

Dedicated police demanded for Australian port system

Study highlights the gaps in the country's maritime security net, reports Lloyd's List DCN in Australia- Thursday April 21 2005

A NEW study of the gaps in Australia's maritime security has called for a dedicated police force for the ports and a A\$100m (US\$77m) Maritime and Port Security Programme, mostly funded by Canberra to work on specific security projects.

The study also recommends that Australia adopts a US-style 24-hour notice of cargo bound for Australian ports and puts foreign seafarers on ships operating on continuous voyage permits under the same scrutiny as Australian coastal seafarers.

Requirements

The report, produced by Dr Anthony Bergin and Dr Sam Bateman of the Australian Security Policy Institute, said that despite the new requirements of the Maritime Transport Security Act few resources had been applied and the division of responsibility between state and federal bodies was still "murky".

The most-eye catching proposals are for dedicated port police and for Canberra to take over the funding of new security measures.

The report said that existing waterside security measures in ports would be inadequate over an extended period. Private security services were not up to the job, and the capabilities of water police forces

around the country were uneven.

The authors said the New South Wales Water Police had recently been put through a A\$27m overhaul.

They called for a total of A\$76m to be spent on waterside security capabilities of other state police forces and funded from port authority dividend payments to state governments, not by a levy on trade.

The new Act had imposed considerable costs on the ports and private sector — A\$313m to start with and A\$96m annually — which the government viewed as "part of the cost of doing business".

There had been no direct government spending on security outside its own co-ordinating agencies.

Security projects

The study says a A\$100m Maritime and Port Security Programme, 80% funded by Canberra and 20% by the private sector, should be used for specific security projects such as surveillance and command and control systems.

State and territory governments were also under increasing pressure from Canberra to give resources to maritime security, but this made it even more important that "there is consistency in their responses".

The answer was a proposed premier-

level meeting and setting up of state maritime security committees.

The report noted no federal agency "owned" the issue of security of the whole supply chain and urged that the Department of Transport and Regional Services was given the job in co-operation with Customs, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Attorney-General's office.

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>FOLEY BROTHERS</i>	fishing	CAN	—	139	—	2003	Reported disabled with propeller and/or rudder problems in lat 50 49N, long 55 45W, Apr 12. Coast Guard icebreaker tasked to assist.
<i>HUA FU 101</i>	reefer	PAN	—	6,607	7,468	1986	Reported flooded engine-room and hull damage off Xiamen Apr 7. Salvage services rendered under LOF. Salvage operations continuing Apr 13, ETC 2-3 days.
<i>JOHAN</i>	general	—	—	—	1,500	—	Anchored with engine trouble in Rotterdammer Hoek Apr 7. Waves smashed windows to living quarters and vessel sank in shallow water. Raised same day and towed to Urk.
<i>LAIETA</i>	Ing	PAN	LR	29,071	25,293	1970	Reported engine breakdown in lat 41 06.8N, long 06 18.3E, Apr 11. Salvage services rendered under LOF. Taken in tow by tug <i>Merou</i> Apr 12 bound Barcelona, ETA Apr 14.
<i>LUJIN II</i>	general	PRK	RM	5,987	8,900	1976	Had engine failure in lat 37 01N, long 06 15E, after leaving Djen-Djen Roads to shelter from bad weather Apr 11. Subsequently rudder touched ground. Sank nearby same day. 14 of the 22 crew rescued.
<i>LYKES VOYAGER</i>	container	GBR	AB ABS	23,540	30,645	1995	In collision with a passenger ferry close to Hong Kong Apr 8. Damage to superstructure, hull and part of container charge. Several containers lost overboard. Arrived Hong Kong Apr 9. Arrested.
<i>MARVITA</i>	general	MLT	LR	2,061	3,085	1980	Reported engine problems and anchored in about lat 54 04N, long 05 06E, Apr 12. Experienced complete black-out later same day. Taken in tow by tug <i>Barracuda</i> Apr 13 and under tow to Hull, ETA Apr 14.
<i>RATNA SHALINI</i>	crude oil tanker	IND	LR	55,178	89,960	1987	Struck jetty at Kipevu oil jetty, Mombasa, Apr 7 while berthing. Tank damaged and about 150 tonnes of oil spilled into sea. Booms deployed. Security guarantee provided to port authority
<i>TA MAK GOL</i>	general	PRK	—	6,711	9,730	1984	Sank 40 nautical miles from Dandong, Yellow Sea, Apr 6. Twelve of the 35 crew rescued.
<i>THOR ENTERPRISE</i>	bulker	THA	LR	25,676	42,529	1995	Developed a list at Antwerp Apr 12, for unknown reason. Lost a quantity of oil. Berthed at Antwerp same day, with tug assistance. Still alongside and under inspection Apr 14.
<i>XIE HANG 99</i>	container	CHN	—	577	—	—	Sank in lat 22 11.3N, long 113 45E, Apr 12. One crew member rescued, 6 missing. Search under way.

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



AEGEAN WIND (Greece)

London, Apr 10 -- Following received from managers of bulk Aegean Wind, dated today: The managers of Aegean Wind report that following the investigation into the event which was concluded on Apr 7, and a court hearing on the morning of Apr 8 involving all parties, Aegean Wind has been cleared to depart with its full complement of officers and crew members. Small temporary repairs to the bulbous bow section have been completed and approved by Class. Aegean Wind has now proceed to its scheduled discharge port of Ilichevsk in the Ukraine.

Istanbul, Apr 11 -- Bulk Aegean Wind completed necessary repairs by its own means and after inspection/formalities, departed Canakkale at 1930, Apr 9. -- Lloyd's Agents.

AL FAHAD (Saudi Arabia)

Jeddah, Apr 10 -- Understand from owners of passenger ro/ro Al Fahad that the vessel is still in the same position. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ALIDA GORTON (Sweden)

Montreal, Apr 8 -- Rudder repairs to general cargo Alida Gorton are now completed and vessel will undock Sunday (Apr 10). Understand that next port is Corner Brook. -- Lloyd's Agents.

AMENITY (U.K.)

London, Apr 12 -- Product tanker Amenity departed Hull Apr 11.

ARAS-I (Georgia)

See Sude 1.

ASIAN CHORUS (Panama)

Maassluis, Apr 10 -- Vehicle Asian Chorus (55729 gt, built 1997), inbound to Antwerp, struck the Farnese Bridge while entering the Kallo lock at 1730, local time, today. The vessel, which is now berthed at Antwerp, has lost a part of its railing and has some damage to ventilation pipes. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note -- Asian Chorus sailed Bremerhaven 1605, Apr 9.)

London, Apr 12 -- Vehicle Asian Chorus sailed Antwerp 2050, Apr 11, for Southampton.

ATLANTIC CRUSADER (Cyprus)

See Global Mariner.

ATLAS SKY (NIS)

London, Apr 11 -- Bulk Atlas Sky was reported passing through the Dover Straits Apr 10, in a westerly direction, on passage from Gdynia for Newport.

AURORA (U.K.)

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: Passenger Aurora is still expected back in

Southampton from repairs at Lloydwerft in Bremerhaven on Apr 21.

BAHLAWAN (Syria)

Aleppo, Apr 11 -- Our Lattakia office has reported that general cargo Bahlawan is still berthed at quay No.15 at Lattakia port and that Mr Azam Makhlouf who bought the vessel at public auction on Sep 15, 2004 has not completed the formalities yet. Consequently, the ETD of the vessel is not known yet. -- Lloyd's Agents.

BARBARA (Germany)

London, Apr 8 -- Following received from the operators of general cargo Barbara (2986 gt, built 1996), dated Flensburg, today: While moored in southern Kiel Canal locks at Brunsbuttler Barbara was contacted by general cargo Siuita (1892 gt, built 1986) at 1800 yesterday. Barbara was towed stern first out of lock for assessment of damage at Southern Pier, Brunsbuttler harbour. Vessel, which sustained slight damage, carried out temporary repairs, and continued voyage. Vessel is now at Bremerhaven. Understand Siuita sustained slight damage. (Note -- Siuita sailed Tallinn Apr 4 for Liverpool.)

London, Apr 9 -- General cargo Barbara sailed Bremerhaven 1630, Apr 8, bound Hamburg.

London, Apr 10 -- General cargo Barbara arrived Hamburg 0125, Apr 9, sailing 1830 the same day bound Gothenburg.

BARGE BREAKAWAYS, MOBILE RIVER, ALABAMA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 9 -- A press report, dated Apr 8, states: Coast Guard crews working with waterfront agencies "rounded up" 30 barges that broke free today and drifted down the Mobile River, but caused no collisions. The barges were about 1.5 miles north of the Cochran-Africatown Bridge. The drifting barges were reported to the Coast Guard about 0800 hrs. Crews from the Alabama State Docks, Cooper Fleet and Tugs and the Coast Guard Cutter Stingray worked together to gather the barges. No injuries, pollution or damage have been reported. Marine Safety Officials opened an investigation into the incident.

CANADIAN PROSPECTOR (Canada)

Thunder Bay, Apr 7 -- Understand bulk Canadian Prospector only sustained minimal damage to the port side aft fuel tank, which delayed the vessel's departure from Thunder Bay for several days. Once repairs were completed, the vessel proceeded to the grain berth Mar 28. The vessel completed cargo operations Mar 31 and sailed the same day for Port Cartier. -- Lloyd's Agents.

CAPTAIN BILL (U.S.A.)

New Orleans, Apr 13 -- Tug Captain Bill, struck approach wall at

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

Smithfield Locks and Dam Apr 5, resulting in two barges requiring salvage. The barge owners, Heartland Barge, report that barge CM-101 is currently stuck in the lock gates. Salvage vessel Okie Moore will begin attempts to remove it today. The second barge ML-609 has not been found. It has been determined that it is not in the gate/channel. They are beginning sounding today to try to locate it. The Corp of Engineers has required safety vessel Dennis George be on stand-by during operations. -- Lloyd's Agents.

CHANDA AND VALERIE (Canada)

London, Apr 13 -- Fishing Chanda and Valerie (99 gt, built 1982) reported taking on water in lat 51 57 18N, long 55 16 12W, at 2138, UTC, Apr 12. Vessel borrowed pumps from other vessels and the problem was found and repaired.

CHARLOTTE-C. (U.K.)

London, Apr 11 -- General cargo Charlotte-C. was reported passing through the Dover Straits Apr 8, in a westerly direction.

CHENG LU 8 (Mongolia)

Yokohama, Apr 13 -- General cargo Cheng Lu 8 passed the Kanmon Strait Apr 10. -- Lloyd's Agents.

CHINOOK (Chile)

Santiago, Apr 11 -- Ro/ro Chinook is presently under tow from Potter Cove to Punta Arenas, ETA Apr 12. Once an inspection has been carried out by the Maritime Authorities, it will be determined if the vessel needs to enter the Asmar shipyard for repairs. Understand from the vessel's owners that the damage is very slight. -- Lloyd's Agents.

CM-101

See Captain Bill.

DAVID C.DEVALL (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: The body of a crewman who disappeared when his tug David C.Devall capsized in the Houston Ship Channel was found yesterday after the vessel was brought to the surface, Coast Guard officials said. Officials said the investigation into the capsized tug is continuing.

DMITROV (Russia)

London, Apr 11 -- General cargo Dmitrov was reported passing Istanbul, in an easterly direction, 1622, Apr 9, on passage from Nemrut Bay, bound for Azov.

ECE (Marshall Islands)

London, Apr 11 -- Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1945, UTC: Acid tanker Ece (8003 gt, built 1988) had steering trouble and came into contact with a buoy at Sabine Jetties, about 0930, UTC, today. Vessel has since been moved about half a mile outside Sabine Channel with tugs in attendance. Inspection by divers revealed no apparent damage. Investigations

remain in hand and weather on scene is bad at present. The buoy is missing.

London, Apr 13 -- Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1505, UTC: Acid tanker Ece: Vessel's engines have been tested and proven to be satisfactory. Vessel remains just outside Sabine Channel. The Sabine Channel is due to reopen at 2200, tonight and there are a number of vessels queueing.

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated today, states: The U.S. Coast Guard gave the go-ahead for all vessel traffic to resume in the Sabine Channel at Port Arthur, Texas, at 1230 hrs, yesterday. The decision was taken after authorities established that a submerged buoy (which sank after being struck by acid tanker Ece) was no longer in the waterway. The Army Corps of Engineers dragged the channel and reported to the Coast Guard that the buoy was no longer there. Nevertheless, the Coast Guard urged boats in the area to proceed cautiously.

EIRIK RAUDE (Bahamas)

See "Barents Sea" under "Pollution."

EL SAFA (Panama)

Hodeidah, Apr 8 -- Passenger ro/ro El Safa is currently at anchor, awaiting bunkers, which should be loaded over the next few days. Once the bunkers are loaded, the vessel will sail for Mumbai, for scrapping. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ENSCO 70 (Bahamas)

See Stevns Ocean.

FAGR (Honduras)

Port Said, Apr 14 -- Passenger ro/ro Fagr remains at Suez harbour. -- Lloyd's Agents.

FAUNA (Russia)

London, Apr 8 -- General cargo Fauna arrived Ilichevsk Mar 29, sailing the next day.

FLEET TRADER 1 (Hong Kong)

London, Apr 14 -- Bulk Fleet Trader 1 is being towed to Lagos, where ETA tomorrow.

FOLEY BROTHERS (Canada)

London, Apr 12 -- Fishing Foley Brothers (139 gt, built 2003) with 10 people on board, reported disabled with propeller and/or rudder problems in lat 50 49N, long 55 45W at 1500, UTC, today. CCGS ice breaker tasked to assist.

FREITIND (Norway)

Trondheim, Apr 8 -- General cargo Freitind is still at Kvernhusvik Shipyard, Hitra. No decision has yet been taken concerning the vessel's demolition or conversion to a barge. -- Lloyd's Agents.

FRIENDSHIP IV (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Ocean Jewel casino vessel passenger Friendship IV (99 gt, built 1994) smashed into a barrier protecting the base of the

John's Pass drawbridge on Saturday (Apr 9). No one was injured but there was about \$50,000 in damage to the concrete and wood "fender" guarding the bridge, said Ocean Jewel officials and the state Department of Transportation. Damage to the vessel, a 149-passenger catamaran, will end trips out of John's Pass for three or four days while repairs are made. Patty McKee, Ocean Jewel spokesperson said the Friendship IV was leaving John's Pass and taking passengers out in the gulf. The captain tried to cross under the bridge when he found his vessel on a collision course with a smaller, unyielding watercraft. Faced with the option of crashing into the smaller vessel or hitting the bumper protecting the bridge pilings, he opted for the bumper, McKee said. Six of the concrete pilings anchoring the bridge's wooden fender are cracked or chipped, as is a 20-foot section of "whaling," or timber, said DOT spokesperson Kris Carson. DOT subcontractor ICA Infrastructure Corporation of America is sending divers down today to check for underwater damage.

GLOBAL MARINER (U.K.)

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: The Admiralty Court said general cargo Global Mariner, which was in collision with the anchored c.c. Atlantic Crusader while leaving its berth at Mile 194, River Orinoco, in August 2000, was solely to blame for the incident even though officers on the anchored vessel also made several mistakes. The court severely criticised the actions of the officers on Atlantic Crusader but said they were not to be blamed for the accident because they did not cause the collision. The collision occurred just after Global Mariner unberthed from the port of Matanzas and made a 180-deg starboard turn to head downstream. During the manoeuvre it ploughed into the Atlantic Crusader. Global Mariner sank within minutes but no one was seriously hurt. According to the court, if both vessels were at fault but the fault of the first vessel caused the collision regardless of the fault of the second vessel, then the first vessel is solely to blame for the collision.

GLORY BRIDGE (Liberia)

London, Apr 9 -- C.c. Glory Bridge is still in Jeddah. The cleaning operation is in progress and the vessel is scheduled to sail in three to four days time.

Jeddah, Apr 13 -- C.c. Glory Bridge sailed from Jeddah on Apr 12 for Suez. The containers (2 x 20') were loaded on to the vessel Mol Promise and that also sailed from Jeddah, same day, for Singapore. -- Lloyd's Agents.

GOOD LUCKY (Cambodia)

London, Apr 8 -- Following navigation warning issued at 1605, JST, today: Anchoring vessel (general cargo Good Lucky) removed.

HAM LUONG NO.05 (Vietnam)

Hanoi, Apr 15 -- Non specific tanker Ham Luong No.05, loaded with crude oil, and general cargo Tay Ho 1 were in collision in the Long Tau River, near Ho Chi Minh City, on Apr 6. Both vessels sustained hull damage, but were not in danger of sinking. Ham Luong No.05 was put safely at an even keel at the side of the bank in order to discharge into barges alongside. The alleged pollution area around the site of the incident was surrounded by booms in order to control the pollution. Both vessels are believed to have sustained considerable damage, and repairs will be undertaken in due course. -- Lloyd's Agents.

HUA FU 101 (Panama)

London, Apr 13 -- Following received from Guangzhou Salvage, dated today: Ref Hua Fu 101 (6607 gt, built 1986) reported a flooded engine-room and hull damage off Xiamen, Apr 7. Salvage services rendered to vessel under LOF by Guangzhou Salvage. Salvage operations are continuing and are expected to be completed in two or three days.

IDATEN (Japan)

See "Malacca Strait" under "Piracy."

IKA NO.7

Suva, Apr 7 -- Vessel Ika No.7 is still lying in Suva Harbour under Fiji Customs custody. -- Lloyd's Agents.

IRVING JOHNSON (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: The necessary repairs to training Irving Johnson, which ran aground last month near Oxnard, are expected to keep the vessel out of commission for six to eight months, according to the Los Angeles Maritime Institute, the group that operates the vessel for character-building voyages serving local students. Meanwhile, long-range plans have taken two of the San Pedro nonprofit agency's other vessels out of commission, as well, leaving the institute's popular TopSail program with just one working vessel, Exy Johnson. As a result, program leaders are having to juggle schedules and may be forced to cut back on some hands-on boat time for students. "We're looking at some pretty serious times, but our No 1 commitment is to have as little impact on the kids as possible," said Capt. Jim Gladson, president of the Los Angeles Maritime Institute. "Most of the kids will go out as scheduled this year, but some trips may be shortened and some things are being postponed," Gladson said. "We're going to be using Exy Johnson every available minute." The total cost of repairs to Irving Johnson is still unknown, but after insurance payments, the institute expects to pay about \$50,000 out of its own pocket, Gladson said. Bids are set to go out soon. Irving Johnson ran aground on Mar 21 when it hit an uncharted sandbar. The 20 college students and crew members on board were rescued, but it took salvage crews several days

before they could free the vessel from where it was stuck on a sandbar in about five feet of water. "I was prepared to find it a whole lot worse than it really is," Gladson said after surveying the vessel where it is still docked at a boatyard in Ventura Harbour. "There's a lot of damage, but nothing that can't be repaired. But it will likely be six to eight months before we can get the vessel back in commission and sailing with kids." Some initial repairs would have to be done in Ventura before the vessel could safely be towed to San Pedro, Gladson said. Some planks in the hull and a piece of wood on the vessel's rudder need to be replaced, he said. "There was surprisingly little damage to the hull itself," Gladson said. "There is a lot of damage down below from water and where tables broke loose and rammed up against things, but that's all cabinetry and a great deal of that will be cleaning up, sanding, painting and fixing a few nicks. But who knows what else we might find as we get into it."

IVYAN (Turkey)

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Turkish-flagged chemical/oil carrier Ivyan (5054 gt, built 1976), loaded with sulphuric acid, struck rocks near Balikesir, the Anatolia news agency reported yesterday. The vessel carrying a 19-person crew had departed from Samsun for Bandirma. The vessel hit the Trak Rockies on Fener Island, two miles from Erdek's «akil district. The sulphuric acid did not leak into the sea.

London, Apr 11 -- Following received from MSRCC Ankara, timed 1255, BST: Chemical/oil carrier Ivyan, TCKE, ran aground in lat 40 21.8N, long 28 03.7E yesterday. The vessel refloated at 1430 hrs, today and proceeded on passage to Bandirma. Understood there was no spillage of cargo.

JINSEI MARU (Japan)

Bremen, Apr 11 -- Bremer Schiffsmeldedienst have reported that at 0505, Apr 10, vehicle Jinsei Maru (55489 gt, built 1990), when moving backwards into the northern floodgate, touched the mole. Apparently the vessel only sustained some slight damage on the port side stern and is now entering the floodgate again. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 12 -- Vehicle Jinsei Maru sailed Bremerhaven 1530, Apr 11, for Hamburg. (See issue of Apr 12.)

JOHAN EVERTSEN

London, Apr 12 -- On Apr 7, the crew of the lifeboat station at Urk was alerted to the fact that an inland cargo vessel was in trouble, in strong winds. The lifeboat Koningen Beatrix sailed from Urk to the Rotterdammer Hoek where 80 metre long inland general cargo Johan Evertsen (built 1979), from Raamsdonkveer, loaded with 1400 tons of marble, was anchored with engine troubles. The vessel had water in its fuel tanks and the engine

had stopped. The Coast Guard Centre had also alerted the lifeboat at the Lemmer station. Two of the lifeboat crew went on board Johan Evertsen to help to get the engine started again, but in vain. Water was entering the engine-room and when, at about 1300 hrs, waves smashed the windows of the living quarters, the vessel sank in the shallow water. The two crew and the wife of the captain were taken off and taken to Lemmer. On Apr 7, Johan Evertsen was raised, with the help of a sheerleg crane, and was towed to Urk.

KAREN DANIELSEN (Bahamas)

Gothenburg, Apr 11 -- It has been confirmed that general cargo Karen Danielsen has been sold to Italian interests and will be towed to Naples for repairs there. -- Westax Marine Services AB. (See issue of Apr 5.)

KASHIMA MARU (Japan)

See Xiang Wang.

KINSMAN INDEPENDENT (Canada)

Troy, Mich, Apr 12 -- Firefighters were called yesterday afternoon to the McKeil Marine dock in Hamilton, Ont., to extinguish a blaze that broke out on the aft end of bulk Kinsman Independent (12,296 gt, built 1952). Reports by those battling the blaze say the fire damaged the engine-room and stern living quarters. The extent of the damage, and how far this might set back the conversion of the vessel from steam to diesel propulsion, is not yet known. No injuries were reported and McKeil officials had no comment, as the fire is under investigation at this time. It was anticipated that the vessel's conversion would be complete by midsummer. -- Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

KYOSEI MARU (Singapore)

See "Malacca Strait" under "Piracy."

KYROS (Cook Islands)

London, Apr 14 -- General cargo Kyros arrived Aalesund Apr 14 and sailed the same day.

LAIETA (Panama)

London, Apr 12 -- Following received from MRCC La Garde, timed 1528, UTC: Lng Laieta (29071 gt, built 1970), La Spezia for Huelva, in ballast, reported engine breakdown in lat 41 06.8N, long 06 18.3E, at 0200, UTC, Apr 11. The vessel was taken in tow at 0645, UTC, Apr 12, by tug Merou and is presently under tow to Barcelona, ETA 0800, UTC, Apr 14. (Note -- Laieta sailed La Spezia Apr 9.)

London, Apr 13 -- Salvage services have been rendered to lng Laieta under LOF 2000 by Les Abeilles International Limited.

LEVERKUSEN EXPRESS (Germany)

Cristobal, Apr 7 -- C.c. Leverkusen Express (53783 gt, built 1991), northbound, made contact with an upper level gate on the West side of Gatun Locks this afternoon. The

extent of damages to the vessel and lock gate(s) is unknown at this time however initial reports indicate that the West lane of Gatun Locks will be out of service for about 18 hours to allow for inspection and/or repair. The East lane of Gatun Locks remains in service however it is likely that some vessels will be delayed in commencing their scheduled transits. -- Lloyd's Agents. (Note -- Leverkusen Express sailed Oakland Mar 30 for Panama, with ETA Antwerp Apr 21.)

Balboa, Apr 8 -- The West lane of Gatun Locks is expected to be back in service by late this morning. Due heavy traffic delays, waiting times for non-booked vessels were already running at 36-48 hours and even longer for some vessels with dangerous cargo. With the West lane having been out of service for some 18 hours, this will likely result in some increase in the waiting time for transit, until Canal Authorities are able to clear the backlog. Understand c.c. Leverkusen Express has already departed from the Canal. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 12 -- C.c. Leverkusen Express arrived Savannah 1030, Apr 11.

LUJIN II (North Korea)

Algiers, Apr 11 -- General cargo Lujin II (5987 gt, built 1976) arrived at Djen-Djen roads, in laden condition, at 0200, Mar 30, berthed 0700 same day, commencing cargo discharge at 1000 hrs. The cargo on board destined for Djen-Djen consisted of 5,600 tonnes of soda ash in big bags of one tonne net each. Out of the said consignment, a total of 3,512 tonnes had been discharged and 2,088 tonnes remained on board. The cargo on board destined for Bejaia consisted of 1,557 bundles of wood, of which 341 bundles were shifted at Djen-Djen and stacked on the pier to be reloaded after the discharge of the Djen-Djen cargo. At 0130, Apr 9, due to weather deterioration, the vessel was shifted to the roads where it dropped its anchors until 2130, Apr 10. Thereafter, the vessel heaved up its anchors and sailed, heading north-east. At 0650, Apr 11, due to engine failure, the vessel requested assistance in lat 37 01N, long 06 15E. At 0655 hrs, the harbour-master informed the CROSS and prepared tug Nil II to stand by. At 0745 hrs, the master advised the harbour-master that the vessel dropped its anchor about 70 metres from the coast. At 0815 hrs, the tug proceeded to sea heading to the vessel but, due to heavy weather encountered, returned back at 0835 hrs. By this time, all the concerned authorities were informed of the situation and tug Mazafran 6 sailed from Skikda and one helicopter from Boufarik proceeded towards the area. At 1000 hrs, the master informed the Coast Guards that the vessel's rudder had touched the ground. At 1038 hrs, Mazafran 6 returned to Skikda. At 1055 hrs, last VHF contact was made with the master, who requested urgent

helicopter assistance. At 1125 hrs, the Coast Guards were informed that the helicopter had returned to Boufarik. Thereafter, the local gendarmes remained monitoring the situation from the coast and informed the concerned authorities that the vessel was sunk at around 1300 hrs; up until 1600 hrs, out of the 22 crew members on board, one seaman was safely recovered, together with four bodies. The 17 other seamen remain missing. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Algiers, Apr 12 -- Understand 14 crew members from general cargo Lujin II have been rescued today with the help of a Spanish helicopter and a French tug which was in Skikda. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: General cargo Lujin II struck the rocks off Algeria during a heavy Mediterranean storm, leaving five crew dead and four missing with a search operation under way yesterday, national radio reported. The vessel experienced engine failure yesterday and broke in two when it was driven by a tempest on to rocks off Ras El Maghreb between Jijel and Skikda, two large coastal towns east of Algiers. A Spanish helicopter, four Algerian sailors and a rescue diver were looking for the missing crewmen and have already managed to lift 14 survivors trapped on the vessel to safety.

London, Apr 14 -- General cargo Lujin II, which sank off Skikda Monday night (Apr 11), with the loss of up to 10 lives, had several safety detentions and accidents on board, it emerged yesterday. But the operator denied that there were any structural problems with the vessel. Rescue services, aided by Spanish helicopters, were able to save 14 of the 22 crew. The survivors, nationals of Romania, Lebanon and Syria, were taken to local hospitals. There are conflicting reports of the death toll. Two bodies are thought to be on board and a further six were still missing yesterday. Two Algerian rescue workers also lost their lives. Lujin II was en route to Bejaia laden with 5,618 tonnes of timber and sodium chloride, according to official Algerian news agency APS. No environmental damage was caused by the incident, according to the Algerian authorities.

LYKES VOYAGER (Isle of Man)

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: C.c. Lykes Voyager (23540 gt, built 1995) was in collision with a passenger ferry close to Hong Kong Apr 8, in dense fog. The vessel was damaged. Superstructures, hull and part of the container charge were broken. Several containers went overboard. (Note -- Lykes Voyager arrived Hong Kong Apr 9 and reported under arrest at Western Anchorage No.3, Hong Kong, Apr 11.)

MAARTEN JACOB (Netherlands)

Maassluis, Apr 14 -- Fishing Maarten Jacob is at Stellendam. Repairs have commenced. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

MARITIME ANTALYA (Panama)

London, Apr 11 -- Bulk Maritime Antalya sailed Nagoya Apr 10 bound Ishinomaki.

MARTINA M

(St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Tunis, Apr 7 -- General cargo Martina M is going to be refloated today. We suspect the following damages: Hole-tearing affecting ballast and engine out of work. Repairs will be either in shipyard of Tunis, Menzel Bourguiba, Malta or Greece. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Ymuiden, Apr 8 -- Wijsmuller Salvage B.V. just now succeeded in refloating the heavily grounded general cargo Martina M from its grounding position close to Hergla, Tunisia. The vessel, in ballast, grounded Feb 9 on a rocky stretch. At first it was tried by third parties to refloat the vessel using tugs, which did not succeed. After continuous discussions with owners, Wijsmuller Salvage B.V. was at the end of February instructed to perform feasibility inspections to refloat the vessel, which resulted in a salvage contract being agreed on Mar 3 for refloating the vessel. The oil removal at that stage was entrusted to a local company. Due to un-suitability of the oil removal equipment from the local company, Wijsmuller Salvage B.V. therefore first assisted and later took over the oil removal while at the same time preparing for the refloating operations. Considering the vessel to be heavily aground on a rocky stretch with its complete bow and propeller shaft above water, refloating would require considerable forces to be developed. The operation would require the vessel to be pulled astern over half its length into slightly more water whereupon the bow would require to be pulled sideways towards the sea. This would change the heading of the vessel from parallel along the coast to an angle of 90 degrees with the coast. To achieve same a special newly developed pulling-and-anchoring arrangement was used which could exert a 600 ton pull astern with a conventional ground tackle at the bow for the pull sideways of 100 tons. The oil removal in the meantime was completed and end last week both the stern and sideways pulling, and anchoring arrangements had been deployed with operations to refloat starting in earnest on Monday (Apr 4). These were interrupted by bad weather on Tuesday and Wednesday and continued again yesterday morning, when also a tug for post-refloating-control was connected up. During the deployment and use of the pulling systems special care and attention was given to an historic site in the form of ancient Roman ruins at the area underneath the pulling systems. The vessel during Monday was pulled backwards about half the required length with the last section being done Thursday morning. Thereupon the conventional ground tackle at the bow and the tug were used to turn the vessel 90 degrees,

whereupon the tug and the bow-ground-tackle succeeded in pulling the vessel over the last ridge to deeper water. The vessel finally refloated this morning at 0500, local time. The vessel will now be stabilised and prepared for re-delivery. -- Wijsmuller Salvage B.V.

Tunis, Apr 11 -- General cargo Martina M was refloated on Apr 8, and towed to CMR shipyard of Menzel Bourguiba (ex SOCOMENA) for reparation. -- Lloyd's Agents.

MARVITA (Malta)

London, Apr 13 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 0945, UTC: General cargo Marvita (2061 gt, built 1980), Hull for Riga, cargo timber, reported engine problems and anchored in about lat 54 04N, long 05 06E at 0800, UTC, yesterday. Vessel sustained a complete "blackout" last night. Tug Barracuda is proceeding and vessel will be taken in tow. (Note - Marvita sailed Hull Apr 12.)

London, Apr 14 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 1022, UTC: General cargo Marvita was taken in tow by tug Barracuda Apr 13 and is presently under tow to Hull, ETA 1200, UTC, Apr 14.

MISSISSAGI (Canada)

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: Bulk Mississagi (9706 gt, built 1943) grounded outside of Muskegon breakwall at 1400, Apr 11. MCM tugs Tammy and Drummond Islander II assisted Mississagi off the sand bar. The vessel was freed around 2030 hrs and entered Muskegon Lake to offload stone at Verplank's. The entrance was partially blocked by a dredge clearing the winter sand build-up. Mississagi was forced to enter the harbour closer to the breakwall.

London, Apr 13 -- Following received from Coast Guard Cleveland, timed 1420, UTC: Bulk Mississagi ran aground just outside Muskegon about 2100, UTC, Apr 11. Vessel refloated with tug assistance and proceeded on voyage.

ML-609

See Captain Bill.

MS MARIA (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 8 -- Following received from Coast Guard Boston, dated Apr 7: The Boston-based Coast Guard cutter Spencer is towing disabled fishing MS Maria (127 gt, built 1980) with four people on board 63 nautical miles east of Cape Cod. The crew of the fishing vessel, homeported in New Bedford, Mass, contacted the Coast Guard at 1830 yesterday reporting they were disabled with an unknown engine problem. As Coast Guard Group Woods Hole, Mass. personnel maintained radio contact with the fishing vessel overnight, Spencer was diverted, and arrived on scene this morning to take MS Maria in tow. Spencer is currently enroute to Round Shoal at the entrance to Nantucket Sound, where arrangements are being made to hand over the tow to another vessel.

On scene weather is calm seas and winds with unrestricted visibility. No injuries are reported.

London, Apr 8 -- Following received from Coast Guard Boston, timed 0710, UTC: Fishing MS Maria, official No.651594, is still under tow towards Round Shoal.

London, Apr 8 -- Following received from Coast Guard Boston, timed 1322, UTC: Fishing MS Maria has been handed over to a commercial tug and is currently under tow to New Bedford.

Boston, MA, Apr 8 -- Fishing MS Maria is presently under tow of tug Jaguar bound New Bedford, ETA 1200, local time, today. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Boston, MA, Apr 11 -- Fishing MS Maria arrived New Bedford at 1200, Apr 8. -- Lloyd's Agents.

OLGA F.DEBORAH (Canada)

London, Apr 13 -- Fishing Olga F. Deborah (62 gt, built 1971), with nine persons on board, was reported disabled with ice related rudder damage and requesting assistance in lat 51 12 02N, long 55 32 22W, at 1839, UTC, Apr 12.

OLYMPIC MELODY (Greece)

London, Apr 11 -- Bulk Olympic Melody (17879 gt, built 1984) contacted wharf while docking at Section 48, Montreal, at 0120, EDST, today. No pollution or injuries.

ONEIDA (Malta)

Buenos Aires, Apr 8 -- Bulk Oneida is anchored in Rosario Roads under Judge's Jurisdiction, and an embargo has been placed on the vessel. The vessel sustained frame and shell plate damage. Repairs are being carried out and will be completed by this afternoon. -- Lloyd's Agents.

PALAWAN (Antigua & Barbuda)

Dubai, Apr 9 -- Understand that ro/ro Palawan is still under repair and is expected to sail on Apr 14 to Sudan. -- Lloyd's Agents.

POLARIS

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 4, states: The Nana Owusu Nsiah-chaired committee tasked to investigate, among other things, the cause of the fire at the PSC Tema Shipyard, on Good Friday that claimed at least 17 lives and destroyed various installations was just inaugurated and it is the belief of all that no stone would be left unturned to come out with a clean report on findings. News at the port is that the owner of fishing Polaris was the Greek Stelianos Pantelis Batikiotin, who was among those who perished. But on the day of the disaster, one Captain Kapas' name was very outstanding as the owner who had purchased the ship from Lome. It is understood that sometime in September last year, fishing Altians towed Polaris from Lome to Tema for drydocking. The maiden name of the vessel was Eugenia, sold to Captain Alkaiviadis A. Kapas of Golden Europe Key Company Ltd, Tema, according to

information obtained from the office of the Marine Marshall, Lome. The vessel, after undergoing complete overhauling and refurbishing, was preparing to go on a fishing expedition. It is understood Polaris is 189 gt, 62, nt, length 62 metres. Tema Oil Refinery The Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) is presently working hard to replace the burnt pipelines, connect treated water from the Kpong (GWCL) reservoir at Ashaiman to the Crude Distillation Unit (CDU) of the refinery's cooling tower as the seawater pumping station has been completely consumed in the fire. TOR is actually making assessment as to discarding the idea of using seawater to cool the CDU or pump for relocating the seawater, said to be cheaper at a different location so as to avoid the present catastrophe of destroying lines and pump hose at the same time. TOR Chief Executive Officer, Dr. K. K. Sarpong said, "work is progressing faster and it is likely it will be completed before the deadline of two weeks given." The Volta Aluminum Company (VALCO) WAS affected by the fire disaster, which razed between 400 and 500 metres of its conveyor belt installation. It is being speculated that if VALCO had still been in operation, the disaster would have been avoided, for they patrolled the lines constantly. As things stand now, while all is set for them to resume operation, though under different management, they will have to reconstruct that portion of the conveyor system. PSC Tema Shipyard unfortunately became the first scapegoat, as its already aggrieved workers unleashed their anger at the management, blaming them for what could have been avoided, if safety personnel who were not working on holidays and weekends, because overtime was cancelled, had been allowed to work. The overtime payment has been reinstated since.

QUEEN OF NANAIMO (Canada)

London, Apr 7 -- Ro/ro Queen of Nanaimo (4939 gt, built 1964) reported striking the berth at the Tsawwassen Terminal, B.C., at 0945, PST, Mar 26.

Vancouver, Apr 13 -- Ro/ro Queen of Nanaimo: According to BC Ferries, vessel made contact with pads only while reversing out of pier due high winds and tide. There was no damage to the vessel or the dock. At no time was the vessel's schedule interrupted and it is currently under its normal scheduled maintenance routine at Swartz Bay. -- Lloyd's Agents.

RATNA SHALINI (India)

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) last night allayed fears of an environmental pollution at the Mombasa port following an oil spill earlier in the evening. The KPA harbour master and operations manager Twalib Khamis, confirmed that more than 50 tonnes of oil spilled into the sea after crude oil tanker Ratna Shalini (55178 gt, built 1987)

hit a jetty at Kipevu oil jetty. "Following the accident, we have had an oil spill but it is not of a large proportion," he said. Mr Khamis said the accident happened at around 1700 hrs when the oil tanker was berthing. He said immediately after the accident, oil in the tanker was transferred from the damaged tank. "Right now, we have put up booms around the area where the spill took place to control the oil from spreading to other parts of the port," he said. He said a combined team of both KPA and members of the Oil Spill Mutual Aid Group had managed to put the situation under control. (Note -- Ratna Shalini sailed Jebel Dhanna Mar 28 for Mombasa.)

London, Apr 9 -- A press report, dated Apr 8, states: An oil tanker crashed heavily against a dock at Kenya's port of Mombasa, puncturing its hull and spilling 150 tons of crude oil into the sea, officials said today. Emergency workers placed booms around India-registered crude oil tanker Ratna Shalini to contain the spill after yesterday's accident. Oil was quickly pumped out of the punctured compartment, said Captain Twalib Khamis of the Kenya Ports Authority. The tanker spewed the oil into the harbour but it has not spread to the coastline nor affected shipping operations and fishing, he said. The single-hull vessel crashed against the dock because a fender that was intended to break the impact was not in place after its rope broke, Khamis said.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A national agency will make claims against the owners of crude oil tanker Ratna Shalini, which spilled crude oil in Mombasa port. However, it will be a tiny fraction of what Kenya would have got in damages had it ratified the new international maritime law, experts said. The National Environment Management Authority will launch an environmental restoration claim against the vessel's owners after it spilled more than 150 tonnes of crude oil into the sea. Yesterday, Nema deputy director Ali Mohammed said the owners will be held responsible for the damage to the environment caused by the spill. "We are currently consulting with the Kenya Ports Authority's legal department ... we are going to lodge an overall and environmental claim against the vessel's owners," Mr Mohammed said. The vessel was unlikely to leave the port of Mombasa until matters related to the oil spill were settled, he said. The Nema official refuted reports that the oil spill had caused an adverse effect on marine life, saying initial assessment indicated that only mangrove in Port Reitz area in Mombasa Mainland West had been affected. "A survey on the beaches bordering Mombasa port had established that there was no major danger to marine life, save for affecting a section of mangroves in Port Reitz area," he said. Mr Mohammed said about two kilometres

of mangroves in Port Reitz had been covered by oil on the lower leaves and said it was still too early to establish if this was going to kill the plants. Mr Mohammed also refuted reports that the oil spill had spread outside the port and said fishing in areas surrounding Mombasa port was going on, as usual, and no fish catches had any indications of having been affected. The KPA harbour master and chief operations manager Twalib Khamis said the clean-up was still going on in the affected areas and the situation would be reviewed continuously to ensure that all the oil was cleared. Maritime experts have said Kenya will receive only Sh10,000 compensation for the oil spill instead Sh530 million because of its delay in ratifying a new international maritime law. The Merchant Shipping Act, they said, provides for only Sh10,000 compensation for oil spills, while the International Maritime Organisation's Civil Liability Convention provides for more than Sh530 million.

London, Apr 12 -- The Government has fined the owners of an Indian ship that spilled tonnes of crude oil at Mombasa Sh78 million (£540,800). Making the announcement, Government officials said crude oil tanker Ratna Shalini had polluted the environment and must pay under the Civil Liability Convention to which Kenya is a party. Prof Ratemo Michieka, the Director General of the National Environment Management Authority, said the ship, which spilled the oil last Thursday (Apr 7) would be detained at the port until a formal agreement is reached. The ship owned by Steamship Company of India will also not be allowed to sail away until it seals a hole. Prof Michieka said the use of an oil dispersant helped to minimise the effects of the spill. He said an inspection was still going on to assess the effect of the incident.

London, Apr 14 -- India Steamships, owner of crude oil tanker Ratna Shalini that was holed by a loose Yokohama fender at berthside in Mombasa on Apr 7, causing an oil spill within the harbour, has said agency reports of a hefty fine being imposed on the company are erroneous. "Any report that a fine of \$1million is sought to be recovered from us is not correct," said the Kolkata shipowner's managing director Ashok Kak yesterday. "In fact the claims of the Mombasa Port Authority have not yet been quantified. The P&I club, Steamship Mutual, acting on our behalf, has provided a security to the port authorities towards their claims, which are yet to be proved. The entire matter is being handled by the P&I club, with whom our vessel was insured, through its lawyers and experts. The vessel has been released and will sail at any minute. The oil discharged was in the region of 80-100 tonnes, no more," added Mr Kak. Emergency workers, working round the clock, placed booms around the vessel, contained the spill and cleared the harbour. The coast line, fishing and shipping operations have

remained unaffected. The damage caused to the environment also would have been minimal.

RED POINT (Italy)

Rio de Janeiro, Apr 11 -- Chemical/oil carrier Red Point is still at Renave Repairyard ETD Apr 28. Destination still unknown. -- Lloyd's Agents.

RICKMERS GENOA (Marshall Islands)

London, Apr 8 -- Rickmers Linie has chartered another vessel to replace general cargo Rickmers Genoa, which was badly damaged in collision with general cargo Sun Cross last month. An explosion that followed killed the first officer, while 13 crew members died on the second vessel when it sank. The year-old multipurpose Rickmers Genoa, deployed in Rickmers Linie's round-the-world Pearl String service, is now at an anchorage close to Shanghai and will need extensive repairs. The cargo is expected to be discharged later this week. The company has chartered in the 22,270 dwt Miami, which is at present in dry dock but should be available next week to slot into to the gap in the schedule left by the holed Rickmers Genoa.

London, Apr 8 -- Following received from the operators of general cargo Rickmers Genoa, dated today: Rickmers Genoa is still anchored awaiting a berth at Shanghai in order to discharge its cargo.

London, Apr 14 -- Following received from the operators of general cargo Rickmers Genoa, dated today: Rickmers Genoa is expected to berth in Shanghai commercial port on Apr 19 in order to discharge all cargo. The vessel is then expected to proceed to a shipyard for damage assessment and repairs.

ROCHELLE

Cape Town, Apr 8 -- Fishing Rochelle ran aground at Morris Pt, in Stilbaai, which is located some 100 km west of Mossel Bay. The fishing vessel is a small coastal vessel measuring 12.5 metres in length and constructed of fibreglass. Sections are presently being pulled ashore and it is reported to be a CTL. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SIRIUS (Russia)

Mariupol, Apr 12 -- There is no alteration in the situation of the grounded general cargo Sirius. The Harbour-masters at Eypatoria and Skadovsk have no new information and no alterations in the vessel's situation are expected in the near future. Generally, vessels "wrecked" in this area end up being abandoned. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SIUITA (Lithuania)

See Barbara.

SOLWAY HARVESTER (United Kingdom)

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A vessel owner will stand trial today charged with the manslaughter of seven crew who died

when fishing Solway Harvester sank in the Irish Sea. Company director Richard Gidney, of Gatehouse, Fleet, in Scotland, will appear at the High Court in Douglas, Isle of Man. The scallop dredger capsized in high winds and heavy seas in January 2000, in the Irish Sea 11 miles off the east coast of the island. Gidney, a director of Jack Robinson Trawlers, which owned the vessel, denies seven counts of manslaughter. Skipper Andrew Craig Mills, his brother Robin, and cousin David, died alongside fellow crew members Martin Milligan, John Murphy, David Lyons, and Wesley Jolly. The men were from the villages of Garlieston, Whithorn and Isle of Whithorn in the remote Machars area of Galloway in south west Scotland. A further charge of illegally trawling over the shipwreck site against fisherman Douglas White, who worked as a skipper for Jack Robinson Trawlers, has been dropped. The trial is expected to last up to six weeks.

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: The owners of fishing Solway Harvester, accused of causing the deaths of the seven Scottish fishermen who perished when the vessel sank, allowed the boat to put to sea without a vital £300 deck hatch cover which could have helped to prevent the tragedy, a court heard yesterday. The vessel had a history of flooding problems and the crew had been forced to bale it out by hand because the pumps failed three weeks before the scallop dredger capsized and sank off the Isle of Man in January, 2000. A deck hatch cover had been missing for two years, allowing water to pour into work areas. But no attempt had been made to remedy the situation by buying a new cover, costing only £300, it was claimed at the High Court in Douglas, Isle of Man. Simon Gedge, in his opening address for the prosecution on the second day of the trial of Richard Gidney, told the court the 75ft trawler was in a dangerously unseaworthy state when it foundered while running for shelter in a storm off the Manx coast. He said he would seek to prove that the tragedy had not been caused by the weather alone or a rogue wave, but by the actions and failings of the owner of the £1 million dredger. Gidney, of Gatehouse-of-Fleet in Dumfries and Galloway, denies allowing the Solway Harvester to go to sea in a dangerously unseaworthy state, amounting to gross negligence on his part.

SPICA (Cyprus)

Montreal, Apr 8 -- Chemical/oil carrier Spica (21142 gt, built 1995) while departing from berth, grounded 35 metres from the berth at Section 105, Quebec City, at approximately 1130, Apr 7. The vessel refloated with tug assistance at approximately 1500 hrs the same day and berthed at Section 105. Internal inspection of forepeak and several double bottoms revealed that no damage had occurred. Class attended, and the vessel was cleared. The vessel sailed at 0600, Apr 8, for Philadelphia. -- Lloyd's Agents.

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

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: Rochester's high-speed passenger ro/ro Spirit of Ontario I will head to Canada a month from today to undergo inspections and repairs in preparation for its expected relaunching later this spring. The Rochester Ferry Company -- the entity created by the city to own the ferry also decided last night to pay a German company more than a million dollars to upgrade the vessel's engines. The work is expected to take three to four weeks and will be done while the ship is docked at the Port of Rochester. The inspections and other repairs will be conducted in Hamilton, Ontario after the ship arrives there on May 12. That work is expected to take less than a week. Meanwhile, city officials say the start-up date of service to Toronto won't be announced until all the operational issues are resolved. Officials had originally said they hoped to resume service before Memorial Day. Now a mid-June target date is more likely.

STAR EAGLE (NIS)

London, Apr 11 -- Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1350, UTC: General cargo Star Eagle (24479 gt, built 1981), Vancouver for Hakodate, cargo pulp, had a fire in No.1 cargo hold in the Aleutian Islands about 0448, UTC, Apr 9. Vessel is currently alongside at Dutch Harbour. Inspection of the vessel is due to take place shortly.

STEEL QUEEN (Netherlands)

Gdynia, Apr 12 -- General cargo Steel Queen is currently at the Nauta Shiprepair Yard in Gdynia. Repairs will take approximately another 10 days. -- Correspondents.

STEVNS OCEAN (DIS)

London, Apr 14 -- Following received from Coastguard Humber MRSC, timed 1140, UTC: Tug Stevns Ocean (512 gt, built 2003), seven persons on board, in contact with drill platform Ensco 70 (6730 gt, built 1981), 50 persons on board, in lat 53 55.8N, long 00 33.5E, at 2212, local time, yesterday. Sea and swell slight. Ensco 70 is at full muster stations and all persons accounted for. The rig is jacking up and pinning to assess damage. Offshore Safetys' Putford Aries and Putford Trader on standby.

London, Apr 14 -- Following received from Coastguard Humber MRSC, timed 1246, UTC: Tug Stevns Ocean and Ensco 70: No change in the situation. Rig is undergoing damage assessment. Understand the intention is not to take workers off the rig.

SUDE 1 (Turkey)

Istanbul, Apr 7 -- Understand general cargo Sude 1 and general cargo Aras-I are still lying in the same position, with no change in either vessel's situation. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Istanbul, Apr 8 -- General cargo Aras-I completed repairs by own

means and upon inspection/formalities sailed Canakkale 1756, local time, Apr 7. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SUN CROSS (South Korea)

See Rickmers Genoa.

SUN RISE I (Cambodia)

Constantza, Apr 14 -- General cargo Sun Rise I is presently under repairs in Constantza shipyard. The repairs are estimated to be completed tomorrow, Apr 15. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SVEAFJELL (Norway)

Trondheim, Apr 8 -- General cargo Sveafjell is still at Kvernhusvik Shipyard, Hitra. -- Lloyd's Agents.

TA MAK GOL (North Korea)

London, Apr 7 -- General cargo Ta Mak Gol (6711 gt, built 1984) sank off China's northeastern coast, killing at least two people and leaving 21 missing, a government official and news reports said. The vessel went down last night in the Yellow Sea some 40 nautical miles from the Chinese port of Dandong, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. Dandong is near the North Korean border. By midday, today rescuers had found 12 people alive and recovered two bodies, said Xie Chenggang, an official of the Dandong Maritime Bureau. He said 21 people were still missing. Xinhua said 10 of the people rescued spent at least 14 hours in the sea before being found. There was no word on whether any of them were in lifeboats or what condition they were in. The vessel was bound from the North Korean port of Nampo to Dandong with a cargo of iron ore when it went down, Xie said by phone from Dandong. He said the reason was under investigation.

London, Apr 7 -- Following received from Beijing MRCC, timed 2005, UTC: Ta Mak Gol, HMYH, 35 crew members, sank in the Yellow Sea yesterday. Three crew members have been killed, 12 crew members rescued and 20 crew are still missing.

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: Twelve sailors from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) were rescued today by Chinese border guards after their vessel (general cargo Ta Mak Gol) sank in the Yellow Sea. The cargo vessel carrying more than 8,000 tons of pyrite sank after running into a reef 40 nautical miles from Dandong at about 2200 yesterday, said information from Dandong Subbranch of Liaoning Provincial General Brigade of Public Security and Border Defence. The police with the Dandong Subbranch rushed to the site and organized an additional 12 fishing boats to help in the rescue operation aided by GPS system.

TAY HO 1 (Vietnam)

See Ham Luong 05.

THOR ENTERPRISE (Thailand)

Maassluis, Apr 12 -- Bulk Thor Enterprise (25676 gt, built 1995) began to list due to unknown circumstances at about 1715, today.

The vessel also lost a considerable amount of oil. Vessel was underway from Kaai 154 for a shift via De Zandvlietsluis to Kaai 1217. With the assistance of tugs, vessel berthed at Antwerp's 252/254 berth. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Maassluis, Apr 14 -- Bulk Thor Enterprise is still alongside and under inspection. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

TIM BUCK (Cyprus)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy."

TOKI (Bahamas)

Montevideo, Apr 13 -- Bulk/c.c. Toki (25931 gt, built 1974), which arrived Montevideo Apr 3, has been effecting repairs to its hatches since Apr 4. Work is expected to be completed in around 10 days. -- Lloyd's Agents.

TOR HUMBRIA (NIS)

Maassluis, Apr 13 -- Ro/ro Tor Humbria (20165 gt, built 1978), Europoort for Immingham, lost starboard anchor and five shackles of chain in lat 52 00 08N, long 03 59 37E, around 2050, local time, today. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note -- Tor Humbria sailed Rotterdam 2025, Apr 13 for Immingham.)

TROPIC BRILLIANCE (Liberia)

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated Penang, Apr 10, states: A Russian sailor on board empty crude oil tanker Tropic Brilliance (79718 gt, built 1992), suffered 70% burns when a fire broke out on the vessel, some 31 nautical miles off Muka Head. The Penang Fire and Rescue Department, which were alerted to the fire at 1400 hrs, sent a boat to the tanker to bring Mikhail Ovcharyuk, 55, ashore at about 1900 hrs. Ovcharyuk is reported to be in stable condition at the Penang Hospital. The tanker was slightly damaged in the fire, said its local agent Kharil Hafizi. "We are waiting for a report from the captain to find out what happened," he said. The vessel was enroute to the United Arab Emirates from Singapore.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated Apr 10, states: A Russian crew member of a Monrovia-registered oil tanker suffered serious burns when fire broke out on board the vessel this morning. Mikhael Ovcharyuk, 55, on board crude oil tanker Tropic Brilliance, suffered 70 per cent burns on his body. The incident occurred about 11 nautical miles off Muka Head, Teluk Bahang, when the empty ship was on its way from Singapore to the United Arab Emirates. Fire and Rescue Department officer Sarjan Mohd Hussain and his team were patrolling the sea near Pasir Panjang off Balik Pulau when the distress call came in about 1440 hrs. "We had to go to the vessel and winch him 18 metres down to our boat as the vessel did not have a permit to berth at the Penang port." Mohamad said the victim was conscious despite the serious burns when brought to the port around 1900 hrs. He was taken to the Penang Hospital for treatment. The vessel later continued its journey to Dubai.

London, Apr 11 -- Following received from Unicom Management Services (Cyprus) Ltd, dated today: Unicom regret that one member of the crew of crude oil tanker Tropic Brilliance was injured yesterday (Apr 10) during maintenance work while the vessel was on passage from China to the Middle East Gulf. The seafarer was injured in a localised fire while the vessel was transitting the Malacca Straits. He was transferred ashore at Penang and is receiving treatment at hospital. The vessel sustained no damage and has resumed the voyage.

URSULA LEONHARDT (Malta)

Rijeka, Apr 8 -- General cargo Ursula, ex Ursula Leonhardt, arrived Mali Losinj Mar 29 and is still in port. Repairs have commenced but no completion date is presently known. -- Lloyd's Agents.

VICUNA (Chile)

London, Apr 8 -- Salvors have removed the final section of chemical/oil carrier Vicuna from the berth alongside the Cattalini liquid bulk terminal, allowing inspectors to move ahead with the investigation into the causes of last year's chemical tanker explosion. The remains of the chemical tanker have been alongside since two blasts ripped through the vessel last November. The final mid-ship section was removed on Monday (Apr 4), bringing a close to a four-month operation undertaken by Smit Salvage on behalf of the P&I club, Tyndall Riley (Britannia). Inspectors appointed by the maritime court in Rio de Janeiro, the P&I Club, Cattalini and the port captain have been analysing the remains of the vessel for clues into what caused the vessel to explode while discharging methanol at the terminal. Two Chilean crew, an Argentine Lloyd's Register surveyor and a representative of Humboldt Shipmanagement, the vessel's Chilean manager were killed in the accident.

VIKING MULL

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: A blaze broke out on standby safety vessel Viking Mull after its engine blew up yesterday. The fire began as the crew were starting the engines of the vessel while it was moored in Edinburgh Dock, Leith. Firefighters spent two hours soaking the engine-room walls to keep them cool to stop the fire spreading. Extinguishers in the engine-room were also used to tackle the blaze. No one was injured.

XIANG WANG (Panama)

Moji, Apr 11 -- C.c. Xiang Wang (4960 gt, built 1995), Moji for Ningbo, with containers, in collision with lpg Kashima Maru (998 gt, built 1989) Chiba for Ulsan, with chemical cargo of propylene, in the Kanmon Straits at round 0142, Apr 8. Xiang Wang sustained scratch and light dent damage to its starboard forecastle and hull. No oil leak, human casualty or cargo damage was reported. Vessel

berthed at Moji No.5 wharf at around 1230, Apr 8 for investigation by Coast Guard and sailed Moji at 1930, Apr 10, without any repairs, bound Ningbo. By order of Coast Guard, master is staying at Moji for further investigation and for attendance at the prosecutor's office and summary court which schedule is still unknown at present. Kashima Maru sustained scratch damage to its port side hull under the bridge. No oil leak, human casualty or cargo damage was reported. Due to dangerous cargo on board, an investigation by Coast Guard was carried out at Hesaki anchorage and vessel sailed 2030, Apr 10 upon completion of investigation by Coast Guard, without any repairs. -- Lloyd's Agents. (Note -- Xiang Wang arrived Moji Apr 7 and sailed Apr 10 for Ningbo. Kashima Maru sailed Chiba Apr 5 for Ulsan.)

XIE HANG 99 (China)

London, Apr 13 -- Following received from Hong Kong MRCC, timed 0001, UTC: C.c. Xie Hang 99 (577 gt, 49.4 metres length), on voyage Hong Kong to Macau with seven crew members, sank at approximately 2030, local time, Apr 12, in lat 22 11.3N, long 113 45E. Six crew missing. Search, coordinated by the Chinese, continues.

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: Six people are missing after a Chinese freighter (c.c. Xie Hang 99) with a seven man crew sank near Hong Kong, officials said today. The accident occurred yesterday in Chinese waters near the island of Qing Zhou, located at the mouth of the Pearl River between Macau and Hong Kong, a duty officer at the Marine Department of the southern Chinese Guangdong province said. Rescuers have saved one crew member, who was unharmed, and are searching for the remaining people on board, he said. The cause of the accident is still being investigated the duty officer said. Hong Kong dispatched a helicopter to assist with rescue efforts early today, but rescuers did not locate any survivors, duty officer Alan Lee at the Government Flying Service said.

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated today, states: Six mainland sailors are missing after c.c. Xie Hang 99 sank in the Pearl River Delta. One crewman was rescued. The vessel started taking on water near the island of Qing Zhou, in mainland waters, on Tuesday (Apr 12). The sole rescued crewman was plucked from the sea by a passing vessel, but there had been no sign of the others last night. A search-and-rescue operation by the Guangdong Rescue Co-ordination Centre was continuing. Mainland rescuers called for help from the Hong Kong Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre at about 0200 hrs, yesterday. A Government Flying Services helicopter mounted a fruitless two-hour search of the area. A spokesman for the Hong Kong Marine Department said fog hampered the search, as visibility was cut to two kilometres or less. "It is very difficult to find a person in the sea under such

poor visibility," he said. Another helicopter was dispatched when mainland authorities asked for assistance again just before noon. The helicopter returned to Hong Kong after searching for about an hour and finding no sign of the missing men.

YOHTEISAN (Panama)

See "Singapore Strait" under "Piracy."



MALACCA STRAIT

London, Apr 8 -- The Japanese owner of salvage tug Idaten, from which three crew were kidnapped in the Malacca Strait last month, has admitted the company did pay for their safe release. Kanji Kondo, president of Kondo Kaiji in Kitakyushu, told the Manichi Daily News said that the incident cost the company about yen 50m (\$461,000). This included yen 10m in travel costs, payment of the negotiator and compensation for the contract being undertaken by the Idaten. The Japanese master and chief engineer and the Filipino chief officer of the vessel were kidnapped on Mar 14 after 14 armed pirates attacked it north-east of Pulau Berhala. They were released six days later off south Thailand. Mr Kondo refused to call the payment to the negotiator a ransom as the payment of kidnapers is illegal under Malaysian law. Malaysian officials had earlier claimed that no ransom was paid. "Pirates are rapidly getting better equipment," Mr Kondo said. "If no preventive measures are taken they will start to target large ships."

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated today, states: Armed pirates attacked and robbed Singapore-registered product tanker Kyosei Maru (1352 gt, built 1983) in the Straits of Malacca last night, escaping with an assortment of cash in foreign currency belonging to the crew. The tanker was about eight kilometres off the port of Tanjung Pelepas when 10 pirates wearing ski masks slipped aboard the vessel at 1120 hrs. The pirates, believed to be Indonesians, used a speedboat to get to the tanker. They fled with US\$5,000 and the crew's handphones after tying up everyone on board. The master, an Indonesian, and his 10-member crew, all Indonesians and a Singaporean, later managed to free themselves. No one was reported injured. Understand that the tanker has since returned to Singapore. Police said investigations were under way.

SINGAPORE STRAIT

London, Apr 8 -- On Tuesday (Apr 5) seven craft, which looked like fishing vessels and were believed to be carrying pirates, surrounded crude oil

tanker Yohteisan (149282 gt, built 2000) in the Singapore Strait and tried to board it. Owned by Japan's International Energy, Yohteisan was on an eastbound journey in heavy rain and poor visibility when the incident occurred off the Indonesian Karimun Islands, where the southern tip of the Malacca Strait joins the Singapore Strait. The tanker managed to shake off the pirates by increasing speed and the ship's crew stood by with water hoses to repel the pirates if they managed to board. (Note -- Yohteisan sailed Ras Tanura Mar 25.)

SOMALIA

London, Apr 11 -- Following received from Larnaca RCC, timed 1100, UTC: Bulk/c.c. Tim Buck (14009 gt, built 1983), pirates boarded vessel in about lat 03 24N, long 48 17E, at 1000, Apr 10. No injuries to the crew and no goods were taken. Master secured vessel and it proceeded on voyage to Tanzania. Vessel sustained a small amount of damage.

London, Apr 13 -- Pirates armed with grenade launchers and automatic weapons failed to board bulk/c.c. Tim Buck off Somalia, despite setting the starboard rescue boat on fire in an attempt to gain access. The incident is reported by Itar-Tass news agency. Bulk/c.c. Tim Buck was en route from Jeddah to Dar es Salaam at the time of the attempted boarding. Fortunately the fire was localised and none of the crew was hurt. The vessel is reported to be continuing its voyage.



ANGELIKI M. (Honduras)

Port Said, Apr 14 -- General cargo Angeliki M. is still under arrest at Port Said. -- Lloyd's Agents.

CLEOPATRA SKY

Brest, Apr 8 -- General cargo Cleopatra Sky, which was detained by French Customs authorities in 2000, has since been reported by the civilian port authorities to be moored in the River Elorn, close to Brest, together with a number of old military vessels waiting to be scrapped. The military authorities now advise that Cleopatra Sky was towed out to sea and sunk by a navy vessel on Mar 24, 2000. For reasons unknown, the commercial port authorities were not aware of the situation. -- Lloyd's Agents.

DELOS (Bahamas)

Port Said, Apr 14 -- Chem.tank Delos is still under arrest at Port Said. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ELEN (Honduras)

Port Said, Apr 14 -- General cargo Elen is still under arrest at Port Said. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ENI (Albania)

Trieste, Apr 7 -- Following received from Lloyd's Agents, Durres: Informed that general cargo Eni (920 gt, built 1965) entered the port of Durres at 0300, Mar 29, and discharged seven containers of cigarettes clandestinely. At 0900 hrs the vessel was boarded by the police and the customs for the usual "free pratique" procedure but there was no cargo on board anymore. A search was carried out in the port and in the premises of Mr Zotaj, owner of the vessel, were found seven containers of cigarettes, estimate value US 5 million. Some crew members and other persons were arrested and the vessel and the owner's properties were seized. -- Lloyd's Agents.

HANKO I (Honduras)

Port Said, Apr 14 -- Tug Hanko I is still under arrest at Port Said. -- Lloyd's Agents.

KEMPO (Norway)

Gothenburg, Apr 9 -- It has been reported in the local press that fishing Kempo was arrested (at Las Palmas) on Mar 4. The vessel's registered owner is: m/s Kempo A/S - Sunndalsoya, Norway - Peter Lyngstad. The NOR report that the vessel was registered on Dec 10, 2004. The management company is: LSC Shipmanagement, Riga, Latvia. There are reports of unpaid debts and the telephone listed for the owner has been cut-off. It is also confirmed that the previous owner has not been fully paid for the vessel. The vessel and its Latvian crew have reportedly been "dumped at Las Palmas" with no water or food supplies. The crew have also reportedly not received any salary during 2005. All their attempts to contact the owner have been unsuccessful. -- Westax Marine Services AB.

LYKES VOYAGER (Isle of Man)

See under "Marine".

MAHDI (Norway)

London, Apr 8 -- A Nigerian shipowner is launching contempt of court proceedings against his country's navy, after accusing them of illegally holding a product tanker for 15 months in defiance of a legal ruling. Do Labinjo, principal of Al-Dawood Shipping Lines, also accuses the armed forces of stealing the vessel's cargo of 600 tonnes of fuel oil. The navy's actions are unconstitutional and "a rape of democracy", Capt Labinjo insisted. His vessel, chem.tank Mahdi, was detained by the Nigerian navy on Dec 31, 2003, on suspicion of smuggling crude oil. Oil smuggling is a crucial economic issue in the West African country, with around 10% of its 2.5m bpd oil output thought to be stolen. But according to Al-Dawood, the master produced documentation to show that he was carrying fuel oil rather than crude, and even had naval approval to discharge at a tank farm in Apapa. Samples taken for analysis

subsequently proved that the cargo was indeed fuel rather than crude. Following a legal battle, the courts earlier this year ruled that the vessel should be returned. But the vessel remains in navy hands, and on Mar 21 this year, the navy allegedly siphoned off the fuel oil, worth about N200m (\$1.51m). Two photographers hired to document the event were arrested and detained at a naval base. Capt Labinjo said: "The court has ruled that the detention is illegal, unlawful and contrary to the Nigerian constitution. As I'm talking to you, our lawyers are in court filing contempt proceedings right now." There are also reports that the company has directly petitioned Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo, "in view of his love for justice, fair play and anti-corruption practices in all facets." Al-Dawood, founded in 1994, operates a fleet of five small tankers. A navy spokesman told the local media that the navy is acting on a directive from the Economic and Financial Crime Commission.

MANSUNG (South Korea)

See "South Korean Fishing Vessels Seized by Japan."

NORTHELLA (U.K.)

Valletta, Apr 11 -- Understand oceanographic research Northella was sold to Mr Joseph O'Connor, and is presently still at the dock at Cassar Ship Repair Yard. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ODYSSEUS (Greece)

See "Royal Olympia Cruises Ltd."

ORIENTAL (Egypt)

Port Said, Apr 14 -- Fishing Oriental is still under arrest at Port Said. -- Lloyd's Agents

ORIONIS (Hong Kong)

Kandla, Apr 14 -- General cargo Orionis arrived with steel coils from Japan, Mar 19. The vessel subsequently loaded steel pipes from Adani Port Mundra. There are unconfirmed reports that the vessel was delayed, but the reason is still unknown. The Port authorities are not aware of the next port of call. Understand from the vessel's local agents that the vessel had eventually sailed from Adani Port Mundra, Mar 30 bound Muara Port, Brunei. -- Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Mar 29.)

Karachi, Apr 14 -- Mundra Port Authority (MPA), India, said today that on the order of the honourable High Court of Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India, they had released the arrested general cargo Orionis. According to Mundra port sources, the Port Authority and Customs received a release order from the Court on Mar 30, while the agent obtained port clearance from the Custom authorities on Mar 31. The vessel sailed from anchorage at 2250, local time, same day. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

PAVEL YABLOCHKOV (Russia)

London, Apr 8 -- Cargo/training Pavel Yablochkov now renamed Capella

under St. Vincent & Grenadines flag, departed from Leghorn on Mar 31, destination Izmail.

ROYAL OLYMPIA CRUISES LTD

London, Apr 8 -- A report in today's issue of "Newsfront" states: Louis Cruise Lines, US-based Ravenscroft Shipping and a Chinese company, IP, were the buyers of three Royal Olympia Cruises (ROC) cruise vessels sold at a public auction in Piraeus on Apr 6. Although the amount raised was almost 50% more than the combined reserve price on the three vessels it was a fraction of the total outstandings. Louis group of Cyprus picked up passenger Triton for \$9.5m. The reserve price for this vessel was \$5.5m. It is expected to join the recently established Louis Hellenic Cruises and be deployed out of Piraeus. Louis, led by group chairman Costakis Loizou, also bid unsuccessfully for the other two vessels. Ravenscroft bought passenger World Renaissance for \$3.4m, some \$200,000 more than the reserve, while the Chinese company paid \$2.2m for passenger Odysseus, which has been laid up for the best part of two years. The reserve on the vessel had been \$1.8m. The auction came when Piraeus lawyer Theodoros Sioufas moved quickly after being named Feb 18 as the court-appointed liquidator of what remained of the ROC operation. A Piraeus Court accepted a petition of ROC's main creditor, Fortis Bank, and on Feb 7 the companies owning the three cruise vessels were placed in liquidation. (See issue of Apr 1, also Triton, World Renaissance and Odysseus in issue of Mar 18.)

SAMARA CITY (Russia)

Batumi, Apr 12 -- Product tanker Samara City was arrested for violation of marine regulations. The penalty sum was 50 000 GEL (about US\$ 27,800). The penalty sum was paid and, at 2250, local time, Mar 31, vessel sailed for its next port, Kertch, Ukraine. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SEA SERENADE (Cyprus)

London, Apr 11 -- On Apr 7, ro/ro Chang Po Po, ex Sea Serenade was reported to be still at Izola.

SOUTH KOREAN FISHING VESSELS SEIZED BY JAPAN

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: Two South Korean fishing boats were seized by the Japanese authorities for allegedly violating Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), the local maritime police said today. The two 79-ton fishing boats, Mansung and Yongkwang, were operating in waters 9.2 nautical miles off Niigata Prefecture, Japan, at 0100, local time, yesterday, when a Japanese coast guard cutter seized the boats and their over 20 crew members, the police said. The boats were fishing for conger eels with pots at the time of the seizure by the Japanese vessel, which towed them into Niigata port. The South Korean maritime police are investigating and have contacted the

owners of the fishing boats to determine more details of the incident, the police said.

THALASOPOROS (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Limassol, Apr 8 -- Tug Thalassoporos, now named Pileas, is still under arrest at Limassol port. No prospects for its release yet. -- Lloyd's Agents.

THETIS

Port Said, Apr 14 -- General cargo Thetis is still under arrest in the Great Bitter Lakes. -- Lloyd's Agents.

TRITON (Greece)

See "Royal Olympia Cruises Ltd."

WEN FENG SHAN (China)

London, Apr 12 -- General cargo Wen Feng Shan (2612 gt, built 1985), BBJD, which arrived Hong Kong 0930 hrs, today, was at 1614 hrs, reported at South West Lamma Anchorage, Hong Kong, under arrest.

WESTERMOOR (Liberia)

London, Apr 9 -- C.c. Westermoor (30047 gt, built 2001), which arrived Hong Kong 1334, Apr 8, is today reported at North Lamma Anchorage, Hong Kong, under arrest.

London, Apr 11 -- C.c. Westermoor sailed Hong Kong 0035, Apr 10, bound Shanghai.

WORLD RENAISSANCE (Greece)

See "Royal Olympia Cruises Ltd."

YONGKWANG (South Korea)

See "South Korean Fishing Vessels Seized by Japan."



PRUDHOE BAY, ALASKA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: State pollution officials are investigating a pipeline leak in the Prudhoe Bay oil field that sent crude oil spraying over a large area of snow-covered tundra. The spill, which occurred just after midnight yesterday, came after a high-pressure oil line sprang a leak, spewing oil that was carried by the wind over an area state officials estimate at 100 to 200 acres. Crews for BP Exploration (Alaska) are working on a cleanup, which is expected to be very effective as workers can simply scoop up the oiled snow with shovels, an official with the state Department of Environmental Conservation said. Neither the state nor a spokesman for BP could estimate the amount of spilled oil involved.

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: Crude oil spewed out of a ruptured Prudhoe Bay pipeline early yesterday and "misted" up to 200 acres of tundra, a state pollution official said. Wind carried

the oil over an area nearly a mile long and 300 feet wide, acknowledged Andrew Van Chau, a spokesman for BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc. BP runs Prudhoe Bay, the nation's largest oil field. BP crews plugged the leaky, six-inch pipeline and also halted oil production from wells on Prudhoe drill site 14. The drill site is near the centre of the 213,500-acre oil field and produces an estimated 10,000 barrels of oil per day, which is a little more than 2% of Prudhoe Bay production. Neither Van Chau nor Ed Meggert, a spill prevention and response co-ordinator for the state Department of Environmental Conservation, could immediately say yesterday how much oil was spilled. Natural gas and some water were also discharged. "I don't know that we'll ever get a volume on something like this," Meggert said, as the oil was dispersed over such a large area. However, Meggert said he doubted that the leak ranked as one of the Slope's larger spills. Details remained sketchy yesterday evening, but the DEC and Van Chau gave this account: At about 0030 hrs, an alarm signaled a possible gas leak at the drill site. Field workers went to the site to investigate and about 0230 hrs, according to the DEC, they discovered the leak coming from a pressurised pipeline under some snow. The pipe is part of a system that sends natural gas down wells. The gas essentially adds fizz to the wells, lifting more crude oil out of the ground. A breeze of about 10 mph was blowing at the time, carrying the spewed liquid downwind across the tundra. The thickest coating of oil settled on buildings, pipes, tanks and roads on the drill site. No one was injured, and the only people close to the leak were working on a nearby well, Van Chau said. About 30 emergency responders headed to the site yesterday, including some from Alaska Clean Seas, a contractor North Slope oil companies use to deal with spills. According to a DEC report issued yesterday afternoon, heavy equipment operators removed "heavily oiled, compacted snow" from roadways on the gravel drill pad. The report said most of the oil stayed on the pad with other areas "lightly misted." The cause of the leak appears to be a failed pipe weld, the DEC report said. While neither state officials nor BP were able to estimate the amount of spilled crude late yesterday, they estimated the amount of natural gas released at 1.4 million cubic feet. Van Chau said BP was calculating an oil estimate. Clean-up workers planned to go out with shovels and sleds to pick up and cart away the stained snow, he said. The tundra clean-up will probably be easy and effective, Meggert said. The temperature is below zero, and the ground is frozen and layered with snow. Workers should be able to easily shovel up the oil, he said. "It's not a huge spill, but it covers a pretty good area. It looks a lot worse than it is," Meggert said. By late yesterday,

BP was taking steps to reactivate oil production from drill site 14, so less than 10,000 barrels of oil production was interrupted, Van Chau said.

PYRAMID LAKE, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated Apr 10, states: Angeles National Park officials say clean-up of last month's oil pipeline spill could take at least a year. Pyramid Lake could re-open within a month but parts of the shoreline and hillsides are still coated with remnants of the 126-thousand gallons of oil that spilled Mar 23, after a landslide burst an underground pipeline. It took special hazardous materials crews a week to skim about two thousand gallons of light crude oil from the surface of the lake. The clean-up efforts are being overseen by the Environmental Protection Agency.

VERACRUZ, MEXICO

Mexico City, Apr 13 -- At least five workers died today in a toxic spill of ammonia while they were repairing an oil pipeline in the southern Mexican state of Veracruz, authorities said. It was not immediately clear how the deaths occurred, but the spill also caused the evacuation of about 6,000 people living nearby. "There are five dead who were workers of a company that Pemex contracted to carry out repair work on the pipelines," said Erika Herrera, police spokeswoman for Veracruz state. -- Reuters.



BARENTS SEA

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: Statoil ASA said it has decided to stop all drilling from drill platform Eirik Raude (36898 gt, built 1998) after hydraulic oil was accidentally spilled from the rig yesterday, probably caused by a leak from a hose. The rig is currently drilling the Guovca exploration well in the Norwegian sector of the Barents Sea. Statoil said it takes the incident very seriously and will now set up a working group, which will identify short and long-term measures to avoid similar leaks in the future. 'The progress of the drilling activity is of secondary importance, and we will take the time we need before we start up again,' said Tim Dodson, Statoil's senior vice president for exploration on the Norwegian continental shelf.

GUANGZHOU, CHINA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Guangzhou doctors and residents are blaming a brownish-yellow shroud of particulates and moisture that has hung over the city for more than a week for an increase in respiratory diseases especially among children and the elderly. "Air pollution is one of the

reasons for the rise in cases of bronchitis and other respiratory diseases, especially among children and older people," said Guangdong Health Department spokesman Feng Shaomin. "The government has allocated 300 million yuan to expand the Guangzhou Institute of Respiratory Diseases but there has to be a multi-departmental approach to the problem," he said. Since last year, weather experts found a new phenomenon they have seen in only one other place, Beijing, when airborne particulates expand upon contact with moisture in fog. The phenomenon, which they call "polluted fog", has been brought under control in the capital but is drawing air pollution scholars including the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology's Alexis Lau Kai-hon to the Pearl River Delta to conduct studies. Wu Dui, an academic who has studied air pollution in the Pearl River Delta since 1987, said: "In terms of visibility, our problem is more severe than in Los Angeles. Sometimes, visibility is not even 1km." There had been reports of a higher incidence of respiratory diseases by Guangzhou hospitals but while nobody had died as a direct or indirect result of smog, as in Los Angeles or London, the harmful effect could not be ruled out, Professor Wu said. The professor is concerned that the particulates could enter the bloodstream and harm the body. The Guangzhou Environmental Protection Bureau was not available for comment, but a bureau executive played down the severity of the smog, saying they disagreed with the weather experts and that haze and pollution were not the same thing. In the past few years, the bureau reported that Guangzhou's air quality had remained good while acknowledging that particulate levels had risen. Last month there were 12 days when visibility fell as low as 1.62km, while last year there were 144 days of poor visibility as a result of the smog. But no warnings have been issued to the public to avoid strenuous physical activities outdoors on days when there is poor air quality. In fact, the Air Pollution Index (API) reading yesterday was 91, which means good air quality, while Baiyun Mountain remained hidden in the haze. An environmental expert said mainland API readings did not take into account all the parameters that Hong Kong did. On Monday (Apr 4), the municipal government allocated 200 million yuan to build three air-quality monitoring networks over the next three years to provide data on dust, haze and fog, which have not previously been recorded, to the environmental protection bureau. Guangzhou's latest air pollution problem, which experts believe to have been triggered by emissions, from vehicles, factories and power plants, combined with weather conditions, is particularly serious because the phenomenon is compounding old problems.

MOMBASA, KENYA

See Ratna Shalini under "Marine."

**PRUDHOE BAY, ALASKA,
UNITED STATES**

See under "Pipeline Accidents."

**PYRAMID LAKE, CALIFORNIA,
UNITED STATES**

See under "Pipeline Accidents."

Weather & Navigation**AUSTRALIA**

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Berth No.1 at Hay Point terminal was closed at 0930, local time, this morning due to adverse weather conditions. The next scheduled berthing attempt will be at 1330, tomorrow and will be subject to weather conditions.

CHINA

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: Storms, hail and torrential rain have claimed the lives of 18 people in south-west China, state media said today. Thirteen of the victims died in Sichuan province and five in neighboring Chongqing municipality on Friday (Apr 8), the Xinhua news agency and Beijing News said. One person remains missing and 30 were injured in Sichuan, Xinhua quoted the local disaster relief office as saying. Most of the 13 people who died in Sichuan were killed by lightning or house collapses, a local official said. The violent weather, the worst so far this year, also destroyed more than 20,000 houses, damaged cropland and cut off power in more than 20 cities and counties in Sichuan, Xinhua said. The largest hailstones were 30 millimetres in diameter. In Chongqing more than 458,800 residents in 80 townships and districts were affected, with 25 injured. Losses were estimated at 140 million yuan/million dollars, the Beijing News reported, citing local officials.

COLOMBIA

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: At least 11 people were killed and three others missing after torrential rains lashed Colombia over the past two days, local media said today. In Maripi District, in the northern Boyaca department, three adults and three children of the same family were killed when the car they were on board was swept away by floods. In a similar accident in the north-western Antioquia department, three soldiers drowned and three others disappeared while trying to cross a river during a routine patrol. Heavy rains also caused a landslide which buried a house in a rural area of Belen de Umbria, in Risaralda department, killing two children.

Traffic leading to the south-western municipality of Colombia was disrupted when the "El Milagro" bridge was swept away by floods from the Ambica river.

INDIA

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 38 Hindu pilgrims have died and 35 are missing after they were struck by a flash flood while praying on the banks of the Narmada River in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, police said today. Local police chief Swaraj Puri said two bodies had been found on Friday (Apr 8), while the rest had been recovered over the weekend from Dharaji, near Dewas, some 300 kilometres from Madhya Pradesh's state capital Bhopal. "Thirty-eight bodies have been recovered so far and 35 people are still reported missing," Suri said. Locals said the Narmada rose suddenly on Thursday after state-run National Hydel Development Corporation (NHDC) released water from the Indira Sagar reservoir on the heavily dammed Narmada River. The NHDC has denied the locals' version of events but could not immediately explain the surge of water, which came despite the fact there has been no rain in the area. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Babulal Gaur ordered a probe into the incident. "I will present my report within 15 days and the brief includes not just finding out reasons for the tragedy but ways to prevent it in the future," Principal Secretary Arvind Joshi, who is heading the probe, told reporters. The controversial Narmada Valley project involves the building of 3,000 dams across three states on the Narmada and its tributaries.

ITALY

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: A spring storm has caused major damage in Italy because of heavy rains and high winds, especially in the north where falling trees and landslides have blocked roadways and brought down power lines, local media reported today. According to the report in Trieste, the northern Bora wind gusted up to 173 kph, a new record for the season and not far below the all-time record of 180 kph. High winds battered the north-western coastal region of Liguria where flights to Genoa had to be re-routed to Turin and several power outages were reported due to falling trees knocking out power lines. Traffic was slowed by heavy rains all over the north-west while the winds ripped out billboards and tore off roof tiles, report said. Further south, train traffic between Perugia and Terontola was interrupted during the night because of tree falling on the tracks, while in the Emilia-Romagna region a flood alert has been issued. The spring storm also brought snow back to the mountains where up to 70 cm fell in Piedmont over the weekend (Apr 9-10).

NEW ZEALAND

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: The Insurance Council believes its estimation of the full cost of the tornado at Greymouth in New Zealand's southern west coast is almost spot on. It is predicted last month's twister, which tore through the West Coast town, cost around NZ\$10 million. Insurance Council CEO Chris Ryan says while the total figure has not yet been calculated but he believes it will be fairly much in line with the estimate. He says insurers were able to assess the damage fairly quickly, as the tornado only hit certain areas.

ROMANIA

Bucharest, Apr 13 -- The Sulina Channel was closed today due to strong wind, north northeasterly, Beaufort 6-7 (strong breeze - near gale), seas five feet. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Bucharest, Apr 14 -- The Sulina Channel was re-opened at 0600 hrs, today. -- Lloyd's Agents.

RUSSIA

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A storm warning is issued for all the appropriate services in Kamchatka as a cyclone with a snowstorm is moving towards the peninsula, the Kamchatka meteorological service said today. The cyclone is moving from the Khabarovsk Territory and Sakhalin at the speed of 40-50 kilometres an hour. It will reach Kamchatka's southern coast on Apr 12 and bring snow and a windstorm with the wind speed of up to 20 metres a second to the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, Yelizovo, Ust-Bolsheretsk and Milkovo regions. The storm will also rage in the Pacific area and the Sea of Okhotsk near the peninsula. Captains of vessels working there are informed about it. The cyclone is expected to move from Kamchatka Apr 13 to the Bering Sea where it will also cause a storm.

SOMALIA

Hargeysa, Apr 13 -- Thousands of Somalis are in dire need of aid, following a severe drought in several areas of the self-declared republic of Somaliland and the semi-autonomous state of Puntland in northeastern Somalia, relief workers told IRIN on Sunday (Apr 10). The worst affected areas were Togdheer and Sool regions, Nudal valley and Mudug. Some affected people in these areas had started moving to less affected regions and urban centres such as Las Anod, Bossaso, Garowe and Galkayo, the sources said. Abdihakim Ahmed, a programme coordinator for Save the Children-US, told IRIN in the Somaliland capital, Hargeysa, that pastoral communities in the most severely affected areas had lost over half of their sheep and goats, 70 percent of their cattle and 35 percent of their camels. Food stocks, he added, were virtually non-existent in some areas of Sool and Togdheer, and most traditional water points had dried up.

Abdi Ahmed Iidle, Mayor of Burao, Somaliland's second city, told reporters during a news conference on Sunday that the lack so far of the usual long (Gu) rains meant no recovery was expected soon. He urged international relief agencies to send more aid, adding that several organisations were already trying to provide food, water and immunisation services. The first signs of severe drought were reported in January 2004 in the Sool Plateau, which includes Sool and Sanag regions. An inter-agency assessment conducted in May 2004 found that the eastern Togdheer region was equally affected. According to Somaliland officials, the Deyr (short) rains expected earlier this year had largely failed to materialise, except in areas along the border with Ethiopia, which had received some rain. Somalia has, over the last four years, experienced partial or total rain failure, prolonging a dry spell that has eroded the traditional coping mechanisms of its predominantly pastoral population. Relief workers said inter-clan conflicts, environmental degradation and the lack of a strong central government had also exacerbated long-term food insecurity in the country. In March, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation warned that food shortages meant some areas of Somalia had reported malnutrition levels of more than 20%. -- Reuters.

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Widespread reports of rain damage and flooding have been received following a heavy storm which lashed South Africa's Cape Peninsula last night. Johan Minnie, a spokesperson for the Cape Town Disaster Management, says their personnel will do a damage assessment and will take appropriate steps after that. Minnie says the northern and southern parts of the Peninsula were the hardest hit. Bellville and Durbanville, as well as the south Peninsula, were mostly affected. Various roads were flooded and closed because of mud and rock falls. No reports of deaths and injuries have been received so far.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "ADELINE"

London, Apr 11 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of tropical cyclone "Adeline" was located near lat 23.4S, long 63.6E, approximately 400 nautical miles east-south-east, of Mauritius, and has tracked southward, or 235 degs, at 10 knots over the past six hours. The position is accurate to within 40 nautical miles and is based on the eye fixed by satellite. "Adeline" is forecast to continue weakening as it enters an environment of increasing vertical wind shear and decreasing sea surface temperatures. The present wind distribution: maximum sustained winds: 90 knots, gusts 110 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds: 15 nautical

miles in all four quadrants. Radius of 34 knot winds: 85 nautical miles in the north-east and north-west quadrants and 95 nautical miles in the south-east and south-west quadrants. Maximum significant wave height is 34 feet. At 0600, UTC, Apr 12, the centre is predicted to be near lat 28.0S, long 66.0E, with maximum sustained winds of 65 knots and gusts to 80 knots.

London, Apr 12 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone "Adeline" near lat 27.0S, long 65.8E, at 0600, UTC, Apr 12. Movement past six hours 130 deg at 13 knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots with gusts to 65 knots. Becoming extratropical. Radius of 34-knot winds 110 nautical miles south semicircle, 60 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 1800, UTC: Position lat 28.2S, long 68.9E. Maximum sustained winds 40 knots with gusts to 50 knots. Extratropical.

London, Apr 13 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of extra-tropical depression "Adeline" was located within a 20 nautical mile radius of lat 28.4S, long 72.2E. The maximum average wind speed was 45 knots. The system is weakening, with strong winds far from the centre. The system is expected to track globally east-south-eastwards, fill up gradually south of 30S. At 0600, UTC, Apr 14, the centre is predicted to be near lat 30.6S, long 77.1E, with maximum winds of 40 knots.

UNITED STATES

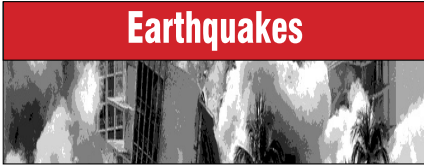
London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Lines of violent thunderstorms rolled through the South yesterday, blowing apart mobile homes, snapping dozens of trees and power lines and ripping the roof off a school while classes were in session. A tornado touched down in Mississippi during an hours-long storm siege. There were no immediate reports of deaths, but officials said at least eight people were injured, including one in critical condition. Gov. Haley Barbour declared a state of emergency in storm-damaged areas. The hardest-hit section of Mississippi was rural Rankin County, southeast of Jackson. At least 17 homes were destroyed in the county and 15 others had major damage, said Amy Carruth, a Mississippi Emergency Management Agency spokeswoman in Brandon. National Weather Service officials said the tornado was rated an F3 on the Fujita scale, with winds ranging from 158 mph to 206 mph. Violent storms continued during the mid-afternoon hours yesterday, triggering numerous new reports of possible tornadoes aloft and flash flooding. Tornado threats returned to many of the counties pounded during the morning hours. Another tornado destroyed about eight homes and

damaged about a dozen other houses, barns and workshops near Heflin in northwest Louisiana.

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: Initial estimates for repairing the damage caused by flooding to the Delaware Canal, last weekend start at approximately \$30 million. However, according to Delaware Canal State Park Manager Rick Dalton, even that amount of money doesn't guarantee the landmark can be restored to its original state. Dalton and his staff were just about to secure \$9 million in repair money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to begin reconstruction of segments of the canal devastated by the remnants of Hurricane "Ivan" in September when the latest disaster struck. The state thought it could rebuild the canal after "Ivan". Now the forecast isn't so bright and the future of the canal is uncertain. Right now much of the 60-mile expanse between Bristol and Easton has been weakened and left vulnerable to another event. Large sections of the canal in the Washington Crossing-New Hope area have been breached. Dalton also has reports of damage in the Yardley, Morrisville and Bristol segments. There were four major damage areas left by "Ivan", including one at Washington Crossing that was repaired with private funding from two groups. "We have areas damaged that weren't before," Dalton said. "We have areas that were weakened by "Ivan" and now they are worse. It's really bad. "In Yardley, we have a blowout south of Lock No. 5. We have an engineer checking today for possible problems in Morrisville. In places where before the trail had just washed out, now it's more structural," he added. Longtime residents along the river are calling the weekend floods the worst since the Flood of '55, considered perhaps the most catastrophic in the history of the Delaware Valley. Repair work can't start until the state resubmits a request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Due to the excessive damage and the length of the evaluation, that could take months.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Travellers slept in airport corridors and Denver-area commuters braced for a snowy morning rush-hour as a spring blizzards pounded parts of Colorado. Most airlines had delayed or cancelled flights, including United Airlines, the biggest carrier at Denver International Airport, officials said. Flights also were cancelled out of Colorado Springs, and whiteout conditions shut down highways. Up to two feet of heavy, wet snow blew across eastern Colorado yesterday, cutting power to thousands in the heavily populated Front Range region. There were no immediate reports of injuries or deaths. About 11,000 customers lost power at the peak of the snowstorm.

Earthquakes



CHINA

Karachi, Apr 9 -- An earthquake of moderate intensity measuring 5.8 on the International Richter scale was recorded yesterday afternoon by the Regional Met Centre at Peshawar city in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. According to preliminary analysis of Meteorological Centre, the earthquake originated at 0105, PST, and its epicentre lies about 1100 kilometers east of Peshawar in China. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

INDONESIA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake shook northeastern Indonesia early today, Hong Kong seismologists said. The 5.5-magnitude quake's epicentre was beneath the Maluku Sea, about 230 kilometres north-east of Manado, the provincial capital of North Sulawesi. No damage or injuries were immediately reported.

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake has struck near the Indonesian island of Sumatra, seismologists said. The epicentre of the quake, which had an estimated magnitude of 6.7, was about 120 km south-west of the city of Padang, officials said. There were no immediate reports of damage, but some people fled the coast. No tsunami warning was issued. The latest tremor struck at 1729, local time, and was felt as far away as Singapore. Many people were reported to have fled their homes in Padang, after a radio broadcast by city mayor Fauzi Bahar.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Panic swept through the streets as another powerful earthquake shook a Sumatran town today. The quake, measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale, hit at 0130, local time, today, with its epicentre estimated off the coast, about 100 km south-west of the Sumatran town of Padang, the Hong Kong observatory said. An earlier quake hit yesterday near Siberut Island, 109 km south-west of Painan, a neighbouring town to Padang, causing panic among residents fearful of another tsunami. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage. There were traffic jams in the streets as people tried to flee the city for higher ground. The duty seismologist at Geoscience Australia, Cvetan Sinadinovski, said the Padang area would have felt the quake at an intensity of around 5 or 6 on the Richter scale. The region has experienced a further eight tremors since the initial 6.8 quake, the largest being 6.4.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: All major Sumatran ports - including Padang, Belawan and Dumai - are operating normally and have not been affected by the earthquake off the west coast of Indonesia's Sumatra Island yesterday afternoon. So far, there are no reports of casualties or damage from the quake, measuring 6.7 on the Richter Scale, which struck at 1729, local time, approximately 30 km beneath the sea surface south of Siberut Island, about 115 km south west of Padang. Whilst major ports in the area are operating as normal today, there is reported to be a shortage of trucks at Padang as many drivers fled their homes for higher ground when the earthquake struck.

JAPAN

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake, measuring magnitude 6.1, jolted Tokyo today, but no tsunami warning was issued, public broadcaster NHK reported. There were no immediate reports of serious damage, but NHK said two runways at Narita International Airport, near Tokyo, were closed for checks. NHK said the focus of the quake was about 60km below the earth's surface in north east Chiba, outside of Tokyo.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake that hit the Tokyo area early today has caused some minor damage. However, there are no reports of injuries. Officials say the quake broke windows, collapsed part of a roof and knocked cans and bottles off supermarket shelves. Japan's meteorological agency says the quake had a preliminary magnitude of 6.1. It was centred north-east of Tokyo and focused about 36 miles underground. An airport spokesman says runways at Tokyo's international airport shut down for about 15 minutes. Some train delays were reported.

NEW CALEDONIA

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale hit the Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, at 0215, Hong Kong time, today, according to the Hong Kong Observatory. The epicentre was initially determined to be over the seas south-east of Loyalty Islands, about 440 kilometres east of Noumea.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale hit sea waters near Papua New Guinea yesterday afternoon. The epicentre was initially determined to be near the seas west of Papua New Guinea.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Jakarta, Apr 8 -- Indonesian officials have cut their estimate of the number of people missing in Aceh province after the Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami, by 60 percent, as a result of

better data collection. According to the latest numbers, 37,063 are now listed as missing from 93,458 early this week. The change largely reflects identification of people listed as missing as actually among those displaced when the quake and the tsunami it triggered destroyed their homes, a spokesman for the government's disaster coordinating operation said today. The spokesman from Indo Pacific, which handles media relations for the relief effort, said since Mar 26 there had been a concerted effort to gather and collate identification details of people displaced by the disaster. Displaced persons "now have to start giving their details and register their contact details ... and that's why the number of missing people has dropped significantly," said the spokesman, who declined to be named. More than 500,000 people were displaced by the disaster. Though many now live in government or aid organisation-constructed and maintained camps, others stay in ramshackle collections of tents and shacks on hillsides or in forests, or are housed with relatives and friends. A government disaster centre statement issued late yesterday gave a count of 126,915 for those killed by the quake and tsunami, less than 200 more than in a statement on Tuesday (Apr 5), when the count of those missing had still been 93,458. Many bodies were washed out to sea by the giant waves, while others are unlikely ever to be recovered from the tonnes of debris left behind, meaning the precise death toll from the disaster will probably never be known. -- Reuters.

TIBET, CHINA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: A severe earthquake estimated at 6.5 on the Richter Scale struck Tibet early today, the Hong Kong observatory said. It said the quake was monitored this morning and struck around 710km west of the capital Lhasa. There was no news on damage or casualties.

Volcanic Activity



MOUNT ANATAHAN, MARIANA ISLANDS

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Anatahan volcano in the Northern Marianas continued spewing smoke thousands of metres into the air today but the intensity was decreasing, officials said. At its peak the smoke plume reached 50,000 feet into the air, darkening skies over the Northern Marianas Islands while aircraft were warned to steer clear of Anatahan. The ash fallout over a wide area forced the closure of schools and people with respiratory problems were advised to

stay indoors. "The eruption hasn't stopped, but it has slowed down," Juan Takai Camacho, a geophysical seismic technician at the Emergency Management Office said. Nurses at the Commonwealth Health Centre, Saipan's only hospital, said they had admitted a few people who were hyperventilating. There were also complaints from education authorities at the late notice to close schools yesterday. The volcano reached its peak intensity at 0300, local time, but it was mid-morning when schools were advised to send students home. Although public and private schools reopened today, rolls were well down as many parents kept their children at home.

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Overnight rain washed away a dusting of ash from Anatahan Volcano, which continued to erupt on an uninhabited island just north of this tiny U.S. territory in the Pacific, authorities said today. "We had a pretty good rain last night," which dissolved the ash that had settled on the capital island of Saipan, said Benjamin Cepeda, a public information officer with the commonwealth's Emergency Management Office. The volcano on Anatahan Island erupted Wednesday morning (Apr 6), sending a plume of ash 50,000 feet into the air. "The eruption didn't stop. But it has slowed down," said Juan Takai Camacho, a geophysical seismic technician with the emergency management office. Commonwealth Health Center, Saipan's largest medical facility, reported admitting a few people whose asthma was exacerbated by the ash. Schools that were closed Wednesday re-opened yesterday, and a couple of commuter flights that were grounded because of the ash were back in the air, Cepeda said.

MOUNT TALANG, INDONESIA

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: A volcano on Indonesia's Sumatra Island erupted today, spewing out clouds of ash and causing villagers on its slopes to flee their homes in panic, government vulcanologists said. Mount Talang's eruption was probably triggered by a series of earthquakes that have rocked Sumatra in recent weeks, including one on Mar 28 that killed more than 600 people on outlying islands, said Syamsul Rizal. Despite the eruption, the volcano posed no immediate threat to people living nearby, and the government had not officially urged them to evacuate their homes, said Taufan Hardiamaitalas, a second vulcanologist. Talang began rumbling shortly before dawn today, and then spewed out ash up to 1,640 feet into the air. Around 1,000 people living on the mountain's slopes left their homes and moved to villages further away from the 9,000-foot volcano, said Hardiamaitalas. Talang is about 560 miles north-west of Jakarta.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

Kabul, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Twelve Taliban insurgents were killed today in a battle with US and Afghan government forces in the volatile south-east of the country, police said. Two soldiers from the US-led foreign force in Afghanistan were wounded in the fighting which also involved US aircraft, a US military spokeswoman said. The two wounded troops were in stable condition. "We collected 12 enemy bodies killed during the operation," Hai Gul Sulaimankhel, police chief of Paktia province said. The insurgents were killed after they attempted to assassinate Kheyal Baaz Khan Sherzai, the former military commander of neighbouring Khost province, as he travelled on a main road near Gardez town. US and Afghan forces responded with a joint ground and air attack in two areas to the east of Gardez, the capital of Paktia province, Sulaimankhel said. A Taliban spokesman confirmed the fighting but said only one Taliban fighter died while five Afghan government troops were killed, the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press reported. The battle followed an increase in rebel attacks in parts of the south and east where the militants have been most active since their overthrow by US-led forces in late 2001. The attacks have followed a lull over the winter after the guerrillas failed in a vow to derail an October presidential election. Earlier, Khost's governor Mirajuddin Patan said five guerrillas had been killed after their failed attack on Sherzai, a prominent ally of US-led troops hunting the Taliban when he was provincial commander. "Sherzai survived the ambush and as a result of the American air attacks, five Taliban were killed," Patan said. If confirmed, the toll of Taliban dead would be the highest in months. Last week, the guerrillas said they killed a senior provincial official after kidnapping him in the southern province of Zabul, the third such murder of a local official in the south in less than a week. The guerrillas killed five policemen in a clash in Zabul on Thursday (Apr 7). -- Reuters.

ALGERIA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Thirteen people have been killed by armed Islamic militants who had mounted a fake roadblock near Larbaa, about 30 kilometres south of the capital, security sources said. The militants ambushed four cars and a van on the main road linking Larbaa to Tablat in Medea region and opened fire, they said. They then set fire to the vehicles.

One person was injured, the sources added. The ambush came a day after President Abdelaziz Bouteflika gave an address to the nation in which he claimed that security had been "largely re-established everywhere across the country". He said this had been made possible by "sacrifices" by the security forces under the leadership of the army. About 50 people, including about 15 security force members, have been killed in violence involving armed Islamist groups since the beginning of last month, according to a toll compiled using official figures and media reports. Islamic insurgents rose up in arms in 1992 when the army prevented the now-outlawed fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front from taking power by calling off the second round of general elections it was poised to win. In February, Mr Bouteflika put the official death toll from the Muslim fundamentalist insurgency at 150,000 since 1992, and said it had caused economic losses estimated at \$US30 billion dollars.

COLOMBIA

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated today, states: The peace process between the Colombian government and the leadership of the illegal right-wing paramilitaries is threatening to fall apart. After a tense day of negotiations, the United Self Defence Forces of Colombia, the AUC, said it would not accept the terms of a proposed amnesty law. Paramilitary leaders say the legislative framework making its way through Congress is too severe. The US and the UN say it is too lenient and leaves loopholes. The AUC says the new law would still leave them open to extradition to the United States on drugs charges, where many have warrants pending on drugs trafficking charges.

EGYPT

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least two people were killed and more than a dozen wounded yesterday when an explosion occurred near Cairo's popular Khan al-Khalili bazaar. The Associated Press said the explosion in the Khan al-Khalili district was apparently set off by a man on a motorcycle.

HAITI

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: Violence in Haiti could break out once more because a UN peacekeeping force is not working hard enough to ensure rival gangs are disarmed, a new report says. The Small Arms Survey, a Geneva-based research group, says gangs and militias on the streets are still heavily armed. The report comes after a policeman was beheaded and burned in Haiti's capital. The man, a private security guard working in Port-au-Prince, was found by colleagues in the St Martin district close to the centre of the city. It was the fourth decapitation of police officers in the city since September. Haiti's police force is unpopular among many of the

country's armed gangs for allegedly targeting supporters of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who complain of targeted beatings and executions. Police have opened fire on two pro-Aristide marches in the recent weeks, killing three protesters. In its report, the Small Arms Survey warns that if groups are not disarmed, the country's pattern of political change at the point of a gun could continue. Armed gangs are "consolidating their influence and networks throughout the country", and Haiti's government is accused of failing to secure either legitimacy or authority in the eyes of the country's eight million people. "Without the permanent demilitarisation of armed groups, humanitarian assistance and development will be continually endangered," the report finds. It called for tough action on those caught smuggling weapons into Haiti, and severe punishments for gun crime. In addition, the report urges extra support for gunmen if and when disarmament finally happens. A mid-2004 deadline for handing in weapons was widely ignored, the report says. The UN, which has peacekeepers posted on the island, says its forces have only recently come up to strength. It is likely to ask for more funding for disarmament programmes when a Security Council delegation visits Haiti in the future.

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated Apr 9, states: Haitian police today shot and killed a prominent rebel leader who helped force former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide into exile last year, officials said. Police killed Remissainthe Ravix during a shoot-out in an industrial area in the capital of Port-au-Prince, said U.N. civilian police spokesman Dan Moskaluk. The violence was the latest in a series of clashes that have pitted police and U.N. peacekeepers against ex-soldiers and street gangs. Early today, Haitian and U.N. police were searching for suspects in yesterday's shooting of a U.N. civilian employee, who was lightly injured, when they saw about 10 armed men fleeing an area in the Delmas neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Moskaluk said. Police cornered the men and began exchanging fire, killing Ravix, Moskaluk said. He said it was unclear whether Ravix was armed. No other casualties were reported. Ravix's death could stoke anger among former soldiers who refuse to lay down their weapons and control several rural towns, U.N. officials said. Ravix's death comes days before a U.N. Security Council visit to Haiti to assess conditions for the elections. More than 400 people have been killed since September in clashes between gangs, former soldiers, police and peacekeepers.

INDIA

London, Apr 9 -- A press report, dated Apr 8, states: A blast ripped open an Oil India Ltd pipeline near Jorhat just a couple of hours after AICC general secretary Digvijay Singh

claimed that the situation in Assam was improving. The explosion occurred around 1150 hrs at Dekagaon, five km west of Jorhat town. Supply of crude to refineries was suspended following the blast. Residents of Dekagaon said they heard a deafening sound and saw oil spilling out of the pipeline, but police denied knowledge of any such blast. Sources said the police may have tried to hush up the incident because it occurred when Singh, chief minister Tarun Gogoi and Union minister of state for defence B.K. Handique were in Jorhat for a Congress meet.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Ten people were killed and 20 were injured yesterday in a grenade blast and clashes between militants and security forces in Jammu and Kashmir, said the police. Two people were killed and 20 injured when militants threw a hand-grenade at a security patrol. It missed the target and exploded among the passers-bys in Shopian, said a police spokesman. Four of the injured were in critical condition. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack yet. It was the first grenade attack in Kashmir since the launch of a historic bus service between the Indian and Pakistani zones on Apr 7. Four militant groups had threatened to attack the people taking the bus. A day before the launch of the service two rebels stormed a passenger shelter in Srinagar, injuring eight people before they were shot dead. Meanwhile, a militant and two Indian soldiers were killed in a gunbattle at Palhalan village. Another two militants were shot dead by troops in Anantnag yesterday, said the police. Elsewhere, police said that militants killed a Muslim civilian, while security forces killed one of the militants. A policeman was killed and another was injured in an ambush in the Rajouri. Yesterday's death toll is the highest since the launch of the Kashmir bus service. It comes ahead of a visit by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf on Apr 16 to watch a cricket match between the two national teams and talk with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi. The bus service is seen as a concrete step in the India-Pakistan peace process that began over a year ago.

IRAQ

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Iraqi Shia leader Ibrahim Jaafari has been named prime minister of the country's new interim government. He was appointed shortly after Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani was sworn in as Iraq's new interim president. The transitional government's main task will be to oversee the drafting of a permanent Iraqi constitution and to pave the way for elections in December. Mr Jaafari, 58, is seen as one of Iraq's most popular political figures. He has up to a month to name his team, but indicated that he hoped to announce a new government within two weeks. The presidential swearing-in ceremony

took place before the parliament in the heavily-fortified Green Zone in central Baghdad. The appointment of Mr Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, makes room for Kurdistan Democratic Party chief Massoud Barzani - his long-time rival - to head an autonomous government in the Kurdish region in the north of Iraq. Some critics of the system have labelled the new political structure a "sectarian carve-up" of Iraq.

London, Apr 9 -- A press report, dated today, states: Insurgents have killed 15 Iraqi soldiers travelling in a convoy south of Baghdad, police and officials say. The attack happened near the town of Latifiya, in a lawless area known as the "triangle of death". The violence came on the second anniversary of the fall of Baghdad to the US-led coalition. Tens of thousands of Iraqis joined an anti-US protest in Firdus Square, where Saddam Hussein's statue was toppled on Apr 9, 2003, as millions watched on TV. Police in the nearby town of Mahmudiya told Reuters news agency that gunmen forced the soldiers' truck to stop before shooting and killing them. However, an Iraqi defence ministry official told AFP news agency that they were blown up by a roadside bomb. News of the attack came as protesters poured into Firdus Square, carrying banners and chanting anti-US slogans, for a protest called by radical Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr. They joined a group who had been in the square since yesterday night. The protest was a peaceful one aimed at urging US troops to leave and demanding quicker trials for Saddam Hussein and his aides, a spokesman for Mr Sadr said.

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Pakistani diplomat has been kidnapped in Iraq, officials in Islamabad said. Malik Mohammed Javed disappeared yesterday after going to a Baghdad mosque for evening prayers. Pakistan's foreign ministry said his abduction had been claimed by the "Omar bin Khattab" group. He has contacted the embassy to say he is safe.

Baghdad, Apr 12 -- An American contractor was kidnapped near Baghdad yesterday, the U.S. embassy said, raising fresh concerns about security in Iraq where more than 150 foreigners have been abducted by guerrillas over the past year. "No group has claimed responsibility. We have contacted the Iraqi authorities to try and find him," said embassy spokesman Bob Callaghan, adding the contractor was working on a reconstruction project. No other details were available. Two suicide car bomb attacks were mounted at the entrance to a U.S. military camp in the western Iraqi town of Qaim, close to the border with Syria, witnesses said. U.S. forces in the area were not immediately available for comment, but an official at the hospital in Qaim said two civilians were killed and three were wounded. The first car rammed into a checkpoint outside the

camp and detonated before reaching the gate, the witnesses said. U.S. and Iraqi troops were rushing to help the wounded when a second car bomber raced up and blew up his vehicle, they said. In the northern city of Mosul, an Iraqi lieutenant working with the Americans in an explosives disposal unit was assassinated on his way to work, the U.S. military said. A car bomb that targeted U.S. troops killed two Iraqis and wounded six others in the northern town of Samarra, police said. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: Attackers used a live bomb to kill at least nine Iraqi security force members dismantling an apparent decoy device near the city of Kirkuk. The casualties, including at least three wounded, worked for the Northern Oil Company guard service. Anti-US insurgents also launched a string of attacks in Baghdad, as the second high-level American official visited Baghdad in as many days. At least four roadside blasts have been reported in the Iraqi capital. The US state department's second-in-command Robert Zoellick arrived there a day after Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's one-day stopover. Police say the security guards killed in the blast had been cordoning off an area containing a suspected decoy device when a second, live device blew up. They included Colonel Natham Abdullah who was in charge of protecting the northern oil fields from sabotage, police said. In Baghdad one bomb struck an oil tanker in the east of the city, sending thick clouds of black smoke into the air. Two other bombs went off near US military convoys, one on the road to the airport and another in the Amariya district. No US casualties were reported but at least seven Iraqis were wounded. In other violence today, the US military said it had killed a suspected foreign insurgent in a fierce gun battle near the restive western city of Qaim, near the Syrian border. Local hospital officials are quoted as saying that at least nine people were killed in clashes in Qaim but they were all believed to have been civilians.

Baghdad, Apr 14 -- Two suicide car bombs killed at least 11 people and wounded around 20 during rush hour near an Iraqi Interior Ministry building in central Baghdad today, ministry and hospital officials said. The bombs detonated in quick succession about 200 metres apart on a busy street packed with traffic. A Reuters cameraman said children were among the dead. Other witnesses said some 15 cars were destroyed in the explosions and human debris was scattered over a wide area. The blasts occurred near Iraqi police vehicles protecting an entrance to the Interior Ministry building. Reuters television pictures showed several policemen covered with blood. An Interior Ministry official, who asked not to be named, said at least 11 people had been killed. He expected the death toll to

rise. The U.S. military confirmed that two car bombs had detonated but had no further information. An official at nearby Yarmouk hospital said around 20 people had been brought in with injuries. Several other wounded people were taken to another nearby hospital. The blasts took place at about 1000 hrs, (0600, UTC) and sent a black plume of smoke over the Iraqi capital. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated Apr 13, states: A US hostage in Iraq has appeared on a video tape urging his government to "open a dialogue with the Iraqi resistance" to save his life. The hostage is believed to be Jeffrey Ake, a subcontractor who went missing on Monday Apr 11), say US officials. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said they were working "very, very hard" to secure his release but they would not negotiate with his captors. No group has claimed responsibility for the abduction. Unlike in previous videos of hostages, there was no banner giving the name of the kidnappers. In the video, shown on al-Jazeera satellite television, the hostage sits behind a desk with three armed and masked men standing beside him. He is holding up his passport and driver's licence.

ISRAEL

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated today, states: Massive security in Jerusalem appears to have thwarted plans for a Jewish extremist rally at Temple Mount, which is sacred to both Jews and Muslims. Thousands of police were sent to the site that Muslims call Haram al-Sharif, which contains the al-Aqsa mosque. In the event, only a few dozen Jewish ultranationalists tried to get to the area, police said. Elsewhere today, a group of Israeli right-wingers blocked a major highway near Tel Aviv during the rush hour. Protesters opposed to plans to remove Jewish settlements from Gaza set tyres alight and sat down on the road. Several were arrested and police said they were able to end the blockade within minutes. Militants in Gaza again fired mortars, the day after three Palestinian youths were killed by Israeli soldiers. Witnesses claimed the three youths killed in southern Gaza yesterday were shot trying to retrieve a football in a no-go area near the Egypt border; the Israeli army says they were involved in smuggling weapons. The killings are the first violent deaths in Gaza for weeks. The Palestinian Authority called the killings a "serious violation" of the truce. Following the shootings, Palestinian militants from Islamic Jihad fired at least 14 mortars at Jewish settlements in Gaza - the first such attack since February when Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas ordered security forces to prevent such attacks. More home-made rockets were fired today, but all main Palestinian militant groups say their agreement to an extended period of calm will continue for now.

LEBANON

Beirut, Apr 8 -- More than 70 Syrian military trucks left Lebanon overnight, witnesses said today, carrying tanks, mortars and anti-aircraft guns as Damascus looked to complete its withdrawal by the end of the month. Witnesses said Syrian forces, now in the final phase of withdrawal, abandoned two posts in the mountainous Dahr al-Baydar area east of Beirut and another in the Bekaa Valley. Yesterday the U.N. Security Council ordered an international investigation into the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri, a move long called for by the anti-Syrian opposition. Lebanon and Syria have both said they will co-operate with investigators. A U.N. fact-finding mission said last month that Lebanon's own probe into the killing had "serious flaws" and that Syria's military intelligence bore some responsibility by failing to provide security in Lebanon. Lebanese hostility toward the Syrians has surged since the killing of Hariri, who fell out with Syria several months before his death. Scores of Syrians working in Lebanon for low wages have fled as reports of attacks on laborers have spread. Today, unknown assailants set fire to a camp in northern Lebanon where Syrian workers live, witnesses said. They said at least 10 tents were destroyed before the blaze was extinguished, but no one was hurt. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated Apr 13, states: Lebanon's pro-Syrian prime minister has said he is stepping down after failing to form a new government. "Today, and after many attempts once again we reached a dead end," Omar Karami said at a news conference. "The resignation after weeks of deadlock deepens a political crisis triggered by the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri on Feb 14. It means a general election may not have time to take place before the May deadline, as cabinet needs to call it." "I wrote my apology and deposited it with the president of the republic on Monday evening, but of course we did not announce that upon the request of the president," Mr Karami said. "We wanted to allow time for more contacts ... until the last moment for solutions that could help the formation of the government," Mr Karami added. He indicated that prolonged talks with President Emile Lahoud and parliament speaker Nabih Berri had failed to agree on a list of ministers. The anti-Syrian opposition has accused Mr Karami and other loyalists of manoeuvring to delay elections, hoping that the popular outrage at Hariri's death may subside. However, Mr Karami insisted that there was still time to hold the poll before May 31, when the mandate of the current parliament runs out.

NEPAL

Kathmandu, Apr 8 -- Nepali soldiers killed at least 18 Maoist rebels after

the insurgents attacked their base overnight in the west of the nation in the deadliest clash in the past five weeks, an army officer said today. Nine soldiers were wounded in the fighting at the base in Khara in Rukum district, 550 km west of Kathmandu. "So far, we have recovered 18 bodies of the terrorists. The search is continuing and we have foiled their attempt to overrun the base," an army officer told Reuters, adding the Maoists used rocket launchers and mortars in the attack. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 9 -- A press report, dated Apr 8, states: Opposition parties in Nepal say police have arrested more than 500 people across the country demonstrating against King Gyanendra. They were protesting against his February take-over of the government. They are the biggest protests since the king declared a state of emergency and suspended civil rights. Opposition parties say that about 100 people were arrested in the capital, Kathmandu, and that many others were taken into custody in other parts of the country. Meanwhile, the Authorities are now claiming Nepali soldiers killed at least 50 Maoist rebels in a deadly overnight clash. The Nepali army said its troops killed the rebels after the insurgents attacked their base in Khara in Rukum district, 550 km west of Kathmandu overnight, using rocket launchers and mortars. An army statement said that many more, possibly hundreds, of Maoists could have died in the fighting and soldiers had recovered 31 weapons, including AK-47 assault rifles. "On the basis of the situation at the site of the clash and on the version of local people, it is understood that hundreds of terrorists have died," it said. "Only 50 bodies have been recovered so far."

Kathmandu, Apr 9 -- Two Russian tourists were injured, two Nepali citizens were killed and 13 others wounded in separate bombings by Maoist rebels in the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal today, the army said in a statement. The Russians were on a highway on their way to the base camp of Mount Everest when they were injured by a roadside blast. The two Nepalis died and 13 other people were wounded in the bombing of a bus by rebels in southern Nepal. "The bus has been completely destroyed and the injured passengers were rushed by a helicopter to a hospital in Kathmandu," the army said in a statement. Maoist rebels have been fighting to topple the monarchy in the impoverished kingdom. The bombings follow a rebel raid on an army base two days ago. Nepali soldiers have recovered 47 more bodies of rebels killed in the raid, taking the toll of rebels killed to 97, the deadliest clash in the country in five months, an army official said today. The violence came as an 11-day strike called by the Maoists to protest against the King seizing power continued to disrupt supplies. The strike ends on Tuesday (Apr 12). -- Reuters.

Kathmandu, Apr 10 -- Maoist rebels stormed a jail in central Nepal, killed two policemen and set free 28 inmates, including guerrillas, late yesterday, police said. The rebels also bombed half a dozen government offices during the raid in Charikot in Dolakha district, 150 km northeast of capital Kathmandu, a police officer said. Violence has escalated since the Maoists called a 11-day general strike to protest against King Gyanendra's Feb. 1 move to dismiss the multi-party government and assume full powers. The strike, due to end on Tuesday (Apr 12), has disrupted supplies and travel across the kingdom. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Nepalese authorities said today that more than 100 Maoist rebels were killed in a prolonged clash last week with government forces in western Nepal's remote Rukum district. The clashes began in the Khara area on Thursday (Apr 7) and ended late on Friday after rebels attacked the Royal Nepalese Army's Bhairavi Battalion stationed in the area and were eventually crushed by the government forces. According to an official statement from the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA), government forces have recovered 113 bodies of slain rebels in Khara. The Rukum district, located some 550 kilometers from the capital, Kathmandu, has long been a rebel stronghold. Maoist forces have not commented on the government's statement about the rebel death toll but did say that the RNA's losses were also high. The Thursday and Friday clashes in Khara were the most violent since King Gyanendra assumed absolute power Feb 1, vowing to crack down on the Maoist rebels.

Kathmandu, Apr 12 -- Maoist rebels shot dead a district administrator in west Nepal, police said today, the most senior civil servant killed since King Gyanendra sacked the government and assumed full power himself two months ago. A police officer said two rebels riding a bicycle shot Balananda Kafle outside his home in Bardiya district yesterday. Yesterday, the UN said it would send observers to Nepal, where both government forces and the rebels are accused of abusing human rights. Human rights groups say abuses have intensified since the king's move, which included a state of emergency giving sweeping power to the army. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: Businesses reopened and traffic resumed on major highways in Nepal today after an 11-day general strike called by communist rebels that crippled life across the country. Buses carrying thousands of passengers and trucks loaded with fruit, vegetables and fuel headed toward the capital Kathmandu, which had been virtually shut off from the rest of the country during the strike as rebels blocked key highways. The guerrillas called the general strike to protest King Gyanendra's seizure of absolute power on Feb 1 and the imposition of a state of emergency.

PAKISTAN

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: Seven people were injured, two of them seriously, when a bomb exploded on a passenger train in Pakistan's south-western province of Baluchistan, officials said. The blast occurred in the toilet of an economy class coach on the Chiltan Express, chief controller of Pakistan Railways, Mohammad Shoaib, said. It went off as the Lahore-bound train neared Abe Gum station, 85km south of Quetta, he said. Tribal militants fighting for greater royalties from Baluchistan's natural resources have claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on Pakistan's railway network in recent months.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Apr 8 -- The largest Muslim rebel group in the Philippines, due to resume peace talks next week, offered on today to help security forces hunt renegade members behind a string of kidnappings on the southern island of Mindanao. Today, a wealthy Chinese trader in Cotabato City, the seat of power of the area's autonomous government for Muslims, became the fourth person since late 2004 to be held for ransom by a rogue faction of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). "We are duty-bound to help recover the kidnap victim because of an agreement we have signed with the Philippine government to go after criminals and kidnappers hiding in our territories," Eid Kabalu, a spokesman for the MILF, said. "This will also prove we are not behind the kidnappings. We remain committed to the peace talks." The MILF's offer was seen as part of confidence-building moves ahead of Malaysian-hosted talks due to resume on Apr 16-18. Technical panels from the government of the mainly Roman Catholic Philippines and the MILF rebels are due to discuss ancestral land for Muslims and indigenous people on resource-rich Mindanao. Agreement on the land issue, one of the most thorny, could lead to formal talks and a peace deal ending three decades of violence that has killed 120,000 people, stunted development in the south and dented investor confidence in the Philippines. Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar was due to meet senior MILF leaders next week after a two-day retreat with his counterparts from the other nine members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the central Philippines. Hamid will also visit 60 monitors from Malaysia, Brunei and Libya overseeing a July 2003 ceasefire agreement with the MILF. The truce was broken in January when a group of rebels attacked an army outpost, but the monitors prevented the violence from escalating. -- Reuters.

RUSSIA

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Fighting between pro-Moscow forces and separatists in war-torn Chechnya has left five people dead and 16 injured on the Russian

side in the past 24 hours. Three rebels were also killed in a clash with pro-Moscow Chechen policemen, leaving one of them dead and two others injured, in the Chechen capital Grozny, an official in Chechnya's pro-Moscow administration said on condition of anonymity. The Chechen policemen opened fire at the separatists who had just ambushed a jeep transporting Russian interior ministry troops, wounding four of them. In another incident, one Russian soldier died and two others were wounded when their armoured vehicle drove over a mine near Grozny. Another Russian trooper died and two were hurt in the accidental explosion of a grenade near the eastern town of Nozhai-Yurt. And a pro-Moscow Chechen policeman was injured in the suburbs of the eastern city of Gudermes in a rebel attack. Two Russian soldiers were killed and five injured in other attacks throughout the war-torn republic, during which Russian positions came under fire 14 times.

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: One policeman was killed and several were wounded in two explosives attacks carried out early today in the Russian Caucasian republic of Dagestan near Chechnya, Interfax news agency has reported, quoting police sources. A bomb exploded shortly after midnight as a police patrol passed by on the road linking the capital Makhachkala to the airport, killing one policeman and seriously wounding two others. Less than an hour later another explosive device went off on a Makhachkala thoroughfare near another group of police officers, slightly wounding them, the agency said.

SOMALIA

Mogadishu, Apr 10 -- More than 30 members of Somalia's parliament arrived in the capital today to stake their support for Mogadishu as the seat of power amid a deep split over where the fledgling government should be based. Under pressure from foreign governments and donors, the interim Somali government plans to leave Kenya, where it was formed in December after two years of stop-start peace talks, and return to lawless Somalia. MPs aligned to President Abdullahi Yusuf have said they want to temporarily relocate to the relatively calmer cities of Baidoa and Jowhar, until security is established in anarchic Mogadishu. Others insist the government should return to Mogadishu, Somalia's single most dangerous place, which the transitional constitution stipulates must serve as the capital. The members of parliament who landed today included former Mogadishu warlords Mohamed Qanyare Afrah, minister for national security and Muse Sudi Yalahow, minister for commerce. However, Prime Minister Mohamed Ali Gedi told local media the MPs were returning for personal reasons, saying the government had yet to decide where it would relocate

to. "These are MPs who have no right to intervene in the activity of the cabinet," Gedi said from the Libyan capital Tripoli where he was visiting. More than 18 people were killed and 32 others wounded when heavy clashes broke out yesterday between the rival Garre and Merrehan clans in the Gedo region, close to the border with Kenya, residents and clansmen said. It was not immediately clear why they were fighting in a clash that illustrates the volatile instability of the Horn of Africa country. A spokesman for the Merrehan clan told local media today their militiamen, who were chased out of the area, would return with reinforcements. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 36 people were killed and 30 more injured at the weekend (Apr 9-10) as two clans fought for control of Somalia's border town of Bura Hache. The fight between the Marehan and the Garre clans is said to be for control of the town, less than four kilometres from the Kenyan border, mostly inhabited by the Garre clan. Unconfirmed reports indicated that Garre militiamen were training on the Somalia side of the border when the Marehan, who control the Gedo region of Somalia attacked them to drive them out of the town. The Garre are also fighting the Murule of Mandera over water and pasture in Elwak Division. Among the dead in the latest clash were 30 Marehan militia and six combatants of the Garre clan. In a meeting yesterday to resolve differences between Somali MPs at Safari Park hotel in Nairobi, President Abdullahi Ahmed Yusuf condemned the attacks and asked the Kenya to step up security at the border. The survivors of the attack were being treated at Elwak health centre in Kenya. Several families are reported to have crossed into Kenya with their livestock to escape the fighting, while those on the Kenyan side of the border are reported to have moved deeper into Kenya to flee the fighting. They said stray bullets fired from the Somalia side landed in their homesteads, prompting them to flee to safety. North Eastern provincial commissioner Abdul Mwaserrah yesterday said Kenyan security forces stationed on the border with Somalia were placed on high alert following the fighting, which he said lasted for six hours. The PC said one group that attempted to cross into Kenya was repulsed by the security forces

SPAIN

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: Three people had been arrested in connection with the separatist organisation Basque Homeland and Freedom (ETA) in northern Guipuzcoa province, police said today. With the arrests yesterday evening, the so-called Donosti Complex cell of ETA in Guipuzcoa was dismantled, Interior Minister Jose Alonso said. The three detainees belonged to Donosti, Alonso said. In

the swoops carried out at their houses, documents were also seized and they would be analyzed, he added. Spanish security forces have captured 50 ETA members this year, said the minister.

THAILAND

Bangkok, Apr 8 -- Thai police have defused a bomb in the southern commercial centre of Hat Yai, security officials said today. The remote-controlled three kg device -- like last Sunday's (Apr 3) bombs made of gunpowder and fertiliser -- was defused on Wednesday (Apr 6), a senior policeman said. "The bomb was connected to a mobile phone and meant to cause damage, not take lives, otherwise it would have contained a lot of nails," the officer told Reuters. He declined to say where the bomb was found, but Thai newspapers said it was in a rubbish container next to a leading department store and failed to explode because it was not wired properly. -- Reuters.

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: Violence continued in Thailand's insurgent deep south with three killings occurring yesterday, while the kingdom celebrates its Thai New Year. A former defense volunteer was shot dead when driving his pickup truck to shop in the Rueso District of the southern province of Narathiwat. The 41-year-old victim was found with shotgun wounds on his head, neck and back, reported Bangkok Post on Tuesday. Another civilian was shot dead by assailants riding in a pickup truck. Body of the 25-year-old victim was found lying beside his motorcycle, with five rifle bullets on the chest and side. Late on yesterday, an excise official was shot dead while riding a motorcycle in the neighbouring southern province of Pattani. After killing, assailants also set fire on the victim's body, which was burning when found by the police, according to newspaper Nation. Two bombs and shootings were also reported yesterday in the country's southernmost area, which has fallen into continuous violence since the beginning of last year.

UGANDA

Kampala, Apr 10 -- Ugandan troops killed 21 rebels from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in operations in the north over the last two days, a spokesman said today. Fighting between Ugandan forces and the LRA has intensified in recent weeks after landmarks talks to end a brutal 19-year war stalled late last year. Lieutenant Tabaro Kiconco, army spokesman for northern Uganda said 15 LRA fighters had been killed in a string of operations in war-torn Gulu district since Friday (Apr 8), while six were shot dead in neighbouring Kitgum district. Efforts to end the war through dialogue broke down on December 31, but were reinvigorated last week by the return to Gulu of top mediator Betty Bigombe. Bigombe, a former Ugandan government minister who now works for the World Bank,

was key to setting up the first face-to-face meeting between both sides deep in the bush last year. -- Reuters.

YEMEN

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Yemeni government forces have launched a fresh assault on insurgents in the north-west of the country. At least 70 rebels are reported to have died in heavy clashes from Wednesday (Apr 6) to last night in Saada province. The rebels are followers of radical cleric Hussein al-Houthi, who was killed by security forces in September after starting an uprising. The government launched its latest attack after negotiations failed, Yemen's Saba news agency said. Security forces blamed the renewed violence on Hussein al-Houthi's father, Badr al-Din al-Houthi.



IRAQ

See under "Political & Civil Unrest."

PHILIPPINES

See under "Political & Civil Unrest."



ARGENTINA

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: Port operations at Buenos Aires are being disrupted by a strike by drivers of the truck union SUFRA. They have been on strike since yesterday over national license arrangements, and have partially blocked crucial gateways and severely disrupted traffic flows. Although work at the terminals is continuing for vessels already berthed, no personnel are available for moving cargo in and out.

FINLAND

Helsinki, Apr 14 -- It has been reported in the local press that in order to speed up the negotiations for the renewal of collective labour agreements of stevedores, AKT, the Finnish Transport Workers' Union, has today, started a "stoppage of work" at Helsinki, Kotka, Turku and Hamina harbours. As a result, all port operations have been stopped at these four harbours. AKT has given no information as to the duration of this stoppage. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated today, states: Transport workers went on strike today in eight of Finland's largest ports, including Helsinki, Kotka and Abo, to speed up

progress in labour talks, union officials said. It was not immediately clear how many workers joined the strike, which was expected to last one day and stop some maritime exports but not affect passenger traffic. Unions had earlier threatened a strike by more than 3,000 workers. Industrial leaders warned that a strike at ports, which deal with some 80 percent of Finland's exports, would result in major losses for the country. The labour negotiations, which have continued since November, are aimed at achieving a collective agreement for port workers.

FRANCE

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: The period of the tug strike at Fos and Lavera from 0600, Apr 13 to 0600, Apr 16 has been extended to include the period from 2200, Apr 16 to 0600, Apr 17.

GERMANY

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 6, states: DaimlerChrysler AG said it's using helicopters to deliver parts to a factory in northern Germany where production has been disrupted by a strike at a supplier. Production of Mercedes SL models at the plant in Bremen has been affected, DaimlerChrysler spokesman Toni Melfi said yesterday without providing details. A strike at Fritz Draexlmaier GmbH, which makes door panels, is causing the delays. The use of helicopters to deliver parts and components during strikes is common in the auto industry, Melfi said.

NEPAL

See under "Political & Civil Unrest."

OFFICERS OF FRENCH COMPANY FERRIES

London, Apr 12 -- Three out of SeaFrance's four ferries currently in service were out of action yesterday as the Channel operator's officers continued to take strike action over proposed new crewing arrangements on its vessels. Passenger ro/ro SeaFrance Cezanne was withdrawn from service in mid-morning yesterday, followed by ro/ro SeaFrance Rodin a little later and passenger ro/ro SeaFrance Manet at the start of the afternoon. Only the company's newest vessel, passenger ro/ro SeaFrance Berlioz was operating, using an experimental new crewing configuration, which the company has refused to abandon despite the officers' opposition to it. The officers were meeting late yesterday to decide what response to make to the company's refusal to drop the new crewing arrangement and pay them for working time lost through strike action. SeaFrance said that it had warned its freight clients of severe disruption to services and that it was advising passengers to use other services. The company is proposing to reduce crew sizes over its fleet, to contain the cost of maintaining six vessels in service, following the arrival of SeaFrance Berlioz last week. So far,

however, the new crewing arrangement has only been introduced on board SeaFrance Berlioz for a three-month experimental period. The officers began staging strike action last Wednesday (Apr 6.).

London, Apr 14 -- Officers at French cross-Channel ferry company SeaFrance have ended their industrial action over proposed new crewing arrangements on board the company's vessels.

PAKISTAN

Karachi, Apr 9 -- A meeting called by the All Pakistan Oil Tankers Owners Association (APOTOA) against oil marketing companies turned violent in Karachi yesterday when enraged people pelted police with stones, ransacked a bank, a petrol pump and damaged over two dozen vehicles in Shireen Jinnah Colony area. However, police claimed to have arrested over 100 miscreants and brought the situation under control. Heavy contingent of police was also present near the venue to avert any untoward incident. Police claimed that some participants of the meeting had tried to create a law and order situation. In a bid to disperse the mob, police lobbed tear gas canisters, which further aggravated the situation. Vice President APOTOA, Haji Faizullah, said that the association held a meeting to chalk out future programme and discussion with Sindh government in connection with the ongoing strike. Reportedly, a tense situation has been created following the start of the oil pipeline from Karachi to Punjab, which has put about 10,000 oil tankers out of business and they are pressing oil companies to still utilise their services. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent

SERBIA

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: The union of striking aeromechanics has reached an agreement with the Serbian government, which will end their nearly month-long strike. Union President Dragan Bogdanovic said that the aeromechanics will return to their places of work at 1200, tomorrow. He said that this decision to end the strike was reached after the government adopted a demand from the union to separate the technical/maintenance workers from the rest of the JAT company. Serbian Finance Minister Mladjan Dinkic said that this separation of the technical workers signals the start of the company's restructuring process.

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strike at Serbia's key oil refinery triggered fuel shortages today, sending people lining up at gas stations to stock up on diesel and gasoline. The workers at Pancevo oil refinery, just outside Belgrade, blocked the gates of their compound last Friday (Apr 8), demanding a 30 percent increase in salaries. The striking workers have since rejected a government offer of a nine percent increase and pledged to keep the

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refinery under blockade until their demands are met. Meanwhile, several towns in Serbia reported shortages of diesel fuel and gasoline.

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 500 coalminers are continuing strike action in an underground pit in South Africa to protest the sale of the mine to mining group BHP Billiton, despite a court deeming the strike illegal. The miners launched the sit-in, now in its fifth day, at the Zululand Anthracite Colliery near Ulundi on Thursday (Apr 7) to demand guarantees for severance pay from future owners Riversdale Mining Limited. Bongi Nkosi, provincial coordinator for the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) said up to 1,200 miners have joined in the strike action and talks with management to try to settle the dispute are underway. Ingwe won a court order on Sunday (Apr 10) declaring the strike illegal and ordering the miners to come to the surface, but Nkosi said sending police into the shaft to enforce the ruling "would only exacerbate the situation".

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of coal miners who had launched a strike in an underground pit in eastern South Africa five days ago decided to end their protest today after the mine owners agreed to talks, a mine spokesman said. The miners at the Zululand Anthracite Colliery near Ulundi in KwaZulu-Natal province launched the sit-in last week to protest the terms of the sale of the mine to an Australian mining group, "We made a proposal late this afternoon and they started to exit the mine," BHP Billiton spokesman Michael Campbell said, which owns the mine through its Ingwe subsidiary. The proposal included medical care and free bus transportation home for the striking miners. Management said there were 500 miners taking part in the action but the unions said there were up to 1,200 in the underground pit.

UGANDA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: The on-going strike by workers of the Uganda Railways Corporation has cost several businesses millions of shillings. Industries, forwarding firms and other users of the cargo train services are losing millions of shillings due to failure to access URC train services. Mr Mehendra Karandikar, the Logistic Manager of Mukwano Industries, said Wednesday (Apr 6) that their company has so far lost Shs100 million due to the strike. The Chief Executive Director, Mr Hassan Rizvu, said there is a backlog of tonnes of imports of goods. Mukwano uses the railway to transport crude Palm oil meant for making soap and cooking oil, material for making polythene bags and plastics.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: ITV programmes are being disrupted by strike action over pay, with a walk-out by 700 production staff across the UK expected to last for 36 hours. Staff in London, Leeds and Manchester have said they will remain on strike from today until 1900 BST, tomorrow, manning picket lines outside ITV studios. Bectu members in Nottingham, Birmingham, Norwich and at ITV's southern transmission centre in London will also take part in a two-hour stoppage from 1200 to 1400 hrs, today. Unions also say the stoppages will disrupt, not only live shows, such as "Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway", but filming schedules of popular ITV dramas such as Coronation Street, Emmerdale and Heartbeat. An ITV spokesman said: "Our entertainment shows will go out as planned tomorrow and we do not foresee a delay in delivering drama serial programming on schedule." The regular Thursday night filming of chat show Parkinson at The London Studios, on the capital's South Bank, had to be moved to a smaller studio due to pre-recording of Ant and Dec's show, union representatives said. Members of the Bectu and Amicus broadcasting unions voted to strike after rejecting a 3.3% pay offer. The action comes after ITV announced £340m pre-tax profits and a £1.9m pay package for chief executive Charles Allen after steering the broadcaster through last year's merger of Carlton and Granada. "Our members have effectively suffered year on year pay cuts while ITV executives and shareholders have been generously rewarded," said Mike Smallwood, Amicus' national officer for the broadcast industry. ITV has said it believed its pay offer was fair when combined with the promise of a minimum salary of £13,500 and an extra day's holiday to celebrate the network's 50th anniversary. Both unions will be taking further action in London, starting again at 0700 hrs on Friday Apr 15.

UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: Union members at the Cooper Tire and Rubber plant in Texarkana, Arkansas, have voted to accept a company contract offer and end a month-long strike. The vote was a close one, 708-to-632. The contract won approval 53 percent to 47 percent among ballots cast by 1,340 workers. The plant has 1,700 workers that went on strike Mar 12. Health care was the main issue in the strike. In the new contract, Cooper Tire workers agreed to start paying for part of their health insurance. A single worker will pay \$36.80 per month, and monthly family premiums will be \$89.68. Hourly raises will cover about half of the average premium. The Texarkana plant produces about 40,000 tires each day. Cooper Tire said the strike cost the company between \$3.5 million and \$4.9 million.

ZAMBIA

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: Zambian magistrates have decided to end a three-week strike that had crippled criminal courts in the country, to give the government a chance to respond to their demands, an official said today. All magistrates are expected to return to court today, Jones Chinyama, chairman of the Magistrates and Judges Association of Zambia (MAJAZ) said. "We want to allow government to respond to our grievances. But if nothing is done, we shall reconsider our position," said Chinyama. The magistrates had launched the strike on Mar 21 to press demands for better wages and benefits. Prison authorities had complained of unprecedented congestion in prisons caused by the strike as the magistrates were refusing to hear cases or grant bail to the detainees. The Zambian government warned the strikers two weeks ago that they faced unspecified consequences if they did not call their work stoppage. The average monthly salary of a Zambian magistrate is about 800,000 kwacha (\$180) and most of them do not have a vehicle provided by the government. The Zambian government awarded generous pay packages to high court and Supreme Court judges but not to the lower-level magistrates who handle the bulk of criminal cases.

Awards & Settlements



ANTI-COMPETITIVE PRACTICES, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 9 -- A press report, dated Apr 8, states: Willis North America Inc., the nation's third-largest insurance broker, agreed Friday to pay \$50 million in restitution to settle an investigation into anticompetitive practices involving incentive fees in property and casualty insurance sales. An investigation by New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer and New York state's insurance department found that Willis steered insurance contracts to companies with which it had fee arrangements and fraudulently misrepresented its operating methods to business clients.

ANTITRUST LAWSUIT, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: Microsoft Corp has agreed to pay Gateway Inc \$150 million in the first settlement of a computer-maker's claim it was harmed when the world's largest software maker abused its Windows monopoly. The settlement is a byproduct of the government's 1998 antitrust lawsuit that led a federal judge to conclude the following year that Microsoft bullied computer-makers to promote

its Internet Explorer Web browser. Last year, Microsoft paid Sun Microsystems Inc \$1.6 billion to end a 10-year feud. RealNetworks Inc, which makes a media player that is a rival to Microsoft's product, is seeking \$1 billion in antitrust damages from the software giant. It also won an order by European authorities forcing Microsoft to sell a version of Windows stripped of the company's own media player. Microsoft has appealed the decision.

BAD FINANCIAL ADVICE, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: A former WorldCom employee has won \$2.5 million in arbitration on his allegations of bad stock option advice from Citigroup Inc brokers. Virginia resident Travis Brown claimed during the National Association of Securities Dealers hearing that brokers in Citigroup's Smith Barney branch office in Atlanta advised him to use an "exercise and hold" strategy with his WorldCom stock options from 1999 to 2000. He was also advised to borrow money on margin from the brokerage firm to cover costs and taxes associated with the options, he claimed. Like many investors who exercised WorldCom options and then did not sell the underlying stock, Brown's account lost value as WorldCom's stock price began to tumble in 2000. As the value fell, Smith Barney made margin calls on the loan he had taken out, and advised Brown to liquidate other stocks to meet the calls rather than sell his WorldCom shares, Brown claimed. WorldCom filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy-court protection in July, 2002. It emerged from bankruptcy last year under the name MCI Inc. Brown's attorney argued in the hearing that he would have been better off with no advice at all than following Smith Barney's. If Brown had just allowed the stock options to expire, unexercised, instead of following Smith Barney's strategy, he would have been better off by \$1.3 million by the time, said his attorney, Harry S. Miller of Perkins Smith & Cohen in Boston. Miller added that Brown, who was promised "personal financial planning" in welcome letters from Smith Barney, did not realise that one of the brokers who handled his account had just passed her licensing exams. He also presented tapes during the hearing showing the brokers disparaging Citigroup analyst Jack Grubman's bullish stance on WorldCom, even as he claimed they were using his research to convince Brown not to sell the rapidly declining stock. "He hung in there as the stock was crashing," said Miller. "They kept telling him not to sell." Brown sought \$3.7 million in compensatory damages from the firm. Arbitrators awarded him \$2 million plus interest, and also awarded \$500,000 in punitive damages against Smith Barney. In the award, the NASD panel did not explain the basis for the punitive damages.

BREACH OF CONTRACT, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: An attorney for prominent radio host Jennifer Ross yesterday vowed to appeal \$17.2 million in damages a jury awarded to her former station. "I was stunned," attorney Rob Haile said of the jury's verdict. "It's grossly excessive." A Palm Beach County jury on Friday (Apr 8) awarded "Sunny 104.3" (WEAT FM) more than the \$13.3 million the station's attorney had asked for after ruling that Ross breached her contract by moving to rival station WRMF, 97.9 FM. Ross, a fixture on local morning radio, has been at the centre of a contentious legal battle since 2000, when she jumped from Sunny 104.3 to WRMF. Once she made the move, Infinity Radio, the owner of Sunny 104.3, quickly asked a judge to enforce a contract clause that barred her from working at another radio station within 125 miles for a year if she left her No 1- rated morning show. In the legal wrangling, Ross was ordered off the air and held in contempt of court twice, once after promoting WRMF at a 2001 March of Dimes event where people allegedly sold "Free Jennifer Ross" shirts. Haile, who represents Ross and three James Crystal companies that formerly owned, operated and held the broadcast licenses for WRMF, said he planned to file a request asking Judge Diana Lewis to set aside the ruling. If that effort fails, Haile said he would turn to the 4th District Court of Appeal. Ross and the three business entities were ordered to pay \$1 million each in compensatory damages. The rest is punitive damages. If the appeals fail, James Crystal will pay the \$1 million Ross is responsible for, Haile said.

EXCESSIVE FORCE AND LASTING INJURIES, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: Easton City council today formally approved a \$2.5 million settlement with former wrestling standout Jack Cuvo, avoiding what officials feared could have been an even costlier payout. Council unanimously approved the settlement with no discussion, and no one from the public attended the meeting to comment on or question the agreement. Easton police stopped Cuvo on Oct 9, 2001, after a 14-block, low-speed vehicle chase that began with Cuvo videotaping police in Centre Square and ended with a struggle after Cuvo allegedly refused to get out of his vehicle. Attorney John Karoly filed the federal lawsuit against the city in August 2003, alleging excessive force and lasting injuries. City officials met in federal court with Cuvo, 37, of Palmer Township, and Karoly for about six hours Mar 28 and hammered out a settlement. A settlement was in the city's best interest because the judge and a city attorney handling the suit agreed a jury award could have easily reached \$20 million, council Vice President Michael Fleck said. After the meeting,

Fleck said a survey of Hirko jurors revealed a trial could have cost the city of Bethlehem in excess of \$100 million. Cuvo did not have a criminal record, and the evidence against the city "didn't look good," he said. Now that council has approved the settlement, a \$1.5 million payment is due Cuvo within 90 days. The remaining \$1 million is due within a year of the initial payment. The city's insurance carrier will pay \$1 million of the settlement, less a \$25,000 deductible. The city could use the sale of excess sewer capacity and a portion of its insurance and casualty fund reserve for the initial payment.

HOLOCAUST VICTIMS, AUSTRIA

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated today, states: The heirs of two Holocaust victims have been awarded \$21.9m (£11.6m) in the largest single payout to date from a \$1.25bn fund set up by Swiss banks. The victims - major shareholders in an Austrian sugar refinery before World War II - had put their shares into a Swiss bank to safeguard them in 1938. But under Nazi pressure, the unnamed bank transferred the shares to a German investor after the men were arrested. The US court award dwarfs the previous record payout of about \$4m. The niece of one of the victims, Maria Altmann, 89, was "very gratified" by the "very generous" award, her lawyer E Randol Schoenberg said. She was the only plaintiff named of about a dozen family members of the victims, Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer and Otto Pick. A Holocaust survivor herself, Ms Altmann now lives in Los Angeles. She is also fighting the Austrian government to recover \$150m worth of family paintings taken by the Nazis, including a Gustav Klimt portrait of her aunt. Swiss banks set up the \$1.25bn fund in 1998 in a settlement with Holocaust survivors who accused them of stealing their property, handing it over to the Nazi regime, and destroying records to conceal their actions. US District Judge Edward Korman handled the case and set up a tribunal to process individual claims. He approved the tribunal's recommendation of the \$21.9m payout yesterday. The tribunal said the size of the award was "unique", and that the case was "a striking example of the widespread betrayal of Jewish clients by Swiss banks. "Having marketed themselves to the Jews of Europe as a safe haven for their property, Swiss banks repeatedly turned Jewish-owned property over to the Nazis in order to curry favour with them." About \$254m has been paid out from the compensation fund since 1998.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, AUSTRALIA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Supreme Court has awarded a Sydney woman A\$7 million compensation after her cancer treatment caused her to become a quadriplegic. Monique Frances King was 12 when she was admitted to the Prince of Wales Children's Hospital, in

Sydney's east, for cancer treatment. But her therapy for a highly malignant tumour on her spine caused her to develop quadriplegia. The Supreme Court has found her treatment regime was out of date, and that the hospital was negligent in failing to keep its staff fully informed about the latest protocols for that type of treatment. Ms King says she is delighted with the compensation. "I'll have a choice of care, I won't have to wait five years to get basic equipment that I need to get through the day," she said. The parties had already agreed on the A\$7 million figure, and the now 29-year-old says it would have been nice for the hospital to have acknowledged its mistake earlier. "The end of the day that's pretty much what it is you're after; just someone to say, 'Sometimes mistakes happen and we're sorry'," Ms King said. "It would have taken a lot of grief away from the situation." She says the decision brings to an end a difficult process.

ROAD ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: A Florida utility must pay \$10 million to the parents of a 12-year-old girl killed in a traffic accident after the power company shut off a signal at a suburban Miami intersection, the state Supreme Court ruled today. The court overturned an appeals court ruling that drivers involved in the crash that killed Jill Goldberg were responsible in the death, not Florida Power & Light. The high court said the power company should have realised it was causing a hazard when it cut electricity to a traffic light while fixing a nearby power line. The family won a \$37 million jury verdict, but a three-judge panel of the 3rd District Court of Appeal cut it to \$10 million last year. The full appeals court later overturned the verdict, citing a state law that requires drivers to treat intersections as four-way stops if a signal is out.

SEXUAL ABUSE, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated Apr 13, states: A California jury today awarded nearly \$2 million to two brothers and former altar boys who were molested by a parish priest more than two decades ago. The brothers had sought \$27 million, but their attorney nonetheless said he was pleased the jury ruled that the Oakland Diocese acted with malice and awarded punitive damages. Bob Thatcher, 34, won \$875,000 in compensatory damages and \$875,000 in punitive damages. His brother Tom, 33, was awarded \$180,000 in compensatory damages. He had not sought punitive damages. The brothers' case is the first among 160 filed in northern California to seek punitive damages, which are designed to punish the diocese and help deter it from future misconduct. There was no immediate word on whether an appeal was planned. The Rev. Robert Ponciroli, 68, has been removed from public ministry and now lives in

Florida. The brothers argued the church knew Ponciroli was sexually abusing children but failed to stop him. "The jury decided the policy and practice within the diocese of Oakland was to protect pedophile priests over children," said their lawyer, Rick Simons. The former altar boys said they were molested when they were nine or 10 at St. Ignatius Catholic Church in Antioch by Ponciroli. Diocesan lawyers do not dispute the abuse occurred, but disagree the diocese was responsible for the anxiety, relationship, and drug and alcohol problems the men suffered later. The case is the second to go to trial among 160 lawsuits filed in northern California. In the first, a jury last month awarded \$437,000 to a man abused in the early 1970s by the late Rev. Joseph Pritchard, a former San Jose pastor. More than 750 civil lawsuits were filed against Roman Catholic dioceses in California after the state in 2002 temporarily lifted the statute of limitations for filing sex-abuse claims.

UNFAIR DISMISSAL, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: A federal court jury has awarded \$1.59 million to a woman who said the city of Durham fired her because she blew the whistle on a small-business scandal. The jury deliberated about 90 minutes before agreeing to award Ava Hinton \$90,000 for lost earnings and \$1.5 million for damage to her reputation, emotional distress and humiliation, said Stewart Fisher, Hinton's lawyer. After the Apr 8 verdict, Fisher moved to have his client reinstated to her city job, a motion that a federal judge will decide later. Fisher said he offered to settle the case for \$15,000 last year if the city would reinstate Hinton to her job, but city officials rejected the offer. Hinton was fired from the city Housing Department in July 2003. In dismissing her, the city claimed she wrongfully allowed \$1,280.50 to be used on weatherizing improvements for a house owned by her and her elderly mother on an apparent violation of federal regulations on conflicts of interest. Hinton said her direct supervisor approved the expense and that her mother met eligibility requirements for federal assistance. In her lawsuit, Hinton alleged that the weatherisation issue was only a pretext for her firing. The real reason, she claimed, was that she raised questions as early as the spring of 2000 about the city's small-business loan programme, which ended in July 2001 amid evidence of fraud and mismanagement. Beginning in 1999, the city lent \$828,000 in federal money to 24 businesses in an attempt to spark entrepreneurial activity in low-and moderate-income areas of the community. But some recipients gave false addresses and then disappeared, while others repaid little or nothing. According to Hinton's lawsuit, she warned then-housing director Charlene Montford throughout the fall

of 2000 that the loan program was being improperly administered and that there needed to be more oversight.

Railway Accidents



GALVESTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: A train derailment caused a chemical scare in Galveston today. Two cars jumped the tracks on Harborside at 77th Street at 1150 hrs. Hazardous materials crews were called to the scene to determine if the train was leaking dangerous chemicals. Officials determined that the cargo was not hazardous. No one was injured.

Robberies & Thefts



CASH FROM SECURITY VAN, BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: More than £1.2m in cash is believed to have been stolen from a security firm in Belfast in a robbery where a woman was held hostage for up to eight hours. An employee of the firm Brinks was ordered to drop off the money at a filling station in the Finaghy area on the outskirts of south Belfast. The woman was later freed unharmed in the Annadale area of the city. It is understood the woman was taken from her home at Belvoir in the early hours of today. She was held hostage at a disused property in Annadale Avenue. At the same time, her partner, an employee with the security firm was told to drive a cash delivery van to the forecourt of a filling station in the upper Lisburn Road area of Finaghy. He was given instructions on how to hand over the large sum of cash. Brinks looks after many ATMs, and it is understood such security vans could carry as much as £1.5m.

PAINTING, PARIS, FRANCE

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated Apr 8, states: A Picasso painting which went missing from the Pompidou Centre in Paris has been recovered by police. Following a tip-off, police traced the painting, worth 2.5m euros (£1.7m), to a house in the Anthony suburb of Paris where the painting was hidden behind a wardrobe. Cubist painting Nature Morte a la Charlotte, completed in 1924, was reported missing in May last year from a restoration workshop. The painting was handed back to the Pompidou Centre today. The painting

was uncovered at a house in Paris. Pompidou officials said the painting would have been impossible to sell on because it was too well known.

PAINTINGS, OSLO, NORWAY

Oslo, Apr 11 -- An Oslo court has ordered a man suspected of links to the 2004 theft of the painting "The Scream" be held in custody for four weeks as police hunt for the 1893 masterpiece by Norwegian painter Edvard Munch. "The Scream" and another Munch painting "Madonna" were stolen in August from an Oslo art museum in front of dozens of tourists. Neither painting has been found, although police said they were hopeful of recovering them. "This may take some time, but we are still confident we will find them," police attorney Morten Hojem Ervik said today. The 37-year-old man was charged as an accessory to the crime on Friday (Apr 8). The court today ordered that he should be remanded in custody for four weeks pending further investigations, Oslo police said in a statement. His lawyer has said he had nothing to do with the robbery, national broadcaster NRK reported. Worth millions of dollars, the pictures are among Munch's best-known, although he produced several versions of both works. Police and art experts have said the paintings are so well known that there is no market for them. -- Reuters.



Miscellaneous

BLOCKADE OF PORTS BY CANADIAN FISHERMEN

London, Apr 13 -- A report from La Salle, dated today, states: Crab fishermen prevented oil tankers from entering and leaving oil facilities in Newfoundland's Placentia Bay today to protest against the province's new quota system. After disrupting the House of Assembly twice this week, the fishermen used their vessels to block access to the Come By Chance oil refinery and Whiffen Head oil trans-shipment terminal. "There's nothing in and nothing out," Ralph Ryan, a fisherman from Southern Harbour, Nfld., told the CBC. Mr. Ryan said at least 40 vessels were involved in the protest and more were expected to arrive during the day. The crab fishermen are protesting against the government's new two-year pilot program, which guarantees processors access to crab quotas. Fishermen say the change will destroy competition in the industry, tilt power towards plant owners and cost them millions of dollars.

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated today, states: Fishermen have agreed to end their blockade of tanker traffic in Placentia Bay, as their union begins talks with the provincial government over a controversial crab

quota plan. Fishermen prevented tankers from navigating through the bay throughout yesterday, stalling work at North Atlantic Refining in Come Bay Chance and the Whiffen Head transshipment facility. Fishermen said they were prepared to disrupt traffic in the busy shipping lanes of Placentia Bay in order to press government to drop its production quota system. The Fish, Food and Allied Workers union held a preliminary meeting yesterday with government officials. The FFAW says fishermen have ended their blockade, as a sign of good faith. The protest alarmed the operators of the refinery and the transshipment facility, as well as Transport Canada. Transport Canada issued a warning to mariners in the Placentia Bay area yesterday, advising them not to jeopardize the safety of people in the port, and not to interfere with navigation or port operations. RCMP and Transport Canada will monitor Placentia Bay today to see whether mariners comply with the notice. The protesters are refusing to catch crab to protest the government's plant quota system, which ensures plant owners have access to crab quotas. Fishermen say the decision is being imposed unilaterally, and will destroy bargaining gains they have made over the years. They say will no longer be able to sell their catches to the highest bidder. Fisheries Minister Trevor Taylor said this morning he is pleased to see the blockade end. "We see that as a positive development," said Taylor, who described yesterday's one-hour meeting with FFAW officials as polite. "We hope we can find a way to move forward on this, to get crab harvesters back on the water," he said. No other meetings were scheduled, but Taylor said he would like to see the dispute resolved soon.

BLOCKADE OF PORTS BY FRENCH FISHERMEN

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: The ports of Fos and Lavera have been blocked by fishermen since 1815, local time, yesterday evening. No vessel movements are currently authorised, except at anchorage for vessels arriving on roads.

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: The ports of Fos and Lavera remain blocked by fishing boats today. No movement is authorised except at anchorage for vessels arriving on roads. The ports have been blocked by the fishing boats since Wednesday evening (Apr 6) as part of a protest at the cost of gas oil. There is currently no indication of how long the action is likely to last, and it is understood that no agreement has been reached between the French Government and the protesting fishermen. This morning, about 25 vessels were anchored at Fos/Lavera roads and another 20 were alongside at the ports of Lavera, Fos and St. Louis.

London, Apr 13 -- The pilot office for the ports of Fos and Lavera has been

blocked by protesting fishermen since 0900, local time, today. No vessel movements are currently authorised, except at anchorage for vessels arriving on roads. Following a meeting between the protesting fishermen and port authorities, after the latest blockade of the ports by fishing boats ended on Saturday (Apr 9), it has been advised that the fishermen may embark on another blockade at Lavera/Fos/Sete in the next few days.

London, Apr 14 -- French ports and ferry services were hit by widespread disruption yesterday as fresh action by seafarers was compounded by new protests by fishermen over fuel prices. The port of Marseilles took the brunt of the double offensive as fishermen succeeded in imposing a new blockade on accesses to the port and action by seafarers halted ferry and towage services. Towage services were also out of action at Le Havre, where the port said yesterday afternoon that 10 port calls had had to be cancelled so far. The CGT maritime federation, which called on its members to strike from Tuesday over the government's plans to introduce a new low-cost international register and the European Commission's port services directive, said yesterday that action by its members was also hitting towage, dredging and other port services at Nantes-Saint Nazaire, Rouen, Brest and Bordeaux. A spokesman said that the action was generally being spread over 72 hours and could be expected to continue today. At Marseilles, apart from seafarers involved in port services, their colleagues at state-owned French Mediterranean ferry operator, SNCM, also staged strike action yesterday, halting all the company's sailings to Corsica and North Africa. Activity at the port was brought to a standstill in any case by fishermen who decided to take fresh action after failing to win assurances of further aid with fuel prices from the government at a meeting in Paris on Tuesday. The port confirmed that the tactic had proved effective, indicating that no vessels could come in or out of port as long as the pilots were out of action.

COLLAPSE OF BUILDING, PALASHBARI, BANGLADESH

Palashbari, Apr 11 -- Hundreds of factory workers are feared trapped under the rubble of a nine-storey building that collapsed like a house of cards near Bangladesh's capital, survivors and witnesses said today. Rescuers dug out 11 bodies and pulled 55 people alive from the debris but narrow roads leading to the site delayed efforts to bring in cranes to help remove concrete slabs. Anxious relatives joined rescuers searching for survivors in the twisted remains of the building at Palashbari, 30 km from Dhaka, which housed a garment factory. The victims were employees working a late shift. Police said the collapse was probably triggered by a boiler explosion at the factory. Fire brigade officials said they would investigate further to determine the

exact cause. Shahid Alam, a senior official of the Dhaka Development Authority, said the factory had been built on marshland despite a lack of planning permission. Authorities called in extra police, army and paramilitary troops to bolster the rescue effort. One small crane entered the site at noon and more were on their way, rescuers said. Police and firefighters said the building collapsed about an hour after midnight. Security officer Abdul Hye said at least 250 people had been working the night shift at Shahriar Fabrics. -- Reuters.

Palashbari, Apr 12 -- Rescuers in Bangladesh were today trying to reach up to 150 people trapped in rubble after a nine-storey garment factory collapsed near the capital, killing at least 26, officials said. "The confirmed death toll from the collapse has risen to 26 with four bodies pulled out after midnight," one rescue official said today. Nearly 100 people had been rescued alive, officials and witnesses said. Army and fire brigade officials said they believed around 100-150 people were still trapped. "But it is really impossible to give an exact number," said fire brigade official Fariduddin Ahmed. "Bringing out the victims dead or alive is proving a difficult task. They are stuck deep under the debris or in the tangle of crumpled iron rods and bricks," Ahmed said. "We cannot use hammers, shovels or other equipment just recklessly to dig down, because this may jeopardise the lives of the trapped survivors. We need to be careful." Another official said some 1,000 troops, fire brigade personnel and volunteers joined the rescue efforts but they lacked appropriate tools. "If the trapped people can't be rescued before nightfall tonight, chances of finding them alive would really fade," said Talim Mollah, a civil defence volunteer. Firefighters said the building collapsed at about 0100 yesterday at Shahriar Fabrics in Palashbari, 18 miles from Dhaka. Security officer Abdul Hye said at least 250 people had been working the night shift at the factory. The army brought in sniffer dogs and heavy equipment, including excavators and cranes, to speed up an effort that went on through the night to reach those trapped under debris, rescue officials said. A massive pile of bricks and concrete slabs was all that remained of the building. Army medical units supplied bottled water and medicine to trapped survivors after cutting holes in the building's roof. Police said the collapse was probably triggered by a boiler explosion. Fire brigade officials said they would investigate. Shahid Alam, a senior official of the Dhaka Development Authority, said the factory had been built on a swamp without permission. The authority has formed an inquiry committee to ascertain the cause of the collapse and determine who was to blame. The factory produces clothes for export, including to the United States. -- Reuters.

COLLAPSE OF GANGWAY, SHIPYARD, ST. NAZAIRE, FRANCE

London, Apr 15 -- The shipbuilder Chantiers de l'Atlantique and supplier Endel have been charged with homicide in relation to the collapse of a gangway at St.Nazaire Shipyard Nov 15, 2003, in which 15 people were killed.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated today, states: An eight-year-old Cambodian girl has died from bird flu, becoming the third victim of the deadly virus in that country, health officials said. The girl was from a south-western province bordering Vietnam. An epidemiologist for the World Health Organisation confirmed the girl had died from the H5N1 strain, as already announced by local health officials. The WHO's Megge Miller said the girl's death was still being investigated by officials sent to her village in order to establish how she contracted the virus. A local health official who asked to remain anonymous told AFP news agency that although chickens had fallen ill in a village there, villagers were reluctant to let the authorities cull their birds.

OUTBREAK OF BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY, WORLDWIDE

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: A four-and-a-half year-old Holstein cow has been diagnosed as the 17th case of mad cow disease in Japan, the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry said today. The cow had been kept in Otofuke, Hokkaido. It was born in September 2000, the year before feeding cows with meat-and-bone meals was banned due to fear of infection with bovine spongiform encephalopathy, ministry officials said.

OUTBREAK OF MARBURG VIRUS, ANGOLA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: The World Health Organisation has advised four countries around Angola to go on a Marburg alert after confirmation the deadly Ebola-like virus has now claimed 174 lives. A senior health official says Angola remains the epicentre of the outbreak, but the neighbouring countries, including the Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia and Zambia, should all be on alert. The death toll from the virus has more than doubled in the past three weeks, now spreading to seven of the poor southern African country's 18 provinces. The virus spreads through contact with bodily fluids, and there is no specific treatment.

Geneva, Apr 14 -- Travellers to Angola, where Marburg disease has killed 210, should avoid close contact with ill people and countries may wish to screen returning visitors, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said today. In its first advice on travel

since the outbreak began last October, the U.N. agency also said that people with existing medical conditions who might require hospitalisation "should consider deferring non-essential travel to Angola". At least 14 of the 210 people known to have died of the disease -- a haemorrhagic fever transmitted through bodily fluids including saliva and blood -- have been health workers. Most of the total 231 cases have been in northern Uige province. "WHO does not recommend restrictions on travel to any destination within Angola, but does advise some precautions. Travellers to Angola should be aware of the outbreak of Marburg haemorrhagic fever and of the need to avoid close contact with ill persons," it said in a statement posted overnight. Countries having close ties with Angola, and whose citizens travel frequently there, may wish to consider introducing measures to increase vigilance for potential symptoms in travellers returning from Angola, according to the WHO. Travellers leaving Angola should seek medical attention if any illness with fever develops within 10 days of their departure and should inform health care workers of their recent travel, it said. -- Reuters.

VESSEL FIRED ON BY SOUTH KOREA

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: An unidentified vessel defected to North Korea over the Northern Limit Line (NLL) early this afternoon. It was spotted 2.7 km off the coast of Jeonin Harbour, Goseong County, Gangwon Province around 1554 hrs. South Korean coastal border guards fired some 20 warning shots from a 60-mm mortar, 106-mm recoilless rifle and MG50 machine gun but were unable to stop the vessel crossing the NLL. The incident reveals worrying holes in the Army and Navy's guard and patrol activities in the East Sea. As of 1800 hrs, the identity and type of the vessel remain uncertain. "Our coastal sentry posts fired only warning shots," an official from the Joint Chiefs of Staff said. "I understand they didn't aim at the vessel, so it wasn't sunk."

Fires & Explosions



COAL MINE, SORAINJ, PAKISTAN

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: Three miners were killed and two were injured when methane gas in a coalmine exploded in Sorainj today. Miners said that eight workers were in the 1,600 feet deep mine. Three miners managed to escape without injuries. Officials said that wood beams supporting the mine's roof broke and caused the accident.

FACTORY, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters battled a blazing warehouse fire late yesterday night into this morning in a south Baltimore neighbourhood. The fire erupted into massive flames at the Life-Like Products facility in the Brooklyn neighbourhood in Baltimore. The rapidly spreading fire erupted into three alarms, then within a half hour, firefighters called for a fourth alarm. Firefighters found difficulty in getting water to the fire scene. The fire has caused several explosions and huge flare-ups. Baltimore City Fire Department spokesman Kevin Cartwright said the fire broke out about 2230 hrs, yesterday and that the warehouse is a one-storey building. He said crews were able to contain the fire by 0315 hrs, today. "Units arrived on the scene to find the building heavily involved with fire," Cartwright said.

FACTORY, KARACHI, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Apr 11 -- A major fire broke out in a privately owned plastic factory M/s Modern Plastics Company, in the Korangi Industrial Area of Karachi, Sindh Province, yesterday morning. According to a spokesman for the central fire department, the fire broke out at around 0730 hrs and was controlled in the afternoon. Thirteen fire tenders from different fire stations extinguished the fire. Quoting an official of the factory, the spokesman said losses went into millions of rupees. However, no injuries were reported in the massive fire. The cause of the fire could not be ascertained immediately. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Apr 13 -- According to the central fire brigade station, a major fire broke out at 1523, Apr 12, in a privately owned tent-making factory, Paramount factory, in SITE, causing millions of rupees losses. A spokesman for the fire department said that the fire broke out in factory located near Ghani Chowrangi in Karachi, Sindh Province of Pakistan. The entire building was engulfed in the fire, however, no casualty was reported in the incident. About 16 fire tenders belonging to different fire stations of the city were called in to control the situation. Apart from the losses to the raw material, the infrastructure of the factory sustained considerable damage as walls and several rooms collapsed due to the sheer heat, the spokesman added. The cause of the fire could not be ascertained, nor could the extent of losses be assessed, the spokesman added. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

FOREST, SOUTH KOREA

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated today, states: The government has designated Yangyang in Kangwon Province, severely damaged by a forest fire, as a special disaster zone. The Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs has decided that although the damages are not technically eligible to be designated as a special disaster zone, the damage in the already flood-prone area is

severe enough for the designation. Under the designation, fire victims will receive special compensation and subsidies depending on the degree of damage to their property, homes and crops. The victims will be eligible for about five million won for a fully destroyed house and 2.9 million won for partially damaged houses. The farmers will be given up to five million won in compensation for damaged farm crops. They will also receive various kinds of assistance such as labour support, equipment to restore electricity and water supply and medical aid, along with tax reductions and loans. According to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the fire engulfed 250 hectares of mountainous areas and about 246 buildings and houses on Apr 4-6, displacing 340 residents from 134 households. Kosong, also hit by the fire, was not designated as a special disaster area because no damages to residents' homes or property were reported.

FOREST, VIETNAM

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: A 40-hour fire was eventually stamped out at the primeval forest in Xa Bang historical site in the southern province of Ba Ria-Vung Tau on Apr 6. According to local forest rangers, an estimated 3,000 sq.m of the forest was damaged. Fire broke out at nightfall on Apr 4 at the eastern side of the swamp in the historical site and spread quickly. More than 300 people and several dozen fire engines were mobilised to fight the fire, which was fanned by strong winds. The cause of the fire is being investigated.

FORESTS, ISRAEL

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Forest fires broke out today in Israel's northern Galilee region and on Mount Carmel, overlooking the port of Haifa, as strong winds buffeted the country amid unseasonable heat, firefighters said. Public radio said the authorities had begun evacuating student dormitories at the University of Haifa, which is located on the mountain. "Several dozen hectares of forest are under threat from the flames on Mount Carmel, and some 20 firefighting teams, aided by aircraft, have been trying to subdue the fires for several hours," spokesman Moshe Mosco said this evening. The blaze is also threatening an animal park on Mount Carmel. The winds were expected to drop later today, the meteorological service said.

FORESTS, RUSSIA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Forest fires continue in Russia's Chita region (Siberia) where almost 900 hectares of taiga are in flames, 15 conflagrations have been registered, the press service of the regional administration told Itar-Tass today. Four fires in an area 145 hectares were extinguished yesterday. Sixty forest fires have been registered in the trans-Baikal taiga since the start of the fire hazardous period. Fires have

destroyed and damaged over 6,000 hectares of forest. Over 120 people and 33 units of machinery are engaged in fire fighting efforts. The Chita airbase of forest protection is conducting aerial reconnaissance to detect forest fires using the An-2 plane.

FURNITURE FACTORY, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: A factory fire in Sydney closed a major artery into the city. A number of homes were evacuated as up to 70 firefighters from 15 stations battled to bring the blaze which started around 0500 AEST, in the furniture factory at the corner of Frenchs Lane and Parramatta Road, Summer Hill, under control. NSW Fire Brigades Assistant Commissioner John Benson said the wreckage continued to smoulder throughout the day, and investigations into its cause would begin later today. The building was unoccupied at the time of the fire and no-one was injured, although ambulance crews were on standby throughout the morning. One firefighter suffered a minor injury in the fire, while 15 people who had been evacuated have been allowed back in their homes.

PREMISES, BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Police believe a fire that gutted a small Brisbane shopping centre and a church for disadvantaged families was deliberately lit. Fire destroyed the entire shopping centre and the Life Christian Church at Eagleby, south of Brisbane, about 0345 hrs, today, causing millions of (Australian) dollars worth of damage. At the height of the blaze, 10 fire units were fighting the flames, which were controlled within an hour. However firefighters were kept busy until after 0600 hrs making sure there were no fresh outbreaks. A police spokesman said police were tonight interviewing two people in connection with the fire. Fire crews believe the blaze began in an industrial bin and in a rear section of the centre, which included the church's food co-operative, a fruit and vegetable shop, a fish and chip shop, and a video shop. Youths were reportedly seen running from the centre shortly after the fire broke out.

PREMISES, PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A large fire raced through Trinidad's main shopping centre, destroying more than 200 businesses and causing millions of dollars in damage, officials said yesterday. The inferno started just after dawn Saturday (Apr 9) in The People's Mall in Port of Spain and quickly spread to three other buildings on the block, fire officials said. There were no injuries because the buildings were mostly empty of people. The cause of the blaze was under investigation, authorities said. The capital's Downtown Owners and Merchants

Association estimated damages at Trinidadian \$35 million (US\$5.6 million). The fire wiped out a wide array of stores and restaurants and also destroyed several government offices and private organisations. Hundreds of firefighters struggled to put out the blaze which raged throughout Saturday, and the rubble smoldered yesterday.

SCHOOL, NEWHAVEN, EAST SUSSEX, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated Apr 9, states: An East Sussex school devastated by fire will be unable to reopen on Monday (Apr 11) after the Easter holidays. The blaze last Tuesday (Apr 5) gutted the main hall, staff room, library, drama room, administration offices and toilets at Tideway Secondary School, Newhaven. Parents are being told the school will be closed to all pupils on Monday and Tuesday (Apr 12) and only GCSE-year pupils in Year 11 should attend on Wednesday (Apr 13). Four teenagers arrested on suspicion of arson have been freed on police bail. East Sussex County Council said today it was doing all it can to get the school open again as soon as possible. Damage to the school is estimated to be in excess of £1m. There was extensive smoke damage to two teaching blocks, although the majority of classrooms were unaffected. Up to 80 firefighters from across East Sussex and outside the county tackled the blaze. Following the incident, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service called for sprinklers to be installed in all schools and public buildings.

SHOPPING MALL, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

London, Apr 10 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: A fire at a shopping mall in Dhaka today injured at least 50 people and gutted nearly 15 shops, a fire official said. Firefighters took several hours to douse the blaze, while investigators were trying to ascertain its source, a fire official said. "Witnesses said the fire followed a loud bang ... It may have been caused by an exploding generator or air conditioner triggered by a short circuit," the official said. Many of the victims suffered burns or were trampled while trying to escape the building, sources said, adding that several cars parked outside were also damaged. The mall is on Elephant Road, a popular shopping district in Dhaka, housing trendy shops and restaurants.

WAREHOUSE, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: Fire investigators said extensive damage to the Davis Trading factory, in Carbine Rd, Mt Wellington, Auckland, is making it difficult to determine the cause of the weekend blaze. Auckland deputy chief fire officer Graham Fuller said 20 fire-engines and 80 fire-fighters were involved in battling the blaze from 2300, Apr 9. Mr Fuller expected crews

would still be working at the site today. "It went to a fifth-alarm fire, which is the greatest alarm we can have and effectively takes most of the appliances out of Auckland. We had an aerial appliance respond from Hamilton, as well." The factory was still burning yesterday afternoon as fire-fighters started demolishing the building. Mr Fuller said the fire was not being treated as suspicious. "Because of the extensive damage it's going to be very difficult to ascertain what did cause it. The whole place is just absolutely destroyed." He said stormwater drains were being pumped out to recover oil which ran from the bulk-foods factory. The oil made the area slippery for fire-fighters and was a potential hazard to the environment, said Mr Fuller. The Fire Service was working with the Auckland Regional Council to stop the oil getting into waterways. Firefighters were pumping stormwater drains, said Mr Fuller, but there would be some contamination.

WAREHOUSE, BATLEY, YORKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated Apr 10, states: Fire crews were called to a huge blaze at a West Yorkshire warehouse this morning where about 80% of the building was alight. Over 80 firefighters were needed to tackle the fire at Green Hill Mill on Grange Road in Batley. The single-storey building is used for general storage and eight engines were needed to deal with the incident.

WAREHOUSES, SHARJAH, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Karachi, Apr 9 -- A massive fire destroyed eight warehouses privately owned by Pan Emirates Furniture in Industrial Area No 13 in Sharjah on Thursday (April 7). Civil defence teams from Sharjah and Dubai rushed to bring the blaze under control and the fire took 17 hours to be finally extinguished. It was reported that the fire, which broke out at about 1900 hrs, damaged furniture worth several million dirhams. No casualties were reported. Investigations are under way. According to Colonel Rashid Al Matroushi, director-general of Dubai civil defence, the fire started in two warehouses and later engulfed others. One of the warehouses contained spare parts for cars and the other one contained ropes and other materials, while the others have other furniture materials. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Fire crews at Wilsons Promontory in southern Victoria have contained burning sections of a blaze from Mt Oberon and Windy Saddle. The fire started when a fuel reduction burn at Tidal River reignited last Friday night (Apr 1). It has burnt 12 per cent of the Wilsons Promontory National Park. Parks Victoria says crews will now focus on Wilson Range and Little Waterloo, but others have been

delayed with bad weather clouding the Mt Wilson and Windy Saddle helipads. Rain at Tidal River and the lighthouse today has reduced fire activity but hampered crews efforts to complete containment lines.

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters are still working to contain the Wilsons Promontory bushfire that has burnt out more than 6000ha of national parkland. The fire flared out of control Apr 2 when strong winds fanned the flames of a Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) fuel reduction burnoff. Rainfall today had actually hindered firefighters, preventing them from using aircraft to get to the fire front, a DSE spokesman said. "We had a little bit of rain this morning but not enough that it is going to have a major impact on the fire and what it meant was that we couldn't get out to the fire line," the spokesman said. The fire was still not classified as under control as there were no containment lines right around it, he said. Firefighters have been working to create an 18km firebreak right across Wilsons Promontory to contain the fire, and have 1km still to go. More than 50 firefighters would be on standby to work tomorrow if conditions allowed.



ABORTED TAKE-OFF, CARACAS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, VENEZUELA

See CU-T1539.

ACCIDENT, NARITA AIRPORT, JAPAN

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: An engine of a Nippon Cargo Airlines jumbo jet touched the runway during landing at Narita airport today when the aircraft lost balance due to strong winds, airport authorities said. No one was injured in the 1325 hrs incident involving the Boeing 747 flight from Anchorage, with four crew members aboard. The runway, however, was closed for about 35 minutes following the accident because the aircraft broke six runway lights on landing. Seven incoming flights were diverted to other airports.

C-FRJD

London, Apr 7 -- Piper PA-28, C-FRJD, departed Pitt Meadows, BC on a VFR night flight to Kelowna, BC with the pilot onboard. On descent from 12,000 feet into Kelowna, the engine began to gradually lose power and the pilot could not reduce the descent. The aircraft struck trees and terrain at the 4,700-foot level and crashed inverted at 1703, PST, Apr 2. The pilot received minor injuries and the aircraft was substantially damaged. There was no fire and the

ELT functioned. DND SAR recovered the pilot several hours later and took him to Kelowna for observation.

CRASH, BOGALUSA AREA, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: The pilot of a single-engine plane was killed this evening when the aircraft slammed into trees and burst into flames near a Bogalusa assisted living facility. Some witnesses said they heard the planes engine sputtering before it crashed. Federal investigators will investigate the cause of the crash, which occurred just south of the Bogalusa airport.

CRASH, CAPE MAY COUNTY AIRPORT AREA, NEW JERSEY, UNITED STATES

See N36725.

CRASH, FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Three Sonoma County men are dead after the small aircraft they were flying in crashed in Fresno County. Witnesses say they heard an explosion, then heard the engine quit before the aircraft went down yesterday in a field in a rural area of western Fresno County, about 20 miles south-west of Fresno. The three men were flying in a four-seat Cessna from Santa Rosa to Scottsdale, Arizona.

CRASH, FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

See N8126L.

CU-T1539

London, Apr 8 -- Ilyushin 18D-40, CU-T1539, operator Aerocaribbean, failed to take-off from runway 09, Caracas-Simon Bolivar Airport, Venezuela, at 1615, Mar 28. It overran the runway and came to rest on a small hill. The landing gear was sheared off in the slide, the engines sustained serious damage and the No.1 engine had separated from its mountings. There were 10 crew and 87 passengers on board. There were no fatalities.

EMERGENCY LANDING, GRAZ AIRPORT, AUSTRIA

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: A commercial aircraft en route from Vienna to Venice made an emergency landing in the southern Austrian city of Graz because of technical problems, it was reported today. None of the 34 passengers or three crew aboard the aircraft was injured in the landing yesterday evening. The flight was operated by Austrian Arrows.

EMERGENCY LANDING, KARACHI AIRPORT, PAKISTAN

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Pakistan International Airlines made an emergency landing at the airport in Karachi today after developing engine trouble on a flight heading for London, officials said. No one was hurt. A PIA

official in Karachi, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the fault was noticed after the aircraft took off from the eastern city of Lahore. "There was a fault in the engine and the captain made an emergency landing at Karachi airport," the official said. A civil aviation official at Karachi airport said on condition of anonymity that no one was injured on board the aircraft and there was no damage to the aircraft.

EMERGENCY LANDING, KOLKATA AIRPORT, INDIA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Ranchi-bound Indian Airlines flight was diverted to Kolkata yesterday afternoon after its pilot detected a hydraulic leakage shortly after taking off from Patna. The A-320 aircraft carrying 45 passengers landed safely at the NSCBI Airport at 1615 hrs. The passengers - four for Mumbai and the rest for Delhi - were later accommodated in regular evening flights to Mumbai and Delhi. Pilot G. Bhalla, who was commanding the flight, noticed the snag in the instrument panel soon after takeoff from Patna. The instrument panel showed a leakage in the hydraulic system. Bhalla decided to make an emergency landing in Kolkata instead. "The leakage did not risk the safety of passengers during flight but there was a possibility of the aircraft getting stalled on landing. Bhalla opted for Kolkata as Ranchi does not have the engineering capability for intensive repairs," sources said.

EMERGENCY LANDING, PARAPARAUMU AIRPORT, NEW ZEALAND

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Piper Aztec aircraft carrying Prime Minister Helen Clark has been forced into an emergency landing after a door blew open during turbulence. Miss Clark told National Radio that she feared for her life during the incident. The small aircraft was travelling from Rotorua to Wellington but was forced to land at Paraparaumu Airport after hitting "severe turbulence". Two policemen travelling with the PM held the door closed while the pilot landed the aircraft, she said. Miss Clark said she was sitting in the rear of the aircraft reading her papers on the journey from Rotorua to Wellington when they struck turbulence without any warning. The sudden movement of the aircraft dislodged the door and as it began to open, two police officers travelling with Miss Clark grabbed hold of it. Miss Clark was in Rotorua last night, speaking to the Grey Power annual conference. Keith Mackenzie, managing director of Mountain Air planes, confirmed that the Prime Minister was on one of the company's Piper Aztec planes on a flight from Rotorua to Wellington this morning. He said that as a precaution the pilot declared an emergency and diverted to the nearest airport, which was at Paraparaumu. Mr Mackenzie said the aircraft landed safely.

EMERGENCY LANDING, SALT LAKE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 14 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: A Delta Airlines flight from Ontario, California to Salt Lake City had to make an emergency landing today because of hydraulic problems. The aircraft was met on the runway by fire trucks and police.

EMERGENCY LANDING, TRABZON, TURKEY

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated today, states: A passenger aircraft has made an emergency landing in northern Turkey after smoke filled the cockpit. The Britannia Airways-owned airliner, en route from Phuket in Thailand to Copenhagen, landed at Trabzon Airport, near the Black Sea. None of the 350 passengers, all believed to be Swedish, were injured. The aircraft was being operated by Swedish operator BLX, a sister airline of Britannia Airways, which said the landing was "precautionary".

EMERGENCY LANDING, WILL ROGERS WORLD AIRPORT, OKLAHOMA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: A commercial airliner was attempting to make an emergency landing at Will Rogers World Airport today after reporting mechanical problems. Airport officials said the Continental Airlines jet reported trouble with landing gear on its nose shortly before 1600 hrs. Pilots reported that they could see that the landing gear was down but could not tell whether it was locked. Airport spokeswoman Karen Carney said pilots of the Boeing 737 were burning off fuel before their attempted landing. It was not immediately clear how many passengers were on board.

G-BMJT

Belfast, Apr 11 -- A light aircraft (Beech 76 Duchess, G-BMJT) crash landed in playing fields in east Belfast at around 1750, yesterday. Air accident investigators are trying to establish reports that the plane burst into flames shortly before nosediving into Inverary playing fields, which are situated between the Inverary housing estate, a railway line and the Sydenham Bypass, which is one of Belfast's main arterial routes. The pilot, who is believed to be from the Isle of Man, was treated for burns in Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital and is described as being critically ill. -- Lloyd's Agents.

INCIDENT AT AIRPORT, TONGA

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated Apr 9, states: Polynesian Airline's Boeing 737-800 flight from Auckland on Wednesday night (Apr 6) didn't reach its destination of Faleolo International Airport, in Apia. A malfunction caused the flight to be abandoned and passengers were forced to spend the night at Tonga. According to a statement from the airline

yesterday, the aircraft experienced "a hydraulic pump malfunction" during a scheduled transit stop in Tonga. "Unfortunately in Tonga we do not have the spares to cover this unit and it has become necessary to source a replacement unit from New Zealand and have it flown in," Polynesian's acting Chief executive Officer, John McNeely explained. Passengers heading to Tonga from Faleolo were flown out on board Polynesian's Dash 8 aircraft, McNeely said. With them went additional engineering personnel to help fix the pump. The Dash 8 was then scheduled to fly passengers stranded in Tonga to Apia. "As with any mechanical transport equipment, aircraft components are just as prone to malfunction or failure, but with the extremely high standards of aviation safety to be complied with, the aircraft cannot be released into service until the problem has been cleared".

INCIDENT AT MELBOURNE AIRPORT, AUSTRALIA

London, Apr 9 -- A press report, dated today, states: The wheels of a 747 freighter caught fire as it landed in Melbourne this afternoon. A spokesman for Air Services Australia said firecrews rushed to the scene after the pilot of the Atlas Cargo aircraft sounded an alarm about 1600 hrs. As the plane was touching down in Melbourne, the pilot could see warning signs that the brakes, which are in the wheels of the 747-400, were overheating. The aircraft was escorted back to the freight apron by three fire trucks and caught fire when it stopped, the spokesman said. He said fire crews were keen to move the plane to the apron, fearing it would otherwise block the only runway in use now that work is underway at the airport to accommodate the new Airbus. The spokesman said there were no injuries to the crew on board and the fire was put out easily.

N24779

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: A flight instructor and his student were killed today when their plane crashed in Brown County field in south-west Ohio. Authorities said the two-seat Cessna crashed near Mount Orab a few minutes after it took off from the Clermont County Airport in Batavia. One witness said she heard the engine fail and saw the plane spiral to the ground. Federal Aviation Administration investigators are examining the wreckage. Instructor Michael Moreland worked for Sporty's Academy at the Clermont County Airport, which provides flight training for the University of Cincinnati. Student Jonathan Miles was working on an aviation technology degree.

London, Apr 12 -- Cessna 152 N24779 crashed near Batavia, Ohio, at 1817, Apr 11. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N2781R

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft

though to be headed toward Shreveport crashed into an East Texas lake yesterday, killing all three people on board. The Marion County Sheriff's Department says the aircraft crashed into Lake On the Pines around noon near the Alley Creek Recreation Area. The Sheriff's Office says all three probably died on impact, but autopsies will be performed to be certain. The Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board are trying to determine what caused the crash.

London, Apr 12 -- Piper PA-28-200R (Cherokee Arrow), N2781R, operated by William T. Thorne, while on a flight from Shreveport, Louisiana, to Mount Pleasant, Texas, with three persons on board, crashed into the water after striking powerlines, 16 miles west of Jefferson, Texas, at 1701, UTC, Apr 10. The aircraft was destroyed and all three persons on board died.

N3015L

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated Apr 7, states: A single-engine aircraft crashed and caught fire while landing today at Jefferson County Airport, seriously injuring the one person on board. The crash, involving a Piper Cherokee that seats four people, occurred at 1245 hrs, said Mike O'Connor, a Federal Aviation Administration regional duty officer in Seattle. "It ran off the north-west side of the runway on landing, crashed and caught fire," O'Connor said. The aircraft was destroyed by the fire, and the pilot was taken to Denver's University Hospital in serious condition, O'Connor said. The pilot reportedly suffered severe burns. A spokesman for the North Metro Fire agency said the pilot was able to crawl out on his own. The aircraft was registered to Ten Hi Flyers Inc. in Lakewood.

London, Apr 8 -- Piper PA-32RT-300 (Lance II), N3015L, crashed near Broomfield, Colorado, at 1819, Apr 7, while on a local flight from Broomfield. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board suffered minor injuries.

N36725

London, Apr 7 -- Piper PA-28R-201 (Arrow III), N36725, crashed near Green Creek, New Jersey, at 0200, Apr 6, while on a flight from Millville, NJ, to Wildwood, NJ. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N39482

London, Apr 12 -- Stinson 10A, N39482, operated by Ted W. Mathews, on a flight from a private airstrip with two persons on board, crashed at Oak Harbour, Washington, at 2300, UTC, Apr 8. The aircraft was destroyed and both persons on board died.

N448T

London, Apr 13 -- A press report, dated Apr 12, states: A single-engine plane bound from Tampa to Fort Lauderdale crashed late this evening near South Bay in Palm Beach County,

officials said. The Beech Bonanza crashed at 2010 hrs, in the Okeelanta Sugar Mill, Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said. It was flying from Tampa International to Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport, she said. Officials don't know why the plane crashed. The plane is registered to Thomas B. Olzem of Lighthouse Point. Olzem has a valid FAA pilot's license, records show. Officials couldn't verify who was on board at the time of the crash. The crash occurred four miles into the Okeelanta Sugar Mill property, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Teri Barbera said. The Sheriff's Office got a call from the FAA about 2015 hrs, telling them a plane fell off their radar and was thought to have crashed near South Bay. When sheriff's deputies arrived about 2040 hrs, the plane was fully engulfed in flames. Pieces littered the area, Barbera said. The investigation is expected to resume tomorrow morning, she said.

London, Apr 13 -- Beechcraft Bonanza A36 N448T crashed near Belle Glade, Florida, at 0006, Apr 13, while on a flight from Tampa, FL, to Fort Lauderdale, FL. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

N7545V

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated Apr 11, states: A single-engine aircraft veered off a runway, flew over a ravine and crashed into woods while landing today, killing a businessman and seriously injuring another, officials and an eyewitness said. The two men took off from Butler County in a four-seat Cessna 177 and were landing at the privately-owned Warren Airpark in Conewango Township when the aircraft ran off the runway, said Jim Peters, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration. As the aircraft was landing, the wind kicked up and the pilot apparently lost control about a third of the way down the runway, said Bob Pelini, an employee with Warren-based Struthers Wells who was at the airfield to meet the men on business. "It was like the wind blew it off the side of the runway," Pelini said. Pelini said it looked like the pilot tried to keep the aircraft on the runway before it veered off the right side, flew over a ravine and crashed into some trees before flipping over. Warren County Coroner Jerry Borden declined to identify the man who died in the crash, and officials did not release details about the man who was injured and taken to an Erie hospital.

London, Apr 12 -- Cessna 177B (Cardinal RG) N7545V crashed near Warren, Pennsylvania, at 2006, Apr 11. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. One of the two persons on board was killed and the other was seriously injured.

N8126L

London, Apr 12 -- Cessna T210L (Centurion II), N8126L, operated by

Karl Eposti, while on a flight from Santa Rosa, California, to Scottsdale, Arizona, with three persons on board, crashed near Tranquility, California, at 1615, UTC, Apr 7. The aircraft was destroyed and all three persons on board died.

PK-LTZ

London, Apr 12 -- A press report, dated today, states: A DeHavilland DHC-6 Twin Otter turboprop with 18 people aboard crashed today in West Papua province, officials said. The 19-seat aircraft crashed during a flight along the mountainous interior of Indonesia's largest province, which shares New Guinea island with neighbouring Papua New Guinea, police said. "We lost contact with the plane carrying 14 adult passengers, a baby and three crew members, and now we are searching the location of the crash," Timika Police Chief Lt. Col. Paulus Waterpau said. The Canadian-built plane operated by GT Air -- a regional airline owned by the local administration -- was on its way to the airstrip at the village of Enarotali in the central highlands, he said.

London, Apr 14 -- DeHavilland Canada DHC-6 Twin Otter, PK-LTZ, Timika for Enarotali, 14 passengers and three crew, crashed near Enarotali, Indonesia Apr 12. All 17 people are missing. The weather near destination Enarotali was poor, with thick haze during rain.

Product Recalls



DAIMLERCHRYSLER MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 11 -- A press report, dated Apr 9, states: DaimlerChrysler AG's Chrysler Group yesterday announced a voluntary recall of about 70,000 model year 2003 Dodge Grand Caravan and Chrysler Town & Country minivans because of problems with a latch on the rear door. The automaker said the power liftgate latch on a small number of vehicles may become stuck in an unopened position, preventing the latch from closing. If the latch does not close, the liftgate can open while the vehicle is

being driven, Chrysler said. Max Gates, a DaimlerChrysler spokesman, said no vehicle crashes, injuries or fatalities have been reported because of the latch issue. The company said the installation of new liftgate control modules will prevent the problem from occurring.

ISUZU MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Isuzu Motors Ltd. said today it will recall a total of 2,080 buses in three models for free repairs to fix the mechanism for supplying air to engine cylinders. In a statement filed with the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, the maker of buses and trucks said it will recall the Erga, Gala and Hino Blue Ribbon II buses to prevent their engines from stalling when they are moving. Responding to the report, the ministry ordered Isuzu to improve its quality control regime in writing, because it has recalled the same bus models twice in the past to fix the same mechanism. The buses in question were made between May 2000 and February this year.

KIA MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Apr 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Kia is issuing a recall for 974 Sportage XS models built for the UK market up to 28 February 2005. There will be a precautionary upgrade for the electronic stability program control unit, which has in some cases begun to operate when it is not needed. The upgrade will be provided free of charge, and Kia will be contacting all affected owners.

TABLE SAW RIP FENCES, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Apr 7 -- The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with Rexon Industrial Corp. Ltd., of East Windsor, Conn., today announced a voluntary recall of about 41,800 Table Saw's Rip Fence Assembly. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. Distributor/retailer Sears Roebuck and Co., of Hoffman Estates, Ill. The rip fence, a metal guide that keeps material being sawed from shifting side to side as it passes through the cutting blade, can come loose. This could result in kickback of the material

being sawed and possible injury to the operator. Rexon on behalf of Sears has received 230 reports of the rip fence bracket coming loose. No injuries were reported. The rip fence on these saws is made of silver extruded aluminum, is 31 in in length, and has an over-locking handle with a black die-cast aluminum head. They were included with Craftsman table saw model number 137.21830. Sold at Sears stores nation-wide from August 2002 through November 2004. The cost of complete table saw is about \$399, and the cost of the rip fence is about \$40. Manufactured in Taiwan. The firm will provide free replacement parts with instructions to consumers. -- Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Port Conditions



FINLAND

See under "Labour Disputes."

ITALY

London, Apr 7 -- Port situation Apr 4: Genoa: One bulk carrier awaiting berth. Average delays in berthing 12 - 24 hrs. La Spezia: No vessels awaiting berths. Savona: No vessels awaiting normal berth. No vessels awaiting special berth. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 13 -- Port situation Apr 12: Genoa: One general cargo vessel awaiting berth. Average delays in berthing 12 - 24 hrs. La Spezia: No vessels awaiting berths. Savona: One vessel awaiting normal berth. Average delays in berthing 12 - 24 hrs. No vessels awaiting special berth. -- Lloyd's Agents.

PANAMA

London, Apr 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Following damage to a guard gate at Gatun Locks yesterday afternoon (Apr 7), the Gatun West Side in the Panama Canal shall be closed for repairs for approximately 24 hours. This is expected to cause severe disruption to traffic over the next days.

PANAMA CANAL

See Leverkusen Express under "Marine."

Port Delays

Country/Port	Date of report	No.of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbott Point	11-13-Apr-2005	Coal: 12 vessels due by 4/5; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability
Brisbane	11-13-Apr-2005	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 7 vessels due by 12/5; no delays expected. Grain: 1 vessel due 20/4 to load sorghum; no delays expected.
Dalrymple Bay	11-13-Apr-2005	Coal: 2 vessels berthed, 47 anchored; 34 vessels due by 19/6. 20-30 days berthing delay subject to cargo availability and berth congestion; waiting times vary greatly due to different stem supply issues.
Dampier	11-13-Apr-2005	Iron ore: Parker Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 6 anchored; 5 vessels due by 19/4; up to 7 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 7 anchored; 9 vessels due by 14/4; up to 12 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; shippers are experiencing cargo shortages of some grades and stockpile problems; some vessels will berth out of turn and berthing line-up may change at short notice.
Gladstone	11-13-Apr-2005	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 2 vessels berthed, 5 anchored; 30 vessels due by 12/5; up to 4 days berthing delay expected subject to port congestion and cargo availability; a 3 day maintenance shutdown is scheduled for shiploader No. 1 commencing 9/5; Barney Point: 1 vessel berthed, 1 anchored; 3 vessels due by 21/4; up to 1 day's berthing delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion; shiploading activities will cease from 06.00 hrs. 16/5 until 06.00 hrs. 26/5 to enable repairs to be carried out to wharf deck.
Hay Point	11-13-Apr-2005	Coal: 2 vessels berthed, 16 anchored; up to 12 days berthing delay expected subject to cargo availability and berth congestion; vessels berthing in order of cargo availability.
Newcastle	11-13-Apr-2005	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 2 vessels berthed, 11 anchored; 29 vessels due by 25/4; Dykes 4+5: 1 vessel berthed, 4 anchored; 15 vessels due by 25/4; 2 unallocated vessels due by 28/4; 5-13 days delay expected prior to berthing due to planned maintenance at Kooragang terminal, coal product problems with some shippers and cargo receipt.
Port Adelaide	11-13-Apr-2005	Grain: No. 27 berth: 4 vessels due by 16/4, 2 to load canola, 1 wheat, 1 barley; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Hedland	11-13-Apr-2005	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 3 anchored; 6 vessels due by 19/4; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; "B" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 4 anchored; 5 vessels due by 18/4; up to 9 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, 1 anchored; shiploader repairs are being carried out; no delays expected; "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 anchored; 5 vessels due by 16/4; shiploader repairs are being carried out for 36 hours; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Kembla	11-13-Apr-2005	Coal: 2 vessels anchored; 12 vessels due by 10/5; CB-1: 4 vessels due by 22/4; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Walcott	11-13-Apr-2005	Iron ore: 2 vessels berthed and loading; 22 vessels due by 26/4; up to 7 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Shippers are experiencing shortages of lump and fine grade ores.
Portland	11-13-Apr-2005	One vessel due 27/4 to load canola; no delays expected.
Brazil		
Paranagua	12-Apr-2005	Fourteen vessels berthed of which 3 fertiliser dischargers, 3 pellets loaders, 1 soya loader, 1 sugar loader, 1 container discharger, 5 other loaders/dischargers; 10 vessels waiting in roads, all to load, of which 3 soya, 4 pellets, 1 reefer, 2 other vessels; 35 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Rio Grande	12-Apr-2005	Three vessels berthed of which 1 sorghum discharger, 1 salt discharger, 1 potassium chloride discharger; 5 vessels waiting in roads; 19 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Santos	12-Apr-2005	Eighteen vessels berthed of which 1 bulk oil loader, 4 sugar loaders, 1 Ro/Ro loader, 1 wheat discharger, 1 fertiliser discharger, 2 pellets loaders, 6 other loaders/dischargers, 2 full container loaders/dischargers; 11 vessels waiting in roads; 27 vessels due over the next 7 days;
Sao Sebastiao	12-Apr-2005	Four vessels berthed, 4 waiting in roads; 6 vessels due over the next 10 days.

Port Conditions

Vitoria	12-Apr-2005	Four vessels berthed of which 2 granite loaders, 1 steel products loader, 1 pig-iron loader; Terminal Vila Velha: 1 granite loader, 1 full container loader/discharger; Tubarao: 1 soya meal loader; Praia Mole: 1 steel products loader, 1 iron ore loader, 1 coal discharger; Portocel: 1 cellulose loader; Ubu: 1 iron ore loader; 11 vessels waiting in roads; 20 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	11-Apr-2005	Fifteen vessels in port operating, of which 9 loading (1 transformers, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 3 coils, 2 steel sheets, 1 lead, 1 empty vessel), 6 discharging (2 billets, 1 concrete/iron, 1 lead/zinc, 1 iron ore, 1 zinc concentrate); 2 vessels waiting in roads, both to load, of which 1 coils, 1 empty vessel; 4 vessels due, of which 3 to load (1 baryte concentrate, 1 equipment, 1 steel sheets), 1 to discharge iron ore.
Varna	11-Apr-2005	Varna East, Varna West, Electrical Power Station, Balchik: Conditions 4-10 April: Thirty-seven vessels in port operating of which 23 loading (6 sunflower seeds, 2 scrap, 8 soda, 1 silica sand, 1 kaolin/other, 1 silica sand/other, 2 silica sand/kaolin, 1 hydrochloric acid, 1 sulphuric acid), 4 discharging (2 bulk coal, 1 equipment in packing cases, 1 gypsum board), 10 discharging/loading containers.
Chile		
Antofagasta	11-Apr-2005	Four vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 12 vessels due this week to load/discharge concentrates, bulk copper, containers and general cargo.
Valparaiso	11-Apr-2005	Two vessels berthed, 6 berths vacant; 7 vessels anchored; 11 vessels due this week.
Egypt		
Alexandria	11-Apr-2005	Forty vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 32 general cargo, 5 bulk carriers, 3 tankers; 16 vessels at inner anchorage, 5 at outer anchorage; 14 vessels dry-docked.
Damietta	11-Apr-2005	Nineteen vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 12 general cargo, 3 bulk carriers, 4 container vessels; 2 vessels at outer anchorage, 8 at inner anchorage.
Suez Canal	11-Apr-2005	Thirty-three vessels transiting Northbound, 28 Southbound.
Israel		
Ashdod	12-Apr-2005	No labour problems. Three general cargo vessels loading at berth, 10 general cargo vessels discharging at berth, 4 container vessels loading/discharging at berth; 7 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (4 general cargo, 3 bulkers), 5 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load/discharge; 1 vessel awaiting orders; 15 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Haifa	12-Apr-2005	No labour problems. Six vessels discharging at berth (2 general cargo, 4 bulkers), 6 vessels loading/discharging at berth (2 containers, 3 tankers, 1 passenger vessel); 1 general cargo vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge, 3 tankers waiting at anchorage to load/discharge; 3 vessels under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 21 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Mozambique		
Maputo	11-Apr-2005	Twenty-four hour berthing/sailing. There are some restrictions to berthing at certain badly lit wharves. Vessels have to be geared for general cargo berths as shore cranes are very few and unreliable. 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. Five vessels are currently in port berthed, of which 1 loading coal, 2 discharging clinker, 1 discharging/loading petcoke/aluminium, 1 other vessel; 2 vessels due to berth 11/4 of which 1 to load/discharge bulk wheat, 1 unknown cargo; 18 vessels due by 2/5 of which 7 to load (1 coal, 1 magnetite, 2 bulk sugar, 1 aluminium, 2 ferro chrome), 3 to discharge (1 bulk aluminium, 1 bulk urea, 1 bagged rice), 7 to discharge/load (6 containers, 1 containers/steel rolls), 1 other vessel.

Port Conditions

Pakistan

Karachi	11-Apr-2005	Four vessels loading at berth (1 naphtha, 1 MOL, 1 rice, 1 cement), 6 discharging at berth (1 chemicals, 2 general cargo, 1 vehicles, 1 jute, 1 phosphorus); 1 vessel waiting at anchorage to load cement, 1 waiting at anchorage to discharge chemicals; 2 vessels due (1 general cargo, 1 crude oil), with no delays expected.
Port Qasim	11-Apr-2005	One vessel loading rice at berth, 2 vessels discharging at berth (1 wheat, 1 MEG); 4 vessels waiting at anchorage to load (1 project, 3 containers), 3 waiting at anchorage to discharge containers; QICT berth: 1 vessel loading/discharging containers.

Poland

Gdansk	11-Apr-2005	Eleven vessels in port operating of which 7 loading at berth (2 coal, 1 general cargo, 2 bulkers, 2 tankers), 4 discharging at berth (1 bulker, 2 general cargo, 1 grain); 10 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 10 vessels due.
Gdynia	11-Apr-2005	Eleven vessels in port operating of which 7 loading at berth (2 coal, 1 general cargo, 2 bulkers, 2 tankers), 4 discharging at berth (1 bulker, 2 general cargo, 1 grain); 10 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 10 vessels due.

Russia

Novorossiysk	11-Apr-2005	Twenty vessels in port operating, of which 17 loading (2 DRI, 1 WRIC/coils/lumber, 1 scrap, 1 steel billets/pipes, 1 copper, 3 slabs, 3 wheat, 1 steel billets, 1 bulk NPK, 1 coils, 1 aluminium, 1 oil), 3 discharging bulk sugar; 16 vessels waiting in roads, of which 14 to load (1 aluminium, 1 barley, 1 debars, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 3 steel billets, 1 pipes/coils, 2 WRIC/pipes, 2 wheat, 1 pipes, 1 vegetables), 2 to discharge bulk sugar; 60 vessels due, of which 57 to load (1 tin plate/steel sheets/coils, 2 paper, 2 bulk ammonium nitrate, 4 pig-iron, 7 coils, 1 UAN solution, 4 copper, 1 lead, 2 DRI, 9 steel billets, 2 wheat, 12 aluminium, 1 copper/zinc, 2 bulk cement, 1 bulk NPK, 1 pipes, 1 blooms, 2 bulk urea, 2 diesel oil), 2 to discharge (1 bulk NPK, 1 non-ferrous metals), 1 to discharge/load containers. Oil terminal: 1 tanker berthed loading crude oil; no tankers in roads; 7 tankers due, all to load, of which 5 crude oil, 1 fuel oil, 1 diesel oil.
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Spain

Cadiz	11-Apr-2005	Fifteen vessels in port of which 7 operating (3 Ro/Ros, 1 containers, 1 semolina, 1 coke, 1 passenger vessel), 8 vessels under repair; no delays.
Sagunto	11-Apr-2005	Nineteen vessels in port operating of which 12 discharging (9 steel products, 1 vehicles, 1 containers, 1 machinery), 2 loading (1 bulk fertiliser, 1 steel coils), 5 Ro/Ros discharging/loading general cargo; no vessels outside commercial wharf; 3.5 days berthing delay at present due to shortage of dock labour.

Sri Lanka

Colombo	11-Apr-2005	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 berthing at breakbulk berths if there is container congestion; conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 & 2 are facing delays in navigation after commissioning of SAGT 1 & 2 berths (former QEQ 1 & 2). Nine container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 16 vessels discharging at berth (10 containers/feeders, 1 bagged soybean meal, 1 steel, 1 Ro/Ro, 2 bulk palm oil, 1 bulk cement); 4 vessels dry-docked; 7 vessels due (1 containers/feeders, 1 bulk cement, 1 bulk wheat), with no delays for general cargo, bagged cargo, containers/feeders expected.
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Ukraine

Illichevsk	11-Apr-2005	Eight vessels in port operating, of which 6 loading (3 steel products, 1 vegetable oil, 1 wheat, 1 pellets), 1 discharging containers, 1 discharging/loading containers; 3 vessels in roads, of which 1 to load vegetable oil, 2 to discharge/load containers; 17 vessels due, of which 9 to load (5 steel products, 1 vegetable oil, 1 ferrous metals, 1 wheat, 1 pig-iron), 2 to discharge (1 iron ore, 1 tin plate), 6 to discharge/load containers.
Mariupol	11-Apr-2005	Eight vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 2 steel, 2 coal, 1 fire-clay, 2 sulphur, 1 bran; 3 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 1 coal, 2 steel; 48 vessels due, of which 46 to load (26 steel, 2 coke, 5 coal, 8 fire-clay, 2 wheat, 1 pitch, 1 sulphur, 1 heavy lift cargo), 1 to discharge containers, 1 to discharge/load acid/bran.

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Port Conditions

Odessa	11-Apr-2005	Twenty vessels in port operating, of which 15 loading (9 metal, 1 pig-iron, 1 ore, 2 wood, 1 auto machinery, 1 corn), 3 discharging (1 luggage, 1 general cargo, 1 citrus), 1 discharging/loading containers, 1 passenger vessel; 3 vessels in roads, of which 1 to load metal, 1 to discharge building materials, 1 to discharge/load containers; 51 vessels due, of which 31 to load (26 metal, 1 pig-iron, 1 scrap, 1 ore, 1 wheat, 1 wood), 9 to discharge (2 metal, 3 citrus, 1 oil, 2 ore, 1 sugar), 11 to discharge/load containers.
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