

CasualtyWeek

February 24 2006

Greeks make case against 'unsafe' common rules

World's biggest shipping nation bares its teeth, writes Nigel Lowry in Athens — Friday February 24 2006

GREEK shipowners have laid bare the full extent of their objections to class society common structural rules for tankers and bulkers, claiming the new standards represent "an unacceptable regression" over existing rules.

Adopted by the International Association of Classification Societies last year, the rules are damned in a 40-page Greek document circulated this week as intended "not to create more robust ships but to minimise steel weight and labour intensive shipbuilding procedures, and thus keep construction cost low."

According to the Union of Greek Shipowners-authored document, the rules are riddled with errors and misrepresentations.

Key criticisms levelled by the Greeks include a charge that corrosion additions adopted by IACS are "clearly inadequate for the stated design life of 25 years" and that claimed weight increases in the new rules do not allow for design optimisation.

"By the time such a future initial CSR design is optimised and finalised, a reduction of 6%-7% in weight is to be expected," the UGS said.

The document scornfully alleges that CSR corrosion additions derived from a study that manipulated data — "most probably to cater to shipyards' desire for 'design obsolescence'".

It states, "Corrosion additions of, for example, 3 mm to 3.5 mm are now being presented by IACS to the industry as adequate for the side shell of a 25-year design life ship, when present rules envisage corrosion additions to plating in the same area of 4.75 mm for ships of a

20-year design life built to today's technology.

"This reduction of corrosion additions will reduce the ship's service life to about 18 years or less, grossly misrepresenting her claimed 25-year design life."

The UGS warns that IACS' failure to agree with its campaign last year for heftier corrosion margins "will also make ships inherently unsafe and will pollute the environment with substantial avoidable CO2 emissions from the steel fabrication necessary to build the replacement ship many years earlier.

"That is not the way forward," it said. "Shipping operates in a zero tolerance environment for pollution. Owners cannot accept operating ships prone to develop cracks or other defects. In the interest of safety the CSR should be corrected before

implementation," the document concluded.

The criticisms will disappoint class societies, which will have hoped controversy over the new rules would quietly fade away.

Some senior class executives have been playing down the strength of the Greeks' feelings, even portraying dissent as confined to one or two angry voices. But the top brass left Lloyd's List in no doubt that the volley of complaints is representative of opinion.

UGS president Nicos Efythymiou called the rules "unacceptable" and "detrimental to safety" while Hellenic Chamber of Shipping chief George Gratsos said, "It must be one of the first times the regulated are asking for stricter regulations."

Piraeus still hit by strike

Thursday February 23 2006

Passengers sit in front of ferries moored in Piraeus yesterday, as a seafarers' strike continued to disrupt services at the port, writes Nigel Lowry in Athens.

Although hundreds of trucks clogging many Greek ports started rolling yesterday after a desperate government ordered striking seafarers back to work in a bid to end the week-long stoppage, the Panhellenic Seamen's Federation voted to defy the 'civil mobilisation' in both Piraeus and Patras, the west coast hub for services to and from Italy.

In these two ports, strikers continued their action, reportedly allowing vessels to berth on arrival yesterday but not to embark on new journeys.

Previously there had been a virtual 100% standstill of Greek-crewed vessels in the nation's ports, causing widespread disruption and a critical situation in many islands that began to run out of food, medicine and other basic supplies.

Ferry company executives confirmed the first vessels left many Greek gateways in the morning. There were also sailings from Italy's Adriatic ports, it was confirmed.

One leading ferry executive in Athens said yesterday, "We will understand the situation better later in the day, but some vessels have sailed."

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>ALASKAN FRONTIER</i>	fishing	USA	—	89	—	1991	Reported drifting due lost propeller in lat 55 52N, long 158 53W, Feb 15. Awaiting another vessel to tow, probably to Chignik.
<i>ARSCO III</i>	fishing	USA	—	101	—	1969	Sank at moorings in Conn Brown Harbour, Texas, Feb 5. Fuel being removed by authorities.
<i>AYU VI</i>	barge	—	—	—	—	—	Reported sank in Selayar Strait off Bulukumba Feb 4.
<i>JOANNA III</i>	general	GRC	—	499	1,160	1965	Grounded in lat 38 48N, long 22 44.6E, Feb 16.
<i>LNG EDO</i>	lng	BHS	BV	93,619	72,561	1980	Arrived Ferrol Feb 3 with major gearbox problems. Still at shipyard there Feb 14, with gearbox under repair at Houston. Expected to leave Ferrol after permanent repairs are complete at the end of April.
<i>MING LIEN YU 1028</i>	fishing	CHN	—	—	—	—	In collision with mv <i>Ever Bright</i> in lat 26 19N, long 120 01E, Feb 9. Subsequently sank. 8 crew missing.
<i>PEGVAK</i>	general	IRN	—	—	—	—	Had fire while under repair in Baku Bay Feb 15. Towed away from shore. Vessel <i>Vikhr 9</i> used to fight fire. Extinguished same day.
<i>PRINCESS GIGI</i>	yacht	—	—	—	—	—	Encountered heavy weather in about lat 23.6N, long 73.3W, Feb 6 and taking water. Found Feb 7 capsized but still afloat. Towed to sheltered bay at Cat Island, where arrived Feb 11. Awaiting repairs decision.
<i>REHUA</i>	trawler	NZL	LR	2,483	—	1996	Had machinery failure 26 nautical miles south of Pitt Island Dec 11. Taken in tow to Nelson.
<i>STAR OHIO</i>	crude oil tanker	BHS	AB ABS	80,569	149,563	1992	Reported Feb 16 adrift at one knot in lat 59 40.8N, long 04 27.3W, with turbo-charger problems. Restarted engines same day and to proceed to Belfast after trials.
<i>TANANGER</i>	ro-ro	BRB	NV	4,636	4,380	1980	Had engine black-out in bad weather, four nautical miles south-west of Jossingfjord, outside Flekkefjord, Feb 15. Awaiting tug. Towed into Tananger same day.
<i>THOR TRAVELLER</i>	bulker	THA	LR	8,821	24,232	1985	Grounded in 07 09 N 117 46 E, Feb 2. Refloated Feb 14 after part cargo removed. Moved from grounding position and anchored for underwater inspection.
<i>TUGEN</i>	product tanker	LUX	BV	5,412	7,413	1999	Grounded at Morondava Roads, Madagascar, in bad weather due cyclone "Boloetse" Feb 3. Refloated Feb 13 and carrying out transshipment operations, ETC Feb 15, after which decision will be made regarding repairs.

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Lloyd's
Marine Intelligence Unit



The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



A.DEAN HEASLEY (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: On Saturday night (Feb 11) the Coast Guard Command Centre in Memphis was notified by the tug *A. Dean Heasley* (250 gt, built 1949) that one of the two barges they were towing had struck the Riverside Park Marina. Coast Guard investigators were dispatched to the scene of the accident. The marina sustained significant damage but no injuries were reported. The marina holds many houseboats and is home to approximately 60 people. Many of the boats were affected by the accident with one reported to be taking on water. The two tank barges, which were empty at the time of the accident, were being towed to the refinery in the port for a scheduled loading. West-north-west winds of 15 mph were reported last night and may have been a factor in the casualty. The crew of the towing vessel was tested on scene by the Coast Guard for evidence of alcohol with negative results. Mandatory drug testing of the crew was also ordered by the towing vessel company, the results are pending. The Coast Guard and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency will co-ordinate on the marine casualty investigation into the circumstances surrounding this accident.

AGIOS GEORGIOS (Greece)

London, Feb 13 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Passenger ro/ro *Agios Georgios* (5122 gt, built 1972), with 347 passengers, sustained damage to the starboard main engine off Ag. Georgios Island, Saronikos Gulf, during the afternoon of Feb 10. At the time of the incident vessel was performing the schedule of 1455 hrs from Piraeus for Kythnos-Serifos-Sifnos-Milos-Kimolos. Following the incident vessel returned to Piraeus arriving 2045 hrs. The passengers were forwarded to their destinations on passenger ro/ro *Dimitroula* which departed 2355 hrs for Kythnos-Serifos-Sifnos-Paros-Naxos-Ag. Kyriko-Vathi.

Piraeus, Feb 13 — Passenger ro/ro *Agios Georgios* had starboard engine breakdown in Saronikos gulf. The vessel had departed Piraeus port at 1455 hrs with 347 passengers onboard and was performing the schedule Piraeus-Kythnos-Serifos-Sifnos-Milos-Kimolos. The vessel returned to Piraeus at 2045 same day and its sailing was prohibited till repair of the damage. — Lloyd's Agents.

AHURIRI (New Zealand)

See *Kota Jaya*.

AKADEMIK ALEKSANDR KARPINSKIY (Russia)

London, Feb 15 — Research *Akademik Aleksandr Karpinskiy* sailed Cape Town Feb 8.

AL MANARA (St. Kitts-Nevis)

Port Victoria, Feb 14 — The US Navy rescued general cargo *Al Manara*, attacked by pirates off the coast of Somalia, the vessel's master said late yesterday. In a spate of attacks along the unpatrolled waters off Somalia, gunmen stormed *Al Manara* last month, captain Deaa Naseh said. US sailors arrested and left two suspected pirates locked up on board the vessel, Naseh said, adding that it was unclear what action would be taken against them. After the rescue mission, the vessel had an engine failure and drifted for 15 days before being towed at Naseh's request by the Seychelles Coast Guard into Port Victoria on Saturday (Feb 11). "The attackers kept boarding and leaving the vessel at will going and coming back by smaller boats but when the US Navy personnel were about to board, the gunmen threw away their weapons into the sea," Naseh said. He said he used makeshift sails to reach the Indian Ocean island. — Reuters.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: The fate of general cargo *Al Manara*, its crew and cargo of charcoal remained unclear yesterday as the vessel's Iraqi owner, Saad Bahar, blamed its master, Deaa Abed Naseh, for requesting that his vessel be towed into Port Victoria. Bahar said he objected to paying US \$79,000 towing charges, saying that in the first place, Captain Abed Naser should not have sought that kind of assistance or signing an agreement saying that the money would be paid. But the master said that after the ordeal of being attacked on the shores of Somalia, and later at sea, where the vessel eventually became disabled as its engines failed, he had no choice. Saying that the international media was wrong in saying that the first attack occurred at sea, Captain Abed Naser said that the initial attack came on shore in Somalia, where he and his engineer, said they were shot at from close range although the gunmen missed when they ducked. An Iraqi national himself also, he blamed Bahar for not having paid the salaries of the crew for many months. Asked what he would do with the two attackers on board the vessel who were arrested by a U.S. Navy ship team on high seas, the master said he would keep the promise he had made to the Americans who had sought to know what he would do with the attackers. "I said I would hand them over to authorities in the next port we would call at. We are all now under your command, and they are your prisoners now," he told journalists, who said that the prisoners were still on board his vessel and were therefore his responsibility. "That's true they are on the vessel, but the ship is at the moment flying the Seychelles flag,

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it is up to your country to deal with them," he said. During the interview, a Seychelles Red Cross pick-up laden with supplies made its way to the port where the ship is still docked.

AL SALAM BOCCACCIO 98 (Panama)

London, Feb 10 — Brussels has asked Italian classification society Rina for copies of all certification provided for passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98*, which sank in the Red Sea last week. The European Commission, acting through the European Maritime Safety Agency, contacted Rina early this week as part of its investigation into the cause of the disaster, in which more than 1,000 people died. "We have written to Rina requesting details of certification provided by the company itself and on behalf of Panama, the flag state," said Stefaan de Rynck, commission transport spokesman. "I would like to underline that this is standard procedure and Rina is not itself under investigation." The Genoa-based company, which is involved in legal action in France dating back to the *Erika* oil spill tragedy, moved fast after the Red Sea incident to state that it would co-operate fully with any inquiry. Chief Executive Ugo Salerno, said: "Our office in Egypt is ready to co-operate fully with the Egyptian and flag state authorities, should they ask for Rina's technical contribution to the investigation. We are fully at the disposal of all interested parties." *Al Salam Boccaccio 98* was classed with Rina, which issued statutory certificates on behalf of Panama. These certificates were: - Full Term International Load Line (expiry date Mar 31 2008); Full Term International Oil Pollution Prevention (expiry date Mar 31 2008); - Interim Safety Management Certificate (expiry date 26 Apr 2006); - Interim International Ship Security Certificate (expiry date 26 Apr 2006). "It is understood that all other statutory certificates, including the Passenger Safety Certificate, were issued by the Panama flag state," Rina said in its statement. The ill-fated vessel was modified in 1990 and 1991, adding three superstructure decks "in compliance with international standards", Rina added. The most recent annual survey carried out on the vessel was completed on Jun 30 2005 and the most recent class renewal survey was completed on Jun 29 2003. The vessel's last drydock survey was completed on Jun 13 2004. It complied with Solas 90 stability standards, based on calculations and tests carried out by Rina in 2003. "We are in touch with the commission and are providing them with our information as is normal for a recognised organisation," said Rina's Mario Dogliani. Separately, Brussels is seeking to extend its control over classification societies through new legislation. As part of its third package of maritime legislation now under discussion at "expert" level the commission proposes creating a body

to oversee societies and powers to fine them up to 10% of gross turnover for poor performance. EU officials met industry representatives to discuss the proposals last month. Reports show the industry thought any new body would be "costly and counter-productive." EMSA should be used instead, it argued.

London, Feb 10 — Technical assistance and a number of experts are to be provided by the International Maritime Organization to help investigate the circumstances of the loss last week of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98* in which more than 1,000 people are believed to have died. IMO Secretary-General Efthimios Mitropoulos returned to London from Egypt yesterday. In meetings with the Egyptian Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, he had conveyed the sympathy and solidarity of the IMO, along with strong moral support to the relatives of the victims. While a joint casualty investigation has been launched under the leadership of Egypt, with the assistance of the Panamanian flag state, which has already dispatched two investigators to Egypt, Mr Mitropoulos stressed the importance of a thorough, prompt and transparent inquiry and offered the assistance of IMO technical experts to help in this respect. Terms of reference are being finalised at the IMO for the appointment of accident inspector Mike Travis from the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch and Jean-Charles Leclair from the French marine investigation department. Mr Travis has special expertise in the interpretation of Vessel Data Recorders, while Mr Leclair participated in the inquiry into the loss of the Senegalese ferry *Joola* with huge loss of life in 2002. The Egyptian government has also welcomed technical support from the IMO in the development of crisis management and emergency systems, and the former chairman of the IMO Marine Safety Committee Tom Allan, who recently retired from the UK Marine Safety Agency as the UK's permanent IMO representative, will undertake this role. During his visit to Egypt, Mr Mitropoulos also paid tribute to those involved in the search and rescue operations following the disaster, and expressed his condolences to the bereaved.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 11, states: The Ministry of Interior of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia said the Saudi search and rescue team, an affiliate of the air forces and civil defense, has staged several flight aerial and sea survey of the area of the incident looking for survivors of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98* which sank in the Red Sea last week, drowning to death hundreds of passengers and crew on it, but found no survivors. However, the team was able to pick up six more bodies, bringing to 245 the total number of bodies picked since the beginning of the ordeal to date and handed over to the Egyptian side. In a

statement, the Ministry said three bodies belonging to Saudi nationals were recognized in co-ordination with those in charge at the Saudi embassy in Cairo, bringing to 16 the number of those recognized on the Saudi side of victims. The number of bodies remained anonymous amounted to 40 Saudis, the statement added. One Saudi survivor, who was among the previously-announced list of survivors, arrived at King Abdulaziz International Airport on-board a Saudi airlines flight, the Ministry said, adding that four bodies, accompanied by their first of kin, have been transported to Saudi airports of Jeddah, Madinah and Riyadh. The Ministry said two of the three Saudi survivors, who were earlier rushed to Jeddah-based King Faisal Specialist Hospital, were discharged last Wednesday while the third was still receiving health care.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: On his return from a one-day trip to Cairo in the aftermath of the tragic loss of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98*, IMO Secretary General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos explained the purpose of his mission as follows: "first, to demonstrate the solidarity and compassion of the IMO membership to the people and Government of Egypt and those of other nations affected, in particular to the families, friends and colleagues of the victims of the tragic accident, and to provide moral support at the heavy loss of life suffered; and, secondly, to assist the investigation of the accident by facilitating the provision, through IMO's technical co-operation programme, of independent technical expertise and advice." Mitropoulos added that this assistance was intended to ensure that the outcome of the investigation would not only identify, beyond any doubt, what caused the accident, but would also identify what lessons, if any, might be learnt so that, through the IMO system, prompt and expeditious action was taken to prevent similar accidents happening in the future. During the visit, Mitropoulos met, inter alia, with the Prime Minister of Egypt, Dr. Ahmed Nazif, and the Egyptian Transport Minister, Mr. Mohamed Mansour, and other officials as well as the Panamanian Ambassador to Egypt, Jorge Ram n Vald s Charris and the Panamanian experts nominated to assist in the investigation. Mitropoulos expressed his appreciation to the Government of Egypt and the Government of Panama, as the flag State, for their co-operation with IMO and their willingness to co-operate with each other and any other Government with a substantial interest in the case, in the joint casualty investigation.

Cairo, Feb 15 — Failures within both the private sector and government agencies were to blame for the deaths of some 1,000 people in the sinking of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98* on Feb 3, according to a report by a leading human rights group.

“National institutions failed to adequately deal with the sinking of the vessel,” states an initial 46-page report released by the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) on Feb 14. “This tragedy illustrates how far the level of service in all sectors, without exception, has fallen,” the report adds. According to EOHR Chairman Hisham Kassem, the accident was the result of “major infrastructural deficiencies.” The report points specifically to several culprits. The private company that owned the doomed vessel, for example, “lost the opportunity to deal quickly with the crisis” after “being alerted to the sinking ... by the master of the (nearby) ferry *Saint Catherine*,” which led to a delay in search and rescue efforts. The performance of the government media apparatus, meanwhile, was marked by uncertainty and confusion, so while news agencies and satellite television stations had up to date news coverage, Egyptian state television was late in transmitting details of how the disaster happened, the report states. The Red Sea governorate was blamed for failing to prepare an adequate reception for the anxious families of passengers, who descended on the ports of Safaga and Hurghada in the wake of the accident. “The governorate dealt with the issue in a haphazard manner, which led to the prolonging of the families’ discomfort for three days,” the report notes. Specific government ministries also came in for criticism. “The Ministry of Interior is still deficient in dealing with civilians in an appropriate manner,” the report states. It goes on to concede, however, that “the ministry’s performance during the crisis was still better than that of other agencies.” As for the Health Ministry, the report noted the fact that local hospitals had inadequate refrigeration units to handle the bodies of incoming victims. This resulted in “some bodies waiting in ambulances in front of the hospital while waiting for places.” The report, which was issued following a fact-finding investigation to the port of Safaga concludes with a number of key recommendations. These include: The launch of a wide-ranging investigation into the recent disaster as well as previous incidents; the formation of a team of experts to confirm the seaworthiness of the nation’s passenger ferries; and amendments to legislation on the legal passenger capacity of such vessels. While the state prosecutor announced that a government-led investigation would be undertaken shortly after the accident, few details have emerged. “The official investigation into the causes of the sinking of the vessel has yet to make its findings public, leading to a spate of speculation and rumour,” the state press reported on Feb 9. In the past, similar incidents were never satisfactorily prosecuted, the EOHR report notes. — Reuters.

ALASKAN FRONTIER (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 15 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1925, UTC: Fishing *Alaskan Frontier* (89 gt, built 1991), official number 971241, five persons on board, was reported drifting due lost propeller, in lat 55 52N, long 158 53W, at 1700, UTC. Vessel has now anchored with a Coast Guard helicopter standing by as a precaution and is waiting for another vessel to arrive on scene and take it in tow, possibly for Chignik.

ALICAN DEVAL (Turkey)

London, Feb 10 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1058, UTC: General cargo *Alican Deval* is still aground. The refloating attempt planned for Feb 11 has been delayed, as bad weather has prevented lightering operations.

London, Feb 13 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1015, UTC: General cargo *Alican Deval* remains aground. Yesterday unloading of oil and gasoil was completed and today it is planned that divers will inspect underwater damage and check for possible leakage.

London, Feb 15 — A SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage BV report, dated Feb 14, states: SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage over the weekend, Feb 11/12, was able to discharge the oil products from the heavily grounded general cargo *Alican Deval* off the south-eastern tip of Sicily. Special equipment necessary for the oil removal and refloating operations had been trucked in from SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage’s warehouses in the Netherlands while a salvage team was formed of South African, Turkish and Dutch salvage team members. Team and equipment were used to prepare the casualty for the oil removal and for the actual refloating operation, planned later this week. Weather interfered and prevented the tug/bunker barge combination to come alongside until this weekend the oil removal operations could be started and completed. In the meantime SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage station tug *Neftegaz 51* had arrived and was connected up in anticipation of the refloating attempt.

London, Feb 15 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1212, UTC: General cargo *Alican Deval* is still aground.

ALLORA (Honduras)

London, Feb 10 — General cargo *Allora* sailed Klaipeda Feb 8.

ALYSSA M.II (U.K.)

Wellington, Feb 15 — Yacht *Alyssa M.II* attracts buyer interest. Potential buyers are showing interest in a partly completed luxury boat in Nelson, for sale for NZ\$2.9 million after being damaged by fire. The *Bulldog* has been berthed at the wharf Sealord’s Vickerman Street processing plant for the past 21 months since fire ripped through it in April 2004 while it was undergoing major luxury refit. A welder or gas cutter was thought to

be responsible for the fire on the ship, which is owned by Hong Kong businessman Wing-cheung Fung. The multimillion-dollar refit started in 2002. Ship manager Rocka Romcke, owner of Nelson Yacht Services, said insurance after the fire had been settled and the ship’s sale had attracted interested parties. He would not give the value of the insurance payout. After the fire the owner lost interest in converting *Bulldog*, also known as *Alyssa M.II*, and cancelled the refit. Website Yachtworld.com shows *Bulldog* is for sale for NZ\$2,909,937. It says the crew’s quarters are 85% complete while the guest areas are bare steel. *Alyssa M.II* is still laid up at Nelson. — Lloyd’s Agents.

ANG PANGULO (Philippines)

Manila, Feb 13 — Keppel Shipyard, Bauan, Batangas, report that yacht *Ang Pangulo* is still moored at vicinity of said shipyard with no repairs being undertaken as of todate. — Lloyd’s Agents.

ANGEL PEARL (Sierra Leone)

London, Feb 10 — Following received from Coast Guard Portsmouth, VA, timed 1557, UTC: General cargo *Angel Pearl*: The tug arrived on scene at 2200, UTC, Feb 9, and took the vessel in tow for Jamaica.

Kingston, Feb 15 — General cargo *Angel Pearl* arrived Kingston Feb 11. Repairs have not yet commenced. — Lloyd’s Agents.

ANNA MARIE (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Feb 15 — General cargo *Anna Marie* arrived Grenaa Feb 11, sailed same day and arrived Wismar Feb 12.

ANTONIS A. (Panama)

London, Feb 14 — Chemical/oil carrier *Antonis A.* arrived Mersin Jan 18 and sailed Feb 4 for Eleusis.

APL PANAMA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Feb 9 — A press report, dated today, states: C.c. *APL Panama*, stranded since Christmas Day off an Ensenada beach, now has its own jetty. Salvors commissioned the 500-foot rock-and-sand ramp and hired a giant crane to carry containers ashore. The operation is the latest in a series of attempts to lighten the ship’s load and get it floating again. Weighed down by cargo and pinned in by sand, the 880-foot vessel has refused to leave the broad sandy beach where it ran aground more than seven weeks ago. The ship was on a trans-Pacific route, and its cargo included electronic components for Baja California manufacturing plants as well as parts for car factories in central Mexico. The delay in delivery prompted Nissan, the Japanese car manufacturer, to stop producing vehicles for three days last week at its Aguascalientes facility. Led by Florida-based Titan Maritime LLC, salvage efforts since the grounding

reportedly have succeeded in moving the bow 35 degrees, about a third of the distance necessary to pull it away from shore. A major effort late last month involved six tugs and a barge equipped with hydraulic pullers, with a combined capacity of more than 80,000 horsepower. Yesterday, as onlookers gazed from a distance, containers were hooked to the crane and lifted off the ship. The crane swung each container over to a waiting truck, where a worker manoeuvred it into place. The Baja California construction company Amaya Curiel y Cia S.A. de C.V. built the jetty. Company President Roberto Curiel said yesterday the 300-ton crawler crane, with a 250-foot boom, has been working around the clock since Sunday, and moving up to 60 containers per day. About 1,500 containers were on board yesterday, said Mike Hanson, spokesman for the ship's owner. Leaders of the salvage effort had hoped they wouldn't have to resort to the costly land-based operation. They initially relied on a Sikorsky Sky Crane helicopter to remove some of the lighter containers from the ship. But many of the boxes weigh more than the helicopter's 20,000-pound carrying capacity. Titan Maritime executives have told local officials that they are also hoping to bring in a more powerful helicopter, a Russian-made Mil-25 to lift the heavy containers. But the helicopter had yet to make an appearance yesterday. Capt. Jose Luis Rios Hernandez, Ensenada's harbor master, said renewed pulling efforts are expected during the next few days. Salvage workers must not only remove cargo, but also find ways to remove the sand that is trapping the vessel. Meanwhile, the delay has had its consequences in central Mexico. Nissan was missing parts that were in about 100 containers, and as a result, did not produce vehicles on Jan 30, 31 and Feb 1 at its 5,000-employee facility in Aguascalientes, said Fred Standish, director of corporate communications for Nissan North America Inc. Alternative supplies were found, and production resumed last Thursday, Standish said. "It's been running full steam ever since."

London, Feb 10 — An APL service status report, dated Feb 9, states: C.c. *APL Panama*: Containers are again being removed from the deck by helicopter and by crane to lighten the vessel's load. Approximately 270 containers have been removed from the vessel. The salvors intend to remove additional containers from the deck of the vessel.

London, Feb 10 — Following received from the operators of c.c. *APL Panama*, dated today: *APL Panama* remains aground on sand 1.5 nautical miles south-east of the entrance to the port of Ensenada. Salvage efforts have continued over the past week to free the vessel. Several attempts have been made to pull the vessel from the beach using the tugs in place and the hydraulic pulling machine. Stronger surf that was predicted for last week,

which was hoped would help to free the vessel, failed to materialise. Salvors have removed further containers from the stern section of the vessel using a heavy lift helicopterto airlift containers directly to a secure area within the port, and a crawler crane, which lowers the containers to the temporary roadway to be driven to the port area. So far, 327 containers have been removed, with a combined weight of 3,206 tones. Environmental response teams remain on 24-hour standby to ensure that no damage is caused to the local environment. The vessel's owners continue to work in close cooperation with the Mexican authorities in order to remove the vessel in a safe and manageable manner from the beach.

ARSCO III (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 10 — An Aransas Pass Coast Guard press release, dated Feb 9, states: The Coast Guard is continuing to work today to offload red-dye diesel from fishing *ArSCO III* (101 gt, built 1969), which sank at its moorings in Conn Brown Harbor, Feb 5. The Coast Guard is working with the Texas General Land Office to control the environmental impact of the sunken vessel and has already removed about 7,000 to 8,000 gallons of diesel from its fuel tanks.

ATLANTIC SUPERIOR (Canada)

London, Feb 15 — Bulk *Atlantic Superior* arrived Baltimore Feb 13.

AURA (U.K.)

London, Feb 13 — C.c. *Aura* sailed Hamburg 0805, Feb 11 for Mantyluoto.

AVRO CHIEFTAIN (New Zealand)

London, Feb 10 — Fishing *Avro Chieftain* (1425 gt, built 2001) sustained hull damage to its starboard midships (engine-room area), Dec 12, consisting of a dent in the vessel's side of approximately 50 - 60 mm over several frames and some minor twisting of the ribs. Damage was limited to this area. It is believed that the damage occurred when the vessel was being cautiously navigated through sea ice on the outskirts of the Ross Sea.

AYU (Indonesia)

See *Ning Shun*.

AYU VI

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Nine people are still missing as of Wednesday (Feb 8) after the LJT *Ayu VI* barge with 15 crew members on board sank in the Selayar Strait off Bulukumba in South Sulawesi on Saturday (Feb 4), an official said. Bulukumba Police chief Adj. Sr. Comr. Haryono said Wednesday six of the crew members were picked up by a fishing boat that happened to pass by Sunday. The barge, owned by shipping company PT Pelayaran Gunung Sibitung, was on its way from Luwu Timur regency to Makassar on Saturday, when it encountered bad weather and high

seas. It was transporting heavy machinery, including two excavators and a front-end loader. Haryono said news of the sinking was received by Bulukumba Police on Tuesday evening. Authorities immediately dispatched a rescue team, involving representatives from Pamatata Selayar Port, the Selayar Military District and both the Selayar and Bulukumba police, he said. The search was also assisted by local fishermen familiar with the area where the accident occurred. "The search and rescue operation was extended for up to three kilometres along the eastern parts of Selayar island, but none of the nine, still missing, were found," Haryono said.

BAHAMAS SPIRIT (Bahamas)

London, Feb 11 — A United States Coast Guard report states: Supply *SPT Defender* (660 gt, built 1977) was in contact with crude oil tanker *Bahamas Spirit* (57947 gt, built 1998) while it was attaching fenders for lightering operations at the Gulf Deep Water Access, in Galveston area at approximately 0616, Jan 9. *Bahamas Spirit*, which has a double hull, sustained a two foot gash in No.3 water ballast tank. (Note — *Bahamas Spirit* sailed New Orleans Jan 7, arrived Galveston 0300, Jan 11 and sailed 2230, Jan 12.)

BOA VISTA (Panama)

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Milford Haven Port Authority is currently investigating how ro/ro *Boa Vista* (8104 gt, built 1973) collided with a navigational marker in the haven, Feb 12. The vessel was transporting military equipment and personnel to Pembroke Port when she collided with the beacon in good weather at 1630 hrs. No-one was injured during the collision and the vessel sustained only minor damage. The navigational beacon, although still working, sustained more serious damaged.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Investigations are under way to find out how ro/ro *Boa Vista* hit a navigational marker. She was transporting Belgian tanks, equipment and personnel to Pembroke Port in the Milford Haven harbour when she hit the fixed, seven-metre flashing beacon at 1630, Sunday (Feb 12). She sustained only minimal damage and there were no injuries. A spokesman for Milford Haven Port Authority said it appeared it had overrun the jetty it had been due to stop at and that investigations were under way.

BREMER VICTORIA (Gibraltar)

London, Feb 12 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1020, UTC: General cargo *Bremer Victoria* (1782 gt, built 2001), bound France with a full cargo of timber, was reported at 2123, UTC, Feb 10, aground in lat 60 38.48N, long 17 58.77E, with a five degree list. No leakage reported only a small amount of water in bow thruster-room. It was

reported yesterday afternoon that vessel was retrimming and there was a tug alongside According to AIS vessel is still aground.

London, Feb 12 — Following received from Coastguard Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1830, UTC: General cargo *Bremer Victoria* is still aground. Diver inspection carried out this afternoon, awaiting report. Discharge of some cargo to another vessel to be effected tomorrow.

London, Feb 13 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1310, UTC: General cargo *Bremer Victoria* is still aground. One tug made an unsuccessful attempt to pull vessel off the ground. At present, some cargo is being removed.

Gothenburg, Feb 13 — General cargo *Bremer Victoria*, registered in Gibraltar and loaded with timber/wood, ran aground north of the light Bjornen/Bear. It experienced a 15-deg list, "holes/torn" in the vessel's bottom and water penetrated into double bottom tanks and forward bow thruster-room but there was no oil leakage. The Coast Guard have oil booms and other equipment, if required. The vessel had left Norrsundet after loading timber, bound for France. At 2210, Friday (Feb 10), the master reported the grounding to Gothenburg MRCC. Initially, the vessel attempted to refloat under its own power but was unsuccessful and requested tug assistance. Tug/icebreaker *Jarven* made an attempt but this failed after the towline broke. It was then decided the vessel would have to discharge its tanks and offload part of the deck cargo of bundles of timber/wood. Another tug *Gibb* attended from the port of Soderhamn. Vessel has no cranes and needs assistance for the discharge. The six person crew on board were all OK and the vessel's main engine and electricity were working fine. The master has no proper explanation why vessel veered off course and ran aground and an investigation has commenced. The vessel was "far away from its normal route." The Coast Guard commenced an environmental operation yesterday. The vessel has 58 cubic metres of diesel in its bunker tanks. The Coast Guard completed a diver survey of the vessel's bottom and as long as vessel remains at the ground there is no immediate danger. The vessel will empty its tanks under Coast Guard supervision and then a further refloating attempt will be made. — Westax Marine Service AB.

London, Feb 14 — Following received from Gavle VTS, timed 1031, UTC: General cargo *Bremer Victoria* was refloated at 1630, local time, Feb 13, and proceeded to Norrsundet under its own power. The vessel is currently berthed at Norrsundet.

Gothenburg, Feb 14 — General cargo *Bremer Victoria* is now at Norrsundet. Approximately 2,000 tons of cargo will be discharged and an inspection of the vessel's bottom will be carried out. The Board of Shipping will then decide whether the vessel will be

permitted to proceed "as is" to a shipyard. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Feb 15 — The master of general cargo *Bremer Victoria* admitted to having fallen asleep during his watch and causing the grounding and was fined SEK 2300:- . The fee has been paid and master released. — Westax Marine Services AB.

BRIGHT SUN (South Korea)

London, Feb 15 — Following received from the hull underwriters of bulk *Bright Sun*, dated Seoul today: *Bright Sun* laden with 35,237.215 tonnes of iron ore left Bandar Abbas, 0615, Oct 29 for Tangshan, and was in collision with bulk *Johnny K.* (91651 gt, built 1994) approximately 200 miles south-easterly off Vietnam, at 0545, Nov 11. Although *Bright Sun* sustained collision damage in way of starboard bow and side shell plates and upper deck in way of No. 1 and 5 cargo holds, the master decided to continue the intended voyage to China after effecting temporary repairs by ship's crew. A few days later, it encountered heavy weather near Taiwan and while taking shelter off the Philippines, it sank, as a result of ingress of seawater into cargo holds on Nov 18. (Note — *Johnny K.* subsequently arrived Singapore, from Xingang, Nov 13, where understood it carried out repairs, and sailed Dec 21.)

BRIMSTONE (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Jan 11, states: Firefighters took about an hour today to bring under control a blaze on board tug *Brimstone* (468 gt, built 1958), owned by Yazoo River Towing, in dry dock at Vicksburg harbour. *Brimstone*, was heavily damaged but there were no injuries reported, said Fire Chief Keith Rogers. Rogers said the fire was in the vessel's engine-room. Officials from the Warren County Emergency Management Agency and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality were being called to investigate for possible environmental damage from hazardous material.

BRISE (Netherlands)

London, Feb 15 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Non specific tanker *Brise* sustained very minor damage in its grounding on sandy bottom on the River Rhine Feb 2. Vessel has now returned to service.

CARIBBEAN LADY (Malta)

Freeport, Bahamas, Feb 14 — Ref *Caribbean Lady* is still at Freeport awaiting spare parts and will re-enter the drydock on or about Feb 17. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAST PRESTIGE (Germany)

Montreal, Feb 10 — C.c. *Cast Prestige* still has not cleaned its bilge lines of oil and therefore cannot load its containers until that is done to the satisfaction of Transport Canada.

Therefore it will be here in Montreal for several more days. — Lloyd's Agents.

Montreal, Feb 13 — C.c. *Cast Prestige* completed repairs/cleaning. The vessel then shifted to the load berth, loaded its containers and sailed from Montreal this morning. It is bound for Liverpool and is back on its regular service. — Lloyd's Agents.

CENTURY TEAM (Belize)

Busan, Feb 14 — General cargo *Century Team*, in tow of tug, berthed at Pier No 3, Wando, about 1300, Feb 9, to discharge cargo. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

CHEN LONG (Panama)

See "Fishing Vessel Intercepted Off Wessel Islands, Northern Territory, Australia" under "Miscellaneous".

CITIUS (Marshall Islands)

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

CLAN GLADIATOR (Cyprus)

Antwerp, Feb 14 — C.c. *Clan Gladiator* (21053 gt, built 1992) sustained damage to No.2 crane when it struck a shore gantry during operations at No.5 WGQ Terminal, Shanghai port, Feb 10. The vessel sailed Shanghai Feb 13 after three days stay at Wusong Anchorage with the damaged crane not repaired. — "DPS Teamhead Surveyors." (Note — *Clan Gladiator* sailed Buenaventura Jan 11, arrived Hong Kong Feb 7 and sailed Feb 8. Vessel was reported due Busan today.)

CLEMENCEAU

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: India's Supreme Court is set to meet to deliberate on whether asbestos-laden decommissioned French warship *Clemenceau* should be allowed to be broken up in western India, court officials said. The court, which has to determine whether the ship conforms to the Basel Convention on transporting toxic materials, said it would begin hearing the matter later in the day after it has cleared other scheduled cases, the officials said. Legal sources said that because the matter was only to be taken up by the court late in the day, a final ruling was unlikely to be issued today. The high court had earlier said it would base its decision on the recommendations of an 11-member environmental watchdog it appointed, known as the Supreme Court Monitoring Commission (SCMC). Members of the commission last week admitted the group was split over whether to allow the ship to be broken up at Alang, in Gujarat state, and had submitted two reports to the Supreme Court in New Delhi. Activists from environmental group Greenpeace, who have been campaigning against allowing the ship into India, said the split report and the fact that the court may listen to further submissions could delay the ruling. "If the court orders the ship back it will be setting

a strong precedent," said Greenpeace media officer Ramapati Kumar. "It will send out a strong signal that India cannot be made into a dumping ground." Last week, France offered to take back asbestos removed from the *Clemenceau* if "Indian authorities so desire." "We will abide by the decision of the Indian government and the Indian courts. It's out of the question to force our way into India," French ambassador to India Dominique Girard told reporters after visiting the ship-breaking yard at Alang on Wednesday (Feb 8). Girard said France was sending its own experts to India and would closely monitor the health of some 45 Alang workers expected to dismantle the 27,000-tonne vessel. Findings of a survey released by Greenpeace at the weekend said 70 percent of Indians were against allowing the *Clemenceau* to be broken up at Alang.

Paris, Feb 14 — Paris ordered a probe today into the removal of asbestos from French warship *Clemenceau*, bound for an Indian scrapyard, a new twist in a saga that has embarrassed France ahead of a visit to India by President Jacques Chirac. India's top court has banned the decommissioned aircraft carrier *Clemenceau* from entering the country's territorial waters pending a final decision on whether to allow the vessel's destruction at the Alang scrapyard in western Gujarat state. Once the pride of the French fleet, critics now dub the *Clemenceau* the "Farcical Flagship" after two years of failed attempts to scrap the 27,000-tonne vessel. Ecologists say the vessel contains ten times the 45 tonnes of asbestos that France said had to be left on board to keep the *Clemenceau* afloat, and say poor Indian workers with little protective clothing should not be exposed to the hazard. Defence Minister Michele Alliot-Marie said she had demanded an inquiry after a 30-tonne discrepancy emerged between the amount of asbestos said taken off the carrier and the amount weighed by disposal teams. The Defence Ministry said at the weekend it only had documents to account for 85 tonnes of the 115 tonnes of asbestos that was supposed to have been removed from the vessel. "I have referred it to the public prosecutor of Marseille to set up an inquiry," Alliot-Marie told Europe 1 radio. The issue even barged its way into an official visit by Dominique de Villepin to Moscow, where the French Prime Minister said the dispute was "regrettable and so needs swift decisions". The saga is also an unwanted distraction for Chirac as he prepares to visit India at the weekend at a time when France wants to sell Airbus passenger jets, military hardware and possibly civilian nuclear know-how to New Delhi. India's Supreme Court on Monday (Feb 13) ordered a new panel to investigate the affair but legal rulings in France may yet make any Indian decision moot. France's top administrative court, the Council of

State, has been asked to rule this week whether the defence ministry was right to allow the vessel to be sent for scrap overseas. An independent magistrate said in an opinion to the court that the *Clemenceau*'s export license should be revoked, saying France had breached international rules on the export of dangerous waste. A recent poll showed 68 percent of voters believed the *Clemenceau* should return to France. — Reuters.

CLEMENCEAU (Decommissioned Aircraft Carrier)

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: France's latest attempt to dispose of decommissioned aircraft carrier *Clemenceau* was thwarted today when the country's highest court suspended plans to scrap it in India. The decision of the State Council, announced by President Jacques Chirac, means that *Clemenceau* has now been ordered back to a French dock. Greenpeace and three other environmental campaign groups challenged the proposal to scrap it in India on grounds that Indian workers were not properly equipped to dismantle the craft's hazardous lining. Michele Alliot-Marie, the Defence Minister, has said that France would abide by the decision of the court, which today ruled to suspend the transfer. The vessel left the port of Toulon Jan 31 after French authorities reached a deal with the Indian courts to have it dismantled at the Alang yard in western Gujarat state. However, India's Supreme Council withdrew its permission several days later when suggestions were raised that the aircraft carrier contained around ten times more than the 50 tons of asbestos previously thought. *Clemenceau* has since been stuck off the coast awaiting the French court ruling.

DAYANA (Panama)

Santo Domingo, Feb 13 — Ro/ro *Dayana* remains alongside the pier at the port of Santo Domingo. Reportedly, it is no longer under detention, after settling outstanding invoices with the local tug company, Remolcadores Dominicanos SA, and the Dominican Republic Navy, for their part in the refloating operation. It is also reported that the vessel has not performed any repairs to any damages resulting from the grounding incident. It is not presently undergoing any repairs. Its destination port or date of departure are unknown at this time. — Lloyd's Agents.

DONG FA (China)

See *Healthy Falcon*.

ECE (Marshall Islands)

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated Feb 10, states: An underwater survey is to be carried out on the wreck of acid tanker *Ece* which sank 30 miles off Guernsey to decide if its

oil can be salvaged. The vessel sank earlier this month while being towed to Le Havre, following a collision with bulk *General Grot-Rowecki*. The tanker was carrying 10,000 tonnes of phosphoric acid when it sank. Experts say the chemical does not pose a threat. But there are concerns the fuel oil in its tanks could pose a problem. A contract has now been awarded to survey the hull. The survey is expected to start next Friday. Aerial surveillance will continue with one or two flights each day over the wreck site.

Riga, Feb 15 — Bulk *General Grot-Rowecki* arrived at Riga at 1100 hrs, Feb 12 (from Police, from where it departed on Feb 9). The vessel finished loading at 0700 hrs, today and sailed at 1000 hrs, for Norderhamn. — Lloyd's Agents.

ECSTASY (Panama)

London, Feb 12 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 1,000 New Orleans police officers, their families, and other city workers using the Carnival passenger *Ecstasy* (70367 gt, built 1991) for post-"Katrina" lodging faced a harrowing early morning ride yesterday when the ship broke free of its moorings at the Poland Avenue Wharf and spun out into the Mississippi River. The ship narrowly avoided hitting a pair of Military Sea Lift Command ships moored near *Ecstasy* and, with quick help from a river pilot and three tugs, came to rest about 0615 hrs about 300 feet from the Algiers riverbank, just downriver from Algiers Point, authorities said. The episode began about 0535 hrs when a large metal bollard holding some tie-down lines at the old wharf broke off, starting a chain reaction of line breaks, Coast Guard spokeswoman Lt. Emily Tharp said. Pressure placed on lines by brisk winds as well as the dock's age may have been factors in the accident, which remains under investigation, Tharp said. No injuries were reported. The Coast Guard said 1,100 people, mostly law enforcement officials, were onboard *Ecstasy* during the incident. The ship has been commissioned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide housing for more than 1,600 people, mainly New Orleans police, fire and other emergency-response workers and their families, FEMA spokesman Jack Brandais said. Though the broken moorings could have led to a disaster, *Ecstasy* actually was out of control for only minutes, Tharp said. Cruise ship personnel were able to activate a bow thruster within two minutes of learning that lines were snapping, and they got one of the main stern propellers running minutes later, she said. The bow thruster was critical to missing the military ships, and "once they had that bow thruster on line, they had some semblance of control," Tharp said. Notified by *Ecstasy*, the Coast Guard used mariner broadcasts to keep other ships out of the area. River pilot Don Gagnon noticed *Ecstasy*'s separation from its dock as

he waited for a small launch boat in Algiers, Tharp said. Gagnon raced across the river on the launch boat, climbed across a wastewater-holding barge attached to *Ecstasy* and joined the cruise ship's crew on the bridge of the ship, Tharp said. To try to gain control of the cruise ship, Gagnon used his hand-held radio to summon help from three tugs, *Louisiana*, *Alison* and *Jefferson*, and told the crew where to drop anchor after *Ecstasy* had drifted near Algiers, Tharp said. Before it came to a rest, the cruise ship had drifted seven-tenths of a mile. Though it had been docked with its bow pointed downriver, it flipped around during the early morning ride, redirecting its bow upriver near Algiers. *Ecstasy* was returned to the Poland Avenue Wharf and was moved again to the Julia Street Wharf later in the day. Its use for emergency housing continues:

EGON-W (Netherlands)

London, Feb 15 — General cargo *Egon-W* arrived Rochester Feb 11, from Kiel, and sailed Feb 13 for Wismar.

EIDER (Hong Kong)

Balboa, Feb 14 — Bulk *Eider* is still under repair. Understand repairs should be completed within the next few days. — Lloyd's Agents.

ELENA KUDRYAVTSEVA (Georgia)

Messina, Feb 15 — There was no damage to the hull and/or machinery of general cargo *Elena Kudryavtseva*. There was some to its cargo of galvanized steel beams, but that has been looked after by P&I insurers and the vessel has sailed from Catania. — Lloyd's Agents.

ESTRADEN (Finland)

See *Wolgastern*.

EURO FJORD (Norway)

Trondheim, Feb 14 — General cargo *Euro Fjord* is still at Kvernhusvik Shipyard, Hitra. ETS unknown. — Lloyd's Agents.

EVER BRIGHT (Tuvalu)

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Eight Chinese fishermen are missing after their boat (fishing *Ming Lien Yu 1028*) collided with a freighter (general cargo *Ever Bright*, 9169 gt, built 1980) near Matsu, a Taiwan-controlled group of islands. Taiwan's coast guard says patrol boats have been sent to the islands off China's southeastern Fujian province, to try to find the men. It says the fishing boat sank after being struck by the freighter registered in Tuvalu.

London, Feb 10 — Following received from Taipei RCC, timed 1020, UTC: General cargo *Ever Bright* (9169 gt, built 1980) and Chinese fishing *Ming Lien Yu 1028* were in collision in lat 26 19N, long 120 01E, 0540, UTC, Feb 9. Eight persons are missing from the fishing vessel and Taiwan Coast

Guard vessels and vessels from mainland China are searching for the missing persons.

FAIRWEATHER (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The Alaska Marine Highway System announced today that it is estimating the fast vehicle ferry passenger ro/ro *Fairweather* (3424 gt, built 2004) will be out of service until mid-April due to a problem with all four of its MTU diesel engines. "It is apparent that the cylinder sleeves on the engines have developed hairline cracks, which have allowed coolant to enter the cylinders," said Captain John Falvey, AMHS General Manager. "We have been in contact with the manufacturer and are proceeding with a plan to replace all the sleeves on the engines, which we estimate will take nine to ten weeks." The MTU diesels are manufactured in Germany and use an aluminum block. They were chosen for the fast ferries in an effort to keep the weight down. Like other diesel engines, they have steel sleeves inside the cylinder, in which the pistons move up and down. The cause of the hairline cracking has not been determined. The *Fairweather* and its sister ship, the *Chenega*, were in the Ketchikan shipyard for regularly scheduled annual maintenance when the problem was diagnosed. (Note — *Fairweather* according to LMIU AIS, was in lat 55 21.92N, long 131 44.76W, at 0233, Feb 11.)

FOWAIRET (Qatar)

London, Feb 14 — C.c. *Fowairet* sailed Rotterdam 1115, Feb 10, for Hamburg.

GECO SAPPHIRE (Panama)

Gdynia, Feb 15 — Research *Geco Sapphire*, now named *EDT Protea* is still at Stocznia Marynarki Wojennej yard in Gdynia. The renovation process will last until May/June 2006. The shipyard offers only the berth and use of cranes and the renovation of the vessel is being done by the owner himself. — Correspondents.

GENERAL GROT-ROWECKI (Malta)

See *Ece*.

GOLDEN BELLS 2

Belfast, Feb 10 — Fishing *Golden Bells 2* is presently undergoing repairs at Kilkeel, ETC Apr 10. — Lloyd's Agents.

GRAND PRINCESS (Bermuda)

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: Passenger *Grand Princess* (108806 gt, built 1998) made an emergency turnaround last week when a passenger suffered a heart attack returned today to Galveston. Passengers exiting the *Grand Princess* described broken glass and water spilling into the dining area and staterooms when she made her turn last Saturday. Earlier in the week, Princess Cruises spokeswoman Karen Tetherow said

that several passengers and crew had minor injuries from the abrupt change in course. She turned around just two hours after leaving the Port of Galveston.

HANIFE ANA (Turkey)

London, Feb 9 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1056, UTC: General cargo *Hanife Ana* is still aground.

London, Feb 12 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 0600, UTC: General cargo *Hanife Ana* is currently "in shore".

London, Feb 13 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1020, UTC: General cargo *Hanife Ana* remains aground north of Brindisi. Vessel has moved further into shore, making refloating operations more difficult. At present arrangements are being made to remove the oil on board but there is no current danger of pollution. It is believed that the hull is holed in three places in the forepart region.

London, Feb 15 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1212, UTC: General cargo *Hanife Ana* is still aground. The fuel has been removed from the vessel, and removal of the remaining oil is under way.

HAPPY BRIDE (Isle of Man)

London, Feb 13 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Lpg *Sigmagas*, which had been in collision with lpg *Happy Bride* north-west of Donges on Jan 4, was towed to Bremerhaven in the morning of Feb 12 to be repaired at Rickmers Yard. The vessel was towed to Hoheweg Roads and there taken over by the tugs *Bremerhaven* and *Steinbock*. Vessel is berthed in a dry dock with bow damage.

HEALTHY FALCON (Vietnam)

Antwerp, Feb 14 — Product tanker *Healthy Falcon* (2998 gt, built 1985), loaded, and general cargo *Dong Fa* (8859 gt, built 1978), loaded, were in collision near Shanghai port Jan 31. *Healthy Falcon* sustained damage on starboard aft quarter. After discharging at Zhapu Terminal, Shanghai port, it shifted to Zhapu Anchorage on Feb 3 waiting for the class surveyor to inspect and decide repair work. *Dong Fa* sustained damage in the way of Nos 1 and 2 holds. After collision it entered Shanghai Shipyard for repairs which expected to take about 20 days. — "DPS Teamhead Surveyors."

HJALTLAND (U.K.)

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: Northlink passenger ro/ro *Hjalmland* (11486 gt, built 2002) left Lerwick two hours behind schedule last night after its bow had been repaired following contact with the Holmsgarth pier yesterday morning. An investigation is underway into the incident in which the vessel's bow made contact with the linkspan when it suddenly lurched forward during berthing, causing some damage to the vessel.

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

Passengers were able to disembark, but cars and cargo were not unloaded until the afternoon. No one was hurt in the incident. A company spokesman said late yesterday afternoon: "Officials from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) were informed immediately and remain on-site. NorthLink is continuing to consult with them as the necessary repairs are carried out."

HOEGH GANDRIA (NIS)

London, Feb 14 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 1025, UTC: Lng/Lpg *Hoegh Gandria* (96011 gt, built 1977) had water ingress into engine-room while anchored off Singapore Feb 4. Water has been pumped out of the engine-room and vessel, which is currently at Raffles Anchorage, is awaiting towage to Singapore shipyard for permanent repairs. (Note — *Hoegh Gandria* arrived Singapore anchorage Feb 4 from Pyoengtaek.)

HUMBER WAY (Malta)

London, Feb 14 — Ro/ro *Humber Way* sailed Ostend Feb 11 for Immingham.

INZHENER SHLEM (Russia)

London, Feb 15 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Ore/oil *Inzhener Shlem* discharged its cargo of 3,300 tons of gasoil and 150 tons of oil sludge at Stallzus in Kiel and then returned to sea, proceeding to Hamburg. The crew carried out repairs to the propeller shaft.

London, Feb 16 — Ore/oil *Inzhener Shlem* arrived Hamburg 0300, Feb 15.

IRAN MADANI (Iran)

Lisbon, Feb 10 — Bulk *Iran Madani* is still being inspected by surveyors to ascertain the necessary repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

IRENA ARCTICA (DIS)

London, Feb 10 — C.c. *Irena Arctica* sailed Gdansk Feb 8 for Aalborg.

JAMES PRIOR (U.K.)

London, Feb 14 — Following received from Acorn Shipyard, Rochester, dated today: General cargo *James Prior* has completed repairs and is due to sail Feb 15.

JIN KYUNG 101 (South Korea)

See *Ning Shun*.

JOANNA III (Greece)

London, Feb 16 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0950, UTC: General cargo *Joanna III* (499 gt, built 1965), Larimna for Thessaloniki, no cargo on board, grounded in lat 38 48N, long 22 44.6E, about 30 minutes ago. No injuries on board and no pollution reported.

JOERY P. (Netherlands)

London, Feb 15 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Non specific tankers *Joery P.*

and *Katharina* sustained only minor damage in their collision on the River Rhine on Feb 2. They have both returned to service.

JOHNNY K. (Cyprus)

See *Bright Sun*.

KATHARINA

See *Joery P.*

KATYA Z. (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Because of bad meteorological conditions in Azov Sea general cargo *Katya Z.* and tugs *Vityaz* and *Pluto* continue to be ice-bound about 20 miles from Kerchenskiy strait, *Katya Z.*'s manager company Varna Shipping and Trading said. Yesterday the crew built a temporary helicopter pad on the ice and at 1730 hrs welcomed Ukrainian helicopter with which new ice pilot arrived and replaced the one from Berdyansk port. The helicopter also brought additional provisions to *Katya Z.* and the two tugs. Mariupol convoy is expected to be formed on Feb 12 or 13 and after a two-day passage led by icebreaker *Kapitan Belousov* to reach *Katya Z.* and free it from its ice trap.

London, Feb 13 — General cargo *Katya Z.* is still waiting for the arrival of the ice-breaker *Captain Belousov*, which is leading a convoy of eight ships from Marupol to Kerch, according to a representative of Varna Shipping & Trading Company. With the assistance of two tugboats, *Katya Z.* has managed to make its way closer to the convoy, located 15 miles to the west. The convoy is expected to reach *Katya Z.* late tomorrow night. The ship has enough fuel, water and food supplies, FOCUS-Varna reported.

London, Feb 14 — The ice breaker *Captain Belousov* is expected to reach general cargo *Katya Z.* this afternoon. This morning the rescue team was located 52 kms north of *Katya Z.*, a representative of the managing company Varna Ship and Trading Vesselin Genov said. The vessel had been trapped for nearly 20 days, Focus news agency reported.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Katya Z.* was reached yesterday by a convoy led by icebreaker *Kapitan Belousov* which was sailing in the Azov Sea from Mariupol to Kerch and was included in the convoy, *Katya Z.*'s manager company Varna Shipping and Trading said. It is expected the convoy to reach the Kerchenskiy strait this morning.

KHALED JUNIOR (Cambodia)

London, Feb 10 — Bulk *Khaled Junior*, Tuzla for Bejaia, passed Dardanelles Feb 8.

KIM JACOB (Liberia)

Rotterdam, Feb 9 — SMIT Salvage BV was contracted to refloat the fully laden crude oil tanker *Kim Jacob* on basis of LOF 2000 on Jan 30. After a ship-to-ship transfer of about 22,000

tons of crude oil which was pumped into the *Prime*. Salvage Master Jan Kalkman and his team successfully refloated *Kim Jacob* on Feb 6. *Kim Jacob* was anchored in stable condition and the breached tank caused by the grounding was pressurised for safety reasons. The 22,000 tons of crude oil transferred into the *Prime* will be delivered at Bonaire. On Feb 9 the 136,000 DWT tanker *Endless* was connected to *Kim Jacob* to conduct the next ship-to-ship transfer for the remaining cargo on board *Kim Jacob*. After completion, the *Endless* will deliver the remaining crude oil at St Croix. — SMIT Salvage BV.

KOTA JAYA (Hong Kong)

London, Feb 10 — C.c. *Kota Jaya* (18502 gt, built 2000) while coming alongside berth No.5, Napier, Dec "15" a loud thud was heard and the aft tug *Ahuriri* (299 gt, built 2002), which was made fast on the port quarter, had hit the ship's side. Damage consisted of a dent about 70 cms long x 40 cms high x 8 cms deep to *Kota Jaya*. (Note — *Kota Jaya* arrived Napier Dec 12 and sailed Dec 14.)

KOTOWAKA MARU (Japan)

See "LNG Tanker Delayed at Darwin, Australia" under "Miscellaneous."

LNG EDO (Bahamas)

Ferrol, Feb 14 — Lng *LNG Edo* (93619 gt, built 1980), which arrived Ferrol Feb 3, 2005, with major gearbox problems, is still at local Navantia Shipyard. Main gear is still under repairs at GE, Houston. It is expected the vessel could leave port after permanent repairs at the end of April. — Lloyd's Agents.

LYKES VOYAGER (Isle of Man)

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: The misuse of VHF radio and an inability to employ the Automatic Identification System as an effective anti-collision aid contributed to a collision between c.c. *Lykes Voyager* and c.c. *Washington Senator* in the Taiwan Strait, a Marine Accident Investigation Branch report has concluded. The collision, which took place in thick fog last April, resulted in severe damage to both ships and containers lost overboard. The inquiry into the accident, in which *Lykes Voyager* was running at 19.5 knots and *Washington Senator* 17 knots, discovered that there had been an abortive attempt over the VHF to make a passing arrangement between the two vessels, which regrettably resulted in the two ships turning toward each other. Both vessels were fitted with AIS but neither of the bridge teams made use of the equipment to monitor the actions of the other vessel. The equipment had not been sufficiently sophisticated to display information on radar. The report was the latest in which the use of VHF as a tool for collision avoidance has been a contributor and the report recommends that owners discourage

its use for this purpose. Speed, with the vessels closing at more than 36 knots and with no avoiding action taken until the ships had closed to 2.5 miles, was also determined as an important issue, given the visibility and the presence of other traffic in the vicinity. Neither master thought it necessary to reduce speed when the visibility deteriorated and large concentrations of fishing craft were encountered. It was recommended that there should be more guidance on the determination of safe speed available to masters, as the practice of operating at high speed, regardless of visibility, is recognised to be endemic among those who operate container ships with their tight schedules. Other recommendations by the inspector highlighted the potential of AIS information which identifies other ships together with their course, speed and other data, when manoeuvring in a close quarters situation. It was also recommended that ship managers be advised of the advantages of displaying AIS information in a format which can be readily associated with radar and other sources of navigational information. More sophisticated systems show the information on radar.

M.PIONEER (Panama)

See "Crew Of Panamanian Vessel At Fredericia, Denmark" under "Labour Disputes".

MAGALLANES (Chile)

Valparaiso, Feb 9 — Ro/ro *Magallanes* arrived safely in Puerto Natales, Feb 3, and temporary repairs to engine were effected. Vessel was authorised to sail, with precautions, but only with cargo and no passengers, and arrived safely in Puerto Montt Feb 7. — Lloyd's Agents.

MAINE (Cambodia)

London, Feb 10 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 1041, UTC: General cargo *Maine* is still aground. Salvors are currently lightering part of the vessel's cargo prior to a refloating attempt.

London, Feb 10 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: General cargo *Maine* Maine, is managed by DTS Ltd (Donbasstransitservice LLC) Maripoli, insured for hull and machinery with Soglasie Insurance Company, Moscow and entered for P&I with British Marine Mutual, London. Salvors are Volos Tug Company and their tug *Centaurus*, of 2,000bhp, has proceeded to site. An Lloyd's Open Form has been signed. Understand there is four metres of water in the engine-room. Lemnos Harbour-master advised this is morning that the vessel is still heavily aground, and will remain in the same position for some time. Refloating efforts are not yet taking place. The Authorities are concentrating on pumping out fuel and preventing any pollution. For the time being, no spills have been

noticed. An underwater inspection has been carried out by local divers.

London, Feb 13 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: General cargo *Maine* is still heavily aground and will remain that way for some time. Refloating efforts are not yet taking place. The Authorities are concentrating on pumping out fuel and preventing any pollution. To date, no spills have been noticed. The company that has been contracted for the anti-pollution measures is Maritime Consortium of Thessaloniki.

London, Feb 14 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0940, UTC: General cargo *Maine* remains aground, with fuel and cargo removal operations still under way.

London, Feb 15 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: General cargo *Maine* is still heavily aground. All fuels and oils have been removed from the vessel and oil-absorbing mats are now being used to clean the remaining sediments. The Harbour-master has advised that there is now no risk of pollution. Salvors have stated that once the vessel is cleaned from all oil sediments etc, they will commence the transhipment of cargo, in order to lighten the vessel.

London, Feb 16 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 1000, UTC: General cargo *Maine* remains aground, fuel removal complete.

MARIBELLA (Greece)

London, Feb 11 — Bulk *Maribella*, New Orleans for El Dekheila, passed Gibraltar Feb 9. (See issue of Jan 18.)

MARIELLE BOLTEN (Liberia)

Santo Domingo, Feb 15 — After receipt of General Average and Salvage securities from local importers and completion of discharge of the cargo consigned to the Dominican Republic, general cargo *Marielle Bolten* departed Manzanillo Bay at 1400, Feb 13, under tow of anchor handling tug/supply *Rig Deliverer*, chartered to the salvors SWS/RMG and in accordance with the LOF. The vessels destination is Freeport, Grand Bahamas, ETA, weather and other conditions permitting, within five-nine days of commencement of tow, where it is planned that the cargo remaining on board will be discharged and the vessel will be drydocked for a full assessment of its condition. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Feb 16 — A SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage BV report, dated Feb 15, states: Under control of salvors from SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage and partners Resolve Salvage and their salvage equipment general cargo *Marielle Bolten* departed the Dominican Republic under tow, Feb 13, for Freeport, Bahamas, with an ETA beginning next week. After having refloated the vessel slightly over a week earlier, salvors were engaged in stabilising the vessel and discharging the vessel of cargo destined for governmental projects on the island.

MARITIME LADY (Gibraltar)

Maassluis, Feb 9 — Chemical/oil carrier *Sunny Blossom* sailed Hamburg Feb 7 for Skikda. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

MING LIEN YU 1028 (China)

See *Ever Bright*.

MIZ T (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 11 — A Coast Guard Boston press release states: Yacht *Miz T* has been raised by Boston Transportation and Tow at Rowes Warf, Boston harbour. *Miz T* caught fire at 2100 Monday (Feb 6). The incident is under investigation by the Coast Guard.

MONCHEGORSK (Cyprus)

London, Feb 10 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Monchegorsk* destroyed some pilings and sustained only minor damage to the hull. It could continue its voyage towards the Baltic after the investigations were completed. The lock itself was not damaged.

MOON STAR (Cambodia)

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Feb 9, states: c.c. *Moon Star* (5378 gt, built 1980), Busan for Vostochnyy, loaded, had an engine exploded today 40 miles south of Vladivostok. None of the vessel's 18 crewmembers, six Russians and 12 Filipinos, were hurt, a duty officer at the Vladivostok rescue coordinating centre said. Maritime Territory rescuers have offered sending tug *Lazurit* to the ship but the vessel's crew declined the offer of help and will try to eliminate the aftermath of the breakdown on their own.

London, Feb 10 — Following received from Vladivostok MRCC, timed 1240, UTC: C.c. *Moon Star* arrived Vostochnyy 1025, local time, today and is now loading.

MSC JILHAN (Panama)

London, Feb 11 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: C.c. *MSC Jilhan* (14068 gt, built 1986) was in contact with the stern of ro/ro/c.c. *Trans Carrier* (8476 gt, built 1994) when entering the Brunsbuettel locks from the North Sea at 2330 yesterday. Previously the bow thruster had already failed on the approach of the Kiel Canal. *MSC Jilhan* had to berth afterwards with the help of tugs. It was only allowed to resume its voyage after having carried out some repairs. The ship continued its voyage towards the Baltic at 1140 today escorted by a tug. *Trans Carrier* was only slightly damaged and could resume its voyage soon after the incident. (Note — *MSC Jilhan* sailed Bremerhaven 1635, Feb 10, for Klaipeda and *Trans Carrier* sailed Antwerp 1640, Feb 9, for Turku.)

London, Feb 14 — C.c. *MSC Jilhan* arrived Gdynia 1812, Feb 12, and according to LMIU AIS was in lat 51 51 21.91N, long 18 51 29.97E, at 1032 today, course 314, speed 15.4 knots.

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

London, Feb 15 — Ro/ro/c.c. *Trans Carrier* arrived Turku Feb 13 and sailed same day for Helsinki.

NAPOCOR POWER BARGE NO.106 (Philippines)

See "Tropical Storm 'Kajiki' under 'Weather & Navigation.'"

NAPOCOR TUGBOAT NO.1 (Philippines)

See "Tropical Storm 'Kajiki' under 'Weather & Navigation.'"

NING SHUN (China)

Antwerp, Feb 15 — Tug *Jin Kyung 101* and barge *Ayu* had departed from port of Ningbo after providing the LOU. Lpg *Ning Shun* has completed permanent repairs at Zhoushan Changzhi Shipyard, and sailed Feb 14. — "DPS Teamhead Surveyors."

NORMAND NEPTUN (NIS)

Kristiansand, Feb 15 — Tug/supply *Normand Neptun* is still berthed in Stavanger. Vessel will undergo sea trial on Monday (Feb 20). No date has been set for when or where it will sail. — Lloyd's Agents.

NORTHERN ORION (U.S.A.)

Portland, Ore, Feb 15 — The investigation into the spill from fishing *Northern Orion* is continuing. — Lloyd's Agents.

NORWAY (Bahamas)

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A Bangladeshi scrap merchant said he had bought passenger *Norway* for 12 million dollars, sparking protests from environmentalists and a warning from the government it will not allow the vessel to be broken up in Bangladesh. "I have finalised the deal (for the *Norway*) but I have not yet made the payment because of a dollar crisis in the local market," said Haji Lokman Hossain, owner of a scrapyard near Chittagong in southern Bangladesh. "If I can buy the ship, I will take measures to destroy all hazardous materials and toxic gas," he added today. News of the deal prompted dozens of environmentalists to form a human chain in Chittagong to protest the move to dismantle the ship at Hossain's Giri Subedar Ship Breaking Yard at nearby Sitakundu. Global environmental group Greenpeace has included the *Norway* on a watchlist of 50 vessels, which it fears will not be decontaminated before being scrapped. It says the French workers who built the ship claim it contains 1,250 tonnes of material that contains asbestos. The Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association today served legal notices in the capital Dhaka on relevant government agencies in a bid to halt the ship being brought into Bangladesh's territorial waters. "We served the legal notice after the documents that we've collected indicate that the the Giri Ship Breaking company has bought the ship and it is now on its way to the company's scrap yard," lawyer Rizwana Hasan said. The

government has already said it will not allow the ship to be broken up in Bangladesh as it might cause loss of life and environmental damage. "We've told Haji Lokman who has reportedly bought the asbestos-laden ship not to bring it into Bangladesh waters as it can kill workers," the government's environment director, Mosharraf Hossain, said yesterday. "He has to dispose of the hazardous waste elsewhere first and only then will we allow the ship to be dismantled in the ship breaking yards," Hossain said. An inter-ministerial meeting was to be held today to discuss ways to keep the ship away from Bangladeshi waters, an environment ministry official said. *Norway* is now lying in open waters off the Malaysian coast.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: The government has decided to gather more information about the possible extent of danger of asbestos-laden passenger *Norway*, which a ship-breaker intends to buy and scarp at a ship-breaking yard in Chittagong. The decision came yesterday at an inter-ministerial meeting chaired by Environment and Forest Secretary Abu Jafar Chowdhury at the Ministry of Environment and Forest. Environmentalists are protesting against bringing the ship to Bangladesh since newspaper reports unveiled its hazardous impact on environment and health of labourers. Yesterday's meeting decided to gather more information about the ship before making a decision whether it will be allowed to enter Bangladesh waters, reports AFP quoting Mohammad Riazuddin, technical director of the Department of Environment. The meeting decided to prevent the import of *Norway* by not allowing opening any LC with Bangladesh Bank, directing the Chittagong Port Authority and Coast Guard authorities not to let the ship enter Bangladesh and taking up steps as per the Bangladesh Environment Act, the WTO, ILO and Basel Convention, according to BDNEWS. Lokman Hossain, a Bangladeshi ship-breaker, has finalised a deal to buy the ship at over \$13 million. Department of Environment Chittagong Divisional Director Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said: "We'll go for legal action against Lokman if the vessel is brought here for scrapping." Meanwhile, Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association yesterday served legal notices on concerned government agencies to bar the ship from entering Bangladesh waters.

NU C

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: The U.S. Coast Guard and Washington Department of Ecology are overseeing the salvage of a fishing boat that went aground on the north jetty near Grays Harbor, Wash, this morning. Coast Guard Group/Air Station Astoria, Ore, received a mayday call at 0643 hrs,

that the 59-foot fishing *Nu C* ran into the north jetty and the crew was preparing to abandon ship. Air Station Astoria Launched an HH-60 Jayhawk helicopter and Station Grays Harbor launched two 47-foot motor lifeboats. The Ocean Shores surf rescue team and local Emergency Medical Services also responded. The four crewmembers were able to safely reach shore where they were treated and released. Coast Guard pollution investigators from Coast Guard Sector Portland and representatives from the Department of Ecology are assessing the extent of the pollution. A diesel sheen was reported after the boat went aground. The amount of oil spilled is unknown. The National Response Corporation has been hired to respond to the pollution and to salvage the boat. The on board tanks of *Nu C* have a potential capacity of 1,000 gallons of diesel fuel. Plans to salvage *Nu C* are in development. Coast Guard Sector Portland and Washington State Department of Ecology will continue to monitor the pollution response and mitigation efforts and the salvage of the vessel. The cause of the grounding is under investigation.

London, Feb 15 — Following received from Coast Guard Seattle, timed 1935, UTC: Fishing *Nu C*: Salvage operations expected to commence today, with a two-day good weather window expected.

OCEAN MAINPORT (Norway)

Dover, Feb 13 — Tug/supply *Ocean Mainport* (2518 gt, built 1976), Yarmouth for United Arab Emirates, had an engine failure off Dover. It came into the port under its own power without assistance from tugs, although a tug was standing by with it.. Vessel is berthed on Eastern Arm and repairs are underway. Vessel is expected to complete repairs later today and will continue on its voyage. — Lloyd's Agents.

Dover, Feb 14 — Tug/supply *Ocean Mainport* completed repairs and was able to continue its voyage at 2139 yesterday. — Lloyd's Agents.

OCEAN THERESE (Panama)

Trondheim, Feb 14 — General cargo *Ocean Therese*: The vessel's cargo was discharged at Kristiansund and it left Kristiansund in tow of tug *Boa Siw* on Feb 11. The vessel will effect repairs at a Polish yard. According to the tug owners, the vessels are ETA Gdansk at 0400, Feb 16. — Lloyd's Agents.

ONEGO TRAVELLER (Netherlands)

London, Feb 9 — Following received from Bermuda RCC, timed 1455, UTC: General cargo *Onego Traveller* (5057 gt, built 2004), New Orleans for Liverpool, cargo diammonium phosphate, reported at 1400, Feb 7, that it was proceeding into Hamilton as port of refuge due to its cargo reportedly becoming wet. Vessel arrived in port yesterday. Superintendents have arrived on scene and inspections are under way. Local surveyors appointed.

Bermuda, Feb 14 — General cargo *Onego Traveller* arrived in Bermuda on Feb 6, using Bermuda as a port of refuge. The cargo, fertilizer, somehow liquified in transit whilst below decks, causing the vessel to list. It is not yet known how the cargo became wet. There is no damage to the hull. Ways to establish how to stabilise the cargo so that the vessel can proceed are currently being investigated. One option is to possibly load 20-ft containers with the cargo and then sink the containers within the cargo to try and stabilise everything. The vessel will remain in Bermuda for at least another 10 days whilst work continues. The vessel's destination was Liverpool. — Lloyd's Agents.

OOCL NEVA (Luxembourg)

London, Feb 11 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: A 12 metre high wave hit c.c. *OOCL Neva* (9981 gt, built 2001), Rotterdam for St. Petersburg, off Norderney island in the night of Feb 9. Some containers were torn open and a lifeboat was lost. The master reported the damage only when entering the Brunsbuettel locks of the Kiel Canal. (Note — *OOCL Neva* sailed Rotterdam 1550, Feb 8 for St. Petersburg and passed Brunsbuttel 0940, Feb 9.)

OOCL QINGDAO (Hong Kong)

London, Feb 9 — The Suez Canal has reopened after the grounding Wednesday (Feb 8) of c.c. *OOCL Qingdao*. The vessel drifted from its route near Ismailiya as it sailed northwards, blocking the transit of seven northbound ships behind it before bringing canal operations to a complete halt. Canal officials said that strong winds might have contributed to the accident. Canal officials speaking on condition of anonymity said the ship experienced steering problems and ran aground. Four tugs were subsequently dispatched to remove the ship and free up traffic in the canal. Besides the Suez Canal blockage, bad weather and strong seas on Feb 8 forced four Egyptian Red Sea harbours and several airports to close.

ORIENT BRILLIANCE (Panama)

Lima, Feb 14 — Bulk *Orient Brilliance* is still anchored in Callao, but we cannot yet establish whether repairs have been completed or not as they are being done underwater and the vessel is fully loaded with bulk minerals. — Lloyd's Agents.

OSCAR DYSON (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 10 — Research *Oscar Dyson* (2218 gt, built 2003) made contact with the bottom, without grounding, in lat 52 38.02N, long 128 31.01W, near Jane Island, in Finlayson Channel, British Columbia, at 2155 PST, Feb 6..

P&O NEDLLOYD MONDRIAAN (Liberia)

London, Feb 10 — Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 1101,

UTC: C.c. *P&O Nedlloyd Mondriaan* (94724 gt, built 2004), bound Hamburg, reported at 1659, UTC, Feb 9, that the vessel had lost 58 containers overboard in bad weather near Terschelling. Operations are currently under way to recover the containers. (Note — *P&O Nedlloyd Mondriaan* sailed Southampton Feb 8 for Hamburg.)

London, Feb 10 — Dozens of containers were swept into the sea from c.c. *P&O Nedlloyd Mondriaan* soon after it left Rotterdam for Hamburg yesterday. *P&O Nedlloyd Mondriaan*, now part of the Maersk fleet, lost 58 containers overboard during bad weather while many others were damaged. Conditions were said to be windy, although not stormy. Nine of the boxes were washed up on the island of Terschelling where the local police were called in to guard beaches after sportsgear and Barbie dolls were found scattered along the coast. However, none of the boxes apparently contain hazardous cargoes. Neither were there any injuries as a result of the accident. *SvitzerWijmsmuller*, part of the AP Moller-Maersk group, was appointed to salve the containers. The ship, which later berthed in Hamburg, had been carrying Grand Alliance as well as Maersk cargo. Some containers belonging to partner lines were among those that fell into the sea.

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of tennis shoes, aluminium briefcases and children's toys washed onto the beach of a Dutch island yesterday, drawing crowds of treasure-hunting residents, coast guard officials said. The booty came from a load of containers that was swept from c.c. *P&O Nedlloyd Mondriaan*, which got caught in a storm on Thursday night about 14km off the coast of the island of Terschelling. "We now believe 58 containers were washed overboard. Nine landed intact on the beach and two others are stuck in the breakers, which means many others may have sunk or are still drifting around," spokesman Kees Koning said.

London, Feb 12 — A *SvitzerWijmsmuller Salvage BV* report, dated Feb 11, states: *SvitzerWijmsmuller Salvage* and partners *Rederij Noordgat* were yesterday instructed to take action to locate and recover some 58 lost containers from c.c. *P&O Nedlloyd Mondriaan* while it was passing by the north Netherlands coast during bad weather Thursday evening. In total 10 containers which were washed up ashore, were recovered and during today moved to a holding area on the island of Terschelling. Survey vessel *Zirfaea* was engaged yesterday and busy today to trace possible containers left in the shipping route. Further floating containers have been located and action is being taken to secure them.

London, Feb 13 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: C.c. *P&O Nedlloyd Mondriaan*,

which sustained container damage in a storm off Terschelling last week, has completed unloading its containers at Container Terminal Altenwerder at 0230, Feb 13. For discharging the damaged containers two special cranes were used. The operation was completed after 64 hours, and the vessel has now left Hamburg.

PANAGIA HOZOVIOTISSA (Greece)

London, Feb 13 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the afternoon of Feb 10, while ferry *Panagia Hozoviotissa* (3204 gt, built 1977) was making berthing manoeuvres at the port of Syros, the vessel collided with the Neorion Shipyards jetty. Following the incident the vessel safely arrived/berthed at the harbour, but was prohibited from departing pending the issuance of a class maintain certificate. At the time of incident, the vessel was performing the schedule Lavrion-Kea-Kythnos-Syros-Paros-Naxos-Ios-Sikino-Folegandros with four passengers on board.

PEGVAK (Iran)

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: The reasons for a fire on board an Iranian vessel in Baku bay today have not yet been revealed. The fire began while the Turannur company was conducting repairs on the vessel, the Chief of the State Fire Department said. When fire began the vessel was towed from shore with the help of vessels from the Caspian fleet. Information about the fire was received at 1134 hrs. Vessel *Vikhr 9* was used to fight the fire but as of 1500 hrs the fire continued. Prior to this event, the Iranian vessel asked for permission to moor at SOCAR's dock in order to conduct a small technical examination. The crew examined the vessel. The vessel was towed from shore when the fire began for security reasons. No one was injured in the fire.

Baku, Feb 15 — The vessel which caught fire in Baku bay was general cargo *Pegvak*. The fire has not yet been completely extinguished. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire has broken out at an Iranian exploratory vessel (general cargo *Pegvak*) which is being repaired in Baku. All the crew have been evacuated to safety. Fire extinguishing vessel *Vikhard-9* was sent to the scene of the accident. According to the chief of the State Fire Department, Murad Huseynov, the fire has been completely put out. The reason for the fire is not known yet as investigation is still underway. Emergencies Minister Kamaladdin Heydarov also visited the scene.

PINE BRIDGE (Liberia)

Vigo, Feb 13 — Helicopter "PESCA 1" was called to medivacuate one crewmember from c.c. *Pine Bridge* (64005 gt, built 2001), who was

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

severely injured following an explosion in a boiler. The vessel was off the Portuguese coast, 60 miles off Vigo. Unfortunately by the time the crewman was landed ashore at Vigo airport, he was already dead. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Pine Bridge* sailed from Rotterdam on Jan 31 and is ETA Shanghai on Mar 4.)

PINTAIL (Cyprus)

See *Twin Star*.

POLANA (Slovakia)

Prague, Feb 14 — Understand pusher tug *Polana* is due to arrive Bratislava in March. — Lloyd's Agents.

PRINCESS GIGI

Freeport, Bahamas, Feb 15 — Luxury yacht *Princess Gigi* (built 2001), length 124 ft, encountered heavy weather in approximately lat 23.6N, long 73.3W, Feb 6 and started taking on water through the "garage" doors on her aft deck, these large doors lead to a storage facility for small boats, jet skis, etc. Salt water attacked the sophisticated electronic equipment and engine controls effectively rendering it not under command. US Coast Guard responded with a helicopter and lifted all eight crew to safety. Overseas Salvage of Exuma, Bahamas, were contacted and they dispatched a plane to check on the ship's status. On "Feb 6" they found it on its beam ends with the deckhouse breaking free and it was presumed it was lost. The following day the plane found it capsized but still afloat with considerable debris surrounding it, so they dispatched small salvage vessel *Amazing Grace* and took the hull in tow. Four days later it arrived at a sheltered bay at Cat Island and the Overseas Salvage team, with their salvage vessel *Victoria* and a large crane, 400 tons, and barge from Mobro Marine, Jacksonville, are presently on site assessing whether to right it at this location for tow to safe harbour, or to tow it "as-is" to safe harbour. — Lloyd's Agents.

PRIVATIM (Netherlands)

London, Feb 3 — Authorities are hoping that general cargo *Privatim* can be raised during February, but the insurance company who are handling this case are still negotiating with salvage companies to raise the vessel. Both Dutch and German authorities are involved in the salvage operation. Before the vessel can be raised, its cargo of a 1,000 tons of asphalt scrapings must be removed from the holds, which will take several days. The salvage plan has to be approved by Rijkswaterstaat and the port authority Groningen Seaports.

QUEEN MARY 2 (U.K.)

London, Feb 12 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Cunard has canceled the passenger *Queen Mary 2* planned stop at Port Everglades in April, blaming damage as it left Port

Everglades last month for requiring a change in itinerary. The damage to a propulsion unit, caused when it hit an underwater structure as it left Port Everglades Jan 17, has slowed down the vessel and forced a number of earlier changes to planned cruises. A spokesperson for Cunard says it was necessary to drop the stop in Fort Lauderdale so the it could arrive in New York on time. Now, Cunard says the vessel will proceed directly from St. Thomas to New York when it completes a Los Angeles to New York voyage, bypassing Port Everglades. Cunard says it will return to Port Everglades next fall, when it resumes cruising the Americas. It will spend the summer cruising the Mediterranean and making trans-Atlantic voyages.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger *Queen Mary 2*, which saw passengers up-in-arms during a troubled trip last month, has sailed into further difficulties. Owner Cunard has cancelled two future voyages so the propeller pod problem, can be sorted out. Cunard said today that the vessel would have to go into dry dock for repairs in May and then again in November. A 12-day Mediterranean cruise in May has been cancelled and replaced with a six-day Norwegian fjords voyage. A seven-night Caribbean cruise in November has also been cancelled and replaced with a seven-night Southampton to Fort Lauderdale transatlantic sailing, which has been put back one week. The problem has also led to alterations to other schedules.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger *Queen Mary 2* is to be drydocked for six days at Blohm&Voss' Hamburg yard in May to remove a propulsor pod damaged when leaving Port Everglades last month. Repairs to the pod, which is due to be replaced in further drydocking in November, will mean the cancellation of two voyages. A 12-day Mediterranean cruise which was due start on May 5 will now become a six-day cruise to the Norwegian fjords, with passengers who opt to take the six-day cruise being offered refunds of up to 70% of their fares plus on board credits of \$250 per passenger. Alternatively, they can opt for a full refund or the possibility of booking one of the other three 12-day Mediterranean cruises planned. The vessel will return to drydock on Nov 11 and the transatlantic cruise scheduled for that date has been deferred for a week. This has resulted in the cancellation of a one-week Caribbean cruise. Port calls at Fort Lauderdale and Salvador in Brazil are being cancelled when the ship heads towards New York in April, with a substitute call in the Virgin Islands. An investigation by both the US Coast Guard and Cunard into the accident is continuing, the Cunard spokesman said. The ship was under tow and had a pilot on board at the time. Cost of repairs aside, the damage has already proved expensive, with passenger pressure resulting in

their being offered full refunds for three missed port calls following the accident.

RATHROWAN (NIS)

London, Feb 14 — Following received from Manchester Ship Canal Company, timed 1050, UTC: Asphalt tanker *Rathrowan* (2920 gt, built 1991) is currently entering lock at Eastham, outward bound for Belfast in fully loaded condition. Vessel was delayed at Eastham for a short period due boiler problems.

REDENTORE PRIMO (Italy)

London, Feb 15 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 1212, UTC: Ro/ro *Redentore Primo* (970 gt, built 1965) struck the wharf at Pozzuoli at 1700, local time, Feb 14, while berthing. The vessel and wharf sustained only minor damage.

REHUA (New Zealand)

London, Feb 10 — Trawler *Rehua* (2483 gt, built 1996) had machinery failure 26 nautical miles south of Pitt Island, Dec 11. At 1300 hrs, the main engine was shut down by the chief engineer due to a piston failure on No.4 cylinder. The vessel was taken under tow by trawler *Thomas Harrison* to Nelson.

REJOICE (U.K.)

London, Feb 12 — A press release from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, dated Feb 2, states: Humber Coastguard received a channel 16 Mayday call from the fishing *Rejoice* (49 gt, built 1999) after the crew had detected a fire on board at 1415 hrs. The 40 ft fishing vessel is currently 14 miles north-east of the River Tyne. The crew of three have managed to contain the fire in the engine-room. Humber Coastguard are co-ordinating the incident and the Tynemouth RNLI all weather lifeboat has the casualty under tow for Amble where on arrival they will be met by Northumbria Fire Service.

RIGEL (U.S.A.)

Seattle, Feb 10 — Tank barge *Rigel* is presently at Pier 91, Seattle, undergoing repairs. The repairs are expected to be completed Feb 11, and the vessel is expected to receive US Coast Guard clearance to resume operations Feb 13. — Lloyd's Agents.

RIO AYSEN (Chile)

Valparaiso, Feb 9 — Ferry *Rio Aysen* was refloated, Feb 2, with the aid of tug *Beagle*, and towed to Puerto Natales for inspection, but no damage of any importance was detected. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Feb 11 — Ferry *Rio Aysen* arrived Punta Arenas Feb 7.

ROUGH 47/3B

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: A North Sea gas rig (gas production platform *Rough 47/3B*) has been evacuated following reports of an explosion and a fire, coastguards said. Two people have been taken to hospital, one with burns

and one with shock, Humber Coastguard have confirmed. The rig, which had 58 personnel on board, is situated in the Bridlington Bay Rough Field off Hull. The fire was put out by personnel. The Coastguard said 11 people were taken to an adjoining rig by helicopter, another 11 were taken to Humberside Airport and nine to a standby vessel.

London, Feb 16 — Following received from Coastguard Humber MRSC, timed 1235, UTC: Gas production platform *Rough 47/3B*: Of the 58 persons on board two have been taken to hospital and 31 non-essential personnel have been taken off the rig the remainder remain on board.

London, Feb 16 — Maritime & Coastguard Agency press release, timed 1301, UTC, states: At 1045 this morning Humber Coastguard received a call from standby vessel *Putford Trader* reporting a fire on the gas storage facility platform *Rough 47/3B* which is in a position 25 miles south east of Flamborough Head. The fire is reported to be now extinguished. The Rough offshore storage facility is operated by Centrica Storage Ltd.

SAMMARINA M. (Romania)

Bucharest, Feb 16 — The owners of ro/ro *Sammarina M.* advise that the vessel is still under repairs, being reportedly subject to reconversion. The operations are estimated to last at least two or three months. — Lloyd's Agents.

SARUNA (Panama)

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

SEABULK PRIDE (U.S.A.)

London, Feb 10 — Product tanker *Seabulk Pride*: An Alaska Department of Environment Conservation situation report, timed 1530, Feb 8, states: A formal report of the dive survey was completed by American Bureau of Shipping and supplied to the ship's owner and the Coast Guard. Following that report, the Coast Guard certified that the vessel was safe to operate at sea. *Seabulk Pride* is awaiting a pilot and is expected to depart Kachemak Bay between 2100 and 2300 tonight. Seabulk Tankers, Inc. plans to transit *Seabulk Pride* to Puget Sound to offload its cargo in Anacortes. Pressure testing of the valves and manifolds, as well as repairs, to the KPL Dock has been completed. The dock has reopened. The Coast Guard investigation into the grounding is continuing. Final repairs to the hull will be coordinated with ABS and the US Coast Guard. Pressure testing of the repaired valves and manifolds on deck will be required to ensure that the tanker may be safely offloaded. This will be completed prior to offloading in Washington.

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Feb 9, states: Nearly a week after it was grounded on a Nikiski beach, product tanker *Seabulk Pride* has left Kachemak Bay. The tanker left Wednesday (Feb 8) night to

deliver its cargo to Tesoro's Puget Sound refinery. From there, it's likely headed to dry dock for repairs. Small cracks found in the hull were patched. Coast Guard Petty Officer Sara Francis says the tanker was held in Kachemak Bay until it was confirmed that the patch work held.

London, Feb 14 — A Coast Guard Seattle press release, dated Feb 13, states: The Captain of the Port Puget Sound announced plans today for receiving product tanker *Seabulk Pride* this week, which will allow the vessel to offload its cargo at the Tesoro Dock, Anacortes, followed by dry dock repairs in Victoria, BC. A post incident investigation, completed with the support of divers, found a water ballast tank in its outer hull had two small 5-to-7 inch cracks, which were temporarily repaired with a cement patch restoring the vessel's seaworthiness. Additionally, the vessel lost an anchor and incurred other topside damage. The Coast Guard evaluated the ship's propulsion, navigation, manoeuvring systems to ensure they were operating properly prior to the ship's departure from Alaska on Feb 9. The Captain of the Port Puget Sound, Capt. Steven Metruck, is working closely with Washington Department of Ecology and other regional stakeholders in finalising the plan to ensure the vessel completes its transit safely. Key among these measures include requiring the vessel to continually monitor its cargo and ballast tanks, replacing one of the vessel's lost anchors, maintaining a tug escort throughout its transit east of the J Buoy at the mouth of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and monitoring the vessel's cement patch. In addition, the vessel must produce an amended cargo transfer procedure, provide spill containment measures and pass a pressure test of the ship's cargo piping. The company which owns the vessel, Seabulk Tankers, will also be required to produce a plan to the Coast Guard for implementing permanent repairs. "Our goal here is to ensure a safe transit from Alaska on through our pristine Washington State waters. Ultimately, by working closely with our partners, our counterparts in Alaska and the ship's operators, we've developed a comprehensive plan which will allow *Seabulk Pride* to complete its voyage," said Capt. Steve Metruck. "While the grounding resulted in damage to the outer hull, the repairs and mitigation plans make this event pretty basic and relatively low risk." These measures will cap a number of earlier steps the Coast Guard Western Alaska Captain of the Port imposed to ensure the vessel's stability, seaworthiness and fitness for the trip from Alaska to Puget Sound. A joint Coast Guard and Department of Ecology inspection team, along with an American Bureau of Shipping surveyor, will meet the vessel in Port Angeles, Wash., upon its arrival. *Seabulk Pride* is due to arrive into Port Angeles sometime tomorrow.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: Product tanker *Seabulk Pride* is due to arrive today at Port Angeles. A Coast Guard and Ecology Department inspection team will meet the vessel to ensure a safe transit to the Tesoro refinery at Anacortes. The Coast Guard says the risk of a spill is low, but the tanker will be escorted with a tug through the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Officials also are monitoring the tanker's cargo and ballast as well as cement patches that were applied to two small cracks, five-to-seven inches long, in a water ballast tank in the outer hull. From the Anacortes refinery, she will go into drydock at Victoria, British Columbia, for repairs.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: Product tanker *Seabulk Pride* has docked in Port Angeles. The Coast Guard says *Seabulk Pride* turned into Port Angeles harbour at 1600 hrs, escorted by tugs. The ship tied up at the marine terminal around 1730 hrs. After the ship departs Port Angeles, it's supposed to go the Tesoro refinery in Anacortes to unload its cargo. From Anacortes, *Seabulk Pride* will go into drydock at Victoria, BC, for permanent repairs.

London, Feb 15 — Following received from Coast Guard Seattle, timed 1940, UTC: Product tanker *Seabulk Pride* is still at Port Angeles, with inspectors on board. Vessel still has a Captain of Port issue on it and there is no estimate at present as to when the vessel will be cleared to sail to a repair yard.

SIGMAGAS (Antigua & Barbuda)

See *Happy Bride*.

SILVA (Cambodia)

Esbjerg, Feb 10 — General cargo *Silva* is still in port. — Lloyd's Agents.

SLOMAN PRODUCER (Antigua & Barbuda)

Valletta, Feb 9 — Ro/ro *Sloman Producer* sailed Marsaxlokk Feb 8 and arrived Valletta the same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

SPT DEFENDER (U.S.A.)

See *Bahamas Spirit*.

STAR DERBY (Norway (Int. Register))

London, Feb 13 — General cargo *Star Derby* (27104 gt, built 1979) experienced a shifting of cargo during rough seas while enroute near Dixon Entrance, B.C. in lat 54 20N, long 132 30W at 0830, Feb 9. (Note — According to LMIU AIS *Star Derby* was reported in lat 54 21 17.98N, long 131 7 7 78'W at 2141, Feb 10, 44.3 nautical miles from Port Simpson, at 14 knots.)

STAR OHIO (Bahamas)

London, Feb 16 — Following received from Coastguard Shetland MRSC: Timed 1227, UTC: Crude oil tanker *Star Ohio* (80569 gt, built 1992), Sture for Louisiana, cargo 117,464

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tonnes crude oil, was first reported at 1035, UTC, adrift at one knot in lat 59 40.8N, long 04 27.3W, with turbo-charger problems. Owners trying to contact a tug to escort vessel. Vessel's engines were restarted at 1148 hrs. Vessels intends to proceed for Belfast, and awaiting tug for escort. Weather on scene wind south force 5 (fresh breeze). Twenty-four hour forecast: Wind south or south-west 5 (fresh breeze) to 7 (near gale) occasional gale 8. Timed 1320, UTC: Vessel carrying out trials at the moment.

London, Feb 16 — Following received from Coastguard Shetland MRSC, timed 1419, UTC: At 1400, UTC, the master of crude oil tanker *Star Ohio* advised that all was well, and the vessel had stopped its engines in lat 59 41.3N, long 04 25.9W, to carry out an inspection requested by the owners. Once the inspection is completed, the vessel will proceed to Belfast.

SUAD N. (North Korea)

Piraeus, Feb 10 — General cargo *Suad N.* arrived Piraeus Feb 7 for repairs, ETC unknown. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUNSHINE (Singapore)

See "Oil Cargo Dispute, Mombasa, Kenya" under "Miscellaneous".

TAMOYO MAIDEN (Philippines)

Valparaiso, Feb 9 — General cargo *Tamoyo Maiden* engine repairs were completed Jan 31 and was authorised to sail, Feb 1, to Santos. — Lloyd's Agents.

TANANGER (Barbados)

London, Feb 15 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Tananger* (4636 gt, built 1980), Haavik for Grenaa, experienced engine black-out in bad weather four nautical miles south-west of Jossingfjord, outside Flekkefjord, early today. Rescue vessel *Gjert Wilhelmsen* arrived alongside the vessel at 1050 hrs and is standing by, awaiting tug *Bryteren* which is due on scene at about 2100, local time, today. *Bryteren* will probably tow the vessel to Stavanger or Kristiansand S for inspection and repairs. *Tananger* has 10 persons on board and the weather in the area is rough.

London, Feb 16 — Following received from Stavanger RCC, timed 0935, UTC: Ro/ro *Tananger* was towed into Tananger port by tug *Bryteren* at 0425, local time, today.

THOR TRAVELLER (Thailand)

London, Feb 15 — Following received from owners of bulk *Thor Traveller* (16794 gt, built 1985), dated Bangkok, today: *Thor Traveller*, cargo rock phosphate in bulk, grounded in lat 07 09N, long 117 46E, Feb 2. The vessel was refloated last night after some 4,062 tons of rock phosphate was removed. The vessel has been moved three miles west of grounding position and anchored for underwater

inspection. (Note — *Thor Traveller*, arrived Singapore Jan 30, from Aqaba, and sailed same day for Lahad Datu.)

TIGER (U.S.A.)

Portland, Ore, Feb 14 — Tug *Tiger* is currently undergoing repairs at Diversified Marine Inc, Portland. Understand that once repairs have been effected, the vessel will be employed within their vessel repair facility. — Lloyd's Agents.

TONG SHENG (Panama)

Taipei, Feb 10 — According to the news, general cargo *Tong Sheng* departed from Keelung, Taiwan on Feb 3 bound for Taichung, Taiwan to load cargo. Subsequently, the vessel anchored at outer Taichung port and awaited berthing information. Thereafter, Taichung Port Authority received a report that the vessel had dragged anchor at 0715 hrs on Feb 4, caused by the stormy weather (sea height around 5-6 metres). Immediately three rescue boats and a helicopter were launched by the Taiwan Coast Guard. At 0855 hrs, same day, the vessel was drifting away from the shore about 0.2 nautical miles and the stern of the vessel was grounded. At 0920 hrs, the engine was repaired by the crew and the vessel was refloated by manoeuvring her own engine. At 1045 hrs, *Tong Sheng* had safely berthed at pier No.24 of Taichung port for the classification society survey and cargo loading. The vessel sailed from Taichung at 2130 hrs, on Feb 6, bound for Kabira, Japan. — Lloyd's Agents.

TOR DANIA (NIS)

See *Tor Minerva*.

TOR MINERVA (NIS)

London, Feb 10 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Tor Minerva* (21215 gt, built 1978) struck the ro-ro ramp of the ferry harbour when leaving Cuxhaven port in the evening of Feb 5. The hydraulic of the ramp was destroyed and the ramp itself plunged into the water. As also the second ro-ro ramp was out of service due to repair works, ro-ro *Tor Dania*, which has just completed collision damage repairs, and is back in service, had to berth at the Steubenhof Feb 9. Repairs should be completed today.

London, Feb 15 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Tor Minerva* left the Cuxhaven service Feb 12 and sailed for the Baltic Sea, via the Kiel Canal.

TORM ALEXANDRA (Malta)

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Global Security Seals (GSS), which specializes in port management and marine services, yesterday began the salvaging and removal of general cargo *Torm Alexandra* from the Free Port of Monrovia.

TRANS CARRIER (Bahamas)

See *MSC Jilhan*.

TUGEN (Luxembourg)

London, Feb 11 — A Cesam report, timed 1812, Feb 10, states: It has been reported that on Feb 3, product tanker *Tugen* (5412 gt, built 1999), which had been at Morondava roads, Madagascar, since Jan 28 on standby for unloading by barges, the weather conditions suddenly deteriorated in consequence of cyclone "Boloetse". During an operation of change of position, the ship touched the ground with the keel on a sandbank and ran aground. *Tugen* is loaded with 4,367 m3 of gas oil, 1,050 m3 of gasoline, 1,048 m3 of oil paraffin and 349 m3 of jet. This cargo is in the course of transshipment to product tanker *Elven* of the same owners. Mr. Michel Borie, technical adviser of the company Chevreau & Lavie will arrive at Morondava on Feb 11 to attend the refloating operations on Feb 13, in the presence of two chartered tugs.

London, Feb 14 — Following received from the operators of product tanker *Tugen*, dated today: *Tugen* was refloated at 1530, Central European Time, Feb 13. The vessel is presently carrying out transshipment operations, ETC Feb 15, after which a diver's inspection will be carried out and a decision regarding repairs will be made.

Antananarivo, Feb 16 — Local press report that product tanker *Tugen* was refloated on Feb 13 after having transferred part of her 6.3 million litres of gas oil to tanker *Elven*. She was helped by two tugs, *Zoulos* and *Toto* requested from South Africa by the Malagasy authorities. — Lloyd's Agents.

TWIN STAR (Panama)

Lima, Feb 11 — Bulk/c.c. *Pintail* is still under arrest as the Harbour Master has still not finished with the master and crew. Bunkers have been retrieved from bulk *Twin Star*, however, there is still a cargo of steel on board for Callao with a value of approximately \$5 million and at present no salvage of the same has taken place. — Lloyd's Agents.

TYUMEN (Russia)

Seoul, Feb 13 — General cargo *Tyumen* still under arrest at Hwasoon Port and will be able to sail from the port after payment or providing acceptable security for the expenses incurred during collection of wash over board logs from the vessel. The total number of logs collected by the contractor is reported to be 806 pieces and the contractor is demanding payment of Won638,590,000 and Kim & Chang, lawyer appointed by the shipowner is under negotiation with the contractor. — Lloyd's Agents.

UGRA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Gothenburg, Feb 12 — General cargo *Ugra* (1639 gt, built 1979), bound Lake Vanern, started leaking oil while passing the locks at Trollhattan. The leakage was observed in an early stage and there was no major

environmental damage, however, the vessel was required to berth to repair the bunker tank and to pump into the other tank. Vessel certified to proceed to Vanersborg to discharge cargo onboard but vessel does not have sufficient Iceclass required today for traffic at Lake Vanern. — Westax Marine Services AB. (Note — *Ugra* left Amsterdam Feb 6 for Lidköping.)

VEGA DESGAGNES (Canada)

Quebec, Feb 9 — Product tanker *Vega Desgagnes* only sustained very minor damage and did not require repairs. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

VERTIGO (Jamaica)

Aarhus, Feb 10 — Bulk *Vertigo* is still in Fredericia, undergoing intermediate repairs. The vessel is to be towed to Poland for docking etc. — Lloyd's Agents.

Copenhagen, Feb 15 — As of yesterday, bulk *Vertigo* was still lying in Fredericia. While waiting for the 30 cms of ice in Szczecin to improve, the owner has hired the Danish diving company Hein Marine to weld additional steel to the patch on the sideplatings. They are welding over the stringers on the patch in order to make it possible to sail in the icy water. — Correspondent.

VIEIRASA ONCE (Argentina)

London, Feb 12 — Following notice to mariners issued Feb 11: Fishing *Vieirasa Once* (1002 gt, built 1989) adrift in lat 47 30S, long 64 37W.

VOLGO-BALT 26 (Belize)

See "Cyprus" under "Port State Control".

VOLGONEFT 120 (Russia)

Mariupol, Feb 13 — Product tanker *Volgoneft 120* has shifted from shipyard to berth No.59, Sevastopol port, and is expected to complete the rest of the repair in eight to 10 days. — Lloyd's Agents.

WASHINGTON SENATOR (German)

See *Lykes Voyager*.

WERSE (Antigua & Barbuda)

Bremen, Feb 16 — General cargo *Werse* is still under repair in Emden. — Lloyd's Agents.

WESTGARD (Netherlands)

London, Feb 13 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: General cargo *Westgard* (2868 gt, built 2000) had a machine failure when entering the Kiel Canal at 1035 yesterday. The ship came rightangular to the "leadwork" and struck some pilings which were damaged. The incident occurred in dense fog. (Note — According to LMIU AIS *Westgard* was in lat 53 27 49.8N, long 04 39.18E, course 246 degrees, speed 11.2 knots, at 0246 today.)

London, Feb 15 — General cargo *Westgard* arrived Tilbury at 2218, Feb 13 and sailed at 1324, Feb 14.

WOLGASTERN (Isle of Man)

London, Feb 10 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Chemical/oil carrier *Wolgastern*, like ro/ro *Estraden*, is entering Bremerhaven to be repaired there, probably at the Bredo Yard.

ZHEN HUA 11 (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Feb 14 — Crude oil tanker *Zhen Hua 11* arrived Hong Kong 0613, Feb 11, and sailed 1735 same day for Laem Chabang.



SOMALIA

See *Al Manara* under "Marine."



CYPRUS

Limassol, Feb 10 — General cargo *Volgo-Balt 26* (2406 gt, built 1966), which arrived Larnaca Feb 5, is currently under detention by the Department of Merchant Shipping due to deficiencies. — Lloyd's Agents.

Limassol, Feb 16 — General cargo *Volgo-Balt 26* was released from detention and sailed from Larnaca on Feb 15, for Odessa. — Lloyd's Agents.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A Devon shipping inspector says general cargo *Saruna* (5983 gt, built 1979), detained in Falmouth, is the worst he has seen in his 28-year career. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) inspected the Panama-registered cargo vessel and found several serious safety breaches. They included faulty lifeboats and leaking hatches. The vessel has also been detained in other countries. Owner Sammarina Shipping blamed freezing weather for the failures and said the vessel should pass reinspection. Tony Heslop of the MCA in Plymouth was asked to inspect the vessel last week after concerns were raised by Falmouth harbour pilot David Barnicoat. "It was the worst case I have seen. "One of the lifeboats had no working engine and the other could not be lowered. "Hatch seals on the foredeck were so bad that water was pouring through." The vessel, which was also detained in Cherbourg for 15 days last month, has been ordered to stay in port until the defects are rectified. Rado Petre of Sammarina Shipping blamed freezing weather for some of the faults. He said a director was on the way to the vessel which would be ready for

reinspection on Monday (Feb 13). He said: "The weather has caused problems with fittings such as the lifeboats. "They have now been rectified and we expect the ship to pass inspection." (Note — *Saruna* arrived Falmouth Feb 10.)

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Product tanker *Citius* (43733 gt, built 1986), which was detained in the UK last year after the discovery of a small crack in its deck and another in its side plating, is currently on a voyage to Greece from Lithuania. The vessel is to be repaired in a Greek yard although the final selection has not been made, executives said. It has been out of service since Dec 3, 2005, and after an ultrasonic steel thickness test and an optional fatigue survey, Aries anticipates it will not be read to re-enter service until end-March. Repairs, including an estimated 500 tonnes of steel replacement and preventative maintenance work, are expected to cost about \$3.4m, while the expected loss of revenue will total \$2.2m, the company said. Mr Bolin commented: "We are committed to completing the repair and preventative maintenance work in a manner that enhances the long-term viability of the vessel and returns it to service as soon as possible." Aries has stated that a well-concealed crack that was publicised by British inspectors was "unrelated" to the present ownership or management of the vessel.



ADRIACARGO (Panama)

Naples, Feb 13 — General cargo *Adriacargo*, ex *Current*, remains under arrest here. — Lloyd's Agents.

ATLANTIC MERCADO (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Feb 15 — Reported that general cargo *Atlantic Mercado* was sold at auction at Durban on Dec 8.

London, Feb 15 — An press report, dated Dec 17, states: After four months in Durban, *Atlantic Mercado* was sold at auction on December 15, 2005. The 11 crew from Ukraine, Estonia and Poland will be paid as soon as the money is released. They are scheduled to be repatriated to their respective countries on December 21.

AUDREY

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A shipowner whose vessel has been stranded in Bahrain for over a year because of a financial dispute finally arrived in the country yesterday. Filipino Ricarido Jorge, owner of tug *Audrey*, arrived on a Manila-Abu Dhabi-Bahrain flight and was met by Jun Ustares, the vessel's former master, at Bahrain

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International Airport. He was initially due to arrive on Feb 3, but has postponed his trip twice. Philippine Embassy officials are to meet both Mr Jorge and Mr Ustares today. Mr Jorge is in Bahrain to settle a dispute concerning the vessel. He hopes to auction off the vessel and settle a court case filed against him by the company that chartered it, Inventra General Trading Dubai. The vessel was docked in December last year by a Higher Court judge's ruling after experts deemed it "unseaworthy". Four Filipino sailors, who were stranded on board for several months, flew home after the vessel was docked. While in Bahrain, Mr Jorge also plans to meet his Bahraini lawyer and officials at both the embassy and the Justice Ministry. A court case has been filed against him by Inventra, which chartered the vessel for a towing job in the Gulf in late 2004. The vessel was on its way to Kuwait from Dubai in December, 2004, when both its engines failed and it put into Bahrain for repairs. Inventra is now demanding that Mr Jorge pay \$102,000 for losses incurred. The next court hearing will be on Feb 27, which Mr Jorge hopes to attend. Mr Jorge said he hoped to settle the unpaid salaries of his nine-member crew, though he disputed their combined claim for over \$34,000.

CABO VERDE (Argentina)

Buenos Aires, Feb 13 — Product tanker *Cabo Verde* remains at Site 8 of Galv'n province of Bahia Blanca, waiting to be scrapped. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAPE ENDURANCE (Panama)

Cape Town, Feb 9 — The port of Cape Town confirms standby safety vessel *Cape Endurance* is still in port. — Lloyd's Agents.

CHEN LONG (Panama)

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: A suspected illegal fishing vessel, fishing *Chen Long*, that authorities are calling a "mother ship" is now in Darwin Harbour. On board is what authorities say is the largest catch ever seized. Quarantine officers have climbed on board the *Chen Long* to inspect her and its huge catch. Fisheries officers suspect it carries the catch from other smaller boats. There is 639-tonnes of reef fish on board but only 270 tonnes of it is suspected of being taken from Australian waters. The vessel is being escorted by the Navy to an offshore quarantine area. It is believed the crew are Chinese and Fisheries officers and a translator will go on board to interview the captain and check the logs. If the vessel is cleared it is free to leave Australian waters. Otherwise the crew will be detained and the catch sold or destroyed.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: The biggest illegal fishing vessel caught in Australia's northern waters, fishing *Chen Long*, steamed into Darwin today under guard from navy patrol boat HMAS

Dubbo. She was ordered to Darwin after being intercepted north-west of Cape Wessels, off the Northern Territory coast, on Sunday by HMAS *Dubbo*. AFMA officers boarded the boat early this morning, and quarantine officials joined them soon after her arrival in Darwin Harbour about 0900, CST. "The crew will be taken off the boat and held in the immigration facility in Darwin where our investigations will be conducted," Mr Veslovas said. Mr Veslovas said it was possible the vessel might have been operating in conjunction with boats operating on the northern side of the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ). The Royal Australian Navy said the foreign crew did not put up any resistance when intercepted by the HMAS *Dubbo*, but its sailors had other problems to deal with. "They actually had to tow *Chen Long* for two days, which wasn't an easy task because the vessel broke down not long after we boarded it. They then, with the assistance of some of the crew, managed to get the engines going, and then it steamed under its own power for the next 24 hours, so they actually did a fantastic job."

DAHOMY EXPRESS (Bolivia)

Miami, Feb 16 — General cargo *Dahomey Express* was arrested while on the Miami River, when US Customs and Border Patrol boarded it and found drugs on board. This occurred on Feb 7. Understand from the United States Coast Guard that they were not involved with this matter. However US Customs and Border Patrol advise that this vessel has been seized by the US Government for narcotics smuggling. *Dahomey Express* is now awaiting a decision on either being auctioned off by the US Government, or being stripped of all contents and being donated for use as an artificial reef. — Lloyd's Agents

DOO AN NO.77 (South Korea)

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Fishing *Doo An No.77* (498 gt, built 1974) was apprehended by officials on board the corvette *ARA Drummond* of the Argentine Navy Maritime Patrolling Division, while breaking fishing laws in the Argentine exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The vessel was detected within national waters to the east of Comodoro Rivadavia. After arresting the vessel's crew, the offence was corroborated and the vessel was escorted to the port for its crew to appear before the presiding authorities, thus initiating the corresponding charges.

DRAGONIS (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Chittagong, Feb 15 — Local agents, Prominent Shipping informed that bulk *Dragonis* sailed Chittagong today, for Yangon. — Lloyd's Agents.

DREPANO (Greece)

London, Feb 10 — A report in today's edition of Newsfront, states: General

cargo *Drepano* has once again been listed for hammering down, this time on Mar 1. Lying in Elefsina, the vessel is carrying start-up price of Euro 27,000.

DURSUN CEVAHIR (Turkey)

Beirut, Feb 15 — P&I of general cargo *Dursun Cevahir* are arranging for a counter guarantee. Once received the vessel will be able to sail. ETS Feb 17. — Lloyd's Agents.

FARLEY MOWAT (Canada)

Cape Town, Feb 16 — Research *Farley Mowat* remains under police guard in a security zone in Cape Town harbour. Last month, it was detained on arrival in South Africa by marine officials who say it does not meet safety requirements. — Reuters.

INDONESIAN FISHING VESSELS SEIZED BY AUSTRALIA

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Authorities have now caught six illegal foreign fishing boats off eastern Cape York Peninsula, in far north Queensland, in the past four days. In the latest incident, three Indonesian boats were caught yesterday after a search by Customs, police and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The 25 crew members have been taken to Thursday Island for processing. Last Friday (Feb 10), three other Indonesian boats were apprehended near Raine Island, 620 km north of Cairns.

MADAGASCAR (Ukraine)

Durban, Feb 10 — Passenger *Madagascar* is still under arrest at Durban. — Lloyd's Agents.

PAN YUN BO 1 (China)

London, Feb 13 — General cargo *Pan Yun Bo 1* is still reported at Western Anchorage No.1, Hong Kong, under detention.

PINTAIL (Cyprus)

See under "Marine."

SEA EMPEROR (Georgia)

Kochi, Feb 10 — Bulk *Sea Emperor* sailed Kochi Feb 7 for Mundra. — Lloyd's Agents.

SEA SHUTTLE (Malta)

Naples, Feb 13 — General cargo *Sea Shuttle* is still under arrest in Naples. — Lloyd's Agents.

SENTINEL (Comoros)

Genoa, Feb 13 — General cargo *Sentinel* remains under arrest at Genoa. No details for release/ETS are available. — Lloyd's Agents.

TANIA (North Korea)

Piraeus, Feb 16 — Ferry *Tania* remains at Alexandroupolis port under arrest. — Lloyd's Agents.

TIOMAN (Honduras)

Jakarta, Feb 15 — Product tanker *Tioman* is still under arrest according to Tanjung Uban Port Authority. — Lloyd's Agents.

UGO FOSCOLO (Greece)

Piraeus, Feb 16 — Passenger ro/ro *Ugo Foscolo* remains at Zante port under arrest. Reportedly an auction is set for March 2006. — Lloyd's Agents.



NEW YORK HARBOUR, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Up to 30,700 gallons of heavy fuel oil spilled into a waterway off New York Harbour today while the cargo was being transferred from a barge to a Chevron plant, authorities said. The Coast Guard and spill-response companies set up booms to contain the oil, floating on the Arthur Kill between Perth Amboy and New York's Staten Island. The oil escaped during a transfer of about 1.5 million gallons of oil from a barge, the Coast Guard said. The cause was under investigation. Coast Guard officials said Chevron assumed responsibility for the spill and contracted with two companies to help with the cleanup.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: The U.S. Coast Guard said today a heavy fuel oil spill from a Chevron facility in New York Harbour closed vessel traffic in waters near Staten Island. The spill happened during a transfer of about 1.5 million gallons of heavy fuel oil from a barge to the facility in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, the Coast Guard said.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: As many as 30,786 gallons of heavy fuel oil spilled into the Arthur Kill today during a transfer from a barge to the Chevron plant here, authorities said. The spill this morning stretched from the Chevron facility to Smoking Point in Staten Island, and the U.S. Coast Guard and spill response companies had set up boom boats to contain it, said Larry Cattano, the city's emergency management co-ordinator. Coast Guard Petty Officer Daniel Bender said the worst case scenario was that 733 42-gallon barrels of oil, equaling 30,786 gallons, got into the waterway. New York City of Department of Environmental Protection Spokesman Ian Michaels said that a hazardous materials team the agency sent to monitor the Staten Island shoreline had reported that a small amount of oil came aground near the Outerbridge Crossing around 1530 hrs. "We'll continue to monitor the area," Michaels said. The cause of the spill was being investigated by the Coast Guard, which received a report of the spill at 0800 hrs. The Coast Guard said it has halted vessel traffic from the Outer Bridge Crossing to Fresh Kills, Staten Island.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: The Coast Guard

is responding to an oil spill at the Chevron Perth Amboy facility, in Perth Amboy, N.J., that was reported yesterday, Feb 13. The spill occurred during a transfer of approximately 1.5 million gallons of number six heavy fuel oil from a barge to the facility. It is unknown how much of the product entered the water. A New York Police Department over-flight confirmed the spill stretching from the Chevron facility to Smoking Point, Staten Island, in the Arthur Kill. Chevron Perth Amboy has assumed responsibility for the spill and has contracted Clean Harbors and Atlantic Response to help with the cleanup. The Coast Guard has set up a safety zone from the Outer Bridge Crossing to Fresh Kills, Staten Island, to contain the spread of the spill. This area is closed to vessel traffic. Coast Guard investigators from Sector New York are on-scene overseeing the response.

London, Feb 14 — According to the US Coast Guard vessel traffic service, what is believed to be a shore-side oil spill has closed the Channel down from AK Bridge (Fresh Kills) to the Outerbridge (Fresh Kills Reach - Port Reading Reach - Outerbridge Reach). All traffic, inbound and outbound, has been stopped in order to contain the spill.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: The clean-up of about 31,000 gallons of crude oil from the Arthur Kill continued today as crews used floating booms and large skimmers to contain a spill that had stretched from the Chevron plant here to Staten Island. The cause is still under investigation, said U.S. Coast Guard Chief Tom Sperduto. Oil in the waterway today stretched roughly two miles from the Outerbridge Crossing to Fresh Kills, Staten Island, said Coast Guard Petty Officer Michael Lutz. The area was closed to waterway traffic and booms were being used to contain the oil while skimmers were being used to make a path for ship traffic to pass, Lutz said. A statement released by the San Ramon, Calif.-based company Tuesday said that about 25,000 gallons of an oil and water mix had been recovered. State Department of Environmental Protection spokeswoman Elaine Makatura said the agency hadn't received any reports of environmental damage. But spots of oil remained at New Jersey's Port Reading and at Mill Creek near Staten Island, she said. Nineteen boats, 8,000 feet of booms, five skimmers, and trucks equipped with vacuums to suck oil off the shoreline were being used in the cleanup, Makatura said. More than 90 people from state and local environmental agencies were on hand to help as well, with 40 more on standby, she said. A statement released Tuesday by Mayor Joseph Vas said the cleanup is "expected to be ongoing for a minimum of several weeks." The Coast Guard said Chevron had assumed responsibility for the spill and had contracted with spill response companies to help with the clean-up.

London, Feb 16 — A press report dated Feb 16, states: A Unified Incident Command comprised of Chevron Products Co., the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, as well as state and city environmental agencies continues to respond to a crude oil spill in the Arthur Kill. The Arthur Kill has been reopened to marine traffic. The total volume of crude oil spilled is unchanged from the prior estimate of approximately 31,000 gallons. Approximately 29,400 gallons of oil-water mixture have been recovered. The Unified Incident Command's priorities today are focused primarily on: Protecting human health and the environment, and continuing a safe, incident-free response; continuing oil recovery along both shores of the Arthur Kill and conducting detailed assessments of impacted areas and implementing response efforts. More than 300 personnel from the Unified Incident Command, including contractors, are on site working to manage response efforts and contain and clean up the spill. Approximately 8,300 feet of containment boom has been deployed. On-water oil recovery is being conducted by five oil skimming vessels. Another 33 vessels are being used for a variety of purposes, such as deploying or maintaining containment and absorbent booms. Responders have also deployed four vacuum trucks and other equipment for the response effort. Work crews began removing oil residue from vessels on the Arthur Kill on Tuesday (Feb 14) and continued efforts overnight. Thus far, four vessels have been cleaned and nine vessels are to be cleaned. The cause of the spill is under investigation. Chevron is co-operating with regulatory agencies to determine the cause.

Weather & Navigation



BOLIVIA

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Flooding and mudslides caused by heavy rain have killed 19 people in Bolivia and injured dozens. Some 100,000 people across the country have been affected by the natural disasters and electric power outages, officials said yesterday. Bolivia's new president, indigenous leader Evo Morales, has appealed for international aid after heavy rain ravaged the poverty-stricken country for more than a week.

EGYPT

Alexandria, Feb 10 — Due to bad weather Alexandria and El Dekheila Ports were closed part of yesterday and re-opened this morning. — Lloyd's Agents.

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HURRICANE "KATRINA"

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: Port of New Orleans President and CEO Gary LaGrange announced today that activity at the port has reached 100% of pre-Hurricane "Katrina" levels. Only the upriver portion, 70%, of the port's facilities is operational, LaGrange says, but 30 general cargo ships, including 10 container vessels, will call on the port this week. Despite the current figures, LaGrange says general cargo activity is down about 20% for the fiscal year, which runs from July 1 to June 30. LaGrange blamed the dip on having to restore merchants' confidence in the city after "Katrina." The port sustained 84 (M) million dollars in damage from the hurricane.

MOZAMBIQUE

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The storms and flooding that have hit parts of Mozambique since the start of this year have affected over 27,000 people, according to the country's relief agency, the National Disasters Management Institute (INGC). Speaking to reporters in Maputo today, INGC director Paulo Zucula said that, of this total, 2,187 people had been evacuated from their homes and are currently in need of help. These are people who were evacuated from islands in the river Zambezi, which were inundated as the river flooded in late January. These people are now living in accommodation centres in Caia district, in the central province of Sofala. The storms, with their high winds and torrential rains, had caused 16 deaths, said Zucula. They had also destroyed 2,156 houses, 26 schools, and 5,274 hectares of crops in Nampula, Gaza, Sofala, Inhambane and Tete provinces. Zucula said the level of the waters in the main river basins is falling. Currently none of the country's major rivers is in flood - but a state of alert remains in the Zambezi, Pungue and Buzi basins, due to continuing rains in Mozambique, and in the neighbouring countries. The INGC is continuing to warn people in these river valleys to stay away from flood prone areas. Relevant Links Southern Africa Mozambique Water and Sanitation Oceans and Rivers Climate As for aid for the victims of the storms and of last year's drought, Zucula said that this week 1,200 tonnes of food was distributed.

NEW ZEALAND

London, Feb 12 — State Highway 2 at Matata in the Bay of Plenty remains closed due to flood damage, and is not expected to reopen until 0900, tomorrow. About 250mm of rain drenched the township overnight and two streams had to be diverted to prevent serious flooding. Matata is still recovering from devastating floods and landslides which hit last May. Transit New Zealand says diversions are in place at Matata for the closure, which is at the junction of

State Highway 29 near Paengaroa. SH2 is also blocked further east at the Waimana Gorge, due to a slip, but all other roads in the region have now reopened. Meanwhile, residents are mopping up surface flooding after about 250mm of rain fell in the township of Matata overnight. Up to 20mm an hour fell in the Bay of Plenty and the Gisborne area, with 150mm in the Whakatane area in 24 hours. The rain stranded patrons and tourists at the Matata Hotel, with owner Warren Freeman saying about 10 people were put up for the night. Bay of Plenty regional council spokesperson Roger Waugh says several creeks had to be diverted overnight after blocking near Matata. Mr Waugh says pumps were being used to drain patches of surface flooding. Flooding has also disrupted telecommunication services in Matata, with Telecom saying phone lines, broadband services and some mobile phone sites are affected. Repair crews are working to fix the problem. The area is still recovering after being devastated by severe flooding and landslides last May.

PHILIPPINES

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: At least four people drowned in flash floods that hit 15 towns in the southern Philippines, the Office of Civil Defence said today. Two other people were reported missing in the floods that submerged the 15 towns in the provinces of Agusan del Sur, Agusan del Norte, Surigao del Sur and Surigao del Norte. At least 27,900 families were affected by the floods, said Salvador Estudillo, regional director of the Office of Civil Defence in Butuan City, 795 kilometres south of Manila. Estudillo said heavy rains since Tuesday (Feb 7) swelled the Agusan river that passes through the four provinces and its tributaries, causing the flash floods.

Manila, Feb 15 — The Philippines has warned farmers and ordered government agencies to prepare for heavy rains and flash floods from a stormy La Nina weather pattern that has already killed 16 in the country's south-eastern provinces. Heavy rains, which the weather bureau blamed on a nascent La Nina, have triggered landslides, massive flooding and the evacuation of hundreds of families in the Philippines, which grows rice, corn, coconuts, mangoes and other tropical fruit. The damage to infrastructure and agriculture from recent heavy rains in central and southern provinces has already cost pesos 114.6 million (£1 million), the National Disaster Co-ordinating Council said. The country's weather bureau said damages across the country from continuous heavy rains were likely to rise. Flaviana Hilario, weather services chief at the meteorological bureau, said that the number of storms passing through the Philippines would not necessarily rise during a La Nina but the storms were expected to hit closer to the country's

7,100 islands, resulting in more damage. "Not all La Ninas are the same in terms of impact," Hilario said. "In some La Nina years, the number of storms reached as high as 23. But in most episodes, the track is closer to the Philippines." Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban said in a radio interview he was drafting a contingency plan to widen areas planted for rice, the country's water-dependent staple, and to help farmers in areas likely to be hit by heavy rains to shift to other crops. Agriculture makes up about one-fifth of the country's gross domestic product and is one of the largest employers. La Nina features unusually cool surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean resulting in storm surges and strong winds. The weather bureau said typhoons, floods and rains since November may be linked to the development of the pattern. Hilario said a La Nina episode, expected to last three to six months, would be confirmed if sea surface temperature thresholds were breached for five consecutive months. The Philippines was likely to see normal to above normal rainfall at least up to May, more tropical cyclones and flooding in some areas, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration said in a statement. — Reuters.

THAILAND

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Severe flooding caused by unseasonal rainstorms has struck several districts of the violence-plagued southern border province of Narathiwat on Thailand's border with Malaysia. Four days of constant rainfall complicated by runoff from forest waters flowing down San Kala Kiri mountain has caused the Sungai Kolok River to overflow its banks and flooded local homes located along the riverbanks. At least 300 households in Sungai Kolok municipality are now inundated due to the floods, according to the report. In the Waeng and Sukirin district, also submerged by floodwaters over two-metres deep, villagers are using flat-bottomed boats to evacuate their belongings to higher ground. The local electricity authority has temporarily halted power supply to homes and businesses in some areas for fear of electrical shock accidents.

TROPICAL STORM "KAJIKI"

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: A joint panel from the Senate and the House of Representatives will conduct an on-site inquiry on Saturday (Feb 18) on the massive oil spill off the coast of Semirara island in Antique. Sen. Pia Cayetano, head of the Senate committee on environment and natural resources and co-chairman of the congressional oversight committee on clear water, will lead the inquiry. "The panel will inspect the site of the oil spill and look into the progress of cleanup operations as well as the real extent of damage to the environment

two months after the incident," Cayetano said. At MalacaOang, President Arroyo said she has ordered newly appointed Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes to act quickly on the Semirara oil spill. Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said representatives from his department went to the site last Monday with members of the Philippine Coast Guard for an ocular inspection. The National Power Corp. (Napocor) has discussed with energy officials a rehabilitation plan while the Coast Guard and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will team up for the cleanup, Lotilla told reporters who interviewed him during a break in budget deliberations at the Senate. The oil spill was caused by barge *Napocor Power Barge No.106* last December, contaminating some 40 square kilometres of the waters off Semirara island and destroying mangroves and coral in the area. Napocor has hired about 50 casual workers to clean up the oil spill. It is estimated that the cleanup will cost P80 million and take four months to finish. As of now, about 30 percent of the oil spill has been cleaned up, Lotilla said. "The Semirara Coal Corp. also started operating on the island itself. It's the one that mobilized the cleanup effort," he added. Lotilla also allayed public fears of a possible spread of the oil spill towards Boracay island. "Boracay is 60 nautical miles away. Second, all the oil went into a cove. Third, winds are going to Semirara, not Boracay. That's what I heard from the Coast Guard," he said. Cayetano and other lawmakers will look into reports by the University of the Philippines in the Visayas and the Coast Guard that 175,000 cubic metres of spilled oil may have already contaminated the seabed off Semirara island. The probe will be expanded to cover the situation of affected residents, including fisherfolk and shell pickers, whose livelihoods have been permanently altered by the Dec 18 oil spill. "In the end, we hope to come out with recommendations to hasten the cleanup and remedial legislation that would provide additional safeguards for the environment for similar incidents in the future," Cayetano said. Cayetano will be joined by Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta, who chairs the House committee on ecology and co-chairs the congressional oversight committee on clean water, and Sen. Edgardo Angara, who authored Senate Resolution 430 that called for a congressional investigation into the oil spill. The three lawmakers will fly by helicopter on the morning of Feb 18 to conduct an aerial inspection of Semirara island. They will then proceed to Balabag Elementary School in Boracay island for the joint committee hearing, which will include resource speakers from the different agencies involved in the cleanup. Among those invited to the hearing are Napocor president Cyril del Callar; Capt. Arturo Olavario, the Coast Guard commander in the

Western Visayas who is spearheading the cleanup drive; and a team of marine experts from UP Visayas led by Dr. Rex Sandaba. Representatives from Barangay Semirara and those from the business establishments in Boracay were also invited. The joint panel will also tackle related bills filed in both chambers seeking to increase existing penalties on marine pollution, establish a proposed oil spill liability fund and set up a mechanism for the implementation of the 1992 International Convention for Oil Pollution.

Manila, Feb 15 — The state-owned National Power Corporation (Napocor) reported that sea trials for *Napocor Tugboat No.1*, scheduled for Wednesday (Feb 15), had been postponed until Feb 18. A Napocor spokesperson said that sea trials had to be deferred because repairs on the vessel's rudder was taking longer than expected. Repair work is being undertaken at Keppel Batangas shipyard in Bauan town, Batangas province south of Manila. *Napocor Tugboat No.1* was damaged when it ran aground off Semirara island on Dec 18 while towing *Napocor Power Barge No.106*. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

TROPICAL STORM "VAIANU"

London, Feb 12 — A press release from Reuters, states: Tropical storm "Vaianu" struck Tonga at about 1500, GMT, Feb 11. Data supplied by the US Navy and Air Force Joint Typhoon Warning Center suggest that the point of landfall was near lat 17.4S, long 174.9W. Vaianu brought 1-minute maximum sustained winds to the region of around 64 km/hr.

London, Feb 13 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone "Vaianu" was near lat 21.0S 176.7W, at 0600, UTC, today, movement past six hours 175 degrees at 10 knots, position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Present wind distribution: Maximum sustained winds 75 knots, gusts 90 knots. Forecast valid at 0600, UTC, Feb 14, lat 23.3S, 176.2W, maximum sustained winds 65 knots, gusts 80 knots. Remarks: Tropical cyclone "Vaianu", located approximately 325 nautical miles east-southeast of Suva, Fiji, has tracked southward at 10 knots over the past six hours. "Vaianu" will track poleward throughout the forecast period as a mid-level ridge to the east remains the primary steering mechanism. Although the cyclone has intensified over the past several hours, recent animated water vapor imagery reveals a suppression of storm outflow in the western quadrants. Upper level analysis depicts an impinging trough and developing low just to the west of "Vaianu". The storm should begin to weaken within 24 hours due to deteriorating upper level outflow, increasing vertical wind shear, and increasing atmospheric stability. Maximum significant wave height at 0600, UTC, today is 28 feet.

London, Feb 15 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone "Vaianu" near lat 25.8S, long 171.9W, at 0600, UTC, today, movement past six hours 125 degrees at 11 knots, position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Present wind distribution: Maximum sustained winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds: 90 nautical miles east semicircle, 80 nautical miles west semicircle. Forecast for at 0600, UTC, Feb 16: Position lat 28.3S, long 167.2W with maximum sustained winds of 30 knots and gusts to 40 knots. Dissipated as a significant tropical cyclone over water.

TURKEY

London, Feb 13 — The passage of southbound daylight-restricted vessels through the Istanbul Strait was suspended due to snow showers and poor visibility at 1540, local time, today.

London, Feb 14 — Southbound tanker traffic in the Istanbul Strait was suspended between 1230 and 1400, local time, today due to snow and poor visibility. As a result, the passage of two vessels programmed transit today have been postponed until tomorrow.

UNITED STATES

London, Feb 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A developing storm headed up the East Coast yesterday with a threat of heavy snow, cancelling flights and putting road crews on overtime. Blizzard warnings were posted from the New York City area into eastern New England, where up to 15 inches of snow was possible, and a winter storm warning was issued for most of New Jersey, the National Weather Service said. Heavy snow warnings were in effect from eastern Kentucky to New England. More than 100 flights were cancelled at New Jersey's Newark Liberty International Airport, one of the New York area's major airports. There were scattered cancellations at New York's LaGuardia and John F. Kennedy International airports. Delta said it cancelled its Sunday arrivals and departures at several other airports in the storm's path, including those in Philadelphia; Boston; Baltimore; Newark; Providence, R.I.; Washington, D.C.; and Hartford, Conn. In Connecticut, forecasters predicted up to 12 inches of snow, with the highest totals along the shoreline.

London, Feb 12 — A Press report, dated today, states: A major snow storm has hit US mid-Atlantic and north-east states, shutting down air travel and leaving thousands without power. More than 2,000 flights were cancelled in the region this morning, causing chaos at airports around the country. Meteorologists have been predicting winds of up to 50mph. Early today, a deep blanket of snow lay from Boston to Washington. Thousands of people in the states of Maryland and New Jersey were without power. Road travel was disrupted, although main highways

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across the north-east managed to stay open. The snow storm swept the region early today, dumping 20 inches of snow in some areas. By late morning, nearly 23 inches of snow lay in New York's Central Park. The National Weather Service is predicting as much as 24 inches of snow across the New York metro region. New York had more than 2,500 snow ploughs and salt spreaders at work, officials said. The heaviest snowfalls were north and west of Washington, with Columbia, Maryland, reporting 21 inches. Thousands of customers in that state had no electricity. Philadelphia's northern and western suburbs measured up to 18 inches this morning, the weather service said.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A record-breaking storm buried sections of the Northeast under more than two feet of snow yesterday, grounding hundreds of flights and marooning air travellers at airports in Florida and around the nation. In New York City's Central Park, the National Weather Service said 26.9 inches of snow had fallen, the most since record-keeping started in 1869. The old record was 26.4 inches in December 1947. More than 85,000 homes and businesses were blacked out in Maryland, according to Baltimore Gas & Electric Co. spokeswoman Linda Foy. More than 60,000 customers were reported in the dark in northern Virginia, and thousands more lost power in parts of Delaware, New Jersey and on New York's Long Island. Temperatures were mostly in the 20s. The storm temporarily closed all three of the New York metropolitan area's major airports, and airlines cancelled more than 500 inbound and departing flights, 200 each at LaGuardia and Newark airports and 120 at Kennedy. Delta Air Lines cancelled arrivals and departures at Washington, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Providence, R.I., and Hartford, Conn. The flights that did operate found conditions tricky. A regional transportation spokesman says a Turkish Airways flight skidded off the runway late yesterday at Kennedy, but no one was hurt. The airport closures and grounded aircraft stranded travelers in South Florida and elsewhere across the country. At Miami International Airport, nearly 100 flights had been cancelled by late yesterday, according to spokesman Marc Henderson. About 50 flights were cancelled at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, stranding about 7,500 travellers, many returning from Caribbean cruises. "This is the worst weather event we've had at a long, long time in terms of the number of cancellations," said airport spokesman Jim Reynolds. Twenty-one inches of snow fell at West Caln Township west of Philadelphia, the National Weather Service said. Philadelphia's average for an entire winter is about 21 inches. "It's going to be a menace trying to clean it up," said Wayne,

N.J., Mayor Scott T. Rumana. New York officials said snow removal costs the city about \$1 million per inch. The possibility of coastal flooding was a major concern for Massachusetts as wind hit 60 mph, said Peter Judge, spokesman for the state's Emergency Management Agency. Meteorologists predicted 2-foot storm surges from Cape Ann to Cape Cod with seas off the coast running up to 25 feet.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Battered road, rail and air systems are staggering back to life across the US north-east, after a massive blizzard. The storm has dumped record snowfall on New York, cutting power and closing airports. The city faces a \$US27 million clean-up operation in the wake of the storm that moved across the region Saturday (Feb 11) and Sunday and covered the Big Apple in a white blanket more than half-a-metre deep. The official reading in Central Park was 68.33 centimetres - the highest level since record keeping began in 1869 and surpassing the previous high of 67.06 centimetres in 1947. All three city airports, which had been forced to close during the blizzard, are back in operation, with major delays expected as airlines sought to clear a lengthy backlog of cancelled flights. Public schools were open yesterday, although not in some areas outside the city, and regional rail systems were back in operation albeit with restricted services. More than 200,000 people from Virginia to Massachusetts were left without electricity as the snow downed power lines, while thousands of air travellers were left stranded.

Earthquakes



INDIA

London, Feb 14 — A report, dated today, states: An earthquake of 5.7 magnitude reported in Sikkim, India, lat 27.33N, long 88.36E, depth 20.1 km at 0055, UTC today.

Volcanic Activity



MOUNT KARYMSKY, RUSSIA

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Feb 9, states: One of the most active volcanoes in Russia has started erupting, a local volcano expert said today. Alexei Ozerov said Mount Karymsky, which is 1,500 metres high and is located in the southeast of the Kamchatka Peninsula on the Pacific, had thrown up ash to a height of 1,500 metres yesterday. According to an observatory in Alaska, a 15-

kilometre ash train stretches from the volcano eastwards at a height of 4,000 metres. Ozerov said Mt. Karymsky's activity was normal for the period of the current eruption, which began in 1995. Although the volcano poses no threat to local settlements, its ash may prove to be poisonous if breathed in.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Two separate bomb blasts by suspected Taliban rebels killed six Afghan soldiers and wounded eight others in volatile north-eastern Afghanistan early today, the Defence Ministry said. Two soldiers were killed and four wounded in the first blast in the troubled Pech Valley of Nuristan province, spokesman General Mohammed Zahir Azimi said. A convoy sent to their aid struck another mine and four more soldiers were killed and four hurt, General Azimi said. "In both attacks six Afghan soldiers were martyred and eight wounded," he said. It was not clear if the explosions were caused by landmines or remote-controlled bombs, he said. General Azimi blamed the attacks on the "enemies of Afghanistan", a catchphrase that usually refers to remnants of the ousted Taliban regime and their Al Qaeda allies who have mounted a guerrilla-like insurgency against the new Government.

Kandahar, Feb 13 — Taliban guerrillas ambushed a militia unit working with U.S. forces in southern Afghanistan, killing two men and capturing six, the leader of the militia group said today. Militia commander Dawood said the ambush took place late yesterday in the troubled province of Helmand, where 3,300 British troops will soon be based as part of a NATO plan to expand its Afghanistan peacekeeping force. A Taliban commander, Mullah Mujahid, said his men had killed five of the militiamen and captured six. One Taliban fighter had been killed, Mujahid said by telephone. — Reuters.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Afghanistan's Taliban rebels said a battle in which they killed four US soldiers in a bomb blast and then took on American and Afghan troops showed their military capability is strengthening. The soldiers died yesterday in Uruzgan province. An exchange of small arm and rocket-propelled grenade fire erupted after the explosion, and the coalition called in helicopters and planes to help the US and Afghan forces on the ground, a coalition statement said today. A purported Taliban spokesman said the battle showed the rebels were capable of

conventional battle, despite claims to the contrary by Afghan officials. Three other US soldiers have died in Afghanistan this year, two of them in hostile fire, and more than 130 have been killed in action since 2001.

Kabul, Feb 15 — A blast killed an Afghan policeman and wounded two colleagues today and two intelligence officers kidnapped this week have been found dead, officials said. The violence came as the first 150 British combat troops of a deployment of about 3,300 British troops to the Afghan south arrived in the country. Taliban or members of an allied faction were responsible for the blast that hit the second of two police vehicles travelling on a road in Ghazni province, south of the Kabul, said district government official Habibullah January. The bodies of two intelligence officers abducted while on a mission in Farah province in the west were found in a desert yesterday, said provincial governor Izatullah Wasifi. He declined to speculate on who might have been responsible. Earlier, police said security forces arrested a Taliban district commander in Ghazni province along with two of his men suspected of burning down a school. The Taliban commander, Mullah Nazer Shah, had been a district official during the Islamist group's rule and was detained during a search by security forces late yesterday, said provincial police chief Abdul Rahman Sarjang. Shah's two men who were also detained were suspected of burning down a school in the area on Monday (Feb 13) night in the latest attack on the U.S.-backed government's efforts to promote education, he said. — Reuters.

Kabul, Feb 16 — Taliban rebels raided a remote security post, killing one policeman and wounding four, in the latest incident in a wave of violence that has raised alarm as thousands of peacekeepers prepare to deploy to the country. A Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for yesterday's raid on the post in the southern province of Nimroz. Provincial governor Ghulam Dastagir Azad said today about 60 Taliban were involved in the attack that killed one policeman and wounded four. Blood stains found after the one-hour clash indicated the Taliban had suffered casualties too but they had taken wounded or dead comrades with them when they fled, Azad said. Most of the recent attacks have been in the south and east, near the border with Pakistan, and many Afghans say their eastern neighbour is not doing enough to stop insurgents launching attacks from the safety of Pakistani soil. Afghan President Hamid Karzai called on Pakistan to intensify its efforts to root out terrorism during a visit to Pakistan yesterday. Pakistan has had tens of thousands of soldiers battling foreign al Qaeda-linked militants on its border with Afghanistan, but Afghan officials say Taliban in Pakistan have not been tackled with equal vigour. In a separate incident, Taliban captured

and killed an intelligence officer in the eastern province of Ghazni yesterday, the provincial governor said. A Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for kidnapping two intelligence officers in the western province of Farah on Monday (Feb 13). Their bodies were found dumped in a desert the next day. — Reuters.

BURUNDI

Bujumbura, Feb 15 — Five members of Burundi's only remaining rebel group and one government soldier were killed in clashes in the hills outside the capital Bujumbura today, an army spokesman said. Major Adolphe Manirakiza said that three soldiers were also wounded in the fighting with the Hutu-dominated rebel Forces for National Liberation (FNL). — Reuters.

COLOMBIA

Bogota, Feb 12 — Left-wing Colombian rebels massacred a family of six in the northern province of Antioquia, including an 80-year-old woman, authorities said today. The government sent soldiers and investigators to the village of Llanos del Encuentro after members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, opened fire on the family home, authorities told reporters. The massacre could be related to the murder "some time ago of a warlock said to be linked to the guerrillas," Jorge Mejia, the secretary of government of Antioquia, told reporters. The FARC may have carried out the killings "to take revenge," he said. This area of Antioquia was controlled by illegal right-wing paramilitary groups until their recent demobilization under a peace deal with President Alvaro Uribe. Both the rebels and the paramilitaries are known to kill peasants accused of sympathizing with the other side. — Reuters.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Rebels attacked a crew that was removing coca plants from one of Colombia's national parks and killed at least six police guards today, authorities said. The government in January began a risky operation to manually eradicate thousands of acres of coca - the bush used to make cocaine - from the Sierra Macarena National Park, 100 miles south of Bogota. Rebels from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, who have long held sway in the region and are heavily involved in the drug trade, have resisted the government action. On February 6, six other police officers were killed while protecting the 1,000 low-paid workers hired to rip out the coca plants using small shovels. President Alvaro Uribe said Colombia could launch an air attack against the rebels. Before any bombing took place, the government would ensure that civilians living in the area are evacuated, Uribe told local RCN television from Washington, where he was negotiating a free-trade deal with

United States. At least one of the workers, who make about \$12 a day, has been injured from crossfire between the rebels and government forces, leading many others to quit because of the danger. Just a third of the original 1,000 workers - protected by 3,000 thousand police and army troops - are left to handle the task of clearing the park of an estimated 4,600 hectares of coca. Despite the setbacks, Uribe said he remains committed to the task, although he backed away from the police's original goal to clear the park of coca by April. The Macarena eradication programme was announced in December after FARC rebels attacked and killed 29 soldiers in a makeshift camp just outside the park's boundary. Aerial spraying, common elsewhere in Colombia, could complete the job faster. But despite urgings by the United States, Colombia has refused to chemically fumigate any of its 49 national parks and protected areas, 11 of which are believed to contain coca.

HAITI

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: At least one person has been killed and several injured in clashes in Haiti, as tensions mount over the results of last Tuesday's (Feb 7) election. Supporters of the presidential front-runner, Rene Preval, erected roadblocks in the capital to demand he be declared the winner. Witnesses said UN peacekeepers had opened fire on protesters, but the UN said its troops had fired in the air. The incident came as the prospect of a run-off vote grew. Mr Preval's share of the vote fell further today, according to electoral officials. With nearly 90% of the ballots counted, the front-runner has 48.7% of the vote, just short of the 50% required to win outright. Another ex-leader, Leslie Manigat, has 11.8%, while industrialist Charles Henri Baker has 7.9%, officials say. Final results are expected to be announced later today.

INDIA

Guwahati, Feb 13 — A day-long general strike called by a powerful rebel group disrupted life in India's northeastern state of Assam today, shutting down transport services, schools, offices and businesses. The closure was called by the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) to protest against police killing of nine villagers when they stormed a police station and a military camp in the troubled state last week. Authorities said they had stepped up security across the state and police and soldiers had intensified patrols to prevent trouble during the strike. The nine people shot dead by police were among hundreds of villagers protesting against the killing of another villager by soldiers in the revolt-hit state. — Reuters.

Agartala, India, Feb 14 — Tribal rebels in India's remote north-eastern state of Tripura today ambushed workers of a state-run gas firm on

their way to surveying a site, killing three of them, police said. "The rebels first lobbed grenades and then opened indiscriminate fire on employees of GAIL who were proceeding to a survey site," police officer Nepal Das said referring to the Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL). The attack at Buduniapara, 60 km east of Agartala, capital of the gas-rich state, triggered a gun battle between police escorting the workers and the rebels but there were no casualties in the fighting. Police said two of the workers were killed instantly and the third died in hospital. Police blamed the outlawed National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) for the attack. The NLFT is fighting for a separate homeland for minority tribals in Tripura, one of seven states in India's restive north-east. — Reuters.

IRAN

Tehran, Feb 15 — Iranian police have arrested around 1,000 people in the central seminary city of Qom after violent clashes over the closure of a house of worship used by mystical Sufi Muslims, city officials said today. Officials and a Qom resident said the police had fired teargas to disperse a crowd of dervishes, or mystics, and those who had gathered to support them. They said the dervishes were armed with knives and stones. Around 200 people were hurt in the clash, one official said. The fighting erupted on Monday (Feb 13) after the Sufis refused to evacuate a suburban house where they had been congregating for dervish rites, said an official at Qom municipality. "The violence ended and their place was knocked down on Tuesday," he said, adding that the municipality had demolished the building because the Sufis had illegally turned their residential building into a centre of worship. Sufi Muslim spirituality is tolerated under mainly Shi'ite Iran's strict Islamic laws, although some senior religious figures occasionally call for a clampdown on its rites. The governor-general of Qom accused the dervishes of being part of a foreign plot. "We did not aim to confront them at first, but when we felt that ... a plot was under way, we took steps," Abbas Mohtaj was quoted as saying by the "Jomhuri-ye Eslami" newspaper. Mohtaj said about 200 people had been hurt and around 1,000 arrested. — Reuters.

IRAQ

Baghdad, Feb 10 — A car bomb killed up to 11 people in Baghdad today as election officials announced the final results of December's parliamentary elections, confirming the political dominance of the ruling Shi'ite Muslim alliance. The car bomb targeted worshippers leaving a Shi'ite mosque after prayers in Baghdad's notorious Doura district, one of the most dangerous areas of the capital, reinforcing the vast security crisis the new government faces. Sunni insurgents fighting to topple the US-backed Kurdish- and Shi'ite-led

government have already expressed anger over the election results, accusing the Shi'ite alliance of cheating their way to victory. Certified final results from the Dec 15 election confirmed the ruling United Iraqi Alliance, dominated by religious Shi'ites, won a near majority in parliament, securing 128 of the 275 seats. The results also confirmed that a Kurdish alliance took 53 seats and Arab Sunni parties took a total of 58. That result was a large improvement on the previous elections held in January, 2005, when Arab Sunnis boycotted the poll, ending up with barely any seats in parliament. As electoral commission official Adel al-Lami read out the results at a media briefing in the heavily fortified Green Zone, a car parked near the mosque in Doura as midday prayers ended. Police said eight people had been killed and 28 wounded, but doctors at nearby al-Yarmuk hospital said 11 people were killed and 38 wounded. Iraqi and US officials warned in January that they expected a spike in Sunni insurgent violence over the election results. Shi'ite, Sunni and Kurdish parties have yet to start what are expected to be tough formal talks on forming a government of national unity, nearly two months after the polls. US officials hope the election will give minority Sunnis a bigger voice in the political process and weaken support for the Sunni insurgency, which has exacted a deadly toll on American troops and killed many thousands of Iraqis. Two US Marines were killed yesterday when their patrol was hit by a roadside bomb in Falluja, west of Baghdad, the US military said in a statement. The deaths brought to at least 2,267 the number of US soldiers killed in Iraq since March 2003, when US-led forces invaded the country to topple Saddam Hussein. Iraq has also seen a rise in sectarian violence in recent weeks. In the latest incident, gunmen wearing Iraqi army uniforms kidnapped a Sunni mosque leader from his Baghdad home, the Interior Ministry said today. Adel Khalil Dawoud, the imam of al-Nuami mosque, was seized last night by 16 gunmen who arrived at his home in the Karrada district in three white Land Cruisers, an Interior Ministry official said. A number of Sunni clerics have been killed in Iraq in recent weeks. Dozens of bodies have also been found dumped around Baghdad, usually bound and shot dead. All are believed to be the victims of spreading sectarian violence. American hostage Jill Carroll appeared in a new video tape last night, appealing for help in securing her release. Carroll wore a headscarf and appeared calm in the brief video aired by Kuwait's Al Rai TV, the third video she has appeared in since she was kidnapped in Baghdad on Jan 7. Her kidnappers, the Revenge Brigades, have threatened to kill her unless the US military and the Iraqi Interior Ministry release all the women in

their custody. She said the video had been recorded on Feb 2, but did not say what was in the letter that the TV station received along with the tape. More than 200 foreigners and thousands of Iraqis have been abducted in the anarchy that followed the US-led invasion of Iraq. Most foreign hostages have been released, but 54 are known to have been killed; dozens are still believed to be held. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Feb 13 — Seven people were killed and 47 wounded in Baghdad today when a suicide bomber detonated his explosive belt as people queued up outside a bank, a police source said. The source said poor Iraqis were queuing up to collect compensation for food rations the government had failed to distribute last year when the explosion occurred, in an eastern district of the capital. — Reuters.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Gunmen attacked a group of Shiite farmers north of Baghdad today, killing 11, including eight members of the same family, and wounding two, officials said. One coalition soldier was killed and six were wounded in two separate attacks in Baghdad. Authorities in the southern Iraqi province of Basra, meanwhile, severed all ties with Britain amid the furor over alleged British military abuse of several Iraqi males in Amarah, 180 miles southeast of Baghdad, two years ago. British military officials called the Basra decision regrettable. The provincial police chief said all security cooperation and joint patrols with British soldiers were called off throughout the vast southern province. "Decisions like these and reductions in patrols hinder the process of promoting security and economic reform and merely work to the detriment of the people of Basra," British military spokesman Capt. James St. John-Price said. British-Iraqi relations have been strained recently over British arrests of local police linked to killings and kidnappings and British security control over Basra International Airport. Basra authorities also demanded the 530-member Danish military contingent leave unless the Danish government apologizes for the contentious Prophet Muhammad drawings that appeared in Danish and European newspapers. Denmark's Defence Minister Soeren Gade rejected the demand. "Our foreign policy is not being decided by the provincial council in Basra," he told reporters in Copenhagen. The attacks took place as the trial of Saddam Hussein and seven co-defendants resumed, with the former president claiming he and three former officials in his regime were on a hunger strike to protest the judge overseeing the proceedings, which were adjourned until Feb 28. Gunmen opened fire on the group of farmers in Balad, 50 miles north of Baghdad, shortly before midday today, police chief Brig. Mohammed al-Baldawi said. Sheik

Hussein al-Hayali, the owner of the farm, and seven other members of his family were killed, al-Baldawi said. Three other people were killed and two wounded, said Dr. Qassim al-Qaisi of Balad Hospital, where the victims were taken. Balad is a religiously mixed area where Shiite-Sunni Arab sectarian violence has flared previously. Two attacks in Baghdad today killed one coalition soldier and wounded six others, the US military said. The military press office said it did not know the nationality of the victims. Sgt. Stan Lavery said a roadside bomb targeted a military vehicle at 1030 in Abu Ghraib, western Baghdad, killing one soldier and wounding two others. About an hour later, another coalition convoy was attacked in the Baghdad's western Salaam area, wounding four soldiers. Two Iraqi males purporting to be victims of the alleged British abuse in Basra also told reporters today that they would seek compensation from the British government. A British military probe has started and one soldier, believed to be the cameraman, has been detained. At least 12 Iraqis were wounded in a series of roadside bombings and mortar barrages across Baghdad, and police found the bullet-riddled bodies of eight men in different locations throughout the capital. The identities of the victims were unclear. Saddam said he had not eaten in three days, while his half brother and former intelligence chief, Barzan Ibrahim said he had been on strike for two days. Their claims of a hunger strike could not be independently confirmed. Investigative judge Raid Juhi did not deny the defendants were refusing food, but added: "As you could see, the defendants are in good health." Chief judge Raouf Abdel-Rahman, who took over the court last month, has worked to impose order after his predecessor resigned amid criticism over outbursts and arguments that frequently overshadowed the testimony. The defendants refused to attend sessions last month after their defence team walked out of court. The defence lawyers have refused to participate in the trial until Abdel-Rahman is removed, accusing him of bias against Saddam.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A car bomb blew up in northern Baghdad today, killing four policemen, a police source said. "A car bomb in the Maghrib Street in Baghdad's Adhamiyah district detonated at about 1135 hrs (0835, UTC), while a police patrol was passing by," said Captain Ahmed Abdullah with Baghdad police. The blast killed four policemen and wounded another, Abdullah said. Three civilians were also wounded in the attack which damaged several police and civilian cars. Earlier, another car bomb detonated in eastern Baghdad near a police patrol, killing a civilian and wounding five others, according to an Interior Ministry source. "A booby trapped car

parked on the side of a road near the Technology University detonated at about 0940 hrs (0640, UTC) while a police patrol was passing by," the source, who spoke anonymously, said.

Baghdad, Feb 16 — Two car bombs exploded in Baghdad today, killing seven Iraqis and wounding 16, police said. One of the blasts ripped through a crowded Baghdad market in the Shi'ite district of Shula at about 1100 hrs, killing six civilians and wounding 13, police said. The second bomb exploded as an Iraqi police patrol drove by in Baghdad's Karrada district, killing one bystander and wounding two policemen, police said. Another civilian was hurt in that blast. — Reuters.

NEPAL

London, Feb 12 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: At least 16 policemen and soldiers were killed and a dozen others injured when a gun battle broke out between government troops and warring Maoist insurgents in central Nepal, government officials said yesterday. The fighting occurred late Thursday in Nawalparasi district, about 275 kilometres west of Kathmandu, when security personnel tried to remove a roadblock placed by the rebels on a highway, the officials said.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Three soldiers have been killed in fresh clashes with Maoist rebels in western Nepal, army officials say. Fighting took place early today when rebels reportedly attacked an army convoy in Palpa district. An army official said that the rebels had suffered heavy casualties. The rebels have not commented yet. The deaths follow controversial local elections last week in which only about 20% of voters cast ballots amid an opposition boycott and rebel threats. Yesterday's clash is said to have lasted for several hours. The rebels have launched major attacks in Palpa and neighbouring Nawalparasi district over the past two weeks, leaving scores of soldiers, police and rebels dead. Violence has escalated across Nepal after the rebels called off a four-month unilateral ceasefire last month.

NIGERIA

Warri, Nigeria, Feb 15 — The Nigerian military launched a helicopter gunship attack on land targets in the oil-producing Delta state today and militants threatened to shoot down aircraft unless military flights stopped. The attack marked the first major military operation in the Niger Delta since a militant group staged a series of attacks against the oil industry, including a 19-day kidnapping of four foreign oil workers in January. Militants from the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta said today's attack was against Ijaw communities in the Gbaramatu area of the state but a Navy source said it was directed against oil barges suspected to be

used in the theft of crude oil. "A military helicopter belonging to the Nigerian Army attacked Ijaw communities in Gbaramatu area of Delta state firing rockets and machine-guns at targets on land," the militants said in an email statement. The helicopter took off from the Osubi airstrip in Warri, operated by Royal Dutch Shell, and militants said it was meant to be a civilian airfield. "Operators of civilian aircraft in this airfield will do well to advise Shell to desist from the practise of permitting the use of this airfield for military use," the militants said. "We are very well capable of shooting down aircraft landing and taking off from this airstrip and may consider doing so should it be discovered that the use of this privately owned civilian airstrip for military operations is not discontinued." — Reuters.

PAKISTAN

Kohat, Pakistan, Feb 9 — A suspected suicide bombing and gunfire killed at least 29 minority Shi'ite Muslims in north-western Pakistan today and gunmen killed at least four more people in an attack on a bus, officials said. The bombing targeted a procession in the town of Hangu in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) to mark Ashura, the holiest day for Shi'ites. Officials reported several blasts. Abdul Rashid, medical superintendent at the Hangu hospital, said 29 people had been confirmed dead there. "We have 29 confirmed dead bodies," he said. "Some of them have bullet wounds. All of them are Shi'ites." A leader of the Shi'ite procession, Maulana Khurshid Anwar, said a bomb exploded near a stage where he was about to address Shi'ite mourners. Enraged Shi'ites set shops and a bank on fire and fired shots into the air in the town 200 km west of Islamabad. Superintendent Mohammad Ayub, of the Hangu police, said four people died in a shootout during a curfew imposed after the bombing — one policeman, a soldier, and two civilians. In another incident, unidentified gunmen opened fire on a bus outside the town, killing four passengers, including a woman, and injuring two, said a paramilitary commander, Aziz Rehman. NWFP police chief Riffat Pasha said the bombing was a suicide attack and troops were sent to help restore order. Security forces put up barricades on roads leading to Hangu. "We have sent armoured personnel carriers there, and the Frontier Constabulary is also there," Pasha said. "The situation is pretty much under control." Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao said there had been three blasts and it could have been a suicide attack or caused by time bombs. — Reuters.

Karachi, Feb 13 — Armed men again fired rockets at the pipeline of Well No.1 of the Loti gas field in Dera Bugti district in Balochistan Province of Pakistan yesterday, suspending supply to the purification plant.

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According to local media, officials of the Dera Bugti administration said unknown assailants fired several rockets on the gas field, a camp of the Frontier Corps (FC) and mess of the Oil and Gas Development Corporation from nearby hills. One of the rockets hit the pipeline, disrupting gas supply from Well No.1. Paramilitary forces rushed to the site following the attack and cordoned off the area in an attempt to apprehend those involved in the attack. In another incident, armed men fired at least three rockets at the FC camp and the OGDC mess in Pir Koh area of Dera Bugti, the same day. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: A gas pipeline has been blown up in Pakistan's troubled southern province of Balochistan, officials say. An official said the blast in Pirkoh early today would disrupt gas supplies to some parts of the country. No one was injured in the blast, and no-one has admitted carrying out the apparent attack, officials said. Tribal militants in Balochistan, the source of Pakistan's main gas reserves, are demanding greater control over natural resources. The situation in the province is unsettled, with increasing violence between rebels and security forces. The explosion damaged a pipe connecting a well to a gas compression plant in Pirkoh. Two gas plants that produce around 60 million cubic feet of gas daily have been shut down after the explosion. A local official, Abdul Samad Lasi, said this would lead to a shortage of natural gas in Multan and Faisalabad areas in the Punjab province. Earlier this month, tribesmen blew up a gas pipeline in the district of Dera Bugti in Balochistan, officials said. They are said to be led by Nawab Akbar Bugti, the leader of one of the most powerful tribes in the area.

PROTESTS AGAINST PUBLICATION OF CARTOONS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Pakistani security guards have shot dead two protesters in Lahore during unrest over cartoons satirising the Prophet Muhammad, officials say. Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao said the shots were fired by bank guards as crowds rampaged in the city. Hospital officials say 41 others were injured. Police in Islamabad fired tear gas and used batons to beat back hundreds of students who entered a diplomatic area. The cartoons, first printed in Denmark, have angered Muslims worldwide. The Lahore deaths are the first in Pakistan since the controversy over the cartoons erupted at the end of last month. The shootings took place outside the Metropolitan bank. Reports say crowds tried to set fire to the building housing the bank. Earlier, shots were fired into the air to prevent hundreds of protesters torching the city's Punjab assembly building, which is reported to have

been badly damaged. Police also fired tear gas as crowds tried to set fire to outlets of McDonald's and KFC and placed burning tyres on some roads. Lahore and other cities in Punjab province are observing a strike against the cartoons and most shops are closed.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Three more people have died in Pakistan in continuing violence over the publication in the West of cartoons satirising the Prophet Muhammad. In the city of Peshawar, two people died as protesters targeted anything linked to foreign firms, however, local businesses also suffered. In Lahore, one person died when police clashed with Islamic students. Two people died in Lahore yesterday. Thousands of supporters of hardline Islamic groups marched up to the main business district in Peshawar, the capital of North-West Frontier Province, and attacked shops and businesses. Police used teargas and then opened fire to break up the protest after the mob set fire to a KFC fast food outlet and ransacked it. Eyewitnesses say some of the protesters opened fire as well. An eight-year-old boy was killed by a stray bullet, while another person died when a power transmission line fell on protesters. The office of a Norwegian mobile phone company was also attacked. The provincial chief minister urged people to remain calm. "We will not ban rallies against sacrilegious cartoons but protesters must remain peaceful," Chief Minister Akram Durrani said. However, elsewhere in North-West Frontier Province, violence broke out in the town of Tank, near the Iranian border. A policeman was injured when some protesters opened fire indiscriminately. In Punjab province, hundreds of Islamic students took to the streets of the eastern city of Lahore despite a ban on public protests. Security has been increased in the diplomatic district in the capital after dozens of protesting students managed to break through a security ring yesterday and tried to attack foreign embassies.

Karachi, Feb 16 — Tens of thousands of Pakistani Islamists wielding sticks and waving green flags rallied in Karachi today, protesting against cartoons of Prophet Mohammad, the latest in a wave of protests in which five people have died. A crowd of up to 50,000 rallied in the main commercial district of the sprawling southern city, and some torched effigies of US President George W. Bush and Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Protesters wearing green headbands shouted slogans of "Here I come, O Mohammad" and "Death to blasphemers" as thousands of policemen and paramilitary troops looked on. The crowd dispersed peacefully at the end, in contrast to the violence seen in Islamabad, Lahore and Peshawar earlier this week. A branch of US-based Citibank, and an office of the German company

Siemens, hung black flags to mask their logos, as did a Christian hospital and several cinemas on the rally's route. Armed troops were stationed on the roof-tops and roadsides of a city that has been consumed by religious, sectarian and ethnic violence over the past two decades. Urging participants to stay peaceful, Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman, a leader of the rally, called on Pakistan to sever ties with European countries where cartoons were published. "The government should recall its ambassadors and send back ambassadors of these countries," Rehman, an influential madrasa principal, said. A senior security official in Peshawar told Reuters close to 350 people were arrested after yesterday's rioting. He said members of the Jamaat-i-Islami, the country's most influential Islamist party, along with its student and youth wings were involved, as well as sectarian and other militants. Police were shot at in Peshawar, but didn't return fire, he said, adding: "We didn't want to give them bodies." Demonstrations have been held almost every day this month in Pakistan since European papers republished the cartoons — first published in Denmark in September. Muslims believe it is blasphemous to depict the Prophet. Although Pakistan is the world's second most populous Muslim nation, the protests only grew in size this week, and the worst violence occurred in Peshawar, a stronghold of the Islamist parties in North West Frontier Province. The Islamist parties have called for a nationwide strike on Mar 3, around the time President Bush is expected to visit Pakistan, and Ambassador Ryan Crocker said there was no change of plans, as yet. Musharraf, a key ally in the US-led war on terrorism, chaired a meeting on the violence yesterday and warned that instigators would be dealt with sternly. At least three people, including an eight-year-old-boy, were killed in violent protests yesterday while two died a day earlier. Police have detained some 200 people in Lahore over the past 24 hours following violence in the city on Tuesday (Feb 14) and yesterday. — Reuters.

RUSSIA

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Ten gunmen and three police died after special forces stormed a house in southern Russia near Chechnya today following a daylong standoff against unidentified, heavily-armed gunmen, officials said. "Ten fighters were killed, according to preliminary reports," said a spokesman for the local interior ministry in Stavropol region. "Three police were killed" when the siege began yesterday, he said. Interior ministry officials were quoted by Russian news agencies as saying the gunmen were preparing an attack in the area, just north-west of war-torn Chechnya, and were foiled by Russian security forces. The firefight broke out

in the village of Tukui-Mekteb in eastern Stavropol region, about 60 km from the border with Chechnya and 10 km from Dagestan, another volatile province in the Russian part of the Caucasus mountain range. Interfax news agency reported several gunmen were still holding out in the village and that about 300 Russian troops, including some from the interior ministry and the FSB intelligence service, were taking part in the operation.

SPAIN

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A car bomb exploded at a discotheque in northern Spain yesterday night, causing damage but no injuries because police had cleared the area after a warning call in the name of the Basque separatist group ETA, an Interior Ministry spokesman said. The blast came just four days after Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero said that Spain could be witnessing the “beginning of the end” of ETA, which is blamed for more than 800 deaths in its 37-year fight for Basque independence. While government officials and political analysts speculate publicly about an imminent ETA cease-fire, the Basque ambulance service DYA received a call just after 1900 hrs (1800, UTC) yesterday in which the caller, speaking for ETA, warned of a bomb that would explode an hour later at La Nuba discotheque in the town of Urdax, in northern Navarra province, a DYA spokeswoman told CNN. Civil Guards rushed to the site and cleared the area. The bomb, in a van parked outside the dance club, went off at 2000 hrs, the ministry spokesman said.

SRI LANKA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: The Sri Lankan government says the trawler that exploded yesterday in the Mannar seas is believed to have been transporting large quantities of explosives to uncleared areas when it was intercepted by the Sri Lanka Navy. In a statement, the Government Information Department yesterday said, “Two Fast Attack Craft of the Navy on routine patrol detected the suspicious movements of a multi-day fishing trawler heading towards the coast of Vettitativu situated in uncleared areas.” One naval craft approached the trawler for the purpose of inspection and as the sailors were about to board the trawler, the trawler’s crew detonated a large explosive device from within, destroying the trawler and seriously injuring one sailor who has since died. “It is believed the trawler was transporting large quantities of explosives to the uncleared areas at the time the Navy tried to inspect. On a previous occasion ten days ago, the Navy arrested the crew of a fishing boat in the same vicinity with 61,000 detonators being transported to uncleared areas,” the Government Information Department said.

SUDAN

Khartoum, Feb 14 — Darfur rebels said they had shot down a government helicopter today and captured one surviving crew member. “The government helicopters came to protect the Janjaweed (Arab militias) who were attacking civilians in our areas and our troops shot down one of them,” said rebel Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) leader Minni Arcua Minnawi. He said the incident happened in the area of Shearia in South Darfur state. A Sudanese army source confirmed the news of the helicopter but said he could not as yet give further details. A tentative truce was signed between the two main rebel groups and the government in April 2004, but has since been violated many times. The ceasefire specifies Khartoum can fly helicopters in the vast region the size of France but not on offensive missions. — Reuters.

TURKEY

Istanbul, Feb 9 — A bomb blast at an Internet cafe in Istanbul wounded at least 14 people, including six police officers, today and a hardline Kurdish group claimed responsibility. The Kurdistan Liberation Hawks, which claimed to be behind a series of bombings in Turkey in recent years, carried out the blast in the Bayrampasa district, not far from Istanbul airport, according to a person who called the Kurdish Firat news agency, claiming to speak on behalf of the group. The group is believed to have links to Kurdish rebels fighting security forces in south-east Turkey. It was not immediately possible to verify the authenticity of the report. “It’s a bomb explosion, there are 14 injured. One of them is seriously injured,” Istanbul police chief Celalettin Cerrah said after visiting the scene. Local police later said up to 16 people had been wounded, including a child who was in a serious condition. Local people said the blast was very powerful. The blast occurred some 100 metres from a local headquarters for riot police. Locals said police regularly used the Internet cafe. A dozen police sealed off the side street, where the cafe is located. — Reuters.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: At least one person has been killed and many more wounded in an explosion at an Istanbul supermarket, police say, in the second blast in Turkey’s largest city in four days. A police spokesman told Reuters the blast occurred in the early evening at a supermarket belonging to the Kiler chain on the European side of Istanbul, not far from the airport. He could not say exactly how many people had been hurt. The state Anatolian news agency says 12 people have been wounded and rushed to various hospitals in the city. Police, ambulances and fire engines rushed to the scene of the blast, which came days after a bomb exploded at an Internet cafe in Istanbul, killing one

person and injuring 16 others. A militant Kurdish movement known as the Kurdistan Liberation Hawks claimed responsibility for last Thursday’s (Feb 9) blast. The group is believed to have links to outlawed Kurdish rebels fighting security forces in south-east Turkey.

UGANDA

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Ugandan troops have killed four rebels in southern Sudan and captured an assortment of ammunitions from the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) fighting the Ugandan government. The army’s 4th division army spokesman, Lt. Chris Magezi said today that the Ugandan troops killed the four rebels in western Equatorial province. He said the group was part of that led by the LRA chief Joseph Kony heading for eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. He described the army’s operation against the LRA in southern Sudan as moving on smoothly with successes recorded frequently. Elsewhere, the army yesterday killed one rebel and rescued three civilians who were abducted by the LRA in the northern Ugandan district of Apac. Magezi said the army’s Golf Battalion killed the rebel at Adora Primary School. He said this rebel was part of the group that battered six civilians to death and abducted several others in Alito sub-county in Apac district on Monday (Feb 13). On Saturday (Feb 11), the army’s 71st Battalion repulsed an attack by the LRA rebels on civilians travelling on Pabbo-Atiak road in the northern district of Gulu. Magezi said during the operation two rebels were killed and one rebel surrendered to the army.

Labour Disputes



BANGLADESH

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: Export to Bangladesh through Hilli land customs station in South Dinajpur was suspended following the ongoing strike called by the customs clearance association of the neighbouring nation from Jan 30, the Indian exporters said today. They said that the strike would scupper plans to achieve the targeted turnover of more than Rs 500 crore for 2005-2006 financial year. In the last financial year, while the customs had recorded a turnover of Rs 495 crore through foreign money exchange the Indian government could earn Rs 2 crore as revenue. But this year, till now, the turnover has recorded Rs 275 crore in Hilli LCS. Several trucks, carrying close to 3,000 tonnes rice, are lined up there, they said. “The Bangladesh importers had called the strike demanding equality in the system of carrying goods in the lorry

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with a view to reduce transportation costs of the products exported to Bangladesh," said Mr Ujjal Saha, general secretary of the exporters co-ordination committee. He also said that the truck owners association has decided not to carry excess load above 10 tonnes per truck only in the South Dinajpur though there is no such system in the land customs stations of Malda, Cooch Behar and other places in south Bengal. "Though we have requested the district magistrate to sort out the problem no solution has come out to withdraw the ongoing strike in Bangladesh." Indian exporters have also alleged that cost control is a main factor to boost up agro export to Bangladesh through this region but the customs department is not clearing one per cent subsidy on agro product export following the system of Duty Entitlement Pass Book schemes.

Karachi, Feb 15 — The import and export operations at Hili land port in Dinajpur in northern Bangladesh will resume today following the Indian traders' and truckers' decision to withdraw the new transport rules and the strike they enforced from Feb 4. According to local media, at least 10 meetings were held between the clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents, traders, truckers and the district magistrate of Balurghat of India, after which the Indian traders and truckers agreed to withdraw the rules. They agreed to allow 20 tonnes of goods per truck as Bangladeshi traders demanded. It may be mentioned here that in a letter to Bangladeshi Importers and C&F Agents Association on Jan 15, Indian Exporters and C&F Agents Association laid out the rules that Bangladeshi importers would not be allowed to carry more than 10 tonnes of goods in a single truck. Bangladeshi traders feared that it would increase their transportation cost. Protesting the new rules, exporters, importers, clearing and forwarding agents (C&F) of Bangladesh called an indefinite strike from Jan 30. The situation worsened as the All Indian Traders' Association and Truck Owners' Association imposed a counter strike against the Bangladeshi C&F agents and traders on Feb 4. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: A general strike enforced by the opposition in Bangladesh to protest rising food and fuel prices partially crippled life and businesses countrywide today following a police crackdown on anti-government protesters in the capital Dhaka, officials said. Transport links on the highways were disrupted and state-run train and ferry services snapped in many parts of the farming hinterlands, despite warnings of tough actions against pro-shutdown protesters. Security was stepped up across Bangladesh with the deployment of an additional 8,000 riot police and paramilitary border soldiers ahead of the strike called by

the main opposition party Awami League heading 13 left-wing secular groups. Prices of foodstuff like sugar, pulses, onions, cooking oil, milk powder and the staple diet rice shot up by at least 10% over the past three months. Transport costs soared while irrigation became dearer as the state-owned oil companies raised the price of both petrol and diesel citing higher import costs. More than 1,000 political activists, half of them Awami League workers, were arrested during the crackdown on the eve of the strike, opposition spokesman Obaidul Kader said. About 50 activists were injured in overnight clashes between BNP and Awami League cadres in the northern city of Rajshahi, which has become the scene of frequent political violence.

CREW OF PANAMANIAN VESSEL AT FREDERICIA, DENMARK

London, Feb 13 — Bulk *M.Pioneer* (21309 gt, built 1984), which was to lift the cargo off bulk *Vertigo*, has lost its cancellation on the cargo. The crew of 22 persons from the Philippines, Poland, Romania and El Salvador have gone on strike. They have not received correct payment and three of the crew have been on board for 48 months. So now both vessels are lying at Fredericia and the cargo is still waiting. (Note — *M.Pioneer* arrived Fredericia Jan 31.)

GERMANY

Berlin, Feb 10 — Germany faces what could become its biggest public sector strike in 14 years after workers across the country voted in favour of walk-outs today to protest against employers' plans to extend working hours. "We could not have had a clearer result in the strike ballot," said Frank Bsirske, the head of services union Verdi, at a news conference in Berlin. He added that more than 90 percent of workers in 8 states had voted for industrial action. Strikes organised by Verdi started on Monday (Feb 5) in the large south western state of Baden-Wuerttemberg. Some 10,000 hospital, swimming pool, sewage, cemetery, library, kindergarten and garbage disposal workers walked out of their workplaces. The dispute centres on efforts by some public-sector employers in western Germany to extend the working week without extra pay to 40 hours from around 38.5 hours, as well as plans to trim holiday and Christmas bonuses. — Reuters.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: German public sector workers began strike action today in more than half of the country's 16 states to increase pressure against plans to extend working hours without extra pay. University hospital staff and street cleaners went on strike in nine states including Bavaria, Saarland and Schleswig-Holstein, according to the ver.di union, Germany's largest. About 40,000 people were to strike today, the union said. Workers are

protesting against plans to extend weekly working hours to 40 from 38.5 without any pay increase. Ver.di, which represents 2.4 million workers, said local and regional authorities would use longer hours to cut as many as 250,000 jobs in the public sector and related administrative branches.

About 250 people were on strike in front of the university hospital in Erlangen, about 15 kilometres north of Nuremberg, this morning. Non-emergency operations were cancelled, and the hospital had designated nurses to look after intensive-care patients and tumor patients, said Johannes Eissing, a hospital spokesman. Workers ranging from kindergarten teachers to hospital staff and refuse collectors were also expected to strike in Baden-Wuerttemberg, and Lower Saxony. Ver.di has said that it is prepared to strike for as long as six weeks. The local and regional authorities are pressing for longer working hours without higher pay to cut costs and trim a budget deficit that has violated European Union limits since 2002. Unemployment in Germany rose above five million in January for only the fourth time since World War II as the country struggles to generate enough growth to bring people back into work. "We won't cut unemployment by only employing people in the public sector," Hartmut M'llring, the head of TdL, the state employers' association, said in a televised interview. Job cuts are possible in areas like refuse collection because services there are in competition with private companies, Thomas B'hle, president of the Municipalities' Employers Association, said in an interview with Deutschland Radio. Kindergartens are unlikely to suffer job losses, said B'hle, whose group represents 2.2 million workers, or 68 percent of the people working in the public sector.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: Thousands of German hospital workers, rubbish collectors and other state employees stopped work as Germany's largest public sector strike for 14 years spread across the country. All but one state, in western Germany, joined action in Baden-Wuerttemberg that began last week in protest against plans to increase the working week from 38.5 to 40 hours without a pay rise. Frank Bsirske, head of giant services union Verdi, said it had enough money to support a strike lasting many weeks. TV reports showed pickets outside several hospitals in North Rhine-Westphalia and rubbish piling up on streets in Stuttgart. Engineering union IG Metall threatened action that would hit the car and steel sectors after employers rejected its demand to lift wages by five per cent. Verdi said about 22,000 people had joined the strikes yesterday. The union said it expected 40,000 workers to take part during the week. Yesterday's strikes centred on university hospitals, with nurses, care workers and general staff

participating. Road maintenance workers also went on strike. In Bavaria, which wants a 42-hour working week, road workers stopped clearing snow in most areas. Public theatres, day-care centres and a few schools were also affected. Union members also planned larger demonstrations in some city centres. Public transport was running normally.

GREECE

Piraeus, Feb 15 — The Panhellenic Seamen's Federation (PNO) has announced a nationwide 48-hour strike for tomorrow morning. The seamen are pressing demands for increased insurance as well as settlement of tax, unemployment and marine training issues among others. The strike is scheduled to start at 0600, Feb 16 and will affect Greek-flag vessels of all categories as well as foreign ships employing Greek seamen. The Panhellenic Tug Crew Association has also announced a 24-hour strike for tomorrow in support of PNO. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Vessel transit delays through the Corinth Canal can be expected between 0600 hrs tomorrow and 0600 hrs on February 18, due to the 48-hour strike announced and supported by the Panhellenic Marine Federation.

INDIA

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: Three-day nationwide strike by the seafood exporters against the amended Income Tax Act, began today has been total with work at nearly 400 seafood processing units across the country and allied units like ice manufacturing and peeling sheds come to a standstill. It is estimated that the daily loss would run to around Rs 25 crore. The token strike call given by the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI), is in protest against the amended rules which do not treat duty entitlement pass-book (DEPB) benefits as export income. As the new law affects the exporters since the scheme was introduced in 1997, exporters would now have to cough up around Rs 500 crore by way of tax. SEAI national president AJ Tharakan said that the matter had been taken up with the Central authorities, several of them were sympathetic to the industry. Mr Tharakan felt that the industry having to pay back was unfair, and the benefits received had already been passed on to the fishermen and the farmers. This was only a token strike and in case the Government was unwilling to relent, the association would be forced to go in for an indefinite strike which would affect the country very hard. The strike call had been well-received with peeling shed owners, ice manufacturers and boat owners, except in Kerala. The industry was hopeful that the Centre would appreciate the situation and take a favourable stand, he added.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of passengers were stranded in Mumbai for several hours yesterday, as the undeclared strike by pilots of Air Sahara entered the second day, disrupting the airline's schedules. The pilots are protesting the expected cut in their salaries, following the \$500 million takeover of the airline last month by Jet Airways. Air Sahara pilots had gone on "mass leave" yesterday, fearing a loss in pay and perks following the airline's acquisition by Jet. Talks were on between the management and the pilots, but several flights were cancelled, especially in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Hyderabad. Chaotic scenes were witnessed at Mumbai airport as angry passengers demanded being put on other flights to their destinations. The airline was forced to cancel several flights, but most passengers were being accommodated on other airlines.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: The three-day strike by Seafood Exporters Association will affect fish exports to the tune of Rs.50 crore from Tamil Nadu alone, association president D Palpandian said today. In all, there are 756 seafood processing and export units in the country out of which 56 are in Tamil Nadu and the strike which began yesterday would affect exports worth Rs 50 crore from the state. The protest would also hit three lakh workers dependent on seafood export units, he added. The strike was called by the association to protest against the levy of income tax on the seafood exporters with retrospective effect from April 1997. The units would intensify strike, if the government did not withdraw the income tax demand notice, he said. The government should use its good offices to ask the US government to reduce duty on the Indian seafood, he added.

Mumbai, Feb 16 — THE three-day all India strike called by Sea-food exporters from Feb 13, against the amended Income-Tax Act, was total with nearly 400 seafood processing units coming to a grinding halt. It is estimated that the daily loss would run to around Rs. 250 million. Mr. Elias Sait, Secretary-General, Seafood Exporters Association of India, said purchases of seafood and processing had come to a halt. Exporters are protesting against the amendment that paved the way for levying tax on the duty entitlement pass book, DEPB, scheme. The arrears work out to about Rs. 5000 million and could break the processors, Mr Sait bemoaned. The strike means that the units would not purchase seafood from fishermen and produce from the agriculture farms. The fishermen had also expressed support for the processing units, he claimed. Through an amendment of the Income-Tax Act, the DEPB income on export turnover of more than Rs. 100 million has come under the tax net. The export incentive was granted for the period

between 1997 and 2002. The SEAI President, Mr A. J. Tharakan, felt that the pay back decision was unfair, and the benefits received had already been passed on to the fishermen had the farmers. — Lloyd's Agents.

NICARAGUA

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Feb 9, states: The public transportation strike, which already had its baptism of violence, is on its fourth day today, and may worsen before it gets better, due to the unyielding attitude of the government. This fatal prediction is based on statements by Finance and Public Credit Minister Mario Arana, who repeated yesterday that the government will not grant the monthly subsidy of more than one million dollars demanded by the strikers. According to the minister, such an outlay would compromise the economic assistance promised by the International Monetary Fund and other international financial agencies. As Arana was giving a news conference in this capital, a clash between the police and strikers took place in the municipality of Ciudad Sandino, in the outskirts of Managua, where the latter tried to block the traffic. At least 25 strikers were arrested, according to local television, which broadcast footage of the incident.

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Feb 13 — Strike action by members of three Transnet trade unions is set to resume on Wednesday (Feb 15) at the Western Cape ports and rail services, Cape Town and Saldanha, with the port and rail services at Saldanha in particular being targeted. A planned strike for the Eastern Cape region, Port Elizabeth and East London, which was originally scheduled for today has been deferred, possibly because it would have little national impact. When the strike focused on KwaZulu Natal two weeks ago the target then was clearly directed at the Durban Container Terminal. When it comes to the Western Cape the unions have made it clear that Saldanha and its strategic iron ore exports are in its sights but Cape Town won't be ignored. The strike is intended to last one day. Next week between Monday and Wednesday (Feb 20 and 22) the unions will extend their strike action across the remainder of the country including the Gauteng region. Originally listed as a one-day strike, this has now been extended to three days.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: Hundreds of University of KwaZulu-Natal students who were expecting to start lectures for the 2006 academic year were turned away yesterday because of a massive combined strike involving staff and students. Those students who went to the university's campuses hoping to register were also forced back as registration at all campuses was halted. Thousands of students

and staff staged a peaceful demonstration at the Westville campus with staff from the other four campuses being bused in to participate. Yesterday students rejoined the strike after the university management went back on an agreement it had made with the students last week. Parents who brought their children to register expressed concern over the ongoing staff strike, saying it could impact on their children's studies. Students on the campus said they fully supported their lecturers, but were also worried about their lectures. Late yesterday afternoon, the four staff unions taking part in the strike, the Combined Staff Association, the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union, the National Tertiary Education Staff Union and the University of Natal Staff Union, had agreed to revise their demands. The unions were demanding a salary increase of eight per cent and increases in their housing and medical aid allowances. They have since dropped their salary demand by one per cent to seven per cent but still insist on the benefits. Mabaso said that if the university failed to accept their latest offer then they would go back to their eight per cent salary demand.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A Transnet strike in South Africa's Western Cape and Northern Cape "kicked off" today with rail services in the Cape Town area severely affected. The SA Transport and Allied Workers Union (Satawu) said over 5000 employees had stopped work in protest against "management's unilateral decisions about restructuring the company". Cape Town station was quiet in the morning rush-hour as the strike by three transport unions brought the Metrorail train service to a virtual standstill. Metrorail spokesperson Riana Scott said only 20 trains were running in the entire system, cutting the usual commuter service to a minimum. Satawu, the United Transport and Allied Trade Union (Uatu) and the United Association of SA (Uasa) are participating in the strike. The Transnet restructuring programme will see non-core businesses disposed of. About 100 union members gathered in District Six for a planned march on Parliament this morning. They have also been affected by the strike. Metrorail is offering just a skeleton train service and protesters are unable to get to town to participate in the march. Uasa's Dennis George said although the unions were presented at Nedlac, currently Transnet management was "both player and referee" in the ongoing negotiations. "Government is sitting with its arms folded and hoping that workers get tired of striking and roll over and play dead," he said. George emphasised the strike was not just against possible job losses. "It's about restructuring in a way that's in the best interest of the country. We believe the restructuring

process should be creating jobs." The unions will present memorandums outlining their grievances to the Department of Public Enterprises and Transnet management. Satawu's Evan Abrahamse said the timeframe for restructuring should be re-visited and proper consultation with union members be allowed. Satawu said no march had been planned for the Northern Cape, but workers belonging to the unions would be out in full force in support of the strike. Workers in the Eastern Cape will go on strike on Friday (Feb 17). The bulk of the action will be in East London and Port Elizabeth where marches are also scheduled. Satawu said workers would then strike in Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the North West from Feb 20 to 22. A national strike is expected on Mar 6.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: Transnet said that its operations in the Western and Northern Cape operated normally yesterday despite a strike by the majority of its workforce. About 50 to 90% (approximately 5,000) of the Metrorail, Spoornet, National Ports Authority, SA Ports Operation and other Transnet subsidiaries did not report for work yesterday. The biggest impact was felt at Metrorail where the damage of a power capable exacerbated the situation even further. According to unions no trains were running yesterday morning and other means of transport into Cape Town were highly restricted. As part of this current phase of the action, which started about three weeks ago in KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape workers will stage their own strike tomorrow. The bulk of the action will be concentrated in East London and Port Elizabeth, where marches are also scheduled. (See issue of Feb 16.)

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: A one-day strike across the Western and Northern Cape provinces ended last night with transport workers expected to return to work this morning, but unions are warning that the rolling action will continue. Yesterday all commuter rail services in and around Cape Town came to a virtual halt, leaving thousands of frustrated and often angry workers unable to get to their places of work. Ironically the lack of trains also meant that a mass march by Transnet Union members to present a memorandum to a government representative outside parliament failed to attract more than 200 marchers because others could not get into town. Only sections of the port of Cape Town operated by SA Port Operations and the NPA were affected. Other terminals such as the fruit terminal, which is privately owned and whose personnel are not members of the striking unions continued to operate normally although marine movements were restricted. The container terminal was shut and little work took place within its closed gates. At Saldanha where both the iron ore and multi

purpose terminals are operated by SA Port Operations, things came to a general halt. Meanwhile unions have advised that the Eastern Cape ports, East London and Port Elizabeth, as well as commuter train services in the province will be affected as the strike is extended for one day tomorrow. On Monday, Feb 20, it is the turn of Gauteng and the remaining provinces that have not yet felt the effect of Transnet union stoppages. The Gauteng strike is due to last for three days. Unions said they would meet again tomorrow to chart the way forward and decide whether a national strike on Mar 6 is still necessary. A union spokesman said the prognosis was not good and he blamed an arrogant approach by Transnet as offering little hope for settlement.

SWITZERLAND

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: A strike at a metal factory in north-western Switzerland has escalated after the company dismissed 21 managers at its Reconvilier plant. The strikers continued to stay away from work today while moves were underway by a government-appointed mediator to break the deadlock. Swissmetal said the 21 senior staff members had been sacked because they failed to turn up for work today despite repeated calls by the company. Only four staff members reported for work, said a company spokeswoman. On Saturday (Feb 11) the head of the company's board of directors, Friedrich Sauerlœnder, said the strikers faced the sack if they ignored the warning. Trade union Unia said it was shocked that those concerned had learned of the job losses via the media. It said lawyers were looking into challenging the dismissals. Spokesman Nico Lutz said that the decision called into question the mediation measures initiated by the economics ministry last week. The mediator, Rolf Bloch, has been meeting all sides in the conflict to find ways of ending the industrial action, now in its 20th day. The strike was called in protest against plans to close the Reconvilier foundry, with the possible loss of 120 jobs. Swissmetal wants to concentrate its activities at another site in a neighbouring region, but keep a factory manufacturing wires and rods at Reconvilier. Over the weekend the unions organised a demonstration in the village attended by more than 10,000 people in support of strikers at the factory. The situation came to a head after Swissmetal announced that an "accelerated headcount reduction" of 120 positions would take place over the next two to three months. They also announced the re-acquisition of a former subsidiary, Busch-Jaeger in Germany, which carries out similar work to Reconvilier. The strikers have accused Swissmetal of renegeing on an agreement reached after last November over the company restructuring plans.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: There is still no breakthrough in the postal workers strike in Belfast which is now in its 10th day. The Communications Workers Union has been considering an offer by Royal Mail to bring in a third party to help resolve the dispute. Further talks were held at the Labour Relations Agency yesterday evening. Belfast City Hospital said the dispute had “severely disrupted” outpatient appointments with almost 1,000 people not getting letters in the post. Cancer clinics are, so far, unaffected but oncologists at the hospital fear they could be hit next week if the postal strike continues. Carmel Hanna of the SDLP said today it was in “nobody’s interest” or the dispute to go on. “Both parties in this dispute do need to be aware of their wider social responsibilities, particularly if people are missing appointments for scans where they may have a serious illness.” No letters posted to areas outside Northern Ireland are being dispatched and no mail posted in Belfast is being processed. Most incoming British and international mail will be delivered. Royal Mail has brought in up to 50 managers from Britain to help deal with the backlog caused by the strike. Yesterday, an attempt to widen the strike to Londonderry failed because of a lack of support. Post has been disrupted in north, south and west Belfast since the dispute began on Jan 31. It was started by more than 200 postal workers at the city’s Tomb Street depot following difficulties between staff and management over disciplinary procedures and other issues in the north Belfast section. It is understood the dispute relates to allegations of widespread bullying and harassment in the company. However, the head of personnel at Royal Mail, Gary Crawford, rejected the claims, saying the company was only dealing with a small number of cases. Royal Mail and the Social Security Agency have issued advice to customers affected by the dispute. The agency said people who normally received benefit payments through the mail should collect it from their nearest post office from today.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 11, states: The Belfast postal strike continued last night with no sign of a breakthrough as political pressure mounted on both sides to broker a deal. As the strike entered its 12th day, Royal Mail said it had not received a response from the Communication Workers Union to the offer made on Wednesday (Feb 8). It is believed that the CWU was in talks last night. No-one from the union could be contacted. Belfast councillor Jim Rodgers said the strike was bringing the Ulster economy to its knees and it couldn’t be allowed to enter a third week. It is believed that a large-scale demonstration is

planned for Tuesday should the dispute remain unresolved.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 11, states: Postal workers have gone on strike in Dundee following a row with Royal Mail bosses. Staff had to be drafted in from across Scotland to ensure mail was delivered from the Dundee East sorting office. The dispute centres on a new nation-wide policy by the Royal Mail to replace full-time positions with part-time workers when vacancies arise, though mail chiefs insist there will be no redundancies. If a resolution isn’t found then a further strike will be held next Saturday.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: A new offer has been made to striking postal workers, Royal Mail has said. The company said that if striking workers returned to work immediately, it would engage an independent third party to “improve employee relations.” One of the striking Belfast workers’ key demands has been an independent review of disciplinary procedures. The Communication Workers Union said it would not give an official response until officials have had a chance to consult all parties tomorrow morning. Royal Mail personnel director Gary Crawford said they “were not giving into the unions. We have clarified exactly what we mean by that offer and we have clarified the position in relation to the employee relations view in terms of looking forward and trying to improve the situation.” Talks aimed at resolving the strike took place in London today when national representatives of the CWU met Royal Mail management. Workers at Tomb Street in Belfast began an unofficial strike on Jan 31 after staff alleged harassment by managers. Royal Mail denied the claims. Mail deliveries have been disrupted with Belfast the worst affected area. The Federation of Small Businesses said the strike was disrupting the economy. “Many of our members are unable to receive cheques and other important mail which has resulted in their cash flows being reduced by 95% in some cases,” he said. Post has been disrupted in north, south and west Belfast but an attempt to widen the strike to Londonderry failed because of a lack of support for the Belfast workers.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: Striking postal workers in Northern Ireland were meeting today to decide on an offer from Royal Mail and whether to call off their two-week wildcat action. Late last night, management pledged to use independent conciliators to improve future relationships between them and the union at all levels. But staff involved in the strike in Belfast must agree to return to work immediately and pledge not to hold any further industrial action for 12 months.

London, Feb 15 — Following press release, dated today, received from

Royal Mail: Mail is moving out of the NI Mail Centre to the Irish Republic with immediate effect. However, other international and mail to Great Britain is still being held as an unofficial Industrial Action is continuing in Belfast. The current situation, therefore, continues as follows: Unofficial Strike action is still ongoing in the Belfast areas BT1-17 (excluding BT4,5,6 and 16). Deliveries to City Centre firms BT1, 2 and 3 have been made over the last couple of days and this will continue although mail volumes may be less than normal. Residential deliveries have been made by managers to most addresses in BT7, 8 and 9. Mail posted in Northern Ireland for Great Britain is not being despatched. Inward mail from Great Britain should be delivered with the exception of North, South and West Belfast i.e. the affected areas. Firm’s Collections are not taking place although mail can still be posted at Post Offices. Special Delivery items are no longer being accepted at Post Offices in Northern Ireland. Special Delivery posted in Great Britain for delivery in Northern Ireland including the affected areas are being delivered by managers. Capacity and resourcing difficulties are now preventing customers calling at the callers office in Tomb Street to collect mail. Items posted in Northern Ireland for delivery to Great Britain are not being despatched. International items including International Priority Services (Airsure & International Signed For) are also not being despatched - with the exception of items for the Republic of Ireland. Team members at Dundee East Delivery Office, on the West Pitkerro Industrial Estate have given notice that they intend to take Official Industrial Action from 2300 hrs, Feb 17 to 2300 hrs, Feb 18. Talks with the CWU are continuing with the aim of resolving the situation and avoiding the planned action, but at this present time it is expected it to go ahead.

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: As public concern over the postal crisis grows, strikers today predicted their unofficial dispute is coming to an end. Workers have not yet accepted an offer from Royal Mail to bring in an independent third party to help improve employee relations, but admitted that a deal could soon be struck. Crisis talks between Royal Mail and Communication Workers Union officials continued in London today in a bid to find a resolution to the unofficial strike, which is now in its third week. Royal Mail personnel director Gary Crawford said it was “completely unacceptable that customers continued to suffer.” And Ulster Unionist leader Sir Reg Empey has called on Economy Minister Angela Smith to get involved in settling the strike, which is causing “some really significant economic damage.”

Awards & Settlements

**ANTI-TRUST SETTLEMENT,
UNITED STATES**

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Microsoft is fighting its corner on anti-trust issues against the European Commission. Under the shadow of fines of up to \$2 million a day for non-compliance with the original settlement, it claims to have answered, on a deadline day, the European complaints. Microsoft was originally fined a record \$497 million by the European Commission in March 2004, and was ordered to licence important parts of the source code for Windows Server to competitors. It had however, been accused of failing to comply with the ruling. Now, the company has filed a 75-page response to the formal charges it faced, reports the Associated Press, outlining complaints of its own, that the European Commission had ignored key information. According to the AP, the company said in the statement: "Microsoft has complied fully with the technical documentation requirements imposed by a 2004 European Commission decision. Hundreds of Microsoft employees and contractors have worked for more than 30,000 hours to create over 12,000 pages of detailed technical documents that are available for license." Microsoft apparently went on to state that the European Commission had ignored important evidence. This included two reports by experts that stated that Microsoft's technical documents met industry standards. Microsoft's response was a last-day affair, after the EU had given it an extra two months to comply with certain aspects of the 2004 antitrust settlement. It had been ordered to supply additional documentation by Dec 15, or face backdated fines of as much as €2mn per day. That deadline, however, was extended to Feb 15 to give the EU more time to consider Microsoft's argument that disclosing more information would enable competitors to "clone" parts of its Windows operating system. Back in January we reported that Microsoft had buckled under EU pressure. It seemed Microsoft had blinked first, by announcing it was to license all the Windows Server source code for the technologies covered by the European Commission's Decision of March 2004.

**ASBESTOS SETTLEMENT,
UNITED STATES**

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: British building materials firm Hanson Plc said today one of its U.S. subsidiaries had reached an insurance settlement which would slash the group's asbestos-related costs by 20%. The

subsidiary will pay the first \$35 million of its future asbestos costs between 2006 and 2008, providing asbestos insurance cover well beyond 2020, Hanson said in a statement. The settlement would also reduce the group's net asbestos costs by 20% to \$48 million from 2009, from previous estimates of \$60 million. "Certain other U.S. subsidiaries of Hanson continue to litigate for asbestos coverage under their insurance policies ... Hanson remains supportive of the current attempts to introduce U.S. Federal Reform for asbestos," the company said. The U.S. Senate is reviewing a bill to create a \$140 billion fund, aimed at ending victims' right to sue. Claims would be paid out of a trust financed by asbestos defendant companies and their insurers. The bill has sharply divided lawmakers and industry over how to resolve billions of dollars in litigation by people injured with lung-scarring diseases and cancer linked to asbestos. Asbestos fibers were widely used for their insulating and fire-retardant capabilities for years. Around 70 U.S. outfits, including W.R. Grace and Co. (Research) and USG Group (Research), have been pushed into bankruptcy proceedings by injury claims. In June, Hanson said it had built \$485 million in asbestos provision costs and estimated its outstanding asbestos claimants at 139,250, versus 135,750 at the end of December 2004.

**BREACH OF DUTY TO ACT
IN CLIENTS BEST INTEREST,
CANADA**

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: HVB yesterday became the first bank to reach a settlement with prosecutors over its role in helping KPMG provide fraudulent tax shelters to wealthy US individuals. The German bank made a sweeping admission of wrongdoing, and will pay \$29.6m in fines and relinquishment of fees derived from sales of the shelters. In a statement agreed with prosecutors, HVB said between 1996 and 2002 it had "participated in a number of fraudulent tax shelter transactions" that included those developed by KPMG, the big accounting firm. Prosecutors said HVB provided lending that was essential to the functioning of shelters that enabled wealthy individuals to evade more than \$500m in tax payments. KPMG's US business agreed to pay \$456m last year after admitting helping individuals to evade tax on billions of dollars of income and capital gains by selling them fraudulent shelters. The Department of Justice said it was the biggest criminal tax case ever filed. A Senate report last year alleged that HVB, together with Deutsche Bank and UBS, facilitated KPMG's tax shelters by providing lending. Michael Garcia, US attorney for the southern district of New York, said his office's investigation into those responsible for the shelters was "continuing." Mark Everson, commissioner at the

Internal Revenue Service, said the settlement with HVB demonstrated that it was not just accountants and lawyers "who peddled abusive shelters." "The network of criminality extended to banks and other financial players," he said. HVB entered into a deferred prosecution agreement with Mr Garcia's office, which should enable it to avoid a trial on a charge of conspiring to defraud the IRS. So long as HVB abides by the agreement, which requires its continuing co-operation in Mr Garcia's investigation, the charge against the bank will be dropped in 18 months. In its agreed statement of facts with prosecutors, HVB admitted providing loans that were necessary for the functioning of shelters developed by KPMG and known as Bond Linked Issue Premium Structure, or Blips. "The loans entered into by HVB in the Blips transaction were not bona fide," said the bank. "The purported loans had no legitimate business purpose other than reducing the taxes of the Blips customers." HVB blamed much of its wrongful conduct on Domenick DeGiorgio, a former senior employee based in New York who pleaded guilty to tax fraud charges last year.

**BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY,
UNITED STATES**

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: A jury today awarded a Kirksville, Mo., woman \$3 million after finding that a Kansas City lawyer misrepresented her in an adoption 11 years ago. Jurors said Sanford Krigel and his law firm committed a breach of fiduciary duty to Chandrika Collins, 32. She believed Krigel represented her in 1995 when she agreed to let a Pennsylvania couple adopt her baby. Collins then decided not to put the baby up for adoption, but Krigel never moved to stop the process and instead worked with the adoptive parents, jurors said after the verdict in Jackson County Circuit Court. Collins did not see the boy, now 10, for more than four years while she fought in court to get the right to joint custody. It is common for lawyers to represent the birth mothers and adoptive parents, said Adam Pertman, director of the Evan Donaldson Adoption Institute in New York, an adoption advocacy group. The case demonstrates what can happen in such an arrangement, Pertman said. "It raises the question of where is (the lawyer's) heart," he said. "Typically it's the adoptive parents who pay the bill." About half the women who are considering placing children for adoption change their minds during the process, he said, and it is important that lawyers make the rules clear. James Ensz, attorney for Krigel, said his client would appeal. Several other lawyers involved in the case settled before trial for undisclosed amounts. Those settlements will be subtracted from the \$3 million verdict. At trial, Krigel contended that he never actually worked for Collins. He spoke to her for a few minutes on the telephone

and forwarded the case to another lawyer, he said. Collins contended that Krigel told her she could back out anytime before the adoption was final, but in fact she could not after her signed legal consent was approved. That happened just days before the adoptive couple left with the baby.

CLASS-ACTION LAWSUIT AGAINST DIOCESE OF COVINGTON, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: A top Cincinnati corporate executive and a retired federal judge will determine how much money each victim of priestly sexual abuse will receive in the \$85 million settlement of a class action lawsuit against the Diocese of Covington. During a hearing yesterday in Boone Circuit Court, lawyers for both sides announced that William Burleigh, chairman of the board of the E.W. Scripps Co., which owns The Post, and Thomas D. Lambros of Ashtabula, Ohio, former chief judge in the Northern District of Ohio, will be the special masters of the settlement fund. In that role, the pair will meet with those who filed claims, determine the validity of each claim, and award the victim a cash settlement in accordance with the settlement outline. "My role is to do my part to try to bring equity and fairness to the final disposition of this case, and to help heal this awful wound," Burleigh said. But that might not happen quickly. Senior Judge John Potter of Louisville warned the 20 or so victims who sat in the courtroom that it could be six months to a year before they see any payments. He said the paperwork, insurance settlements and other details might take months to finalize. Attorneys had hoped to begin awarding the cash payments, which will range from \$5,000 to \$450,000, depending on the nature of the abuse, sometime this summer. Potter set a hearing for Mar 14 to review the plans for payment of the money. He also rejected two people attorneys had proposed to oversee the masters and administer the payments. Potter said he did not want to choose between Louisville attorney Alex Rose and retired Kenton Circuit Judge Ray Lape because both are friends. But he approved the appointments of Lambros and Burleigh. Lambros, 76, served as a federal judge in northern Ohio from 1967 to 1995. For the last five of those years, he was chief judge, and the courthouse in Youngstown is named after him. Burleigh, who lives in Rabbit Hash, Ky., has some familiarity with the issue of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. He was one of the initial members of the National Review Board, a 13-member panel of lay Catholics that the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops created in 2002 to implement their new policy on handling priest sexual abuse. The board issued a study in 2004 that painted an unflattering portrait of the U.S. Catholic Church

as an institution in which thousands of young victims, mostly boys, were abused over the last half-century, and church leaders were either unable or unwilling to deal with the problem. As he served on that board, Burleigh said he sat and listened to some horrid cases of abuse, including one in which a mother and father from Kansas talked about their son's committing suicide because of abuse. Yet Burleigh remains a faithful Catholic. He attends All Saints Church in Walton, and he played a key role in bringing about the settlement of the lawsuit. Carrie Huff, the attorney for the diocese, said Burleigh's ability to find common ground and his calm temperament were a great help at a critical point in the negotiations. The lawsuit, filed in 2003, claimed a 50-year coverup of sexual abuse by priests and other employees of the diocese. The diocese agreed last year to put up \$40 million to help settle the case. Originally, insurance companies were to kick in another \$80 million, but that figure was cut to \$45 million when fewer victims than expected came forward. Yesterday, much of the full-day hearing was taken up with how much attorneys should be paid. Attorneys in the lawsuit - Stanley Chesley and Robert Steinberg, both of Cincinnati, Michael O'Hara of Crestview Hills, and Ann Oldfather of Louisville - said they deserve 30% of the money awarded. A fifth attorney, Barbara Bonar of Covington, said she deserves a portion of that 30% for her work in the early stages of the lawsuit. Chesley argued that in many such lawsuits, the attorneys get 30 to 40%. He and the others should be paid the 30% for the extraordinary amount of work done and the risk taken in filing the lawsuit, he said. He said his firm has fronted more than \$1 million in expenses. More than a dozen of his clients testified under pseudonyms that the 30% fee was more than fair. They said the attorneys were hardworking, compassionate and went beyond simply seeking justice. "They tried to do the right thing," said one.

CLASS-ACTION SETTLEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. said today that a judge gave preliminary approval for a proposed \$185 million settlement to end a class-action lawsuit that alleges the drug maker artificially inflated its stock price by making false and misleading claims about an experimental heart drug. US District Judge Stanley Chesler entered preliminary approval of a settlement for the case pending in the US District Court in New Jersey, relating to the drug known as Vanlev, the company said. Vanlev was never approved. Under the proposed settlement, Bristol-Myers Squibb will pay \$185 million to create a settlement fund to pay the claims of certain investors who purchased

Bristol-Myers Squibb common stock during the period from Oct. 19, 1999 through March 20, 2002. Last month, Bristol-Myers announced it had reached a settlement with plaintiff lawyers and had established a reserve to settle the case. At that time, Thomas Dubbs, a plaintiff's lawyer in the case, said he hoped the settlement would act as a deterrent to other companies hiding damaging information. The settlement also includes provisions regarding the company's commitment to the public disclosure of the results of certain clinical trials, and the registration of trials on an appropriate publicly-accessible database. The shareholders' lawsuit alleges that company executives praised Vanlev as a potential blockbuster despite the side knowing it had potentially severe side effects as early as 1996. But on April 19, 2000, Bristol-Myers announced it was withdrawing its application for approval from the US Food and Drug Administration because of side effects. The stock fell 39%, according to the suit. In July of 2000, Bristol-Myers said it would test Vanlev at lower doses where the problem of side effects didn't seem as severe. The complaint alleges that there were still problems at the lower doses, and that Bristol-Myers didn't announce it to the market until March 20, 2002, sending the stock down more than 15%. The company said it agreed to the settlement without any admission of wrongdoing. The court has set another hearing in the case for May 11. Bristol-Myers shares fell 15 cents to close at \$22.59 on the New York Stock Exchange.

CLASS-ACTION SHAREHOLDER LAWSUITS, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Feb 9, states: Telecom-equipment manufacturer, Nortel Networks said yesterday that it has reached a tentative settlement agreement with the plaintiffs in two class-action shareholder lawsuits over the company's accounting scandal. Nortel has said that it wants to avoid ongoing litigation over the scandal, which involved the falsification of financial expectations for the 2001 fiscal year. The proposed settlement has a total value of \$2.47 billion, including \$575 million in cash and 628.7 million shares. The company will also contribute half of any funds that it recovers through legal action against former executives involved in the scandal. "Our intent is to achieve a fair resolution of these lawsuits and avoid a prolonged, uncertain and costly litigation process," said Nortel Chairman, Harry Pearce in a statement. Despite the apparent co-operation, there is still no guarantee that this settlement will go ahead. In order to become definitive, both parties will need to agree on corporate governance and insurance-related issues and court, regulatory, and stock exchange approvals must be obtained.

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DECEPTIVE ACCOUNTING PRACTICES, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: American International Group Inc. has agreed to pay \$1.64 billion (euro1.37 billion) to resolve allegations that it used deceptive accounting practices to mislead investors and regulatory agencies. The deal, believed to be the biggest concluded by regulators with a single company, also requires the New York-based firm to adopt changes in its business practices that will ensure proper accounting procedures in the future. AIG said in a statement that the settlement was approved by its board "in the best interest of the company." The pact announced yesterday settles a civil lawsuit filed last May by New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer with backing from the New York State Insurance Department and the U.S. Justice Department. The Securities and Exchange Commission, which also worked with Spitzer on the investigation, filed and settled allegations of accounting fraud with the company simultaneously. The settlement does not cover Maurice "Hank" Greenberg, the company's former chairman and chief executive who was named in the suit but who has pledged to fight it in court. While acknowledging the civil misconduct and facing a huge fine, AIG at the same time escapes the threat that a criminal case could have been brought. The Justice Department said that AIG's agreement spares the company criminal prosecution in exchange for its co-operation with the ongoing federal criminal investigation. Shareholders welcomed the announcement, sending AIG shares up 74 cents, or 1.1%, to close at \$67.12 yesterday on the New York Stock Exchange. AIG said that under the settlement it will pay \$800 million for investors who were deceived by AIG's accounting tactics, including a \$100 million penalty to the SEC. In addition, it will pay \$375 million to AIG policyholders, \$344 million to states harmed by AIG's practices from 1986 to 1995 involving state workers' compensation funds, and fines of \$100 million to the state of New York and \$25 million to the U.S. Justice Department. AIG said it would take a \$1.15 billion after-tax charge in its upcoming fourth-quarter earnings report to cover the settlement. It also announced that it would take a \$1.1 billion after-tax charge to increase its reserves to reflect the completion of a recently concluded internal risk study. AIG said that as part of the deal, it also has agreed "to retain for a period of three years an independent consultant who will conduct a review" of the company's accounting and internal controls.

DRUG MAKER SETTLEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: The manufacturer of Zicam Cold Remedy

has agreed to pay \$12 million to settle lawsuits brought by consumers who say the popular over-the-counter zinc nasal gel destroyed their sense of smell. The Phoenix-based manufacturer, Matrixx Initiatives, says the agreement announced Jan 19 is not an admission of liability, but rather an effort to end most of the litigation over the homeopathic remedy. Five months ago, Matrixx settled with an undisclosed payment the only Zicam lawsuit that has gone to trial. About 400 lawsuits have been filed against Zicam since 2003, some by users who say they lost their ability to smell and taste after using the product only once. Matrixx has denied the allegations, saying no study has linked the spray with loss of smell, also known as anosmia. The company says the likely culprit is a virus, the most common cause of anosmia.

HEALTH DAMAGED DUE POLLUTION, INDONESIA

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: US mining giant Newmont agrees to pay 30 million dollars in an out-of-court settlement of a civil suit in a pollution case with the Indonesian government, a minister says. While a separate criminal case will not be affected by the agreement, the deal brings to an end nearly 18 months of high-profile legal wrangling that has been followed keenly by environmentalists and foreign investors concerned about Indonesia's weak judicial system. The accord follows the rejection last November of a 1.24 trillion rupiah, 124 million dollar, civil lawsuit filed by Indonesia's environment minister after residents near Newmont's now-closed gold mine in North Sulawesi complained that the company's waste had damaged their health. "The funds that will be transferred by Newmont Minahasa Raya ... will reach 30 million dollars," Welfare Minister Aburizal Bakrie told reporters, reading from a statement on the settlement. The money will fund environmental monitoring and projects aimed at health, education and infrastructure projects in the area surrounding the former mine. Bakrie said Newmont would transfer 12 million dollars to an escrow account and "once the money is there, the government will withdraw its appeal" against the rejection of the civil suit. Both sides would set up a foundation to receive that money and then three million dollars annually from the fifth year of the arrangement. The company will also provide a corporate guarantee of an additional 20 million dollars. An environmental monitoring panel will be set up, with members comprised of three people nominated by each side, to determine over the next 10 years whether the environment has been polluted, Bakrie said. The panel will be responsible for making a definitive, scientific conclusion about the conditions of Buyat Bay and if

Newmont is found to have polluted, the money will be taken from the guarantee. Bakrie said that an ongoing criminal case against Newmont's president in Indonesia, Richard Ness, who could face up to 10 years in jail if convicted of failing to prevent the alleged pollution, would not be affected. "This agreement does not lead to an obligation for the government to halt the criminal case currently being processed at the Manado state court," he said. Robert Gallagher, a Newmont official, told reporters that the company was "willing to subject ourselves to 10 years of scientific scrutiny because we remain confident that we have fulfilled our responsibility to the environment." In a separate statement, Newmont said it would "continue vigorously to defend" the criminal proceedings. Environmentalists have said the court initially ignored incriminating evidence of pollution allegedly carried out by Newmont. A World Health Organisation-backed report found no evidence of pollution but Indonesian government tests showed high levels of toxins in the area.

LEGAL MALPRACTICE, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: Eight former members of Hilgers & Watkins have settled a legal malpractice case for \$2.9 million. According to reports, prosecutors allege that the former Hilgers & Watkins attorneys — seven of which are now with Austin firm Brown McCarroll — helped a now-defunct high-risk loan operation cheat Michael McCarthy and his Austin companies Gowran LLC and MGM Holdings Inc. out of \$4.5 million. Among the allegations were legal malpractice, negligence, breach of fiduciary duty, common-law fraud, civil conspiracy and securities fraud. The settlement, which plaintiffs attorney Joseph M. Webber dubs "outstanding," dismisses McCarthy's suit and all claims between the parties, as well as ending several smaller lawsuits, all of which relate to Hilgers & Watkins' representation of Thomas Kaufmann and his company Capital Advantage. "The defendants and their attorneys saw a significant risk in going to trial," according to Webber. The defendants' attorney, Sam Johnson of Scott, Douglass & McConico, says his clients deny any wrongdoing.

TRADE DRESS INFRINGEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: The Procter & Gamble Company and McLane Company, Inc. today jointly announced they have reached a settlement in the lawsuit filed by P&G on Dec 21, 2005 that alleges trade dress infringement on four of P&G's brands and unfair competition by McLane. McLane and its subsidiaries denied those contentions,

but have agreed to a Consent Order submitted to the Court and will immediately redesign the packaging of their products. The remaining terms of the agreement were not disclosed. "Our objective was to put an end to what we view as infringement of our package designs," said Jim Johnson, P&G's chief legal officer. Johnson added: "We simply must protect our brand designs. This settlement addresses our infringement concerns and we are gratified McLane will now compete in the marketplace with different package designs." "We are pleased to have reached a settlement that enables both companies to move forward without the shadow of protracted litigation," said Bill Fendrick, Vice President of Merchandising for McLane's Grocery Distribution division. "As one of America's largest distributors of consumer goods, we value our longstanding relationship with P&G, America's largest consumer goods company and one of our largest suppliers. We believe this settlement is in the best interests of both companies and look forward to continuing the positive and productive relationship that puts dozens of P&G product lines into convenience stores and other retailers nationwide."

WRONGFUL DEATH, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: The family of a patient who died at a state psychiatric hospital while being restrained will receive \$2.3 million from the state to settle a wrongful death suit. James Bell, a 39-year-old patient at Whiting Forensic Institute, died of a heart attack in 2002 after being pinned to the floor and cuffed at his wrists and ankles by staff members. The family's lawyer, Antonio Ponvert III, said staff notes and other records showed Bell began to choke on his tongue and made gurgling noises when he was restrained. He also had dilated pupils, a faint pulse and blood in his mouth when the staff administered a sedative. "Twenty-four staff members, including his treating physician and treating psychiatrist, stood around and watched James Bell die. Not one of them took any steps to save his life," Ponvert told The Hartford Courant today. Bell, who was 6-foot-4 and weighed 350 pounds, had a history of assaults on staff members in his four years at Middletown complex. He was diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic and the paranoia would sometimes trigger aggression. He also had a breathing disorder and was considered morbidly obese. Ponvert said Bell was also not getting the proper anti-psychotic medication. The U.S. Department of Justice in December began investigating patient treatment at Whiting, part of the Connecticut Valley Hospital. Since Bell's death, Whiting has made changes in staff training and emergency medical

protocol to prevent such a fatality, said Wayne Dailey, a spokesman for the state Department of Health and Addiction Services. Dailey did not say whether the workers involved with Bell were disciplined. The lawsuit named 24 staff members, CVH and state officials, and state agencies, including Scott and Thomas A. Kirk Jr., commissioner of mental health and addiction services.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: A Miami-Dade jury awarded an Ontario widow and her seven children a multi-million dollar award today — the final chapter in a wrongful death lawsuit filed six years ago against the Opa-locka engine repair firm she accused of failing to properly fix her husband's plane. At the conclusion of the six-day trial, Certified Engines Unlimited, Inc., was ordered to pay for negligence it exhibited in failing to properly inspect, service and repair the aircraft, and for failing to warn the pilot and owner of any defects about which the firm should have known, according to the plaintiff's complaint. Valerie Leung's husband, Derek Anthony Leung, had run a commercial air charter service ferrying workers and equipment into the gold mines of Guyana. He was killed in August 1998, when the engine on his Cessna U206 aircraft failed, sending him and one passenger plummeting into the Guyanese jungle, attorney Steven C. Marks said. Previously, Leung had sent parts of his engine to Certified Engines Unlimited, a well-known repair station near the Opa-locka airport, for repair. There, Valerie Leung's attorneys argued, mechanics had accidentally overheated the engine, cracking two of its six cylinders — and trying to cover that up by replacing several engine parts without disclosing what they had done. Federal aviation regulations require a complete description of any work performed on a plane. Certified kept the engine for at least three years, Leung's attorneys said. Experts hired by Leung's attorneys traced fractures found on the failed engine back in time, like rings on a tree trunk, dating the source of the damage to the time when the engine was still in Certified's possession. Certified, in turn, argued that it would never have kept an engine for as long as Leung claimed — but that a 1998 tornado had destroyed business records that might have proved it had in fact returned the engine at an earlier date, Marks said. The jury — which included a one-time airplane mechanic for Pan Am, according to Marks — appeared not to agree with that argument, and returned with its \$10 million verdict in less than four hours. Certified's insurance would only have covered half that amount, but as a result of a "high-low" agreement made before the case went to trial, the award will be reduced to \$4 million. There can be no appeal, attorneys said.

Railway Accidents



BALTIMORE, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: CSX Transportation has agreed to pay the city of Baltimore \$2 million to settle costs associated with cleaning up after a 2001 train derailment and tunnel fire. The payment, announced today, settles an ongoing dispute between city officials and the freight rail company over who should bear the costs after a CSX freight train with tankers carrying flammable and hazardous chemicals partially derailed in the Howard Street Tunnel creating an inferno that paralyzed downtown for days. Baltimore sued the rail company to recover the costs of cleaning up the accident estimated to be as high as \$12 million. The city claimed in its suit that Jacksonville, Fla.-based CSX failed to properly maintain its tracks. CSX countered that the derailment actually was caused when a city watermain in the tunnel broke. An investigation by the National Transportation and Safety Board failed to determine a cause. The settlement also provides for increased communication between the city and the rail company about hazardous and non-hazardous rail shipments, including shared access to police radio frequencies and real-time surveillance images from tunnel security cameras, city officials said in a statement.

BRODEK U PREROVA, CZECH REPUBLIC

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A passenger train derailed in Brodek u Prerova today. Nine people were slightly injured. The engine and two out of four cars went off the rail shortly after leaving the station. Seven out of some 50 passengers and both engine drivers were treated for slight injuries on the spot and none were taken to hospital, Czech Rail (CD) spokesman Ales Ondruj told CTK. The engine however slid into a ditch outside the track. One of the derailed cars is tilted and the trolley wiring and rails were also damaged, Ondruj said. He said that operations along the track are expected to be resumed during this morning.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: A freight train derailed yesterday evening in Cumberland County, Pa. Norfolk Southern said 11 cars jumped the tracks at the Enola Rail Yards. Norfolk Southern rerouted trains around the area.

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GLACIER NATIONAL PARK AREA, MONTANA, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 12 - A press report, dated today, states: Six cars of a BNSF Railway freight train derailed yesterday afternoon about a mile east of Glacier National Park, blocking the tracks that carry Amtrak's Empire Builder passenger train from Chicago to Seattle. BNSF Railway spokesman Gus Melonas said it was not immediately clear what caused the derailment, but that an investigation is under way. No one was injured. The freight train was headed from Chicago to Portland, Ore., when the cars derailed at 1335 hrs. The six segmented cars were carrying multiple containers of general merchandise, including paper products and tile, Melonas said. BNSF is investigating reports that some of the containers were carrying hazardous material. Melonas said the line won't reopen until late today at the earliest.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: The railroad tracks east of Glacier National Park reopened today, a day after a freight train derailed and blocked them. The tracks reopened at about 1100, Mountain time, said Gus Melonas, a spokesman for BNSF Railway. The derailment of six cars yesterday afternoon disrupted service by Amtrak's Empire Builder, which travels a Chicago-Seattle route and passes through North Dakota. Passengers boarded buses for part of the trip. Melonas said the cause of the derailment remained under investigation today. Freight in the six cars included paper products, tile and aerosol hairspray.

GUADALAJARA AREA, MEXICO

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: An empty cargo train derailed in western Mexico, killing one person and injuring two others. Jalisco state officials say 17 cars derailed last night 70 miles from Guadalajara. It's unclear what caused the derailment. A security guard traveling on the train, Ignacio Lopez, was killed and two other guards were injured. The train's conductor and machinist escaped unharmed.

HARDEN, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, Feb 11 — A Press report, dated today, states: Fast train services between Melbourne and Sydney remain on hold because of safety concerns after a derailment. An XPT service derailed at Harden in south-west New South Wales on Thursday (Feb 9), prompting a safety audit of axles. Coach services will replace the XPT between Melbourne and Sydney while the entire fleet is inspected. Railcorp chief executive Vince Graham says the XPT will not run until the company is confident the trains are safe.

KILKIS AREA, GREECE

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: At least three people were reported dead and dozens more injured in an inter-city train crash near the northern Greek town of Kilkis, reports said today. The reports said the train, which was travelling from the northern port city of Thessaloniki to the town of Alexandroupolis, derailed after crashing into a truck near Kilkis. Officials said at least three people were reported dead and up to 30 people injured, two of them seriously.

KOTRI AREA, PAKISTAN

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Two trains, one carrying oil, collided in southern Pakistan on today, sparking a fire. There were no immediate reports of injuries. Atiq Ur-Rahman, a railway official, said the collision happened near the town of Kotri and four wagons of the oil tanker train were on fire. Rescue teams were on their way to the site of the crash, which blocked a rail line linking the southern city of Karachi and the north-western city of Peshawar, he said.

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Two freight trains have collided in southern Pakistan but no casualties have been reported. A train carrying chemicals hit an oil transporter near the town of Kotri, 110 miles north of Karachi. The collision started a fire which destroyed several wagons but nobody is believed to have been hurt. A railways official in Hyderabad said it was too early to tell why the crash happened but they are looking at all possibilities including sabotage. "The train carrying oil was on the track at the station when a northbound goods train hit it from behind and a fire broke out," The interior minister of Sindh province, Rauf Siddiqui, told the AFP news agency. The incident has led to train services between Karachi and Peshawar being suspended.

Karachi, Feb 11 — Thousands of railways passengers are stuck between Karachi and Hyderabad as railways traffic remains suspended in Southern Pakistan after the train accident near Kotri yesterday morning. The debris of the burnt locomotives has been removed and new railways track is being laid. It is expected that the normal railways operation will be resumed by this evening. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Feb 12 — Pakistan Railways said it has resumed the train operation in southern Pakistan after a delay of 24 hours as one of the two tracks has been opened for train traffic yesterday evening, which had been closed following the collision of two freight trains. As a result, the Lahore-bound Karakoram Express was the first train that departed around 1622 hrs from Cantonment Station, Karachi after a delay of 24 hours, railway officials said and added more than 19 trains, which

were scheduled to depart from Karachi on Friday, were cancelled and the passengers were asked to collect full refund of their tickets. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

NORTH DAKOTA, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Canadian Pacific Railway must pay four people nearly \$1.86 million for injuries they suffered as a result of a 2002 derailment near Minot, N.D., that spilled a cloud of anhydrous ammonia, a jury decided today. The railroad had admitted it was at fault for the derailment, so the jury was responsible for deciding how much money each plaintiff would receive. In January 2002, 31 cars in the Canadian Pacific train went off the tracks in January 2002 on Minot's western edge. Five tank cars ruptured, releasing almost 221,000 gallons of anhydrous ammonia, a common farm fertilizer. One man was killed and hundreds of people reported injuries ranging from burns to breathing problems from the chemical cloud that hung over the city. Jodi Schulz, 47, who claimed she has suffered from asthma and other respiratory problems since the derailment was awarded \$938,482 for past and future losses. She had been seeking more than \$1.24 million to cover medical expenses and emotional pain and suffering. Jeanette Klier, 51, who claimed she has suffered dry eyes, was seeking nearly \$360,000 but got \$300,191. Melissa Allende, 37, claimed she suffered from asthma, dry eyes and post traumatic stress disorder. She was awarded \$450,872, compared with the \$705,000 she sought. Her husband, Richard Allende, 37, who also claimed to suffer from dry eyes and some emotional issues, was seeking more than \$250,000. He was awarded \$168,071. All told, the plaintiffs in the case sought about \$2.65 million. The railroad had offered them about \$120,000 - \$50,000 each for Schulz and Melissa Allende and \$10,000 each for Klier and Richard Allende. The trial was held in Minneapolis, where Canadian Pacific Railway has its U.S. headquarters. The railroad is based in Calgary, Alberta. More than 100 claims were filed against the railroad. Six cases were settled out of court earlier, including a wrongful death lawsuit by the widow of John Grabinger, 38, who died while trying to escape the toxic cloud.

PENTLAND AREA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, Feb 13 — A Press report, dated today, states: The railway line from Townsville to Mount Isa is closed until at least tomorrow morning after a spectacular derailment on Saturday (Feb 11). An empty copper concentrate train returning to Cloncurry left the track at 1639 hrs 230 km from Townsville, just east of Pentland. A QR spokeswoman said 29 of the train's 50 wagons derailed, causing significant damage to the rollingstock

and the track. Yesterday's passenger service The Inlander from Townsville was cancelled and passengers instead travelled by bus. The spokeswoman said the cause was still being investigated. However, it is understood a buckle in the track, possibly caused by heat, may have caused the wagons in the middle of the train to derail. The two locomotives hauling the train remained upright. "We expect to have the line open by 0400 hrs on Tuesday. QR is doing everything possible to have the area cleared and the track repaired," the spokeswoman said. The view of the derailment from the air showed wagons on their side, in a zig-zag pattern, while one was upside down. Some had their bogies detached by the impact, while about 400 m of line appeared to be damaged, with track and sleepers displaced. The train was returning to Cloncurry after unloading copper at the Townsville harbour. By yesterday morning, repair crews had re-railed three wagons and the 20 wagons from the rear of the train that were not derailed had been stowed in Charters Towers. Cranes and low loaders were on site as part of the repair effort.



Miscellaneous

FISHING VESSEL INTERCEPTED OFF THE WESSEL ISLANDS, NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Fisheries minister Eric Abetz says the Navy has caught a 75 metre boat believed to be acting as a mother ship to other vessels illegally fishing in Australian waters. Navy patrol boat HMAS *Dubbo* apprehended the steel hulled fishing *Chen Long* north-west of the Wessel Islands in the Northern Territory yesterday. There were allegedly more than 600 tonnes of fish on board. Senator Abetz says the freighter may have been acting as a mother ship, but no smaller vessels were caught. "It'd be nice to be able to apprehend absolutely every boat," he said. "The fact that we have apprehended a vessel about which we have certain suspicions, a 75 metre vessel, I think that is a major breakthrough but let's wait and see what the facts actually disclose." Senator Abetz says the boat's 18 crew members are thought to be of Chinese origin. "At the end of the day, the origin of the crew is not all that important other than it may potentially tell us where the operators are emanating from," he said. "But of course the vessel is flagged, as I understand it, to Panama, with a Panamanian flag." The boat and its crew are being brought to Darwin and are expected to arrive later this week.

GAS LEAK AT COAL MINE, DENG FENG, HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: The death toll from a poisonous gas leak at a coal mine in central China has risen to 15 after the last body was found today, state media said. The gas leak occurred late Friday (Feb 10) at the Malingshan coal mine in the city of Dengfeng, Henan province, while 56 miners were working in the shaft, Xinhua news agency reported. Forty-one workers escaped, the report said. Local officials are now dealing with the work of compensating victims' families, Xinhua said.

LNG TANKER DELAYED AT DARWIN, AUSTRALIA

Darwin, Feb 15 — Lng *Kotowaka Maru* departed Darwin last night, Feb 14, for Negishi, Japan. — Lloyd's Agents.

OIL CARGO DISPUTE, MOMBASA, KENYA

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Hostilities between fuel marketers Kenol/Kobil and national transporter Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC) escalated yesterday with complaints by Kobil that their ship, product tanker *Sunshine* (23410 gt, built 1985), had been turned away at Kipevu, Mombasa. It said KPC had only allowed part of the cargo to be discharged. Kobil dug in yesterday instructing the ship to stay put until it had discharged fully. KPC in turn said it had warned them not to bring in the cargo. KPC operations manager Peter Mecha said the storage capacity stood at 300,000 cubic metres with monthly storage at 210,000 only. Alternatively, Kobil threatened to offload the cargo in other markets which would cause a shortage in the local market: "The situation is also likely to affect supplies to foreign countries that rely on Kenya for their supplies, including Uganda and Burundi." KPC said there was no possibility of a shortage. The stand-off in the midst of court battles over monies claimed by each party came only a day after KPC had started to supply the firms controlling over one-fifth of the oil market. On Sunday, KPC cut off the joint marketers claiming non-payment of Sh 39 million for service. "*Sunshine* carrying 35,000 cubic metres of Gasoil and Jet A1 has finally berthed at Kipevu Oil Terminal," said a statement yesterday. "However, it is disturbing that the ship will only be allowed to offload 2,500 m3 of the product, which is an unfortunate situation for the industry and the country as a whole." CEO Jacob Segman yesterday lodged a complaint with Energy PS Patrick Nyoike. Kenol/Kobil had declined to pay the money claiming it was offsetting the same against handling and storage costs, arising from staying in the high seas, incurred by failure of KPC to allocate the space at its Kipevu Oil Storage Facility

(KOSF). They claimed the move would cost them \$36,000 daily in handling and storage costs. "It is our position that this is completely out of direction as per our Trading and Supply Agreement with KPC, Clause 3 (4). We have given the ship owners instructions not to leave the jetty until the full load is discharged in order to avoid demurrage charges." Kobil said it had written to KPC saying the ship would dock last week and the latter checked availability of space. "They insisted on bringing the ship even after we told them about the situation a month ago before the ship started sailing," said the KPC operations manager. (Note —*Sunshine* had sailed Ruwais Jan 30 for Mombasa.)

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

Kano, Feb 10 — Measures to contain an outbreak of deadly H5N1 bird flu in Nigeria got off to a slow start today as authorities struggled to get a clear picture of how far and how fast the virus has spread. In Geneva, the World Health Organisation said it was sending a team of experts to Nigeria to try to prevent human cases of the disease after outbreaks in poultry. "We have a team arranged to go tomorrow or Sunday (Feb 12)," Michael Perdue, an epidemiologist at WHO's global influenza programme, told a news briefing today. In northern Kaduna state, where H5N1 was first found, teams of officials searched for sick birds and tried to find out if any people had fallen ill after contact with birds — a major worry in a country where people and poultry mingle everywhere. "We are driving to poultry farms to find out if they are having any problems with their chickens," said Aliyu Dawobe, a spokesman for the Kaduna state emergency response agency. "We are unaware of any human casualty so far but we are trying to find out more information," he said. The H5N1 strain, which has killed at least 88 people mostly in Asia since late 2003, has been identified in four Nigerian commercial farms, in Kaduna and in the neighbouring states of Kano and Plateau — the first known cases in Africa. However, unexplained poultry deaths have been reported elsewhere in Africa's most populous country, including on smaller farms, raising fears that the disease had already spread to households where chickens and people are in constant contact. The government has ordered a cull of all birds suspected to have contracted avian flu and a quarantine of all suspect farms, but this is difficult to enforce because of a shortage of trained personnel and equipment, and a lack of information. State authorities in Kaduna said a flock of ostriches bred in the same commercial farm where H5N1 was detected had now been shot, but there was little other evidence of any culling. — Reuters.

London, Feb 11 — A Press report, dated today, states: The deadly H5N1 strain of the bird flu virus has

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reached three new European countries, officials have confirmed. The virus has been found in wild swans in Sicily, and other cases are suspected elsewhere in Italy, the country's health minister says. A specialist UK laboratory has identified the virus in dead swans found in northern Greece and Bulgaria. Seventeen migratory birds which had fallen ill or died were recovered from the Italian regions of Puglia, Calabria and Sicily. Two of them - swans that were found in the Sicilian town of Messina - tested positive for the H5N1 strain, the Italian health ministry confirmed. Greek health officials have intensified precautions in areas near Thessaloniki, where three migratory swans tested positive for the H5N1 strain. Tests carried out in a UK laboratory also confirmed the deadly bird flu virus in wild swans found in the Bulgarian wetland region of Vidin, close to the Romanian border. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation warned this week that bird flu could already have arrived in countries neighbouring Turkey, where outbreaks have hit 26 of its 81 provinces. The Rome-based agency said it is working with ornithologists at more than 20 sites in southern Europe where bird migration is under way. The infected swans found in Italy are believed to have been returning to Europe from Russia. Traps for wild birds are being set and farmers are being urged to be vigilant. The area surrounding the lakes in northern Greece, where the dead swans were found, has already been sealed off. Restrictions have been imposed on the movement of commercial poultry and a ban on hunting is in place. The measures are expected to remain in force for at least three weeks.

Hong Kong, Feb 13 — Government workers searched rural areas of Hong Kong for poultry today to enforce a ban on backyard fowl to try to stop bird flu taking hold in one of the world's most densely populated cities. Hong Kong has not had any bird flu infections in people since the present outbreak began in Asia in late 2003, but the territory's health chief said earlier this month that H5N1 is probably endemic in the region around Hong Kong. Hong Kong's legislature passed last week an emergency law banning backyard poultry farming and officials stressed today that poultry would be culled with no further warning. "Chickens, ducks, geese, pigeons and quails are out and not even one can be kept. From today, we will confiscate," said a government spokesman. An official said 700 birds had been seized so far this month but many poultry owners had culled their own birds so it was unclear how many were left. Under the new law, anyone breaking the ban can be fined up to HK\$100,000 (US\$12,900). Global fears grew over the weekend after the deadly strain first appeared in the European Union, in swans in Greece and Italy, while Nigeria waited nervously for test

results on two children feared to be the first Africans to be infected. — Reuters.

Bucharest, Feb 13 — Romania found cases of suspected bird flu in fowl close to the port of Constantza, authorities said today. Avian flu has been discovered in 29 villages across the country since the virus was first detected in the Danube delta in October, but Romania has not reported any human cases. "Rapid tests on two dead hens found in a courtyard led to suspicion of the presence of the H5 type of the virus in the Topraisar village, in the county of Constanta," the country's chief veterinarian Ion Agafitei told Reuters. The village is 40 km north of the border with Bulgaria. Agafitei said all 20 hens from the courtyard were killed. The village will be quarantined and birds will be culled there if further checks confirm the presence of the H5 type. On Saturday (Feb 11), authorities found new suspect bird flu cases in the delta and confirmed the presence of the virus in a nearby village. Last week, Romania confirmed the presence of the H5 type in poultry in a village in the south of the country close to the border with Bulgaria. — Reuters.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Indonesia says confirmed bird flu cases at 26 Indonesia says the World Health Organisation (WHO) has confirmed the country's 26th human case of bird flu, while a minister said infections of the virus in poultry must be reported faster. Hariadi Wibisono, director of control of animal-borne diseases at the ministry, said a WHO-recognised laboratory in Hong Kong had confirmed a November case in which the patient survived. "It was an old case but we only recently received the confirmation. He was admitted on Nov 25 but became well again," Mr Wibisono said, adding the man in question was from Central Java province. Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country, has reported 18 human deaths from avian flu that have been confirmed by the WHO. Local tests also showed a 23-year-old man died of bird flu on Friday and tissue samples have been sent to the same Hong Kong laboratory. Seven of the confirmed Indonesian fatalities have been in 2006, making Indonesia the country with the most bird flu deaths so far this year.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: The deadly H5N1 bird flu virus has been confirmed in swans in Austria. Austria's health authorities said the cases in two dead wild swans were the first to be found in the country. The H5N1 strain, which can be deadly to humans, was also confirmed on Saturday (Feb 11) in neighbouring Italy, as well as in Greece and Bulgaria. The swans were among 21 dead wild fowl examined in Austria. They were found at Mellach, near Graz, where restrictions on poultry are now in effect. The authorities have set up a protection zone within a three-kilometre radius

of Mellach and a 10-km surveillance zone beyond that. The H5 bird flu virus has been found in Slovenia, on Austria's southern border. The H5N1 strain of bird flu has killed at least 90 people since early 2003, mostly in South-East Asia.

Berlin, Feb 15 — Three more countries said yesterday they had detected cases of deadly bird flu in wild swans, with Germany, Iran and Austria the latest to find the virus that has killed 91 people worldwide. Austria and Germany became the third and fourth European Union countries to report H5N1 bird flu, just three days after the bloc's first instances were confirmed by Italy and Greece. Germany said its results came from initial tests. Both countries said samples of the dead birds had been sent to the EU's reference laboratory in Britain for confirmation. Experts had said it was only a matter of time before the H5N1 strain dangerous to humans broke out in Iran, a wintering place for wildfowl that may be carriers. Neighbouring Iraq, Azerbaijan and Turkey had already reported outbreaks. New cases of H5 bird flu were found in Romania, Europe's largest wetlands and a major migratory route for wild birds. Tests were under way in Britain to see if the new samples were H5N1, of which Romania and neighbour Bulgaria have already had cases. Germany said it would bring forward to February 17 a ban on keeping poultry outdoors, and Italy said police had impounded more than 80,000 chickens and 7,000 eggs from farms in the south that were not respecting health norms. Across Europe and into Africa, countries have reported sharp drops in poultry sales as the number of outbreaks grows. Health experts are trying to warn people of the dangers of the virus that is contracted through direct contact with infected birds, but are struggling in countries such as Nigeria where poultry is everywhere — on the streets and on buses. International experts are in Nigeria to advise authorities on what preventive measures they should be taking, including closing live-poultry markets and restricting poultry movements. No human cases have been found in Nigeria, the first African country to confirm cases of H5N1, and health officials said yesterday that two children suspected of having the virus probably did not have it after all. Greece also said tests on a man suspected of having bird flu had come back negative. — Reuters.

Paris, Feb 15 — European governments today ordered farmers to lock up their chickens after the deadly bird flu virus was found in two new countries on the continent, dealing another blow to battered poultry sales. Germany and Austria are the latest EU countries to report the discovery of dead swans infected with the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, that has spread from Asia to Africa and killed 91 people and led to the destruction of millions of birds. The World Animal Health Organisation

(OIE) says the cases themselves do not necessarily mean the disease, which is highly contagious among poultry, has spread to domestic flocks, and this is where governments should now concentrate their efforts. "Little can be done about the migratory patterns of wild birds, therefore we emphasise the importance of minimising the opportunity for domestic birds to come into contact with wild birds," a spokeswoman for the OIE said. German Agriculture Minister Horst Seehofer said authorities would now focus on preventing any transmission to livestock. He brought forward a ban on keeping poultry out of doors to Feb 17 from Mar 1. Seehofer said the ban would take immediate effect today in the rural northern state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, where the infected swans were found. In Austria, the Health Ministry said it had created a restricted zone within a three-km radius of where the dead swans were found, in the Styria region bordering Slovenia. All poultry trade has been banned in the area for at least 30 days. Monitoring for signs of bird flu will be carried out within a further 10-km radius, and poultry bought and sold only with ministry permits. In the entire area, farmers will have to confine their poultry stock to barns. Poultry markets and shows, and hunting for wild fowl, have been banned, the ministry said. The latest European cases follow the discovery of the virus in Italy and Greece at the weekend (Feb 11-12), putting governments as far north as Stockholm and Oslo on alert. Sweden has ordered farmers to keep chickens and turkeys indoors, reinstating restrictions that were issued in the autumn and Norway has imposed a similar ban and stepped up its checks. The Netherlands, home to Europe's most densely-populated poultry flock, may also bring its ban forward soon. In France, the national food safety agency yesterday warned the government of an increased risk from migratory fowl. The farm ministry is today expected to extend its ban on keeping poultry outside to the whole of France. The Slovenian Veterinary Administration has ordered the confinement of all poultry in the country and authorities have told people to stay away from wild birds. And the Swiss government today ordered a nationwide poultry lock-up from Feb 20. In Italy, police impounded more than 80,000 chickens and 7,000 eggs from farms in the south of the country as part of a major crackdown on health norms. The new cases have had a dramatic effect on Europe's 20-billion-euro poultry sector. Sales in Italy have plunged more than 50% since the weekend, the farm union Coldiretti said, while others have estimated losses to the sector of euros one billion. In France, sales are down by 15% after recovering around Christmas, although they have held up in the UK, where 90% of poultry reared for meat is kept inside anyway. There are fears

that in Germany, where turnover is around euros two billion, consumers may start to shun chicken too. "Poultry sales are currently 10-15% below normal levels but we attribute this more to reports about several meat hygiene scandals not to bird flu," said Thomas Janning, a spokesman for the German poultry industry association ZDG. — Reuters.

OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA, SUDAN

Khartoum, Feb 15 — Cholera has been confirmed in two southern Sudanese cities in a rapidly spreading outbreak that has claimed 27 lives, UN officials said today. With cities full to the brim of returning southerners following a 2005 peace deal, the bare infrastructure cannot cope and two-thirds of the population drink unclean water, a carrier of the disease. "It's particularly alarming in Juba, where a city of at least 250,000 depends to a great extent on untreated water from the Nile," said the UN children's agency (UNICEF) spokesman Ben Parker. In less than two weeks, 1,433 cases have been reported and at least 27 people have been killed by the outbreak first reported in the town of Yei earlier this month, The World Health Organisation (WHO) said. The first case tested positive as cholera this week, the WHO said. "The outbreak highlights the woeful state of water supply in southern Sudan's urban centres," Parker said. UNICEF are upgrading water sources in other urban centres to prevent the cholera outbreak spreading further and are distributing soap, jerry cans and chlorine to contain the cases in Juba and Yei. — Reuters.

Fires & Explosions



CHEMICAL PLANT, RAMPUR, UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: At least two persons were killed and 16 others received burn injuries, six of them serious, as a fire broke out at a Menthol chemical factory in Rampur, Uttar Pradesh, following a boiler explosion today, police said. Though the fire was controlled soon, some more persons were feared to be trapped in the debris of the boiler, which was yet to be cleared, they said. The cause of the boiler explosion was being ascertained, police said, adding that six of the injured were taken to New Delhi for further treatment while others were admitted in Moradabad district hospital.

CHURCH, MINNEDOSA, CANADA

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: The congregation of the Minnedosa United Church is struggling to deal with a fire that destroyed their 105-year-old

church building early yesterday morning. The building was central to the community of Minnedosa, and was used as a meeting place for people of many faiths. It was also home to a nursery school and a food bank."It was extraordinary. It had extensive renovations and additions over the years. It had some of the most beautiful stained glass windows I've seen in my career, and acoustically, it was one of the most superb spaces around." Three people appeared in a Brandon court this morning, charged with arson in connection with the fire. While most of the church building was levelled, Ankenmann says the church centre at the back of the building is still standing, and the offices were relatively unscathed.

COAL MINE, TANGSHAN, HEBEI PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Compensation totalling 24.8 million yuan (US\$3.1 million) has been given to all the families of the victims of a coal mine blast in northern China over two months ago, which killed 108 miners and injured 29 others. The money was paid by the management of the Liuguantun colliery in Hebei Province, in line with the rules and regulations on mine accidents, reported the rescue operation headquarters today. The gas explosion happened at the Liuguantun Coal Mine in Kaiping District of Tangshan City at 1530 hrs, Dec. 7, when more than 100 miners were working there. The exact number is known. Of the injured, 23 have recovered, but six are still hospitalized. The gas blast was an exceedingly grave accident caused by "illegal operation", Li Yizhong, director of the State Administration of Work Safety, said. The official has promised to take "resolute measures" to deal with the grim situation of coal mine safety, including enhancing supervision and standardising coal mine resources.

COAL MINE, TRAVNIK, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Sarajevo, Feb 16 — One miner was killed and 22 injured in a gas explosion at a coal mine near the central Bosnian town of Travnik, police said today. Rescuers evacuated all 25 miners from the coal mine Abid Lolic after the explosion late yesterday, a spokesman for the central Bosnian cantonal police said. Fourteen miners were kept in nearby hospitals but their lives were not in danger, media reported. Police spokesman Muraif Husic said the investigation into the cause of the explosion was under way. He did not elaborate but local media reported that the methane gas exploded at the mine. — Reuters.

ELECTRICITY SUBSTATION, PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Power has been fully restored to about 8,000

Palmerston North homes and businesses after a fire in an electricity substation cut off power yesterday. Many shops closed for the day as they were unable to process eftpos transactions. Traffic lights were out in many parts of the city and police had to direct motorists. Isaac Nicholson, who was working in the neighbouring building, says he smelled smoke, then heard two loud bangs from the station about 1400 hrs. Three appliances brought the fire under control. A Powerco spokesman says although power was restored just after 1800 hrs, the company is still asking people to use electricity conservatively.

FACTORY, DELHI, INDIA

London, Feb 12 — A Press report, dated today, states: Several people were feared killed in a fire at a chemical factory in North West Delhi tonight, fire brigade sources said. The blaze was reported in the factory located at Samaipur Badli area at around 2000 hrs, the sources said. Eleven fire tenders were rushed to the scene. Several people were inside the factory when the fire broke out, the sources said. A rescue operation was going on in full scale, they said.

FIREWORKS FACTORY, SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA AREA, SPAIN

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: An explosion at the Calo-Teo firework factory near Santiago de Compostela this morning caused substantial material damage to various workshops and storage areas as well as to residential properties around 300 metres away. Nobody was injured in the blast, which occurred at 0623 hrs in the parish of Mazas, but the noise of the explosion was heard in Santiago city centre around 10 km away.

GAS WELL, GRINDSTONE AREA, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Drilling equipment apparently sparked a gas well fire yesterday morning that injured six people, two of them seriously, officials said. Crews poured water on the burning well yesterday afternoon and moved the equipment out of the way, said Roy Shipley Jr., Fayette County emergency management director. "It's a very serious situation, but they do have it under control," Shipley said. Crews planned to cap the well, about 30 miles south of Pittsburgh, once the fire was out. County emergency dispatchers said six workers were hurt. Four were taken to Mon Valley Hospital and were reported in stable condition. Two others were flown to Pittsburgh hospitals with burns and were said to be in serious condition, dispatchers said. The well is owned by Moon Township-based Atlas America Inc., but the company had no workers at the site when the fire started about 0900 hrs, said Jeffrey Simmons, the company's executive vice president of

operations. Simmons said two other companies had workers on the site - Clymer-based Whipstock Natural Gas Service and Superior Well Services Ltd., which has offices in Blacklick and Indiana, Pa. "From talking to our engineers, it doesn't sound like we're going to have any problem putting it out," Simmons said. "There's still gas coming out of the wellhead, but not a tremendous amount."

NIGHTCLUB, WEST WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: People affected by a deadly nightclub fire added dozens of new defendants to a lawsuit today, including members of the band whose pyrotechnics sparked the blaze and manufacturers of flammable foam that fed the flames. The new defendants were added to a complaint filed in 2004 on behalf of people including survivors of the fire and relatives of those killed. The nearly 270 plaintiffs allege negligence and carelessness led to the deaths and injuries in the 2003 blaze at the Station in West Warwick, Rhode Island. The lawsuit alleges that members of the band Great White — David Felice, Eric Powers, Mark Kendall and Jack Russell — helped with the pyrotechnics show but failed to get the required permit. The blaze began when sparks from the pyrotechnics ignited soundproofing foam around the stage. It killed 100 people and injured more than 200. Also named in the suit is Aram DerManouelian, president of American Foam Corp, which sold the flammable foam to the club owners. He is accused of discouraging employees from telling prospective customers about the potential hazards. The new lawsuit also names companies accused of manufacturing the flammable foam and insurance companies that allegedly failed to adequately inspect the club. The new suit also accuses The Home Depot of selling insulation to the club without warning of its potential hazards. That material is different from the foam ignited by the pyrotechnics. "The Home Depot intends to defend itself vigorously in the lawsuit," spokesman Jerry Shields said. "The company is proud of its longstanding history of providing safe products for its customers." The initial complaint named roughly four dozen defendants, including club owners Jeffrey and Michael Derderian and former Great White tour manager Daniel Biechele. Biechele pleaded guilty this month to 100 counts of involuntary manslaughter for lighting the pyrotechnics. The Derderians were also charged in a criminal indictment and have pleaded not guilty. The third anniversary of the Feb 20, 2003, blaze is the statute of limitations for bringing a claim, said Steven Minicucci, a lawyer for the plaintiffs. The suit did not specify how much the plaintiffs were seeking in damages.

PREMISES, AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Austin fire officials announced Thursday (Feb 9) that Saturday's major fire downtown was caused by an electrical malfunction in the heating and ventilation system at Club Taste. Besides the nightclub, several others businesses and artists studio spaces were destroyed at Fifth and San Jacinto in the early hours of Feb 4. More than 50 artists were left without studios. One of the buildings housed the KOOP 91.7 FM radio station. New estimates show the fire caused \$2.7 million in damages.

PREMISES, MOSCOW, RUSSIA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire raged today through a building in central Moscow housing several newspapers and firefighters were struggling to contain the spreading blaze, emergency officials said. Two people were hospitalized with suspected carbon monoxide poisoning and firefighters rescued another 10 people from the top floor of the burning building, said Viktor Beltsov, a spokesman for the Emergency Situations Ministry. All the people who had been inside the building when the fire broke out were believed to have been evacuated, he said. An electrical short-circuit in the offices of popular daily Komsomolskaya Pravda on the sixth floor is believed to have caused the fire, which then spread to the floor above, the ITAR-Tass news agency quoted the fire department as saying. Several dozen fire engines were at the scene to douse the flames, which spread to an area of nearly 400 square metres, ITAR-Tass quoted Deputy Emergency Situations Minister Yevgeny Serebrennikov as saying. Russian television showed thick, black smoke pouring from the top two floors as flames raged inside.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: Fire destroyed much of a central Moscow office building housing several newspapers today, and injured at least four people including two firefighters, emergency officials said. Firefighters using extension ladders poured water on the multi-storey building and rescued 10 people from the top floor of the burning structure, said Viktor Beltsov, a spokesman for the Emergency Situations Ministry. Two people were hospitalised with suspected carbon monoxide poisoning and Beltsov said at least two firefighters were injured. Russian news agencies said they were injured when part of a floor inside collapsed. The ITAR-Tass news agency quoted the city fire department as saying that a short-circuit in the sixth floor offices of the popular daily Komsomolskaya Pravda is believed to have sparked the blaze. Russian television showed thick, black smoke pouring from the top two floors. The blaze was finally put out around 1930 hrs.

PREMISES, TAMPA, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 11, states: State and local arson investigators concluded this week that the fire that caused an estimated \$5 million damage to a glass company and put about 150 employees out of work, was sparked by a piece of office equipment. Investigators with the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue and the Florida State Fire Marshal's Office called the fire accidental, saying it started in a second-floor office of West Shore Glass, 5300 Knox St. The fire January 29 swept through two buildings and took 60 firefighters four hours to extinguish.

PREMISES, WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: A three-alarm fire that ripped through a two-story Waltham building yesterday evening caused an estimated \$1 million in damage, left three businesses in shambles and forced the temporary closure of surrounding ones. The businesses destroyed were a Beauty Salon, a Cafe, and a restaurant-bar. Waltham firefighters battled the blaze for several hours with the help of neighbouring departments and remained at the scene yesterday. The building was destroyed with the exception of the original space occupied by Shopper's Cafe before a recent expansion that almost tripled the size of the decades-old business, according to Waltham Building Commissioner Ralph Gaudet. The space was protected by a brick firewall. The cause of the fire remains under investigation, State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan said.

PREMISES, WINNIPEG, CANADA

London, Feb 12 — A press report, dated today, states: The charred metal shells of several semi-trucks stared out from what was left of a maintenance garage as investigators tried to sort out what caused a multimillion-dollar blaze at a Winnipeg trucking firm Friday (Feb 10) night. The cause of the fire at 739 Lagimodiere Blvd., which is owned by Arnold Bros. Transport Ltd. but rented out to several tenants, was still under investigation yesterday. The cost of the damage caused by the fire was not available yesterday, but was expected to be between \$3 million and \$5 million, a fire official said. "We still haven't got all the insurance details," the fire official said. There were six or seven rigs worth about \$135,000 each, and a bus inside the garage, he said. The steel-clad structure was deemed unsafe for crews to enter yesterday, he added, slowing their investigation into the blaze, which burned for hours Friday night. The fire was contained in the building on the northwest corner of the site. It once served as a maintenance building for the company but was being rented by a private

owner/operator. Except for several investigators and a Winnipeg police cruiser car securing the scene, it was business as usual at the Lagimodiere Boulevard site yesterday. Company president Fred Arnold said yesterday afternoon that business was "absolutely not" disrupted by the fire. "Our operation is up and running. We have over 300 trucks on the road today," Arnold said yesterday.

RESTAURANT, BRENTON, ARKANSAS, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 7, states: The fire that destroyed the Western Sizzlin restaurant in Benton early Sunday (Feb 5) caused more than \$1 million in damage, officials are estimating. Fire Marshal Bruce Armstrong said today that insurance investigators offered the damage estimate. "That's the rough estimate right now," Armstrong said. Officials also believe the fire may have been started by an electrical problem in the restaurant's bakery section, Armstrong said. "The insurance investigators are bringing in an electrical engineer tomorrow to evaluate the scene," Armstrong said. "The engineer will determine what condition appliances were in at the time of the fire." The fire was first reported to the Benton Fire Department at 0243 hrs Sunday. The Bryant Fire Department assisted Benton firefighters. Restaurant owner Elgin Hammer reportedly told fire officials at the scene that he intends to rebuild the popular eatery, which has operated in Benton for 28 years. Benton Fire Chief Ben Blankenship told one source that six firefighters escaped serious injuries while battling the blaze. The firefighters were on top of the building when fire broke through the roof, Blankenship said.

TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, CHENNAI, INDIA

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated today, states: A major fire at the Kellys telephone exchange early yesterday destroyed switches and equipment, affecting over 12,000 lines of Chennai Telephones. The levels affected are 2641, 2642, 26419, 2631, 26418 and 26419. Giving the details, Chief General Manager, Southern Telecom Project, R. Purushothaman, who is holding additional charge as CGM, Chennai Telephones, told reporters that engineers noticed smoke coming from the second floor of the technical block. They alerted senior officers and the Fire and Rescue services department. Fire fighters broke open a windowpane to enter the room where the fire was raging. It was put out by 0300 hrs. Water used to extinguish the fire seeped into the first floor housing vital technical equipment, including bay switch controllers. As a precaution, power was shut down on the first floor. Mobile phone users lost connectivity for five hours. The mobile network was also shutdown. A high-level technical team from New Delhi is probing the cause of the fire. "We

are co-ordinating with State Electricity Board authorities and are hopeful of restoring the 8,500 worst affected lines in four to seven days. We are providing wireless in local loop connections, wherever feasible. We will waive the rent during the 'down time' for the affected subscriber lines," the CGM said.

TEXTILE MILL, GAZIPUR DISTRICT, BANGLADESH

Karachi, Feb 10 — A huge fire broke out at privately owned textile mill-Shamim Spinning Mill near Shafipur Ansar Academy in Gazipur district in central Bangladesh on Wednesday night (Feb 8). According to local media, as result of fire, property and goods worth about Tk 1 billion (\$15 million) were gutted and at least six people including the manager of the mill were dead. Fire fighters said, the fire occurred at the mill at around 2250 on Wednesday from a short circuit. The flames engulfed the mill within a short period of time, as there were stacks of cotton everywhere. The fire also destroyed valuables including machinery, different kinds of textile items, furniture and raw materials. A total of 13 units of the Fire Brigade rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after a seven-hour-long effort at around 0500, yesterday. Brigadier General Md Abdur Rashid, PSC, G (rtd), Director (Administration) of the Jamuna Group, informed that the fire had almost gutted the mill and its valuables including machinery, cotton and different kinds of textile items worth about over Tk 1 billion. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

WAREHOUSE, MURRAY, UTAH, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: Dozens of arcade games were destroyed in a two-alarm warehouse fire this morning. The fire began at about 0645 hrs, in a warehouse behind Davidson Marine, 4688 S. Riverside Drive (500 West). Murray Fire Marshal Phil Roberts said the blaze is being considered "suspicious," and an investigation into the cause is under way. No one was inside the warehouse at the time of the fire, and no one was hurt. Roberts did not have a damage estimate Sunday night but said several dozen arcade games were destroyed. Other items in the warehouse sustained smoke damage, he said. The fire began in the centre of the warehouse and was contained to that area. It took fire crews about 30 minutes to get the fire under control, and they were on scene for another seven hours, Roberts said. Ten fire units responded, including firefighters from the Murray and West Valley City departments, as well as the Unified Fire Authority.

WAREHOUSE, PORT MUHAMMAD BIN QASIM, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Feb 12 — Understand form Central fire brigade of Karachi that a huge fire broke out in imported cargo

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shed at Port Qasim Authority (PQA). As a result, a large quantity of imported Jute from Bangladesh was gutted. The fire was reported to fire brigade around 1115 today and is still burning. About 10 firefighting vehicles of city district government, 2 of Port Qasim and 8 of Pakistan Navy took part in firefighting operation. A few vehicles are still dousing the fire. The jute was imported by a private party. The cause of fire and actual loss are yet to be determined. Initial report suggests about 30,000 bales (? bales) were gutted. Other cargo is being saved. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

WAREHOUSE, PUNJAB, INDIA

London, Feb 12 — A press report, dated Feb 6, states: A fire at a railway warehouse in the Indian state of Punjab has destroyed millions of dollars of earthquake aid meant for Pakistan, officials say. No one was injured in the blaze, which has now been brought under control. The material stored in the warehouse was meant for distribution by Pakistan to victims of the 8 October earthquake. Pakistan says more than 73,000 people died and millions were made homeless in the earthquake. Another 1,400 died in Indian-administered Kashmir. The district commissioner of Amritsar, Kirandeep Bhullar, said that medicines, tarpaulins and about 10,000 truck and tractor tyres were stored in the warehouse when it caught fire. It is not clear why the relief goods were still in storage so long after the disaster. Railway officials say the fire was possibly caused by a short-circuit.

WAREHOUSE, STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: A raging fire at a central Stockton warehouse shot flames and smoke into the evening sky yesterday, taking dozens of firefighters hours to extinguish it. An hour into the two-alarm blaze, the 21,000-square-foot warehouse collapsed. More than 40 firefighters fought the blaze from outside, because entering it would have been too dangerous, Stockton Fire Department Battalion Chief Bill Costanza said. No-one was injured in the fire, although it threatened a nearby market early on. The warehouse, in the 2800 block of North California Street, was used to store boats. No damage estimates were available late yesterday. Officials said they do not know what caused the blaze and said arson investigators would inspect the building today. The fire was reported at around 1800 hrs. Firefighters sawed through the warehouse's metal exterior, making holes to shoot water into the structure. Jim Rubino, co-owner of the warehouse, said he leases the warehouse to four people, who rent out space to others to store boats. Rubino said he did not know how many boats were inside the warehouse.

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 100 firefighters and six aircraft are fighting a fire that has destroyed more than 3,000 hectares of grassland in the central west of New South Wales. Crews have not established containment lines around the fire, south-east of Rylstone, but are confident they are managing the hot spots to the north-east of the blaze. Firefighters have saved more than 30 homes but sheds, fencing and stock have been lost. The Rural Fire Service's incident controller, John Parnaby, says ground and aerial crews are aware of the risk of spotting during strong winds forecast for today. "We also have additional resources that we can call from other areas and strike teams from the ... Dubbo, Wellington, Narromine area and we also have access to other strike teams should that be required and that will be identified very shortly today," he said.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: A major bushfire at Rylstone in central New South Wales is still burning out of control. Authorities are concerned that a wind change this afternoon will worsen the blaze. Stock losses are believed to be in their hundreds but no figure is available as yet. The fire has burnt out around about 3,500 hectares. They have saved about 30 households and sheds. A few outbuildings were destroyed, but overall the fire is not controlled and not contained at this stage and the wind is picking up but they hope to keep it within containment lines.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: As firefighters began turning the corner yesterday in their efforts to stamp out a stubborn blaze that's consumed thousands of canyon acres in northeastern Orange County, new predictions of hazardous conditions through the weekend raised fresh concerns. By late yesterday, the blaze, dubbed the Sierra fire after the Santa Ana Mountains peak where it began Monday (Feb 6), had blackened 9,850 acres and was reported to be 62% contained. Full containment is expected by 1800 tomorrow, officials said. The number of firefighters at the scene was reduced from a high of more than 2,000 to about 1,450. To prevent the fire from rekindling, firefighters were burning islands of chaparral remaining near the fire line. Eight firefighters have suffered minor injuries; no structures have been damaged. The federal government would foot the bill for the fire should investigators find any negligence on its part. Preliminary reports indicated that the blaze was started by a planned burn by federal firefighters. Combating the blaze had cost about \$5.5 million, with the final bill expected at about \$9 million.

London, Feb 12 — Hot, gusty weather remained a threat yesterday

as firefighters mopped up two wildfires that burned through 11,000 acres of dry brushland in Southern California. No homes were threatened. In Orange County, a 10,854-acre blaze was 93 percent contained and was expected to be completely extinguished today, said Capt. Steve Miller of the Orange County Fire Authority. Eight firefighters suffered minor injuries battling the blaze and 564 remained on the fire lines, Miller said. The blaze apparently was ignited by remnants of a Feb. 2 controlled burn in the Cleveland National Forest, according to the U.S. Forest Service. Hundreds of homes were threatened over two days. So far, the fire has cost \$6.9 million to fight and the final bill may reach \$9 million, which the Forest Service has said it will pay.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 11, states: Crews continued today to build containment lines and drop retardant on a 24-hundred-acre wildfire 12 miles north of Payson. The February fire wasn't threatening any homes or buildings, and officials say crews were faring well in trying to knock down the fire. The fire in the Tonto National Forest was started Feb 6 by an abandoned campfire. It was 30% contained. Full containment was expected by Wednesday. About 500 firefighters were battling the blaze.

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: A wildfire that charred nearly 4,400 hectares in southern California was fully contained, officials said. Eight firefighters suffered minor injuries yesterday battling the 4,342-hectare blaze on rugged land on the edge of Orange County suburbs. About 130 firefighters remained on the lines mopping up hotspots, said Captain Stephen Miller of the Orange County Fire Authority. Hundreds of homes were threatened and many were voluntarily evacuated in the fire's first two days. The United States Forest Service has said the blaze was most likely started by remnants of a controlled burn conducted on Feb 2 in the Cleveland National Forest. The fire's estimated cost is just over \$7m and the final tally may reach \$9m, authorities said. (See issue of Feb 14.)

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: Firefighters are holding the upper hand in reining in a wildfire just north of Interstate 8 near Gila Bend, Arizona. Bureau of Land Management spokeswoman Chris Tincher says only one helicopter remained today to battle the Saddle Fire, along with two crews. Two other helicopters were released after working the fire yesterday. Tincher says the fire is believed to be 90% contained but the exact acreage was unclear. The brush fire, first reported Saturday afternoon (Feb 11), was estimated at 1,500 acres yesterday. However, Tincher said B-L-M officials might downgrade the size to 1,200 acres. The fire on private and some public lands had threatened only a power line at one point. Tincher said crews would watch for hot spots for

the next few days. She said the fire was likely to have been caused by a person or persons.



C-FTEE

London, Feb 14 — At 1945 hrs, Feb 9, the privately registered PA-46 Malibu, registration C-FTEE, was landing on runway 33 at London, Ontario. During the touchdown the aircraft suddenly veered to the left. The pilot attempted to control the aircraft by applying right rudder and brake, but the aircraft departed the runway surface approximately 2500 feet from the threshold. During the runway excursion the left main gear and the nose gear collapsed, resulting in substantial damage to the aircraft. The runway condition report for runway 15-33, taken approximately 35 minutes after the occurrence, was 50% bare and dry, 40% trace of snow and 10% ice. The runway friction index was 0.63. An aviation routine weather report (METAR), was taken as a result of the occurrence and indicated the wind was 240∞ True at seven knots, visibility eight statute miles, ceiling 5200 feet broken, the temperature was minus five degs Celsius. There were no injuries.

CRASH, SANTO DOMINGO

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: Three people, including the pilot, died today when the Cessna 172 in which they were flying from the Arroyo Barril airport, in Samana, to the terminal of Herrera in Santo Domingo crashed. One of dead was the pilot Raul David Moran, whereas the two passengers who accompanied him have not been identified. Authorities immediately initiated the investigation in the case. But according to Juan de la Rosa, of the Rescue unit in the Herrera terminal, the aircraft was headed to Punta Cana from Santo Domingo. He added that the Dominican Air Force or the Punta Cana airport authorities would conduct the rescue operation.

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

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: An American Eagle Embraer Regional Jet made a safe emergency landing shortly after takeoff this evening at RDU International. Airport sources say flight 4647 to Austin took off around 1740 hrs when someone on the ground thought they saw something streaming from the right wing. Air traffic controllers took a look at the aircraft, but could not see any leaks. Chopper 11 was covering traffic on

Interstate 40 near the airport when pilot Chris Wilson heard radio traffic about the American Eagle flight. The Chopper 11 crew used its powerful camera to zoom in and look at the aircraft, but saw nothing. The pilot declared an emergency and landed safely. RDU crash units deployed as a precaution. No one was injured.

EMERGENCY LANDING, ABERDEEN AIRPORT, SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Feb 12 — A mid-air emergency on a flight from a Scottish airport has been blamed on a faulty cooling fan. The British Airways Airbus carrying 132 passengers and six crew had just left Aberdeen bound for Heathrow when the incident happened last October. The flight crew put on oxygen masks after the interior heat increased and a smell permeated their cabin. An Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) report has blamed the incident on a worn bearing in a cooling fan. The incident happened on 30 October at about 1320, GMT, shortly after the Airbus had taken off. The report stated: "The cabin crew became aware of a strange smell in the forward cabin area. The flight crew were informed of the smell and they asked the cabin crew to monitor the situation. "The strange smell then became evident on the flight deck and there was an increase in cabin temperature. "Initially it was thought that the smell emanated from the galley ovens, but, as it was early in the flight, these had not yet been switched on." An emergency was then declared and the flight crew put on oxygen masks. "The flight crew donned their oxygen masks, declared an emergency and then carried out an uneventful return to Aberdeen," the report said. Investigations resulted in suspicion that the source of the problem was the avionics cooling system. When the avionics fan vent was sent for repair it was discovered that it had worn bearings which were believed to have been the cause of the incident.

EMERGENCY LANDING, HALIFAX, CANADA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: A Swiss airplane flying from Zurich to Miami had to divert today and make an emergency landing at Halifax, Canada, a spokesman said. The Airbus A-330 landed in Halifax at 0745 hrs, after the pilot decided to cut short the flight when he noticed that the oil pressure in one of the engines was dangerously low, said Juerg Dinner, a spokesman for Swiss International Airlines. The pilot initially diverted to Montreal but, as the oil pressure continued to fall, he had to turn off one engine and land in Halifax, which was closer, Dinner said. The passengers were taken to a hotel and were to be picked by another Swiss plane later in the day. A technician has been sent to Canada to repair the engine, Dinner added.

London, Feb 14 — At 1300 hrs, Feb 12, Swiss International Airbus A330-200, operating as SWR65, was in New York oceanic airspace enroute from Miami International Airport to Zurich Airport when the crew requested to divert due to a high oil consumption rate on the number one engine. The aircraft descended to "FL220" and the crew shut down the engine, but did not declare an emergency. Initially, a request to divert to Montreal was made. However, once inside the Moncton FIR the crew then requested to fly direct to Halifax. Moncton ACC cleared SWR65 direct to Halifax where the aircraft landed uneventfully at 1433 hrs. Maintenance crews inspected the aircraft engine and did not find any sign of external oil leakage. It is suspected the oil was consumed by the engine during flight and troubleshooting is ongoing.

EMERGENCY LANDING, INDIRA GANDHI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, INDIA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: An Air India Airbus 310 with 94 passengers on board today made an emergency landing at the Indira Gandhi International Airport following a technical snag. Flight AI 453, on its way from Kuala Lumpur to Delhi, made the precautionary landing at about 1315 hrs after the pilot reported hydraulic failure in the aircraft, according to a senior Air India official. The Airbus 310 landed safely with no reports of anyone injured, the Fire Brigade said. As it was a minor technical fault a "fullscale emergency" requiring various follow-up measures, wasn't declared though all emergency procedures were activated by airport authorities, the official added.

EMERGENCY LANDING, TAMBOLAKA AIRPORT, INDONESIA

London, Feb 12 — A press report, dated yesterday states: A Boeing 737-300 which is operated by Adam Air made an emergency landing at Tambolaka airport in West Sumba district, South East Nusa Tenggara today, chief of NTT Transportation Office Simon S. Uly has said. He said the aircraft with 145 passengers was on its flight from Jakarta to Makassar in South Sulawesi but the failure of its navigation system forced the aircraft to make the emergency landing at 1145, central Indonesia Time. According to him, all the passengers were unharmed.

London, Feb 15 — A press report, dated Feb 14, states: The Indonesian government has expressed anger to a local airline for ordering pilots to fly an aircraft after an emergency landing without examination by authorities, reports said today. The Ministry of Transportation has threatened to revoke licence of Adam Air after its pilots continued the flight of a Boeing 737-300 before undergoing check by the National Committee for Transportation Safety (KNKT),

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reported Kompas newspaper. The aircraft made an emergency landing on Tambolaka Airport in East Nusa Tenggara province on Saturday (Feb 4) and continued the flight about 600 km to the South Sulawesi capital of Makassar without government approval. "The flight between Tambolaka Airport and Makassar was without any permit and very dangerous. Although the aircraft arrived at destination safely, it was against the law," air transport director Mohammad Iksan Tatang was quoted as saying. Tatang said the government might consider revoking Adam Air licence because the illegal flight puts Indonesia at the risk of international sanction. KNKT chairman Setio Rahardjo said continuing flight after an incident breached both national and international regulations. "A plane must not fly immediately after an incident, primarily if the incident was very serious," he said. The aircraft made the emergency landing after pilots reported a faulty navigation system that misled it out of the scheduled Jakarta-Makassar route. Pilots decided to continue flight to Makassar before the KNKT team arrived.

F-OVJR

London, Feb 16 — Smoke in the cockpit forced the crew of Dassault Falcon 20C-5, F-OVJR, operator Develton Ltd, on flight from London to Moskva, carry out an emergency landing at Kiel-Holtenau Airport, at approximately 1930, Feb 15. The aircraft landed on runway but overran the runway end and fell down an embankment. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. There were three crew and three passengers on. There were no fatalities.

FLIGHTS DELAYED/DIVERTED DUE TO FOG, INDIA

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Fog made a comeback at New Delhi airport early yesterday, throwing flight schedules out of gear and greatly inconveniencing passengers as none of them could be informed in time about the delays. This resulted in hundreds of passengers being grounded for hours. The condition was worst at the cramped I-B for domestic departure for private airlines. For over three hours, starting from 0700 hrs, the runway came to a standstill and passengers had to wait for the fog to lift. Clearing the massive backlog, once visibility started improving around 1000 hrs, also took hours. Delays of up to three hours was standard. The problem worsened as the runway visibility range measuring equipment, maintained by the Met department, developed a snag and could not take any readings. A Jet Airways official said that seven of its flights were affected.

GROUNDINGS OF KINGS AIRLINES AIRCRAFTS, NIGERIA

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Nigerian Civil

Aviation Authority (NCAA) has suspended the Air Operator Certificate (AOC) of Kings Airlines pending the outcome of investigation. The CAA noticed that two of the management staff of Kings Airlines, the Quality Assurance Manager and Chief Engineer are no longer serving the airline in any capacity. In addition, procedures for reporting of failures, malfunctions and defects had also been violated.

HI-410CT

London, Feb 14 — Cessna 172P HI-410CT, owned and operated by Caribair of Santo Domingo, crashed following a loss of control while manoeuvring near the Arroyo Barril Airport, near Samana, Dominican Republic, at 0920, EST, Feb 12. The pilot and the two passengers were killed.

INCIDENT AT MANCHESTER AIRPORT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Rocker Meat Loaf narrowly avoided injury after an overloaded jet bringing him to England almost lost control when it landed in Manchester. The Bat Out Of Hell star, who weighs 107 kilograms (236 pounds), and his entourage were seated at the back of the Eastern Airlines Jetstream despite warnings they should be put at the front. And the 58-year-old had so much heavy luggage some of it was strapped to seats, making the aircraft dangerously overweight. The pilot battled with the controls as the Jetstream landed, but it still veered across the runway before coming to a stop on a grass verge. No one was hurt in the incident, but safety bosses have ordered the airline's cabin crew to receive extra training.

INCIDENT ON ALASKAN AIRLINES AIRCRAFT

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: Five passengers on board an Alaska Airlines jet bound for Denver were treated by paramedics after the aircraft's automatic pressurization system malfunctioned, officials said. Flight 578 returned to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport at 1925 yesterday, about 15 to 20 minutes after it departed, said airline spokeswoman Caroline Boren. Paramedics treated the five people for "minor symptoms of ear and sinus pain," said Bob Parker, a Seattle-Tacoma International Airport spokesman. They were taken by ambulance to two local hospitals. The aircraft was carrying 52 passengers, two pilots and three flight attendants, Boren said. The remaining passengers were put on another plane, which left for Denver at 2100 hrs, Boren said. Cabin pressure in flight is set as though the aircraft were at 8,000 feet, Boren said. The alarm goes off when the cabin pressure reaches the equivalent of 10,000 feet altitude, and oxygen masks don't drop until it reaches the equivalent of 14,000 feet,

she said. No masks dropped on the Denver-bound flight, she said.

INCIDENT, FALKLAND ISLANDS

London, Feb 11 — A press report, dated today, states: The Air Atlanta flight to Britain which was due to leave the Falkland Islands on Tuesday (Feb 7) morning has been delayed by four days after a ground handling incident. The Boeing 747 sustained damage to one of its engine covers after a vehicle being driven by a member of the ground staff struck the aircraft. A second aircraft is expected to arrive in the Islands today in line with the usual airbridge schedule. The British Forces are hopeful that outbound passengers from both flightloads will be able to make the journey tomorrow.

LN-RND

London, Feb 14 — A SAS Fokker 50, LN-RND, sustained substantial damage when the main landing gear collapsed when the aircraft was parked at the gate at Oslo-Gardermoen Airport, Norway. The aircraft was to carry out early morning flight SK2301 to Kristiansund, but the passengers had not boarded the flight yet.

London, Feb 16 — Fokker 50 LN-RND, operator SAS Commuter, sustained substantial damage when the main landing gear collapsed when the aircraft was parked at the gate at Oslo-Gardermoen Airport Feb 14. The aircraft was to carry out early morning flight SK2301 to Kristiansund, but the passengers had not boarded.

MID-AIR COLLISION, SAN DIEGO AREA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

See N759KE.

N121LE

London, Feb 16 — A press report, dated Feb 15, states: The starboard landing gear of a small aircraft collapsed this afternoon, crippling the aircraft on a runway used by general aviation at Tampa International Airport, a TIA spokesperson said. TIA's main runways were not affected, the spokesperson said. One person, a man, was aboard the single-engine aircraft and was reported uninjured. It was not immediately known whether the collapse occurred while the aircraft was in the process of landing or taking off. The aircraft was a brand new Beechcraft King Air, and was expected to be towed off the runway in about 30 minutes.

London, Feb 16 — Beechcraft King Air 90 N121LE experienced landing gear collapse on landing at Tampa Airport, Florida, at 2010, Feb 15. The one person on board was not injured.

N266EB

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Feb 9, states: The National Transportation Safety Board says a pilot of a Beechcraft King Air 200 (N266EB) was having problems with his left engine shortly before a crash

in North Myrtle Beach that killed six New Jersey residents on Feb 3. A preliminary report shows Jon Kraut reported trouble with the engine as he aborted an initial landing attempt at the Grand Strand Regional Airport about 2030. Kraut, his wife Robin, their three children and the family's baby sitter were all killed. The report shows the aircraft was "fish tailing" above the runway on its first approach. Kraut radioed he would try again. Witnesses say there was no indication of trouble on the second try. But the aircraft climbed slightly after lining up with the runway before diving into the grass.

N501RH

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated today, states: After an investigation into the Hendrick Motorsports aircraft (Beechcraft King Air 200 N501RH) crash ruled that flight crew error was the cause of the accident that claimed ten lives in October 2004, two of the widows left by the crash are now suing the multi-championship winning team. Diane Dorton, whose husband Randy built engines for Hendrick's team and Tracy Lathram, whose husband was Tony Stewart's helicopter pilot, claim that the safety of their husbands was put at risk by the desire of team president John Hendrick, who also perished in the crash, to get to the race in Martinsville on time. The National Transportation Safety Board had previously ruled that flight crew error was behind the crash, which occurred in poor weather in the Blue Mountains Region near to the half-mile Martinsville crash. Dorton and Lathram claim that Hendrick Motorsports could have flown to another airport, or not gone to the race at all due to the conditions, and showed disregard for the safety of their employees by electing to take the original flight.

N540FT

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: A single-engine aircraft crashed into a house in Roseville this morning, killing four people and sparking a fire that spread to a second residence, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman said. A Glasair aircraft crashed into the house at 1302 Longfellow Circle, near Woodcreek Oaks and Pleasant Grove Boulevard at about 1130 today. Two people on the aircraft and two people inside the house were killed, according to FAA spokesman Bruce Nelson. From Air10, it appears the crash demolished one entire side of the house's second floor. There is also extensive fire damage. Investigators from the Federal Aviation Administration will try to determine the cause of the crash.

London, Feb 13 — Glasair II-S FT, N540FT, crashed under unknown circumstances into a residence at Roseville, California, at 2010, Feb 12. The two persons on board were fatally injured, ground injuries are unknown. The aircraft was destroyed.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: The bodies of two people were removed today from the wreckage of a stunt aircraft (Glasair II-S FT N540FT) that crashed into a Roseville, Calif., home a day earlier. Two people were aboard the aircraft, said Allen Kenitzer, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration, although the identities had not been released this morning. Residents in the city north-east of Sacramento said the aircraft had been performing stunts yesterday afternoon when it crashed into a house and burst into flames. The two bodies were left in the remains of the aircraft overnight to allow crews to stabilize the badly damaged home before extricating the bodies and wreckage, Roseville Fire Marshal Dennis Mathisen said.

N583UA

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A United Airlines Boeing 757 collided with a passenger loading bridge at Sea-Tac Airport about 2000 yesterday just after arriving from Chicago, said Jeff Green, a spokesman for the airline. Seattle-Tacoma International Airport firefighters treated two people for minor injuries on the United aircraft, said Bob Parker, an airport spokesman. The aircraft had taxied to the jetway, stopped and set its brakes but then rolled forward another 10 feet, Green said. The engine cowling hit the bridge, causing minor damage to the aircraft. Passengers were not on the bridge, as the seat belt sign had just been turned off and the aircraft's door was not yet open, Green said. Parker said a passenger and a flight attendant were treated for injuries sustained when they fell inside the aircraft. The passenger was treated at the scene and released. The flight attendant was taken to St. Francis Hospital in Federal Way, treated and released, officials said. There were no flight delays as a result of the accident.

London, Feb 14 — Boeing 757-222 N583UA, operated by United Airlines, struck the breezeway at the gate at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Washington, at 0349, Feb 13, while positioning to park following a flight from Chicago, Illinois. The aircraft sustained minor damage. Two persons on board suffered minor injuries.

N629EK

London, Feb 11 — Swearingen SA 226TC Metro II, N629EK, operated by TriCoastal Air aircraft departed Toledo Express at 1016, Feb 8, arriving at Dayton at 1050, EST. The Metro was to transport auto parts to Harlingen and departed again at 1148 hrs. The aircraft climbed to a cruising altitude of FL160 which it reached at 1156, EST. About The aircraft was descending around one hour and fifteen minutes later when it reportedly nose dived into the ground.

N6895B

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: A pilot was

seriously injured after his plane crashed into a container-loading area at the Port of Long Beach, authorities said. The single-engine plane crashed today in a paved area at the Pacific Container Terminal, said Battalion Chief Jeff Reeb of the Long Beach Fire Department. The plane, carrying only the pilot, cracked in two on impact and came to a rest near a stack of steel containers, said Reeb. The crash did little damage to the ground and there was no fire, said Reeb. Two employees and a longshoreman pulled the pilot from the crippled plane, and he was taken to St. Mary Medical Center, where he was in stable condition, Reeb said. Diana Joubert, spokeswoman with the Federal Aviation Administration, said the crash was under investigation but couldn't immediately provide more details.

London, Feb 13 — Cessna 210M, N6895B, privately operated, crashed under unknown circumstances into shipping containers at a pier, at Long Beach, California, at 0016, local time, Feb 12. The aircraft sustained substantial damage.

N759KE

London, Feb 9 — Cessna 172RG (Cutlass) N9531B and Cessna 182Q (Skylane) N759KE were in collision near El Cajon, California, at 0042, Feb 8. N759KE was on a flight from El Cajon to San Diego, CA. Both aircraft were destroyed. The one person on board N759KE and the two persons on board N9531B were killed.

N900LG

London, Feb 10 — A press report, dated Feb 9, states: A Challenger 601 aircraft, owned by Cheniere Energy Inc., a natural gas and oil company based in Houston, according to public records, with three people on board skidded off the Aspen-Pitkin County Airport runway at 1246 p.m. today after the landing gear under the right wing failed. No one was injured. Two inbound commercial flights, a United flight from Denver and a Northwest flight from Minneapolis, were diverted, said airport director Jim Elwood. Four outbound flights were delayed as well, he said. "On the approach the landing gear failed," said Elwood. "The pilot was able to control the plane and it skidded to a halt three-quarters down the runway." According to Elwood, the runway was immediately closed. The aircraft damaged three runway lights and scattered debris. The Aspen-Pitkin County Fire Department and Trajen FBO Networks responded to the scene. The plane had departed from Van Nuys Airport in Los Angeles, Calif. at 1100 hrs.

London, Feb 10 — Canadair CL-600 Challenger, N900LG, operated by Bramblebush LLC, while on a flight to Aspen Pitcairn Airport, Aspen, Colorado, with three persons on board right main landing gear collapsed on landing at Runway 15, at 1945, UTC, Feb 9. The aircraft sustained substantial damage but no personal injuries reported.

N9531B

See N759KE.

N967CA

London, Feb 14 — At 1743 hrs, Feb 8, Comair CL-600-2B19 Regional Jet, registration N967CA, operating as Comair 1893, was inbound to Toronto, Ontario. During the approach the flight crew was unable to lower the flaps. They declared an emergency and performed a high speed flapless landing on runway 05. The aircraft was inspected by maintenance, and ferried back to Cincinnati International Airport.

TC-THY

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A Turkish Airlines flight skidded off a runway at John F. Kennedy International Airport yesterday, but none of the 198 passengers were injured, a regional transportation spokesman said. Turkish Airlines flight 1 skidded off the runway at 2120 hrs as it was landing, said Steve Coleman, a spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. The flight was arriving from someplace in Turkey, he said. The airport had been closed earlier in the day as New York was hit by a record-breaking snowstorm, and the flight was one of only a few that had been running, Coleman said. It was unclear whether the icy weather was responsible for the incident. "I wouldn't jump to the conclusion that it's weather related until people have the chance to look at what happened," Coleman said. Coleman said the aircraft's pilot would have been responsible for deciding whether or not to land the aircraft, and the airline would have made the call not to cancel the flight. An investigation would begin into the skid, and no further information would likely be available until this morning, Coleman said.

London, Feb 14 — Airbus A340 TC-THY, operated by Turkish Airlines, skidded off the runway on landing at John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York, at 0217, Feb 13. None of the passengers or crew were injured.

Product Recalls

**FLOOR FANS, UNITED STATES**

London, Feb 12 — A serious burn and fire hazard linked to electrical failure has prompted the recall of about 5.6 million floor fans made by Lasko Products Inc. of Pennsylvania, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission said Wednesday (Feb 8). There have been 42 reports of fires, including at least eight that resulted in major property damage, associated

with motor failures on the fans. There have been seven reports of injuries, including burns and smoke inhalation. The recall includes various models of Lasko, Galaxy and Air King fans made between January 1999 and July 2001, and sold through February 2004. The fans were sold at discount department stores across the United States from September 2000 through February 2004 for between \$10 and \$25.

TYRES, UNITED STATES

London, Feb 14 — A press report, dated Feb 13, states: Cooper Tyre and Rubber is recalling about 288,000 replacement tyres used on passenger cars and light trucks. The tyre maker said the recall was prompted by concerns about slow leaks and cracking in the tyres, a small portion of the 40 million tyres it produces each year. Cooper said there have been no reported crashes or injuries linked to the recalled tyres. The models on pickups and SUVs include the Cooper Discoverer S/T, Dean Mud Terrain Radial S-X-T, Durango Radial XTR, Mastercraft Courser C/T, Dick Cepek Radial FC II, Mesa C/T, Pro Comp Xtreme A/T and Tempra Trailcutter Radial RT. The tyres used on passenger cars were made from November 2004 to July 2005 and include the Dean Alpha 365 A/S, Mastercraft A/S, Starfire Flite-line IV and Trendsetter SE. Cooper Tyre is also recalling more than 3,000 models of the Cooper Zeon 2XS and Mastercraft Avenger ZHP because of cracking in the sidewall.

Port Conditions

**BANGLADESH**

Karachi, Feb 12 — The containers handling at Chittagong port (CPA) is suffering on account of low productivity of the newly installed gantry crane coupled with the strike of the shipping agents association. The Chairman of the CPA, AMM Shahadat Hussain, however, told local media that with the installation of the generator, the productivity of the gantry crane would immensely be improved. He also of the opinion that the operating capacity of the operators would be improved remarkably. For this reason, he said, a good number of operators were imparted training. According to CPA sources, eight container vessels are now operating at the jetties of the Chittagong Port while 14 container vessels are waiting for berthing at the outer anchorage. Besides, 15 more container vessels are likely to arrive in the Chittagong Port by Feb 18. Following the acute congestion, the

port users became the worst sufferers. Earlier, port users reported that the handling capacity of the newly installed quay gantry crane at the Chittagong Container Terminal is lower than the normal crane earlier installed in the port. The CPA sources attributed the reasons to unskilled operators and the power shortage. In order to meet the power shortage the CPA has already undertaken a project to install a generator. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, Feb 13 — A press report, dated Feb 12, states: Cargo deliveries at Chittagong port, which handles 80% of the country's external trade, resumed after truckers called off their two-day strike after only nine hours today, port officials said. They said the Bangladesh Transport Workers Federation called off the strike after "successful talks" with the port authorities, but gave no details. "Deliveries resumed after truckers resumed duties at 1500 hrs," a port official said. Imports and exports were disrupted at the port as the truckers halted their deliveries to and from the port from 0600 hrs on the day to demonstrate against what they say is routine harassment from the police for bribes. The Chittagong regional office of the Bangladesh Transport Workers Federation which called for the strike, said the authorities had agreed to redress their complaints. "We have withdrawn the strike as the authorities agreed to heed our complaints," Haji Raja Meah, a federation leader. Port officials said they were greatly relieved that the trucks and buses were moving again and the port had resumed normal operations. Earlier lack of trucks had forced at least 10 ships at the port to suspend loading and unloading, port officials said. Witnesses said thousands of bus passengers were also stranded by the strike. The federation includes bus drivers and their assistants. The federation alleged that truck drivers have been harassed by the police to pay bribes to avoid fictitious traffic violations. "We will go for a longer strike if police do not stop harassing us for money," Raja Meah had said after today's strike took hold. But a senior police officer denied the allegation and said: "We will continue to enforce rules, which transport operators often violate."

ITALY

Genoa, Feb 13 — Port situation: Genoa: One tanker awaiting berth, average berthing delay 12 hours. Savona: One vessel awaiting normal berth, average berthing delay one day. One vessel waiting for special berth. La Spezia: No vessels awaiting berths. — Lloyd's Agents.

SYRIA

Lattakia, Feb 13 — The waiting period for Lattakia port is currently 24 hours and for Tartous it is five days. — Lloyd's Agents.

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		
Abbots Point	13-02-06	Feb 13: Coal: Three vessels due by 19/2; up to 1 day's delay expected.
Brisbane	13/15-02-06	Feb 13: Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth; Three vessels due by 4/3; no delays expected. Feb15: Grain: One vessel due 19/2 to load wheat. Up to 2 days delay expected.
Dalrymple Bay	13-02-06	Feb 13: Coal: Fourteen vessels arrived; 29 vessels due by 27/2.
Dampier	13-02-06	Feb 13: Iron ore: Parker Point A berth: One vessel loading at berth; 6 vessels arrived; 5 vessels due by 21/2; up to 21 days delay expected; Parker Point B berth: 3 vessels arrived; 6 vessels due by 22/2; up to 11 days delay expected; Parker Point C berth: 1 vessel loading at berth; 1 vessel arrived; East Intercourse Island; One vessel loading at berth, 4 arrived; 7 vessels due by 22/2; 6-8 days delay expected.
Esperance	13/15-02-06	Feb 13: Iron ore: Two vessels due by 19/2; up to 1 day's delay expected. Feb 15: Grain: One vessel loading barley at berth; 3 vessels due by 28/2 (2 wheat, 1 other grain); up to 5 days delay expected.
Geraldton	13/15-02-06	Feb 13: Iron ore: One vessel due 15/2. Feb 15: Grain: One vessel loading other grain at berth; 2 vessels due by 26/2, both to load wheat; up to 1 day's delay expected.
Gladstone	13-02-06	Feb 13: Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: Two vessels loading at berth; 22 vessels arrived; 33 vessels due by 6/4; Barney Point: 15 vessels due by 20/3; plant shutdown notice: Shiploader 27/2-4/3 for repairs and maintenance.
Hay Point	13-02-06	Feb 13: Coal: One vessel loading at berth; 2 vessels arrived; 8 vessels due by 24/2.
Newcastle	13/15-02-06	Feb 13: Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: Two vessels loading at berth; 13 vessels arrived; 35 vessels due by 4/3; 5-10 days delay expected; Dykes 4+5: 2 vessels loading at berth; 4 vessels arrived; 15 vessels due by 4/3; 6-8 days delay expected. Feb 15: Grain: Three vessels due by 21/2, all to load wheat; up to 2 days delay expected.
Port Hedland	13-02-06	Feb 13: 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 24/2; "B" berth: 1 vessel loading at berth, 4 arrived; 5 vessels due by 22/2; 6 other vessels due at A or B berth by 27/2; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island "C" berth): 1 vessel due 15/2; (Finucane Island "D" berth): 1 vessel loading at berth, 1 vessel arrived; 4 vessels due by 18/2. Cockatoo Island: 1 vessel due 22/2.
Port Kembla	13-02-06	Feb 13: Coal: One vessel loading at berth, 1 at anchor; 11 vessels due by 7/3; up to 4 days delay expected.
Port Walcott	13-02-06	Feb 13: Iron ore: One vessel loading at berth; 7 vessels arrived; 12 vessels due by 24/2; up to 11 days delay expected.
Azerbaijan		
Apsheron	10-02-06	Oil products: Two vessels discharging crude oil at berth, 2 completed discharging at berth (1 crude oil, 1 fuel oil); 2 vessels in roads, both to discharge (1 fuel oil, 1 crude oil).
Baku	10-02-06	Oil products: Bay of Baku: No information; Azerneftiyag terminal: no information; Azertrans terminal: Nobel Avenue: port open; no vessels; Sangachal District: port open; no vessels.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	13-02-06	Eleven vessels in port of which 7 loading (1 barite concentrate, 1 cigarettes, 1 billets, 1 gasoil, 1 coils, 1 steel, 1 wheat), 4 discharging (1 billets, 2 zinc concentrate, 1 iron ore); 8 vessels in roads of which 7 to load (1 wheat, 2 empty, 3 coils, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate), 1 to discharge jet oil; 15 vessels due of which 9 to load (1 copper concentrate, 3 coils, 3 containers, 1 profiled iron, 1 concrete iron), 6 to discharge (3 containers, 1 coal, 1 iron ore, 1 zinc concentrate).
Varna	13-02-06	Varna East, Varna West, Balchik: Twenty-two vessels in port operating of which 13 loading (1 scrap, 2 bulk wheat, 5 soda, 1 bulk sulphuric acid, 2 bulk silica sand, 1 chamote/soda, 1 sunflower seed meal), 7 discharging (3 bulk coal, 2 bulk copper concentrate, 1 bricks fire/packets, 1 equipment), 2 discharging/loading containers; no vessels waiting in roads.
Cyprus		
Larnaca	14-02-06	Two conventional vessels discharging at berth; 1 conventional vessel due 15/2; no delays expected.
Limassol	14-02-06	Two container vessels loading/discharging at berth, 1 conventional vessel discharging at berth, 3 Ro/Ros discharging/loading at berth; 9 container vessels, 2 conventional vessels, 1 Ro/Ro, 1 passenger vessel due 15/2; no delays expected.

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Port Conditions

Egypt

Adabiya	13-02-06	Six vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 2 general cargo, 3 bulk carriers, 1 tanker.
Alexandria	13-02-06	Twelve vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 3 general cargo, 8 bulk carriers, 1 tanker; 1 vessel at outer anchorage.
Damietta	13-02-06	Nineteen vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 12 general cargo, 2 bulk carriers, 1 tanker, 4 containers; 3 vessels at outer anchorage, none at inner anchorage.
Port Said	13-02-06	Four vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 1 general cargo, 3 container vessels; 1 vessel dry-docked.
Suez Canal	13-02-06	Thirty-seven vessels transiting Northbound, 21 Southbound.

Estonia

Tallinn	13-02-06	No labour problems. Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): 7 days delay expected.
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Israel

Ashdod	14-02-06	No labour problems; Two vessels loading general cargo at berth, 18 discharging at berth (15 general cargo, 3 bulk cargo), 2 loading/discharging containers at berth; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge general cargo; 17 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Eilat	14-02-06	No labour problems; One vessel discharging general cargo at berth.; 2 vessels due, with no delays expected.
Haifa	14-02-06	No labour problems; Seven vessels discharging at berth (5 general cargo, 2 bulk cargo), 7 loading/discharging at berth (4 containers, 3 tankers); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 general cargo, 1 bulk cargo), 4 waiting at anchorage to load/discharge (3 containers, 1 tanker); 5 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 24 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.

Kazakhstan

Aktau	10-02-06	Oil products: Two vessels loading crude oil at berth; 11 vessels in roads, all to load; 1 vessel due 10/2 to load.
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Mozambique

Maputo	14-02-06	Five vessels in port operating, of which 2 loading (1 bagged sugar, 1 aluminium), 3 discharging (1 bagged rice, 1 bulk maize, 1 diesel); 27 vessels due by 5/3 of which 8 to load (2 ferro chromeo, 1 coal, 1 container, 1 bagged sugar, 1 magnetite, 2 aluminium), 13 to discharge (2 petrol, 1 frozen fish, 2 bulk aluminium, 1 bagged rice, 2 bulk maize, 1 pitch, 1 bulk wheat, 1 general cargo, 1 vehicles, 1 pipes), 6 to discharge/load (1 containers/general cargo, 4 containers, 1 steel rollos/sheets).
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Russia

Novorossiysk	13-02-06	Twenty vessels in port operating of which 17 loading (1 cement, 1 bulk NPK, 1 scrap, 5 coils, 2 steel billets, 1 copper, 3 wheat, 1 aluminium, 1 vegetable oil, 1 D/O), 3 discharging (2 bulk sugar, 1 vegetable oil); 27 vessels in roads of which 23 to load (5 steel billets, 1 cellulose, 2 copper 2 coils, 1 bulk fertiliser, 1 pig iron, 3 vegetable oil, 1 wric, 1 steel billets, 1 bulk cement, 2 D/O, 1 pipes/coils, 1 steel billets/tin, 1 coils/pipes), 4 to discharge (3 bulk sugar, 1 citrus); 92 vessels due of which 91 to load, 1 to discharge products; Oil terminal: 3 tankers loading at berth (2 crude, 1 diesel oil); 6 tanker in roads, all to load (5 crude, 1 fuel oil); 4 tankers due, all to load crude oil.
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Slovenia

Koper	13-02-06	Port working normally; Nine vessels berthed of which 3 loading (2 bulk cargo, 1 sawn timber), 4 vessels discharging bulk cargo, 1 tanker discharging liquid cargo, 1 vessel discharging/loading containers; 1 vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge bulk cargo; 16 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 3 to load (2 bulk cargo, 1 sawn timber), 6 to discharge bulk cargo, 1 tanker to discharge liquid cargo, 4 vessels to discharge/load containers, 2 car carriers to discharge/load vehicles.
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Spain

Bilbao	13-02-06	Feb 13: Twenty-five vessels in port operating (4 tankers, 21 others), of which 4 loading, 12 discharging, 9 loading/discharging.
Sagunto	14-02-06	Feb 14: Twenty vessels in port operating, of which 2 loading (1 steel products, 1 cement), 17 discharging (13 steel products, 1 fruit, 1 machinery, 1 vehicles, 1 logs), 1 loading/discharging steel products; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present.

Sri Lanka

Colombo	13-02-06	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). 5 container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 13 vessels discharging at berth (11 containers/feeders, 2 bagged maize); 1 container/feeder vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge; 5 vessels dry-docked; 9 vessels due (8 containers/feeders, 1 bulk cement), with no delays for general cargo, bagged cargo, containers/feeders expected.
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Port Conditions

Turkmenistan

Aladja	10-02-06	Oil products: One vessel in roads to load crude oil.
Turkmenbashi	10-02-06	Oil products: One vessel discharging crude oil at berth; 1 vessel in roads to load, 1 vessel due 10/2 to load.

Ukraine

Ilichevsk	13-02-06	Six vessels in port operating of which 4 loading (3 steel products, 1 grain, 1 S/F oil, 1 sulphur), 1 discharging palm oil, 2 discharging/loading containers; 2 vessel in roads, both to load (1 S/F oil, 1 steel products); 27 vessels due of which 15 to load 13 steel products, 1 wheat, 1 iron ore pellets), 2 to discharge ore, 10 to discharge/load containers.
Mariupol	13-02-06	Fourteen vessels in port operating of which 13 loading (7 steel, 2 sulphur, 2 coal, 1 wheat, 1 fire-clay), 1 to discharge pipes/equipment; 8 vessels in roads, all to load (4 steel, 1 coal, 1 coke, 1 sulphur, 1 pitch); 45 vessels due of which 38 to load (17 steel, 10 coal, 3 sulphur, 2 fire-clay, 1 wheat, 2 sunflower beans, 2 ammonia saltpetre, 1 equipment), 3 to discharge equipment, 4 to discharge/load (1 containers/ fire-clay, 2 containers, 1 feldspar/containers).
Odessa	13-02-06	Twenty-three vessels in port operating of which 15 loading (2 scrap, 8 metal, 1 barley, 2 pig iron, 1 corn, 1 wheat), 7 discharging (1 passenger vessel, 2 citrus, 1 oil, 1 building materials, 1 baggage, 1 sand), 1 discharging/loading containers; 11 vessels in roads of which 9 to load (6 metal, 1 corn, 1 wheat, 1 general cargo), 2 to discharge (1 sugar, 1 general cargo); 64 vessels due of which 38 to load (23 metal, 3 pig iron, 2 scrap, 1 general cargo, 2 ore, 1 ferroalloy, 2 timber, 1 barley, 1 car technics, 2 oil), 5 to discharge (1 bananas, 1 car technics, 1 citrus, 1 sugar, 1 baggage), 21 to load/discharge containers.

United States

Beaumont, TX	14-02-06	No new restriction in draft (40 ft. 0 ins. FW max. channel draft reported). Traffic schedule: outbound 14/2 AM, inbound PM 15/2; Louis Dreyfus terminal: no delays expected.
Galveston, TX	14-02-06	No new restriction in draft (normal 39 ft. 6 ins. BW max. channel draft reported - 40 ft. 0 ins. with ideal conditions). Channel open under normal traffic. ADM-Farmland terminal: 1-2 days delay expected.
Houston, TX	14-02-06	Channel open under normal traffic. Low 44 ft. 11 ins. FW max channel draft reported (up to Shell Terminal); low 39 ft. 11 ins. FW max channel draft reported above Shell Terminal to 610 Ship Channel bridge; Normal 36 ft. 0 ins. FW max channel draft reported above 610 Bridge to turning basis area. (Normal Max channel draft is 45 ft 0 ins. to Shell.) LDC Dreyfus terminal: 3-4 days delay expected; Cargill terminal: 2-3 days delay expected.
Kalama, WA	14-02-06	Kalama export terminal: 8 days delay expected; United Harvest terminal: no delays expected.
New Orleans, LA	14-02-06	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: 1-2 days delay expected. Cargill-Westwego: 2-3 days delay expected. ADM/Ama: 2-3 days delay expected. Bunge/Destrehan: 5 days delay expected. ADM/ Destrehan: 2-3 days delay expected. ADM/Reserve: 2-3 days delay expected. Cargill/Reserve: 2 days delay expected. ADM/Paulina: 2-3 days delay expected. Zen-Noh/Convent: 1-2 days delay expected. Cargill/Baton Rouge: No delays expected. Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: 2 days delay expected; Mile 158.0 Myrtle Grove Midstream terminal: no delays expected; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: 5 days delay expected.
Portland	14-02-06	Ten-day forecast for Carrolton Gauge/New Orleans: expected to decrease to 4.6 ft. by 9/2/06 Columbia Grain terminal: 2 days delay expected; CLD Irving terminal: no delays expected; CLD, O Dock terminals: no delays expected.
Seattle, WA	14-02-06	Louis Dreyfus (Pier 86) terminal: 2 days delay expected.
Tacoma, WA	14-02-06	Temco terminal: 2 days delay expected.
Vancouver, WA	14-02-06	United Harvest terminal: 2 days delay expected.

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