 1000, local time, Nov 6, leaking from non specific tanker *Hedy Jaeger* caused a lot of work for the Fire Brigade and other services. At the time the inland tanker was lying in the locks of the Krammersluizen, loaded with a cargo of 1600 tons of petrol, together with three other inland vessels. It was found that about 200 litres of petrol had leaked from one of its tanks into the lock. The Fire Brigade arrived soon and covered the water around the tanker with a layer of foam. The shipping traffic in the two locks was stopped. Immediate explosion danger was not present. About noon the shipping traffic was started again through the second lock and the three other vessels that were lying with the leaking tanker could carefully leave the lock. The petrol from the leaking tank of *Hedy Jaeger* was pumped into another tank of the vessel. At around 1900, the petrol and the

foam had been cleared from the lock and the vessel could resume voyage under own power.

HEIDI KATRINE

Gothenburg, Nov 4 — At approximately 2000, Nov 2, trawler *Heidi Katrine* experienced a heavy leak in its engine room "off Denmark". The three men crew was rescued by Norwegian anchor handling firefighting tug/supply *Havila Troll*. The vessel was attended just 15 minutes after issuing an SOS call, but sunk. There were no injuries to the crew. — Westax Marine Services AB.

HENRIETTE (NIS)

Trondheim, Nov 8 — General cargo *Henriette* remains in the port at Holla due to a delay in the delivery of spare parts. — Lloyd's Agents.

HEUNG-A BANGKOK (South Korea)

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A fisherman was critically wounded early today after fishing *Fukusho Maru*, 4.9 tonnes, was in collision with c.c. *Heung-A Bangkok* (8273 gt, built 1995) in the sea off Awaji Island in Hyogo Prefecture, the Japan Coast Guard said. The fishing vessel capsized after the collision, about 9 kilometres west of the island at around 0430 hrs, the coast guard said. None of the 16 crew on the cargo ship was injured.

HIGH ISLAND 207

See *SCM Athina*.

HUEY L.CHERAMIE (U.S.A.)

Key West, Fla., Nov 5 — A tugboat hauling a barge collided with docked Royal Caribbean International passenger *Enchantment of the Seas* (74136 gt, built 1997) in Key West today, causing an eight-foot-long puncture in the ship's hull. No injuries among the 2,040 passengers and 741 crew members were reported after the collision jolted passengers, many of whom were eating breakfast on the vessel moored at a privately-operated pier in Key West. "The ship is not in any danger. The passengers are not in any danger. We're welding a metal plate over the puncture," Lynn Martenstein, a spokeswoman for Miami-based Royal Caribbean, said. "This was a barge. They just sideswiped us and kept going." The 916-foot-long cruise ship was expected to keep its scheduled departure today for Cozumel, Martenstein said. The Coast Guard was investigating the cause of the incident, said Miami-based spokesman Ryan Doss. The gash, six feet above the waterline, is located in the hull's forward port side. Tug *Huey L. Cheramie* (95 gt, built 1981) was hauling a dredging barge that is approximately 80 feet long and 100 feet wide, Key West assistant city manager John Jones said. The U.S. Navy is overseeing a \$32 million, 18-month dredging project to deepen Key West's Outer Mole Pier shipping channel area. The project will allow the Navy to bring destroyers and other large ships into

the channel. New Orleans-based dredging contractor Bean Stuyvesant LLC was awarded the contract. A spokesman for the company said the tug was transporting a hopper barge to the dredge site when the accident occurred. "We are uncertain about the cause of the accident and are co-operating fully with the Coast Guard and other authorities as they seek to make that determination," spokesman Greg Beuerman said in a written statement.

Miami, Nov 5 — A press release from Roral Caribbean International, dated today, states: Royal Caribbean International's passenger *Enchantment of the Seas* was struck by a construction barge (being towed by tug *Huey L. Cheramie*) at approximately 0800 today, while the ship was docked in Key West. All guests and crew members are completely safe and none were injured. The barge created a puncture in the forward, port side of the hull, approximately six feet long and one foot wide, approximately six feet above the water line. The company has begun temporary repairs and expects the ship to depart Key West as scheduled today. Royal Caribbean immediately notified the U.S. Coast Guard and other authorities regarding the incident, and is fully assisting in their investigations. *Enchantment of the Seas* departed Fort Lauderdale yesterday on a four-night sailing, carrying 2,040 guests and 741 crew members. The ship is visiting Key West today, Cozumel tomorrow, spending the day at sea Sunday, and returning to Fort Lauderdale on Monday. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Nov 8 — Understand from Royal Caribbean that passenger *Enchantment of the Seas* is operating normally.

HULSIG

Gothenburg, Nov 4 — Trawler *Hulsig* caught fire pm, Nov 2. After the fire had been put out, the vessel was towed back to Skagen. There were no injuries. — Westax Marine Services AB.

IBUKI (Antigua & Barbuda)

Honolulu, Nov 8 — C.c. *Ibuki* sailed Honolulu Nov 6 for Long Beach. — Lloyd's Agents.

Honolulu, Nov 11 — C.c. *Ibuki* is still in port. It is reported repairs to the vessel are complete, and vessel was due to sail, however, the US Coast Guard has detained it. — Lloyd's Agents.

IRINIKOS (Panama)

London, Nov 5 — Bulk *Irinikos* sailed from Brindisi on Nov 1, bound for Palermo.

JIN AN (Panama)

London, Nov 9 — General cargo *Jin An* arrived Kashima Oct 28 and sailed Nov 6, arriving Chiba Nov 7 and sailing Nov 8.

KAIWO MARU (Japan)

See "Typhoon 'Tokage'" under "Weather & Navigation."

KEN EXPLORER (Liberia)

London, Nov 8 — Following received from the managers of bulk *Ken*

Explorer, dated today: *Ken Explorer* is still discharging cargo, after which it will be drydocked. We have not yet decided on where repairs will take place and are still receiving quotations.

London, Nov 9 — Tsavlis has refloated stranded bulk *Ken Explorer*. Tsavlis has been working on the salvage operation under a Lloyd's Open Form contract since mid-August. *Ken Explorer* ran aground in the Gulf of Khambat while on a voyage from Chile to India. Two salvage tugs *Fairplay IX* and the Tsavlis-operated *SB-408* were mobilised to assist the bulk carrier, which was severely damaged in the accident. The operation was hampered by the monsoon season, and the cargo of 43,800 tonnes of copper concentrates, which liquifies if the moisture content rises, was potentially destabilising the ship. Four cargo holds were flooded during the accident. Tsavlis successfully removed the bunkers from the ship using a bunker vessel from the United Arab Emirates. Two further vessels, general cargo *Patara* and bulk *Sheng Mu*, were mobilised to act as storage vessels, as well as a large team of personnel including three salvage masters.

LUDVIG ANDERSEN (Panama)

London, Nov 10 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: *Ro/ro Ludvig Andersen* is still at Karlsund Shipyard, undergoing repairs.

LUJIN-I (North Korea)

Bucharest, Oct 29 — General cargo *Lujin-I* sailed Midia Oct 28 and arrived Constantza same day. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Lujin-I* subsequently sailed Constantza Nov 5 for Nemrut Bay.)

MANSON (Canada)

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Rescue crews off the B.C. coast are scaling back the search for two missing crew men from sunken tug *Manson* (44 gt, built 1970). Coast Guard spokesman Troy Haddock said today "We're suspecting that the vessel is on the bottom. We believe the tug is still attached to the towline (of one barge). "As far as active searching goes, we've reduced the search," he said. The mayday signal came in around 0300, PST. The tug was pulling two barges off Texada Island, about 80 kilometres north-west of Vancouver. "They had lost one of the two barges they were towing and were attempting to recover it," said Coast Guard officer Darren Morely, who added *Manson* also reported steering problems. There was no assistance request at that time. However, satellite picked up an emergency signal 15 minutes later. When no response was received from the tug's crew, rescuers were dispatched and arrived within the hour. Three tugs, three Coast Guard vessels and a Canadian Forces Buffalo search aircraft were initially involved. Other vessels came to join the search in the rough waters, where wind and rain hampered visibility. While a debris

field was found, along with an empty liferaft, there was no trace of the crew. The barges are above the surface, but the tug has been found about 200 metres below the surface.

London, Nov 7 — Following received from Victoria RCC, timed 1625, UTC: Tug *Manson* has still not been located but is believed to be sitting on the seabed at a depth of 250 metres. Vessel is still attached by towline to an equipment barge, which is sitting on the surface above the sunken tug. The search for the two missing crewmen has been called off.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: The search for two crew members who disappeared when their tug *Manson* sank early Saturday morning has been called off. "We've covered all our bases. All leads are exhausted. The chance of survival is non-existent at this point," Troy Haddock of the Canadian Coast Guard said yesterday. Fifty-five year-old skipper Dusty Davidson and an unidentified 42-year-old crewman remain missing. Discovery Towing's Paula Kaye says Davidson made the trip up the Georgia Strait and into Malaspina Strait routinely, and that he was an experienced skipper. Recovery of the tug will be up to the RCMP and Discovery. RCMP Cpl. Wayne Plimmer said the ongoing poor weather set back attempts to raise *Manson* yesterday. "They had some equipment problems and the weather was still a little ugly out there," he said. "They did get the barge removed from the site. They'll be out at first light (today)."

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated Nov 8, states: RCMP ended their search for two crewmen missing from tug *Manson* today after failing to find the vessel, which sank in bad weather off the B.C. coast early Saturday. Searchers had hoped the sunken tug was still attached to one of the two barges it was towing through the Strait of Georgia about 80 kilometres northwest of Vancouver. "Through recovery efforts they've managed to pull up the cable and it is not attached to the tug," said Sgt. Danny Willis of the Sunshine Coast RCMP detachment. "So the tug is believed submerged somewhere in the water and two persons are missing and presumed drowned." Willis said searchers have no idea where the wreck could be located because it's not known when the cable broke. Water depth in the area ranges from 200 to 250 metres. "It's not feasible to send anything down that deep to find out where it went," he said. The northbound current through the strait also is very strong, he said, and could have taken the barge and the bodies a fair distance from the site of the sinking. The only hope of finding the bodies now is if they are spotted on the surface of the water or wash ashore, said Willis. The accident investigation has been handed over to the National Transportation Safety Board.

MARY NOUR (Panama)

See "Cement Dispute, Mexico" under "Miscellaneous."

MENOMINEE (NIS)

Montreal, Nov 9 — At 1600, Nov 8, the port bow of bulk *Menominee* (9261 gt, built 1967), Germany for Toledo, Ohio and Green Bay, Wisconsin, loaded with lumber, struck the bullnose end of the approach wall for Beauharnois Lock in the St. Lawrence Seaway. The bullnose is a concrete pier and has sustained local damage. *Menominee* has been heavily indented and torn on its port shoulder over a length of approximately 12 metres and width of 2.5 metres. This is in way of two ballast tanks. There was no pollution and no cargo damage. The vessel will proceed to Montreal where the intention is to effect repairs before proceeding into the Great Lakes to its ultimate destination ports. Repairs are estimated to take two weeks minimum. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Menominee* sailed Brake Oct 29 for Toledo (USA).)

London, Nov 9 — A report, dated today, states: Bulk *Menominee* upbound, struck the end of the lower approach wall of Beauharnois lock No. 3, in lat 45 19 06N, long 73 55 00W, at 1540, EST, Nov 8, sustaining considerable hull damage.

Troy, Michigan, Nov 11 — Bulk *Menominee*, loaded with lumber for Toledo and Green Bay, hit the wall at Beauharnois Tuesday morning (Nov 9) causing a 30-foot by 3-foot gash on the port side above the waterline. *Menominee* was escorted back to Montreal sec 44 by the Groupe Ocean tug *Laprairie*. Repairs are under way by Mount Royal Walsh Marine and should be completed in four-to-five days. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

MIGHTY CONFIDENCE (Cyprus)

Santos, Nov 4 — Bulk *Mighty Confidence* arrived at Santos on Nov 3, from Rio de Janeiro. — Lloyd's Agents.

MILENA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Nov 6 — Following received from the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, dated today: C.c. *Milena* (10917 gt, built 1995) grounded about 1.1 km north-east of Raffles Lighthouse, Singapore, about 2003, local time, today. The vessel had sailed Singapore about 1810 today for Mumbai with 574 containers. As a precaution, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore has deployed an anti-pollution craft, although there has been no pollution reported up until now. Port operations are unaffected. The vessel's owners are making arrangements to refloat the vessel.

London, Nov 7 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 0345, UTC: C.c. *Milena*: Situation remains the same, vessel is still aground. Salvage options are being discussed.

London, Nov 8 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 0330, UTC: C.c. *Milena* remains aground near Raffles Lighthouse. Salvage operations are continuing.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: C.c. *Milena*, en route from Singapore to India, ran aground Saturday (Nov 6) night near

Raffles Lighthouse and within port limits, the Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore, MPA, said yesterday. The ship is in stable condition with no reports of any injuries to the crew or of any oil pollution, the MPA said in its statement. The shipowner is currently making arrangements to have the ship refloated and port operations and vessel traffic are uneffected. Navigational broadcasts are being made warning ships in the vicinity to keep clear and the MPA has deployed an anti-pollution vessel as a precaution. The MPA said it was investigating the incident.

London, Nov 9 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 0420, UTC: C.c. *Milena* remains aground in the same position.

London, Nov 9 — Understand salvage services are being rendered to c.c. *Milena* under Lloyd's Open Form by Smit Marine BV and Semco Salvage.

London, Nov 10 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 0555, UTC: C.c. *Milena* is still aground in the same position. An attempt to refloat the vessel failed this morning.

London, Nov 11 — Reported c.c. *Milena* was successfully refloated overnight and is to now undergo a diver survey.

MSC LUCIA (Panama)

London, Nov 9 — C.c. *MSC Lucia* departed Singapore 2255, Nov 5 for Surabaya.

MYOETSU MARU NO.18 (Japan)

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Four of eight fishermen aboard fishing *Suehiro Maru No.55*, 19 tonnes, went missing early today when their vessel was in collision with general cargo *Myoetsu Maru No.18* (611 gt, built 1993) in the Sea of Japan off Tomamae in northwestern Hokkaido and capsized, the Japan Coast Guard said. The coast guard said the collision occurred at around 0040, off Tomamae town, about 150 kilometres north of Sapporo.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: The master of fishing *Suehiro Maru No.55* that sank after colliding with general cargo *Myoetsu Maru No.18*, loaded with gravel, in the Sea of Japan last Saturday (Nov 6) was found dead in the vessel this morning, local Japan Coast Guard (JCG) officials said. The JCG is searching for three other missing crewmembers of the 19-ton *Suehiro Maru No.55*. The JCG's local office is poised to refer Seiji Sugawara, 55, a 2nd class navigator of *Myoetsu Maru No.18*, to prosecutors for negligence endangering traffic. Divers hired by a local fishermen's cooperative searched the fishing boat lying 60 metres below the surface off Tomamae and found the body of Captain Toshikazu Ishioka, 56, at the bridge, JCG officials said. The divers are still searching the boat for the three other missing crewmembers. *Suehiro Maru No.55*, which had left Tomamae Port, was on its way to a fishing ground and *Myoetsu Maru No.19* had departed from Ishikari Bay New Port and was heading for Teshio

Port when they collided. At the time of the accident, the sea was relatively calm and winds were not strong, the local meteorological observatory said.

NEUSE (U.S.A.)

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The Cherry Branch to Minnesott Beach ferry that routinely crosses the Neuse River 34 times a day will remain closed until at least tomorrow, officials said yesterday. And the cost of making repairs to the Cherry Branch landing after ferry *Neuse* struck it on Oct 24 will likely exceed a \$100,000 estimate. "I am hoping on hope it will be Wednesday or Thursday," said Jerry Gaskill, N.C. Ferry Service director. He said repairs included new 70-foot pilings and assorted welding as well as replacement of the landing. He said hydraulic and electrical work had yet to be completed. Gaskill said repair costs are expected to exceed \$125,000. The total cost of the wreck, in which the ferry captained by Roger Resora struck the landing at about seven knots with about 15 vehicles onboard, has yet to be determined because of damage claims to those vehicles. He did say no injury claims have been made by the couple of dozen people on board when the ferry crashed, though he said some initially complained of neck or back pain. None were transported to the hospital. N.C. Department of Transportation crews and workers from Inco worked on the repairs. Gaskill said steel pilings initially believed to be 50 feet deep were actually 70 feet deep, adding to the length of repairs. Rough water on the river and windy conditions yesterday slowed welders, who worked from baskets held by a crane. The reason for the crash is still under investigation, said Lt. Charles Fluke of Coast Guard Station Fort Macon, who had no estimate of when the cause of the accident will be known.

NINA (Comoros)

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today states: Bulk *Nina* is currently at the Raffles Anchorage awaiting the conclusion of a deal to sell its remaining cargo.

NYK SIRIUS (Panama)

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: C.c. *NYK Sirius* (76847 gt, built 1998) ran aground at Km 101 of the Suez Canal at about 2200, local time, Nov 9. The incident has had no effect on the transit of other vessels and the canal is still in operation. Efforts by the Suez Canal Authority to refloat the vessel are currently underway. (Note — *NYK Sirius* sailed Singapore Oct 30 for Suez.)

London, Nov 10 — Following received from the operators of c.c. *NYK Sirius*: Having been at anchor awaiting passage at Great Bitter Lake in Suez, *NYK Sirius* grounded at 2152, local time, soon after resuming its northbound piloted passage last night. The vessel was aground in the Amin Channel. It was not impeding traffic and there were no injuries and no

pollution. All tanks and holds have been sounded and the hull is intact with no water ingress. It was refloated at 1240, UTC. Local tugs were involved with the refloating operation. The vessel is now at anchor at Great Bitter Lake where a divers inspection under class supervision will ensure that it is safe to resume its voyage. A revised schedule will be available as soon as this survey report is available.

London, Nov 11 — C.c. *NYK Sirius* ran aground in the Amin Channel at around 2152, local time, Nov 9. The vessel, which was under pilot, was part of a northbound convoy, which had been previously delayed. *NYK* reported that no injuries or pollution resulted, with no ingress. No other vessels were impeded, the company said, and the vessel was yesterday refloated, before heading to Great Bitter Lake for inspection.

ONLY ONE D (Honduras)

Bermuda, Nov 8 — General cargo *Only One D* arrived Bermuda Nov 2. — Lloyd's Agents.

OXEN (Finland)

London, Nov 9 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1115, UTC: Finnish tug *Oxen*, SLHR, grounded in lat 59 19N, long 13 25.5E, about 2040, UTC, yesterday. Crew are in no danger. Vessel remains aground.

London, Nov 12 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1045, UTC: Tug *Oxen* refloated Nov 9 and arrived at Skoghall same day.

PACIFIC SKY (U.K.)

Sydney, Nov 5 — The 1,485 passengers on board passenger *Pacific Sky* returned to Brisbane this morning after engine trouble cut short their incident-plagued cruise. The vessel set sail on Nov 1 for a 12-day cruise of the Pacific, but 560 km into the trip, engine failure struck, reducing power and forcing the vessel to return to Brisbane. Passengers had already spent more than a day stranded at the Pinkenbah industrial wharf after it was discovered the vessel had a faulty boiler valve, and later a damaged gearbox in the starboard engine needed repairs. P&O Cruises Australia general manager Gavin Smith said all passengers had been offered a full refund and a 25% discount on any future cruise with the company. Mr Smith said repairs would be made in Brisbane and the next cruise would depart from Brisbane on Nov 13, as scheduled. — "Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News."

PAUWGRACHT (Netherlands)

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: The collapse of a bulkhead in the hold of general cargo *Pauwgracht* (5974 gt, built 1986) has led to a bustle of activity at the Port Lincoln wharf. Local stevedores have had to unload almost the entire 6000 tonne load of barley off the Dutch owned vessel while the internal structure is repaired. Once the repairs are inspected and approved by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority,

all the barley will then have to be reloaded before the vessel can once again continue on its journey. The vessel was going to be carrying two different cargos in its hold that was divided into three separate compartments separated by bulkheads consisting of wooden planks. The plan was for the vessel to take on its load of barley at Port Giles before heading off to Bunbury, Western Australia to fill the vacant section of its hold with mineral sands. The barley was headed for Taiwan, while it would then continue to Japan to unload the sand. But shortly after leaving Port Giles, something went wrong and one of the bulkheads collapsed spilling the barley into the remaining empty hold meant for the sand. An AMSA spokesman said the authority was notified Nov 4 that the failure had occurred. The vessel's crew after consulting with head office decided to dock at Port Lincoln to assess the situation and shortly thereafter the vessel was inspected by AMSA. The barley was this week being unloaded by a gang of 10 stevedores and six semi-trailers and this weekend work should begin on the repair of the bulkhead. The grain will be cleaned to remove any debris such as splinters before being reloaded, so the vessel and its 12 multi-national crew can once again continue their journey. Captain Josef van Zadel said now that the spilled grain was being cleared from the damaged area, the crew hoped to determine the cause of the collapse. *Pauwgracht* will leave next week. (Note — *Pauwgracht* sailed Port Giles Oct 31 for Bunbury.)

PLEIONE (Bahamas)

London, Nov 5 — Bulk *Pleione* sailed from Kashima on Oct 30, bound for Nagoya, arriving on Oct 31. Vessel departed from Nagoya on Nov 4, bound for Indonesia.

PRIDE A. (Greece)

Piraeus, Nov 4 — Product tanker *Pride A.* completed repairs and sailed from Piraeus port on Nov 3, destination Turkey. — Lloyd's Agents.

RED FERN (U.K.)

London, Nov 8 — Bulk *Red Fern* remains aground, with SMIT Salvage still working on refloating efforts.

London, Nov 9 — Following received from the managers of bulk *Red Fern*, dated today: SMIT Salvage continue to be employed on *Red Fern*. Refloating attempts with the assistance of two tugs are presently in progress, so far without success. Lightering operations will therefore commence tomorrow to facilitate refloating.

London, Nov 11 — Reported bulk *Red Fern* was successfully refloated overnight and will now undergo a diver survey. Prior to refloating approximately 6,500 tonnes of cargo was lightered.

S. DURVILLE (Singapore)

Brisbane, Nov 9 — General cargo *S. Durville* is still at Brisbane. Vessel is due to depart Nov 11 but this is not definite. — Lloyd's Agents.

SAN ROCHELLE (New Zealand)

Wellington, Nov 7 — Fishing *San Rochelle*, 52 gt, built 1971, owned by Challenger Trawler Co. Ltd., understood to be sunk off Cape Reinga. — Lloyd's Agents.

SANDFRAKT (Faroe Islands)

London, Nov 10 — Following received from Torshavn MRCC: General cargo *Sandfrakt* (443 gt, built 1966) informed Torshavn Radio at 1937, Nov 8 about a leakage in the forepeak in the Skopunarjordur area. Fishing vessels *Niclas* and *GrImur Kamban* were in the area and followed *Sandfrakt* to Torshavn. Tug *Pressarin* was also on standby with pumps. *Sandfrakt* was able to manoeuvre by own power. The incident last one hour 26 minutes.

SCM ATHINA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *SCM Athina* (6170 gt, built 2000) struck an unmanned natural gas platform off Galveston, Texas, early today, setting the rig ablaze, the Coast Guard said. Coast Guard spokesman Lt. Nick Wong said the 335-foot vessel was in contact with *High Island 207* gas platform around 0300 hrs. The platform, 17 miles offshore, is owned by Houston-based EOG Resources. All gas lines on the platform, which sustained extensive damage, have been shut. The fire, seen from shore, "should be extinguished by now," Wong added. Offshore oil-supply boats in the area had rushed to the scene to put out the fire. There were no reported injuries to the freighter's crew of 16 Russians or pollution from the clipped platform. The ship, owned by Sudkap Shipping, was sent under its own power to an anchorage off Galveston for further inspection while the Coast Guard investigates the cause of the accident, according to Wong. "There's damage along the side of the hull that's visible to us," he said, adding that it was still too early to know the ship's condition. Wong indicated that the pilot, entrusted to take vessels in and out of port, would already have left the outbound ship when it hit the platform. The ship was headed to Freeport, Texas, from Houston. EOG spokeswoman Elizabeth Ivers said the platform housed a "low-producing well" that had been shut for the past 30 days. "Our personnel are just arriving at the scene, so it's too early to tell how badly damaged it is," she added.

London, Nov 6 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1750, UTC: General cargo *SCM Athina* is now moored safely in Houston, awaiting classification society reports. Understand there is minimal damage to the superstructure, confined to the starboard side, and vessel's seaworthiness is not in question. The platform's fire was extinguished quickly but it is confirmed that extensive damage was sustained.

London, Nov 8 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1445, UTC: General cargo *SCM Athina* is still moored at Houston awaiting classification society inspections.

SCOT EXPLORER (United Kingdom)

See *Dorthe Dalsoe*.

SCOT EXPLORER (United Kingdom)

London, Nov 9 — General cargo *Scot Explorer* arrived Rochester Nov 7, from Varberg, and sailed Nov 8 for Harlingen.

SEABARONESS (Russia)

Novorossiysk, Nov 4 — General cargo *Seabaroness*, proceeding in ballast to Balakovo for loading, struck the lower gate of Lock Konstantinovskiy at 0145, Nov 1, because of a main engine malfunction, and caused severe damage to the lower gate. The lock's water was discharged into the river to empty it to perform outer damage survey of the gate's lock. Survey of the lower gate's base was performed by the divers due to impossibility of its survey from inside of the lock's chamber. The results of the survey revealed serious damage to the lower gate's base. In order to perform the repairs it is necessary to construct a dam forward of the entry to the lock to fully empty. It is possible that due to the large amount of work, traffic through Konstantinovskiy Lock will be closed till Spring, 2005. Preliminary cost of the repairs US\$ 2,000,000. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Dozens of ships and tankers remain stranded on one of Russia's most important waterways following an accident several days ago. They are unable to use the Volga-Don Canal to move into the Black Sea after general cargo *Seabaroness* struck a huge set of lock gates on the Tsimlyanskoye reservoir. Shipping companies have already lost millions of dollars in late or undelivered goods, reports say. The lock gates may not be repaired until the end of November, experts say. Some ships have chosen to take a lengthy alternative route via the Baltic Sea, around Europe and past Spain. *Seabaroness* crashed into the massive Konstantinovskiy lock late last week, snapping their gates in a single blow. The captain said the ship suddenly lurched forward although its engines were in reverse, Russia's RTR television reported. Repair work is being carried out round-the-clock, while investigators examine how the accident happened. "We have sent a crane there, but we will not be able to do anything before Nov 20," Russian Transport Minister Igor Levitin was quoted as saying by Russia's Itar-Tass news agency late last week. "The water level drop is too high there - it is over three metres," the minister said.

SEEBRISE (Belize)

Cork, Nov 11 — General cargo *Seebriase* is still in the Cork Dockyard. British Marine Mutual have settled with the owner. The cost of repair is beyond its value. Owner is considering sale or scrapping of vessel. — Lloyd's Agents.

SHER HIND (India)

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: At least 11 sailors were reportedly declared missing after privately owned Indian general cargo *Sher Hind*, carrying 550 tonnes of rice, is said to have capsized off the coast of Somalia. Reports said that of the 19 crew members on board, eight had managed to swim to safety. The vessel, which had set off from Porbandar last week, is said to have sunk late last night.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated Nov 8, states: A vessel owned by a Gujarati businessman sank today near Yemen in the Arabian Sea and 10 crew members were missing, according to a media report. Yasinbhai, owner of merchant vessel *Al Share-e-Hind* (also reported as *Sher Hind*), said it had sunk near Socotra Island in the Gulf of Aden. "My ship collided with the wreckage of a sunken ship believed to have sunk 10 years ago. Of the 19 crew members on board, nine swam their way to the shore, while 10 are missing," Yasinbhai told a TV channel in Jamnagar. "According to those who reached the shore safely, the missing crew members were in a lifeboat that is untraceable in the high seas. Yasinbhai said he was keeping in touch with the Yemen government. "The officials of the Yemen government told me that they had launched a search and rescue operation," he said. The vessel had begun its journey a few days ago from Porbandar and was headed for Somalia with a cargo of 550 tonnes of rice.

SILVA (Cambodia)

London, Nov 10 — Reported yesterday that general cargo *Silva* was still at Esbjerg.

SONTONG-5 (North Korea)

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: North Korean passenger *Sontong-5* ran aground in the bay of Kitovy off the island of Iturup, reported the captain on duty of the marine rescue co-ordinating centre Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. The ship was stranded on sand approximately 80 metres off the coast. It stands on its keel, has no holes in hull, and the crew is apparently waiting for good weather to refloat and leave the bay, reported the captain. The 24 North Korean citizens on board have not been injured. Strong winds, up to 15m a second, are still blowing and high waves of 1.5 to two metres rise at the accident site northwest of the Iturup. This prevents tugs or small boats from approaching the ship, say the rescuers. Radio talk with *Sontong-5* crew is impossible, as none of them speak English or French and nobody on Iturup speaks Korean.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated Nov 8, states: A North Korean transport vessel (*Sontong-5*) has hit the rocks off the Kurile Island of Iturup, a source at the Far Eastern regional centre of the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations said today. The vessel has a water displacement of 1,000 tons. It is carrying 200 tons of fish in its holds. The crew has 12

members. The North Korean vessel hasn't sent any distress signals. Its master is apparently waiting for the tide to set the vessel afloat in deep waters.

SOPHOCLES V. (Greece)

London, Nov 11 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Passenger ro/ro *Sophocles V.* (13384 gt, built 1990), with 128 passengers on board, sustained damage to the port main-engine while on voyage from Tergestis to Igoumenitsa-Patras during the morning of Nov 11. The voyage was continued with reduced speed and the vessel is expected to arrive Igoumenitsa at 1900. (Note — *Sophocles V.* arrived Trieste Nov 10 from Igoumenitsa.)

SPETSES (Greece)

London, Nov 11 — Crude oil tanker *Spetses* sailed Piraeus Oct 19 and subsequently arrived Novorossiysk Nov 8.

SPIRIT OF ONTARIO I (U.S.A.)

Troy, Mich, Nov 9 — Passenger ro/ro *Spirit of Ontario I*, the fast ferry between Toronto, Ont. and Rochester, N.Y., will spend the winter laid up at Rochester dock. "We pretty much agreed that this ferry isn't going to float again until next spring," Mayor William A. Johnson Jr. told the Rochester Democrat-Chronicle on Friday. There's no reason to rush the ferry back into service until all of the issues that contributed to its suspension of service are taken care of, he said. Many supporters had hoped it would restart this fall. Canadian American Transportation Systems, the private ferry company, blamed the stoppage on money problems and government bureaucracy. Since then, CATS, its financial backers and city, state and federal officials have been trying to figure out whether and when the service should resume. CATS needs to raise new capital, restructure its debt, increase revenue and reduce costs. The financial backers remain committed to restarting the service, Johnson added. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER (Philippines)

Manila, Nov 10 — Repairs to passenger ro/ro *St. Joseph the Worker* were completed sometime during October and the vessel is now back in normal trading operations. — Lloyd's Agents.

STARLITE PACIFIC

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated Nov 4, states: Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro R. Mendoza directed Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) commandant Vice Admiral Arthur N. Gosingan yesterday to investigate the cause of the mishap where ferry *Starlite Pacific* smashed into a pier at the Calapan City Port, Oriental Mindoro, late Tuesday night (Nov 2). The accident injured 50 passengers and damaged several rolling cargoes and the vessel and the

pier. Police and port personnel rushed the victims to the Oriental Mindoro Provincial Hospital, also in Calapan City. Several passengers sustained major injuries, including bone fractures, heart failure, and hypertension caused by the accident. Some had been advised to go home. No deaths were reported. In compliance with the directive of Mendoza, Gosingan instructed the PCG Southern Tagalog District headed by Captain Crisolito Agustin to immediately form a District Board of Marine Inquiry (DBMI) to probe the cause of the maritime incident, which was considered rare, that caused millions of pesos in damages to property. Agustin will chair the district's probe body, according to Gosingan, who also tasked Agustin to get to the bottom of the accident and spare no one of responsibility if at fault. "Whoever, from the deck and engine officers, are found at fault, will face criminal and administrative sanctions by the court, on recommendation of the probe body, if evidence so warrants," Gosingan said. *Starlite Pacific*, with 146 passengers and 14 rolling cargoes on board, was approaching to dock at the Calapan pier, when its controls were shattered due to "engine malfunction," causing the vessel to smash into the pier with strong impact. To be summoned are Captain Petronilo Manalo, the master of *Starlite Pacific*, other deck officers and engine officers, the quartermaster on duty, the security guards assigned at the bridge, deck, and the cargo area, and the manager of Starlite Ferry Inc., owners and operators of the vessel, which is based in Makati City. *Starlite Pacific* was en route to Calapan City from Batangas City when the incident happened at about 2230, Tuesday.

STARTEC (Hong Kong)

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Bulk *Startec* (27031 gt, built 1978) ran aground on a shoal near buoy No.14, near the 'Hiron Point', around noon, Oct 30, when it was on its way to Mongla Port. The ship was laden with 24,000 tonnes of clinkers. The Mongla Port Authority tug *Sarothi-2* rushed to the scene to offer salvage services and one more tug *Shibsha* was kept ready in a standby position, sources said. The pilot remained on board. (Note — *Startec* was reported sailing from Singapore on Oct 21 and was reported arriving at Mongla on Oct 31.)

London, Nov 9 — Bulk *Startec* departed Mongla Nov 6, for Singapore.

STENA EXPLORER (United Kingdom)

See "United Kingdom and Ireland" under "Weather & Navigation."

STEPAN RAZIN (Russia)

St. Petersburg, Nov 9 — Bulk/c.c. *Stepan Razin*: According to officials, salvage operations are still in progress. No investigation by Harbour-master's office regarding cause of grounding has commenced yet. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUEHIRO MARU NO.55 (Japan)

See *Myoetsu Maru No.18*.

SUPERFERRY 2 (Philippines)

Manila, Nov 9 — Passenger ro/ro *Superferry 2* arrived Manila Nov 8, from Tagbilaran. — Lloyd's Agents.

SVEN OLTSMANN (Antigua & Barbuda)

Bilbao Nov 8 — C.c. *Sven Oltsmann* left Bilbao Nov 5 for Hamburg. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Nov 10 — Tug *Fairplay 23*, towing c.c. *Sven Oltsmann*, Bilbao for Hamburg, passed Dover Nov 9.

TINA (Greece)

London, Nov 4 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the afternoon of Nov 3 Salamis Port Authority was advised that general cargo *Tina* (490 gt, built 1956) had become semi-sunk while at long lay up in the sea area of Ampelakia, Salamis. No crew on board and no pollution was caused. Salamis Port Authority has requested the owners of the vessel to take the necessary precautions for the preventing of any pollution and to organise for the vessel to be lifted.

TONY MACKAY (Canada)

London, Nov 8 — At 0404, Nov 5, tug *Tony Mackay* (373 gt, built 1973), with a barge in tow, reported momentary contact with the bottom 40 nautical miles south-east of Nain, Labrador, in lat 56 04.12N, long 60 51.54W, while in transit to Voisey Bay. Vessel continued onto Voisey Bay without further incident. Vessel reports "F/W" double bottom tank breached. Barge undamaged.

TRANS-ASIA I (Philippines)

Manila, Nov 5 — Ro/ro *Trans-Asia I* is currently undergoing repairs at Ouano Wharf, in Mandaue City on the island of Cebu, the Philippine Coast Guard reported. The vessel arrived, under own power, at Pier 5, Cebu, on Oct 29. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

TRI ARDHIANTO (Indonesia)

See "Typhoon 'Songda'" under "Weather & Navigation."

TROPIC BRILLIANCE (Liberia)

Port Said, Nov 7 — Crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance* (79718 gt, built 1992), which entered the Suez Canal with the northbound convoy on Nov 6, went aground at 1600 hrs, due to steering gear trouble at Km 73 in the Canal. SCA tugs are endeavouring to refloat it but still have not succeeded. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance* broke down in the Suez Canal blocking the passage of 40 vessels and forcing the strategic Egyptian waterway's temporary closure, the Suez Canal Authority said. The authority released a statement saying the vessel, carrying 85,000 tonnes of fuel, sustained mechanical problems 70 kilometres south of Port Said. A Suez Canal official, speaking

on condition of anonymity, said the 190-kilometre canal was expected to reopen early tomorrow. Efforts were underway to transfer part of the tanker's load of fuel to another vessel and repair the stranded vessel. The authority said in its statement that 10 tankers travelling south on the canal were stuck behind the vessel, while 30 other vessels bound for the Mediterranean have also been forced to wait.

London, Nov 8 — A press release from the managers of crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance*, dated today, states: Unicom of Cyprus, managers of *Tropic Brilliance*, regret to confirm that this vessel grounded while transiting the Suez Canal during Saturday Nov 6. The vessel is aground some three miles north east of Ismailia. Tugs are attending the vessel. There is no pollution and all cargo tanks are undamaged. Traffic through the Canal has been suspended, however, pending a refloating. Preparations are in progress to refloat the vessel. A Unicom team of specialists is at the scene. They are cooperating closely with a Suez Canal Authority response team. A highly experienced senior salvage master will assess the situation later today. In addition, a small tanker is expected to arrive at the grounding position during this afternoon, to receive a part of the *Tropic Brilliance* cargo and so lighten the vessel. The objective is to transfer around 25,000 tonnes of cargo to this second vessel. The tugs will then endeavour to free *Tropic Brilliance*. When the vessel is refloated, it will proceed to a nearby safe anchorage, where a diving inspection will be performed. *Tropic Brilliance* had loaded a cargo of crude oil at Mina-Saud, Kuwait.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Egyptian authorities closed the Suez Canal today after crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance* defied efforts by tugs for a second day to free the waterway and release more than 60 blocked ships. The canal authority said the closure would remain in place "until a new order", according to a statement carried by the official Egyptian news agency Mena. The stricken tanker is lying cross-wise in the canal, preventing any ships from passing, and defying efforts by several tugs - including tug *Ezzat Adel*, sent late yesterday - to shift it. Some 46 ships heading towards the Red Sea are lying off the coast and in the Port Said area to the north of the canal, while another 20 are blocked in the south, heading from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, authority officials said. Port sources say the tanker will have to be partly discharged before it can be moved, but *Ezzat Adel* lacks the necessary pumping equipment. The authority says it will take at least two days for another tug to reach the area.

London, Nov 8 — A press release from the managers of crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance*, dated today, states: Unicom of Cyprus, managers of *Tropic Brilliance*, report that preparations to refloat the vessel have commenced with

the transfer of part of the cargo, to lighten the ship. It is aground at a position some three miles north east of Ismailia. There is no pollution and all cargo tanks are undamaged. Traffic through the Canal has been suspended, however, pending a refloating. The transfer of 25,000 tonnes of cargo from the tanker began this afternoon. The bulk of the oil will be received by a second tanker, *El Nabila* (?*Al Nabila 4*), which arrived at the grounding location at 1800 hrs, today. The objective is to connect up transfer hoses and pump cargo to *El Nabila* overnight, then deploy the tugs on-scene to refloat the vessel. Some oil has already been transferred to a large receiving barge. This phase of the operation was completed this afternoon. When the vessel is refloated, it will proceed to a nearby safe anchorage, where a diving inspection will be performed. A Unicom team of specialists is at the scene. They are assessing the situation and are cooperating closely with a Suez Canal Authority response team. The vessel's certificates are in full compliance with all requirements. *Tropic Brilliance* has a crew of 26 CIS nationals.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Egypt's Suez Canal remained blocked today and shipping could be disrupted for at least two more days after crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance* broke down in the middle of the strategic waterway, shipping sources said. Port sources said about 104 vessels inside and outside the canal were waiting to pass through the waterway. A Suez Canal Authority official said attempts using eight tugs to shift the vessel had failed so far. "Navigation in the canal will remain halted for at least two more days," the official told Reuters. The official said two Egyptian tankers were being used to try to lighten the cargo carried by the vessel. According to the International Energy Agency, about 1.3 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil passes through the canal. About 7.5 per cent of the world's seaborne trade passes through the waterway, according to the port authority. Prolonged closure of the canal would result in vessels hauling commodities such as oil having to take a much longer route around the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa. Officials estimate that daily canal losses caused by the disruption were about \$7 million.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Operations to lighten the cargo of the grounded crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance* were completed at 0700 today. It is estimated that the operation to refloat the vessel will be completed on or about midday today. If the vessel is successfully floated and the canal cleared, the Suez Canal Authority will then decide the number and time of convoys and vessels in each convoy. It is understood that the intention is to accommodate as many vessels as possible in order to minimise delays.

London, Nov 9 — A press release from the managers of crude oil tanker *Tropic*

Brilliance, dated today, states: Unicom of Cyprus, managers of *Tropic Brilliance*, report that the tanker was successfully refloated at 0900, local time, today, so clearing the way for normal traffic through the Suez Canal to resume. The tanker will be towed to a nearby safe anchorage, for an underwater inspection. The vessel was lightened by the transfer of just over 22,000 tonnes of cargo to a second, smaller tanker, *El Nabila*. This ship-to-ship transfer commenced at 2115, local time, yesterday and continued overnight. It was completed by 0700, local time. This operation was accomplished without pollution. Unicom's team of specialists at the scene worked closely with the Suez Canal Authority's response team, to achieve a refloating as soon as possible.

Port Said, Nov 9 — Crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance*: Situation of delayed vessels: The northbound convoy of Nov 7 is waiting at El Ballah and the southbound convoy is waiting at Great Bitter Lakes. — Lloyd's Agents.

Port Said, Nov 9 — Crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance*: Vessel *El Nabeela* offloaded 5,000 tons from vessel and it refloated with the aid of Suez Canal Authority tugs at 0940 today and is now proceeding for Lake Temsah. We expect passage of convoys to resume today. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Nov 9 — A press release from the managers of crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance*, dated today, states: Unicom of Cyprus, managers of *Tropic Brilliance*, advises that the Suez Canal reopened at 0920, local time, following the successful operation to refloat the vessel.

London, Nov 10 — The Egyptian authorities were able to reopen the Suez Canal yesterday morning, following a three-day closure caused by the grounding of crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance*. Efforts immediately turned to sorting out the backlog of over 100 vessels which had built up as a result of the situation. A convoy of 46 vessels was able to head north, while 55 or so vessels seeking to sail in the other direction were scheduled to do so last night. The reopening follows the successful refloating of *Tropic Brilliance* at around 0900, local time. In the event, around 22,000 tonnes of crude had to be pumped off the vessel on to a smaller tanker, after the failure of initial attempts to pull it free solely with the use of tugs. The ship-to-ship transfer, carried out by tanker *El Nabila*, commenced at 2115, local time, Nov 8, and continued overnight until it was completed at 0700, local time. *Tropic Brilliance* was yesterday due to be towed to a nearby safe anchorage near Port Said at the northern end of the canal, for underwater inspection. Its managers, Cyprus-based Unicom, stressed that its specialists worked closely with the Suez Canal Authority response team. There had been no pollution as a result of the casualty, and all cargo tanks were undamaged, Unicom added.

London, Nov 11 — Following received from managers representative of crude oil tanker *Tropic Brilliance*, dated

today: The vessel is currently anchored at Km 61, in the Suez Canal. Vessel underwent a diver inspection yesterday and will be inspected by representatives of the Class Society today, after which a decision on where vessel is to be taken, will be made.

URSULA LEONHARDT (Malta)

Brest, Nov 4 — General cargo *Ursula Leonhardt* is still at Brest with a reduced crew pending a decision of the owners. No decision expected for the next 15 days. — Lloyd's Agents.

VASCO DA GAMA (Namibia)

London, Nov 7 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0940, UTC: During the evening of Nov 5, a distress message was received from "Chinese" fishing *Vasco da Gama*, V5VD, in approximately lat 03S, long 05E. Vessel was reporting a fire on board and was subsequently abandoned by all 26 Chinese crew. They were safely rescued by a sister ship *Ming Tai*. *Vasco da Gama* was last reported to be afloat and smouldering. The current situation of *Vasco da Gama* is not known as there have been considerable problems communicating with the crews, which only speak Chinese.

London, Nov 8 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0925, UTC: There is no further information regarding the current situation of fishing *Vasco da Gama* as there has been no response to our messages. It is not known whether vessel is still afloat and drifting or if it has sunk.

VEMAOIL XXV (Malta)

See *Celtic Pioneer*.

VIHAN 5 (Vietnam)

See "Typhoon 'Chaba'" under "Weather & Navigation."

VOC GEMINI (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Nov 6 — Following received from Australia RCC, timed 0455, UTC: Bulk *VOC Gemini* (30928 gt, built 2003) dragged anchor off Geraldton at 1130, UTC, Nov 5. Vessel proceeding using only its port anchor. Understand vessel will proceed to Geraldton for repairs and awaiting better weather conditions.

WEST (Mongolia)

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: The Russian Emergencies Ministry said today that general cargo *West* had sunk in the Sea of Japan, but the Vladivostok Sea Rescue Centre searching for the vessel and its crew did not confirm the information. The two rescued crew members from the vessel, sailor Grigory Dubnin and motor mechanic Safar Dzhannirzoyev, also knew nothing about the fate of the missing vessel. The search is more intensive today. Two helicopters and two aircraft of the Emergencies Ministry, the Pacific Fleet and the Vladivostok Avia airline joined in the operation. The Vladivostok Rescue Centre believes the information that the vessel *West* sank is premature.

WHITE STAR (Cayman Islands)

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated Nov 9, states: The crew of US guided-missile destroyer *The Sullivans* safely rescued all crew members of motor vessel *White Star* (? yacht *White Star*, 499 gt) in the Red Sea yesterday, when the vessel called for help after experiencing a fire in the engine-room. The international 12-member crew of the vessel from the Grand Cayman Islands included mariners from the United States, Croatia, the Philippines and Great Britain. *The Sullivans* responded immediately and found *White Star* drifting toward shoal water. The U.S. Navy ship towed the vessel out of the area and coordinated arrangements with the Yemeni Coast Guard for a tug to take *White Star* into harbour for repairs.

WINNER I (Panama)

See "Typhoon 'Chaba'" under "Weather & Navigation."

XIN FUDA (China)

See *Da Qing He*.



BAY OF BENGAL

Karachi, Nov 11 — Piracy has reached an alarming proportion in Bay and Sundarbans, northern Bangladesh, as 15 fishing trawlers have been looted in four days, 11 fishermen were thrown into the sea, and 27 hurt in attacks, according to a local media report. Fishermen pointed out that despite these acts, there is no patrol by the Coast Guard. All but two of the fishermen were rescued by other fishermen. The pirates looted fish, nets and other equipment, fuel and about Tk 2 million from the 15 trawlers. These include fv's *Tin Bhai*, *Jasim*, *Erfan*, *Mamun*, *Khalil*, *Barkat*, *Bismillah*, *Ramzan*, *Sekander*, *Mustafa* and *Nijami*. The piracy took place at Fairway Buoya, Char Adda, Kaligahata Char, Alipur, Mohi-pur, Patharghata, Golachipa, Bishkhali, Baleswar, Katka, Chandreshwar and Kachikhali areas in the Bay and the Sunderbans coast, they said. On Tuesday, four trawlers were looted in Fairway Buoya, Char Adda, and Kaligahata Char. The survivors said hardly a day passes without piracy in these areas. The incidents have increased in recent days because there is no patrol by the Coast Guard in the areas. Armed pirates move on the water posing as fishermen. In opportune moments, they attack fishermen's trawlers, loot them and again move on the water like fishermen. So it is difficult to be aware of pirates, they said. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Port State Control

GIBRALTAR

See *Celtic Pioneer* under "Marine."

Seizures & Arrests

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

See under "Marine."

BITUMEN ONSAN (South Korea)

Busan, Nov 11 — Asphalt tanker *Bitumen Onsan* (6049 gt, built 1978) is at present lying afloat anchored at the southern outer harbour anchorage, Busan. The vessel has been arrested by local courts and is now under the process of court auction. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Bitumen Onsan* arrived Busan Feb 17.)

CELTIC PIONEER (U.K.)

See under "Marine."

DEBORAH M. (Republic of Ireland)

See "Fishing Vessel Detained by Republic of Ireland."

FEEDER 5 (Malta)

Cadiz, Nov 5 — General cargo *Feeder 5* is still at IZAR Shipyard in San Fernando (Ex-Bazan). Since it has no consignee, there is no information about its situation. — Lloyd's Agents.

FISHING VESSEL DETAINED BY REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Trawler *Deborah M.* (326 gt, built 2000) was detained by the Irish Naval Service this morning and is being escorted to Castletownbere in West Cork. The vessel was detained for alleged breaching of fishing regulations 70 miles south west of Mizen Head. In order to facilitate legal proceedings *Deborah M.* has been taken to the West Cork town. Officials from the Department of the Marine will inspect the trawler on its arrival later this afternoon.

IBUKI (Antigua & Barbuda)

See under "Marine."

KAPTAN NEVZAT KACAR (Turkey)

Beirut, Nov 10 — After payment of a US\$10,000 fine, bulk *Kaptan Nevzat Kacar* was removed from the boycott office blacklist and sailed from Beirut at 1700, local time, Nov 6. — Lloyd's Agents.

LAEMTHONG GLORY (Thailand)

Aden, Nov 10 — It is reported that the court arrest of general cargo *Laemthong Glory*, in dispute with

receivers over alleged wrongful delivery of a consignment of bagged sugar from Brazil, has been lifted. However understand that the vessel is now detained by the Coast Guard under ISPS. — Lloyd's Agents.

LAVERNA (Bahamas)

Piraeus, Nov 5 — General cargo *Laverna* remains under arrest at Piraeus port. — Lloyd's Agents.

LIDER SAFAK (Madeira)

London, Nov 6 — Ro/ro *Lider Safak* arrived at Velsen at 1405, Nov 5.

MAHDI (Norway)

Apapa-Lagos, Nov 5 — Chem.tank *Mahdi* (886 gt, built 1969) is tied up at the marina in Lagos and is said to be under arrest and abandoned by its owners. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Mahdi* arrived Apapa-Lagos May 6, 2003.)

OCEAN BOOMER (Panama)

London, Nov 9 — Oceanographic research *Ocean Boomer* sailed Gibraltar Nov 7.

RANTSEVO (Russia)

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: The Japan Coast Guard has assisted Russian border control authorities in detaining Russian fishing *Rantsevo* (617 gt, built 1973) suspected by the latter of illegal fishing, the Coast Guard said yesterday. A patrol ship of the Coast Guard in Wakkanai, Hokkaido, located the fishing near Rishiri Island, Hokkaido, around noon, Tuesday (Nov 9), and chased it back into Russian waters, it said.

RESHID BEHBUDOV (Azerbaijan)

Mersin, Nov 5 — General cargo *Reshid Behbudov* was released at 1700, Nov 2, and departed for Bandirma. — Lloyd's Agents.

SEACHEM ENA (Honduras)

Bari, Nov 5 — Chem.tank *Seachem Ena* remains in Monopoli under arrest. — Lloyd's Agents.

TAPORO V (France)

Tahiti, Nov 8 — General cargo *Taporo V* (299 gt, built 1969), which arrived at Papeete on Jun 18, remains at the port under arrest/retired from navigation by the French Maritime Authorities. — Lloyd's Agents.

Pipeline Accidents



IVEL, KENTUCKY, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The explosion of a four-inch liquid gas line in a Floyd County subdivision has injured six people and left four houses in flames. The blast occurred at about 0830 hrs in the Ivel community on U.S. 23 near the Floyd-Pike County line. The high-

pressure gas line is owned by Kentucky-West Virginia Gas. There has been no report on what may have caused the explosion.

KIRKUK AREA, IRAQ

See "Iraq" under "Political & Civil Unrest."

SAFA AREA, IRAQ

See "Iraq" under "Political & Civil Unrest."

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A Kinder Morgan Energy Partners LP gasoline pipeline explosion killed two construction workers and seriously injured four others near San Francisco. One or two workers are missing. The contractors, who weren't employed by Kinder Morgan, were working on an excavation project in Walnut Creek, California, when the gas line ruptured, city police Lt. Steve Skinner said in an interview. The city is about 24 miles northeast of San Francisco. Houston-based Kinder Morgan, the world's largest publicly traded pipeline partnership, said the pipeline was shut down after the incident and fire. The workers struck the line with excavation equipment, releasing gas and causing the explosion, Kinder Morgan spokesman Larry Pierce said. The resulting fire, which lasted almost three hours, burned two apartment complexes and three homes, Skinner of the police department said. The fire was contained at about 1630, local time.

Weather & Navigation



AUSTRALIA

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Raging floodwaters swept cars off roads, forced motorists onto car roofs and trapped children playing in swollen creeks as record rain fell across south-east Queensland yesterday. The Gold Coast had the brunt of the rainfall, but it was Archerfield, on Brisbane's southside, that set a new November rainfall record with 160mm dumped in the area between 0900 hrs and 1500, yesterday. The rain is set to continue today and tomorrow. Two children have already died as a result of flash flooding when the four-wheel-drive they were travelling in was swept off a causeway at Degilbo Creek, Biggenden. The body of the second girl was found early yesterday, the two sisters later being identified by their father. The RACQ attended 3075 call outs between 0600 hrs and 1400 hrs to drivers mainly on the Gold Coast and Brisbane's southside who found themselves stranded in rising floodwater.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of

homes were without power last night, while several more were damaged by hail as severe storms and flash-flooding hit southeast Queensland. An EnergeX spokesman said power had been restored this morning to all areas blacked out, including the worst affected Fassifern Valley, near Boonah south-west of Brisbane, and the Lockyer Valley, west of Brisbane. Hail the size of golf balls struck Boonah last night causing widespread damage, while one family escaped flash flooding at Deagan Creek near Ipswich, also west of Brisbane. A State Emergency Service spokeswoman said volunteers had been called out to about 15 homes in the Boonah area where hail had broken windows and skylights. At Beaudesert, SES workers used sandbags to keep out water lapping at the doors of three houses. A Weather Bureau spokesman said the storms extended from east of Oakey, west of Brisbane, to the Gold Coast, with Brisbane facing heavy winds and rains. The bureau said today the rain was easing, with no significant falls recorded between midnight and 0600 hrs, and localised areas of minor flooding in smaller rivers and streams was easing. But forecasters warned showers and thunderstorms could develop later in the day, leading to a rise in water levels.

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: South-east Queensland's summer storm season has struck with a vengeance with insurance claims expected to reach \$10 million. The Insurance Disaster Response Organisation (IDRO) said the strong winds, hail, flash flooding and overflowing drainage systems had taken their toll on homes, cars and other property. Worst affected areas were in the Brisbane metropolitan region and the Brisbane Valley, to the city's west, IDRO Queensland coordinator Graham Jones said. Claims for three days of storm damage in the region were expected to total about \$10 million, he said. Meanwhile, residents of a Gold Coast apartment block have had their cars submerged in an underground parking lot since Sunday (Nov 7). Seven cars, including two BMWs, have been under two metres of water since the garage filled up at the Biggera Waters property. The garage was being pumped out today.

CYCLONE IN GULF OF ADEN

London, Nov 7 — Following received from Reuters, dated today, states: A cyclone is forecast to strike Yemen at about 1200, GMT, Nov 8. Data supplied by the US Navy and Air Force Joint Typhoon Warning Centre suggest that the point of landfall will be near lat 13.3N, long 53.7E.

HAWAII, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated Nov 4, states: Damage to personal property from weekend (Oct 30/31) flooding in Manoa Valley could reach \$5 million, civil defence authorities announced yesterday as dozens of people sought help and

shared their stories at a just-opened disaster centre. The damage estimate is considerably higher than the early figure of \$1 million, and still does not include an assessment from the heavily damaged University of Hawaii campus. UH planned to resume classes today for the first time since Saturday's flooding, and yesterday requested, and received, clean-up help from the National Guard. With plenty of work still ahead, the Department of Health warned of two possible health implications: leptospirosis, a bacterial disease that could lurk in polluted floodwaters and the mud it left behind; and mosquitoes.

ITALY

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Storms across Italy left St Mark's Square in Venice more than a four feet under water today, delayed flights and snarled traffic. Lightning damaged the dome of 16th century Santa Sofia church on the island of Capri in the Bay of Naples. The storm left 6,000 residents without electricity in the Trieste area in north-eastern Italy. In Venice, a city of islands in a lagoon, the water level rose by more than four feet, submerging St Mark's Square and other parts of the historic centre. Pedestrians donned rubber boots and used the elevated walkways of wooden planks, which are routinely laid down when Venice is swamped by high waters. In Rome, flights at Leonardo da Vinci airport sustained delays from the rain storm, while morning commuter traffic in the city centre was far worse than usual as drivers tried to avoid swathes of flooding on a main artery flanking the Tiber River.

JAPAN

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Three powerful typhoons that hit Japan in August and September caused some 128 billion yen in damage across the country to agricultural produce, government officials have said. As the Japanese government has already decided to help farmers cover losses by emergency loans, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry investigated damage to farms sustained in typhoon No. 15, 16 and 18. Ministry officials have found that Niigata Prefecture farmers lost 16.5 billion yen in produce, followed by 14.6 billion in Akita Prefecture, 13.1 billion yen in Hokkaido, and 11.7 billion yen in Kumamoto Prefecture. They are also investigating damage caused by three other typhoons that hit after late September. Their initial results show that farms, businesses and the general public sustained 81.8 billion yen damage to agricultural produce and facilities in typhoon No. 21. The damage from typhoon No. 23 was larger at 147.1 billion yen.

MALAYSIA

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated today, states: An overnight storm lashed Kuala Lumpur leaving the homes of about 40,000 people flooded,

while a landslide destroyed a house, killing a girl, media reports said today. The floodwaters forced about 100 families to flee their homes to higher ground. Thousands of other houses were flooded with about half a metre of water. Several major roads in Kuala Lumpur were also submerged. The eight-year-old girl was sleeping with her sister when the landslide hit their home just east of the city late yesterday. Their father rescued the sister from the rubble with light injuries. Rescue workers recovered the eight-year-old's body today. Heavy rain in the country's south this week damaged railway lines, causing disruptions to train services between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore.

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: According to the Meteorological Services Department, rains and thunderstorms are expected from today until Wednesday (Nov 10) in most major towns. Based on the department's website's five-day weather forecast, the west coast of the peninsula in particular would experience thunderstorms every afternoon. But the department says despite the chaos and flash floods in recent days, following heavy rains, the amount of rainfall has not reached an "exceptionally high" level. The weather bureau said the floods were likely caused by rains and thunderstorms over large areas and poor drainage. This would include almost the whole of the Klang Valley, said its central forecast office director Kang Thean Shong.

MEXICO

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated Nov 5, states: Mexico's three Gulf coast crude oil loading ports were closed yesterday because of poor weather conditions, the Transport and Communications Ministry said. Pajaritos in Veracruz state and Dos Bocas in Tabasco closed Wednesday (Nov 3), and the offshore terminal at Cayo Arcas closed yesterday, the ministry reported. State oil monopoly Petroleos Mexicanos ships most of its 1.9 million barrels a day of crude oil exports from those three ports.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "AROLA"

London, Nov 9 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone "Arola" located near lat 11.1S, long 76.8E, at 0600, UTC. Movement past six hours 250 deg at six knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 20 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 40 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 40 nautical miles south-west quadrant and 20 nautical miles north-west quadrant. Radius of 34-knot winds 40 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 60 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 60 nautical miles south-west quadrant and 40 nautical miles north-west quadrant. Forecast for 1800, UTC: Position lat 11.6S, long 75.2E. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Forecast for

0600, UTC, Nov 10: Position lat 11.9S, long 73.8E. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots.

TYPHOON "CHABA"

Moji, Nov 9 — General cargo *Vihan 5*: Wreck removal commenced Nov 4 and expected to be completed by the end of November or early December. — Lloyd's Agents.

Yokohama, Nov 1 — General cargo *Winner 1* and salvage tug *Sui Jiu 204* left Shikama Oct 29 for Guangzhou. — Lloyd's Agents.

TYPHOON "SONGDA"

Moji, Nov 9 — General cargo *Tri Ardhianto*: Wreck removal commenced Nov 6 and expected to be completed in a week. — Lloyd's Agents.

TYPHOON "TOKAGE"

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Tokage" has put training *Kaiwo Maru* out of action for the foreseeable future. The vessel ran aground in Japanese waters with 167 people on board last month when the most powerful typhoon in 25 years struck. The vessel's anchor was washed away by the strong winds, which left some of its crew dangling perilously from the masts of the vessel. Damage to the vessel has forced it to cancel its sailing schedule for 2005, when it was originally pencilled in to participate in Canada's SeaVancouver, a recently-approved multicultural event in Vancouver that will feature a handful of massive Class A tall ships.

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Russian owners have now abandoned the wrecked passenger *Antonina Nezhdanova* and Japanese salvage operations have begun to remove the vessel. The deck cargo of automobiles have been removed as well as oil and fuel from the vessel. The hull will be removed and scrapped elsewhere. In regard of the damage to the quay, the port administrator's prefecture is asking the vessel owner for repair compensation.

UGANDA

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Over 10,000 people have been displaced by floods and their gardens submerged following heavy rains that have also led to overflow of streams in Pakwach in northwestern Nebbi district of Uganda, Radio Uganda reported today. Member of parliament for Jonam county Fred Jachan Omach today told the government radio that at least seven villages surrounding Pakwach town council have been affected and people have moved to upland areas for safety. Omach described the incident as a disaster, saying that over 50 pit latrines have also overflowed by the floods while the entire internal road network has been devastated. Owere Primary School near Apac town has also been cut off and children have to walk through pools of water to school.

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Liverpool, Nov 8 — Passenger ro/ro *Stena Explorer* returned to service as

scheduled Nov 5 after repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.



FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

London, Nov 10 — A report, dated Nov 9, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 2214, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.5 event has been located in Yap States, Federated States of Micronesia, in lat 11.58N, long 140.69E. The hypocentral depth was estimated to be 53 km.

JAPAN

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.2 on the Richter scale shook Niigata Prefecture yesterday morning, causing a bullet train line and a nuclear power plant to temporarily halt operations. Only minor injuries were reported. The quake was believed to be an aftershock related to the devastating magnitude 6.8 earthquake and two other strong quakes that hit the area on the evening of Oct 23, the Meteorological Agency said. Strong aftershocks have been rattling the area ever since. The quake, which struck at 0857 hrs, registered upper-5 on the Japanese intensity scale of seven in the towns of Koshiji and Mishima. Its focus was about 20 km beneath the Chuetsu region in central Niigata Prefecture, the agency said. In Kashiwazaki, the No. 7 reactor at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear plant automatically shut down after the quake, according to Tokyo Electric Power Co. The utility said there was no danger of environmental contamination. Bullet train runs on the Joetsu Shinkansen Line meanwhile came to a halt between Niigata and Nagaoka stations, according to East Japan Railway Co. The Tsubamesanjo-Nagaoka section of the line, which had just resumed operations for the first time since the October quakes, was also among the sections shut down. The Nagaoka-Echigoyuzawa section remains out of operation, with no likelihood of service resuming anytime soon, the railway said. The official death toll in the prefecture from the powerful quakes since Oct 23 has risen to 39 with the death of a 71-year-old man who had been living in a shelter in Tochio since Oct 24. He died on Wednesday (Nov 3) of what was believed to be a stress-related heart attack, police said yesterday. The Meteorological Agency has warned people in the area that there is a high probability aftershocks measuring five or above on the Japanese scale will continue for about a month. In the cities of Nagaoka and Tokamachi, 92 elementary and junior high schools and schools for disabled children reopened yesterday morning. The prefectural board of education said 35 schools in

five municipalities, including Ojiya and the town of Kawaguchi, were still closed but may reopen on by Monday. The board said 38 pupils at the elementary school and 86 students at the junior high school in the village of Yamakoshi will resume classes on Monday in borrowed classrooms at a school in Nagaoka. The entire village, which was virtually flattened by the Oct 23 quakes, was evacuated and there is no chance that anyone will return there in the near future, the board said. Germany yesterday offered to extend \$50,000 in emergency humanitarian aid for the survivors of a series of earthquakes that have hit Niigata Prefecture and nearby areas along the Sea of Japan coast, Japanese officials said. The German government said the money will be earmarked for building temporary residences for quake survivors, the officials said. Many residents have evacuated due to damage to their homes or fear their houses might collapse as a result of the continuing temblors.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A magnitude 5.9 earthquake rocked northern Japan today, injuring at least eight people. The quake, which hit at 1116, local time, close to the earth's surface in the Chuetsu area of Niigata prefecture, the Meteorological Agency said. The operators of the high-speed "bullet" train line between Tokyo and Niigata suspended service to conduct safety checks. Television footage from Niigata showed swaying power lines. Three weaker temblors of magnitudes 5.0, 4.5 and 4.2 struck in succession in the 30 minutes following the initial aftershock, the Agency said. The quake posed no danger of a seismic tidal wave, it said. A man was injured after being briefly buried by a small landslide, said Atsushi Moriyama, a spokesman for Niigata prefecture. Five kindergarten students and their teacher also were injured when a wall they were walking past collapsed.

KURIL ISLANDS

London, Nov 5 — A report, dated Nov 4, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 1403, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.8 event has been located in the Kuril Islands in lat 43.64N, long 146.77E, depth 200 km.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

London, Nov 8 — A report, dated Nov 5, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 0518, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.0 event has been located in New Guinea, Papua New Guinea, in lat 04.39S, long 143.96E, depth 121 km.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

London, Nov 10 — A report, dated Nov 9, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 2358, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.9 event has been located in the Solomon Islands in lat 11.11S, long 163.68E, depth 53 km.

TAIWAN

Taipei, Nov 9 — An earthquake measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale rattled northeast Taiwan yesterday, the

government said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The epicentre of the quake was about 1km north-west of Ilan county on the north-east coast, at a depth of 19km, the Central Weather Bureau said in a statement. — Reuters.

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Taiwan was rocked by a magnitude 6.7 earthquake, whose epicentre was located south-east of the capital Taipei. There were no immediate reports of casualties, according to the island's Ministry of Interior. The centre of the tremor, which struck at 2355, yesterday, was located about 97 kilometres offshore of Taiwan's eastern coastal city of Hualien, the Central Weather Bureau said in a statement, revising the magnitude to 6.7 from an earlier 5.7. The U.S Geological Survey said the earthquake was magnitude 6.3 and centred about 152 kilometres south-east of Taipei, in a sparsely populated area, agency spokesman Waverly Person said in an interview. The U.S. seismologists gave an earlier reading of 6.6 for the quake's intensity.

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale rocked Taiwan today, causing high-rise buildings to sway, seismologists said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The tremor struck at 1016, local time, with its epicentre located 46.8 kilometres south-east of Suao along the northeastern coast, 13.9 kilometres below the seabed, the seismological centre in Taipei said.

Volcanic Activity



MOUNT ST. HELENS, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated Nov 6, states: Lava continues to flow at a rate of one dump truck per second. The lava flow is building a huge mass that glows as the hotter elements reach the surface. Two scientists flew into the crater by helicopter Thursday (Nov 4) and landed beside the new structure, under strict orders to stay no longer than 10 minutes to collect samples. Climbing Mount St Helens is not allowed at this time.

VATNAJOKUL, ICELAND

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: A spectacular volcanic eruption under an Iceland glacier has forced airlines to divert flights to avoid flying through gas emissions from the blast. The volcano first erupted on Monday (Nov 1), sending thick black smoke and ash heading towards continental Europe. Since then, Grímsvötn volcano has produced a steady stream of ash and lava, with explosions sending ash up to 12,000m in the air. Officials say people

or homes are not at risk from the eruption of Grímsvötn, which is in an unpopulated area of the island. But ash from the eruption under Vatnajökull glacier - Iceland's biggest - has landed in Norway, Sweden and Finland. The eruption was also violent enough to set off earth tremors. The ashfall in Iceland has caused some problems for wildlife in the area. For instance, farmers have brought their sheep inside to prevent them from grazing on land covered with shards of abrasive "glass-like" material deposited by the eruption. Oli Thor Arnarsson of the Icelandic Meteorological Office said a change in the wind could send the cloud toward central Europe. "We are speculating that the eruption should be clear tomorrow. But if there are more eruptions, we may have ash over central Europe," he said. Trans-Atlantic flights had been diverted south of Iceland to avoid the ash cloud, and domestic flights to the northeast of Iceland were cancelled. Dutch airline KLM said it had cancelled 59 flights, stranding hundreds of passengers at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport, because of the cloud of ash hanging above Europe. "Because of company rules we can't fly below it and we can't fly above it," said airport spokesman Frank Houben. In addition to visibility problems, abrasive particles released into the air by the volcano can get inside aircraft engines.



Political & Civil Unrest

AFGHANISTAN

Kabul, Nov 4 — An Afghan militant group that kidnapped three U.N. workers over a week ago told the government and United Nations today to stop stalling negotiations, adding the hostages were cold and sick. The Jaish-e Muslimeen (Army of Muslims) has threatened to kill the three unless authorities meet a series of demands including the release of all Taliban prisoners, the withdrawal of U.S. troops and the suspension of U.N. operations in the country. Deadlines came and went yesterday as the kidnapers sought negotiations with authorities, and a clearly angry spokesman for the Taliban splinter group: Sayed Khalid Agha, accused authorities of trying to buy time. "Last night, when the deadline finished, they said 'it is night so we will have negotiations during the day', but when our people went for talks, none of them had come," he said. Agha said the hostages were suffering from cold and lack of food, and all three were ailing. U.N. officials spoke of their anguish and concern for the hostages, but declined further public comment. The hostages — Filipino Angelito Nayan, Annetta Flanigan from Northern Ireland and Shqipe Hebibi from Kosovo — were snatched from a busy Kabul street last Thursday (Oct 25), sparking

fears among the 2,000-strong Western community that militants might have started copying the tactics of insurgents in Iraq. The investigation is officially in the hands of the Interior Ministry and its fledgling police force, with help from the United Nations, NATO-led peacekeepers and U.S.-led forces. Security sources say Britain has sent a hostage specialist team from Scotland Yard, while the Philippines has dispatched its ambassador from neighbouring Pakistan. Apart from the militant group, the parties involved are tight-lipped and it is unclear what talks might already have taken place. — Reuters.

Kabul, Nov 7 — Afghan militants holding three U.N. workers hostage began talks with the government and the United Nations today and the kidnapers have dropped some of their demands, a militant spokesman said. Mullah Sabir Momin, one of several men claiming to speak for the Jaish-e Muslimeen Taliban splinter faction, said the talks were being conducted by telephone. "We have backed away from some of our demands," he told Reuters, without elaborating. — Reuters.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Negotiations to secure the release of three UN workers held hostage in Afghanistan are proceeding "very well", a source has said. Afghan government representatives have been in talks with Islamic militants since Sunday (Nov 7). The officials are dealing with the Jaishul Muslimeen (Army of Muslims), a Taliban-splinter group, in the southern province of Kandahar. A second round of negotiations is due to take place today. Investigators said there have been positive signs in the interval since Sunday's talks, when militants gave the representatives a list of 26 prisoners whom they want to swap for the hostages.

Kabul, Nov 10 — Kidnappers of three U.N. workers in Afghanistan said today the government had agreed to terms for their release, despite indications from Afghan and U.S. officials that a compromise was not possible. "The government has promised to release our colleagues," Mullah Sabir Momin, one of several men claiming to speak for the Jaish-e Muslimeen (Army of Muslims) told Reuters. "They have also assured they would accept our other demands." Government officials, who have, like the United Nations, declined to give details of any talks with the kidnapers, could not immediately be reached for comment on Momin's statement. Government officials have suggested a deal was not possible and visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage appeared to rule that out today, saying compromising with hostage takers only encouraged more kidnapping. Momin said the government's willingness to accept the demands was communicated through intermediaries. Several deadlines for the release of the militants' 26 imprisoned comrades have passed — the latest was 1100 hrs, today. The kidnapers have said all three U.N. workers were suffering from the bitter

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cold and poor food, but two were allowed to phone home on Monday (Nov 8) and said they were being well treated. — Reuters.

Kabul, Nov 11 — Kidnappers of three U.N. workers in Afghanistan said today they expect the government to release 26 Taliban prisoners in exchange for their hostages before the Muslim Eid festival this weekend. The kidnappers from a Taliban splinter faction have threatened to kill Annetta Flanigan from Northern Ireland, Shqiye Hebibi from Kosovo and Filipino diplomat Angelito Nayan unless the prisoners, some of whom may be in U.S. custody, were freed. "Intermediaries assured us that our prisoners will be released and other demands will also be met before Eid," said Mullah Ishaq Manzoor, one of several men claiming to speak for the Jaish-e Muslimeen (Army of Muslims) militants. — Reuters.

ALGERIA

Algiers, Nov 9 — Algerian militants fighting for a purist Islamic state have killed two members of the security forces and two civilians in the latest of a spate of attacks, newspapers said today. Late on Sunday (Nov 7) militants ambushed a patrol on a bridge in western Relizane province, killed two members of the security forces and stole their weapons, said El Khabar, citing security sources. Troops chased the rebels and killed one of the attackers, it said. Officials were not immediately available for comment. Anti-terrorist units are supporting a large-scale military operation to hunt down rebels in Relizane who have carried out numerous attacks during the holy month of Ramadan, which began in mid-October. In a separate attack, rebels killed two civilians on Sunday night in the eastern province of Tebessa near the Tunisian border, El Khabar said. — Reuters.

COLOMBIA

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated Nov 8, states: Security around Colombian President Alvaro Uribe has been tightened after rebels issued an order for his assassination. Intelligence services have intercepted guerrilla communications calling all units to focus on murdering Mr Uribe. Rebel group Farc has intensified its efforts to kill Mr Uribe, who is seeking to change the constitution so he can be re-elected. Mr Uribe has led a US-backed campaign to crack down on the country's militia. Farc's orders show a new urgency brought on by Mr Uribe's efforts to stand for a second four-year term in 2006. The president, who has survived more than 10 attempts on his life, has pledged to bring the guerrilla groups to the peace table at gun-point or defeat them altogether. Farc leaders have instructed all fronts or guerrilla companies to explore ways to murder the president. They do not want another administration supported by the US committed to launching all-out military offensives against them. Security forces are taking the new threat seriously and are reinforcing the president's protection. Mr Uribe is

already the most highly protected Latin American leader and his bodyguards have been sent to the US for training.

GHANA

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Ghana's authorities have arrested seven serving and retired military personnel, accusing them of plotting to overthrow President John Kufuor. Officials said the alleged coup plotters' plans involved acts of "destabilisation and sabotage" in the run-up to December's presidential poll. Ghana's security agencies were said to have been monitoring the threat. Officials gave no names or other details of those arrested. Ghana's capital Accra was reported to be calm, with no military presence. Mr Kufuor took office four years ago, after former President Jerry Rawlings stood down after a second term in office.

HAITI

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Haitian gunmen opened fire on a police station in the northwestern city of Gonaives, allowing the escape of about 100 prisoners, Haitian radio reported today. The shooting occurred yesterday after police arrested an alleged gang leader for looting a humanitarian aide truck transporting relief supplies to the flood-ravaged city. On Friday (Nov 5) Latin American and Caribbean leaders decided to augment the U.N. peacekeeping force in Haiti. That force - led by Brazil — currently stands at around 5,000 troops, well below the 8,000 originally planned by the United Nations. Brazil decided Friday to send an envoy to South Africa — where former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide now lives in exile — to discuss the peacekeeping mission and the political transition. Brazilian officials, however, insist Aristide will not resume a role in Haiti's politics or have a say in the current U.N. mission.

INDIA

Guwahati, Nov 6 — Indian troops have captured an important rebel stronghold in the northeastern state of Manipur, close to the border with Myanmar, the army said today. Around 6,000 troops have been deployed in a major military operation against rebel-controlled regions of Manipur this week, with the help of Myanmar which has closed its border to cut off escape routes. The army said it had re-established control over Sajik Tampak, a stretch of thick forested mountains where an estimated 2,000 rebels had set up their camps. "Sajik Tampak is no longer a 'liberated zone' because of the army presence, but the area is yet to be completely cleared of rebels," Major Santanu Dev Goswami, military spokesman in Imphal, the capital of Manipur, told Reuters. "Operations are going on every day to clear the remaining areas." Civil government officials have reopened offices in small towns and villages in the area, which had been out of bounds for several years. The area lies in Chandel district, just 80 km south of Imphal. The Indian

army says it has attacked more than 100 rebel bases in Manipur since Monday (Nov 1). Police officials in Chandel said at least 30 rebels had been killed and 50 arrested, while the military said two soldiers died after stepping on a landmine. — Reuters. (See issue of Oct 22.)

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated Nov 6, states: As the home minister visited the Indian portion of Kashmir, suspected Islamic militants exploded a bomb and fought gunbattles with government forces today, killing at least 14 militants and soldiers. The rebels blew up a truck carrying soldiers, killing two of them and wounding six others, in the crowded Lal Mandi neighbourhood of Srinagar, the summer capital of India's Jammu-Kashmir state, a police officer said. India's border guards killed eight suspected rebels as they tried to sneak into the Indian-held Kashmir from Pakistani territory, said Lt-Gen Ashok Kapoor, an army corps commander. India's Home Minister Shivraj Patil arrived in the Kashmir Valley today on his first visit since the Congress party won power in May, to prepare for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit later this month. Patil said that the security situation in the region "has changed for the better and the government of India is ready to hold talks with separatists without any precondition." However, separatist groups have refused to meet Patil until India allows them to visit Pakistan and meet leaders of the Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. Patil said he was not opposed to their demand, but "if they want to go (to Pakistan) they will have to go through proper channels, and their request will be looked into seriously." Patil met with state ministers, lawmakers and army and police officers in Srinagar. Meanwhile, two suspected rebels were killed in a separate gun battle with soldiers who surrounded their hide-out in Minmargi, a village nearly 50 miles north of Srinagar, said Lt-Col V.K. Batra, the army spokesman. Elsewhere, two suspected militants threw grenades and fired with automatic weapons as they entered a paramilitary camp in Sopore, killing a soldier and injuring four others, said Kashmir's police chief, Gopal Sharma. One militant also was killed. No rebel group claimed responsibility for the attacks.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The Indian army says it has captured key rebel bases of a major separatist group in the north-east of the country. The temporary headquarters of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) bordering Burma in the remote Indian state of Manipur has been seized, an army spokesman said. The army began a major offensive against the rebel bases last month. The PLA is the main target of the ongoing offensive in which 6000 soldiers are believed to be involved. An Indian army spokesman said explosives, ammunition, food and computer equipment had been recovered from what the army suspects was the PLA's temporary headquarters. Major

Santanu Dev Goswami said that the rebels had fled from the bases and "some may have crossed the border into other states". Burma had stationed troops along its side of the border to prevent the rebels from escaping. So far, the action in Manipur has led to the deaths of two Indian soldiers and 20 rebels, Major Goswami said. The army had also captured 59 rebels, he added.

IRAQ

London, Nov 4 — A suicide car bomber killed three British soldiers and a translator at a checkpoint in Iraq today. Junior Defence Minister Adam Ingram said eight British soldiers were wounded in the blast and mortar fire which followed the attack. "Soldiers manning a vehicle checkpoint were targeted by a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in a suicide attack, followed shortly afterwards by mortar fire," Ingram told a news conference in London. The deaths brought the toll of British troops killed in Iraq to 70. It was the worst incident since three soldiers were killed in August 2003. A reporter from Britain's Times newspaper, contributing to a British media pool embedded with the Black Watch, said the unit had come under repeated rocket attacks at its camp. To counter those attacks it expanded its patrol area to the opposite bank of the Euphrates River. "To control one side of (the river) is good," said Captain Steve Melbourne, a spokesman with the regiment. "But the enemy can always go to the other side and shoot us." A Warrior fighting vehicle had been disabled by a roadside bomb yesterday and a second Warrior sent to its aid was driven off the road by a mortar attack, the pool report said. It did not make clear if that was the incident in which the men were killed. — Reuters.

Falluja, Nov 5 — U.S. forces hit the rebel-held Iraqi city of Falluja with air and artillery strikes today that residents described as the heaviest in months. The attacks focused on the eastern part of Falluja and at least five large explosions were heard, shaking the city and lighting up the night sky, they said. There was no immediate word on casualties and no further details. U.S.-led forces are expected to mount a major offensive to capture the city soon. — Reuters.

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Saboteurs set off an explosion today damaging a gas pipeline in northern Iraq, police and oil officials said. Police Col. Mohammed Ahmed said the blast hit a pipeline that connects the Baba Gurgur fields near the northern city of Kirkuk with the North Gas Company, affiliated with the state-owned North Oil Co. A North Oil Co. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the pipeline was expected to be repaired within three days. The pipeline's damage is likely to affect several power stations, including the Beiji power station but it wasn't immediately clear by how much, the official said.

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 34 people

are reported dead and 40 wounded in four car bombs and clashes between rebels and Iraqi forces and US troops in Samarra, north of Baghdad. Officials said at least 20 people were killed by car bomb blasts that targeted the town hall and a nearby police checkpoint. Police said rebels also carried out simultaneous attacks on three police stations, killing four policemen, wounding 17 and capturing 10. The dead include the included Brigadier General Abdul Razak Mohammed al Jarmani, the local chief of a police rapid reaction force. Gen Jarmani died in a double car bomb attack in front of the local administration building, according to members of his entourage. A third car bomb exploded later, targeting a US convoy that was trying to reach the scene of the first two bombings, police said. They had no word on casualties in that blast.

Falluja, Nov 7 — Gunmen captured 21 Iraqi policemen and shot them in cold blood today, a day after attacks on security forces that killed 34 people, police said. The weekend attacks were a clear riposte to a planned offensive by U.S. forces on the Sunni Muslim rebel strongholds of Falluja and Ramadi as part of the interim government's drive to cripple Iraq's insurgency before elections in January. Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi has said the door for a peaceful solution in Falluja is closing. U.S. forces say they will attack Falluja whenever they get the order from Allawi, who returned from Europe yesterday. A suicide car bomber attacked a U.S. convoy on the highway to Baghdad airport and a Humvee vehicle was hit, witnesses said. There was no immediate word on casualties. A U.S. military spokesman said he could not confirm the report. A powerful blast also shook central Baghdad at midday, but its cause was not immediately clear. Falluja residents said heavy fighting erupted on the eastern edge of the city near the highway leading to Baghdad after intense overnight air strikes and artillery shelling. They said the Americans were using tanks and heavy machineguns against insurgents with rocket-propelled grenades and mortars entrenched in the Hay al-Askari district. One U.S. armoured vehicle was seen burning on the highway, they said. Police said insurgents attacked a police station in Haditha, 200 km north-west of Baghdad, at dawn with rocket-propelled grenades and mortars. After a 90-minute battle in which six policemen were wounded, the attackers took 21 captured policemen to the K-3 oil pumping station area and shot them dead execution-style. Police said Brigadier Shaher al-Jughaiifi, security chief in western Iraq, was also shot dead in an attack on a police station in the nearby town of Haqlaniya. Yesterday, bombings and attacks on police stations killed 34 people, mostly police, in the restive city of Samarra, some 100 km north of Baghdad. Allawi's office said 49 people were wounded. All the casualties were men. U.S. troops enforced a round-the-clock curfew in Samarra and nearby villages

today, with patrols ordering people by loudspeaker to stay at home or be killed, residents said. Al Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's group, which previously claimed responsibility for that mass killing, also said it was behind yesterday's car bombings in Samarra. In the other attacks claimed by Zarqawi's group, insurgents staged a suicide bombing that wounded 16 U.S. soldiers in the western city of Ramadi and a car bombing that killed an Iraqi and wounded three U.S. soldiers in Baghdad yesterday. Three officials from the eastern province of Diyala were found killed southwest of Baghdad, police said today. — Reuters.

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Iraq's government has declared a 60-day state of emergency in response to the escalation of violence by militants. Official spokesman Thaer Naqib said the emergency would cover the whole of Iraq except Kurdish-run areas in the north. He said the move came in response to mass killings and destruction of the country's infrastructure carried out by "criminals and terrorists". He said the violence was part of a plot to derail the Iraqi government's progress towards January's elections. In the latest violence, Iraqi insurgents stormed a police station in the western province town of Haditha in al-Anbar, disarmed 21 officers and shot them dead. Another six policemen were shot in the neighbouring town of Haqlaniya. Three government officials have also been assassinated. One car bomb also went off outside the house of Finance Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi. The minister was not at home at the time, but one of his guards was killed. It is not clear at this stage what the state of emergency will mean in practice. Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi is due to give full details tomorrow. The insurgents' offensive is seen as a response to a planned assault by US troops on their stronghold of Falluja. American and Iraqi forces are continuing preparations for the attack, amid reports that more than 100 insurgents have volunteered to drive suicide car bombs into the advancing troops. There has been artillery fire on positions inside the city, with American aircraft heard almost continuously overhead. As well as the risk of suicide attacks, US commanders said they expected resistance to an offensive to include car bombs and even crude chemical weapons. It is reported from inside Falluja that insurgents, tribal chiefs and Sunni Muslim clerics have invited the media to enter the city under their protection to witness any assault, which they described as a crusade against Islam.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: One Black Watch soldier has been killed and two more injured in an incident north of Camp Dogwood, the Ministry of Defence has said. A roadside bomb appeared to be involved and one soldier was "possibly seriously" injured, a spokesman said. It happened north of the UK battle group's base at Camp Dogwood 20

miles, from Baghdad. Yesterday, two bomb disposal experts were injured by a suicide car bomb.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Car bombs at two Baghdad churches and outside a hospital treating the victims of those attacks have killed at least eight people and wounded dozens. The first blast was outside St George's Catholic church in southern Baghdad just before 1830, local time, yesterday and was followed minutes later by a second outside St Matthew's church. Victims from both blasts, some carried by friends or relatives, were rushed to Yarmouk hospital. A doctor said at least three people had been killed and 40 injured. A few hours later, a suicide car bomber ploughed into four police cars parked outside the hospital entrance, killing at least five policemen, police said. Several more explosions later echoed across the city, but there was no immediate word on casualties. The wave of bombings came as US Marines began their full-scale offensive to capture the rebel Sunni Muslim city of Fallujah, 60km west of the capital.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: US and Iraqi soldiers have seized the northern third of Falluja from insurgents on the second day of a full-scale assault, the US military says. Troops have been advancing towards the centre, fighting rebels armed with rifles and mortars street by street. Early today the US-led troops reached a key objective early - a mosque in the north part of Falluja. Some reports say US units have crossed the central highway in the heart of Falluja. Earlier, a US tank commander said guerrillas were putting up a strong fight in the north-western Jolan district. The US military said the mosque was being used as an arms depot and a meeting point for the leaders of the insurgency. It is surrounded, and Iraqi forces fighting alongside US marines will in due course storm it. Residents in the city say water and electricity have been cut off. One man who managed to flee Falluja said that the streets where he had come from were littered with bodies. Interim Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi gave the go-ahead for the assault. Up to 15,000 US and Iraqi troops involved. It is estimated that 2,500 Iraqi insurgent and foreign fighters are in city, along with an estimated 30,000 civilians, out of usual population of more than 250,000. In other developments: Hundreds of armed insurgents are reported to have taken up positions in the centre of Ramadi, near Falluja. An indefinite night curfew is introduced in Baghdad. Iraq's largest Sunni-led political party, the Iraqi Islamic Party, pulls out of the interim government in protest at the Falluja assault. A suspected car bomb hits an Iraqi National Guard base near the northern city of Kirkuk. Rebels attack police stations in Baquba, north of Baghdad, wounding a number of officers.

Baghdad, Nov 9 — Saboteurs have blown up an oil pipeline in northern Iraq, as attacks against the country's

oil infrastructure intensified following a two-month lull. Reuters Television footage showed a pipeline burning near the village of Safa, 70 km south-west of Kirkuk. The Iraq-Turkey pipeline and lines feeding it run through the area. A shipping source told Reuters earlier today that Kirkuk crude has stopped flowing along the export pipeline to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan yesterday, but that loadings there continued from crude held in storage. "They have stopped pumping. They stopped yesterday," the source said. One tanker was loading a 600,000 barrel cargo of Kirkuk crude from Ceyhan stocks, the source said. Tanks at the Turkish Mediterranean terminal held 3.3 million barrels today. The northern pipeline resumed pumping on Friday (Nov 5) at 250,000 bpd, having been repaired following a separate sabotage attack last week. The pipeline's capacity before the US war was 800,000 bpd. — Reuters.

Falluja, Nov 10 — U.S. Marines backed by air strikes battled through a rebel stronghold in Falluja today and officials said kidnappers had seized three relatives of Iraq's interim prime minister in Baghdad. The kidnappers took a first cousin of Iyad Allawi, the cousin's wife and another relative from their home this morning, but have made no demands, a government spokesman said. It was not clear if the abductors were hitting back at Allawi for ordering the U.S.-led assault on Falluja. Air strikes, artillery shelling and mortar fire shook the city during intense clashes interspersed with periods of relative calm, a Reuters reporter in Falluja said. "We've reached the heart of Jolan," Major Clark Watson said of an area the Marines view as a bastion for die-hard Saddam Hussein loyalists. "It's too early to say we are controlling it ... because there will always be pockets of resistance." Helicopters later fired missiles at targets in Jolan before Marine infantry and Iraqi troops moved back in. "There are still many snipers in buildings in Jolan," Alaa Abboud, an Iraqi soldier just back from the area, told Reuters. "We are trying to surround them and take them out." A BBC correspondent with Marines who occupied the main police station and mayor's office said they were still under heavy rifle and rocket fire, including from mosques overlooking the compound, and had fired at least one tank shell at a mosque. The U.S. firepower raining down on Falluja is sure to have caused civilian casualties, but no clear figures have emerged since the all-out assault began late on Monday (Nov 8). As the battle for Falluja raged, gunfire and explosions echoed across the northern city of Mosul, but it was not clear who was fighting. The U.S. military, which has said rebel leaders have probably fled Falluja, had no immediate comment. The Pentagon said yesterday that at least 10 U.S. and two Iraqi soldiers had died since 10,000 U.S. soldiers and Marines and 2,000 Iraqi troops launched the offensive. The assault on the city infuriated Sunni clerics who have urged Iraqis to boycott

the January elections. In a move which could further undermine the Jan 27 polls, the influential Muslim Clerics' Association urged Iraqis to boycott any elections held "on the remains of the dead and the blood of the wounded from Iraqi cities like Falluja and others." — Reuters.

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: US marines have taken the mayor's office in central Falluja in a morning of fierce fighting, and say they now control 70% of the Iraqi city. A battle is reported to be still raging in the city centre while US-led forces control the perimeter. According to US estimates, hundreds of rebels were killed today alone and at least one more marine died. Relief groups say they are deeply worried about the fate of civilians. No civilians can be seen on the streets, shops are shuttered and black smoke is rising all around. One marine officer, Maj Francis Piccoli, said the rebels were hemmed into a strip of the city bordering the east-west motorway which splits Falluja. Marines backed by tanks met little opposition when they blasted their way into the mayor's compound, which also houses a police station, at around 0400 hrs (0100, UTC), Paul Wood reports. However, they came under sustained fire around dawn from the minaret of a mosque. According to marines, the rebels waved a white flag at one stage but opened fire from three directions when a marine interpreter tried to begin talks. The marines then called in air strikes. Lt Gen Thomas Metz, the multinational ground force commander in Iraq, said troops were achieving their objectives on, or ahead of, schedule but warned that "several more days of tough urban fighting" lay ahead. Many rebel leaders including Abu Musab al-Zarqawi appear to have fled before the assault began, he added.

Amman, Nov 11 — The following areas on the main highway between Trebil (Iraqi border with Jordan) and Baghdad are extremely dangerous for shipments (especially those consigned to American and Coalition Forces): Rutba, Ramadi, Fallujah and Abu Ghreab. These areas are considered the main areas of conflict in Iraq for the following reasons: Widespread pockets of insurgent forces on the highway and especially at Fallujah city; Looters and hijackers are also operating in the above mentioned areas sometimes in conjunction with insurgent forces in detaining shipments and kidnapping drivers; Many American check points and camps are in these areas and are always under attack; Many Iraqi police check points are located in these areas but it is said that they are ineffective; At Rutba, the route between Syria and Baghdad meets on the same highway, as above, and same risks apply. The areas of Anah, Heet and Ramadi on the route between Al Qaem and Baghdad are very risky as these cities are insurgent strongholds. The route from Rabe'a through Mosul to Beiji-Samara-Balad. These areas are also dangerous and many attacks have been made upon the American and coalition forces.

There is a high risk of driver kidnap. Many Turkish drivers have been kidnapped and had their cargoes abducted by Al Mahdi troops on the routes from Southern Turkey. The security situation at the Safwan borders (Kuwaiti and Iraqi borders) does not differ a lot, there are four Iraqi check points, but this is not preventing attacks which are concentrated in the Deear area (about 40 km from Basra to the north on the way to Baghdad), via Nasrea (Thiqar), after leaving Basra there is Kosaysa Bridge and from here trucks can move to Baghdad via Basra International Airport road, through a highway to Thiqar. This road is usually used by the occupation forces and many incidents have been reported where divers have been kidnapped or killed and the cargoes stolen. At Nasreah City Al Mahdi troops are active. This route joins with another from Basra via Omara (Messan) at a city called Waset or Kutt, via Omara (Messan), Deear area and Auzair. These areas are very dangerous and only daylight movements are possible. At Wast, both routes from Basra meet at this point and the risky areas start from Al Noamania, Aziezia through to Al Madain via Al Hafrea and Al Swera. The route between Al Madain and Baghdad is relatively safe. It is normal procedure for trucks coming from the main ports and Safwan crossing point to wait and gather at an area called Saad (outside Basra city) until daybreak at which time they move in convoy to Baghdad or to other north west areas. — Lloyd's Agents.

Falluja, Nov 11 — U.S. Marines consolidated their hold on Falluja today, but insurgents struck back with attacks in Baghdad and the northern city of Mosul. A car bomb killed at least four people in central Baghdad, while in the north, insurgents set police stations ablaze, stole weapons and roamed the streets of Mosul as Iraq's third largest city appeared to be sliding out of control, residents said. Explosions and firing from assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades echoed across the city and columns of smoke rose from at least two police stations set alight. In Baghdad, a Reuters reporter saw four charred bodies in burned-out cars after the explosion near a police patrol in Nasr Square at 1130 hrs. The bomb devastated a nearby building and sent black smoke billowing skyward. Iraqis had been queuing at a nearby petrol station when the bomb went off, though the station itself did not catch fire. Kirkuk's provincial governor escaped unhurt when a car bomb blew up near his convoy in the northern city, wounding 16 people, police and hospital officials said. The violence erupted as U.S.-led troops pursued a major offensive in Falluja. Residents said the stench of decomposing bodies hung over the battered city, power and water supplies had been cut for five days and food was running out for thousands of civilians trapped in their homes by the fighting. With the offensive in its third full day, a death

threat hung over three of interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's relatives kidnapped by Islamist militants. A militant group has threatened to behead Allawi's 75-year-old cousin Ghazi and two women relatives unless he calls off the assault. The government has said its policy will not change. A Marine spokesman said yesterday that U.S.-led forces had taken 70 percent of Falluja, but did not have full control. The Iraqi military governor in Falluja said his men had found "slaughterhouses" where militants had held and killed hostages, along with records of victims. But Major-General Abdul-Qader Jassim told reporters he could not say if the evidence offered any clues to the fate of at least nine foreign hostages still missing. Marine commander Lieutenant-General John Sattler said insurgents could no longer coordinate their resistance. "They are now in small pockets, blind, moving throughout the city. We will continue to hunt them down and destroy them," he said. Rebels, in a video given to Reuters, said they had captured more than 20 Iraqi National Guards in Falluja. The video showed masked men pointing weapons at captives in Guard uniforms. U.S. commanders say rebel leaders may have fled Falluja before the offensive began. The military says 11 Americans and two Iraqi soldiers have been killed, along with many rebels. The International Committee of the Red Cross said it was worried about the plight of the wounded in Falluja and about the thousands of civilian refugees who have fled the city. The State Department, which oversees slow-moving reconstruction projects in Iraq, said it has earmarked about \$90 million to help rebuild Falluja once it is under control. — Reuters.

ISRAEL

Lonsdon, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: At least two Palestinians have been killed in an Israeli helicopter strike near a Jewish settlement in Gaza. The Israeli army said the men - Islamic Jihad militants - were suspected of carrying explosives. In another incident, two Palestinians were killed in a car bomb explosion in the West Bank town of Qalqilya. Israel said it had killed a third militant alongside them, but Palestinians have not confirmed this. The three had been spotted "carrying what was suspected to be an explosive device" near the Gush Katif settlement, the army said. It said one of its soldiers had been slightly wounded. (See issue of Nov 2.)

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli forces today shot dead two Palestinian militants who entered an unauthorised area in the Gaza Strip near Israeli territory, Israeli army and Palestinian sources said. And a third Palestinian was killed in the West Bank town of Nablus after troops opened fire on stonethrowers. The two members of the radical Islamic Jihad movement were shot as they approached the Gaza border fence near Kibbutz Kfar Aza, a farming community in southern Israel.

"They entered a forbidden area for movement as they were crawling towards the security fence. They were identified and then they were shot by the forces," an army spokeswoman said.

Nablus, Nov 11 - Israeli soldiers shot dead three Palestinian militants near the West Bank city of Nablus today, Palestinian security sources said. One of the dead in the raid at Rajeeb, a farm near Balata refugee camp, was the alleged recruiter of a suicide bomber who killed three Israelis in a market in Tel Aviv late last month, the sources said. Soldiers had destroyed that militant's home the day after the bombing, but the suspect had been still at large until the troops backed by helicopters hunted him down before dawn yesterday. — Reuters.

Gaza, Nov 11 — Palestinian militants angry over Yasser Arafat's death attacked a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip today in what they said signaled the start of a new round of clashes against Israel. Israeli soldiers killed two of the gunmen, who launched a multi-pronged attack against the heavily fortified Netzarim settlement in the Gaza Strip shortly after news of Arafat's death reached the territory, medics said. Gunmen opened fire at the settlement, detonated a bomb and attempted to fire a rocket-propelled grenade. An army spokeswoman said there had been an exchange of fire with troops and five gunmen had been hit. Abu Qusai, a spokesman for the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, an armed group in the late Palestinian leader's Fatah faction, said it held Israel responsible for Arafat's death. Dozens of Palestinian youths threw stones at soldiers at a checkpoint near the West Bank city of Ramallah, where Arafat will be buried following a funeral in Cairo tomorrow. Sporadic stone-throwing clashes were taking place in other parts of the West Bank as well, the army said. The 75-year-old leader who came to symbolize the Palestinian cause died at a French hospital early today. Qusai said Israel was to blame for Arafat's death, by forcing him to live in primitive conditions in his headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah, where he was virtually confined by the Israeli army for 2.5 years. — Reuters.

IVORY COAST

Bouake, Nov 4 — Ivory Coast government warplanes bombed rebel-held northern towns today, the most serious escalation in the West African country's simmering conflict for more than a year. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan urged President Laurent Gbagbo to call off the offensive, which army officers said was the start of an operation to regain control of the rebel-held north of the world's top cocoa grower. The military unleashed three raids on Bouake, the rebel "capital," and also bombed Korhogo 225 km further north near Burkina Faso and Mali, witnesses said. "It's the start of operations to reconquer the territory. We've started with an aerial bombardment and we

will start using armored vehicles for a ground assault," said Captain Jean-Noel Abbey, who commands a unit of armored vehicles. "We think we can finish the war in six days. We are going to attack all the zones where there are rebels," he told Reuters by phone from Yamoussoukro. Some 10,000 U.N. and French peacekeepers police a buffer zone which cuts across the middle of the country. A contingent of U.N. troops is stationed in Bouake. "Some several dozen civilians may have been killed and wounded during these attacks. A major violation of the cease-fire has thus taken place," chief U.N. spokesman Fred Eckhard said. Annan was "deeply concerned" by the attacks and reminded all sides "of their responsibilities to ensure the protection and safety of the civilian population, and of U.N. and other international personnel," Eckhard said in New York. Pro-Gbagbo radicals set ablaze or smashed three opposition newspaper offices today in Abidjan, the country's seat of government, staff at the dailies said. They said they had been targeted because they were seen as allied to the rebellion. Jacques Combarieu, a spokesman for French forces in Ivory Coast, said the two aircraft used in the Bouake raids were Russian-made Sukhoi-25s armed with bombs and a 30-mm cannon. The planes targeted but missed the rebel headquarters this afternoon, witnesses said. They bombarded a military camp and fired at other rebel positions in two morning raids. One resident said a truck had been hit and six people had been injured in the attacks and taken to hospital. The rebels said the offensive was a unilateral violation of the cease-fire by the presidential clan. "We are being attacked. We haven't reacted yet," said Sindou Cisse, a rebel official in Bouake. "It is war." Guillaume Soro, political leader of the rebel New Forces, was in Togo when the raids began, holding talks to resolve the crisis. He later boarded a Togolese army plane to return home. — Reuters.

Bouake, Nov 5 — Government warplanes and helicopter gunships pounded rebel-held towns in northern Ivory Coast for a second day today, fuelling fears of a slide into all-out war. U.N. peacekeepers reported stopping army troops in or near the buffer zone separating the country's rebel-held north from the government-run south — a development that suggested a ground offensive may soon follow the air attacks. The latest raids targeted at least three towns east and west of the rebel stronghold of Bouake, which was bombed yesterday. Troops were also seen moving toward the buffer zone. Henry Aussavy, the spokesman for a 4,000-strong French peacekeeping force, said three Ivorian army helicopters had fired rockets in the Bonguera area east of Bouake, while two warplanes bombed the towns of Baoulifla and Seguela to the west. In the main city Abidjan, militant Gbagbo supporters attacked the offices of former Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara's opposition RDR party overnight. Nearby in the plush Cocody

area, the headquarters of former President Henri Konan Bedie's PDCI party were vandalised by student militants known as the "Young Patriots" late yesterday, according to party chief Alphonse Djedje Mady. The attacks mirrored those on offices of three newspapers deemed hostile to Gbagbo by groups of youths yesterday. — Reuters.

Abidjan, Nov 7 — Loud explosions rocked Ivory Coast's main city of Abidjan early today and heavy gunfire could be heard as thousands of anti-French demonstrators marched towards a French military base. A witness said a French military helicopter fired warning shots into a lagoon crossed by two bridges that lead from the city centre towards the French base and the airport. Red tracer bullets streaked across the night sky, coming from the residential district of Cocody in the commercial capital of the world's top cocoa grower. The witness said Ivorian army soldiers appeared to be shooting at the helicopter from positions in Cocody, which is just across the lagoon from the two bridges and the city centre. Yesterday, Ivorian warplanes killed nine French peacekeepers in a bombing raid during the fiercest clashes with rebels for 18 months. France hit back by destroying most of the West African country's small air force, sparking anger in Abidjan against French troops based in the city. Thousands of stick-wielding youths marched past the French embassy in the city centre and headed towards the airport, which was under French army control. U.N. spokesman Jean-Victor Nkolo said there had been shooting at a crossroads near the airport for about 45 minutes but it had died down. — Reuters.

Abidjan, Nov 8 — Top generals in the Ivory Coast pledged today to work with France to establish stability in the country after some 700 people were injured in three days of anti-French riots in the main city Abidjan. Mob violence erupted on Saturday (Nov 6) after France destroyed most of Ivory Coast's small air force, in retaliation for the killing of nine French peacekeepers in a bombing raid on a rebel town. In a rapid escalation, French and Ivorian troops traded fire in Abidjan and thousands of anti-French marchers took to the streets, attacking foreigners and looting shops and homes. Ivory Coast's army chief of staff General Mathius Doue said "We are calling on all for calm and asking for everything to be done as soon as possible so normal life can resume." The price of cocoa for December delivery rose sharply in London to by up to 12 percent because of the unrest which paralysed exports of the commodity. Antoine Foucher, head of mission in Ivory Coast for Doctors Without Borders (MSF), told Reuters that about 700 people had been injured in Abidjan during the riots. He stressed the figure was provisional and to be confirmed. South African President Thabo Mbeki, who engaged in a flurry of telephone consultations with African leaders, was due to land in Abidjan

tomorrow at the head of an African Union mission. The rebel New Forces said in a statement today that Gbagbo should no longer be part of the peace process and a power-sharing government should be given more authority under Prime Minister Seydou Diarra to organise free and fair elections. France deployed troops on the streets of Abidjan yesterday, took control of the airport and flew in reinforcements to contain the backlash of looting and rioting in major towns. French helicopters clattered overhead and troops fired shots into the air today to disperse thousands of Gbagbo supporters who feared Paris was about to topple their leader. The French commander in Ivory Coast said on state television his soldiers had no intention of ousting Gbagbo, who came to power in disputed 2000 polls. He said he hoped joint French, U.N. and Ivorian patrols would soon bring calm to Abidjan. Nearly 2,000 foreign nationals were sheltering in French and United Nations bases in Abidjan, many plucked to safety by French helicopters as machete-wielding mobs looted their homes. French President Jacques Chirac said in a speech that France was Ivory Coast's ally and urged national reconciliation. In New York, France began pushing to win passage of a U.N. resolution that seeks an arms embargo and other penalties against Ivory Coast. The draft Security Council resolution, obtained by Reuters, also calls for travel bans and a freeze on "funds and other financial assets" of individuals. Ivorian officials initially maintained they had no evidence their planes had bombed the French camp in the rebel-held town of Bouake. But yesterday the army acknowledged responsibility. It said it had not meant to target the French. On Chirac's orders, the French military retaliated using heavy weapons and air strikes from its own helicopters to destroy two Ivorian Sukhoi 25 fighters and five helicopters. The U.N. Security Council, the African Union and the European Union issued urgent appeals for an end to the violence. — Reuters.

Abidjan, Nov 9 — Cocoa shipments from Ivory Coast were blocked today and most exporters were closed for the second day running after three days of mob violence across the world's top cocoa grower. "For the moment nothing is moving in Abidjan and the insecurity is still there so we are at home," said the manager of a leading UK exporter based in Abidjan. London cocoa futures slipped early today after ending at a three-month contract high yesterday as the violence in the West African country, source of 45 percent of the world's cocoa, fuelled fears of supply disruption. "There is no point buying cocoa if we can't export it because the ports are closed. We are hoping to start to work between now and the end of the week if things get back to normal," the manager told Reuters. Mob violence erupted in Abidjan and the southwestern port city of San Pedro on Saturday (Nov 6), targeting foreigners, after France destroyed most of Ivory Coast's small air force in retaliation for

the killing of nine French peacekeepers. French troops in Abidjan fired shots into the air on Monday to disperse thousands of supporters of President Laurent Gbagbo who feared Paris was about to topple him. Rioters at the port were beaten back by French soldiers. The crowds later dispersed and joint French, U.N. and Ivorian army patrols staired in Abidjan overnight. "It's calm...People are starting to go out a bit to see if they can get to work but for the moment there's nobody here," said a security guard at one top cocoa exporter in Abidjan. "Normally work starts here at 0730 hrs, but there's no one here because of the situation," a guard at the offices of a leading exporter in the commercial capital said today. In San Pedro, activity was still paralysed today even though the docks were officially open. "The port is not closed but there is nothing happening. Nothing is moving at the port right now. The boats are there but no one is loading or unloading them," Parfait Agbo, spokesman for the San Pedro port, said. Three shipments of coffee and cocoa were blocked at the port yesterday as workers stayed away and gangs of club-wielding militants loyal to Gbagbo roamed the streets. "The looting has stopped but the situation is still very uncertain. The people are continuing to demonstrate. We are still closed and we are waiting for calm to return," said Ali Lakiss, manager of San Pedro's Saf-Cacao. In the western town of Soubre, a merchant said he had continued to buy cocoa beans throughout the latest crisis but had no spare storage space. The situation in the rebel-held north was calm but tense, with U.N. peacekeepers for the most part preventing the Ivorian army crossing a ceasefire line that splits the country, U.N. spokesman Fred Eckhard said late yesterday. — Reuters.

Bagsvaerd, Nov 9 — BIMCO members report that during Nov 8, and possibly also on Nov 9, there are no pilots taking ships in or out of Abidjan. Whilst one agent has informed that there is no 'port movement', BIMCO has also been informed that several ships have been able to leave the port, and one ship has been discharging urea since Nov 6, without interruption. This ship reports that it was at no time under threat as a result of the unrest, and expects to complete discharging today and sail. Members are reminded that another ship reported that her cargo operations were interrupted twice on Nov 8, as a result of gunfire in the vicinity. Reports also indicate that French forces have taken control of the area. Some companies are, however, considering evacuation options for their staff. — BIMCO Services Division.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: South African President Thabo Mbeki was in Ivory Coast as an envoy of the African Union in a bid to restore peace to the world's top cocoa producer after days of violence that claimed at least 30 lives. Mbeki held brief talks with his Ivorian counterpart Laurent Gbagbo, whose government is widely held responsible

for the deteriorating situation in the west African state after air strikes on the rebel-held north, in violation of a May 2003 ceasefire, killed nine French troops and a US civilian. The South African leader emerged "pleased" from the meeting at the presidential residence in Abidjan's upmarket Cocody district, which had been a prime target for anti-French looting and vandalism that left hundreds of homes gutted and dozens of people injured. A social welfare ministry official told AFP on condition of anonymity that "at least" 30 people were killed in four days of violent anti-French demonstrations in Abidjan, the country's economic hub.

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated Nov 10, states: France is evacuating its nationals from Ivory Coast after days of anti-French demonstrations. The first plane carrying 270 people from the main city Abidjan landed in Paris this evening, and two more flights were expected to follow. Several thousand of the estimated 14,000 French nationals in Ivory Coast are understood to want to leave the country. The disturbances came in response to France's destruction of the Ivorian air force, in retaliation for the deaths of nine French peacekeepers on Saturday (Nov 6). The government has called on people to return to work in riot-hit Abidjan. Abidjan is said to be calmer, with some public transport now operating, and it is thought that there is a good chance some people will return to work tomorrow. But mobs are still active in Abidjan. More than 1,000 foreigners have taken refuge at a French military base in Abidjan while another 1,600 people from other nationalities are being sheltered at UN premises in the city. The UK government says its troops are on standby to go to Ivory Coast to rescue British nationals stranded there. After meeting President Laurent Gbagbo on Wednesday, South African President Mbeki praised the Ivorian leader's "commitment" to carry out peace accords. Mr Mbeki is due to meet opposition and rebel leaders in South Africa tomorrow. It has now emerged at least 4,000 of 5,500 inmates at the main prison in Abidjan managed to escape at the weekend while the city was engulfed in the rioting. They managed to disappear through a sewer in the prison yard, while work was being carried out to repair broken locks and bars after a mutiny last week, AFP news agency reported.

NEPAL

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 30 people have been hurt in an explosion in Nepal's capital, Kathmandu. Police say it was a bomb. The explosion struck a building of the government-owned Employees' Provident Fund that was under construction. No one has admitted the attack but police say it follows the pattern of raids by Maoist rebels. A police officer told Reuters three men walked into the building today and left a bomb on the first floor. Most of those wounded were

construction workers. Their injuries were not reported to be serious.

PAKISTAN

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Three members of a Pakistani religious group have been shot dead in Karachi. Police say gunmen opened fire outside a mosque killing three members of the Sunni Tehreek organisation and injuring at least four others. The ethnic Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), which represents Urdu-speaking migrants from India, has been blamed for the attack. The shooting has raised tensions in the area and police and paramilitary troops have been deployed to maintain peace. No arrests have yet been made.

RUSSIA

Moscow, Nov 8 — Russian troops killed at least 22 rebels in separatist Chechnya today, including a man officials said was linked to the assassination of Chechnya's pro-Moscow president, media reported. Akhmad Kadyrov was killed on May 9 in a bomb attack that damaged President Vladimir Putin's peace plan for the Muslim province. Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev later claimed responsibility for the assault. Ramzan Kadyrov, the killed leader's son, said special troops had infiltrated a rebel base in Chechnya's turbulent Vedensky region and killed 22 militants in a brief gun battle. Kadyrov said one of the dead was a member of the group under Basayev's command that carried out the attack on his father. "Emir Suleiman, or Khairulla, was among the dead, the man who publicly claimed responsibility for the act of terror that took place on May 9 in (regional capital) Grozny," Kadyrov was quoted as saying by Interfax news agency. Russia's NTV channel showed pictures of scorched bodies, some clad in camouflage gear and some still clinging to their AK-47s, piled in front of a brick building, with Russian soldiers silently picking through them. Putin says Chechnya, where Russian troops have fought rebels for about a decade, is returning to normal, but troops and police die daily in attacks by rebels. — Reuters.

SRI LANKA

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Norway's foreign minister has held talks with the Tamil rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran in an attempt to revive the peace process in Sri Lanka. Jan Petersen met the reclusive Tamil Tiger leader in the northern rebel-held town of Kilinochchi. His visit coincides with a rights group report which has accused the rebels of recruiting child soldiers. Peace talks between the rebels and the Sri Lankan government broke down last year and an uneasy truce prevails. Mr Peterson, who has already met President Chandrika Kumaratunga, was accompanied by a team of Norwegian mediators for talks with the rebel leader. No details were available on the three-hour-long closed door talks

with the rebel leader, according to reports. Correspondents say the talks were likely to have focussed on maintaining a fragile ceasefire which was brokered by Norwegian mediators over two years ago. A spate of political murders since the defection of a Tiger commander in March has threatened the island's tenuous peace. "We will see if there's a possibility to bridge the gaps," Norwegian peace envoy to Sri Lanka, Eric Solheim, told the Associated Press ahead of the rare meeting with Mr Prabhakaran. "But we have no high expectations of a breakthrough," he said. Analysts say the "gaps" possibly relate to the deadlock between the two sides over the rebels' central demand for interim self-rule in the north and east of the country. Mr Petersen, who arrived in Colombo yesterday, met President Chandrika Kumaratunga to "explore all possibilities for the resumption of peace talks," according to a peace envoy. President Kumaratunga said the government was totally committed to the peace process, and an early resumption of talks "within an agreed framework". Norwegian mediators regularly visit Sri Lanka but analysts say the foreign minister's visit reflects growing impatience with the failure to resume negotiations. In a separate development, the US-based Human Rights Watch has accused the Tamil Tiger rebels of forcibly recruiting more than 3000 child soldiers under the age of 18 years after the ceasefire began in February 2002. "By abducting children or threatening their families, the Tamil Tigers had recruited thousands since active fighting ended in 2002," the report said. Such forced recruitment has bought fear instead of the expected peace dividend, the report added. In September, the United Nations children's agency, Unicef, found that child recruitment is still rife in Tamil Tiger-controlled territory.

SUDAN

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Peace talks between the Sudanese government and Darfur rebels have stalled over the question of creating a no-fly zone over the area. Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo, who is hosting the talks in Abuja, put forward a compromise, which called for a ceasefire on land and in the air. The rebel groups agreed to the new wording late yesterday; the government has rejected it. The new stalemate comes as the UN warns of anarchy in the area. United Nations envoy to Sudan, Jan Pronk, told the Security Council violence was increasing in the area. Mr Pronk called for a fast deployment of the newly-expanded African Union peacekeeping mission. Some 1.6 million people have fled their homes since the conflict began. Sudan's government refused to sign peace deals with rebels today, saying the accord drafted by African Union mediators was too one-sided. AU mediators have described the security plan as the "best possible compromise". As well as calling for a military no-fly zone over Darfur, the deal also

demands the disarmament of the pro-Khartoum militias. The UN's Mr Pronk says the government is not in control of its forces and fighting is breaking out in "more and more places". But Sudan's Foreign Minister Mustapha Osman Ismail lays the blame for the insecurity on the rebels, who, he says, increase their attacks ahead of Security Council meetings.

Abuja, Nov 9 — Sudan bowed to international pressure today for a ban on military flights over the Darfur region, where 1.5 million have been forced from their homes, and signed two landmark peace deals with rebels. After two weeks of talks in the Nigerian capital, the government dropped its opposition to the no-fly zone and signed agreements with rebels covering security and access for aid to Darfur, scene of what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The government climb-down comes 10 days before a United Nations Security Council meeting at which Sudan could have seen sanctions imposed on its oil industry because of the lack of progress in the talks and a deteriorating security situation on the ground in Darfur. The security protocol, which imposes a ban on "hostile military flights" over the desert region the size of France, also envisages the government disarming loyalist militia known as the Janjaweed who are accused of a campaign of rape and killing. It also instructs both sides to reveal the location of their forces to cease-fire monitors. The humanitarian protocol says aid workers should be given free access to refugees in precarious, makeshift camps where disease and malnutrition have killed at least 70,000 people since March. The agreements were hailed as a breakthrough by African Union mediators at the two-week-old talks, but analysts doubted whether they would be implemented. "When it is put under pressure, the Sudanese government says it will concede, but whether this translates to action is another question and I think that is unlikely," said Tom Cargill, Africa program coordinator of the Royal Institute for International Affairs in London. Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo echoed these doubts, saying: "These documents won't be worth the paper they are written on if they are not scrupulously implemented on the ground."

THAILAND

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: Thailand troubled south remains tense after a series of violent incidents left at least seven people dead. The killings came a week after 85 Muslims were killed when a protest turned violent, many of them suffocated while in police custody. Islamic leaders warned that the tragedy could trigger reprisal attacks in Thailand's mainly Muslim south. Two state railway workers were shot dead early today in Narathiwat province, according to police. In Yala province, a senior policeman was also

killed today, by gunmen on a motorbike. Late yesterday two people were shot dead near their home in Narathiwat, while at least one other man was killed in a separate incident. "Buddhists are living in a state of fear because we find that the insurgents are now targeting us," said Pairat Wihakarath, president of the Teachers Association in southern Thailand. "They are exacting revenge on innocent Buddhists who have nothing to do with the ongoing violence," he told the Associated Press. He was referring to warnings made by Islamic leaders of reprisal attacks for the Oct 25 deaths of 85 Muslim protesters outside a police station in Takbai, Narathiwat province. Most of those who died were suffocated in police custody, after being bundled into army trucks. A senior Buddhist official was beheaded earlier this week in an apparent revenge attack for the Takbai deaths, and there have been several other shootings since the incident. Warnings that insurgents may try to target Buddhist teachers and students have prompted many schools throughout the south to close until Monday (Nov 8) at the earliest. Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has ordered an independent panel to investigate the Takbai deaths, but the inquiry has done little to calm fears among Buddhists living in the south. A militant group called the Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO) left a warning message on its website earlier this week urging Buddhist citizens to leave the Muslim-dominated southern areas, and also threatening terrorist attacks in Bangkok. The south of Thailand is home to most of the country's Muslim minority, which has long complained of discrimination by the authorities in Bangkok.

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Suspected militants beheaded an elderly man, the second Buddhist decapitated in a week, and shot dead two Buddhist workers in southern Thailand in revenge for the October deaths of 85 Muslim protesters, police said yesterday. The growing number of apparent revenge killings prompted a leading Islamic cleric to urge Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to apologise to families of the dead protesters, most of whom died of suffocation in army custody. However, Thaksin, who has said he regretted the deaths, responded by blasting his own officials for delaying extra payments to officials tackling the unrest in the largely Muslim and relatively poor region and to teachers. The latest victim in more than 10 months of violence in the region was a 60-year-old rubber tapper, whose body and severed head were found in a plantation hut in Narathiwat province. Beside the corpse were two handwritten notes saying the beheading was intended to avenge the Muslim protesters, 78 of whom died in overcrowded army trucks after a demonstration outside Narathiwat's Tak Bai police station, police said. A Buddhist couple was shot dead by gunmen on a motorcycle while they

were riding to work in neighbouring Yala province on Tuesday (Nov 9), police said. At least 22 people, almost all of them Buddhists, have been killed since the October 25 Tak Bai deaths, which led to warnings from Muslim clerics and analysts that the "massacre" could trigger reprisal attacks.

ZIMBABWE

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated Nov 10, states: Zimbabwe's parliament has agreed to amend its already tough media code making it mandatory for journalists to register with a state commission. Journalists who fail to do so, could face up to two years in prison, a fine, or both. President Robert Mugabe is expected to sign the amendment into law by the end of the month. The act is likely to deter foreign correspondents who have been entering the country disguised as tourists. The original Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) bars foreign journalists from working in the country on a permanent basis. It stipulates that only local reporters licensed by a state-approved media commission can operate.

Labour Disputes



BANGLADESH

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A 24-hour countrywide transport strike was jointly called by Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation and Bus Minibus Owners and Workers Parishad. The strike in force since the morning with many commuters not aware of the programme taken aback as they found the roads without the buses, minibuses, and taxicabs. Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation, a platform of transport workers, enforced the strike from 0600, yesterday protesting killing of one of its central leaders by elite police force Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) while Bus Minibus Owners and Workers Parishad was protesting the government's decision to withdraw diesel-run buses and mini-buses older than 10 years.

CHILE

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Workers at Phelps Dodge Corp's El Abra copper mine in Chile said they went on strike this morning because of a wage dispute. Unions representing 495 workers at El Abra, which last year accounted for 1.6 percent of copper mine output worldwide, don't have talks scheduled with management, said Rodrigo Hernandez, a spokesman for the unions, in a telephone interview. Workers had voted on Oct 27 to strike. The unions said that the strike will disrupt copper output because they run most of the mine's machinery.

FRANCE

London, Nov 10 — French ports were severely disrupted yesterday as dockers and port workers staged a 24-hour strike to protest at deteriorating job prospects and a reduction in public sector investment. The two leading ports, Marseilles and Le Havre, were both hard hit by the strike which was called by the port workers' federation of the Confederation Generale du Travail. The port of Le Havre said that four container carriers had cancelled their calls at the port yesterday and that 12 other vessels had been delayed by the strike which was observed by dockers and port authority employees. A spokesman said that P&O's Le Havre-Portsmouth ferry service was not affected by the strike, however. At the port of Marseilles, cargo-handling activity was paralysed at both Marseilles and Fos, although the port said that ro-ro services not requiring docker assistance were operating normally at Marseilles. Five vessels were confined to their berths, one was waiting to enter port at Fos and seven vessels were held up in their berths at Marseilles. Cargo-handling was also reported to be at a standstill at the ports of Saint-Nazaire, Lorient and Brest, while at Cherbourg and Saint Malo the strike was observed but had little effect on port activity. The CGT has called for an investigation into the "under-utilisation" of the public sector ports budget and for more public funds to be channelled into the ports rather than into roads and railways. It has also denounced government plans to put a number of secondary ports under full local control as part of a recently voted devolution programme. - The Gaz de France LNG carriers *Descartes* and *Tellier* were continuing to wait off the port of Fos yesterday as the group refused to bring them into port following crew votes in favour of strike action once they had berthed. A union source that executives of GdF shipping subsidiary, Gazocean, had gone aboard *Descartes* yesterday in an attempt to persuade ratings and officers to call off the separate 48-hour strikes they are planning. The source said that GdF was concerned that the strike action planned by the crews of *Descartes* and *Tellier* would block access to the gas terminal at Fos. The crews are protesting over GdF's plans to introduce a majority Filipino crew aboard the 74,000 cu m *Gaz de France Energy*, which is due to be delivered to GdF later this month by the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard.

INDIA

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: More than 200,000 employees and officers of the State Bank of India today observed a countrywide token strike in protest against the "anti-labour" policies of the management. The All India State Bank Officers Federation and All India State Bank of India Staff Federation, which had given the call for the strike, described the strike as a "complete success." "No transaction took place in any of the 9,000 branches of SBI," said SBI Officers Association (Delhi Circle)

General Secretary T N Goel. The leaders of both the federations will meet in Mumbai on Sunday (Nov 7) to chalk out their further course of action. The unions are demanding appointment on compassionate grounds of family members of employees who die in harness, welfare fund and reduction of interest rates on staff loans. Other demands include compensation to employees working on holidays and withdrawal of outsourcing of bank work.

ITALY

Genoa, Nov 8 — A strike was called by SECH/Calata Sanita Genoa port labourers yesterday, Nov 7, in consequence of an accident that occurred at about 0800, local time, when a labourer was injured inside a mobile crane, which capsized due to a large hole in the ground of the SECH Terminal pier. — Lloyd's Agents.

NIGERIA

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated Nov 10, states: Nigeria's white-collar oil workers' union said today it had decided to join the proposed nationwide strike against rising fuel prices that threatens the west African country's oil export. A statement signed by President of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association (PENGASSAN), Brown Ogbeifun, said the decision to join the strike was taken at an emergency meeting of the association. The PENGASSAN, an affiliate of the country's while-collar Trade Union Congress, warned in the statement that branches of the association, which failed to join the strike, would be sanctioned. It also directed its zonal chairmen to convene meetings of their zonal councils and brief them on the decisions taken at the emergency meeting. The strike scheduled to start on Nov 16 is called by the blue-collar Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and its allied associations to press demands for a reversal in fuel prices. The NLC launched a four-day "warning strike" in mid-October, but did not yield the intended result. At a result, it threatened that the Nov 16 one would "indefinite" and would disrupt the country's oil production and export. The Nigerian government warned on Monday (Nov 8) that workers who join the forthcoming nationwide strike against rising fuel prices may be sacked, but the NLC vowed once again that there was no going back.

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A Nigerian high court today blocked an upcoming general strike meant to shut down oil exports in the world's seventh largest exporter. Justice Tanko Mohammed Yusuf, in a union appeal of a case originally brought by Nigeria's government, said in an order to the main Nigeria Labour Congress that "it shall not embark on any strike from 16th of November 2004 or any day thereafter." Nigeria's unions, including blue- and white-collar oil worker guilds, had called the strike for Tuesday, and said this one \neq unlike

other recent strikes \emptyset would target oil production and exports. Unions are unhappy over a 23 percent increase in domestic fuel prices, raised by the government in September. Earlier this year, the government stopped the Nigeria Labor Congress from striking over the imposition of a new fuel tax, saying it did not directly affect its members' interests. Today's ruling came in a union appeal of that decision. The order comes from Nigeria's second-highest court, just below the supreme court. The appeal hearing would resume next Wednesday (Nov 17), said Yusuf, who ordered a stay on union action until a final ruling in the case. During the appeal hearing, government lawyers requested that the Nigeria Labor Congress should be barred from carrying out any strike until a final judgment in the case.

SOUTH KOREA

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A month-long strike at Capro Corp., South Korea's lone nylon material producer, is threatening to halt production in the domestic synthetic fibre industry, industry sources said today. According to the sources, Hyosung and Kolon are considering cutting or stopping production from next week because of depleted inventories unless Capro supplies the essential chemical caprolactam. "We have difficulty bringing in imports from Japan and Europe quickly because it takes a long time before we can recover overseas supply contracts," one of the sources said. Capro's unionised workers walked off the job in early October, calling for a wage increase, while the management locked out striking workers from Friday, worsening prospects for an early compromise. Hyosung and Kolon, which have stakes of 27.7 per cent and 19.9 percent in Capro, respectively, were set to receive a stable supply from the domestic company starting in September as it increased its annual capacity from 120,000 tons to 240,000 tons. The planned production increase caused the companies to slash their import ratios from 50 per cent to 10 per cent and 20 per cent.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of thousands of civil servants are striking over government plans to cut as many as 100,000 jobs. The strike is the largest by civil servants in more than a decade, with museums, courts, Jobcentres and tax offices either closed or disrupted. Today's strike has been organised by the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) and involves 160 government departments and agencies. The PCS Union estimated up to 200,000 civil servants walked out of work today. About 300 workers were expected at the rally in Westminster Cathedral Hall, which followed a protest march that began at the Treasury. Services closed due to the industrial action include the British Museum, the Science Museum and the British Library reading rooms. The PCS union also estimated some 90% of

Inland Revenue staff in Northern Ireland to be on strike, while only eight out of 140 of the staff in the Department for Work and Pensions call centre in Liverpool turned up for work. Elsewhere, driving examiners and staff for the Royal Parks also joined in on the strike. The PCS polled its 260,000 members over government plans to cut 100,000 jobs last month. The union said it was concerned about pensions, sick pay and forced relocation as well as the cut in jobs. PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka said "Hundreds of thousands of members are today taking a stand against arbitrary cuts which will decimate services we all rely on from the cradle to the grave. The people on strike today are not faceless bureaucrats or your bowler-hatted Sir Humphreys but people, who collect the taxes to build hospitals and schools, get the unemployed in to work and protect our shores from illegal contraband." He added: "The public understand full well that one day's inconvenience is nothing compared to losing access to services in communities up and down the country. Chancellor Gordon Brown issued a defiant statement about the strike, saying the action would not affect the government's "determination" to make savings in order to increase investment in healthcare, education, transport and the fight against crime. "Our decisions mean more police, more teachers, more doctors and more nurses," he said.

Awards & Settlements



ANTI-TRUST SUIT, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Microsoft Corp. will pay \$536 million to settle possible anti-trust claims from network-software maker Novell Inc. Microsoft also will settle claims from the Computer & Communications Industry Association trade group. The company revised its first-quarter earnings to include costs from the settlements. That put net income at \$2.53 billion, or 23 cents a share, the company said in a PR Newswire statement. Microsoft has been winding down its legal issues to focus on reviving sales. Revenue growth is forecast to slow to 6% this fiscal year from 14% last year. The Redmond, Washington-based company will pay the cash, and Novell will drop any claims over its Netware operating system. Claims related to Novell's WordPerfect software aren't part of the settlement, Novell said in a separate statement.

CLASS-ACTION SETTLEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A federal judge in New York approved a US\$2.6 billion settlement of a class-action lawsuit by WorldCom Inc investors who claimed they were defrauded by Citigroup Inc.

The settlement is the second-largest ever in a securities fraud case. More than 170,000 WorldCom shareholders and bondholders have filed claims against Citigroup, the world's largest financial services company. Citigroup announced a tentative settlement in May and set aside billions of dollars in reserves to pay for this and other lawsuits. US District Judge Denise Cote, who approved the pact on Friday, called it "historic." The cash settlement is "fair recompense to the class that was victim of the acts taken by WorldCom and the underwriters," said New York State Comptroller Alan Hevesi, trustee of the New York Common Retirement Fund. The state's employee pension fund was named by the judge to manage the suit for other investors. The pact doesn't resolve claims against 17 other securities firms, including JPMorgan Chase & Co, Bank of America Corp, and Deutsche Bank AG. The case against the remaining banks is scheduled to go to trial in February. "The litigation is not over," Mr Hevesi said. WorldCom filed the largest bankruptcy case in US history in July 2002 after engaging in an US\$11 billion accounting fraud. Former chief executive Bernard Ebbers was indicted in March for his alleged role in the collapse. He pleaded not guilty and is scheduled to go on trial in New York in January. The Ashburn, Virginia-based long distance company was renamed MCI Inc, after emerging from bankruptcy in April. Investors accused Citigroup of hiding the company's financial risks when it helped sell US\$10 billion of WorldCom debt in 2001. From 2000 to 2002, Citigroup was the top underwriter of stocks and bonds in companies that later failed. Settlement of the WorldCom litigation applies to investors who acquired stock and bonds between April 29, 1999 and June 25, 2002. When the tentative pact was announced in May, it was for US\$2.65 billion. The investors agreed to a US\$75 million reduction in the payment from Citigroup, after the bank, in the final negotiations, consented to a legal provision demanded by the plaintiffs. Citigroup will also pay US\$51 million in interest. "We are paying one of the largest settlements in the history of securities law in order to get total peace with respect to WorldCom," Citigroup lawyer Richard Rosen said. Citigroup chief executive Charles Prince said in May that the bank elected to settle rather than risk paying US\$54 billion after a trial. Sean Coffey, a lawyer for the investors, said that the plaintiffs were seeking "tens of billions" of dollars.

DISCRIMINATION, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated Nov 11, states: Teen retailer Abercrombie & Fitch said yesterday it will pay \$50 million to settle charges that it discriminates against women and minorities in hiring, saying it hopes to avoid a prolonged conflict over the matter. The settlement, which remains subject to judicial review, would

resolve two federal class-action discrimination lawsuits filed last year in San Francisco and Camden, N.J., and a third suit filed Monday (Nov 8) by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The private lawsuits accuse the retailer, based in Ohio, of overlooking Latino, Asian and other minority recruits in favor of white job candidates. Plaintiffs' attorneys claimed that Abercrombie's minority hires were disproportionately assigned to behind-the-scenes positions such as stockroom clerks, while white employees were placed in conspicuous jobs where the company believed they projected a look more in keeping with its classic, clean-cut image. The retailer denied the discrimination charges. The commission filing Monday in U.S. District Court in San Francisco made public a previously confidential investigation by the federal agency. The commission had responded to allegations that the retailer consistently failed to equitably recruit, hire and promote candidates regardless of race, national origin, gender and skin colour, said commission attorney Anna Park in Los Angeles. "It's a nationwide case. We allege that Abercrombie, on a nationwide basis, discriminated" against large categories of job candidates, including female applicants", Park said yesterday. Details of the proposed settlement were not made public, pending a hearing that's expected to take place within a few weeks, sources said. Abercrombie & Fitch spokesman Tom Lennox declined to say whether the retailer admitted to wrongdoing as part of the settlement. He cited an agreement by all parties involved not to discuss the settlement until it's finalised. Lennox said that the company has hired a vice president of diversity, Todd Corley, who started on Monday. The spokesman declined to comment on Corley's responsibilities or whether shoppers will see any changes inside the company's more than 760 stores as a result of the company's diversity initiatives. Robert Singer, Abercrombie's president and chief operating officer, said in a conference call with Wall Street analysts yesterday, "We decided to settle this because we felt that a long, drawn-out dispute would have been harmful to the company and distracting to management."

MINING ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A man was awarded \$5.7 million from two companies for injuries he suffered when a coal digger he was operating fell down an embankment at a strip mine five years ago. After a two-week trial, a Pittsburgh federal jury yesterday awarded \$6.4 million to David S. Carcaise, 40, of New Castle, and \$500,000 to his wife, Leslie, for the accident in September 1999 at a Lawrence County mine. Carcaise was operating a drag line, a large crane-like machine used to scoop and scrape up coal, when the earth underneath gave way and it fell into a pit, according to his lawyer, Mark Homyak. Carcaise's chest was crushed and his spine was

damaged and he'll have to use a morphine pump to control the pain for the rest of his life, Homyak said. The jury found that Cemex Inc., of Houston, and Industrial Contracting and Erecting, of Terre Haute, Ind., were liable for the accident. Cemex owned the mine and the machine. Industrial Contracting and Erecting had taken the machine apart and brought it to Pennsylvania from Kentucky. Homyak claimed officials knew the dragline was unstable and saw it rocking back and forth at the edge of the pit before it fell in. The machine also lacked 13.5 tons of ballast, Homyak said.

RENEGING ON SALE AND LOSS OF REPUTATION, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated Lawrenceville, Georgia, Nov 5, states: A jury has awarded an international arms dealer \$3.6 million in damages, after he accused Boeing Co. of renegeing on a deal to buy two Russian-made missile launchers and ruining his reputation among other potential customers. Today's judgment gave Milton Blane, owner of Cumming-based Blane International Group Inc., \$3.5 million in punitive damages and \$100,000 in compensation for the missile launchers Boeing allegedly had intended to resell to the U.S. Navy. In 1999, Blane approached the Chicago-based military contractor and offered to broker a deal with Russia for air-to-surface missiles that were available for purchase after the collapse of the Soviet Union, according to court documents. Boeing was interested, but first asked Blane to arrange the purchase of two Russian-made missile launchers, apparently to make him "prove what he could do" before getting a larger order, said Blane's attorney, Lawrence Newlin. The company backed out of its agreement to pay \$80,000 for the missile launchers, then proceeded to discredit Blane after he filed the lawsuit in 2002, Newlin said. The company wrote at least three letters to Ukrainian officials branding Blane an illegal arms dealer, he said. Blane claimed the smear campaign cost him at least \$27 million in lost business. However, Boeing attorney Michael King argued that Blane's business relationships were not hurt, saying the businessman met with Ukrainian officials as recently as last week. Boeing attorneys declined comment on the verdict today, but Boeing spokesman Walt Rice called the Gwinnett County jury award "excessive and unjustified" and said the company would appeal.



EASTLEIGH, HAMPSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Investigators are

trying to establish how all 15 wagons on a freight train derailed at a transport yard at Eastleigh in Hampshire last night. A witness said the train was incorrectly sent across points into a siding, and ploughed through buffers. It came to a halt in a transport firm yard, wrecking several vehicles including a 45ft articulated trailer. No-one was in the yard belonging to the general haulage company H Young Transport and there were no injuries. A spokesman from the rail operator EWS, responsible for the freight train, said they were investigating the cause of the derailment.

ELKO, NEVADA, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Elko firefighters and a Union Pacific Railroad hazardous materials team are investigating a train derailment that caused an ethanol alcohol leak this morning. One of the 11 cars that derailed was a tanker that contained about 30,000 gallons of ethanol alcohol. "There is a potential of about half being leaked out," said Elko Fire Capt. Shane Wiggins. The tanker leaking the ethanol alcohol is next to a tanker containing sulfuric acid, which firefighters believe is not leaking. Elko firefighters were notified of the derailment around 0600 hrs. Elko police and Elko County sheriff's deputies were called at about 0630 hrs to close East Idaho Street from the Department of Motor Vehicles east and all of Manzanita Lane, said Elko Police Chief Clair Morris. The roads were closed for about an hour and a half. The Environmental Protection Agency also is en route to the site from Carson City, Wiggins said. The cause for the derailment is under investigation.

GORAYA AREA, INDIA

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: An engine and a coach of the Dadar bound Amritsar-Dadar Express derailed yesterday near Goraya in Jalandhar, but no casualty was reported. The derailment occurred at around 1100 hrs when the train was changing line, railway sources said. A new engine was arranged for the train, which started its onward journey after being stranded for two hours, they said. Senior Railway officials rushed to the spot and cranes were summoned to clear the track, they said. Experts are probing the exact cause of the derailment, the sources added.

GUTHALUNGRA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A freight train has hit a truck, killing the truck driver, before derailling and overturning on the Bruce Highway in north Queensland. The train hit the semi-trailer on a crossing about 1115, AEST, at Guthalungra, 30km north of Bowen, police said. The train's two drivers were not injured. Wagons from the train had overturned on the highway, which was closed between Bowen and Home Hill, police said.

Receive immediate notice as soon as a Casualty occurs. For further information please contact Andrew Luxton on +44 (0) 20 7017 4625.

**NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS,
UNITED KINGDOM**

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: An M-B-T-A Green Line “trolley” collided into the back of another train in Newton today, injuring seven people and disrupting service. A spokesman for the transit system says an outbound train travelling around 20 miles per hour ran into the back of a stationary “trolley” that was waiting to enter Newton Centre station. The collision occurred just before 1000 hrs on the Green Line’s “D” branch. A single car on each “trolley” derailed. Spokesman Joe Pesaturo says four transit employees and three passengers were taken to hospitals.

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS,
UNITED STATES**

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: One person was killed and another hurt today when a Union Pacific refrigerated freight car smashed through the wall of a cold storage warehouse in San Antonio, police and railroad officials said. “A switch engine was pushing some cars into this spur track where there were some other freight cars already parked,” Union Pacific’s John Bromley said. “These cars hit the parked cars and pushed them off the end of the track through a bumping post and into the side of the Crystal Cold Storage Company office.” It happened in the 4100 block of Profit Drive, off Gemblor Road east of the SBC Centre. The area is a warehouse district built around the main north-south Union Pacific freight line, which runs through the area. There are no homes in the immediate area. One man, identified as a salesman for Crystal Cold Storage, was killed, and another employee of the company was hurt. Thirty-five people were working there at the time. Emergency officials said a small amount of diesel fuel spilled but it was quickly contained. Their main concern was whether the incident threatened the structural integrity of the building. Bromley said it is too soon to tell whether the incident is a case of human error. He said an engineer, and not a remote control device, was controlling the train at the time. “The train either jumped the track at or right behind a stopping post, and then went into the building,” San Antonio police sergeant Gabe Trevino said. No one on board the train was hurt, and the incident did not cause a hazardous materials spill.

**THORPE IN BALNE, SOUTH
YORKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM**

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Normal services on the busy east coast mainline will not resume until tomorrow afternoon, according to Network Rail. Work needs to be carried out on the track and the junction points following a freight train derailment in Thorpe in Balne, South Yorkshire, yesterday. Services between London and the North East and Scotland are being disrupted. GNER is operating services between Leeds and London and York and Scotland with

passengers having to use hourly services between Leeds and York. Services operated by Virgin Trains and Arriva are also being affected. A Network Rail spokeswoman said although the derailed train had been moved there was more damage to the track than at first thought. “The track itself needs repairing and there is some technical work needs doing to the points. “We think the track will be open by mid-afternoon on Saturday,” she said.

**UFTON NERVET, BERKSHIRE,
UNITED KINGDOM**

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Six people have died after a high-speed train hit a car on a level crossing and derailed in Berkshire. Eleven other passengers on the First Great Western express from Paddington to Plymouth were seriously injured. Police say all eight carriages derailed - some overturned. The crash happened at around 1812, yesterday at an automatic barrier crossing at Ufton Nervet, near Newbury. Police say the train hit the vehicle and was “completely” derailed. Crash investigators were quickly on the scene. A search and rescue operation will continue through the night. First Great Western confirmed that the train was the 1735 hrs service from Paddington. Three hundred people were aboard. The Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading said it had treated 57 passengers, including nine with major injuries and three others who had to be resuscitated. Other passengers went to the North Hampshire Hospital in Basingstoke.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Yesterday’s train crash in Berkshire has claimed another life. The death toll has now reached seven, with another 10 passengers seriously injured. Police and rail safety investigators are now examining the wreckage to determine why a car was parked across the level crossing and why the train itself was so catastrophically derailed in the smash. All eight carriages juddered and swayed before tipping over hundreds of metres down the line. An off-duty policeman saw the car drive onto the crossing and stop and wait for the train to arrive. Police are now investigating whether the crash was caused by a suicide attempt. The drivers of the train and the car are among the seven dead.

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: A level crossing at the centre of Saturday’s (Nov 6) rail crash in Berkshire was in full working order, according to a safety report. Interim findings from the Health and Safety Executive said the train driver had just two or three seconds to brake before ploughing into a car. Driver Stanley Martin was travelling at the permitted speed, it added. Early signs suggested car driver Brian Drysdale made “no attempt” to move from the level crossing, added the report. HSE’s assistant chief inspector of railways Steve Walker, who led the investigation, said at this stage there

were no signs of railway staff or equipment error. The report said an off-duty police officer had noticed a car driver was stopped on the crossing before the barrier sequence began. The driver “made no attempt to leave the vehicle once the crossing traffic signals began to flash and the barriers descended” it added. Police are still looking into why chef Brian Drysdale’s car was stopped on the crossing, and have not ruled out suicide. Work to clear the wreckage from the accident site began on Monday night (Nov 8) and is expected to last two or three days.



Miscellaneous

CEMENT DISPUTE, MEXICO

London, Nov 9 — Storage ship *Mary Nour* is still being held at the port of Altamira, not allowed to unload its cargo of cement.

**COLLAPSE OF MOSQUE, FEZ,
MOROCCO**

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A mosque has collapsed in northeastern Morocco, killing 10 people. Another seven people were injured when the mosque in Fez, about 200km east of Rabat, collapsed during one of the five daily Muslim prayers. The Interior Ministry said the Ain Al-Khail mosque caved in after an individual home located above the mosque collapsed.

**FAILURE OF CRANE, UMATILLA,
OREGON, UNITED STATES**

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Container-loading operations at the Port of Umatilla have been suspended indefinitely because of a broken crane. The boom of the crane, the long arm section that swings out above the Columbia River to lift containers from barges, was being lowered for inspection Monday (Nov 8) when a component failed, causing the arm to fall, officials said. Nobody was injured, and there was no damage to a barge at the dock or any containers. Port of Morrow spokeswoman Lisa Mittelsdorf said that Tidewater, the company handling container shipments for the Port of Morrow in Boardman, will pick up container traffic for the Port of Umatilla until its facility is back on line. The Port of Umatilla crane is 64 years old, and a \$3.8 million replacement has been under construction at Ederer Crane in Seattle. The new crane is scheduled for delivery in March, but Ederer Crane officials said they could try to speed the work if it is an emergency.

**INFESTATION OF LOCUSTS
ACROSS NORTH AND
WEST AFRICA**

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: A locust invasion across swathes of West Africa has not

severely affected food production, the UN says. Despite fears the swarms would devastate crops and destroy harvests, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) says actual losses are limited. Mauritania has been the worst-affected country, with up to half of all cereal crops consumed by the insects. Many swarms are still present in Mauritania and Niger but are now moving away from Mali and Senegal. "The harvest prospects are not as bad as feared," says FAO agricultural economist Jean Senahoun. "Although the locusts damaged crops, it was often localised damage which did not have an important impact at a national level," he said. The key crop-producing areas, the so-called "bread-baskets" were not affected, he said, but Mr Senahoun warned that many rural households, especially in Mauritania, would face hardship and need fresh seeds, fertilisers and tools to replant their destroyed crops. Currently swarms are flying northwards and have reached the foothills of the Atlas mountains in Morocco and Algeria. Other swarms have reached the Cape Verde islands, northern Mali and Niger. Countries have been urged to prepare themselves for another upsurge in locust numbers next year. The body says it has now received almost half of the \$100m needed to deal with the crisis.

INFESTATION OF LOCUSTS, CYPRUS

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: A massive aerial spraying campaign has begun in Cyprus to deal with a menacing locust invasion. Swarms of the rare desert locust began arriving on the island at the weekend, threatening entire potato crops. The use of aircraft in eradication programmes was banned several years ago on health grounds. Warm weather in the eastern Mediterranean has been blamed for the arrival of the insects from Africa. The first locusts were spotted in the far west of the island early this week. A limited spraying operation appeared to have brought the situation under control, but yesterday, a third and larger swarm arrived in the same area west of Paphos. Farmers feared the locusts would devour the season's potato crops. After lengthy discussions, the agriculture ministry has resolved to using aircraft to extend the eradication. Officials said they took the decision reluctantly but faced with the size of the locust cloud and how fast it was moving, they had no choice. It is the first time since World War II that swarms of desert locusts have been sighted in Cyprus, experts say.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ISPS CODE

See *Laemthong Glory* under "Seizures & Arrests."

RELEASE OF ACID VAPOUR, HOUSTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: The Houston Ship Channel was closed for more than an hour yesterday morning after a nearby

chemical plant accidentally released nitric acid vapour into the air, US Coast Guard officials said. A vapour cloud was released from the Texas Molecular facility in Deer Park about 0745 hrs, said US Coast Guard Petty Officer Andrew Kendrick. The channel reopened at 0900 hrs. No injuries were reported, according to the Coast Guard, but people in nearby businesses were told to take shelter. Texas Molecular provides waste management and transportation services, as well as specialised chemical manufacturing, recovery and processing services. The cause of the release was not immediately known.



APARTMENT, BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated Nov 6, states: A gas explosion tore through a two-storey apartment building in the Azerbaijan capital of Baku early today, trapping residents under the debris, emergency officials said. At least four people were killed. Part of the building, home to 30 families, collapsed at 0300 hrs when most residents were in bed, said Ehsan Zahidov, a spokesman for Azerbaijan's Interior Ministry. Some of the injured were pulled out of the wreckage during a two-hour operation, he said. Seven people were hospitalised but one of the victims, a 30-year-old man, later died of his injuries. The condition of the other victims was not immediately known. Officials had initially said that no one else was missing but later pulled three bodies out of the wreckage, including a husband and wife. The operations headquarters said it could not rule out finding more dead in the rubble. A gas leak was blamed for the explosion, which destroyed three apartments on the second floor and a store located on the first floor of the building about two miles from the city centre.

COAL MINE, SHUOZHOU, CHINA

Shanghai, Nov 6 — A gas explosion in a coal mine has killed 16 miners in northern China, the latest in a string of accidents to hit the mining industry, the official Xinhua news agency said today. Forty-eight miners were working underground at the time of the blast, in the early hours of yesterday at the Shiyawan coal pit, near the city of Shuozhou in the northern province of Shanxi. Xinhua reported that 32 miners escaped, and the cause of the explosion is being investigated. The Shiyawan mine is run by the local township and churns out about 90,000 tonnes of the hard, dirty hydrocarbon each year. — Reuters.

COAL MINE, XINJIANG PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire at a Chinese

coal mine that began in 1874 has finally been extinguished after four years of concentrated firefighting efforts. The fire broke out at the Liuhuanggou colliery, near Urumqi in Xinjiang province and has smoldered and flared routinely for the past 130 years. In the last four years, firefighting costs reached \$12 million in efforts to snuff the flames that were emitting 100,000 tons of carbon monoxide and sulfur every year, the state Xinhua news agency said. Officials estimate the fire consumed 1.8 million tons of coal and produced 40,000 tons of ash every year.

COLLEGE, ST ANNES, LANCASHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: About 150 students had to leave their Lancashire college after a huge fire broke out. There were 80 firefighters tackling the blaze at the hair and beauty department on the top floor of Blackpool and Fylde College, in St Annes, at its height. It is thought a salon hairdryer is the focus of an investigation into the cause of this morning's fire. One firefighter and a student had to be treated in hospital, but are not thought to have been badly hurt. Firefighters were still dampening down at the scene in the evening. A spokesman said the second and third floors were well alight and some windows in the glass-sided building had cracked due to the heat.

FACTORY, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Karachi, Nov 9 — A big fire broke out in a privately owned sweater factory—Sydney Fashion Limited in Dhaka city's Tejgaon industrial area in Bangladesh yesterday. According to company and fire brigades sources, the fire originated from a short circuit at around 0500 and engulfed three floors of the five-storey building at 158/A/B Tejkunipara within minutes. Eleven units of Fire Service rushed to the spot and were able to bring the fire under control after five hours. The officials of the factory put the loss at Tk 50 million. A case was filed with Tejgaon Police station to find out the cause of the fire. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

FACTORY, NADROGA, FIJI

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: The factory and office of a designer furniture manufacturing company at Malaqereqere, in Nadroga, was razed to the ground yesterday. Pacific Green general manager Ravin Chandra said the company had suffered a loss of Fiji \$5million (£1.58 million) in the blaze, which started at 1230 hrs in the factory. He said machinery and other damaged equipment had a \$6million insurance. Mr Chandra said the workers were in the factory when the fire started and authorities were investigating. He said the company was thankful no-one had been injured. Mr Chandra said the factory and the administration office were destroyed but the company had back-up files. Police spokesman Kolinio Vunaki said foul play would not be ruled out until

investigations were completed. Assistant Superintendent Vunaki said it was premature to make further comments. He said fire officers were concentrating on putting the blaze out before looking for the cause of the blaze.

FACTORY, NEWTOWNABBEY, COUNTY ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated today, states: There has been a fire at an engineering factory in County Antrim. Staff at the FG Wilson factory in Newtownabbey were moved out of the immediate area because of toxic fumes while firefighters tackled the blaze. No-one was injured, and the factory on Doagh Road continued to operate. It took firefighters three hours to deal with the blaze which broke out at about 0400, GMT, today. Fire officer Charlie McAuley said working up close to the burning plastic and cardboard was a serious risk to his crew. "It was dangerous as firefighters had to get up close," he said. "It posed no immediate threat to the workers because it was contained within an extraction unit. "We had to get into that extraction unit to deal with the fire and cut away what was burning." The company, which makes electricity generators, said in a statement that an internal investigation to establish the cause of the fire had begun.

FACTORY, ORDSALL, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 50 firefighters have brought a fire at a Nottinghamshire furniture factory under control. Crews went to the Interpine factory on the West Carr industrial estate in Ordsall, Retford, this morning. A member of factory staff raised the alarm. All the workers escaped, but the single-storey building, full of pine furniture, was gutted. An investigation will begin into the cause of the fire once the area is deemed to be safe.

FIREWORKS FACTORY, KOLDING, DENMARK

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of firefighters contained a huge blaze at a fireworks factory today, a day after it broke out, setting off at least one explosion as powerful as an earthquake. One firefighter was killed and at least 20 homes were destroyed. As many as 350 buildings, including private homes and small businesses, may have been damaged by the fire at the N.P. Johnsens fireworks factory in Kolding in western Denmark, 125 miles west of the capital, Copenhagen. The blaze was thought to have started yesterday when two containers of fireworks were being loaded onto a truck, police said. It quickly spread to a nearby building and led to a chain reaction of explosions. One of the explosions was the equivalent of a magnitude-2 earthquake, according to the Geological Survey of Denmark and

Greenland. It was unclear what caused the container to combust. About 2,000 people living near the factory were evacuated as authorities set up a security perimeter. It might take days before people can return, police spokeswoman Gitte Schou said as firefighters worked to cool the containers. Although the plant has a license to store 330 tons of fireworks, as much as 2,200 tons was stockpiled, police said. A 33-year-old firefighter was killed and 17 people, including firemen, rescue workers and police officers were treated for minor burns and smoke inhalation, Schou said. Overnight, about 60 people were under medical observation after complaining about respiratory problems.

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated today, states: The clean-up has begun after a massive blaze at a fireworks factory in western Denmark, which left one person dead and destroyed at least 20 homes. Some of the 2,000 residents evacuated when the fire broke out at the N.P. Johnsens factory in Kolding have been allowed to return home. As many as 350 buildings, including homes and businesses, were damaged. One firefighter was killed and dozens of emergency workers were injured in the blaze, which started on Wednesday (Nov 3). The fire set off a chain of explosions that devastated the surrounding area. The blackened landscape was littered with debris, gutted cars and damaged houses, but several areas were reopened to residents today. Firefighters were still extinguishing small blazes, and police investigators and army explosives experts surveyed the area. The cause of the fire has not been determined, authorities said. Police said they believed the plant was storing more than its licensed 300 tonnes of fireworks. The factory has denied any wrongdoing.

PREMISES AND VEHICLES, SCARBOROUGH, MAINE, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated Nov 10, states: Only the skeletons of charred vehicles were left today after an overnight fire levelled two garages. The two-alarm blaze at Maietta Construction caused as much as \$1 million in damage, according to early estimates. There were no injuries. Investigators believe the fire, which started Tuesday night and burned into Wednesday morning, was probably accidental. Due to the extensive damage, fire officials do not expect to determine a cause. "It was unsalvageable by the time we got there," Scarborough Fire Chief Michael Thurlow said. The fire destroyed a six-bay garage that Maietta Construction and members of the Maietta family used to store vehicles and equipment. Scotts LawnService, which was renting an abutting garage, lost its whole operation in the fire. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection responded to the fire amid

concerns over pesticides and fertilizers from Scotts. The DEP will oversee the buildings demolition and disposal of debris.

PREMISES, GREENWOOD, INDIANA, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: An electrical malfunction caused a \$1 million fire at a Greenwood business strip. "It was absolutely accidental," said Greenwood Fire Lt. Tom Kite. Saturday (Nov 6) morning's fire destroyed three businesses at Vista Run, 900 block of East Main Street, near Emerson Avenue. Three other businesses sustained damage in the strip. Greenwood Fire Division Chief Rodney Johnson and insurance investigators agree the fire started in the overhang above Blake's Photography, one of the destroyed shops, Kite said.

PREMISES, REDWOOD CITY, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated Nov 7, states: Federal and city investigators today sifted through the wreckage left by a fire that started in an attic shared by an Indian restaurant and a popular bar. The blaze caused \$1.5 million in damage. Sixty-three San Mateo County firefighters fought the five-alarm blaze that started at 0440 hrs, yesterday on the 2400 block of Broadway Street. The fire also spread to Chela's Hair Design and caused significant smoke and water damage. The blaze was under control at about 0635 hrs. No one was injured and preliminary damage to the three businesses is estimated at \$1.5 million. The cause of the fire is unknown, Skinner said. "It was difficult going to the source of the fire," he said. "Our defensive form of attack was with the aerial ladders. With the age of the buildings, it could have burned down the whole block." The fire is under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, since the damage exceeded \$1 million.

RANCH, NORTHLAKE, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated Nov 5, states: A Texas Lil's Dude Ranch employee was arrested on arson charges as three buildings of the recently foreclosed ranch burned to the ground. The first fire started about 2100 hrs, yesterday, and within an hour all three buildings were in flames, said Kevin Patton, spokesman for the Denton County Sheriff's Department. Ten fire departments battled the blaze. Billy Gene Howard, 48, was taken into custody about 2145 hrs, after authorities found him covered with fuel accelerant and standing near one of the blazing buildings, said Northlake police Lt. Brian Harpole. No injuries were reported. Lone Star Bank foreclosed on the widely known 192-acre ranch at an auction last month after its original owner, Lynda "Texas Lil" Arnold, could not come up with the \$2.4 million owed to the bank. The bank sold the property

last week to DKM, a real estate partnership, Lone Star Bank President Joe Goynne told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

REFINERY, EL SEGUNDO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Fire burned inside a jet fuel storage tank at the Chevron refinery in El Segundo yesterday, but no one was hurt. Smoke was spotted coming out of the tank about 1350 hrs. Chevron firefighters sent a water stream onto the tank for 10 minutes to cool it off, and, along with El Segundo firefighters, poured foam inside the tank to put the blaze out, Chevron spokeswoman Lily Craig said. The fire was out in about an hour and 20 minutes. The cause of the fire is under investigation. The blaze did not affect the facility's operations nor the environment, Craig said.

REFINERY, STRASBOURG AREA, FRANCE

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated Nov 8, states: A fire broke out late yesterday at the Reichstett oil refinery in eastern France, but it was quickly brought under control and there were no casualties, local officials and management said. The blaze, which did not threaten people living nearby, started in a unit where oil is transformed into gasoline, management spokesman Andre Franchon said. Police imposed a safety perimeter 1.5 kilometres around the refinery as more than 100 firemen battled the blaze. It was under control by 0200 hrs, today, Franchon said. The origin of the fire, which saw flames leaping 20 metres in the air, was not immediately known.

SHOPPING COMPLEX, SOUTH NORMANTON, DERBYSHIRE

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire officials have confirmed that an electrical fault caused a major fire at a shopping complex in Derbyshire last month. Managers at McArthur Glen Retail Park in South Normanton hope to reopen the centre for business next week. Seven stores were completely destroyed in the fire on the evening of Oct 28. Centre manager Neil Wilson says demolition work is being carried out on the areas that were worst affected. "We are demolishing the parts of the building that have been charred, which will let us get customers back in the centre in a safe environment," Mr Wilson said. "We are at pains to emphasise that 75% of the shops were completely untouched. More than 80 firefighters fought the fire at the centre, located off Junction 28 of the M1, which started at 2200, BST. Nineteen fire engines were called in to tackle the blaze, but no-one was hurt in the fire.

STORAGE FACILITY, PORT DARLINGTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: An evacuation order is being lifted in the area around

a massive propane fire east of Toronto, but close to 500 people are still without power. A fire broke out yesterday at a propane company in Port Darlington, causing a series of explosions that sent debris into the night sky. It took firefighters several hours to bring the blaze under control at the Caledon Propane Inc. storage facility. It is located near a marina on Lake Ontario, south of the main east-west corridor, Highway 401. Several propane tanks were still exploding nearly three hours after the fire started. An evacuation order has been lifted for 150 homes, but police say one controlled fire is still burning. And until the scene is secured, the power will stay off. Police said early today that people wouldn't be allowed to return to their homes until electricity was restored. However, there are reports that some have already making their way back to their houses. At first, it was feared that up to 5,000 people would be forced from their homes, but police later put the number at about 500. The blasts were so powerful that flames shot 200 feet into the night sky and pieces of propane tanks came crashing down on the nearby highway. Police say there are no injuries, though the blaze cut power to the southern end of the nearby community of Bowmanville, Ontario.

TEXTILE MILLS, SINDH PROVINCE, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Nov 8 — According to central fire brigades sources of Karachi city, a huge fire broke out in the privately owned Karsaz Textile Mills, at sector 23 of Korangi Industrial Area, in the Sindh province of Pakistan on Sunday. The fire erupted at around 1034, local time, and soon engulfed the main building of the mills. The fire was so intensive that the roof collapsed. However, 10 vehicles of different fire stations extinguished it after hectic efforts at 2105. But sources pointed out that the textile goods and machinery worth a huge amount were gutted during rescue operations. Causes and losses and the value of losses would be estimated after the removal of debris, sources added. — Lloyd's List Correspondent

WAREHOUSE, LEE MILL, DEVON, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire which has destroyed a parcel warehouse in Devon is being treated as suspicious, say police. Eight fire crews were called to Tuffnells Parcel Company in Lee Mill, near Ivybridge, yesterday evening. The building was severely damaged and about 5,000 parcels destroyed. Twenty three vehicles, including delivery vans, were also burned-out. No one was hurt and fire investigators and scenes of crime officers have begun an inquiry into the fire. About 50 firefighters tackled the fire which is thought to have started at about 1730, UTC. Eyewitness reported seeing 40ft high flames coming from the depot. Brian Gleave, Tuffnells general manager, says the firm closed at lunchtime yesterday. A police spokesman said the Devon and

Cornwall Arson Task force are investigating but the cause of the fire is not yet known.

WAREHOUSE, MOSCOW, RUSSIA

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated Nov 7, states: A fire, which broke out in a warehouse in north-east Moscow at about 1400, local time, today, has been put down, and no one is hurt, a source in the main department for civil defence and emergencies told Itar-Tass. The warehouse had industrial commodities and office stationary inside. The area under fire neared 50 square metres by the time firemen came, but narrow passages, thick smoke and insufficient pressure of water prevented them from putting down the blaze quickly. The fire spread onto four floors and exceeded 600 square metres by 1600, local time. The traffic on Milashenkova Street was blocked, and 30 fire engines were working. Now the firemen are cleaning up, and the fire will be investigated.

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire which damaged three Perth homes was sparked by a grass fire, embers from which entered the homes' air-conditioning units, authorities said today. But investigators are still examining whether the grass fire was deliberately lit or an accident. A Fire and Emergency Service Authority spokesman said one house in the eastern suburb of Noranda was destroyed and two others were damaged in yesterday's fire. A strong easterly wind blew embers from the grass fire into air-conditioning units on the roofs of the affected homes, setting the units on fire, he said.

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A fierce fire is racing through the D'Entrecasteaux National Park near Lake Jasper, in the far south-west of Western Australia. A Department of Conservation and Land Management spokesman says the perimeter of the fire is about 35 kilometres. About 50 firefighters are battling the blaze which started near a camping ground in dense coastal heathlands. Much of the area is surrounded by swamp and steep coastal dunes are making access difficult. Earthmoving equipment is being used to clear paths to the fire, to allow more firefighters and equipment to be deployed.



ACCIDENT, JOHANNESBURG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: One of the two runways at Johannesburg International Airport was briefly closed

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this afternoon following an incident involving a twin engine light aircraft, the Airports Company of South Africa said in a statement. "The nose-gear of the aircraft collapsed after landing," spokesperson Jacqui O'Sullivan said in a statement. "The aircraft had to be towed to clear the runway. No one was injured in the incident." The runway was closed for approximately 10 minutes. No flight delays resulted from the incident.

ACCIDENT, KOTA KINABALU AIRPORT, MALAYSIA

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A plane operated by budget carrier AirAsia skidded off a rain-soaked runway in eastern Malaysia on Sunday, an airline official said. Two passengers were injured while the plane was being evacuated. The Boeing 737 veered off the runway during bad weather at the main airport of Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Malaysia's Sabah state on Borneo island, said Jeemie Lee, a spokeswoman for the Kuala Lumpur-based AirAsia. The plane was reportedly carrying about 100 people on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Kota Kinabalu. Authorities in Sabah said the airport was temporarily closed after the incident.

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated Nov 8, states: All airport and airline staff at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport have been mobilised to assist some 2,500 passengers whose flights were delayed after an AirAsia plane (Boeing 737) skidded off the runway yesterday. The flight schedule was disrupted when the runway had to be closed between 1700 yesterday and 0610 today. The incident happened while the aircraft, with 106 passengers and five crew onboard, was landing during bad weather. No one was seriously injured. The closure forced Malaysia Airlines to reschedule 42 flights, 24 arrivals and 18 departures, affecting some 2,000 passengers. MAS Sabah manager Shauqi Ahmad said two flights were added to the schedule today to accommodate affected passengers. He said international flights also had to be re-routed, as wide-bodied aircraft could not land at the airport while the AirAsia plane was stranded on the runway. Kota Kinabalu Malaysia Airports Berhad manager Baharin Embi said work to remove the aircraft was under way. It will be towed to a hangar near Terminal Two in Tanjung Aru. Engineers have been toiling since early morning to lift the plane's nose-wheel, bogged down in the soggy ground. Baharin said the first flight to leave the airport today was at 0610 hrs to Tawau, while the first to arrive came from Tawau at 0720 hrs. AirAsia itself had to reschedule eight flights, while two Royal Brunei Airlines flights were affected, affecting 500 passengers. Meanwhile, a statement faxed by AirAsia Berhad's regional director of marketing and promotions, Joyce Lai, said investigations would be carried out by the Department of Civil

Aviation and AirAsia in compliance with regulatory procedures. "There was no damage to both the aircraft engines," the statement said, and there was no smoke when the aircraft touched down. The statement said the aircraft veered to the left of the runway after it touched down and as the ground was soft due to the rainfall, the nose-wheel was embedded into the ground. "Upon instructions to evacuate by the flight captain, AirAsia's three male crew supervised and conducted the evacuation process, which was completed in 60 seconds. "A five-year-old girl who was carried by her mother during the evacuation process sprained her wrist while two other female passengers sustained minor injuries," it added.

ACCIDENT, MATEI AIRPORT, FIJI

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Fiji Limited claims that the Matei Airport was in good condition before an Air Fiji flight crash-landed Monday afternoon (Nov 8). Matei Airport manager Simione Raroga said the grounds on the airport was firm enough and was well looked after. "In fact we had not had an accident for a long time and even that accident may be only because of the failure to negotiate the runaway," Mr Raroga said. He said the aircraft went about another 54 metres off the end of the runaway before it crashed into a fence, bordering the airport compound. Mr Raroga said Civil Aviation Authority investigators were at the accident site yesterday inspecting the damage and the aircraft. All 12 passengers and two pilots escaped unharmed. Mr Raroga said the aircraft was pulled by a tractor before Air Fiji engineers and Civil Aviation engineers inspected it.

ACCIDENT, TACLOBAN AIRPORT, PHILIPPINES

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A Cebu Pacific Airways commercial jet on a domestic flight lost part of its tail shortly after landing in the central Philippines yesterday, causing panic but no casualties, aviation officials said. The DC-9 safely taxied to the passenger ramp at Tacloban airport and offloaded all 68 passengers and crew. The Air Transportation Office said the "conical tail end section of the fuselage located right under the vertical stabilizer detached and fell to the runway." An investigation was underway to determine the cause. Earlier, GMA Network radio dzBB reported that aircraft's tail section had hit the ground ahead of the aircraft's landing gear.

AIRCRAFT HIT BY TURBULENCE ON A FLIGHT FROM SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO TO ORLANDO, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Six people aboard an Orlando-bound aircraft from Puerto Rico were injured when the aircraft hit turbulence. Officials said ATA Flight 533 from San Juan to

Orlando experienced clear-air turbulence when it was landing. The flight with more than 200 passengers landed in Orlando just before 1900, yesterday. The injured crew members and passenger were reportedly transported to Florida Hospital East, according to the report. The injuries were not life-threatening.

AIRCRAFTS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING, BRISBANE AIRPORT, AUSTRALIA

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Two Qantas flights carrying hundreds of passengers were struck by lightning today after taking off from Brisbane airport in stormy conditions. Qantas spokeswoman Jodie Taylor said flights QF 617 and QF 619, each carrying more than 150 passengers, were struck by lightning shortly after taking off for Melbourne an hour apart this morning. Both aircraft continued their flights to Melbourne where they were examined by engineers for signs of damage. The first aircraft has already been cleared and is back in the air but the second is still being examined. Ms Taylor said passengers had not been put at risk by the two separate lightning strikes. "This happens from time to time all around the world and aircraft are designed to withstand lightning," she said. "No one was injured and no one was at risk at any time."

C-FCJI

London, Nov 5 — At 0045 hrs, today, Cargojet Airways Boeing 727-225, C-FCJI, operating as flight CJT 575, was en route when the number three engine oil temperature exceeded its operating limit. The crew shut down the engine. The aircraft returned to Hamilton, Ontario, after dumping 13,000 pounds of fuel and carried out the landing without further incident. Maintenance determined that a wire in the engine oil temperature circuit had shorted resulting in the erroneous indication.

C-FETK

London, Nov 8 — On Nov 1, Bell 205 helicopter, C-FETK, operated by Quantum Helicopters, was conducting slinging operations 30 nautical miles from Bob Quinn Lake, British Columbia. Shortly after departing a drop site, the pilot lost visual reference due to falling and blowing snow. During the attempt to land, the helicopter contacted the ground hard. There was substantial damage to the helicopter and minor injuries to the two crew members on board.

COLLISION, MANCHESTER AIRPORT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: Two passenger planes have collided while taxiing at Manchester Airport. A BMI Baby Boeing 737 travelling to Belfast International and an Excel Airways Boeing 767 travelling to Goa are believed to have touched wings. More than 330 passengers and crew from the aeroplanes were taken to safety and

there are no reports of injuries. Emergency services and air accident investigators are at the scene at Terminal One, following the accident at 1630 hrs, today. The plane travelling to Goa is believed to have been carrying 255 passengers, and the one to Belfast is thought to have had 79 passengers on board. A Greater Manchester Ambulance Service spokesman said: "We received reports that there had been a minor collision between two planes on the runway. "We believe that the wings of the two planes may have clipped. At this time there are no reports of any casualties or fatalities, but we have five vehicles at the scene ready to treat any casualties." The passengers from the affected flights were believed to be back in Terminal One awaiting others flight to continue their journeys. Other flights at the airport are said to be running as normal. A spokesman for BMI Baby said: "We can confirm there was an incident at Manchester Airport which involved a BMI Baby aircraft being damaged. "We are not aware of any injuries to passengers or crew. The incident is currently being investigated. Passengers have returned to the terminal building and an alternative aircraft is being arranged to take passengers to their final destinations."

CRASH, JURA REGION, FRANCE

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A light aircraft crashed in a wooded area in the Jura region of eastern France today, killing the pilot and severely injuring the three passengers, police said. The adult passenger was said to be in critical condition and two girls seriously injured. The aircraft took off at around 1030, GMT, from the Dole-Tavaux airport and crashed about half an hour later, probably due to the poor weather conditions, investigators said. "The cloud cover was very low and it seems the aircraft was flying too low and caught on some trees and crashed," an investigator told AFP. The aircraft crashed near a highway, and rescue services were able to get to the scene quickly after one of the girl passengers gave the alert by mobile telephone, said police.

CRASH, NYLSTROOM, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Two people were injured when an aeroplane crashed in Nylstroom, Limpopo today. Civil Aviation Authority spokesperson Moses Seate said the Cessna 210, which departed from Johannesburg International Airport with two people on board, had attempted to land at an airstrip on a private farm when the accident occurred. "On landing the plane bounced and the pilot initiated a go-around unsuccessfully," said Moses. He said the aircraft crashed on the trees at the end of the runway, seriously injuring the two on board. The aircraft was also damaged extensively. The CAA has launched an investigation into the crash.

CRASH, RICHLAND COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

See N4874G.

CRASH, WESTER ROSS, SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM

See G-TWIG.

EMERGENCY LANDING, LOS ANGELES AIRPORT, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: A 747 aircraft returned to Los Angeles International Airport early today after witnesses reported seeing sparks or flames in one of its engines, officials said. The Cathay Pacific flight, which had about 330 people aboard, landed without incident at 1217 hrs, said Diana Joubert, an operations officer for the Federal Aviation Administration. The flight departed from Los Angeles at 2300 yesterday and was en route to Hong Kong, Joubert said. Witnesses said they saw sparks or flames in the aircraft's fourth engine, she said. Authorities were investigating. About 50 firefighters were at the scene awaiting the aircraft's arrival.

EMERGENCY LANDING, RALEIGH-DURHAM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: An AirTran flight that departed from Orlando International Airport today was forced to make an emergency landing while on its way to Philadelphia. The Boeing 707 landed safely at Raleigh-Durham International Airport in North Carolina after the pilot reported smelling smoke in the cockpit. The jetliner touched down this morning.

EMERGENCY LANDING, SHANNON AIRPORT, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A trans-Atlantic cargo jet forced to make an emergency landing at Shannon airport this morning has been given the all-clear to continue its journey. The aircraft, which was travelling from Memphis, in Tennessee, to Nottingham East Midlands Airport, made an emergency landing in the early hours of this morning after the captain reported an engine problem. On landing, the engine was shut down as a precaution but following various checks, the aircraft was given the all clear at 1000 hrs.

G-TWIG

London, Nov 5 — Reims Cessna F.406 Caravan II, G-TWIG, operated by Highland Airways, Inverness, crashed in mountainous terrain 37 miles northwest of Inverness, at approximately 0800, UTC, Oct 22. The aircraft was substantially damaged and the pilot was fatally injured. The aircraft departed from Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, and was en route to Inverness.

N1075P

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: A medical helicopter has crashed in a neighbourhood near 3900 West 91st Street in Tulsa. EMSA says one of the three crew members has been taken to a Tulsa hospital. No word on that crew member's condition. Tulsa Fire and Police responded to the scene and an investigation into the crash has begun. There are reports that the helicopter was attempting to make an emergency landing when it went down.

London, Nov 10 — Bell 206L-1, N1075P, operated by Air Evac Leasing Corp, made an emergency landing in a field and flipped over at Sapulpa, Oklahoma, at 2334, Nov 9. The aircraft was destroyed.

N1905S

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated Nov 7, states: A single-engine aircraft bound for Sarasota crashed into the ocean just minutes after taking off, killing both people on board, authorities said. The four-seat TB-20 Trinidad left Key West International Airport Thursday evening (Nov 4). But shortly after take-off, the pilot made a distress call asking to return because of an unspecified problem, said US Coast Guard spokesman Ryan Doss. The aircraft "dropped off the radar" as it flew back to the airport, Doss said, and officials received reports of what looked like flares over the water at about the same time. Authorities found a half-mile long debris field about four miles south of Key West. Divers planned to continue searching the area Friday. The aircraft is owned by Sarasota's Marc Paquin, who rents a hangar from Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport. But Paquin was not aboard, and declined to comment Friday from his office in Sarasota. His secretary said the aircraft was not stolen. The aircraft crashed 10 minutes after departure, said Kathleen Bergen of the Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board are investigating. Tim Monville of the transportation safety board said he'll be looking into what caused the crash, determining pilot experience, toxicology of the pilot and engine condition, among other factors. "We're still trying to gather some facts," Monville said. The Coast Guard would not release the aircraft's tail number or the identities of the pilot and passenger.

London, Nov 10 — Socata TB-20 Trinidad, N1905S, operated by Megapede USA Inc., on flight from Key West International Airport to Sarasota, crashed into the water approximately 10 minutes after departure at 0033, Nov 5. Two persons on board, one person killed, one is unknown. The aircraft is in 40-feet of water off Key West. The aircraft is substantially damaged.

N39971

London, Nov 7 — A press report, dated Nov 6, states: A man died when a single-engine airplane crashed about 5.5 miles northeast of Wicksville

shortly before 1700 hrs, today. The man's name was not released so that relatives could be notified, Meade County Chief Deputy Tom Wilts said, adding that investigators from Meade County Sheriff's Office, Pennington County Sheriff's Office, South Dakota Highway Patrol, Wall Fire Department and Rapid City Fire Department were on the scene today. The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board will investigate, Wilts said.

London, Nov 10 — Taylorcraft BC12-D, N39971, privately operated, crashed into a pasture at Wicksville, South Dakota at 2334, Nov 6. The one person on board was fatally injured and the aircraft was destroyed.

N411CP

London, Nov 9 — A press report, dated Nov 8, states: A small plane crashed onto a suburban Atlanta house today just after taking off from a regional airport, but authorities said there were no serious injuries. The single-engine Piper went down on the roof of the home near DeKalb-Peachtree Airport in north DeKalb County. The pilot walked away, Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said. The aircraft sat relatively intact on the roof after the crash landing, though the engine was hanging through the roof of the house and one wing was broken. The cause of the crash was not immediately known, but witnesses said it appeared to fall from about 350 feet directly onto the house. Bergen said the National Transportation Safety Board would determine the cause of the crash.

London, Nov 10 — Piper PA-32-260, N411CP, operated by RHR Equipment Leasing LLC, declared an emergency shortly after departure and landed on the roof of a house less than a mile east of the airport, at Chamblee, Georgia, at 2030, Nov 8.

N4874G

London, Nov 10 — Cessna 172N, N4874G, operated by Pegasus Air LLC, declared a mayday and landed in a parking lot, knocking down a powerline and collapsing the nose gear, at Columbia, South Carolina, at 0045, Nov 3. Aircraft was substantially damaged.

N496RL

London, Nov 10 — Bell 206B, N496RL, operated by Rotorcraft Leasing Co.LLC, called mayday and crashed into the high seas upside down, South Timbelier, Gulf of Mexico, at 1330, Nov 5. Aircraft was substantially damaged.

N5474Y

London, Nov 4 — A press report, from Nassau, Bahamas, dated today, states: Two women and their pilot escaped serious injury and possible death yesterday when their small plane crashed in a remote pine area, between 1830 hrs and 1900 hrs. Aztec 5-seater, N5474Y, left North Eleuthera enroute to Nassau International Airport when it went down in bushes off Douglas

Road in Gambier Village. Randy Butler, a Civil Aviation Safety Inspector said field investigations would begin today to determine what downed the 5-seater plane. He said the investigations could not immediately begin because possible spilled fuel and other factors could not be detected with downed power lines. He said the investigations however would begin today.

N63887

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A small plane crashed into at least two houses near Detroit's City Airport this afternoon. The plane was reportedly taking off from City Airport when it hit the top of one home, struck another home across the street and crashed into the yard of a third home. Flames were shooting from the roof of one of the homes. Firefighters later extinguished the fire, but the home appeared to be destroyed. The plane was also destroyed after it caught fire and exploded, according to witness reports. One home was occupied during the crash, but no one inside was injured, according to Detroit TV station WDIV. The other homes were apparently unoccupied.

London, Nov 10 — Piper PA-23-250, N63887, operated by Bonnies Deli Inc., crashed shortly after departure, into two houses half-a-mile from the airport, at Detroit, Michigan, at 1905, Nov 8. The two persons on board were injured, extent unknown, the aircraft was destroyed.

N6854P

London, Nov 8 — A press report, dated Nov 7, states: An Air Force veteran who was a former fighter pilot died Saturday (Nov 6) when the small, single-engine aircraft he was piloting crashed nose-down seconds after take-off at Falcon Field in Mesa. A 42-year-old man riding as a passenger in the aircraft suffered life-threatening head injuries and was taken by helicopter to Scottsdale Healthcare Osborn in critical condition, authorities said. Neither man has been identified. Authorities described the pilot as 55 or older. The aircraft, a Piper Super Cub, crashed on the northernmost runway of the airport about 1230 while other aircraft taking part in the Veterans Day Fly In & Expo were also in the air nearby with an estimated 1,000-plus spectators in attendance. Multiple witnesses saw the Piper Super Cub take-off with some saying it ascended at a steep angle. Then, within seconds, the aircraft stalled, turned to the left and descended nose-down to the ground, witnesses said. The aircraft skipped off the ground and crashed into two parked air tankers. No one on the ground was injured. The heavily damaged aircraft was wedged under the wing of a tanker, and both men had to be extricated from the wreckage. The larger aircraft were not heavily damaged, said Mark Freeman, a Mesa Fire Department spokesman. Freeman said breezy conditions possibly caused the pilot to lose control, but mechanical malfunctions or pilot error could also have caused the crash. The pilot was a

member of the Arizona wing of the Commemorative Air Force that was running the nearby veterans event, said Floyd Houdashell, the organization's executive officer who has known the pilot for 11 years. The aircraft that crashed was the pilot's private aircraft, Houdashell said. The injured passenger attended the veterans event and agreed to contribute money to the Commemorative Air Force in exchange for a ride in the aircraft, Houdashell said.

London, Nov 10 — Piper PA-18-150, N6854P, privately operated, crashed on a ramp shortly after take-off and struck a parked aircraft at Mesa, Arizona, at 1929, Nov 6. Two persons on board, one fatally injured the other was seriously injured. The aircraft was destroyed.

N732RW

London, Nov 5 — A press report, dated Nov 4, states: A small aircraft running low on fuel crashed into a home today as it headed for a landing at Torrance Municipal Airport, seriously injuring the pilot, authorities said. The pilot's legs were on fire but he was conscious when nearby residents raced over to pull him from the burning aircraft, witnesses said. Jerry Hoke of Torrance was in critical condition at County Harbor-UCLA Medical Centre. A long-time fixture at the airport, Hoke has a long string of aviation ratings and is a certified flight instructor and commercial pilot, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. At least one person was inside the home at the time, but no one on the ground was injured, said Battalion Chief Jerry Vandenberg of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. No one else was onboard the aircraft. The single-engined aircraft flipped upside down after punching a hole in the home's roof, sparking a small fire in the attic that was quickly extinguished, said Battalion Chief Jerry Vandenberg of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Firefighters pulled the pilot from the aircraft and he was transported to a trauma centre. The pilot had been cleared to land at Torrance Municipal Airport and told air traffic controllers just before the crash that he was running low on fuel, said Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Donn Walker. The six-seater Cessna, built in 1977, registered to a San Diego company Sakakibara Inc, had been put up for sale and crashed shortly after 1730 less than a half-mile from the airport. It had been at the airport for about a month with a "for sale" sign on it and had undergone some kind of inspection recently said Jeff Falco, maintenance director of Southwest Flight Centre. Lomita is located about 20 miles south of downtown Los Angeles.

London, Nov 10 — Cessna C210M, N732RW, operated by Sakakibara Inc., while on landing approach to Torrance, California, lost engine power and crashed into a residence 1.5 miles east of the airport at 0134, Nov 4. Aircraft bounced off the roof and flipped over. The aircraft is reported destroyed and

the sole occupant suffered serious injuries. One minor ground injury and a small house fire is reported.

N7415Y

London, Nov 10 — Piper PA-30 (Twin Comanche), N7415Y, privately operated, crashed under unknown circumstances at Boise City, Oklahoma, at 1830, Nov 5. The one person on board was fatally injured, the aircraft was destroyed.

VH-UPN

London, Nov 10 — The pilot of Cessna 210N, VH-UPN, reported that during the landing roll at Cockatoo Island, Western Australia, the wheel separated from the nose landing gear strut at 1015, WST, Sep 20. The aircraft nosed-over and came to rest inverted. All occupants evacuated the aircraft without injury. The operator examined the aircraft and found that the self-locking nut and through bolt for the nose landing gear wheel axle had separated from the nose landing gear, either prior to, or during, the take-off at Broome. The bolt and a washer were subsequently found on the runway at Broome. During the landing, the wheel became loose when the axle moved from the landing gear forks. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. As a result of this occurrence, the operator has initiated an immediate inspection of its aircraft to ensure that only new through bolt retaining nuts are installed.

Product Recalls



ARC FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTERS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Nov 3 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of about 700,000 Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI) in voluntary co-operation with Schneider Electric North American Division, of Palatine, Ill. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. An AFCI is an electrical circuit protection device (circuit breaker) that detects electrical arcs from cracked, broken or damaged electrical insulation and shuts off power to the circuit before the arcing leads to a fire. An electronic component failure inside the AFCIs can cause the devices to not detect an electrical arc. Although the AFCIs will function as regular circuit breakers, they may not detect an arc fault, posing a safety risk to consumers. Schneider Electric is investigating one reported fire during a new home construction that may be related to this problem. No injuries have been reported. The recalled Square D QOÆ and HomelineÆ Arc Fault Interrupter circuit breakers are used with 15- and 20-amp branch circuits. They are required to be installed in bedroom circuits in

accordance with the 2002 National Electrical Code. The recalled units were manufactured after March 1, 2004, and have a blue test button. The AFCI circuit breakers have one of the following date codes ø CN, DN, EN, FN, GN, HN, or JN ø stamped in red on the breaker label located just above the wiring terminal. The recalled units also have one of the following catalog numbers printed on a label on the front of the breaker: QO115AFI, QO115AFIC, QO120AFI, QO120AFIC, QOB115AFI, QOB120AFI, HOM115AFI, HOM115AFIC, HOM120AFI, HOM120AFIC, QO115VHAFI, QO120VHAFI, QOB115VHAFI, or QOB120VHAFI. Sold at electrical distributors and retailers sold the AFCIs between March 2004 and September 2004 for between \$30 and \$130. Manufactured in Mexico. Installed AFCIs will be replaced free of charge through electrical contractors. Consumers can return uninstalled AFCIs to the retailers or distributor from whom the unit was purchased for a free replacement unit. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

BRAKE CLEANER & BRAKE PARTS CLEANER, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Nov 4 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of 2.8 million cans of PyroilÆ Brake Parts Cleaner and NAPAÆ Brake Cleaner in voluntary co-operation with The Valvoline Company, a Division of Ashland Inc., of Lexington, Ky. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. The affected aerosol cans contain a defective spray valve that might stick when depressed, possibly emptying the cans flammable contents. Valvoline has received nine complaints about sticking spray valves. One consumer was injured when the product sprayed into his eye. The recall involves 13-ounce cans of PyroilÆ Non-Chlorinated Brake Parts Cleaner and NAPAÆ Non-Chlorinated Brake Cleaner. This product is used by professional mechanics as well as “do-it-yourself” consumers who perform brake repairs on their own vehicles. Sold at auto parts retail stores nation-wide from March 2004 through September 2004 for about \$2. Manufactured in United States. Consumers should stop using the recalled aerosol cans immediately and contact Valvoline for a free replacement. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

ELECTRIC BLANKETS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Nov 9 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of 60,000 electric blankets, including 13,720 sold to consumers, in voluntary co-operation with Bilt-Safe Technologies Inc., of Erwin, Tenn. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. When the temperature controller on the blanket is reset multiple times or the blanket is

folded or covered with additional blankets, the blanket can overheat. This can result in smoldering and melting, posing a burn hazard to consumers. Bilt-Safe has received 86 reports of the blankets overheating or charring, including three reports of minor skin burns. The recalled automatic warming blankets were sold in blue or beige colors under the Bilt-Safe and Comfort Max brand names and came in sizes to fit all mattresses. The temperature controller is removable and plugs into a module at the bottom of the blanket. The recalled units have the following model numbers, which are located on a tag sewn to the blanket: BST-03-A-F, BST-03-A-F, BST-03-A-Q, and BST-03-A-T. Sold at Family Dollar Stores, Peebles Inc., and Le Roux at Home stores nation-wide from October 2003 through February 2004 for between \$40 and \$100. Manufactured in China. Consumers should stop using the electric blankets immediately and contact Bilt-Safe to receive a free replacement controller. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

GATOR HPX UTILITY VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated Nov 9, states: The following product safety recall was conducted voluntarily by Deere & Company, of Moline, Ill.. About 14,746 John Deere Gator HPX Utility Vehicles. Consumers should stop using the product immediately unless otherwise instructed. Loss of brake system pressure can decrease the effectiveness of the brakes. Deere is aware of 14 instances of replacement of the master brake cylinder due to this problem. There have been no reported injuries. Gator HPX Utility Vehicles are four-wheeled vehicles with a cargo box. The words “John Deere,” “Gator” and “HPX” appear on the cargo box. The following model and serial numbers can be found on the serial number plate on the vehicle’s frame: HPX 4X2 Gas M0HP2GX010001-010775, HPX 4X2 Diesel M0HP2DX010001-030032, HPX 4X4 Gas M0HP4GX010001-031406, HPX 4X4 Diesel M0HP4DX010001-030552 and HPX 4X4 Trial M 0 H P 4 G T 0 1 0 0 0 1 - 0 3 0 6 7 8 . Manufactured in United States. Sold at authorized John Deere dealers nation-wide from December 2003 to October 2004 for between \$8,000 and \$10,600. Consumers should contact a John Deere dealer for a free repair of the master brake cylinder.

GENERAL MOTORS VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Nov 4 — A press report, dated today, states: General Motors said today it is recalling nearly 1.5 million vehicles sold in North America to correct a variety of safety problems. The biggest recall involves faulty brake lights on 946,817 mid-size sport utility vehicles, including the 2002-2004 Chevrolet Trailblazer, GMC Envoy, Oldsmobile Bravado and the 2004 Buick Rainier. GM spokesman Alan

Adler said the company is aware of two crashes and one injury reported as a result of the cars' tail lights coming loose and flickering. Overheating can also cause the tail lights to fail, he said. Sticking gas pedals have also prompted the company to recall 204,317 of its 2003 model Chevrolet Malibu Classic, Pontiac Grand Am, and Oldsmobile Alero. So far, no crashes or injuries have been linked to the problem, Adler said. A third recall aims to repair faulty rear turn signals and tail lights - which use the same light bulb - on 339,008 Chevrolet Cavaliers and Pontiac Sunfires. Three non-injury crashes have been linked to the defective tail lights. Finally, GM's internal tests found possible brake fluid leaks on its 2004-2005 Cadillac XLR and 2005 Chevrolet Corvette, prompting a recall totaling 5,914 cars, Adler said. GM, the world's biggest auto manufacturer, sent notice of the recalls on Oct 27 to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which posted them on its Web site today. The company declined to comment on how much this latest recall program would likely cost. Up to the end of October, GM has recalled nearly 10.5 million vehicles.

HYUNDAI MOTOR VEHICLES, SOUTH KOREA

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Hyundai Motor Co., South Korea's largest automaker, will recall nearly 30,000 Equus sedans due to faulty brake hoses, the Ministry of Construction and Transportation said Wednesday. The recall affects 29,932 units built and sold between Jul 6, 2001 and Mar 2, 2003, the ministry said. The brake hose can tear when using certain types of brake oil for a long period of time, it said.

LAND ROVER MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Nov 11 — A press report, dated today, states: The Japanese importer of British Land Rover vehicles offered yesterday to recall some of them for free repairs in Japan, the transport ministry said. Subject to the recall are 10,410 units of three Land Rover models such as the Range Rover which were imported into Japan between June 1993 and August 1998 and could be susceptible to fuel leaks.

PEUGEOT MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Nov 10 — A press report, dated today, states: The Japanese arm of French automaker Peugeot SA will recall a total of 20,040 cars in 12 models for free repairs of defective gasoline pipes, the transport ministry said yesterday. Subject to the recall are models in the 306 series, including the 306 XR and the 306 Break, imported between July 1993 and January 2001, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport said.

POUCH LAMINATORS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Nov 9 — The US Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of about 34,600 HeatSeal Pouch Laminators in voluntary co-operation with General Binding Corp., ("GBC") of Northbrook, Ill. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. Improper wiring at the heating coil could cause the pouch laminators to overheat and become a fire hazard. No incidents/injuries reported. The recall includes the H300 and H200 model HeatSeal: Pouch Laminators. They are used to laminate documents and photos. The recalled H300 Pouch Laminators have serial numbers starting with "PI," "PJ," "PK," "PL," "QA," "QB," "QC" or "QD." The recalled H200 Pouch Laminators have serial numbers starting with "PI" or "PJ". The H300 and H200 model numbers are found on the top of the Pouch Laminators, and on the rating plate on the bottom of the Pouch Laminators. The serial numbers are found on the rating plate on the bottom of the Pouch Laminators. Sold at office supplies stores nation-wide from September 2003 through September 2004 for between \$200 and \$260. Manufactured in China. Consumers should stop using the Pouch Laminators included in this recall immediately, and contact GBC a free replacement or refund. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

THERMAL SAFETY CONTROL GAS VALVES, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Nov 1 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of 123,544 gas valves and 37,350 magnet heads in voluntary co-operation with Robertshaw Controls Company of Long

Beach, California. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. If the pilot light goes out, the gas valve can stick in an open position, permitting gas to continue to flow. This can result in a gas explosion and fire which could result in severe personal injury or property damage. The firm has received 12 reports of flash fires, including nine reports of injuries. The injuries involved first, second, and - in one instance - third degree burns. The TS-11 Thermal Safety Control Gas Valves are installed in commercial cooking equipment with pilot lights, including ranges, griddles, fryers, and warming trays. The recalled gas valves were produced between February 2003 and August 2004. The "magnet heads" on the gas valves were made during the same range of dates. The recalled products can be identified by date codes 0306 through and including 0432. The TS-11 gas valve with different manufacturing dates and a different hazard was recalled in 2002. Sold through original equipment manufacturers and food service equipment dealers to commercial food service providers (such as restaurants). The recalled products were sold from February 2003 through August 2004. Manufactured/assembled in Mexico. Free repair or replacement (if necessary). Robertshaw Controls Company will arrange for free repair or replacement of the recalled gas valves. If you smell gas near the appliance or in the building, immediately leave the area and call your gas company or a certified gas technician to investigate the cause. If you do not smell gas, check the pilot lights on your gas appliances. If any pilot lights are out, do not attempt to relight. Have the appliance examined by the gas company or a qualified technician. Have the date-code of your TS-11 gas valve ready when you contact Robertshaw. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Port Conditions



FRANCE

See under "Labour Disputes."

Port Delays

Country/Port	Date of report	No.of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbot Point	08-Nov-2004	Coal: 11 vessels due by 27/11; up to 2 days berthing delay subject to cargo availability and berth congestion can be expected.
Brisbane	08-Nov-2004	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 4 vessels due by 30/11; no delays expected. Grain: 1 vessel waiting to load wheat; 1 vessel due 14/11 to load wheat; no delays expected.
Dalrymple Bay	08-Nov-2004	Coal: 3 vessels berthed, 16 anchored; 50 vessels due by 26/12; vessels berthing in order of cargo availability; up to 10 days berthing delay subject to cargo availability and berth congestion can be expected, although vessels with other stems are experiencing longer berthing delays.
Dampier	08-Nov-2004	Iron ore: Parker Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored; 7 vessels due by 18/11; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 11 vessels due by 18/11; up to 8 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; shippers will always consider a shift to a lay-by berth for loaded vessels awaiting HW; cargo shortages are evident, delays are anticipated and vessels may berth out of turn.
Gladstone	08-Nov-2004	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 3 vessels berthed, 5 anchored; 35 vessels due by 13/12; up to 6 days berthing delay expected subject to port congestion and cargo availability; Barney Point: 1 vessel berthed, 1 anchored; 6 vessels due by 1/12; up to 2 days delay expected due to port congestion and cargo availability. Grain: 1 vessel due 29/11 to load sorghum; no delays expected.
Hay Point	08-Nov-2004	Coal: 1 vessel berthed, 3 anchored; 13 vessels due by 18/11; up to 7 days berthing delay expected subject to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Newcastle	08-Nov-2004	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 4 vessels berthed; 31 vessels due by 22/11; Dykes 4+5: 3 vessels berthed; 15 vessels due by 21/11; 1-4 days delay expected prior to berthing due to planned maintenance at Kooragang terminal and cargo receipt. Grain: Maintenance work is being carried out from 1/11 to ca. 1/12; during this time, there will be no loading but towards the end of this period, 1 vessel will be used for testing etc.
Port Adelaide	08-Nov-2004	Grain: No. 27 berth: 3 vessels due by 3/11, 2 to load barley, 1 wheat; 14-15 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Hedland	08-Nov-2004	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel anchored; 6 vessels due by 17/11; up to 2 days delay expected; "B" berth: 6 vessels due by 15/11; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "C" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 2 vessels due by 13/11; no delays expected; Westyard "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 4 vessels due by 17/11; up to 3 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; shiploader maintenance will take place from ca. 14/11 to 23.59 hrs. 18/11. Due to heavy demand for product, acute cargo shortages are still being experienced at wharf stockpiles. Vessels will continue to berth as product becomes available.
Port Kembla	08-Nov-2004	Coal: 2 vessels berthed, 2 anchored; 14 vessels due by 27/11; CB1: no vessels; up to 7 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Grain: 4 vessels due by 20/11, all to load wheat; no delays expected.
Port Walcott	08-Nov-2004	Iron ore: 2 vessels berthed and loading, 3 anchored; 16 vessels due by 4/12; up to 3 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; berth no. 3 will shut down for loader repairs from ca. 9/11 to 12.00 hrs. 11/11. Every effort will be made to ensure that vessels berth in order of arrival; however, due to product constraints, this may not be possible. Shippers advise that stores, air freight and crew baggage can no longer be delivered to vessels or taken off at berth. With immediate effect, all stores, airfreight and bags must be delivered/removed by launch.
Portland	08-Nov-2004	Grain: 1 vessel berthed to load wheat; 5 vessels due by 3/12, 1 to load wood-chips, 1 barley, 3 wheat; up to 8 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Brazil		
Paranagua	08-Nov-2004	Twelve vessels berthed of which 2 fertiliser dischargers, 1 container discharger, 1 reefer loader, 2 sugar loaders, 6 other loaders/dischargers; 2 vessels waiting in roads, both to load, of which 1 sugar, 1 other; 34 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Rio Grande	08-Nov-2004	Three vessels berthed of which 1 calcium phosphate loader, 1 acid discharger, 1 soya meal loader; 4 vessels waiting in roads; 37 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Santos	08-Nov-2004	Twenty-four vessels berthed of which 5 bulk fertiliser dischargers, 2 bulk pellets loaders, 1 bulk juice loader, 1 bulk soya loader, 2 full container loaders/dischargers, 10 sugar loaders, 1 paper coils loader, 1 bulk fuel oil discharger, 1 crude oil discharger; 18 vessels waiting in roads; 90 vessels due over the next 7 days.

Port Conditions

Sao Sebastiao	08-Nov-2004	Six vessels berthed, 2 waiting in roads; 6 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Vitoira	08-Nov-2004	Five vessels berthed of which 1 sugar loader, 1 cellulose, 2 containers, 1 pig-iron loader; Terminal Vila Velha: 1 malt discharger; Tubarao: 3 iron ore loaders, 1 fertiliser discharger; Praia Mole: 1 coal discharger, 3 steel products loaders; Portocel: no vessels; Ubu: 1 iron ore loader; 25 vessels waiting in roads; 18 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	08-Nov-2004	Six vessels in port operating, of which 4 loading (1 scrap, 1 bulk ammonium sulphate, 1 coils, 1 other), 1 discharging coal, 1 under repairs; 4 vessels waiting in roads, of which 2 to load chemicals, 2 to discharge (1 ore, 1 magnetite); 13 vessels due, of which 7 to load (1 metals, 1 sunflower seeds, 2 steel sheets, 1 baryte concentrate, 2 containers), 6 to discharge (2 containers, 1 concrete/iron, 1 bulk salt, 1 billets, 1 iron ore).
Chile		
Valparaiso	08-Nov-2004	Two vessels berthed, 6 berths vacant; 2 vessels anchored; 14 vessels due this week.
Egypt		
Alexandria	08-Nov-2004	Thirty-five vessels berthed (loading/discharging) of which 23 general cargo, 8 bulkers, 2 containers, 1 tanker, 1 passenger vessel; 13 vessels dry-docked; 14 vessels at inner anchorage, 6 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	08-Nov-2004	Twenty-two vessels berthed (loading/discharging) of which 14 general cargo, 3 bulk carriers, 5 containers; 6 vessels at outer anchorage, 1 at inner anchorage.
Suez Canal	08-Nov-2004	Nineteen vessels transiting Northbound, 22 Southbound.
Israel		
Ashdod	08-Nov-2004	No labour problems. Two general cargo vessels loading at berth, 14 vessels discharging at berth (12 general cargo, 2 bulkers), 4 vessels loading/discharging at berth (3 containers, 1 car carrier); 2 general cargo vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge, 2 container vessels waiting at anchor to load/discharge; 1 vessel under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 14 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Haifa	08-Nov-2004	No labour problems. Five vessels discharging at berth (2 general cargo, 3 bulkers), 8 vessels loading/discharging at berth (4 containers, 1 car carrier, 3 tankers); 2 vessels waiting at anchor to discharge (1 general cargo, 1 bulker), 1 container vessel waiting at anchor to ad/discharge; 3 vessels under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 19 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Mozambique		
Maputo	08-Nov-2004	Twenty-four hour berthing/sailing. Some restrictions to berthing at certain badly-lit wharves. Vessels have to be geared for general cargo berths as no shore cranes available. The Port is working normally and is expected to remain so, hence vessels should berth on arrival, daylight, draft and weather permitting. No berthing delays envisaged. A shortage of equipment is being experienced (except at the Container terminal). Shed space is currently available. Safe draft for transiting the channel is 9.1 metres plus the tide of the day. Density of water varies from 1.020 to 1.023. Vessels with ramps on starboard side can berth with the ebbing tide. Should ramps be portside, vessels to berth with the flowing tide. Pilot launch is operational. Both tugs are operational. Leading lights are lit. Both container gantries are operational. Matola coal terminal is operational. Ressano Garcia, Goba and Limpopo railway lines are all operational. Four vessels are currently in port berthed, of which 2 loading (1 ferro chrome, 1 aluminium), 1 discharging rice, 1 loading/discharging containers; 1 vessel due 8/11; 21 vessels due by 27/11 of which 4 to load (1 aluminium, 1 ferro chrome, 1 bulk sugar, 1 magnetite), 11 to discharge (1 petcoke/aluminium, 2 bulk wheat, 2 bagged rice, 1 heavy machinery, 1 pitch, 1 cooking oil, 1 containers, 1 petrol, 1 aluminium), 6 to discharge/load containers.
Pakistan		
Karachi	10-Nov-2004	One naphtha vessel loading at berth, 6 vessels discharging at berth (1 coal, 2 DAP, 1 general cargo, 1 urea, 1 jute), 4 container vessels loading/discharging at berth; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to load (1 containers, 1 rice), 5 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 containers, 1 chemicals, 1 MEG, 1 fuel oil, 1 crude oil); no vessels bunkering, none under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 5 vessels due (4 containers, 1 coal), with no berthing delays expected.

Port Conditions

Russia

Novorossiysk	08-Nov-2004	Seventeen vessels in port operating, of which 15 loading (1 coils/steel sheets, 1 bulk urea, 1 HBI, 1 scrap, 1 pipes, 2 wheat, 3 coils, 1 bulk NPK, 1 equipment, 1 aluminium, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 diesel oil), 1 discharging bulk sugar, 1 discharging/loading containers; 4 vessels waiting in roads, all to load, of which 2 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 bulk urea, 1 coils/lumber; 70 vessels due, of which 67 to load (7 copper, 1 steel sheets, 1 zinc/lead, 4 bulk NPK, 2 pig-iron, 11 coils, 1 steel billets, 5 DRI, 3 bulk urea, 1 bulk cement, 2 HBI, 8 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 scrap, 4 aluminium, 1 coils/steel sheets, 2 slabs, 1 steel billets/steel sheets/coils, 1 pipes, 1 coils/copper, 1 flowers, 1 vehicles, 1 pipes/steel sheets, 1 ammonium sulphate, 1 barley, 1 wheat, 1 equipment, 2 UAN solution, 1 zinc), 2 to discharge (1 zinc ore, 1 bulk sugar), 1 to discharge/load containers. Oil terminal: 2 tankers berthed, both loading, of which 1 crude oil, 1 fuel oil; 2 tankers in roads, both to load, of which 1 crude oil, 1 fuel oil; 15 tankers due, all to load, of which 14 crude oil, 1 diesel oil.
Tuapse	08-Nov-2004	Oil products: 2 vessels berthed, both loading gasoil; 1 gasoil vessel in roads; 7 vessels due by 9/11, of which 4 gasoil, 1 naphtha, 2 crude oil.

Slovenia

Koper	08-Nov-2004	Port working normally; no berthing delays. Seven vessels berthed of which 4 bulk carriers discharging coal/minerals/solid chemicals, 1 bulk carrier loading coal, 1 vessel loading general cargo, 1 tanker discharging mineral oils; 20 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 3 to discharge/load containers, 3 bulk carriers to discharge minerals/cement/grain, 4 bulk carriers to load coal, 1 barge to load coal, 4 vessels to load sawn timber/timber products/general cargo, 1 reefer to discharge refrigerated goods, 2 car carriers to discharge/load vehicles, 2 tankers to discharge mineral oils.
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Spain

Cadiz	08-Nov-2004	Eleven vessels in port of which 7 operating (3 Ro/Ros, 1 containers, 1wheat, 1 sugar, 1 passenger vessel), 4 vessels under repair; no delays.
Sagunto	08-Nov-2004	Thirty vessels in port operating of which 19 discharging steel products, 5 loading (1 steel products, 1 fruit, 1 bulk fertiliser, 2 machinery), 4 Ro/Ros discharging/loading general cargo, 2 vessels loading/discharging steel products; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays.

Sri Lanka

Colombo	08-Nov-2004	Berthing/unberthing (pilotage) delays being experienced on breakbulk/conventional vessels. Delays to conventional vessels are due to the fact that container/feeder vessels are given priority at breakbulk berths if there is container congestion. Conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 and 2 are facing navigation delays. Seven container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 17 vessels discharging at berth (9 containers/feeders, 1 bagged wheat, 1 steel cargo, 3 bulk cement, 1 bulk fertiliser, 1 general cargo, 1 bagged soya meal); 2 bagged maize vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge; 5 vessels dry-docked, 1 under arrest, 2 awaiting orders from principals, 1 at new tanker berth; 5 container/feeder vessels due, with no delays expected.
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Ukraine

Ilichevsk	08-Nov-2004	Eleven vessels in port operating, of which 7 loading (5 steel products, 1 oil, 1 wheat), 2 discharging ore, 2 discharging/loading containers; 3 vessels in roads, all to load/discharging containers; 21 vessels due, of which 14 to load (11 steel products, 1 wood-pulp, 1 wheat, 1 oil), 7 to load/discharging containers.
Mariupol	08-Nov-2004	Ten vessels in port operating, of which 9 loading (3 steel, 1 pig-iron, 1 fire-clay, 3 coal, 1 barley), 1 discharging equipment; 7 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 6 steel, 1 ammonium nitrate; 48 vessels due, of which 44 to load (28 steel, 10 coal, 4 fire-clay, 1 ammonium salt petre, 1 wheat), 2 to discharge (1 pipes, 1 heavy lifts), 2 to discharge/load (1 containers, 1 pipes/steel coils).
Odessa	08-Nov-2004	Thirteen vessels in port operating, of which 7 loading (5 metal, 1 wood, 1 general cargo), 5 to discharge (1 metal, 1 sand, 1 citrus, 1 cars/luggage, 1 oil), 1 passenger vessel; 5 vessels in roads of which 3 to load (1 pig-iron, 1 metal, 1 corn), 1 to discharge wood, 1 to load/discharging containers; 64 vessels due, of which 33 to load (25 metal, scrap, 2 barley, 2 ferro alloy, 4 wood), 11 to discharge (1 metal, 2 building materials, 3 oil, 1 sugar, 3 citrus, 1 meat), 20 to discharge/load containers.

United States

Houston	08-Nov-2004	Channel open under normal traffic. Pilots report normal 40 ft. 0 ins. max. draft in Houston ship channel; Cargill terminal: no delays; LDC Dreyfus terminal: no delays.
Kalama	08-Nov-2004	Kalama export terminal: 1 day's delay; United Harvest terminal: 2 days delay.

New Orleans	08-Nov-2004	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: 3-4 days delay expected; Cargill-Westwego: 2 days delay expected; ADM/Ama: 3-4 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: 4 days delay expected; ADM/Destrehan: 3-4 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 3-4 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 2 days delay expected; Peavey/Paulina: 2 days delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: 4-5 days delay expected; Cargill/Baton Rouge: no delays; Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: 1 day's delay expected; Mile 158.0 Cargill (K2) - Convent: no delays; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: no delays. Ten-day forecast for Carrolton Gauge/New Orleans: expected to increase to 8.00 ft. by 19/11. Mississippi River recommended draft restrictions: SW Pass to New Orleans (Mile 090.0) - 47 ft. for all vessels; New Orleans (Mile 090) to Baton Rouge (Mile 233.5) - 45 ft. for all vessels; Mississippi River Gulf outlet: 36 ft. bw.; vessels with drafts up to 47 ft. have been handled up to Mile 180 in the past, but are approved by pilots on a case by case basis, based on current river conditions.
Portland	08-Nov-2004	Columbia Grain terminal: 3 days delay; CLD Irving terminal: 1 day's delay; CLD, O Dock terminals: 1 day's delay.
Tacoma	08-Nov-2004	Temco terminal: 1 day's delay.

Published by Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit, part of T&F Informa plc, Sheepen Place, Colchester, Essex CO3 3LP.

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ISSN 0047 4908

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