

CasualtyWeek

December 16 2005

Corrosion failures meant Erika's 'fate was sealed'

By Andrew Spurrier — Friday December 16 2005

A NEW French judicial report into the loss of the Erika has highlighted the failure of the ship's manager and classification society to detect and deal with the advanced structural corrosion from which it said the vessel was suffering immediately before its break-up and sinking six years ago this week.

The report claims that the real level of corrosion at the time of the Erika's sinking on December 12, 1999, contradicted measurements taken in the course of its five-year survey a little over a year earlier.

The structures of the vessel's ballast tanks were corroded to an extent "well beyond corruptions acceptable to a classification society", it said.

"In summary, the fate of the Erika was virtually sealed as soon as it was confronted for a long period to very severe sea conditions."

Measurements

And it claims that a document detailing steel thickness measurements taken in 1998, which was communicated by the Erika's manager, Panship, to its classification society, Rina, appears to have been falsified.

According to the authors of the report, the document was used to reduce the

quantities of steel plate to be replaced on the Erika from 220 tonnes to 34.5 tonnes, cutting the cost of the operation from \$500,000 to \$157,000.

"This situation cannot be the result of simple material errors," they say.

The new report was produced by experts appointed by the court of commerce in Dunkirk — the Erika's last port of call before its break-up and sinking off the southern coast of Brittany.

Rina declined to comment yesterday on the allegation that data on the structural state of the Erika had been falsified.

Conflicted

But it drew attention to the fact that the report's findings conflicted with those of another one produced for the examining magistrate carrying out a separate investigation into the disaster in Paris.

This latter report highlights the responsibility of the Erika's charterer, the Total oil group, in the loss of the ship and the ensuing pollution disaster, arguing that it had had effective control of the ship.

A Rina spokesman also noted that the report carried out for the Dunkirk court of commerce had been conducted at the request of the oil group, which had also financed it.

"We do not want to comment directly on the report," he said. "These are matters for the court to handle."

Wrongdoing

He added, however, that the company was confident that the court would find it had not been guilty of wrongdoing on the basis of the investigations the company had carried out on its own account and with the help of independent parties. "We think we are in a good position," he said.

"We are sure that the court will take into account our report with the others and we will continue to co-operate in the investigations as we have until now."

Panship, which indicated soon after the accident that it had no ships on its books as a result of its involvement with the Erika, proved impossible to contact yesterday.

Details of the report carried out for the Dunkirk court of commerce have emerged as examining magistrate Dominique de Talancé prepares formally to close her investigation into the Erika disaster.

She announced this week that she expected to be able to complete work on the case by the end of January, opening up the possibility that a trial could open before the end of next year.



EDITOR
Stephen Legall
Tel +44 020 7017 5228

ADVERTISEMENTS
Mike Smith
Tel +44 (0) 20 7017 4488
Fax +44 (0) 20 7017 5007
email mike.smith@lloydsmiu.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS:
Peter Barker
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7017 4779
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7017 5007
Email: peter.barker@lloydsmiu.com

Lloyd's is the registered trade mark of the Society incorporated by the Lloyd's Act 1871 by the name of Lloyd's

A complete online archive covering the last 10 years of Lloyd's Casualty Week. For further information please call +44 (0) 20 7017 4779.

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>AZZAHRA</i>	ro-ro	MAR	LR	20,344	9,332	1978	Dragged anchor and struck rocks off South Mole, Gibraltar, Dec 2. Damage sustained, leaking gasoil into sea. Pumping ballast to prevent listing towards port side. Moved to Detached Mole, tugs in attendance.
<i>DIFKO SUSANNE</i>	chem/oil carrier	NIS	NV	43,398	84,040	1989	Sustained crack in tank & to carry out a ship to ship transfer of cargo to chem/oil Longfin off Southwold Dec 5. Chem/oil Longfin on scene Dec 6. Transfer to start Dec 7, ETC Dec 8.
<i>EBERSWALDE</i>	general	DEU	—	—	—	1950	Struck dolphin and sank due ingress of water in River Ems, between Petkum and Gandersum, Nov 29.
<i>FUKUYOSHI MARU NO. 85</i>	dredger	JPN	—	397	921	1985	Capsized near Himeshima, Oita Prefecture, Dec 5. Two of four crew rescued. Wreck exists in lat 33 41.19N, long 131 46.21E, at depth of 21 metres.
<i>HANDONG NO. 97</i>	fishing	KOR	—	134	—	—	In collision with c.c. <i>Bunga Mas Lapan</i> about 30 km SW of Byungpoong-do island, off Jindo, Dec 1. Sank in 65 metres of water. One of the 14 crew rescued. Oil pollution at the scene.
<i>MARGARET</i>	general	GEO	BM	2,643	3,854	1976	Sought refuge in bad weather at La Spezia, dragged anchor, contacted jetty, & sank Dec 3. All 13 crew safe. Thousands of gallons of fuel released into harbour. Anti-pollution vessels on scene.
<i>MARITIME LADY</i>	general	GIB	GL	1,857	2,200	1984	In collision with c.c. <i>Arctic Ocean</i> in River Elbe Dec 5. Capsized. All 7 crew rescued, 3 injured. Contacted by chem/oil carrier <i>Sunny Blossom</i> same day. Secured by tug <i>Otto Wulf 3</i> . To be salvaged by Taucher Otto Wulff, LOF signed.
<i>SEA SURVEYOR</i>	research	BHS	LR	1,275	777	1979	Reported unable to move due fouled propellers in lat 47 40N, long 06 29W, Dec 2. Restarted on engine Dec 2. Tug <i>Facal Dieciesiete</i> on scene Dec 5, to assist to Corunna, where ETA Dec 6.
<i>TRANS HOLM</i>	chem	NIS	NV	4,259	4,055	1981	Towed into Helsingborg with engine problems, cylinder smashed, Dec 1. Discharge & repairs to main engine completed & sailed Dec 2 for Nystad.
<i>VERTIGO</i>	bulker	JAM	LR	15,502	26,666	1986	In collision with bulk <i>Ziemia Lodzka</i> in the Great Belt in lat 55 13N, long 11 05E, and sunk, Dec 7. All crew rescued by ro/ro <i>Stena Carrier</i> . The wreck is rising above seasurface.
<i>VISTEN</i>	general	ANT	LR	4,060	6,260	1990	Mooring line caught in propellor while departing Miiduranna Dec 2. Aft stern tube seal wear ring broken. Cargo transferred to vessel <i>Saxon</i> . Towed to Tallinn Shipyard and drydocked Dec 6.
<i>WAHKIAKUM</i>	ferry	USA	—	88	—	1961	Taken out of service on the Puget Island to Westport run after one engine failed Dec 1. Engine needs replacing, out of service for one week.

CONTENTS

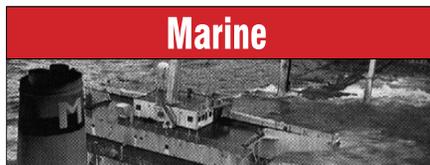
Reports appear in alphabetical order under the following headings and relevant page number:

Marine, including Overdue & Missing Vessels	1
Piracy	11
Port State Control	11
Seizures & Arrests	11
Pipeline Accidents	12
Pollution	12
Weather & Navigation	13
Earthquakes	17
Volcanic Activity	17
Political & Civil Unrest	17
Kidnappings	22
Labour Disputes	22
Awards & Settlements	25
Railway Accidents	27
Miscellaneous	29
Fires & Explosions	29
Aviation	32
Product Recalls	34
Port Conditions	35
Port Conditions charts	36

© Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit 2005
These reports may not be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photographic, recorded or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.



The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



ALDRIN (Bahamas)

London, Dec 7 — General cargo *Aldrin* is still at Haugesund.

ALGOISLE (Canada)

London, Dec 5 — A 10-inch crack was found on the turn of the bilge, in No.3 starboard double bottom, of bulk *Algoisle* (18127 gt, built 1963), docked in Port Cartier, Quebec, lat 50 01 59N, long 66 46 59W, at 1420, EST, Dec 4.

ALLORA (Honduras)

Gothenburg, Dec 1 — Understood that the owners of general cargo *Allora*, which is presently at Otterbacken, Lake Vanern, have applied for approval from the "Inspectors & Administration of Shipping and Navigation", for the vessel to proceed to Trelleyard at Kallandsoe - north of Lidköping in Lake Vanern - and if positive to grant a temporary allowance/certificate. According to sources, the owner should have paid 50% of the costs for the salvage. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Dec 4 — General cargo *Allora* is still at Otterbacken, having completed cargo discharge several days ago. Tomorrow Roda Bolaget will take it to Trellevarvet Lidköping, in Lake Vanern, for docking and survey. — Westax Marine Services AB.

ANDINET (Ethiopia)

See *Arno*.

ANDREW J. BARBERI (U.S.A.)

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 4, states: The master of the Staten Island ferry (ferry *Andrew J. Barberi*) that crashed in October 2003, killing 11 people, is suing the city. Michael Gansas wants his job back, with back pay, or he wants the city to arbitrate his grievances in front of a labour panel. He claims city officials made him a scapegoat by firing him the month after the crash and that they made false statements about ferry regulations. In the suit, Gansas says it's untrue that he violated rules requiring two captains to be in the pilot house when a ferry docks because there was no applicable rule in his case, according to published reports. Richard Smith, the assistant captain of the ferry, was alone at the wheel. He lost consciousness before the accident. Gansas filed suit on Nov 22 in federal court in Brooklyn.

ANTIGONI B. (Cyprus)

See *Champion Adriatic*.

ARCTIC OCEAN (U.K.)

See *Maritime Lady*.

ARNO (Antigua & Barbuda)

Maassluis, Dec 3 — General cargo *Arno* (2729 gt, built 1985), while leaving its berth at Antwerp, came into contact with general cargo *Andinet* (11731 gt, built 1985), which was alongside at Quay 336, at 0645, local time, today. The *Arno* sailed without pilot and the dockmaster is under way to investigate any damage caused. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ARTEMIS (Netherlands)

London, Dec 7 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: General cargo *Artemis* (2545 gt, built 2004), from the Great Belt, cargo peat, while approaching the Holtenau locks of the Kiel Canal, ran aground off Laboe, near Kiel, Dec 6. The rescue vessel *Berlin* came from Laboe and a tug was called, which was expected in the evening. (Note — *Artemis* had sailed Klaipeda 0255, Dec 5.)

London, Dec 7 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: General cargo *Artemis* was salvaged during the night by SFK-tugs *Falckenstein* and *Bulk*. Multi-purpose vessel *Scharhorn* was on stand-by during the operation.

AUK ARROW (Bahamas)

Antwerp, Dec 5 — General cargo *Auk Arrow* (27962 gt, built 1984) was detained at Shanghai port Dec 1, because, according to harbour authority, it had a collision with fishing *Zhe Sheng Yu* in area of Zhejiang Province that morning. The vessel was released today after issuing a guarantee. However, it again had a collision with a small boat in Shanghai port today and anchored at No.8 Wusong Anchorage. — DPS Teamhead Surveyors. (Note — *Auk Arrow* sailed Praia Mole, Oct 19, arrived Hong Kong Nov 27, and sailed Nov 28 for Changshu.)

AZZAHRA (Morocco)

Gibraltar, Dec 2 — Ro/ro *Azzahra* (20344 gt, built 1978) has after dragging anchor struck rocks off South Mole on port side and where it has sustained damage and is now leaking gasoil into the sea. They are presently pumping ballast in order to stop it listing towards portside. Vessel is now at the Detached Mole where tugs are in attendance and the local Port Authorities are awaiting in order to spray detergents and place booms to stop the spreading of the gasoil. — Lloyd's Agents.

Gibraltar, Dec 2 — Ro/ro *Azzahra*: Vessel's local agent is presently on board assessing the situation. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Dec 2 — Understand salvage services are being rendered to ro/ro *Azzahra*, under Lloyd's Open Form, by the Ministry of Defence assisted by TP Towage.

Gibraltar, Dec 2 — The incident involving ro/ro *Azzahra* occurred at about 0745 hrs. Understand the vessel has lost approximately 300-600 litres gasoil due to the damage to the forward port tank, which is below the

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

water line, and that it has taken approximately 350 litres of salt water. Divers are expected to do a patch-up job once vessel is moored alongside the detached mole, this being hampered due to bad weather condition, strong gale force winds, therefore tugs are still in attendance. — Lloyd's Agents.

Gibraltar, Dec 2 — Damage to ro/ro *Azzahra* consists of a 1.2 metre gash in No.1 port forward tank which holds 600 litres of gasoil. Underwater contractors are carrying out underwater damage control with cement and epoxy. Vessel is already moored, with tugs pushing on and standing by until weather moderates as per instructions from the Port Authorities. — Lloyd's Agents.

Gibraltar, Dec 5 — Ro/ro *Azzahra* is still under detention in Gibraltar. We have been informed that although temporary repairs have been carried out there is still water in the damaged tank and the situation is being reviewed by Port State Control and Class. We believe that it is owners intention to drydock in Las Palmas. — Lloyd's Agents.

BARGE 340 (U.S.A.)

See "Washington State, United States" under "Pollution".

BLACK PEARL (Malta)

Brest, Dec 8 — General cargo *Black Pearl* is still at Brest. It is understood that the cargo of timber that shifted on deck was discharged on the quay and the vessel was seized by the lawyers of the tug company Les Abeilles Internationales, who had taken the vessel in tow. Therefore the vessel will not depart from Brest until an agreement has been secured between the owners and the salvage company. — Lloyd's Agents.

BUNGA MAS LAPAN (Malaysia)

Busan, Dec 2 — C.c. *Bunga Mas Lapan* (7998 gt, built 1998), on loaded passage Yantai for Moji, and fishing *Handong No.97* (134 gt) were in collision some 30 km south-west of Byungpoong-do island, off Jindo, at about 0340, Dec 1. *Handong No.97* subsequently sank in some 65 metres of water. One of the 14 crew was rescued, but the remaining crew members are still missing. Oil pollution was reported at the scene but the extent of the pollution is not presently known. *Bunga Mas Lapan* is currently lying afloat at the scene for inspection/investigation. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: The South Korean coast guard intensified its search today for 13 missing crew members of fishing *Handong No.97* that sank off the country's southwest coast after colliding with c.c. *Bunga Mas Lapan*. Two of the missing were Chinese. One crew member was rescued. All 25 crew members on board *Bunga Mas Lapan* were unharmed. A total of 13 patrol ships, five planes and five fishing boats have been mobilized in the search, said Chang In-seok, a coast guard official. Chang said he could not

judge the prospects for finding survivors. The coast guard plans to question crew members of the Malaysian ship today to determine the circumstances of the accident, said Kim Nak-cheon, another coast guard official. Kim said the Malaysian ship was expected to arrive in of Mokpo later today.

Busan, Dec 5 — C.c. *Bunga Mas Lapan* shifted and arrived at Mokpo at 0100, Dec 3, and is now lying anchored at inner harbour anchorage for Marine Police investigation. The Marine Police boats and helicopters are attending the site to search for the missing crew but so far without result due to bad weather in vicinity. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

CELTIC SPIRIT (Bahamas)

London, Dec 6 — General cargo *Celtic Spirit* sailed Stornoway Dec 2 for Warrenpoint.

CHAMPION ADRIATIC (NIS)

London, Dec 2 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 0024, UTC: Product tanker *Champion Adriatic* (21963 gt, built 1981) and bulk *Antigoni B.* (14274 gt, built 1977) are reported to have been involved in a minor contact just outside Singapore waters. Both vessels are now in port at Singapore.

London, Dec 5 — Following received from the managers of product tanker *Champion Adriatic*, dated today: *Champion Adriatic* was in contact with bulk *Antigoni B.* outside Singapore on Dec 1. The vessel is currently just outside Singapore port limits and will need to effect repairs before it is able to resume service. Discussions with regards to repair options are currently under way.

CHIOS SAILOR (Panama)

London, Dec 7 — Bulk *Chios Sailor* (17832 gt, built 1984), upbound, reported making contact with the Jacques Cartier bridge foundation at the side of the seaway canal, lat 45 31 17N, long 73 31 33W, 2100, EST, Dec 6.

CITIUS (Marshall Islands)

See "United Kingdom" under "Port State Control".

CONCEPTION (U.S.A.)

Los Angeles, Dec 6 — Ventura ship yard advise that repairs to diving support *Conception* commenced at the end of March and were completed at the end of August. She is back in business in Santa Barbara, California, and operates under the name of *Truth Aquatics*. The owner is Glen Fritzier. — Lloyd's Agents.

DA YUAN YU 309 (China)

Maputo, Dec 5 — Fishing *Da Yuan Yu 309* is under arrest and there is no indication of when it will be released. — Lloyd's Agents.

DIEPPE (France)

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Coast guard Solent MRSC, timed 0929, UTC: Passenger ro/ro *Dieppe*

(17672 gt, built 1981), with 116 passengers and 41 crew on board, grounded on approach to Newhaven harbour, in lat 50 46.7N, long 00 03.7E, at 0730, UTC. Vessel refloated at 0759, UTC, without assistance and made way into port. No damage or injuries reported. Vessel awaits divers to survey. Wind at time force 3 (gentle breeze), slight sea.

DIFKO SUSANNE (NIS)

London, Dec 2 — Following received from Coastguard Yarmouth MRCC, timed 1425, UTC: Chemical/oil carrier *Difko Susanne* (43398 gt, built 1989) is to carry out a ship to ship transfer of cargo to chemical/oil carrier *Longfin* off Southwold. *Longfin* has an ETA at the transhipment position of 1000, Dec 5 and operation expected to take two days. *Longfin* will then proceed to New York. (Note — *Difko Susanne* sailed Muuga Nov 23 for New York.)

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Coastguard Great Yarmouth MRCC, timed 0930, UTC: Chemical/oil carrier *Difko Susanne* is still waiting off Southwold for transfer of its cargo to another vessel. Understand vessel has a crack in one of its tanks which has made the transfer necessary.

London, Dec 6 — Following received from Coastguard Great Yarmouth MRCC, timed 1230, UTC: Chemical/oil carrier *Difko Susanne* is still anchored off Southwold. Chemical/oil carrier *Longfin* is due on scene today to commence ship-to-ship transfer.

London, Dec 6 — Following received from Coastguard Great Yarmouth MRCC, timed 1645, UTC: Chemical/oil carrier *Difko Susanne*: Chemical/oil carrier *Longfin* is now anchored in lat 52 24N, long 01 48.8E, and is hoping to commence ship-to-ship transfer operations tonight or tomorrow.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Coastguard Great Yarmouth MRCC, timed 1310, UTC: Chemical/oil carrier *Difko Susanne*: Chemical/oil carrier *Longfin* commenced docking operation at 0948 today and was anchored down at 1242 hrs. The ship-to-ship transfer should start this afternoon. Vessels are in lat 52 17.9N, long 02 01.7E.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Coastguard Great Yarmouth MRCC, timed 1325, UTC: Now understand the ship-to-ship transfer of cargo from chemical/oil carrier *Difko Susanne* to chemical/oil carrier *Longfin* is expected to commence around 1500-1600, UTC, today, with completion estimated at 1400-2000, UTC, tomorrow.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Coastguard Great Yarmouth MRCC, timed 1630, UTC: The ship-to-ship transfer of cargo from chemical/oil carrier *Difko Susanne* to chemical/oil carrier *Longfin* commenced in lat 52 17.9N, long 02 01.7E, at 1530, UTC. It is expected to take around 36 hours.

DONGJIN PHOENIX (South Korea)

Busan, Dec 2 — General cargo *Dongjin Phoenix* discharged its

remaining cargo at Hiroshima on Nov 25 and then shifted to Setoda, where it is presently moored at the berth. A contractor is now being sought to scrap the vessel. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

DOROTHEA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Dec 1 — General cargo *Dorothea* sailed Antwerp 2258, Nov 28, and passed Brunsbuttel 0656, Nov 30.

DYVI BALTIC (Hong Kong)

London, Dec 5 — Information received states: Vehicle *Dyvi Baltic*: Rudder cracks were detected, which necessitated repairs at Durban. Durban's dry dock facilities were already occupied by other ships under repair and it was therefore necessary to construct and fit a cofferdam in order to effect repairs to the vessel. Temporary repairs to the ship were completed this morning and, the cofferdam is currently being removed, and the ship is expected to sail this afternoon.

Durban, Dec 6 — Vehicle *Dyvi Baltic* departed Durban at 1857, local time, last night, awaiting orders as to next port of call. — Lloyd's Agents.

EDMONTON QUEEN (Canada)

London, Dec 7 — Ferry *Edmonton Queen* (750 gt, built 1993) made contact with the bottom while passing under the Quesnel Bridge in Edmonton, lat 53 34N, long 113 31W, 1005, CDST, Sep 20. The vessel sustained a small crack in an engine cooler causing an internal coolant leak.

EIDER (Hong Kong)

London, Dec 4 — Bulk *Eider* sailed Antofagasta Dec 3 for Callao.

ENVOY (NIS)

London, Dec 4 — Passenger ro/ro *Envoy* apparently sustained more damage than expected when it broke its moorings while carrying out engine repairs at Ymuiden. Vessel is now in dry dock and Nedlines are anticipating that it will be in operation again Dec 11, resuming its Ymuiden-Harwich service.

EVER MIGHTY (Panama)

London, Dec 7 — Bulk *Ever Mighty*, Kalundborg for London, passed Skaw Nov 23. According to LMIU AIS *Ever Mighty* was in lat 51 54 54.44N, long 01 43 9.5E, at 2221, Dec 5.

EVERSUNNY (Tuvalu)

See "China" under "Weather & Navigation".

EXCELLENCE (U.S.A.)

Seattle, Dec 1 — Reported that a fire erupted in the engine room of the fish factory *Excellence* (5007 gt, built 1973), KTDP, while at Pier 91, Seattle, Washington at approximately 0720 hrs, Dec 1. The fire was reportedly extinguished in approximately one hour. Thirty people were evacuated. No injuries have been reported. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: The Seattle Fire Department says an engine-room fire on fish factory *Excellence* at Pier 91 is completely out. Fire department spokeswoman Helen Fitzpatrick says no one was injured in the fire that took about an hour to put out. Thirty people on the fish processor were evacuated. Fitzpatrick says the cause of the fire at the north end of Seattle's waterfront is under investigation. It was a wall fire in a room within the engine-room. Estimates about damage to the ship are not yet available. The fire was reported at 0720 hrs and the department sent a large response, including a fireboat. The fire department also called in the coast guard in case any other vessels needed to be moved. All units have gone back to their stations.

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Roughly 30 workers were evacuated this morning from fish factory *Excellence* moored at Pier 91 in Seattle, after a minor fire started in a wall near the ship's engine-room. The fire apparently was caused just after 0700 hrs by someone using a torch in a small room within the ship, said Seattle Fire Department spokeswoman Helen Fitzpatrick. There were no injuries, she said. Although the fire was extinguished by 0830 hrs, firefighters still were chasing hot spots and had not determined the extent of the damage, Fitzpatrick said. *Excellence* has been in Seattle for several weeks at its permanent moorage, Pier 91, said Mick Shultz, a spokesman for the Port of Seattle.

Seattle, Dec 5 — All repairs to fish factory *Excellence* are to be effected at Pier 91, Seattle. There is minimal structural damage to bulkhead and overheads. Cost of repairs is estimated at between \$10,000 and \$50,000. This figure includes inspection, repairs and painting. — Lloyd's Agents.

FENIX (Panama)

Kakinada, Dec 1 — Bulk/c.c. *Fenix* arrived Kakinada Nov 25 from Chittagong. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

FIGHTER (Belgium)

London, Dec 7 — Understand tug *Fighter* (517 gt, built 1977), with tow tug/supply *Normand Neptun*, en route from Ferrol to Stavanger, entered Den Helder for some time, due to mechanical problems on board *Fighter*. *Normand Neptun* is en route Stavanger for repairs after experiencing a fire in the engine-room. (Note — *Fighter*, Ferrol for Stavanger, passed Dover Strait Dec 2 and was last reported on LMIU AIS in lat 53 20 18.6N, long 03 37 59.4E, at 1749, Dec 5 on course 25 degrees, speed 6.7 knots.)

FOWAIRET (Qatar)

London, Dec 5 — After the stranding in the River Scheldt on Sep 20, c.c. *Fowairet* was towed to Flushing Sloeharbour for discharging its cargo of containers. The vessel then sailed Oct 6, arriving the next day in

Europoort. The same day the vessel was shifted to the shipyard of Keppel Verolme in the Botlek harbour. Later the vessel was towed to the repair yard of Damen at Schiedam for temporary repairs. After the vessel had been docked, the 30 metre long part of its hold, where the vessel had been bent while being aground, was removed. Then the vessel was welded together again. The removed part, which weights about 1600 tons, will be scrapped by Metaalrecyclingbedrijf Zethameta and recycled again. The vessel will then sail for an unknown shipyard where a new mid-section will be replaced to get back its original length again.

FREITIND (Norway)

Trondheim, Dec 6 — Kvernhusvik Shipyard inform no decision yet regarding final disposition of general cargo *Freitind*. — Lloyd's Agents.

FREY (Malta)

Tallinn, Dec 8 — General cargo *Frey* is still in port completing repairs to her main engine. The vessel is expected to sail in week 50, after sea trials. — Lloyd's Agents.

FUKUYOSHI MARU NO.85 (Japan)

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Two of the four crewmen on a gravel freighter were rescued this morning by the Japan Coast Guard after the vessel's master warned of an imminent capsizing in an inland sea in southwestern Japan. The Coast Guard dispatched an aircraft and patrol boats to the area near Himeshima, a small island just off the coast of Oita Prefecture, and rescued two crewmen, who were drifting in the sea just before 0800 hrs. The Coast Guard is still searching for the remaining crewmen.

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0400, UTC, today: Dredger *Fukuyoshi Maru No.85* (397 gt, built 1985) capsized and sank off Himeshima, this morning. Two crew members and vessel remain unlocated.

GRISHA PODOBEDOV (Russia)

Yokohama, Dec 1 — General cargo *Grisha Podobedov* arrived Rumoi Nov 25 from Plastun and sailed Nov 26 for Niigata. — Lloyd's Agents.

GUANG SHEN (China)

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated Dec 5, states: All of the 24 victims on board a freighter (bulk *Guang Shen*, 15963 gt, built 1973), which had a mishap in the Bohai Sea, were saved by rescuers today. The 30,000-dwt freighter registered in Guangdong Province was en route to Zhuhai Port in Guangdong yesterday, when it had an engine failure 20 nautical miles west of the Lushun port. The Beihai Marine Salvage Bureau under the Ministry of Communications sent two ships for the rescue mission. Rescuers braved a strong gale to pull the freighter out of the raging sea. They are expected to reach Dalian port at 0800 tomorrow.

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

London, Dec 7 — Bulk *Guang Shen* arrived Dalian am yesterday.

HANDONG NO.97 (South Korea)
See *Bunga Mas Lapan*.

HK DEQIN 201 (Tuvalu)
See under "Miscellaneous".

HRINGUR (Iceland)
London, Dec 4 — Following received from Aarhus RCC, timed 0000, UTC, today: Trawler *Hringur* ex *Marina Polaris* (473 gt, built 1997), C/S MYAK8, ran aground in lat 55 39.5N, long 12 42.11E at 0317, UTC, Dec 3. Vessel refloated with tug assistance and arrived Copenhagen at 1215, UTC, Dec 3.

London, Dec 5 — A Svitzer/Wijsmuller Salvage report, dated Dec 3, states: Svitzer/Wijsmuller Salvage today in a quick operation succeeded in refloating trawler *Hringur*. The vessel grounded early in the morning a few miles off Copenhagen in the Sound. Svitzer/Wijsmuller tug *Sigyn* was immediately send out to assist and first executed the necessary preparational inspections, inclusive of a bottom contour survey. Once the Danish authorities gave their 'go-ahead' for a dedicated refloating attempt *Sigyn* carefully manoeuvred in and connected up. At around 1200, local time, the first controlled attempt proved to be succesfull and the trawler was refloated. ITthereupon was escorted into Copenhagen for the necessary dive inspections.

London, Dec 8 — A Svitzer/Wijsmuller Salvage report, dated Dec 3, states: Svitzer/Wijsmuller Salvage today in a quick operation succeeded in refloating trawler *Hringur*. The vessel grounded early in the morning a few miles off Copenhagen in the Sound. Svitzer/Wijsmuller tug *Sigyn* was immediately send out to assist and first executed the necessary preparational inspections, inclusive of a bottom contour survey. Once the Danish authorities gave their 'go-ahead' for a dedicated refloating attempt *Sigyn* carefully manoeuvred in and connected up. At around 1200, local time, the first controlled attempt proved to be succesfull and the trawler was refloated and subsequently escorted into Copenhagen for the necessary dive inspections.

Copenhagen, Dec 8 — Trawler *Hringur*, Gdansk for Reykjavik, grounded off Copenhagen on Dec 3. Danish Maritime Authorities required vessel to (proceed) to Copenhagen arriving about 1300 hrs for examination by divers after the vessel had been taken refloated. The examination showed vessel to be seaworthy and fit to proceed although the hull showed signs of marks from the grounding. Danish Maritime Authorities released the vessel at about 1800 same day and vessel proceeded without repairs having been made in Copenhagen. — Lloyd's Agents.

INVINCIBLE (Cyprus)
London, Dec 3 — Product tanker *Invincible*, Piraeus for Novorossiysk, passed Dardanelles Nov 30.

ISLE OF INISHMORE (Republic of Ireland)
See "Irish Ferries Personnel " under "Labour Disputes".

ISSAQUAH (U.S.A.)
Seattle, Dec 1 — Ro/ro *Issaquah* encountered difficulties with its controllable pitch propeller on Nov 23. Repairs were reportedly completed within four hours, after which the vessel returned to service. — Lloyd's Agents.

IVS KWELA (Panama)
London, Dec 7 — Bulk *IVS Kwela* sailed from Seven Islands on Nov 14.

JONATHAN SWIFT (Republic of Ireland)
See "Irish Ferries Personnel " under "Labour Disputes".

JUAN J.SISTER (Canary Islands)
See "Tropical Storm "Delta" under "Weather & Navigation".

KAPITAN KUROPTEV (Malta)
See "Maltese Vessel Blockaded at Le Havre, France" under "Miscellaneous."

KARAVI (Malta)
London, Dec 2 — General cargo *Karavi*, Nikolayev for Iskenderun, passed Istanbul Nov 30.

KARMSUND (Barbados)
London, Dec 3 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: General cargo *Karmsund* is still at Stavangerdokken, undergoing repairs.

KITION (Bahamas)
London, Dec 5 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1450, UTC: Crude oil tanker *Kition* (53829 gt, built 1994) grounded near the junction of the Houston Ship Channel and the Intracoastal Waterway at 0344, UTC, Dec 3, while avoiding a collision with a tug. Vessel was subsequently refloated with the assistance of two tugs at 0548, UTC, same day. Class inspection was carried out and vessel was cleared on Dec 4 to sail.

LADY HAMILTON (Hong Kong)
London, Dec 4 — Bulk *Lady Hamilton* arrived Rotterdam Nov 29 from Port Cartier and sailed Dec 2 for Aaheim.

LECONTE (U.S.A.)
London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated Dec 5, states: State ro/ro *Leconte* (1328 gt, built 1974) is continuing to operate despite a small hole it its hull. The ferry struck a piling while docking Thursday (Dec 1) in Petersburg. The impact ripped a hole about ten inches long on the starboard side of the ferry 16 feet above the water line. Marine Highway System general manager John Falvey says the vessel was never

in danger. Falvey says the rip was temporarily repaired and a permanent repair will be scheduled in a few weeks.

London, Dec 6 — An Alaska Marine Highway System press release, dated Dec 5, states: The Alaska Marine Highway System announced today that ro/ro *Leconte* has been delayed in Sitka due to a problem with its propulsion shafts. It will be held over in Sitka at least through this morning. "We are now making contingency plans in the event *Leconte* is required to return to the yard in Ketchikan," said Jim Beedle, operations manager for the ferry system. "If that is the case, we will fill in *Leconte's* schedule with *Taku* where possible, and work to get *St. Aquilina* back under contract to cover those communities *Taku* cannot get into."

London, Dec 7 — An Alaska Marine Highway System press release, dated Dec 6, states: The Alaska Marine Highway System has announced that ro/ro *Leconte* will sail today from Sitka to the Ketchikan shipyard to have its shaft problem diagnosed and repaired. No passengers will be allowed to travel on the voyage. "We do not know at this point how long *Leconte* will be out of service, so we are contracting with Alaska Catamarans for the use of the *St. Aquilina* to provide fill-in passenger only service to Hoonah, Tenakee, Angoon and Kake," said Jim Beedle, operations manager for AMHS. "We hope the problem can be taken care of within two weeks. We are working to get the vessel back in service as soon as possible." Beedle said *Leconte* stayed at the dock in Sitka overnight and was inspected this morning by the Coast Guard. It has been experiencing abnormal movement in its propulsion shafts. *St. Aquilina* will replace *Leconte* service until the vessel is repaired. Initially *St. Aquilina* will make a trip from Juneau to Hoonah and return today, leaving tomorrow morning from Juneau through the villages to Sitka. On Thursday it will begin the same pattern that was run during the *Leconte* overhaul.

LILIANA DIMITROVA (Bulgaria)
London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated Dec 6, states: Two Bulgarian sailors were injured when a blast shook bulk *Liliana Dimitrova* (23779 gt, built 1981) in the port of Brake. The fourth mechanic Ivan Dimitrov was in the engine-room of the ship when the fuel mixture in the auxiliary boiler burst. Dimitrov received 60% burns and was immediately transported to a hospital by a helicopter. His life is in danger. The third mechanic Radostin Aleksiev was also hurt during the blast. His injuries are lighter. Authorities are still investigating the blast. The ship was not ruptured, but its skin has been damaged. *Liliana Dimitrova* has continued its voyage. (Note — Liliana Dimitrova arrived Brake 1550, Dec 3 from Paranagua and sailed Dec 6 for Hamburg.)

LINA MULLER (Germany)

London, Dec 7 — General cargo *Lina Muller*, Ghent to Salzger, loaded with a cargo of 1135 tons petroleum coke, ran aground in the Oosterschelde (East Scheldt) on a sandbank near Stavenisse at 0630, local time, Dec 6. The grounding was due to the radar breaking down and the master had insufficient local knowledge of the fairways. The nearby stationed salvage tug *Zephyrus* was soon at the stranding place but could not pull the cargo vessel because of the outgoing tide. The salvors had then on the next tide two salvage tugs ready with pumps on board, which vessels succeeded to refloat the vessel on the next high tide at about 1815, local time. The vessel was refloated by three tugs of the companies Multratug and Polderman. They towed the stranded vessel to the Vluchthaven of Zijpe (near Bruinisse) where several inspections will be done and an investigation will be started by the authorities. No damage or leakage found.

LODBROK (Sweden)

Gothenburg, Dec 3 — Crane barge *Lodbrok*: According to owners, a final decision on where and when vessel will be repaired will be made next week. — Westax Marine Services AB.

LUCKY LADY

See "Hurricane "Wilma" under "Weather & Navigation".

MARGARET (Georgia)

See "Italy" under "Weather & Navigation."

MARITIME LADY (Gibraltar)

London, Dec 6 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: General cargo *Maritime Lady* (1857 gt, built 1984), which was on the way from the Elbe towards the North Sea, with a cargo of fertiliser, was struck by c.c. *Arctic Ocean* (6326 gt, built 1995), which just left the Brunsbützel locks of the Kiel Canal, coming from the Baltic, at 2000, yesterday. *Maritime Lady* capsized shortly after the incident. The crew of seven was rescued and taken to hospital. The wreck drifted in sinking condition with the tide towards the North Sea. At 2130 hrs *Maritime Lady* was struck by chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom* (11598 gt, built 1986) which grounded after this collision. (Note — *Maritime Lady* sailed Hamburg 1355, Dec 5 for New Holland, and according to LMIU AIS was in lat 09 30 37.68N, long 53 40 23.76E, at 2031, yesterday. *Arctic Ocean* sailed Helsinki Dec 2 and according to LMIU AIS was in lat 53 49 47N, long 0-9 40 29E, at 0633 today. *Sunny Blossom* sailed Klaipeda 0015, Dec 4, and according to LMIU AIS was in in lat 53 53 14.9N, long 09 10 26.34E, at 0832 hrs.)

London, Dec 6 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom* was towed free by tugs some hours after running aground. General cargo *Maritime Lady* seems to have settled.

London, Dec 6 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom* which ran aground after hitting the wreck of general cargo *Maritime Lady* has meanwhile been brought into Brunsbützel harbour after tugs had towed it free from the grounding site on the southern Elbe bank with the rising tide. Investigations have started regarding possible faults of pilot and master. The "Havariekommando" is presently working on a salvage plan for *Maritime Lady* which will have to be turned upright by sheerlegs before being raised. At 0800 hrs c.c. *Arctic Ocean* was lying at anchor off Brunsbützel.

London, Dec 6 — Following press release, dated today, states: Yesterday evening a collision occurred on the Elbe, before Brunsbützel, from a still undetermined cause between general cargo *Maritime Lady*, coming from Hamburg with 1,805 tons of fertilizers, and c.c. *Arctic Ocean*, coming out from the northeast ship canal. Due to the collision *Maritime Lady* "kenterte" (?capsized). Chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom*, loaded with 18,000 tons liquid fertilizer, ran into *Maritime Lady*. In consequence of this second collision the *Sunny Blossom* ran aground at the southern Elbufer, however, three tugs freed the vessel after midnight and towed and into the Elbe port after Brunsbützel. The *Arctic Ocean* anchored after the collision on the Reede before Brunsbützel. A withdrawal of pollutants and charge could not be determined. Despite the collision *Arctic Ocean* could continue its journey into the Baltic Sea. Navigation can pass the accident scene with decreased speed. A diver secured a connection between the *Maritime Lady* and a tug. This measure prevents the strong current causing the vessel to drift in the Elbe into the approach road of the northeast ship canal.

London, Dec 7 — A major collision on the River Elbe near the entrance to the Kiel Canal, involving three ships, left at least three crew members injured and led to the sinking of one vessel on Monday night (Dec 5). German police have launched criminal proceedings against the master and pilot of one vessel. They called the incident one of the most serious in the area. Early on Monday night, the c.c. *Arctic Ocean* its exit from the Kiel Canal into the Elbe in collision with the general cargo *Maritime Lady*, which was carrying 1,800 tonnes of fertilisers. The *Arctic Ocean* was later able to continue its planned trip up the Elbe to Hamburg, where it was to be inspected. The seven crew members aboard the *Maritime Lady*, however, went overboard while the vessel sank within 13 minutes. All were rescued by a tug. Three crew members had to be sent to hospital. The reason for the collision is as yet unclear. Later that evening, the chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom* loaded with 18,000 tonnes of liquid fertiliser, crashed into

the wrecked *Maritime Lady*. The *Sunny Blossom* was freed with the help of three tugs and is now moored in the port of Brunsbützel. Hamburg water police said they had started criminal proceedings against the master and pilot of the vessel, which is owned by Houston-based Laurin Maritime, for endangering shipping. Initial investigations are also under way against the masters of the other two vessels involved. Both are managed by northern German owners. Shipping at the location was slowed down but was able to continue. Central maritime accident command in Cuxhaven said the sunken vessel was secured by a tug so that it would not drift and block the entrance to the canal. The command said the vessel had been abandoned by the owner. Insurer P&I Club Hamburg would not launch any salvage measures. Germany's new Transport Minister, Wolfgang Tiefensee, inspected the scene.

London, Dec 7 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: The wreck of general cargo *Maritime Lady* which is lying capsized off Brunsbützel was "given up by its owners as well as the P&I club" the day after the incident. Tug *Taucher O'Wulf 3* is securing the wreck so that it does not move with the tide. Multi purpose ship *Neuwerk* is on watch at the wrecksite. Shipping is allowed to pass at slow speed. Sheerleg *Taklift 4* meanwhile has left Rotterdam probably in order to join the salvage as well as a Bugsier-sheerleg from Hamburg. C.c. *Arctic Ocean* meanwhile has proceeded to Hamburg. Chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom* is now surrounded by oil booms at its berth in Brunsbützel as it started losing oil through a leak. Alcohol testings of pilot and master had negative results. No technical problems were found on the ship. The master had to pay Euro 12,000.

London, Dec 7 — A "HavarieKommando" press release, timed 1130, today, states: Offers are to be submitted at 1200 today for the salvage of general cargo *Maritime Lady*. Salvage companies are to submit detailed offers as well as a salvage plan. The offers are to give information over the prospective total costs, timings and the beginning of salvage as well as over the safety, elevation and disposal of the wreck.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Laurin Maritime, dated Houston, Dec 6: On Dec 5, while transiting from Klaipeda in Lithuania to the United States, chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom* was waiting in the locks of Brunsbützel after the collision between c.c. *Arctic Ocean* and general cargo *Maritime Lady*. The master was on duty and the bridge was fully manned under the advice of an experienced pilot. The vessel waited in the locks of Brunsbützel until shortly after 2100, local time, when they received the order to leave the locks. Due to the very strong tidal current, *Sunny Blossom* was pushed towards the sunken *Maritime Lady*.

The main engine of *Sunny Blossom* was in good working order and with the full power of the main engine and hard rudder manoeuvres, the ship tried to avoid *Maritime Lady* but unfortunately the ship appears to have made contact. The impact badly damaged the propeller and the main engine immediately stopped. The port anchor was dropped immediately but a slight grounding on the south side of the River Elbe could not be avoided. The vessel was assisted by tugs and has proceeded to a safe mooring. All cargo and bunker tanks are undamaged. No injuries have been experienced on board. Neither cargo, nor bunker oil escaped from the vessel. A small amount of lubrication oil from the stern tube protecting the propeller shaft escaped due to the accident. A boom was immediately deployed around the ship to avoid pollution. Divers attended the ship to assess the damage and inspections by the company's technical personnel in conjunction with the class society and underwriters are on-going. *Sunny Blossom* is carrying a cargo of urea ammonium nitrate, UAN. UAN is a non-hazardous biological liquid used as fertilizers. Laurin Maritime and the ship's crew are co-operating in the investigation. As of today, the master and company have not been informed of any criminal proceedings against the pilot or master. The master is required to put up a guarantee prior to leaving the country which is standard practice for an investigation as he is not a German citizen.

London, Dec 8 — Problems in radio communication could be the cause for the major collision on the river Elbe near the entrance to the Kiel Canal late on (Dec 5) Monday, according to Hamburg water police. The general cargo *Maritime Lady* sank after a collision with c.c. *Arctic Ocean*. Salvage operations on the vessel will not start before tomorrow or Saturday (Dec 10), a spokesman for the central maritime accident command said. The command was hoping to award the contract for the salvage operation late yesterday afternoon. The *Maritime Lady* was declared an actual total loss by its owner. According to the command, the owner is a Norwegian company called Jensen. A northern German company, which is still listed as owner, said it had sold the vessel. The chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom*, a third vessel that crashed into the scene after the first accident, is seriously damaged and cannot continue under its own power, the command said. Water police added that they have banned the vessel from leaving the port of Brunsbittel. Shipping was not hampered on either the Elbe or the Kiel Canal.

London, Dec 8 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: It has been reported today that the wreck of general cargo *Maritime Lady* will be salvaged by the salvors Taucher Otto Wulff, Cuxhaven, who has signed a Lloyd's Open Form contract. The salvage will start next week with the Denmark-based sheerleg *Samson*.

MAYA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Etel MRCC, timed 1115, UTC: General cargo *Maya* (2318 gt, built 1982), V2UI, (bound Leixoes) currently has engine problems in lat 45 57.5N, long 05 06.5W.

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Etel MRCC, timed 1655, UTC: General cargo *Maya* is still in the same position still with engine problems. A sistership is proceeding, possibly to render assistance.

London, Dec 6 — Following received from Etel MRCC, timed 0800, UTC: General cargo *Maya*: General cargo *Agat*, V2PL2, is now on scene and is passing a tow line over to vessel. *Agat* will then tow *Maya* to Bilbao.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Etel MRCC, timed 0940, UTC: General cargo *Maya*, in tow of general cargo *Agat*, has left the French sector and is now in waters covered by Spanish rescue authorities.

London, Dec 8 — Following received from Madrid MRCC, timed 1110, UTC: General cargo *Maya* was safely towed into Gijon at 1455, UTC, Dec 7.

METALLICA (Gibraltar)

London, Dec 2 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1300, UTC: General cargo *Metallica* informed us at 0328, local time, Dec 1, that it was awaiting owners' instructions on where to proceed, under tow.

London, Dec 6 — General cargo *Metallica* was in lat 53 13 11N, long 22 09 15E, at 0231 today, speed 11 knots, course 051 deg.

MICHEL (Netherlands)

Gijon, Dec 7 — General cargo *Michel* is still in port detained by the Admiralty Court of Ferrol at the request of the salvors. — Lloyd's Agents.

MIRAC-3 (Turkey)

Venice, Dec 5 — General cargo *Mirac-3* sustained heavy indentation and tearing of starboard shell plating in way of hold No.1. Vessel also reported detachment of rudder which got lost at sea. Repairs have been placed in hand with local workshop but have not started as yet. Arrangements are reportedly in hand to forward a new rudder from Turkey. General cargo *Silver* sustained an indentation of port shell plating and bulbous bow top plate. Vessel carried out no repairs and, after loading bulk grain cargo, sailed on Dec 3 bound for Luanda. — Lloyd's Agents.

MOBBY DICK (Honduras)

London, Dec 2 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: General cargo *Mobby Dick* arrived Rhodes safely in tow of tug *Megas Alexandros*. Departure has been prohibited pending issuance of class maintain certificate.

Piraeus, Dec 2 — General cargo *Mobby Dick* was located by salvage tug *Megas Alexandros* 25 25 nautical miles west of Tilos Island and was towed to

Rhodes port yesterday, where it remains awaiting class inspection. — Lloyd's Agents.

MR-I (Indonesia)

Jakarta, Dec 5 — According to the owners of wine tank *Mr-I* the vessel completed repairs Dec 2 and vessel moved to Tanjung Priok anchorage where it is still there today. — Lloyd's Agents.

MSC ELENA (Panama)

See under "Pollution."

MSC FRIBOURG (Panama)

Bucharest, Dec 7 — C.c. *MSC Fribourg* (37277 gt, built 1980) arrived Constantza Dec 5 and when sailing grounded on Constantza northern breakwater at 2357, Dec 6. The vessel was de-ballasted this morning and with the assistance of tugs *Zimbrul 3* and *Zimbrul 4*, the refloating operations was completed at 1037 hrs. The vessel is presently under towage to inner anchorage for further inspections and surveys, including by class. — Lloyd's Agents.

MSC IRIS (Panama)

Zeebrugge, Dec 7 — C.c. *MSC Iris* (21586 gt, built 1982) sailed Antwerp, via Boudewijnlock, for Bilbao, at 0155, local time, today and anchored in the River Scheldt with engine trouble at 0325 hrs. Vessel heaved up anchor and proceeded seawards at 0504 hrs. Vessel subsequently anchored at Flushing roads for repairs at 1105 same day. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

MSC KATIE (Panama)

London, Dec 7 — The owners of two vessels which collided close Mauritius in April this year are heading for a High Court confrontation. The two vessels, c.c. *MSC Katie* and c.c. *Nordsun* collided off Port Louis, Mauritius, on Apr 21. Now in an interim writ issued at London's High Court on Nov 11, the owners of the *MSC Katie* accused the owners of *Nordsun* of negligence and say this led to the collision. They are seeking unspecified damages of more than £300,000.

NAFTOCEMENT V

London, Dec 2 — Following received from the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs of St Vincent and The Grenadines, dated today: Cement *Naftocement V* was deleted from this registry on Apr 27.

NATHALIE (Finland)

Helsinki, Dec 2 — Owners of general cargo *Nathalie* report that vessel was repaired at Naantali dockyard and ETD today. — Lloyd's Agents.

Helsinki, Dec 8 — General cargo *Nathalie* sailed from Naantali at 0910 hrs, Dec 2. — Lloyd's Agents.

NATIONAL STAR (Egypt)

Aleppo, Dec 7 — Our Tartous office has reported that the related parties of general cargo *National Star* and general cargo *Statengracht* have agreed to refer the matter to P & I

club for settlement, and the two vessels have left Tartous port without repairs. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Statengracht* subsequently arrived Antwerp Dec 6.)

London, Dec 6 — General cargo *Statengracht* passed Gibraltar Dec 2 bound Antwerp.

NORDSUN (Cyprus)

See *MSC Katie*.

NORMAND NEPTUN (NIS)

See *Fighter*.

NORMANDY (Bahamas)

See "Irish Ferries Personnel" under "Labour Disputes".

OLYMPIAS

(St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Dec 2 — General cargo *Olympias* arrived Alang Oct 10, to be broken up. (Note — *Olympias* had an engine-room fire which engulfed the vessel in the northern Persian Gulf on May 11.)

ORATECA (DIS)

London, Dec 6 — Edible oil tanker *Orateca* arrived Hull at 1741, Dec 3, from Gdynia, sailed 0430, Dec 4, for Rotterdam, where it arrived 2305 same day.

ORO 1 (Comoros)

Piraeus, Dec 6 — General cargo *Oro 1* remains in port under detention due to numerous distresses applied. No information regarding repairs available. — Lloyd's Agents.

OTM 3072 (Canada)

London, Dec 7 — Barge *OTM 3072* was reported arriving at Quebec on/about Dec 1.

OVERSEAS COLMAR (Marshall Islands)

London, Dec 2 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0845, UTC: The tow line between crude oil tanker *Overseas Colmar* and tug/supply *Shin Chou Maru* parted yesterday. The tanker is still adrift and was in lat 43 44.1N, long 139 51.9E, at 0500, local time, today, with the tug standing by. The tow line cannot be reconnected at the moment due sea conditions.

London, Dec 2 — OSG Shipmanagement, report that their managed crude oil tanker *Overseas Colmar* in tow from Sakhalin Island, to Yosu for lightering, temporarily parted from the towing tug/supply *Shin Chou Maru* when the 800 metre tow line broke, due to heavy weather, at 0520, local time, yesterday. The tug remains with the vessel and will attempt to re-connect a new tow line within the next few hours. The Japanese Coast Guard have been notified and are being kept updated on the situation. *Overseas Colmar* is loaded with some 23,000 mt of crude oil and is located some 54 miles from the nearest coastline. The vessels estimated time of arrival in Korea is Dec 8.

London, Dec 6 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0230, UTC: Crude oil tanker *Overseas Colmar* adrift in lat 42 19.2N, long 135 25.6E at 0100, UTC, today. Tug *Shin Chou Maru* attempting to reconnect tow line.

London, Dec 6 — OSG Shipmanagement, report that at approximately 0430, UTC, (today) their managed crude oil tanker *Overseas Colmar* was reconnected to its tow in lat 42.19.2N, long 135 25.6E, and resumed passage to Yosu for ship to ship transfer prior to proceeding to China for repair. Tug *Koyo Maru* is now providing the tow.

London, Dec 7 — Following notice to mariners issued Dec 6: Tug towing crude oil tanker *Overseas Colmar* in lat 42 17N, long 135 23E, at "0300", UTC, today, with ETA Yosu 0001, Dec 12. Speed about five to six knots, length of tow about 1,000 metres.

PAPER MOON

(Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Dec 3 — General cargo *Paper Moon* arrived Great Yarmouth Nov 29 from Szczecin.

PAULA (Republic of Ireland)

Trondheim, Dec 6 — Trawler *Paula*: Eidsvik Skipsbyggeri estimate complete rebuilding at the end this week. — Lloyd's Agents.

PAVEL MOCHALOV (Russia)

London, Dec 8 — General cargo *Pavel Mochalov* arrived Novorossiysk Dec 5 from Poti.

PAVO (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Dec 3 — General cargo *Pavo* sailed Swinoujscie Dec 1 for Klaipeda.

PEQUOT (Liberia)

Caracas, Dec 7 — Bulk *Pequot*: Reported Nov 30 that temporary repairs have not yet started. The estimate to accomplish the repairs is 21 days after the forepeak was sealed and pumped off and Fiscalia (Prosecutor Office) gives the authorisation to start the works, which could be next Saturday (Dec 3). If so, the repairs could be expected to be completed on Dec 24. The repairs will consist of the following: Divers will seal and make watertight the forepeak from outside and inside. Oily water will be pumped out from forepeak to barges. Swash bulkhead openings between forepeak and bulbous will be sealed and reinforced. Bow ripped plating at bos'n deck and forecandle deck level to be partially cut as needed. Bos'n deck distorted and ripped plating to be sealed with 8 mm steel inserts and concrete boxes. A 8 mm steel plate bulkhead with internal reinforcement, extending from port to starboard aft to the damaged bos'n deck plating will be fabricated and installed to seal the compartment from outside and protect the equipment installed inside. Port side anchor system will be repaired, tested and made ready. Starboard side anchor will be detached and stowed on forecandle deck. Zulia Towing & Barge

Co., S.A., Maracaibo, has been nominated to carry out the repairs. The vessel still at Maracaibo anchorage. Forepeak compartment has been sealed from outside and inside by divers. Oily water pumped out to barges, but water still flooding inside compartment, so at the present time the divers still working to seal the compartment. Visit on board has been scheduled with P & I representative Dec 1. — Lloyd's Agents.

PHAYOON 3 (Thailand)

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: Luxury yacht *Phayoon 3*, length 130 ft, was grounded off the southern coast of Phuket early this morning after the vessel began taking on water in heavy seas. The yacht, which is operated by Kingfisher Marine, came back from a season based in Singapore in October, and was on the way to pick up passengers from Myanmar. So far not much is known about why the yacht started taking on water, Scott Kingston, son of the company's principal, Jean Kingston, said. "We're still assessing the actual situation. They grounded it. Jean is just now diving underneath to assess damage." Rough seas appeared to have played a part in *Phayoon 3's* troubles, Scott said. "It started taking on quite a bit of water. There were about two-metre swells, which we've handled before. But I think it was the direction of the swell, coming in from aft, and it started taking on water through one of the hatches. That's as much as I know at the moment." *Phayoon 3* has a crew of nine and accommodation for 12 passengers in six cabins. The boat is currently grounded off Laem Phromthep. There were no passengers on board at the time, and all crew were unharmed.

PHILIPP (Antigua & Barbuda)

Liverpool, Dec 7 — Repairs to general cargo *Philipp* will be completed today. Understand that the vessel will sail at 0400 hrs tomorrow. — Lloyd's Agents.

PINEY POINT (U.S.A.)

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Transfer of 750,000 gallons of liquid asphalt remaining onboard grounded tank barge *Piney Point* in the James River was completed late Wednesday night. U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Paul Rhynard said the chemical cargo onboard the barge was transferred to the larger tank barge *Penn No.400*. That vessel departed late Wednesday night for a Chesapeake port to unload the liquid asphalt, he added. "The contents of the damaged tank has congealed," explained Rhynard. "The recovery of the hardened asphalt from the river is scheduled to begin Monday." Meanwhile, *Piney Point* has been moved to a sheltered cove 50 yards north of where it grounded to allow divers to assess damage to its hull before it is moved to its final destination for repair, he added.

Baltimore, Dec 5 — US Coast Guard, Group-Hampton Roads advise that tank barge *Piney Point* completed

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

discharging her cargo and was then moved to a sheltered area for damage assessment. There was no information available regarding the extent of the reported cargo spill. The vessel is presently underway (actually, at this precise time she is sheltering from the anticipated heavy snow storm tonight near Hog Island, then she'll be underway) for the Colonais Ship Yard in the southern branch of the Elizabeth River in Portsmouth, VA for repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

POINTING

London, Dec 6 — Bulk *Ithomi* (before reported as renamed *Pointing*) arrived Alang Nov 28 for breakers.

QUADRA QUEEN II (Canada)

London, Dec 6 — Ro/ro *Quadra Queen II* (865 gt, built 1969) struck dock while berthing at Sointula, Malcolm Island, BC, lat 50 38N, long 127 01W, at 1621, PST, Nov 25.

QUIET WATERS (U.K.)

London, Dec 8 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 0020, UTC: Fishing *Quiet Waters* (121 gt, built 1980), four persons on board, taking on water in lat 56 56N, long 06 55W. Fishing *Gleaner* responded and rescued four crew from liferaft. ETV *Anglian Prince*, tasked, ETA 0300, UTC. Vessel afloat but unstable. *Gleaner* remains on scene.

London, Dec 8 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed, 0049, UTC: Fishing *Quiet Waters* sank in 120 metres of water in lat 56 56.82N, long 06 55.78W. No pollution.

RAWAA A. (Syria)

London, Dec 3 — General cargo *Rawaa A.*, Volos for Constantza, passed Istanbul Dec 1.

REGINA J. (Antigua & Barbuda)

Vigo, Dec 5 — General cargo *Regina J.* (3806 gt, built 1994) when leaving Vigo at 2300 yesterday it reported alleged engine damage and remained at anchor inside Vigo Bay. At 1200 today the vessel proceeded to berth in Vigo assisted by local tugs *Alejandro Jose* and *Julia S.* — Lloyd's Agents.

RENNESØY (Norway)

London, Dec 3 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Rennesoy* is now at Rosenberg Yard in Stavanger, undergoing repair.

RODINA (Bulgaria)

Aarhus, Dec 8 — Bulk *Rodina* is expected to complete dry-docking in Fredericia by the end of this week and it will be ready to depart Fredericia on Dec 13. — Lloyd's Agents.

SALAM 4 (Jordan)

See *Shanghai Pride*.

SARAH ROUSING (DIS)

Copenhagen, Dec 1 — General cargo *Sarah Rousing* sailed Copenhagen Nov 30 for Kolding. — Lloyd's Agents.

SARAH SPENCER (Canada)

London, Dec 2 — Barge *Sarah Spencer*, in tow of tug *Jane Ann IV*, arrived Thunder Bay Nov 29 and sailed same day.

SEA MAGNOLIA (Panama)

London, Dec 2 — Bulk *Sea Magnolia* is currently proceeding on its voyage from Seattle to Japan, and was reported in lat 48 47 50.76N, long 125 46 03.3W, at 1035, Nov 29, speed 10.7 knots, course 307 deg.

SEA SURVEYOR (Bahamas)

London, Dec 2 — Following received from Coast Guard Falmouth MRCC, timed 1340, UTC: Research *Sea Surveyor*, C6QL6, (1275 gt, built 1979) is in lat 47 40N, long 06 29W, with fouled propellers and unable to move. Owners are looking for commercial tow.

London, Dec 2 — Following received from Coast Guard Falmouth MRCC, timed 2149, UTC: Research *Sea Surveyor* has managed to re-start one of its engines and has stabilised its position and is waiting for a tug which is due to arrive on scene a.m. tomorrow.

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Coast Guard Falmouth MRCC, timed 0850, UTC: Research *Sea Surveyor*: Due weather conditions the tug was delayed at Brest but was last reported now due of scene at 0500 this morning. Vessel still has use of one engine.

London, Dec 5 — Research *Sea Surveyor*: Understand tug *Facal Diecisiete* is now on scene and is to tow *Sea Surveyor* to Corunna.

London, Dec 6 — Following received from Coastguard Falmouth MRCC, timed 0805, UTC: Research *Sea Surveyor* was in lat 46 40N, long 09 25W, at 1425 yesterday with tug in attendance, bound Corunna, where ETA 1700 today.

SHANGHAI PRIDE (Panama)

London, Dec 2 — A SvitzerWijismuller Salvage report, dated Dec 1, states: SvitzerWijismuller Salvage and her Sri Lankan partners Sri Lanka Shipping Co were instructed to start up salvage operations on general cargo *Shanghai Pride* off Sri Lanka on Nov 29. The vessel, loaded with rice, had been involved in a collision (with bulk *Salam 4*) off Sri Lanka some time ago (Nov 13) which caused considerable damage to its side with two of its five holds being flooded. The vessel limped back to off Colombo but it has now been decided that the situation requires professional salvage assistance to be resolved. In the meantime a salvage team has been formed with SvitzerWijismuller staff from South Korea, South Africa and The Netherlands, with further staff from Singapore to follow in case of need in addition to Sri Lankan staff from Sri Lanka Shipping. Additional equipment has been mobilised in from the SvitzerWijismuller warehouses in Singapore and The Netherlands.

SIDI MOHAMMED BEN ABDALLAH (Moroccan)

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated Dec 6, states: United States Coast Guardsmen aboard helicopters, jets and cutters rushed to the aid of Moroccan Navy vessel *Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah* taking on water tonight, 60 nautical miles north of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. *Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah* started taking on water in the engine-room from an unknown source at about 1700 hrs. *Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah*, with 250 people on board, contacted the Coast Guard on VHF radio Channel 16, the international hail and distress frequency. A Coast Guard HH-65 Dolphin helicopter from Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico, and an HU-25 Falcon jet from Air Station Miami dropped a total of three dewatering pumps to the vessel. The Coast Guard also diverted Coast Guard Cutters *Sapelo*, *Ocracoke* and *Confidence* to assist as well as two commercial vessels participating in the Automated Mutual-assistance Vessel Rescue System. The crew of the *Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah* was able to get the flooding under control by 1858 hrs and is making way to the port of San Juan. The *Sapelo* is escorting the vessel, making sure it safely returns to port.

SILVER

(St. Vincent & Grenadines)

See *Mirac-3*.

SIRICHAH PETROLEUM 2 (Thailand)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy".

SMIT RHONE (Netherlands)

Maassluis, Dec 2 — Tug *Smit Rhone* had a fire in the engine-room. Understand repairs will take a couple of days. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Maassluis, Dec 6 — Repairs to tug *Smit Rhone* were completed Friday evening, Dec 2. The tug is carrying out operations at the moment. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

SOLIDOR 5 (France)

Nantes, Nov 29 — Passenger *Solidor 5* arrived St. Nazaire Nov 23. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Dec 6 — New doubts have arisen over the future of one of Jersey's ferry services to St. Malo after it stopped taking bookings for all its future sailings. Emeraude Ferries has also been forced to cancel all its services until at least Dec 19 while passenger *Solidor 5* undergoes emergency repairs. The firm says it cannot afford a replacement vessel on the loss-making route to the continent. Emeraude says it still hopes to find a replacement for the Christmas break. The company has sustained heavy losses on the Jersey to St. Malo route for the past two years. It blames the opening up of the route to competition with Condor Ferries in March 2003.

STATENGRACHT (Netherlands)

See *National Star*.

STEVA (Malta)

Piraeus, Dec 2 — Bulk *Steva* sailed Piraeus Nov 28 for Bulgaria. — Lloyd's Agents.

STORMAN ASIA (Madeira)

Trondheim, Dec 6 — Kristiansund Harbour Office confirm ro/ro *Storman Asia* arrived Kristiansund, under own power, 0800, Nov 30, after engine trouble. Vessel's agents inform engine was repaired, renewal of ball bearings, alongside quay. Vessel left Kristiansund at 0800, Dec 4, for Eleusis, Greece. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUNNY BLOSSOM (Bahamas)

See *Maritime Lady*.

SUPERFLYTE (New Zealand)

Wellington, Dec 5 — Ferry *Superflyte* completed repairs and was back in service Dec 1. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUZIE Q. (Antigua & Barbuda)

Busan, Dec 3 — General cargo *Suzie Q.* drydocked Nov 14 upon arrival at Yosu. After completion of repairs at Daehan Shipbuilding Co., vessel sailed from Yosu at about 1330, Nov 24 bound for Hitachi, ETA Nov 28. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Dec 3 — General cargo *Suzie Q.* arrived Hitachi Nov 28 from Yosu.

TAKU (U.S.A.)

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: State ferry officials hope to have the passenger ro/ro *Taku* (2625 gt, built 1963) up and running by later today. The vessel was delayed in Ketchikan because of a dead boiler. Transportation Department spokesman John Manly says workers discovered that the ferry's boiler was dead when the vessel's water supply ran cold. Workers at Alaska Ship and Drydock planned to assess the problem. (Note — *Taku* arrived Ketchikan Dec 1.)

London, Dec 5 — An Alaska Marine Highway System press release, dated Dec 2, states: The Alaska Marine Highway System announced today that the northbound sailing of passenger ro/ro *Taku* has been cancelled due to its inoperative boiler. *Taku* had been scheduled to depart Ketchikan this afternoon for Skagway, with intermediate stops at Wrangell, Petersburg, Juneau, and Haines. Its normal schedule would have it returning to Ketchikan by Saturday night. It is the intention of AMHS to have the vessel back in service in time to sail southbound to Prince Rupert on schedule at 0200 Sunday (Dec 4). Workers at Alaska Ship and Drydock have so far been unable to determine why the boiler, which provides heat and hot water throughout the vessel, stopped working on Thursday while *Taku* was en route to Ketchikan. Capt. John Falvey, general manager of AMHS, said reservations personnel would work to place travellers on other ferries.

London, Dec 7 — Passenger ro/ro *Taku* sailed Ketchikan 0400, local time, Dec 4. Vessel subsequently arrived and sailed Petersburg Dec 5 and arrived and sailed Sitka Dec 5.

TALBOR (Norway)

London, Dec 2 — Following received from Bodo RCC, timed 1250, UTC: Fishing *Talbor* has been safely towed into Bodo.

Narvik, Dec 6 — The Harbour Authority at Bodo advises that fishing *Talbor* arrived at Bodo at 2100, Dec 1, for repairs. Vessel sailed from Bodo Dec 3. — Lloyd's Agents.

TIGER (U.S.A.)

London, Dec 5 — A Coast Guard Seattle press release, dated Dec 4, states: The Coast Guard is responding to tug *Tiger* (47 gt, built 1948) that capsized after taking a barge in tow near Astoria, Ore. Two commercial tugs successfully took a log barge in tow after it was reported drifting at 2000 hrs, by a pilot boat in the area. While attempting to secure the barge, one of the tugs capsized and was lodged underneath the barge. One person entered the water when the tug capsized and was rescued by two fellow crewmembers and personnel from the pilot boat. Later, all three were transported to Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria. The barge and capsized tug have been moved to Youngs Bay, Ore., with two tugs standing by to assist as needed. Although there is no evidence that fuel or oil is leaking from the tug, protective boom has been placed around the tug. In addition, personnel from Coast Guard Sector Portland, Ore., are assessing pollution hazards and working with the tugs owners to develop a salvage plan. The Coast Guard is coordinating with the Washington Department of Ecology and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. The Coast Guard is also investigating the cause of the capsizing.

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Coast Guard Seattle, timed 0815, UTC: Tug *Tiger*, official No.256714, is still in capsized condition. A boom has been placed around the tug, however, there has been no pollution. Divers have been down and removed 1,400 gallons of fuel from the tug. A crane is expected on site tomorrow (local time).

Portland, Ore, Dec 6 — Tug *Tiger* capsized in Astoria, Oregon, while assisting a log barge on Dec 5. Understand that there were no fatalities. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Coast Guard Seattle, timed 2131, UTC: Tug *Tiger* righted a.m. yesterday and understood heading to Portland, Ore.

TOR BELGIA (U.K.)

Vigo, Dec 5 — Ro/ro *Tor Belgia* (21491 gt, built 1978), Montoir for Vigo, cargo of trailers, reported heavy weather conditions Dec 2, (wind up to force 10 (storm), swell 10 metres at times), and several trailers with cargo shifted. Cargo was jointly surveyed at

Vigo Dec 4 and found several logs fallen of trailer and some other minor bumps and dents caused to trailers and some additional cargo shifted on them. Initially it appears no damage, "(small)" attributed to vessel. — Lloyd's Agents.

Vigo, Dec 5 — Ro/ro *Tor Belgia* sailed Vigo Dec 5 for Montoir. — Lloyd's Agents.

TRANS HOLM (NIS)

London, Dec 1 — Following received from Coast Guard Karlskrona, timed 1520, UTC: Chem.tank *Trans Holm* (4259 gt, built 1981) was towed into Helsingborg this morning, with engine problems, by tugs *Asterix* and *Kullen*. The vessel was first towed from the position where it first had a problem to Koge Bay by general cargo *Baltic Guide* and from there it was towed to Helsingborg by *Asterix*.

Gothenburg, Dec 1 — Chem.tank *Trans Holm*: While heading for Helsingborg from loading port in Finland as per schedule at noon yesterday, vessel had engine breakdown and parts in cylinder smashed, also damaging turbo-charger. Vessel was left drifting off Bornholm island with only bow thruster working. Sistership attended where vessel afloat and supported with tugs from Roda/Svitzer up to Drogden in The Sound, where tug *Asterix* attended and took over the tow to Helsingborg/Kemira port. Supported by local port tug of Helsingborg, vessel tied up at Kemira quay, south of Helsingborg and all fast at 0940 today. This was the intended port and is currently discharging chemical substance until ETD 2300 hrs and all working fine. After final discharge to shift berth, alongside same berth but two new vessels ETA tonight. "Vessel repair and dismantled damaged parts while in port/discharging and some spares for delivery tomorrow morning." It is expected to depart at noon tomorrow if all goes OK. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Helsingborg, Dec 1 — Chem.tank *Trans Holm*, in tow of tug *Asterix* and assisted by local harbour tug *Kullen*, was moored alongside its discharge berth in the Helsingborg Bulk Harbour at 0940 hrs, Dec 1, after having sustained main engine breakdown off Bornholm, during a loaded passage from Nystad, Finland to Helsingborg, carrying a cargo of 3,539.41 tonnes of fluorsilicic acid. Discharging is estimated to be completed at 2300 hrs, today. Repairs to the main engine damage are estimated to be completed by noon tomorrow, at which time the vessel vessel will sail, bound for Nystad in ballast. — Lloyd's Agents.

Gothenburg, Dec 2 — Chem.tank *Trans Holm* completed discharge and repairs and departed Helsingborg at 1730 hrs, bound for Nystad, Finland. The vessel was expected to have sailed around noon, but was delayed due to "technical reasons". — Westax Marine Services AB.

TRANSFER (Antigua & Barbuda)

Belize City, Dec 7 — The Belize Company "Pinnacle Construction and Engineering" contacted the reported owners in Miami with their proposal of salvage for part c.c. *Transfer*. A proposal has been made to the Belize Government to make an ex-gratia payment, and part has already been paid. The note added that the contractor will be notified of Pinnacle's proposal. Based on the Scopis/SCR clauses the payment would represent the "Liability Underwriters" portion. The vessel sits on the reef and obviously any direction, to which the Belize salvage companies may be pointed, in order to make some progress with this case, will be very welcome. — Lloyd's Agents.

TRIZAN (North Korea)

Thessaloniki, Dec 2 — During the night of Nov 23 a Lloyd's Open Form 2000, incorporating SCOPIC, was signed between North Aegean Consortium for Salvage & Towage - Gigilinis Shipping Group for the salvage of general cargo *Trizan* which ran aground off Thasos Island. On the same day, SCOPIC was invoked. Early morning Nov 24, our tugs *Dimitrios* and *Theodoros* along with a team of divers and specialized personnel were dispatched to the site from the port of Kavala. During the night, due to the bad weather conditions prevailing in the area, the grounded vessel broke in two between holds 2 and 3. Some of the cargo fell into the sea but no major oil pollution was observed initially. Anti-pollution material, booms and other equipment were dispatched to the site and following an underwater inspection of the casualty by divers, booms were placed all around the casualty and anti-pollution materials were used for dispersing small oil spills. By the evening of same day, the casualty was completely circled by booms. All small oil spills had dispersed and the cargo falling to the sea from the open, torn, hold was driven ashore through the booms and collected by special equipment. In the afternoon time of Nov 25, the operation of transferring the bunkers from the casualty commenced and it was completed the same day. All the bunkers were successfully transferred to our tug *Dimitrios*. At the same time, all other pollutants, i.e. slopes, lub oils etc. from the engine-room were also removed and transferred to *Dimitrios*. Later on the same day, our tug *Europ* sailed the port of Thessaloniki, headed for the site of the casualty. *Europe* arrived at the site Nov 26 and it was engaged in the operation. In the weekend, Nov 26-27, strong winds and bad weather prevailed in the area. During that time, various works were performed in the site, but the main task was to further separate the two parts of the casualty, which would allow a more thorough inspection by divers. Anti pollution measures continued to be in force. More anchors were placed on the booms to compensate for the bad weather. On Nov 28 and after the two

parts of the casualty were further separated, several inspections were performed by divers and marine engineers and other specialized personnel were dispatched to the site in order to assess the situation regarding a possible course of action for the removal of the cargo from and the two parts of the casualty from the beach. On Nov 30 the relevant reports were prepared and presented. Up to this day, anti-pollution measures are in force and the planning/preparations for removing the cargo and the two parts of the casualty, is underway. — Gigilinis Shipping Group.

ULYSSES (Republic of Ireland)

See "Irish Ferries Personnel" under "Labour Disputes".

URVAAG

Trondheim, Dec 6 — Fishing *Urvaag* was sold today. New owners: Bat og Oppdrettservice AS, Averoy, Norway. — Lloyd's Agents.

UTE JOHANNA (Germany)

Vigo, Dec 7 — General cargo *Ute Johanna* (2984 gt, built 1995) reports heavy weather damage to one container reefer unit HJCU69766818 on Dec 3, while on passage to Vigo from Rotterdam. Container landed for inspection. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Ute Johanna* arrived Vigo Dec 3 from Rotterdam and sailed same day for Leixoes.)

VERTIGO (Jamaica)

London, Dec 7 — Following navigation warning broadcast at 0359, UTC, today: A vessel has sunk in lat 55 13N, long 11 05E. The wreck is rising above seasurface and makes an obstruction. The wreck is unmarked. Guard vessel VTS4 is listening on vhf channel 16. Mariners are advised to keep clear.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0805, UTC: It was reported at 2344, UTC, yesterday that bulk *Vertigo* (15502 gt, built 1986), Baltic for Houston, cargo steel products including pipes, had been in collision with bulk *Ziemia Lodzka* (17458 gt, built 1992), bound Swinoujscie, cargo phosphate (from Casablanca). *Vertigo* has partially sunk with part of the vessel above the waterline. The crew from *Vertigo* have been rescued and are now in Korsor. *Ziemia Lodzka* is at anchor with water in bow, in no danger of sinking, but likely to require assistance. (Note — *Vertigo* sailed Swinoujscie Dec 6 for New Orleans.)

London, Dec 7 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Two vessels collided in the morning of Dec 7 in the Great Belt off Denmark. The Jamaica-flagged bulk *Vertigo* was damaged severely and started listing so seriously that the crew of 23 left the vessel in the boats. The listing vessel subsequently ran aground. The Liberia-flagged bulk *Ziemia Lodzka* was only slightly damaged.

Copenhagen, Dec 7 — Bulk *Vertigo* and bulk *Ziemia Lodzka* were in collision in the Great Belt at 0130,

local time, today. *Vertigo* sank as a result and part of the wreck is above the water. The crew were all rescued and taken to the nearest port, Korsor. Danish maritime authorities will today receive statements from the crews of the two vessels and will also carry out technical inspections at the place of the collision. No leakage of oil has been reported from the vessels, which have been detained by Danish authorities. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Dec 7 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Bulk *Vertigo* was damaged severely and started listing so seriously that the crew of 23 left the vessel in boats. The crew were rescued by ro/ro *Stena Carrier* and taken to Korsor. The listing vessel then ran aground. Bulk *Ziemia Lodzka* was only slightly damaged and anchored between Langeland and Korsor. Helicopters, oil fighting vessels *Marie Miljo* and *Gunnar Seidenfaden*, rescue boat *Storen* and other craft are on the scene.

London, Dec 8 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0925, UTC: Bulk *Vertigo* is still in the same position. Efforts will be made today to pump water out of the engine-room. Fuel oil etc will have to be removed from the vessel and plans for this are awaited. Bulk *Ziemia Lodzka* has been given permission by Danish Maritime Authorities to proceed but is still at anchor.

VISTEN (Netherlands Antilles)

Tallinn, Dec 8 — While departing from Miiduranna harbour, Estonia, at 0230, local time, Dec 2, general cargo *Visten* (4060 gt, built 1990) caught a mooring line in her propeller. Underwater survey was carried out in the Bay of Tallinn and the aft sterntube seal (Cedervall KR type) wear ring's housing was found broken. It meant that the propeller could not be clutched to running main engine as it would have caused serious oil pollution. The cargo was transferred to vessel *Saxon*. *Visten* was subsequently towed to Tallinn Shipyard and dry-docked on Dec 6 for inspection and repairs. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — On Dec 8 AIS reported in lat 59 27 32.06N, long 24 39 31.99E, 0.7 nautical miles from Bekker.)

VULCAN (U.S.A.)

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: The Hannibal Locks and Dam on the Ohio River reopened this morning after being shut down overnight by a barge accident. A tug (*Vulcan*) pushing nine coal-laden barges lost power Wednesday night and several barges crashed into a wall at the locks. The accident caused only minor cosmetic damage, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers spokeswoman Karen Auer said today. Six men onboard the tug, owned by Mon River Towing from Belle Vernon, Pa., were not injured, Auer said. The main lock reopened at about 0700 today. The smaller lock was being used to store the tug and

the barges until the corps could examine them and Mon River Towing could retrieve them, Auer said. No boats or barges were waiting to go through the locks when the main lock reopened, she said.

WAHKIAKUM (U.S.A.)

London, Dec 4 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Ferry *Wahkiakum* (88 gt, built 1961), which runs between Washington's Puget Island and Westport, will be out of service for at least a week, said Pete Ringen, who serves as public works director and county engineer for Wahkiakum County, Wash., which operates the ferry. He said one of the ferry's two engines failed Thursday (Dec 1) morning and must be replaced.

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated Dec 6, states: Ferry *Wahkiakum*, which runs between Washington's Puget Island and Westport, could resume normal service as soon as tomorrow afternoon, said Pete Ringen, who serves as public works director and county engineer for Wahkiakum County, Wash., which operates the ferry, today. He said a new engine to replace the one that failed last week will be installed today, and the U.S. Coast Guard will check out the ferry tomorrow morning.

WILSON TANA (Malta)

London, Dec 6 — Bulk *Wilson Tana*, Seville for Swinoujscie, passed Cape Finisterre 1412, Dec 4.

YM VENUS (Malta)

Ponta Delgada, Dec 5 — Chem.tank *YM Venus* still under repairs at Ponta Delgada. — Lloyd's Agents.

ZHE SHENG YU

See *Auk Arrow*.

ZHENLE 57 (China)

See "China" under "Weather & Navigation".

ZIEMIA LODZKA (Liberia)

See *Vertigo*.



SOMALIA

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Thai owned product tanker *Sirichai Petroleum 2* (711 gt, built 1978) believed to have been hijacked in the pirate-infested waters off the Somali coast this week managed to escape its attackers after coming under heavy fire, a maritime official said. *Sirichai Petroleum 2*, which was delivering fuel to Thai fishing vessels in the Indian Ocean and was reportedly seized on Tuesday (Dec 6), took evasive action and then sped away from the pirates, the official said. "The ship was fired on by gunmen in a speedboat, but it

managed to outrun them and sped on," said Andrew Mwangura of the Kenyan chapter of the Seafarers' Assistance Programme (SAP) that initially reported the incident. The tanker and its 10-strong crew are safe and continuing with their journey, he said.



UNITED KINGDOM

London, Dec 6 — A Maritime and Coastguard Agency press release, dated today, states: The Maritime & Coastguard Agency announced today that they had detained product tanker *Citius* (43733 gt, built 1986) at Portbury Dock, Bristol on Dec 1. The attending Inspector found the following detainable items: Hull cracked in way of No.3 starboard water ballast tank. Deck cracked in way of No.3 port water ballast tank. Lack of training with regard to fire and boat drills. Radio MFDSC not operational. Failure of shipboard safety management system This vessel was last inspected in the Paris MOU Region on July 8, 2004.

Avonmouth, Dec 8 — The local BBC news reports that product tanker *Citius* has been detained at Portbury Docks after an inspection found faults. *Citius*, flag Marshall Islands, had small cracks in its hull and deck, inadequate fire and boat drills and general failure of shipboard safety. The vessel will have to undergo repairs which satisfy the Maritime and Coastguard Agency before it can leave. Understand from local agents that the vessel is due for reinspection late 8th early 9th. — Lloyd's Agents.



AZZAHRA (Morocco)

See under "Marine."

CAPTAIN JOY (Syria)

Limassol, Dec 2 — General cargo *Captain Joy* released and sailed Dec 1 for Odessa. — Lloyd's Agents.

DA YUAN YU 309 (China)

See under "Marine."

GLAROS (Panama)

La Spezia, Dec 5 — General cargo *Glaros* (1226 gt, built 1969), which arrived at La Spezia on Sep 13, remains at the port under detention. — Lloyd's Agents.

GRIEND (Netherlands)

Maassluis, Dec 8 — General cargo *Griend* (2868 gt, built 2000), which

arrived at Rotterdam on Dec 6, is currently under arrest in the port. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

HISTRIA TOPAZ (Romania)

Maassluis, Dec 8 — Product tanker *Histria Topaz* (24248 gt, built 1987), which arrived at Rotterdam on Nov 2 is currently under arrest in the port. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

HONDURAN FISHING VESSEL APPREHENDED BY JAMAICA

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: There is no word from the Marine Police as to the status of 115 Hondurans who were taken into custody for illegally fishing in Jamaican waters. The Hondurans and their vessel were apprehended by the Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard after they were caught fishing in a restricted area. The Coast Guard which was on a routine patrol of the Pedro Banks says the group was actively fishing and had an undetermined quantity of lobster and crab on board their vessel. The vessel and the crew were detained and handed over to the Marine Police.

MADAGASCAR (Ukraine)

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated Dec 7, states: Passenger *Madagascar* (3008 gt, built 1960), which arrived in Durban about a month ago to begin all-year cruising in the Indian Ocean from a base in Durban, has remained in port for the past week and has been placed under judicial arrest. The ship has since remained at its berth near M Shed with no confirmation of if and when the detention may be lifted, although a spokesman for Indian Ocean Cruises said the delay was caused by "technical problems" which he anticipated being sorted out shortly. The ship has so far completed only one voyage with a party of amateur ornithologist as passengers who travelled to Europa Island in the southern Mozambique Channel, the home of a unique species of bird. Apart from that several other voyages to Inhaca Island near Maputo have been attempted but aborted after the ship encountered rough weather. Another planned cruise to Inhaca last week was suddenly cancelled as a result of the detention order being served on the vessel.

OLYMPIA I (Greece)

London, Dec 6 — Passenger *Olympia I* arrived Piraeus Nov 21 from Eleusis.

ORESTES (Panama)

Bari, Dec 7 — Passenger ro/ro *Orestes* is still under arrest at Bari. — Lloyd's Agents.

PAN YUN BO 1 (China)

London, Dec 2 — General cargo *Pan Yun Bo 1* is still at Western Anchorage No.1, Hong Kong, under detention.

PLAVA (Albania)

Bari, Dec 7 — General cargo *Plava* is still under arrest at Bari. — Lloyd's Agents.

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

TERNEY (Russia)

London, Dec 8 — General cargo *Terney* (2463 gt, built 1982), seeking shelter from a sea storm in the territorial waters of North Korea was detained Dec 5, by N. Korean border guards who opened a warning fire. The vessel was carrying cargo from Pusan to Vladivostok and had to enter the territorial waters of North Korea to find a shelter near Cape Musudan. North Korean border guards approached the Russian vessel and opened warning fire. The Russian crew tried to use international code to hold negotiations but failed as North Korean side did not answer. Later N.Korean border guards came on board of the vessel and demanded that it should go to the port of Kimchaek. The captain contacted the vessel's owner, Primorye's shipping company Ardis, and the latter did not give permission to follow to the North Korean port. The 14 members of the crew are reported to be safe. The vessel has enough supplies of food and drinking water, Ardis company officials said. Ardis company management has forwarded appeals to North Korean Consulate General in Nakhodka, to Russian Border Guards department, to N.Korean Embassy in Moscow and Russian Embassy in Pyongyang. Anatoly Sidorenko, deputy general director of the Far Eastern shipping company, commented on the international sea laws regarding ships in distress, "According to international sea laws ships have right to seek shelter in stormy weather in territorial waters of other countries but may be North Korea and international laws lie apart." (Note — *Terney* sailed Busan Dec 2 for Vladivostok.)



Pipeline Accidents

FREMANTLE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

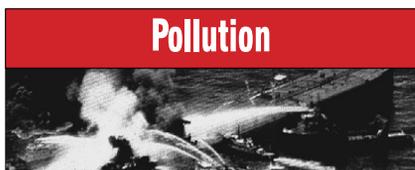
London, Dec 5 — The Fremantle Port Authority in Western Australia is continuing to investigate how more than 100 litres of fuel oil managed to leak into the inner harbour. Fremantle Port employees reported smelling oil on Thursday (Dec 1) night but it was not until Saturday that a small hole was discovered in a pipeline under one of the north quay container berths. Containment booms have been deployed near the Fremantle Traffic Bridge to clean-up the spill. The port authority says one bird has died, while others have been found covered in oil. The harbour master, Eric Atkinson, says the spill was initially estimated at 100 litres but it is now believed to be considerably more. "We suspect it certainly has been happening for longer than we thought was the case," he said. BP issued a statement yesterday saying it deeply regrets any oil spill and is working with

authorities to minimise the impact on the environment. The Swan River Trust is assisting the Port Authority with the clean-up. General manager Rod Hughes says it is difficult to gauge how much oil has flowed into the harbour. "We're waiting on a report from the Fremantle Port Authority to get definitive figures but what we've got is material mixed in with sand and seaweed so it seems to gather together quite a lot so you get quite a lot of material that you've got to pull off the beaches," he said.

PARAGUANA REGION, VENEZUELA

Caracas, Dec 4 — A fire hit a pipeline supplying Venezuela's huge Amuay-Cardon refinery in Paraguana region, but the blaze was controlled and had not affected fuel supplies, Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said today. "The situation is under control and they are opening an investigation to determine the exact cause of the incident," Ramirez told state television. "There is enough crude at the refinery so there should be no problems with fuel supplies," he said without giving more details. The giant 940,000 barrel-per-day Amuay-Cardon refinery is Venezuela's largest product exporting plant. The plant has been hit by several fires recently. — Reuters.

Caracas, Dec 4 — A pipeline supplying Venezuela's Amuay-Cardon refinery was damaged by an explosion and fire that government officials today blamed on sabotage, but exports were not affected. Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said both damaged lines of the oil route carrying a total of 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) to Amuay-Cardon — Venezuela's largest petroleum product-exporting plant — should resume operations over the next five days. "Our exports are not being affected," Ramirez told reporters, adding that an oil tanker with 400,000 barrels was in the port and other tankers could be used as well in case additional supplies to the refinery were needed. "We have enough stocks of crude to give us time to repair the pipeline, which we estimate will not take longer than five days to resume normal transportation," Ramirez told reporters. He also said the refinery had 2.841 million barrels stocked. Repairs to a bigger 26 inch line in Zulia state should be completed by Monday, he said, while the other line, 24 inches wide, would take somewhat longer to restart. — Reuters.



Pollution

AVONDALE CREEK, NORTH BIRMINGHAM, UNITED STATES

See "Dumping of Polluted Wastewater, Avondale Creek, North Birmingham, United States" under "Awards & Settlements."

FREMANTLE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

See under "Pipeline Accidents"

MSC ELENA (Panama)

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: An Indian national working as the Second Engineer on c.c. *MSC Elena* pleaded guilty today in federal court with violating an anti-pollution act in connection with his failure to maintain proper records and functioning equipment to monitor the overboard discharge of oil-contaminated bilge waste. United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan; Kelly A. Johnson, Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division; and William Schenkelberg, Special Agent in Charge of the Northeast Region of the U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Service, announced today that Aman Mahana, of India, pleaded guilty before Chief U.S. District Judge William G. Young to a criminal information charging him with one count of violating the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships. At today's plea hearing the prosecutor told the Court that, had the case proceeded to trial, the evidence would have proven that, Mahana was the Second Engineer on *MSC Elena*. She made regular voyages from ports in Europe across the Atlantic to ports in the United States, including Boston. As Second Engineer, Mahana was second in command of *MSC Elena's* engine-room and responsible for overseeing most of the functions of the engine room and the mechanical operation of the vessel. On May 16, 2005, in the Port of Boston, Mahana maintained an Oil Record Book that falsely reported and/or omitted overboard discharges of oily sludge and oil-contaminated bilge waste that created the false and misleading impression that the vessel was being operated properly and was fully maintaining an accurate record. Large container ships like the *MSC Elena* generate large quantities of oily waste water and oily sludge which must be stored on board the vessel in sludge tanks. The sludge may be burned on board through the use of an incinerator or offloaded onto barges or shore side facilities for disposal. International protocol has set standards for the maximum concentration of oil permitted to be discharged overboard and requires that vessels maintain an oil sensing device to monitor the discharge of oil overboard and redirect effluent to a storage tank on board the vessel when oil content exceeds the allowable limit. Additionally, United States law requires all large vessels in its waters to maintain an Oil Record Book where all transfers of oil, the disposal of sludge and waste oil, and overboard discharges of bilge water containing oil must be fully and accurately recorded. Chief U.S. District Judge William G. Young scheduled sentencing for Feb 2, 2006. Mahana faces a maximum sentence of five

years in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine. The case was investigated by the U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Service. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan Mitchell in Sullivan's Economic Crimes Unit, Trial Attorneys Richard Udell and Malinda Lawrence in the Department of Justice's Environmental Crimes Section, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Coast Guard Commander Luke Reid.

NORTH SEA

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Oil company BP has been fined £25,000 after a diesel spill in the North Sea. The company was prosecuted after 65 tonnes of fuel leaked from a supply vessel in July last year. The vessel was refuelling the company's Lomond Platform, around 160 miles east of Aberdeen, when the accident happened. A BP spokesman confirmed the firm had been found guilty of breaching environmental regulations, at Aberdeen Sheriff Court last week. He added that they had been fined £25,000. "Obviously we regret the fact that this happened," he said. "But we have learned lessons from that and have taken remedial action to prevent any similar incidents in the future."

WASHINGTON STATE, UNITED STATES

Seattle, Dec 2 — The Washington State Maritime Co-operative is responding along with others to a small leak in a Seacoast Barge (*Barge 340*) that had just completed loading gasoline and diesel products at either Shell or Tesoro's facility. The leak was first noticed while the barge remained at anchor at approximately 2300 hrs, Dec 1. The leaking tank was pumped down and the leaking halted at that time. Divers have inspected the tank and a patch is being considered. The USCG is on the scene and the decision will be made as to whether the entire cargo will be pumped off. An overflight is scheduled for 0900 hrs, this morning. John Felton from the WSMC is on scene. No spill clean-up has been called for. It is being called a "potential" spill situation. The barge is said to hold 60K BBLs. — Lloyd's Agents.

Weather & Navigation



ALBANIA

London, Dec 3 — Thousands of hectares of land were flooded and hundreds of houses damaged in Albania yesterday after heavy rains hit the country, an interior ministry spokesman said. The floods blocked roads and bridges in various regions, brought down electricity pylons and inundated transformers, leaving large

areas without power, Altin Ndroqi said. Police and troops were dispatched to the southern regions of Vlora and Fier to evacuate people stranded by rising water. At least one person went missing yesterday, presumably swept away by the river Fan in Burrel, some 70 kilometres north of Tirana, following a road accident caused by bad weather.

AUSTRALIA

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: A man has died after a tree fell on him during this afternoon's storm in Canberra. Winds reached more than 100-kilometres-an-hour during the storm. The man died about 1630, AEDT, when severe winds struck the area in Curtin. Police are at the scene investigating the death. Several other trees have also been strewn across the street and the road remains closed. The storm has also hit other areas of Canberra, closing the airport and causing traffic disruption. There are also reports roofs have been damaged in some areas. The Emergency Services Authority has been inundated with calls for help mainly for downed trees and powerlines.

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Canberra is facing a multi-million dollar damage bill after a fierce storm lashed the capital, killing one man and damaging hundreds of homes and businesses. Three mini tornadoes touched down across the city yesterday evening, tearing off roofs and uprooting trees across the city. The 62-year-old man was killed in the southern suburb of Curtin when he was crushed by a falling gum tree. A big clean up effort is underway and up to 1,000 homes and business remain without power. One of the hardest hit districts was Canberra's commercial zone Fyshwick, with the ACT Fire Brigade estimating the storm caused more than A\$4 million damage in that area alone. The State Emergency Service received more than 300 calls for help, making the storm the territory's biggest emergency response since bushfires killed four people and destroyed 500 homes in the city almost three years ago.

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Insurance companies will be out in force today assessing some of the hundreds of Canberra homes damaged by Friday's (Dec 2) vicious storm. The Government's early estimate has put the storm damage at more than A\$10 million but the insurance industry is yet to calculate its final bill. John Crommie from one of the biggest insurers expects the average claim to be about \$5,000. Mr Crommie says about 40 of the 200 claims received over the weekend will be assessed. "A lot of those were for relatively minor damage but the 40 certainly appear to be quite significant," he said. The Insurance Council's deputy chief executive, Philip McGuire, says most standard house insurance should cover storm damage.

CHINA

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescue workers were still searching the East China Sea for six missing sailors yesterday after a gale-force cold front from the north capsized two ships in waters on Sunday (Dec 4). Yesterday, two rescue boats and a helicopter were still patrolling the area where cargo vessel *Zhenle 57* capsized, looking for six of its crew members who have been missing since the ship went down on Sunday afternoon. "The hope of spotting them is growing small, especially given the terribly cold weather at sea," said Tang Panrun, an official with the Donghai Rescue Bureau, which is in charge of the sea rescue tasks in the Yangtze Delta region. Officials said the cold weather brought powerful winds to the East China Sea near the mouth of the Yangtze River on Sunday. Gales gusted up to Force 8, or at least 62 kilometres an hour, at sea on Sunday. Twenty-two sailors from the two capsized ships were rescued on Sunday, officials said. The first vessel, a Zhejiang Province fishing ship, was swamped about 0415 Sunday morning, near the coast of Zhejiang Province. Huge waves hit the vessel and swamped its engine-room. The vessel had just capsized and all 11 of its fishermen were struggling in water when a rescue helicopter arrived at the site about 0900 hrs. The wind grew to force 10, about 100 kilometres an hour, by the time the helicopter tried to lift up the fishermen from the sea. The helicopter pulled the last fisherman from the water at about 1030 hrs. The headquarter office received the next emergency report at noon on Sunday, saying the 17-men cargo vessel *Zhenle 57*, was sinking about 30 nautical miles from shore near the mouth of the Yangtze River. Nine of the sailors were picked up from the sinking vessel about 1430 hrs, one hour after a helicopter arrived at the scene. A rescue boat remained at the site to continue with the rescue efforts while the fully-packed helicopter had to return to shore with the first-batch of survivors. After the vessel finally capsized about 1800 hrs, the rescue boat managed to pull two of the other sailors from the sea. The remaining six sailors disappeared in huge waves, however.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Twelve people were rescued but five remained missing after a cargo ship (*Zhenle 57*) sank in the East China Sea waters Sunday, local navigation authority said today. The ship loaded with more than 5,500 tons of mineral ore was enroute from Qingdao to Jiangsu Province, east China when it encountered a storm halfway about 30 sea miles northeast of the estuary of the Yangtze Rver according to the port and navigation department of Wenzhou City, Zhejiang Province, where the ship is registered. Gale-force winds and high waves kept pummeling the ship, and flooded its cabins, according to initial

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

investigation. All the 17 crew member were thrown into the sea, but 12 were lifted to the land by a helicopter and a rescue ship. Rescuers are still going all out to search for the five missing.

Busan, Dec 6 — General cargo *Eversunny* arrived Busan Nov 28 from Bayuquan, and sailed same day for Hitachi. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

EGYPT

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Thick fog yesterday halted traffic at Cairo International Airport, diverting and delaying flights, the Egyptian official MENA news agency reported. "Eight flights were forced to change route to several domestic airports in Egypt as a result of the heavy fog over Cairo International Airport that lasted for almost four hours," MENA said, quoting airport officials. The diverted eight incoming flights were from Sanaa, Johannesburg, Riyadh, Bangkok, Milan, Athens, Asmara and Casablanca, said the officials. Visibility over the airport was decreased to less than 100 meters, officials said, adding that another 18 outgoing flights were forced to wait for between two and four hours before taking off. It was the second time in two days that air traffic in Egypt was affected by bad weather. Meanwhile, the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria also suffered from bad weather, which caused two international flights, one from Germany's Lufthansa airline and the other from the British Airways, to make forced landing at Cairo International Airport.

HURRICANE "EPSILON"

London, Dec 3 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Hurricane "Epsilon": Following received from the National Hurricane Centre, Miami, timed 0900, UTC: Hurricane centre located near lat 34.6N, long 45.7W at 0900, UTC. Position accurate to within 15 nautical miles. Present movement towards the east-north-east, or 75 deg, at eight knots. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 15 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 40 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 100 nautical miles. Radius of 12-ft seas 400 nautical miles south-east and south-west and 300 nautical miles north-east and north-west. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Dec 4: Position lat 35N, long 44W. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots with gusts to 65 knots.

Miami, Dec 3 — Hurricane "Epsilon", the 14th hurricane of a record-breaking Atlantic storm season, defied expectations it would weaken over cool Atlantic waters and strengthened today as it churned slowly eastward. Epsilon's maximum sustained winds reached 80 mph by 2100, GMT, comfortably over the threshold for a tropical storm to be categorized as a hurricane, and it was about 930 miles west of Portugal's Azores islands, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said. But the cyclone posed no threat to

land, and the hurricane centre said in a bulletin that "Epsilon" could not maintain that intensity for much longer. Hurricanes are normally spawned over warmer Atlantic waters further south. — Reuters.

London, Dec 4 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Epsilon": Following received from the National Hurricane Centre, Miami, timed 0500, AST: Tropical storm centre located near lat 34.3N, long 40.4W, at 0500, AST. Present movement towards the east at 13 mph. Maximum sustained winds close to 70 mph. Additional weakening is forecast over the next 24 hours.

London, Dec 5 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Hurricane "Epsilon" located near lat 33.8N, long 36.2W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the east-southeast or 105 degrees at nine knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 986 mb, eye diameter 35 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds: 20 nautical miles south semicircle. Radius of 50-knot winds: 50 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 30 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds: 100 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 75 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 12-foot seas: 300 nautical miles north semicircle, 250 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 400 nautical miles south-west quadrant. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Dec 6: Position near lat 32.7N, long 34.2W with maximum sustained winds of 55 knots and gusts to 65 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 30 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 75 nautical miles east semicircle and 90 nautical miles west semicircle.

London, Dec 6 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Hurricane "Epsilon" located near lat 32.9N, long 33.9W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the south or 185 degrees at nine knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 986 mb, eye diameter 20 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds: 20 nautical miles south semicircle. Radius of 50-knot winds: 50 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 30 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 12-foot seas: 300 nautical miles north semicircle, 250 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 400 nautical miles south-west quadrant. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Dec 7: Position near lat 30.5N, long 35.0W with maximum sustained winds of 50 knots and gusts to 60 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 30 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 75 nautical miles.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: To the surprise of forecasters, "Epsilon" retained hurricane force winds today in the

open Atlantic, but the storm posed no threat to land. For the second straight day, "Epsilon" had sustained winds near 75 mph, according to the National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Hurricane status begins with sustained winds of 74 mph. "There must be some favorable environment, but we're not able to see what it is," hurricane specialist Lixion Avila said. The 26th named storm of a record-breaking hurricane season is expected to take a turn to the southwest in the next 24 hours and finally weaken, Avila said. "Epsilon", the 14th hurricane of the season, had been downgraded Sunday (Dec 4) to a tropical storm but unexpectedly regained hurricane strength. At 0400, EST, the centre of "Epsilon's" large eye was about 525 miles southwest of the Azores and moving southeast near 5 mph.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Hurricane "Epsilon" located near lat 29.8N, long 36.3W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the southwest or 220 degrees at eight knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 987 mb, eye diameter 20 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds: 20 nautical miles southeast quadrant, 25 nautical miles southwest quadrant, 35 nautical miles northwest quadrant. Radius of 50-knot winds: 40 nautical miles southwest and northeast quadrants, 30 nautical miles southeast quadrant, 70 nautical miles northwest quadrant. Radius of 34-knot winds: 100 nautical miles northeast and southwest quadrants, 75 nautical miles southeast quadrant, 130 nautical miles northwest quadrant. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Dec 8: Position near lat 27.7N, long 38.5W with maximum sustained winds of 45 knots and gusts to 55 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds: 75 nautical miles.

London, Dec 8 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Epsilon" was located near lat 27.1N, long 39.6W. The position is accurate within 20 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the south-west, or 215 degs at seven knots. The estimated minimum central pressure is 1005 mb. The maximum sustained winds are 35 knots with gusts to 45 knots. The radius of 34 knot winds: 40 nautical miles in the north-east, south-west and north-west quadrants and 60 nautical miles in the south-east quadrant. At 0900, UTC, Dec 9, the centre is predicted to be near lat 26.7N, long 38.9W, with maximum winds of 25 knots and gusts to 35 knots.

HURRICANE "WILMA"

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Owners of casino boat *Lucky Lady* beached on gulfside mangroves off US 1 between Sugarloaf and Key West, have hired Titan Salvage of Ft. Lauderdale to remove

the vessel. Coin Castle of Melbourne, Fla. has engaged the company to work on a salvage plan that will be submitted to the Coast Guard, which will work with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary to "ensure that any additional damage as a result of the salvage effort is minimised," said sanctuary spokesperson Cheva Heck this week. While normally the Marine Sanctuary seeks damages and/or civil penalties from those who injure its resources, in the case of groundings resulting from hurricane "Wilma", it will "refrain from enforcing the relevant statutory authorities where the owners exercised due diligence in securing their vessels in light of the hurricane warnings," noted Heck. Owners are expected, however, "to remove their boats and to ensure that removal does not result in additional injury to sanctuary resources including, but not limited to, the seagrass, coral and mangrove ecosystems.

INDIA

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Floods after days of heavy rains have forced officials to evacuate about 175,000 people from their homes in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency said. Around 75,000 were evacuated in the state capital Chennai and 100,000 from other parts of Tamil Nadu, PTI said, quoting state Chief Minister Selvi Jayalithaa. Around 140 relief centres have been opened, said Vijaya Kumar, commissioner of the Chennai Corporation municipal agency, on the NDTV news channel. The commissioner said the city was experiencing its heaviest rainfall in decades. Although rain ceased yesterday, the state weather department predicted thunderstorms in parts of the state for the next two days, leading officials to fear the flood situation could worsen. Low-lying outskirts of the city were flooded with water up to waist deep yesterday.

ITALY

London, Dec 4 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A steep rise in sea levels swamped part Venice today amid storms and heavy rains that have beaten down on Italy over the past 24 hours. On the other side of the peninsula, at La Spezia, general cargo *Margaret* (2643 gt, built 1976) seeking refuge at La Spezia when it was caught in the storm as it was travelling from Genoa to Varna, contacted a jetty, holing it and dumping thousands of litres of fuel into the harbour, the Italian news agency ANSA said. The vessel dragged its anchor in high winds, hit a pier and sank in about 10 metres of water just off the commercial port. Several anti-pollution vessels were quickly on the scene and others were to arrive tomorrow, said Environment Minister Altero Matteoli. "The situation is for the moment under control, our vigilance is at maximum level and anti-pollution measures were rapidly

activated," he added. All 13 crew members aboard the vessel were reported safe. Some threw themselves into the sea as it began to list while others were lifted off by helicopter and coast guard vessels. Police said the chief engineer aboard the vessel reported that it was carrying some 85,000 liters of fuel, and not 13,000 as earlier reported. Venice was hit by a common seasonal phenomenon as winds and tides backed up the Adriatic waters, causing levels in the lagoon to rise. According to the city's flood centre, the water rose 1.32 metres above normal sea level. Forecasters said the water level was expected to decline tomorrow, but warned the weather would turn for the worse again on Tuesday (Dec 6).

Genoa, Dec 4 — General cargo *Margaret*, Genoa for Varna, in ballast, grounded and capsized in way of the outer side of La Spezia breakwater around 0400, local time, Dec 3. The vessel was caught in an adverse weather situation and unsuccessfully attempted to gain refuge at La Spezia. It is now lying semi-sunk on its starboard side and is beaten by waves very close to the breakwater. All 13 crew members have been rescued by a helicopter of the local Coast Guard and are well. Marine pollution combat vessels and Navy divers are at work on site. The vessel is said to be carrying approximately 90 cubic metres of fuel and lubricating oil. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Dec 5 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1030, UTC: General cargo *Margaret*, sank at La Spezia Dec 3: Operations under way to prevent pollution. Situation under control.

La Spezia, Dec 5 — General cargo *Margaret* sank at La Spezia on Dec 3. All 13 crew rescued. Vessel is now lying semi-submerged close to the external side of the breakwater. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Dec 7 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 0930, UTC: General cargo *Margaret*, sank at La Spezia: Anti-pollution work is still under way and is likely to continue for the next week.

Genoa, Dec 7 — General cargo *Margaret* is still reported on same site where it sank surrounded by tugs and anti-pollution vessels. — Lloyd's Agents.

JAPAN

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Snow and strong winds disrupted traffic in many parts of Japan yesterday, with the Japan Meteorological Agency warning of more snow. More than 30 domestic and international flights were cancelled at Centrair International Airport in Aichi Prefecture due to a strong west wind, while causing some other flights to be rerouted. Bullet trains on Sanyo Shinkansen Line ran at reduced speeds due to snowfall in Hiroshima and Yamaguchi prefectures, causing delays of up to an hour and affecting some 13,000 passengers, West Japan Railway Co said.

PHILIPPINES

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Thousands of residents escaped flash floods in the Philippines today, as a heavy downpour continued south of Manila. Military and civil defence teams used rubber boats to help bring people to evacuation centres, the Philippine Daily Inquirer reported. Over 12,000 residents had been evacuated from several villages, according to the paper. Waters in some parts of Lucena City in Quezon province reached chest-height and residents reported that houses had been destroyed by the floods. The province has been hit by heavy rains since yesterday, but authorities believe the downpours will now subside.

RUSSIA

London, Dec 3 — A powerful cyclone that swept Kamchatka made the local authorities declare an emergency regime in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. Classes have been cancelled at secondary schools. More than fifty people have suffered over the past two days. Five people who received serious injuries were hospitalized. A boatswain of the Alagez military vessel died because of an accident caused by the storm. The vessel was harboured in the settlement of Zavoikovo near Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, according to Yevgeny Petrov, a spokesman for the troops headquarters in the northeast of Russia. In Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, thirty-eight people asked for medical help on Thursday (Dec 1) and another 20 on Friday. Fifteen patients broke legs and arms while falling in gale wind. Numerous billboards, trees and electricity lines were damaged, as well as building roofs and windows. The airport and schools in Kamchatka remained closed for the second day running yesterday, while the fleet is hiding in ports because of force 7 (near gale) storms. All flights to Kamchatka from Russia's mainland have been delayed until today because of a heavy cyclone continuing in Kamchatka, the dispatcher's service of the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski airport said. Flights performed to Kamchatka from St. Petersburg, Vladivostok, Moscow, Novosibirsk, Khabarovsk and Krasnoyarsk has been delayed. The Transaero Airlines Company has delayed a flight from Moscow until Dec 4. Local airline companies will not perform flights in Kamchatka until today.

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 4, states: Following a break of almost three days caused a heavy cyclone, flights between the Kamchatka Peninsula and mainland Russia resumed today. Sources at the air controllers service of the Petropavlovsk airport said it had begun to receive the flights delayed since Thursday (Dec 1). A total of nine flights with passengers were delayed. The airports of departure were Khabarovsk, Krasnoyarsk, St Petersburg, Vladivostok, Moscow, and Novosibirsk. The jets blocked in

Vladivostok and Khabarovsk were the first ones to take off and head for Kamchatka. In the meantime, the southern districts of the peninsula were still in the grips of cyclone this morning, and a storm warning was in effect across the region. An emergency situation was declared in Petropavlovsk, while the fleet was told to stay in the ports because of storms on the seas around the peninsula. Experts at the regional center for hydrometeorology told Itar-Tass the storms might rage for another day but its force was clearly subsiding.

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Owing to a heavy snowfall, the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk airport has been closed to inbound and outbound flights since this morning. Weathermen's forecast is that the cyclone will continue to rage over Sakhalin island for another several days. About 100 graders, bulldozers, and other machines have been continuously removing snow from the roads. The thickness of the snow cover on mountain passes is more than one metre. Meanwhile, rescuers from the Russian Ministry for Emergencies have helped more than 20 cars, stranded on the Lovetsky Pass, out of the snow on the road leading from Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk to Port Nevelskoi.

SOUTH KOREA

London, Dec 5 - A press report, dated yesterday, states: A cold snap is expected to continue this week after snowfall across the peninsula over the weekend. Morning lows will fall to minus 9 degrees Celsius in Seoul and Suwon, minus 10 degrees in Chunchon, minus 8 degrees in Chongju and Taejon, and minus 4 degrees in Kwangju and Pusan. Midday highs are forecast to stand at minus 1 degrees in Seoul and Inchon, zero degrees in Suwon and Chunchon, 1 degree in Taejon, and 5 degrees in Kwangju and Pusan. The Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA) today issued heavy snow warnings in such southwestern regions as North and South Cholla Provinces. Seoul reported about 8.8 centimeters of snow, the first time this winter over the weekend. As of 2000, today, Changhung in South Cholla Province recorded 34 centimetres of snow, Haenam 31.5 centimetres, Mokpo 28.6 centimetres, and Kwangju 20.4 centimetres. Local authorities in the southwestern regions plan to close schools tomorrow due to heavy snowfalls. More than 70 traffic accidents related to aggravated road conditions were reported in Seoul this morning. In other incidents, four people remain missing after a fishing boat was overturned due to strong winds off the southern coast of Cheju Island. A 26-year-old man was killed and 22 others injured in Chungju, North Chungchong Province, when a bus rolled over and hit a guardrail after skidding on the icy road. In Kumi, North Kyongsang Province, 19 vehicles were involved in a bumper-to-bumper collision due to the bad road conditions. The strong winds

accompanied by the snowstorm also forced airlines to delay flights coming in and out of Cheju (Jeju) International Airport. According to the Korea Airports Corporation, 74 flights from Seoul to Cheju were canceled due to weather conditions, as was 66 flights from Cheju to Seoul. All marine transport connecting Cheju Island and the mainland was also cancelled, leaving the southern island virtually isolated.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "BAAZ"

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: The cyclonic storm (tropical cyclone "Baaz") looming over parts of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, that had remained "practically stationary" for a day, weakened last night and turned into a deep depression and now lay 300-kms east southeast of Chennai, leading to the forecast of rains during next two days. The MET office here said the system was likely to intensify and move in a west north-westerly direction and cross between extreme north coastal Tamil Nadu, comprising Kancheepuram, Chennai and Tiruvallur and south coastal Andhra Pradesh tonight. Under its influence, rain or thundershowers have been forecast for north coastal Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. Strong gusty winds have been also forecast during the period. On Wednesday (Nov 30) and Thursday, the cyclonic storm, which was located 400-kms east northeast of Chennai had remained stationary, but weakened last night. Meanwhile, official sources said there were reports of rough seas and high waves in many places between Pondicherry and the city.

London, Dec 2 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone 05B, "Baaz," near lat 12.3N, long 82.5E, at 0600, UTC. Movement past six hours, 235 deg at four knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on center located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 30 knots, gusts 40 knots.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "FANOOS"

London, Dec 8 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of tropical cyclone "Fanoos" was located near lat 10.4N, long 85.6E, approximately 350 nautical miles, east-south-east of Madras, India and has tracked west-northwestward, or 285 degs, at four knots over the past six hours. The position is accurate to within 60 nautical miles and is based on the centre being located by satellite. The maximum sustained winds: 55 knots, with gusts to 70 knots. Radius of 50 knot winds: 10 nautical miles in all four quadrants. Radius of 34 kt winds: 50 nautical miles in the north-east, south-west and north-west quadrants and 55 nautical miles in the south-east quadrant. The maximum significant wave height is 23 feet. At 0600, UTC, Dec 9, the centre is predicted to be near lat 10.7N, long 82.7E, with

maximum sustained winds of 55 knots and gusts to 70 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "DELTA"

Tenerife, Dec 1 — Passenger ro/ro *Juan J. Sister* sailed Tenerife Nov 30 for Santa Cruz de la Palma. — Lloyd's Agents.

TROPICAL STORM "EPSILON"

Miami, Dec 1 — Tropical Storm "Epsilon" veered away from Bermuda today toward colder waters in the central Atlantic that were expected to gradually weaken the 26th named storm of a record-breaking hurricane season. "Epsilon" was around 780 miles east of the British island territory by 1500, UTC, the U.S. National Hurricane Centre said. The Centre said the storm had been pounding Bermuda with heavy surf for a couple of days. The storm bore maximum sustained winds of 65 mph and could strengthen slightly before weakening over cooler water tomorrow. It was heading toward the northeast at 10 mph. — Reuters.

London, Dec 2 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Epsilon:" Following received from the National Hurricane Centre, Miami, timed 0900, UTC: Tropical storm center located near lat 32.8N, long 49.4W at /0900, UTC. Position accurate within 25 nautical miles. Present movement toward the north-east or 50 deg at nine knots. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots with gusts to 65 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 30 nautical miles NE, SE, SW and NW.

TURKEY

London, Dec 4 — Closure of the Dardanelles Strait Because of poor visibility at 2200, local time, yesterday, for Northbound passages.

London, Dec 6 — The Dardanelles Strait closed because of poor visibility at 0410, local time, today for Northbound and Southbound passages.

London, Dec 7 — The Dardanelles Strait is open after fog at 0930, local time, Dec 6 for Northbound vessels and for Southbound vessels.

UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: A week after an ice and snow storm crippled much of central and eastern South Dakota, there's a price tag on all the damage. The governor's office says the initial estimate for public damages tops 18 million dollars, and that doesn't include costs to the state, Yankton Sioux and Sisseton Wahpeton tribes. Rural electric cooperatives say the total impact to them is more than 20 million dollars. Governor Rounds says he sent a letter to the president asking for a presidential disaster declaration, based on damage in 25 counties. He says that would allow rural electric cooperatives and state, tribal and local units of government to be reimbursed. Rounds says 11,700 customers were still without power as of yesterday.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A tornado damaged about 50 homes in rural Wakulla County today, but no deaths or injuries were immediately reported, state officials said. The extent of the damage, in an area south of Tallahassee and north-east of Crawfordville, was not immediately known, said Mike Stone, spokesman for the Florida Division of Emergency Management. The tornado was initially spotted at 1234 hrs in Liberty County and moved north-east into Wakulla, southern Leon County and then Jefferson County, where it dissipated about 1400 hrs, said National Weather Service forecaster Jennifer McNatt. That path kept in almost entirely within the Apalachicola National Forest, reducing the chances for property damage.



Earthquakes

EAST AFRICA

London, Dec 5 — A magnitude 6.8 earthquake hit East Africa in the Lake Tanganyika region today, the US Geological Survey said. Hundreds of people evacuated office buildings in the centre of Nairobi after the earth shook and waited for any information about what was going on. The quake was also felt in the Rwandan capital Kigali. — Reuters.

London, Dec 5 — A report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 1219, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.8 event has been located in the Lake Tanganyika region, Congo-Tanzania, lat 06 21S, long 29.60E, depth 10 km.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Children are believed to be trapped in the ruins of their homes near the epicentre of a strong earthquake in East Africa. The earthquake is believed to have caused several deaths and injuries near its epicentre in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The 6.8-magnitude quake caused tremors in a number of countries including Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, where people fled swaying office buildings in the capital Nairobi. The epicentre is believed to have been near the village of Kalemie in the Democratic Republic of Congo, about 1,000 kilometres from the Kenyan capital. Communications infrastructure in the region is limited and initially there were no reports of injuries. However, the United Nations office in the Congolese capital says local residents have reported that people have been killed and injured. It is now believed that thatched houses collapsed trapping children near the epicentre of the quake near the village of Kalemie. There is also serious damage to homes.

JAPAN

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: A magnitude 6.4 earthquake has rocked north-eastern Japan, according to the country's Meteorological Agency. The agency said the quake struck at 2213 hrs, (1313, UTC) and was centred off the coast of Miyagi prefecture. There were no immediate reports of damage, and the agency said there was no risk of a tsunami. The agency said the quake's centre was 40km underground.

London, Dec 5 — A mild earthquake, registering a preliminary magnitude of 5.5, jolted northeastern Japan early this morning, but no tsunami alert has been issued, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. The 0720 hrs quake registered intensity 3 on the Japanese seismic scale of 7 in northern and southern Miyagi Prefecture and parts of Fukushima Prefecture.

KERMADEC ISLANDS, NEW ZEALAND

London, Dec 8 — A 6-3 magnitude earthquake struck the Kermadec Islands region, New Zealand at 2332, Dec 7.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

London, Dec 5 — A report, dated today, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 0559, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.5 event has been located in New Guinea, Papua New Guinea, lat 05 38S, long 142 05E, depth 26 km. The hypocentral depth was poorly constrained.



Volcanic Activity

MOUNT MANARO, VANUATU

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of villagers living in the shadow of a volcano spewing ash and steam on the Vanuatu island of Ambae have been evacuated amid fears of a major eruption, officials said today. Mt. Manaro, which cradles a volcanic lake in its crater, began tossing out ash and a towering plume of steam on Nov 27. Douglas Charlie, a local volcanologist, said the lakebed was in danger of being torn open by the trembling mountain, causing "a gigantic explosion" as the water hit the hot volcanic magma. The lake also is being forced up toward the rim, sparking fears of a mud flow that could flow toward the villages that surround the mountain. Officials ordered 5,000 people living in 15 villages nearest the mountain to move to the island's coast. Ambae itself has a total of 10,000 residents. Since the volcano's activity started, some 2,000 tons of ash has been falling daily around the mountain base, and white steam billows 4,500 feet above its cone.

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated today, states: An erupting volcano on

Ambae Island burst into spectacular life today - shooting steam and toxic gases 9,845 feet into the sky. Huge columns of dense white steam and muddy ash spewed above Ambae Island to reach the greatest height seen since the Mount Manaro volcano began erupting Nov 27. Thousands of villagers have been evacuated from the path of a possible lahar, or mud flow, that volcanologists fear could burst over the crater lip if the eruption continues or intensifies, sweeping away the flimsy homes in its path.

MOUNT POPOCATEPETL, MEXICO

London, Dec 3 — Mexico's Popocatepetl volcano spewed out columns of smoke up to 5km high and rained ash on nearby homes yesterday, but disaster prevention officials ruled out a full-blown eruption. Popocatepetl, whose snow-capped peak can be seen from the capital 64km away on a clear day, belched out two enormous columns of billowing smoke and sprinkled ash on the village of Amecameca in the State of Mexico. "The activity registered in the volcano during the past weeks is within forecast levels and we have not detected any precursors or signals that indicate a higher level of risk," said the disaster prevention centre Cenapred. It said ash could land as far away as the neighbouring states of Puebla and Tlaxcala, but did not expect it to reach Mexico City, home to some 18 million people.



Political & Civil Unrest

AFGHANISTAN

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Two US helicopters that made emergency landings in volatile southern Afghanistan, injuring five US troops and an Afghan soldier, were hit by hostile fire. The CH-47 Chinook heavy-lift choppers involved in US-led coalition operations against Taliban rebels and other Islamic militants were forced down separately on Sunday (Dec 4). "Both helicopters received enemy fire," Lieutenant Colonel Laurent Fox, a spokesman for the 20,000-strong coalition, said. He says the coalition is investigating what kind of weapons had been used against the choppers. The first helicopter had made a hard landing at a forward operating base in Uruzgan province, wounding an Afghan National Army soldier. The second made an emergency landing just north of Kandahar city, wounding five US soldiers and destroying the aircraft. The injured, who were not seriously hurt, were evacuated to a nearby US medical facility for treatment. They are in a stable condition. A man claiming to be a spokesman for the Taliban said in a telephone call that

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

the militia had shot down the helicopter near Kandahar. His links to the fundamentalist group could not be verified.

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated Dec 7, states: Afghan and US troops have killed 22 suspected militants in two clashes in the south, the US military says. Thirteen Taleban insurgents were killed at the weekend in the southern province of Kandahar, a statement said. Nine other suspected militants were killed in a clash in the central province of Uruzgan yesterday. Three US, three Afghan and two other foreign soldiers were wounded in the weekend clash. There has been no word from the Taleban. Six other suspected rebel fighters were detained following yesterday's fighting in Tarin Kowt district of Uruzgan, the US military said. Reports that one Afghan soldier also died were not confirmed by the US military. Uruzgan governor Jan Mohammad Khan told Reuters news agency that one Afghan soldier had been killed.

ALBANIA

Bari, Dec 7 — Product tanker *Ambar* is still under arrest at Bari. — Lloyd's Agents.

BANGLADESH

Dhaka, Dec 1 — A bomb blast near a Bangladesh court building where lawyers were marching to protest against violence killed one man and injured 25 today, police and witnesses said. The explosion occurred at a police checkpoint near the building in Gazipur, 30 km north of the capital Dhaka, where six people died and 50 were wounded in a suicide bombing on Tuesday (Nov 29). Some of the wounded were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and one of them died on the way, hospital doctors said. Those hurt included five policemen and three newspaper reporters, witnesses and police said. Three other people, including two police officers, were also killed on Tuesday by a would-be suicide bomber outside a court building in Chittagong. The bomber, who gave his name to police as Abul Bashar, lost both legs and his right hand in the blast and died in hospital today, police said. Today's blast took the death toll from suicide attacks this week to 12, including three bombers, police said. "The suspected bomber disguised himself as a tea vendor," said Kazi Fazle Rabbi, Gazipur district commissioner. "One of his flasks exploded when police stopped him for checking." Police today recovered a live bomb at an administrative building at Narayanganj town, 16 km east of Dhaka. Explosive experts from elite force Rapid Action Battalion removed the "powerful bomb" from the building, a police officer said. Lawyers called today's national strike to press for greater security and immediate government action to prevent further attacks on the judiciary. Bangladesh has been hit this year by a wave of bombings blamed on militants

demanding Islamic law in the mainly Muslim democracy. Hundreds of people from two outlawed Muslim groups, Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh, have been arrested this year. — Reuters.

Dhaka, Dec 8 — At least seven people were killed and more than 50 wounded in a suicide bomb attack in Bangladesh today which took place during the morning rush hour on a crowded street in a district town, police said. Two bombs went off within the space of a few minutes in Netrokona, 360 km north of the capital Dhaka. Police said the wounded included three policemen. Many of the victims were people on their way to work at offices, colleges and markets, witnesses said. No one claimed responsibility for the blasts, but police blamed Islamist suicide bombers fighting for the introduction of sharia law in the mainly Muslim democracy. Police said they found a suicide bomber among the wounded, with an unexploded bomb strapped to his body. He was taken to hospital unconscious, police added. Another suicide bomber was believed to be among the dead. The bombs exploded near the local office of a cultural organization, Udichi, which police believe was the target. Many Islamic groups dislike Udichi, which organizes open-air shows of drama, music and poetry recitals. It pursues a strong secular philosophy. Today's deaths took the number of people killed by suspected suicide bombers to 27 in three weeks, including judges, lawyers and policemen. At least 150 people have been injured in the deadly attacks. — Reuters.

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: A general strike in protest against the violence in Bangladesh brought the country to an almost complete standstill today. The protest, which spread to all cities, followed a series of suicide attacks on law courts in which nine people were killed. The attacks in the towns of Gazipur and Chittagong were reportedly carried out by Muslim extremists demanding the introduction of Islamic Sharia law. The courts were allegedly chosen as targets to prevent other rebels from standing trial. In the past four months, at least 500 bombs have been set off throughout Bangladesh. One person was killed and 25 injured in another attack in the capital Dhaka yesterday.

EGYPT

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: One man was killed and dozens injured as Egyptian security forces used tear gas and live bullets in clashes that marred yesterday's final round of voting in parliamentary elections. In what appeared to be an attempt to counter a strong showing by the opposition Muslim Brotherhood, police stopped voters reaching polling stations across the country. There were claims that officers beat up four judges working as

election monitors. At several polling stations crowds claiming they were being denied the right to vote surged towards the police lines and officers opened fire. One particularly determined group stormed a station, using ladders to scale the perimeter wall. Opposition officials said the police violence showed that the government of President Hosni Mubarak was worried by the success of the Muslim Brotherhood, one of the Middle East's oldest Islamist movements.

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Three voters died today as Egypt's month-long parliamentary elections wound up amid running battles and electoral abuses that have drawn a sharp rebuke from the regime's US ally. Scores of polling stations were sealed off by police, especially in areas where candidates representing the banned Muslim Brotherhood were contesting the final run-offs, fuelling frustration that often spilled over into violence. The worst clashes erupted outside polling stations in the northern coastal town of Damietta, where two men were shot dead and dozens wounded, according to medical sources. Another man died of a heart attack in the governorate of Sharqiya further south after inhaling tear-gas fired by police to disperse protesters, bringing to six the number of deaths since the polls kicked off on November 9. Pitched battles filled the streets of several towns and villages in the Nile Delta region north of Cairo, with furious would-be voters confronting armed riot police and ruling party thugs armed with truncheons and machetes. In the small town of Al-Aziziya near Zagazig, young voters who had been denied access to polling stations started pelting their opponents with stones, triggering a charge by a 50-strong force of policemen.

HAITI

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated Dec 7, states: A senior member of ousted Haiti's President Jean Bertrand Aristide's party said he was released four days after he was kidnapped, one of 30 people abducted during the last week in the increasingly violent country. Emmanuel Cantave, leader of the Lavalas Family party, told The Associated Press today that he was held by armed gangs in the Cite Soleil slum on the northern outskirts of the capital. Cantave said his party and his family pooled a ransom of more than \$25,000 to set him free yesterday. His release came as abductions surged in the capital, a month before national elections scheduled for January 8. "We registered 30 cases of kidnappings for the whole of November and 30 cases just for the first week of December," police spokesman Frantz Lerebours told reporters today. Observers believe the real figures could be up to 10 times higher, since many families prefer not to report cases and instead negotiate directly with kidnappers.

Last week, 14 schoolchildren, a U.S. missionary and a Haitian journalist were among about two dozen people who were taken hostage and then released for ransom in the area. Cite Soleil - the country's largest slum, where about 200,000 people live in squalid conditions - remains a hub for violence plaguing the capital. Well-armed gangs allegedly close to Aristide clash nearly daily with U.N. peacekeepers in armored vehicles. The freshly released Cantave said gang members beat him and at one point threatened to kill him, criticizing the Lavalas party leadership's choice for the presidential elections.

INDIA

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Six persons, including a woman and a two-month-old baby, were killed while two others injured in renewed ethnic violence in Assam's Karbi Anglong district, a senior official said today. District SP Krihna Das told news agencies that around 0100, a group of unidentified militants swooped on Shirrkongnep village under Diphu Police Station and began firing indiscriminately and set ablaze houses of six Karbi families. On hearing the gunshots, two sections of CRPF rushed from a nearby camp and retaliated the firing for nearly an hour. Later, four bodies were recovered from the village while the scared inhabitants fled away. Three bodies bore gunshot marks while a two-month old baby was crushed to death in the stampede, he said. The villagers suspected that attackers were Dima Halam Daoga (DHD) militants as they were spraking Dimasa language and were in battle fatigue, Das said. In another incident, Desaitopbi village headman and another person, both Karbis, had gone to Doldoli Reserve Forests to cut wood day before yesterday. When they were reported missing, police searched the area and recovered their bodies yesterday. An exchange of fire also took place between DHD and United Peoples Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) ultras at Sartheingti village under Diphu police circle yesterday. Seven empty cartridges were recovered from the spot. Stating the situation as tense, the SP said security forces were rushed to the vulnerable areas to prevent further outbreaks of violence.

IRAQ

Baghdad, Dec 1 — Insurgents launched a brief assault west of Baghdad today, firing mortar rounds and rockets at a U.S. base and local government buildings. Residents said heavily armed men wearing masks attacked a U.S. garrison in the centre of Ramadi, 110 km west of Baghdad, and fired on nearby council offices before seizing several streets. Leaflets were distributed saying al Qaeda in Iraq, led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al Zarqawi, was taking control and promising that "Iraq will be a graveyard for the Americans and their allies". But after a couple of hours most of the militants dispersed and

the city returned to relative calm. The U.S. military, which together with Iraqi forces launched a new operation in the area round Ramadi yesterday, played down the assault. "Reports of insurgents taking control of Ramadi are completely unsubstantiated," Marines Captain Patrick Kerr said in an emailed statement. "There have been a few sporadic small-arms engagements, but nothing out of the ordinary." In the new U.S.-Iraqi operation, more than 2,000 soldiers and Marines were sent into Hit and surrounding towns yesterday to track down militants and try to restore security before parliamentary elections on December 15. Residents of Hit demonstrated against the U.S. offensive today, complaining about excessive force and calling on foreign troops to leave their city, local police said. In Baghdad, gunmen wounded an adviser to Iraq's defense minister and killed one of his bodyguards today in an attack on his convoy, police said. Police sources said the adviser, Saad al-Obeidi, and two other guards were wounded. Two U.S. soldiers were killed in separate incidents in Iraq yesterday, raising to at least 2,110 the number of soldiers, Marines and sailors to have died since the war began. Since last Friday (Nov 25), five foreigners have been snatched in Baghdad, including four Christian aid workers — two Canadians, a Briton and an American. All four were shown in an insurgent video broadcast by Al Jazeera television two days ago. A fifth hostage, a German archaeologist who has worked in Iraq for more than a decade, was shown in a separate video broadcast by German television. Her captors threatened to kill her and her driver unless Berlin stopped cooperating with Iraq's U.S.-backed interim government. Today, an Iraqi insurgent group posted a video on the Internet showing what appeared to be a man being shot. The Army of Ansar al-Sunna video, whose authenticity could not be verified, said the man was an Iraqi special forces member linked to an Interior Ministry bunker where 170 malnourished and sometimes badly beaten men and teenagers were held. The Interior Ministry dismissed the deputy responsible for probing ministerial corruption and abuses. Nouri al-Nouri was fired on November 28, a ministry official said, nearly two weeks after the discovery of the bunker. — Reuters.

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Ten US marines were killed and 11 wounded by a roadside bomb outside the central Iraqi town of Falluja yesterday, the US military has said. The soldiers from the 2nd Marine Division were conducting a foot patrol when a bomb exploded. Their combat unit was taking part in a counter-insurgency operation in Anbar Province, west of the capital Baghdad. The attack was one of the deadliest against US forces. It brings to 2,120 the number of US troops killed in Iraq.

London, Dec 4 — Insurgents killed 19 Iraqi soldiers and wounded four in a

coordinated ambush north-east of Baghdad just two days after the deadliest attack against U.S. Marines in four months. The bloodshed yesterday confirmed U.S. and Iraqi warnings of a surge in insurgent attacks ahead of national elections set for Dec 15. A total of 14 U.S. service members have died this month, 10 of them in a bombing Thursday (Dec 1) near Fallujah. Yesterday's attack occurred as an Iraqi army unit patrolled near Adhaim, about 60 miles north of Baghdad. Survivors said insurgents triggered a roadside bomb and then showered the patrol with rocket-propelled grenades and machine-gun fire. Al-Jazeera broadcast a videotape yesterday from the Islamic Army of Iraq showing an explosion targeting a U.S. foot patrol near Fallujah. The tape did not directly link the explosion to Thursday's attack, but the Al-Jazeera announcer noted the Marine deaths as the tape aired. The grainy video, filmed through a long lens, showed ground troops walking down a street on both sides of a Humvee when a huge fireball engulfed the area, sending terrified Iraqi bystanders scrambling for their lives. Al-Jazeera said the Islamic Army, one of Iraq's best-known insurgent groups, claimed responsibility for a series of other attacks against U.S. forces north of Baghdad, in Nasiriyah and another in Fallujah. The United States hopes a big Sunni turnout in the Dec 15 elections will produce a government that can win the trust of the minority Sunnis, the backbone of the insurgency. Along with a stronger Iraqi military, it is hoped that will hasten the day when U.S. troops can leave. In a separate incident, the U.S. base at the airport in Mosul, Iraq's third-largest city, came under fire yesterday, wounding two American soldiers, the U.S. military said. Also yesterday, a leading member of the British anti-war movement, Anas Altikriti, arrived in Iraq to try to win the release of the four Christian peace activists taken hostages last week. Altikriti told the British Broadcasting Corp., that he would meet with various Iraqi organizations in hopes one of them might have contacts with the kidnappers. The co-workers of the activists - two Canadians, an American and a Briton - appealed to militants yesterday to release them.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 27 Iraqi police officers have been killed and another 32 wounded in a suicide attack on a police academy in Baghdad, the US military has said. A US forces' statement said that the students were killed when two women blew themselves up inside a classroom at around 1245, local time, (0945, UTC). No US servicemen were killed or wounded in the attack. Police and Iraqis queuing to sign up at recruitment centres have often been targeted by insurgents.

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A suicide bomber detonated an explosive belt in a bus as

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

it was about to depart Baghdad today for a Shiite city in the south, killing up to 30 people and wounding nearly 40, police and hospital officials said. Most of the dead were in the bus, which was gutted by flames, and the rest were gathered around a food stall nearby, police said. The Kindi hospital said at least 37 were injured. Witnesses told police that the attacker left a car, boarded the bus and blew himself up as it was about to leave for Nasiriyah, 200 miles southeast of Baghdad, police Lt. Ali Mitaab said. The blast occurred a week before national elections, and officials had warned of a surge in violence ahead of the balloting. Several other explosions rumbled through the heart of the capital this morning. In other developments, kidnappers extended a deadline until Saturday (Dec 10) in their threat to kill four captive peace activists and posted a video of two of the hostages wearing orange jumpsuits and shackled with chains. The original deadline set by the group calling itself the Swords of Righteousness was today. The extension was announced in a statement that accompanied yesterday's video, according to Al-Jazeera and IntelCenter, a government contractor that does support work for the U.S. intelligence community. Another American in captivity was shown Tuesday (Dec 6) on a separate insurgent video broadcast on Al-Jazeera. Yesterday, his brother in the United States identified the captive as Ronald Schulz, 40, an industrial electrician from Alaska. Videotape of the Christian peace activists provided by IntelCenter to AP Television News showed two men, who were blindfolded and shackled. The men were not identified, but still photos from IntelCenter showed they were Fox and Kember. The two other hostages were not shown. The two captives made statements condemning the U.S. and British presence in Iraq. Both men were instructed to give their statements twice, which they did without reading a text because they were blindfolded. As a result, each man's second statement was slightly different from his first. A senior Iraqi official said yesterday that "intelligence and security efforts" were under way to win the release of the Western hostages. Maj. Gen. Hussein Ali Kamal, deputy interior minister for intelligence, said efforts were "aiming and hoping for the release of those people who came to Iraq to provide humanitarian services." The seventh Western hostage seized recently was Bernard Planche, a French engineer. A spokesman for the French government said officials were working to free him.

ISRAEL

London, Dec 4 — A fierce firefight between members of two rival clans killed at least four Palestinians and wounded many others in northern Gaza yesterday, local medics and witnesses said. The fighting began in

the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanun on Thursday (Dec 1) for unknown reasons and degenerated into a pitched battle involving automatic weapons, grenades and anti-tank rockets by Saturday, said the sources. A policeman was among the killed and one of his colleagues wounded as police struggled in vain to contain the violence to impose order, added the sources. Witnesses said that many people, including mediators and bystanders, were wounded, some seriously, as bullets and grenades flew in a neighbourhood of the town of Beit Hanun, adding the fighting was still underway yesterday evening.

Netanya, Israel, Dec 5 — A Palestinian suicide bomber killed at least five people and wounded dozens outside a shopping mall in an Israeli coastal town today in the first attack on its kind in six weeks. Lebanon's Hizbollah television said the Islamic Jihad group's military wing, the Jerusalem Brigades, claimed responsibility for attack in a telephone call to the station. Earlier, a Gaza radio station said Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, part of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for bombing in Netanya. Emergency officials put the death toll at five and said at least 40 people were wounded, seven of them seriously. "A suicide bomber who tried to enter the Sharon mall in Netanya was spotted by passers-by after he raised their suspicions," said Avi Sasson, deputy police chief in the area. "Two policemen at the scene pulled out their guns and ordered him to halt and to take his hands out of his pockets. At that stage, he blew himself up," he said. Palestinian officials quickly denounced the bombing. "The Palestinian Authority condemns the attack and says this harms Palestinian interests and aims at sabotaging efforts exerted to revive the peace process," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said. — Reuters.

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Israel imposed a strict closure on the West Bank and Gaza Strip yesterday and vowed to target Islamic Jihad militants after a suicide bombing that killed five Israelis and wounded more than 40 other people outside a shopping mall. By yesterday morning, Israeli forces had arrested 14 wanted Palestinians, most of them in an area of the northern West Bank that is a hotbed of Islamic Jihad activity and the origin of the suicide bomber who blew himself up in the coastal city of Netanya on Monday morning (Dec 5). Nine of the 14 suspects were thought to be Islamic Jihad members, military officials said. Among those arrested, Israeli troops detained the father and a brother of the 21-year-old bomber in the village of Ilar, about five miles northeast of Tulkarm, army officials said. The two are members of Islamic Jihad, said an Israeli military spokeswoman, but it was not known whether they had any role in the

bombing. Palestinian authorities said they had arrested seven members of Islamic Jihad in the West Bank as part of their investigation into the bombing. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, who condemned Monday's attack, said his security forces would seek to bring to justice any others involved. Tawfiq abu Khoussa, spokesman for the Palestinian Interior Ministry, said the investigation would continue. But Israeli officials said the arrests by Palestinian authorities did not go far enough. "It's a start. But it's clear that responsive actions, sporadic actions, alone are not going to deal with this issue," said Mark Regev, spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry. "You have to disarm." Israel has criticized Abbas and his government for failing to act forcefully enough against armed groups, and its latest threats of sweeping military operations against Islamic Jihad appeared in part an effort to prod the Palestinian authorities into action. Israeli military officials said their forces would vigorously pursue suspected Islamic Jihad militants through arrest operations and so-called targeted killings of the group's leaders. In addition, Israel vowed to continue airstrikes into the Gaza Strip to combat rocket attacks on communities in southern Israel. During the past two months, Israel has killed several Islamic Jihad activists and arrested many more in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. But after Monday's attack, Israeli officials vowed stepped-up reprisals against the hard-line group, which is relatively small in size but has stubbornly carried out attacks against Israelis despite an informal cease-fire declared by other armed Palestinian groups. An Israeli military official said Israeli commanders were also weighing whether to fire artillery into populated areas of the Gaza Strip from which fighters have launched Kassam rockets into Israel. "It's a possibility, among other possibilities," said the official, who requested anonymity. Until now, Israel has lobbed shells into open fields used as launching pads but refrained from firing into neighbourhoods where bystanders might be hit. The daily Haaretz newspaper reported that the military was preparing plans under which it would warn residents by loudspeaker to leave an area before launching shells.

Gaza, Dec 8 — An Israeli warplane and artillery gunners attacked rocket launch sites in Gaza today hours after Israel killed a senior militant in response to a suicide bombing at a shopping mall. The new violence tested an already shaky ceasefire and a peace process on hold as Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon faced a campaign for re-election in a March poll. Witnesses said an Israeli fighter jet bombed an open area in northern Gaza in a predawn raid, after soldiers fired dozens of artillery rounds at rocket launch sites in the northern Gaza Strip. None of the assaults caused any injury. The Israeli army

said its aircraft had fired the missile to cut off an access road to sites from where militants had launched rockets at Israeli towns since a senior militant was killed in an Israeli air strike on his car yesterday. The Popular Resistance Committees had vowed revenge for the death of field commander Mahmud el-Arqan, 29, in yesterday's raid in the Gaza town of Rafah. Ten other people were wounded in that attack, including three children struck by shrapnel. — Reuters.

NEPAL

LONDON, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Communist rebels in Nepal announced today they will extend their unilateral cease-fire by one month. Prachanda, leader of the rebels, said they decided on the extension after considering requests from home and abroad. The three-month unilateral cease-fire was to have expired this weekend. The extension will offer a chance to find peace in Nepal, Prachanda said in a statement.

NIGERIA

Onitsha, Dec 5 — Shops, schools and banks were shut in many parts of southeast Nigeria today, the first of a two-day strike called by a separatist group refusing to abandon its long fight for an independent state. The Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) called the stay-at-home protest to back a demand for independence for the region's ethnic Igbos. The group is also protesting the continued detention of its leader, Ralph Uwazurike, currently facing trial for treason. One MASSOB activist said the strike was but a "warning" of things to come if their leader is not released. The protest is timed to coincide with Uwazurike's trial, due to resume in the capital, Abuja, tomorrow after official treason charges in early November. Prosecutors said Uwazurike and six other accused belonged to a militant group intent on waging war against the Nigerian state. Today in the sprawling trading town of Onitsha - a separatist stronghold - troops and police used tear gas and fired in the air to disperse crowds of MASSOB supporters who poured onto the streets in support of the movement. In other key cities in the region inhabited mainly by Igbos - the cities of Enugu, Aba, Owerri and Abakaliki - businesses and schools shut down and many workers could not reach their offices as transporters stayed home, paralysing the areas. — Reuters.

Onitsha, Dec 7 — A secessionist protest left at least 12 people dead after violence erupted on the second of a two-day stay-home strike in southeast Nigeria, according to residents and witnesses. The Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) called for schools, businesses and offices to shut down on Monday (Dec 5) and yesterday in the ethnic Igbo-dominated areas of the southeast to back a demand for secession and

protest the detention of their leader, Ralph Uwazurike, who is on trial for treason. While most people complied on the first day, leaving streets deserted in key towns of the southeast, which is home to many of Nigeria's over 30 million Igbos, more residents went about their daily affairs yesterday. But attempts by MASSOB supporters to enforce the strike led to clashes with police in the cities of Owerri, Onitsha and Awka, in which at least 12 people were killed, residents and witnesses said. Some of the dead had visible gunshot injuries. Some local newspapers reported that as many as 20 people were killed across southeast Nigeria during the protests. Official figures have not been released. MASSOB spokesman Uchenna Madu accused the police of opening fire on unarmed protesters and declared the strike a success. Felix Ogbaudu, a top police official in the region, denied his officers had opened fire on protesters. Instead he accused MASSOB members of shooting and killing people who defied the stay-at-home call. "They turned violent," Ogbaudu told reporters. "You have every right to agitate but they have no right to embark on that type of enforcement drive." MASSOB wants to recreate the short-lived Republic of Biafra over which a bloody civil war was fought in Nigeria from 1967 to 1970, during which over one million people died, largely of starvation. Separatist leader Uwazurike's claims that successive governments have oppressed Nigeria's Igbos have struck a chord among thousands of jobless Igbo youths who were born after the war but have joined MASSOB's ranks. Human rights groups charge that dozens of pro-Biafran activists have been killed over the last six years for campaigning on behalf of their cause, with hundreds in detention after being arrested at marches and rallies organised by MASSOB. — Reuters.

PAKISTAN

Karachi, Dec 7 — Rail traffic was restored between Quetta and Sibi in Balochistan western province of Pakistan on Tuesday (Dec 6) after remaining suspended on Monday night following a powerful explosion on the main rail track linking Quetta with other parts of the country. According to local media report, saboteurs blew up the track near the Balochistan University. "A piece of one and half feet long rail track was blown by a powerful blast," a senior official of the Pakistan Railway's Quetta division said. The saboteurs blew up the track with powerful explosives planted under the track, sources said and added that after the explosion railway engineers and other staff rushed to the site and started replacing the affected track. The sources said that the blast took place after the passing of a goods train on the track. Quetta-bound passenger trains coming from Punjab and Karachi were stopped at the Sibi railway station. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Wana, Pakistan, Dec 8 — At least 12 people were killed and dozens

wounded when a bomb exploded today in a market in Pakistan's troubled tribal region near the Afghan border, officials said. The blast hit a hotel and shops in a market in Jandola town in the South Waziristan region. Intelligence officials said the blast killed at least 12 people, but a resident said many more people could have died in the explosion that happened at 0800 hrs (0300, UTC), and came amid a spate of violence in the lawless region. South Waziristan is part of Pakistan's semi-autonomous tribal belt that stretches through rugged mountains and deserts along the border with Afghanistan. Many al Qaeda members fled to the region from Afghanistan after U.S.-led forces ousted the Taliban in late 2001, and were given shelter by militant sympathizers from conservative Pashtun tribes that inhabit both sides of the border. Also today, the beheaded bodies of two members of a paramilitary force were found near Wana, the main town in South Waziristan, said a member of the force, the South Waziristan Scouts. The two men went missing on Tuesday (Dec 6) when they and two colleagues went into Wana town in civilian clothes. The whereabouts of the other two men were not known, said the member of the force, who declined to be identified. In neighboring North Waziristan, violence erupted on Tuesday when Islamic militants clashed with a bandit gang and 15 people were killed. The militants strung up the bodies of five of the dead bandits and displayed the head of one on a pole. At the weekend, authorities said an al Qaeda commander, Abu Hamza Rabia, and four others were killed when bomb-making material stored at their hideout in North Waziristan detonated accidentally last week. Villagers in the area said the blast was caused by a missile fired from an unidentified aircraft, possibly a U.S. drone. Unidentified gunmen on Monday (Dec 5) kidnapped a journalist who had reported that Rabia was killed by a U.S. missile and took photographs of what villagers said were fragments of the weapon. The journalist, Hayatullah Khan, who worked for various publications including the Nation English-language newspaper, has not been seen since. Authorities say they are looking for him. — Reuters.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Dec 8 — Floods triggered by heavy rains in the Philippines have killed two and affected more than 100,000 people, relief officials said today as they appealed for food, water and blankets. Water levels were rising after three days of continuous monsoon rain that has burst dykes and forced people in low-lying areas to flee homes and farms in three provinces south of the capital Manila, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) said. Two people were buried alive in a landslide in Pagbilao town, Quezon province, disaster officials said. The OCD added about 60,000 people had been evacuated in Quezon, Camarines

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

Norte and Mindoro Oriental provinces. Officials said wide areas were affected by landslides and floods and that many homes, farms and businesses had been damaged. Calapan City on Mindoro island was worst hit, they said. Doy Leachon, an official in Calapan, told Reuters the dykes protecting the city had been breached by swollen rivers. "Flood waters are still rising," Leachon said by telephone. "We are in need of food, medicine, blankets and other relief materials. We need rubber boats to evacuate more residents to safer areas." He said flood waters in the city had risen chest-deep, with hundreds of commuters stranded in bus terminals, forcing the suspension of land travel to the central Philippines. The army said bad weather had prevented military helicopters from taking off from bases in Manila and on Mindoro island. Environmental activists said the floods were caused by logging, slash-and-burn farming and quarrying on the mountains in Quezon and Mindoro island. — Reuters.

SPAIN

London, Dec 7 — The Basque separatist organisation ETA set off six small bombs and caused the evacuation of Santander airport, on the anniversary of the Spanish constitution. The Spanish Interior Ministry says the five low-intensity explosions occurred on roads near Madrid following warnings from ETA, causing slight damage. No casualties were reported. Authorities in Navarra, in northern Spain, said an attack against a post office attributed to ETA caused slight damage overnight. About 200 passengers were evacuated from the airport at Santander in northern Spain after authorities received a warning of a grenade attack and was believed to be from ETA, security services said. The warning was given in a call to the Basque separatist newspaper Gara, the usual vehicle used by ETA to claim responsibility for attacks. The airport was made off-limits to traffic and police were deployed to search for weapons. "The terminal was evacuated and all flights were rerouted," an airport security spokesman said. The interior ministry said security forces were continuing to search the airport after receiving warnings that several grenade launchers were on the premises. The terminal was, however, reopened to traffic. "These attacks are a new manifestation of senseless violence, which shows that we must continue to fight against ETA with all the force of a democratic state," Interior Minister Jose Antonio Alonso said.

SRI LANKA

Colombo, Dec 6 — Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels killed five Sri Lankan soldiers in a second claymore mine attack in the island's north in three days, the military said today, as a surge in violence strains a 2002 truce. One officer and four regular soldiers were killed in the attack in the military held town of Jaffna, in Sri

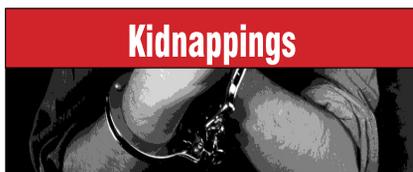
Lanka's far north, on a peninsular hemmed in by a de facto rebel state. Today's attack comes after a separate claymore mine blast on Sunday (Dec 4) killed seven soldiers in the deadliest attack since the ceasefire and brought the death toll in a spate of attacks in the island's north and east to at least 19 since last week. A claymore is a fragmentation mine that sprays hundreds of small steel balls up to 250 metres (yards) in a wide arc. Neither the rebels nor the government were immediately available for comment. The government has blamed Sunday's attack on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who last month threatened to resume their struggle for a separate homeland for ethnic Tamils next year unless given wide political powers. The army has boosted troop numbers on the streets of Jaffna, where residents say the atmosphere is extremely tense. Patrols have also been stepped up in the eastern port town of Trincomalee after two Tamil men were killed and three abducted Muslim farmers were found slain on Saturday. — Reuters.

SYRIA

London, Dec 5 — Syrian security forces clashed yesterday with militants planning to launch terror attacks in the northern city of Aleppo, the state-run news agency reported. Five people were wounded, including two militants. The SANA news agency also reported for the first time that a separate clash took place last week in Aleppo in which two militants were killed and a third was wounded. An unknown quantity of arms was seized during that clash, SANA said. The report did not say which group the militants belonged to nor how the two clashes — the first in the area in three months — were related. It was unclear precisely when the earlier clash took place. Yesterday's clash took place on the road to Aleppo's airport, about 221 miles north-west of the capital, Damascus, the SANA agency reported.

VENEZUELA

See "Paraguana Region, Venezuela" under "Pipeline Accidents".



HAITI

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



ARGENTINA

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Workers and

management for Argentina's largest airline reached an agreement on wage increases today, ending a nine-day walkout that affected more than 80,000 passengers. Spokesmen for the two unions representing pilots and mechanics of Aerolineas Argentinas said the workers had accepted in principle the company's offer to raise monthly salaries by at least US\$134.

CHILE

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Unionised workers at north Chilean railway FCAB, which serves many of the larger copper mines in the country, have rejected a company contract offer and gone on strike, union leader Luis Ortiz said today. Workers went on strike after the company limited an offer of a pay hike to just 28 out of the 368 workers in the union, he said. In reaction, FCAB, a unit of Antofagasta PLC, "brought in workers from Bolivia to keep running," Ortiz added, calling the move illegal. These workers also lack the certification to operate the system that its mining customers require, added Ortiz, an official at one of the four unions that went on strike. The unions also rejected a five-day arbitration period. FCAB serves huge copper mines such as BHP Billiton's Escondida, El Abra, the joint venture between Phelps Dodge and Corporacion Nacional del Cobre, or Codelco, and Codelco mines. The railway has had a contingency plan in place for the past two weeks. "At most, our clients will see their shipments cut by 10% or 20%," said FCAB Sales Manager Carlos Yanine ahead of the strike call. Antofagasta also owns the Los Pelambres copper mine in Chile, the world's top copper producer. Copper prices have reached record highs around \$2 per pound on the back of plummeting stocks on the world market and the weak dollar, while outages related to strikes, poor weather, and other events have helped provoke price spikes. Lower-than-expected copper output has cast doubt on whether Chile's gross domestic product growth will reach 6% this year, as previously estimated by authorities.

FRANCE

London, Dec 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Industrial action by French fishermen protesting against EU quota cuts has been disrupting ferry services leaving the port of Dover. Blockades at the ports of Calais, Boulogne and Dunkirk which began early yesterday morning were lifted at 1200, GMT. Five P&O sailings were cancelled, while SpeedFerries cancelled two. SeaFrance and Norfolkline suffered slight delays. Cross-channel ferries began to sail from Dover again just before 1000, GMT. The action led to heavier traffic that usual in Dover, but there was no major disruption in either the town or on the main routes into it. The delays at Dover were compounded by technical problems at

the Channel Tunnel in Folkestone, which also forced passengers to wait to cross the Channel.

London, Dec 5 — Tug crews said they were ready to strike at ports throughout France today if they failed to get an agreement with the French government over the weekend on conditions for the introduction of competition in the towage sector. Talks were in progress between union representatives and officials at the ministry of transport in Paris on Friday (Dec 2), but the unions said that the strike would go ahead if they failed to produce an agreement. At the port of Le Havre, where Societe Nouvelle de Remorquage du Havre is waiting for authorisation from the ministry's maritime affairs department to start operation, crews of the existing tug company, Les Abeilles, began a 72-hour strike on Friday but said that they would renew it for a further three days if no agreement was reached with the government. Les Abeilles and the tug crews' union representatives say that they are not afraid of facing competition but that any newcomer to the sector must be subjected to the same operating conditions as existing operators. Current concerns centre on working hours. Crews at Les Abeilles have a 35-hour working week but the government has so far shown itself reluctant to impose comparable arrangements on incoming companies. Deep sea salvage and rescue tug crews employed by Les Abeilles International in Brest, Cherbourg and Toulon said that they would join their port colleagues on strike today, staging an initial 46-hour stoppage which they said they were ready to renew. The Brest CGT seafarers' union denounced the government's failure to introduce clear rules to prevent unfair competition in the towage sector. The port of Le Havre said that four container carriers and three other vessels had cancelled their calls at the port on Friday as a result of the tug strike, while others were waiting to go through the Francois 1 lock.

London, Dec 6 — French tug crews dropped plans to stage a national strike this week after reaching agreement with the French government regarding maximum working hours applicable to newcomers to the industry, writes Andrew Spurrier in Paris. Crews on Les Abeilles vessels at the port of Le Havre, who began a 72-hour strike on Friday (Dec 2) morning, called off their action on Friday evening as soon as they received the results of talks between union representatives and Ministry of Transport officials in Paris. Crews at other ports who had been planning to take part in a national strike from yesterday called off their action too. The tug crews are concerned at the prospect of competition in the French towage sector, which they say could jeopardise the existence of existing operators if new arrivals are not subject to the same operating conditions. They said that they reached agreement with

ministry officials at last week's meeting on rules which would oblige newcomers to apply the 35-hour working week currently in force. There are some doubts about the legality of the rules in relation to EU competition regulations. The legislative texts have to be signed by two French ministers before coming into force.

FRENCH POLYNESIA

London, Dec 5 — French Polynesian Union leaders ended a four-day general strike on Saturday (Dec 3) with the signing of a draft agreement that suspends for 2006 the key reason for the strike - the Temaru government's proposed increase in a solidarity tax on all wages, Tahiti Presse reports. The last strike blockade was removed earlier Saturday when union leaders announced they had agreed to participate in a new round of negotiations with the Temaru government, with French High Commissioner Anne Boquet serving as mediator. Only about an hour of negotiations were necessary to produce a draft agreement acceptable to everyone. Besides the postponement of the hike in the solidarity tax, the draft agreement protected the 6,000 French Pacific franc (USD\$60) increase in all salaries, which was another key element in the Temaru government's tax reform proposal. The settlement left the City of Papeete open to normal movement of motor vehicles for the first time since Thursday. At one point Friday, the strikers had blocked all west coast motor vehicle access to the French Polynesia capital and had set up another blockade leading into the Port of Papeete area where inter-island and international cargo ships dock.

IRISH FERRIES PERSONNEL

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: Dublin port workers last night voted to support Irish Ferries staff fighting attempts to replace them with cheaper foreign labour, by refusing to handle any of the firm's vessels. Members of the marine division of Ireland's largest union SIPTU at Dublin Port decided unanimously to support their colleagues at the ferry company, branch secretary Paul Smyth said. "As a result of this ballot, our members will not handle any Irish Ferries ships — such as passenger ro/ro *Normandy* — until such time as the dispute is resolved," he said. *Normandy* was allowed to dock late on Sunday night (Nov 27) at Dublin with 113 passengers, for what were described as humanitarian reasons, after protests by port workers in Rosslare forced it to divert to the capital. It has since sailed to Cherbourg and SIPTU has given the company notice its members will not allow it to return. The increasingly bitter debate between union members and management at the ferry company began in mid-September when Irish Ferries announced it was looking to replace 543 Irish workers with foreign agency

staff. It escalated last week when security personnel escorted Eastern European seafarers on board passenger ro/ro *Isle of Inishmore* in Pembroke and passenger ro/ro *Ulysses* in Holyhead, leading to protests on both vessels. Although the personnel have been removed, three officers — Brian Whitfield, John Curry and Gary Jones — remain barricaded in the control room on *Isle of Inishmore*, while crews on *Ulysses* and tro/ro *Jonathan Swift* in Dublin are preventing their vessels from sailing. With trucks sitting in ports for up to 24 hours awaiting transport, shipping agent Victor Treacy International has chartered a freight ferry to carry lorries to France. The Brittany Ferries vessel will leave Cherbourg tomorrow bound for Cork, before making a return trip on Saturday evening. The ferry, which was chartered following moves by the Irish Road Hauliers Association, can carry 70 articulated trucks. It is hoped it will alleviate frustration felt by many Irish exporters at their busiest time of year. The move was welcomed by Jimmy Quinn of the Irish Road Hauliers Association, who said a huge backlog of freight was building up as a result of action on the vessels. "This is going to be of tremendous benefit to people who are in a jam. A lot of seasonal stuff, like salmon and lamb are very seasonal goods and they need to move and move pretty quickly," he said. He added that the industrial action was putting pressure on other shipping lines who were doing their best to plug the gaps in freight transport.

London, Dec 4 — A press report, dated Dec 3, states: A protest in support of workers embroiled in a dispute with Irish Ferries over the outsourcing of jobs took place today at Pembroke Dock in Wales. Around 40 members of several trade unions in Wales gathered at the Irish Ferries terminal in Pembroke Dock where crew members have been barricaded on board the passenger ro/ro *Isle of Inishmore* for nine-days. As the rally took place, four of the protesters on the vessel emerged on the deck and unveiled a banner with the message SOS. Officials from the International Transport Workers Federation also handed a letter of protest to the dock authorities in Pembroke. Tony Killeen, the Labour Affairs Minister, said a small level of progress had been made with the company removing security people off the ferries. Nick Ainger, a Labour MP in Wales, attended the protest and appealed to Irish Ferries management to begin meaningful talks to resolve the dispute immediately. He said the dispute and closure of the port was having a serious financial impact on the south Wales economy. The dispute over the outsourcing of jobs at the company has led Irish Ferries workers to refuse to sail on the *Isle of Inishmore P* and the *Ulysses*, which are stranded in Wales. The *Jonathan Swift* ferry is also still stranded in Dublin as port workers threaten to block any Irish Ferries vessel from docking. Despite intensive

efforts the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) has so far failed to come up with a peace formula in the dispute. Rallies in support of Irish Ferries workers are being held by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) next Friday (Dec 9) in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick, Rosslare Harbour, Athlone, Sligo and Waterford. Last night, shore staff at Irish Ferries voted in favour of industrial action in support of ships officers embroiled in a long-running dispute at the company. Clerical staff, who are members of the union SIPTU, voted by three to one for industrial action to support the workers which will be invoked if the industrial situation deteriorates. With trucks sitting in ports for up to 24 hours awaiting transport, shipping agent Victor Treacy International has chartered a freight ferry to carry lorries to France. The Brittany Ferries vessel will be bringing freight between Cork and Cherbourg in a bid to alleviate frustration amongst many Irish exporters at their busiest time of year.

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: A trade union has said it will enter talks with Irish Ferries to try and end an 11-day dispute over foreign workers. Irish union Siptu said it wanted to end the stand-off which has kept two ferries in Welsh ports. Ship crews at Holyhead and Pembroke Dock are protesting at plans to replace staff with cheaper workers from abroad. Irish Ferries has said it had been completely open about what it was doing over bringing in new crews as part of a cost-cutting exercise. Ireland's industrial relations watchdog, the National Implementation Body, proposed talks between unions and management yesterday. A statement from Siptu General President Jack O'Connor said: "We acknowledge the statement late last night by the National Implementation Body. We will be participating and we will be doing our best to try and reach an agreement." (See issue of Dec 6.)

London, Dec 6 — Talks were set to resume yesterday in an attempt to resolve the increasingly bitter dispute between Irish Ferries and the unions over the use of cheap foreign labour on board the company's ferries. Irish Ferries said it had been invited to attend meetings at the Labour Relations Committee but could not confirm the timing of talks nor comment in more detail. The decision to re-enter discussions followed a statement by the Irish National Implementation Body, issued on Sunday (Dec 4) night, in which it expressed concern that the situation had the "potential to damage significantly the climate of trust and stability which has developed over the years in the context of social partnership." The NIB issued a series of recommendations including: - Calling on Irish Ferries to suspend its application to re-register its vessels in Cyprus, - Setting a deadline of Dec 7 on the conclusion of talks over terms and conditions for those employees

that wished to remain at Irish Ferries, - Recommending that future employees' terms and conditions should reflect Irish minimum wage arrangements in the context of the unique nature of the contracts of employment which typically operated in the maritime sector and to the competitive pressures faced by the company and - "In the event that the outcome of this process was that these vessels were not maintained on the Irish register, then the terms of any agreement with regard to existing employees, and the standards which would apply to employees are recruited to work on these Irish Ferries vessels in the future, should be reflected in an agreement of binding character which not be vitiated by any subsequent change in the country of registration." The NIB also highlighted the need for a review of employment protection measures applying to Irish workers, including incentives or disincentives that might influence the decision to substitute lower paid workers for existing employees, the position of vulnerable workers who had relocated to Ireland and the need to ensure that an appropriate balance was reached between employment protection and labour market flexibility. Ireland's largest trade union, Siptu, said yesterday that it accepted the invitation to talks.

London, Dec 7 — Irish Ferries services remained at a standstill yesterday, with the company and officers' union Siptu still in talks over the dispute that has paralysed the operator for almost two weeks. Meanwhile the country's labour movement is gearing up for a national protest that is expected to see more than 30,000 people march through Dublin on Friday (Dec 9). Government-brokered peace talks were still under way yesterday, although both sides were keeping tight-lipped about any developments. Unions have reacted with anger to Irish Ferries' attempts to replace Irish crews with low-cost foreign seafarers. Ireland's official National Implementation Body has put forward settlement proposals that would bind the company to paying the Irish minimum wage and observing Irish labour law. In return, it would be allowed to reflag the vessels to Cyprus, a move that Siptu opposes. The NIB has set today as a deadline for finding a resolution. Union sources said that even if the talks prove successful, Friday's protest will go ahead. Teachers, bus drivers and railworkers have all pledged support for a planned demonstration in the Irish capital.

NEW CALEDONIA

London, Dec 4 — A strike by nickel miners in New Caledonia is over. After days of deadlock, New Caledonia's workers' union and French nickel company SLN, reached an agreement to end the three-week action. The strike had resulted in blockades on roads, bakeries and banks. The union

was demanding two sacked members, be reinstated. In the final agreement the company said they could return to work at the end of February. However, they have to undergo a nine-month training period.

NIGERIA

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

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of KwaZulu-Natal commuters were stranded this morning after being caught up in a taxi strike. Promised alternative transport from the department of transport failed to materialise. The strike, which has been mobilised by the members of the KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Alliance, saw thousands of people being forced to stay at home. This will also have an impact on economic activities in the province. The strike went ahead even though the department of transport and the KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Council, which is a mother body for the taxi association, claimed that they were not formally informed about the strike. Raman/Alton, the company that operates the former Durban Transport buses, reported that their buses were full to capacity and that they were unable to take all the people to work. Speaking to the Daily News yesterday, transport, community safety and liaison minister Bheki Cele said that the department would arrange transport for commuters. "We have ensured that commuters have transport, that is our main objective," he said. In Pietermaritzburg, members of the Taxi Alliance converged on the Edendale main road leading to CBD and stopped members of the KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Council from operating. They prevented all taxis from ferrying passengers to town and people were dumped on the road and had to walk to their workplaces. The KZN Taxi Alliance spokesperson, Muntu Ngcobo, said that they had been in contact with the transport department and government officials to schedule a meeting to discuss their grievances but no meeting had been forthcoming. Ngcobo said the main reason behind the strike was "police harassment." "We are constantly being stopped by Metro police, the South African Police Service members and the Special Taxi Unit who want to check permits," he said. "If permits are not in order then taxis are impounded. This going against the contents of a letter which had come from national level saying that taxis don't have to be impounded for not having a valid permit." Ngcobo said that all taxi operators in KZN who were members of the alliance would be taking part in the strike. "The strike will continue until the government decides to set up a meeting to address our problems," said Ngcobo. Chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Council Jabulani Mthembu said they had not received any information about a strike, nor had they mandated actions for a strike.

“Members of the taxi council have not yet called a meeting at which we resolved to go on a strike. We don’t see it as necessary for our members to go on strike,” explained Mthembu.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of commuters in KwaZulu-Natal were left stranded by yesterday’s strike by the KwaZulu-Natal Transport Alliance in an attempt to get the department of transport to stop impounding taxis and to fast-track the issuing of route permits. However, operations are expected to return to normal today following the success of a three-hour meeting last night between Transport MEC Bheki Cele and leaders of the alliance in Durban. The parties agreed that the taxis would return to the roads today while issues were being addressed. Alliance spokesperson Muntu Ngcobo said Cele had met the alliance’s demand to stop police impounding taxis while applications for route licences were being processed. Ngcobo said taxi operators would, however, have to produce proof that their applications were being processed by the Local Transport Board. Transport spokesperson Nonkululeko Mbatha confirmed that taxis for which there was no proof of application and those which were not roadworthy would not be allowed on the roads. Although yesterday’s strike left thousands of commuters stranded, businesses said minimal damage had been done to the economy as plans had been made to deal with worker absenteeism ahead of time.

SOUTH KOREA

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: About 60,000 South Korean workers defied a government warning by going on strike today to demand better protection for part-time workers. Meanwhile, a protest by some of the striking union members outside parliament turned violent, as workers armed with bamboo spears clashed with police, who turned water cannons on the demonstrators and beat some with sticks and shields. Yonhap news agency, citing police, put the number of protesters taking part in the rally at 5,000, with 10 suffering injuries. Workers from some of the country’s biggest companies — including Ssangyong Motor and Kumho Tyre — went on strike today, saying that government legislation to improve conditions of so-called non-regular workers does not go far enough. Non-regular workers include temporary workers and those who do full-time work but do not enjoy the benefits of regular, full-time employees at South Korea’s big companies. “We demand that the government come up with detailed legislation for better protection of the rights of non-regular workers,” said Lee Soo-bong, a spokesman for the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. The workers plan to continue the strike through Dec 9, Lee said. The federation is one of South Korea’s two umbrella labour groups and claims a

membership of 620,000. The fact that only about 60,000 members are taking part in the strike was seen as limiting its impact. Lee said that unionised members of Hyundai Motor and its affiliate Kia Motors were not participating in the walkout, which the government has deemed illegal. “The KCTU decision to launch a general strike related to the bill is clearly illegal and the government will strictly and clearly deal with this accordingly,” Labour Minister Kim Dae-hwan told reporters.

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Unionised pilots at Korean Air Co. voted to strike from tomorrow in a dispute over pay, a move that could cost the world’s second-biggest cargo airline around \$24 million a day. Faced with the prospect of serious disruption to Asia’s fourth-largest economy, the government said it could be prepared to intervene to stop the strike and bring in emergency mediation. Korean Air’s management and its union failed to reach an agreement in talks earlier today and no plans had been set for further talks, the company and the union said. “We will launch a strike as planned unless we make progress in negotiations, but we are still open to the possibility of an agreement,” Park Byung-ryul, a union spokesman said by telephone. The union said that nearly 80% of its members voted to support a strike tomorrow, starting at midnight. The union has 1,344 members representing roughly 70% of Korean Air’s pilots. The union was pushing for a 7.98% increase in annual wages, while Korean Air offered a 2.96% increase with conditions, Korean Air said in a statement. The company said it would try to reach an agreement as soon as possible. A strike would cost the firm about 25 billion won (\$24.17 million) per day, a spokesman at the airline said. South Korea is heavily dependent on air cargo, since it sends almost all of its key semiconductor and mobile phone exports by aircraft. The government has the power to order the union to return to work, a move which the government took when unionised pilots at the country’s second-largest airline, Asiana Airline Inc., went on strike for almost a month in August.

Seoul, Dec 8 — Unionised pilots at Korean Air Co. went on strike over pay today, forcing South Korea’s biggest airline to cancel more than half of its scheduled flights. Korean Air’s management and its union had failed to reach agreement in talks yesterday, prompting a government warning that it could intervene to stop the strike and bring in emergency mediation. The airline cancelled 30 out of 154 international flights scheduled for today and 150 of its scheduled 202 domestic flights, Korean Air said in a statement. Korean Air, the world’s second-biggest cargo carrier, also cancelled 24 of its 31 cargo flights. “It’s expected that there will be more international flights cancelled as more pilots will

join the strike when their flights return to South Korea,” a Korean Air spokeswoman said by telephone. The union, which has 1,344 members representing roughly 70 percent on Korean Air’s pilots. — Reuters.

SPAIN

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: Spanish auto workers staged a one-day strike today to protest plans by SEAT, a subsidiary of Volkswagen AG, to cut 1,346 jobs. The stoppage in Barcelona was the second in three weeks and came three days before a deadline for reaching a deal on some kind of alternative to the layoffs.



DEFAMATION, AGE-GENDER DISCRIMINATION & EMOTIONAL DISTRESS, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Former San Diego State equipment manager Steve Bartel reached a settlement yesterday in his lawsuit against several SDSU defendants, ending a two-year-old case that was set to go to trial today. California State University attorney Sue Westover and Bartel’s attorney Paul Kondrick confirmed yesterday’s settlement but declined to reveal details until the contract was signed. Bartel filed suit in August 2003, alleging defamation, age-gender discrimination and emotional distress in the wake of a CSU audit that condemned his management of the athletics equipment room. He was fired by SDSU in September 2003 but reinstated to a new position after a state appeals board hearing in February 2004. “It’s all over, finally,” Westover said. “Everybody is happy to put this all behind us and give Mr. Bartel a clean slate.”

DUMPING OF POLLUTED WASTEWATER, AVONDALE CREEK, NORTH BIRMINGHAM, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A judge fined McWane Inc. \$5 million and ordered the company to finish a \$2.7 million environmental project for dumping polluted wastewater into a creek near one of its foundries. Three executives of the privately owned company also were fined and placed on probation during a hearing yesterday, and two were ordered to spend time in home detention. One was ordered to perform community service work, but all avoided prison time. Prosecution witnesses testified during a five-week trial earlier this year that McWane and its managers gave orders for water tainted during the pipe making process to be pumped into storm drains and into Avondale Creek near a plant in north Birmingham.

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

Environmental engineers testified there were elevated levels of zinc, lead, oil and grease in the water, and jurors rejected defense claims that the men and the company didn't commit any crimes. Five U.S. subsidiaries of McWane have been accused this year of environmental crimes. A Salt Lake City federal grand jury last month indicted McWane and its Pacific States Pipe subsidiary in Utah on environmental violation charges. Prosecutors asked senior U.S. District Judge Robert Propst for the maximum \$20 million fine against McWane but he penalized the company only one-fourth of that amount. Propst also refused to send executives James Delk, Michael Devine and Charles "Barry" Robison, the company's vice president of environmental affairs, to prison. Propst ordered Delk, a former vice president and general manager, to serve three years' probation, pay a \$90,000 fine and serve six months of home detention. Devine, a former plant manager, is required to serve two years' probation, pay a \$35,000 fine and serve three months of home detention. Robison received a term of two years' probation, a \$2,500 fine and is required to perform 150 hours of community service. Delk, Devine and McWane were convicted of conspiring to violate the Clean Water Act and polluting Avondale Creek. Robison and McWane were convicted of filing a false report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2000. Propst said Delk and Devine inherited environmental problems at the aging McWane Cast Iron Pipe Co. "It was a situation growing out of old plants becoming older," Propst said. Witnesses told the judge during the hearing that the company has spent millions making improvements to better manage water at the plant, and company chairman Charles Phillip McWane apologized for McWane's action.

FALSE ALLEGATION STATEMENTS, GREENEVILLE, TENNESSEE, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 3, states: Jonesborough woman has been awarded \$3 million in her lawsuit against the Ingles grocery chain. Lisa Day filed a \$10 million lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Greeneville in 2001 claiming that the manager of the Ingles Market in Elizabethton made false statements to police that eventually led to her being charged with theft. Ingles denied the claim. Following an eight-day trial in October, a jury found that Ingles was guilty of malicious prosecution and awarded Day \$500,000 in compensatory damages and \$2.5 million in punitive damages.

FRAUD, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 3, states: Reclusive billionaire Izzy Englander agreed to fork out \$30 million of his own fortune yesterday as part of a monster settlement of fraud charges against his Wall Street hedge fund. Englander, 57, who shuns public events and avoids being photographed, also will shell out more than \$121

million in "ill-gotten revenues" from the coffers of his high-flying Millennium Partners fund. The hermitlike moneymen is also banned from trading for three years, a much stiffer penalty for a man who raked in an estimated \$200 million last year. Attorney General Eliot Spitzer said Englander's head-spinning profits were fueled by sneaky practices that inflate big-bucks funds at the expense of ordinary investors. The fund used more than 1,000 shell accounts to trade mutual funds after hours and take advantage of so-called market timing, or breaking news that drove funds up and down. The shell accounts were opened by dozens of brokers who were sent to New Jersey for the day, where they underwent physicals and bought variable annuities, a form of life insurance that offers undetectable access to mutual fund accounts, sources told Fortune magazine. When trading on those accounts, some as large as \$20 million, moved the market price of certain mutual funds, Millennium cashed in. After being poked and prodded, the brokers dined at a four-star French inn in New Jersey's horse country, the magazine said. "Millennium cost mutual fund investors tens of millions of dollars," Spitzer said. "Those frauds have been halted, and restitution will be made to investors who were harmed."

FRAUDULENT SALE OF VIATICAL SETTLEMENTS, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: Three men who formerly oversaw a Florida-based company have agreed to pay \$25 million to settle charges that they cheated about 31,000 investors through the fraudulent sale of \$1 billion in viatical settlements from 1994 through 2004. The Securities and Exchange Commission announced the settlement with brothers Joel and Leslie Steinger and their friend Peter Lombardi today. The settlement with the people who ran Mutual Benefits Corp. requires approval of U.S. District Court Judge Federico Moreno. Viatical settlements allow terminally ill people to sell their life insurance policies for an immediate payment. The purchaser of the policy becomes the beneficiary of the policy and makes premium payments, receiving the full life insurance benefit when the person dies. The SEC found that the Steingers and their friend deceived investors by failing to disclose that purported returns were based upon life-expectancy estimates that were manipulated by Joel Steinger rather than determined independently by doctors. The SEC also said that investors weren't told that Mutual Benefits used funds from new investors to pay premiums on older policies and that the Steingers controlled the company and had a disciplinary history, including prior actions by the SEC and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The SEC said that the Steinger brothers each agreed to give up \$9 million in ill-gotten gains and to pay a \$500,000 civil penalty. Lombardi, the former president, agreed to pay

\$5.88 million in disgorgement and to pay a \$120,000 civil penalty. The SEC said its case continues against a third brother, Steven Steinger. "Judge Moreno threw out, dismissed, all of the fraud charges against Steven," said his attorney, Faith Gay. "There's only one charge left," she said, "and we intend to litigate it."

INSURANCE FRAUD, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: State Farm Insurance has been ordered to pay more than \$8 million to a tow truck driver and his sister-in-law who were acquitted of insurance fraud after being accused of faking the theft of a vehicle. Jackson County Circuit Judge Charles Atwell on Monday (Dec 5) said he would award \$4.5 million to Jennie Hampton, of suburban Olathe, Kan., owner of the Toyota 4Runner reported stolen in 1997, and \$4.2 million to Marvin Vail, 33, of Edgerton, Kan. "We felt that a significant punitive award was justified, particularly given State Farm's size and conduct," said attorney James P. Frickleton, who represented Hampton and Vail. Hampton and Vail sued State Farm Insurance and the National Insurance Crime Bureau, an organization that investigates insurance fraud. Jurors in September awarded \$800,000 in damages to the pair after finding they were the victims of malicious prosecution. But the decision on punitive damages was left to Atwell. The crime bureau settled with the pair after trial. Dick Luedke, spokesman for Bloomington, Ill.-based State Farm, said Tuesday that the company could not comment on the pending litigation. After Hampton's vehicle was found burned in rural Miami County, Kan., in December 1997, State Farm refused to pay her claim. The company accused her of lying in claiming that the Toyota's engine was in "excellent" condition before the reported theft, citing reports from several witnesses who told investigators she had talked about engine problems and was looking for a new engine a few weeks before the event. One witness was reported to have overheard Vail, who worked as a tow-truck driver, stating that he was involved in towing the vehicle to where it was burned. Through the insurance crime bureau, the case was forwarded to the district attorney's office in Johnson County, Kan., which filed charges. Hampton and Vail were acquitted in May 2001. Frickleton said State Farm and the insurance crime bureau relied on incomplete, hearsay evidence in seeking the fraud prosecution. The attorney for State Farm argued at trial that an analysis showed that the engine was damaged before the fire. The award Atwell ordered included an adjustment to account for the settlement with the crime bureau.

MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Dec 6 — A young mother who took an overdose while suffering from

post-natal depression yesterday accepted £2.8 million in settlement of her damages claim against the ambulance service called out to help her. Claire Burchell, now 25, who suffered brain damage, claimed negligence against the Lancashire Ambulance Service NHS Trust because of a delay in arriving at her home after an emergency call. She was also claiming over alleged failures in her treatment on the way to hospital. Her barrister, Simeon Maskrey, told a judge at the High Court in London that the trust had agreed to make the payment to Mrs Burchell, now of Milton Keynes, "without admission of liability". Mrs Burchell claimed it should have taken ten minutes for the ambulance to reach her home, but the court was told it took half an hour. Mr Justice Newman said the sum was a "wholly appropriate settlement".

PRICE-FIXING, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Samsung, the world's largest maker of computer memory chips, has pleaded guilty to a charge it conspired with other companies to fix the price of chips used in personal computers and other electronic devices, boosting the cost to consumers. After accepting the plea and a previously arranged deal with prosecutors yesterday, U.S. District Judge Phyllis J. Hamilton ordered Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd. and its U.S. subsidiary, Samsung Semiconductor Inc., to pay \$300 million, the second-largest fine in a criminal anti-trust case. It was the culmination of a three-year investigation into price fluctuations in the dynamic random access memory market from April 1999 to June 2002. Prosecutors said Samsung, which is based in Seoul, South Korea, and other companies engaged in price fixing through e-mails, telephone calls and in-person meetings. Earlier this year, Seoul-based Hynix Semiconductor Inc. agreed to pay a \$185 million fine; rival Infineon Technologies AG of Germany agreed to pay \$160 million last year. A fourth chip maker, Micron Technology Inc. of Boise, Idaho, has been co-operating with prosecutors and was not expected to face charges. Yesterday, Samsung Semiconductor's chief financial officer, Dahm Huh, spoke on behalf of the company and answered a series of routine questions about the defendant's ability to pay, the company's understanding of the deal and the waiving of various rights. The plea deal, which was announced in October, requires the company to pay \$300 million, plus interest, in installments over the next five years. The government agreed to not pursue additional prosecutions against Samsung or most its officers and employees. Seven people, including Samsung Semiconductor President Y.H. Park, are specifically excluded from such protection and could still face prosecution. The others are Tom Quinn, senior vice president of sales and marketing for memory products;

marketing vice presidents Kim Il-ung and Kang Yeong-ho, and memory chip sales vice presidents Lee Sun-woo and Lee Young-woo. The seventh, Rha Young-bae, is no longer with Samsung. Niall Lynch, a Justice Department antitrust attorney, declined to comment on the status of the seven people who were "carved out" of the deal. He said the investigation is continuing to look at other companies and people. He did note that the government will now have Samsung's assistance in its investigation. The deal also did not seek restitution from Samsung. Instead, victims, ranging from other chip makers and computer makers to private individuals, can sue for damages. "We're letting that be the vehicle for victim compensation," Lynch said outside the courtroom. Victims, according to federal prosecutors, included Dell Inc., Compaq Computer Corp., Hewlett-Packard Co., Apple Computer Inc., International Business Machines Corp. and Gateway Inc. Apple and Dell raised PC prices to compensate while others reduced the amount of memory installed on their systems to compensate. The Justice Department investigation began in 2002, a year after memory chip prices began to climb even though the rest of the tech industry was suffering its worst downturn in history. At the time, then Dell CEO Michael Dell blamed the high prices on cartel-like behaviour. The outcome of the investigation also is expected to help fuel a private antitrust case filed by Rambus Inc., which licensed a memory technology that had been embraced by Intel Corp., the world's largest maker of the microprocessor brains of computers. In 1996, Intel chose Rambus technology to help speed up systems running its then-upcoming Pentium 4. But the chip makers did not want to pay Rambus royalties. DRAM prices fell sharply, so much so that Intel agreed to support non-Rambus technology in the fall of 2001. Shortly after that, DRAM prices nearly quadrupled. In 2004, Rambus filed a private antitrust suit against several chip makers. That litigation is ongoing, as are other cases related to memory prices. "We are continuing to pursue our own antitrust case, which is based in part on the price fixing now being admitted by key members of the DRAM industry," said John Danforth, Rambus' general counsel. Lynch refused to comment on whether the government believes Rambus was a victim.

RACE-RIOT KILLING, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials in York announced a two million dollar settlement with the children and sisters of a black South Carolina woman who was shot and killed more than 36 years ago during race riots that rocked the central Pennsylvania city. The settlement, which the city council is expected to approve tonight, would extinguish the lawsuit that Lillie Belle Allen's family filed against

the city and five former police officers. It also calls for the appointment of a panel to make recommendations for an appropriate memorial to Allen and Henry Schaad, a white city policeman who also was shot to death during ten days of rioting in the summer of 1969. York Mayor John Brenner apologized to Allen's family, saying, "We are very sorry for your loss, and I know no monetary settlement and no community dialogue will bring back Lillie Belle Allen." Two white men are serving prison terms for second-degree murder in Allen's case, and seven others pleaded guilty or no contest to lesser offenses. Former York Mayor Charlie Robertson, who had been a policeman during the riots, was acquitted in the 2002 trial. The case had been scheduled to go to trial in April.

WRONGFUL-DEATH, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: A judge today approved a wrongful-death settlement stemming from a cattle farmer's fatal shooting of his neighbour, a longtime nemesis who was trespassing to retrieve a wayward bull at the time of his death. "I'm just glad it's over," Evelyn Brooks, the wife of Oliver P. Brooks, said as she left Caroline County Circuit Court after a brief hearing this morning. She and her daughters had filed a \$10 million lawsuit against Richmond attorney and cattleman John F. Ames, who shot Oliver "Perry" Brooks, 74, multiple times in April 2004. Ames, who claimed he acted in self-defence when he shot his stick-wielding neighbour, was acquitted of criminal charges during a jury trial in September. Ames was not in court for the settlement hearing today. Retired Judge John E. Clarkson of Norfolk sealed the settlement from public view, and lawyers for each side would not divulge monetary terms.

Railway Accidents



ATHENS, GREECE

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated Dec 6, states: The 250 passengers of train 503, which was performing the Thessaloniki-Athens route, are all well. The passenger train collided with a freight train, bound for Larissa, at about 2230, Greek local time, today, in Afidnes, Athens. Unfortunately, though, the passenger train's driver, who was trapped in the first carriage, was recovered dead. According to OSE (Hellenic Railways Organisation), the first carriage of the passenger train collided with the last carriage of the freight train, as the latter delayed exiting the track. Afidnes Station closed down and the passengers will arrive at their final destination with

another train, which departed from Larissis Station. OSE crews are trying to free the tracks.

BRANDON, MANITOBA, CANADA

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Several rail cars on an eastbound CN Rail train left the tracks west of Brandon just after midnight this morning. Twelve grain cars and 200 metres of track were badly damaged in the derailment, which happened five kilometres west of Brandon, on a rail line south of the 1A Highway. RCMP say no one was injured and local residents were not put at risk by the derailment. It's not yet known why the cars left the track. The CN line has been closed down as RCMP and CN police investigate.

COMILLA TOWN AREA, BANGLADESH

Karachi, Dec 8 — Bangladesh Railway's two tank wagons and the locomotive of a Sylhet-bound train from Chittagong derailed near Lakhsham's Alishwar rail station near Comilla town in south-east of Dhaka, yesterday morning. No casualty was reported except an oil spill. It is said due to accident, the derailed tank wagons along with the engine fell on the track-side road spilling oil in nearby areas until railway officials rushed to the scene and salvaged the wagons. Train communication on the route resumed after two hours of the accident at about 0700 hrs. An enquiry is being ordered. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

DAGESTAN, RUSSIA

Moscow, Dec 8 — A goods train went off the rails in the southern Russian region of Dagestan near rebel Chechnya after an unknown device exploded in one the carriages, Interfax news agency reported today. The agency said no-one was hurt in the explosion. — Reuters.

FRASER RIVER, VANCOUVER, CANADA

London, Dec 7 — A CN Rail train has derailed on a trestle crossing the Fraser River between Richmond and Burnaby, sending a railcar loaded with automobiles into the Fraser River. The derailment late Monday (Dec 5) night was the second of the day for CN, after seven empty cars jumped the tracks in the Cheakamus Canyon north of Squamish, B.C. A stretch of the Vancouver-area bridge's railing was snapped off where the car carrier plunged into the water. Several dozen CN workers and an environmental company were at the site to assess the damage while a massive crane was brought in to pull the train car out of the river. A CN Rail spokesman said four cars derailed in a 39-car train. A number of automobiles - which were being carried on enclosed double-decker railcars - were submerged in the river as a result of the derailment. The derailed rail cars impeded some traffic on the Fraser River. There was

no indication of anything toxic spilling into the river, said the CN spokesman, although some gasoline from the automobiles may have leaked. The line in Richmond has been owned for a long-time by CN rail, unlike the one north of Squamish, which is a former B.C. Rail line taken over by CN. The train that derailed in the Cheakamus Canyon on Monday was 125 cars in length and not in contravention of an order from the federal transport minister earlier this year that trains on that line be reduced in length.

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated Dec 6, states: CN Rail is facing more questions after two derailments in a single day, including one on the trouble-prone former B.C. Rail line north of Vancouver and another that sent a car loaded with new automobiles into the Fraser River. The accidents happened within hours of each other on yesterday, and while CN said there is no evident connection, critics want federal regulators to take a closer look at the railway's record and rail safety overall. Yesterday evening, four cars of a 39-car northbound train carrying new autos derailed while crossing a swinging trestle over the Fraser River into the Vancouver suburb of Burnaby from an industrial area in neighbouring Richmond. "The train was almost across the bridge," said Graham Dallas, CN's regional communications manager. "Three of them derailed upright on the bridge. The last car in the train, however, fell off the bridge into the water." The surviving derailed cars sat stranded at the north end of the bridge while CN workers and employees from salvage and environmental-response contractors worked on the wreck site. A containment boom surrounded the submerged car near the riverbank while a massive crane on a barge prepared to lift it. Dallas said there's no real environmental concern. Dallas would not speculate on the cause of this accident. He said the track and trestle is inspected weekly. The railway is at a loss to explain the spate of derailments in British Columbia, said Dallas. B.C. Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon declined to comment on yesterday's derailment over the Fraser River, saying railway regulation is a federal responsibility.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Seven empty cars on a CN Rail train left the track yesterday in the Cheakamus River canyon north of Vancouver, the third accident in the area this year. Company spokesman Graham Dallas said seven empty cars went off the tracks on the old BC Rail line between Squamish and Whistler. "Seven cars toward the back half of the train derailed," Mr. Dallas said. "There were no injuries and no dangerous goods involved in the derailment."

INDIAN HEAD, CANADA

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: It could be several

months before Canadian Pacific Railway learns what caused 25 rail cars to leave the tracks in Indian Head. The accident happened early Friday (Dec 2) morning as the train was heading west. No one was injured and rapid response crews were on the scene right away, said CPR spokesperson Ed Greenberg. The line has been repaired and trains are back on schedule. The next job will be to find out what happened. "We'll begin analyzing all the physical evidence, as well as talking to the crew, reviewing the data off the black box," Greenberg said. "We do want to take steps to determine what led to the cause and what the cause was."

NAKHON SI THAMMARAT, THAILAND

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Thailand's southern train services from Nakhon Si Thammarat Province to the southernmost region and vice versa have been temporarily suspended due to a cargo train derailment in Nakhon Si Thammarat last night. Hat Yai Railway Station in Songkhla Province, the centre of the country's southern train network, announced that the train services on five routes were to be suspended today until the derailed train is moved out of the way and repairs of the affected railroad are completed. They include the Hat Yai-Chumphon, Hat Yai-Sungai Kolok, Yala-Sungai Kolok, Hat Yai-Surat Thani and Surat Thani-Hat Yai routes. However, the train services between Thung Song in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Bangkok and vice versa have been unaffected and opens as usual. The cargo train derailed between Ron Pibool and Chong Khao Railway Stations in Nakhon Si Thammarat Monday night. Local railway officials are urgently moving the derailed bogies out of the railroad and repairing some damaged parts.

ORISSA, INDIA

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: At least two people were killed and 10 others injured as a goods train derailed in Orissa today. Thirty bogies of an iron-ore loaded goods train went off the tracks in Bimalagarh in Sundergarh district around 1100 today, officials said. District railway police chief Mahendra Pratap said the train was on its way from Roxy to Bimalgarh, about 80 km from the steel city Rourkela.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: At least eight people were killed and four seriously injured when about 30 wagons of a goods train jumped the rails near Bimalagarh, about 70 km from Rourkela, today. The dead were identified as a guard, two gangmen and five others including a woman, Superintendent of Police Mahendra Pratap, said. Among the injured were the driver and assistant driver of the goods train who had been shifted to the Ispat General Hospital here while the rest were being treated at the

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

nearby Lahunipara Public Health Centre. Unofficial sources, however, put the number of dead and injured at a higher figure. Eyewitnesses said a large group of people, who were on their way to a weekly market at Bimalagarh, were travelling in the guard van. Their exact number, however, was yet to be ascertained. Railway Police sources earlier had said about 70 persons, mostly tribals, were travelling in the train when the mishap occurred.

STEELE AREA, NORTH DAKOTA, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: A rail line closed by the derailment of a coal train near Steele has reopened. BNSF Railway spokesman Gus Melonas in Seattle says the train derailed at about 0100 Saturday morning (Dec 3). He says the line was reopened yesterday. Melonas says the train was carrying coal from Montana to a South Dakota power plant. He says 122 coal cars went off the tracks. Melonas says there were no injuries. He says officials are still trying to determine what caused the derailment.

Miscellaneous



FLOODING IN COAL MINE, HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Forty-two workers were trapped in a flooded coal mine in central China's Henan province, the state-run Xinhua news agency said today. A total of 48 miners were working underground when the Sigou Coal Mine in Shisi township, Xin'an county, was flooded late yesterday. Only six miners managed to escape, the report said.

HK DEQIN 201 (Tuvalu)

Chittagong, Dec 8 — General cargo *HK Deqin 201* (12213 gt, built 1989) arrived at Chittagong port Oct 28 for discharge of 10,613.89 tonnes of bagged TSP/GTSP fertiliser, as per bill of lading. The vessel after part cargo discharge sailed from Chittagong outer anchorage night of Dec 6 with remaining cargo on board, 5,497.89 tonnes as per stevedores discharge report, without informing agent and other concern authority as per vessel local agents K D Shipping, Chittagong. Reportedly, vessel had claim from cargo interest, as cargo found wet, caked/lumped inside the holds on arrival of vessel at berth of Chittagong Port Authority. — Lloyd's Agents.

MALTESE VESSEL BLOCKADED AT LE HAVRE, FRANCE

Le Havre, Dec 2 — Greenpeace protesters blocked the loading/discharging operations of containers on board general cargo

Kapitan Kuroptev yesterday. Apparently they learned that some containers containing uranium waste were to be loaded on board the vessel. The police came on the terminal and arrested the people. The time during which no operations were carried out was around three to four hours. — Lloyd's Agents.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

Hanoi, Dec 3 — Fresh bird flu outbreaks have killed more chickens and ducks in Vietnam's two northern provinces and birds were dying in a third area, the Agriculture Ministry said. Six outbreaks killed 317 ducks and 37 chickens in the port city of Haiphong and Thanh Hoa province on Thursday (Dec 1), prompting workers to slaughter more than 20,400 birds there, the ministry's Animal Health Department said in a report seen today. In Quang Ninh province 78 ducks and chickens were found dead of unknown reasons on Thursday and some 2,000 birds were culled immediately while bird flu tests were under way, said the department's report on its web site. — Reuters.

Jakarta, Dec 3 — Indonesia has had its eighth human death due to bird flu confirmed by a Hong Kong laboratory affiliated with the World Health Organisation, a senior Health Ministry official said today. Hariadi Wibisono said the results on the 25-year-old woman, who died earlier this week, made her Indonesia's eighth confirmed death from the H5N1 strain of bird flu. "We got the result this morning. She was positive," said Wibisono, who heads a department charged with eradicating animal-borne diseases. Officials have previously said the woman had contact with dead chickens before being admitted to a Jakarta hospital. Another five people have been confirmed to have contracted the virus in Indonesia but have survived. — Reuters.

Nekrasovka, Dec 4 — Ukrainian troops moved from house to house today in five villages where a virulent strain of bird flu has been detected, removing domestic birds for a mass cull in pits being excavated by diggers. Emergency Ministry troops, covered from head to toe in plastic and wearing masks, rounded up squawking chickens, ducks and geese, stuffed them in plastic bags and tossed them in the back of dump trucks in the Crimea peninsula. Villagers could do little but watch and head for administrative offices to receive compensation for every head lost. Chickens, for instance, were set at the equivalent of \$3. Authorities imposed tough measures yesterday to contain the outbreak, the first in the ex-Soviet state. But villagers told reporters their poultry had been hit by disease for more than two months without any official action being taken. Families had continued to eat meat from what were deemed to be healthy birds. Police and Interior Ministry troops stood alongside barriers and handwritten "Quarantine" signs outside three-km (two-mile) exclusion

zones around the villages, though some residents were still passing in and out. Villagers were being vaccinated against human forms of flu. Further 10-km monitoring zones were in place in the peninsula jutting into the Black Sea — a major stopping point for migratory birds heading south for the winter. Agriculture Minister Oleksander Baranivsky yesterday identified the virus as H5, and said it was highly lethal to birds and may be dangerous to humans. Official data showed more than 2,500 birds had died since Friday and samples were sent to laboratories in Britain and Italy for further analysis to see if the virus is the deadly H5N1 strain. Mechanical diggers prepared pits to accommodate the remains of the birds, due to be incinerated with napalm — stored from the Soviet era and brought to the region in drums aboard trucks. Other soldiers chopped logs to build make-shift bath-houses for servicemen — to ensure they washed regularly. Ukraine had previously been declared free of bird flu, though the deadly H5N1 virus had been discovered not far from its borders in Romania and Russia. New cases of bird flu were detected in southeastern Romania at the weekend and officials said the birds had most likely contracted the H5N1 strain. Ukraine's top veterinary surgeon, Petro Verbytsky, repeated that no humans had been affected and said contagion from the virus was unlikely. — Reuters.

Fires & Explosions



ALUMINIUM PLANT, HEBEI PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Two people were killed and three others injured in an explosion at an aluminium plant in Luancheng county of north China's Hebei Province yesterday, the local fire brigade confirmed today. The blast went off at around 1920, yesterday at Xingya Electrophoresis Aluminium Plant in Youtong village of Yehe town, burying five women workers and destroyed 300 square metres of workshops, said Li Xinbao, head of the fire brigade in the provincial capital Shijiazhuang. The brigade sent more than 50 firemen to the rescue operation. All the five women were dug out in an hour, but two of them died during emergency treatment at a local hospital. The other three are still being treated. Investigators say the blast was probably lit by an unidentified spark at the workshop.

COAL MINE, QITAIHE, HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE, CHINA

Beijing, Dec 1 — Chinese authorities have shut down a state-owned colliery in north-east China and detained top

officials after 164 miners died in an explosion, state media reported today. State-owned Dongfeng coal mine run by a branch of the Heilongjiang Longmei Mining Group Co Ltd, a conglomerate of four major coal firms in north-eastern Heilongjiang province, was hit by a blast late on Sunday (Nov 27). The coal mine operator and the party chief of the Dongfeng coal mine were removed from posts and detained by police for investigation, the Beijing News said. The general manager of Longmei Group's Qitaihe branch was also dismissed, Xinhua News Agency said. The death toll includes 162 miners underground and two women who had been working in a generator room at ground level. Seven others were still missing. Xinhua said there were 242 miners underground rather than the previously reported figure of 221. "Due to the very disorderly management of the Dongfeng coal mine, the actual number of miners underground is very different from that reported," the Beijing News quoted a coal mine safety supervision spokesman as saying. — Reuters.

COAL MINE, TANGSHAN, HEBEI PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Dec 8 — An explosion tore through a coal mine in northern China yesterday, leaving at least 54 workers dead and another 22 missing, the government said. Yesterday's explosion occurred at the privately run Liuguantun Colliery in Tangshan, a city in Hebei province, when 186 miners were underground, the official Xinhua News Agency said, increasing the number of workers underground from a previously reported 123. Thirty-one miners were immediately rescued but three later died. The bodies of 51 miners had been recovered from the mine by early today, bringing the death toll to 54, it said. Rescuers were searching for 22 still trapped in the mine.

COTTON PROCESSING FACILITY, TULIA AREA, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 4, states: A Panhandle cotton processing facility sustained an estimated \$11 million in fire damage as gusty winds fanned flames that charred three warehouses at the North Plains Compress Co.'s 100-acre site, company officials said. No one was injured in the fire that began Friday (Dec 2) afternoon just south of Tulia and took firefighters from 14 agencies 12 hours to bring under control, officials said. The blaze began in hay bales stored at Tulia Livestock Auction on U.S. 87 and spread to the compress, officials said. The cause of the fire remains under investigation, officials said. The preliminary loss estimate included about 30,000 bales of cotton, company official Richard Griffin said. A bale weighs about 480 pounds. The blaze could have been worse, Griffin said. Firefighters remained at the compress Saturday afternoon to monitor the still-smoldering area,

officials said. Shipments at the compress, which handles about 7,500 bales a day, resumed Saturday afternoon, Griffin said.

DEPARTMENT STORE, SHARJAH, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Karachi, Dec 8 — A huge fire broke out in a privately owned departmental store in Sharjah Industrial Area No. 2, in the United Arab Emirates yesterday evening. No one was hurt, but there was considerable damage. The authorities are investigating its cause and suspect it was a short circuit. Lieutenant Colonel Gareeb Shaaban, Director-General of Sharjah Civil Defence, told media that the fire broke out at 1740, local time, at the premises of the Festival Centre and spread rapidly. Fire engines from Dubai, Sharjah and Ajman quickly converged on the scene and contained the blaze to the 100,000 square foot store. It was brought under control by 1830, but the embers were expected to continue to glow until the morning. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

FACTORY, EAST DELHI AREA, NEW DELHI, INDIA

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 12 people have been burnt to death in a major fire that engulfed a cloth factory in an east Delhi area. The blaze erupted at around 1115, IST, and soon spread through the three-storeyed building in Vishwas Nagar area in Patparganj. "The fire started in the second floor of the building where under garments were being manufactured and packaged," said Vijay Bahadur, Divisional Officer (East) of the Fire Services. Firemen battled for over two hours before bringing the fire under control. Twelve charred bodies have been recovered from the premises and efforts are underway to identify them. When the fire started, it blocked the only exit of the building and escape for the people working inside. Four people managed to jump out of a window of the building to save themselves. They are suffering from burn injuries and have been admitted in Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital. Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit has announced a compensation of Rs 1 lakh each to the family of those who were killed. The building, located in a congested lane, had no fire safety measures in place. And the fire has once again brought into focus the hazards of running factories in densely populated residential areas.

FISH FACTORY, ABERDEEN, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Fifty firefighters have been tackling a major blaze at a fish factory near Aberdeen Harbour. A huge plume of black smoke was visible throughout the city as Grampian Fire and Rescue used eight appliances to bring the blaze under control. Eleven people were safely evacuated from the Joseph Robertson warehouse in Sinclair Road in the Torry area. Police described the fire as a major incident.

Roads in the area have been closed and traffic diversions set up. Emergency services were called to the blaze at about 0645, UTC, today. Station master Brian Crouch said that there had been several workers at the processing plant when the fire broke out but they had been quickly evacuated. Speaking from the scene, he said: "The fire is contained to the one building and there have been no rescues or reports of any injuries. "It's too early to say possible causes of the fire at the moment." Mr Crouch added that the firefighters were expected to remain at the scene for most of the day.

GRAIN SILO, LATTAKIA, SYRIA

Damascus, Dec 4 — One person was killed and 20 were injured in an explosion in a grain silo today in Lattakia, hitting grain export facilities, an official said. A port official said the blast appeared to be the result of a technical fault. "There is no reason to make us believe that there is any non-technical reason," Bassam Fedda, the port operations manager said. Fedda said the damage will "hamper grains exports for about a month but will not bring them to a halt. We will start as of tomorrow to repair the damage". State television, which first reported the incident, said four of the injured were in critical condition. The television showed footage of the destroyed building and bridge connecting the silo to other facilities. Fedda said the blast hit a facility attached to the silo used for loading and offloading vessels. "It is a tower of seven levels with a basement for machines and a bay for trucks," said Fedda. The governor of Lattakia told the official Syrian Arab News Agency earlier that the cause of the blast was unknown and an Interior Ministry official said technical experts were examining the site but gave no further details.

London, Dec 5 — At least two men were killed and 24 wounded by an explosion inside a wheat silo caused by an elevated walkway's collapse in Lattakia, port and hospital officials said. The blast occurred after a steel walkway reinforced with concrete fell onto electric transformers in the silo, a Latakia port official said. The explosion, which caused a two-story structure inside the silo to collapse, initially raised fears of a bomb attack, but this was later ruled out. Three hundred civil defense members, firefighters and police personnel joined in efforts to rescue people trapped under the rubble. Two workers were killed and 24 wounded and rushed to hospital. Four workers were in critical conditions after suffering severe burns.

LANDFILL SITE, SEVENOAKS AREA, KENT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A huge pile of tyres set alight by arsonists is still burning nearly eight months later and it could be another three months before it is put out. The 3,000 tonnes

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

of tyres were the base liner for a new landfill site at a former quarry near Sevenoaks, Kent. The fire was smothered with 16ft of clay but has still not burnt out. Owner of the site, Cory Environmental, said it is working with the fire service and the Environment Agency to extinguish the tyres gradually. The process involves slowly removing the clay cap, separating the smouldering tyres and extinguishing them one by one. At the height of April's fire, at Tilcon Quarry, off Bat and Ball Road, black smoke rose hundreds of feet into the air and could be seen for miles around. Residents living up to half a mile away say they can still smell fumes from the site. Some were unable to use their gardens during the summer and others fear there may be toxins in the air. Cory said there should be no adverse effects on the health of people living nearby. "We are gradually putting out the tyre pile as it is being dismantled," said spokesman Achilles Georgiou. "As this happens there is the occasional flare. "Water is added and so steam and dust from the clay will rise.

MARKET, WISET CHAI CHAN DISTRICT, ANG THONG, THAILAND

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire broke out at a famous century-old market in Wiset Chai Chan district early yesterday, razing historical wooden buildings and causing damage estimated at over 300 million baht. The destruction of the market, one of the province's top tourist destinations, will have a major impact on the provincial economy. Officials declared the area a danger zone. The blaze began about 0300 hrs in the northern part of Rong Thong Shrine market on the banks of the Noi river which runs through Wiset Chai Chan district in Ang Thong. At least 300 wooden houses in the market were gutted, including a house where Bangkok Senator Chirmsak Pinthong lived during his childhood, and the houses of relatives of Ang Thong's Chart Thai MP Somsak Prisanananthakul. At least 1,000 people were left homeless. A rescue team and firefighters, led by provincial governor Wibul Sanguanpong, with the help of officials and firefighters from neighbouring provinces, rushed to the area but the community's narrow lanes made it difficult to approach the scene. They had to connected up several firehoses to reach the flames and it took them more than five hours to bring the blaze under control. Two relief centres were set up at the entrance to the market and at Wat Nang Nai temple to provide temporary shelter, food and drink to distraught residents. There were only minor injuries reported and no deaths. The cause of the fire has yet to be established. Apart from the physical damage to the market, the Tourism Authority of Thailand expressed concern over losing the traditional way of life at the market

which was a reason it was such a popular tourist attraction. In terms of cultural, historical and traditional significance, the losses are immeasurable, TAT said. Vichai Limwanchai, mayor of tambon Rong Thong Shrine, said a lot of money would be earmarked to restore the market to its former glory.

MINE, DONETSK, UKRAINE

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: According to early reports, a methane blast at a mine in Ukraine's Donetsk has killed one miner and injured seven, sources from the regional department of the State Committee for Labor Protection said. There were 45 miners at the mine at the moment of the explosion, they said.

PIER, SOUTHEND ON SEA, ESSEX, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Dec 1 — A press report, dated today, states: The world's longest pleasure pier destroyed by fire six weeks ago has reopened to the public. A 130 ft section of the 1.34-mile long pier at Southend on Sea, Essex, was destroyed in a blaze in October. Southend Borough Council, which owns the pier, said limited numbers of people were being allowed on to the structure while repair work continued. Police have yet to establish the cause of the blaze which caused millions of pounds of damage but no-one was hurt. Much of the evidence about the cause of the fire was lost in the blaze or fell into the sea and was washed away.

PREMISES, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A multi-million dollar home that once belonged to the founder of Polaroid has been destroyed by fire. The vacant colonial mansion on Brattle Street in Cambridge went up in flames shortly after midnight and burned for several hours. The home reportedly once belonged to the late instant photography pioneer Edwin Land and was undergoing renovation after being sold for about five million dollars. No serious injuries were reported and firefighters working in bitter cold weather managed to keep the flames from spreading to other homes in the neighbourhood, including the historic Longfellow House. Fire investigators will be sifting through the rubble today, trying to determine how the blaze started.

PREMISES, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Authorities believe a burglar set fire to a dentist's office in Scripps Ranch today, causing \$2 million in damage but no injuries. The blaze at a strip mall at 9999 Mira Mesa Blvd. was reported at 0521 hrs, San Diego fire information officer Maurice Luque said. It took about 40

firefighters a little less than an hour to quell the flames, which destroyed the dentist's office and an adjacent dermatological practice, Luque said. Four other businesses - including a pharmacy that also houses a post office - sustained extensive smoke and water damage, Luque said. The burglar apparently was looking for drugs in the dentist's office, Luque said.

SCHOOL, DUBLIN, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 4 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A fire Wednesday (Nov 30) night that destroyed one building at a recently built school in Dublin caused an estimated \$2 million in damage, Alameda County Fire Department spokesman Randy Moore reported today. Investigators believe a propane explosion in a portable heater caused the fire at Fallon Middle School, located at 3601 Kohnen Way. The school opened for students last year, according to Moore, but several buildings on the campus have yet to be finished. The fire broke out around 2218 hrs in an unfinished building containing a kitchen utility area. The heater was being used to dry the floors, Moore explained. One of the heaters leaked propane causing the "explosion," according to Moore. A total of 35 rescue personnel helped to extinguish the blaze by midnight. There were no reported injuries. The structure, which was attached to a multi-purpose room, was very close to completion, said Moore, and may have to be completely rebuilt because structural beams were damaged in the fire.

TRAIN, PIPARIYA STATION, INDIA

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire broke out in an engine of Mumbai-Howrah Mail train at Pipariya station today but passengers were unharmed, police said. The fire, which erupted in one of the two engines of the Howrah-bound train at the station, was doused promptly with the help of the extinguishers fitted in the train and two fire tenders, police said. No injury was caused to any of the passengers as the fire was put out before it could spread, the police said, adding the exact cause of the fire was yet to be ascertained. The train, which was stranded for nearly an hour, resumed its journey after the affected engine was detached, they added.

WILDFIRE, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 3, states: A grass fire at Farm Road 920, north of Boonesville in Wise County, burned about 3,000 acres Saturday, making it the largest grass fire during several weeks of extremely dry conditions, fire officials said. The fire, which could be seen from downtown Fort Worth, started at about 1030 hrs and spread from County Road 3655 to County Road 3855, Wise County Sheriff department

officials said. About 20 fire departments including Tarrant County, Blue Mound, Parker County, Lake Bridgeport and Azle responded. Many were still on the scene at about 1800 hrs when the fire was nearly extinguished. Flames could be seen in the distance after sundown as crews burned areas to keep the remaining flames from spreading. Six buildings, none of them homes, were destroyed in the blaze, fire officials said. A Boonesville firefighter injured his wrist while fighting the flames, according to a Wise County sheriff's official. Fire officials believe the fire was started by a welder.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: A wind-driven grass fire sparked yesterday on a military bombing range in eastern New Mexico destroyed two buildings, charred 27,000 acres and forced dozens of people to evacuate the small farming community of Floyd. After clearing out the residents, authorities blocked the highways heading to Floyd and discouraged people from trying to return to their homes. Residents were taken to area churches for the night. The blaze started on the Melrose Bombing Range to the north and west of Floyd. The town was evacuated early in the afternoon as wind gusted to more than 30 mph. Firefighters got a break when the sun went down and the wind died down. "Right now, we're putting out hot spots and there are no structures that are in immediate danger," Portales Police Capt. Lonnie Berry said. "As long as the wind cooperates, we'll be OK." Dan Ware, spokesman for the state Forestry Division, said the fire burned two structures, but he did not know whether they were homes or outbuildings. Two firefighters suffered minor injuries. Officials from Cannon Air Force Base and the Roosevelt County Sheriff's Department said the cause of the fire remained under investigation. Base spokesman Capt Andre Kok said it was not known if military operations might have sparked the blaze. Floyd, with about 78 residents, is located just west of the Texas line in east-central New Mexico.



AIRCRAFT DIVERTS TO TORONTO, CANADA

London, Dec 2 — On Nov 26, Korean Airlines Boeing 747-300 aircraft (flight KAL258) was enroute from New York to Anchorage Alaska when the crew requested a diversion to Toronto LBPIA due to a number 2 engine shutdown. No emergency was declared and the diversion was conducted without incident.

AIRCRAFT HIT BY TURBULENCE ON A FLIGHT FROM DUSSELDORF TO ISTANBUL

London, Dec 4 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Thirteen passengers, aboard a Turkish Airlines (THY) aircraft flying from Dusseldorf to Istanbul, were injured when the aircraft entered turbulence. The accident occurred as it was landing at Istanbul's Ataturk Airport. Turkish newspaper Hurriyet reported that the injured were hospitalised after the aircraft finally landed at the airport.

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated Dec 4, states: A Turkish Airlines aircraft got into trouble when it hit a spot of turbulence when coming into to land at Istanbul Airport. Thirteen people were injured when the aircraft hit turbulence as it descended to land. Nine passengers and four crew were injured as the aircraft lost altitude in the turbulence. The Airbus 321 with 113 passengers and five crew was coming from Dusseldorf, Germany, to Istanbul late Friday when it ran into trouble 5,400 meters over the northwestern Turkish province of Tekirdag, the Vatan daily said.

AIRCRAFT PUT BACK TO KAGOSHIMA AIRPORT, JAPAN

London, Dec 3 — Skymark Airlines Boeing 767-300 suffered an uncontained No. 2 engine failure after takeoff from Kagoshima, while climbing through an altitude of about 1,650 metres. Dec 1. Flight 306 was bound for Tokyo-Haneda Airport with 90 passengers and crew on board. The aircraft returned to Kagoshima where it landed safely. After landing a 1.5-metre-long, 20- to 60-centimeter hole was discovered in the engine.

C-FABT

London, Dec 1 — On Nov 27, The Air Canada Jazz flight 8732, a DHC 8, that had departed from Pierre Elliott Trudeau International, Montreal (CYUL), at approximately 700 feet when the No.2 engine (PW120, serial no. TM120368) feathered by itself and the torque began to run away. The crew shut the engine down, declared an emergency and landed back at CYUL. The FDR data was analysed and revealed that the torque was erroneously read by the sensor at 22% causing the propeller to auto-feather. Once the propeller feathered, the torque quickly rose to 160. The engine and propeller were removed from the aircraft and replaced. Maintenance found that there was a problem with the torque sensor. The aircraft returned to service.

COLLISION, MANCHESTER AIRPORT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A passenger jet captain who crashed into another plane at an airport has been criticised in a report. An Excel Airways Boeing 767 was taxiing at Manchester Airport on Nov 4, 2004 when its wing struck the tail of a bmibaby Boeing 737. The passengers, who were waiting to fly to Belfast, reported hearing "a loud noise

accompanied by severe shaking". The Air Accidents Investigation Branch said the 50-year-old pilot should have seen and avoided the 737. None of the 255 passengers on the Excel plane or the 74 passengers on board the 737 were injured and all were evacuated safely. Shortly after the collision, the captain of the 767, which was due to fly to Goa, in India, fainted. The AAIB report said this was due to shock rather than any underlying medical condition. The air traffic controller was also cleared of wrongdoing.

CONDOBOLIN AREA, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Police are trying to determine the flight plan of a light aircraft that crashed in New South Wales's central-west this afternoon, killing the two people on board. The four-seater fixed wing aircraft crashed on a property 20 kilometres west of Condoobolin just before 1500, AEDT. Detectives are at the scene and a forensic team and Air Safety Bureau officials will also work to establish the cause. The Bureau of Meteorology reported a thunderstorm in the area at the time of the crash. Heavy rain and strong winds have been moving through the region for the past few hours. In Cowra, heavy winds have blown the roofs off two houses, and a wall has collapsed in a Bathurst business.

CRASH, AMUR RIVER, RUSSIA

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Russian helicopter crashed today on a mission to airlift patients in the Far East region, killing at least two people aboard, news agencies reported. The Mi-8 helicopter plummeted into the icy Amur River five minutes after taking off from Nikolaevsk-on-Amur, Viktor Beltsov, spokesman for the Emergency Situations Ministry, told Russian news agencies. The helicopter, with three crew members aboard, was on a mission to pick up patients to a hospital in the town of Bogorodskoye. Regional emergency officials said rescuers have found the bodies of two crew members and the other one is missing. Preliminary reports said five people were killed in the crash.

CRASH, BOZEMAN, MONTANA, UNITED STATES

See N701QR.

CRASH, COLDSTREAM, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Paramedics say a pilot is lucky to have escaped serious injury in an aircraft crash at Coldstream, in Melbourne's east. The aircraft hit a fence at the Coldstream Aerodrome, as it came in to land at about 1100 today. The Ambulance Service's Peter Watts says the pilot is being treated in hospital for minor burns. "He suffered partial thickness burns to his face," he said. "The problem with that is it always raises the potential for airways burns, which

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

can manifest later and compromise the airway. The burns to both hands will be quite painful, but certainly he'll make a full recovery."

**CRASH, CONDOBOLIN AREA,
NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA**

See VH-PYN.

**CRASH, CUNDINAMARCA STATE,
COLOMBIA**

See HK-3516.

**CRASH, LAKE SELFE,
NEW ZEALAND**

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated today, states: An Environment Canterbury water-quality scientist, last night told of his dramatic escape from a Garden City Robinson 22 helicopter which crashed in Lake Selfe, at about 1300, yesterday. They were hovering about 10m above the lake and 100m offshore in a bid to drop a weighted container into the lake when the helicopter started to descend, Adrian Meredith said. "There was no change in motor pitch or anything like that," he said. "The pilot was just stabilising the aircraft and for some reason it started to descend. He looked a bit worried, and some orange lights were flashing on the dashboard before we went in." The skids touched the water and submerged. Then the helicopter started to roll on to the pilot's side and the rotors hit the water, Meredith said. The men, who were wearing lifejackets, swam about 100m to shore. Garden City Helicopters general manager Simon Duncan said the company was relieved both men had survived. The helicopter had experienced a power loss. "The helicopter is believed to be in 20m to 30m of water, and no decision has yet been made as to its recovery," Duncan said.

**CRASH, LEAVENWORTH COUNTY,
UNITED STATES**

See N123F.

**CRASH, MIRRIWINNI,
QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA**

London, Dec 8 — A man has survived after his helicopter crashed and burst into flames in far north Queensland, police said. The Little's Airspray helicopter crashed in a banana paddock at Mirriwinni, near Innisfail, about 0615, today. The 36-year-old pilot, the only occupant of the Bell 206 helicopter, suffered injuries which were not believed to be life threatening, a police spokeswoman said. She said the chopper bought down power lines and was destroyed by fire following impact. Fire and ambulance officers at the scene said the injuries of the Tully man were unknown at this stage.

CRASH, MOSTOLES, SPAIN

Madrid, Dec 1 — Spanish opposition leader Mariano Rajoy escaped with minor injuries from a dramatic helicopter crash today. Rajoy, 50, head of the conservative Popular Party, was

taken to a local hospital with a broken finger after the crash at the town of Mostoles, near Madrid, a hospital official said. The head of the Madrid regional government, Esperanza Aguirre, was also on board but emerged unscathed. "We could have been killed but I am in perfect shape," Aguirre, a senior Popular Party member, told state radio. A Spanish government spokesman told reporters in Rome Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero had called to speak to Rajoy when he heard of the crash, but Rajoy was being treated. Doctors reassured Zapatero the opposition leader was fine. Mostoles Mayor Esteban Parro, a television cameraman and a policeman who were on board were also taken to hospital, but had no serious injuries, the hospital official said. Rajoy's delegation had visited a police station in Mostoles before getting on the helicopter to tour the area. CNN+ television showed dramatic footage of the helicopter taking off from Mostoles bull ring, then spinning around as it gained height to get over the bull ring's outer wall. The helicopter then plunged five metres (yards) to the ground, crashing outside the bullring. The next pictures showed Rajoy, who appeared shaken but was smiling, being helped out of the wreckage. Police said they were investigating the cause of the crash. The helicopter was operated by the Madrid regional government. — Reuters.

CRASH, TEHRAN, IRAN

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: An Iranian military aircraft trying to make an emergency landing has crashed in a residential area in the south of the capital Tehran. Iranian media reports said a C-130 transport aircraft carrying up to 90 people hit a 10-storey block and exploded in a ball of fire. State television said the aircraft encountered a technical problem shortly after take-off from Mehrabad airport. It crashed in the nearby Yaftabad district, home to many airport staff. Reports say the city is currently covered in a blanket of smog because air pollution is especially high, but its not known if this played a role in the crash. "There were between 74 and 90 people on board," a civil aviation official was quoted as saying, although there were no immediate casualty figures. The building was reported to be in flames and emergency services rushed to the scene. Ten bodies have reportedly been recovered so far and there are no reports of any survivors from the aircraft. The Iranian air force is believed to have about 15 ageing US-made C-130s in operation, dating back to before the 1979 Islamic revolution and the US boycott of Iran.

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Confusion and chaos reigned in Teheran today after a military aircraft crashed into a tower block in the south-west of the city killing over 116 people, including all

passengers and crew. Most of the dead passengers were Iranian journalists and photographers, who were bound for the south of the country aboard the C-130 Hercules aircraft to report on military exercises. The ten-storey tower block in the Azeri quarter of Teheran burned for hours after the crash. The death toll of 116 appeared to also include residents of the building or people on the ground. Various reports put the number of people onboard the aircraft at between 94 and 106. Earlier official reports said 90 residents of the building were injured, 20 of them seriously. The aircraft apparently tried to make an emergency landing shortly after takeoff from Teheran's Mehrabad International Airport, before crashing into the Towhid residential complex at 1345, local time. Hours later, the Interior Ministry announced the situation was under control, as the bodies of the dead had been retrieved, the injured taken to hospital, and the fires put out. The tower block burned for several hours, but did not collapse. Witnesses said the aircraft wreckage lay next to the building and that several cars parked near the scene of the crash were also in flames.

**EMERGENCY LANDING,
CALICUT AIRPORT, INDIA**

London, Dec 4 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The Indian Airlines aircraft made an emergency landing at Calicut Airport this evening after one of its engines failed during flight from Mumbai. According to airport authorities, an alert from a local civilian saved the 62 people on board, including the crew. The Sharjah-bound IC-595 flight landed safely on one engine at 1748 hrs. The flight to Sharjah was cancelled and passengers were lodged in hotels. The airport authorities declared full emergency following a phone alert about the engine failure. Mr. Ayyappan called the Central Industrial Security Forces (CISF) control room saying that he saw smoke and fire and heard a thunderous noise from the engine of Airbus-320 which was approaching the airport. The CISF alerted the Air Traffic Control (ATC) personnel who immediately alerted the aircraft's pilot Capt. M.A. Zaheer. Soon after the alert, Capt. Zaheer switched off the engine and requested emergency landing. The aircraft landed safely with one engine shut off.

HK-3516

London, Dec 7 — Bell 206L3 helicopter, HK-3516, operated by Tecniaerreas de Colombia LTDA, crashed near Pacho, Cundinamarca, Colombia, at approximately 1550, local time, Nov 20. The pilot and five passengers were killed.

**INCIDENT AT MIRI DISTRICT
AIRPORT, BORNEO**

London, Dec 8 — Malaysia Airlines commuter aircraft missed the runway when it landed at an airport on the island of Borneo, but all 19 passengers

and the two pilots were unhurt, the airline said today. The twin-engine turboprop, used for connecting flights in Sarawak state's rural and mountainous regions, landed in the grass next to the runway at Miri district airport, the airline said in a statement. The airport was temporarily closed to allow for the removal of the aircraft, said the statement carried by the national news agency, Bernama. It said initial investigations showed no damage on the aircraft, but checks would be conducted before the plane will be allowed to fly again.

INCIDENT ON A FLIGHT TO BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

London, Dec 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Several passengers on a Virgin Blue flight into Brisbane late last night were taken to hospital after the pilot was forced to make a rapid descent. An airline spokesman says the pilot of the Boeing 737 made a precautionary descent from 34,000 to 10,000 feet when an outer windscreen cracked. Ambulance crews treated 11 of the passengers on the aircraft as soon as it landed. Eight were then taken to the Princess Alexandra and Royal Brisbane Hospitals after suffering ear and headaches and bleeding noses.

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: A mid-air emergency on a Virgin Blue flight from Townsville left nine people recovering in hospital in Brisbane on Friday (Dec 2) night. A cracked windscreen on a Boeing 737 travelling from Townsville to Brisbane forced the pilot to make an emergency decent about 40 minutes into the flight. "The pilot made a precautionary decent from 34,000 to 10,000 feet after he noticed a cracked outer windscreen," Virgin Blue public and media relations manager Amanda Bolger said. Virgin Blue flight DJ668 left Townsville about 2030, Friday, with 99 passengers on board. Ms Bolger said passengers remained calm during the rapid descent, however some complained of nose and ear problems. Ms Bolger said an investigation would determine what caused the windscreen to crack mid-air. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau will examine the flight recorders from the aircraft and conduct a full investigation. The windscreen was replaced and the aircraft was operating again yesterday.

N123F

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft crash-landed into a field in Leavenworth County yesterday after the pilot became ill and disoriented. Two passengers were treated for bumps and bruises at a Leavenworth hospital, and the pilot was hospitalized in Kansas City. Authorities said Terry Cox, of Leavenworth, was able to put the aircraft down in an open field. The propeller dug into the ground, but the aircraft remained upright. The

Federal Aviation Administration is investigating the crash.

London, Dec 7 — Cessna 182E, N123F, pilot became disoriented, vomitted and landed in a field at Leavenworth, Kansas, at 2005, local time, Dec 4. Damage was substantial. Minor injuries.

N701QR

London, Dec 2 — Cessna 425 (Conquest I) N701QR crashed near Bozeman, Montana, at 0042, Nov 30, while on a flight from Algona, Iowa, to Bozeman. The one person on board was killed.

N7315Y

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated Dec 1, states: A Mississippi airport manager and two others died today when their small aircraft crashed and burned at the John Bell Williams Airport near Raymond, authorities said. "The aircraft went down soon after taking off from the airport and was fully involved" in flames upon striking the ground, said Capt. Steve Pickett of the Hinds County Sheriff's Department. Mayor Tim Kent of New Albany said the dead included Billy Crumpton, manager of his city's airport, and Paul Fisher, a member of the airport board. Kent said he was told the third victim was from Jackson, Tenn., and possibly was the new owner of the twin-engine aircraft. Randy Percy, chairman of the aviation department at Hinds Community College, said the plane slammed into the ground off the runway in an area where construction was under way. "It had just taken off and some think there was an early indication of engine trouble," said Percy, whose department uses the airport for training student pilots. "Some of the eyewitnesses seem to believe they heard the engine backfire," he said. Kent said both Fisher and Crumpton were both pilots but that Fisher apparently had accompanied the other two men because he was qualified to fly the aircraft. Officials said the airport, which is primarily home to small aircraft and pilot training, had not closed.

London, Dec 7 — Piper PA-30, N7315Y, lost control on departure from John Bell Williams Airport, Raymond, Mississippi, at 2125, local time, Dec 1. Aircraft was destroyed. The three persons on board were killed.

PACKSADDLE, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, Dec 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Police are investigating reports that a woman has survived an aircraft crash in the far west of New South Wales. A man was killed when the aircraft crashed in an isolated area near Packsaddle north of Broken Hill this morning. Police say a woman walked to the Packsaddle Roadhouse to raise the alarm at 1000 hrs about three hours after the aircraft went down. Police are still travelling through rugged bushland to reach the crash site.

PK-ZAI

London, Dec 7 — IPTN (CASA) 212-A4 Aviocar 100, operated by Sabang Merauke Raya Air Charter, PK-ZAI, approached and landed on runway 25 of Lasikin airport at about 0815, Nov 30. It could not stop in the available runway and overran the end of 07 by about 60 metres before coming to a halt in a swamp. The right propeller hit a concrete fence causing blades to bend. The fuselage and wings were damaged in several locations.

VH-PYN

London, Dec 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Police are trying to determine the flight plan of a light aircraft that crashed in New South Wales's central-west this afternoon, killing the two people on board. The four-seater fixed wing aircraft crashed on a property 20 km west of Condobolin just before 1500, AEDT. Detectives are at the scene and a forensic team and Air Safety Bureau officials will also work to establish the cause. The Bureau of Meteorology reported a thunderstorm in the area at the time of the crash.

London, Dec 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Investigations are continuing into the cause of a light aircraft crash that killed one of Australia's leading cattlemen. The bodies of Peter Menegazzo and his wife Angela were found near Condobolin in central-western New South Wales on Friday (Dec 2) afternoon. Two other people were also killed in the crash.

London, Dec 7 — Piper PA-31-350, VH-PYN, crashed approximately 12 nautical miles northwest of Condobolin, New South Wales, in a farm field, at approximately 1345, local time, Dec 2. The pilot and three passengers were killed.

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated today, states: The Air Transport Safety Bureau has completed its investigations at the site of a fatal aircraft (Piper PA-31-350 VH-PYR) crash north of Condobolin in central western New South Wales last Friday (Dec 2). The deputy director of aviation safety investigation, Allan Stray, says an insurance company is now responsible for the wreckage. "The investigators have retrieved some instruments which will be brought to the laboratory for further examination, the remainder of the aircraft has been documented thoroughly, both photographically and in writing, and there is no need for that to be returned to for further examination," he said.

Product Recalls



HYUNDAI MOTOR VEHICLES, CHINA

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Hyundai

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

Motor's unit Kia Motors will recall 5,685 Carnival multiple-purpose vehicles (MPVs) in China, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said on its website. The administration said that damage to the wire under the automobile seats of the Carnival MPVs, made between January 2001 and November 2003, might result in overheating in the car's circuit breaker and cause a fire.

ISUZU MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Dec 8 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Isuzu Motors is to recall over 193,000 trucks due to faulty ball joint sockets, according to press reports. A company statement said the recall is on Elf model trucks produced between 1993-2004. The company said the fault may cause the ball joint sockets to crack. Isuzu's statement wasn't clear on whether the recall would affect vehicles outside of Japan.

OIL-FILLED RADIATOR HEATERS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Dec 1 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with King of Fans Inc. of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., today announced a voluntary recall of about 202,000 Maxi-Heat(tm) Electric Oil-Filled Radiator Heaters. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. Welds in the heating fins can break, allowing oil to leak. This poses a burn and fall hazard to consumers. King of Fans Inc. has received 81 reports of incidents involving leaking oil. Two minor burns were reported, along with two reports of falls in the oil. The portable electric radiator-style heaters have seven fins, one of which has the control panel attached to it. The units are gray with

a black control panel. "Maxi-Heat(tm)" is printed below the handle indentation on the control panel. The model number 70030 and date codes 0705 and 0805 are printed on the UL label on the lower right side of the control panel. The following purchase order numbers are located on the bottom of the radiator heater's packaging: 56199910, 56199924, 56199961, 57105731, 57105732, 57100092, 57100089, 57100086, 57105685, and 57105686. Sold at The Home Depot stores in the Northeast and Midwest from October 2005 through November 2005 for about \$35. Manufactured in China. Consumers should immediately stop using these heaters and unplug them. Return the recalled heaters to a Home Depot store for a full refund. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

TOSHIBA DVD HOME THEATRE SYSTEMS, UNITED STATES

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated Dec 6, states: Toshiba is recalling about 4,100 DVD Home Theater Systems. A problem in the system's circuit board could pose a fire hazard. This recall involves the Toshiba 5-Disk DVD Home Theater System, model number SD-C67HT. The model number can be found on the front of the DVD Player/Receiver to the right of the word "Toshiba." The DVD Home Theater System consists of six speakers, including a subwoofer and a DVD Player/Receiver. The units were sold by consumer electronics stores nationwide from April 2005 through September 2005, for a Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price of \$399.99.

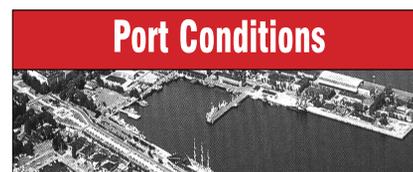
TOYOTA MOTOR VEHICLES, CHINA

London, Dec 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Toyota

Motor Corp will recall 351 Landcruiser Prado sport utility vehicles, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said on its website. Toyota Motor will recall the Prado SUVs to replace English-language safety warnings, about proper use of desks installed in the back of the front passenger seats, with Chinese-language warnings. The 351 Prado cars were produced in Japan between September 2004 and January 2005.

VOLVO MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Dec 8 — Import Inc said yesterday that it will recall over 300 Volvo cars in Japan because of defects in engine starters. According to a report submitted to the Land, Infrastructure and Transport Ministry yesterday, it will recall a total of 321 Volvo cars in models S80 and XC90 that were imported between July 2004 and May this year.



WELLAND CANAL, CANADA

Troy, Michigan, Dec 5 — The Welland Canal is having a problem at Lock One. They can't get the gates to close. As recently as 1630 hrs, a crane was attempting to fix the problem. Bulk *CSL Niagara* has been in the lock since 0703, this morning. At least eight other vessels are affected by the delay, and are backed up as far as Lake Ontario to the north, and Lock 5 to the south. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

Port Delays

(Information received from BIMCO, Denmark and Indian Ports Association, New Delhi)

Country/Port	Date of report	No. of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbott Point	05-Dec-2005	Coal: Eight vessels due by 24/12; no delays expected.
Brisbane	05-Dec-2005	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth; Three vessels due by 23/12; no delays expected.
Dalrymple Bay	05-Dec-2005	Coal: Two vessels loading at berth; 35 vessels due by 19/12; up to 13 days delay expected.
Dampier	05-Dec-2005	Iron ore: Parker Point A berth: One vessel loading at berth, 3 arrived; 2 vessels due by 7/12; up to 6 days delay expected; Parker Point B berth: 1 vessel loading, 2 arrived; 3 vessels due by 11/12; up to 6 days delay expected; East Intercourse Island; One vessel loading, 2 arrived; 1 vessel due 6/12; up to 6 days delay expected.
Geraldton	05-Dec-2005	Iron ore: One vessel loading; 1 vessel due 11/12; no delays expected.
Gladstone	05-Dec-2005	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: One vessel loading, 1 in berth; 38 vessels due by 12/1; up to 13 days delay expected; Barney Point: 9 vessels due by 18/1.
Hay Point	05-Dec-2005	Coal: One vessel loading; 10 vessels due by 14/12; up to 4 days delay expected.
Newcastle	05-Dec-2005	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: Three vessels loading at berth; 54 vessels due by 20/1; 6-8 days delay expected; Dykes 4+5: 1 vessel loading at berth; 24 vessels due by 21/1; 7-8 days delay expected.
Port Hedland	05-Dec-2005	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: One vessel loading at berth, 4 vessels arrived; 4 vessels due by 13/12; 2-3 days delay expected; "B" berth: 1 vessel loading at berth; 3 vessels arrived; 4 vessels due by 12/12; 2-3 days delay expected; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island "D" berth): 1 vessel loading at berth; 3 vessels arrived; 2-3 days delay expected; Cockatoo Island: 1 vessel due 8/12; no delays expected.
Port Walcott	05-Dec-2005	Iron ore: Two vessels loading at berth, 3 arrived; 14 vessels due by 16/12; up to 4 days delay expected.
Whyalla	05-Dec-2005	Iron ore: Eight vessels due by 23/12; up to 3 days delay expected.
Azerbaijan		
Apsheron	05-Dec-2005	Oil products: One vessel discharging crude oil at berth; 2 vessels due by 6/12, both to discharge (1 crude oil, 1 Kerosene).
Baku	05-Dec-2005	Oil products: Bay of Baku: No information; Azerneftiyag terminal: no information; Azertrans terminal: Nobel Avenue: 1 vessel discharging crude oil berth; 1 vessel due 7/12 to discharge crude oil; Sangachal District: no vessels.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	05-Dec-2005	Fifteen vessels in port of which 11 loading (2 ammonium nitrate, 5 coils, 1 general cargo, 1 concrete iron, 1 metal, 1 trucks), 4 discharging (3 salt, 1 billets); 3 vessels in roads of which 2 vessels to load (1 scrap, 1 coils), 1 vessel to discharge lead concentrate; 16 vessels due of which 8 to load, 8 to discharge.
Varna	05-Dec-2005	Varna East, Varna West, Balchik: Thirty-eight vessels in port operating of which 22 loading (6 soda, 1 silica sand, 3 scrap, 3 sulphuric acid, 1 packed hardboard, 1 woodpulp, 1 equipment, 1 steel sheets, 3 bulk wheat, 1 bulk maize, 1 chamote/kaolin), 7 discharging (1 apatite, 4 bulk coal, 1 raw phosphate, 1 bulk copper concentrate), 9 discharging/loading (7 containers, 1 feldspar/chamote/kaolin, 1 chemical/cement/equipment); no vessels waiting in roads.
Estonia		
Tallinn	05-Dec-2005	City port: No vessels at berth, none at anchorage; no vessels due, with no delays expected; Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): 2 vessels loading at berth (1 fertiliser, 1 coal), 1 discharging cacao beans at berth; 3 vessels due; 9 days delay expected; Muuga: no vessels at berth, none at anchorage; no vessels due, with no delays expected.
Israel		
Ashdod	06-Dec-2005	Two vessels loading general cargo at berth, 15 discharging at berth (11 general cargo, 4 bulk cargo), 5 loading/discharging at berth (5 containers, 1 tanker); 1 vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge general cargo, 2 waiting at anchorage to load/discharge containers; 14 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected..
Haifa	06-Dec-2005	One vessel loading general cargo at berth, 2 discharging at berth (1 general cargo, 1 bulk cargo), 7 loading/discharging at berth (5 containers, 2 car carriers); 1 vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge general cargo; 8 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 26 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected..

Port Conditions

Kazakhstan

Aktau	05-Dec-2005	Oil products: One vessel loading crude oil at berth; 11 vessels in roads, all to load; 5 vessels due by 6/12, all to load.
-------	-------------	--

Nigeria

Bonny LNG	30-Nov-2005	No vessels berthed, 1 anchored, 2 due.
Qua-Iboe terminal (Eket)	30-Nov-2005	Production at Oso platform remains low. One vessel loading at berth, none anchored, 3 due.

Poland

Gdansk	05-Dec-2005	Eight vessels in port operating of which 6 loading at berth (1 coal, 2 general cargo, 3 bulk cargo), 2 discharging coal at berth; 1 tanker waiting in roads; 10 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 23 vessels due.
Gdynia	05-Dec-2005	Seven vessels in port operating of which 2 loading at berth (1 tanker, 1 general cargo), 5 discharging at berth (3 grain, 2 bulk cargo); 18 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 38 vessels due.

Russia

Novorossiysk	05-Dec-2005	Seventeen vessels in port operating of which 15 loading (1 cement, 2 bulk urea, 1 steel billets, 3 wheat, 1 copper, 1 pipes, 1 steel sheets, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 ammonium sulphate, 1 steel sheets/slabs, 1 aluminium, 1 D/O), 1 discharging citrus, 1 discharging/loading containers; 8 vessels in roads of which 7 to load (1 UANS, 1 wheat 1 bulk urea, 1 coils/ steel, 1 bulk NPK/bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 bulk NPK, 1 D/O); 79 vessels due of which 73 to load, 5 to discharge (2 debars, 2 products 1 container), 1 to discharge/load containers; Oil terminal: 4 tankers loading at berth (3 crude, 1 fuel oil); 5 tankers in roads, all to load crude; 7 tankers due all to load (5 crude oil, 1 fuel oil, 1 diesel oil).
--------------	-------------	--

Slovenia

Koper	05-Dec-2005	Nine vessels berthed of which 2 vessels discharging/loading containers, 3 bulk carriers discharging iron ore/minerals/ grain, 1 bulk carrier loading coal, 2 vessels loading timber products/general cargo, 1 vessel loading livestock; 18 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 4 vessels to discharge/load containers, 3 bulk carriers to discharge solid chemicals/minerals/ore, 6 bulk carriers to load coal/ grain, 1 vessel to load sawn timber, 1 car carrier to discharge vehicles, 1 reefer vessel to discharge refrigerated goods, 2 tankers to discharge mineral oils.
-------	-------------	---

Spain

Sagunto	05-Dec-2005	Fifteen vessels in port operating of which 3 loading (1 steel, 2 bulk fertiliser), 10 discharging steel products, 2 discharging/loading (1 steel products, 1 general cargo); Outside commercial wharf: no vessels; no delays expected.
---------	-------------	--

Sri Lanka

Colombo	05-Dec-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). Five container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 15 vessels discharging at berth (7 containers/feeders, 2 bulk palm oil, 1 steel, 1 bagged urea, 2 Ro/Ros, 1 bagged maize, 1 bulk cement); 1 container/feeder vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge; 5 vessels dry-docked; 1 vessel at new tanker berth; 4 container/feeder vessels due, with no delays for general cargo, bagged cargo, containers/feeders expected.
Galle	05-Dec-2005	No vessels loading at berth, 2 discharging at berth; no vessels awaiting berth.
Trincomalee	05-Dec-2005	No vessels loading at berth, 2 discharging at berth; no vessels awaiting berth.

Turkmenistan

Aladja	05-Dec-2005	Oil products: One vessel loading crude oil at berth.
Turkmenbashi	05-Dec-2005	Oil products: One vessel loading kerosene at berth.

Ukraine

Ilichevsk	05-Dec-2005	Nine vessels in port operating of which 6 loading (5 steel products, 1 grain), 1 discharging manganese ore, 2 discharging/loading containers; 2 vessels in roads of which 1 to load, 1 to discharge palm oil; 22 vessels due of which 9 to load (7 load steel products, 1 sulphur, 1 ferronickel), 1 to discharge nickel ore, 12 to discharge/load containers.
-----------	-------------	--

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

Port Conditions

Mariupol	05-Dec-2005	Ten vessels in port operating of which 9 loading (3 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 sulphur, 1 bran, 1 wheat, 1 barley), 1 discharging/loading feldspar/fire-clay; 4 vessels in roads of which 3 to load (2 steel, 1 coal), 1 to discharge/load containers/fire-clay; 12 vessels in roads, all to load (7 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 coal, 1 fire-clay/containers, 1 baggage); 48 vessels due of which 45 to load (25 steel, 9 coal, 3 fire-clay, 3 sulphur, 1 pitch, 1 fertiliser, 1 sunflower beans, 1 equipment, 1 bran), 2 to discharge (1 pipes, 1 citrus), 1 to discharge/load magnesite/steel plates.
Odessa	05-Dec-2005	Sixteen vessels in port operating of which 9 loading (6 metal, 2 corn, 1 wheat), 7 discharging (1 passengers, 1 ore, 1 wheat, 1 baggae, 1 meat, 1 citrus, 1 sand); 8 vessels in roads of which 5 to load (2 metal, 1 ferroalloy, 1 pig iron, 1 wheat), 3 to load/discharge containers; 67 vessels due of which 30 to load (19 metal, 2 pig iron, 4 corn, 1 soybeans, 1 wheat, 1 grain, 1 oil, 1 other), 9 to discharge (1 metal, 5 citrus, 1 bananas, 2 oil), 28 to load/discharge containers

Published by Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit, part of Informa plc, Sheepen Place, Colchester, Essex CO3 3LP.

Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit does not guarantee the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, nor accept responsibility for errors or omissions or their consequences.

Copyright © Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit, part of Informa plc 2005. This casualty information is copyright. Unauthorised copying prohibited by law.

ISSN 0047 4908

If subscribers wish to purchase records for networkable or shared use within their company they can contact Andrew Luxton on +44 (0) 20 7017 4625.

Lloyd's is the registered trade mark of the Society incorporated by the Lloyd's Act 1871 by the name of Lloyd's

© Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit 2004 These reports may not be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photographic, recorded or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.