

April 28 2006

MAIB issues alert on cruiseship balcony fire risk

By Michael Grey — Thursday April 27 2006

WHILE investigations into the cause of last month's fire aboard the cruiseship *Star Princess* continue, the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch has today issued a safety bulletin warning of the shortcomings in fire protection on ships' balconies.

Working on behalf of the Bermuda government, the flag state of the vessel, which caught fire on passage from Grand Cayman to Montego Bay with 2,690 passengers and 1,123 crew aboard, the MAIB is undertaking its investigation in co-operation with the US Coast Guard and the US National Transportation Safety Board.

Readily ignitable

Tests on a replica of the cruiseship's balcony arrangements have shown that the materials at the seat of the fire were "readily ignitable" and that the polycarbonate balcony divisions generated intense heat and huge amounts of black smoke as they burned.

Although the exact cause of the blaze on the deck 10 balcony has yet to be determined, the fire spread with great rapidity along the port side of the ship, up

two decks and on to stateroom balconies in two adjacent fire zones.

The fire also spread internally as the heat shattered glass in stateroom balcony doors, although it was contained by the fixed fire-smothering system fitted in each stateroom.

Extinguished within an hour and a half of starting, the fire was fought with water hoses from external areas and internal alleyways, but damaged more than 280 cabins on five decks. One passenger died as a result of smoke inhalation and 13 others required treatment.

Configuration

The investigation has determined the materials and configuration of outside balconies on cruiseships falls outside Solas construction regulations, while there are no regulations on the combustibility of materials used in external balcony areas.

These areas are not required to have fire detection or suppression systems, and are difficult to monitor due to their inaccessibility.

"Immediate action is therefore required internationally to address the risk of fire in external areas such as balconies, and to stop the potentially catastrophic spread of any such fire," said the MAIB.

The International Council of Cruise Lines, which represents a large number of cruiseship operators, has issued a safety notice in parallel with the MAIB bulletin prescribing immediate action to mitigate the risk, and additional action to be undertaken within three and six months to provide long-term solutions in existing ships.

Recommended

Increased vigilance and fire patrolling have been recommended under the first "immediate" category, while longer-term measures include fire-risk assessments of external areas, paying particular attention to accessibility, availability of fixed detection and suppression systems and the combustibility of furniture and structural material, which should be replaced if necessary.

The International Maritime Organization has also been alerted to the MAIB findings and is expected to fast-track amendments that will remedy any shortcomings in the 1974 Solas shown up by the investigation.

The IMO should take action "with maximum speed" to strengthen the regulations, according to its secretary-general, Efthimios Mitropoulos.



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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>AMITIE</i>	general	GEO	—	1,939	2,992	1977	Grounded off Lemnos Island, in lat 39 56.2N, long 25 35.2E, Apr 15. Refloated Apr 17. No damage and departed Lemnos Island Apr 18.
<i>EIFFEL PLANET</i>	general	BLZ	—	1,995	3,716	1973	Immobilised with main engine damage 400 miles off Cape Verde Apr 14. Taken in tow ETA Mindelo, Cape Verde Apr 20.
<i>GREAT LAKES TRADER</i>	barge	USA	—	15,823	—	2000	Grounded in Saginaw River turning basin Apr 4. Two of the 4 rudders later found missing. Unable to locate rudders in river.
<i>HSIN TSAN NO.2</i>	fishing	BLZ	—	98	—	—	Fire on board and sank Apr 15. Crew evacuated to fv <i>Yu Long No.2</i> which is proceeding to Manta, ETA Apr 18.
<i>SEBA M.</i>	bulker	LBN	GL	7,244	11,680	1976	Grounded south of Balikci Island in about lat 40 49N, long 29 07E, Apr 18. Salvage agreement signed Apr 18. Arrived Istanbul anchorage Apr 19, awaiting survey.
<i>UPPLAND</i>	general	ATG	GL	3,093	3,185	1984	Reported not under command due engine trouble in Irbe Strait, in lat 57 46.9N, long 22 12.8E, Apr 13. Unable to repair. Taken in tow by tug, bound Ventspils. Arrived Apr 14 and sailed Apr 16.

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



AL SALAM BOCCACCIO 98 (Panama)

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 13, states: Egyptian courts yesterday decided to freeze the assets of the owner of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98*, which sank in the Red Sea in February, killing about 1,000 people. Public prosecutor Jaber Raihan issued a press statement saying that the initial results of an investigation into the disaster blamed Mamdouh Ismail and five others for serious violations that led to the sinking of the vessel and the deaths of more than 1,000 people. The violations included disregard for safety regulations and tampering with inspections, said the statement. Mamdouh Ismail, a lawmaker in parliament, left Egypt shortly after the disaster despite an ongoing investigation into the sinking of his vessel. The vessel was sailing from the Saudi port of Duba and carried mostly Egyptian itinerant workers, some of whom were bringing months if not years' worth of savings back home.

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: An investigation into the sinking of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98* has blamed the vessel's owner, a maritime safety body and the Egyptian government, Egypt's semi-official news agency reported today. "The responsibility of the owner and his sons has been determined in this crime because the ferry was operating with major deficiencies that should have prevented it from sailing," said the report of the parliamentary investigating committee. The report said there was "collaboration" between the maritime safety body and the Al-Salaam company that owned the ferry. This collaboration meant that the ferry was not observing "minimum safety requirements," the Middle East News Agency reported. The report criticised the government for failing to launch an adequate rescue operation. "Many obstacles could have been overcome in the management of the crisis if the response had been at the level that President Hosni Mubarak spoke of when he went to Hurghada port," hours after the sinking, the report said. The maritime safety body, the Egyptian Commission of Maritime Safety, authorised the vessel's sailing although it was aware of "huge shortcomings," including a shortage of liferafts and fire-fighting equipment, the report said. A copy of the report would be filed with the prosecutor general, the agency said.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Blocked drains on the car deck of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98* contributed to a disaster in which more than 1 000

people lost their lives, an Egyptian parliamentary report said. The report said that, as water sprayed by crew members tackling a fire built up on the deck, passengers dived down into the water and pulled out paper and plastic bags to try to unblock the drains. The report said: "This (the accumulation of water on the car deck) was one of the direct reasons for the vessel listing and then sinking. It shows that they (the drains) had not been inspected by the Maritime Safety Board." In a conversation on the bridge, preserved by a data recorder, the master of the ferry told his first officer, named as Massoud, that the drains were blocked and should be cleared. The account tallies closely with some of the initial eyewitness reports that water built up on the car deck because the crew were spraying hoses on a fire. They said that as the vessel listed, all the water shifted to one side of the deck, making it increasingly unstable. However, the deck had plenty of drain pipes 20 cm in diameter, which should have been enough to clear the water. The preliminary report repeated a long list of other safety violations on the vessel, including lifeboats and life-jackets which were not in good order and the crew's failure to send a distress signal.

ALGIERS STAR (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Messina, Apr 19 — C.c. *Algiers Star* (7683 gt, built 1980) has been towed into Augusta roads, where she still presently stands. Vessel unable to enter port because of a 20-knot wind. Vessel has been affected by main engine problem. When pilots allow entry main engine works scheduled to be carried out at NOE' shipyard. — Lloyd's Agents.

ALGONORTH (Canada)

London, Apr 18 — Bulk *Algonorth* sailed Hamilton Apr 15.

AMITIE (Georgia)

London, Apr 17 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0617, UTC: General cargo *Amitie* (1939 gt, built 1977), Constantza for Chioggia with iron, grounded east of Lemnos Island, in lat 39 56.2N, 25 35.2E, at about 1500, local time, Apr 15. The vessel is still aground. One tug is on scene but was unable to refloat the vessel Apr 16. A second tug is proceeding to assist.

piraeus, Apr 17 — General cargo *Amitie* was found aground by Coast Guard vessels eight nautical miles south-east of Plaka Cape, Lemnos Island, at 1615, Apr 15. All nine crew members were reportedly safe and well. No pollution or water ingress was reported. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 18 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0900, UTC: General cargo *Amitie* was refloated at 1730, local time, yesterday. Vessel sustained no damage and is now getting ready to depart from Lemnos Island.

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

Piraeus, Apr 18 — General cargo *Amitie* was refloated and, following inspection, sailed at 1300, Apr 18, for Gioia Tauro. — Lloyd's Agents.

ANGLIAN SOVEREIGN (U.K.)

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The master of anchor handling tug/supply *Anglian Sovereign* which ran aground off Shetland while he was drunk has been jailed for eight months. Peter Leask admitted he was more than three times the legal alcohol limit while in charge of the vessel. Leask also admitted two other charges, including spilling 84 tonnes of diesel oil into the sea after hitting rocks. Lerwick Sheriff Court heard the repair and clean up operation costs were more than £3 million. Sheriff Graham Napier told Leask today that his actions were reckless in the extreme and he had no option but to impose a custodial sentence. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Sepa) said Leask was the first person to receive a custodial sentence for pollution in Scotland. Sentence on Leask had previously been deferred for social inquiry reports.

ASIAN VENUS (South Korea)

London, Apr 13 — Following notice to mariners issued at 1425, JST, today: Engine troubled general cargo *Asian Venus* (741 gt, built 1993) exists in vicinity of lat 33 49.4N, long 131 27.6E. (Note — *Asian Venus* sailed Hirohata Apr 12 for Changshu.)

London, Apr 13 — Following notice to mariners issued at 1800, JST, today: Engine troubled general cargo *Asian Venus* has weighed anchor.

AZOV MARINER (Malta)

Tallinn, Apr 17 — Product tanker *Azov Mariner* is still under repair at Tallinn Shipyard, ETC Apr 20. — Lloyd's Agents.

BINAR 4 (Panama)

See "Greenpeace Protest at Las Palmas" under "Miscellaneous."

BRP-SA-58 (Bulgaria)

Belgrade, Apr 12 — Barge *BRP-SA-58* pulling out the cargo-coal was completed Apr 6. Pulling out the barge is temporarily suspended, as well as all traffic, due to high water level-flood of the river Danube, in area of Kladovo. — Lloyd's Agents.

BURG (Panama)

London, Apr 19 — General cargo *Burg* passed Gibraltar, westbound, Apr 17.

CABO VERDE (Argentina)

See under "Seizures & Arrests."

CALIFORNIA (Panama)

Port Klang, Apr 13 — Bulk *California* is still in the same position and salvage operation is being organised. C.c. *Sinokor Seoul* sailed Port Klang Apr 5 for Batam, Indonesia, for further repair. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAPE HOPE (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 12 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1456, UTC: Supply *Cape Hope* (1489 gt, built 1999) lost power and came into contact with drilling platform *GSF Arctic 001* in Green Canyon Block 243, in lat 27 43.154N, long 90 47.877W, Apr 9, becoming stuck against the platform. *Cape Hope* was freed later the same day by another vessel, and proceeded to Bollinger Shipyard, Larose, for repairs. Both the vessel and the platform sustained damage, including denting and hull breaches.

CAPT. HENRY JACKMAN (Canada)

London, Apr 18 — Bulk *Capt. Henry Jackman* (19699 gt, built 1981), in ballast, lost remote pitch control in Brockville Narrows, in lat 44 33 02N, long 75 43 37W, at 1452, EDST, Apr 15. The vessel anchored and is waiting for assistance to do repairs.

London, Apr 18 — Following received from St. Lawrence Alerting Network, timed 1915, UTC: The loss of remote pitch control by bulk *Capt. Henry Jackman* was not reported to St. Lawrence Alerting Network by vessel's master.

London, Apr 20 — According to LMIU AIS, bulk *Capt. Henry Jackman* was in lat 46 02 59.21N, long 73 08 28.21W, at 2055, UTC, Apr 19, course 074 deg, speed 10 knots. (See issue of Apr 20.)

CARPE DIEM I (Panama)

London, Apr 18 — General cargo *Carpe Diem I* arrived Fos Apr 13 from Piombino.

CHINA SEA DISCOVERY (Liberia)

See under "Seizures & Arrests."

CLEMENCEAU (Decommissioned Aircraft Carrier)

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated Apr 11, states: A subsidiary of French water and energy giant Suez has offered its services to the French government to decontaminate and dismantle the asbestos-laden warship *Clemenceau*, the company's chief executive told the French press today. The controversial vessel was sent to India to for recycling, only to be ordered back to France after protests erupted against its toxic legacy being dumped abroad, and raising wider concerns about the dumping of aging ships on developing countries. Dealing with the *Clemenceau* will involve not only recycling 30,000 tonnes of waste metal that the vessel is estimated to represent, but also disposing of an estimated 220 tonnes of asbestos. Suez subsidiary Sita France has declared itself ready to rise to this challenge, having already dealt with the first batch of asbestos from the *Clemenceau*. Paul Davin, chief executive of Sita France, told La Tribune newspaper: "This (ship-breaking) market will be important in Great Britain and in France, where more than 100 ships must be disposed

of in the next three years." He said that it is "difficult to estimate the budget without a detailed analysis of the vessel." Two months ago the French ministry of defence had said the investment would have to exceed 45m euros. The *Clemenceau* is expected to arrive in Brest on the French coast at the end of May.

CORNUCOPIA PRINCESS (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Mustafa Kilic, owner of passenger *Cornucopia Princess* (99 gt, built 1978), a sight-seeing and dinner cruise vessel, got a shocking start Sunday morning (Apr 16). The Coast Guard called him around 0400 to report his 130-foot-long vessel had been been untied and drifted about a mile from the Carteret dock into the Arthur Kill where it had become stuck in the mud near Staten Island. The incident occurred just hours before a noon Easter Sunday brunch cruise was scheduled to set sail, cruising past landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty and South Street Seaport. Luckily for Kilic, the vessel was not damaged, and the Sunday holiday cruise, with 150 people, mostly families along with the crew, went off as scheduled. But before anyone was able to board the vessel, Kilic said he spent "a lot of money" for four tugs to bring the vessel back to the dock as well as a dive company to check underneath the vessel for any damage. None was found, he said. He thinks kids may be responsible for untying the vessel, but he's not sure. The US Coast Guard is investigating, according to Petty Officer Daniel Bender. Carteret police and New Jersey State Police Marine Division also responded. Nine ropes, measuring about an inch and a half thick, are used to tie the vessel to the dock. "Someone untied the boat," Kilic, adding the three-level vessel has been docked at the Carteret Waterfront Park. Kilic, who temporarily moved the vessel from Perth Amboy to Carteret in January while the construction of a new dock and pier is under way in Perth Amboy, said he received a call from the Coast Guard around 0400, Sunday, that the vessel had drifted and was stuck in the mud. Kilic said the vessel is worth about \$5 million to \$6 million, he said the vessel was about a mile out into the Arthur Kill, near to Staten Island.

CP VALOUR (Bermuda)

Ponta Delgada, Apr 19 — C.c. *CP Valour*: Salvage vessel *Jacomina* arrived at the port of Horta being part of the removal operations under the coordination of SvitzerWijismuller experts. The operations are expected to commence next week after the necessary preparations. — Lloyd's Agents.

CSCL HAMBURG (Hong Kong)

London, Apr 19 — Seaspan Corporation announced Apr 17, during the quarter, the c.c. *CSCL Hamburg* (39941 gt, built 2001) and c.c. *CSCL Chiwan* completed their

regularly scheduled five-year special surveys and drydockings. During the final inspection at the end of the scheduled drydocking of the *CSCL Hamburg* for its special survey, a minor crack was detected on the rudder horn area. Similar but significantly smaller cracks than those found on the *CSCL Hamburg* were also found on two other 4250 TEU vessels. Permanent repairs costing less than \$75,000 for the minor crack on the *CSCL Hamburg* were completed by the manager. Similar repairs will be also required for the two other 4250 TEU vessels. The Manager expects to fully recover these incremental costs from third parties, while the remainder of the special survey costs will be for the account of the manager. There was no damage found to any other vessels in service.

DONG WON NO.628
(South Korea)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy."

EASTERN CHALLENGER
(Philippines)

See *Tsugaru Maru*.

IEFFEL PLANET (Belize)

Piraeus, Apr 20 — General cargo *Eiffel Planet* (1995 gt, built 1973), in ballast, was immobilised with main engine damage 400 miles off Cape Verde Apr 14. Tug *Leopard* was dispatched to the scene and took vessel in tow, ETA Mindelo, St Vincent, Cape Verde, 1900, UTC, today. — Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd. (Note — *Eiffel Planet* sailed Douala Apr 3 for St Vincent, Cape Verde.)

ELWHA (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The ferry system says passengers should prepare for a busy summer on San Juan Island runs. Ro/ro *Elwha* went out of service Apr 7 with a mechanical breakdown and repairs and other maintenance will keep it out until February. The ferry system is shuffling boats, but not all will have the capacity of the 144-car *Elwha*.

EURO FJORD (Norway)

Trondheim, Apr 19 — Kvernhusvik Shipyard inform general cargo *Euro Fjord* left yard at 1255, local time, Apr 18, sailing south Norwegian coast. Yard inform owners have changed vessel's flag in March / April, prior to leaving Kvernhusvik. New flag: Cook Islands. Port of Registry: Rarotonga Call sign: ZKU2096. — Lloyd's Agents.

FEDERAL POLARIS (Bahamas)

Montreal, Apr 12 — Understand bulk *Federal Polaris* (17815 gt, built 1985) had a small fire on board overnight while loading scrap at Quebec City. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 12 — Bulk *Federal Polaris*, cargo metal, had a fire break out in cargo hold number 5 at Section 50 of the port of Quebec in lat 46

49.40N, long 71 12.12W at 0425, local time, today. The fire required the assistance of local firefighters. Damage not known.

Montreal, Apr 18 — The fire on board bulk *Federal Polaris* was confined to the scrap metal cargo. A small portion of the smoking cargo was removed ashore from hold No 5 and replaced with sound scrap. There was no damage to the vessel, which departed late Apr 12 for Turkey as planned. — Lloyd's Agents.

FJORDBRIS (Norway)

Bergen, Apr 19 — Ferry *Fjordbris* sustained only minor damage and was back in service on Apr 5. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

FLORENCE (Bahamas)

Hanoi, Apr 19 — Bulk *Florence*: The leak was caused by a wooden prop used for the launch piercing the outer hull, causing a tear of about 1.2 metres. On Apr 9 water was pumped out to facilitate refloating of the vessel and it was towed to the dock for repairs. According to the shipyard, the incident was not serious and the remedy was inexpensive. They are expecting to deliver vessel in August as scheduled. — Lloyd's Agents.

GENERAL GUISAN (Switzerland)

Rio de Janeiro, Apr 18 — Bulk *General Guisan* was surveyed Apr 13, unberthed 1755, local time, Apr 15 and sailed Apr 17 for Argentina. As far as informed, no repairs (carried out). — Lloyd's Agents.

GERARD PAUL (Netherlands)

See *LRG Gas 76*.

GOLDEN BELLS 2

Belfast, Apr 13 — Fishing *Golden Bells 2* is still undergoing repairs at Kilkeel, ETC Apr 24. — Lloyd's Agents.

GOLDEN CRANE (Singapore)

See "India" under "Port State Control".

GRAN BRETAGNA (Italy)

Maassluis, Apr 14 — At approximately 0600 hrs, today, ro/ro *Gran Bretagna* (51714 gt, built 1999) while entering the "Kallo Lock" (Antwerp) hit the quay. There was no serious damage to the vessel and/or the quay. After inspection the vessel can leave the locks and moore at the berth. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Apr 18 — Ro/ro *Gran Bretagna* sailed Antwerp 2135, Apr 14, and passed Dover Strait Apr 15.

GRASMERE MAERSK (U.K.)

Valletta, Apr 20 — C.c. *Grasmere Maersk* is still undergoing repairs, ETC Apr 22-23. — Lloyd's Agents.

GREAT LAKES TRADER (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 14 — A press report, dated Apr 13, states: The wayward rudders of Escanaba-based barge *Great Lakes Trader* (15823 gt, built 2000, not from tug *Joyce L/Vanenkevort* as reported in issue of

Apr 12) remain lost, but they're not in the Saginaw River, searchers say. Gregory Busch, owner of Busch Marine of Carrollton Township, said he has scoured the river channel unsuccessfully for at least one \$70,000 rudder missing from a barge last week. Dock owners said the rudder, about 15 feet long, 5 feet wide and about 8 inches thick and weighing several tons, could damage freighters enroute to businesses upstream. Busch said the rudder is not in the river. "We are as convinced as we can be that it is not in the river," he said. "There is always a chance, but it is highly unlikely." Busch said he has searched the 16-mile stretch of river from one end to the other more than once and circled the turning basin near the Interstate 675 Henry Marsh Bridge "hundreds of times" without detecting it. Instead, Busch found 5-gallon buckets, oil drums and an 8-foot steel beam on the river bottom by using a magnetometer, which uses a magnetic field to find underwater metal objects. The search for the rogue rudder began after *Great Lakes Trader* owned by VanEnkevort Tug & Barge of Escanaba, ran aground Apr 4 in the Saginaw turning basin. Upon returning to the bay and experiencing severe steering problems, barge operators discovered two of their four rudders missing. They suggested that one may have snapped off in the turning basin. Busch, who built a mock rudder out of steel plates to test his equipment, said the barge probably lost its rudders before entering the river. After speaking with the shipping company, he said the rudders may have broken off in thick ice over the winter. While the ship may have steered all right in open water, the problem would have appeared when winding through the Saginaw River, he said. William Webber, owner of Sargent Docks & Terminal, said Lower Lakes Towing delayed its shipment up the Saginaw River early this week because of the missing rudder. The company, which will decide whether to keep boats floating up the Saginaw River based on the success of its next shipment, has not yet set a return date.

HAMMURABI (Kuwait)

Port Said, Apr 17 — While c.c. *Hammurabi* (32534 gt, built 1983) was manoeuvring to berth at Port Said harbour Apr 15, the vessel came into contact with hopper dredger *Mecca* (11316 gt, built 2004), which was working in the area. *Mecca* sustained dents in the starboard side. *Hammurabi* entered the Suez Canal Apr 16. — Lloyd's Agents.

HERCULES 25

See "Hurricane 'Katrina'" under "Weather & Navigation."

HOLLAND (U.S.A.)

San Francisco, Apr 12 — Office of Spill Prevention and Response/California Department of Fish and Games reported that oil pollution from

barge *Holland* was not significant and clean up was completed. — Lloyd's Agents.

San Francisco, Apr 12 — A press report, dated Apr 11, states: Workers have cleaned out and raised sunken barge *Holland*, which was found spilling oil and diesel fuel into the Stockton Deep Water Channel last week, a US Coast Guard spokesman said yesterday. The barge leaked up to 1,000 gallons of fuel after winds blew it against the shore at the mouth of Mormon Slough. The sheen drifted about a mile along the channel and carried with it an odour that drew complaints from the public and sent the Coast Guard and the state Department of Fish and Game on a hunt last week. A company hired by the barge's owner pumped most of the remaining fuel from the cracked barge on Saturday (Apr 8) and refloated the 134-foot-long barge on Sunday with the help of pumps drawing out water, said Lt John Fu, a spokesman for the Coast Guard. Workers continued to clean the fuel tanks yesterday in case the barge sinks again, Fu said. The *Holland's* owner, Ryan Voorhees of Galt, has co-operated with the clean-up. — Lloyd's Agents.

San Francisco, Apr 18 — Barge *Holland*, which has not been in use for several years, is likely to be scrapped, according to its owner, Ryan Voorhees. — Lloyd's Agents.

HSIN TSAN NO.2 (Belize)

Guayaquil, Apr 18 — Belize fishing *Hsin Tsan No.2*, 98 gt, registration No.280210113, caught fire on Apr 15. The master decided to abandon the ship and all 13 crew members were evacuated to fishing *Yu Long No.2*. *Yu Long No.2* is now proceeding to Manta, Ecuador with ETA today. *Hsin Tsan No.2* sank.

HYUNDAI FORTUNE (Panama)

London, Apr 18 — A SvitzerWijmuller Salvage BV report, dated Apr 14, states: During the past few days the convoy, consisting of c.c. *Hyundai Fortune* under tow of tug *SmitWijds Rotterdam* and escorted by a fire-fighting tug, proceeded to and kept going in the border area between Yemen and Oman. The fire-fighting/salvage team of SvitzerWijmuller continued activities on board the casualty, attacking the last hot spots and maintaining control over the vessel. On Apr 13 the convoy moved into the Omani Economic Zone after the tow was handed over to tug *Mahanuwara*, which had been mobilised in from Sri Lanka. Today, Apr 14, the convoy was allowed into the Omani territorial waters to anchor at Salalah Anchorage.

London, Apr 18 — A SvitzerWijmuller Salvage BV report, dated Apr 17, states: After anchoring the convoy off Salalah, Oman, yesterday, the latest hurdles were taken by SvitzerWijmuller Salvage BV to allow c.c. *Hyundai Fortune* to be towed into the port of Salalah. Overnight the salvage/fire-fighting teams and the tugs continued their

preparations with the actual operation starting in earnest about 0300, local time, today. Vessel, under control of SvitzerWijmuller and port/terminal tugs, under command of a SvitzerWijmuller salvage master and a tow master, was then moved into port, berthing alongside around 0645, local time, with discharge actually starting at 1025, local time.

Salalah, Apr 19 — C.c. *Hyundai Fortune* berthed at Salalah at 0800, Apr 17. All apparently sound containers were discharged from 1000, Apr 17, to 0340, Apr 19. She left the berth at 0535 today and is now at Salalah anchorage. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Apr 19.)

London, Apr 20 — A SvitzerWijmuller Salvage BV report, dated today, states: After c.c. *Hyundai Fortune* had been towed into Salalah port last Monday morning (Apr 17) and with the actual discharge starting soon after, discharge of the sound and (most of the) wet containers was completed early yesterday morning. The vessel was then towed out of port and anchored at Salalah anchorage for further preparations for towing it, with some damaged containers remaining on board, to next destination. In total 2,249 containers were discharged in Salalah port during a period of less than two days according to a detailed discharge plan prepared by SvitzerWijmuller Salvage BV specialists. The plan incorporated the discharge sequence of the containers and, simultaneously, the necessary ballasting activities that had to be executed to ensure stresses remained within acceptable limits. A complicating factor in the process was the fact that the vessel's own ballast system could not be used anymore and that, as such, alternative means had to be engaged to achieve the required result.

INDEPENDENT TRADER (Liberia)

London, Apr 13 — C.c. *Independent Trader* arrived Antwerp 1402, Mar 7 and sailed 1437, Apr 12 for Liverpool.

INGER (Netherlands)

St.Petersburg, Apr 12 — Information received, dated today, states: Agents for general cargo *Inger* report that vessel will be put into dry dock on Apr 14. Preliminary period of repairing two weeks. — Lloyd's Agents.

ISMAIL PRINCE (Georgia)

London, Apr 20 — General cargo *Ismail Prince* arrived Algiers Apr 11.

JADRANKA (Croatia)

London, Apr 13 — Croatian rescue services have managed to keep afloat ferry *Jadranka* (216 gt, built 1955) that sustained massive damage after hitting rocks as it came into port off the Adriatic coast in bad weather. Rescue workers pumped water from the ferry overnight after it had sustained what its master called "huge" damage in the incident as it was caught in strong southerly winds when it came into port at Crveni Otok island yesterday.

Rijeka, Apr 19 — Ferry *Jadranka* struck rocks near Rovinj at 0636, Apr 11. Understand the vessel's master was able to take the vessel into port. The vessel was under repair at a shipyard in Punat as of Apr 14. — Lloyd's Agents.

JENNY (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Apr 18 — A Turkish Ministry of Transport report states: Upon the notice of a fire on the holds of bulk *Jenny* (2578 gt, built 1978), which was at the port of Derince, our tug *Sonduen 6* and SAR vessel *Kiyi Emniyeti 10* was sent to the location by Gebze fire department on Apr 8. According to the initial information there were 12 crew members and 350 tonnes of boarding bridge belonging to Esenboga Airport on board. Our vessels have been sent back to their moorings as fire had been brought under control as at 1500 hrs. (Note — *Jenny* arrived Derince Apr 7 and sailed Apr 9.)

JOYCE L. VANENKEVORT (U.S.A.)

See *Great Lakes Trader*.

KOMETIK (Canada)

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials looking into a deadly fire on crude oil tanker *Kometik* earlier this month have completed their on-board investigation and will now analyse the data and determine which leads to pursue. A flash fire on board the vessel killed 38-year-old Wayne Dalton and injured another man while it was anchored in Conception Bay on Apr 8. The two men, both from Newfoundland and Labrador, were doing welding repairs in a cargo area while the vessel, owned by Canship-Ugland, was waiting to take on crude oil. A spokesperson from the Transportation Safety Board, Jim Harris, said investigators had interviewed crew members and collected material evidence. "They've taken a sample of the residue that was inside the tank where the accident occurred. They're going to have that analysed to see what it is," said Harris. "They've taken the little machine that tested the air for the people who went into that tank, so we're going to check that to see if it was working properly." Harris said he did not know how long it would take to determine the cause of the fire. (See issue of Apr 13.)

LONG HAI (Panama)

London, Apr 19 — Understand bulk *Long Hai* (39997 gt, built 1977), Qingdao for Mundra, is disabled with engine failure approximately 140 miles off Colombo today. (Note — *Long Hai* sailed Singapore Mar 27 for India.)

London, Apr 19 — Understand salvage services are to be rendered to bulk *Long Hai* by Tsavliris Salvage tug *SB-408* under Lloyd's Open Form.

Piraeus, Apr 20 — Bulk *Long Hai*: Lloyd's Standard Form salvage contract was signed with Tsavliris

Salvage Apr 18 and tug *SB-408* sailed same day to assist, arriving on scene during the morning of Apr 19. It then took *Long Hai* in tow, arriving Colombo Roads today. We are now awaiting further instructions from owners. — Tsavlis Salvage (International) BV.

LRG GAS 76 (Germany)

London, Apr 13 — In the early morning of today, Apr 13, two inland cargo vessels had a collision in the fairway Volkerak near the Steenbergse Vliet. They were the 85 metres long, empty, Lng *LRG Gas 76* (built 1970) 1160 tons dwt, with homeport Hamburg, owned by Lehnkering Reederei, and the Dutch inland general cargo *Gerard Paul* (built 1964), 1493 tons dwt, 85 metres long, owned by Gebr. Van Laak in Capelle a/d IJssel. They collided head to head in which the anchor of the *Gerard Paul* went through the hull of *LRG Gas 76* and got stuck there. The cause the collision is not known. At first the authorities feared a gas explosion, but the tanks of the *LRG Gas 76* were not hit and the two attached vessels were directed to the moorings at the Krammer locks. There the two vessels have been separated from each other. Meanwhile all the shipping traffic in the Krammer fairway had been held up, until the the two vessel were separated. The firebrigade of Bruinisse was standing by all the time. As the damage of both vessels was above the waterline, they could proceed their voyage after the authorities did make their inquiries.

London, Apr 14 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Inland waterways Lng *LRG Gas 76*, and general cargo *Gerard Paul*, were in collision on the Volkerak, Netherlands, yesterday. The anchor of the cargo vessel tore a gash in the hull of the gas tanker. As the ship was empty, but not free of gas, an explosion was feared and the Bruinisse firebrigade alerted. An inspection in the lock of Krammer showed that the tanks had remained intact, thus the shipping on the waterway, which had been stopped after the collision, could be resumed.

LTC JOHN U.D.PAGE (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: C.c. *LTC John U.D.Page* (57075 gt, built 1985) arrived in Cape Town yesterday afternoon. The vessel was taking on water on the starboard side and divers began surveying as soon as she had berthed.

LYGRA (Norway (Int. Register))

London, Apr 14 — Ro/ro *Lygra* arrived Tyne 1158, Apr 12 and sailed 1458 same day for Bergen.

MAERSK DRESDEN (Germany)

London, Apr 19 — C.c. *Maersk Dresden* is still under tow for Tokyo, where ETA Apr 22.

MAJ DANIELSEN (Bahamas)

London, Apr 13 — General cargo *Maj Danielsen* arrived Antwerp 1410 yesterday.

London, Apr 16 — General cargo *Maj Danielsen* sailed Antwerp Apr 15.

MARIELLE BOLTEN (Liberia)

Freeport, Bahamas, Apr 12 — General cargo *Marielle Bolten* is still at Freeport, however, vessel is at a lay berth in the harbour having left the shipyard where “essential” repairs were evidently undertaken. Apparently they are still awaiting a decision on the remainder of the repairs, the rudder is still missing. Its cargo is still being loaded on board sister vessel *Sigrun Bolten*. — Lloyd’s Agents.

MECCA (Egypt)

See *Hammurabi*.

MOL INITIATIVE (Panama)

London, Apr 12 — Tug towing c.c. *Mol Initiative* departs Hakodate ko, in lat 41 47N, long 140 41E, to Keihin ko, in lat 35 34N, long 139 50E, at 1500, UTC, today. ETA 0415, UTC, Apr 16. Tow via Inubo Saki, speed about seven knots, length of tow about 1200 metres. (See issue of Apr 13.)

London, Apr 13 — C.c. *MOL Initiative*: Following notice to mariners issued 1400, JST, today: Hakodate ko No.6 quarantine inspection anchorage navigation and staying prohibition released.

London, Apr 13 — An APL service status report, dated today, states: APL has today been notified by MOL the operators of c.c. *MOL Initiative*, that the vessel is under tow to Uraga. If towing proceeds as scheduled, *MOL Initiative* is expected to arrive at Uraga around 1000, local time, Apr 16, with the likelihood of berthing at Tokyo that afternoon. MOL has also advised that all reefer containers onboard the vessel have been connected to portable generators.

London, Apr 18 — Following Japan Navigation Warning dated today, states: C.c. *Mol Initiative* departs Keihin Ko Tokyo section 3 to Yokohama section 5, in lat 35 24N, long 139 38.2E. ETA 1000, JST, Apr 19, via east fairway, lat 31 29.0N, long 139 51.0E. Speed about six knots, length of tow about 472 metres.

London, Apr 19 — An APL service status report, dated today, states: C.c. *MOL Initiative* berthed at Tokyo Apr 17 and commenced cargo discharge operations. APL has now been advised by the average adjusters, Asai & Ichikawa of Japan, that they have, in addition to being appointed by the shipowners as adjusters for General Average, also been appointed by the salvors as adjusters for salvage and to collect salvage security. Customers are required to provide salvage security under the terms of the Japan Shipping Exchange (2005) salvage agreement. Asai & Ichikawa has appointed agents to collect the documentary requirements for General Average and Salvage Security according to the place of delivery for your cargoes.

MYS KOMMUNAROV (Russia)

London, Apr 18 — Ref *Mys Kommunarov* arrived Nanao Feb 24.

MYSTIC (Netherlands Antilles)

London, Apr 14 — Ref *Myst*, ex *Mystic*, which passed Dover Mar 18 in tow for Aliaga, arrived Corunna Mar 23 and left Apr 1 for Aliaga.

NAPOCOR POWER BARGE No.106 (Philippines)

See “Tropical Storm ‘Kaijiki’” under “Weather & Navigation.”

NAPOCOR TUGBOAT NO.1 (Philippines)

See “Tropical Storm ‘Kaijiki’” under “Weather & Navigation.”

NEPTUNIA MEDITERRANEO (Brazil)

Buenos Aires, Apr 17 — C.c. *Neptunia Mediterraneo* is still under arrest, without development. — Lloyd’s Agents.

NEW DELHI EXPRESS (Hong Kong)

London, Apr 15 — Following received from Coast Guard Portsmouth, VA, timed 1213, UTC: C.c. *New Delhi Express* (39941 gt, built 2005) grounded near Burgen Point, west of Bayonne Bridge, at 0420, local time, today. The vessel subsequently refloated and is now anchored at Elizabethport. Some water ingress was reported in an empty fuel tank.

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated today, states: C.c. *New Delhi Express* ran aground for a couple of hours early today in the Kill Van Kull. Officials blocked off the area around the vessel to water traffic during the incident, said Coast Guard spokesman Petty Officer Daniel Bender. The vessel ran aground around 0430 hrs and was moving again by 0700 hrs. The cause of the incident was being investigated, Bender said, and officials were to meet the vessel when it docked at Elizabethport in New Jersey.

London, Apr 18 — A Seaspan Corporation press release, dated Hong Kong Apr 17, states: Seaspan Corporation reported today that c.c. *New Delhi Express*, on charter to CP USA, was aground for about two hours at the entrance of Newark Bay, New Jersey, early Saturday (Apr 15) morning in heavy fog. The vessel is currently discharging containers and will move, under its own power, to a local dry dock for permanent repairs on or about Apr 19. Management is in the process of assessing the potential cost and projected offhire time, but currently anticipates that repairs will take approximately one week to complete after which the vessel will return to service. The company also anticipates that the incident will not result in a material financial impact. There were no injuries and no adverse environmental impact as a result of the incident. The vessel is fully insured and the appropriate claims will be filed with insurance underwriters in due course.

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

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: C.c. *New Delhi Express*, which grounded in a shallow New Jersey shipping channel, has been taken to the Red Hook port for unloading — a move critics say shows why the city should not close Brooklyn's last working port. "The city depends for its safety and security on maintaining a port in Brooklyn," said Rep Jerrold Nadler. The Port Authority will not renew the lease of American Stevedoring, which runs the Red Hook Container Terminal, when it expires next April. Nadler said yesterday the grounded freighter shows how vulnerable vessels are in the Kill Van Kull, a narrow channel between New Jersey and Staten Island leading to the area's major ports. The *New Delhi Express* ran aground in the Kill Van Kull about 0400, Apr 15, in "zero visibility" and damaged its hull, Coast Guard officials said. The vessel was carrying \$50 million worth of electronics, clothes and food, Red Hook officials said.

OCEAN HEART (Panama)

See under "Miscellaneous".

ORHAN EKINCI (Turkey)

See "Sweden" under "Port State Control".

PENELOPE A. (Greece)

piraeus, Apr 17 — Passenger ro/ro *Penelope A.* (5590 gt, built 1972), operating the Rafina-Mykonos-Andros-Tinos-Rafina route, experienced a mechanical failure in the starboard main engine Apr 14, while approaching Mykonos port. The passengers were forwarded to their destinations on board another vessel. *Penelope A.* proceeded the same day without passengers to Rafina for repairs. Following completion of repairs and Class inspection, the vessel returned to service Apr 15. — Lloyd's Agents.

PRIDE OF HAWAII (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 14 — A press report, dated Apr 13, states: Mechanical problems are delaying the handover of Norwegian Cruise Line's newest ship, passenger *Pride of Hawaii* (92250 gt, built 2006). Problems with faulty bearings were detected a couple of weeks ago. The bearings were replaced, but now there are problems with the replacement bearings. Repairs are expected to last about four days. NCL says the problems will not push back the ship's May 28 arrival at Nawiliwili Harbour on Kauai. (Note — *Pride of Hawaii* was last reported at Eemshaven Apr 7.)

London, Apr 17 — Passenger *Pride of Hawaii* arrived Bremerhaven Apr 15.

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Norwegian Cruise Line has now taken ownership of its brand-new passenger *Pride of Hawaii* which had mechanical issues after the ship was constructed, and before it was launched. The repairs were made this week after the ship had

decamped from Lloyd Werft in Bremerhaven. There, the yard changed the bearings of the pod propulsion system as a measure of precaution in order to avoid damage to the system. The repairs took place absolutely on the schedule NCL anticipated and the minor setback will have no bearing on pre-cruise launch events. *Pride of Hawaii* has since returned to Eemshaven, the site where final outfitting takes place. Upon departure, the ship will head straight across the Atlantic where it will reside for a few weeks in Baltimore. At that point *Pride of Hawaii* will undergo crew training as well as inspections by government agencies such as the U.S. Coast Guard and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

London, Apr 19 — A NCL press release, dated Miami today, states: Today, NCL Corporation welcomed passenger *Pride of Hawaii* as the newest member to the NCL America fleet, with a handover ceremony in Eemshaven.

QUEEN OF THE NORTH (Canada)

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: BC Ferries is hoping to return to a reduced, but somewhat normalised service on its northern run this weekend (Apr 15-16), but clean-up crews are still struggling with the aftermath of the sunken passenger ro/ro *Queen of the North*. Meanwhile, local residents are expressing concern that the wreck is a "time bomb" that could yet spill large amounts of fuel into Wright Sound. Passenger ro/ro *Queen of Prince Rupert*, which was in dry dock for a refit when *Queen of the North* sank last month with the loss of two passengers, is being rushed back into operation. Deborah Marshall, media relations director for BC Ferries, said the vessel will have to be checked out and declared fully operational before it starts service, but is only a few days away from being ready. "The first run is tentatively scheduled for this Saturday," she said. She said the vessel had been refitted so that crew cabins are no longer located below the car deck. When *Queen of the North* sank on Mar 22, the crew quarters quickly flooded. Some crew members reported jumping out of their bunks and being waist-deep in water by the time they were dressed. *Queen of the North* sank about one hour after striking Gil Island. Of the 101 passengers and crew on board, all but two escaped safely. Those two are missing and presumed dead. RCMP Constable Alain Beaulieu of the Prince Rupert detachment said police were still looking into the circumstances of the sinking. "The focus is still to find out what happened — why those people were not in the liferafts," Constable Beaulieu said. Gerald Foisey and his wife, Shirley Rosette, were not seen after the vessel sank. At first a head count indicated that 101 people on board had made it off the vessel, but the count was erroneous and somehow

the two passengers were left behind. "They were on the vessel," Constable Beaulieu said. "The focus is to try to find out what happened to them." Meanwhile, clean-up crews remain on site, monitoring fuel that continues to leak from the wreck. BC Ferries said discussions were under way with specialists to see if it might be possible to pump the remaining fuel out of the vessel. Robert Hill, Chief of the Gitk'a'ata First Nation in Hartley Bay, the community where many of the survivors were first taken, said he was concerned about the fuel leaking from the vessel. "There is still an upwelling of fuel and there is oil on the beaches. We are worried about how it might impact the seaweed that we harvest, and the shellfish." He said samples of clams had been sent in for tests, but the community had not yet heard if they were polluted. Michael Uehara, president and managing director of King Pacific Lodge, a luxury wilderness resort in the area, said people continue to have "grave concerns" about the cleanup effort. "Ultimately, since BC Ferries have rejected the option of raising the *Queen of the North*, Hartley Bay and operators such as King Pacific are asked to live with a sunken time bomb that can deliver its payload long after BC Ferries have gone home," Mr. Uehara said.

RHEINGOLD

Maassluis, Apr 19 — Understood general cargo *Rheingold* did not effect any repairs and is now operating again. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

RUNNER 4 (Dominica)

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Estonia's crisis regulation team has appealed to the government for help in the Baltic state's most recent oil disaster. As of yesterday, oil was still leaking from general cargo *Runner 4* than sank off Vaandloo Island in early March. After their Apr 10 meeting, the team asked the government if the wreckage could be raised and fuel pumped out. More oil surfaced at the site of the shipwreck last week, prompting the group to call for a new inspection of the wreckage, in order to establish the location and scope of the leak. Alo Tammsalu, deputy director general of the Rescue Board who heads the crisis regulation team, told reporters that it was not yet clear how much this operation could cost. "The sums we will have to deal with are no doubt rather big," he admitted. Tammsalu said further steps would be decided after a video inspection. He stressed that the team's first duty was to stop the leak and eliminate environmental danger. Tammsalu said it was possible for Estonia to pay for all procedures, and then call in the costs from the ship-owner. Sen. Lt. Silver Vahtra, head of the Border Guard Board pollution control department, told reporters that small oil slicks of one by 15-25 metres in area had been found near the sunken *Runner 4*. The border guard ship *Kati* is collecting

the oil by means of recovery booms. A monitoring flight that should have been carried out on Apr 10 was postponed by one day due to unfavourable weather conditions. The pollution that last month reached the Bay of Tallinn has since dispersed, Vahtra added. He said there were ice flows dark with oil in the bay, but the slick was no longer as dense as the previous week. During a monitoring flight on Apr 8, the Border Guard discovered an oil slick 2.8 kilometres long and 1.3 kilometres wide near Vaindloo Island. In addition to a cargo of aluminum, the Dominican-flagged freighter *Runner 4* that sank off Vaindloo Island in early March also carried more than a hundred tons of oil, 35 tons of light fuel and 600 liters of lubricants. Oil escaping from the ship travelled to various places along the north Estonian coastline, including the Bay of Tallinn.

SANKO ROBUST (Liberia)

London, Apr 16 — Bulk *Sanko Robust* sailed Limassol Apr 13.

Limassol, Apr 19 — Bulk *Sanko Robust* completed some repairs at Limassol and sailed Apr 13 in tow of tug *Barracuda*, bound Cartagena, Spain. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 19 — Bulk *Sanko Robust* is expected at Escobredas, near Cartagena, tomorrow morning.

SEA-LAND QUALITY (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 12 — C.c. *Sea-Land Quality* (57075 gt, built 1985), fully loaded, 22 persons on board, reported main engine air start issues while preparing to enter Halifax Harbour, in lat 44 29.06N, long 63 28.06W, on Mar 11. Repairs were carried out and the vessel proceeded into the harbour without further incident. (Note — *Sea-Land Quality* arrived Halifax Mar 11 and sailed Mar 12 for New York, where arrived Mar 13.)

SEBA M. (Lebanon)

London, Apr 18 — A Turkish Ministry of Transport report, dated today, states: Bulk *Seba M.* (7244 gt, built 1976), Tuzla for Bourgas, grounded south of Balikci Island, (? lat 40 49N, long 29 07E) at 0200, today. Tug/supply *Gemi Kurtaran* and SAR vessel *Kiyi Emniyeti 4* were immediately sent to that place. There is no environmental pollution. The vessel has not made a request for assistance yet.

London, Apr 18 — Following received from Ankara MRCC, timed 1645, UTC: Understand bulk *Seba M* is still aground.

London, Apr 19 — Following received from Ankara MSRCC, timed 1045, UTC: Bulk *Seba M.* has been successfully refloated by salvors.

London, Apr 19 — Following received from Ankara MSRCC, timed 1150, UTC: Bulk *Seba M.* arrived Istanbul anchorage at 0751, UTC, today, and is now anchored awaiting survey to ascertain extent of damage.

London, Apr 19 — A Turkish Ministry of Transport report, dated today, states: (Salvage agreement was

signed between master of salvage vessel and bulk *Seba M.* at 2335, local time, Apr 18 and the vessel was salvaged safely by salvage vessel at 0720, local time, today.

SILVER ARROW (Belize)

Yokohama, Apr 20 — Reportedly general cargo *Silver Arrow* was towed to Hakodate, however no any other information available. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Apr 20 — General cargo *Silver Arrow* sailed Yokosuka Apr 18.

SINOKOR SEOUL (South Korea)

See *California*.

SOSPAN-DAU (Netherlands)

London, Apr 12 — Hopper barge *Sospan-Dau* sailed Zwijndrecht 2120, Apr 10.

STAR MARINER (South Korea)

London, Apr 20 — C.c. *Star Mariner* arrived Shimizu Apr 18.

STAR PRINCESS (Bermuda)

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Princess Cruises has confirmed that the fire that broke out on board passenger *Star Princess* last month started on one of the ship's balconies although "no definitive cause of the fire has yet been determined." The company said in a statement it believed the fire, in which one person died, was an "isolated incident" but that it had put precautions in place so that, in the event of a similar incident, the company would be able to detect and put out the fire quickly. Measures put in place include a 24-hour fire watch on balconies and training for crew members on handling balcony-based fires, as well as enhanced passenger communication and changes to balcony housekeeping procedures. Over and above these measures, Princess Cruises says it is "moving quickly to provide long-term and permanent measures to improve fire safety on our balconies." She is currently having 100 new cabins fitted at Lloyd Werft's yard in Bremerhaven which were supplied by Fincantieri. Fire damage is expected to cost the company \$34m.

SUPER SHUTTLE FERRY 7 (Philippines)

Manila, Apr 18 — Passenger ro/ro *Super Shuttle Ferry 7* (730 gt, built 1973) was stranded for several hours in Mactan channel Apr 17. The vessel had sailed from Camiguin island and was bound for Mandaue City when its engine broke down while approaching Mactan channel at around 0800 hrs. Efforts to restart the engine failed and the vessel was stranded for six hours until a tug arrived. The first attempt to tow the vessel failed when the towline snapped. The tug then maneuvered to the starboard side of the vessel where it attached itself alongside and towed the vessel to Mandaue city, where it arrived in the afternoon of the same day. There were no injuries to the passengers or crew. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

SUPERFERRY II (Greece)

Piraeus, Apr 12 — Passenger ro/ro *Superferry II* effected repairs and returned to service Apr 11. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUPERSEACAT TWO (U.K.)

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: The fast ferry from the Isle of Man to Liverpool is back in service after essential repairs were carried out. The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company said passenger ro/ro *Superseacat Two* spent two days in dry dock in Birkenhead. Damage to a water-jet that powers the vessel, which may have been caused by floating debris, is being investigated. The vessel recently spent eight weeks undergoing refurbishments. Passenger areas were improved and standard engine maintenance was carried out. A cafe bar was created, its lounge extended and the toilet facilities were upgraded. The *Superseacat Two* was the first of the firm's fleet to be upgraded.

THE ADMIRAL (U.S.A.)

London, Apr 13 — At 2353, EST, Mar 31 the National Response Center received a phone call from Luhr Brothers regarding a 1,500 gallon diesel fuel spill that occurred at 2040 hrs in the Vermillion River near Intracoastal City, LA. While pushing four empty hopper barges, tug *The Admiral* (461 gt, built 1958) hugged the bank to avoid on-coming traffic and bumped the bottom, causing a rupture in the port fuel tank. It is estimated that 1,500 gallons of diesel was discharged into the Vermilion River at mile marker 3. The vessel pushed itself onto the bank to minimise the discharge. The master estimated that the tank was holding 5,000 gallons of fuel.

TORO (Greece)

London, Apr 19 — Bulk *Toro* arrived Liverpool Apr 13.

TRANSFER (Antigua & Barbuda)

Belize City, Apr 18 — Part c.c. *Transfer*: The situation has not changed. No further efforts have been carried out with regard to salvage. According to the operations manager of The Belize Ports Authority today a meeting with the Commissioner of Ports, and other relevant parties, is scheduled for Apr 24. — Lloyd's Agents.

TSUGARU MARU (Japan)

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Two vessels collided early this morning at the mouth of Tokyo Bay, damaging the container ship and forcing all the 25 Filipino crewmen on it to evacuate in lifeboats, the Japan Coast Guard said. No-one was reported injured and all the evacuated crew members were rescued after the collision that took place at around 0520 hrs, in foggy conditions, the coast guard said. Visibility was less than 200 metres at the time, it said. In the collision, the

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

bow of general cargo *Tsugaru Maru* (498 gt, built 1989) with five crewmen onboard struck the port side of the bow of the general cargo *Eastern Challenger* (6182 gt, built 1985) about 9 kilometres northwest of Sunosaki Lighthouse in Tateyama, Chiba Prefecture, on the Boso Peninsula. The container ship suffered some damage and was taking in water and in danger of sinking, the coast guard said. The crew launched the lifeboats and were rescued by the coast guard's patrol ship *Samagi* and other ships, according to the coast guard. The container ship, carrying steel, was heading to Yokohama from the Philippines via Osaka, while the freighter was transporting animal feed ingredients from Chiba to Tomakomai, Hokkaido. The coast guard is questioning the skippers of the two vessels to investigate the cause of the collision.

London, Apr 13 — Following received from Japanese Coast Guard, timed 0301, UTC: Two tugs are alongside general cargo *Eastern Challenger* and are attempting to tow the vessel.

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A Philippine-registered vessel sank today near the mouth of Tokyo Bay, after colliding with a Japanese vessel, according to local media reports. General cargo *Eastern Challenger* sank shortly after 1200 hrs, (0300 UTC), TV footage showed. The vessel had earlier collided with general cargo *Tsugaru Maru*. No injuries were reported to the crew members on both vessels. The 25 crew onboard *Eastern Challenger* were all safely rescued. Fuel oil leaked into the sea, Kyodo News said. The accident probably happened due to the foggy weather, with a visibility of less than 200 metres.

London, Apr 13 — Following notice to mariners issued at 1225, JST, today: Half submerged cargo vessel (general cargo *Eastern Challenger*) sunk in lat 35 02.5N, long 139 45.9E.

London, Apr 14 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Eastern Challenger* sank after it collided with general cargo *Tsugaru Maru* early yesterday morning at the mouth of Tokyo Bay, forcing all 25 Filipino crewmen on it to evacuate in lifeboats, the Japan Coast Guard said. *Tsugaru Maru*, with five crewmen on board, hit the port bow of *Eastern Challenger* about nine km northwest of Sunosaki Lighthouse in Tateyama, Chiba Prefecture, on the Boso Peninsula. *Eastern Challenger* stayed afloat for nearly seven hours before sinking shortly after noon yesterday, the Coast Guard said. The crew was rescued by the patrol ship *Amagi* and other ships. *Tsugaru Maru* managed to enter Nagaura Port in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture, without assistance.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: The transport ministry today issued an improvement order to a vessel operator over operation management failure following a collision last week

between one of its freighters and a Filipino vessel in Tokyo Bay, bureau officials said. The Kanto District Transport Bureau of the Land, Infrastructure and Transport Ministry found that Tokyo-based operator Sanyo Kaiun had not warned the captain of its general cargo *Tsugaru Maru* of thick fog in the area at the time of the accident, the officials said. The bureau demanded that the operator collect weather forecast data on land and at sea and notify the captains of its vessels as necessary and to thoroughly educate the captains to stick to navigation rules in order to prevent such accidents and ensure safety. Last Thursday (Apr 13), the *Tsugaru Maru* hit general cargo *Eastern Challenger* at the mouth of Tokyo Bay off Tateyama, Chiba Prefecture. Visibility in the area was less than 200 metres at the time, according to Japan Coast Guard. The Philippine-registered vessel sank after the collision but none of the crew members of either vessel was injured in the accident. (See issue of Apr 18.)

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The Yokosuka Coast Guard Office sent papers to prosecutors today on the master of Filipino general cargo *Eastern Challenger* and a crew member of Japanese general cargo *Tsugaru Maru* over the collision of their vessels in Tokyo Bay last week. Coast guard officials identified them as Gilberto Tolentino, 50, master of *Eastern Challenger*, and Koichi Chiba, 56, a first officer of *Tsugaru Maru*. The two men are suspected of professional negligence resulting in the accident in which the Japanese freighter hit the Filipino vessel at the mouth of Tokyo Bay off Tateyama, Chiba Prefecture, last Thursday amid low visibility. The Filipino ship later sank.

UPPLAND (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Apr 13 — Following received from Riga MRCC, timed 1930, UTC: General cargo *Uppland* (3093 gt, built 1984) was reported not under command due to engine trouble in the Irbe Strait, in lat 57 46.9N, long 22 12.8E, at 1450, UTC, today. The vessel refused any help. (Note — According to LMIU AIS *Uppland* was in lat 57 46.11.34N, long 22 12.37.98E at 2059, today. Nearest Port: Roomassaare 32.5 nautical miles, speed 1 knot.)

London, Apr 13 — Following received from Riga MRCC, timed 2205, UTC: General cargo *Uppland* did not manage to repair the engine. At 2040, UTC, it was taken in tow by tug *Ventspils* and is being towed to the port of Ventspils.

London, Apr 14 — Following received from Riga MRCC, timed 0445, UTC: Towing of general cargo *Uppland* was completed at 0200, UTC. Vessel is now in Ventspils.

London, Apr 19 — General cargo *Uppland* sailed Ventspils Apr 16.

VENETICO BREEZE (Hong Kong)

Zeebrugge, Apr 18 — Bulk *Venetico Breeze* (73116 gt, built 1990), Sepetiba

for Antwerp, passed pilot station Wandelaar at 1233, local time, and subsequently grounded between buoy Sierra 3 and 5 at 1417, local time. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Venetico Breeze* sailed Sepetiba Terminal Mar 31 for Antwerp, where ETA Apr 18. According to LMIU AIS vessel was in lat 51 24.9N long 03 4.42E at 1301, UTC, today.)

Maassluis, Apr 18 — Bulk *Venetico Breeze* grounded between buoy Sierra 3 and 5 at about 1415, local time, this afternoon. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Maassluis, Apr 18 — Bulk *Venetico Breeze* refloated and continued voyage without assistance at 1705, local time, today. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Apr 20 — Bulk *Venetico Breeze* arrived Antwerp Apr 19. (See issue of Apr 20.)

VEIRASA DIECISEIS (Argentina)

Lobdon, Apr 19 — Following notice to mariner issued today: Fishing *Taberion* towing fishing *Vieirasa Dieciseis* (277 gt, built 1989) in lat 46 41S, long 65 47W, line length 450 metres, speed 6.5 knots, course 171, bound Puerto Deseado.

VOLGO-BALT 211 (Russia)

London, Apr 13 — General cargo *Volgo-Balt 211* (2457 gt, built 1978), Halmstad for Rostock, ran aground at Ellekilde Hage, north of Sjaelland, in lat 56 04.5N, long 12 30E, in the early hours of this morning, only some 40 metres from the shore. According to local police, the crew were not found to be intoxicated, but the persons in charge may have fallen asleep. The vessel's master will be fined some DKK10,000 for not reporting a grounding in Danish waters.

London, Apr 13 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 1237, UTC: General cargo *Volgo-Balt 211* is still aground.

London, Apr 14 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 1045, UTC: General cargo *Volgo-Balt 211* refloated at high tide at approximately 0900, local time, today. Damage, if any not known, and under investigation at the moment.

Gothenburg, Apr 14 — General cargo *Volgo-Balt 211*, Halmstad for Rostock, cargo timber products, that ran aground in The Sound/Oresund at approximately 0330 yesterday refloated today at high water and could proceed to safe anchor north of Hornbaek port. According to Danish sources there are suspicions that "somebody was asleep" at bridge when the vessel ran aground about 40 metres from shoreline at Hornbaek, located north of Elsinore/Helsingoer. Eleven crew and master "admitting confirmed" in police investigation. Also vessel kept same course for approximate two hours without changing course. No report of leakage or holes, but environmental vessel checked vessel all night. Danish authorities to investigate and check vessel before it is allowed to proceed.— Westax Marine Services AB.

London, Apr 14 — Understand general cargo *Volgo-Balt 211*, cargo timber, refloated today on by its own power as the waterlevel was raising. The ship was ordered by the Danish Naval Command to a safe anchorage for inspection by the Danish Maritime Authorities before it can continue its voyage to Rostock.

London, Apr 18 — According to LMIU AIS, general cargo *Volgo-Balt 211* was in lat 55 45 51.18N, long 12 40 43.56E, at 0325, UTC, Apr 17, course 179 deg, speed 9.6 knots.

London, Apr 18 — General cargo *Volgo-Balt 211* arrived Rostock 1645, Apr 17.

ZWERVER (Belgium)

Zeebrugge, Apr 14 — Fishing *Zwerver* is still berthed in the port of Ostend for repairs. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.



SOMALIA

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: The militias who hijacked fishing *Dong Won No.628* on Apr 5 have announced that they now own all the natural resources found on the vessel. A spokesman for the militias named Mohamed Afweine said that his group plans to charge the vessel's owners a monetary fee because it was fishing "illegally" in Somalia's territorial waters. Mr. Afweine said that the group of militias he represented were not "pirates," as charged by some international media outlets. He said that the militias were rightfully defending Somalia's territorial waters from the illegal encroachment of foreign vessels. The militias found papers signed by Somali federal fisheries minister Mr. Hassan Abshir that gave the *Dong Won No.628* fishing rights in Somali waters, the militias' spokesman added. Two officials from the South Korean company that owns the vessel arrived in Dubai, UAE, today to take part in efforts to release it. The officials have reiterated Mr. Afweine's statement that the *Dong Won No.628* had licence to fish papers from the Somali federal government.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: The nine Indonesian citizens taken hostage by armed groups in Somalia from fishing *Dong Won No.628* were already moved to a safer area in Mudug province of the country, foreign ministry spokesman said. "After a series of phone calls between the company and the captors, it was said that all the hostages were in a good health. They were all safe," Antara news agency today quoted spokesman for the foreign ministry, Desra Percaya, as saying. The spokesman said he had

met with the relatives of the hostages in Indonesia to inform them of the hostages-taking while seeking a negotiation for the release of the hostages. On Apr 11, Somalian Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi also took part in efforts for the release of the 25 crew members, including nine Indonesians. The *Dong Won 628* was hijacked about 200 kms off the Somalian coast on Apr 4.



INDIA

Kochi, Apr 17 — Chemical/oil carrier *Golden Crane* (4105 gt, built 1981) arrived Beypore Apr 7 from Belawan with 6,002 tonnes crude palm oil in bulk. The vessel had experienced engine trouble Apr 5 while on voyage but the problem was rectified by the crew. However, the vessel was detained at Beypore by the Mercantile Marine Department due to a lack of certificates of tanker experience for the crew members. Understand the owners are trying to obtain the required certificates. — Lloyd's Agents.

SWEDEN

Visby, Apr 18 — Bulk *Orhan Ekinci* was released from its port state detention in Slite and sailed at 0150, local time, Apr 14, destination Port Everglades. — Lloyd's Agents.

UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1452, UTC: Bulk/c.c. *Arosia* (21135 gt, built 1983) was detained at Houston Apr 9 under SOLAS regulations in respect of deficiencies in the vessel's firefighting procedures. (Note — *Arosia* arrived Houston Apr 7.)



CABO VERDE (Portugal)

Buenos Aires, Apr 17 — Agents in Bahia Blanca confirmed general cargo *Cabo Verde* that the vessel is still under arrest, without development. — Lloyd's Agents.

CHINA SEA DISCOVERY (Liberia)

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Passenger *China Sea Discovery*, at Alang, had not been cut as of last week. Investigations are still under way into the cause of the recent fire that killed several workers and injured scores more, ultimately leaving the vessel a charred hulk from stem to stern.

MYS TIKHIY (Russia)

Vladivostok, Apr 16 — As at Mar 31, fish factory *Mys Tikhyy* was still under detention at Vladivostok. — Lloyd's Agents.

OPON (Russia)

London, Apr 19 — Trawler *Opon* sailed Tromso Mar 23.

SEA SERENADE (Cyprus)

Koper, Apr 19 — Ro/ro *Chang Po Po*, ex *Sea Serenade*, is still idle at the berth at Izola Shipyard. The total owed for repairs and berthing is in excess of Euros 700,000. According to local press, the shipyard itself has some Euros 8.9 million in unpaid debts and is subject of legal proceedings at the commercial court in Koper. The next hearing will be on May 16, when a court decision is expected with regard to the yard's future — whether it will be wound up or will agree a settlement proposal with its creditors. One of the shipyard's major owners has also announced that they are in negotiations with another strategic partner who is prepared to reimburse the debts. — Lloyd's Agents.

TIOMAN (Honduras)

Jakarta, Apr 19 — Understand from Batam Port Authority that product tanker *Tioman* is still under arrest and in the custody of the Indonesian Navy and Police. — Lloyd's Agents.



BRAILA COUNTY, ROMANIA

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated Apr 18, states: A crude oil pipe in a locality in Braila County, Eastern Romania, broke yesterday evening because of an installation used to steal oil, and some seven tones of crude oil polluted the farmlands nearby, the Ministry of Environment and Water Administration informed.



CENTRAL EUROPE

Belgrade, Apr 12 — The Danube river rose to its highest levels in decades today, driving people from their homes in northern Serbia and Romania and swamping Bulgaria's main river ports, officials said. In Serbia, the River Danube and Sava were still rising near the capital Belgrade, while the towns of Titel, Zabalj and Zrenjanin were threatened by the Tisa River, swollen from rain and melting snow from central Europe. Crews resorted to bringing sandbags by boat in pouring rain to

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reinforce barriers on the Tisa as inundated wooded areas on the river's bank blocked access. Authorities also erected new barriers and evacuated people from their homes. In Belgrade, the Rivers Sava and Danube were 20 centimetres from record highs hit in 1981 but authorities said berms built from earth and sandbags should hold back the water when it is expected to peak tomorrow and Friday (Apr 14). In Romania, over 70 houses were damaged and over 50 people evacuated from the Danube delta village of Smardan after the river burst its banks. Some 5,000 hectares of farmland were also flooded along the river further inland. Across the Danube in Bulgaria, soldiers and disaster workers strengthened dykes in many towns as water swamped the country's three major river ports. In the port of Lom, workers rushed to construct a second dyke as water levels reached 35-year highs, a disaster management ministry spokeswoman said. Upriver in Vidin, rising underground water flooded basements in scores of houses and waters neared the critical overflow level of 930 cm. "If it reaches that level, evacuations will begin but experts say the water will probably stop rising before then," said Hristian Kirilov, an official at the regional civil defence office in Vidin. Officials said the flood threat would persist for another four to five days. — Reuters.

Lom, Apr 13 — The Danube hit record high levels in the Balkans today, sending soldiers and disaster workers scrambling to evacuate people and stem flooding along its banks, officials said. Bulgaria's government declared a state of emergency along the Danube's southern bank, while in Serbia's capital, the mayor called for the evacuation of a suburb near the Sava river. "No evacuations have started yet, but we have told people if it is impossible to leave, they should go to the top floors or roofs of their buildings," Krasimir Kostov, a civil defense official in Silistra, northern Bulgaria. In Lom, a town of 6,000 some 230 km north of Sofia, workers filled sandbags to shore up dikes as the river swamped a hotel and city administration buildings. A Reuters photographer at the scene said people were carrying furniture and other belongings from the buildings as the waters, fed by melting snow in central Europe and heavy rains in the Balkans, continued rising. Upriver in the port of Vidin, 140 soldiers arrived to help shore up berms as the Danube rose to 942 cm, near or higher than the not officially recorded all-time high set in 1942, when waters inundated the then unprotected city centre. Officials said they would move 70,000 people from the area if it appeared the river would overcome dikes built to withstand water a metre higher than current levels. Serbian crews struggled in heavy rain to shore up defenses on the banks of the Tisa and people in Mosovin, a village of 3,500, raced to build a new

dyke, news agency Beta reported. In the capital, Belgrade Mayor Nenad Bodanovic decided to evacuate Partizan, a suburb of around 1,000 people on the Sava river. Several of the city's main roads were also flooded but not closed to traffic. Romania's Interior Ministry said more than 120 people had fled their homes near where the Danube creates its southern border with Bulgaria and swollen rivers also overcame a dam on the Borcea tributary — the second to overflow in two days. "We are on alert and ready to take immediate action. If the Danube rises by 30 more centimeters, we will be forced to evacuate 1,500 people from nine villages," said Ioan Boieru, government representative in Tulcea. Away from the Danube in southern Bulgaria, the Struma river also threatened to break its banks due to heavy rains, threatening a repeat of floods last month that caused major damage to farmland in neighbouring Greece. The Danube is expected to rise for around another week as the flood wave travels down from central Europe. — Reuters.

Fetesti, Apr 14 — Romania will submerge thousands of hectares of farmland on the banks of the Danube to prevent the swollen river from flooding villages, Prime Minister Calin Tariceanu said today. Soldiers stacked sandbags around towns as the water level in the river — boosted by melting snow — rose to its highest level in more than a century in some areas, flooding ports and villages on the southern bank of the river in Bulgaria. Rising water levels have caused flooding or the threat of flooding in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Serbia. "We decided to pursue controlled flooding of farmland along the Danube to protect villagers who might be hit by rising waters," Tariceanu said after a cabinet meeting. He said the Danube could hit flow levels in the coming days not seen since 1895. The operation to submerge the farmland should begin within days, said a water department official. About 90,000 hectares of fertile soil on a 400-km stretch of the river will be flooded. Wheat and maize are cultivated on the river's northern bank. In the Danube town of Fetesti, soldiers stacked 50,000 sandbags to protect it from rising waters and emergency workers in small boats cut electric cables to prevent short-circuiting. Environment Minister Sulfina Barbu said meteorologists said there could be heavy rain as early as Wednesday (Apr 19). So far, about 400 houses have been flooded and 500 people evacuated across Romania. The Serbian government declared a state of emergency in six towns in the northern plains and in the east as rescue teams helped by the army reinforced embankments along the swelling Danube, Sava, Tamis and Tisa rivers. One person drowned in Stari Kostolac village, some 80 km east of Belgrade where some 200 houses were flooded and people were being evacuated, state news agency

Tanjug said. In Bulgaria the government maintained a state of emergency along the river but said mass evacuation was not needed for now. In the Danube town of Vidin, water levels rose to an all-time high of 9.5 metres and authorities feared some dikes might break under the pressure. "The dikes are built to hold waters up to 10 metres and our biggest worry is that some of them may give in," said Anatolii Tsnov, head of civil defence in Vidin. More than 250 houses were flooded by rising groundwater in villages near the swollen river. In Lom, home to 6,000 people, civil defence officials scrambled to build a dike — the third new defensive barrier in as many days — and people surrounded their homes with sandbags after the river flooded a port and administrative buildings. The waters also swamped a large part of Nikopol, a town 250 km north-east of Sofia, and authorities were preparing to evacuate the city's 4,000 inhabitants, the head of the local crisis headquarters Aidan Ismailov told state agency BTA. In Hungary, the flood alert was lowered on the Hungarian section of the Danube but flooding to the south of the country has boosted the level of the tributary, Tisza. Authorities today declared an emergency on much of the River Tisza, expected to rise to a record level next week, and prepared to evacuate up to 40 villages should dams burst. — Reuters.

Belgrade, Apr 17 — The Danube threatened to spill over soaked anti-flood defences in Serbia's capital and wash through towns across south-eastern Europe yesterday after heavy rains helped push it to its highest levels in a century. The river, fed by heavy rain and melting snow in central Europe, rose to a 111-year record high on Saturday (Apr 15), displacing hundreds of people across the Balkans and putting tens of thousands more at risk. A bottleneck at Serbia's narrow Djerdap gorge, near its border with Romania, caused the river to back up and water levels to rise upstream all the way to Belgrade. The city's mayor, Nenad Bogdanovic, said he expected the waters of the Danube and the Sava river, which converge in the city, to peak yesterday after surpassing their record highs. "We have reinforced barriers which will resist the wave but the question is how long the water level will remain so high. That's what's worrying," said Srdjan Jovanovic, head of the Belgrade flood defence team. He appealed to citizens to avoid a popular recreation spot on the Sava, saying some young women had pierced sandbags with their high heels, increasing the danger of collapse. "The danger is big, and water can break the top of the dikes. The whole recreation area would be flooded in only a few seconds," he said. Workers also scrambled to stem flooding downstream in the centre of Smederovo, where waters have inundated the city's ancient fortress, train station, and other buildings.

“There are too few volunteers, unfortunately. It seems citizens don’t understand seriousness of the situation and what consequences a breakthrough of the dykes might have,” Smederovo mayor Sasa Radosavljevic told daily Politika. Much of the area is still reeling from devastating floods last year which drowned scores of people and destroyed houses, farmland and infrastructure worth hundreds of millions of euros. Downstream, the intentional flooding of a vast swath of forest and farmland in Romania prevented the river from engulfing towns there and across the river in Bulgaria. But the move forced 113 people from their homes in the village of Rast in south-west Romania, raising the total number evacuated in that country to 750. Officials were also preparing to move 500 more in the affected zone. “The controlled flooding is bearing fruit, triggering lower water levels in some locations,” deputy Environment Minister Lucia Vargasaid. “We are continuously monitoring the situation downstream because we expect higher water levels in the south-east.” On the opposite bank in Nikopol, a Bulgarian town of 4,000 that was largely under water on Saturday, authorities said water levels had fallen, but soldiers and divers continued to fortify dykes there and in other partially swamped towns. In Vidin, home to 50,000, authorities erected a tent city in case they needed to evacuate people from low-lying areas. They said that although the river should recede slightly today and tomorrow, they were not out of danger, as the flood now in Serbia was expected to reach the area and push waters higher again in the middle of the week. “I expect a drop tomorrow. But it will not last for long and I expect another rise from Wednesday or Thursday,” Hristian Kirilov, head of the Vidin civil defence office, said. — Reuters.

Bucharest, Apr 17 — Seagoing vessel traffic between Sulina and Galatz is still halted due to high waters. The Danube level at Galatz reached 642 cm above the zero level at Cernavoda Apr 17. Galatz Shipyard is under water, and Galatz port is only partly operational, parts of the port also being seriously affected by water. — Lloyd’s Agents.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Floods threatened cities and farmland across Serbia, and record water levels on one of Europe’s longest rivers surged downstream towards neighbouring Romania and Bulgaria today. In Serbia, emergency crews and volunteers struggled to keep embankments and sand barriers from giving way as the River Danube’s water levels started receding. Meanwhile, the River Tisa, which flows from Hungary in the north, started rising dramatically. Thousands of civil protection workers and soldiers in Romania and Bulgaria were bolstering dikes and building new ones. The peak of the Danube

floodwaters was expected to reach the two Balkan countries in the next few days. Spring melting of snow together with heavy rains has led to floods throughout south-eastern Europe in the past few weeks. More than 3,000 residents left on their own or were evacuated by the police from the southern Romanian villages of Rast and Negoi after a dike collapsed yesterday, flooding the communities. “No one was caught by the water in their homes,” said Lt. Bogdan Nicolae, a spokesman for the local police. He said the water destroyed over 100 homes in Rast and the village was only accessible with large vehicles.

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Approximately Euros 40 million in damage has resulted from the record floods in Serbia, authorities announced today. “Over 240,000 hectares of farm land were flooded,” Nikola Marjanovic, Director of the Serbian Waters Management Department, said. He added that a state of emergency and flood defence measures would remain in force until swollen waters recede, a process that might take three to four weeks. The Serbian Ministry of Agriculture and Water Economy issued a public warning of possible new floods along the Tisa River as its water level continued to rise on the section from Novi Becej up to the Hungarian border. Water levels in all other rivers in Serbia have stabilised for the first time in a week.

Bistret, Apr 19 — Seven thousand Romanians were evacuated overnight after a dam on the River Danube was breached, raising the danger the swollen river would submerge their low-lying villages. Officials said rescue teams were working round the clock to mend the dam. The Danube remains at its highest level in more than a century in the Balkans, but heavy rains and melting snow were expected to further swell Europe’s second-largest river. Gendarmes and soldiers rushed thousands of people into trucks in southern villages around Bistret overnight, while some villagers left the area with belongings crammed in horse-drawn carts. Three thousand people will be evacuated later today, authorities said. Prime Minister Calin Tariceanu appealed to people in the endangered areas to help rescue teams reinforce dykes. Thousands of hectares of farmland, as well as several ports and villages across the Balkans were already under water and torrential rains were expected to last in Romania until tomorrow morning. Around 4,700 people were evacuated in the Black Sea state over the past few days, mostly in southern Dolj county and roughly 600 houses were flooded and 170 destroyed. More than 31,000 hectares in southern Romania, a fertile region for wheat and maize farming, are underwater and officials said they would continue to submerge farmland to help protect populated areas in the east. — Reuters.

COLOMBIA

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Authorities have ordered the evacuation of 1,200 tourists as gushing rains and landslides are thought to have killed as many as 50 people in south-western Colombia. The disaster has paralysed the country’s main Pacific port. The Minister of Social Protection, Diego Palacio, says 11 bodies have been recovered. He says another 40 people are missing in the massive flooding and landslides in the Valle del Cauca department between Cali and Buenaventura. “We have recovered 11 bodies but are extremely worried about the high number of missing,” Dr Palacio said. “After hours and in spite of their efforts, aid teams have not been able to rescue the more than 40 people who are missing.” After surveying the stricken area by air, President Alvaro Uribe ordered the evacuation of 1,200 tourists stranded by the flooding.

London, Apr 17 — A press report, dated Apr 15, states: Landslides triggered by heavy rains in south-western Colombia this week have killed an estimated 51 people and paralysed the country’s main port on the Pacific. A pre-dawn landslide on Wednesday (Apr 12), triggered when the rain-swollen Dagua River overflowed its banks, devastated an area of the Valle Del Cauca department, between Cali, its capital, and the port of Buenaventura. Since then 15 landslides, five of them massive, have been recorded in the area. According to official figures, 11 people were killed — including a reporter who was covering the disaster — and 40 people were missing. The social protection minister, Diego Palacio, said that despite the major rescue operation under way, the number of deaths “could reach 50”. “We have recovered 11 bodies, but are extremely worried about the high number of missing. After hours and in spite of their efforts, aid teams have not been able to rescue the more than 40 people who are missing,” Palacio said. Five army and air force helicopters helped evacuate the Buenaventura area. President Alvaro Uribe ordered the evacuation of some 1,200 tourists by government aircraft after surveying the stricken area by air. Uribe said he was considering declaring an economic emergency in the area, a move that would free public money to aid the more than 700 people affected in the disaster and speed recovery efforts. The disaster has caused heavy economic losses in the Andean country as roads to the port that normally see 100 cargo trucks a day remain blocked.

CYCLONE “MONICA”

London, Apr 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Cyclone “Monica” is heading towards the far north Queensland coast. “Monica” is a category one system and is in the Coral Sea about 620 km north-east of Cooktown. It is heading slowly west

and should reach Cape York by Wednesday (Apr 19). Senior forecaster Jeff Callaghan says it is likely the cyclone will also gain strength. A cyclone watch has been declared for coastal and island communities between Torres Strait and Cape Melville.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Emergency services say they will be prepared if cyclone "Monica" hits populated areas in Queensland's far north. The category 2 cyclone is in the Coral Sea, about 470 kilometres east of Lockhart River on Cape York, moving slowly west. The weather bureau expects it to intensify to a category 3 and cross the Cape York Peninsula coast tomorrow. Counter Disaster and Rescue Service (CDRS) spokesman Wayne Coutts says volunteers are ready to fly into affected areas.

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Gale force winds are battering Cape York in far north Queensland as tropical cyclone "Monica" moves over the coastline. The destructive core of the category three cyclone is crossing the coast south of the small Aboriginal community of Lockhart River, with winds of up to 220 kilometres an hour. The CEO of the local council, Peter Buckland, says it is too early to say if there has been any structural damage, but the trees are suffering. Ergon Energy spokeswoman Gaylene Whenmouth says power has been switched off due to safety concerns. "If the strong winds bring down powerlines, then we want to make the network safe and the public safe, so we turn the power station off," she said. "Monica" is expected to weaken as it continues west across Cape York overnight. Far north Queensland's disaster coordinator Mike Keating says airport access for Cape York communities will be a priority once cyclone "Monica" has passed.

Sydney, Apr 19 — Tropical cyclone "Monica", with winds of up to 200 kph, crossed Australia's remote northeast coast today, officials said. There were no early reports of damage in the area, where there are few major settlements or infrastructure. Residents had been warned to take shelter as the cyclone, a mid-range category-three storm, closed in on Lockhart River, an Aboriginal community of about 600 people in Queensland state's sparsely populated Cape York Peninsula. The cyclone began crossing the coast just south of Lockhart River, about 2,000 km north of the Queensland capital Brisbane, soon after 1400, local time (0400, UTC), meteorologists said. "It will take a couple of hours to cross the coast. It should weaken slightly as it moves across Cape York Peninsula," Queensland Weather Bureau meteorologist Manfred Greitschus said. "It still could produce destructive winds for crops or vegetation and weaker shelters." — Reuters.

London, Apr 19 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Cyclone "Monica" near lat 12.9S, long 144.2E at 0000, today. Movement for the past six hours 265 degrees at eight knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Forecast position lat 13.1S, long 142.7E at 1200, today. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots, gusts 90 knots. Forecast position lat 13.2S, long 141.1E at 0000, Apr 20. Maximum sustained winds 80 knots, gusts 100 knots.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Cyclone "Monica" is expected to build into a category 3 storm this afternoon and is moving slowly west across the Gulf of Carpentaria at around 10 kilometres an hour. Cyclone shelters are being prepared across east Arnhem Land. Four thousand residents of Nhulunbuy, on the Gove Peninsula, are preparing for Cyclone "Monica". Today, staff at the Gove District Hospital were clearing out the building storeroom that serves as Nhulunbuy's only public shelter. They are putting in portable toilets and facilities to boil water. Emergency services are also preparing cyclone shelters in Anguragu on the west coast of Groote Eylandt.

HURRICANE "KATRINA"

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Checking state news tonight six salvage workers repairing an offshore rig (? drill platform *Hercules 25*) damaged by hurricane "Katrina" were hurt in an explosion this morning. The accident happened on a cement platform in Breton Sound, Block one, 45 miles southeast of New Orleans. Offshore ship *Gulf King* was dispatched to rescue the workers, who were then flown to hospitals in Metairie and Mississippi. There were no reports of fire on the platform or any pollution from the blast.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: Coast Guard aircrews airlifted six injured construction workers to local hospitals along the Gulf Coast today after an explosion occurred on the cement offshore platform (? drill platform *Hercules 25*) they were working on approximately 45 miles south-east of New Orleans in block one of Breton Sound, La. Aircrews from Air Station New Orleans airlifted one critically injured patient to East Jefferson General Hospital in Metairie, La. Two injured construction workers were airlifted to Singing River Hospital in Pascagoula, Miss., and three were airlifted to Biloxi Regional Medical Center in Biloxi, Miss. The Coast Guard launched three helicopters from Air Station New Orleans and a Falcon Jet from the Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Ala. The construction workers were reportedly salvaging the platform after it was damaged by Hurricane "Katrina." The incident is currently under investigation.

HURRICANE "RITA"

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Fuel production resumed at BP's Texas City refinery over the

weekend, more than half a year after the London-based company shuttered it in anticipation of Hurricane "Rita's" landfall. "We're now manufacturing petrochemicals and fuels for our customers," said Scott Dean, a spokesman in BP's Warrenville, Ill., offices. In February, the company said it planned to restart processing at about 200,000 barrels of oil a day - a little less than half of the refinery's capacity of 430,000 barrels - and boost it to 400,000 barrels daily by midyear. But Dean would not discuss the specific products or quantities being manufactured at the plant, calling such information "commercially sensitive." Union employees working in the refinery, however, said that diesel fuel production is under way and probably will be followed in the next few days by gasoline, said W.E. "Sonny" Sanders, an international representative of the United Steelworkers.

INDONESIA

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Overnight flash flooding and landslides triggered by monsoon rains in Indonesia's densely-populated East Java have killed at least 23 people. "[So far] we have registered 23 dead victims, with most killed in Bendungan subdistrict," a top government official in the Trenggalek district said. The Antara news agency says 13 of the victims were killed in Bendungan, in a landslide that hit three hamlets after two days of heavy rain. Hermanto, who heads operations at the East Java search and rescue agency, says his agency does not yet have a toll but has dispatched a team to Trenggalek. Flows of water, mud, rocks and other debris swept through Trenggalek district and cut off the main road linking it to the nearby town of Ponorogo, district spokesman Joko Setiono said. Mr Setiono says the flood, which hit six subdistricts as well as the district town of Trenggalek, are subsiding. In some areas he says the flood had reached a depth of up to two metres. Additionally, hundreds of houses along with schools and office buildings were affected by the floods, which hit after heavy rains swelled the water of the Ngasinan River, Mr Setiono said.

IRAQ

London, Apr 18 — Navigation operations at Basrah Oil Terminal and Khor Al Amaya Terminal have been temporarily suspended due to rough weather prevailing in the area since yesterday morning.

London, Apr 19 — Normal operations resumed at Basrah Oil Terminal and Khor Al Amaya Terminal at 2145, local time, yesterday. Navigation operations at the terminals had been suspended since Apr 17 due to rough weather.

KENYA

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: A river swollen by heavy rains overflowed its banks, forcing at least 10,000 people to flee their homes and destroying thatched mud huts and crops in impoverished villages, a senior official said today. The victims have taken shelter with relatives and on the

grounds of two public schools, together with their livestock after the Sabaki River began flooding last week, the Malindi District Commissioner Jan Ireri said. It was not immediately clear whether there were any fatalities in the floods that destroyed at least 100 homes, he said. The displaced face food shortages after their crops and food stocks were swept away, Ireri said, adding that there were fears of an outbreak of waterborne diseases in the area. The Red Cross was preparing to send tents, food aid, mosquito nets and medicines, said the organization's coordinator in the Malindi area, Ruth Muriungi. The floods caught residents by surprise because the region has been hit by a searing drought. Heavy rains upcountry, however, have dumped large volumes of water into the river, causing floods as it crosses Malindi before emptying into the nearby Indian Ocean.

ROMANIA

Bucharest, Apr 12 — The Sulina Channel was closed at 1500, local time, Apr 12, due to bad weather, with winds of force 5-6 (fresh to strong breeze). — Lloyd's Agents.

Bucharest, Apr 13 — The Sulina Channel was reopened at 0715, Apr 13. — Lloyd's Agents.

Earthquakes



CHILE

London, Apr 17 — A report, dated Apr 16, states: A magnitude 6.0 earthquake in offshore Coquimbo, Chile, lat 29 66S, long 71 68W, depth 12 km, at 2350, UTC, Apr 15.

INDONESIA

London, Apr 16 — A report, dated today, states: A magnitude 5.7 earthquake in Kepulauan Sangihe, Indonesia, in lat 04 58N, long 125 42E, depth 185 km, at 1746, UTC, today.

London, Apr 20 — A 6.0 earthquake reported in lat 2.722N, long 93.13E at 2036, UTC, Apr 19.

TAIWAN

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: A strong undersea earthquake shook south-eastern Taiwan today, the Central Weather Bureau said, but no serious damage or injuries were immediately reported. The 6.2-magnitude quake was centred in the Pacific Ocean, 12 miles off the south-eastern coast, at a depth of 7.2 miles, the weather bureau said. The tremor, striking at 0641, local time, came as many people were still sleeping. At least four aftershocks were registered within hours, measuring between 4.3 and 4.5, the weather bureau said.

London, Apr 17 — A report, dated Apr 16, states: A magnitude 5.8 earthquake has occurred in Taiwan in

lat 22.74N, long 121.30E, depth 17 km, at 2240, UTC, Apr 15.

TROPICAL STORM "KAJIKI"

Manila, Apr 11 — *Napocor Tugboat No. 1* is still moored at Keppel Batangas Shipyard in Bauan town, Batangas province, the state-owned National Power Corp. (Napocor) reported today. The vessel will remain at Keppel Batangas until the state-run Government Service and Insurance System (GSIS), which provided hull insurance, pays the shipyard for repairs undertaken. Cost of repairs is estimated at Pesos10.8 million (US\$212,000 dollars). Napocor also said barge *Napocor Power Barge No.106* continues to be anchored off Keppel Batangas Shipyard awaiting repairs. — Lloyd's List Correspondent. (See issues of Mar 21 & 30.)

Manila, Apr 19 — Barge *Napocor Power Barge No.106* is still moored unrepaired at Keppel Shipyard in Batangas. We, however, were informed that the repairs carried out on tug *Napocor Tugboat No. 1* were already completed but the tug is also still moored at Keppel Shipyard. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Apr 18.)

Manila, Apr 20 — Tug *Napocor Tugboat No. 1* is scheduled to be released by Keppel Batangas Shipyard on Apr 26, officials of the National Power Corp (Napocor) said today. Repair work was completed in March but the vessel was not allowed to leave because of payment problems — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

UNITED STATES

London, Apr 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Tornadoes tore across an Iowa City university campus overnight, ripping roofs and walls off a sorority house, homes and apartments, crushing cars, and killing a woman in a mobile home south-east of town. Entire walls were gone from the Alpha Chi Omega house, this morning, and the interior of several rooms could be seen from the street. Two cars had been tossed into a nearby ravine and glass, debris and tree limbs littered the yard. The twisters swept across eastern Iowa, with the worst damage in a path from Iowa City, south-east through the small town of Nichols, about 20 miles away. "We have a path in the Nichols area that's four to five miles long," said Maj. Dave White of the Muscatine County sheriff's office. He said the tornado hits farms, knocked a tractor-trailer off a road, then hit the mobile home with a man and woman inside. "It blew it off the foundation and the trailer rolled and basically disintegrated," White said. He said the woman died in the storm. In Iowa City, 21 people were reported treated at hospitals for storm-related injuries, none believed to be life-threatening. The tornadoes left entire neighborhoods in disarray as strong wind and hail pounded the city. Downtown, half the roof of St. Patrick's Catholic Church was torn off. Store windows were shattered, some buildings were partially collapsed and homes and apartments were heavily damaged. Thousands of homes were

without power this morning. The storm system knocked down trees and power lines in north-west Illinois communities as well after crossing the Mississippi River around 2200 hrs, last night. In neighborhoods across Iowa City, people piled up tree limbs, splintered wood, brick and roofing materials as they cleared streets and yards. In a downtown parking lot, cars sat amid broken glass and metal parts, with one vehicle overturned and others blown several feet from their original parking spots. Police said a roof collapsed at a pedestrian mall. A water line broke and there were concerns about gas lines. MidAmerican Energy reported early this morning that about 7,000 homes and businesses in eastern Iowa were without power, including 6,200 in Iowa City. Officials said crews would work through the night but could not say when the power would be restored.

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated Apr 15, states: Federal disaster agents arrived in Iowa City today to record damages for possible federal aid, as residents picked through tornado wreckage and the county released formal damage estimates for public buildings. Lt Gov Sally Pederson toured some of the hardest-hit areas, visiting for the first time since Thursday's (Apr 13) tornadoes pummelled Iowa City. Repairs to tornado-damaged public buildings will cost \$4 million, with final estimates likely to rise another \$2-3 million by next week as city workers assess Thursday's storm aftermath, a county emergency management official said. James Moody, public information officer for the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, said the preliminary figures were a mere fraction of the total cost, including damage to private property. The F-2 tornado tore a 4.5-mile north-easterly path through Iowa City, destroying the Riverside Drive Dairy Queen, heavily damaging Hartwig Motors and damaging other properties not included in the estimate. Inspectors from the Federal Emergency Management Agency met with city and county workers this morning before branching out to document damages. FEMA workers toured parts of Iowa City, Oxford and the University of Iowa in separate teams with city and county staff members. The public damage estimates were announced during a gathering of city, county, state and UI officials, who met with Pederson to share their assessments of tornado damage. The FEMA inspectors will look for "uninsured loss" incurred by private citizens during the storm, Miller said. Focusing on damage to businesses and infrastructure, the inspectors will tally a cost estimate per resident county-wide. The cost estimate is then factored in with other considerations, such as the tornadoes' impact on the local economy and the county's storm preparedness, said County Emergency Management Coordinator Tom Hansen. Hansen said he hoped to have all the figures compiled within the next four to five

days. The state's emergency management service agents then present the results to the governor's office, which forwards a final recommendation to the president.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: A powerful spring storm swept through the north-western Plains today, dumping up to two feet of snow that closed major highways, cut power to hundreds and was blamed for at least four deaths. More than 2,000 homes and businesses lost power in South Dakota's Black Hills, and many schools were closed. Some customers in North Dakota could be without electricity until Friday (Apr 21), said the Mountrail-Williams County Electric Cooperative. The heaviest snow was reported in the Black Hills, with 24 inches at Lead and Rochford, the weather service said. Sundance, Wyoming, reported 13 inches by mid-morning with wind gusting to 60 mph. A foot of snow had fallen at Bowman, in North Dakota's south-west corner, which was under a blizzard warning, the weather service said. "Authorities closed about 100 miles of Interstate 94 last night from Glendive, Montana, to Dickinson, ND, but had reopened it by midday today. A stretch of about 140 miles of I-90 was shut down from Gillette, WY, to Rapid City, SD. I-90 had icy pavement, zero visibility and trucks blocking parts of the road, said South Dakota Highway Patrol Capt. Greg Ingemunson. Three people died yesterday in a crash on an icy North Dakota highway amid blowing sleet and snow, state police said. A utility worker died last night in an apparent weather-related accident in north-western North Dakota.

Volcanic Activity



MOUNT MERAPI, INDONESIA

Jakarta, Apr 17 — Indonesia prepared to evacuate thousands of villagers today after a massive volcano in the heart of densely populated Java island started spewing thick clouds of smoke and hot lava, officials said. Authorities have placed Mount Merapi, which overlooks the ancient city of Jogjakarta, on Orange Code, or the second highest alert level, following fears of an eruption due to an increase in the number of tremors. "Due to a high level of tremor activities and the spewing of the lava, Mount Merapi is now on alert status," Dali Ahmad, a volcanologist from the Directorate of Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation, said. Officials said the military had deployed more than 200 trucks and buses to evacuate villagers living on the slopes of Merapi near Jogjakarta, 460 km west of Jakarta. "We have conducted an evacuation drill and it

appears that villagers have grown used to it," said Sriyanto, a police official. Mount Merapi's increased volcanic activity prompted President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to order preparations for evacuation. — Reuters.

QUERAPI AREA, PERU

Lima, Apr 18 — Officials urged a small farming town in southern Peru to evacuate today after a volcano sent smoke and ash 2,600 feet into the air, but residents were reluctant to leave. "A yellow alert has been called, which means precaution due to emission of gases and steam," Armando Minaya, head of the geophysical institute in the southern city of Arequipa, told Reuters. "Civil Defence has sent small anti-gas masks to the town of Querapi and covers for their water deposits," Minaya said. The volcano has not been this active since 1969. Civil Defence asked the 42 farming families in Querapi, three miles from the 5,672 metre-high volcano, to evacuate. But they did not want to leave, Minaya said. The volcano, in the Moquegua region 550 miles south of Lima, has been belching for much of the month. It has sent ash and sulfur as far away as the town of Ubinas, home to 3,500 people five miles away. Small tremors have also been felt in nearby towns. Minaya said emissions had affected crops and water sources. He said geologists have travelled to the area to measure volcanic activity. — Reuters.

Arequipa, Apr 20 — At least 1,000 people have suffered respiratory problems from a tower of ash spewing from the Ubinas volcano in southern Peru, and 20 llamas have died after eating poisoned grass, a local official said yesterday. Ubinas, in the Moquegua region 550 miles south of Lima, has been belching for much of the month and this week sent smoke and ash 2,600 feet into the air, spreading a thick carpet of ash on areas north of the volcano. Officials said the volcano continued to spit out ash and smoke yesterday, and the wind was carrying it north. "Approximately 1,000 people from several small towns north of the volcano have had breathing problems and itching eyes from the sulphur in the rain of ash," Agustín Quispe, mayor of the town of San Juan de Tarucani de Arequipa, one of the towns north of the volcano affected by ash, said. Quispe said ash carried north by the wind had affected five towns that are within six miles of the volcano. He also said 20 llamas in his village died from eating "contaminated grasses." In the village of Querapi, home to 42 farming families three miles from the 18,700 foot-high volcano, Civil Defence authorities distributed gas masks and recommended evacuation earlier this week. However, the people of Querapi were reluctant to leave despite the yellow alert declared by Civil Defence. — Reuters.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Coalition and Afghan forces, backed by military aircraft, killed six insurgents today in northeastern Afghanistan, the US military said. The operation took place in the Pech River Valley in the northeastern Kunar province bordering Pakistan, the military said in a statement. It came a day after a missile believed fired by militants toward a US base in the Kunar provincial town of Asadabad, about 105 miles northeast of the capital, Kabul, landed in a school and killed seven students. It was unclear if today's military operation, which began with pre-dawn air and ground assaults, came in response to the school attack. The military said, however, that it was part of an ongoing anti-insurgent campaign in the region, dubbed Operation Mountain Lion.

Kandahar, Apr 15 — Forty-one Taliban fighters and six Afghan policemen were killed in a fierce battle in southern Afghanistan, a provincial governor said today. Foreign forces suffered no casualties in yesterday's battle pitting Taliban fighters against Afghan and foreign forces in the Zare Dasht district of Kandahar province, Kandahar Governor Assadullah Khalid said. "Forty-one Taliban were killed in the fighting, mostly as a result of air bombing. Six policemen, including the Zare Dasht police chief were also killed," Khalid told a news conference in Kandahar city. — Reuters.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: A massive explosion believed to have been caused by a rocket shook the Afghan capital late today near the U.S. Embassy compound, wounding an Afghan security contractor, officials said. U.S. Embassy spokesman Lou Finton said the blast did not occur on embassy property, and no Americans were injured. Staff rushed to a bunker in the compound after the 2300 hrs blast. "All embassy personnel are safe and accounted for," Finton said. A U.S. counterterrorism official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because it is still early in the investigation, said the south-west side of the U.S. Embassy's compound was among the buildings struck in the rocket attack. The official was not immediately aware of casualties or the magnitude of the attack. It also was too early to say who was responsible. Lt. Col. Todd Vician, a Pentagon spokesman, said one rocket struck near, but not inside, the U.S. Embassy compound, and no U.S. personnel were injured. The blast occurred inside the grounds housing the state-run television offices, a police official at the scene

said. The building is next to the heavily fortified embassy and the base for NATO-led forces in the capital. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media, said the explosion apparently was caused by a rocket fired from south-east Kabul targeting the U.S. Embassy. U.S. military spokesman Lt. Mike Cody said one Afghan security contractor was wounded, but he was unsure what caused the blast. NATO-led troops in armored vehicles patrolled the area after the explosion. "It was a very strong explosion near the ISAF (NATO's International Security Assistance Force) compound and we are trying to confirm its cause," spokesman Lt. Col. Riccardo Cristoni said.

CHAD

N'Djamena, April 12 — Chad's army battled to keep rebels bent on overthrowing President Idriss Deby from the capital N'Djamena today after rapid advances by columns of insurgents put the city on high alert. Rebels fighting to oust Deby before a presidential election in three weeks moved to within 40 km of the capital of the landlocked central African oil producer after a wave of hit-and-run attacks over the last three days, diplomats said. But government forces mounted stiff resistance and appeared to have halted the advance, though there were fears that small units may still be able to infiltrate the capital, they said. "On the face of it the rebels are no longer advancing," one diplomat said. "But the risk is not zero. It is lower than this afternoon but there is always the risk of infiltrations." France, Chad's former colonial ruler, reinforced a military contingent it has in the country and was ready to evacuate some 1,500 French nationals if necessary, French officials said. The U.S. embassy and other foreign missions took similar contingency measures that foresaw possible evacuation. Esso Chad, a subsidiary of U.S. oil major Exxon Mobil which operates an oil pipeline in Chad, had already evacuated some staff and their families, diplomats said. Rebels of the United Front for Democratic Change (FUC) have carried out attacks in the south, southeast and centre-south of the country in recent days as part of a military campaign to disrupt the presidential election planned for May 3. "Our objective is to liberate N'Djamena as quickly as possible, before the elections if we can," an FUC rebel leader, Abdoulaye Abdel Karim, told Reuters by satellite telephone. He said he was speaking from Chadian territory. N'Djamena's streets were quiet as many residents stayed at home out of fear of a possible rebel attack. Reinforcing military defences in the capital, two tanks were deployed in front of the presidential palace. French armoured vehicles were stationed at N'Djamena's international airport. Chad's government, which accuses

neighbour Sudan of backing the anti-Deby rebels, vowed to resist any attack by the insurgents, who have been travelling in pick-up trucks mounted with machineguns. Khartoum denies helping the rebels. "The integrity of the national territory and the institutions of the Republic will be defended by every means," Information Minister Hourmadji Moussa Doumgor said. He accused Sudan of arming rebel groups he said were preparing to launch fresh attacks into Chad over the border. Surveillance flights by French military jets helped locate the rebel columns as they closed in on N'Djamena. Chad's army also fought rebels around the central-southern towns of Mongo and Bitkine. French military sources said French soldiers were not involved in the fighting but were merely providing intelligence support under existing cooperation accords. "France sets great store by stability in Chad (and) ... reiterates its unambiguous condemnation of attempts to take power by force," a French Foreign Ministry spokesman said. Security sources said while the rebel force closest to N'Djamena might not be strong enough by itself to threaten the city, there was a risk of an uprising or mutiny in the Chadian army which has been weakened by desertions since last year. The government said last month it foiled a plot to kill Deby and arrested 100 officers and soldiers it said were involved. The rebel raids have raised questions over whether Deby's government can hold the polls in which he is standing for re-election. In May's election, Deby, who won power in a 1990 military revolt from the east, will face four candidates with links to his government and is expected to win. The opposition is boycotting the polls. — Reuters.

N'Djamena, Apr 13 — Chadian President Idriss Deby's forces fought off the most daring strike yet by rebels against the capital N'Djamena today, as international concern grew over the escalating conflict. Residents of the capital, located on Chad's western border with Cameroon, sheltered in their homes as rebels who had slipped in under cover of night battled with government troops in a northeastern neighbourhood. The thump of artillery and rattle of small arms fire echoed across the city for several hours before easing later. Some residents fled in canoes and ferry boats over the Chari river to Cameroon. Others reported seeing armed rebels in pick-up trucks. Former colonial power France, made clear it opposed any attempt to overthrow Deby by force while U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the African Union (AU), meeting in emergency session, strongly condemned any attempt to seize power. Deby earlier told French radio he was in the presidential palace and the situation in the city was under control. Soldiers patrolling the dusty streets wore red armbands to distinguish themselves from

infiltrators or deserters, diplomats said. Government officials paraded several dozen rebel prisoners they said were captured with vehicles and weapons in N'Djamena. The prisoners were young and dressed in camouflage uniforms. Near the parliament building in northeast N'Djamena, a Reuters reporter saw a burned-out pick-up truck containing blackened bodies and another body lying nearby. Deby's opponents denounce what they see as his autocratic and clan-based rule and accuse him of corruption. His grip on power has been weakened recently by a wave of army desertions. The United Nations said it was evacuating 148 non-essential staff from its various agencies to neighbouring Cameroon aboard two chartered aircraft while some embassies, including the U.S. embassy, said they planned to evacuate family members. France, which has reinforced its military contingent and has six combat aircraft on standby, said it was ready to evacuate some 1,500 French nationals if necessary. French officials said the rebels who broke into the capital today appeared to be isolated units and that the main advancing insurgent column was halted by government forces late yesterday at Linia, 30 km outside N'Djamena. A French warplane fired a warning shot over the rebel column yesterday, a French Defense Ministry spokesman said in Paris. He added French aircraft had also flown reconnaissance flights over the rebel positions today. The rebel United Front for Democratic Change (FUC) accused French aircraft of bombing rebel forces which attacked the eastern town of Adre toay. France denied any combat role, while Chad's government said it was in control of Adre and accused "Sudanese forces" of attacking the town. — Reuters.

IRAQ

Baghdad, Apr 11 — A car bomb exploded near a mosque and a crowded market and killed at least 26 people in Howaydir north of Baghdad today as Iraqi leaders failed to make progress toward forming a national unity government they hope can avert sectarian civil war. Some 70 people were wounded in the explosion, police said. The explosion was the latest in a wave of attacks against Iraq's Shi'ite majority that Washington fears will push the country close to a full-scale communal conflict in the vacuum left by bickering politicians. Fresh demands from the Shi'ite Alliance over the creation of a government threatened to prolong the political paralysis. Acting parliament speaker Adnan Pachachi said Iraqi leaders would discuss a national unity government at the next session on Monday (Apr 17) and he was optimistic of a breakthrough before then in spite of the Shi'ite Alliance's reluctance to drop its choice of Ibrahim al-Jaafari for prime minister. In other events, gunmen killed three policemen west of Mosul and in a

separate attack a policeman was gunned down in the city. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Apr 15 — Two US Marines were killed and 22 wounded in combat against insurgents in Anbar province in western Iraq on Thursday (Apr 13), the US military said today. The military issued a statement on the casualties but gave no details on the fighting. More than 2,370 US troops have been killed since the US-led invasion of Iraq in March, 2003. — Reuters.

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 10 people were killed and 20 injured when a car bomb exploded in the Iraqi town of Mahmudiya south of Baghdad, Iraqi police say. The explosion took place near a market in the town, about 20 miles south of the capital, which has a mixed population of Sunni and Shia Muslims. An earlier unconfirmed report said the blast happened outside a Shia mosque. There has been an escalation of sectarian violence since the bombing of a major Shia mosque on Feb 22.

Baghdad, Apr 17 — Heavy clashes erupted overnight in the Sunni Arab district of Adhamiya in Baghdad and heavy casualties were feared, residents said today. Residents said ambulances were rushing to the northern district and a Sunni politician said he had received calls from people pleading for help. It was not clear who was involved in the clashes but Sunni officials said they heard from residents that Iraqi forces had fought Sunni insurgents. "I could not reach work. Adhamiya is cordoned off. There were fierce clashes last night. I heard explosions. Fighting is still taking place but it is not as heavy," Adhamiya resident Ghina said. Adhamiya is a stronghold of Sunni insurgents. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Apr 18 — Snipers held rooftop positions as masked Sunni Arab insurgents said they were gearing up for another open street battle with pro-government Shi'ite militiamen in Baghdad's Adhamiya district today. The Arab Sunni stronghold is still feeling ripples from overnight clashes yesterday that appeared to be the closest yet to all-out sectarian fighting. A US military spokesman said 50 insurgents attacked Iraqi forces in the middle of the night in a seven-hour battle that killed five rebels and wounded an Iraqi soldier. Fighting was so fierce that US reinforcements were brought in to the northern district, home to some of Iraq's most hardcore Sunni guerrillas and the Abu Hanifa mosque, near where Saddam Hussein was last seen in public before going into hiding. Sporadic fighting continued today. It appeared to be the first example of a large-scale, open sectarian street battle in the capital, if not all of Iraq. The boldness of the attack was a stark reminder of the security nightmare that will challenge the new government, which will face a Sunni insurgency that has killed many thousands of Shi'ite security forces and civilians. Meanwhile, the

Sunni town of Ramadi, 110 km west of Baghdad, was recovering from the latest rebel assault. The US military said marines repelled insurgent attacks at several locations in central Ramadi yesterday, including the local government centre, which often comes under fire. The multiple suicide car bombs, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machine-guns appeared to be closely co-ordinated, said the military. — Reuters.

ISRAEL

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated Apr 12, states: An Israeli airstrike killed two Palestinian gunmen near the Gaza border today as Israel kept up attacks that have killed civilians as well as militants. An army spokeswoman said an Israeli aircraft fired at two men who had approached the Israel-Gaza frontier carrying rifles. Palestinian security forces said the militants belonged to al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades and were on their way to plant bombs. The group, which belongs to President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction even though he opposes violence, confirmed the men's identities and deaths.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: The Israeli Army has carried out a raid in the Gaza Strip, hours after a devastating Palestinian suicide bombing in Tel Aviv yesterday. Israeli forces fired missiles at a metal factory. The factory is said to be used by militant Palestinian groups for assembling weapons. Witnesses say there are no known victims, but that there has been considerable material damage. Earlier, nine people and the suicide bomber were killed and dozens of others wounded in the Tel Aviv blast. The attack was claimed by the Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad. It is the first suicide attack in Israel since Hamas took over power in the Palestinian Territories. Hamas has called it a natural response to Israeli aggression. But that has been dismissed by the interim Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, during the opening session of the newly elected Israeli Parliament, the Knesset. "We will halt consultations and decide how to respond," he said. "We will know how to respond in the way and manner required. "We will continue to act with all means at our disposal to thwart further such incidents." There has been widespread international condemnation of the suicide attack, including from the United Nations secretary-general Kofi Annan. The Hamas Government has so far failed to condemn the attack, with a Hamas spokesman calling the bombing an act of self-defence.

IVORY COAST

Yamoussoukro, Apr 12 — A meeting between Ivory Coast rebel and government military leaders to discuss disarmament was postponed today after the rebel delegation was prevented from passing through an army roadblock. Senior rebel military officials were due to travel to the

meeting in the capital, Yamoussoukro, from their stronghold, Bouake, in the north but were stopped on the edge of the buffer zone which separates the two halves of the country. The meeting was rescheduled for tomorrow. "Although escorted by United Nations vehicles, government security forces on duty at the checkpoint in Tiebissou refused to lift the barrier for the convoy," rebel forces spokesman Seydou Ouattara said in a statement. He said there had been a heated exchange in which punches were thrown before the rebel delegation decided it was best to return to Bouake. The meeting — due to be attended by the Defence Minister, the head of the national disarmament programme, senior rebels and army chiefs of staff — was meant to discuss a final disarmament timetable and the creation of a joint army command. A string of agreements in the world's top cocoa grower to begin disarming rebels and pro-government militias have come to nothing but the rebels and army chiefs of staff held their first talks in eight months at the start of April. A senior Ivorian army officer said the rebels had been prevented from crossing the roadblock today because they had refused to be searched. But he said the French army would bring the rebel delegation by helicopter to the capital tomorrow to avoid another such incident and ensure that the meeting could go ahead. — Reuters.

MYANMAR

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Five small bombs exploded at five different places in downtown Yangon early this morning, causing minor damage to the government's post office building and to some electric power transformers, but no one was injured. The first explosion occurred at the entrance of the state-run Myanmar Post and Telecommunication office building. Three other bombs exploded at three state-owned electric power transformers, they said. The fifth one exploded on a rail tract near the Yangon Central Railway Station in downtown area, with minor damage.

NEPAL

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Nepal's royal government today lifted a day curfew in Katmandu that was imposed over the weekend (Apr 8-9) to deter anti-monarchy protesters who had clashed with security forces, a government announcement said. The announcement broadcast over the state-run Nepal Television said the curfew imposed on Saturday has been lifted until further notice. There have been several clashes and protest rallies over the past week, since opposition political parties called a general strike to pressure King Gyanendra to restore democracy.

Kathmandu, Apr 12 — Nepali troops shot dead an activist today as violent pro-democracy protests flared for the seventh day across the troubled

Himalayan nation. The latest death is the fourth during a mass campaign launched by political parties last Thursday (Apr 6) to force the monarch to end his absolute rule. The royalist government relaxed a daytime curfew in the capital city Kathmandu, although protests continue to be banned and there was no indication of King Gyanendra trying to defuse the crisis. Today's shooting took place in Nawalparasi town, 200 km west of Kathmandu, when hundreds of demonstrators clashed with police, Yogesh Bhattarai, a senior leader of the Communist Party of Nepal (UML), said. Troops also opened fire at hundreds of activists in Jhapa town, to the east of Kathmandu, wounding several, one local journalist said. However, local officials denied the shooting and said the protesters had only been baton-charged. The Communist Party of Nepal said in a statement that 26 people were wounded in Jhapa and 13 in Nawalparasi. Hundreds of protesters defied a curfew in the western tourist resort town of Pokhara and clashed with police before some 200 were detained, witnesses said. About 5,000 people marched through the main streets of Nepalgunj town on the Indian border, about 550 km west of Kathmandu. However, despite the relaxation of the curfew in Kathmandu, there was a relative lull in protests with only a handful of peaceful demonstrations. — Reuters.

Kathmandu, Apr 14 — Nepal's embattled King Gyanendra vowed today to hold elections in his Himalayan kingdom, but gave no firm date, and did not appear to go beyond previous promises. "It is our wish that in order to re-energize multi-party democracy, there should not be any delay in re-activating all representative bodies through elections", the monarch said in a message to the nation, broadcast at the stroke of midnight at the start of Nepal's Hindu New Year. "May the efforts at ensuring sustainable peace and meaningful democracy in the interests of the nation and the people bear fruit during the new year. King Gyanendra has earlier vowed to hold elections by April 2007 and the latest promise looked unlikely to douse a virulent anti-royal campaign to restore democracy immediately and bring in a representative government. — Reuters.

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated Apr 15, states: Dozens of demonstrators, among them many journalists, were arrested from various parts of Nepal today on the 10th day of a general strike aimed at restoring full democracy. The capital, which had been returning to normality since Wednesday (Apr 12), was again paralysed by the general strike, with almost all vehicles off the road and most shops pulling down their shutters. At least one three-wheeler and one taxi cab that dared defy the strike call were set on fire by the activists, who also burnt tyres on the streets to prevent vehicles moving

about, witnesses said. A senior leader of the communist United Marxist-Leninists, one of the main parties in the seven-party anti-king alliance, said: "We will strictly enforce the general strike that was appearing to be fizzling out in the past three days." Journalists demanding the restoration of democracy and full press freedom, under the banner of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ), clashed with the police as they took out a protest march in a prohibited area of the capital. FNJ claimed that over a dozen journalists, including senior journalist Harihar Birahi, former chairman of the Nepal Press Council Tara Nath Dahal and the former president of the FNJ were injured in the clash. Protest rallies were also organized in different parts of the Kathmandu Valley. Local media reports said police arrested scores of protesters today in different parts of the country as they took part in rallies calling for the restoration of democracy. A Nepalese television report said over 100 protesters were arrested in the southern Nepal town of Hetauda as demonstrators defied a 0900 to 1800 hrs curfew enforced there. Reports also said the general strike was being observed in over a dozen urban areas across the country, including the important east Nepal town of Biratnagar, about 225 kilometres from the capital.

London, Apr 17 — A press report, dated Apr 16, states: The Nepalese capital ran low on fresh food and fuel today because of a general strike that shut down the city, and thousands of angry pro-democracy demonstrators clashed with police firing rubber bullets. The emboldened opposition urged Nepalis to stop paying taxes to the government of King Gyanendra, who responded by further banning protests on the capital's outskirts. Today's pro-democracy rallies across the Himalayan kingdom attracted tens of thousands of people and were the biggest since opponents of Gyanendra's royal dictatorship began their campaign of protests and a nationwide strike that has cut off Nepal's cities for 11 days. The rallies included small protests in Kathmandu's tourist hub and commercial heart, where rallies are banned. The prices for what few vegetables could be found have risen fivefold since the strike started Apr 6, and the prices of chicken and mutton have doubled. Today's biggest rallies took place in two neighborhoods on the outskirts of Kathmandu. One attracted 15,000 people and was peaceful. However, the second, in the Balkhu neighborhood, degenerated into a running battle between protesters and police.

Kathmandu, Apr 18 — Anti-monarchy protests persisted in Kathmandu today despite a steady drizzle as diplomats said the movement against King Gyanendra appeared to be reaching a climax. It was the 13th day of a general strike

and protest campaign launched by a seven-party political alliance which wants the king to restore multi-party democracy. Hundreds of people gathered in various parts of the capital and attempted to take out a procession, but were prevented by police. No one was injured. At least five people have been killed and hundreds wounded in police action on protesters during the campaign, which has brought the impoverished nation to a standstill. Diplomats said time appeared to be running out for the monarch. "We could see him toppled if he doesn't do something in the next few weeks or days," said one. "I am very afraid we are moving into a revolutionary situation." The king held talks with the US, Chinese and Indian ambassadors on Sunday (Apr 16), and indicated he could meet some of the protesters' demands, but diplomats said they knew of no specifics. "He has to hand over power to the political parties," the diplomat said. "And if he does not, it's not looking good." The parties have called for mass rallies on Thursday, the 15th day of the campaign, and have vowed to bring out hundreds of thousands of people on the street. However, they have not specified what will happen after that. King Gyanendra sacked the government and assumed full power in February, 2005, vowing to crush a decade-old Maoist revolt in which more than 13,000 people have died. He has offered to hold elections by April next year, but activists say he cannot be trusted and should immediately hand over power to an all-party government. The Maoists have formed a loose alliance with the political parties and have not launched any operations in the Kathmandu Valley since the start of the protest campaign. Under an agreement with the parties, the Maoists have agreed to join the political mainstream once the royalist government is overthrown. — Reuters.

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Nepal has imposed a curfew on a tourist town to curb growing protests as international pressure grows on King Gyanendra to step down. The government's day-long curfew in Pokhara today came after thousands of pro-democracy protesters clashed with police a day earlier. Anyone violating today's order to stay off the streets of Pokhara would be shot, state-run Radio Nepal was quoted as saying. India, meanwhile, is sending a special envoy to talk to the king and political parties to try to engineer a solution following 14 days of unrest. The envoy is the latest in a series of global officials urging the king to restore democracy after he sacked the elected leaders over a year ago. Activists are planning what they hope will be their biggest rally against the king tomorrow as the death toll from two weeks of demonstrations and clashes with police stands at six. "We have to choose one, either a democracy or a monarchy, and we have already made

a choice. And democracy is our choice," student leader Gagan Thapa said. Twenty-five home ministry employees were arrested today after walking out of work chanting anti-king slogans. With shops closed and vehicles off the streets, food and fuel are running short in the Himalayan kingdom. Armored military vehicles brought supplies to the Kathmandu for the first time since the general strikes began.

PAKISTAN

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Youths rioted in Karachi for a second straight day today to protest a suicide bombing that killed 56 people, which a top Pakistani official said was aimed at "eliminating" the leadership of a moderate Sunni Muslim group. Police confirmed that a lone unidentified suicide bomber detonated an 11-pound bomb near Sunni dignitaries seated in a Karachi park yesterday at a religious service with 10,000 other worshippers. Amid soaring sectarian tensions, hundreds of security forces blocked main roads and shut schools throughout Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, to prevent a repeat of yesterday's riots that broke out after the suicide bombing. But a group of youths, apparently supporters of the Tehrik group, rampaged through a neighbourhood, setting fire to a bus and two cars, and smashing shop windows before police aided by Islamic clerics brought the situation under control, said area police chief Shah Nawaz Khan. Funerals for many of the victims were held throughout Karachi and attended by up to 5,000 people. There has been no claim of responsibility for the attack, one of the deadliest in Pakistan.

Islamabad, Apr 12 — Pakistani army helicopter gunships killed a number of foreign militants today in a night time strike on their compound in a tribal area bordering Afghanistan, a military spokesman said. "The operation was successful. It is now over," Major-General Shaukat Sultan told Reuters. "We have confirmed reports that a few foreign militants were killed in the compound but details are still coming." The military used Cobra helicopter gunships in the attack on the hideout in a village called Nagar, six km south of Miran Shah, the main town in North Waziristan, a restive region where the army has been fighting al Qaeda and Taliban guerrillas and their sympathisers among the local Pashtun tribes. The attack occurred at around 2315 hrs (1815 UTC), and the helicopters were ordered into the air after the military received information about the presence of foreign fighters, Sultan said. — Reuters.

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated Apr 12, states: A gas pipeline in the Loti gas field has been partially destroyed in a rocket attack today in Dera Bugti. According to information received, the Loti gas field came

under rocket attack which resulted in a 30-inch gas pipeline being totally destroyed. Sui gas authorities have started repair work on the gas line. Militants also fired 17 rockets at Kohlu, Chashma, Bela Pash Bogi and Shah Norani checkpoints but no loss of lives and property were reported. Security forces retaliated but the militants managed to flee from the scene. Meanwhile, security forces defused 11 landmines planted by militants in three different areas including Uch power plant, Sangsila Chashma and Pir Koh gas field. In another incident, four government officials including three National Bank employees sustained serious bullet injuries when unidentified militants started indiscriminate firing on their separate vehicles in Tali Mat and Pesh Bogi.

Karachi, Apr 13 — Understand from Karachi Port Trust (KPT) that due to ongoing strike/cum mourning in the city for the last two days, has affected loading of rice at port for export. The movements of cargo to and from the port has also been hampered. Containers and trawler owners also kept their vehicles parked at terminals. Import and export have suffered. However, a press release of port authority said 11 vessels have berthed and first ship sailed today. Meanwhile, all the industrial and trading activities in the city came to a grinding halt in the wake of Tuesday's Nishtar Park tragedy. More than 80% of industrial units in almost all the industrial estates in Karachi could not operate for a very low turnout of workers and non-availability of goods transporting services. All the major markets remained closed through out for the last two days and even small time petty shopkeepers, in various localities, kept their shutters down. There was thin attendance at the private and public sector offices due to absence of public transport while many motorists opted to stay home in view of the uncertain situation in the city. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Apr 14 — Karachi has been paralysed for the last three days on account of mourning and protest against the Nashter Park tragedy, Apr 11, which left 47 people dead among almost all Sunni Tehreek (ST) leadership and religious scholars and over hundred others were injured. Imports, exports, cargo handling at ports and industrial production were badly suffered. All petrol pumps were also closed, adding in the suffering of people. Today, a general strike called by Ulma-e-Ahle Sunnat, which was supported by Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), Jamaat-e-Islami and other parties expressing solidarity with the religious organizations over Nashter Park tragedy, business community also announced complete closure of their business and transporters assured that no vehicle will ply on roads. The entire Karachi city gave deserted look as people remained at home; the business activities came to standstill and no public vehicle was plying on the roads due to the strike.

Business centres were closed down at Saddar, Kharadar, Mithadar, M.A Jinnah Road, Clifton, Defence, Shahra-e-Faisla, Tariq Road, Bahadurabad, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Shah Faisal Colony, Korangi, Landhi, Malir, Quaidabad, Bin Qasim, North Nazimabad, Liaqatabad, Nazimabad, North Karachi, New Karachi, Federal B area, Sarjani Town, SITE, Sher Shah, Baldia Town, Garden and other areas. The majority of private vehicles were also off the road due to non-availability of fuel because of the closure of petrol pumps in the city. Karachiites are facing difficulty as the city undergoes scarcity of essential commodities and vegetables on account of closure of markets and Sabzi Mandi consecutively for three days. Over all law and order situation was under control, however, some incidents of setting tyres on fire, torching public property and pelting stones on vehicles were reported in various parts of the city. Reports and private channels also suggest partial closure of other cities including Peshawar, Lahore, Hyderabad, Sukkur, and some other interior parts of all provinces. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Quetta, Apr 18 — Tribal militants blew up a natural gas pipeline in Pakistan's restive southwestern Baluchistan province today, disrupting supplies to two districts, police said. The used heavy explosives to blow up the pipeline that was supplying gas to Mustung and Qalat districts, local police official Hamid Shakeel said. "Around 100,000 people living in the two districts are now without gas," he said adding that the pipeline would be restored after 24 hours. In separate incident, militants attacked a telephone exchange with rockets in Noshki district, 100 miles southwest of provincial capital Quetta. — Reuters.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Suspected militants opened fire today on vehicles carrying Pakistani security forces in a northwestern tribal region near the Afghan border, killing seven soldiers and wounding 22, an army spokesman said. The attack took place on the outskirts of Miran Shah, the main town in the North Waziristan tribal region, spokesman Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan said. The wounded were transported to a hospital. A security official said at least three were in critical condition. Sultan said the attackers had fled to a nearby village and security forces were responding to the attack. He gave no further details, but a second security official in the region said the army, backed by helicopter gunships, was hunting for the militants. Militants also attacked a military post with rockets near Miran Shah late yesterday, triggering a shootout, but no security forces were hurt. It was not clear whether there were any militant casualties.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Apr 12 — The Philippine army said today 67 communist fighters had surrendered after two weeks of clashes on the southern island of Mindanao. “They surrendered due to continuing military operations against them. Our operations have been ongoing for the past two weeks, they’ve run out of food,” said Brigadier General Alfredo Cayton. Cayton said some of the 67 were local farmers recruited to reinforce regular guerrillas from the 8,000-member New People’s Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines. “They surrendered because they are being punished by the NPAs, they were required to give portions of their harvest to the NPA.” But the Communist Party denied that such a large number of their fighters had given themselves up. “We are not saying that none of our fighters are surrendering but with that big number, that is not true,” party spokesman Gregorio Rosal said. — Reuters.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Australia is sending 110 soldiers to the Solomon Islands after a night of rioting and looting in the capital, Honiara. An extra 66 Australian Federal Police (AFP) officers, equipped with riot gear, are also heading to the region. Prime Minister John Howard says the troops will arrive in the Solomons tonight. The swearing-in yesterday of the new Solomons Prime Minister, Snyder Rini, sparked widespread riots and looting in the capital. The protesters say Mr Rini’s coalition Government is funded and influenced by the owner of the Honiara Hotel, Sir Thomas Chan, a naturalised citizen of Chinese origin. Mr Rini has issued a statement denying that his Government is heavily influenced by Chinese businessmen and accusations that he bought the votes of MPs before the election ballot. Honiara residents have been asked to stay indoors as the looters target shops and businesses in Chinatown. Seventeen Australian police serving in the country as part of the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission (RAMSI) have been injured in the violence. Two of the officers need surgery and will be evacuated to Australia for medical treatment. The commissioner of the Solomon Islands Royal Police, Australian Shane Castles, has met the Solomons Governor-General for talks about the unrest. Commissioner Castles has suggested that the Government invoke a declaration under the Preservation of Public Security Act to help lock-down the capital Honiara. “That will see a potential curfew come into play at 1800 this evening that will be effective until 0600 tomorrow morning,” he said. “There’s other strategies also being developed to lock down the city and allow us to restore law and order”

Honiara, Apr 19 — Australian troops landed in the troubled Solomon Islands today to quell two days of rioting and looting sparked by the election of a new prime minister in the South Pacific nation. Four military transport aircraft began delivering 110 troops and 70 police to reinforce an Australian-led, multinational peacekeeping operation which has been unable to stop the violence against Chinese businesses in the capital Honiara. “There is a lot of fear. People are just hoping the military will calm things down,” government spokesman Johnson Honimae said, adding that mobs of drunken youths were roaming the streets of Honiara. The Solomons head of state announced a dusk-to-dawn curfew in Honiara as black smoke rose above the capital from burning buildings and as looters continued ransacking buildings. Rioters claimed the new government of Snyder Rini, elected by secret parliamentary ballot yesterday, would be heavily influenced by the Taiwan government, which the Solomons recognises diplomatically, and local Chinese businessmen. “Some of this rioting was sparked by allegations made by Snyder Rini’s political opponents that he was in receipt of Chinese, meaning I think largely Taiwanese, money,” Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer told Australian television. Crowds have called for Rini to resign and his swearing-in has been postponed until the unrest eases. Police in riot gear looked on as a crowd of about 1,500 people looted and burnt shops and buildings today. Schools, banks, supermarkets, post offices and other government buildings were close. The Pacific Casino Hotel and three other Honiara buildings were in flames after they were attacked by stone-throwing protesters. Police evacuated about 150 hotel guests, Honimae said, while others were seen fleeing by boat. Honiara’s Chinatown district was mostly razed in the violence. Chinese families living above their stores jumped for their lives from burning buildings and swam across a nearby river to escape rioters late yesterday, the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation reported. There were some minor injuries among Chinese residents. — Reuters.

SOMALIA

Berlin, Apr 12 — A Somali man working with a German-based aid group was shot dead in a gun battle involving bandits in the south of the lawless east African country earlier this week, the organisation said today. The man and seven others were caught in crossfire between highway bandits and another vehicle on the road from the capital Mogadishu to the southern city of Kismayu, said Stefan Libisch. The incident occurred on Monday (Apr 10) at around 1730 hrs, said Libisch, spokesman for Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe in Stuttgart. Abdulkadir Esse Far’Ade, who was working on a project to clear debris washed up by the Asian

tsunami, died at the scene a few minutes after being struck by a stray bullet. — Reuters.

SRI LANKA

Colombo, Apr 12 — Blasts blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels and riots that followed killed 13 people today and injured dozens more in north-east Sri Lanka, officials said, raising fears peace talks might not happen and war might restart. Two policemen died in a claymore mine ambush while one soldier and four civilians were killed in a blast in a crowded marketplace in the port town of Trincomalee, the army said. Another six people died in riots that followed. “It was blast by an army point by the clock tower,” said an army spokesman of the second attack. “We think it was the LTTE. We don’t think it was a grenade. With the soldier, they only found half his body,” he added, referring to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels. More than 30 people have now died since Friday (Apr 7) in a dramatic rise in violence in what looks to be the bloodiest few days since a 2002 cease-fire halted two decades of civil war that killed more than 64,000 people killed. Peace talks between the government and the LTTE are planned for next week in Switzerland, but diplomats are increasingly doubtful the meeting will take place. In Trincomalee, which has large populations both from Tamil and Muslim communities as well as Sri Lanka’s Sinhalese majority, the attack was followed by angry rioting in which officials and witnesses said Tamil shops were attacked and burnt. Police said some 50 people were injured but a curfew had restored order. Earlier, international truce monitors described the situation as out of control. “It is under control now,” Assistant Superintendent Mahendra Serasinghe said. “They are putting out the burning buildings.” A police sergeant at the Trincomalee hospital said wounded people from both the Sinhalese and Tamil communities were arriving with blast and burn injuries. The government says it remains confident that talks will take place as planned, but the rebels have yet to say they will attend. Some say the peace process may be slipping away. The rebels say they will not attend unless the government guarantees safe conduct for a Sea Tiger vessel to transport eastern Tiger commanders to their main headquarters for talks ahead of Geneva. The government says it will not. “The government has offered a ferry which is air conditioned,” head of the government peace secretariat Palitha Kohona said before the second blast. “I think there is a certain amount of gamesmanship going on here. This government was not elected to simply concede. There is no right under the cease-fire for the Tigers to use their own vessels.” The LTTE also accuses the army of backing a breakaway group and using it to attack the mainstream Tigers. The army denies the charge, and say they

are unable to find any armed groups operating in government areas to disarm. — Reuters.

Batticaloa, Apr 15 — Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels said today they would pull out of peace talks with the government in Switzerland due to a dispute over the transport of eastern rebel commanders to their northern base. The Tigers were concerned about Sri Lankan navy plans to monitor a civilian sea transport escorting unarmed Nordic truce monitors that was to have taken the rebel commanders on Saturday, said the head of the Tiger peace secretariat, S. Puleedevan. "It is very important we meet our commanders," he said. "We have cancelled the transport. If we cannot meet them, Geneva is off." Violence has surged in Sri Lanka, with more than 40 people killed this week in the bloodiest few days since a 2002 cease-fire. The government yesterday agreed to a rebel request that talks scheduled in Geneva next week to rescue the fragile truce be postponed until Apr 24-25. Head of the Sri Lanka monitoring mission, Swedish Maj-Gen Ulf Henricsson, said the Tigers had agreed to allow the Sri Lankan Navy to monitor the rebel transport vessel at a distance. If the rebels did not know that, they had not read the paperwork properly, he said. — Reuters.

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated today, states: At least four people were killed and 10 others injured when a claymore anti-personnel mine was set off in northern Sri Lanka, military officials said today. The attack raised the death toll to over 50 in a week of bomb attacks, shooting incidents and retaliatory attacks. The mine, fixed to a small tractor, was set off near an army camp as a bus carrying troops was passing in Vavuniya town, 254 kilometres north of the capital. The incident came as the peace process suffered a further setback today when Tamil rebels pulled out of an arrangement to transport its senior cadres by sea from the east to the north of the island for 'consultations' ahead of peace talks scheduled for next week. The transport was arranged by Scandinavian monitors for two senior rebel leaders, but the rebels claimed that the Sri Lankan Navy was too close to their vessels, monitoring their movements. They said they therefore could not go ahead with the plan. A spokesperson for the Scandinavian monitoring mission said the trip from the east to the north had been called off following the protest by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The government's peace secretariat expressed 'serious doubts' about whether the rebels wanted to go ahead with peace talks scheduled from April 24 to 25 in Geneva. The talks had originally been scheduled for April 19 to 21, but the (LTTE) said it wanted the talks postponed as it could not have consultations with eastern provincial leaders. 'There is a serious doubt if the (LTTE) wants to

go to Geneva,' the head of the government peace secretariat Palitha Kohona said in a statement. His statement came after the rebels scrapped plans to have their field commanders consult with the group's leadership ahead of the Swiss talks on saving the ceasefire that has been in place since February 2002. Over 50 people have been killed in mine attacks by rebels in the north and east, and another powerful bomb in Trincomalee town, 254 kilometres north-east of the capital, and in a few retaliatory attacks on minority Tamils following the rebel attacks.

Colombo, Apr 17 — Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels killed four Sri Lankan soldiers in a claymore fragmentation mine ambush today, an army source said, as violence on the island continued to worsen. "It was a claymore attached to a three-wheeler auto-rickshaw," the source said from the northern town of Vavuniya, just south of rebel territory, where the attack occurred. "Four army people were killed." Another army source in the northern town of Jaffna said another claymore mine had exploded prematurely there, killing the suspected Tiger rebel who was carrying it. — Reuters.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: Five Tamils have been shot dead in northern Sri Lanka as efforts to revive peace talks continue, officials say. Police found the bodies of the men near Jaffna. The TamilNet website blamed the military, who have denied the claim. Meanwhile, at least four people were hurt in two mine attacks in the north, police say. More than 60 people have died in attacks in the last week. In Colombo, a Norwegian special envoy met officials as part of efforts to salvage talks with Tamil Tiger rebels. Police found the bodies of the five Tamils with gunshot wounds today near Puttur on the Jaffna peninsula. The pro-rebel TamilNet website said soldiers had shot and killed the men on Tuesday night. The military denied the allegation, and blamed the rebels for the killings. Today's two mine blasts were the latest in a series of attacks over the last 10 days, in which many members of the security forces have been killed. Two sailors were hurt in one of the claymore mine attacks in northern Mannar district, the military said. Meanwhile, about 1,000 people are now known to have left their homes in the north-eastern port town of Trincomalee after a surge in violence in the area. Hundreds of residents are taking shelter in schools and churches after Sinhala mobs burned Tamil homes.

SUDAN

Cairo, Apr 12 — Six civilians and two rebel fighters were killed in eastern Sudan when rebels attacked government positions, an armed forces official said today. Eastern Sudan contains the country's only port and main oil pipeline and rebels there accuse the government of raising local militias and causing insecurity.

Rebels attacked two sites in Kassala state, Tanay and Wagr, simultaneously yesterday using infantry and vehicles fitted with guns, the official said. "The rebels withdrew after the Sudanese army, backed by the airforce, drove them out, killing two rebels in a battle that lasted about two hours," said the official. The official said the Beja Congress, one of the groups that makes up the Eastern Front, and the Justice and Equality Movement, a group that has members fighting in the separate rebellion in Darfur, took part in the attack. An official from the Beja Congress said the attacks, in an area around 40 km north of Kassala town, came in response to continued government attempts to move into rebel areas. "The militia and the army tried to enter our areas ... they have been trying this for three months," said Abdallah Moussa Abdallah, Secretary-General of the Beja Congress. Abdallah said he did not have precise details about the clash. — Reuters.

TURKEY

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: An explosion near a sidewalk cafe in an Istanbul suburb injured about 30 people today, and police said they suspected it was caused by a percussion grenade. The Anatolia news agency reported that the explosion occurred in a trash container in the Bakirkoy district. Istanbul's chief of police was investigating the blast site and the injured were taken to a nearby hospital, Anatolia said. One victim was in serious condition. Kurdish militants have left bombs in Istanbul and threatened more attacks after widespread rioting recently in Turkey's Kurdish-populated south-east.

Labour Disputes



FRANCE

London, Apr 12 — The port strike that started without notice at Fos and Lavera yesterday (Apr 11) is over.

INDIA

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated today, states: The strike at Hero Honda's Gurgaon plant is set to enter the sixth day, with no production, even as talks between the company's management, the striking workers of contractors and the Haryana state labour department continued late into this evening. The company said although there could be a notional loss due to the complete stoppage of production for the last five days, its value could not be quantified. In a media release, the company today said since the plant was running at 90% capacity, the loss of production could be made up only by running the

plant to its full capacity, once the strike ended. Two separate meetings, first between representatives of the striking workers and the state labour department and second between the company management and the labour department took place at the Gymkana Club in Gurgaon. However, the talks continued with no sign of a resolution until late in the evening. A union leader from the company's Dharuhera plant was also present at the meeting venue. Workers and members of the All India Trade Union Congress, who were present at the meeting venue, said there was little hope of the talks ending in any positive outcome during the day. The failure of the talks to end the strike has pushed it into the sixth day.

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated Apr 15, states: Some 2,000 contract workers at India's largest motorcycle maker, Hero Honda Motors Ltd, ended a five-day strike after being given assurances on some of their demands, a company statement said today. "The flash strike at Hero Honda's Gurgaon plant was called off peacefully and unilaterally by the striking contract workers last night," the statement said. "The contractors have agreed to address some of the genuine grievances of the contract workers," he said. Hero, 26% owned by Japan's Honda Motors Co, said operations at its Dharuhera plant, also near New Delhi and which makes about 4,000 bikes a day, were unaffected.

MEXICO

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Striking Mexican copper miners and steel workers vowed yesterday to prolong a 24-day stoppage after no talks between management and union were held over Easter in an impasse that has pushed up prices for the red metal to all-time highs. Workers at Grupo Mexico SA's La Caridad copper mine in the northern state of Sonora walked out on Mar 24 in support of an embattled national union leader not recognized by the government or mining companies. Other miners and steel workers, including those at steel producer Grupo Villacero SA, are backing the La Caridad miners and are also on strike, though union members of Netherlands-based Mittal Steel Co. NV's Mexican operation returned to work last week. The strike continues at La Caridad, said a union official who declined to be named. La Caridad, about 160 kilometres south of the U.S. border, mines 140,000 tonnes of copper concentrates a year. "We have had talks with local authorities about the validity of the strike, but so far there is nothing," said Villacero chief financial officer Ignacio Trevino. The strike is aimed at pressuring the government to recognize Napoleon Gomez as the union's representative. The government has accused him of fraud involving the disappearance of millions of dollars of workers' funds.

NETHERLANDS

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated Apr 12, states: A 24-hour strike hit ferry services between the Netherlands and the UK today as last-ditch collective labour agreement talks in the Netherlands broke down late last night. All cargo operations were stopped but passengers were allowed to carry on unaffected. Niek Stam, from the FNV union, said six rounds of negotiations, which started in November last year, had not resulted in any movement in the situation. Pensions and holiday pay are major issues, as well as the dockworkers register. The salary payment was not at the centre of the dispute, he added: øit is the total packageø. Around 290 dockworkers went on strike at 0700 hrs, this morning from P&O Ferries, Norfolkline and Stena Line. Of these 120 are from Norfolkline and 60 from Stena. Stena Line commercial freight manager Rob Mittelmeijer, said that the firmø Harwich-Hook of Holland service had continued but the Rotterdam Europoort-Harwich service had been totally cancelled, meaning three departures were abandoned.



ALLEGED CONTAMINATION BY PESTICIDE, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated Apr 18, states: Long Island Sound lobstermen have reached a settlement with the final chemical company targeted by a lawsuit that claimed a pesticide may have contributed to a steep decline in the lobster population, they announced today. The deaths rattled the lobster industry, sending 75% of full-time lobstermen in Long Island Sound out of the trade. Lobster catches in the Sound have dropped to less than one million pounds a year, compared with six million pounds in the late 1990s. "This settlement is a victory for the hundreds of lobster fishermen in New York and Connecticut who lost their vocation and way of life with the destruction of the 200-year-old Long Island Sound lobster fishery," attorney Gladstone Jones said in a statement. Lawsuits filed in 2000 targeted the makers of chemicals sprayed in and around the New York area in 1999 to combat an outbreak of the West Nile virus, which is spread by mosquitoes. Suits against two companies were settled in 2004. Cheminova today agreed to pay \$12.5 million to the lobstermen, subject to court approval, Jones said. The settlement is in addition to the \$3.75 million paid in the 2004 agreements with Clarke Mosquito Control Products Inc and Agrevo Environmental Health Inc, Jones said. Cheminova admitted to no wrongdoing in the settlement. The

money would be divided among several hundred commercial lobstermen, Jones said, adding that \$100,000 is to be donated to the Lobster Institute at the University of Maine to research the Long Island Sound lobster fishery. The lobstermen claimed that Cheminova, of Wayne, New Jersey, allowed Fyfanon, a brand name for malathion, to be used with an outdated label on its 55-gallon drums. The Environmental Protection Agency said in 1994 that the label needed a warning that the spray should not be used "around bodies of water where fish or shellfish are grown and/or harvested commercially," according to the lawsuit. The EPA delayed final approval of the label change a number of times between 1994 and 1999. The labels that included the warning did not appear until a few weeks after lobsters began to die, the suit contended. Cheminova had argued in court papers that the EPA never told it specifically when to start using the new label.

BARGE ACCIDENT, CEDAR RIVER, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: A large verdict in a civil trial involving the collision of boat and barge in the Cedar River in 2001 was not only upheld on appeal, it has grown larger. The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the \$16-million verdict, which now exceeds \$19 million because of interest generated while the judgment was on appeal. Superior Construction appealed, saying the boat operator, Charles Brock, was at fault because he was intoxicated. While Brock was arrested for boating while intoxicated, the appeals court agreed with trial Judge Harvey Schlesinger's ruling that the operator's intoxication did not matter as none of nearly a dozen people on the boat saw the barge until the last second.

CONTAMINATION, PHOENIX-GOODYEAR AIRPORT, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 13, states: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Justice have reached a settlement requiring parties potentially responsible for soil and groundwater contamination at the Phoenix-Goodyear Airport North Superfund Site to pay more than \$8 million and to clean up the site. Under the terms of settlement, Unidynamics/Phoenix Inc. and its parent company, Crane Co., are required to continue current cleanup at the site, conduct supplemental site investigation and future cleanup, pay \$6.7 million in past costs and all future oversight costs, and pay \$500,000 in penalties. The settlement also requires the companies to spend \$1 million on an environmental project that includes the inventorying and assessment of up to 25 possible brownfields sites in the city of Goodyear, complete four more

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extensive site assessments, and conduct cleanups at three of those sites. From 1963 through 1994, the Unidynamics/Phoenix facility manufactured defense and aerospace component systems, including pyrotechnics and explosives. The site was listed on the federal Superfund list in 1983 after the Arizona Department of Health Services discovered hazardous substances, including trichloroethylene, also known as TCE, in local water supply wells. In the late 1990s, perchlorate, a common component of rocket fuel, was found in area wells, and was added as a contaminant of concern for the site. The federal government said the penalties were the result of the companies' failure to comply with two EPA orders, issued in 1990 and 2003, requiring specific site cleanup.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated Apr 15, states: The parents of a four-year-old boy who died after receiving preliminary care in Chambersburg Hospital were awarded \$2.1 million in damages on Wednesday (Apr 12) in Franklin County Court, Pennsylvania. Christian F. Jessen, the son of Christian A. Jessen of Chambersburg and Ellen Rose of Shippensburg, died Jun 15, 1999, in Hershey Medical Centre, PA. The child had been transferred to Hershey on Jun 11 from Chambersburg Hospital, where he was diagnosed with pneumonia, moderate to severe respiratory distress, dehydration, respiratory alkalosis and metabolic acidosis, according to court records. The hospital, staff and anesthesiologist Dr. Yin Keong Ngeow were found negligent in the treatment of the child, and the negligence was a factual cause in harming him, the jury ruled in the eight-day wrongful death trial before Judge Richard Walsh. The jury also found Ngeow's negligence was not a factual cause in the young boy's death. The couple was awarded \$1.4 million based on the potential earnings of the child, \$500,000 for mental and physical pain and suffering, \$100,000 based on the child's potential support of his parents during his lifetime and \$100,000 for the loss of his services, physical comfort and society. The hospital is very sorry for this tragic loss, but because of a pretrial resolution in the case, challenges to the care rendered at the hospital were not defended and the matter will not be appealed, said Kevin E. Osborne, an attorney representing the hospital.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: A jury yesterday awarded a Hollywood couple \$5.75 million after a six-week medical malpractice trial in Broward County, Florida. Michael and Mary Jane Palanza sued for damages after claiming that their son, Alex, now 11, suffered a brain hemorrhage during delivery on Apr 28, 1994. Alex now suffers from cerebral palsy and other

disabilities. The couple said their doctors, Eric Freling and Edward Zelnick, failed to treat Mary Jane Palanza appropriately when she went to Memorial Regional Hospital with suspected premature labour. The defendants said the bleeding was not related to the delivery but rather to the fact the baby was born prematurely. The doctors plan to appeal. Memorial Regional Hospital and AvMed Health Plans settled with the couple before trial.

PATENT INFRINGEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 14 — A press report, dated Apr 13, states: A federal jury awarded TiVo nearly \$74 million in damages today in a swift ending to a patent-infringement lawsuit against EchoStar Communications Corp., the parent of the Dish satellite television provider. TiVo got most of the \$87 million in damages it sought in a case that one of its lawyers called "life or death" for the company that was among the first to sell devices to pause and rewind live television. The case in U.S. District Court in Marshall was closely watched on Wall Street, with some analysts even dropping in during the two-week trial. They said a victory would help TiVo win other royalty deals involving digital video recorders (DVRs). In a statement, EchoStar called the decision "the first step in a very long process" and said it considered TiVo's patent overly broad. "We believe the decision will be reversed either through post-trial motions or on appeal. Additionally, the Patent Office is in the process of re-examining TiVo's patent, having determined there is a substantial question concerning the validity of the patent." TiVo General Counsel Matthew Zinn said the verdict in U.S. District Court gives the company more leverage to negotiate royalty deals with cable companies that, like Dish, use digital video recorders that function much like a TiVo. Those rivals have taken sales away from TiVo by offering boxes and service at lower prices. Zinn would not rule out suing cable companies that use other boxes, but he called it a last resort. "We're just trying to build products that people use and enjoy, and this gives us more runway to do that," said James M. Barton, a TiVo co-founder whose name is listed first on the company's most important patent. The 10-member jury deliberated just over two hours after hearing two weeks of highly technical testimony from engineering experts. The panel agreed with TiVo's nine claims that EchoStar had used its technology without license for the satellite company's own DVRs. An electrical engineer paid by TiVo said the EchoStar boxes relied on technology covered by TiVo patent, but two experts hired by EchoStar said the designs were different. TiVo claimed EchoStar violated its patent for a "multimedia time warping system" to pause, rewind or fast-forward live TV programs by

recording them on a hard drive. EchoStar's own original box "didn't work. It was a disaster," TiVo lawyer Sam Baxter said during closing arguments. In closing arguments, EchoStar attorney Harold McElhinny said TiVo was using EchoStar as a scapegoat for its own failure to compete against other makers of set-top boxes. He said TiVo's box was overpriced at a time when Dish and cable companies were giving away recorders to new subscribers. McElhinny highlighted TiVo's financial problems since its founding in 1997 which he blamed on erratic decision-making. The \$87 million request was based on a financial consultant's estimate of how much TiVo would have earned if EchoStar had not sold more than 4 million of its own recorders using TiVo technology. "This is life or death for them," Baxter said of TiVo. The jury awarded \$73.99 million instead of \$87 million because it was not convinced TiVo had done everything it could to promote its patent, which was approved in 2001, according to the jury forewoman. As a result, jurors based damages starting in January 2004, when TiVo filed the lawsuit.

TOBACCO-RELATED ILLNESS, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: New Hampshire is among the states suing the tobacco industry for money owed from a 1998 settlement. A spokesman for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco said the weeks-long negotiations between the states and tobacco companies has broken down. The tobacco companies say the disputed amount, roughly \$1.2 billion, is money they should get to keep. They cite a settlement provision that allows the cigarette makers to pay less if they've lost market share to smaller companies that weren't part of the settlement. That prompted New Hampshire and other states to file lawsuits yesterday looking to recover the money. Also yesterday, the state treasury received less than expected in an annual settlement payment from R.J. Reynolds and Lorillard Tobacco Co. Attorney General Kelly Ayotte said the state was expecting \$43.8 million, but the payment was \$5 million short. Another \$2 million is late but expected soon.

UNDERPAYMENT FOR CATTLE, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 14, states: A federal jury in Aberdeen, South Dakota, has awarded just over \$9 million in damages to cattle producers who said large meat packing companies underpaid them for live cattle. The class action lawsuit alleged losses of nearly \$43 million. One of the plaintiffs' attorneys said the jury awarded damages of \$4 million dollars from Tyson Meats, \$3 million dollars from Excel-Cargil, and \$2.5 million from Swift. The jury ruled in favor of a fourth defendant, National Beef. The

lawsuit was based on a few weeks of misinformation in 2001 from the US Department of Agriculture on boxed beef prices. The lawsuit alleged that the meat packers knew about the problem before it became public and used the information to pay less for live cattle.

Railway Accidents



DRAMA AREA, GREECE

London, Apr 17 — A press report, dated Apr 16, states: Four people died and 40 were hurt, five of them seriously, when a passenger train collided with a truck and derailed near the northern Greek city of Drama, police and officials said. Public Order Ministry officials said the fatalities included two occupants of the truck. Several of the injured appeared to be in critical condition, an official said. “We are waiting for a crane to lift one of the wagons, as we suspect several passengers are trapped underneath,” the country’s fire brigade chief, Andreas Kois, told The Associated Press. The train had four wagons in total. Three cars derailed in the incident, which occurred at 2125 hrs, when Intercity Train No. 92 struck a vegetable truck at a railway crossing in the village of Koudounia. The train was carrying 110 passengers in four cars on its route from Thessaloniki to Alexandroupolis. Municipal officials were en route to the area to coordinate rescue efforts, but the fire brigade was responsible for overseeing the operation.

GUBUK STATION, JAVA ISLAND, INDONESIA

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A passenger train bound for the capital crashed into another train stopped at Gubuk Station, Java Island, early today, killing at least 13 people and injuring more than 25, a railway official said. Rescue workers at the crash site were checking to see if more bodies or injured passengers remained trapped in the wreckage of the trains, which were carrying more than 1,000 people between them, said a local railway official. He said that 13 people were killed and at least 26 were injured. Officials were investigating the cause of the accident. It appeared the moving train was able to brake before it smashed into the stationary one.

Jakarta, Apr 15 — Two trains collided in Indonesia’s Central Java province today killing 14 people and injuring 12, police said. The early-morning accident occurred when two trains bound from Jakarta to Surabaya, Indonesia’s second city, collided, a police official at Gubug near the crash site said. “According to the latest information, 14 people were killed and 12 are injured,” police

official Winarno said. One of the train drivers was among the dead. He said hundreds of passengers had been evacuated from the scene, and the busy line closed to all traffic. One of the locomotives derailed and plunged into a paddy field, the police official said. Transportation Minister Hatta Radjasa, who was heading for the scene, said the accident might have been due to “human errors”. “Based on temporary findings, there was no order from the train station to let one of the trains go but the train just went away,” Radjasa told Elshinta radio. — Reuters.

HAMPDEN, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Bangor, ME, Apr 12, states: Part of Western Avenue in Hampden remains closed to traffic, after a train collided with a tractor trailer and derailed last night. The section of Western Avenue that is shut down is between Mayo Road and Patterson Road. Police say a tractor trailer hauling demolition debris drove into the path of the oncoming train around 1900 hrs. The locomotive, along with a tanker carrying diesel fuel and two box cars, derailed. None of the fuel from the tanker leaked. Police say the truck driver was heading east on Western Avenue and could not see the warning lights because the sun. Police say the road will be blocked off, while crews clean up the debris and fix the tracks. The Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway will be bringing in a crane to remove the locomotive and derailed tanker.

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 14, states: Western Avenue in Hampden is now open to traffic, now that the mess left over from a train derailment on Tuesday (Apr 11) has been cleaned up. Officials say a tractor trailer truck ran through the crossing as the train approached. The collision caused the train to jump off the tracks and become lodged in dirt. Some heavy lifting was required to clear the site. Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railroad brought in two giant cranes to gently lift the 165 ton locomotive, which was taken to a maintenance yard in Milo. Before that, the cranes righted a tanker car that also went off the tracks. The tracks themselves have been repaired and train service has resumed. Western Avenue was reopened at 1500 hrs.

KEDDIE AREA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: A major rail route through the Sierra Nevada remained closed last night, after five railcars, including a tanker reportedly containing methanol, derailed near Keddie in Plumas County. The early morning accident left the tanker lying on its side, leaking a small amount of the toxic liquid. A spokeswoman for BNSF Railway said hazardous material crews had responded to the derailment in an attempt to contain the spill, but did not know when the

tanker would be righted and cleared from the tracks. Lena Kent said the other four cars, part of a 73-car train hauling a variety of freight, reportedly had only minor damage. No one was injured in the accident, she said. A Union Pacific spokesman said the derailment was also affecting their tracks yesterday, causing some trains to be rerouted. Kent said the derailed train originated in Everett, Washington, and was headed for Barstow.

LAKE TOWNSHIP, OHIO, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated today, states: No one was hurt when 15 freight cars, including four tanks of flammable ethanol, derailed early yesterday at CSX’s Stanley Yard in Lake Township. None of the tank cars leaked, CSX spokesman Kim Freely said. A string of cars being pushed at 4 mph to a sorting area derailed into other cars on two parallel tracks. Ms. Freely said the cause of the accident and damage estimates haven’t been determined yet, and the impact on railroad operations was minimal.

SANDPOINT AREA, IDAHO, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated Apr 18, states: A Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway train derailed near the small town north of Sandpoint but no one was injured, railway spokesman Gus Melonas said today. The line was reopened Tuesday night, Melonas said, and an investigation into the cause continued. About 13 of the train’s 105 grain cars derailed at 2315, Monday (Apr 17), he said. Two cars remained upright and 11 tipped over. The train was travelling about 22 mph in a 50 mph zone. During the line closure, Amtrak bused passengers on its Empire Builder train between Libby, Mont., and Spokane, Wash. The freight train originated in Wolf Point, Mont., and was bound for Kalama, Wash., Melonas said.

Miscellaneous



BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY, CANADA

London, Apr 17 — A press report, dated Apr 16, states: Canada today confirmed a case of mad cow disease at a farm in British Columbia — the country’s fifth case since May, 2003, when the United States closed its border to Canadian beef. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency announced on Thursday (Apr 13) that it had a suspected case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE. The six-year-old cow was identified on a Fraser Valley farm through the national BSE surveillance program. It is the fifth case in Canada since May,

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2003, when the US border was closed to Canadian beef after the sick cows were detected in Canada. In a written statement, the inspection agency said the case would have no bearing on the safety of Canadian beef, because no part of the animal entered the human food or animal feed systems. Inspectors have tested roughly 100,000 animals since Canada's first case was detected in Alberta and have said they expect to find isolated cases of the disease. It is the second animal born after a 1997 ban on cattle feed to test positive for mad cow. A cow from an Alberta farm tested positive for the disease in January. Canada has invited the United States to participate in the epidemiological investigation of the latest case, and the US Agriculture Department planned to send an animal health expert to Canada tomorrow. US Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns said he did not anticipate a change in status in trade between the countries.

GREENPEACE PROTEST IN LAS PALMAS

London, Apr 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Four Greenpeace activists were occupying ref *Binar 4* (1110 gt, built 1974) in Las Palmas, Grand Canary Islands, today, pressuring the Spanish Government to seize what the environmental group says is a cargo of illegally transported fish. Three activists climbed on board *Binar 4* before dawn, yesterday, and, under cover of darkness, four others replaced them early today, said Sebastian Losada, a Greenpeace representative in Las Palmas. One Greenpeace activist who was among the first group was arrested, he said. The activists are perched on top one of the masts of *Binar 4* and one of its tall cranes, he added. The refrigerated vessel is carrying around 200 tons of sea bass and other species, caught by other vessels in waters off Guinea, in west Africa. Losada said the catch was transferred illegally on to the *Binar 4* because Guinea's laws require that a government official witness such operations, to be sure the smaller fishing vessels have licences and, in this case, that did not happen. Spain would not allow the vessel to unload its cargo, until it hears from Guinea's Government whether the *Binar 4* acted legally, said Juan Carlos Martin Fragueiro, a government fisheries official in Gran Canaria. The Greenpeace occupation of the vessel has been peaceful except for an incident early today, in which a crew member of *Binar 4* turned a high-pressure water hose on the activists, Losada said.

OCEAN HEART (Panama)

Kakinada, Apr 13 — Bulk *Ocean Heart* arrived Kakinada Apr 6 from Chittagong. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: An Indonesian man who died on Apr 8 has been confirmed as a bird flu victim by a

World Health Organization-affiliated laboratory, a senior Health Ministry official said yesterday, raising Indonesia's bird flu death toll to 25. Hariadi Wibisono said the 24-year-old man from Tangerang, on the outskirts of Jakarta, was infected with the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, but the source of the infection remains undetermined.



ASBESTOS PLANT, VOLZHSKY, VOLGOGRAJ REGION, RUSSIA

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated Apr 18, states: Seven people were hurt in an explosion at the asbestos plant in the town of Volzhsky in the Volgograd region. Five of them were hospitalized with burns and bruises, a source at the press service of the southern regional center of the Emergency Situations Ministry told Itar-Tass today. The explosion occurred at about 2000 as a steam pipe carrying gasoline mixture ruptured. "Luckily, there was no fire. Otherwise consequences could have been much more serious," the source said. The accident is being cleaned up and investigated.

CHEMICAL PLANT, WIXOM, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 14, states: Pontiac Trail west of Wixom Rd. was shut down this morning, following a massive fire at the Korex Plant in Wixom. The fire started early this morning. Workers inside the plant thought they could put out the flames on their own with extinguishers, but the fire quickly spread before they could get it under control. Wixom fire crews, with the help of Lyon Township and Milford fire crews, battled for hours before the blaze was finally extinguished. The Korex Plant has produced soap in the Wixom area for decades. Although the fire was in a plant, there were no evacuations in the area. There were no injuries reported as a result of this fire. Because of the damage sustained on the Korex building, it could be some time before the plant is up and running again.

FACTORY, MOORABBIN, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: A factory fire currently burning in Moorabbin is the biggest seen in Melbourne in years, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade says. "It's the largest we've seen in some time," Metropolitan Fire Brigade Corporate Communications Manager Wayne Debernardi said. More than 150 firefighters are battling the blaze, which is believed to have started in a bedding factory in Simpson Street, Moorabbin, before spreading to a

neighbouring factory. Deputy Chief Fire Officer Keith Adamson said the fire was now classified as level seven. Thick black smoke from the fire is blowing in a south-easterly direction, and scientific officers from the fire brigade have been brought in to determine whether the smoke is toxic. The fire is still threatening another factory in Keys Road. Mr Debernardi said the area affected by the fire was too large to evacuate. Keys Road has been closed between Chesterville Road and Warrigal Highway.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Three buildings have collapsed and others are under threat, as a large fire burns at Moorabbin in Melbourne's south. The fire started at the Select-o-Pedic bedding factory on Simpson Street. Firefighters were called just after 0900, AEST, and more than 150 firefighters are now battling the blaze. Workers in the area say they heard loud explosions soon after the fire started. The fire spread to four other factories. Nearby houses and buildings have been evacuated. No one has been injured.

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The cause of one of Melbourne's biggest fires in a decade won't be known for several days, firefighters said. The blaze began in the Lifestyle Classics bedding factory in Moorabbin yesterday morning and spread rapidly, fuelled by synthetic bedding materials and plastics. It destroyed at least four adjoining buildings. The walls and roof of the bedding factory collapsed in the intense heat, hampering efforts to probe the cause, Metropolitan Fire Brigade communications controller Trevor Woodward said. "It's a matter of finding that location (of the fire's origin), which is not easy considering the amount of destruction and debris there," he said. "That has to be cleared away, then they have to look at what was there to work out the cause. It's a long, drawn out process that could go over several days." Mr Woodward said crews stayed on the scene overnight to deal with any flare-ups. "There will be more crews down there a later in the morning to continue with the mop-up, and dampening down little hot spots," he said. Mr Woodward said the blaze would not be extinguished for several days as firefighters could not get to fires burning underneath the roof, which yesterday collapsed. "Those little fires will continue to burn until such time as they can get in and start pulling the building apart and demolishing what's left, and putting the fires out as they go," he said. MFB assistant chief fire officer Keith Adamson said yesterday that a range of factors, including the intensity of the blaze, a strong north-west wind and a lack of fire safety equipment contributed to the extensive damage. Tests established that thick smoke which blanketed several suburbs and a nearby aged care centre was not toxic.

FOREST, CHINA

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated Apr 15, states: Firefighters were sent to quench a forest fire that had been brought under control but resurged due to strong wind this afternoon in Lijiang city, South-west China's Yunnan Province. The fire flared up at 1400 hrs when it blew heavily with the flame in some areas more than 10 meters high. The firefighters have then put out most of the fire, and were quenching in two sites measuring more than 3 hectares each, according to He Zixing, party secretary of Lijiang city today. The fire, which broke out at Cimeige of Yulong County, around 1800 Wednesday (Apr 12), has not posed a threat to or influence on the famous snow-clad Yulong Mountain scenery some 20 km away. Affected forest area extends 133 ha, with primarily regrown forests and some primitive forests being destroyed, said an official from the fire fighting headquarters. More than 2,000 personnel, including those from the military and the armed police, plus one helicopter and about 100 tanker trucks have been sent to quench the fire.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Fire fighters in south-west China's Yunnan Province said they may put out a forest fire close to a scenic snow mountain today, five days after it flared up. By midday today, all the visible flames had been extinguished in forests close to Yulong (Jade Dragon) Snow Mountain, said sources with the Yunnan provincial headquarters of the Chinese People's Armed Police Force. The five-day fire-fighting campaign is to end today, though fire fighters are still keeping watch at the fire site for any spark that might escalate into flames again. The fire broke out last Wednesday (Apr 12) in forests 15 km from the mountain and the famed tourist town of Lijiang. The fire was almost extinguished on several occasions, but resurged again due to strong wind. Fortunately, the fire failed to result in any injury, and tourists continued to flood to the Yulong Snow Mountain yesterday, said Sun fang, head of the fire fighting headquarters. The investigators suspected the fire was caused by human, while meteorological statistics indicate prolonged dry weather was also to blame.

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated Apr 18, states: After several days of hard work, fire fighters have finally quenched the forest fires at two sites in southwest China's Yunnan Province, the local fire fighting headquarters said today. The fire close to the scenic Yulong (Jade Dragon) Snow Mountain was put out at 0930, today, six days after it flared up last Wednesday (Apr 12) in forests 15 kilometres from the mountain and the famed tourist town of Lijiang. At another fire site in Mount Baoshan, fire fighters extinguished all visible flames today, more than 70 hours after fires engulfed the forests. To

avoid dying cinders glowing again, more than 2,000 soldiers and civilians are still watching closely at the site. Yesterday, fire fighters put out the forest fire on Cangshan Mountain, close to the scenic town of Dali. The fires have injured no one and posed little threat to the local tourist industry.

MINE, SIBERIA, RUSSIA

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Two miners were killed today in an explosion in a mine in Siberia, Russia's emergencies ministry said. "Two men were killed in the explosion," ministry spokesperson Viktor Beltsov told AFP, adding that it happened at midday at a seam being mined by the Kvarzt company. Beltsov said a commission has been formed to investigate the causes of the explosion, and would try to establish whether explosives had been mishandled. He could not say how many miners were working on the seam when the accident happened.

OIL REFINERY, CHIBA, JAPAN

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: An explosion and fire damaged part of an oil refinery belonging to Japan's Cosmo Oil Co. early today, but caused no casualties, state broadcaster NHK reported. The blast occurred at about 0540 hrs at a desulphurisation facility at Cosmo's Chiba refinery, about 35 km east of Tokyo. The subsequent fire was extinguished after about three hours, NHK said. There was some leakage of toxic gas in the vicinity of the unit, NHK said. Television pictures had earlier shown flames and thick black smoke rising high into the air at the site, which is about 1 km away from the nearest residential area. NHK said refinery workers had evacuated the site.

Tokyo, Apr 16 — Cosmo Oil Co, Japan's fourth-largest refiner, said today it had closed down a desulphurisation unit near Tokyo after a fire at the plant. The fire, set off by an explosion in the early hours of today, had been extinguished, there were no casualties, and refinery workers had evacuated the site, a local fire department spokesman said. The blast occurred at about 0540 hrs (2040, UTC, Apr 15) at a desulphurisation facility at Cosmo's Chiba refinery, about 35 km east of Tokyo. A spokesman at Cosmo Oil said the capacity of the closed desulphurisation unit was 35,000 bpd. He added that operation of a 240,000-bpd crude distillation unit at the plant would not be affected by the fire. There was some leakage of toxic gas in the vicinity of the unit initially, but no such substance could be detected after the fire was put out, the local fire spokesman said. Television pictures earlier showed flames and thick black smoke rising high into the air at the site, which is about one km away from the nearest residential area. — Reuters.

PREMISES, COHOES, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: A barbecue grill on the back deck of 167 Bridge Avenue in Cohoes is to blame for a fire that spread to two other buildings. All three buildings are destroyed.

PREMISES, RAPHO TOWNSHIP, LANCASTER COUNTY, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Fire marshals are searching for the cause of a massive fire in Rapho Township Saturday (Apr 15) night that destroyed a barn, an adjacent building and several vehicles and burned a patch of woods a half-mile away. Mastersonville Fire Company responded to reports of a barn on fire at 756 Cold Spring Road about 1730 hrs Saturday, fire Chief Troy Montgomery said. When firefighters arrived, the barn was engulfed in flames. Within 10 minutes, he said, winds gusting to 20 mph carried embers to a building 80 feet away. That structure, used to manufacture pallets, quickly caught fire, along with piles of pallets resting outside and seven tractor-trailers waiting to transport the pallets, Montgomery said. Flying embers also ignited a separate fire that scorched 5 acres on a nearby Rapho Township farm. Nineteen fire companies, some from as far away as York, Dauphin, Lebanon and Berks counties, battled the two blazes. Smoke and flames were visible from miles away. Several explosions, which firefighters believe were caused by burning propane tanks, rocked the barn. It took three hours to get the barn fire under control, Montgomery said, and firefighters remained on the scene until 0530 yesterday. Crews returned to the smoldering brush fire several times yesterday to put out "hot spots," he said. Apparently no one was on the property when the fire broke out, Montgomery said. The pallet factory and the barn, which was being leased to an automobile reconstruction business, were total losses. Montgomery did not have a dollar estimate of the loss. He said a covered bridge was reported on fire in Manheim, but it turned out to be smoke from the barn fire that had collected in a low-lying spot.

REFINERY, WENTWORTH, DURBAN AREA, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Apr 18 — Engen is conducting an internal investigation into a fire that broke out at its Wentworth refinery on Sunday (Apr 16) night and left one worker injured. The injured worker was apparently burnt when asphalt fell on his arms while the fire was being extinguished. Engen spokesperson Raymond Damon said the worker was treated immediately at the on-site clinic and then discharged. He said the fire broke out in the vacuum unit, which produces oil from crude in the early stages of the petroleum production

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process. The fire had apparently raged for 20 minutes before being brought under control. The impact of the fire was still being felt and the refinery was currently running at 60 percent of capacity. Engen hoped to restore the refinery to full production capacity by tomorrow.

SCHOOL, WAIAKEA, HAWAII, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials at Waiakea High School continued to work yesterday to relocate staff displaced by a fire early Tuesday (Apr 11) that caused \$1.5 million damage to the administration building. Principal Patricia Nekoba said the campus is expected to reopen Monday to the school's 1,300 students. The damaged portion of the administration building has been cordoned off while fire and police investigators and insurance adjusters sift through the debris, and school staff have been unable to conduct a more thorough assessment of losses, she said. Fire inspectors and police detectives are investigating the cause.

WAREHOUSE, ORLANDO, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Orlando, Apr 19, states: Hazardous chemicals were caught in the middle of a warehouse fire. Firefighters discovered several different types of hazardous chemicals stored in the warehouse. The fire is out at the Perma-Fix warehouse off Rocket Boulevard near the Turnpike and Central Florida Parkway. Firefighters spent this morning mopping up and their work is done. The case was handed over to the State Fire Marshal's Office, who determined the fire was caused by a plastic bin containing wood chips that spontaneously combusted. The problem started around 0300 hrs. Firefighters found thick, black smoke billowing out of the Perma-Fix building, a waste treatment and storage facility on Rocket Boulevard. There was so much chlorinated gas in the air, firefighters sectioned off the entire area. At one point, 70 firefighters were on scene, even though the sprinkler system in the warehouse activated itself and contained the fire. The Environmental Protection Service was also on the scene to review company procedures and to make sure chemicals are properly stored.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated Apr 11, states: Three wildfires raced across the dry, scorched Texas Panhandle today, burning more than 22,000 acres, officials said. Heavy air tankers dropped retardant to help fight the largest fire, which burned 18,000 acres, north-west of Canadian in Lipscomb County, Texas Forest Service spokeswoman Traci Weaver said. The community of Locust Grove, with six homes and a church, was evacuated as a precaution. No injuries

or damage to homes were reported. A 4,000-acre area about 25 miles south of Canadian also burned. Smoke and low visibility in the area forced the temporary closure of a several-mile stretch of US Highway 83. A smaller fire was reported farther south near the city of Mobeetie and involved about 400 acres, Weaver said. Weaver said all three fires were expected to be contained late today. The county, in the north-eastern corner of the Panhandle, battled blazes in mid-March, when an estimated 3,000 residents were given evacuation warnings during fires that burned nearly a million acres across the Panhandle. The wildfires have claimed the life of a Howardwick volunteer firefighter who was injured last month when the fire truck he manned overturned and rolled down a 60-foot ravine. James Wilson McMorries Jr was taken off life support and died on Sunday (Apr 9) in a hospice. Fires last week burned another 40,000 acres in the Panhandle, the Forest Service said.

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 14, states: Firefighters braced for more hot, dry, windy weather today as they tried to corral a blaze that has burned 17,000 acres of mostly grass and stands of ponderosa pine trees in northeastern New Mexico. The fire was threatening the small community of Los Hueos, some residents of the Coyote area and a number of surrounding ranches, the fire's management team said. Emergency shelters were set up at the Mora High School gym. The human-caused fire, burning on private land, has charred one trailer home and four outbuildings. Coyote Creek and Morphy Lake state parks were closed because of the fire, said Dave Simon, state parks director. Three other parks in northern New Mexico waived their camping fees for evacuees. 445 firefighters were tackling the blaze, which began Wednesday (Apr 12) 11 miles north of Mora and was moving north-west. The firefighters were aided by bulldozers, helicopters and air tankers

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 14, states: Firefighters have contained a wildfire that broke out at land between The Lakes in western Kentucky, federal officials said. The wildfire has burned 1,365 acres near the Tennessee state line in Trigg County, according to a statement from the USDA Forest Service, which manages the park. Officials said the fire was contained, but still burning in some areas today. The fire was likely started yesterday by a cigarette or small warming fire at the park, the statement said. "This is our largest wildfire at LBL this season," said Jim McCoy, Fire Management Officer at the park, said in the statement. McCoy said there have been no reports of injuries or structural damages from the blaze. It took "several hours" for firefighters from the U.S. Forest Service and Kentucky Division of Forestry to contain the fire, federal officials said.

London, Apr 17 — A press report, dated today, states: An out-of-control wildfire on steep, rocky terrain had destroyed at least one house and charred 4,000 acres Monday, forcing some residents to flee their homes. The blaze on Bull Mountain, Virginia, near the North Carolina state line, was only 15 to 20% contained and was expected to continue burning for several days. The area has received practically no rain this spring. About 250 firefighters were battling the blaze, including 40 National Guardsmen. Forestry officials said the fire, which was started by lightning on Friday (Apr 14), had forced the evacuation of about 40 homes. Flames had destroyed at least one home and two garages. Gov. Timothy M. Kaine declared a state of emergency in the county.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Residents of Los Hueos remained under an evacuation order, but crews fighting a wildfire in the area made progress and fire officials were confident the displaced could return soon. "We are optimistic we can lift it soon," fire information officer Dan Bastion said late yesterday. "That area was the only really active fire we had left. We threw a lot of resources at it today." Crews battling the Ojo Feliz Fire north of Mora took advantage of good weather. The 16,600-acre blaze was 80% contained by last night. About 550 firefighters were on site. The human-caused fire burned in grasslands and tree stands. Crews concentrated their efforts on the north-west side of the fire near the canyon at Los Hueos. An unoccupied adobe structure, along with four outbuildings, were destroyed in the fire. As of yesterday, the cost of fighting the fire was estimated at \$1,930,000, Bastion said. The Federal Emergency Management Agency will cover 75% of the cost. Meanwhile, crews from the Vaughn Fire Department mopped up hot spots yesterday from a blaze that sparked Saturday near Yeso. The Lumbre Fire consumed about 9,000 acres and was contained yesterday morning. The cause of the fire was unknown, officials said.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: Fed by gusty winds, a grass fire grew to about 1,800 acres today, forcing the evacuation of about 100 people in southern Colorado and closing a major highway. It was contained late today. Between 30 and 35 businesses in a small shopping centre were evacuated as the fire burned behind it, said El Paso County sheriff's spokesman Lt Cliff Northam. Winds gusting to nearly 50 mph along the eastern edge of the Rockies ahead of a storm system pushed the fire along a creek, across grass and scrub oak parched by recent dry weather. "We'd have had this out hours ago if it wasn't for this wind," Northam said. The blaze was near Fountain, south of Colorado Springs, about 75 miles south of Denver. No injuries were reported. No

homes or businesses were damaged and the fire was 100% contained by about 2000 today, though some hot spots remained, according to Fountain Police Deputy Chief Mark Barnett.

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated Apr 17, states: An out-of-control wildfire on steep, rocky terrain had destroyed at least one house and charred 4,000 acres today, forcing some residents to flee their homes. The blaze on Bull Mountain near the North Carolina state line was only 15-20% contained and was expected to continue burning for several days, said Gregg O'Donnell, a public information officer for the Virginia Department of Forestry. "Patrick County is incredibly dry," he said. The area has received practically no rain this spring. About 250 firefighters were battling the blaze, including 40 National Guardsmen. Forestry officials said the fire, which was started by lightning on Friday (Apr 14), had forced the evacuation of about 40 homes. Flames had destroyed at least one home and two garages, said Mike Hudson, Patrick County's emergency services co-ordinator. Governor Timothy M. Kaine declared a state of emergency in the county.



ACCIDENT AT ARNOS VALE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KINGSTOWN, ST. VINCENT

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Passengers travelling to Trinidad from St Vincent escaped injury yesterday when the aircraft on which they were travelling was involved in a wing-to-wing collision with another aircraft. More than 50 passengers on board the Liat De Havilland DHC-8 (Dash-8) were in a state of panic, when they heard a loud crash and the aircraft began swerving, moments before take-off. Paula Benjamin, Liat's regional manager in Trinidad, said that the aircraft was preparing to leave Arnos Vale International Airport when another aircraft crashed into its wing. "The collision took place while Liat's pilot, who is very experienced, was preparing the aircraft for take-off. He was advising the passengers that the flight would arrive at Piarco International Airport 15 minutes early," she said. Instead, the passengers waited for more than one hour for an aircraft to be flown in from Antigua to take them to Trinidad, Benjamin said.

AIRCRAFT DIVERTED TO GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR, CANADA

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: 303 Aer Lingus passengers and 12 crew are stranded after flight EI124 from Chicago to Shannon, via Dublin, was forced to

divert to Goose Bay Airport, Labrador, Canada. The diversion happened after a smell of burning plastic was noticed on board the Airbus A330-300 aircraft, a little over three and a half hours into the flight, which departed Chicago at 0100, Irish time, this morning. The captain took the decision to make an emergency landing, and the aircraft landed safely in Goose Bay in Labrador at around 0450 hrs. A technical difficulty has been identified on board the aircraft which necessitates repair, and the aircraft has been grounded in the meantime. Engineers and spare parts were sent from Ireland to Goose Bay on board the 1200 hrs Aer Lingus flight to Boston this afternoon, which will land temporarily at Goose Bay to facilitate the drop off. Director of Operations at Aer Lingus, Dick Butler, said the passengers were never in any danger, and the diversion was purely routine and precautionary under the circumstances. He added that the passengers had been accommodated in hotels in the area, and its hoped the flight will arrive in Dublin at 0830 tomorrow. As a result of the original aircraft not arriving into Ireland from Chicago, Aer Lingus has been forced to cancel EI136 from Dublin to Boston this afternoon. However, all outbound passengers on the flight have been accommodated on other services to the US. Flights out of the US are unaffected, Mr Butler said.

AIRCRAFT DIVERTED TO GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR, CANADA

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: An Aer Lingus aircraft landed at Dublin Airport this morning after being forced to divert to an air base in northern Canada early yesterday while on a scheduled flight to Ireland from Chicago. 303 passengers and 12 crew were on board when a smell of burning plastic was noticed three-and-a-half hours into the flight. The aircraft was diverted to Goose Bay in Labrador and passengers were put up for the night in accommodation nearby. A technical difficulty was identified and engineers and spare parts were sent from Ireland yesterday.

AIRCRAFT DIVERTED TO URALSK, KAZAKHSTAN

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of passengers on a Sydney to London flight were diverted to Kazakhstan after a fire warning. The British Airways flight spent 12 hours at the regional airport of Uralsk before its passengers were taken from the former Soviet republic to the UK. A warning of fire in the hold, which caused the landing, was discovered to be a false alarm but other problems stopped the Boeing 747 from taking off. Three aircraft took the 354 passengers to London, the last arriving today. The problems began with an emergency landing at Uralsk, which happened safely, said a British

Airways spokeswoman. The Boeing 747 was unable to take off again because its weight was unsuitable for the runway. Three smaller aircraft were despatched to take the passengers to London, but there were no steps high enough at the airport so those on board had difficulty disembarking. "We would not have let passengers off until it was safe," said the BA spokeswoman. After a 12-hour wait the passengers were all taken to London, one group arriving yesterday and the other two landing early today. The jet was also carrying a cargo of bees, but they did not set off the fire sensors and were still in their packaging, the spokeswoman said. "We apologise to our customers for the inconvenience, but safety and security are our top priorities and will not be compromised," she added.

C-FBSX

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated Port Alberni, BC, today, states: Two local men died when a aircraft crashed yesterday en route to this Vancouver Island community. Rescuers located the wreckage west of nearby Horne Lake after an overnight search. The pilot and passenger were dead at the scene. The four-seat Cessna, which was owned by the Alberni Valley Flying Club, was on a return flight from Sechelt. Capt. Steve Eyre of Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Victoria said crews spent all night searching for the aircraft and finally located it at 0600 this morning. Port Alberni RCMP have taken over the investigation but there was no immediate word on why the aircraft went down.

London, Apr 19 — Cessna 172 C-FBSX, operator Port Alberni Flying Club, en route from Sechelt-Gibson to Port Alberni when it crashed into a ridgeline five nautical miles east of destination at 1440, PDT, Apr 15. There were two fatalities.

C-FILW

London, Apr 12 — McDonnell Douglas helicopter, C-FILW, operated by Lakelse Air, struck a tree while in the hover and crashed at Red Deer Valley, British Columbia, at 1630, local time, Mar 19. The pilot was not injured.

CRASH, ADELAIDE AREA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The pilot of a fatal aircraft crash north of Adelaide was suffering a terminal illness and was not permitted to fly, an investigation has found. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau today released its findings into last year's fatalities, revealing also that a warning system that may have alerted those on board to the impending crash had also been disconnected. Veteran flyer Graham Taylor, 63, and Matthew Smith, 17, were both killed in the crash that occurred soon after take-off from the Stonefield airstrip near Truro, north of Adelaide, on May 15 last year. The

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

ATSB said the crash occurred while Mr Taylor was performing a low-level spin manoeuvre, 500 feet above ground level. "The pilot was reported to have conducted a similar low-level manoeuvre to that which preceded the accident on several previous occasions," the ATSB said in its report. "The manoeuvre left little or no margin for error and required sound judgment and skill. Although the pilot may have possessed those skills, no evidence was found of his ever having undertaken the appropriate check to assess those skills and obtain approval to conduct low-level aerobatic manoeuvres. Repetition of the manoeuvre over a period of time may have led to the pilot gaining a false sense of security and may have led to the pilot becoming complacent about the inherent dangers involved with such manoeuvres." The ATSB said in the year prior to the crash, Mr Taylor had advised he was suffering a terminal illness and was subsequently prohibited by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority from flying as a pilot. Despite the ban, Mr Taylor logged more than 20 flight hours as a pilot in command, the ATSB said. "The effect of the pilot's medical condition on his judgment or decision making could not be determined," the report said. It also found the aircraft was 20 kg over the maximum allowable weight and an electrical lead on its stall warning system had been disconnected. "The investigation was unable to determine when, or by whom, the stall warning system was deactivated. Subsequent testing of the stall warning system found that when wired correctly, it was capable of functioning normally," the report said.

CRASH, NEW KUSH AREA, SUDAN

London, Apr 19 — A press report, dated Apr 18, states: Pilot error was to blame for the helicopter crash that killed Sudan's vice president and set off protests in the country's capital and southern cities, an investigation concluded today. The death last July of John Garang, a former rebel leader who became Sudan's vice president under a peace deal, led to the killing of at least 130 people during protests in Sudan's capital and in southern cities. After the crash in southern Sudan, the Sudanese government and Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Movement asked Uganda, Kenya, the US, Russia and the United Nations to help in the investigation. "The findings attributed the cause of accident to a combination of three factors all centred around the captain," including a decision to continue flying without the aid of electronic navigation equipment in deteriorating weather, said Uganda's Minister of Works, Housing and Communication John Nasasira, who led the investigation. Other factors include "the captain's failure to maintain horizontal and vertical

situational awareness of the helicopter proximity to the surrounding terrain, resulting in inadequate clearance" that caused the Ugandan presidential helicopter to slam into a mountain in southern Sudan, Nasasira said.

CRASH, NORTHERN TANZANIA

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: Nine people survived the crash landing of their Cessna 208 (Caravan) in northern Tanzania, when torrential rains and gushing winds forced the aircraft almost 400 km off course. The nine people on board the aircraft were medical collaborators heading for Moshi in northern Tanzania for a conference, according to the local English newspaper, Sunday News. The newspaper said that no one on board was hurt in the incident which saw the aircraft crash land in a sisal plantation field almost 400 km west of Moshi. "Nobody was killed but the aircraft has been damaged," the newspaper quoted an eyewitness as saying.

CRASH, SCIO TOWNSHIP, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 13, states: A helicopter crashed in Scio Township in Washtenaw County this afternoon. The private helicopter went down in a wooded area on Stabler Road, north of Jackson Road, just after 1500 hrs. Chelsea Police Chief Scott Sumner and Chelsea Fire Department Captain Matt Tuttle were both killed in the accident. They were in the chopper searching for a man who had run from police after a traffic stop. Washtenaw County Sheriff Daniel Minzey said: "Originally we did have police officers on the scene right shortly after the crash took place. They did try to perform some CPR on the occupants in there. Huron Valley Ambulance arrived on the scene. There was so much [damage] they just couldn't bring them back."

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 14, states: Today, federal investigators were looking into the helicopter crash in Scio Township that killed the police chief and a fire captain from Chelsea. The helicopter belonged to Captain Tuttle. Washtenaw County Sheriff Cmdr. Dave Egeler said: "The motor is going to be removed from it and shipped to the manufacturer's office in the Chicago area for them to continue their investigation on it." Today, the National Transportation Safety Board was at the scene of the crash.

CRASH, WALES, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Apr 16 - A press report, dated today, states: A helicopter with four people on board has crashed on the outskirts of Wrexham in north Wales. The accident happened as the light aircraft fell onto its side while landing on an airstrip near the Holt Lodge Hotel in Holt. Four people were

on board the helicopter and were said so be suffering from bruising and shock. Crews from North Wales Fire Service made the area safe clearing up the wreckage of the helicopter. Police are investigating the accident which happened just before 1500, UTC, today.

CRASH, WILLCOX AREA, ARIZONA

London, Apr 14 — A press report, dated Apr 13, states: A single-engine plane crashed south of Willcox yesterday afternoon, killing the pilot, the Cochise County sheriff's office reported. Witnesses called the sheriff's office just after 1500 hrs, to say they had heard a small aircraft's engine sputtering as it passed overhead, then saw a column of smoke appear along the plane's flight path, officials said. Searchers from the sheriff's office and several other emergency agencies began a search and discovered the wreckage about 20 miles south of Willcox, east of the Dragoon mountains. The aircraft was destroyed by the impact and subsequent fire and the pilot was dead at the scene. The name of the pilot of the rear-engine plane has not been released. The crash will be investigated by the National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Aviation Administration.

EMERGENCY LANDING, FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA, UNITED STATES

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A Northwest Airlines flight bound for Minneapolis blew a tire after lifting off from the Grand Forks airport today and was forced to make an emergency landing at Fargo, North Dakota. Northwest spokesman Dean Breest said Flight 1946 took off from Grand Forks at 0801. The DC-9 was headed for Minneapolis with 95 passengers and five crew members, he said. Breest said the aircraft landed safely in Fargo at 0854. No one aboard was injured. The airline planned to use a bus to shuttle passengers to Minneapolis, he said.

EMERGENCY LANDING, NAPIER AIRPORT, NEW ZEALAND

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A light aircraft was damaged after landing on its belly when its landing gear failed on approach to Napier Airport today. No one aboard the aircraft was injured in the incident. Napier police Senior Sergeant Tony Dewhirst said the Aztec six-seater, containing the pilot and one other person, notified the air control tower just after 1500 hrs the landing gear had failed. "They were practicing landings when the malfunction occurred," he said. "It was a controlled emergency landing without wheels." The aircraft made a forced landing on its belly at 1525 hrs. Emergency vehicles including fire appliances immediately arrived on the scene, but were not required.

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

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: Officials said an aircraft had to be evacuated at RDU International this afternoon after smoke was reported in the cockpit. A representative with American Airlines said the flight was leaving RDU International for Newark at the time. The aircraft was later taxied to a safe area. WRAL has learned that 17 passengers and three crewmembers were taken off the aircraft and were bused to the terminal. The passengers were rebooked on other flights. There is no word on where the smoke came from.

EMERGENCY LANDING, TEL AVIV AIRPORT, ISRAEL

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated today, states: An El Al passenger aircraft with more than 100 people on board landed safely at Tel Aviv Airport today after a wheel burst while the aircraft was en route to Moscow, forcing the pilot to turn back to Israel. Israel's Army Radio said the pilot feared the body of the aircraft had been damaged by the explosion. The radio quoted authorities as saying the crew and passengers remained calm throughout. About 30 ambulances and fire engines were stationed at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion International Airport, where a state of emergency had been declared, rescue spokesman Yeruham Mandola said. There were 107 passengers on board.

FAB-91

London, Apr 18 — The Fokker F-27, FAB-91, 32 persons on board, departed Riberalta at 1123, Apr 16 on a flight to GuayaramerIn. It was raining when the aircraft landed at GuayaramerIn. The F-27 ran off the runway, causing substantial damage to the undercarriage and wings. An 80-year old woman died of a heart attack a few hours after the accident.

INCIDENT AT PRESTWICK AIRPORT, SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Apr 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Prestwick Airport has been closed after a security alert on board an aircraft. Strathclyde Police said officers were attending an "ongoing incident" at the airport in Ayrshire. National Air Traffic Services said the security alert was reported on a Paris-to-Dublin flight at about 1400, BST, and the aircraft landed at 1420, BST. A "fighter escort" accompanied the aircraft onto the ground after what was described by the Ministry of Defence as a "threat to the flight". The MoD said the aircraft, believed to be a Boeing 737, was escorted to the ground at Prestwick by Tornado aircraft from RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire. A spokesman for Prestwick Airport said the Ryanair flight was diverted "as a precautionary measure". No flights

are taking off or landing as a result of the incident. Ryanair flights from Paris and Milan have been diverted to Edinburgh Airport and a flight from Amsterdam was diverted to Glasgow Airport. Six scheduled departures have been delayed.

INCIDENT OFF GLADSTONE, AUSTRALIA

Sydney, Apr 13 — A freak storm has severely damaged a pilot transfer helicopter off the port of Gladstone. Insurers are assessing the damage to the machine, after a sudden squall tipped the helicopter off the hatch cover of the Singapore-flag bulk carrier *Ruby Indah* at about 2000 hrs, last Friday evening (April 7). The Australian Helicopters' MD-500E helicopter had landed on the bulk carrier carrying a pilot when a powerful storm unexpectedly appeared. Instead of taking off, the helicopter pilot was forced to leave his machine and go to the bridge. However a strong squall blew the helicopter over and it ended up on its side between two hatch covers. No one was hurt in the accident, and the helicopter was craned off the 77,000-dwt vessel at Gladstone the next morning. Australian Helicopters described the accident as "freak", explaining that the weather had become much worse than forecast. It is understood that the helicopter damage is substantial. — Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News.

N123CK

London, Apr 14 — Robinson R-44 Raven II, N123CK, operated by Il Falconiere Holdings LLC, with four persons on board, struck powerlines on take-off at Fredericksburg, Texas, at 2330, UTC, Apr 13, and crashed. The helicopter was destroyed, one person on board died, two were seriously injured and one suffered minor injuries.

N15507

London, Apr 17 — Piper PA-28-140 (Cherokee), N15507, operated by John D.Culos, while on a local flight from Toughkenamon, Pennsylvania, with two persons on board, crashed and burned at 1745, UTC, Apr 16, in swampy area at Avondale, Pennsylvania. The aircraft was destroyed, one person on board died and the other suffered minor injuries.

N1966S

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated Apr 14, states: Investigators with the Federal Aviation Administration are on the scene of a Cessna aircraft crash in South Lubbock County. The aircraft crashed in a cotton field just west of Slaton just before 1500 hrs. The pilot, of Lubbock, was experiencing problems shortly after take-off from the Town and County Airport. He tried to perform an emergency landing but the aircraft flipped on the ground and crashed. The aircraft then burst into flames.

London, Apr 17 — Cessna 210F (Centurion), N1966S, operated by Jay Preston Jenkins Sr, while on a flight from Lubbock, Texas, with one person on board, had fire on board and force landed at 1955, UTC, Apr 14, in a field six miles east of Lubbock, flipped over and burned. The aircraft was destroyed.

N289WB

London, Apr 20 — Cessna T310R N289WB crashed near Heber City, Utah, at 1626, Apr 17, while on a flight from Billings, Montana, to Cedar City, UT. The one person on board was killed.

N5003E

London, Apr 17 — Air Tractor AT-602, operated by H & P Flying Service Inc, with one person on board, crashed and burned at 2218, UTC, Apr 15, 16 miles north-east of Meridian, Mississippi. The aircraft was destroyed and the pilot died.

N592PR

London, Apr 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A Piper PA-32 crashed today at Dunnellon Marion County Airport, sparking an eight-acre brush fire. Authorities say the aircraft's pilot, his 12-year-old son and another 11-year-old boy have been hospitalized with non-lifethreatening injuries. Aviation officials say the aircraft lost power around 1730 yesterday, hit a hanger and then crashed into a field near the airport. Authorities say the brush fire was extinguished about an hour after the crash.

London, Apr 17 — Piper PA-32-260 (Cherokee Six), N592PR, operated by Gregory S.Taylor, with two persons on board, lost power on take-off at 2115, UTC, Apr 14, from Dunnellon, Florida, and hit a hangar. The aircraft was destroyed and two persons on board suffered minor injuries.

N887BC

London, Apr 14 — Robinson R-22 (Beta), N887BC, operated by Matts Move-all, while on a local flight from Ann Arbor, Michigan, with two persons on board, crashed when its engine failed at Ann Arbor, at 1930, UTC, Apr 13, and was destroyed. Both persons on board died.

N999DE

London, Apr 16 — A press report, dated today, states: Gainesville Police say that a small aircraft has crashed into the side of a building at the Gainesville Regional Airport. Early reports from police say at least two people may be dead. A witness says that she was standing outside of baggage claim when she heard and saw an explosion.

London, Apr 17 — A press report, dated Apr 16, states: A Beechcraft Duke 60 crashed into a sport utility vehicle parked outside an airport today, hurling it through a terminal wall, officials said. Three people on board the aircraft were killed. The

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twin-engine aircraft also sparked a fire behind the airport's commercial baggage claim area, filling the terminal with smoke, officials said. About 100-150 people were inside the Gainesville Regional Airport terminal, but no injuries were reported on the ground, police said. The aircraft took off from the north Florida airport and circled several times before attempting to land, but sent no distress call, Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said. The aircraft's destination was not known. Officials did not release the victim's identities, but relatives told The Gainesville Sun they included a retired University of Florida engineering professor and his former student, who were testing a new autopilot system they had developed. The terminal was evacuated and would remain closed until tomorrow, airport spokeswoman Michelle Danisovszky said. Commercial flights were suspended until tomorrow afternoon, although privately owned aircraft continued taking off and landing at the airport today, she said.

London, Apr 17 — Beechcraft Duke B-60, N999DE, operated by Acem Avionics Inc, with three persons on board, on departure from Gainesville Airport, at 1553, UTC, Apr 16, veered, hit a parked vehicle and slid into the west side of the airport terminal. The aircraft was destroyed and all three persons on board died. No ground injuries reported.

London, Apr 20 — A press report, dated Apr 19, states: The Beechcraft Duke B-60 (N999DE) that crashed at Gainesville Regional Airport on Sunday (Apr 16) had an out-of-date inspection, meaning it was flown illegally, an air safety investigator said yesterday. "Every year at a minimum, it has to have an inspection," the National Transportation Safety Board's John Lovell said after reviewing the aircraft's maintenance records. He declined to say when Giuseppe Basile's aircraft was last examined, but said there were "no entries" in the maintenance log to indicate that it was inspected in the past year. Lovell is part of a team examining the wreckage of the aircraft that nose-dived near the airport's main terminal shortly after takeoff Sunday morning. It exploded into flames on impact, killing all three occupants. Witnesses told investigators the aircraft rolled to the right before it dropped to the ground, sliding into an SUV, which then crashed through a wall of the terminal. In his investigation, Lovell said he found that the right wing of the aircraft was far more fragmented than the left, leading him to believe the aircraft's right side hit first. He said it appears the plane "T-boned" the edge of the terminal before it dropped to the ground. Lovell and his crew meticulously picked through the charred, mangled wreckage in an airport hangar yesterday, putting the aircraft's parts where they would have been if it were still intact. He gestured to the aircraft's propellers on both its left and right sides, saying their condition leads him to believe they were still in

motion when the aircraft crashed. The cockpit apparently crushed into the cabin area of the aircraft during the crash. It will be difficult to determine the cause of the crash because of the nature of the accident and the condition of the wreckage. Crews examined the aircraft's left engine late yesterday and did not find abnormalities within it, Lovell said. They'll examine the right engine today. Meanwhile, the airport has a new wall where the SUV went through the building. Passengers and flights carried on as usual yesterday while maintenance workers tried to clean up what's left of the mess.

XC-UPN

London, Apr 14 — Bell 407 helicopter XC-UPN, owned and operated by the Government of the State of Michoacan, was substantially damaged during a forced landing following a reported loss of engine power during approach to the Morelia International Airport, near Morelia, Mexico, at 1215, CDT, Apr 11. The pilot and his four passengers were seriously injured. The helicopter was being utilised as an emergency medical service flight at the time of the accident.



CITROEN MOTOR VEHICLES, CHINA

London, Apr 18 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Dongfeng Peugeot Citroen Automobiles Co Ltd (DPCA) said it will recall 19,306 vehicles due to an alternator defect. The company said in a statement that the defect may lead to a loss of electricity in the car battery or the inefficient operation of electrical components. The cars may also experience problems starting. No accident caused by the defect has been reported to date, the company added. DPCA is PSA Peugeot-Citroen's only joint venture in China, with partner Dongfeng Automobile Corp, the country's third-largest automaker. It has set a sales target of 200,000 units this year, compared with sales of 141,000 units in 2005.

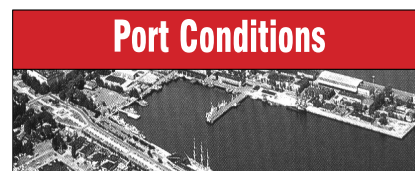
DVD PLAYERS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Apr 13 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with McNair Technology Co. Ltd., of China, and Unitech Battery Ltd., of China, today announced a voluntary recall of about 102,000 Battery Packs Sold with Disney(r)-Brand DVD Players. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. The battery packs sold with these DVD players can overheat and possibly burst when recharging, posing a risk of burns. Memcorp has received 17 reports of batteries overheating, including three reports of minor skin irritations and three reports of minor

property damage. The recalled product is the battery packs sold with Disney(r)-brand personal DVD players. The DVD players are about 6.5-inches by 5.5-inches with a 3-inch screen display. Sold at discount and electronics stores nation-wide, and at Disney theme parks and through the Disney catalog from April 2005 through March 2006 for between \$70 and \$130. Consumers should stop using the battery pack supplied with these DVD players immediately and contact Memcorp for a replacement rechargeable battery pack. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

LEXUS MOTOR VEHICLES, WORLDWIDE

London, Apr 13 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Toyota Motor Corp. will recall about 57,000 vehicles worldwide from its upscale Lexus brand because faulty parts in the device that winds seat belts may prevent passengers from buckling up. Of the 57,000 vehicles, about 29,000 vehicles will be recalled in North America, 11,000 in Japan, 10,000 in Europe, and the remainder in other markets, according to a release issued today by the world's No. 2 automaker.



ITALY

Genoa, Apr 19 — Port situation Apr 19: Genoa: Four vessels awaiting berths. Average delay in berthing one to two days. La Spezia: No vessels awaiting berth. Savona: No vessels awaiting berth. — Lloyd's Agents.

PANAMA CANAL

London, Apr 14 — Severe delays persist in the Panama Canal, despite the fact that the Panama Canal Authority claims to be utilising all resources to maximise the number of daily transits. Non-booked Panamax vessels now face forecast delays of eight to nine days for northbound transits and five to six days southbound. Regular vessels are also being delayed five to six days. The Panama Canal Authority continues to auction one booking slot per day.

Balboa, Apr 17 — The situation at the Panama Canal shows some improvement from our last advice and the queue has dropped below 100 vessels. Arrivals seem to be moderate to heavy. The Panama Canal Authority continue to use maximum resources with pilots cooperating in the best manner possible. Delays for non-booked vessels are running about five to six days. The auctioning of one booking slot per day continues.

SYRIA

Aleppo, Apr 18 — waiting time presently two days at Lattakia and five days at Tartous. — Lloyd's Agents.

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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	18-Apr-2006	Coal: One vessel loading at berth; 11 vessels due by 2/5; 1-3 days delay expected.
Brisbane	12-Apr-2006	Apr 12: Grain: One vessel due 19/4 to load wheat; no delays expected.
	18-Apr-2006	Apr 18: Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth; Two vessels due by 29/4; no delays expected.
Dalrymple Bay	18-Apr-2006	Coal: Three vessels loading at berth; 10 vessels arrived; 33 vessels due by 5/5; 1-20 days delay expected.
Dampier	18-Apr-2006	Iron ore: Parker Point A berth: One vessel loading at berth; 2 vessels arrived; 6 vessels due by 25/4; Parker Point B berth: 1 vessel loading at berth; 2 vessels arrived; 8 vessels due by 25/4; Parker Point C berth: 1 vessel loading at berth; 1 vessel arrived; 4 vessels due by 18/4; East Intercourse Island; One vessel loading at berth; 5 vessels arrived; 7 vessels due by 26/4; 8-12 days delay expected;.
Esperance	18-Apr-2006	Apr 12: Grain: One vessel arrived; 5 vessels due by 26/4; up to 17 days delay expected. Apr 18: Iron ore: Three vessels due by 27/4; up to 1 day's delay expected.
Geraldton	18-Apr-2006	Apr 12: Grain: Four vessels due by 21/4; up to 31 days delay expected. Apr 18: Iron ore: One vessel due 25/4.
Gladstone	18-Apr-2006	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: Three vessels loading at berth; 13 vessels arrived; 39 vessels due by 17/6; Barney Point: 1 vessel arrived; 17 vessels due by 15/6; 7-10 days delay expected.
Hay Point	18-Apr-2006	Coal: Two vessels loading at berth; 2 vessels arrived; 11 vessels due by 1/5; 1-20 days delay expected.
Newcastle	18-Apr-2006	Apr 12: Grain: Five vessels due by 1/5, all to load wheat; up to 2 days delay expected. Apr 18: Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: Three vessels loading at berth; 13 vessels arrived; 34 vessels due by 12/5; 4-14 days delay expected; Dykes 4+5: 2 vessels loading at berth; 4 vessels arrived; 14 vessels due by 9/5; 3-17 days delay expected.
Port Hedland	18-Apr-2006	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: One vessel loading at berth; 5 vessels arrived; 7 vessels due by 27/4; "B" berth: 1 vessel loading at berth; 5 vessels arrived; 6 vessels due by 26/4; 5 other vessels due by 11/5 at A or B berth 2/4; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island "C" berth): 2 vessels due by 25/4; (Finucane Island "D" berth): 1 vessel loading at berth, 2 vessels arrived; 6 vessels due by 25/4; Cockatoo Island: 1 vessel due 21/4; up to 14 days delay expected.
Port Kembla	18-Apr-2006	Coal: Ten vessels due by 5/5; up to 2 days delay expected.
Port Walcott	18-Apr-2006	Iron ore: Twelve vessels arrived; 7 vessels due by 30/4; 10-20 days delay expected. Mar 28: Port closed from 12.00 hrs. 28/3 due to cyclone Glenda.
Whyalla	18-Apr-2006	Iron ore: One vessel loading at berth; 6 vessels due by 24/5; up to 2 days delay expected.
Azerbaijan		
Apsheron	17-Apr-2006	Oil products: Four vessels at berth, all discharging (2 crude oil, 1 fuel oil, 1 empty); 4 vessels due by 18/4, all to discharge (2 crude oil, 1 kerosene, 1 gasoil).
Baku	17-Apr-2006	Oil products: Bay of Baku: No information; Azerneftiyag terminal: no information; Azertrans terminal: Nobel Avenue: port open; 1 vessel waiting at berth to discharge gasoil; Sangachal District: port open; no vessels.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	17-Apr-2006	Ten vessels in port operating, of which 6 loading (1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 copper anodes, 1 profiles, 1 metals, 1 containers, 1 coils), 4 discharging (1 containers, 2 billets, 1 zinc concentrate); 1 vessel in roads to load gasoil; 11 vessels due, of which 6 to load (3 coils, 1 containers, 1 wheat, 1 lead), 5 to discharge (1 containers, 2 iron ore, 1 equipment, 1 coals).
Varna	17-Apr-2006	Varna East, Varna West, Electrical Power Station, Balchik: Conditions 10-16 April: Forty-three vessels in port operating of which 23 loading (1 packed hardboard, 3 scrap, 10 soda, 2 bulk sulphuric acid, 1 bulk clinker, 1 silica sand/chamotte/kaolin, 1 miscellaneous cargo/STPP, 1 raw phosphate, 1 bulk copper concentrate, 1 bulk cement, 1 sunflower seeds), 10 discharging (1 cement in large bags, 1 bulk copper slag, 3 bulk coal, 1 raw phosphate, 1 clay, 1 bulk sugar, 1 bulk white clinker, 1 equipment in packing cases), 10 discharging/loading (7 containers, 1 containers/small consignments, 1 kaolin, 1 feldspar/silica sand); no vessels waiting in roads.
Chile		
Antofagasta	18-Apr-2006	Three vessels berthed, 4 berths vacant; 17 vessels due this week to load/discharge concentrates, bulk copper, containers and general cargo.
Arica	18-Apr-2006	Three vessels berthed, 4 berths vacant; 22 vessels due this week.
Iquique	18-Apr-2006	Four vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 20 vessels due this week.
Puerto Montt	18-Apr-2006	Two vessels at terminal, 1 berth vacant; 8 vessels due this week.
Punta Arenas	18-Apr-2006	Four vessels at terminal, 3 berths vacant; 12 vessels due this week.

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Port Conditions

San Antonio	18-Apr-2006	Six vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 24 vessels due this week.
San Vicente	18-Apr-2006	Two vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 21 vessels due during the week; Steel pier: 1 vessel at terminal, 1 berth vacant; no vessels due this week; Coronel pier: 3 vessels at terminal, 1 berth vacant; 2 vessels due this week; Oil terminal: 1 tanker at terminal, 1 berth vacant; 2 tankers due this week.
Valparaiso	18-Apr-2006	Five vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 3 vessels anchored; 19 vessels due this week.
Cyprus		
Larnaca	18-Apr-2006	One conventional vessel discharging at berth; 1 conventional vessel due 19/4; no delays expected.
Limassol	18-Apr-2006	Six container vessels discharging/loading at berth, 3 conventional vessels discharging at berth; 3 container vessels, 2 conventional vessels, 4 passenger vessels due 19/4; no delays expected.
Egypt		
Adabiya	17-Apr-2006	Ten vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 4 general cargo, 3 bulkers, 3 tankers.
Alexandria	17-Apr-2006	Forty-two vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 37 general cargo, 3 tankers, 2 containers; 24 vessels at inner anchorage, 7 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	17-Apr-2006	Twenty vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 11 general cargo, 3 bulk carriers, 1 livestock, 5 containers; 6 vessels at outer anchorage, none at inner anchorage.
Dekhelia	17-Apr-2006	Nine vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 6 general cargo, 1 bulk carrier, 1 containers; no vessels at outer anchorage.
Port Said	17-Apr-2006	Six vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 1 general cargo, 5 containers.
Suez	17-Apr-2006	Eight vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 3 general cargo, 1 reefer, 4 passenger vessels; 3 tugs, 1 vessel dry-docked.
Suez Canal	17-Apr-2006	Twenty vessels transiting Northbound, 27 Southbound.
India		
Kolkata	17-Apr-2006	6 vessels operating at berth of which 1 vessel loading General Cargo, 3 vessels discharging (Logs-2, Containers), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers, 1 vessel waiting to discharge Liquids; 1 vessel working at mid stream to discharge Logs; 3 vessels under repairs; 1 vessel under dry docked; 1 vessel waiting for bunkering; 1 vessel waiting to sail; 2 vessels due (Containers, Edible Oil).
Haldia	17-Apr-2006	13 vessels operating at berth of which 4 loading (Iron ore-2, POL, Thermal Coal), 7 vessels discharging (POL-2, Coking Coal, Net Coke-2, Met Coke, MAP), 2 vessels loading and discharging Containers; 1 vessel awaiting berth to discharge; 6 vessels waiting at anchorage (2 to discharge, 4 to load); 3 vessels due (Thermal Coal, Steel, Iron ore).
Paradip	17-Apr-2006	10 vessels operating at berth of which 5 loading (Iron ore-2, Chrome Concentrate, Thermal Coal, SKO), 5 vessels discharging (C Coal-2, A. Coal, Lam Coke, NC Coal); 1 vessels awaiting berth to load.
Vizag	17-Apr-2006	13 vessels operating at berth of which 6 loading (Iron Ore-2, Steel Cargo-2, Granite, POL Tanker), 6 vessels discharging (Steam Coal, Crude Oil, Petroleum Coke, Timber, Styrene, Urea), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 8 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (3 to discharge, 5 to load); 24 vessels due (Iron Ore-6, Steel Cargo-2, Thermal Coal, Pig Iron, Granite, Food Grains-3, Coking Coal-3, Petroleum Coke, Containers-2, Lime Stone, Lam Coke, Acetone, Crude & Products Tankers).
Chennai	17-Apr-2006	13 vessels operating at berth of which 3 loading (Granite Blocks, Project, IOL), 7 vessels discharging (Pet Coke, Thermal Coal, S.Scrap, Containers, S.Coal, General Cargo, Crude Oil), 3 vessels loading and discharging (S.Plate/Project Cargo, Punita, Containers); 1 vessel not ready to work and waiting at anchorage to discharge; 2 vessels due (HSD, Containers).
Tuticorin	17-Apr-2006	7 vessels operating at berth of which 2 loading (General Cargo, Cement), 5 vessels discharging (Machinery, Timber Logs, Rock Phosphate, I.Coal, Thermal Coal); 10 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (9 to load, 1 to load and discharge).
Cochin	17-Apr-2006	5 vessels operating at berth of which 4 vessels discharging (Soda Ash, HSD, MS. Salt, Crude), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 1 vessel awaiting berth to discharge.
New Mangalore	17-Apr-2006	5 vessels operating at berth and discharging (Sulphur, Urea, Phosphoric Acid, Timber-2); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge; 12 vessels due (POL Product, Coal/Coke-2, Granite Stone-2, Containers, POL Crude-3, Iron Ore Fines-2, Methanol).
Mormugao	17-Apr-2006	2 vessels operating at berth of which 1 loading Iron ore, 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 4 vessels working at midstream to load Iron Ore; 6 vessels waiting at anchorage (1 to discharge, 5 to load); 4 vessels under repairs/dry dock; 8 vessels due (S.C.Soal, Met Coke, Coal, MOP, Iron ore-4).
Mumbai	17-Apr-2006	11 vessels operating at berth of which 1 loading General Cargo, 7 vessels discharging (Fertilizer/Fertilizer R.M-2, General Cargo-2, POL-3), 3 vessels loading and discharging (Container/Steel/General/Project/Vehicle); 5 vessels awaiting berth to discharge; 2 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage to load; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage (1 to load and 1 to discharge); 7 vessels under repairs/dry docked, 5 vessels under arrest, 1 vessel under laid up (Berths not required for cargo operations); 19 vessels due (Containers-3, General Cargo-16).
J.N.P.T.	17-Apr-2006	9 vessels operating at berth of which 1 loading Naptha, 2 discharging (Cement, SKO/RKO), 6 vessels loading and discharging Containers; 5 vessels awaiting berth (2 to discharge, 3 to load and discharge); 5 vessels due(Containers-3, CBFS, MEG/STY) .
Kandla	17-Apr-2006	13 vessels operating at berth of which 6 discharging (POL, Other Liquid-2, Scrap, Timber Logs-2), 7 vessels loading (Agriculture Product-4, Salt, Cement, Pipe/Containers); 2 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage to load; 1 vessel under repair; 1 vessel under maintainance.

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Port Conditions

Ennore	17-Apr-2006	4 vessels due (MV Arani Padmini(Thermal Coal), MV Pacific Pioneer(Thermal Coal), MV Tamil Anna (Thermal Coal), MT Shogun (POL Products).
Israel		
Ashdod	18-Apr-2006	No labour problems. Two general cargo vessels loading at berth, 13 vessels discharging at berth (9 general cargo, 4 bulkers), 6 vessels loading/discharging at berth (5 containers, 1 tanker); 1 bulker waiting at anchorage to discharge, 1 tanker waiting at anchorage to load/discharge; no vessels awaiting orders; 13 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Eilat	18-Apr-2006	No labour problems. One general cargo vessel discharging at berth; no vessels anchored; no vessels due, with no delays expected.
Haifa	18-Apr-2006	No labour problems. Four vessels discharging at berth (2 general cargo, 2 bulkers), 9 vessels loading/discharging at berth (5 containers, 2 car carriers, 2 tankers); 4 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (3 general cargo, 1 bulker), 8 vessels waiting at anchorage to load/discharge (3 containers, 4 tankers, 1 car carrier); 4 vessels under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 13 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Kazakhstan		
Aktau	17-Apr-2006	Oil products: Five vessels in roads, all to load; 6 vessels due by 18/4, all to load.
Mozambique		
Maputo	17-Apr-2006	Three vessels in port operating, of which 2 loading (1 mineral coal, 1 condensed gas), 1 discharging pitch; 4 vessels due to berth 17/4, of which 1 to load diesel/petroleum, 1 to discharge bulk aluminium, 2 to discharge/load containers; 22 vessels due by 15/5 of which 8 to load (1 mineral coke, 1 cane molasses, 4 ferro chrome, 1 aluminium, 1 citrus), 10 to discharge (1 bulk maize, 1 diesel/petrol, 1 fertiliser, 3 bulk wheat, 1 vehicles/petcoke, 1 vehicles, 1 petcoke, 1 other vessel), 4 to discharge/load containers.
Pakistan		
Karachi	18-Apr-2006	Four vessels loading at berth (1 naphtha, 3 rice), 6 discharging at berth (1 crude oil, 1 DAP, 1 sugar, 2 general cargo, 1 jute), 4 container vessels loading/discharging at berth; 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to load (2 containers, 1 rice), 3 waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 containers, 1 chemicals); no vessels under repairs dry-docked, none awaiting orders; 4 vessels due (1 containers, 1 crude oil, 1 rice, 1 tallow), with no delays expected.
Port Qasim	18-Apr-2006	Two rice vessels loading at berth, 4 vessels discharging at berth (1 S-beams, 1 VCM, 1 iron ore, 1 HSD oil), 2 container vessels loading/discharging at QICT berth; 1 container vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 containers, 1 fertiliser, 1 HSB oil).
Russia		
Novorossiysk	17-Apr-2006	Fifteen vessels in port operating, of which 11 loading (2 DRI, 1 bulk cement, 1 HBI, 1 scrap, 1 pipes/coils/tin plate/steel billets, 1 coils, 1 bulk urea, 1 slabs/coils, 1 vegetable oil, 1 coils/steel billets/pipes), 4 discharging (1 coils, 1 citrus, 2 bulk sugar); 11 vessels waiting in roads of which 8 to load (1 HBI, 2 steel billets, 1 coils/steel sheets/steel billets, 1 slabs, 1 bulk cement, 1 pipes/wire rods, 1 wire rods/steel billets), 3 to discharge bulk sugar; 80 vessels due, of which 78 to load (3 scrap, 4 pipes, 4 vegetable oil, 3 steel sheets, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 4 cellulose, 8 copper, 12 coils, 1 lead, 4 DRI, 12 steel billets, 1 steel billets/WRIC, 2 bulk NPK, 1 bulk NPK/bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 wheat, 1 slabs, 2 vehicles, 1 pipes/steel sheets/coils, 1 copper/lead, 2 aluminium, 2 pig-iron, 1 wire rods/steel sheets, 1 HBI, 1 soda ash, 1 pipes/wire rods, 1 WRIC, 2 diesel oil, 1 ammonium sulphate), 1 to discharge vegetable oil, 1 to discharge/load containers; Oil terminal: 2 tankers berthed, both loading, of which 1 crude oil, 1 diesel oil; 1 tanker in roads to load crude oil; 6 tankers due, all to load crude oil.
Slovenia		
Koper	18-Apr-2006	Port working normally. Ten vessels berthed of which 1 discharging/loading containers, 1 car carrier discharging vehicles, 1 car carrier discharging/loading vehicles, 3 vessels discharging bulk cargo, 1 loading bulk cargo, 2 loading general cargo, 1 discharging general cargo/sawn timber; no vessels waiting at anchorage; 16 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 2 to discharge/load containers, 1 car carrier to discharge/load vehicles, 2 car carriers to load vehicles, 3 vessels to discharge bulk cargo, 2 to load bulk cargo, 2 tankers to discharge liquid cargo, 4 vessels to load sawn timber/general cargo.
Spain		
Bilbao	18-Apr-2006	Thirty-four vessels operating (6 tankers, 28 other vessels), of which 8 loading, 17 discharging, 9 loading/discharging.
Turkmenistan		
Turkmenbashi	17-Apr-2006	Oil products: One vessel in roads to load gasoil; 1 vessel due 18/4 to load.
Ukraine		
Ilichevsk	17-Apr-2006	Eight vessels in port operating, of which 5 loading (3 steel products, 1 ferro nickel, 1 sunflower oil), 2 discharging (1 ore, 1 petrol), 1 loading/discharging containers; 1 vessel in roads to load ethanol; 16 vessels due, of which 8 to load (6 steel products, 1 ore, 1 grain), 8 to discharge/load containers.

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Port Conditions

Mariupol	17-Apr-2006	Fourteen vessels in port operating, of which 11 loading (5 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 wheat, 1 sulphur, 2 coal), 1 discharging heavy lift cargo/containers, 2 discharging/loading (1 feldspar/clay/kaolin, 1 containers/clay); 16 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 10 steel, 2 coal, 1 bran, 2 fire-clay, 1 fire-clay/containers; 44 vessels due, of which 39 to load (20 steel, 6 coal, 1 sulphur, 2 equipment, 1 steel/equipment, 6 fire-clay, 2 barley, 1 wheat), 5 to discharge (1 heavy lift cargo, 1 borax, 3 equipment).
Odessa	17-Apr-2006	Sixteen vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (4 metal, 1 scrap, 1 corn, 2 timber/metal), 6 discharging (1 citrus, 1 sugar, 2 luggage, 1 sand, 1 general cargo), 1 loading/discharging containers, 1 passenger vessel; 6 vessels in roads, of which 4 to load (1 metal, 2 pig-iron, 1 grain), 1 to discharge meat, 1 to load/discharge containers; 70 vessels due, of which 41 to load (30 metal, 3 pig-iron, 2 scrap, 2 ore, 1 barley, 1 corn, 1 timber, 1 coal), 5 to discharge (1 bananas, 2 sugar, 1 oil, 1 luggage), 24 to discharge/load containers.

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

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ISSN 0047 4908

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