

More than half US Gulf oil output still shut

Hurricane recovery slow, writes Rajesh Joshi in New York — Tuesday September 13 2005

ABOUT 60% of the US Gulf's daily crude oil production, 38% of natural gas production and four major refineries representing 5% of national capacity were still shut at the weekend, exactly two weeks after Hurricane Katrina swept across the southeast coastline.

About 56 rigs were damaged, with 20 total losses. An estimated 122 out of 819 manned platforms and three out of 134 rigs in the region remained evacuated, according to the US Department of Energy.

Although the "shut-in" percentage of oil and gas production declined from 95% and 88% respectively immediately after the storm, the latest figures confirm a growing view that a return to normality would stretch into November.

Decline

The only solace was in a reported 4% decline in US weekly gasoline consumption, as pump prices skyrocketed. However, experts advised circumspection on this figure, since it was not apparent whether shortages played a role.

The US Energy Information Administration's monthly short-term energy outlook for September noted: "Because of considerable uncertainty over the specific extent of damage, it is difficult to provide a single forecast for the upcoming winter."

Instead, the EIA offered three scenarios based on fast, medium and slow recovery.

Of the total US offshore crude oil production of 5.5m barrels a day, the Gulf of Mexico accounts for 1.56m bpd or about 18%. Of the total US crude imports of 10.75m bpd, the US Gulf total region accounts for 6.49 bpd or 60%. Ports in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama account for 23.5% of the imports, and the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port 8.5%.

Of the total US refinery capacity of 17m barrels a day, the US Gulf total region accounts for 8.06m bpd, or 47%.

The EIA projects that total US crude production in September will be 4.72m bpd, 4.58m bpd and 4.3m bpd in a fast, medium and slow recovery, respectively. A return to the August levels of 5.4m bpd is not projected until November.

The August refinery throughput of 16.33m bpd is projected to drop to 15.73m bpd, 15.5m bpd and 15.1m bpd in September based on the three recovery scenarios, and not return to "normal" until November.

Non-availability

These figures underpin the rise to record levels in transatlantic product tanker rates, as European sellers fall over each other to cash in on arbitrage. However, brokers warn that practical problems – including the simple matter of non-availability of ships – would ensure that the US faces a so-called "gasoline shortage" for the near future.

There was no consensus on whether the drop in weekly gasoline demand to 9m barrels from the normal 9.4m barrels – a figure said not to include updated Labor Day statistics – would last into the autumn. One view was that the "drop" in demand actually reflected "shortages".

Indeed, the EIA has obliquely warned of such an outcome. The Colonial and Plantation petroleum product pipelines are back up to 100% of capacity. The Dixie pipeline, which supplies propane into the southeastern US, is at 95%-100%.

"Supplying these pipelines with products may become an issue as long as some of the refineries remain shut down or running at reduced rates," the EIA states.

According to figures available at the weekend, refineries with a combined 930,000 bpd capacity, or nearly 5% of US capacity, remained shut. The EIA said these would remain shut "for an extended period".

A premium is therefore being placed on supplying other refineries with extra crude. The US plans to release 30m barrels from its strategic stockpile to abet this process.

But even here, the recovery would be tied in to distribution issues, experts state.

Hopeful signs have emerged on this front. The Capline, a major crude oil pipeline that supplies crude oil from the Gulf Coast to some Midwest refineries, is past 90% according to operator Shell. The LOOP started operating two of its three berths last week and was understood to be approaching 100% utilisation at the weekend.

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>ANGLIAN SOVEREIGN</i>	tug	GBR	LR	2,263	1,000	2003	Ran aground at Oxna, Scalloway, Sep 3. Estimated 200 tonnes fuel oil spilled. 13 crew airlifted safely, refloated and proceeded back to Scalloway. Extensive damage to vessel. Skipper arrested.
<i>APACHE</i>	barge	USA	—	3,550	—	1989	Grounded in Plantation Key, Florida Keys, during hurricane "Katrina" Aug 26 after breaking free from tug <i>Crosby Skipper</i> . Hard aground Sep 6, awaiting salvage plan.
<i>AYGAZ 4</i>	lpg	TUR		2,609	3,133	1981	Reported major engine failure off Croatian coast Sep 2. Problem not reported to Croatian authorities until Sep 4. Towed to Malinska, Krk where repairs will be effected. Master to be fined.
<i>BALTIC CAPTAIN I</i>	chem/oil carrier	CYP	NV	23,235	37,418	2000	Ran aground at Pelican Island, Houston Ship Canal, Sep 2. LOF salvage contract signed with Titan Maritime. Refloated and delivered to its owners Sep 4.
<i>DONGJIN PHOENIX</i>	general	KOR	KR	3,098	4,345	1985	Fire broke out in hold in the Sea of Japan in about lat 34 16N, long 129 49E, Sep 4. A salvage contract signed with Japanese salvors, tug on scene and fire reportedly extinguished Sep 5. Vessel washed ashore Sep 6.
<i>KUK SA BONG 2</i>	general	PRK	—	670	850	1977	Vessel sank at No.3 berth of Dayaowan Bay, Dalian Sep 2. One sailor is missing. To be salvaged.
<i>KYRIAKOS M.</i>	bulker	CYP	AB ABS	20,083	34,368	1976	Ran aground at buoy No.5, Umm Qasr Sep 6. Salvage services rendered under LOF awarded to Tsavliris Salvage. Refloated Sep 9 and anchored, awaiting a berth to discharge cargo.
<i>LONG XUYEN</i>	general	VNM	—	5,470	6,929	1990	Ran aground in strong winds caused by typhoon "Nabi" while lying anchored at Pohang outer harbour Sep 6. All 22 crew members rescued.
<i>MOADDELI</i>	general	DMA	—	898	—	1989	Reported drifting in lat 19 19.3N, long 120E, Aug 24. Tug arrived on scene Sep 2 and taken vessel in tow bound Philippines. Still under tow Sep 6.
<i>PACIFIC HOPE</i>	bulker	PAN	NK	22,147	38,855	1991	Grounded at Km 454, River Parana Sep 2. Vessel is not reported to be obstructing navigation channel. Refloated Sep 3 assisted by tug <i>Alianza Rosario</i> .
<i>PACIFIC SKY</i>	passenger	GBR		46,087	6,135	1984	Experienced mechanical breakdown and drifted aground onto a reef off Isle of Pines, New Caledonia in lat 22 40S, long 167 25.4E, Sep 3-4. Two tugs were being sent from Noumea. Refloated Sep 4, no damage.
<i>PARKGRACHT</i>	general	NLD	LR	5,998	9,656	1986	In contact with Quay 1221 Vrasendock, Antwerp Sep 6. Vessel is making water but situation is stable, surveyor is en route. In port Sep 7.
<i>POLYHRONIS</i>	bulker	MLT	BV	23,386	37,901	1980	Ran aground on banks of the Mississippi, west of New Orleans in Hurricane "Katrina" about Sep 2. Salvage services rendered under Lloyd's Open Form by Wijsmuller Salvage.

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



AALFJORD (Norway)

Trondheim, Sep 5 -- Understand from the managing owners of general cargo Aalfjord that no decision has yet been taken concerning the vessel. -- Lloyd's Agents.

AIS NIKOLAS (Greece)

Port Said, Sep 1 -- Bulk Ais Nikolas sailed Suez Aug 31. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ALLIANCE (Germany)

London, Sep 2 -- Understand research Alliance is still under repair at Genoa.

ALPHASHIP (Bahamas)

See Aztec.

ANGLIAN SOVEREIGN (U.K.)

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated Sep 4, states: Anchor handling tug/supply Anglian Sovereign (2263 gt, built 2003) ran aground yesterday evening, spilling an estimated 200 tonnes of fuel oil. The skipper was breathalysed and arrested after the incident and is due to appear at Lerwick Sheriff Court next week. The police inquiry is one of three under way into the incident. Pollution booms were set up around the Anglian Sovereign and another was deployed in Scalloway Harbour, while a diver was sent down to survey the damage. A Coastguard counter-pollution team from Southampton was sent to co-ordinate the operation. Fish farmers who have cages in the area were assessing whether any of the oil had affected their stocks. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency said there would be an investigation into how the vessel ran aground at Oxna in strong winds at 2045, UTC, yesterday. A Coastguard rescue helicopter from Sumburgh was called in after the vessel sent a Mayday. The 13-man crew on the vessel was airlifted to safety. The master then managed to refloat the vessel, despite extensive damage, and it proceeded back to Scalloway Harbour.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Pollution experts in Shetland estimate that they have recovered almost half of the fuel oil spilt following the grounding of an anchor handling tug/supply Anglian Sovereign. The vessel ran aground on Saturday (Sep 3) evening and about 200 tonnes of fuel leaked into the water at Oxna. Fish farmers on the west side of the islands have been assessing the spill and plan to carry out water samples on their sites. They have stopped feeding their stock and suspended harvesting until water samples have been taken. Three inquiries have been launched into the circumstances which led to the grounding of the emergency towing vessel.

London, Sept 5 -- A Maritime & Coastguard Agency press release, timed 1418, UTC, Sept 4, states: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency can confirm that at 2145 yesterday the Coastguard Emergency Towing vessel anchor handling tug/supply Anglian Sovereign ran aground on the Island of Oxna, 10 miles west of Scalloway. The vessel at present is alongside in Scalloway harbour. The vessel has sustained some damage and is undergoing an underwater inspection by divers to ascertain the extent of that damage. The vessel has also lost approximately 200 tons of marine gas oil. The tug is owned and operated under contract to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency by Klyne Tugs of Lowestoft. The Counter Pollution Branch has mobilised resources to Scalloway, Shetland Islands to work in cooperation with the relevant authorities to deal with this fuel spill. The Marine Accident Investigation Branch which is an independent body has been notified of the incident by the MCA and they will be investigating this incident. The vessel is currently surrounded by booms in Scalloway Harbour and mechanical equipment has been deployed to deal with the pollution. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency are working closely with all interested parties to minimise the pollution risk to the environment.

London, Sept 5 -- A Maritime & Coastguard Agency press release, timed 1252, UTC, today: Following the pollution incident in Scalloway Harbour, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency on behalf of the established Environment Group has issued precautionary advice to local shellfish and fish farmers, and inshore shellfish fishermen in the Scalloway area, not to fish, harvest or feed in areas of obvious oil pollution. Updates will be issued following the assessment of the aerial survey carried out yesterday by an MCA surveillance aircraft. Environmental Health Officers confirm that the clearance carried out in the harbour yesterday has been effective. However, there are sheens, which extend beyond the harbour boundaries. The location, extent and impact of these will be determined during the day. Fish farmers in the vicinity are monitoring the situation on the ground. They report no signs of any pollution affecting these sites and are taking any necessary precautions. Shellfish farmers are also monitoring the situation.

London, Sept 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Fish-farmers suspended harvesting their stocks as a precaution yesterday while a pollution clean-up continued after the grounding of anchor handling tug/supply Anglian Sovereign. The 42-year-old master of the tug, who was breathalysed following Saturday night's incident, is expected to appear in court at Lerwick next week. He was detained after he managed to refloat the vessel and bring it into Scalloway. Pollution-

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control booms were still deployed around the vessel in Scalloway harbour yesterday. More than half the diesel that spilled from its ruptured tanks was estimated to have been recovered.

APACHE (U.S.A.)

London, Sept 2 -- A press report, dated Aug 31, states: Tank barge Apache (3550 gt, built 1989) remains sitting just off Plantation Key after grounding Friday (Aug 26) after hurricane "Katrina" made landfall in the Keys. Efforts to move the barge are expected to require "weeks," officials said. "It's a problem because of how big it is and where it is," said Cheva Heck, communications director for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The propane barge was empty when it broke free from its tug Crosby Skipper, late Friday. Even empty, the barge draws about 7 feet. The shallows where it grounded near Treasure Harbor "appear to be about 3 to 5 feet deep," Heck said. Resolve Marine Salvage company has been contracted to work on removing the barge. A preliminary salvage plan developed jointly by Coast Guard Sector Key West, Resolve Marine, Crosby Tug LLC of Golden Meadow, La., the marine sanctuary and the state Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission indicates the tug will be left in place for several weeks. "It will take a few weeks to get the equipment they need down here," Heck said. Sea conditions had prevented an assessment of possible damage to the marine environment as of press time. The barge rests on a hardbottom area which had seagrasses and some soft corals. "Sanctuary divers will go out and look for other areas it might have hit on the way in," Heck said. "There are certain patch reefs that we are concerned about." The salvage plan seeks to remove the barge with as little environmental impact as possible. Since the barge was empty, no hazard exists to residents. To ensure safety, a firefighting safety team from Resolve Marine Salvage is on scene, and the Islamorada Fire Department has been involved in the response. The shipping company could face a legal case for damaging protected marine resources, including fines to cover restoration and recovery costs. A decision on legal action will be made when the barge is moved and complete environmental assessments are available.

Miami, Sep 6 -- Tank barge Apache was in ballast when it went aground off Plantation Key on Aug 23. The barge is still hard aground. The tug has been released. Resolve Marine were called in to free the barge, however, the Coast Guard is waiting for a salvage plan to be presented to them that would be agreeable by them, environmental interests and others before any efforts to free it will take place. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ATHOS I (Cyprus)

London, Sept 2 -- A press report, dated Sep 1, states: Claims ranging

from \$27 to replace an oil-stained tarp to \$6,300 for boat damage have been settled in connection with the crude oil tanker Athos I oil spill in the Delaware River nine months ago. Nearly \$200 million in claims are still awaiting processing. Two dozen claimants, ranging from individual property owners and recreational river users to state agencies and businesses on both sides of the river, have been awarded close to \$40,000 from the National Pollution Funds Center, an agency of the U.S. Coast Guard. Before it's over, up to \$187 million for 69 claims still pending will have to be considered, said Augusto Rios, chief of the damage claims branch for the Arlington, Va.-based agency. Four claims have been withdrawn and two have been denied to date, Rios said. "Claims are processed in the order they have been received," Rios said. "The larger claims have taken longer to arrive, because it takes a lot longer for the claimants to put together the information they need." Claims and cleanup costs were turned over to National Pollution Fund Center, which oversees the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, in February after vessel managers Tsakos Shipping & Trading decided to stop paying out cleanup and damage costs after spending more than double what they were required to pay under the federally regulated liability cap of \$45 million. Cleanup costs have exceeded \$167 million to date. Petty Officer Kimberly Smith, a Coast Guard spokeswoman, said the investigation into the spill has been completed and forwarded to the Atlantic Area Command in Portsmouth, Va., for review. The report will go to Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C., for review before it is released to the public, Smith said. Results could be made public as early as next month. Rios said the center will not be permitted to consider the findings of the report in a claim the ship's management company is expected to make to recover money paid on cleanup costs. To recover all of the money it has paid for cleanup, Tsakos will have to prove that a either an act of God, an act of war or a third party was responsible for the damage caused by the spill, Rios said. A natural resources damage assessment, meanwhile, is still being compiled to determine a cost of environmental damage caused by the spill.

AYGAZ 4 (Turkey)

London, Sep 7 -- Croatian authorities are to fine the master of lpg Aygaz 4 (2609 gt, built 1981) after he failed to report a major engine failure off the Croatian coast. The vessel was sailing from Rijeka when its engine failed on Friday (Sep 2). However, it did not report the problem to local maritime authorities until late on Sunday. Marina Haluzan, spokeswoman for the Croatian Sea and Transport Ministry, said: "We will be fining the master. He should have reported the engine failure immediately and he also did not report that he had anchored near

the island of Susac. We have yet to determine the size of the fine as we are still inspecting the vessel." The ministry fine came after the Croatian Sea Rescue Service reported the vessel's master to authorities after it was called to the Aygaz 4 on Sunday as it lay anchored near Susac off the central Croatian coast. The tanker has been towed to Malinska on the island of Krk, where it will have its engine repaired. (Note -- Aygaz 4 sailed Rijeka Sep 2 for Dortyol.)

AZTEC (Greece)

St. Petersburg, Sep 6 -- On Aug 28, the storage crude oil tanker Alfaship, was lying secured to four buoys (two forward and two aft) and anchored with two anchors at No.5 Anchorage Area off Kronshtadt, St. Petersburg. Mooring fenders were floating alongside. Crude oil tanker Aztec, in ballast, with the compulsory pilot onboard, and assisted with two tugs, was manoeuvring in way of the left side of Alfaship, in order to moor alongside the starboard side. At 1810 hrs, Aztec contacted the upper plate of starboard side of Alfaship in way of No. 79 Frame. Aztec sustained damage on its starboard side. The Lloyd's Register surveyor recommended to restore the broken welded seams within a period of two months. The ship was scheduled to complete the loading on Sep 2. Alfaship sustained damage on its port side. Based on our information Alfaship is still at St.Petersburg, while Aztec sailed from St. Petersburg on Sep 02, with cargo on board, for further repairs. Its port of her destination is not currently known. -- Lloyd's Agents.

St. Petersburg, Sep 8 -- Crude oil tanker Aztec sailed from St. Petersburg on Sep 2, bound for Rotterdam. -- Lloyd's Agents.

BALTIC CAPTAIN I (Cyprus)

London, Sep 2 -- Information received from Houston, dated today, states: Chemical/oil carrier Baltic Captain I (23235 gt, built 2000) is aground at Pelican Island, Houston Ship Channel. Lloyd's Standard Form salvage contract has been signed with Titan Maritime.

London, Sep 6 -- Chemical/oil carrier Baltic Captain I refloated after lightering and was delivered to its owners Sep 4. -- Titan Maritime.

BHN PRODUCTION PLATFORM

London, Sep 8 -- India's government-owned Oil & Natural Gas Corporation has slapped an insurance claim of Rs11.50bn (US\$260m) for the fire damage sustained by BHN Production Platform on Jul 27. "We had expected the ONGC claim to be in the region of the amount that has been filed," said M.K. Garg, chairman of the Chennai-based public sector undertaking United India Insurance, which insured the platform. "It is indeed the single largest claim ever filed in India by any company. However, we have sufficient reinsurance to cover the claim and it will not make a major dent in our profitability." It would appear that the

state-run United India had shared the risks for the ONGC oil platform with other state-owned and private sector general insurance companies, as well as with national reinsurer General Insurance Corporation of India. The platform was insured for \$750m, with the first \$20m deductible, which means ONGC will have to absorb losses up to \$20m on its own balance sheet. The state-run explorer-producer, which has the country's largest insurable assets, is believed to require around \$500m to repair the damaged platform.

BRENTLAND (Norway)

London, Sep 8 -- Following received from Stavanger RCC, timed 0900, UTC: General cargo Brentland (299 gt, built 1963) sustained engine failure and blackout and subsequently lightly grounded in lat 59 21.30N, long 05 57.20E at 0120, UTC, this morning. Support vessel Peter Henry Von Koss assisted in refloating the vessel. No damage or injuries sustained and vessel continued on voyage.

CHENG CHING FENG (Taiwan)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy".

CHRISOPIGI LADY (Liberia)

Singapore, Aug 29 -- Product tanker Chrisopigi Lady sailed Singapore 2330, Aug 27 for Mina al Ahmadi. -- Lloyd's Agents.

CHUNG YI 218 (Taiwan)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy".

COSTA CLASSICA (Italy)

London, Sep 3 -- Passenger Costa Classica arrived Corfu Sep 2 and sailed the same day.

CROSBY SKIPPER (U.S.A.)

See Apache.

CSL TADOUSSAC (Canada)

Troy, Michigan, Sep 5 -- Bulk CSL Tadoussac (20634 gt, built 1969) arrived in the Saginaw River early this morning to unload cement clinker at the Essroc Terminal in Essexville. While deploying its unloading boom, the brakes failed causing the boom to crash down to the dock. Reports indicated that at the time of the accident the brakes were "smoldering". The Master of the CSL Tadoussac radioed US Coast Guard Station Saginaw River to report the incident and asked them to inform other large vessels to transit the area at a very slow speed. No injuries were reported. -- Great Lakes and Seaway Shipping News.

Troy, Michigan, Sep 7 -- Bulk CSL Tadoussac was outbound the Saginaw River early Tuesday morning (Sep 6). It is unknown if it was able to offload its cargo at Essroc, or if it departed heavy. -- Great Lakes and Seaway Shipping News.

DOCTOR HOOK

See Quickcat.

DONA RAMONA (Philippines)

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

DONGJIN PHOENIX (South Korea)

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Fire broke out on board general cargo Dongjin Phoenix (3098 gt, built 1985) in the Sea of Japan yesterday but all 15 crew members were rescued unharmed, the Japan Coast Guard said. The vessel reported to the Coast Guard at around 1430 hrs that a fire had started in its hold and that it was still burning. The 15 crew members -- eight South Koreans and seven Chinese -- abandoned the vessel in lifeboats.

London, Sep 5 -- Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0025, UTC: General cargo Dongjin Phoenix reported in lat 34 16N, long 129 49E, at 0600, JST, today. A salvage contract was signed with Japanese salvors; a tug is already on scene and the fire is reportedly almost extinguished. However, operations are being made more difficult by the approach of a typhoon, which is already generating heavy seas.

London, Sept 5 -- Following notice to mariners issued today: General cargo Dongjin Phoenix, on fire, adrift in lat 33 45.2N, long 129 21.7E at 1420, UTC, today.

London, Sep 6 -- Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0015, UTC: General cargo Dongjin Phoenix was reportedly adrift in lat 33 23 08N, long 129 06 13W, at 2340, UTC, Sep 5. The fire is reportedly out.

London, Sept 6 -- Following notice to mariners issued today: Drifted unmanned general cargo Dongjin Phoenix washed ashore.

London, Sept 6 -- Following navigation warning issued today: Stranded general cargo Dongjin Phoenix exists in lat 33 00.9N, long 129 01.9E.

London, Sep 7 -- Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0440, UTC: General cargo Dongjin Phoenix remains aground in lat 33 00.92N, long 129 01.92E.

London, Sep 7 -- The following press release was issued by Leonhardt & Blumberg, Hamburg, managers of c.c. NYK Prestige, dated today: Our vessel NYK Prestige, on route to Busan, rescued 14 Korean seamen from general cargo Dongjin Phoenix, which was on fire and sinking. NYK Prestige, under the command of Captain Bernd Jantzen, was sailing under time charter with NYK, Japan, from Osaka to Busan, when at 1440 hrs, Sep 4, a mayday message on VHF was received from Dongjin Phoenix, stating: "Distress, vessel on fire" and shortly after: "Vessel slowly sinking". The distance between the two vessels was about six nautical miles and the distance to Busan was about 50 nautical miles. Winds were force seven (near gale) and there was a high swell. Captain Jantzen communicated with the Korean Captain Kim Yeion Keun, and was advised that the crew of Dongjin Phoenix were to abandon their sinking vessel into lifeboats and liferafts. NYK Prestige diverted to towards the position of the distress.

Upon arrival at the scene, a rescue was effected. In just one hour and 42 minutes after receiving the first mayday message the 14 Korean seamen from the lifeboat and rafts were safely onboard NYK Prestige. However, one Korean seaman was missing. Our vessel started searching for this missing seaman, who was picked up 20 minutes later by helicopter. At 2030 hrs, Sep 4, all 14 seamen, rescued by our vessel, were brought, in a healthy condition, to the port of Busan.

Yokohama, Sep 8 -- General cargo Dongjin Phoenix had a fire in No 1 hold in lat 34 40N, long 130 02E, at 1400, Sep 4. Tug Koyo Maru was dispatched to assist but was unable to take the vessel in tow due to high seas. Dongjin Phoenix subsequently grounded in the Shughenjima shallows, near the Goto Islands. There were no injuries, and no oil spill has been observed. -- Lloyd's Agents.

EISHO MARU 1 (Panama)

Busan, Aug 31 -- General cargo Eisho Maru 1 arrived Masan Aug 30. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ELTSEN

(St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Piraeus, Sep 2 -- General cargo Eltsen sailed Piraeus Sep 1. -- Lloyd's Agents.

EUGENIO

(St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Sept 2 -- Understand general cargo Eugenio grounded off Madagascar Aug 7 laden with approximately 100 containers of general cargo some of which was reefer cargo. Salvage services were rendered to the vessel under the terms of Lloyd's Open Form 2000 by Smit International. The vessel was successfully refloated Aug 18. During the refloating operation the vessel listed severely to starboard causing container lashings to break and as a result, 39 containers fell overboard, 26 full containers including one reefer and 13 empty containers. The vessel was subsequently towed to Durban. The shipowners have declared general average.

FJALIR (Norway)

London, Sep 5 -- Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Ro/ro Fjalir (646 gt, built 1974) experienced engine problems and grounded at 0840, local time, today during its arrival at Krakhella. There were no injuries to the 25 passengers on board. The vessel was refloated by local vessels after few hours. Following a diver's inspection, ferry "Svanoy will tow the vessel to a shipyard. Ferry Sunnfjord will replace the vessel.

GALAXY II

See Yinhe 2.

GAS VISION (Panama)

London, Sep 3 -- Lpg Gas Vision arrived Sakai Sep 1.

GC 55

See Kiperousa.

GECO SAPPHIRE (Panama)

Gdynia, Sep 6 -- Research Geco Sapphire, now renamed EDT Protea, is being repaired in a repair shipyard in Gdynia. Due to financial problem of the Greek shipowner, the repairs will last for about six months. -- Correspondents.

London Sep 7 -- Research Geco Sapphire now EDT Protea is not undergoing any repair, as we wrongly stated in yesterday's edition, but a major conversion. She was formerly known as a Seismic Survey Vessel and is in the process of being converted to a DP-III DSV, light construction and ROV support vessel. The vessel has been lengthened, added accommodation, engines, generators and thrusters. The conversion is scheduled to be completed just after the coming new year. We would like to apologise for our erroneous suggestion that the vessel's owner faced any kind of financial problems.

GENERAL MEHMANDAROV (Azerbaijan)

Baku, Sept 2 -- Product tanker General Mehmandarov is still repairing at Parkkommuna. -- Lloyd's Agents.

GEORGE T. (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Sept 2 -- Bulk George T. arrived off port limits Gibraltar 2100, Aug 31 and left 2110, same day.

GRANDE AMBURGO (Italy)

Zeebrugge, Sep 2 -- Ro/ro Grande Amburgo (56738 gt, built 2003), bound Antwerp, grounded in the River Scheldt, near buoy 47, at 1930, local time, today. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note -- Grande Amburgo sailed Hamburg Sep 1 for Antwerp.)

Maassluis, Sep 2 -- Ro/ro Grande Amburgo grounded off Hansweert for unknown reasons at about 1930, local time, today. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Zeebrugge, Sep 2 -- Ro/ro Grande Amburgo was reported afloat at 2130, local time, and subsequently passed buoy 55, on the River Scheldt, at 2143. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Sep 2 -- Understand ro/ro Grande Amburgo was assisted under Lloyd's Open Form by URS and Multraship.

Maassluis, Sep 2 -- Ro/ro Grande Amburgo was refloated about 2130, local time, with help from four tugs of URS. After investigation the vessel will be able to enter the harbour. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Sep 4 -- Ro/ro Grande Amburgo arrived Antwerp Sep 3.

Maassluis, Sep 5 -- Ro/ro Grande Amburgo sailed Antwerp Sep 4. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

HANSEATIC (Bahamas)

Trondheim, Sep 5 -- Passenger Hanseatic underwent temporary repairs to the bottom tanks, alongside at Nesna. The vessel sailed Sep 1 for Hamburg, ETA late Sep 5. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 7 -- Passenger Hanseatic arrived Hamburg Sep 5.

HI'IALAKAI (U.S.A.)

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: The government research vessel Hi'ialakai (built 1984) is returning to Honolulu for repair to an engine, cutting short a 35-day voyage to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. On Monday (Aug 29), just three days into the trip and southwest of French Frigate Shoals, there was a small fire in the engine-room of the 224-foot vessel, said Sean Corson, of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve. "My understanding is it was a small fire that was put out quickly," Corson said yesterday, adding that no one was hurt. The ship's crew shut down the engines to troubleshoot the problem and determined that the vessel needed to be repaired in port, Corson said. "It was very well handled and hasn't presented a problem other than its interrupted schedule," he said. Corson did not know yesterday what modifications might be made to the planned research cruise or how many scientists are aboard. He is acting reserve manager while the manager is off island at a conference. Typically, the Hi'ialakai has officers and crew of 24 and 22 scientist-passengers aboard, Capt. Scott Kuester explained while giving a tour of the vessel last month. The vessel served the Navy and Coast Guard before being renovated for scientific work for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Its four diesel engines have a total of 1,600 horsepower. The vessel now is traveling at seven mph, about half its usual cruising speed, and probably will be back to its Snug Harbor berth this weekend (Sep 3/4), Corson said. A crew member said the fire was preceded by a small explosion, but the crew member did not elaborate on the cause, instead noting that "everyone is OK, and the fire was put out quickly."

HSIN LIEN FENG 36 (Taiwan)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy".

HUAL TRAPPER (NIS)

Durban, Sep 7 -- Vehicle Hual Trapper arrived Durban Sep 6. -- Lloyd's Agents.

JAVA SEA (Singapore)

Singapore, Sep 3 -- General cargo Java Sea is currently at Singmarine Floating Dock 1, Singapore. -- Lloyd's Agents.

KAAWA (Uganda)

See Kabalega.

KABALEGA (Uganda)

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: The joint concessioning of the Kenya-Uganda railways will continue in spite of the sinking of ro/ro Kabalega and the demobilisation of ro/ro Kaawa and ro/ro Pamba. However, the handover date had been extended to next March, the works minister, John Nasasira, said while receiving the report of enquiry into the sinking of the Kabalega. He said bidders requested

for more time to conclude financial arrangements. The Pamba and the Kaawa were out of service awaiting repairs and certification that would enable them to get insured. The minister said structural repairs on the two ferries were almost complete. He said funds were being mobilised to complete the maintenance work required to bring them to class and insurance before being put back in service. The Kabalega was not insured at the time it sank because it lacked the necessary maintenance.

KIPEROUSA (Malta)

London, Sept 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Extensive damage to barge GC 55, brought to the Eastern Cape coast for the bulk Kiperousa salvage operation, is likely to cause another delay in the ill-fated operation, which is now becoming a race against the onset of further bad weather. The barge, 86m by 23m, arrived in East London at the weekend after being in tow by tug Zakher Delmon, from the United Arab Emirates for the past month. Several bad storms were encountered on the voyage. After personally inspecting the barge yesterday, South African Maritime Safety Association spokesman Captain Peter Kroon described the damage it sustained as "serious". He said the vessel, tied up on the East Bank, would be taken into the dry dock today for a more thorough assessment. "In my opinion the damage is serious, and I imagine the decision will simply be to either repair it, or tow it out to sea and sink it." He said the barge was insured for R400,000. "I cannot imagine that repairs will amount to much less than R1 million. That leaves the question of who will pick up the R600,000 tab for the balance," he added. Together with salvors SvitzerWijismuller's senior salvage master Captain Nick Sloane, Kroon on Thursday did an in loco inspection of the stranded Kiperousa. Both Kroon and Sloane confirmed that the ship was now a wreck. Wide cracks, right through the vessel, had opened up in the bow, amidships and through the stern accommodation section. Both marine experts are worried about more bad weather, with Kroon stressing that another storm, like the one at the end of August, was likely to rip Kiperousa apart. While an earlier salvage operation involving a helicopter and road transportation from Wesley had succeeded in transferring around 1,600 logs to East London, about 7,000 logs are still trapped in the ship's flooded holds. Sloane was last night still hoping that the GC 55 would be repaired and that, together with the Zakher Delmon, it would be put to work on the salvage operation.

London, Sep 7 -- Tsavlis Salvage has clarified why it is no longer handling a problem-plagued wreck operation off the South African coast. Tsavlis stressed that it had advised continued use of a heavy-lift helicopter in taking cargo off bulk Kiperousa, which had originally

experienced flooding in its engine-room after running aground on Jun 7 during a voyage from Durban to the Far East. Tsavlis said it had earlier de-watered the engine-room and removed all bunkers and other pollutants from the vessel. Under a first wreck removal contract, it also removed the vessel's deck cargo of up to 1,560 logs, about 6,000 tonnes. This was carried out in 15 days "by use of the most powerful helicopter available," the Greek firm said. It admitted the helicopter was a "more expensive method" than lightering by barge but was justified by the conditions. Tsavlis hired a Russian-built MI26 helicopter to remove the deck cargo from the log bulker, which has been stranded for three months, but said that its hopes of refloating the vessel in late July were dashed by bad weather which further damaged the vessel's hull and left all its holds flooded. This prompted the vessel's owners and P&I insurers to seek new tenders for removing the under-deck cargo. Saying it did not formally bid for the most recent stage of the operation, the Greek salvor said it had nevertheless "proposed" continued use of the helicopter, which was operational in bad weather, as it believed the vessel could break up before discharging by barges could be completed. "A number of companies tendered and we understand all of them, with the exception of one, included the use of the helicopter," Tsavlis said in a statement. It added that "the Club decided to entrust the operation to the only company that excluded the use of the helicopter." The salvage group said that reports it had abandoned the operation were "entirely wrong" and it had wished the insurers success in completing the project. It is understood that French insurer Axa provided coverage for the bulker's hull as well as P&I risks and it has been required to post a hefty guarantee with the South African authorities against damage from the vessel or cargo. The removal operation has been taken over by SvitserWijismuller. Last week, it was reported that the bulker had lost some of its logs as it began breaking up in fierce gales.

London, Sept 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: The salvage team removing an estimated 6 000 logs worth R65-million from grounded bulk Kiperousa have been unable to make use of a second larger barge (GC 55) after it was damaged in a storm in the Mozambique Channel. And if the barge, which arrived at the weekend from the Middle East, is not repaired in time, Kiperousa could come apart in bad weather. The barge being used in the salvage operation can only hold between 100 and 120 logs. The Middle Eastern barge, measuring 84 metres by 24 metres, accommodates between 400 and 500 logs, said Captain Nick Sloane, SvitserWijismuller's senior salvage master. The barge was taken to dry dock at East London's harbour yesterday and the extent of the

damage would be known only later today, said Sloane. To date, the smaller barge used in the salvage operation has taken four loads of logs from the ship. "The first of four holds has been cleared," said Sloane. Meanwhile, Kiperousa continues to present a challenge to the salvage team, after it shifted and was further damaged in a severe storm at the end of last month. "The ship is moving the whole time. Our crane is also moving," said Sloane. The crane, attached to the ship, towers 10 metres above the deck. "No one knows when it will break," said Sloane, who nevertheless is confident that, "without bad weather", the salvage operation will take a further six weeks. SA Maritime Safety Authority spokesman Peter Kroon said: "Another storm will definitely destroy the ship."

KUK SA BONG 2 (North Korea)

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A cargo vessel of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (general cargo Kuk Sa Bong 2 (670 gt, built 1977)) sank at the No. 3 berth of Dayaowan Bay in Dalian, Liaoning Province in north-east China, Friday night (Sep 2), leaving one sailor missing, the Dalian Maritime Bureau said Saturday. The 670-ton cargo vessel with 15 sailors on board, anchored at the Dayaowan bay, started to set sail at 2100 Friday, when the accident occurred. "The vessel body leaned to the right suddenly, overturned and sank in a few minutes," a witness said. Rescuers saved 14 sailors and are searching for the missing chief engineer, with the sea route closed. Investigation into the cause of the accident is under way.

Dalian, Sep 7 -- General cargo Kuk Sa Bong 2 sank at pier No.3 of Dalian Container Terminal (Dalian DCT Port) after discharge at 2130, local time, Sep 2. It maybe that the poor stowage of the goods (27 x 20' containers with full goods of about 700-800 tonnes) on board caused the sinking. The matter is being investigated by MSA, DCT and Carrier. Fourteen crew were rescued and one is missing. After investigation the salvage must be carried out. -- Lloyd's Agents.

KYRIAKOS M. (Cyprus)

London, Sep 7 -- Bulk Kyriakos M. (20083 gt, built 1976), cargo 34,000 tonnes rice, ran aground at buoy No.5, Umm Qasr, Sep 6. Salvage services awarded under Lloyd's Open Form to Tsavlis Salvage.

Piraeus, Sep 8 -- Bulk Kyriakos M. was refloated early this morning and is presently anchored, awaiting a berth to discharge its cargo. -- Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd.

LONG XUYEN (Vietnam)

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

MICHELLE (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Sep 3 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 0709, UTC: General cargo Michelle is still

lying in the same position. Preparations for salvage are continuing, and refloating operations are expected to commence tomorrow evening.

London, Sep 5 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 0930, UTC: General cargo Michelle remains in the same position with salvage operations continuing. A meeting between parties is scheduled for 1200. It is hoped the vessel will be lifted later today and then taken to Delfzyl/Eemshaven tomorrow.

London, Sep 6 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 1250, UTC: An attempt to lift general cargo Michelle failed yesterday after one of the three slings broke. The vessel is now back in the same position, with a list of 30 degrees.

London, Sep 7 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 1350, UTC: General cargo Michelle remains in the same position with salvage operations continuing.

MOADELI (Dominica)

London, Sep 3 -- Following received from Hong Kong MRCC, timed 0315, UTC: General cargo Moaddeli (898 gt, built 1989), J7AT5, Ulsan for Singapore, reported drifting on Aug 24, following power blackout, in lat 19 19.3N, long 120 00E. A tug arrived on scene at 2230 hrs, yesterday, and has taken the vessel in tow. MRCC do not yet know which port the vessel will be towed to.

London, Sep 4 -- Following received from Hong Kong MRCC, timed 0317, UTC: General cargo Moaddeli is being towed to the Philippines, but the MRCC are unaware of the actual port to which it is being towed and its ETA.

London, Sep 6 -- Following received from Manila Coast Guard, timed 0030, UTC: Understand general cargo Moaddeli is still under tow by a Manila-based tug, bound Philippines.

MONARCH OF THE SEAS (NIS)

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Three crew members were killed by an apparent methane gas leak on board passenger Monarch of the Seas (73937 gt, built 1991) in the port of Los Angeles today, a fire spokeswoman said. There were three fatalities and seven other people injured, Fire Department spokeswoman Melissa Kelley said. No passengers were involved, she said. Two of the injured were ship's physicians who had gone to aid the others. Two of the injured were being taken to hospitals. The other five were "walking," she said. The incident aboard Royal Caribbean's Monarch of the Seas was reported at 0915. Crew members were performing routine maintenance in the starboard propeller shaft when they came in contact with the gas, Kelley said. Firefighters discovered a five-gallon container of raw sewage that was the apparent source of the methane leak, she said. Passengers were allowed to remain aboard the vessel. The vessel is based in Los Angeles harbour and normally cruises to Baja California.

London, Sep 6 -- Passenger Monarch of the Seas sailed Los Angeles Sep 3.

MSC FABIENNE (Panama)

London, Sep 5 -- Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: On Aug 24, c.c. MSC Fabienne (54774 gt, built 2004) ran aground on the River Elbe when leaving Hamburg. Tugs tried to stop the ship but it ran aground on the beach close to Oevelgoenne. The ship was subsequently refloated. (Note -- MSC Fabienne sailed from Hamburg at 1645 hrs, Aug 24 and arrived at Bremerhaven at 0250 hrs, Aug 25. It sailed at 1755 hrs, Aug 25 and subsequently arrived at Piraeus on Sep 1.)

MSC KATIE (Panama)

Durban, Sep 7 -- C.c. MSC Katie sailed Durban Sep 6. -- Lloyd's Agents.

NATIONAL PROSPERITY (Panama)

Taipei, Sep 6 -- Bulk National Prosperity is still docked at China Shipbuilding, Kaohsiung, for repairs which are expected to be completed on or about Sep 10. -- Lloyd's Agents.

NCC MADINAH (NIS)

Singapore, Aug 29 -- Chem.tank NCC Madinah arrived Singapore 0825, Aug 28. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Singapore, Sep 3 -- Chem.tank NCC Madinah is currently at Singapore Tech North Pier West. -- Lloyd's Agents.

NEEKIS (Canada)

London, Sep 2 -- Fishing Neekis (131 gt, built 1978) ran aground near Hocking Point in Alberni Inlet, B.C. in lat 48 04.59N 124 50.21W at 0158, local time, today.

London, Sep 2 -- Following received from Coast Guard Victoria, timed 1950, UTC: Fishing Neekis is still aground with salvage operations in progress.

London, Sep 5 -- Following received from Victoria BC MRCC, timed 0100, UTC: Fishing Neekis was refloated by a commercial tug on Sep 3 after transshipping some of its cargo to another fishing vessel and it departed under its own power for Alberni for inspection.

NEW GLORY (Dominica)

Singapore, Aug 30 -- General cargo New Glory sailed Singapore 0810, Aug 29. -- Lloyd's Agents.

NOBLESSE-C. (Netherlands)

Maassluis, Sep 2 -- General cargo Noblesse-C. sailed Ymuiden Sep 2. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

OIL AMBASSADOR (Liberia)

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

ORIENT BRILLIANCE (Panama)

London, Sep 6 -- The following statement, dated today, was issued by Wallem Shipmanagement, Hong Kong, managers of bulk Orient Brilliance: Wallem Shipmanagement, managers of the bulk Orient Brilliance, which

touched a submerged rock while departing San Nicolas, Peru on Aug 29, report that repairs are proceeding to tanks open to the sea. A team of 12 divers, with workshop, has completed repairs to No.1 (S) DB tank and work is in progress to No.4 (S) DB tank in line with Class recommendations. Following completion and after DNV'S Response Team have checked vessel stability and stresses, they will request agreement for the Orient Brilliance to sail to Callao, some 240 miles north, which offers better water conditions for water repairs. At Callao, it is the intention to complete repairs prior to the vessel continuing on passage to its discharge port in China.

PACIFIC HOPE (Panama)

Buenos Aires, Sep 2 -- Bulk Pacific Hope (22147 gt, built 1991), San Lorenzo for Rosario loaded with soya pellets, grounded at Km 454, River Parana, at 0240, Sep 2. The vessel is not reported to be obstructing navigation in the channel. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Buenos Aires, Sep 6 -- Bulk Pacific Hope was refloated at 2240, local time, Sep 3, assisted by tug Alianza Rosario. -- Lloyd's Agents.

PACIFIC SKY (U.K.)

Wellington, Sep 5 -- Passenger Pacific Sky (46087 gt, built 1984) experienced mechanical breakdown and drifted aground onto a reef off the Isle of Pines, New Caledonia, over the weekend (Sep 3-4). Two tugs were being sent from Noumea to refloat the vessel and divers were to inspect for damage. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 5 -- Following received from Australia RCC, timed 2340, UTC, Sep 4: Passenger Pacific Sky grounded in lat 22 40S, long 167 25.4E. It was refloated by tugs at 2115, UTC, Sep 4 and an inspection of the hull by divers revealed no apparent damage.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Passenger Pacific Sky, with more than 1,700 people on board, ran onto a reef in the south of New Caledonia over the weekend. Maritime authorities in Noumea said the vessel experienced engine problems and drifted onto the reef of Bayonnaise near the isle of Pines. Police divers checked the vessel and found it to be undamaged. The incident occurred in calm conditions and all persons on board are safe.

Sydney, Sep 5 -- Passenger Pacific Sky has been refloated after running onto a reef in the south of New Caledonia. According to maritime authorities in Noumea, the vessel experienced engine problems and drifted onto sand at Bayonnaise, near the Isle of Pines, at 1330, local time, yesterday. P&O Cruises Australia said the vessel was refloated around 0700, Sydney time, today. Company spokesman John Richardson said the vessel was at the Isle of Pines anchorage where a Lloyd's Register surveyor would inspect it today. All passenger services were available and a tender service to the island enabled

passengers to enjoy the facilities ashore today, he said. The vessel and passengers have, at all times, been safe. The Pacific Sky departed Brisbane on Thursday (Sep 1) on a nine-night South Pacific cruise with 1,289 passengers and 615 crew on board. Mr Richardson said the vessel's schedule would have to be revised as a result of the incident. It was due at Mystery Island today but, subject to the surveyor's report, was likely to sail there from the Isle of Pines and then on to Port Vila, missing a call at Wala. -- "Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News."

Noumea, Sep 5 -- Passenger Pacific Sky grounded near Ilot Bayonnaise Bayonnaise, near Isle of Pine, at 1430, local time, Sep 4. The 1,163 passengers and 601 crew members were not injured and no breach was found in the vessel's bottom hull. The vessel was refloated by two tugs at 0800 this morning, and is expected to arrive at Noumea at about 1600 hrs. The cost of the salvage is expected to be around US\$150,000. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Wellington, Sep 5 -- Passenger Pacific Sky has been refloated after running onto a reef in the south of New Caledonia. According to maritime authorities in Noumea, the vessel experienced engine problems and drifted onto sand at Bayonnaise, near the Isle of Pines, at 1330 yesterday. P&O Cruises Australia said the vessel was refloated at around 0700, Sydney time, this morning. Company spokesman John Richardson said the vessel was at the Isle of Pines anchorage where a Lloyd's Register surveyor would inspect it today. All passenger services were available and a tender service to the island enabled passengers to enjoy the facilities ashore today, he said. The vessel and passengers have, at all times, been safe. Pacific Sky departed Brisbane on Thursday (Sep 1) on a nine-night South Pacific cruise with 1,289 passengers and 615 crew on board. Mr Richardson said the vessel's schedule would have to be revised as a result of the incident. It was due at Mystery Island today, but subject to the surveyor's report, the vessel was likely to sail there from the Isle of Pines and then onto Port Vila, missing a call into Wala. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sept 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Passenger Pacific Sky, which ran onto a reef in New Caledonia at the weekend, has been pulled free by two tugs and led to an anchorage, marine authorities said. According to an initial inspection by approved New Caledonian divers Veritas, the ship had not sustained any damage from yesterday's accident apart from a block of coral wedged in a propeller shaft. An Australian team from Lloyd's Register arrived this evening on site for a thorough inspection. Subject to approval by the maritime authorities, the ship was expected to continue its cruise toward Vanuatu tonight, monitored by the experts remaining on board.

London, Sept 7 -- Passenger Pacific Sky was sea bound Brisbane at 1741, UTC, today.

PARKGRACHT (Netherlands)

Massluis, Sep 6 -- General cargo Parkgracht (5998 gt, built 1986) struck Quay 1221 at the Vrasendock, Antwerp, at 1030 today and is making water. At present, the situation is stable and a surveyor is en route to the vessel. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Maassluis, Sep 7 -- General cargo Parkgracht remains in port at Antwerp. Crew are investigating causing of leak. Understand ballast tanks unable to cope with water ingress. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

PHILADELPHIA (U.S.A.)

See Yasa Aysen.

POLARBORG II (Uruguay)

Buenos Aires, Sep 6 -- Trawler Polarborg II is currently at San Antonio Este. -- Lloyd's Agents.

POLYHRONIS (Malta)

Ymuiden, Sep 5 -- Wijsmuller Salvage rendered services under Lloyd's Open Form to bulk Polyhronis (23386 gt, built 1980) aground on the banks of the Mississippi, west of New Orleans, Sep 2. Salvage staff from the Netherlands and United States have been tasked. -- Wijsmuller Salvage BV. (Note -- Polyhronis arrived Ama Anchorage Aug 21.)

QUEEN OF CAPILANO (Canada)

See Queen of Cowichan.

QUEEN OF COWICHAN (Canada)

London, Sep 2 -- A report from LaSalle, PQ, dated Sep 1, states: As BC Ferries break down almost every day, the ferry workers' union is demanding that the company face some scrutiny. Two more vessels broke down yesterday -- ro/ro Queen of New Westminster, on the Tsawwassen-Nanaimo run, and ro/ro Queen of Capilano (2855 gt, built 1991), on the Horseshoe Bay-Bowen Island route. They were just the latest in a series of mechanical problems that have hobbled the ferry fleet all summer. On Monday (Aug 28), ro/ro Queen of Cowichan was removed from service until the second week of September on the Nanaimo-Horseshoe Bay route. Ferry spokeswoman Deborah Marshall said that vessel was having a problem with its main gear. Now ferry workers union president Jackie Miller wants Premier Gordon Campbell to order the Auditor-General to look into how BC Ferry Services spends the \$130-million taxpayer subsidy it gets each year. "A wholly unrealistic mandate to compete against itself with an aging fleet, aging work force and ailing infrastructure make a public accounting of the Coastal Ferry Act a necessity," Mr Miller said at a news conference yesterday. The union says the Campbell government removed such oversight when it turned the Crown corporation into a private company. Mr Miller said the union is not trying to reverse the privatization,

but just wants some accountability. Captain Brian Hart, the head of the ships' officers' arm of the union, said with the unprecedented breakdowns this summer, the company has barely "limped through." This week, president David Hahn acknowledged the company has had a "brutal" summer for breakdowns, as two ferries were fixed on Monday and another was pulled out for repairs. Mr. Hahn said the company has no spare vessels at all at a time of year when passenger and vehicle traffic are at their highest. He said vessels have to "run flat out without even a day off." This summer has been troublesome for the ferry corporation fleet, which relies on some vessels that are more than 40 years old. However, company vice-president Mike Corrigan said yesterday that on-time performance is up and customer satisfaction levels are rising. "We're doing what we can to eliminate breakdowns and making the customers' travel experience as good as possible," he said. "I don't believe we're losing customers' confidence but they have every right to be concerned."

QUEEN OF NEW WESTMINSTER (Canada)

See Queen of Cowichan.

QUEEN OF OAK BAY (Canada)

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: BC Ferries says that due to mechanical problems, ro/ro Queen of Oak Bay (6969 gt, built 1981) is out of service this morning. The Queen of Oak Bay is on the Horseshoe Bay to Departure Bay route and the first sailings this morning had to be cancelled. Spokesperson Deborah Marshall said the problem is with an emergency generator and crews are working to fix it as soon as possible.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: The damage and repair bill so far resulting from the ro/ro Queen of Oak Bay running aground at Horseshoe Bay on Jun 30 amount to \$3 million. A cotterpin, a hardware item that sells for less than a dollar, fell out and disabled a speed governor, knocking out the ferry's engines. The \$3-million number is tucked away in management's discussion and analysis of the latest quarterly financial report from B.C. Ferry Services Inc., now filed with financial regulators. The report said "a significant portion is expected to be recovered from third parties, including insurers." Damage to the ferry itself was minor. Part of the bill covers \$136,000 worth of gift certificates for the 544 people who were on Queen of Oak Bay during the crash and could not get off for hours. Each received a \$250 credit to spend on ferry fares or in the gift shops, said spokeswoman Deborah Marshall. The figure also includes settling with owners of 28 boats damaged or destroyed when Queen of Oak Bay ran into their marina beside the Horseshoe Bay terminal. That dollar figure is not specified. Marshall said claims for just three boats are outstanding. The ferry corporation is still in discussions with

owners or their insurance companies, over differences of opinion as to the value of the boats.

QUICKCAT (New Zealand)

Wellington, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: The death of a woman after a collision between ferry Quickcat and fishing Doctor Hook was due to the failure of both masters to keep a proper lookout, the Transport Accident Investigation Commission has found. The finding came in a report released today into the Jan 4 collision that killed Gisborne woman Moira Newman, 74. She was a passenger on the Doctor Hook, which was struck by the Quickcat, sailing from Waiheke Island to Auckland, and she died three weeks later. None of the 377 passengers or eight crew on the Quickcat was hurt. The commission found that the master of the Quickcat, Wayne Williams, did not have an additional look-out although visibility from the bridge was restricted by a cargo crane. Immediately before the collision, the owner and skipper of the Doctor Hook, Bruce Newbury, was on a cellphone and examining fishing gear, and failed to respond to warnings from his passengers, the report said. Williams has pleaded guilty to two charges under the Maritime Transport Act of operating a vehicle in a manner causing unnecessary danger or risk to other persons and operating a vehicle in a manner causing unnecessary risk to property, and will be sentenced in Auckland District Court on Sep 16. Newbury has denied the same charges and three others and a depositions hearing is scheduled for Dec 5 and 6. The additional charges include failure to keep a proper lookout. The report found Williams did not see the Doctor Hook until it was too late but did put the engines into neutral and turned to port, which may have reduced the impact. Newbury did not initially respond when his passengers asked if he had seen the ferry until one shouted at him and grabbed his arm. He then tried to turn to port. The report found he may have been suffering from fatigue, having worked two 15-hour days immediately before the day of the accident. The commission said Fullers had ordered a new crane to improve visibility and made it standard procedure to have at least two crew on the bridge at all times. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: The lack of a ferry lane in a channel in the Hauraki Gulf is believed to have contributed to the fatal collision between ferry Quickcat and fishing Doctor Hook earlier this year. The Transport Accident Investigation Commission has found neither crew was keeping an efficient look-out. Investigator in Charge Captain Ian Hill says there was also no segregation of the different users in the channel. He says that meant there were a lot of vessels on a relatively small patch of water, with different priorities. Auckland's harbour-master has since established a ferry lane in the channel.

RENA MARIE (U.S.A.)

London, Sept 2 -- A press report, dated Sept 1, states: The air near the Swinomish Channel dock (Washington) still reeked of diesel fuel yesterday afternoon as dive crews and pollution control workers tried to contain fluids escaping from sunken fishing Rena Marie (141 gt, built 1984). But even as spill control work continued, many wondered who will foot the bill for the clean-up effort and when, if ever, the boat will be removed. Rena Marie began sinking late Tuesday night. By yesterday, the purse seiner rested unevenly on the bottom of the Swinomish Channel next to the dock to which it had been tethered. Much of the diesel fuel that had escaped the wreck had been corralled within booms encircling Rena Marie. A diver from Global Diving and Salvage occasionally surfaced inside the ring yesterday afternoon between trips down to inspect the boat and attempt to plug leaking fuel tanks. Although the boat had been mostly submerged for more than 12 hours, fuel and other oils continued to leak out of it unabated. Workers were able to pump out the vessel's fuel tanks by yesterday evening, removing more than 500 gallons of diesel, said Dick Walker, a spill response supervisor for the state Department of Ecology. Unfortunately for those hoping to see the vessel salvaged, the superstructure collapsed shortly after the tanks were drained, Walker said. "The boat is just a total wreck," he said. "Essentially the boat is falling apart at this point." The difficult work of containing the spill was costly, as would be a salvage operation to raise the boat, said Petty Officer Danielle Gohdes of the U.S. Coast Guard, the federal on-scene coordinator. Gohdes said it was not yet clear how much diesel fuel and other oils had escaped from the sunken boat. About 150 gallons had been mopped up by yesterday afternoon with oil-absorbing pads, and an unknown amount of fuel had escaped from the wreck before the ring of booms had been put in place. It hasn't been determined how much the clean-up will cost, or how it will be paid for, Gohdes said. Gohdes said the owner would be billed for the time of the federal workers and contractors, and for materials used to clean up the spills. "They're all financially liable if there are damages to the environment," she said. But if the owner can't pay the bill, the clean-up costs are paid through a federal trust fund dedicated to spill clean-up. The boat's owner, Les Kneeland, has met several times with government officials responding to the sinking. Officials involved in the clean-up said it's less clear how a salvage operation would be financed, if one occurs. Walker estimated that the cost of salvaging Rena Marie could run into six figures, in part because the superstructure of the boat has collapsed. Any threats to divers would have to be removed by crane before underwater work could begin. A state

fund exists that could reimburse La Conner or Skagit County if either local government paid for the salvage operation. But that could put the governments at risk of losing the money, said Tom Sheahan, director of the Skagit County Department of Emergency Management. Walker said workers with NRC Environmental Services will likely finish their work at Rena Marie later this week.

RIO SOLIS (Uruguay)

Montevideo, Sept 1 -- Understand "there was no fire on trawler Rio Solis, only some wire emitting smoke as a consequence of stormy weather suffered in the area on Aug 23." Class surveyor has already surveyed the vessel and it sailed today for high seas. -- Lloyd's Agents.

RODANTHI (Greece)

London, Sep 3 -- Passenger ro/ro Rodanthi arrived Samos Aug 15 and sailed the same day.

ROSTOK (Russia)

London, Sep 8 -- A Multiraship Towage & Salvage press release, dated Aug 30, states: The heavy floodings in Romania have affected the work of the salvors of general cargo Rostok in the Sulina Channel. All diving operations on the last wreckpiece to be removed (comprising holds 1&2) had to be suspended. The unusual high water level, strong currents and floating debris in the river (such as large trees and logs floating on as well as under water) make it unsafe to carry out underwater works. The high water with strong currents also carries a substantially increased amount of sediments which will settle inside and around the wreck. This will further complicate the already very difficult wreck removal due to the unexpected mud levels and consistency combined with obstructing debris and rigging-materials that were left on the wreck after previous salvage attempts. The salvors intend to resume the diving operations as soon as conditions improve and will deploy all their expertise to continue preparations for lifting the final wreck piece and successfully deliver this to the dumpsite.

SAGA MASCOT (Bahamas)

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Emergency clean-up crews were summoned to three Rio de Janeiro state beaches yesterday after about 2,000 litres of oil spilled from a vessel, authorities said. More than 50 truckloads of oil-contaminated sand had already been removed from the Boa Viagem, Flechas and Icarai beaches in Niteroi, a city facing Rio de Janeiro across the Guanabara Bay, Rio de Janeiro state's environmental agency, or Feema, said. The spill was under control, but the clean-up effort was not expected to end until today. About 80 people were working on the beaches. The oil leaked from a Bahamas-flagged vessel that suffered a small rupture on its hull in a minor accident on Saturday (Sep 3) as it

approached a shipyard. Niteroi city officials said the shipowners would probably be fined for the spill, local media reported. Feema officials were still checking if the spill had also reached sensitive mangrove swamps in Guanabara Bay.

Rio de Janeiro, Sep 5 -- At approximately 0100 hrs, Sep 3, there was a spillage of around 2,000 litres of fuel oil from general cargo Saga Mascot (30931 gt, built 1977), during berthing procedures at Enavi/Renave repairyard. This affected the beaches of Guanabara Bay. Clean-up operations are in progress. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 5 -- Following statement issued by SMT Shipmanagement Ltd., of Limassol, Cyprus, managers of general cargo Saga Mascot, dated today: Saga Mascot came into contact with the dock at the Enavi/Renave Shipyard on Sep 2, resulting in the puncture of a bunker tank and spill of fuel oil. The incident happened at midnight on Friday, as the Saga Mascot was entering the ship repair yard for scheduled maintenance. At the time, the ship had a local pilot on board and was being assisted by four tugs. It is not clear, however, how the vessel came to strike the dock, nor how the bunker fuel tank was punctured. SMT Shipmanagement is working closely with the shipyard and local authorities to establish the cause of this unfortunate incident. Senior representatives of SMT Shipmanagement said that they were treating this incident with the utmost seriousness and that their focus was on supporting the efforts of the Ship Repair yard and the local authorities in doing everything possible to clean up any oil that may have been washed up on the beaches. A large workforce has been contracted by Enavi/Renave Shipyard to undertake the clean up operation of the affected areas. It is hoped that this work will be completed by tomorrow or Wednesday (Sep 7) of this week.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated Sep 5, states: Clean-up crews worked today to contain an oil spill that fouled the white beaches of Niteroi, Rio's sister city just across Guanabara Bay. The spill occurred on Saturday night (Sep 3), when general cargo Saga Mascot cracked its hull in a minor accident as it approached a shipyard and leaked 530 gallons of oil into the bay. Jefferson Martins, the environmental secretary for the city of Niteroi, told reporters he believed the spill was larger than reported and had started leaking earlier. Rio de Janeiro state environmental officials denied it. More than 50 truckloads of oil-contaminated sand were yesterday removed from the upscale beaches of Boa Viagem, Flechas and Icarai beaches in Niteroi. Rio's beaches were not affected, but crews set up floating barriers in the bay in an effort to keep the oil slick from spreading. Federal police said they planned to charge those responsible for the leak with environmental crimes, punishable by up to four years in prison. In

statements to police, the vessel's master and shipyard officials blamed each other for the leak, police said.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: At least 2,600 gallons of oil spilled into Guanabara Bay from general cargo Saga Mascot, which contacted a pier during docking manoeuvres on Saturday (Sep 3). Authorities first thought the oil spill was one-quarter of that size but, after inspecting the extent of the spill, they revised their estimate upwards. The bay borders two cities -- on its southwest shore is the city of Rio de Janeiro and on its south-east shore lies the city of Niteroi. The oil spilled by the Saga Mascote has come ashore on Niteroi beaches and authorities have halted fishing in the bay. In a preliminary report, technicians with the State Environmental Engineering Foundation (Feema) said that eight beaches along the Niteroi shoreline were affected by the oil. Most heavily hit was Icarai beach in Niteroi, where hotels line the shore and watersports like kitesurfing draw visitors from around the world. The white sand was thick with greasy oil that spread for several meters above the waterline, filling the air with the smell of petroleum. The vessel contacted a pier at the Enavi-Renave shipyard, on Conceicao Island, in Niteroi. The fuel tank was perforated in two places. Absorbent booms were placed around the spill and the shipyard transferred part of the fuel on board the Saga Mascote to another tank, preventing greater damage. The Z-8 Fishermen's Colony in Niteroi estimates that at least 3,000 fishermen were harmed by the oil that spilled into Guanabara Bay. Fishing has been prohibited in the area and a survey is under way to determine how many of the 12,000 fishermen associated with the colony work in the area affected by the accident. The secretary of the Z-8 Fishermen's Colony, Jose Pulgas, said that they were only awaiting the Feema and Federal Police reports on the accident in order to start negotiating compensation payments with the shipowners or their Brazilian representatives. "We want to discover who is responsible for the vessel and try to work out a settlement. This will be the first approach, before taking the case to court, since the indemnifications for these kinds of accidents never reach the fishermen," Pulgas said.

SEA ELEGANCE (Vanuatu)

Kolkata, Sep 6 -- Bulk Sea Elegance sailed Haldia at 0030, Sep 5. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SEA SONS II (Canada)

London, Sep 6 -- At 0805, UTC, today, fishing Sea Sons II (93 gt, built 1984) was reported in lat 49 07.36N, long 51 28.38W, taking on water and the ingress was gaining on the pumps.

London, Sep 6 -- Following received from Halifax RCC, timed 1810, UTC: Fishing Sea Sons II is reported to be proceeding to Harbour Grace, under

escort of fishing Silver Foam, ETA 0100, UTC, Sep 7.

SEA STAR (Singapore)

London, Sep 8 -- Chemical/oil carrier Sea Star arrived Onsan Sep 2 and sailed Sep 4.

SEABOURN PRIDE (Bahamas)

See "Republic Of Ireland" under "Port State Control."

SHARK (Lebanon)

Beirut, Sep 6 -- General cargo Shark is still lying sunk at Beirut. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SUPER SHUTTLE FERRY 9 (Philippines)

Manila, Sep 7 -- Owners of ferry Super Shuttle Ferry 9 advise that the vessel is still lying half-sunk in the original position and that no salvage/refloating operations have been carried out to date. -- Lloyd's Agents.

VESTKAPP (Norway)

Trondheim, Sep 5 -- Scrapping of fishing Vestkapp was completed on Aug 25. -- Lloyd's Agents.

VLIBORG (Netherlands)

London, Sept 2 -- General cargo Vliborg sailed Duluth 2141, Aug 26.

VOC GALLANT (Antigua & Barbuda)

Dubai, Sep 4 -- Bulk VOC Gallant arrived Dubai Sep 1, and is awaiting to discharge its cargo at Port Rashid. The vessel will then proceed to Dubai Dry Dock for repairs. -- Lloyd's Agents.

WAREMBUNGAN (Indonesia)

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Product tanker Warembungan, operated by the state-owned Pertamina oil company in Aceh province, caught fire yesterday following an explosion in its engine-room, a company official said. The vessel's master was injured in the accident at the Ujung Blang seaport in North Aceh's capital of Lhokseumawe, company spokesman Adyatma Sarjito said. "The vessel was unloading gasoline at Lhokseumawe Port when an explosion from the engine-room was heard by its master," he said. "The master has been injured and has been taken to a local hospital." Smoke was still billowing from the vessel's engine-room but authorities said the vessel was in no danger of sinking. Mr Sarjito said the explosion appeared to be an accident.

YAMAL (Russia)

London, Sep 3 -- General cargo Yamal sailed Newport Sep 1.

YASA AYSEN (Turkey)

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: A US Navy submarine Philadelphia collided with bulk Yasa Aysen (30303 gt, built 2000) in the Persian Gulf early today, the US Navy reported. No one was hurt on either vessel. Philadelphia was

travelling on the surface when it hit Yasa Aysen at around 0200, local time, the US Navy 5th Fleet Headquarters in Bahrain reported in a statement. No sailors or merchant seamen were injured, the Navy said. Philadelphia was conducting surface operations on its way to Bahrain for a scheduled port visit, the Navy said. The submarine continued to Bahrain where inspectors will check it for damage. There were no immediate reports of damage to the Turkish ship. The Navy statement did not say exactly where the collision took place. Philadelphia is part of a fleet of US and allied navy vessels patrolling the Gulf, conducting what are called "maritime security operations" against weapons and drug smuggling.

London, Sept 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: "There is no serious damage to bulk Yasa Aysen and none of the crew members including the master were injured," said Mehmet Kayhan, the owner of the ship which was in collision with an U.S. submarine in the Persian Gulf early today. Yasa Aysen was sailing from Bahrain to United Arab Emirates to "load pebbles" when it collided with U.S. navy submarine Philadelphia, at around 0215 today in the Gulf. Kayhan said, "The ship returned to Bahrain for a check in a shipyard."

London, Sept 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: U.S. nuclear submarine Philadelphia collided with bulk Yasa Aysen in the Persian Gulf before dawn today, and spokesmen for both vessels said nobody was injured and damage was minor. Philadelphia was travelling on the surface of the Gulf when it was in collision with Yasa Aysen at about 0200 today, said a statement from the 5th Fleet Headquarters in Bahrain. Hours later, the vessels docked in Bahrain for a detailed assessment of the damage and repairs. The collision happened about 30 miles northeast of Bahrain, said the spokesman for the U.S. Navy 5th Fleet, Cmdr. Jeffrey Breslau. Philadelphia was conducting surface operations on its way to Bahrain for a scheduled visit, the Navy said. The submarine's nuclear-powered propulsion plant was not damaged in the crash, the Navy said. Breslau described the damage to the submarine as "superficial." Breslau said the Turkish ship sustained minor damage to its hull just above the waterline. It weighed anchor afterward and a U.S. Coast Guard vessel inspected the ship and found it to be seaworthy. When Yasa Aysen arrived in Bahrain, it berthed near the dry dock and was scheduled for repairs, three officials in the island state's harbour said. In Turkey, the general director of Yasa Aysen's owners, Ya-Sa Shipping, was quoted by the semi-official Anatolia News Agency as saying the firm had asked its lawyers in London to report on who was at fault and pursue damages accordingly. The general director, Mehmet Kayhan, confirmed that nobody on Yasa Aysen was hurt and that damage was minor. The ship,

with a crew of 20, had been carrying a cargo of small stones to the United Arab Emirates when the collision occurred, the news agency reported.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Bulk Yasa Aysen was in collision with US nuclear submarine Philadelphia in the Persian Gulf yesterday morning. The submarine and the ship are reported to have been slightly damaged in the accident in which there were no casualties. The accident that occurred in Bahrain's open sea is thought to have been caused by the failure of the Turkish ship's sonar's to locate the submarine. The submarine that hit the Turkish ship from port side caused some damage to 35 metres of the 190-metre ship. The estimated cost of the damage to the ship is about \$300,000. The accident reportedly occurred three hours after the ship departed from Asry shipyard in Bahrain. It is stated that the accident was caused by the sonar's failure to see the submarine. Authorities point out that the kind of dye called "kriyt" which is used on military ships makes it hard or totally prevents these ships' being noticed by sonar in commercial ships. Turkish Undersecretary for Maritime Affairs General Director for Maritime Transport Ali Kurumahmut, in a statement he made following the collision, said that no casualties were reported and that they received information that the ship entered Bahrain's Asry Shipyard for repair.

YINHE 2 (China)

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Passenger Yinhe 2, a luxurious vessel of a Chongqing company, struck a rock in the Yangtze River in Changshou District, Chongqing, on its voyage from Yichang, Hubei Province to Chongqing at about 0100, yesterday morning. The river was heavily fogged when the accident happened. One hundred and sixty people had been all kept in the vessel until at about 0300 when they were helped out ashore. There were 98 passengers on the vessel, including three Chinese, two English and 93 Germans. All the 98 passengers were sent immediately to the city centre of Chongqing. A rescue plan is being made for the wrecked vessel in the river.

London, Sept 5 -- A press report, dated Sept 3, states: Investigators are still trying to determine how 76-metre cruise passenger Galaxy II (also reported as Yinhe 2) travelling in the Yangtze River on Thursday (Sept 1) ran aground near Chongqing. Salvage workers attempted yesterday to secure Galaxy II., a five-floor vessel originally with 163 passengers and crewmembers on board, and stop it moving into the middle of the river. Zhou Hongwu, an on-scene co-ordinator from a salvage company in Southwest China's Chongqing Municipality, said the ship might have veered away from the charted route due to improper operation. No casualties or injuries were reported, as the ship, now slightly listing, rests in

its bow with its bulk bending downward. In the early hours on Thursday, the ship, sailing from Yichang in foggy conditions, suddenly deviated from its cruise route and struck underlying rocks. "Its bulk was pierced and the passenger compartment was flooded in minutes, causing a thorough blackout and engine failure," Zhou said yesterday in a telephone interview. About 90 passengers, mostly from Germany, were evacuated in ships responding to the scene after Galaxy II sent signals for help. "Now the ship is almost scrapped," Zhou said. He also said the rocks are now visible as the water has receded by about two metres. As the ship was stranded quite near the bank, river traffic has not been affected. "We are trying to secure the vessel and prevent it from moving to the centre of the river," another on-scene co-ordinator Li Shengjiang said. He said that the Yangtze River is still in the flooding season and the vessel might drift inward as the river rises. He also said they will only pull the vessel out of water in October. Personnel from the vessel's company said yesterday that the tourists, organized by different travel agencies, had already left Chongqing to continue their sight-seeing in other cities.

ZIEMIA GORNOSLASKA (Liberia)

London, Sep 7 -- Bulk Ziemia Gornoslaska arrived at Valleyfield previous to Sep 5 and on Sep 6, was reported still at Valleyfield effecting repairs to the rudder. Bulk Iryda (into which cargo was transferred) was reported arriving at Cleveland on/about Sep 6, where cargo was being unloaded.

ZIEMIA LODZKA (Liberia)

Detroit, Sep 1 -- North American Marine were assigned to perform hull inspection on bulk Ziemia Lodzka on behalf of Hull underwriters. Vessel was in Cleveland at the port on Aug 26, discharging from hold number one and Saturday morning (Aug 27) Cleveland Ship Repair began repairing the hull. Vessel continued discharging during repairs on Monday. Repairs were finished this morning and vessel will be sailing this afternoon. Repairs were made to Frame 194 through Frame 202.5. Shell plating was set in 0 to 10 mm due to lock damage. Frames were severely buckled and repaired according to class. -- Lloyd's Agents.



SOMALIA

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated Sep 4, states: Dozens of Asian fisherman and their three vessels (fishing Cheng Ching Feng, fishing Chung Yi 218 and fishing Hsin Lien Feng 36) are being held hostage in

Somalia by pirates who have demanded a \$1.5 million ransom, officials said. The Taiwanese Foreign Affairs Ministry has said that the Somali gunmen threatened on Friday (Sep 2) to start killing one hostage a day if the ransom was not paid within 48 hours. The hostages include three Taiwanese captains as well as 45 crew members from Indonesia, China, the Philippines and Vietnam. Gunmen have been holding the fishermen and their vessels near the southern Somali port of Kismayo since Aug 15. They have demanded \$500,000 for each of the vessels and their crews, Taiwan's Foreign Affairs Ministry said. "Human right groups and civil society organisations are still engaged in negotiations with the hijackers to ensure the release of the hostages unharmed, by all means," Ali Bahsi, chairman of the Fanole Human Rights Centre, a rights group in the Lower Juba region where the fisherman are being held, said today. Bahsi said that he last talked to the kidnappers on Friday and they assured him then that the fishermen were safe. Taiwan has asked for international help in contacting the gunmen, and talked to the hostage-takers last week in an effort to negotiate a lower ransom.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Somali pirates holding 48 Asian fishermen and their three vessels hostage have sharply reduced their ransom demand during government-brokered negotiations, a Somali human rights activist said today. The gunmen originally demanded \$500,000 for each boat and its crew, but later cut the demand to \$50,000 per vessel during talks with the Malaysian agent for the Taiwanese trawlers, said Ali Bashi, chairman of the Fanole Human Rights Centre. Somali Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullahi Sheik Ishmail acknowledged that negotiating ransom could damage the country's already poor international image, but said officials had to act to ensure the safety of foreign hostages.

Port State Control



REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: The International Transport Federation has called for an investigation into why inspectors in Britain allowed passenger Seabourn Pride (9975 gt, built 1988) to sail from Falmouth to Ireland after defects had been identified. Department of the Marine inspectors in Waterford detained the ship because of the defects. The Irish representative of the ITF, Tony Ayton, said it seemed Britain's Maritime and Coastguard Agency had passed the problem on to the Irish authorities rather than deal with it and this was not acceptable where the safety of passengers and

crew was concerned. Seabourn Pride arrived in Waterford, where it was inspected by Irish Department of the Marine officials. They were not satisfied and ordered the detention of the ship. No statement was issued about the actual defects, but information is that they are centred on insulation in the engine-room. There are about 170 passengers on board the ship. Authorities there were informed by the Irish marine officials of the detention and the ship's owners were also notified. The Irish Department of the Marine said it would detain the ship until the defects are remedied to its satisfaction. The ITF said it was writing formally to the MCA seeking an investigation about the way in which the matter had been handled at Falmouth.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 7 -- A Maritime & Coastguard Agency press release, dated today, states: The Maritime & Coastguard Agency announced today that they had detained chemical/oil carrier Oil Ambassador (12758 gt, built 1981) on Aug 31 at its berth at Purfleet, Port of London. The attending Inspector found the following detainable items: Radio equipment defective; cleanliness of engine room and galley very poor; fire doors inoperative. A further inspection on Sep 2 revealed serious deficiencies in the on-board Safety Management System and the vessel was further detained for: Crew not able to operate planned maintenance system; not able to conduct satisfactory emergency drill; planned maintenance system not functioning. Other deficiencies to be rectified prior to departure were: Cockroach infestation; cold room over temperature and dirty; rotten provisions; no hot water available in the galley and accommodation, and widespread deck corrosion.

Seizures & Arrests



ARDEAL (Romania)

Khulna, Sep 4 -- Understand general cargo Ardeal has been sold by order of the High Court Division of the supreme court of Bangladesh, to Six Star Corporation, Chittagong. The vessel was towed from Mongla to Chittagong on Sep 1. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

DANAPRIS 6 (Ukraine)

Naples, Sep 5 -- General cargo Danapris 6 (2360 gt, built 1988), which arrived at Naples on Aug 29, is currently at Naples Roads, under arrest. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ESPERANZA (South Korea)

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Fishing Esperanza

(499 gt, built 1972) was fined £65,000 by the Falkland Islands government, yesterday, on three charges, two on false reporting and one on catching unauthorized species. Kim Myeong, master of the vessel was also fined £2,500 plus legal costs of £500. On Aug 26 the Falklands Fisheries Protection patrol vessel Sigma sighted four vessels operating suspiciously in the Islands EEZ including Esperanza which was licenced to catch skate with a 10% by catch allowance. However when a Fisheries Department officer boarded the trawler the catch was found to be in excess of the 10% limit and a hold inspection discovered amongst the skate seven tons of Loligo squid which had not been declared in the catch report. The value of the excess catch was estimated in £27,000. When questioned the master alleged there must have been mistaken calculations by the crew. The vessel was then escorted to Stanley to face formal charges in court. Richard Marlol acting in defence argued that the offences were committed inadvertently by an inexperienced crew and that this was the first time that charges had been brought against the master and the Dong Yang Fisheries Company, both in the Falklands and in the rest of the world where vessels from the company operate. The defence admitted that "significant mistakes had been committed" but that there had been no deliberate attempt to conceal the excessive by catch, adding that the company had suffered losses of £90,000 due to the vessel being idle. Mr. Marlol emphasized that the maximum fine for all three charges should be reserved for the worst offenders who deliberately conceal. Senior Magistrate Claire Faulds noted that Mr Myeong and the Dong Yang Fisheries Company had given full co-operation and had pleaded guilty at the earliest possible time. A fine of £65,000 was given to the Dong Yang Fisheries Company which included legal costs and the value of the by catch. It was also stated that the vessel would not be discharged until all fines were paid. Korean companies are among the leading purchasers of Falklands fishing licences and contrary to vessels from other flags, Korean trawlers and jiggers normally co-operate with Fisheries officials. (FIRS/MP).

EUGENIA P. (Honduras)

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated Sep 4, states: Indian authorities in Kolkata detained general cargo Eugenia P., carrying arms, ammunition and a large amount of explosive headed for Indonesia. The operation was carried out following a request from local customs department. "The customs authorities have sought time to check on details concerning the delivery of the consignment before allowing the Eugenia to leave the berthing dock," said Anup Kumar Chand, Chairman of Kolkata Port Trust. The matter was referred to the customs

authorities in New Delhi to seek confirmation regarding delivery of consignment from Indonesia. The vessel registered in Honduras arrived at the Kidderpore docks last week and was to have set sail Friday (Sep 2). It was carrying arms, ammunition and 20 tons of explosive. "It's a huge consignment and a serious matter. Unless Indonesian authorities conform us that this consignment is meant for them, we cannot allow the vessel to leave the docks," said Chand. He said the vessel was still unloading iron pipes brought from Romania and it may take a couple more days to complete this operation.

JUPITER ACE (Vietnam)

London, Sep 7 -- General cargo Jupiter Ace (5470 gt, built 1991), which arrived at Hong Kong at 0629 hrs, Sep 6, was today reported at Pun Shan Shek Anchorage, Hong Kong, under arrest.

London, Sep 8 -- General cargo Jupiter Ace sailed from Hong Kong at 1140 hrs, today.

LAMA (Belize)

Beirut, Sep 6 -- General cargo Lama is still lying sunk at Beirut. -- Lloyd's Agents.

MICRONESIAN NAVIGATOR (Marshall Islands)

Honolulu, Sep 1 -- C.c. Micronesian Navigator is still under arrest. The parties are in negotiations and it is hopeful it will be resolved so the vessel can sail early next week. -- Lloyd's Agents.

YAOKI (Panama)

London, Sep 8 -- Chemical/oil carrier Yaoki sailed Hong Kong Aug 31.



GHOR RIYANO AREA, PAKISTAN

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated Sep 4, states: An explosion was reported from the Ghor Riyano area in a 13-inch diameter gas pipeline, owned the Pakistan Petroleum Limited, disrupting the gas supply to some areas of Kashmore, Guddu city and Rahimyar Khan. Police said that high pressure was the cause of the explosion, but sources claimed that some explosive material had been planted which went off and damaged the pipeline. A bomb disposal squad from Sukkar arrived on scene and started investigations. Repair work on the pipeline has been started the sources said.

KALAKAMA, NIGERIA

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: Eleven persons are feared missing and aquatic life completely destroyed when a 28-inch

Liquefied Natural Gas underground pipeline exploded at Kalakama, an Ogoloma fishing community in Okrika Local Government Area of Rivers State. The incident, which occurred at the weekend, resulted in a wild inferno which engulfed an estimated 27 square kilometres of the once rich Kalakama mangrove, killing sea foods and cash crops. So huge, the impact of the explosion was felt on the Okrika Island and the Borikiri area of Port Harcourt where, residents were forced into "a stampede for safety". The problem started more than two months ago, when a minor gas leakage was noticed by inhabitants of the Kalakama fishing community, upon which a formal report was said to have been lodged with Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas Limited (NLNG) by His Royal Majesty, Chief Nemi Tamunoyalla-Oputibeya, Amanyanabo of Koniama. The leakage assumed a frightening dimension, last Monday (Aug 22), when a wild fire was first reported, before culminating in a major gas explosion. It took NLNG fire fighters, using hi-tech helicopter services, more than 48 hours to put out the fire, but not before shutting down the NLNG gas plant at Rumuoji substation. Rivers State Environment Commissioner, Dr. Roseline Konya, on a visit to the area, last Monday described the incident as a great disaster, and blamed it on bureaucratic delays by companies in treating life threatening complaints. Leader of the Okrika delegation and chairman of the Okrika Divisional Council of Chiefs, Chief Taribo Sekibo-Oduobaji blamed the incident on negligence on the part of NLNG. Chief Oduobaji, who was a Second Republic Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and chairman of the Senate Committee on Petroleum and Gas Matters, said it was unimaginable that a report involving gas leakage could be allowed to snowball into such huge disaster.

Pollution



NITEROI AREA, BRAZIL

See Saga Mascot under "Marine".

VENICE AREA, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 3 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: A huge oil spill was spotted near two storage tanks on the Mississippi River downstream from New Orleans, state officials said today. The oil was seen in a flyover of the Venice area by the Department of Environmental Quality. "Two tanks with the capacity of holding two million barrels appear to be leaking," the department said in a statement.

Weather & Navigation



BRAZIL

London, Sep 3 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: A powerful storm packing winds of up to 70 mph slammed into southern Brazil today, killing and least one person and injuring five others. Officials said the storm forced the closure of some airports in the south and caused sporadic power outages, according to media reports. An 81-year-old farmer died after being hit by a falling tree, while at least five people were treated for minor wounds from flying debris, the reports said. Fifteen-foot waves and heavy seas prompted civil defence workers to evacuate some homes and warn fishermen to remain ashore.

EL SALVADOR

San Salvador, Sep 6 -- At least six people died in El Salvador today when heavy rains caused a wall to collapse and triggered landslides, officials said. In Ciudad Delgado, north-east of the capital San Salvador, a 19-year-old woman, her one-year-old child and a 24-year-old man were buried in a landslide, national emergency agency Coen said. Two others may have died in Delgado, although that was not confirmed. Another person died in a mudslide in Mejicanos, north of the capital, while in San Marcos to the south, a mother and her young child were killed when a wall collapsed on top of them. El Salvador's ground is soaked and rivers swollen from weeks of intense rains, causing danger for neighbourhoods built on steep mountainsides and riverbanks. Officials rescued 45 families today, including six people injured in mudslides, on the edge of Ilopango Lake to the east of San Salvador. -- Reuters

HURRICANE "KATRINA"

London, Sep 1 -- Following navigation warning issued, timed 1231, UTC, Aug 31: The port of New Orleans is closed, along with all bridges, floodgates, and locks in the vicinity of the port. The ports of South Louisiana, St. Bernard, Port Plaquemines and Greater Baton Rouge are closed. The Gulf Intercoastal Waterway for the New Orleans and Morgan City zones are closed. There are numerous barges on levees on the Mississippi River and numerous derelict boats at Bayou la Batre. Several tankers are grounded on the Lower Mississippi River.

London, Sep 1 -- Captain Paskewich, COTP, Sector New Orleans, has opened the entire river to tug and barge traffic. USCG is very close to opening most of river to deep draft vessel Shifts within the river, and are working feverishly on getting soundings in the lower river to

determine draft and obstructions. He reports there are 80 to 100 barges on the bank around mm 55, and I have other reports some may have sunk, so they are concerned about draft in that area. They currently have three vessels aground, two at AMA anchorage and one in Algiers, not blocking traffic. Agents, continue to coordinate movements on a case by case basis until the COTP officially opens the river for inter-port movements. Captain Paskewich also reports that SW Pass Pilot station and Pilottown are in tact, with some possible damage, but appear operational. They will have a further report today. Per Captain Gibbs, President of Crescent Pilots. The Coast Guard has coordinated with the Bar and Crescent Pilots presidents to bring a Navy Vessel into the river with about 15 feet of draft. There is another Navy vessel drafting 35 feet that will be brought in when a Bar Pilot is available, and that should be a good test of the status of the channel depth to New Orleans. Captain Gibbs has received word from the Coast Guard, and MRMA has received word from sources, that barges have sunk in the vicinity of mm 55, and that is of concern for channel depth. Per Captain Watson, President of NOBRA Pilots, they are collecting current contact number of their pilots and have arranged pilots on a case by case basis with the Coast Guard to re-anchor or move about six vessels so far. Continue to work with the pilots and Coast Guard directly for individual moves of vessels within the upper river. Captain Watson believes that the river north of New Orleans appears to be navigable without obstructions in the channel, but they have not confirmed all areas yet.

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Lloyd's is likely to face a hit of around £1bn, net of reinsurance, from claims resulting from the devastating hurricane "Katrina," say market sources. Speculation on the potential insured cost is very much unofficial and preliminary, but centres on the Louisiana hurricane taking a 5%-8% slice out of the market's 2005 capacity of £13.7bn. Some experts say it will be six to nine months before a truly reliable picture of losses emerges. At Lloyd's, the hit is expected to fall six times more heavily on the shore-based classes than on offshore energy.

London, Sept 2 -- A Coast Guard St. Louis, press release, dated Sept 1, states: More than 2,580 people have been rescued off of rooftops and flooded neighbourhoods since rescue operations began Monday, and joint-agency rescue operations are continuing through the day and night. The Coast Guard's primary focus along the Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana coast will remain search and rescue as long as necessary. Coast Guard assets continue to arrive in the impacted areas. There are 25 cutters off the Gulf Coast, in the rivers, and in the ports and waterways. The Coast Guard cutters Pelican, Cypress and

Spencer are currently transiting the Mississippi River to New Orleans to establish a command and control presence and provide a flight deck, fuel and communications to the search and rescue assets in and around New Orleans. Thirty-five aircraft and hundreds of air crew personnel are in the area from Coast Guard air stations as far away as Barbers Point, Hawaii, and Cape Cod, Mass. Coast Guard C-130s are en route to Air Station New Orleans with additional fuel supplies. Coast Guard Auxiliary members have responded and are supporting the Coast Guard incident management team. The Coast Guard is contacting its Auxiliary divisions throughout the area to ask for help with post-hurricane recovery operations. Many other federal and local government assets are already in the area or being sent there, including FEMA urban search and rescue teams, incident management teams, disaster assistance and response teams, maritime safety and security teams, marine safety response teams, critical incident stress management teams. The Coast Guard anticipates significant waterways management and environmental clean-up operations. Most Gulf ports remain closed. However, joint-agency surveys of the ports, waterways and rivers are underway. There are approximately 86 vessels awaiting transit to or through the Port of New Orleans. The Gulf Intracoastal Waterway in Louisiana, Red River, Atchafalaya, and Ouachita Rivers has been opened in some areas. More than 100 barges have reportedly sunk, or are aground south of New Orleans, and the majority of buoys and other kinds of navigational markers are off station throughout the Gulf Coast. Ports of New Orleans, Gulfport, Pascagoula, and Destin/Panama City are closed. The ports of Pensacola and Mobile are open only to vessels with a 12-foot draught or less. The Intracoastal Waterway is open from the Mobile Ship Channel east to Apalachicola, Fla., and closed from the Mobile Ship Channel west to Pass Christian, Miss. The Mississippi River is closed to deep draught traffic and open to tug and barge traffic only from Sea Buoy to Mile Marker 507. Deep draught vessels may move within anchorages if they have pilots on board. All bridges, floodgates, and locks are closed in the vicinity of the Port of New Orleans. The Red River is open from Carr Point, La. to Alexandria, La. The Athchafalaya River is open from Eugene Island Sea Buoy to Krotz Springs. The Port Allen Route is open from Baton Rouge to the Port Allen Lock. The Ouachita/Black River is open from Jonesville to Shreveport. The railroad Bridge across Delcambre Canal is open. Vessels may transit Louisiana Highway in Delcambre.

London, Sept 2 -- A Shell press release, dated Sept 1, states: Comprehensive post-hurricane assessment and recovery operations continue at all Shell-operated Gulf of Mexico assets. Significant efforts are

ongoing to evaluate our hurricane-impacted assets, Mars, Cognac, and West Delta 143. Assessment and repair activities for two drilling rigs under contract to Shell, Transocean's Deepwater Nautilus and Noble Jim Thompson continue as planned. Today we are ramping up production at Auger, North Padre Island and Fairway (Mobile Bay). This systematic process can take several days before full production rates can be achieved. Recovery of production from other GoM assets not impacted by "Katrina" will resume as appropriate once final inspections of the facilities are completed and pipelines and other related downstream facilities that transport and receive our production to onshore locations have been systematically inspected and are operational. Shell is expanding its Robert Training Center facility in Robert, LA, about 45 miles northwest of New Orleans, to provide a temporary Operations Center to manage GoM production activities until such time as New Orleans offices can reopen. Activities include establishing communications and increasing space for offices and accommodations.

London, Sept 2 -- A press report, dated Sept 1, states: The Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP) has resumed pumping operations at its offshore oil port facilities in the Gulf of Mexico. The first tanker to visit the port since Saturday is being unloaded. The operation was initiated following the completion of a series of successful pressure tests on the LOOP and LOCAP crude oil pipelines. The start up was delayed after an emergency generator went down earlier today. However, once generator power was restored, tanker offloading began around began at 1700 hrs and LOCAP deliveries began at 1800 hrs. When commercial power is restored, LOOP and LOCAP will be capable of achieving maximum capacity. LOOP stopped offloading tankers Saturday, August 27, 2005, in anticipation of hurricane "Katrina".

London, Sept 2 -- An Apache Corporation, press release, dated Houston Sept 1, states: Apache Corp said it has reported to the U.S. Minerals Management Service and the U.S. Coast Guard that it lost eight of its production platforms in hurricane "Katrina". All personnel were safely evacuated from offshore facilities before the storm, and all Apache employees living in the storm's path have been accounted for, the company said. The platforms lost to the storm were: Main Pass 312-JA; South Timbalier 161-A; South Pass (SP) 62-A; SP 62-B; West Delta (WD) 103-A; WD 103-B; WD 104-C; and WD 133-B. Aggregate gross production from the eight lost platforms was 7,158 barrels of oil and 12.1 million cubic feet of gas per day before the storm. A detailed inspection of damage to other facilities is under way. Apache personnel have begun the process of restoring production as pipeline and processing facilities become available. Apache

carries insurance coverage for its facilities and has up to \$150 million of business interruption insurance to help defray the cost of an extended shut-in.

London, Sept 2 -- Information received, dated Sept 1, states: Initial port of New Orleans assessment following hurricane "Katrina": A tour of accessible facilities via land was made yesterday, Monday, Aug 29 from approximately 1530 to 1900 hrs and again this morning via water, Tuesday, Aug 30, from 1000 to 1300 hrs. Henry Clay Wharf: Heavy damage to roller doors and skylights. Wharf is dry, no flooding. Draught alongside ranged between 36 feet to 38 feet. Nashville A Wharf: Moderate damage to siding, on the end of the shed, and roller doors. The Fantuzzi mobile Harbor Crane with P & O, looks to be in "operational shape" but would need to be inspected. Draught alongside was better than 39 feet. Nashville B Wharf: Moderate damage to siding on shed and roller doors, sections of roof missing. Draught alongside between 39 feet to 48 feet. Napoleon Container Terminal: Numerous stacked containers were "pancaked" in the yard. Our guess is around 100 units and that most were empties. One container had fallen from the stack onto the train adjacent to the facility. A small number of containers on the ground were in approximately 2 feet of water, any cargoes inside would be effected. All four port gantry cranes were secured and intact. The two newer cranes though had lost the sides of the cabs where the computer hardware is located. This will be advised when technicians can service the equipment. One of the cranes had a container next to the base of the crane. This had fallen from a stack of containers in the back reach of the crane. Also the Zim Ship had left the wharf during the storm and proceeded to anchor (both port and starboard) just off the wharf. Draught alongside was between 46 feet to 51 feet. Napoleon C Wharf and Milan Street Wharf: The roller doors experienced heavy damage. The draught alongside ranged from 35 feet to 38 feet. Louisiana Street Wharf: Roller doors appeared to be in good shape, but the new roof had lost sections. The draught alongside ranged from 40 feet to 45 feet. Harmony Street Wharf: The roof had lost sections. The draught alongside ranged from 36 to 38 feet. 7th Street Wharf: Skylights were missing from the roof, and moderate to heavy damage to the roller doors. The draught ranged between 37 feet to 39 feet. 1st Street Wharf: Heavy damage to the roof and roller doors. Adjacent to the Wharf the Jackson Street Ferry Landing had also experienced major damage. The draught ranged between 38 feet to 44 feet alongside. Erato Street Wharf: Wharf incurred heavy damage due to a Bollinger dry dock which was adrift from its mooring on the west bank. The dry dock moved up the river, impacting the wharf, but missing the Crescent City Connection Bridge. The dry dock then became

lodged on the west bank across from the Robin Street Wharf. Julia Street Cruise Terminal: The roof had sections missing. All windows at the terminal appeared to be intact. The new passenger jet way appeared intact as well but will need to be inspected. The auxiliary jet way appeared intact with the canopy still attached. The draught alongside was between 31 feet to 36 feet. Governor Nicholas Street Wharf: The transit shed had moderate damage to the side panels and roller doors. Draught alongside was sufficient. We were not able to sound with the vessel General Kelly due to a bulk ship being there in a lay berth status. Esplande Street Wharf: Heavy damage to the siding and the roof. We did not sound alongside due to the vessel in the lay berth. Pauline Street Wharf: We include the Pauline Street Wharf due to the vessel in the lay berth, bulk Chios Beauty (see issue of Sept 2), lines parted setting it adrift. Vessel is now located on the west bank, having impacted with the Cooper Tug Barge and lodging itself against the barge and at least one tug. We observed two Cooper Tugs trying to dislodge the vessel from the west bank. Poland Street Wharf: Appeared intact with moderate damage, we did not sound in this area. The "nested" MARAD ships appeared intact. Alabo Street Wharf: Moderate damage to the skylights and doors. Draught alongside was OK. We did not sound due to a vessel at the berth. France Road Wharf and Jourdan Street Wharf: We were not able to access these facilities due to flooding in the area. It should be noted that electricity has been lost and Jourdan Street Wharf, used to export frozen poultry, and is now without refrigeration. Summary of Our wharves appear to be, for the most part, intact and able to conduct cargo operations. The transit sheds incurred damage, but could be used while we make repairs. Issues concerning cargo operations would be procuring labour to work the vessels (a lot of the labour most likely incurred heavy damage to their homes or evacuated out of town), distribution of cargoes due to highway connectors being damaged (I-10 twin spans had sections lost and connectors in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes are under water) and initially used for recovery operations, and the ability of the river to receive vessels specifically at the southwest pass and the MRGO. Presently river traffic is limited to tugs, barges, off shore vessels relocating and recovery boats. We must wait now for sounding to be performed by the pilot's organizations and the Army Corp of Engineers. In addition, we need to analyze the Cruise Operation. Right now the Louis Armstrong Airport is underwater and hotels supporting the cruise industry need to repair their facilities. We still have autos for passengers parked which incurred heavy damage.

Sydney, Sep 2 -- Oil and gasoline prices dipped today as the US government moved to avert a fuel shortage and some Gulf Coast oil

operations resumed, but losses were limited by fears it may take months to recover from the rampage of hurricane "Katrina". Washington loaned out emergency crude supplies, eased environmental regulations on motor fuels and waived a shipping law to allow better flow of oil into the Gulf region, where most oil output and eight refineries were idled for a fifth day. Some regional pipelines also started pumping supplies around the country and power was restored to a number of plants. However, the US government said it might take months to recover from the killer storm, which struck at the heart of an industry already running nearly flat-out to satisfy two years of exceptionally strong demand growth around the world. Crude oil prices on the New York Mercantile Exchange retreated 57 cents, or 0.8%, to stand at \$68.90 a barrel today, having hit an all-time high of \$70.85 on Tuesday (Aug 30), one day after "Katrina" hit the coast. London Brent crude was down 42 cents to \$67.30 a barrel. Gasoline prices, which have led the market's gains on fears that already low stockpiles would be squeezed severely, traded 6.96 cents, or 2.9%, lower to \$2.339 a gallon. The contract hit a record high of \$2.9250 a gallon on Wednesday. "My feeling is that the pressure on the gasoline market is much more severe than we first imagined," said Tetsu Emori, chief commodities strategist at Mitsui Bussan Futures in Tokyo. "With damage to refineries looking more serious than after hurricane 'Ivan' last year, I don't see prices falling far soon." The US Department of Energy said some of the refineries shut by "Katrina" could take months to restart, with reports that floodwaters swamped at least three in Louisiana. A dozen other refiners along the coast and in the Midwest have also been forced to slow operations due to pipeline and supply shutdowns, further straining already low inventories. Soaring gasoline prices -- up more than 20% from just a week ago -- have drawn an armada of gasoline cargoes from Europe, but most of those supplies will not arrive until October, leaving open the prospect of a month-long supply squeeze. President George W. Bush urged Americans to conserve gasoline supplies and warned retailers about price gouging as New Orleans and the Gulf Coast struggled to recover from one of the nation's most savage storms, now estimated to have killed thousands. The DOE confirmed the loan of crude supplies from its strategic reserve to three refiners to enable them to resume operations at their Louisiana facilities. Exxon Mobil Corp borrowed six million barrels, Valero Energy Corp 1.5 million and Placid Refining one million, while further requests are being considered. Washington temporarily eased environmental gasoline and diesel regulations and waived a shipping law to allow foreign tankers to move fuel between domestic ports. The European

Commission said it could revive a plan to coordinate EU oil stocks, while France announced financial aid to its citizens to cushion the blow of rampant oil prices. Canada's oil companies could defer autumn maintenance at refineries to maximise gasoline exports south of the border. Gasoline supply fears have overshadowed the loss of nearly all Gulf of Mexico crude production, a quarter of the nation's total, which is more easily compensated with robust commercial stockpiles, strategic inventories or additional OPEC output. Power was slowly being restored to refineries, but plant operations will take days or weeks to resume, operators said. Marathon Petroleum Co LLC said it planned to restart its 245,000-bpd Garyville, Louisiana, refinery at the weekend, the first major plant to resume operations. Motiva Enterprises said it hoped to restart its 230,000-bpd Convent refinery within one week, while Valero said its 227,000-bpd St. Charles facility should be up and running within two weeks. However, pipelines ferrying oil from the Gulf Coast to the rest of the country had resumed limited operations and the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port, which handles a tenth of US crude imports, should begin unloading tankers today, operators said. -- Reuters.

New Orleans, Sep 2 -- US troops poured into New Orleans today with shoot-to-kill orders to scare off looting gangs so rescuers can help thousands of people stranded by hurricane "Katrina", find the dead and clean up the carnage. Faced with a growing threat of anarchy after a natural disaster that may have killed thousands of people, the US military rushed in National Guard reinforcements. Armed looters have had the run of the city since "Katrina" pounded the US Gulf Coast on Monday (Aug 29), but they were warned not to push their luck. "These troops are battle-tested. They have M-16s and are locked and loaded," Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco said last night of one group of 300 National Guard troops being deployed here after recent duty in Iraq. "These troops know how to shoot and kill and I expect they will." Most residents are desperate for an end to the violence and a crackdown on looters was ordered when it became clear the looting and gunfire were hurting relief efforts. Bodies rotted on busy streets, gunmen opened fire on troops and rescue workers, and seriously ill people braved the floodwaters in wheelchairs to search for help. Officials said the death toll was certainly in the hundreds and probably in the thousands, but details remained sketchy. Pentagon officials said an additional 4,200 National Guard troops would be deployed over three days and that 3,000 regular Army soldiers may also be sent in to tackle the armed gangs that have looted stores across New Orleans. "We will not tolerate lawlessness, or violence, or interference with the

evacuation," Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff said. The reinforcements mean nearly 50,000 part-time National Guard and active-duty military personnel are being used in the biggest domestic relief and security effort in US history. However, the deployment has so far failed to guarantee an effective rescue plan and many of the hurricane's victims are increasingly frustrated at being left to fend for themselves. Under pressure from some Democrats for allegedly acting too slowly and for cutting federal funding for improvements to New Orleans' levees, US President George W. Bush was to visit the city today. The US Senate approved his request for \$10.5 billion in emergency disaster relief late yesterday, with billions more in aid seen passing Congress in coming weeks. Flooded New Orleans hospitals had no electricity and critically ill patients were dying because they no longer had access to oxygen, insulin or other medicines. Doctors worked around the clock to keep patients alive and evacuate them but logistical arrangements were chaotic and made worse by the violence. At one hospital, one evacuation was called off when a gunman opened fire on doctors and soldiers. Shelters set up to care for thousands of evacuees in New Orleans were still without food and water early today and families slept near corpses and piles of human waste. Lake Pontchartrain's muddy floodwaters still own New Orleans four days after bursting through the levees that once protected it, and now they are toxic with fuel, battery acid, gas, garbage and raw sewage. Health experts warn outbreaks of disease could wreak havoc in the days and weeks ahead. Thousands of people were finally evacuated from the city on Thursday night and taken to the Astrodome stadium in Houston, about 350 miles west, but it quickly filled up and police turned away busloads of the evacuees to other shelters. "Katrina" forced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes and shut refineries along the Gulf Coast shut, sending gasoline prices at the pump soaring to new records of well over \$3 a gallon in most parts of the country. Bush urged Americans to conserve gasoline to help overcome the crisis. "Don't buy gas if you don't need it." -- Reuters.

London, Sep 2 -- More than 2,580 people have been rescued off of rooftops and flooded neighbourhoods since rescue operations began Monday (Aug 29), and joint-agency rescue operations are continuing through the day and night. The Coast Guard's primary focus along the Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana coast will remain search and rescue as long as necessary. Coast Guard assets continue to arrive in the impacted areas. There are 25 cutters off the Gulf Coast, in the rivers, and in the ports and waterways. The Coast Guard cutters Pelican, Cypress and Spencer are currently transiting the Mississippi River to New Orleans to establish a command and control

presence and provide a flight deck, fuel and communications to the search and rescue assets in and around New Orleans. Thirty-five aircraft and hundreds of air crew personnel are in the area from Coast Guard air stations as far away as Barbers Point, Hawaii, and Cape Cod, Mass. Coast Guard C-130s are en route to Air Station New Orleans with additional fuel supplies. Coast Guard Auxiliary members have responded and are supporting the Coast Guard incident management team. The Coast Guard is contacting its Auxiliary divisions throughout the area to ask for help with post-hurricane recovery operations. Many other federal and local government assets are already in the area or being sent there, including FEMA urban search and rescue teams, incident management teams, disaster assistance and response teams, maritime safety and security teams, marine safety response teams, critical incident stress management teams. There have not been any confirmed reports of casualties to Coast Guard members, but due to communications difficulties some Coast Guard personnel have not been accounted for. The Coast Guard anticipates significant waterways management and environmental clean-up operations. Most Gulf ports remain closed. However, joint-agency surveys of the ports, waterways and rivers are underway. There are approximately 86 vessels awaiting transit to or through the Port of New Orleans. The Gulf Intracoastal Waterway in Louisiana, Red River, Atchafalaya, and Ouatchita Rivers has been opened in some areas. More than 100 barges have reportedly sunk, or are aground south of New Orleans, and the majority of buoys and other kinds of navigational markers are off station throughout the Gulf Coast. Ports of New Orleans, Gulfport, Pascagoula, and Destin/Panama City are closed. The ports of Pensacola and Mobile are open only to vessels with a 12-foot draft or less.

New Orleans, Sep 3 -- Military convoys rolled into New Orleans yesterday, carrying troops to try to stamp out lawlessness and supplies for desperate survivors of hurricane "Katrina" after days of delays and broken promises. President George W. Bush, facing fierce criticism over the government's slow response to the one of the worst disasters in US history, signed a \$10.5 billion measure late yesterday to speed federal aid to Gulf Coast areas devastated by the storm. Earlier, Bush toured the stricken area and vowed to fix relief efforts he admitted had been "not unacceptable." "We're going to make it right," he said. A caravan of camouflage-green trucks carrying National Guard troops and escorted by helicopters brought a glimpse of hope to New Orleans, which quickly fell into chaos and desperation after the storm surge broke its protective system of levees, and floodwaters inundated the city. Thousands of people are feared killed and scenes of decomposing corpses, rampant looting and widespread

destruction have shocked Americans and aroused angry complaints from politicians and local residents about the lack of aid in the world's richest country. The arrival of the military convoy raised hopes the government might finally be getting a grip on the crisis. "We got food, water and medical attention. We are gonna get you people out of here," a National Guard officer told thousands of hungry and frustrated people who have waited days at New Orleans' convention centre for evacuation buses that never came. Some cheered but others demanded to know why it had taken so long. Many stranded evacuees recounted horrific tales of murder, rape, death threats and near-starvation inside the filthy, reeking shelter this week. "Bush and Congress described the relief measure as a downpayment on what will be a larger amount of money to be made available in coming weeks. The Army Corps of Engineers said it may need up to 80 days to drain the floodwaters from the city after the hurricane struck Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama on Monday with 140-mph winds and a huge storm surge. Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco said the troops were going in with shoot-to-kill orders to stop looting. "These troops are battle-tested. They have M-16s and are locked and loaded." "Dozens of foreign governments offered help ranging from cash donations and helicopters to tents and medical teams. Even as the offers came in, the US government was widely criticised abroad for failing to move more effectively. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta said Amtrak passenger trains would join buses and aircraft helping evacuate people trying to escape the city. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 3 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: Shipments of grain and other commodities have languished on barges on the Mississippi River since Saturday (Aug 27), unable to pass through the New Orleans ports closed by hurricane "Katrina." It remained unclear yesterday when the ports would reopen for business, raising questions about what will happen with this year's upcoming corn and soybean harvest. While alternative ports in Houston, Corpus Christi and Tampa say they are ready to handle incoming vessels, New Orleans ports are critical to what goes out, industry experts say. New Orleans traditionally has handled more than half of the country's grain exports to overseas destinations. Lisa Kelley, director of public policy for the National Corn Growers' Association, said it was too soon to tell what long-term transportation damage may be along the Mississippi River, the cheapest route for shipping many crops and other commodities destined for foreign markets, or to estimate damage to New Orleans ports. Barges carrying grain, goods and oil remained halted on the river as government and industry officials focused on efforts to rescue New Orleans residents and repair the sodden city's broken levees.

"It doesn't look like ocean freight will ship out of that area for some time," Kelley said. Matt Nobsch, a freight trader with Pattison Brothers of Fayette, Iowa, also said it was too early to assess the impact of the ports' closure. "If the export elevators are up and running in a week, it probably won't have much impact at all," he said. "If it takes them a month to get going, it's probably going to have very much of an impact." Nobsch said his company ships 40-50 million bushels of corn and beans a year to the Gulf. The Coast Guard has closed ports and waterways stretching from Texas to Florida. The lower Mississippi and other waterways were open to limited tug and barge traffic to help with clean-up, the extent of which had yet to be assessed. Aaron Ellis, spokesman for the American Association of Port Authorities, said it was up to individual shipping lines to determine whether to wait it out or take steps to move their cargo off the river for land transport.

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: Two major fires blackened the skies over New Orleans today, one of them engulfing an industrial stretch on the riverfront northeast of the downtown area and another burning at a fashionable mall. Thick clouds of black smoke from the Louisa Street Wharf area covered the city skyline this morning, where there was no sign of firefighting efforts to put out the blaze. Video showed flames shooting up 50 to 60 feet in the air as the warehouse appeared to be burn out of control. Witnesses said the fire apparently was started in a timber pile. Fears are the blaze could spread from warehouse to warehouse. Meanwhile, Ten fire companies, comprised of four firefighters each, were battling a blaze at the upscale The Shops at Canal Place, a New Orleans mall at the base of Canal Street and near the Aquarium of the Americas. Fire companies were being aided by four water tankers that had been sent to New Orleans from Mississippi. Firefighters told CNN that the building had no electricity and no gas and that the blaze started "under suspicious circumstances." They've given up, they said, because they simply don't have the water and water pressure to win the fight. Police were on scene watching the building, attached to the Wyndham Hotel, as it burned.

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: Some evacuees from hurricane "Katrina" will be housed on board three Carnival Cruise Line vessels, including two initially slated to be docked in Galveston. The Federal Emergency Management Agency is chartering the vessels, which will be crewed by Carnival employees, for six months, Carnival spokesman Vance Gulliksen said today. Passenger Ecstasy, normally stationed in Galveston, and passenger Sensation, normally stationed in New Orleans, are planned for Galveston, Gulliksen said. Both can hold 2,600 people, he said. The vessels will be

pulled from regular service on Monday (Sep 5). A third, passenger Holiday, which normally sails out of Mobile, will be docked there. It can hold up to 1,800 people, Gulliksen said.

New Orleans, Sep 5 -- A week after hurricane "Katrina", New Orleans today searched for growing numbers of its dead from the city's worst catastrophe and had not given up on finding more of the living. As emergency teams scouted flooded homes and streets for bodies, authorities said Louisiana's official death toll of 59 could rise into the thousands. Rescuers in boats and helicopters were still pulling hundreds of people from rooftops, homes and buildings and police said they were getting 1,000 or more emergency calls for help each day, many from people still trapped in their homes and attics by floodwaters. Local officials believe thousands remain in the city despite mass evacuations before and after "Katrina" struck the US Gulf Coast last Monday (Aug 29), hammering an area the size of Britain in one of the biggest natural disasters in American history. Well over 100 deaths have been confirmed in Mississippi, with many people unaccounted for. Authorities were slowly regaining control of New Orleans after days of murder, rape and looting that horrified America and the world. The Southern city, which lies below sea level, fell into chaos after being swamped by floodwaters when the hurricane's force burst protective levees. The US Army Corps of Engineers said it was making progress towards pumping out the city but still expected it would take 80 days or more to complete the job. President George W. Bush planned to visit relief efforts in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Poplarville, Mississippi, today -- his second trip to the devastated region in less than a week. His administration, criticised heavily for its slow response to the flooding, sent top officials to the disaster zone yesterday and pledged to do whatever it took to clean up New Orleans and help its evacuees. Bush has conceded the relief efforts were unacceptable and has ordered 7,200 extra active-duty troops to the disaster zone. Government and emergency officials said it was not the time to assign blame for the troubled rescue efforts but to focus on the challenges ahead. "We're going to have to go house to house in this city. We're going to have to check every single place to find people who may be alive and in need of assistance," Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said. Chertoff warned of grim times ahead in the rescue and recovery mission. "When we remove the water from New Orleans, we're going to uncover people who died hiding in houses, who got caught by the flood, people whose remains will be found in the street. It is going to be about as ugly a scene as you can imagine." Signs of hope were emerging for the stricken city. Lights began to go on in some neighbourhoods when the local power company began restoring

electricity. National Guard troops and US marshals patrolled once chaotic streets, while some residents joined the Coast Guard in rescue efforts. In New Orleans' notoriously poor 9th district, police launched search missions with small speed boats to find bodies and survivors. The tips of roofs poked out from water bubbling from burst gas mains, and, in one spot, a swelling corpse floated on floodwaters. Hundreds of thousands of internal refugees from the disaster in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama were dispersing to states across the country as they confronted how to rebuild shattered lives. Texas alone was accommodating 139,000 in public shelters, while 100,000 others were in hotels. Many more were in private shelters run by churches and other groups or with Texas family and friends. Texas Governor Rick Perry said he was seeking to airlift some of the refugees to other states such as Utah, Michigan, Iowa and New York. "As Texas provides food, shelter and medicine to more than 230,000 evacuees, we are concerned about our capacity to meet this great human need as thousands more arrive by the day," Perry said in a statement. "There are shelters set up in other states that are sitting empty while thousands arrive in Texas by the day, if not the hour." -- Reuters.

London, Sep 5 -- Hurricane "Katrina" has forced operational halts at 18 of Nippon Oil Corp's 27 offshore oil and gas fields in the Gulf of Mexico, officials of Japan's biggest oil distributor said Friday. Although the fields usually produce 10,000 to 20,000 barrels of crude oil a day, the hurricane has forced a 60% cutback in their combined output, the officials said.

London, Sept 5 -- A Shell press release, dated Sept 4, states: Production is now flowing and ramping up from all Shell operated assets in the Western Gulf of Mexico that were shut in because of hurricane "Katrina". Over the last 24 hours Bullwinkle and West Cameron 565 began flowing, and production continues from Auger, Brutus, Cougar, Enchilada, and North Padre Island. In the Eastern Gulf of Mexico our Fairway asset and Yellowhammer Gas Processing Plant near Mobile Bay are operating normally. Ram Powell and Main Pass 252 are ready to resume production, however, delivery of production is dependent upon the completion of ongoing systematic inspections and any needed repairs of pipelines and other related onshore processing/handling facilities that transport and receive our production. Significant efforts continue as we evaluate our hurricane-impacted assets, Mars, Ursa, Cognac, and West Delta 143.

London, Sept 5 -- A press report, dated Sept 1, states: Helmerich & Payne Inc, a contract driller of oil and gas wells, said today that one of its eight active platform rigs in the Gulf of Mexico was significantly damaged by hurricane "Katrina". The company's

Rig 201, which operates on Shell's Mars tensioned-leg platform, lost its entire derrick and sustained considerable damage to the rig floor and substructure. The company said it does not have a damage estimate yet, but expects insurance to cover all of its capital loss, after a \$1 million deductible. Helmerich said the rest of its assets in the Gulf look to have sustained little to no damage, based on early inspections.

New York, Sep 5 -- Energy companies kept working through the US Labor Day holiday to restore damaged Gulf of Mexico offshore oil and natural gas production facilities and restart Gulf Coast refineries devastated by hurricane "Katrina" last week. Gulf of Mexico oil and natural gas production showed improvement. The US Minerals Management Service said 30.43% of oil output was online this morning, up from about 21% pumping on Saturday (Sep 3). Natural gas production was at 47.75% today, up from 42.21% on Saturday. The government said nearly 28% of 819 manned production platforms and a similar percentage of 134 rigs operating in the Gulf remained evacuated today. Two of eight refineries shut in Louisiana and Mississippi by Katrina were in restart today. Marathon Petroleum Co LLC said its Garyville, La, refinery, third largest shut by "Katrina", was in restart and should be back to normal by tomorrow. Shell said yesterday that Motiva's Convent, La, refinery was coming back slowly, while its Norco, La, refinery could be able to restart by the middle of next week. The two largest shut facilities, Chevron Corp's in Pascagoula, Miss, and ConocoPhillips' in Belle Chasse, La, sustained extensive flood damage, according to the government. Chevron said today that the Pascagoula refinery did not suffer catastrophic damage but added that no restart estimate was available. It said it was still assessing damage as it worked to find employees dislocated by "Katrina." Reduced refinery throughput run rates were seen in 12 other refineries as far away as Illinois and Ohio. Colonial Pipeline's key gasoline and distillate products pipelines from the Gulf Coast heading north-east were at 73% capacity on Saturday and were forecast to reach 100% of normal capacity by tonight. The Department of Energy announced last week it will loan crude oil from the national Strategic Petroleum Reserve to refiners. By today oil was pegged for Exxon Mobil Corp, Placid Refining, Marathon, Total and Valero Energy Corp. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Telephone company BellSouth Corp yesterday estimated that it would cost \$400 million to \$600 million to repair the damage from hurricane "Katrina" and said it could take four to six months to restore service in the hardest-hit areas of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast of Mississippi. The Atlanta-based company, the dominant

telephone service provider in much of the South, stressed that those were preliminary estimates. It has not yet been able to survey all of its sites given the breadth of the area struck by the hurricane a week ago. BellSouth said an estimated 1.1 million of its lines were out in the region, with 90% of these in what it calls the "red zone" -- New Orleans, areas north of the city and the Gulf Coast of Mississippi. That is down from 1.75 million lines that were out late last week. "Our best guidance, at this point, without having had the opportunity to physically survey and assess the full area, is \$400 million to \$600 million," BellSouth spokesman Jeff Battcher said of the company's estimated repair costs. Technicians yesterday began surveying parts of New Orleans, where the company believes that the majority of its roughly 472,000 customers remain without service. To protect its workers, BellSouth is sending armed guards to protect trucks of diesel fuel for those of its offices in the city that are running on generators, Battcher said. Battcher said BellSouth's main hub in New Orleans, on Poydras Street, is operating and is a key switching point for long distance carriers such as MCI Inc. AT&T Corp. and Sprint Nextel Corp. BellSouth's recovery is also vital to mobile phone providers, which typically depend heavily on land lines run by local telephone companies to connect their wireless calls. The major wireless providers said some of their calls are going through in New Orleans but service is still out in much of the city. In contrast, most of these companies -- Verizon Wireless, Cingular Wireless and Sprint Nextel -- said they had made significant progress restoring service elsewhere in the region, including to Baton Rouge and Mobile, as well as along parts of the Mississippi coast. Public safety experts said hurricane "Katrina" exposed two major weaknesses in emergency communications: a failure to deploy enough satellite phones and the lack of a national system for police, firefighters and medical personnel to talk with one another seamlessly. In addition to disabling much of the regular telephone network in New Orleans and along the Mississippi coast, the storm damaged local police radio systems and made it much harder for emergency personnel to help those in need.

Mobile, Sep 5 -- Hurricane "Katrina" came ashore around the Louisiana/Mississippi State Line during the early morning hours of Aug 29. Winds in Mobile were hurricane strength, and from about 1230 until about 1930, Aug 29, a storm surge of about 12-15 feet caused the following damage:

- 1) Warehouses 2-8 and A-E of the Alabama State Docks warehouse complex, were flooded with brackish water to a depth of 13-14 inches.
- 2) The McDuffie Coal terminal barge loaders were flooded. Motor reworks are in progress, and new components

are en route so that the power plant distribution is not entirely interrupted.

3) Twenty-six open hopper and covered hopper river barges broke free from Cooper Fleet at Mile marker 4.5 and when the surge receded, they gingerly grounded about 450 feet inland, on top of two tracks on the CSX railroad line. Salvage operations are now under way.

4) Semi-submersible accommodation/multifunctional support platform Chemul drydocked at Bender No 9 yard broke free from its moorings, travelled about 500 yards north and west, destroyed the Alabama State Docks No 9 barge loader, destroyed the Hess Oil Dock, then contacted the Cochran Bridge. Extensive damage to the platform is expected, but not yet quantified.

Currently, Mobile Ship Channel is open to a draught of 42 feet as far as far as Chocktaw Point, and 40 feet thereafter, but vessels with a draught of more than 12 feet are restricted to daylight movement. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 6 -- A press release from the Port of New Orleans, dated Sep 4, states: In the wake of hurricane "Katrina", the Mississippi River is now open in one direction to vessels with a draught of 35 feet during daylight hours. Now that a route has been re-established to the Port of New Orleans and other ports on the lower Mississippi River, the port is bringing together all of the pieces that will allow it to be a major force in the reconstruction of New Orleans. "The Port of New Orleans' riverfront terminals survived hurricane 'Katrina' in fairly decent shape," said Port President and CEO Gary LaGrange. "Although they are damaged, they are still workable once electrical power and manpower is available. In the next several weeks, almost all of the Port of New Orleans will be dedicated to military relief vessels. In the next week to two weeks, commercial vessels will return once electrical power and manpower arrive," LaGrange said He added that many repairs will be needed though to bring the Port back to full capacity. Cargo containers have been tossed around at the Napoleon Avenue Container Terminal and the Nashville Avenue Complex and remain strewn about. Two gantry cranes at the Napoleon and Nashville Avenue Complexes are expected to have damage to electronic components. The other two gantry cranes at Napoleon/Nashville are expected to work once they have electric power. The US Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration is working to supply the cranes with power through huge generators. As of 1600 today, about 15 vessels passed by the Port of New Orleans on their way to upriver ports such as the Port of South Louisiana and the Port of Baton Rouge. All three river pilot groups on the lower Mississippi River recommend opening the river to two-way traffic. The Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet (MRGO), an alternate route for the

Mississippi River, is open to nine feet of draught. It could be opened to 27 feet of draught once debris is removed from the channel. The conditions of the terminals along the MRGO and the Industrial Canal are unknown except that they have no electrical power and they are severely flooded. Three senior staff members of the Port of New Orleans have established a headquarters at the Port's Administrative Office Building, and other members of the senior staff are working from the remote locations they evacuated to. Port CEO LaGrange, Executive Assistant for Port Operations Ted Knight and Operations Manager Paul Zimmermann have been on the scene in an attempt to continue port operations under some very adverse circumstances. The three senior staff members based in New Orleans have been in constant contact with MARAD and two of the Port's terminal operators -- P&O Ports and Ceres Gulf Inc -- to commence cargo operations for humanitarian aid and commercial cargo by the end of the week. A portion of the Port Headquarters building systems is running on emergency generator power. The Port is housing the Louisiana State Police SWAT team's operations centre on its first floor. P&O Ports and Ceres Gulf Inc have mobilised work crews in Texas. At the request of the Port of New Orleans, these work crews are available to load and unload vessels at the Port of New Orleans pending the arrival of vessels. They could be at the terminal within two or three days. The US Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration is following up on a request by the Port of New Orleans for help. They are providing several vessels with the capacity to temporarily house 1,000 people who will operate the port. Those 1,000 people will be either essential Port of New Orleans employees or crews working vessels at the Port of New Orleans. Some of the vessels will be outfitted with generators needed to supply the power needed for port operations. "We are thankful to Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta and his staff for helping to get us what we need to get our port up and running as soon as possible," said LaGrange. Port Chief Operating Officer Dave Wagner has established temporary administrative offices in Atlanta with the help of the Port's Board Chairman John Kallenborn of Chase Morgan. They have established ways for staff payroll to be distributed as usual. Some staff members have been notified by the Port's Emergency Hotline to make contact with the Port for payroll information and to establish communications. Although the Port is making tremendous progress in getting back on its feet, it continues to face many challenges, including fires. Mandeville, Piety and possibly Esplanade Street Wharves have been damaged by fire. The fire started off port property at a produce warehouse when propane tanks exploded. The fire was fought from the

river by the Port's fireboat General Roy Kelley, Crescent River tugs and two vessels owned by the Port of South Louisiana, vessels John James Charles and Accardo. "Propane exploding in the air like bombs touched off fires as far as a half-mile away," LaGrange said. The only way to fight the fire was to use firefighting vessels. Fire trucks responded to the emergency, but did not have ability to pump water. Just after midnight this morning, the fire at the Mandeville Street Wharf started to break out again. The team of fireboats and tugs were once again able to bring the fire under control, preventing the fire from spreading from the wharves into the French Quarter. The Harbour Police, the Port of New Orleans' police force, is working with about 15 officers who are very fatigued. A Harbour Police vehicle was struck by a hit-and-run driver and a Harbour Policeman had to be treated in hospital. From Texas, Pat Gallwey, the Port's Executive Assistant for Administration, is coordinating the needs of the Port with Congressional leaders, FEMA and other federal agencies. Port customers will be contacted by the Port of New Orleans' New York office and by Marketing Manager Bobby Landry once he returns to New Orleans early this week. At 1000 tomorrow, there will be a meeting in the Port Administration Building by the three pilot groups on the Lower Mississippi River, Port staff and any member of the maritime community to discuss rebuilding the port and making it more cost effective for customers.

New Orleans, Sep 5 -- Victims of hurricane "Katrina" returned to pick through their battered homes today and President George W. Bush promised to fix bungled rescue efforts after a disaster in which the mayor of New Orleans said as many as 10,000 may have died. Rescuers in boats, helicopters and military vehicles went house to house looking for stranded survivors of one of the worst natural disasters to hit the United States. A full week after "Katrina" crashed into the US Gulf coast and ravaged one of America's most popular cities, no one knows how many people perished. New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin said "it wouldn't be unreasonable" for the death toll to rise to 10,000, although he admitted he had no idea of the exact number. While authorities allowed people to temporarily return to their homes in areas outside New Orleans, police pleaded with people who have not yet abandoned the city itself to get out. "There are no jobs. There are no homes to go to, no hotels to go to, there is absolutely nothing here," Deputy Police Chief Warren Riley said. "We advise people that this city has been destroyed, it has completely been destroyed." Forensic experts prepared a warehouse for the grim task of identifying victims when they are finally recovered. Some are not hard to find as swollen bodies float in the streets but officials fear thousands more are hidden in homes

across New Orleans. In suburban Jefferson Parish, stunned residents got a first look at the hurricane's damage to their homes when it struck with 140 mph winds and a massive storm surge. They were greeted by a panorama of toppled trees and street signs, and spacious middle-class homes that had been flooded with several feet of water. The Jefferson Parish government told its residents not to stay in their homes, but to gather items they needed and leave again by nightfall because there was no power or clean water. The US Army Corps of Engineers began pumping water from the flooded city after closing a major gap in the levees which burst during hurricane "Katrina" and allowed the waters of Lake Pontchartrain to rush through. Draining the entire city could take 80 days or more, but the Corps was working to plug another major breach in the levees, spokesman John Hall said. Bush, who has faced fierce criticism for the slow relief response, visited dozens of victims being cared for at a prayer centre in Baton Rouge and promised the country would "do what it takes" to help people get back on their feet. He has admitted the early relief effort was "unacceptable" and promised today to make changes as needed. "If it's not right, we're going to fix it, and if it is right, we're going to keep doing it. And this is just the beginning of a huge effort," Bush said. The official death toll in Louisiana stood at 59 but officials said it would climb dramatically in coming days. A warehouse in a Louisiana town is being set up to handle thousands of corpses. Police and troops were regaining control of the city after days of murder, rape and looting that horrified America and the world. However, New Orleans Police Department Deputy Chief Warren Riley said only about 1,000 of the force's 1,641 officers were accounted for and that many had had gone looking for missing relatives but others had apparently deserted. At least 240,000 evacuees had flooded into neighbouring Texas, where Governor Rick Perry said the state could handle no more and asked that any more be airlifted to other states. Two cruise vessels based in Galveston were expected to start boarding evacuees later today. They both have a capacity of 2,600 people. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: US refineries closed by the onslaught of Hurricane "Katrina" are trickling back on-stream, oil companies report. Two refineries are fully operational, while others are close to restarting. The return of US refining capacity has combined with the supply of oil from international stockpiles to help lower prices from record levels. Today saw US crude fall 1.1% to \$66.65 a barrel. Brent crude rose 0.3% to \$65.05, having fallen 1.8% during yesterday's holiday closure of US markets. The refineries which are coming back to life are receiving 12.6 million barrels of oil from the US's Strategic

Petroleum Reserve, the Department of Energy said. Europe, Japan and other members of the International Energy Agency are trying to provide stocks from their own reserves. Exxon's huge 500,000 barrel a day installation at Baton Rouge, Louisiana is "fully operational", according to the department, along with Total's facility at Port Arthur, Texas. Both had suffered reduced production because of the storm, as had a number of others in places as far afield as Illinois and Ohio. Five more - all in Louisiana and previously shut down - have lit their flares, indicating they are either in the process of restarting operations or preparing to do so. The closure of the facilities hit by Hurricane "Katrina" meant that 10% of the US's refining capacity was knocked out of commission - as well as a sizable slice of oil and gas production, as rigs were evacuated and in some cases torn from their moorings. Officials said that 30% of normal oil output was up and running, along with almost 50% of natural gas output, but almost 30% of rigs and production platforms remained evacuated, and at least 20 rigs or platforms are reported damaged, sunk or missing. Although more than half the eight refineries put out of action by "Katrina" are either up and running or in restart - being checked over in preparation for full-scale resumption of production - some look set to remain offline for weeks or even months. Chevron's Pascagoula, Mississippi refinery and ConocoPhillips' Belle Chasse, Louisiana plant have suffered major damage, while another two are without power. Together they account for 690,000 barrels a day of refining capacity. The status of US oil refineries shut by Hurricane "Katrina" (all in Louisiana except where marked) : Motiva in Convent: Restarted. Motiva in Norco: Flare lit - Midweek restart. Marathon in Garyville: Restart - began yesterday. Valero in Norco: Power restored - midweek restart. Murphy Oil in Meraux: Relit but crude leak. Chalmette Refining in Chalmette: Assessing damage. ConocoPhillips in Belle Chasse: Assessing damage. Chevron in Pascagoula, MS: Assessing damage. (See issue of Sep 7.)

London, Sept 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: With ship-loading cranes idle, New Orleans port officials vow the storm-damaged port will rebound once debris is cleared away and electricity restored. "In the next week to two weeks, commercial vessels will return once electrical power and manpower arrive," Port President and CEO Gary LaGrange said today in a telephone interview from New Orleans. "We're trying to bring the first ship in Friday." Mobile's port returned to work today, handling urgent cargo, including parts for the Hyundai plant in Montgomery and coal for utilities. Port warehouses had minimal damage from "Katrina" and generators kept the freezer terminal cold, but floodwaters from the storm surge dumped tons of mud in terminal

buildings. The mud was cleaned up yesterday. Along the north-central Gulf Coast, "Katrina" clobbered the port at Gulfport, Miss., gutting the east pier facilities and wiping out its cargo plants handling forest products, aluminum, paper. Some bundles of fence-board cargo were found in Long Beach about four miles away, Mississippi State Port Authority director Don Allee said. The port's DOLE food terminal was flattened. "One problem is that a three-story gaming barge is now sitting in the middle of the Great White Fleet terminal," Allee said in a report to AAPA. In New Orleans, crane electronics experts are expected soon to make repairs, but diesel fuel remains scarce, LaGrange said. Workers also must be brought back. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration is providing several ships with the capacity to temporarily house 1,000 people who will run the port. LaGrange said the Mississippi River is open, with 25 ships a day, mostly upriver. The river is open in both directions to ships with a draught of 39 feet during daylight hours. Twenty Coast Guard cutters and dozens of small boats between Florida and Mississippi are working to repair missing or damaged navigational aids in the waterways. Until the New Orleans port is rebuilt, its cargo could be diverted to neighbouring ports, including Mobile, said industry spokesman Aaron Ellis at the American Association of Port Authorities. Ports in Houston, south Florida, Savannah, Ga. and North Carolina also could receive some cargo if space is available. Poultry shipments could be diverted to Mobile. Some steel imports may wind up in ports like Philadelphia, Ellis said. Rubber needed for the tyre industry may be diverted to Morehead City, N.C. But space could be a problem: "Katrina" hit when ports were filled with cargo, said James Lyons, president and chief executive officer of the Alabama Port Authority. "I don't know that right now we'll be getting any of their cargo," Lyons said. "Everybody was pretty full before the storm." Ellis had no estimate on total port losses from "Katrina". T

New York, Sep 6 -- Nearly one million electricity customers remained without electricity eight days after hurricane "Katrina" hit the US Gulf Coast in Louisiana and Mississippi, according to area utilities and the US Department of Energy. More than half the customers in Louisiana, or 588,000 homes and businesses, were still without power, while Mississippi had about 382,000 customers with no service. Entergy Corp, the hardest hit electric company, had about 462,000 customers out in Louisiana and 41,000 out in Mississippi. Most of New Orleans, however, remained without power. Crews from Entergy started to return to the city over the weekend (Sep 3-4) for the first time since the hurricane hit to assess the situation, according to a report by the DOE.

Entergy also reported extensive damage to its natural gas distribution system serving 147,000 customers in New Orleans. The company said it would have to shut off gas service to many parts of the city to repair the damage but preserve flows to the power generators running the pumps to get the water out of the flooded areas of the city. Southern Co's Mississippi Power subsidiary had about 119,000 customers still without service. The company expects to restore power to all customers by Sep 11. The utilities in Florida, which restored power to customers last week, continued to urge customers to conserve energy due to the tight but improving natural gas supplies used to fuel power generation facilities. Entergy's subsidiaries own and operate about 30,000 mw of generating capacity, market energy commodities and transmit and distribute power to 2.6 million customers in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Southern's subsidiaries own and operate more than 39,000 mw of generating capacity and provide power to more than four million customers in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida. The Gulf Coast electric companies restored full power to the Colonial Pipeline, which supplies gasoline, diesel and jet fuel to the South-east, Mid-Atlantic and North-east, by yesterday afternoon, according to pipeline officials. The pipeline is now at 100% of pumping capacity. The Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP) has been operating at almost full capacity but Entergy has not yet restored power to the Clovelly storage facility. The LOOP expects to be at full capacity when Fourchon gets power, which should occur in about seven days, according to the DOE report. Tankers are making crude deliveries to the LOOP, which is making deliveries to the Capline, a crude oil pipeline serving the Midwest. The Capline is running at over 80% of capacity, according to the DOE. Three refineries with major damage in Louisiana remain without power, including facilities owned by ConocoPhillips in Belle Chasse, Exxon Mobil Corp in Chalmette and Murphy Oil Corp in Meraux. All of the other refineries in Louisiana and Mississippi still shut due to the hurricane have access to power. Even with access to power, however, it will still take some refineries weeks to resume operations. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 7 -- Insurers and reinsurers globally are facing a total loss of around \$50bn from the hurricane "Katrina" catastrophe in the United States, a top London practitioner has forecast. This would make the disaster twice as costly as the dreadful hurricane "Andrew" of 1992 and surpass the gravity in financial terms of the World Trade Center attack. Dane Douetil, chief executive of Brit insurance group, which has strong expertise in major risk, forecast that "Katrina" would be "the biggest natural catastrophe loss ever to hit the insurance market."

Commenting on earlier predictions by analysts that the insurance cost would range anywhere from \$9bn to \$35bn, Mr Douetil said: "I cannot see it being less than \$35bn. I can easily see it getting above \$50bn." With talk of 60-80 days before water could be pumped out of the worst areas, "what are we going to find when that job is done?" he asked. On the positive side for insurers, Mr Douetil said that the catastrophe retrocession (reinsurance of reinsurance) market was already hardening and likely to go on doing so, while property reinsurance, direct US property and energy classes would also see rates strengthen. If the loss was as big as he suspected, that would affect the whole insurance market. Like other insurers, Brit, which, for instance, is involved in catastrophe retrocession cover, is taking a thorough, new look at the underwriting plans it was on the point of finalising for 2006. A top reinsurance broker in London, Charlie Cantlay of Aon, said that, at this stage, the likely loss from what he described as "an industry-changing event" would be around \$40bn. Specialists expect London, especially Lloyd's, to continue to offer cover for physical damage and business interruption to Gulf of Mexico installations but premiums could soar and terms and conditions tighten substantially. Marine generally may manage a much-needed uplift. A huge loss-adjusting operation is being prepared, meanwhile, across marine, energy and non-marine areas to allow Lloyd's and the London insurance market to maintain a reputation of speedy settlement.

London, Sep 7 -- A US Army Corps of Engineers ports and waterways status report, dated today, states:

Port of New Orleans:

Six wharfs have been assessed as heavily damaged, and six wharfs as moderately damaged. The remainder had "cosmetic" damage, though all but one were assessed as workable with the availability of electricity and manpower. The one wharf with no determination made was inaccessible due to flooding. Where soundings were conducted, draughts ranged from 31 to 51 feet. Power has been restored to the Port Headquarters building. P&O Ports and Ceres Gulf Inc have mobilised work crews in Texas. These work crews are available to load and unload vessels at the Port of New Orleans pending the arrival of vessels. They could be at the terminal within two or three days. The US Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration is providing several vessels with the capacity to temporarily house 1,000 people who will operate the port.

Gulfport:

Total loss of dry cargo facilities. East pier facilities have been gutted. Damage is reported to lifting facilities and cranes as well as the banana storage facility.

Port of Pascagoula:

All phone lines -- cellular and landline -- are out of order. The port sustained

varying degrees of damage; the facility least affected was the Bayou Cassotte, which still had warehouses and piers standing. The port office sustained water damage, and e-mail and telephones are not working.

Port of Baton Rouge:

No damage. The port continues to address and respond to the immediate needs of the maritime community.

Port of Shreveport-Bossier:

No Damage.

Port of Lake Charles:

No Damage.

Port Fourchon:

Considerable damage at the port and to offshore facilities -- the port is key to supporting the repair of these facilities. Preliminary depth surveys show that there is no significant shoaling in the channel. However, there are several large capsized vessels blocking the inland channel. The port hopes to be back in operation within a week. The port's most immediate need is for a minimum of a 125KW generator to fuel and feed recovery workers.

Mississippi River:

The Mississippi River is open to shallow draught traffic and to deep draught vessels to 39 feet -- two way, daylight only -- until Aids To Navigation have been fully re-established. There are two obstructions that must be removed, and that will open the river to 48 feet.

Gulf Intracoastal Waterway:

The Inner Harbour Navigation Canal Lock still has some operational problems, and repair work is ongoing. The status of the Florida Avenue bridge is in question. There are sunken barges in the east approach to the IHNC Lock. A contract has been awarded to correct bridge and obstruction issues. The waterway is closed for 70 miles east of Harvey Lock. The Atchafalaya River is open. Algiers Lock is operational and the railroad bridge is in the up position. The Harvey Lock and St. Claude Avenue bridges are both operational, but the Florida Avenue Bridge is still in question. Dredging of the Baptiste Collette Channel has been completed to establish a 16-foot draught.

Corps Assessment of Status of Gulf Ports and Waterways:

Apalachicola Bay - open.

Bayou Coden - open with restrictions.

Sound Channel - closed - need verification of aids to navigation.

Bayou La Batre - closed - fourth priority for dive and salvage operations.

Biloxi Harbour - closed - second priority for dive and salvage operations.

Blackwater River - open.

Bon Secour River - closed - dredging expected to be completed Sep 10.

Cadet Bayou - closed - survey scheduled.

Carrabelle Harbour - open.

Dauphin Island Bay - closed.

Dog & Fowl Rivers - closed.

East Pass Channel - open.

Escambia-Conecuh Rivers - open.

Fly Creek - closed - survey schedule being developed.

Gulfport Harbour - closed - Navy Salvage Team removed the 2 obstructions in the Federal channel.

La Grange Bayou - open.

Mobile Harbour - open.

Naval Station - open.

Panacea Harbour - open.

Panama City Harbour - open/caution.

Pascagoula Harbour - open/caution.

Pass Christian Harbour - closed.

Pensacola Harbour - open.

Perdido Pass Channel - open.

Port Fourchon - sustained significant damage. Numerous sunken vessels were reported to be in and adjacent to the channel.

Port of New Orleans - open.

Port St. Joe Harbour - open to barge traffic.

St. Marks River - open.

Wolf and Jordan Rivers - closed.

Inland Waterways:

Tenn-Tom Waterway - open.

Black Warrior-Tombigbee Waterway - open.

Alabama River Waterway - open.

London, Sep 7 -- A Port of Mobile press release, dated Sep 6, states: The following is an updated status report for the Alabama State Port Authority terminals at the Port of Mobile:

Channel: The Mobile Ship Channel is open to 43-foot draught vessels up to the McDuffie Coal Terminal. We hope to have our normal draught of 45 feet at McDuffie within a few weeks. The remainder of the Mobile harbour is open to its normal 40-foot draught and the Theodore ship channel is open to 37-foot draught. Currently, traffic is limited to one-way transit during daylight hours only. Two-way transits and night navigation will be allowed once additional aids to navigation are in place.

Bulk Facilities: All bulk facilities are operational. These include the Authority's dry bulk facilities, the grain elevator, cement and liquid bulk terminals. The McDuffie Bulk Terminal is lightly limited in the barge loading/unloading operations pending the repair of some of the equipment. Vessel activity has resumed and rail delivery starts back up today.

General Cargo Terminals: The Authority has been operating on a limited basis since the day after "Katrina," handling urgently needed cargo. Our warehouses experienced only minimal damage. The floodwaters left a great deal of mud in the terminals but clean-up was completed yesterday and full operations began today. Our freezer terminal is also fully operational.

Pier 2 Container Terminal: The container terminal is operating on a limited basis and will continue limited operations for a few more days. We will have to replace all the computers at the gate and repair several container handlers. Neither of the container cranes was damaged.

Inland Access: All major roadways and river access to the port were open the day after the storm. The ASPA Terminal Railroad experienced only minor damage, and is operational. All Class One railroads that serve the

port -- Canadian National, BNSF/Alabama Gulf Railroad, Norfolk Southern and Kansas City Southern -- are operational and the CSX is expected to resume service this morning.

London, Sep 7 -- A Port of New Orleans press release, dated Sep 6, states: As of this day afternoon, the Coast Guard has advised the lower Mississippi River will be open during daytime hours to deep-draught vessels from the sea buoy to mile marker 235, near Baton Rouge, for vessels with draughts of 39 feet or less. This is an increase from the previous allowed draught of 35 feet. Vessels with draughts deeper than 39 feet must have the permission of the Coast Guard captain of the port to enter the river. The Port of New Orleans' riverfront terminals survived hurricane "Katrina" in fairly decent shape. Although they are damaged, they are still workable once electrical power and manpower is available. The Mandeville Street Wharves, Piety Street Wharves and possibly the Esplanade were damaged by fire. The fire broke out off port property at a produce warehouse when propane tanks exploded and spread the fire. Two of the gantry cranes at the Napoleon and Nashville Avenue Complex are expected to have damage to electronic components. The other two gantry cranes are expected to work once they have electric power. The US Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration is working to supply the cranes with power through generators. An alternate route for the Mississippi River, is open to nine feet of draught. It could be opened to 27 feet of draught once debris is removed from the channel. The conditions of the terminals along the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet and the Industrial Canal are unknown, except that they have no electrical power and they are severely flooded. About six or seven Maritime Administration vessels and three Navy vessels are scheduled to dock at the Port of New Orleans. Among the vessels that will dock at the port is assault vessel Iwo Jima, which has been assigned a berth at the Julia Street Cruise Terminal, and will be used to launch helicopters that will go on missions throughout the city. The Port headquarters building now has power, and the Louisiana State Police SWAT team has opened a temporary headquarters on the first floor. Electricity has also been re-established for the Crescent City Connection and the Riverwalk.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: The mayor of New Orleans has warned the estimated 10,000 residents still believed to be holed up in the ruined city to leave or risk being taken out by force. As floodwaters began to slowly recede with the city's first pumps returning to operation, Mayor C. Ray Nagin authorised law enforcement officers and the US military to force the evacuation of all residents who refuse to heed orders to leave. Police Capt.

Marlon Defillo said that forced removal of citizens had not yet begun. "That's an absolute last resort," he said. Nagin's order targets those still in the city unless they have been designated as helping with the relief effort. The move -- which supersedes an earlier, milder order to evacuate made before hurricane "Katrina" crashed ashore on Aug 29 -- comes after rescuers scouring New Orleans found hundreds of people willing to defy repeated urgings to get out. In Washington, DC, President Bush and Congress today pledged to open separate investigations into the federal response to "Katrina" and New Orleans' broken levees. "Governments at all levels failed," said Senator Susan Collins of Maine. The pumping began after the Corps used hundreds of sandbags and rocks over the Labour Day weekend to close a 200-foot gap in the 17th Street Canal levee that burst in the aftermath of the storm and swamped 80% of the city. Although toxic floodwaters receded inch by inch, only five of New Orleans' normal contingent of 148 drainage pumps were operating, the Army Corps of Engineers said. How long it takes to drain the city could depend on the condition of the pumps, especially whether they were submerged and damaged, the Corps said. In addition, the water is full of debris, and while there are screens on the pumps, it may be necessary to stop and clean them from time to time. New Orleans Police Superintendent Eddie Compass said lawlessness in the city "has subsided tremendously," and officers warned that those caught looting in an area where the governor has declared an emergency can get up to 15 years in prison. About 124 prisoners filled a downtown jail set up at the city's train and bus terminal. Some National Guardsmen and helicopters were diverted from their search missions Tuesday to fight fires, an emerging threat in a city that has no water pressure to fight fires or electricity, which has prompted holdouts to use candles. In a plea to those who might be listening to portable radios, Nagin warned that the fetid floodwater could carry disease and that natural gas was leaking all over town. The Pentagon began sending 5,000 paratroopers from the Army's 82nd Airborne Division to use small boats to launch a new search-and-rescue effort in flooded sections of the city. Floodwaters also had receded from St. Bernard Parish south-east of New Orleans, but it was still a disaster scene with bedroom dressers and hot tubs scattered on roofs, toilet seats dangling in tree limbs and cars overturned in driveways. Water gurgled and spouted where natural gas seeped from below. While New Orleans waited for the floodwaters to recede before counting its dead, the effort to accurately catalogue Mississippi's toll was struggling to keep up with the decaying effect of 90-degree heat. Even when dogs pick up a scent, workers say they frequently cannot get at the bodies without heavy

equipment. That is leading officials to estimate that more than 1,000 people could be dead. As of tonight, workers had recovered 196 bodies in Mississippi, the majority coming from coastal counties. Nagin has estimated New Orleans' dead could reach 10,000.

London, Sep 7 -- The following press release, dated Sep 6, received: The following is an updated status report for the Alabama State Port Authority terminals at the Port of Mobile: Channel: The Mobile Ship Channel is open to 43 ft. draught vessels up to the McDuffie Coal Terminal. We hope to have our normal draft of 45 ft. at McDuffie within a few weeks. The remainder of the Mobile harbour is open to its normal 40 ft. draft and the Theodore ship channel is open to 37 ft. draft. Currently traffic is limited to one way transit during day light hours only. Two way transits and night navigation will be allowed once additional aids to navigation are in place. Bulk Facilities: All bulk facilities are operational. These include the Authority's dry bulk facilities, the grain elevator, cement and liquid bulk terminals. The McDuffie Bulk Terminal is lightly limited in the barge loading/unloading operations pending the repair of some of the equipment. Vessel activity has resumed and rail delivery starts back up today. General Cargo Terminals: The Authority has been operating on a limited basis since the day after "Katrina", handling urgently needed cargo. Our warehouses experienced only minimal damage. The flood waters left a great deal of mud in the terminals but clean-up was completed yesterday and full operations began today. Our freezer terminal is also fully operational. Pier 2 Container Terminal: The container terminal is operating on a limited basis and will continue limited operations for a few more days. We will have to replace all the computers at the gate and repair several container handlers. Neither of the container cranes was damaged. Inland Access: All major roadways and river access to the port were open the day after the storm. The ASPA Terminal Railroad experienced only minor damage, and is operational. All class one railroads that serve the port (Canadian National, BNSF/Alabama Gulf Railroad, Norfolk Southern & Kansas City Southern) are operational and the CSX is expected to resume service this morning.

New York, Sept 7 -- An Exxon Mobil Corp spokeswoman said today it will take "several weeks to assess the situation" at its joint-venture 190,000 barrels-per-day Chalmette, Louisiana, refinery shut by hurricane "Katrina". The Chalmette LLC plant, owned 50-50 by Exxon and Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA, does not yet have power, said Betsy Eaton, Exxon spokeswoman. "People are on the ground assessing the situation," said Eaton. "It will take several weeks to assess the situation. When the assessment is completed, then we will be in a better position to say when the refinery will begin its operations." The

assessment began yesterday, when Exxon Mobil said that the refinery was "in better condition than we originally thought." The Chalmette plant is one of four refineries that have the oil industry concerned because there is no solid information of when they will return and vague reports that the term could be months. These plants are the four that were hit by the most violent winds and storm surge caused by "Katrina". The three other refineries that oil trading sources say may be out for weeks and possibly months are the 325,000-bpd Chevron refinery in Pascagoula, Mississippi, the 247,000-bpd ConocoPhillips refinery in Belle Chasse, Louisiana, and the 120,000-bpd Murphy Oil Corp. refinery in Meraux, Louisiana. The EIA said today that 900,000 bpd production on the Gulf Coast will still be out by the end of September under a "medium recovery" scenario. -- Reuters.

Washington, DC, Sep 7 -- Early estimates for rebuilding roads and bridges in hurricane-ravaged Louisiana and Mississippi approach \$2.5 billion combined as the government signed its first road rebuilding contract today, Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta said. Mineta said the cost of rebuilding highway infrastructure knocked out by "Katrina" last week could reach \$1.3 billion in Louisiana and \$1.1 billion in Mississippi. "We still don't know the full extent of the damage to the region's transportation systems," Mineta said. "But we're already working aggressively to get the Gulf Coast moving again." Mineta said energy pipeline operations serving the storm-struck region and extending into the Midwest and eastern US were running normally. In addition, all airports in the region, except Lakefront just north-east of New Orleans, were fully operational. Lakefront remained under water, Mineta said. The agency said it had signed a \$5 million contract with a local company to start work on a key bridge along Interstate 10 in Mississippi. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: The hurricane-ravaged lower Mississippi River is open to two-way traffic for grain shipments from the Gulf Coast, and 63 percent of grain elevator capacity has been restored, the government said yesterday. "Vessels are moving on the river. Vessels are being loaded today, literally as we speak," Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns told reporters. But, he added, shipments remain restricted. River navigation is limited to the daytime because Hurricane "Katrina" knocked out lights used at night. Also, because there are two blockages in the major shipping channel, known as the Southwest Pass, the Army Corps of Engineers is limiting ships to a draft of 39 feet. That is keeping larger vessels out of the channel. Removing the two obstructions and allowing nighttime navigation are the biggest hurdles to resuming shipping, said Lt.

Gen. Carl Strock, chief of engineers for the corps. The United States exports one-fourth of its grain. More than half of that amount departs from Mississippi Gulf ports hit by Katrina. Producers rely on the Mississippi River as the cheapest route for shipping crops and other commodities overseas. Officials said some grain company employees and federal grain inspectors have returned to work. Johanns said most of the 10 grain export elevators along the lower Mississippi are able to operate.

HURRICANE "MARIA"

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Tropical Storm "Maria" formed today out in the open Atlantic, but it posed no threat to land, forecasters said. At 1100 the 13th named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season had top sustained winds of 40 mph, just above the 39 mph threshold to be classified a tropical storm. Its centre was about 1,185 miles south-east of Bermuda. It was expected to move toward the west-north-west at about nine mph later in the day. "It should stay out in the open Atlantic," said Lixion Avila, a hurricane specialist at the National Hurricane Centre in Miami.

London, Sep 5 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of hurricane "Maria" was located near lat 31.3N, long 57.0W. The position is accurate to within 30 nautical miles. The present movement is towards the north-north-west or 345 degs at nine knots. Estimated minimum central pressure is 977 mb. The eye diameter is 15 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 80 knots with gusts to 100 knots. Radius of 64-knots: 15 nautical miles in all four quadrants. Radius of 34 knots: 100 nautical miles in the north-east quadrant, 80 nautical miles in the south-east quadrant, 50 nautical miles in the south-west quadrant and 75 nautical miles in the north-west quadrant. At 0600, UTC, Sep 6, the centre is predicted to be near lat 34.4N, long 56.2W, with maximum winds of 90 knots and gusts to 110 knots.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane "Maria" continued to intensify early today over warm water in the open Atlantic, but remained only a threat to shipping interests, forecasters said. Its top wind speeds were up to 90 mph, and the system was expected to strengthen before reaching cooler waters - which are expected to sap "Maria" of its strength later in the week. At 0500 hrs, the storm was centred 465 miles east of Bermuda. It was moving north-northwest at 10 mph. Forecasters at the National Hurricane Centre said gradual turns to the north and north-east would keep "Maria" well to the east of Bermuda. "Maria" is the fifth hurricane and 13th named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season.

London, Sep 6 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Hurricane "Maria": Hurricane centre located near lat 33.3N, long 56.4W, at

0900, UTC, Sep 6. Position accurate to within 20 nautical miles. Present movement towards the north-north-east, or 020 deg at six knots. Diameter of eye 15 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 90 knots with gusts to 110 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 20 nautical miles east semicircle, 15 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 30 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 40 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 50 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 60 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 80 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 100 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 12-foot seas 100 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 200 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 400 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 7: Position lat 35.6N, long 53.9W. Maximum sustained winds 70 knots with gusts to 85 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 20 nautical miles east semicircle, 15 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 40 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 50 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 60 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 80 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 90 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 110 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane "Maria" weakened on its way to the colder waters of the North Atlantic, forecasters said. "Maria" peaked late yesterday as a Category 3 hurricane with top wind speeds at 115 mph. By 0500 hrs, today, it was centered about 495 miles east of Bermuda with winds near 105 mph, forecasters at the National Hurricane Centre said. The hurricane was only a threat to shipping interests as it moved north-northeast near seven mph, forecasters said.

London, Sep 7 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Maria": Storm centre located near lat 35.2N, long 53.0W, at 0900, UTC, Sep 7. Position accurate to within 30 nautical miles. Present movement towards the east-north-east, or 060 deg at 13 knots. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots with gusts to 65 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 75 nautical miles east semicircle, 40 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 80 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 70 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 140 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 12-foot seas 100 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 200 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 400 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 8: Position lat 37.2N, long 49.7W. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots with gusts to 60 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 75 nautical miles east semicircle, 50 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 140 nautical miles east semicircle, 80 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 8 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Hurricane "Maria" located near

lat 38.3N, long 48.5W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 40 nautical miles. Present movement toward the north-east or 50 degrees at 11 knots. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Forecast position lat 39.4N, long 46.9W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 60 knots, gusts 75 knots. Forecast position lat 41.0N, long 44.7W at 0900, UTC, Sep 9. Maximum winds 60 knots, gusts 75 knots.

HURRICANE "NATE"

London, Sep 6 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Nate": Storm centre located near lat 28.6N, long 66.6W, at 0900, UTC, Sep 6. position accurate to within 30 nautical miles. Present movement towards the west, or 275 deg, at two knots. Maximum sustained winds 40 knots with gusts to 50 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds 40 nautical miles. Radius of 12-foot seas 50 nautical miles. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 7: Position lat 29.0N, long 67.4W. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 25 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 60 nautical miles.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Tropical storm "Nate", which formed yesterday as the 14th named storm of the season, was at 0500 hrs, centered about 275 miles south-southwest of Bermuda with top sustained winds near 45 mph. Forecasters said it could reach hurricane strength, with winds of at least 74 mph, by tomorrow. It was presently meandering west near two mph, though it was expected to eventually make a turn to the north-east, forecasters said. "Perhaps by the end of the work week it could be posing a threat to Bermuda, but not the U.S.," hurricane specialist Stacy Stewart said.

London, Sep 7 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Nate": As of 0900, UTC, Sep 7, the Bermuda Weather Service has issued a tropical storm watch for Bermuda. Storm centre located near lat 28.8N, long 66.5W, at 0900, UTC, Sep 7. Position accurate to within 30 nautical miles. Present movement towards the north-west, or 315 deg, at two knots. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 40 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 20 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 30 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 80 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 40 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 60 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 12-foot seas 100 nautical miles east semicircle, 60 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 8: Position lat 30.1N, long 66.2W. Maximum sustained winds 70 knots with gusts to 85 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 20 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 40 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 90 nautical miles.

Miami, Sep 7 -- In the mid-Atlantic, Hurricane "Nate" strengthened as it neared Bermuda. It had top winds of 85 mph and was expected to pass just south of the island of 65,000 people yesterday. "Nate" was centered 200 miles south-south-west of Bermuda and was expected to pound the island with battering waves. "I think we're unlikely to sustain a lot of damage from Hurricane "Nate"," said Elizabeth Harris, a meteorologist with the Bermuda Weather Service. "It's just really going to brush past." -- Reuters.

London, Sep 8 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office dated today: Hurricane "Nate" centre located near lat 30.2N, long 64.6W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 30 nautical miles. Present movement towards the north-east or 50 degrees at eight knots. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots with gusts to 90 knots. Forecast position lat 31.2N, long 63.1W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 75 knots, gusts 90 knots. Forecast position lat 32.9N, long 60.1W at 0600, UTC, Sep 9. Maximum winds 75 knots, gusts 90 knots.

INDONESIA

Padang, Sep 2 -- A landslide on Indonesia's Sumatra island triggered by torrential rains buried at least 10 people in their homes and left more than two dozen missing, a rescue official said today. The landslide occurred yesterday near Padang city, about 940 km north-west of the capital, Jakarta, after two days of heavy rains. Rescue official Yal Effendi said 10 bodies had been recovered and 12 people found safe. However, with more people reported missing, it was estimated that 34 could be buried in the rubble. The search was suspended this afternoon because of heavy rain, Effendi said. Also yesterday, a police helicopter carrying seven people came down in bad weather in the Bung Hatta national park, 30 km east of Padang, a police spokesman said. At least one of the passengers had survived the crash and had been found on the outskirts of the thick forest, a provincial police spokesman said. He said the fate of the other six on board was unknown because rescue teams had yet to reach the crash site. -- Reuters.

TROPICAL STORM "KHANUN"

London, Sep 7 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Khanun" near lat 13.0N, long 133.7E, at 0600, UTC, Sep 7. Movement past six hours 250 deg at six knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots with gusts to 70 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 25 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 80 nautical miles south semicircle, 50 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 8: Position lat 15.5N, long 130.7E. Maximum sustained winds 80 knots with gusts to 100 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 25 nautical miles. Radius

of 50-knot winds 45 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 105 nautical miles south semicircle, 95 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 8 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Khanun" near lat 16.1N, long 132.2E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 340 degrees at eight knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots, gusts 75 knots. Forecast position lat 18.1N, 131.1E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 70 knots, gusts 85 knots. Forecast position lat 19.7N, long 129.1E at 0600, UTC, Sep 9. Maximum sustained winds 85 knots, gusts 105 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "OPHELIA"

London, Sep 7 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Ophelia": At 0900, UTC, Sep 7, a tropical storm warning is in effect for the east coast of Florida from Sebastian Inlet northwards to Flagler Beach. The tropical storm warning south of Sebastian Inlet has been discontinued. Also, the government of the Bahamas has discontinued all warnings for the Bahamas. A tropical storm watch is in effect for the north-east Florida coast from north of Flagler Beach to Fernandina Beach. Interests elsewhere in northern and central Florida and the south-eastern United States coast should monitor the progress of this system. Storm centre located near lat 28.3N, long 78.9W, at 0900, UTC, Sep 7. Position accurate to within 15 nautical miles. Present movement towards the north-north-west, or 335 deg, at seven knots. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots with gusts to 45 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds 60 nautical miles north-east quadrant, nil elsewhere. Radius of 12-foot seas 160 nautical miles north semicircle, nil elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 8: Position lat 28.8N, long 79.8W. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots with gusts to 55 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds 45 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 20 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 60 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 8 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Ophelia" centre located near lat 28.7N, long 79.5W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 15 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots with gusts to 60 knots. Forecast position lat 29.0N, long 79.6W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 55 knots, gusts 65 knots. Forecast position lat 29.4N, long 79.6W at 0600, UTC, Sep 9. Maximum winds 55 knots, gusts 65 knots.

Miami, Sep 7 -- Tropical Storm "Ophelia" sat off Florida's Atlantic Coast today, barely budging and defying forecasters' attempts to predict where or if it might hit land. "Ophelia" coalesced overnight from a loose and swirling mass of thunderstorms and had top winds of

50 mph. At 1700 hrs, (2100, UTC), "Ophelia"'s centre was about 80 miles east-north-east of Cape Canaveral, Florida. The storm was nearly stationary all day long and was expected to meander around the same spot for the next few days, forecasters at the National Hurricane Centre said. "Ophelia" was expected to alternately weaken and strengthen as it hugged the Florida coast, but could still grow into a weak hurricane, with winds of at least 74 mph. Tropical storm warnings, alerting residents that the storm could hit them within 24 hours, were posted for an 85-mile stretch of shoreline from Cocoa Beach to Flagler Beach in north-east Florida. Forecasters said "Ophelia" could dump three to eight inches of rain on parts of central and north Florida and south-east Georgia, and trigger dangerous rip tides all along the southeastern coast of the United States. But the air currents that guide the path of tropical storms were so weak that forecasting models disagreed greatly on "Ophelia"'s most likely track. One or two nudged it west across Florida and into the northern Gulf of Mexico, the region stricken by catastrophic Hurricane Katrina. Others had it looping slowly eastward and away from the United States. The individual models flip-flopped all day long, so the hurricane center issued a compromise forecast: "Ophelia" is going to stay put for a few days. -- Reuters.

TYPHOON "NABI"

London, Sep 2 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Super typhoon "Nabi" near lat 19.6N, long 136.8E, at 0600, UTC, Sep 2. Movement past six hours 290 deg at nine knots. Position accurate to within 25 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 140 knots with gusts to 170 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 45 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 100 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 210 nautical miles south semicircle, 200 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 3: position lat 21.8N, long 133.4E. Maximum sustained winds 140 knots with gusts to 170 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 40 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 95 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 210 nautical miles south semicircle, 205 nautical miles elsewhere. (See issue of Sep 2.)

Tokyo, Sep 3 -- A powerful typhoon heading north-west towards Japan's Okinawa islands weakened enough by today to lose its super-typhoon status, but the storm remained extremely strong and could threaten Japan's main islands. Typhoon "Nabi" was a Category 5 storm yesterday. According to the website of the Tropical Storm Risk group at University College London, "Nabi" had weakened to Category 4 today, but it was projected to strengthen to super-typhoon status again in 24 hours. An official at Japan's Meteorological Agency said the storm may pass over Okinawa on Monday (Sep 5) and near the

southernmost main island of Kyushu early on Tuesday, possibly making landfall, but that the worst of its fury was likely to have been spent by then. "This is an extremely strong storm, and could bring a lot of rain to Japan, but I think that in terms of overall destructive force it has already passed its peak," he said. "We will still have to be extremely careful, though." At 0100, UTC, the typhoon was some 600 km south-east of Minami Daitoshima, an island around 1,100 km south-west of Tokyo. The storm was moving north-west at 15 kph, the Meteorological Agency official added, and was likely to pass over Okinawa some time on Monday. Although it is still too early to predict the storm's ultimate course, "Nabi" could make landfall on Kyushu before passing across it to strike the Korean peninsula. -- Reuters.

Tokyo, Sep 5 -- A powerful typhoon bore down on south-western Japan today, threatening the nation's heavily populated main islands with torrential rain and strong winds and disrupting transport and oil refineries. Typhoon "Nabi" was 100 km east of the tiny southern Japanese island of Amami Oshima at 1200 hrs, the Meteorological Agency said. Winds were gusting up to 160 kph at the centre of the Category 2 storm. The typhoon was travelling north-north-west at a speed of 15 kph, heading directly for the densely populated southern island of Kyushu. The Meteorological Agency expects "Nabi" to swerve to the east over the next 24 hours, putting it on course to batter much of Japan and southern and eastern parts of South Korea but weakening slightly as it passes over cooler water. Television pictures showed coastal areas of Amami Oshima being engulfed by waves which national broadcaster NHK said were up to nine metres high. Local government officials in Japan's southernmost main island of Kyushu urged people to be alert. Hundreds of flights in and out of Kyushu were cancelled today, NHK said. Trains were also cancelled and expressways closed in southern parts of the island. "Nabi" has already sparked thunderstorms in Tokyo, where more than 110 mm of rain fell in an hour in some areas late yesterday. Two men were killed -- one drowned and one was struck by lightning -- in areas close to the capital, police said. Thousands of households in or near Tokyo were flooded and lost power, some highways were closed and trains delayed. Some banks' cash machines were also out of action due to power outages. Japanese oil refiners suspended waterborne operations at some of their facilities today, refinery spokesmen said. Idemitsu Kosan Co, Japan's third biggest refiner, said it had halted waterborne shipments of refined products at its terminals in Okinawa and Kagoshima, both located in southern Japan, because of the storm. Operations at Idemitsu's refinery facilities with a total capacity of 640,000 barrels-per-day were unaffected, a company spokesman

said. Japan Energy, the refining unit of Nippon Mining Holdings Inc, also suspended tanker operations at its 200,200-bpd facility in Mizushima, western Japan. Kyushu Oil Co suspended waterborne operations at its 155,000-bpd Oita refinery in south-western Japan, a company spokeswoman said. The large scale of the storm and the low speed at which it is moving mean it will affect Japan for a relatively long time, possibly causing extensive damage, a Meteorological Agency official said. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 5 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Typhoon "Nabi" near lat 28.8N, long 130.4E, at 0600, UTC, Sep 5. Movement past six hours 340 deg at eight knots. Position accurate to within 20 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 110 knots with gusts to 135 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 60 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 50 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 100 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 210 nautical miles north-east quadrant over water, 190 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 185 nautical miles south-east quadrant and 160 nautical miles north-west quadrant.

Tokyo, Sep 5 -- Typhoon "Nabi" lashed south-western Japan with torrential rains and high winds today, cutting power supplies and disrupting transport and oil refineries. Weather officials in South Korea also warned of flooding, while eastern China braced for possible effects from the typhoon after the region's previous storm killed at least 84 people in the east of the country, newspapers said. "Nabi" was 180 km south of the tiny southern Japanese island of Yakushima at 1500 hrs (0600, UTC), the Meteorological Agency said. Winds were gusting up to 160 kph at the centre of the typhoon, but the storm was expected to weaken slightly as it passes over cooler water. The Tropical Storm Risk Website classified "Nabi" as a Category 4 storm on an ascending scale of 1 to 5. The typhoon was travelling north-north-west at 15 kph, heading directly for the densely populated southern island of Kyushu. The Meteorological Agency expects Nabi to swerve to the east over the next 24 hours, putting it on course to batter much of Japan and southern and eastern parts of South Korea. Television pictures showed coastal areas of Amami Oshima being engulfed by waves that national broadcaster NHK said were up to nine metres high. The Japanese government set up a liaison office within the prime minister's official residence to co-ordinate efforts among ministries and agencies concerned to minimise possible damage from the typhoon. Japan's top government spokesman, Hiroyuki Hosoda, said the country's military, police, fire-fighters and coast guard would be put on standby for rescue operations. He also urged people to stay off rooftops and away from rivers, oceans, paddy fields and waterways. Hundreds of flights in

and out of Kyushu were cancelled today, NHK said. Trains were also cancelled and expressways closed in southern parts of the island. Nearly 20,000 households were without electricity on Kyushu, NHK said. "Nabi" has sparked thunderstorms in Tokyo, where more than 110 mm of rain fell in an hour in some areas late yesterday. Two men were killed -- one drowned and one was struck by lightning -- in areas close to the capital, police said. Thousands of households in or near Tokyo were flooded and lost power, while some highways were closed and trains delayed. Some bank cash machines were also out of action due to power outages. Japanese oil refiners suspended waterborne operations at some of their facilities today, refinery spokesmen said. Idemitsu Kosan Co, Japan's third-biggest refiner, said it had halted waterborne shipments of refined products at its terminals in Okinawa and Kagoshima, both located in southern Japan, because of the storm. Operations at Idemitsu's refinery facilities, with a total capacity of 640,000 barrels per day, were unaffected, a company spokesman said. Japan Energy, the refining unit of Nippon Mining Holdings Inc, also suspended tanker operations at its 200,200-bpd facility in Mizushima, western Japan. Kyushu Oil Co suspended waterborne operations at its 155,000-bpd Oita refinery in south-western Japan, a company spokeswoman said. The large scale of the storm and the low speed at which it was moving mean it would affect Japan for a relatively long time, possibly causing extensive damage, a Meteorological Agency official said. -- Reuters.

Tokyo, Sep 6 -- Powerful typhoon "Nabi" was pummelling south-western Japan with torrential rain and high winds today, causing floods and landslides, snarling transportation and forcing people to flee their homes. Police said one man was missing, believed to have been buried in a landslide that engulfed his home, and 10 others were injured. At 0900 hrs the eye of the storm was about 40 km south-west of Kushikino, near the southern tip of the mountainous island of Kyushu. Winds had weakened slightly but were gusting up to 144 kph at the storm's centre, Japan's Meteorological Agency said. "Nabi" was moving north at 20 kph but was forecast to swing east and beat a path up the Japan Sea coast, affecting much of Japan over the next few days. Television showed roads deep under water in the city of Kagoshima and waves engulfing coastal roads on the island. More than 70,000 people were being advised to evacuate from the city of Nobeoka in Oita Prefecture for fear that nearby rivers might burst their banks, public broadcaster NHK said. About 800 mm of rain had fallen in some parts of Kyushu in 24 hours, NHK said. The slow pace at which the typhoon is moving means that further heavy rains are expected to fall before "Nabi"

moves on. Hundreds of flights in and out of Kyushu and the neighbouring island of Shikoku were cancelled because of the high winds, as were high-speed "bullet" train services in western Japan. The Tropical Storm Risk website classified "Nabi" as a Category 3 storm but forecast it would weaken to a Category 1 over the next 24 hours. -- Reuters.

Busan, Sep 6 -- At about 0930, Sep 6, while general cargo Long Xuyen (5470 gt, built 1990) was lying anchored at Pohang outer harbour, the vessel ran aground on sandy bottom some 100 metres from Dogu Beach during strong winds caused by typhoon "Nabi". The vessel was reportedly waiting for a berth to load steel products. All 22 crew members are being rescued by a marine police rescue team. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: South Korea's southern and eastern provinces suffered damage from Typhoon "Nabi" today. Most ferry services and 133 domestic flights between Seoul and provincial cities were cancelled due to strong wind and heavy rain. A total of 29 international flights from South Korean cities to Japanese cities were also called off. In Ulsan, an unidentified man in his 70s went missing after being swept away into a river amid torrential rain early in the morning, reported South Korean Yonhap News Agency. Some 34 elementary schools and 90 kindergartens temporarily closed down in Busan and another 34 elementary and secondary schools in Pohang, North Gyeongsang Province, were also forced to shut down, said Yonhap. The KMA has issued a typhoon alert for coastal areas in Gangwon and South and North Gyeongsang provinces, southern waters far south of Jeju Island. Winds were gusting up to 38 metres a second at the center of the powerful typhoon, according to the KMA. The KMA expected South Korea will be completely out of the typhoon's influence around Thursday (Sep 8). Tokyo, Sep 6 -- Typhoon "Nabi" pummelled south-western Japan with torrential rain and high winds today, causing floods and landslides, paralysing transport and prompting officials to tell more than 100,000 people to flee their homes. Sixteen people were missing and 23 injured, Kyodo news agency reported. A woman drowned after falling from a ferry early today, but public broadcaster NHK later said the incident was not related to the typhoon. At about 1400 hrs (0500, UTC), the eye of the storm made landfall at Isahaya near Nagasaki on the mountainous island of Kyushu, Japan's third-biggest main island and home to about 10% of the country's almost 130 million population. A total of about 110,000 residents of Kyushu and the neighbouring main island of Shikoku were told to evacuate, Kyodo said, while more than 16,000 left their homes voluntarily. Winds had weakened slightly but were gusting up

to 126 kph at the storm's centre, Japan's Meteorological Agency said. Military personnel were sent to help evacuate residents of the town of Takaoka-cho in Kyushu after the governor of Miyazaki prefecture requested assistance, said Japan's top government spokesman, Hiroyuki Hosoda. "There is expected to be further damage due to the typhoon so all agencies and ministries are joining together to respond," Hosoda told reporters. The typhoon was moving north at 30 kph but was forecast to swing east and beat a path up the Japan Sea coast, bringing rain and strong winds to western Japan and parts of South Korea before hitting the northernmost main Japanese island of Hokkaido. It was not expected to hit China. Airlines in South Korea cancelled dozens of domestic and international flights today because of the weather and vessels were warned to stay in port. Television showed roads deep under water in the Kyushu city of Kagoshima and waves engulfing coastal roads on the island, which has a mixture of heavy industry and agriculture. About 800 mm of rain had fallen in some parts of Kyushu in 24 hours, public broadcaster NHK said. The slow pace at which the typhoon is moving means further heavy rains are expected before it moves on. Hundreds of flights and ferries in and out of Kyushu and Shikoku were cancelled because of high winds. All West Japan Railway Co train services in Kyushu and Shikoku were halted, railway officials said. About 270,000 households were without electricity at 1400 hrs, according to Kyushu Electric Power. Car makers Toyota Motor Corp, Nissan Motor Co and Mazda Motor Corp suspended work at assembly plants in south-western Japan as a safety precaution. Honda Motor Co had also halted production last night at a factory in Kyushu that makes motorcycles, power products and engines, and said it would cancel the day's work today. The car makers said they saw no long-term impact from the suspension since lost production could be made up through overtime or other means. Oil refiner Kyushu Oil Co said the storm was affecting production at some secondary units in Oita. It halted oil shipments in the area. Web site Tropical Storm Risk classified "Nabi" as a Category 3 storm but forecast it would weaken to a Category 1 over the next 24 hours. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 6 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office: Typhoon "Nabi" near lat 33.1N, long 130.4E, at 0600, UTC, Sep 6. Movement past six hours 005 deg at 18 knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 80 knots with gusts to 100 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 40 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 70 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 180 nautical miles north-east quadrant over water, 170 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 160 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for

0600, UTC, Sep 7: Position lat 40.3N, long 134.8E. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots with gusts to 65 knots. Becoming extratropical. Radius of 34-knot winds 140 nautical miles north-east and south-west quadrants, 120 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Nabi" lashed southern Japan yesterday, causing floods and landslides that left at least 21 dead or missing and over 50 people injured. More than 100,000 people have been ordered to flee their homes as storm surges flooded seaside towns. Power to more than 270,000 households was knocked out. The typhoon also grounded nearly 900 flights. The Tropical Storm Risk website had originally classified "Nabi" as a Category 4 storm on an ascending scale of 1 to 5 but late on Monday (Sep 5) it was downgraded to a Category 3. Forecasters yesterday expected it to weaken to a Category 1 over the next 24 hours.

Tokyo, Sep 7 -- Typhoon "Nabi" faded into a tropical storm and headed into the Sea of Japan today after killing at least nine people on the southern Japanese island of Kyushu. Thirteen people were missing and at least 80 were injured as "Nabi" drenched parts of Japan's third biggest island with more than 1,000 mm of rain, triggering floods and landslides, authorities said. One person was also missing in South Korea. Television pictures showed rescue workers and military personnel hunting for survivors among wrecked houses. Police said at least 48 houses were badly damaged or destroyed completely and close to 5,000 houses had been flooded. At the height of the storm, over 250,000 people fled their homes for evacuation centres throughout south-western Japan, the Yomiuri newspaper said. About 80,000 households in Kyushu were still without electricity at 0900 hrs, Kyushu Electric Power said. Floodwaters in many areas were already drawing back by this morning, officials said. "Although there are some low-lying areas that are still flooded, a lot of the water has gone down already," said an official with the government in Miyazaki Prefecture, some of whose towns were particularly hard-hit. Nearly 300 people spent the night on a train at Osaka station after being stranded after the storm halted rail services, Kyodo news agency said. Japan's Meteorological Agency forecast that "Nabi" would travel north-east, skimming the country's western coast and hit Hokkaido, the northernmost of the country's main islands, tomorrow. The agency warned of heavy rains, high winds and possible flooding and landslides across northern Japan. Oil refiners, meanwhile, were bringing disrupted operations up to speed. Kyushu Oil Co said it planned to bring the operation rate of its sole Oita refinery in southern Japan back to normal levels later today. It had already resumed oil product shipments by truck and was ready to resume berthing operations as well, a company spokesman said. In South Korea, which

escaped the brunt of the typhoon, one person was reported missing and several hundred others were evacuated after heavy rains and winds battered the southern and eastern parts of the country. The storm dumped about 622 mm of rain in the south-eastern industrial city of Ulsan and triggered landslides across roads and railroad tracks, snarling transport. It tossed around vessels docked in harbours like toys. About 150 people in Ulsan remained in shelters, waiting for the water to recede in their neighbourhoods. The country's two main airlines -- Korean Air and Asiana -- cancelled over 100 flights. The National Emergency Management Agency has been working to tally up the damage but has released no figures yet. The one person reported missing was a man in his 60s or 70s, officials said. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Nabi" moved north away from the Japanese archipelago today, with the death toll from the storm rising to 21 after a body believed to be that of a missing man was found at the site of a landslide in Takachiho, Miyazaki Prefecture, in the afternoon. The typhoon moved over the Sea of Okhotsk this morning after crossing Hokkaido overnight. The typhoon brought heavy rain and strong winds to Hokkaido, causing the cancellation of two flights connecting New Chitose Airport near Sapporo and Tokyo's Haneda airport today.

TYPHOON "TALIM"

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: Three people were killed and 59 injured after Typhoon "Talim" has pounded Taiwan with strong winds and heavy rains, forcing offices, schools and financial markets to close. Two men drowned in southern Tainan and northern Miaoli counties while a 60-year-old woman was hit by lightning in the southern Changhua county, said the National Fire Agency. The injured were from the worst-hit northern and central parts of the island. Winds uprooted billboards and trees across the island, all domestic flights were cancelled and many trains and international air services were delayed. Taiwan Power Co shut down generators installed in two nuclear power plants due to strong winds but said one of the generators would resume operation later in the day. Safety considerations prompted the company to cut the operation of its three nuclear power stations to 25 percent of capacity. Electricity was cut to 1.7 million homes but most were expected to be reconnected before the end of the day. In central Taichung, a bridge connecting Kukuan, a popular hot spring, was submerged by flash floods, prompting the evacuation of hundreds of tourists, police said. In north-eastern Ilan county, powerful waves smashed into the port of Wushi, which was closed by the authorities. Nine people, eight prisoners and a policeman, were injured when a van carrying them rammed a crash barrier in Taipei county. Three were seriously hurt. In

the capital, where the rains and winds were less severe than elsewhere, bars, karaoke lounges and restaurants were crowded as people took advantage of the national holiday declared by the government as a result of Talim. Most air and land traffic was expected to return to normal later today as the typhoon moved away from the island and made landfall on the Chinese mainland.

Beijing, Sep 2 -- Typhoon "Talim" killed 14 people as it swept across Taiwan and tore into China, triggering landslides and forcing hundreds of thousands to flee their homes, Chinese state media and Taiwan rescue officials said today. The typhoon, which has since weakened into a tropical storm, killed nine people in mudslides and cave-ins yesterday in mountainous parts of China's eastern Zhejiang province, Xinhua news agency said. Fifteen people were missing. In one county alone, more than 300 houses had been destroyed and main roads cut off. A father and son were killed when their house collapsed in Fuzhou, capital of Fujian province, to the south of Zhejiang. In Taiwan, three people were killed and 59 people were injured, according to the island's National Fire Administration's disaster response centre. As of late yesterday, more than 780,000 homes in Taiwan were without power and 48,000 had no access to clean water. Chinese authorities bracing for the storm had evacuated nearly 500,000 people, the China Daily said. Fujian authorities also shut schools and airports, closed sections of highway and suspended ferry services to ride out the storm, the newspaper said. The storm kicked up waves as high as 10 metres off Fujian. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: Flooding and landslides triggered by typhoon "Talim" have killed at least 53 people on China's mainland and left 21 missing, the government said today. Talim roared ashore on Thursday (Sep 1), wrecking houses, damaging crops and roads and knocking out power and phone services. Before it hit the mainland, the storm killed at least two people on Taiwan and injured 24. The storm knocked down nearly 12,000 houses in Wenzhou in Zhejiang province and damaged homes in the Dabie Mountain area of Anhui, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. The Dabie Mountain area got 16 inches of rain over 24 hours from yesterday to today, a record for the region, Xinhua said. "Talim" weakened to a tropical storm late on Thursday and moved inland. The storm forced the evacuation of nearly one million people in Zhejiang and neighbouring Fujian province from low-lying coastal areas and mountain villages prone to flash floods. More than 100,000 people were evacuated in Anhui, Xinhua said. In Fujian, flooding cut power in the provincial capital of Fuzhou and forced schools to cancel classes. Highway travel was disrupted and some airline flights cancelled.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: The death toll from

typhoon "Talim" could be as high as 73. According to Xinhua News Agency reports, in addition to the deaths the direct economic losses from torrential rains, flooding and landslides are 7.8 billion yuan (US\$960 million), mainly in East China's Fujian, Zhejiang, Anhui and Jiangxi Provinces. In the worst-hit Anhui Province, at least 53 were killed as heavy rains began falling on Thursday (Sep 1). Rainstorms and heavy flows of mud and rock also destroyed 17,200 residential houses, damaged 61,100 houses and affected more than 130,000 hectares of cropland in the province, according to an official with the Anhui Provincial Disaster Relief Office. The province evacuated 168,100 people. The provincial government has allocated 8 million yuan (US\$986,440) in relief funds for affected areas. The provincial civil affairs bureau distributed 400 tents and other relief materials to affected people. In the two worst-hit counties Yuexi and Jinzhai, close to the Dabie Mountain area, about 400,000 people suffered from the disasters and 46,000 hectares of cropland were affected. In Yuexi County, where a landslide occurred, more than 10,000 homes were damaged and transport were cut off. The Ministry of Civil Affairs sent two work teams to carry out disaster relief work in affected provinces after the disaster happened. In Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, the typhoon killed 15, China News Agency reported. According to statistics, in Wenzhou and Lishui, a total of 2.22 million people in 18 counties have been affected. Meanwhile, 11,789 houses have been pulled down. The direct loss was put at 3.42 billion yuan (US\$421.7 million), the local government said. Xinhua said the tropical storm was weakened on Friday as it passed further inland into Jiangxi Province. However, the destructive force was not reduced as parts of Jiujiang city, situated about 20 kilometres from Lushan Mountain, were flooded by the downpour. At 2200 Friday, a mudslide triggered by the typhoon at the Lushan Mountain area buried two buildings, where 21 occupants were inside. One was found dead by the time rescue crews reached him and five others were injured. The remaining 15 are still missing.

Earthquakes



INDONESIA

Jakarta, Sep 5 -- A strong earthquake struck off Indonesia's eastern Sulawesi island today but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage, authorities in the closest major city said. The 6.2 magnitude quake hit at 0658, local time, with the epicentre 400 kilometres under the Sulawesi Sea, near the border with the Philippines.

"It was under the sea. We don't have any damage reported," said Artina, an official at the Geological and Meteorology Agency's office in the North Sulawesi capital of Manado, 250 kilometres east of the epicentre. Manado is some 2,200 kilometres north-east of Jakarta. -- Reuters.

JAPAN

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.2 hit Iwate, Miyagi and other prefectures in northeastern Japan early today, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage from the 0311 hrs, quake.

TAIWAN

Taipei, Sep 6 -- An earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale rattled Taiwan today and shook buildings in the capital but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The epicentre of the quake, which struck at 0916 hrs, was about 63 km east of Hualien on the east coast, at a depth of about 12 km, the Central Weather Bureau said. -- Reuters.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated Aug 29, states: The U.S.-led coalition and Afghan forces have killed a suspected Taliban commander and three of his fighters in the country's south, while six other rebels died in a clash with Afghan police, officials said today.

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: US aircraft bombed a Taliban position in central Afghanistan killing eight militants in the latest violence in the run-up to a September 18 election, a provincial official said today. US and Afghan troops, acting on intelligence reports that Taliban had set up a base in the mountains of Uruzgan province, were met with a hail of bullets when they went to investigate yesterday, provincial governor Jan Mohammad Khan said, adding an air strike was called later. "The Taliban showed resistance, the US aircraft bombed the base," Mr Khan said. A US military spokeswoman said she had no information about the fighting. A Taliban spokesman confirmed the latest fighting but, speaking by telephone from an undisclosed location, said 12 Afghan government troops and US soldiers had been killed. US forces killed a senior Taliban commander in Uruzgan province last week. The man, Payenda Mohammed, had been responsible for a spate of attacks, the US military said. US and Afghan government forces have mounted a series of

operations in the south and east in recent months to root out pockets of militants and ensure security for the parliament elections. Afghan and US officials say the insurgents will not be allowed to disrupt the vote. Election organisers are cautiously optimistic that polling in most areas will be smooth.

Kabul, Sep 1 -- A British engineer was kidnapped after gunmen attacked a convoy in western Afghanistan and killed three police escorts, the Interior Ministry said today. Taliban guerrillas said they carried out the yesterday night attack in the western province of Farah and were holding the Briton, but Interior Ministry spokesman Lutfullah Mashal said a criminal gang was responsible. The attack took place on the road between the southwestern city of Kandahar and the western city of Herat, Mashal said. "They killed three policemen and kidnapped a British engineer working for a road construction company," he said. He gave no other details. Taliban spokesman Abdul Latif Hakimi told the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press that the group's guerrillas had carried out the attack. He said three Britons had been killed and one arrested, but he later said three Americans had been killed. "The arrested Briton was also carrying a pistol," he said. He did not name the man, but said the guerrillas had seized a car from the convoy. He identified the Briton as "David". A spokesman for Afghanistan's NATO-led peacekeeping force, which has units in the west of the country, said checkpoints had been set up and surveillance aircraft scrambled late yesterday. The three people killed in the ambush were apparently Afghan security men, as the Interior Ministry was saying, not foreign troops, he said. Suspected Taliban members have kidnapped several Turkish and Indian nationals working on road projects in the south, but have released them unharmed after ransoms were paid. A Lebanese engineer kidnapped by the Taliban last month was freed unharmed. -- Reuters.

Kabul, Sep 2 -- A district level Taliban commander was killed in a clash with U.S. and Afghan government troops today, a provincial official said, the latest incident in a wave of violence in the run-up to September 18 elections. A spokesman for the Taliban confirmed that the commander, known as Tor Mullah Abdul Manan, had been killed in a battle in Zabul province, in the south. One of Manan's men was killed and a U.S. soldier was wounded in the fighting in a notoriously insecure district, said the provincial governor's spokesman, Gulab Shah Alikhail. A U.S. military spokeswoman said she had no information about the fighting. Taliban spokesman Abdul Latif Hakimi confirmed Manan had been killed. He said Manan's brother and wife were also killed, as well as eight government soldiers. In a separate incident, three Taliban rebels were killed when a bomb they were planting

beside a road in Zabul province went off, Alikhail said. Two Afghan government soldiers were killed in a clash in Helmand province yesterday night, another insurgent hot spot in the south, an official in that province said. -- Reuters.

Kabul, Sep 3 -- A Briton kidnapped in Afghanistan was found dead today and Taliban rebels said they killed him, while in a separate incident, the Taliban said they killed an election candidate and four government officials. Also today, an Afghan doctor said two bodies found dumped in a desert in the south were Japanese tourists who went missing last month. The two, a man and a woman, had been shot in the head, he said. In the latest in a surge of fighting in the run-up to September 18 elections, the Defense Ministry said 16 Taliban were killed in a battle in the central province of Uruzgan today. Briton David Addison, who the Afghan government said was working on security for a road project, was kidnapped with an interpreter in the west of the country on Wednesday (Sep 1) when gunmen ambushed their convoy, killing three police escorts. "During search operations, coalition forces and Afghan forces found the body of David Addison," said Interior Ministry spokesman Lutfullah Mashal. Addison was seized on the main road between the southwestern city of Kandahar and the western city of Herat. The Taliban, who are not known to operate in force in the west, said they kidnapped and killed Addison. "We shot him because he was our enemy," Taliban spokesman Abdul Latif Hakimi said by telephone from an undisclosed location. Addison was a soldier, he said. Mashal said criminals in league with the Taliban were responsible. "They were hired by the Taliban," he said. Security is the main worry two weeks before Afghans go to the polls to elect a lower house of parliament and councils in its 34 provinces. An election candidate, Mohammad Khan, running for a council seat in Kandahar province in the south, was kidnapped with a provincial official and three policemen yesterday, police said. Taliban spokesman Hakimi said Taliban fighters had captured the five. Later he said all had been killed on the decision of a Taliban shura, or council. The government said it could not confirm the Taliban claim and authorities were investigating. If his death is confirmed, Khan would be the fifth election candidate to be killed. Separately, an Afghan doctor said two bodies found in Kandahar province were those of Japanese teachers who went missing after entering Afghanistan from Pakistan on Aug 8. The two had been dead for three weeks or more, the head of the hospital where the bodies were examined told reporters. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: US and Afghan forces killed 12 people who they say were militants preparing to carry out attacks ahead of this month's

parliamentary elections in Afghanistan. They also arrested a nine people during the operation in the south-eastern province of Zabul, which was backed by American warplanes and attack choppers. It was the latest in a string of clashes between US-led troops and suspected Taliban guerrillas, who have pledged to derail the September 18 polls. A statement said the US and Afghan soldiers came under small arms fire as helicopters inserted them into the area. "The forces were conducting operational patrols to engage the enemy in their staging areas before they execute operations designed to influence or disrupt the election process in the Zabul area," it said. There were no American or Afghan military casualties, and material for making improvised bombs was discovered at the scene, the statement said.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Six policemen and two militants were killed after suspected Taleban rebels attacked a security checkpoint in central Afghanistan, officials say. Fighting at the checkpoint in the district of Muqur in Ghazni province lasted for over an hour yesterday. Also yesterday a woman standing in the parliamentary elections in the eastern province of Nangarhar escaped a gun attack unharmed. In a separate incident a car exploded in Helmand province killing two suspected suicide bombers and injuring four passers-by.

BURUNDI

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: Burundi's new president, former rebel leader Pierre Nkurunziza, has formed the country's first government since the end of the 12-year civil war. He gave key posts to members of his Hutu FDD party, and seven out of 20 ministerial posts to women. On Monday (Aug 29), parliament approved his nomination of a Hutu woman and a Tutsi man as his deputies. The new constitution guarantees a balance of power between Burundi's Hutu majority and Tutsi minority. These stipulations were agreed as part of five-year peace process designed to end the conflict between Hutu rebels and an army led by the Tutsi minority. In terms of the agreement, the cabinet should comprise 60% Hutu and 40% Tutsi, with at least 30% of posts going to women. There is one rebel group, the National Liberation Forces (FNL), which remains outside of the peace process. Mr Nkurunziza has said that the constitution may be changed to allow the FNL to join the government. On the eve of his inauguration last week, Mr Nkurunziza vowed to engage the FNL in peace talks.

COLOMBIA

London, Aug 26 -- A press report, dated Aug 25, states: Rebels massacred 13 coca harvesters and their cook, making them the latest victims of a feud with paramilitary gangs to control Colombia's lucrative cocaine trade, authorities said today.

Rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, gunned down Flor Maria Gutierrez and 13 men as she was serving them lunch yesterday on a farm near the village of Puerto Valdivia, where the northern Andes flatten onto a sweltering plain. The killings in northwest Colombia starkly underscore a bloody truth generally overlooked in the ruthless drug trade: that drug-related killings sometimes occur even before the narcotics are made, and that the victims are often those on the lowest rung of the drug-trafficking business. In this case, the victims worked on one of the many farms in a corner of Antioquia state where coca flourishes. The men were harvesters who strip coca bushes of their leaves, grind them up and then add chemicals to make coca paste - a key step in producing cocaine. But they had earned the rebels' wrath by selling their product to a right-wing paramilitary faction, said Antioquia Deputy Gov. Jorge Mejia. "It's a coca-growing area - an area permanently being fought over by the guerrillas and the paramilitaries," Mejia told local Caracol radio. The aim by the warring factions is to terrify the harvesters and drug lab workers into selling their product exclusively to them. The illegal groups then have it processed into purified cocaine and export the drugs abroad. Colombian army counterinsurgency troops were deployed to the region and clashed with the rebels, killing three, said Gen. Jorge Daniel Castro, chief of the Colombian National Police.

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated Aug 28, states: Colombian police have taken control of a safe haven that was granted by the government to right-wing paramilitaries during peace talks. The 368sq km zone of Santa Fe de Ralito in northern Cordoba province had been home to United Self Defence Forces (AUC) commanders since May 2004.

Bogota, Sep 5 -- Over three million Colombians in the south-west part of the country were left without electricity today after attacks, blamed on leftist rebels, crippled power supplies, the army said. The bombing of the electricity towers in a mountainous area of Cauca Province was the latest offensive by the 41-year-old Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, which has stepped up attacks ahead of next year's election, the army said. The Andean country's main electricity transporter ISA said it was seeking to import electricity from neighbouring Ecuador while the towers were being repaired. No one was injured in today's attack but the government says more than 300 Colombian soldiers and police have died at the hands of the rebels so far this year. -- Reuters.

Bogota, Sep 7 -- Colombia's government allowed a jailed leader from the second largest Marxist rebel group to leave prison today for three months to help clear the way for possible peace negotiations. The measure is part of efforts of President Alvaro Uribe to start talks with the

National Liberation Army (ELN) and comes after Uribe said he may yield to a rebel demand by recognising that Colombia is in an internal armed conflict rather than simply facing a terrorist threat. Rebel leader Francisco Galan, who was captured in 1992 and was held at the Itagui prison near the city of Medellin, will be freed for three months for the peace initiative, the presidential office said in a statement. The ELN, which recently acknowledged it had killed two Catholic priests and two civilians by accident, last week said Uribe must recognise Colombia's internal conflict as a condition before any talks. The president said yesterday he would recognise the conflict if the ELN called a cease-fire. -- Reuters.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated Aug 29, states: Renegade Congolese rebel leader Gen Laurent Nkunda has threatened to re-invade eastern Democratic Republic of Congo to bring "peace" to the area. In June last year he jeopardised DR Congo's shaky peace process when he briefly seized the town of Bukavu. In a 17-page letter, extracts of which were published in the Congolese newspaper *Le Potentiel*, he accused the government of promoting ethnic hatred. Meanwhile, the army has confirmed some of its men in the east have defected. Correspondents in the area say an estimated 1,000 soldiers, who speak Kinyarwanda - the language spoken by the ethnic Banyamulenge whom Gen Nkunda claims to be fighting for - have gathered in Masisi, North Kivu province. Gen Nkunda said he invaded Bukavu last year to protect the Banyamulenge from being targeted and killed by the Congolese army, but the UN dismissed his claims that he was preventing a genocide. In his letter, Gen Nkunda said the transitional administration of President Joseph Kabila was corrupt and intent on promoting instability in the east. He said the decision to stop more than 200,000 Congolese refugees living in neighbouring countries from returning home to Kivu to participate in the elections showed President Kabila's unwillingness to foster peace. Elections were due before the end of June under the terms of the 2002 peace deal, but MPs have backed a six-month delay. According to local sources, the United Nations refugee agency has said it is not logistically feasible to organise the return of the refugees before the completion of the electoral registration process.

ECUADOR

London, Sep 7 -- The Ecuadorian government has resumed exports of oil two weeks after a wave of strikes paralysed output in the Amazon region of the country. State oil company Petroecuador said it had resumed oil exports with a first shipment of 300,000 barrels of crude bound for the US. President Alfredo

Palacio had frozen exports from the company to protect domestic reserves, after protesters in two provinces occupied Petroecuador installations. The strikes -- centred in the Sucumbios and Orellana areas -- advanced the demand that most of the income generated by oil exports be invested for the benefit of the population. However, the protests finished last when the government reached agreement with strike leaders and with international oil companies that operate in the zones. As a result, local inhabitants are likely to see the repair of regional roads and the construction of better infrastructure.

ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa, Aug 26 -- Clashes between communities in southern and eastern Ethiopia have so far killed 73 people this year and forced more than 85,000 to flee their homes, a human rights group said on Wednesday (Aug 24). The Ethiopian Human Rights Council said in a report that fighting over cattle and grazing land had erupted in March and June between the Oromo and Somali communities. Some 45 people were also wounded as the rival groups, armed with assault rifles - a legacy of the wars that have scarred the Horn of Africa region - launched attacks on each other. "Tensions are still high but fighting has stopped because the military is now patrolling the area," Adam Melaku, executive secretary of the human rights group, said. He urged the government to hold a referendum to resolve the underlying dispute over ownership and use of the region's grazing land. The Oromos are the largest community in Ethiopia, accounting for more than 25 million of the country's 71 million population. The Somali population is roughly four million. The clashes occurred in the East and West Haraghe Zones of Oromiya Region, some 400 km east of the capital, Addis Ababa. Clashes also erupted in May in Borana Zone in the same region, some 700 km south of Addis Ababa, close to the Kenyan border. In the six-page report, the human rights watchdog detailed the clashes in 2005, first sparked when armed Somali youths stole cattle belonging to members of the Oromo community. Its investigation teams, the report noted, had spent several weeks in the region interviewing witnesses, families of the dead and clan leaders. The USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS Net) recently reported that ethnic clashes in southern Oromiya, Somali and Afar regions were exacerbating food insecurity. "Record high cereal prices, conflicts, food shortages and pockets of acute malnutrition remain persistent threats to food security and mean that many drought prone areas require ongoing assistance for the remainder of the year," FEWS Net said. Officials from the government's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission travelled to the region and said they were assessing the

situation. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that recent government and UN assessments said some 13,500 people urgently needed food and non-food assistance. Ethiopia has more than 80 ethnic groups and languages. - Reuters.

INDIA

Calcutta, Sep 5 -- Maoist rebels exploded a landmine under a security vehicle, killing at least 23 police and a civilian in the central Indian state of Chattisgarh, officials said yesterday. Three police were also wounded in the blast, one critically. The explosion occurred late on Saturday (Sep 3) in the remote Dantewada district, 500 km south of the state capital, Raipur. Chattisgarh Home Minister Ramvihar Netam said: "The explosion was so powerful that it blew the vehicle about 10 metres in the air. The vehicle was torn apart and it came crashing down with its occupants." Inspector-general of Police M.W. Ansari said the landmine had been planted beside a forest road in the remote district that is a known Maoist stronghold. -- Reuters.

Srinagar, India, Sep 8 -- Shops, schools and businesses were closed today in Kashmir's main city Srinagar in response to a strike call to protest against the arrest of women separatists. The strike left streets largely deserted barring armoured security vehicles and police foot patrols. The shutdown came as Muslim militants and troops exchanged fire near a heavily guarded building in Srinagar housing the offices of the chief minister of Kashmir. Police said two militants and two policemen were killed in the gunbattle which began yesterday. Three other policemen were wounded in the firefight, which ended today after the second militant was killed. Today's strike was in protest against the arrest of Asiya Andrabi, the chief of Dukhtar-e-Milat (Daughters of the Muslim Faith), who was arrested last week for raiding hotels, restaurants and wine shops to stamp out the "flesh trade" and check what the group called the "moral decline" in the Muslim-majority region. On Tuesday (Sep 6), authorities charged Andrabi, who wears a head-to-toe black veil, and seven followers under a tough public safety law, drawing condemnation from Kashmiri separatist groups. Syed Ali Shah Geelani, the chief of the hardline faction of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, an alliance of separatist political parties, called the strike. "The detention of Asiya Andrabi and her activists is a heinous crime, a shameful act. Their crime is that they raised a voice against evils in society," Geelani said in a statement. -- Reuters.

INDIA-PAKISTAN

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: New peace talks between India and Kashmiri separatists have ended with an

assurance from India that it will cut troop levels in the region if insurgent violence and guerrilla incursions from Pakistan cease. The commitment has been given by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during talks with the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Kashmir's main political separatist alliance. Kashmiri separatists have long demanded that India scale back its military presence in the troubled Himalayan region. Pakistan has also demanded that India withdraw troops. "The Prime Minister said that if there is a cessation of violence and an end to infiltration, conditions will be created for the reduction of armed forces," Singh's spokesman Sanjaya Baru said. "He reiterated his commitment to ensuring a life of peace, self-respect and dignity for the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

INDONESIA

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: More than 70 rebels from Indonesia's Aceh province were freed from prison today, the first in a wave of releases called for in a peace deal ending a decades-long separatist war. The men, including four senior rebels, were to travel to Aceh later today, officials said. More than 1,300 other prisoners, both those held in Aceh and at prisons elsewhere in Indonesia, were also scheduled to be released today. The amnesty, which is to be followed next month by the decommissioning of rebel weapons, is seen as the first test of the willingness on both sides to comply with the terms of the accord. In two weeks, the rebels are scheduled to hand over their weapons and Indonesian troops are to begin a gradual withdrawal from the province. The process is being overseen by monitors from the European Union and Southeast Asian countries. Local and international human rights groups have long accused the military of torture, rape and arbitrary killings in Aceh. The military has denied the allegations. The insurgents, who number around 5,000, have also been accused of abuses during the war. The peace accord calls for the creation of a human rights tribunal to bring to justice soldiers accused of abuses. But there is widespread skepticism that the military - still a powerful force in Indonesian politics - will allow any troops to stand trial.

IRAQ

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated Aug 29, states: A U.S. Army helicopter made a forced landing yesterday night under hostile fire in northern Iraq, and one soldier was killed and another injured, the U.S. military said. The incident occurred in Tal Afar, an insurgent-ridden city 260 miles northwest of Baghdad, the military said. No further details were released. Residents of Tal Afar, reached by telephone from Mosul, said the helicopter came down about 1830 hrs in the southwestern part of the city. U.S. troops fought insurgents last year in the Turkomen city and

managed to restore control enough to hand it back to Iraqi authorities. However, Iraqi authorities lost control, in part because of the city's volatile ethnic mix. The U.S. military has bolstered its force around Tal Afar last spring and have been trying to restore full control to the strategic city, which sits along major trade routes to Syria.

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Several suspected al-Qaeda fighters were killed in western Iraq today when U.S.-led forces used precision guided bombs to destroy three terrorist hideouts in two cities near the Syrian border, the military said. At least 50 people died in the raids, Agence France-Presse reported. Four bombs were dropped on a house "occupied by terrorists" outside the city of Husaybah in the first strike, the military said in a statement e-mailed from the capital, Baghdad. Then at 0620 hrs, two bombs were dropped on a second house, killing a man identified as "Abu Islam, a known terrorist" and several others, the military said. At about 0830 hrs, another attack was conducted, this time on a house in the city of Karabilah, six kilometres south east of Husaybah, where some of Islam's followers are believed to have fled, the military said. Several terrorists were killed, according to the statement.

Baghdad, Aug 30 -- One of Iraq's top Sunni political leaders, Adnan Dulaimi, warned today that he would work hard to ensure the country's draft constitution was not approved in a referendum due by Oct 15. Dulaimi, speaking at a joint news conference with the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, said the draft did not represent the aspirations of the Iraqi people. "We will do our best to make sure this draft fails at the referendum," he told journalists. -- Reuters.

Kirkuk, Aug 30 -- Gunmen have killed a security official in Iraq's North Oil Company and a companion traveling with him in a car, a police source said today. The killing yesterday night appeared to be part of a campaign to undermine Iraq's oil industry, the biggest source of income for the U.S.-backed government. -- Reuters.

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: More than 600 people have been killed in a stampede of Shia pilgrims in northern Baghdad, Iraqi officials say. The incident happened on a bridge over the Tigris River as about one million Shias marched to a shrine for an annual religious festival. Witnesses said panic spread because of rumours that suicide bombers were in the crowd. Many victims were crushed to death or fell in the river and drowned. Health officials said the death toll could go as high as 1,000. Earlier, mortar rounds had been fired into the crowd, killing 16 people. About 36 others were injured when four mortar rounds landed close to the Kadhimiya mosque. So far no group has said it carried out the attack. Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabbar blamed a "terrorist" for spreading the rumour.

"The terrorist pointed a finger at another person saying that he was carrying explosives... and that led to the panic," he said, quoted by AFP news agency. Iraqis are preparing to vote on a proposed constitution for their country, with Shia and Sunnis sharply divided on its contents. Today is the last day the majority of Iraqis can register to vote in October's referendum. Television pictures showed large crowds of Shia pilgrims heading towards the Kadhimiya mosque to mark the martyrdom of the 8th Century religious figure Imam Musa al-Kadhim. During the crush, iron railings on the Aima bridge leading to the shrine gave way and hundreds of people fell into the water. The bridge links the staunchly Sunni area of Adhamiya on the east bank of the Tigris and the Shia area of Kadhimiya on the west bank. Health officials said more than 640 deaths have been accounted for and there were more than 230 injured, but the number of fatalities could rise. The incident has caused the single biggest loss of Iraqi life since the US-led invasion in 2003. As the number of dead and injured continued to rise, Baghdad's hospitals struggled to cope, with many bodies and injured people left lying in corridors and on pavements outside. The government has declared three days of mourning.

Baghdad, Sep 1 -- Crowds gathered today for the funerals of some 1,000 Iraqis killed in a stampede during a religious festival, as the nation grieved over a tragedy which has overshadowed the daily bloodshed of war. Three days of official mourning will quieten a country inured to mass killing on its streets but shocked by the disaster. At least 965 people were confirmed to have died yesterday when thousands of Shi'ite pilgrims rushed for imagined safety onto a bridge across the Tigris in Baghdad, only to die in the river below or crushed on the roadway. The final toll, one senior official said, was likely to be more than 1,000 as bodies were counted scattered across hospitals, makeshift morgues and family homes across the city. Though fears of sectarian attacks, real or imagined, may have contributed to the fear that drove the pilgrims to their deaths, the shock was felt across the factional divides. A barrage of mortar and rocket attacks on the crowd, some 200,000 strong or more, had added to the tension early in the day. It killed seven people and was claimed by a Sunni group avowing links to the insurgency against the U.S.-backed, Shi'ite-led government. -- Reuters.

Baghdad, Sep 3 -- Unknown gunmen killed 19 Iraqi police and troops and wounded another 16 in three separate attacks near Baquba, north of Baghdad, today, police and hospital sources said. The first attack came in the morning at an Iraqi army checkpoint 30 km north of the mainly Sunni Arab city, when four soldiers died. Later, four police officers were killed by armed gunmen at a checkpoint in the center of Baquba, 65

km north of Baghdad. The third attack was on a checkpoint manned jointly by police and soldiers four km out of Baquba, in which seven police and two soldiers were shot dead. Police would not comment on whether the attacks were carried out by the same people, or on whether they were revenge attacks by Shi'ite Muslims following a stampede on a bridge in Baghdad on Wednesday (Sep 1) in which around 1,000 Shi'ite pilgrims died. -- Reuters.

Kirkuk, Sep 3 -- All exports of Iraq's Kirkuk crude oil through a major pipeline to Ceyhan on Turkey's Mediterranean coast were stopped today after a bomb blast set the pipeline on fire, an oil ministry source said. "The blast halted all exports, it stopped them completely," the source told Reuters. The pipeline was hit by an explosion early today and caught fire for several hours, a guard on the pipeline, who declined to be identified, told Reuters. The pipeline runs from the major northern Iraqi oilfield of Kirkuk to Ceyhan. The explosion took place near Fatha, between Kirkuk and the city of Baiji. The guard gave no further details. Another guard said a roadside bomb had been placed beside the pipeline some four km from Fatha, which is 95 km south-west of Kirkuk. By 1430 hrs (1030, UTC) the fire had been extinguished, a fire department official from Iraq's North Oil Company told Reuters, but he added that oil leaking from the pipeline had spilled some two km from the site of the explosion. It was not immediately clear how long it would take to repair the line and bring it back to full capacity. -- Reuters.

Baghdad, Sep 5 -- Up to 30 gunmen in 10 cars opened fire on Iraq's interior ministry at around 0615 (0215, UTC) this morning, killing two policemen and wounding five, police and interior ministry sources said. "Two policemen were killed and five wounded," an interior ministry source said, adding that the gunmen had used rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and automatic rifles. Iraq's Shi'ite and Kurdish-led government and US forces are facing a Sunni Arab insurgency which sees attacks on police and government forces on a daily basis. Tensions between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims have been exacerbated by an impending referendum on a proposed new constitution for Iraq which Sunnis fear will reduce their influence. Sunni Arabs were the dominant force in Iraqi politics under Saddam Hussein and before, despite accounting for only 20% of the population. The government confirmed on Sunday that Saddam would face trial on a charge of mass killing on Oct 19, just four days after the last date on which the referendum can be held, further adding to the mood of violence. Shi'ite Muslims blame Sunnis for firing rockets into a crowd of Shi'ite pilgrims last Wednesday (Aug 31) and later spreading rumours that there was a suicide bomber in the crowd, triggering a stampede which killed 1,005 people. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 5 -- Two British soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb in southern Iraq today, Britain's Ministry of Defence said. The incident took place in Basra province in the late morning local time, a ministry spokeswoman said. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: U.S. Marine jets today attacked two bridges across the Euphrates River near the Syrian border to prevent insurgents from using them to move foreign fighters and munitions into major cities, the U.S. command said. A Marine statement said U.S. and Iraqi forces also destroyed a "foreign fighter safe house," killed two foreigners and arrested three others during a raid Tuesday in the same area as the bridge attack. The fighting occurred a day after U.N. chief Kofi Annan said Iraq had become an even greater terrorist centre than the former Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. Attacks attributed to al-Qaida's wing in Iraq have increased in the Baghdad area and western Iraq. In statements posted on Islamic Web sites, al-Qaida in Iraq claimed responsibility for two attacks yesterday - a roadside bombing that killed two British soldiers west of Basra and a daring daylight assault against the Interior Ministry in Baghdad in which two policemen died. Also yesterday, U.S. Marines said that al-Qaida in Iraq launched multiple attacks on Sunday (Sep 4) against U.S. and Iraqi targets in Hit, 85 miles west of Baghdad. Fifteen people - including 11 civilians, an Iraqi soldier and three suicide bombers - died in the Hit attacks. Elsewhere, Iraqi officials said that al-Qaida-linked foreign fighters had taken control of large areas of a strategic city on the Syrian border after weeks of fighting between an Iraqi tribe that supports the insurgents and one that opposes them. The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal, said much of Qaim, 200 miles west of Baghdad, had been abandoned after weeks of tribal fighting. The attacks in the Hit area began Sunday morning when two suicide car bombs exploded at security barricades on the northwest side of town, a Marine statement said. Shortly afterward, a vehicle car bomb exploded on the Hit bridge across the Euphrates River, rendering it impassable, the Marines said. The Marine statement said three insurgents and one Iraqi soldier died in the Sunday attacks. The government in Baghdad said eight civilians also died. Also yesterday, gunmen seized one of the sons of the governor of insurgent-infested Anbar province, Mamoun Sami Rashid al-Alwani, officials said on condition of anonymity for fear of insurgent reprisal. The abduction occurred in the provincial capital of Ramadi west of Baghdad. U.S. and Iraqi officials had hoped Iraq's new constitution, which goes to the voters in a referendum Oct. 15, would in time help pacify the insurgency by luring Sunni Arabs from the movement.

However, Sunni negotiators rejected the constitution and vowed to defeat it in the referendum. The bitter, protracted negotiations appeared to have raised tensions among the country's ethnic and religious communities. About 1,500 people, mostly Sunnis, rallied yesterday near the Sunni city of Ramadi to protest the draft charter. Iraq's president said yesterday he and the other top Kurdish leader had agreed to changes in the draft constitution to mollify concerns among Arab countries that the wording in the charter loosened Iraqi ties to the Arab world. The language at issue describes Iraq as an Islamic - but not Arab country - a concession to the non-Arab Kurds who form about 15 percent of the Iraqi population. Talabani did not specify what changes in the language had been agreed to by him and Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: US troops have officially handed over military control of the southern city of Najaf to Iraqi forces. It is the first of a planned series of security transfers across Iraq, paving the way for an eventual withdrawal of foreign forces from the country. Iraq's army is "capable of responding to all security needs... we are now here in a strictly advisory mode," said US commander Lt-Col James Oliver. The ceremony installed Iraqi troops in the strategic Forward Operating Base (FOB) Hotel in southern Najaf, while US forces withdrew to a base further outside the city. Washington has refused to set a deadline for withdrawal of US-led forces from Iraq, saying the timetable depends on the Iraqis' ability to maintain security. Elsewhere in Iraq, officials say large areas of the north-western city of Qaim have been taken over by insurgents loyal to the militant Islamist organisation al-Qaeda. Reports say gunman are patrolling the streets and summarily executing alleged collaborators with the US-backed regime in Baghdad. US troops are stationed outside the town, but reportedly do not have the capability to retake it while an assault on another rebel stronghold, Talafar to the north, has drawn away US troops. In other incidents, a roadside bombing followed by armed clashes has left four Iraqi troops and three civilians dead in the town of Khalidiya, near Falluja, west of Baghdad. An Iraqi army officer was killed by gunmen in Dhuluiya, north of Baghdad. High pressure water pipes in north-east Baghdad were sabotaged overnight, causing drinking water supplies to be suspended in large sections of the capital, Sharqia TV reported.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: A blast today damaged a pipeline used for shipping oil from a field near the Iranian border to Baghdad, police said. The explosion on the line from Khanaqin to the al-Dora refinery caused a blaze in Thiaa Thiaa village, east of the city

Baqouba which is 60 kilometres north of the capital, the provincial police said.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Four US security contractors have been killed by a roadside bomb in the southern Iraqi city of Basra. Officials said the men worked at the US consulate and were attacked on their way from the airport to central Basra. TV pictures showed an overturned vehicle near a busy road. Three of the victims died instantly and a fourth died later in hospital. The British military said its forces were securing the area, and an investigation had started. Eyewitnesses said a convoy of four all-terrain vehicles was driving along the road when the attack happened. "A roadside bomb blew up the last car," one witness said.

Basra, Sep 7 -- A car bomb shattered the relative peace of the southern Iraqi city of Basra after dark today, killing 16 people and wounding 20 in a district packed with restaurants, officials said. At least two children were among the dead carried away by rescuers from the popular Sayed restaurant. Police said a pick-up truck had exploded outside it. They found no evidence of a suicide attacker, they added. Coming at the end of a day on which al-Qaeda claimed a bomb attack that killed four US security guards on diplomatic duties in Basra, it was not clear who had brought such violence to the relatively calm and mainly Shi'ite Muslim south. Although there have been tensions among rival Shi'ite militias and between armed groups and British occupying forces around Basra, major attacks on civilians of the sort associated with Sunni Islamist militants linked to al-Qaeda are rare. Early today, four US security guards died when a bomb hit their vehicle near Basra, the US embassy said in a statement. All four worked for a private security firm supporting the US embassy office in Basra. Meanwhile, US contractor, Roy Hallums, was freed by US troops from a remote farmhouse near Baghdad after being kidnapped in Mosul last November, a military spokesman said. He had been held hostage for 10 months since being kidnapped in Baghdad. A military statement said Hallums was freed after the military received information from an Iraqi detainee. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: U.S. and Iraqi forces have encircled the insurgent stronghold of Tal Afar, and Iraqi authorities today announced the arrest of 200 suspected insurgents there - most of them foreign fighters. The Iraqi military said 150 of those arrested yesterday were Arabs from Syria, Sudan, Yemen and Jordan. The joint forces have reported heavy battles on the outskirts of the city and several deadly bombings that have mainly killed civilians. Iraqi authorities reported most of the civilian population had fled the city, which is 260 miles north of Baghdad and about 35 miles from the Syrian

border. "Our forces arrested 150 non-Iraqi Arabs yesterday in addition to 50 Iraqi terrorists with fake documents as they were trying to flee the city with the (civilian) families," said Iraqi army Capt. Mohammed Ahmed. "We ordered the families to evacuate the Sunni neighborhood of Sarai, which is believed to be the main stronghold of the insurgents," Ahmed said. Eight civilians were killed in the city yesterday by a suicide car bomber at an Iraqi checkpoint, he said. Tal Afar is 90 percent Turkmen, and 70 percent of them are Sunnis. After the ouster of Saddam Hussein, the United States installed a largely Shiite leadership in the city, including the mayor and much of the police force. The Sunni majority has complained of oppression by the government and have turned to the insurgents - who are mainly Sunnis - for protection. Early today, a militant Web site carried a videotape showing the destruction of a U.S. Bradley Fighting Vehicle in Tal Afar. The video, emblazoned with the logo of al-Qaida in Iraq, claimed the armoured vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb. Twenty miles south of Baghdad, police today reported finding 14 unidentified bodies near the farming town of Mahmoudiya. "All the bodies are in civilian clothes and have no identification documents," said Lt. Adnan Abdullah of the Mahmoudiya police. They had been shot to death, he said. Two more decomposing bodies, blindfolded and handcuffed, were found on the outskirts of Baghdad, near a sewage plant, police said. A car bombing yesterday at a take-out restaurant in a central Basra market killed 16 and wounded 21, said an Interior Ministry official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters. The felaful restaurant is in the Hayaniyah district market, a Shiite section of the city, Basra police Lt. Col. Karim al-Zaidi said. Two police vehicles and several nearby shops were destroyed in the blast. Also yesterday, an official of the court that will try Saddam Hussein discounted a claim by Iraq's president that the former leader had admitted wrongdoing in a confession to mass killings and other crimes during his rule. In an Iraqi television interview aired Tuesday (Sep 6), President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, said Saddam had confessed he ordered the killing of more than 180,000 Kurds in the north of the country in the late 1980s. The official of the Iraq Special Tribunal, which will put Saddam on trial on Oct 19, said Saddam made a statement last month, but did not confess to criminal activity. The former dictator "boastfully" acknowledged a campaign against the Kurds in 1987-88. "He said it was legal and justified," according to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the case.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: A suicide car bomber detonated his explosives-laden BMW in the centre of the Baghdad today, targeting a passing convoy of

private American security agents - the second attack in a week near the heavily fortified Sadir Hotel. An Iraqi police official said one passer-by was injured but no one in the convoy was hurt in the explosion, which sent a huge plume of smoke into the sky in Baghdad's busy Karradah neighbourhood, a main shopping and commercial district.

ISRAEL

Gaza, Sep 5 -- An explosion tore through the home of a Palestinian family active in the Hamas militant group today, killing at least four people and drawing vows of revenge against Israel, which denied any connection with the blast. The blast in the Gaza City's Sajaiya neighbourhood, which also wounded 36 people, destroyed the home of the Farhat family, well-known locally for its involvement in Hamas's military wing, and two nearby houses. "Our final information is that an Apache helicopter fired a rocket at the house, targeting the people inside. Four people were killed. At least two of them are members of Hamas," said Mushir al-Masri, a spokesman for the faction. The Palestinian Interior Ministry said an explosion had taken place inside the house. Palestinian security officials said they had opened an investigation which would also examine whether explosives were stored in the building and detonated prematurely. -- Reuters.

Jerusalem, Sep 6 -- Two rockets fired from the Gaza Strip slammed into southern Israel today, after Israel killed a Palestinian cutting his way into a demolished Jewish settlement in Gaza, an Israeli newspaper website said. The site of the "Maariv" daily newspaper said the rockets were fired from Beit Hanoun in northern Gaza and struck near the collective Yad Mordechai, causing no damage or injury. -- Reuters.

Gaza, Sep 7 -- Palestinian militants dragged former security chief Moussa Arafat from his Gaza home and shot the 64-year old dead in the street today, deepening internal turmoil ahead of Israel's military pullout from the territory. He was the most senior figure killed in factional violence that has stirred doubt about the ability of security forces to keep order in a brewing power struggle in the territory. Arafat, a major-general and cousin of late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, was a Gaza strongman who had retained an advisory role to President Mahmoud Abbas after being fired as head of military intelligence in April. In a statement, Abbas said no effort would be spared to arrest Arafat's killers and free his son. "This assassination ... will not undermine our efforts to impose law and public order." The gunmen abducted Arafat's son, Manhal, who is in his 30s. A militant coalition, the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC), claimed responsibility for what it called the "liquidation" of Arafat and snatching of his son. PRC spokesman Abu Abir said Arafat's son was being questioned

by his captors but did not say what the PRC would do with him. Arafat had survived several previous assassination attempts, including a car bomb attack on an Arafat convoy last year. -- Reuters.

IVORY COAST

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: A U.N. peacekeeper was killed today in a knife attack in a northern rebel stronghold of the war-divided country, a U.N. official said. The attack on the Moroccan soldier came shortly after midnight in the city of Bouake, according to U.N. spokesman Renald Boismoreau. A buffer zone patrolled by 6,000 U.N. troops and 4,000 French peacekeepers separates northern rebel fighters and Ivory Coast loyalist forces in the south. President Laurent Gbagbo's party and pro-government militias have been demanding they quit the country, charging they are partisan.

NEPAL

Katmandu, Sep 3 -- Nepal's Maoist rebels announced a three-month cease-fire starting today, their chief said, in a move to win support from political parties opposed to King Gyanendra's seizure of power in February. For "this period, our People's Liberation Army will be in defensive positions," the chief, Prachanda, said. "The P.L.A. will not launch any offensive from its side," he said. "We believe our move will encourage all forces, within and outside Nepal, who want peace through a forward-moving political solution." "We take this very positively," said Arjun Narsingh K. C., a spokesman for the Nepali Congress, the biggest party. He expressed hope that the cease-fire would help establish a permanent peace. Nepal's mainstream political parties said in July that they would talk with the rebels about joint protests against Gyanendra's seizure of power, but added that the rebels must stop the violence as a condition for talks. Prachanda also promised in July that the rebels would not attack unarmed civilians and would stop extortion. It also urged the seven parties to choose negotiators for talks on a united campaign against the king. More than 5,000 people attended a rally here today, organised by the seven parties to demand the return of democracy. Protesters holding red and white party flags and banners criticising the king sat cross-legged and shouted slogans. The truce, if it holds, would be the longest since talks collapsed in August 2003. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated Sep 4, states: Police in Nepal have detained dozens of opposition leaders and activists as thousands attended a pro-democracy rally in Kathmandu. The rally came a day after Nepal's Maoists declared a unilateral three-month cease-fire. The protesters were rallying against King Gyanendra, who has now ruled directly for six months. Former premier Girija Prasad Koirala was

among those detained. He fainted and was treated in hospital. Police used tear-gas and baton charges to break up demonstrators they said had tried to enter central areas declared off limits by the authorities. A day after declaring their ceasefire, the rebels adopted a hard-line position on talks with the king's government. They said they would talk only with opposition parties. The government has yet to make a formal response to the ceasefire.

PAKISTAN

Miranshah, Sep 5 -- Gunmen killed two government officials today in an ambush in Pakistan's tribal belt, near the Afghan border, a witness said. The attack took place while the two officials were patrolling a bazaar in Miranshah, the main town in the North Waziristan region. Two of the officials' guards and two passers-by were wounded. No one claimed responsibility, but in the past authorities have blamed such assaults on al Qaeda-linked guerrillas hiding in the region after fleeing from neighbouring Afghanistan. -- Reuters.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Sep 2 -- A 30-year-old crew member who was severely burned in a bomb explosion on board ferry Dona Ramona died in hospital in Zamboanga City on Wednesday (Aug 31). This brings the number of fatalities in the terrorist attack to two, police authorities said. A 13-year old boy died at Camp Navarro hospital in Zamboanga City on Monday, also from severe burns. Nine more victims are in critical condition, authorities said. About 30 people were injured after an improvised firebomb exploded inside the vessel on Aug 28. The vessel was docked at Lamitan port, Basilan island, when the incident occurred. Authorities suspect that the Al-Qaeda-linked Abu-Sayyaf was responsible for the bombing. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Investigators of Task Force Lamitan have achieved a breakthrough in the probe behind the explosion on ferry Dona Ramona on Aug 28 which killed two people and injured 27 others in Basilan. A member of the investigating team said that the team had obtained a statement from a witness the bombers had entrusted with a box of incendiary explosive. The witness, a contractual employee of the Basilan Shipping Lines, told investigators that, on the day of the explosion, a certain "Fernando" asked him to bring a carton box wrapped in plastic to the ferry canteen. The witness, the source said, told investigators that he left the box on the countertop and tended to his tasks. Subsequently, the explosion occurred. With the revelation, investigators are confident of producing a sketch of the suspect to ascertain his identity. The source said that, days before the explosion, a crewman named Paul Go received a threat through a text message from an

unknown sender that said: "There is a threat to the ship." He shared the message with his co-worker, Melchor Anino. Go, however, erased the message, unaware that the threat would be carried out days later. The breakthrough in the case came on the heels of the death of two possible key witnesses in the blast -- 30-year-old Isnain Olmoc and 13-year-old Sonny Boy Hamac. The two were reportedly nearest to the explosive planted by the bombers at the canteen of the vessel docked at the Lamitan Wharf. Nine victims are recuperating in hospitals around Zamboanga City.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: The death toll from the bombing of ferry Dona Ramona has risen to three following the death of 18-year-old Emmanuel Torres on Monday night (Sep 5) in a local hospital. Torres, a resident of Barangay Kulaybato, Lamitan, succumbed to third-degree burns. Of the more than 30 passengers injured during the blast, eight are still recuperating in different hospitals in Zamboanga City.

RUSSIA

London, Aug 25 -- A press report, dated today, states: The prime minister of Russia's Ingushetia republic has been wounded when two bombs targeted his car in an assassination attempt, his office said. Prime Minister Ibragim Malsagov was injured in the leg but is in satisfactory condition in a hospital after the car he was riding in was hit by an explosive device in the city of Nazran this afternoon. Only a few seconds later, there was a second explosion, which the prime minister's driver was able to avoid, the prime minister's office said. One of the prime minister's security guards was killed in the attack and two other security personnel were wounded. Nazran is the main city in the Ingushetia region, which has suffered frequent spillover violence from neighbouring Chechnya and attacks by native militants and criminal gangs. Last week, the Nazran police chief was wounded when unknown assailants detonated a radio-controlled land mine as his car was passing.

London, Aug 29 -- A press report, dated Aug 27, states: An explosion derailed a passenger train in Russia's southern Dagestan region but caused no injuries, say reports. The train was travelling to the capital Makhachkala from the Caspian port of Astrakhan when the blast happened at 2300, local time, 1900, GMT. The locomotive and two carriages came off the track in the Khasavyurt region. Dagestan, which borders Chechnya, is an ethnically diverse mainly Muslim region with a history of violence by both rebel groups and criminal gangs. Investigators are working at the site to discover the cause of the blast, said a local interior ministry official. RIA Novosti news agency quoted a local official as saying an explosive device had been left on the rail tracks and exploded as the train passed. Local

transport police told Itar-Tass news agency that a gunman opened fire on the car of FSB security service officials as they headed to the blast site. One officer was injured and taken to a nearby hospital, the agency added.

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: A bomb exploded today in a pile of garbage in the capital of the southern Russian region of Dagestan, killing a serviceman and wounding five others who had been searching for explosives, police said. An engineering unit had been sent to the site, on a street leading to the base where it is stationed, said Ilyamin Magomedov, head of the Kirov district police department in the capital, Makhachkala. After they got out of the truck and started their search, the bomb went off, apparently triggered by remote control, he said. News agencies had earlier reported varying casualty tolls. The ITAR-Tass news agency, citing preliminary information from the Dagestani Interior Ministry, said two servicemen had been killed and three others wounded. Later, it said the Interior Ministry had corrected its toll to six servicemen and one civilian wounded, but none killed. The RIA-Novosti and Interfax news agencies quoted medical officials as saying that one soldier had been killed and six wounded. RIA-Novosti said the blast occurred near a trolley bus terminus in the capital, Makhachkala.

Makhachkala, Russia, Sep 7 -- A roadside bomb killed a Russian soldier in the turbulent Caucasus region of Dagestan today, a day after three policemen were killed in an attack blamed on local Islamists. The local interior minister said the soldier had been checking for bombs around a military camp near the town of Khasavyurt on the border with Chechnya when the blast occurred. Interfax news agency reported fresh fighting in Chechnya today, with pro-Moscow officials saying they had wiped out a rebel group near the village of Urus-Martan, south of Chechen capital Grozny. Unknown gunmen killed the three Dagestani police yesterday as they drove along a road near the town of Izberbash, some 70 km south of the regional capital Makhachkala. Local police blamed the attack on Islamist groups. -- Reuters.

SAUDI ARABIA

Riyadh, Sep 4 -- Two suspected militants and a policeman were killed in clashes in the eastern oil city of Dammam today, security sources said. One of the suspected militants died during a daytime gunfight in the city on the kingdom's east coast and a second died later of his wounds in hospital. A policeman died hours later in a shoot-out at a house where security forces said a third suspect was hiding. Thirteen policemen were wounded in the gunfight late last night. -- Reuters.

SRI LANKA

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated Aug 31, states: Tamil Tiger

rebels today rejected a government offer to hold crucial talks inside Sri Lanka, officials said, dealing a blow to efforts to revive the island's stalled peace process. The rebels' rejection of the offer came a week after the government refused Norway as the venue for the talks to review an increasingly fragile truce, arguing the rebels would use a foreign location to promote their autonomy bid. Both sides have turned down several offers, complicating efforts to hold what would be the first high-level negotiations since talks stalled in 2003, a year after they were brokered by Norway. The Tigers, citing security concerns, had said they would not attend the talks if they are held in-country, officials involved in the peace process said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly or to be quoted in the news media. A location in government-held areas of northern Sri Lanka - or even in neutral territory between government and rebel lines - were suggested as an alternative but were rejected by the rebels. The setback came as European cease-fire monitors warned that increasing violence in eastern Sri Lanka could re-ignite the war that began in 1983 with the Tamil's push to carve out a separate homeland. Punctuating the dispute over the negotiations has been sporadic fighting in recent weeks in the volatile east, violence that each side has blamed on the other. In the latest fighting, four soldiers and one policeman were wounded in a series of attacks today, prompting European cease-fire monitors to warn that the skirmishes could lead to renewed war. Analysts said neither side seems to be particularly keen to move ahead with the talks before presidential elections are held that will usher in a new leader. President Chandrika Kumaratunga cannot run for a third term. No date has yet been set, but the vote must be held before Nov 22.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Three Tamil Tiger rebels have been killed and five injured in a clash in the east of Sri Lanka, rebels say. The Tigers say their members were attacked by a heavily-armed group of Sri Lankan army soldiers, the pro-rebel TamilNet website reports, but the defence ministry has denied any involvement in the clash at a rebel base in Vakarai and suggested instead that a breakaway rebel faction might be to blame. Eastern Sri Lanka has been tense since a split in rebel ranks last year. Media in Sri Lanka have reported that they have been contacted by the rival Tiger faction who say they attacked an LTTE camp in the Vakarai area, killing nine rebels and injuring 13 others. The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) which monitors the ceasefire between the government and Tamil Tigers says that it has received no complaint from the Tigers about the incident. Meanwhile the defence ministry said

that one army soldier had been killed in a separate attack by the LTTE in the east today.

SUDAN

London, Aug 31 -- Fighting may have died down in Sudan's crisis-torn Darfur region, but rampant banditry has taken its place and is hitting key humanitarian aid convoys, the UN said today. "There has been a tremendous rise in banditry. Not a single day goes by without two, three or four attacks on aid convoys," Keith McKenzie, UNICEF's representative in Darfur since 2004, told a new conference in London. "You never know when you are going to be hit or where. They seem to be targeting the humanitarian community and workers. If anything, the situation there is more unstable," he added. Fighting between Arab militias and rebels in the western region has decreased in recent months but UNICEF, the United Nations' children's fund, said there were still more than three million refugees and conditions were dire. Some two million of these were in more than 200 camps scattered around the region the size of France. The remainder were in isolated pockets and continuing to drift towards the already overfilled camps, putting them under intense pressure. "That is where the crisis is right now," McKenzie said. "There is a tremendous need. That is where the priority lies." He said the bandits came from both rebel and pro-government militias -- not the Sudanese Army -- and were attacking aid convoys because they were soft targets. "It is opportunistic. They see an aid convoy, hold it up and take everything there," McKenzie said. He said the 11,000 aid workers in Darfur were doing a superb job but warned the rising lawlessness was making some agencies consider reducing the size of their operations just when the need for their presence was growing. Martin Bell, UNICEF's ambassador for humanitarian emergencies and a former war correspondent and politician, said the international community had lost interest in Darfur since a January peace deal ended a separate north-south civil war in Sudan after more than 20 years. Bell praised the African Union ceasefire monitoring force -- which he said needed more people as well as far more logistic and communications support -- and urged the world to refocus on the crisis around new peace talks scheduled for Sep 15. "The prospect of half the population living in camps for the foreseeable future is simply not acceptable," he told the news conference. -- Reuters.

Khartoum, Sep 7 -- Rebels from eastern Sudan released three ruling party politicians, kidnapped in May as they returned from a conference in the region, a senior local official said today. The three men arrived in Port Sudan yesterday after rebels released them without preconditions following mediation efforts by the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC).

"They are free now," Red Sea state governor Hatim al-Wasiyla said. "The Red Cross facilitated contacts between the two sides and carried out mediation." The three men, politicians from the National Congress Party, were kidnapped after they left a government-organised conference in the town of Kassala near the Eritrean border on May 24. "The rebels didn't want money or anything for releasing the men ... they took them to make a statement, to say 'we are here' " Wasiyla said. The eastern rebel groups -- the Free Lions and the Beja Congress -- have clashed sporadically with government forces. The Justice and Equality Movement, one of the two main Darfur rebel groups, has said it joined forces with the eastern rebels to kidnap the politicians. -- Reuters.

TURKEY

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: One man was killed and five officers were injured during clashes between Kurdish protesters and police in south-eastern Turkey. Around 1,000 Kurds were demanding the release of the bodies of six men accused of being Kurdish separatists in the town of Batman. The six were killed during fighting with the Turkish military last week. The violence comes after the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) announced a unilateral ceasefire 10 days ago. Police asked the protestors to disperse and fired warning shots, tear gas and water cannon. They said the dead man had been hit by a stray bullet. Turkish forces launched an operation against PKK militants in Batman last Thursday (Aug 25), when the six suspected rebels were killed. The fighting came just a week after the PKK ordered its armed wing to refrain from violence for a month.

Istanbul, Sep 4 -- Turkish police fired tear gas and wielded batons today to disperse stone-throwing crowds in Istanbul protesting in support of Abdullah Ocalan, the jailed leader of the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The demonstrators hurled petrol bombs and stones, blocked roads in various parts of the city and set fire to a bus, the police said in a statement. Television pictures showed police using water cannon to disperse the crowds. Eighty-eight people were detained in the city. The protesters had been gathering at various places, planning to attend a mass protest in the western province of Bursa but did not go as authorities did not give permission for the meeting. Police also stopped buses carrying protesters from mainly Kurdish south-eastern Turkey from entering Bursa. The crowds chanted slogans in support of Ocalan, who is held in an island prison near the site of the planned protest. -- Reuters.

UGANDA

Kampala, Sep 6 -- Ugandan troops killed 16 rebels in the remote north of the country in two attacks in recent days, the army said today. Military spokesman Lt. Col. Shaban Bantariza

said four Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) fighters were shot dead in Pader District on Sunday (Sep 4). "Then late on Monday we caught up with another group near the River Aswa in Gulu and killed 12 of them," he added. Uganda's army says LRA leader Joseph Kony is hiding in southern Sudan, and under a 2002 deal with Khartoum it can pursue him there. Ugandan troops are only allowed to roam south of the road between the Sudanese towns of Juba and Torit. But Ugandan military chiefs say Kony, a self-proclaimed prophet, retreated north of this so-called "Red Line" last month, and they want Sudan's government to let them follow him. "This is what we have been discussing with Khartoum," Bantariza said. "For now, Kony is having an undeserved rest." -- Reuters.

Labour Disputes



FIJI

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Fiji's Electricity Authority says it is confident it can maintain most electricity supplies during today's expected strike by power workers. The strike over cost of living allowance adjustments has been declared illegal. The chief executive officer of the Fiji Electricity Authority, Rokoseru Nabalarua, told a news conference in Suva late yesterday that about 30 per cent of the staff were not members of the unions that have called the strike. He says the authority is making sure that at least the critical locations are manned. Talks aimed at averting the strike appear to have failed. The Government has criticised the union leaders alleging the strike is political and aimed at coinciding with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference in Nadi.

FINLAND

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated Sep 1, states: Stevedores in the key southern Finnish port of Kotka went on strike today to protest against job cuts announced yesterday, in the latest labour row to hit Finland's forestry sector. Union official Juha Anttila said that 600 workers walked off the job at dockyard operator Steveco at 0600 today and would stay out until 1400, Saturday. Steveco said it regretted the action. It gave no details about the number of staff on strike, but said in a statement that foremen who had walked out on today would return at 0600 tomorrow. The company announced yesterday it was cutting 253 jobs. "Steveco announced it would lay off permanent stevedore staff although it makes new contracts every day," Anttila said. "We can not accept this situation when there is constantly more work to be done than we have time for."

London, Sep 3 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: Employees of the stevedoring company Steveco went on strike at the port of Kotka yesterday. Both the stevedores and their supervisors walked off the job in protest at plans to reduce personnel by the main stevedoring company at Finland's largest export harbour. The supervisors went back to work today, while the stevedores are to stay off the job until tomorrow afternoon. On Wednesday (Aug 31), after the completion of mandatory talks with personnel representatives, Steveco announced that it would cut 253 jobs at the ports of Kotka and nearby Hamina. Most of the cuts will be covered by retirement arrangements, but 76 employees are to be let go. Head shop steward Juha Anttila feels that the job cuts are unfair, because as he sees it, the company keeps hiring new people every day. Anttila refers to the approximately 50 stevedores who work on the docks on a temporary basis one day at a time. The union feels that the hiring of temporary workers, which was originally supposed to be a stopgap measure to deal with sudden backlogs, has become a permanent feature. Anttila does not feel that there is any shortage of work at the harbour, and warns that if the cutbacks are implemented, the remaining employees will have to do vast amounts of overtime. He also fears that work that is now done in Kotka could move to Helsinki or Hamina.

FRANCE

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Production at Total SA's refinery at Gonfreville l'Orcher near Le Havre has been halted by a strike, according to the CGT union. The entire early shift at the plant has "downed tools", the union said, in response to the company downgrading the status of four staff at another refinery in La Mede on disciplinary grounds. Management at Gonfreville - France's largest refinery, employing 1,600 - declined to comment. CGT, which on Monday (Sep 5) called for industrial action across all of Total's French installations, said the strike is also affecting refineries at La Mede, Donges, Feyzin and Grandpuits.

GHANA

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Gold Fields Ltd said operations at its Tarkwa gold mine in Ghana have been interrupted as a result of a wildcat strike. Around half of the mine's 1,200 employees went on strike on Sunday, Aug 28. Gold Fields said the illegal industrial action, which is not supported by the Ghana Mineworkers Union, follows last week's agreement on the annual wage review between the union and the company. The company said it has engaged with the affected parties and aims to resolve the situation and to return the mine to full production as soon as possible.

INDIA

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

ITALIAN AIRLINE PERSONNEL

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Flight attendants for Italy's state-controlled airline Alitalia went on strike today, at the start of a 48-hour strike, with travellers facing delays and cancellations. The walkout, which started shortly after midnight, was scheduled to last through until tomorrow night. The Sult union that called the strike said its members would work between 0700 and 1000 hrs and then again from 1800 to 2100 hrs each day, to allow a truce period for travellers. Strikers were risking fines for defying a transport ministry order to postpone the strike. The ministry said that not enough advance notice had been given for the strike. Alitalia said it had cancelled 21 flights ahead of the strike, warning passengers and booking them on other flights, but insisted the cancellations were not caused by Sult's protest. Alitalia said the cancellations were due to shortage of aircraft and local labour unrest in Turin and Bologna unrelated to the national strike. Sult and Alitalia have been locked in a dispute over recognising the union. The strike was originally set for Aug 30-31, but was postponed by a week because Italian law prohibits transport strikes during the heavy travel weeks of August.

SOUTH KOREA

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: Workers have stepped up strike action at South Korea's largest automaker, Hyundai Motor, shutting down production and preparing for a mass rally, company officials said. More than 20,000 workers downed tools on the day shift for four hours until noon and 10,000 night shift workers said they would keep the plant idle overnight from 2100 until 0800 tomorrow. "Production stopped again. All is quiet now," an official of Hyundai Motor in the southern city of Ulsan said. The union has called for a massive rally on the company premises later today, he said. "Despite the strike action, we will meet the union again later today to continue labor-management negotiations," the Hyundai official said. The strike action began Thursday last week when workers downed tools for two hours. The stoppage cost the firm 233.6 billion won in lost output. Hyundai's affiliate Kia Motors has also been hit by a strike as Kia's 27,000 workers launched a five-day partial walkout from Monday, calling for pay hikes and better working conditions. Hyundai and Kia control more than 70% of the country's auto market. Kia said this week's strike would result in financial losses amounting to 97 million dollars.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Workers at Hyundai Motor and its affiliate Kia Motors have launched a three-day work stoppage, ignoring a plea from major business organisations to end their strike. Five major associations of traders and exporters including the

Federation of Korean Industries which represents South Korea's leading conglomerates, said the auto workers should return to work. "The strikes which have hit the auto industry every year are damaging exports and the image of our nation," the organisations said in a joint statement. Hyundai's strike began on Aug 25 with workers downing tools for periods of several hours. A similar rolling strike began at associate company Kia four days later. The two companies control more than 70 percent of the country's auto market. Workers want higher pay, reduced working hours and a say in management decisions including plans for building overseas plants.

SRI LANKA

Karachi, Sept 1 -- The strike of Sri Lanka Locomotive Drivers' Union continues to protest the Government's failure to rectify their salary anomalies. An official of union said the salary anomalies of our field of work have not been addressed for over 20 years. We have conveyed our grievances to the Railways Minister and he has directed officials to take action. But there is no effort on their part to address the problem," he said. The engine drivers' island wide strike continued to cripple train services for the last two days despite strenuous efforts by railway authorities to maintain a satisfactory service. Meanwhile, Railways Ministry Secretary K. Haputhanthri told local media: "We are trying our best to provide a satisfactory service regardless of the strike". Accordingly, retired and competent engine drivers have been called for service. A group of non-striking engine drivers are also assisting us to continue the service," he said. However, over 100 trains on the usual schedule had to be cancelled yesterday due to the strike, which left thousands of commuters stranded at railway stations and bus terminals. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent

Karachi, Sep 4 -- The strike by Sri Lankan locomotive operators entered its sixth day yesterday. Railway Minister Felix Perera took a firm stand on the ongoing train strike, saying he was not prepared to hold discussions with the striking locomotive operators until they call off their trade union action. The Minister told local media that it was impossible at this juncture to grant a salary increase to striking engine drivers who already receive an average pay packet of around rupees 45,000 per month. "The Cabinet made a unanimous decision on Jul 29 not to revise the salaries of the state sector in a manner that would hinder the activities of the National Administration Council. If we increase the engine drivers' salaries it would give rise to similar demands from other railway unions," he said. Meanwhile, according to the Railway Main Control Room, around 80 trains, including 36 morning trains and 40 evening trains, were operating yesterday despite the ongoing strike. "We have also been able to resume the

operation of goods trains and mail trains. Only a small number of trains have been cancelled owing to the strike," the minister said. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

TONGA

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Tongan Government workers who have been on strike for more than six weeks will return to work today after agreement was reached on a salary deal and a review of the country's political system. A Government negotiating team and the Public Service Association signed an agreement at the weekend which includes a significant political achievement for pro-democracy factions of Tongan society. Pesi Fonua, the editor of the online news site Matangi Tonga, said that the issues over money and democracy had been successfully separated and dealt with in a process helped by an appointed facilitator, Dr Sitiveni Halapua. During the six weeks the strike grew from an industrial dispute over pay rates into a wider political movement for reform. Mr Fonua said the strikers would return to work on their sought-after 60 to 80 percent pay increases for the next two years, but the rates could be reviewed if the cost could not be sustained from Government revenue. They had also pushed through a condition that the Cabinet look at setting up a royal commission to review the constitution and report back by the end of the year. At present the King appoints the Prime Minister and 12 members of the Cabinet. This year, for the first time, he allowed two elected people's representatives and two elected nobles into the Cabinet. Although the move was hailed as significant, the arrangement has achieved little for those wanting a more democratic structure as the elected Cabinet ministers have had to put the wishes of the wider Cabinet first. It has also been agreed that school principals, teachers and students will not be punished for their behaviour during the strike. Some Tonga College students trashed the school office after learning their principal, who had spoken out in favour of the strike, was to be transferred to another position in the Ministry of Education. Mr Fonua said he had heard that a further march was planned in Nuku'alofa tomorrow to call for the sacking of various Government officials.

Awards & Settlements**ABUSE OF IMMIGRANTS, UNITED STATES**

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Immigrants who claimed they were abused at a detention centre won a \$2.5 million

settlement from a private company that operated the centre for the federal government. After legal fees, some 1,600 detainees will divide about \$1.5 million based on how long they were held and what they said was done to them, the New Jersey Law Journal reported this week. US District Judge Dickinson R. Debevoise, in Newark, approved the settlement on Aug 10. The detainees were being held at the Elizabeth centre between August, 1994, and June, 1995, for what was then called the Immigration and Naturalisation Service. Many have since been deported. The centre was operated by Esmor Correctional Services, then based in Melville, NY, until shortly after a June, 1995, riot, when about 100 immigrants broke windows, destroyed furniture and overpowered guards, claiming they had suffered physical abuse and other inhumane conditions. The INS closed the centre and fired Esmor after its investigation found that poorly trained guards abused the detainees physically and mentally, gave them spoiled food and deprived them of sleep. The detention centre reopened in January, 1997, after renovations were completed by its new operator, Corrections Corp of America, of Nashville, Tennessee. Still pending is a related lawsuit against Esmor, now known as Correctional Services Corp, of Sarasota, Florida, by nine detainees who claim that political asylum seekers were abused and harassed at the centre. The judge last year dismissed their claims against the INS and its officials, saying the government cannot be sued.

HARRASSMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: A federal appeals court today substantially reduced the \$108 million in punitive damages a Portland, Oregon, jury awarded to several abortion doctors and clinics harassed by abortion opponents. A three-judge panel of the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals called the activists' actions reprehensible, but unanimously reduced the judgment to \$4.73 million to conform with a Supreme Court precedent limiting such damages. An attorney for many of the 12 activists who created Wild West-style posters and a Website targeting abortion doctors said the damages should be reduced further. "They were exercising their First Amendment rights," said attorney Ed White, of the Thomas More Law Centre. He was considering asking the court to reconsider. Three doctors listed on the Web site were murdered. The Supreme Court had already upheld lower court rulings that the activists' actions were not protected speech. Today's decision from the appeals court was based on a 2003 Supreme Court ruling generally limiting punitive damages to no more than nine times the amount of damages awarded to compensate for monetary losses. Maria Vullo, a Planned Parenthood attorney who represented the four doctors and two

abortion clinics, said that despite reducing the damage award, "the court made it clear the defendants' conduct was highly reprehensible." The four doctors, who said they feared for their lives, sued under racketeering laws and the 1994 law that made it illegal to incite violence against abortion doctors. During trial, targeted abortion doctors testified they used disguises, bodyguards, wore bulletproof vests, and instructed their children to crouch in the bathtub if they heard gunfire. A federal judge and the Portland jury found in 1999 that the Website and some of the posters were "true threats to kill." The jury awarded \$108 million in punitive damages to punish the 12 defendants, who operated under the group American Coalition of Life Activists, and another \$526,334 to cover their monetary losses. The San Francisco-based appeals court multiplied compensatory damages by nine to reach the \$4.73 million in punitive damages. The jury had punished some defendants with damages that were 30 or 40 times greater than the losses incurred by doctors and clinics.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A Kane County jury awarded more than \$4.5 million Wednesday (Sep 1) to a Huntley couple injured in a 2003 crash with a pizza-delivery driver. The jury found in favor of Wyman Carey, 68, and his wife Carol, 66, injured in a crash in Hampshire, the couple's attorneys and court officials said. The Careys were riding in the back seat of a vehicle on Feb 15, 2003, driven by Dr. Thomas Duffy of Huntley, when they were hit by a car delivering for Rosati's Pizza of Hampshire. Duffy admitted that he was partially at fault for the crash, according to his lawyer, Raymond Fabricius. The jury assigned 85 percent of the blame to Duffy, and the rest to the delivery driver and the pizzeria owned by T-Ricks Ltd., Fabricius said. Duffy's insurance paid the \$4.5 million verdict yesterday, and now Duffy will seek 15 percent from the pizzeria and the delivery driver, Fabricius said. Joshua Grisolia, 16 at the time, was delivering for Rosati's when his car hit Duffy's car as Duffy pulled into the eastbound lane of Illinois Highway 72 at Brier Hill Road about 2000 hrs. The crash left Wyman Carey with fractured vertebrae, partial paralysis and numbness, according to attorney Thomas Boleky, of Corboy & Demetrio. His wife suffered injuries that included a fractured rib, he said.

SHAREHOLDER LAWSUIT, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Royal Dutch Shell is set to pay \$9.2m to settle another shareholder lawsuit in the US as it works to close off the remaining fallout from its 2004 reserves scandal. The Anglo-Dutch oil major, that recently unified its ownership and

listing, has reached a settlement with US shareholders on their derivative action that was set up to force the company into corporate changes. The actions that were pending in the federal courts of New York and New Jersey sought to assert claims against current and former members of the board of directors and were looking for changes in corporate structure and governance. Under the terms of the settlement, Shell has agreed to pay \$9.2m in court costs and attorney fees for the derivative plaintiffs. It has also agreed on changes to corporate governance, some of which are already implemented, on areas such as policy, composition and function of the board of directors, financial reporting and compliance. "We are pleased to have taken another step towards putting the reserves recategorisation behind us," said Beat Hess, Shell's legal director. "And to have done so in a way that contributes to Shell's commitment to the highest standards of corporate governance, compliance and integrity." The world's third largest oil firm now has to wait for court approval before closing off this lawsuit. But it still has one other class action pending in the US by shareholders angered by the devaluation of their shareholdings immediately after the reserves recategorisation was announced.

UNFAIR DISMISSAL, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 3 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: A jury awarded more than \$4.7 million in damages today to 11 workers who say a contractor fired them for expressing safety concerns about work at the Hanford nuclear reservation. The workers say seven pipe fitters objected in 1997 when they were told to install a valve rated to withstand less pressure than was needed for a test of radioactive waste pipes. The crew was later laid off, but a settlement required the contractor, Fluor Federal Services Inc. of Arlington, Va., to rehire them. The plaintiffs' attorneys contended that foremen on the job were told they would have to lay off seven other pipe fitters to bring the first seven back. Attorneys for Fluor Federal Services argued there was not enough work at the Hanford site for all the pipe fitters. The jury awards ranged from \$89,700 for one plaintiff to more than \$553,000 for another. They sought lost wages, and all but one sought damages for emotional distress. The suit involved five of the original seven pipe fitters and six included in the second layoffs. Randy Squires, an attorney for Fluor Federal Services, said the company has 30 days to file notice that it plans to appeal. "The company's view is that it did not retaliate against these people," he said. The valve that was to have been installed was located in Hanford's so-called tank farms, which hold 53 million gallons of highly radioactive waste left from Cold War-era nuclear weapons production. Some of the 177 aging, underground tanks

are known to have leaked, threatening groundwater and the Columbia River less than 10 miles away. The Hanford site was created as part of the top-secret Manhattan Project to build an atomic bomb. Today, it is the nation's most contaminated nuclear site. Cleanup is expected to cost \$50 billion to \$60 billion, with the work to be finished by 2035.

VEHICULAR MANSLAUGHTER, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: A San Francisco jury awarded \$27 million today to the family of four-year-old girl killed in 2003 when she was struck by a Muni truck driver. After 3.5 weeks of trial, jurors deliberated almost five days before deciding for the family of Elizabeth Dominguez. The jury found that the driver, Sebastian Garcia, had been negligent when he drove into the intersection of Potrero Avenue and 24th Street on Feb. 11, 2003. Elizabeth was walking on the sidewalk with her mother when Garcia's truck hit her, pinning her against a restaurant. The girl died at the scene. Authorities investigated whether Garcia had run a red light, but the San Francisco district attorney wound up charging him with misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter, rather than a more serious felony. The girl's family said Garcia deserved more severe prosecution, but a spokesperson for then-District Attorney Terence Hallinan said at the time that conflicting witness accounts dictated what charges could be filed. Garcia, who is still employed at Muni, is scheduled to stand trial in January. If the verdict stands, it would be the largest personal injury award ever made by a jury against the city and county of San Francisco, according to Matt Dorsey, spokesman for City Attorney Dennis Herrera.

WORK RELATED ILLNESS, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A jury yesterday awarded a former popcorn-plant worker \$15 million after finding that his exposure to butter-flavoring fumes led to his severe respiratory problems. The verdict brings to nearly \$53 million the total amount awarded in the last two years against the makers of the popcorn flavouring, International Flavors & Fragrances Inc. of New York and a subsidiary, Bush Boake Allen Inc. Four other plaintiffs reached confidential settlements with the defendants last year. The plant where the plaintiffs worked, the Gilster-Mary Lee Corp. microwave popcorn factory in Jasper, Mo., has paid the employees' worker's compensation and has not been named as a defendant in any of the actions. The latest case was filed by Carthage, Mo., resident Stephen McNeely, 35, a machine operator who filled popcorn bags with salt and butter flavouring. McNeely, who worked at the plant from 1989 to 2001, developed

bronchiolitis obliterans, a rare, progressive lung disease that may require him to get a lung transplant. McNeely is one of about 30 former and current workers at the Jasper plant who have sued International Flavors and Bush Boake Allen.

Railway Accidents



AMAGASAKI, JAPAN

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: An interim report on the deadly Apr 25 crash of a speeding commuter train on West Japan Railway Co's Fukuchiyama Line touches on the driver's apparent erratic behaviour but leaves many questions unanswered. The report by the Aircraft and Railway Accidents Investigation Commission probing the derailment in Amagasaki, Hyogo Prefecture, was submitted yesterday to Land, Infrastructure and Transport Minister Kazuo Kitagawa. Its main conclusion is that speeding on the part of driver Ryujiro Takami, 23, caused the seven-car rapid service train to jump the tracks on a tight, 304-metre-radius curve and slam into a nine-storey condominium building, killing himself and 106 passengers and leaving 555 people injured. Officials of the commission said, however, they still had a long way to go before they could determine precisely why Takami failed to slow for the curve. It was widely reported that Takami was speeding to make up for lost time for fear of being punished by JR West but commission officials claimed they need more time to study the crash from an objective perspective. In the report, the commission said the rush-hour train was running at more than 110 kph -- well above the 70-kph speed limit for that section of track -- as it entered the sharp bend. According to data from the automatic train system, Takami applied the regular brakes only after the train entered the curve and never activated the emergency brakes. This has baffled experts, because drivers should instinctively sense a speeding danger and apply the brakes accordingly. Kozo Amano, a professor emeritus majoring in traffic engineering at Kyoto University, said drivers normally should start applying the regular brakes at least 300 to 400 meters before the curve to lower the speed to 70 kph. "It is conceivable that the driver was in an altered state," or was unconscious and unable to apply the brakes, Amano said. The train had overrun the platform at Itami Station, an earlier stop, by 70 metres, prompting speculation that Takami ran faster to make up for the time lost there, which reportedly amounted to 80 seconds. According to the report, Takami was involved in a 100-metre platform overrun at another station in June 2004.

DAGESTAN, RUSSIA

See "Dagestan, Russia" under "Political & Civil Unrest."

FRASER VALLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Canadian National freight train left the tracks in British Columbia's Fraser Valley, the latest in a series of derailments that have beset the railway. CN spokesman Jim Feeney said the westbound train consisting of two locomotives and 97 cars derailed near Cheam View. The train was loaded with dry sulphur. "The crew of the train is unhurt," Feeney said. CN officials and local emergency crews were dispatched to the scene, he added. B.C. Ministry of the Environment spokesman Max Cleevely said the derailment involved nine cars and was about 300 metres from the Fraser River. "The spill is being characterized as minor in volume," he said, calling it "controlled and well in hand." Cleevely said ministry spill-response officers were expected to examine the scene between Chilliwack and Abbotsford today.

HINTON AREA, ALBERTA, CANADA

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: For the second time in less than a month, a CN (Canadian National Railway) train has derailed in Alberta. The company says 10 cars left the tracks about 25 kilometres east of Hinton at about 0700 hrs, yesterday. CN spokesman Jim Feeny said one of the cars contained caustic soda, a dangerous substance, but it remained upright. Another car loaded with coke, a coal-like substance, tipped over, but Mr. Feeny said there will not be any damage to the environment. No one was hurt and the cause of the derailment is not known. Mr. Feeny says there is a double track at the site where the accident happened, so other trains can get around the wreckage.

LOUISA COUNTY, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Officials in Louisa County are on the scene of a train derailment. A spokesperson with the Louisa County Sheriff's Department says a train carrying gravel and clay overturned on Fredericksburg Avenue near Main Street around 1000 this morning. The train partly owned by Buckingham Branch Railroad and CSX was on its way to Doswell, Virginia. There were no hazardous materials on the four cars which overturned, or any of the other twelve forming the train. The are no injuries reported. The site of the derailment should clear by 2000 hrs tonight.

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: A freight train derailed early today without causing any injuries but it temporarily blocked

commuter train traffic on two Metrolink lines, officials said. The derailment occurred about 0410 in northern Orange County when a Burlington Northern Santa Fe platform car backed into a siding and struck other equipment, said Lena Kent, a spokeswoman for the railroad. The derailment blocked three tracks and prompted Metrolink to cancel two routes that run through the area, said Metrolink spokesman Francisco Oaxaca. One of the three tracks reopened at 0830 and the Metrolink trains were operating this afternoon with minor delays expected, Oaxaca said.

SOUTH HUTCHINSON AREA, KANSAS, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: Two freight train cars derailed, causing a tanker to spill 30,000 gallons of highly flammable ethanol into a ditch and forcing the evacuation of about 50 homes, authorities said. No injuries were reported in the Tuesday night (Aug 30) incident. The 17-car Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad train was headed to Hutchinson from Wichita when two tankers and an empty grain car jumped the track in a residential neighbourhood, said Jim Wineland, general manager of the K&O. One of the tankers tipped, spilling the ethanol into a water-filled ditch, said Scott Jones, police chief for South Hutchinson. Crews were sent in early today to upright the other derailed car, which had not spilled its load. Evacuees were being housed in a church, and classes at a nearby elementary school were cancelled today. Nearby businesses and government offices were expected to remain closed. A hazardous material team and firefighters were at the scene today, Jones said. He said sand and foam were poured onto the spill to help prevent the ethanol from igniting. Officials said it could be evening before evacuees could return to their homes. They were being escorted back briefly, one family at a time, to get belongings needed for the day. Jones said he didn't know what caused the derailment.



ZOTOB VIRUS

London, Aug 29 -- A press report, dated Aug 27, states: Computer software firm Microsoft has congratulated authorities in Turkey and Morocco on the arrests there of two men suspected of disrupting computer networks across the US last week. Farid Essebar, 18, of Morocco, and Atilla Ekici, 21, of Turkey, are believed to have been responsible for the Zotob worm that hit the Internet less than two weeks ago, along with predecessors called Rbot and Mytob

released earlier, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation said. Zotob caused computer outages at more than 100 US companies, including major media outlets like CNN and the New York Times, but it did not create widespread havoc along the lines of previous malicious software programs like SQL Slammer and MyDoom. Close teamwork among the FBI, Microsoft Corp and authorities in Morocco and Turkey was essential to the case, FBI Cyber Division assistant director Louis Reigel said. Mr Reigel says Essebar wrote the malicious code and provided it to Ekici for a fee. He says the two men will face prosecution in their native countries and FBI officials will provide evidence. Zotob targeted a recently discovered flaw in the Plug and Play feature of Microsoft's Windows 2000 operating system. Newer versions of the software were not affected. Users who heeded a prior warning from Microsoft and updated their systems were not victimised by the worms, but those who did not keep their systems up to date could have their computers taken over by remote servers or see them shut down and start back up repeatedly. Microsoft general counsel Brad Smith says the worms had a limited impact because more consumers were keeping their software up to date and using firewalls and anti-virus software. He says the software industry was taking threats more seriously as well. Mr Smith says Microsoft's team of 50 investigators was able to analyse the worms and find out where they were coming from. He says the team began work on the case in March after the release of Mytob, but Zytob provided the evidence to track them down.

Rabat, Sep 2 -- An 18-year-old maths student will go on trial in Morocco this month for unleashing computer worms that disrupted networks of major US firms, a Justice Ministry official said today. The FBI last week announced Moroccan Farid Essebar's arrest in Rabat and that in Turkey of 21-year-old Attila Ekici, both suspected of releasing the Zotob worm that hit the Internet three weeks ago. The official said Essebar's trial would start on Sep 13 and he would be in custody near Rabat until then. "The hearing will specify charges against him for the trial," the ministry official said. The Russian-born maths student is accused of illegal access to data systems, criminal conspiracy, aggravated theft and credit card piracy. Legal sources say he faces up to 10 years in jail if found guilty. The Rabat court will try another suspect, identified as 21-year-old Achraf Bahloul, on the same charges. "Bahloul got into this for having used Essebar's alias and pirated credit card data. We don't think Bahloul is directly involved in the Zotob attack," the official said. Police were trying to find any more Moroccan accomplices Essebar may have had, he said. Zotob caused computer outages at more than 100 US firms, including major media outlets like CNN, ABC and the New York Times, but did not create

widespread havoc like previous malicious software programmes like SQL Slammer and MyDoom. Close teamwork among the FBI, Microsoft Corp. and authorities in Morocco and Turkey helped net Essebar and Ekici 12 days after the attack. Using the alias Diab10 (Wolves10), Essebar is suspected of having helped Ekici create the Zotob worm in exchange for credit cards data, local newspapers said,. -- Reuters.



CABLE CAR CRASH, SOELDEN, TYROL, AUSTRIA

Vienna, Sep 5 -- Nine people were killed when a helicopter dropped a concrete block on a ski-lift, plunging a cable car filled with tourists down a mountainside in the western Austrian state of Tyrol, police said today. Austrian radio reported that the victims were mainly young ski tourists travelling to the glacier ski area above the popular Alpine resort of Soelden. A helicopter carrying material to a mountain-top construction site shed its load over the ski-lift, knocking one car off its wires and causing others to swing violently and throw out their passengers, police said. Television pictures showed bodies lying on the rock beneath the glacier. Over 100 other passengers had to be rescued from stranded cable cars. A spokeswoman for the Austrian Red Cross said up to 10 more people had been seriously injured in the incident. Austrian press agency APA reported that the helicopter was flying the piece of concrete, weighing around 750 kilograms, around 300 metres above the ski-lift cables, when the block fell. -- Reuters.

DAMAGE TO FLOATING DOCK, BATAM, INDONESIA

London, Sept 7 -- A floating dock at Pan United Marine's Indonesian yard was damaged in an incident today reducing the group's docking capacity by 7% for the rest of the year. In a statement to the Singapore Exchange Pan United said that a 4,500 dwt lifting capacity dock at its yard in Batam had been damaged and would out of service for the rest of the year. Pan United has five floating docks at its Singapore and Batam yards, and the damaged dock represents 7% of its total docking capacity. Pan United was tight-lipped as to the cause of the damage of the dock. "We are investigating the cause of the damage," said Pan United director May Ng. "We don't know the cause right now." She did however clarify that another vessel was not involved in the incident and that no-one was injured. Pan United said that it did not expect any material impact on its financial performance this year as a result of the damage to the dock.

FLOODING IN COAL MINE, XINGNING, CHINA

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: China is suspending production at 7,000 coal mines - nearly one-third of the nationwide total - in a safety crackdown on the accident-plagued industry, a government newspaper reported today. The mines, most of them small and poorly equipped, will be required to improve safety measures and will not be allowed to reopen if they fail to meet national standards, the China Daily said. The announcement came two days after 123 miners missing in a flooded coal mine in southern China were declared dead in a highly publicised disaster. Eleven mine officials blamed for the accident have been detained and two local mayors dismissed. So far, 1,324 mines have closed, and the rest must suspend production by the end of the year, the China Daily said. It said China's energy supplies should not be affected, because the mines account for only a small fraction of coal output. China has about 24,000 coal mines, according to the government. Fires, floods and other accidents killed more than 5,000 Chinese coal miners last year. Many of the accidents are blamed on lack of fire-control and ventilation equipment or failure to enforce safety rules. Despite repeated official promises to tighten enforcement, the death toll in coal mine accidents rose 33 percent in the first half of this year to 2,672, according to the government.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: Antibody tests showed yesterday that chickens at seven more farms in Ibaraki Prefecture in Japan, may have been infected with a bird flu virus of the H5 strain in the past, the prefectural government said. Chickens at two farms near the seven in the town of Ogawa have already tested positive for antibodies to the virus. In another development, Iran has banned imports of all animal feed from countries which have reported cases of bird flu, a senior trade official said today. "We have banned all kinds of animal feed, grains and grasses from those countries where bird flu has broken out," said Abbas Moazzeni, deputy director of foreign trade at the trade ministry. Iran imported 63,000 tonnes of animal feed wheat in the three months to June before saying it had imposed a moratorium on such imports on Aug 22. Analysts said the bird flu ban would particularly affect the Caspian Sea grains trade. A Russian grains analyst said it had already pushed down grain prices in Russia. "The ban on grain imports from the Caspian region due to bird flu has contributed to an abrupt decline in exporters' demand for (Russian) feed grain prices, particularly of feed barley," Vladimir Petrichenko, of WJ Interagro trading company, said in a report. He said feed barley prices declined in the European

part of Russia in the last seven days by \$3.38 per tonne to \$87.41 EXW. Bird flu has spread from Asia to Russia and is now, according to some experts, threatening Europe.

Ha\noi, Sep 1 -- The deadly bird flu virus has killed a Vietnamese person, taking the number of deaths in Asia from the disease to 63, a senior official said today. The victim, whose gender was not disclosed, died from acute pneumonia on Sunday (Aug 28) and tests showed the H5 component of the H5N1 avian influenza virus in the body, the Tuoi Tre newspaper quoted Deputy Health Minister Trinh Quan Huan as saying. The victim was from Soc Son, a district on the outskirts of Hanoi, but the government had not spotted any outbreaks in poultry in August, Huan said. The death was announced as Agriculture and Health Ministry officials said they were finalising details of an emergency plan to tackle a flu pandemic, which international health officials fear could erupt if the H5N1 virus mutates. The WHO has urged governments to prepare for such an eventuality. Vietnam, which has had more human deaths from the H5N1 virus than anywhere else, was preparing plans for various scenarios, the state-run Tien Phong newspaper reported. "Vietnam is vaccinating poultry so there is a great infection risk involving the H5N1 virus jumping from poultry to humans," the newspaper quoted the Health Ministry as saying. There have been no reports so far of people contracting the virus from vaccinated poultry. Animal health officials said they were meeting today to review the vaccination campaign using Chinese and Dutch vaccines in the provinces of Nam Dinh and Tien Giang. This month, the government will expand the vaccination campaign to target 60 million fowl at small-scale farms nationwide, said Anton Rychener, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization representative in Vietnam. The government aims to complete vaccinations by Nov 15, before the onset of winter when the virus seems to thrive best. The latest human death took Vietnam's bird flu toll to 44, with 23 of the victims dying since the virus returned in December 2004, after sweeping through much of Asia in late 2003. -- Reuters.

OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA, NIGER

Niamey, Sep 7 -- An outbreak of cholera has killed at least 22 people in Niger's north-east region of Tahoua, the national health service said today, after rains brought further misery to the famished central African state. Officials had identified 251 cases of the disease between Jul 13 and Sep 5 in Tahoua, 650 km north-east of the capital Niamey. Millions of people in land-locked Niger, one of the world's poorest countries, are still facing severe food shortages after a drought last year. Long-awaited rains have helped crops but brought an epidemic of the deadly bacterial disease. -- Reuters.

POWER OUTAGE, NORTHERN IRELAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated Aug 31, states: More than 20,000 homes and businesses were left without power at various times after 550 lightning strikes on the electricity network in Northern Ireland. Most supplies have been restored, but thousands of homes in Newry, Banbridge, and Dungannon remain without power. Northern Ireland Electricity said in a statement it expected to restore power to most homes overnight. Lightning also damaged rail signalling equipment in Portadown, temporarily disrupting trains on the Belfast line. Northern Ireland Electricity spokesman Robin Greer said the company was doing its best to restore power. "We have put our escalation plans into action with approximately 350 engineers, linesmen, field staff and call handlers working to restore supplies and keep customers informed," he said. NIE said some customers in rural areas around Dungannon and in the south east may be without supplies overnight "due to the considerable damage sustained by the network in that area." It said staff would work through the night to complete restoration work.

WELHAM GREEN, HERTFORDSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Network Rail, formerly Railtrack, has been found guilty of breaching health and safety legislation in the run-up to the Hatfield crash, but three ex-Railtrack managers, and two former employees of Balfour Beatty, the firm which maintained the line, were cleared at the Old Bailey. Four people were killed when a King's Cross to Leeds train left the tracks at high speed on 17 October 2000. Prosecutors said the crash resulted from a "cavalier approach" to safety. Network Rail pleaded not guilty. The company replaced Railtrack, which owned the East Coast Mainline at the time of the derailment, after it went into administration. The former Railtrack executives - Alistair Cook, 52, Sean Fugill, 52, and Keith Lea, 55 - and the officials from Balfour Beatty - Anthony Walker, 48, and Nicholas Jeffries, 50, also denied the charges. As they left court, the five executives expressed sympathy for victims of the crash, but they also questioned the decision to prosecute them. The jury was told the 117mph crash, which also left 102 people injured, took place when the train was derailed by a cracked section of the track. The prosecution said a backlog of essential work had been allowed to accumulate, and claimed the rail had been identified for repair 21 months earlier. Balfour Beatty, which had the contract to maintain the track at the time of the accident, admitted a charge under the Health and Safety Act, but the company said it did not accept all the facts of the case the prosecution had

outlined against it. During the trial, Balfour Beatty and the five rail executives were formally cleared by the judge, Mr Justice Mackay, of manslaughter. A new law making it easier to prosecute firms in the wake of major disasters is currently being considered by Parliament. The case, however, has renewed the debate over the legislation dealing with corporate manslaughter. "There is a recognition that the law as it stands at the moment is problematic," said solicitor John Pickering, who represented the families of the four who died. "There is a tension between wanting to create a system for corporate accountability so the victims think there has been a criminal level of redress, and for business to know where the borderlines are and how to conduct themselves so not to land in difficulty." The crash left Railtrack with a £733m bill for repairs and compensation to train-operating companies and helped trigger its collapse. Defence lawyers had told the court the executives were being used as scapegoats for a "botched and unworkable privatisation" in an under-funded industry. In a statement, Network Rail said the crash was a "terrible event for everyone involved". "This has been a long trial, it has now reached its conclusion and we respect the findings of the court," said chairman Ian McAllister. "It must be remembered that the maintenance of the railway has fundamentally changed since the Hatfield tragedy." Rail and Maritime Union general secretary Bob Crow said safety on the trains had improved since Network Rail had replaced Railtrack. "Mr McAllister, since he has taken over Network Rail and brought it back to a not-for-profit company, has done extremely well about bringing the maintenance back in-house and making it safer." Sentence will be passed in October.

Fires & Explosions



APARTMENT BLOCK, PARIS, FRANCE

Paris, Sep 4 -- An apartment block fire killed 12 people and injured 13 in the southern suburbs of Paris early today, the French fire service said, bringing to more than 30 the number of deaths in recent serious blazes in the capital. Some 160 firefighters tackled the fire which broke out in the entrance hall of the 15-floor building in l'Hay-les-Roses at around 0100 hrs, a spokesman said. He said most of the victims were choked by fumes. The fire was quickly brought under control, but the cause was not immediately known. It was the latest in a spate of fires in or around Paris which had already killed 24 people, mostly Africans, in a matter of weeks and raised questions over fire safety and the treatment of immigrants. After a fatal fire less than

a week ago, in which seven people died, President Jacques Chirac demanded action on fire safety to prevent further tragedies. -- Reuters.

BAKERS, DURHAM, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: A County Durham bakery is set to resume production on the site where an arson attack destroyed its premises more than a year ago. Peters Cathedral Bakers factory, on the Dragonville Industrial Estate in Durham City, was badly damaged by the fire in April 2004. The family-run company was forced to move to a temporary factory in Peterlee after the fire. However, production is soon to move to a new £9m factory on the old site. The company employs almost 700 people and has 71 retail outlets in the region. The workforce was retained and next week the recovery will be complete with the move to the new premises.

COAL MINE, SHANXI PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: Seventeen miners died, mostly from burns or suffocation, in a gas explosion at an illegal coal mine in northern China's Shanxi province, state media said today. The miners were killed when the blast happened yesterday in the Zhike Town Coal Mine in Zhongyang county, Luliang city, the Xinhua news agency said. Only nine of the 26 miners working underground at the time survived, Xinhua said. Two of them were injured. The mine, run by the township government, had been ordered to shut down due to safety problems but its owners secretly resumed operation on Monday without permission, Xinhua said, citing a local mine safety official. Police have detained six mine executives and authorities have frozen the company's bank accounts, Xinhua said.

GAS WELL, AMALAPURAM AREA, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: An Oil & Natural Gas Corporation oil rig caught fire following a heavy blow-out in an onshore well being drilled in the Krishna-Godavari basin in Andhra Pradesh this afternoon. Seven ONGC personnel were reported missing even as the district authorities evacuated the people from three adjoining villages to safer places. The accident occurred at Tandavapalli village, seven kms from Amalapuram town. There was a sudden blowout in the gas well when the drilling was going on. The blow-out was so severe that the oil rig and four vehicles parked nearby melted in the heat. ONGC officials said 30 people were on the rig at the time of the accident. While 23 escaped safely from the inferno, seven employees were reported missing. Their fate is not yet known, although ONGC officials believe that they could have jumped to the other side of the rig and gone to nearby villages. The

flames from the inferno leapt more than 150 feet and could be seen from a long distance. As a precautionary measure, the authorities have evacuated people from three nearby villages to safer places. Although fire tenders were rushed to the area, they were of no use and the ONGC officials were putting in place plans to cap the blow-out, which could take days or weeks. Meanwhile, in an official statement issued by ONGC, the oil major said: "At about 1130 hrs, Sep 8, there was a blowout in Exploratory Well PSAR at Pasarlapudi near Amalapuram, Rajahmundry. The rig crew has been evacuated and there is no casualty. ONGC's crisis management team based in Narsapur, which is well trained and equipped to handle such situation, has already been mobilised at the site."

MARINA, GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES

Seattle, Aug 31 -- A fire broke out at a marina in Gig Harbor on Aug 31. An estimated 50+ pleasure craft are involved, and damage to the facility is reported. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Seattle, Aug 31 -- Numerous pleasure craft left to burn out. Several rows were evacuated by vessel owners against advice of fire department personnel. Much of Marina collapsed upon moored vessels. Many vessels not actually on fire were hit by debris and damaged. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated Aug 31, states: Firefighters monitored the smoldering wreckage of a downtown marina today after an early morning fire burned 50 boats and spewed billowing black smoke. No injuries were reported, fire spokeswoman Penny Hulse said. One person living on board a boat fled the covered marina before it was charred, she said. "Fuel and fiber-glass burn very quickly," Hulse said. "When we arrived, the flames were 30 feet high." Witnesses reported hearing boats explode around 0730 hrs. Within an hour, the Harborview Marina was in flames. Hulse said the fire started on one boat and quickly spread. The cause was under investigation. Fire crews kept watch on smoldering wreckage later in the day, dousing occasional flareups. "The whole roof is down at the dock level right now, just a rumpled pile of blackened aluminum," said teacher Ross Pomerenk, who has a boat at a nearby marina. Damage is likely to run into the millions of dollars, Hulse said. Gig Harbor is on the Key Peninsula at the south end of Puget Sound. Most of the boats were fiberglass pleasure craft, some as big as 60 feet, Pomerenk said.

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated Aug 31, states: An early-morning fire raced through a Gig Harbor marina today, blowing up propane tanks, sinking the marina cover and sending as many as 50 boats to the waters below. No one was hurt. The blaze was first reported about 0715 hrs, said Penny Hulse, a spokeswoman for the Gig Harbor Fire Department. The flames, contained by

the roof of the marina, spread outward, setting neighboring vessels aflame. The marina was soon an inferno. No cause of the fire was available today nor a damage estimate, although it's likely to run into the millions of dollars, officials said. Firefighters began arriving within minutes of the 911 calls, but by then the flames were eating up the boats and the marina. As the fire spread, the marina cover began to sink. The heat from the fire damaged boats at neighbouring marinas, melting the hull of at least one dinghy attached to a vessel moored nearby. City and fire officials reacted quickly, not only fighting the fire itself, but deploying floating booms to prevent debris and oil from spreading. Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Rick Rodriguez credited this action with preventing more fire damage and for reducing environmental harm. The Harborview Marina is what's known as a condo marina, in which the slips are bought at prices ranging from \$40,000 to \$100,000, John Platt, president of the marina's owners association, said. It's unlikely, he said, that the marina will be rebuilt as it was. City Administrator Mark Hoppen said environmental regulations designed to protect marine life would make it unlikely that a covered marina, which blocks light, would be permitted.

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: About 50 boats were destroyed by a superheated fire yesterday, the worst Puget Sound marina fire in recent memory. No one was injured in the blaze, which was fueled by gasoline, fiberglass, propane and diesel. Today, a barge carrying a crane will be brought into the marina to lift a metal canopy, which had covered the privately owned slips, from the water's surface. Divers will be sent to determine how much debris is at the bottom of the harbor. As of last night, authorities had given no official cause of the fire nor a damage estimate. Several officials said the fire's cost, including cleanup, will likely be in the millions. All of the destroyed boats were insured.

Seattle, Sep 2 -- Fire first reported at approximately 0715, Pacific time. Gig Harbor is a 'condo' marina, berths are purchased by boat owners. No estimate of damage yet available but 50 pleasure craft involved. Marina is total loss. Cause not yet available. Coast Guard deployed floating booms to prevent debris and pollutants from spreading. First reports indicate that exposure to pollutants was limited to the area of the fire. -- Lloyd's Agents.

PREMISES, BENI SUEF, EGYPT

Minya, Egypt, Sep 5 -- Twenty-five people were killed and 45 injured in a fire today in a cultural centre in the Egyptian town of Beni Suef, 100 km south of Cairo, police sources said. The fire broke out in the evening but it was too early to say how it started or why the death toll was so high, the sources added. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 32 people were killed when fire broke out in a crowded Egyptian theatre apparently sparked by candles used by the performers, the official MENA news agency reported today. The blaze swept through the theatre in the town of Beni Suef south of Cairo late yesterday and many of the victims were believed killed in a stampede as hundreds of panicked theatre-goers tried to escape the flames. Egyptian hospital sources told MENA that some of the bodies were burnt beyond recognition in the fire that took hold at about 2330 hrs (2030, UTC). Twelve of those injured were in serious condition and some had to be evacuated to Cairo for treatment, the agency said. Health Minister Mohammed Awad Tag Eddin told state television that 16 of those injured suffered burns exceeding 60%. The blaze is believed to have been started accidentally by actors carrying lighted candles during the performance. The stage curtains caught fire and the flames quickly spread to other parts of the theatre, fuelled by combustible items that were part of the set's decor, including paper and wood. It provoked panic among the crowd as they attempted to escape the blaze, with many of the victims believed to have been trampled underfoot. There were also deaths due to asphyxiation, said Anas Gaafar, governor of Beni Suef which lies about 150 km south of Cairo. Firefighters eventually brought the blaze under control, officials said.

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Survivors of a blaze that killed 32 people in a crowded theatre said today that only one exit was available as the audience stampeded in panic, and authorities were looking into possible fire code violations. Last night's fire was believed to have begun when an actor knocked over a candle, igniting a paper-filled set during a production at the government-run Culture Palace in Beni Suef, about 60 miles south of Cairo. Prosecutors early today inspected the concrete building, which was left a hollowed-out, charred husk. A top official from Egypt's Culture Ministry, which controls the theatre, said local culture authorities had not made sure the theatre's main exit could be opened in an emergency, restricting the escape to a smaller door blocked by debris at the end of the hall where the fire started. Security officials said 32 people were killed. Among them were 14 members of a theatre troupe from nearby Fayoum who were performing and its director, who had designed the set, said Alwy. The fire also injured 60 people, 18 critically, hospital and police officials said. The government requires some fire-safety measures in buildings, including fire extinguishers, but in general the rules are not strictly enforced. Alwy was unsure if the small theatre destroyed in the blaze was equipped with fire extinguishers.

PREMISES, CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA

London, Aug 31 -- A press report, dated today, states: More than 20 families are putting their lives back together after fire tore through their homes early yesterday morning, destroying over 30 townhouses and causing an estimated \$10 million in damage. Officials have no explanation for what caused the firestorm that consumed both sides of a street in the Bayside Pointe subdivision, near 8th Street S.W. and Big Hill Springs Road, but arson investigators were called in. Strong wind was being blamed for whipping the flames across the street from partially constructed condos at the end of the development. The blaze, which started sometime before 0130, ripped through 32 homes, leaving the neighbourhood looking like a war zone. With parked cars and barbecue tanks exploding and the sounds of houses collapsing all around them, residents fled their burning homes to safety. At least a dozen cars were lost. No one was hurt, but a number of pets were thought to have perished in the fire, said firefighters, who were assisted by crews from Calgary and Crossfield and the Municipal District of Rocky View.

PREMISES, TOLEDO, OHIO, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Damage could reach \$1 million dollars after a massive fire yesterday afternoon destroyed several buildings on the Toledo's south side. It happened in the 2400 block of Broadway, near Alden Place. No one was seriously hurt, however, nothing but the smell of burnt wood was in the air where those buildings once stood. Toledo Fire Chief Michael Bell says the fire started in a four-family apartment building, and spread to six other buildings on the fire side of the street. The flames could be seen for blocks and the smoke could be seen for miles over south Toledo. Of those buildings, six of the seven either burned down or would need to be torn down, according to Bell. The heat was so intense cars on the other side of the street started to melt. Firefighters fought high winds in addition to the flames. Bell said the wind created a sort of a "blowtorch" that spread the flames and heat toward firefighters, damaging some of the Toledo fire trucks. One firefighter called it "one of the hottest fires" he had ever seen. The American Red Cross is helping the fire victims with clothing, food, and shelter. So, far there's no official cause of the fire. Toledo called for mutual aid from Ottawa Hills, Maumee, and Oregon. Ottawa Hills and Oregon firefighters went to the scene, while Maumee's firefighters filled in at empty Toledo station houses in south Toledo.

WAREHOUSE, BURTON-UPON-TRENT, STAFFORDSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A large warehouse

in Staffordshire has been badly damaged by fire. The blaze broke out at about 0430 hrs, today at the 100-metre-long B&Q warehouse off Branston Road in Burton-upon-Trent. Much of the roof has been damaged, along with a number of forklift trucks and flat-pack kitchen units inside. At least six crews from across the county tackled the blaze. Fire service area commander Mick Archer said it was brought under control quickly.

WAREHOUSE, LUTON, BEDFORDSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Fifty firefighters worked throughout Sunday (Sep 4) night and yesterday morning to extinguish a huge blaze in a Luton warehouse containing asbestos. Nearby families were warned to shut windows and doors and stay inside. The building in Camford Way, Sundon Park, was used by coffee packing and distribution company Van Lauren Beverages. Company director Maurice Stimler estimated that the fire cost the firm between £6 million to £7 million. He said: "The building is completely gone. We are looking into all the different options for the future of the company. We are absolutely devastated for the business and for the 35 people who worked here. We hope this will be covered by our insurers." Van Lauren Beverages, which supplies private label coffee to supermarkets across the country, was moved from its London headquarters to the specially-built warehouse in Luton two months ago. Firefighters worked throughout the night fighting the inferno, with the peak of activity at Sunday lunchtime, when 10 fire engines and 50 firefighters were at the scene. Rain overnight helped dampen the fire and smoke plume.

WAREHOUSE, PRESCOTT, ARIZONA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: A massive blaze yesterday destroyed a Prescott oil company warehouse owned by state Senate President Ken Bennett. One person was injured, but no other information was available. The family-owned oil company has been cleaning up leaks from underground storage tanks under the direction of a state environmental protection programme. Yesterday's blaze didn't help. The warehouse was full of petroleum products, which leaked into nearby Granite Creek and the storm-drain system, fire officials said. Officials from the Environmental Protection Agency visited the site yesterday to assess the cleanup. Battalion Chief Bruce Martinez said. The three-alarm blaze broke out about 0915 hrs, at Bennett Oil Co., a wholesale gasoline distributor in Prescott. The fire temporarily closed nearby streets and forced the evacuation of Yavapai College's Prescott campus. The blaze

may have caused up to \$1 million in damage to the warehouse and its contents, including antifreeze, diesel fuel and unleaded fuel, fire officials said. Prescott Fire Chief Darrell Willis said officials will have a better understanding of the extent of the damage this morning. The blaze broke out as employees were transferring fuel from 55-gallon drums to smaller containers. Static electricity is believed to have ignited some spilled fuel, which set off a series of explosions, Willis said. Oil from the warehouse mixed in with water from the firefighting efforts and flowed down the street into the creek and storm-drain system, fire officials said. Martinez said firefighters put in dikes down one alley and in the creek to help divert some of the oil. About 50 firefighters from the Prescott and Chino Valley Fire Departments and the Central Yavapai Fire District responded to the blaze. It took firefighters about three hours to put it out, Willis said. Willis said firefighters were able to keep the fire from spreading to adjoining buildings, including an office building, a gas station and a deli. However, the blaze did damage the rear portion of the Bennett Oil building and about 10 vehicles. About 100 people were allowed to return to their nearby homes and business at 1300 hrs. Yavapai College officials cancelled classes until 1700 hrs, because of the smoke.

WILDFIRES, PORTUGAL

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: More than 1,000 firefighters battled flames in northern and central Portugal yesterday as new wildfires continued to flare up following devastating blazes that consumed hundreds of acres of land in the past months. Three firefighters were injured, one seriously, authorities said. So far this year, wildfires fed by high winds and one of the driest summers on record have claimed the lives of 15 people, including 11 firefighters, and destroyed an estimated 600,000 acres of forest and agricultural land, according to the latest government figures. More than 1,000 firefighters, supported by 321 trucks and 36 planes, were fighting eight wildfires in the central and northern districts of Santarem, Leiria, Guarda, Viseu, Braganca and Castelo Branco, firefighters said. Three firefighters were injured yesterday while fighting flames in the Lousa village of the central Coimbra district, firefighters said. Two were treated and released from the nearby Coimbra University hospital, but one who suffered burns on 50% of his body remained hospitalised in intensive care. Another fire, near Batalha county in the district of Leiria, forced traffic to be suspended along a stretch of highway as flames poured onto the road.



5B-DBY

London, Sep 3 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: Two Greek air traffic controllers face disciplinary procedures for allegedly failing to make contact with a Cypriot plane which went on to crash. They should have tried to hail the plane when it entered Greek air space, the Civil Aviation Authority said. But it said the alleged negligence did not directly contribute to the crash. In a statement about the disciplinary procedures, the civil aviation authority said all other personnel involved in handling Helios flight 522 had acted according to regulations.

Athens, Sep 7 -- Alarms heard on a Cyprus passenger plane that crashed near Athens last month confused pilots, who did not realise there was a lack of oxygen in the cabin, the International Herald Tribune reported today. The German captain and his Cypriot co-pilot struggled to communicate effectively in English and misinterpreted the alarms, failing to identify problems with the pressurisation of the plane, the report said, citing sources close to the crash investigation. According to the newspaper, the crew first heard an alarm warning of a failure to pressurise but which they mistakenly thought was indicating a malfunction of their controls. A second alarm related to the air cooling system went off minutes later, prompting the captain to leave his seat to try to turn it off. He quickly lost consciousness due to lack of oxygen, officials told the newspaper. An official involved in the investigation refused to comment on the report. "This is all speculation and until the official results of the inquiry are released they will remain only speculation," the official told Reuters. Pilots of two Greek fighter jets that were escorting the plane until the crash have confirmed the crew was visibly unconscious and the captain was not in his seat minutes before fuel ran out and the aircraft rammed into a hillside. The failure of the plane to pressurise stemmed from maintenance the night before the flight, the report said. The maintenance crew apparently left a pressurisation controller rotary knob out of place and the crew did not catch the mistake during preflight checks the next day, it said. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Cyprus's Helios Airways denied a report today that the below-par language skills and the inexperience of one pilot contributed to last month's crash of an Athens-bound flight (Boeing 737-31S 5B-DBY) which resulted in the deaths of all 121 people on board. The daily "International Herald Tribune" said

crash investigators believed the pilots' inability to respond to warning signals, inexperience and poor communication skills in technical English, all contributed to the crash. However, asked whether he was confident the pilots were able to understand each other in English, Nicos Anastassiades of Helios replied: "Absolutely." Anastassiades said: "I've spoken to both pilots and their English was of a good standard." Citing sources close to the probe, they said an air system knob, incorrectly set during maintenance, prevented the Boeing from pressurising properly and the crew failed to notice the problem during pre-flight checks. As the aircraft ascended through 3 000 metres, cockpit voice recordings showed that an alarm sounded, which confused the pilots because of its dual purpose. The report said that before takeoff, the alarm warned of improper pre-flight settings. Afterwards, it meant that the cabin was not pressurising, and the pilots did not realise that. The sources said as the oxygen masks deployed while the aircraft continued to climb on autopilot, another alarm sounded, further confusing the pilots. It was at this point that the pilots realised they did not possess any shared language well enough to discuss complex technical problems, according to the report, which described Cyprus co-pilot Pambos Charalambous as young and inexperienced. The sources said for normal flight operations, both had adequate command of English -- the accepted default language for pilots -- but they had difficulty working together to solve the unexpected technical problems they faced. Anastassiades also defended German pilot Hans Jürgen Mertens, 58, saying he was "up to scratch." "The German pilot was very capable. He possessed all the relevant certificates. He was in his second season with us and had more than 17,500 hours flying time." The spokesperson said Helios did not want to speculate on the causes of the crash. According to the IHT report, Mertens left his seat to try to fix the alarm problem, at a time when oxygen was already becoming thin. The report also said the crash of the aircraft -- after a long period in an automatic holding pattern -- came when one of its two engines cut out because fuel was running low.

C-FFNS

London, Sep 6 -- At 1750 hrs, Aug 28, the float-equipped Aeronca Sedan 15AC (C-FFNS) was landing on the water at Portage Bay (three nautical miles west of Killarney, Ontario). The aircraft hit a large swell and bounced into the air. During the second touchdown the aircraft's right float was damaged and subsequently took on water. The pilot and passenger evacuated the aircraft and were picked up by a nearby boat. The aircraft sank with the engine still operating and was towed to a nearby mooring. There were no injuries.

C-FHSC

London, Sep 6 -- At 0857 hrs, Sep 1, an instructor and student in a Robinson R22 helicopter (C-FHSC) were practicing engine-off landings from the hover at Victoria International airport, British Columbia. The instructor was unable to prevent a rapid left cyclic input by the student and the helicopter touched down and rolled over. Both pilots escaped without injury, but the helicopter was substantially damaged.

C-GAKD

London, Sep 6 -- At 1420 hrs, Jul 30, after spraying a field near the London airport, PA-25-235 Pawnee aircraft, registration C-GAKD, was returning to St. Thomas, Ontario. Enroute the engine (Lycoming O-540) lost power. A forced approach was attempted in a hay field. However, the aircraft was unable to clear an adjacent corn field. The aircraft sustained substantial damage as it landed in the corn field. The pilot was not injured. A subsequent inspection of the aircraft fuel system indicated that the engine power loss was due to fuel exhaustion.

CRASH INTO SEA OFF RICHARDS BAY, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: Two police helicopters from Durban, along with police divers, have been called in to search for a man who went missing after a Portnet helicopter crashed into the sea at the entrance to the Richards Bay Harbour this morning. Police spokesperson Captain Rene van der Westhuizen said the two pilots who were in the helicopter were rescued and taken to hospital with suspected spinal injuries and fractures. "One other person who was in the helicopter is still missing, and it's suspected that he went down with the aircraft. We can't see the helicopter as it sank and the water is about 20-30 feet deep," said Van der Westhuizen. She said it appeared as if the accident occurred at about 1145 hrs when the helicopter tried to drop or pick up one of the pilots from a vessel and its propeller touched the vessel, causing it to crash. Van der Westhuizen said the fire department as well as the private company who had rescued the two pilots were also assisting in the search.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: The port of Richards Bay was re-opened to shipping yesterday afternoon after being closed for 24 hours following the fatal crash of the marine pilot transfer helicopter at the entrance to the harbour on Saturday (Sep 3) afternoon. Civil aviation authority accident investigators arrived at the port yesterday to start a detailed probe into the cause of the crash, which claimed the life of the helicopter's engineer. The victim's name has not been released yet and harbour authorities have declined to speculate on the cause of the accident, which is also under investigation by the police, the National Ports Authority and the South African

Maritime Safety Authority. Police Captain Rene van der Westhuizen said the helicopter wreckage had been taken to the Ports authority helipad for investigations. The crash occurred while the helicopter was lifting Ashwani Pathak from a vessel. Yesterday the National Sea Rescue Institute spokesperson Harvey Moir said: "The helicopter blades allegedly made contact with the vessel, during this process, causing the helicopter pilot to lose control. The chopper then nose-dived into the sea." He said Pathak was still being winched up when the incident occurred. Helicopter pilot John Basson and Pathak were rescued by divers who were repairing pipelines at the time.

CRASH INTO SEA OFF STRUMBLE POINT, PEMBROKESHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: A man and woman from south Wales have died after their light aircraft crashed in the Irish Sea on its way to Cardiff airport. The single-engine Piper Cherokee left Dublin at 1215, BST, yesterday. It was last detected on radar off Strumble Head, Pembrokeshire, at about 1330, BST. A body, a pilot's licence and wreckage were found 10 miles north of Strumble Head early today. South Wales Police later confirmed a man and woman from Cowbridge had died. The plane was due to touch down at 1500, BST, yesterday before it disappeared off radar. Milford Haven coastguard has not confirmed whether the body found was that of the plane's pilot or the passenger. Spokesman Roy Thomas said: "They have found wreckage and one body." The search over 500 square miles of water was initially co-ordinated from RAF Kinloss in Scotland, with helicopters, a plane, lifeboats and a warship involved. RAF Rescue Centre spokesman Michael Mulford said weather conditions were "pretty bad" for flying when the plane vanished. "You had everything you don't want - fog, mist, heavy rain and severe turbulence," he said. A Nimrod aircraft from RAF Kinloss, an RAF Sea King rescue helicopter from Chivenor in Devon were involved in the search, alongside an Irish helicopter and a warship. Lifeboats from St Davids and Fishguard in Pembrokeshire were also searching for the plane, which only had enough fuel to stay airborne for four hours. According to a spokesman for Weston Aerodrome, near Dublin, the couple's plane had a normal take-off. He added that the couple had flown in the previous day and stayed the night in Dublin before flying out.

CRASH, BOGOTA AREA, COLOMBIA

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: A small twin-engine aircraft crashed shortly after take-off from the Colombian capital Bogota today, killing at least eight people, aviation officials said. The aircraft, which was heading from

Bogota's private Guaymaral airstrip for the central town of Puerto Berrio, apparently suffered mechanical problems, said Fernando Sanclemente, director of Colombia's Civil Aviation agency.

CRASH, BUNG HATTA NATIONAL PARK, SUMATRA, INDONESIA

See "Indonesia" under "Weather & Navigation."

CRASH, ISIRO AIRPORT AREA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Seven people were killed today when an Antonov 26 aircraft crashed near Isiro airport in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the United Nations-backed Okapi radio said. Those who died were four crew members and three passengers on the cargo plane, which belongs to the private DRC airline Galaxie, the radio report said. The Antonov crashed for as yet unknown reasons about 1,500m short of the runway where it had been coming in to land at Isiro in Orientale Province, the report said.

CRASH, KAPIT, SARAWAK, MALAYSIA

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated Sep 5, states: The crash involving a helicopter used for aerial logging in the interior of Kapit on Saturday (Sep 3) was probably caused by engine failure. Kapit police chief Deputy Superintendent Johar Ahmad said an employee of logging company Caiman Venture saw the Russian-made Kamov-32 helicopter plunging to the ground before it exploded. The weather was fine at the time. Johar said it was believed that when the aircraft developed engine trouble, the pilot tried to land at a helipad which was only six minutes from the crash site but failed. The crash claimed the lives of the helicopter's three Russian crew members -- pilot Anatoli Seleznev, 49, co-pilot Andrei Gritsenko, 26, and flight engineer Istomin Alexey, 38. Meanwhile, the bodies of the three Russians were flown from Caiman Venture logging camp to Sibu Hospital for post-mortem this afternoon. The remains had been placed at the camp after they were removed from the wreckage. The helicopter crashed at Nanga Ga'at, Baleh, at 1450 hrs.

CRASH, OTTERY ST. MARY, DEVON, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated Sep 4, states: A mother and son had a lucky escape when their helicopter crashed in east Devon. The pilot's mother, in her 60s, was taken to hospital with suspected back injuries after the accident in a field at Putts Corner near Ottery St Mary. The pair were on a pleasure flight from Dunkswell, but on their return the pilot reported a loss of power. He landed in a field and the helicopter rolled over. The cause of the crash today is not known.

CRASH, PETTIS COUNTY, MISSOURI, UNITED STATES

See N37855.

EMERGENCY LANDING, BORDEAUX, FRANCE

London, Sep 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: More than 150 Scots holidaymakers were caught up in a terrifying mid-air scare today. Their flight to Spain was forced to make an emergency landing in France after a warning light indicated problems with air pressure. Panic spread as passengers were told to put on oxygen masks. But the aircraft landed safely after an anxious 60 minutes. The flyglobespan flight had left Glasgow Airport at 0600, bound for Alicante. About an hour into the flight, a red warning light started flashing in the cockpit. Fearing problems with the air pressure, the captain initiated emergency procedures and decided to land at the nearest airport. The Boeing 737-400 touched down safely in Bordeaux around an hour later. There, the aircraft was quickly evacuated and shocked passengers were ushered inside the terminal building where they contacted anxious relatives to inform them of the situation. They were stuck there for several hours until a back-up aircraft arrived. They were finally expected in Alicante late this afternoon, having been scheduled to arrive at 1010. A spokesman for flyglobespan said: "This was a standard emergency procedure and the captain reacted correctly. "If a warning light comes on, the captain has got to react as safety is a priority. "He made an emergency landing as a precaution. "The red warning light indicated there was a drop in pressure but there wasn't. It went on by mistake and now we will be investigating to find out why it came on." The aircraft has been taken out of service until a full investigation is carried out.

EMERGENCY LANDING, NARITA, JAPAN

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A China-bound jet of the trouble-plagued Japan Airlines (JAL) returned to Narita Airport this morning after the rotating meter of one of its two engines malfunctioned, airline officials said. None of the 115 passengers or crewmembers of JAL Flight 603 bound for Kuangchou was injured in the incident. JAL officials said mechanics are investigating the cause of the trouble, adding that there was no problem with the engine itself. At around 1030 hrs, the pilots of a JAL Boeing 767 twin-engine aircraft on Flight 603 noticed the rotating meter of its left engine was not functioning properly shortly after taking off from Narita Airport. The aircraft made an emergency landing at Narita. The passengers are expected to take another flight to Kuangchou.

EMERGENCY LANDING, NEW ULM, MINNESOTA AIRPORT, UNITED STATES

See N505NR.

EMERGENCY LANDING, PALEMBANG, INDONESIA

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Batavia Air Boeing 737-200 plane flying from Jakarta to Medan made an emergency landing at Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Airport in Palembang today due to engine trouble. The plane was carrying 80 passengers.

EMERGENCY LANDING, PANTELLERIA ISLAND, ITALY

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A passenger plane with an engine problem made an emergency landing on the Italian island of Pantelleria this evening, with all 27 passengers and crew aboard unhurt, Italy's civil aviation agency said. The ATR-42-320 plane took off from Trapani, in western Sicily, and was flying south to Pantelleria, when the pilot reported a problem with an engine shortly after 1900 hrs (1700, UTC), said Loredana Rosati, spokeswoman for the civil aviation agency. The plane made a "normal" landing after airport officials activated emergency landing procedures, giving the plane precedence to land and alerting emergency personnel, said Rosati.

EMERGENCY LANDING, PEKANBARU AIRPORT, INDONESIA

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Boeing 737-400 belonging to Indonesian flag carrier Garuda Indonesia made an emergency landing on the Sumatra province of Riau this morning due to engine failure. "The pilot told us one of the engines shut off. He asked all passengers to remain calm as he managed to control the situation," Azwar Anaz, a legislator aboard the plane, was quoted as saying by the Detikcom online news service shortly after the incident. The plane carried 82 passengers, including Minister of Social Affairs Bachtiar Chamsyah and five legislators. The engine problems came 40 minutes after departing from the Polonia Airport in Medan. Passengers said they heard small explosion before Captain Soni Bagus announced the engine failure on the right wing. The plane was en route to Jakarta. "The pilot decided to make an emergency landing at the nearest airport," Anaz said. The plane landed safely on the Pekanbaru airport in the provincial capital of Pekanbaru.

N2012B

London, Sep 4 -- A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A single-engine plane carrying three passengers crashed at the Beaufort County Airport on Lady's Island yesterday morning, but officials said no one was seriously injured in the crash, which involved a landing gear malfunction. Three passengers were transported to Beaufort Memorial Hospital with minor injuries, said Tom Olson, director of airports for Beaufort County. The plane, a Beechcraft Sierra, suffered substantial damage

from the crash, but did not catch on fire, Olson said. The crash happened at about 1145 hrs, and the runway was closed for about an hour, he said. Investigators with the Federal Aviation Administration were on the scene yesterday assessing the accident, Olson said.

London, Sep 7 -- Beechcraft Sierra 200 N2012B crashed near Beaufort, South Carolina, at 1517, Sep 2. The aircraft sustained minor damage. The three persons on board suffered minor injuries.

N216RN

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Officials say one body has been recovered and a search for a second is under way following the crash of a small plane off Santa Catalina Island. F-A-A spokesman Donn Walker says the Cessna 172 was heading from Redlands in San Bernardino County to the island about 80 miles away when it crashed shortly before 1230 hrs. The victims' identities were not released and the plane's wreckage has not yet been found. The cause of the crash was not immediately clear. The F-A-A and National Transportation Safety Board will investigate.

London, Sep 1 -- Robin R 2160 N216RN crashed into the Pacific Ocean north of Catalina Island Isthmus, California, at 2100, Aug 31, while on a local flight from Long Beach, CA. The aircraft was destroyed. One of the two persons on board was killed and the other was seriously injured.

N30491

London, Sep 3 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: A small plane crashed into a post office building near Teterboro Airport late today, killing the pilot and injuring a passenger, authorities said. The single-engine Cessna struck the South Hackensack Post Office building as the plane was trying to land, said Steve Coleman, a spokesman for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, which operates the airport. The plane ended up crumpled nose-first against a brick wall near a loading dock. There was no immediate word on the extent of the passenger's injuries. The Cessna was diverted to Teterboro after the pilot reported an engine problem, FAA spokeswoman Arlene Murray said. She said the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board are investigating the crash. The crash site is about a half-mile from Teterboro Airport, one of the nation's busiest small airports.

London, Sep 7 -- Cessna 177A N30491 crashed near Teterboro Airport, New Jersey, at 0122, Sep 3, while on a flight from Caldwell, NJ, to Teterboro. The aircraft was destroyed. One of the two persons on board was killed and the other was seriously injured.

N330CC

Baton Rouge, Sep 5 -- A civilian helicopter that was not involved in rescue operations crashed in New

Orleans today and the two people on board were slightly injured, a state official said. The helicopter crashed in the area of the Danziger Bridge, said Mark Smith, spokesman for the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. "The helicopter came down hard and rolled over on its side and broke its blades off and broke its tail off," Smith said. "There were two civilians on the helicopter. Both sustained cuts and scrapes," he said. It was not known why the helicopter was in the area, Smith said. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 7 -- Eurocopter SA 330J N330CC crashed in New Orleans, Louisiana, at 0020, Sep 4. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The two persons on board were not injured.

N37855

London, Sep 1 -- Porterfield FP-65 N37855 crashed near Smithton, Missouri, at 0052, Sep 1. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The one person on board was killed.

N424AA

London, Sept 7 -- American Airlines McDonnell Douglas MD-82 N424AA, flight AAL488, taxied to the gate at Lester B.Pearson International Airport, Toronto, terminal 3 and the engines were shutdown in preparation for deplaning. The ground marshallers advised that the aircraft was not positioned correctly on the gate and arranged for the aircraft to be towed ahead. During the tow, the aircraft's starboard wing struck a fuel truck that was positioned in preparation for refuelling at 1717, EDT, Sept 4. The aircraft's starboard wing sustained substantial damage. As a result of a small fuel spill, two emergency chutes were deployed on the port side of the aircraft to deplane the passengers. There were no reported injuries. Maintenance replaced starboard No.4 slat. The aircraft is being ferried to Tulsa, Oklahoma, for further evaluation and disposition.

N505NR

London, Sep 1 -- Cessna 182R (Skylane) N505NR crashed on take-off from New Ulm Airport, Minnesota, at 1503, Aug 31, while on a flight from New Ulm to Minneapolis, MN. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The two persons on board were not injured.

N667JM

London, Sep 7 -- Bell 206B JetRanger N667JM crashed near Long Beach, California, at 2030, Sep 5, while on a local flight from Long Beach. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The one person on board was seriously injured.

N821AA

London, Sep 2 -- Dassault Falcon 20 N821AA crashed on take-off from Elyria, Ohio, at 0007, Sep 2, while on a flight to St. Louis, Missouri. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The one person on board was not injured.

N9083G

London, Sep 7 -- Cessna 188 (AG Wagon) N9083G crashed near Blytheville, Arkansas, at 1740, Sep 5. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

PK-RIM

Jakarta, Sep 5 -- An Indonesian Boeing 737 operated by local carrier Mandala Airlines, with more than 100 people on board, crashed in a populated area near the Sumateran city of Medan today, Metro TV reported. A government spokesman in Medan said the incident occurred as the aircraft was taking off from the city's airport but he had no further details. It was heading to Jakarta, Metro TV said. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: An Indonesian jetliner crashed into a crowded residential neighbourhood in the city of Medan shortly after takeoff today, killing all 117 on board and an unknown number on the ground, officials said. The Mandala Airlines Boeing 737 was heading to Jakarta when it crashed one minute after takeoff and burst into flames, said Transport Minister Hatta Radjasa. It was carrying at least 117 passengers and crew, said the airline's acting president, Maj. Gen. Hasril Hamzah Tanjung. "They have all died," Edi Sofyan, a government spokesman in Medan said. There were also casualties on the ground, he said, though he did not know how many. Smoke billowed from the burning debris and dozens of houses and at least 10 cars were in flames or damaged. Hundreds of policemen, paramedics and residents were trying to evacuate victims. Syahrial Anas, a doctor overseeing the removal of charred bodies, said flames were hampering their efforts. Officials said one of the dead included the governor of North Sumatra province, who was heading to the capital for a meeting with the president. Mandala Airlines is a Jakarta-based domestic carrier founded in 1969 by a military-run foundation. Its 15-plane fleet consists mainly of 1970s-vintage Boeing 737-200 jets. In recent years, the financially troubled airline has been forced to cut services and fares to remain competitive. Tanjung said an investigation was being carried out into the cause of the crash. The aircraft was nearly 25 years old, he said, and received its last comprehensive service in June. It had flown more than 50,000 hours and was due to be retired in 2016.

London, Sep 5 -- Boeing 737-200 PK-RIM, operated by Mandala Airlines, crashed near Medan Sep 9 following take-off from Medan for a flight to Jakarta.

Medan, Sep 5 -- A Boeing 737-200 (PK-RIM) crashed in a residential area of Indonesia's third biggest city just after take-off today, killing more than 100 people on board as well as 30 bystanders in an inferno on the ground. A spokesman for local carrier Mandala Airlines said several

passengers had survived the crash in Medan, contradicting the city's top rescue official who said all 117 on board died. The official Antara news agency put the number of survivors at six. The aircraft was carrying 112 passengers and five crew. "I could not believe it. After taking off, the plane really shook and then suddenly it plummeted to a main road on top of the cars below," passenger Freddy Ismail told El Shinta radio station from hospital. His name was on the passenger manifest. Mandala's director Asril Tanjung said the cause of the crash was being investigated, but added foul play was highly unlikely. Zainul Kahar, head of operations at Medan's search and rescue agency, said 30 people on the ground were also killed. The aircraft slammed into the heart of a major residential area in the capital of North Sumatra province, breaking into pieces, setting fire to homes, cars and motorbikes, and sparking widespread panic, witnesses said. "I arrived around 10 minutes after the accident. Burning bodies were everywhere," one local reporter said from the scene. "Around 10 houses were burnt, along with five to six minibuses. The plane was torn into pieces, we could only see the tail." Among those on board the flight were the North Sumatra governor and his predecessor. Fierce flames licked at the wreckage as it lay on one of Medan's main roads before fire crews were able to extinguish the blazes. Plumes of thick black smoke rose into the air. Kahar said some 20 homes were damaged by fire. Mandala's Tanjung said the aircraft had been made in 1981 and was fit for eight more years of flying. It was not raining when the aircraft took off, witnesses said. "Temporarily, we are saying the cause is from take-off failure but we don't know yet whether it was from engine trouble, human error or weather," Tanjung said. The aircraft came down 500 metres from the runway in Medan, Transport Minister Hatta Radjasa told El Shinta radio station. It was en route to Jakarta. A few hours after the crash, heavy rain began to fall, hindering recovery efforts. -- Reuters.

Medan, Indonesia, Sep 5 -- A Mandala Airlines Boeing 737-200 (PK-RIM) crashed in a busy residential area of Indonesia's third biggest city just after take-off today, killing 102 people on board and 47 local residents in an inferno on the ground. Officials said 15 passengers in the tail section of the aircraft survived the crash in Medan, capital of North Sumatra. The Boeing was carrying 112 passengers and five crew on a flight to Jakarta. Transport Minister Hatta Radjasa said in Medan that the number of passengers and crew killed totalled 102, although he gave no breakdown. Officials earlier said 104 people on board had died. The death toll on the ground was 47, he added. Mandala director Asril Tanjung said the cause of the crash was being investigated but added foul play was

highly unlikely. The aircraft crashed on a road in the heart of a residential area, breaking apart, setting fire to homes, cars and motorbikes. Officials said some 20 homes were damaged by fire. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Investigators began a probe into the cause of the crash of Mandala Airlines Boeing 737-200 (PK-RIM) yesterday that killed at least 149 people, including dozens on the ground who lived in a crowded neighborhood in the city of Medan, officials said. Human error and mechanical failure are among the possibilities being explored in the crash, said Setio Rahardjo, chairman of the National Transportation Safety Committee. Rahardjo said that the aircraft's black box recorder had been recovered and that investigators hoped it would yield clues. The jet, which was built in 1981 and underwent comprehensive maintenance in June, hit the ground nose first shortly after take-off, officials said. It was bound for Jakarta with a full load of 112 passengers and five crew members.

Jakarta, Sep 7 -- A preliminary investigation into the crash of Mandala Airlines Boeing 737-200 (PK-RIM), which killed 149 people, has found a problem with one of the aircraft's engines, a transport safety official said. "During our preliminary investigation we have found a fuel problem on the engine," said Setyo Rahardjo, head of the National Transport Safety Committee. A Boeing 737-200s has two engines but Rahardjo did not say which was at fault and stressed the findings were preliminary. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: A mass burial was held yesterday for unidentified victims of the crashed Mandala Airlines Boeing 737-200 (PK-RIM). Investigators sifted through the charred wreckage of the aircraft, trying to determine why it slammed into a crowded street in Indonesia's third-largest city Medan on Monday (Sep 5), creating a path of destruction as it crashed into houses and pedestrians. Transport Minister Hatta Radjasa said it would be several weeks before the cause of the crash was known but a preliminary investigation found a problem with one of the aircraft's engines. Survivors said the Boeing shook violently after lifting off the runway and veered left before crashing to the ground. Some described a loud bang while the aircraft was still in flight but officials were quick to rule out terrorism. The dead included 101 passengers and crew and 47 residents on the ground. Sixteen people on board the flight survived. Hundreds of family members gathered at the Adam Malik Hospital morgue, looking for loved ones among a long row of charred bodies. Remains not identified by early yesterday would be buried next to another mass grave for victims of a Garuda Indonesia aircraft crash that killed more than 200 people in 1997, hospital

assistant director Dr Suprato said. By late Tuesday (Sep 6), 40 corpses had yet to be claimed.

TS-LBB

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Italy's Civil Aviation Authority today suspended a Tunisian airline from operating in Italy after an investigation found that one of its aircraft went down off Sicily last month because the wrong type of fuel gauge had been installed. The Tuninter ATR-72 (TS-LBB) hit the water near Palermo on Aug 6, killing 16 people, after the aircraft ran out of fuel because the gauge was the wrong model and did not show that the tanks were nearly empty, according to ANSV, the Italian national agency for flight safety. The Civil Aviation Authority ENAC acted on the agency's recommendation. "It's not a hypothesis" that the fuel ran out, agency spokesman Cmdr. Aldalberto Pellegrino said. "It's a fact." The Tuninter charter, carrying 39 people, was flying from the Adriatic port of Bari to the Tunisian resort of Djerba. Twenty-three people, including the pilot, survived, and some of the passengers recounted how they heard one engine die, and then the other, before the small propeller aircraft went down. An ANSV investigation found that the fuel gauge installed in Tunisia on Aug 5 was actually designed for a smaller ATR-42 aircraft and could not read the larger aircraft's fuel load correctly, Pellegrino said. "It was indicating more fuel than there was in the tanks," he said. The pilot believed there were 1,984 pounds of fuel for each engine "when in fact there was none," Pellegrino said. Tuninter said it was studying the investigation's conclusions and had no immediate reaction. Prosecutors in Palermo investigating the accident had previously said the aircraft's fuel tanks, which were recovered, were still well-stocked. However, Pellegrino said the tanks contained no fuel, only seawater. Separate tests on fuel from a tanker that restocked the aircraft before it took off from southern Italy did not contain impurities that could have caused the accident, Pellegrino said. "The fuel was clean, but unfortunately there was too little of it," he said. ENAC said it was suspending authorisation for Tuninter to operate in Italy immediately and it asked the European Aviation Safety Agency to carry out urgent checks on procedures for the installation of fuel gauges on all ATR-42 and ATR-72 aircraft.

Product Recalls



BICYCLE HELMETS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Aug 31 -- The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission,

in co-operation with Target, of Minneapolis, Minn, today announced a voluntary recall of about 494,000 Back Trails Jr. Toddler, Youth and Child Bicycle Helmets. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. Manufacturer UNA International Limited, of China. Distributor Dynacraft BSC Inc., of San Rafael, Calif. Some of these helmets do not meet CPSC safety standards for bicycle helmets, which poses a risk of riders suffering head injuries. No incidents/injuries reported. The recall includes Target's "Back Trails Jr." brand toddler, youth and child bicycle helmets sold in various colors. They were manufactured after January 1, 2004. Helmet model numbers: 89888 or 88003 (toddler), 89951 or 88001 (girl's 8-vent youth), 89952 or 88002 (boy's 8-vent youth), or 89917 (14-vent child's) appear on a white label inside the helmets, along with date of manufacture (YYYY/MM/DD) and the words "Made in China." Target product identification numbers: 082-01-0520 (toddler), 082-01-0149 (girl's 8-vent youth), 082-01-0189 (boy's 8-vent youth), and 082-01-0334 (14-vent child's) and the brand name "back trails jr." appear on the product packaging. Sold at Target stores nation-wide from April 2004 through July 2005 for about \$13. Consumers should take the helmets away from children and return them to the nearest Target Store for a gift card in the amount of a full refund. -- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

BMX BICYCLES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 5 -- A press report, dated Sep 2, states: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with World Wide Cycle Supply Inc., of Islandia, N.Y., today announced a voluntary recall of approximately 25,000 Harley-Davidson 16-inch BMX Bicycles. The fork that holds the front wheel can separate at the weld, causing the rider to fall and suffer injuries. World Wide Cycle Supply Inc. has received 15 reports of fork welds breaking on these bicycles. There have been reports of six riders suffering injuries including injuries to the face, hands and mouth such as bruises, lacerations and lost teeth. The bicycle has a yellow and red painted flame pattern with a yellow fork and a sticker containing the words "Harley-Davidson" on the fork leg. Only bicycles with the specific serial numbers are being recalled. The bicycles were sold at Toys "R" Us stores nation-wide from July 2002 through June 2005 for about \$80.

FOOD PROCESSORS, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 7 -- A press report, dated Sep 6, states: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in co-operation with Ultimate Chopper LLC, of Los Angeles, Calif.,

today announced a voluntary recall of approximately 1.5 million Ultimate Chopper food processors. The interlocking lid assembly on the appliance can malfunction, allowing the food processor to be operated when the lid is off. This can result in a laceration or finger tip amputation hazard if consumers insert their hands into the food processor. CPSC and Ultimate Chopper LLC have received 17 reports of injuries resulting from a failure of the interlocking lid assembly or the blade assembly breaking. Five of those injured required stitches or surgery, and the remaining 12 consumers received cuts or scratches. manufactured in China, the Ultimate Chopper has been marketed and distributed through television infomercial sales, the firm's Web site, and various retailers nationwide from March 2002 through to July 2005 for about \$40.

FORD MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Ford Motor Co. announced the fifth-largest vehicle recall in U.S. history today to fix a faulty wiring problem blamed for more than 1,100 engine fires in some of the nation's most popular trucks and SUVs. The Dearborn automaker said 3.8 million vehicles are involved in the voluntary recall including 1994-2002 Ford F-150s, 1997-2002 Ford Expeditions, 1998-2002 Lincoln Navigators and 1994-1996 Ford Broncos equipped with factory-installed cruise control. Ford said the problem was caused by brake fluid leaking into and corroding the electrical components of the cruise-control system. In rare cases, the corroded components can cause overheating that may lead to a fire at the switch. Ford dealerships will install a fused wiring harness that should work as a circuit breaker and eliminate the problem. News outlets have reported that at least three deaths are related to the cruise control problem. In June, for example, CNN reported that an Iowa man filed a lawsuit against Ford after his wife died in a fire allegedly caused by their F-150 pickup. Officials at Ford say there is no evidence of a link between the cruise-control system problem and any fatalities. Ford officials didn't give a timetable on how long it would take to repair the nearly four million vehicles being recalled.

GENERAL MOTORS VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 7 -- General Motors Corp has issued a US recall for 804,000 of its Chevrolet and GMC branded vehicles. The recall is due to complaints referring to a problem caused by corrosion from road salt gets in between the casing surface and the sensor of the manufacturer's ABS system. The problem is reported to lead to false readings, causing the anti-lock brakes to activate at the wrong speeds, alarming drivers and making stopping difficult.

GROUT SEALER, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Aug 31 -- The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with Tile Perfect, a division of Roanoke Companies Group Inc., of Aurora, Ill., today announced a voluntary recall of about 300,000 cans of Stand-On Seal "Spray-On" Grout Sealer sold in 2005. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. The product's odor is not chemically pungent enough to force consumers to minimize their exposure to the fumes. Consumers overexposed to these fumes can experience respiratory-related illness. There have been 88 reports from consumers who have had adverse reactions after using the aerosol product, including 28 confirmed reports of overexposure resulting in respiratory symptoms for which medical attention was sought for coughing, irritation, difficulty breathing, dizziness and disorientation. Thirteen individuals required medical treatment including overnight hospitalisation. The product is marketed under the brand name of Tile Perfect Stand'n Seal "Spray-On" Grout Sealer. The date/lot codes are printed on the bottom of the can. All cans with date/lot codes starting with the following six digits are included in the recall: A20985; A30985; A10995; A20995; A30995; A11015; A21015; A31015; A11025; A21445; A31445; A11455; A21455; A31455; A11465; A21465. Units with other date/lot codes have been reformulated and are not subject to this recall. Sold exclusively at Home Depot Stores from April 2005 through June 2005 for about \$10. Manufactured in the United States. Consumers should not use the aerosol product and return it to the Home Depot for a full refund. -- Consumer Product Safety Commission.

TOYOTA MOTOR VEHICLES

London, Sep 8 -- A press report, dated today, states: Toyota Motor Co. yesterday announced a recall of nearly one million trucks to repair a steering-related problem that could cause drivers to lose control of the vehicles. The recall involved 978,000 1989-1996 4Runner SUVs and small T-100 pickups. It was the Japanese automaker's second-largest U.S. recall ever.

Port Conditions



AUSTRALIA

Sydney, Sep 7 -- The Queensland Nickel Yabulu Refinery has experienced a breakdown, resulting in a queue of five fully laden vessels off the port of Townsville. Demurrage costs are estimated to be about A\$32,000 a day. BHP Billiton, part owners of the refinery, said the vessels had been waiting to dock for five days and the last vessel in the queue is not

expected to unload for at least another 10 days. The first of the vessels, bulk Iris Halo, was expected to arrive in port last night for unloading and is not scheduled to sail until late tomorrow. The Townsville Bulletin reports that the last vessel is not expected to be unloaded until next week. The unloader or tippler broke down but has now been repaired. The refinery processes ore from third party mines in New Caledonia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Its production capacity is about 32,000 tonnes a year. -- "Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News."

London, Sept 7 -- A press report, dated today, states: A breakdown at the QNI Yabulu Refinery has left five fully-laden nickel ships laying at anchor off Townsville, some for five days. Industry sources said each of the ships would be chartered at a cost of about \$32,000 a day. They said the total cost of the delay would be more than \$1.3 million. The last ship in the queue is not expected to

unload for at least another 10 days. The first of the vessels, bulk Iris Halo, was expected to arrive in port last night for unloading and is not scheduled to sail until late tomorrow. A spokesman from shipping agent P & O Nedlloyd Ltd said the ships could only be unloaded one at a time. He said each vessel took 2 1/2 days to unload its cargo of nickel ore. One vessel, bulk Magnetic Isle is expected to take longer to unload because of its size. Industry sources said the last vessel would not be unloaded until late next week at the earliest. A spokeswoman from the BHP-Billiton refinery said the delay was caused by a breakdown in the machinery used to unload ore from rail wagons at the refinery. The ore is railed to Yabulu after being unloaded from ships at the port. The unloading mechanism used to tip the wagons over in order to empty the ore out is called a 'tippler'. Its operation is critical to the continued supply of nickel ore to the refinery. The spokeswoman said

the breakdown had been repaired and that wagons could now be unloaded. She said the plant continued to process ore from stockpiles while the rail wagon unloading system was under repair. It is understood there is still a large stockpile of ore on QNI land at the port waiting to be railed to the refinery.

ITALY

Genoa, Aug 29 -- Port situation Aug 29: Genoa: One bulk carrier waiting for berth. Average number of days delay in berthing 24-48 hrs. La Spezia: No vessels waiting for berth. Savona: No vessels waiting for berth. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SYRIA

Lattakia, Aug 20 -- Waiting time presently 24 hours at Lattakia and five days at Tartous. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Lattakia, Aug 27 -- Waiting time presently 24 hours at Lattakia and four days at Tartous. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Port Delays

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

Country/Port	Date of report	No. of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbot Point	05-Sep-2005	Coal: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored; 15 vessels due by 2/10; up to 4 days berthing delay expected.
Brisbane	05-Sep-2005	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 4 vessels due by 14/9; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability
Dalrymple Bay	05-Sep-2005	Coal: 1 vessels berthed and loading, 13 anchored; 47 vessels due by 28/9; 5-25 days berthing delay subject to cargo availability and berth congestion; waiting times vary greatly due to different stem supply issues.
Dampier	05-Sep-2005	Iron ore: Parker Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 3 anchored; 6 vessels due by 15/9; up to 6 days berthing delay expected; shippers cannot guarantee that vessel will be able to load up to max. sailing draft available; Parker Point 2: 1 vessel due 7/9; 3 days berthing delay expected; shippers cannot guarantee that vessel will be able to load up to max. sailing draft available; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored; 10 vessels due by 21/9; up to 12 days berthing delay expected; maintenance shutdowns ca. 8/9 and 19/9; a shift to a lay-by berth for loaded vessels is always a possibility; shippers cannot guarantee that vessel will be able to load up to max. sailing draft available.
Gladstone	05-Sep-2005	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 2 vessels berthed and loading, 1 waiting at berth, 4 off port; 21 vessels due by 26/9; up to 3 days berthing delay expected subject to port congestion and cargo availability; Barney Point: 5 vessels due by 22/9; up to 3 days delay expected due to port congestion and cargo availability; the stacker will be unavailable due to repairs from 06.00-18.00 hrs. 15/9.
Hay Point	05-Sep-2005	Coal: 2 vessels berthed and loading; 12 vessels due by 16/9; up to 3 days berthing delay expected; vessels berthing in order of cargo availability.
Newcastle	05-Sep-2005	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 2 vessel berthed and loading; 65 vessels due by 30/9; Dykes 4+5: 2 vessels loading; 22 vessels due by 30/9; 2 unallocated vessels due by 25/9; 4-7 days delay expected prior to berthing due to planned maintenance at Kooragang terminal, coal product problems with some shippers berthed congestion and cargo receipt.
Port Hedland	05-Sep-2005	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 5 anchored; 7 vessels due by 14/9; up to 6 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; "B" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 3 vessels anchored; 7 vessels due by 14/9; up to 5 days berthing delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "C" berth: 2 vessels due by 11/9; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 4 vessels due by 11/9; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Kembla	05-Sep-2005	Coal: 10 vessels due by 22/9; up to 1 day's berthing delay expected due to port congestion; CB-1: 2 vessels due by 25/9; no delays expected
Port Walcott	05-Sep-2005	Iron ore: 2 vessels berthed and loading, 5 anchored; 11 vessels due by 22/9; no delays expected; Line-up expected to change at short notice. Cargo grade shortages and stockpile problems may result in vessels berthing out of turn.
Azerbaijan		
Apshehon	05-Sep-2005	Oil products: Dubendi terminal: 1 vessel berthed, completed discharging crude oil.
Baku	05-Sep-2005	Oil products: Bay of Baku: no vessels; Azernefttyag terminal: no vessels; Azer Trans terminal - Nobel avenue: 1 vessel berthed, discharging crude oil; 1 vessel due to discharge crude oil; Sangachal district: 2 vessels due by 5/9, both to discharge crude oil; Transserve terminal: closed.
Brazil		
Paranagua	06-Sep-2005	Fifteen vessels berthed of which 2 container dischargers, 4 fertiliser dischargers, 3 pellets loaders, 1 soya loader, 2 reefer loaders, 1 sugar loader, 2 other loaders/dischargers; 29 vessels waiting in roads, of which 14 to load (3 reefers, 3 sugar, 4 pellets, 1 soya, 3 other loaders), 15 to discharge (13 fertiliser, 2 containers); 30 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Rio Grande	06-Sep-2005	Five vessels berthed of which 2 salt loaders/dsichargers, 1 urea discharger, 1 potassium chloride discharger, 1 soya meal loader; 5 vessels waiting in roads; 33 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Santos	06-Sep-2005	Eighteen vessels berthed of which 7 sugar loaders, 1 bulk soya loader, 1 fertiliser discharger, 3 chemical products dischargers, 1 bulk juice loader, 1 wheat discharger, 1 Ro/Ro loader/discharger, 1 other loader/discharger, 2 full container loaders/dischargers; 35 vessels waiting in roads; 28 vessels due over the next 7 days;
Sao Sebastiao	06-Sep-2005	Six vessels berthed, 2 waiting in roads; 7 vessels due over the next 10 days.

Port Conditions

Chile

Antofagasta	06-Sep-2005	Three vessels berthed, 4 berths vacant; 11 vessels due this week to load/discharge concentrates, bulk copper, containers and general cargo.
Arica	06-Sep-2005	Four vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 13 vessels due this week.
Iquique	06-Sep-2005	Three vessels berthed, 4 berths vacant; 12 vessels due this week.
Valparaiso	06-Sep-2005	Two vessels berthed, 6 berths vacant; 2 vessels anchored; 9 vessels due this week.

Egypt

Adabiya	05-Sep-2005	Eleven vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 4 general cargo, 2 bulk carriers, 2 livestock, 1 tanker, 2 containers..
Alexandria	05-Sep-2005	Sixty-two vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 25 general cargo, 13 bulk carriers, 2 tankers, 3 container vessels; 19 vessels dry-docked; 34 vessels at inner anchorage, 14 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	05-Sep-2005	Twenty-seven vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 14 general cargo, 2 bulk carriers, 4 containers; 5 vessels at outer anchorage, 2 at inner anchorage.
Dekheila	05-Sep-2005	Six vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 2 general cargo, 4 bulk carriers; no vessels at outer anchorage
Port Said	05-Sep-2005	Five vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 2 general cargo, 3 containers.
Suez	05-Sep-2005	Twelve vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 2 general cargo, 1 tanker, 3 reefers, 3 passenger vessels; 2 tugs, 1 vessel dry-docked.
Suez Canal	05-Sep-2005	Twenty-two vessels transiting Northbound, 25 Southbound.

Estonia

Tallinn	05-Sep-2005	Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): 1 fertiliser vessel loading at berth, 1 malt vessel discharging at berth; no vessels waiting at anchorage; 2 vessels due, with 6 days berthing delay expected
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India

Kolkata	05-Sep-2005	6 vessels operating at berth of which 1 vessel loading Containers, 4 discharging (Timber Logs, Edible Oil-2, Containers), 1 vessel waiting to load General Cargo; 1 vessel working at midstream and discharging Timber Logs; 1 vessel under repair; 5 vessel under dry docked; 1 vessel waiting to sail; 1 vessel waiting due to non receipt of port clearance from customs by steamer Agent.
Haldia	05-Sep-2005	11 vessels operating at berth of which 5 loading (Iron Ore-3, POL, Steel), 3 vessels discharging (Crude, Coke-2), 3 vessels loading and discharging Containers; 4 vessels awaiting berth to load; 21 vessels waiting at anchorage (8 to discharge, 13 to load); 4 vessels due (POL, LPG, Crude, Iron Ore).
Paradip	05-Sep-2005	8 vessels operating at berth of which 5 loading (Iron Ore-3, Chrome Concentrate, Iron ore(P)), 3 vessels discharging (Coking Coal, NC Coal, Phosphoric Acid); 3 vessels awaiting berth (1 to discharge, 2 to load); 4 vessels waiting at anchorage (3 to discharge, 1 to load).
Visakhapatnam	05-Sep-2005	10 vessels operating at berth of which 3 loading (Iron ore, Steel Plates, Granite Blocks), 7 vessels discharging (Coking Coal-2, Steam Coal, Pet Coke, urea-2, SKO); 6 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (5 to discharge, 1 to load); 1 vessel under repair (MV Chin Shwe Raw at HSY Jetty which was collide with AMV Uttar Kasi); 34 vessels due (Iron ore-7, Steel, B.F. Slag, Thermal Coal, C.P.Coke, Transshipment Crude, Ammonium Sulphate, Urea, MOP, Coking Coal-4, Project Cargo, Pet Coke, Steam Coal, Timber Logs, Methonal-2, Phosphoric Acid, Met Coke, Containers-3, POL Products-2, Crude Oil-2).
Chennai	05-Sep-2005	11 vessels operating at berth of which 2 loading (IOL, Iron Ore), 6 vessels discharging (CPO, Raw Sugar, Wood Pulp/Project Cargo, S.Coal, Thermal Coal, Petroleum Oil), 3 vessels loading and discharging (Steel Pipes/Granite Blocks, Containers, Steel Coil/Granite Blocks); 2 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage to load; 2 vessels due (Project, Barytes).
Tuticorin	05-Sep-2005	10 vessels operating at berth of which 3 loading General Cargo, 6 vessels discharging (Thermal Coal, Copper Concentrate, Raw Cashew, VCM, Phosphoric Acid), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 2 vessels awaiting berth to discharge.
Cochin	05-Sep-2005	5 vessels operating at berth and discharging (Coal, Rock Phosphate, Petroleum Oil, MOP, Timber Logs); 1 vessel awaiting berth to discharge.
New Mangalore	05-Sep-2005	8 vessels operating at berth of which 5 loading (Iron ore (F)-4, POL Product), 3 vessels discharging (Cement, Timber Logs, LPG); 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to load; 13 vessels due (POL Crude-2, POL Product, Iron ore (F)-2, Iron ore(P)-2, Ammonia, Containers, Urea, Granite Stone, Phosphoric Acid, Timber).
Mormugao	05-Sep-2005	2 vessels operating at berth of which 1 loading Iron ore, 1 vessel discharging HSD; 2 vessels working at mid stream to load Iron ore; 8 vessels under repairs; 5 vessels due (Containers, Coking Coal, MOP, Alumina, S.Scrap).
Mumbai	05-Sep-2005	14 vessels operating at berth of which 6 loading (General cargo/Steel-2, Steel Cargo, Steel Coils/Pipes, POL-2), 5 vessels discharging (Steel Cargo, Bagged Pulses/Logs, Peas, POL-2); 3 vessels loading and discharging (Wood Pulp/Mach/Pipes, Steel/General/H.Lift-2); 3 vessels awaiting order to discharge; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage (1 to load, 1 to discharge); 15 vessels under repairs; 7 vessels under arrest, 22 vessels under laid up (Berths not required for cargo operations); 21 vessels due (Containers-4, General Cargo-17).
J.N.P.T.	05-Sep-2005	8 vessels operating at berth of which 2 discharging (UTC, Lubricant Oil), 6 vessels loading and discharging containers; 4 vessels awaiting berth to load and discharge; 4 Container vessels due.

Port Conditions

Kandla	05-Sep-2005	16 vessels operating at berth of which 10 discharging (Chemical, St. Pipes, DSBO, Timber Logs-2, Fertiliser, Vegetable Oil, Phosphoric Acid, Fuel Oil, Sulphur), 5 vessels loading (Rice, Agriculture Product, Salt-2, Cement); 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 3 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (2 to discharge, 1 to load).
Ennore	05-Sep-2005	1 vessel loading Iron ore at midstream; 2 vessels due (MV APJ Sri Devi (Thermal coal), MV Etemal Star (Steam Coal)).
Israel		
Ashdod	06-Sep-2005	Two general cargo vessels loading at berth, 5 vessels discharging at berth (4 general cargo, 1 bulker), 3 vessels loading/discharging at berth (2 containers, 1 tanker); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to load/discharge (1 containers, 1 tanker); 1 vessel awaiting orders; 20 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Haifa	06-Sep-2005	Four general cargo vessels discharging at berth (1 general cargo, 3 bulkers), 9 vessels loading/discharging at berth (6 containers, 3 tankers); 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 general cargo, 2 bulkers), 2 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load/discharge; 2 vessels under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 26 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Kazakhstan		
Aktau	05-Sep-2005	Oil products: 1 vessel berthed, loading unknown cargo; 2 vessels in roads, both to load unknown cargoes; 5 vessels due by 7/9, all to load unknown cargoes.
Pakistan		
Karachi	05-Sep-2005	Two vessels loading at berth (1 MOL, 1 cement), 11 discharging at berth (1 coal, 2 DAP, 1 general cargo, 6 sugar, 1 TSP), 1 container vessel loading/discharging at berth; 4 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 phosphate, 2 crude oil, 1 palm oil); no vessels bunkering, 2 under repairs/dry-docked, none awaiting orders; 7 vessels due (1 containers, 2 general cargo, 1 fertiliser, 1 palm oil, 1 crude oil, 1 chemicals), with no berthing delays expected.
Port Qasim	05-Sep-2005	Three vessels discharging at berth (1 sugar, 1 rape seed, 1 crude oil), 1 container vessel loading / discharging at QICT berth; 2 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 5 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 containers, 2 palm oil, 1 fertiliser).
Russia		
Novorossiysk	05-Sep-2005	Sixteen vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 2 DRI, 1 bulk NPK, 1 scrap, 1 slabs, 1 pig-iron, 1 steel billets/tin plate, 1 copper, 3 wheat, 1 pipes/coils/scrap, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 bulk urea, 1 steel billets/coils, 1 steel billets; 4 vessels waiting in roads, all to load, of which 1 steel billets, 1 ammonium sulphate, 1 WRIC, 1 copper; 55 vessels due, of which 54 to load (3 steel billets, 2 DRI, 4 wheat, 4 scrap, 1 WRIC/coils, 2 bulk fertiliser, 6 aluminium, 5 coils, 1 bulk urea, 1 pig-iron, 1 pipes/steel billets, 1 steel sheets/tin plates/cars, 1 steel billets/ WRIC/scrap/tin plates/coils/steel sheets, 1 bulk cement, 3 copper, 4 bulk NPK, 1 UAN solution, 5 pipes, 2 HBI, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 cartons, 1 cartons/cellulose, 1 ammonium sulphate, 1 diesel oil, 1 WRIC), 1 to discharge non-ferrous metals, 1 to discharge/load containers; Oil terminal: 2 tankers berthed, both loading crude oil; 3 tankers in roads, all to load crude oil; 4 tankers due, all to load, of which 6 crude oil, 1 diesel oil.
Slovenia		
Koper	05-Sep-2005	Eight vessels berthed of which 1 discharging/loading containers, 2 bulk carriers discharging coal/scrap, 1 vessel loading grain, 4 vessels loading steel products/sawn timber/general cargo; 21 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 5 to discharge/load containers, 4 bulk carriers to discharge ore/minerals/cement, 3 bulk carriers to load coal, 1 barge to load coal, 2 vessels to load sawn timber/general cargo, 4 car carriers to discharge/load vehicles, 2 tankers to discharge mineral oils/liquid cargo.
Spain		
Bilbao	05-Sep-2005	Twenty-six vessels operating (4 tankers, 22 others), of which 8 loading, 12 discharging, 6 loading/discharging.
Sagunto	05-Sep-2005	Sixteen vessels in port operating of which 4 loading (1 steel products, 2 cement, 1 bulk fertiliser), 11 discharging (8 steel products, 2 vehicles, 1 miscellaneous cargo), 1 discharging/loading steel products; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present.
Turkmenistan		
Turkmenbashi	05-Sep-2005	Oil products: 2 vessels in roads, both to load unknown cargoes; 1 vessel due 5/9 to discharge crude oil.
Ukraine		
Ilichevsk	05-Sep-2005	Four vessels in port operating, of which 1 loading wheat, 1 discharging palm oil, 2 discharging/loading containers; no vessels in roads; 20 vessels due, of which 14 to load (11 steel products, 3 grain, 1 sunflower seed oil, 1 machinery), 2 to discharge (1 nickel ore, 1 palm oil), 4 to discharge/load containers.
Mariupol	05-Sep-2005	Twelve vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 5 steel, 1 wheat, 2 fire-clay, 2 coal, 1 barley, 1 fire-clay/containers; 4 vessels in roads, of which 3 to load (1 steel, 1 coal, 1 fire-clay), 1 to discharge/load containers; 58 vessels due, of which 57 to load (29 steel, 18 coal, 4 fire-clay, 1 fire-clay/containers, 4 wheat, 1 pitch), 1 to discharge equipment.

Port Conditions

Odessa	05-Sep-2005	Eleven vessels in port operating, of which 5 loading (3 metal, 1 general cargo, 1 barley), 3 discharging (1 sugar, 1 bananas, 1 luggage), 1 container vessel loading/discharging, 2 passenger vessels; 2 vessels in roads, of which 1 to discharge sugar, 1 to load/discharge containers; 55 vessels due, of which 26 to load (16 metal, 2 scrap, 1 pig-iron, 3 wheat, 1 grain, 1 wood, 1 corn, 1 ore), 1 to discharge metal, 28 to discharge/load containers.
United States New Orleans	06-Sep-2005	Per CDR Rawson this morning, controlling draft restriction of 39FT; will most likely remain in effect all day today and tonight as they have found one obstruction that they have to evaluate and possibly clear close to a terminal, obviously not effecting traffic, but continuing to cause them concern that only more detailed channel surveys can take care of. CDR Rawson also reports that (20) vessels have moved into the river since they opened on Saturday and (7) have moved out. A large navy ship is transiting up the river today, the Iwo Jima.

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