

Lloyd's

Lloyd's Casualty Week contains information from worldwide sources of Marine, Non-Marine and Aviation casualties together with other reports relevant to the shipping, transport and insurance communities

CasualtyWeek

October 14 2005

Alcohol shown to cause 61% more accidents than fatigue

But accident investigators stress that booze is not a major problem affecting merchant shipping, writes David Osler — Tuesday October 11 2005

ALCOHOL has caused 61% more accidents at sea than fatigue since 1991, according to statistics released by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch.

However, most of the drink-related incidents involved leisure craft, and the MAIB is keen to stress it does not see booze as a major issue for UK merchant shipping.

The statistics are likely to add to pressure for action to tighten up the current legal situation, in which it is an offence to be drunk in charge of a pushbike, but not a yacht.

MAIB released the figures late last month, after a request under the Freedom of Information Act. The format in which they were published gives details of all individual incidents, without offering any analysis.

However, the raw figures show that there have been 139 accidents involving alcohol since 1991, compared to just 86 accidents involving fatigue during the same period. The main problem with the data in this form is that they do not compare like with like.

For instance, both a passenger falling over and breaking a leg while drunk and a fatigue-related major casualty resulting in loss of life are counted as one accident.

Furthermore, there is no breakdown by types of vessel, particularly between commercial and leisure vessels.

Alcohol at sea has, in the past, been a major issue with 'drunken sailor' stereotypes pervasive for hundreds of years. The problem has recently struck even the Maritime and Coastguard Agency itself.

In September, the master of a tug operated under contract to the MCA in the Northern Isles was charged with alcohol-related offences after a grounding.

But MAIB chief inspector Stephen Meyer argued that the situation has greatly improved over the last decade, thanks to new legislation and widespread adoption of 'dry ship' policies.

"The accidents include leisure craft, where fatigue by and large isn't a problem and alcohol is," he stressed.

"I would hate anyone to draw the conclusion that alcohol is a major factor in the commercial world."

Canon Ken Peters, justice and welfare secretary to Mission to Seafarers, commented: "On a global scale, random drink and drug testing has had an impact on the amount of alcohol drunk at sea, reducing it significantly.

"At our seafarers' centres, alcohol is being served less and less. Fewer centres are selling alcohol, particularly those located inside ports."

In these days of limited time ashore, seafarers often prefer to take the opportunity to telephone or email home rather than get drunk, he added.

A spokesman for Numast said the officers' union had always called on shipping companies to devote the same sort of attention to fatigue as they have to alcohol, but had witnessed a distinct absence of policies to combat long hours.

"How about random testing of working schedules, to match the random testing for drugs and alcohol?" said the spokesman.

"It is easier for owners and the authorities to target alcohol than it is for them to address fatigue and the related issues."

Would you like casualty information as it happens ?

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>BLUE RIBBON</i>	general	KOR	KR	5,416	6,488	1981	In collision with bulk Pacific Dolphin in Selat Philip Channel, Singapore, in lat 01 07.01N, long 103 45.2E, Sep 23. Sustained heavy damage to starboard side shell plates, deck plates and hatch coaming plates. Now at Subic shipyard repairing.
<i>CAST PROSPERITY</i>	container	DEU	—	16,324	15,952	2005	In collision with chem tank <i>Hyde Park</i> while proceeding up river near Lac St. Peter, bound Montreal. Fifty tons of steel to be replaced. Repairing at Montreal. ETC four weeks.
<i>ERIC H.</i>	fishing	USA	—	208	—	2001	Had fire 85 miles west of Fort Myers beach, Florida, Oct 5. Three persons missing. Search underway.
<i>GENMAR TRUST</i>	bulk/oil	LBR	NV	57,082	100,001	1992	Sustained main engine damage about 500 miles west of the Azores Oct 5 and taken in tow of tug <i>Fotiy Krylov</i> bound for Ponta Delgada for inspection and possible repairs.
<i>GOLDEN DRAGON</i>	bulker	TWN	CR	7,855	12,326	1982	Lost power, ran aground and broke in two near Hualien as a result of typhoon "Longwang" during the weekend of Oct 1-2. All crew safe.
<i>HERDIS J.</i>	fishing	DNK	NV	790	—	1950	Grounded just outside Grenaa in lat 56 25N, long 10 56E, Oct 2. Tug due on scene Oct 3. Refloated Oct 3 and arrived Grenaa same day.
<i>HYDE PARK</i>	chem tank	LBR	LR	22,103	38,892	1982	In collision with c.c <i>Cast Prosperity</i> while proceeding up river near Lac St. Peter, bound Montreal. Effected minor temporary repairs at Montreal and sailed for Halifax, where due Oct 5.
<i>KS GLORY</i>	bulker	PAN	—	23,479	38,582	1980	Contacted by bulk <i>Murat Kiran</i> at Chittagong anchorage Oct 4. Anchored chains fouled to each other, but were separated. Damage sustained. Lying at anchorage.
<i>MURAT KIRAN</i>	bulker	TUR	NK	22,145	38,888	1985	Had engine problem, drifted and came into contact with bulk <i>KS Glory</i> at Chittagong anchorage Oct 4. Anchor chains fouled to each other, but were separated. Damages sustained and lying at anchorage.
<i>OCEAN DIRK</i>	tug/supply	EGY	AB ABS	863	1,063	1981	Sank after colliding with a submerged object in the South Belayim Field, Egypt, Sep 20-22. Wreck removed by sheerleg <i>Taklift 7</i> .
<i>OCEAN FOXTROT</i>	tug	CAN	—	700	778	1971	While towing barge <i>Betsiamites</i> , lost power of one engine in lat 46 34.10N, long 72 03.31, near Grondines, Quebec. Assistance requested from another tug.
<i>OLTENITA</i>	passenger	ROM	—	—	—	—	Had fire while cruising on the River Danube between Slovakia and Hungary Oct 2. Passengers evacuated. One crew dead. Extinguished next day but vessel broke in half. One half sunk.
<i>VILLA</i>	bulker	TUR	—	10,513	16,530	1978	Grounded at Km 457, Parana River Oct 1. Being assisted by tugs <i>Alianza Rosario</i> and <i>Buni</i> .

CONTENTS

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

Marine, including Overdue & Missing Vessels	1
Piracy	7
Port State Control	8
Seizures & Arrests	8
Pipeline Accidents	9
Pollution	9
Weather & Navigation	10
Earthquakes	16
Volcanic Activity	16
Political & Civil Unrest	17
Kidnappings	24
Labour Disputes	24
Awards & Settlements	27
Railway Accidents	29
Miscellaneous	29
Fires & Explosions	30
Aviation	33
Product Recalls	36
Port Conditions	36
Port Conditions charts	37

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



ACOR B. (Portugal)

Ponta Delgada, Sep 29 -- C.c. Acor B., in tow of local tug Pero de Teive, arrived Ponta Delgada Sep 28 and safely berthed alongside the quay in the inner port at 2000, local time (not as reported in issue of Sep 30). Understand that, due to the extent of damage, it is not possible to carry out repairs at this port. The vessel is now unloading its cargo at the port of Ponta Delgada and as far as we understand she will be towed during next week to another port on the Continent, possibly Viana do Castelo, Portugal, for the necessary repairs. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Ponta Delgada, Oct 3 -- C.c. Acor B. sailed Ponta Delgada at 1500, local time, today, in tow of Portuguese tug Barra de Aveiro, bound Viana do Castelo, Portugal, for repairs. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ACORN (U.K.)

London, Oct 2 -- A press release from The Maritime & Coastguard Agency, timed 1840, GMT, Oct 1, states: At 1630, today, Aberdeen Coastguard received a routine call from fishing Acorn, INS 237, MNMK, on medium frequency reporting that they were taking water with six persons on board. Aberdeen Coastguard scrambled a rescue helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth and contacted the nearest oil platform, to ask if they would release their standby vessel, Dea Seeker to go to the assistance of the vessel until the helicopter arrived with a Coastguard pump. Dea Seeker is standing by Acorn and the helicopter has now lowered the Coastguard pump to the vessel. The weather conditions are west-south-west, force 6 (strong breeze), with a three metre swell and visibility of eight nautical miles. Hamish Young, Coastguard Watch Assistant, Aberdeen Coastguard said: "The Coastguard pump lowered onto the fishing vessel has helped the crew deal with their situation, another fishing vessel has offered assistance in escorting Acorn to port (Peterhead) for repairs."

London, Oct 2 -- Following received from Aberdeen Coastguard MRCC, timed 0834, BST: Fishing Acorn arrived Peterhead safely at 0430, UTC.

AIS NIKOLAS (Greece)

Singapore, Oct 4 -- Bulk Ais Nikolas arrived Singapore Oct 2 and sailed Oct 3 for Newcastle(AUS). -- Lloyd's Agents.

AL FAHAD (Saudi Arabia)

Jeddah, Oct 3 -- Passenger ro/ro Al Fahad remains in the same position. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ALLIANCE (U.S.A.)

Anchorage, Sep 29 -- Fishing Alliance: According to Coast Guard investigator Lt Mike Moss, vessel is no longer visible and he assumes it has sunk. Lt Moss stated that he is unsure of any salvage operations as the Coast Guard is not involved in these efforts. There were six people on board at the time of the accident and there were no casualties. Lt Moss stated that the operator of the vessel, Mark Giles, fell asleep at the wheel. His alarm went off and he woke up but it was too late to avoid collision with the rocks. -- Lloyd's Agents.

Anchorage, Sep 29 -- Fishing Alliance: Understand from the owner's son that all of the individuals on the boat at the time of the accident made it off the boat safely before it sank. They were picked up by a halibut boat and then met by the Coast Guard. It is believed that the currents are too strong and that the water is too deep to save the vessel and at this time there are no plans to try and save it. -- Lloyd's Agents.

AMERICAN MARINER (U.S.A.)

London, Sep 30 -- Following received from Coast Guard Cleveland, timed 1510, UTC: Bulk American Mariner (15396 gt, built 1980) had a small explosion in its starboard engine off Duluth Sep 24. (Note --- American Mariner arrived Duluth Sep 24 and sailed Sep 25.)

AZUR (Antigua & Barbuda)

Szczecin, Oct 5 -- General cargo Azur sailed Szczecin Oct 4 for England. -- Correspondent.

BAHLAWAN (Syria)

Aleppo, Oct 3 -- Our Lattakia office has reported that general cargo Bahlawan is still in Lattakia port berthing near the breakwater, no change has occurred on previous status. -- Lloyd's Agents.

BARGES ON FIRE, KRASNOYARSK AREA, RUSSIA

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: Two barges with fuel oil are on fire in the Krasnoyarsk Territory. The incident happened at 1815, Moscow time, 25 kilometres north-east of Krasnoyarsk today. "There are 300 tonnes of fuel oil in two barges," Emergencies Ministry spokesman Sergei Vlasov told Itar-Tass. "Fifteen minutes after the fire, at 1828, Moscow time, there was a clap. According to preliminary information, there was an explosion on the burning barges," Vlasov said.

BLUE RIBBON (South Korea)

See Pacific Dolphin.

CANADIAN LEADER (Canada)

Troy, Michigan, Sep 29 -- Bulk Canadian Leader is reported to be headed to Quebec City for repairs after running aground in the St. Lawrence River. The grounding apparently happened early Monday (Sep 26) morning near Grondine, which is

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located between Trois-Rivieres and Quebec City. Reports indicate it ran out of the channel due to engine failure and had received bottom damage. Water was reported in the forward cargo hold. The vessel was freed around 0630, yesterday and is headed for Quebec City under escort of several Groupe Ocean tugs. Vessel was expected to arrive at Section 53 of the Port of Quebec, on the St. Charles River, yesterday afternoon. The vessel was reported to be carrying a load of Quebec North Shore iron ore headed to Hamilton, Ontario. -- Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

London, Oct 2 -- Bulk Canadian Leader arrived Hamilton, Canada, Sep 29 from Seven Islands.

CAST PROSPERITY (Germany)

Montreal, Oct 3 -- On Sep 26, there was a collision between c.c. Cast Prosperity (16324 gt, built 2005) and chem.tank Hyde Park (22103 gt, built 1982). This occurred in the area of Lac St. Peter and both vessels were proceeding up river, bound for Montreal. The incident happened when one vessel was overtaking the other. Cast Prosperity is undergoing full permanent repairs in Montreal and repairs are expected to take approximately four weeks. There are approximately 50 tons of steel to be renewed on the vessel's starboard sheer strake in various areas, from the starboard shoulder forward and aft right to the transom. It is expected that the repairs will take most of October. The vessel discharged its container cargo in Montreal and once permanent repairs are completed, it will load the outbound containers in Montreal and be back in the liner service between Montreal and Europe. Hyde Park was carrying a full cargo of gasoline, which was discharged in Montreal. Minor temporary repairs have been effected and the vessel is now bound for Halifax where it is expected it will carry out temporary repairs. The vessel will arrive at Halifax on Oct 5. -- Lloyd's Agents. (Note -- Cast Prosperity sailed Antwerp Sep 19 for Montreal.)

CHEER ARROW (Panama)

London, Oct 5 -- Cement Cheer Arrow arrived Cebu Sep 7.

CTMA VACANCIER (Canada)

London, Sep 29 -- Passenger ro/ro CTMA Vacancier (11481 gt, built 1973) experienced an electrical equipment malfunction affecting propulsion off Les Escoumins pilot station, St Lawrence River, in lat 48 20 33N, long 69 11 18W, at 0435, EDST, Sep 29. No 4 cylinder was causing blackout.

DONGJIN PHOENIX (South Korea)

Yokohama, Oct 4 -- General cargo Dongjin Phoenix was refloated from the shallows at 0830, Sep 30. Vessel is now under temporary repairs and is scheduled to be towed to Korea upon completion of the repairs. -- Lloyd's Agents.

DURGANDINI (Panama)

Jakarta, Oct 5 -- Product tanker Durgandini (21810 gt, built 1993) grounded at Cilacap water (Buoy II) Sep 30. Extent of damage not known. -- Lloyd's Agents.

EILEEN (Gibraltar)

Cadiz, Sep 29 -- Product tanker Eileen (1650 gt, built 1995), which was loading fuel oil for Gibraltar, caused a spill of 5,000-7,000 litres of fuel oil at the CEPESA Refinery pier, located at San Roque, Algeciras. The spill was caused by a connection between the loading tank and the ballast tank, and the fuel was spilled once the ballast tank exhaust valve was opened. Emergency Co-ordination Centre 112 was alerted, and between three and five vessels have been working on containing the spill, as well as cleaning up the area. The spill is about 1,600 metres long and has already reached the shore at Algeciras. According to information from local representatives of the Central Government, the Harbourmaster has immobilised the vessel and has opened an investigation. Disciplinary proceedings regarding the accident will reportedly be held. The spill is reported to be "very controlled." -- Lloyd's Agents. (Note -- Eileen trades between Gibraltar and Algeciras.)

Cadiz, Oct 3 -- Product tanker Eileen: The spill has already been cleaned up. According to port authorities the spilled fuel amounts 3 to 4 cu m. The barge has been seized by local authorities, who claim for 200,000 euros indemnity to the owners of the barge, Messrs. GIBUNCO in Gibraltar. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ELQUI (Uruguay)

Stanley, Oct 4 -- Fishing Elqui is still at Fiapss awaiting to be scuttled. There has been a slight delay in finding a suitable vessel to tow the Elqui to its final resting place. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ERIC H. (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 5 -- Following received from Coast Guard Miami, timed 1420, UTC: Fishing Eric H. (208 gt, built 2001) had fire 85 miles west of Fort Myers beach, Florida, at 0300, local time, today. The three persons on board are missing, search under way.

ESTEFIX (Antigua & Barbuda)

Messina, Oct 5 -- General cargo Estefix arrived Catania Sep 28 from Piraeus and sailed Sep 30 for Nemrut Bay. -- Lloyd's Agents.

EUGENIA P. (Honduras)

Kolkata, Sep 30 -- General cargo Eugenia P. was released and sailed from Kolkata on Sep 15. It is understood that the vessel's destination is Singapore via Chennai. -- Lloyd's Agents.

EVERISE GLORY (Malaysia)

London, Sep 29 -- A Smit Salvage report, states: In mid-August SMT Salvage started with a major wreck

removal close to the Malaysian/Singaporean boundary some 7.5 nautical miles off Horsburgh lighthouse. In order to maintain safe water depth Asian Hercules II was mobilised to remove general cargo Everise Glory, laden with salt. The wreck was cut into three sections with a weight of around 2,000 tonnes. This operation will be finished mid-October.

FOWAIRET (Qatar)

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Netherlands-based Multraship Salvage, working under LOF2000 with co-contractors URS Salvage and Maritime Contracting, has moved the c.c. Fowairet to the Verbrugge Terminal at the port of Flushing after the 2,757 TEU vessel grounded in the River Scheldt last week with a cargo of almost 2,000 containers, 127 of which contained hazardous cargo. Multraship reports that the vessel sustained hogging damage and flooding in No 5 hold after grounding in the early morning of Sep 20 on the ebb tide near Perkpolder, between Terneuzen and Antwerp. There was some oil leakage from a cracked fuel tank which was contained by anti-pollution craft with sweepers. The vessel was initially held in Flushing Sloe harbour, awaiting inspection and assessment of salvage options. Using three floating cranes, the joint salvors then offloaded the vessel's deck cargo of approximately 600 containers into barges in order to reduce the vessel's draft sufficiently to enable it to be shifted and moored at a terminal in the port. This operation was completed on the evening of Sep 27, and the vessel was successfully moored at the Verbrugge Terminal on the morning of Sep 28. The salvors then started pumping out the fuel oil from the vessel's damaged and leaking tanks into a lightering tanker, attended by salvage craft, oil booms and onsite anti-pollution craft. Work began on Sep 29 to discharge the remaining 1,300 containers from the vessel at the Verbrugge Terminal.

Maassluis, Oct 3 -- C.c. Fowairet: Unloading will be finished tomorrow, after which they will decide whether she will be demolished or repaired. -- Lloyd's Sub-Agents.

FREITIND (Norway)

Trondheim, Oct 4 -- Kvernhusvik Shipyard inform no decision yet regarding final disposition of general cargo Freitind. -- Lloyd's Agents.

GENMAR TRUST (Liberia)

Ponta Delgada, Oct 5 -- Understand that bulk/oil GenMar Trust (57082 gt, built 1992) had main engine damage about 500 nautical miles west of the Azores and is presently being towed by tug Fotiy Krylov towards the port of Ponta Delgada for inspection and possible repairs. -- Lloyd's Agents.

GOLDEN DRAGON (Taiwan)

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

HERDIS J. (Denmark)

London, Oct 3 -- Following received from Aarhus RCC, timed 0915, UTC: Fishing Herdis J. (790 gt, built 1950), en route for Grenaa for demolition, grounded just outside Grenaa, in approximate position lat 56 25N, long 10 56E, at 1945, UTC, Oct 2. Tug due on scene around 1900, UTC, today.

London, Oct 4 -- Following received from Aarhus RCC, timed 1035, UTC: Fishing Herdis J. was refloated at 1724, UTC, Oct 3 and arrived Grenaa at 1811, UTC, same day.

HOHEBANK (U.K.)

Gothenburg, Oct 3 -- General cargo Hohebank is still in dry dock and work is in progress to replace around four to five tons of steel in its bottom. Main rudder centre post has been measured and found defective; trying to dismantle right now but problems being experienced. -- Westax Marine Services AB.

HYDE PARK (Liberia)

See Cast Prosperity.

IERAPETRA L. (Greece)

London, Oct 4 -- Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Ro/ro Ierapetra L. (12891 gt, built 1975) in the port of Piraeus, sustained damage to the port main engine, afternoon of Oct 3. The next voyage was scheduled to be for 1850 hrs and bound for Milos-Santorini-Ag. Nikolaos-Siteia-Kassos-Karpathos-Diafani-Halki-Rodos with 102 passengers. Piraeus Port Authority prohibited departure pending inspection of the repairs. At 0645, today the marine inspectorate confirmed correct operation of the engine and vessel was permitted to continue normal scheduling.

JAVA SEA (Singapore)

London, Sep 29 -- General cargo Java Sea arrived at Singapore at 0120 hrs, Sep 23 (? from trials) and sailed at 2010 hrs, Sep 27, bound for Amamapare.

JUPITER 6 (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

See Satsang.

KHUDOZHNIK KUSTODIYEV (Russia)

See "Netherlands" under "Port State Control."

KS GLORY (Panama)

See Murat Kiran.

LADOGA 101 (Russia)

St. Petersburg, Oct 3 -- General cargo Ladoga 101 was towed to St. Petersburg on Sep 26 and is now under repair. No information regarding extent of damage. -- Lloyd's Agents.

LINDSAY (South Africa)

See Ouro do Brasil.

LOK RAJESHWARI (India)

Tunis, Oct 4 -- Bulk Lok Rajeshwari released from arrest and left Goulette

port 1630, Oct 1, destination Nicolaev, after an amicable settlement reached between receivers and owners. -- Lloyd's Agents.

LONG XUYEN (Vietnam)

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

MAIKE-C. (U.K.)

Muscat, Oct 3 -- Having completed repairs, general cargo Maike-C. sailed from Salalah at 1215, local time, Sep 29. -- Lloyd's Agents.

MAKOURIA (Guyana)

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: The report on the investigation into the failure of the engine of the ferry Makouria Sep 9 has recommended that a serious attempt be made to have its engine replaced as well as the ferry Torani's, instead of continuously refurbishing them, the Government Information Agency (GINA) reported yesterday. The report was conducted by the Transport and Harbours Department (T&HD) after Minister of Transport and Hydraulics Anthony Xavier ordered an investigation into the reasons for the malfunctioning of the Makouria, one of the vessels plying the Rosignol-New Amsterdam route. T&HD General Manager William Joseph has forwarded the report to Minister Xavier, GINA said. The Sep 9 incident had resulted in passengers being stranded for hours after the Makouria encountered problems as it was about to leave the Rosignol ferry stelling. Subsequently, the Torani was used to tow the disabled vessel to New Amsterdam. According to the report's findings, vehicles and passengers were already onboard the vessel when the main engine malfunctioned. The captain therefore, the release said, had no other alternative but to take the vessel to Rosignol, using the port main engine only, with the assistance of the tide. "Instead of putting the vessel out of service at Rosignol, desperate efforts were made to ease the heavy vehicle traffic by loading only light vehicles and passengers, but the heavy wind and current made unberthing almost impossible with the one engine," the report found. The findings also showed that no tug was in the vicinity to render assistance in a timely manner and 'out of course' action had to be taken to summon the Torani which was full to capacity with vehicles and passengers to tow the disabled Makouria to the New Amsterdam stelling. It was further noted, GINA reported, that the full load RPM for the main engine is 1350 RPM (Revolutions Per Minute). The chief engineer said that the throttle was at full RPM but the output was only 900 RPM. Moreover, the report has recommended that the Captain of the Torani be commended for towing the Makouria under adverse conditions.

MARIANELA (Panama)

Cayman Brac, Sep 30 -- Bulk Marianela (14367 gt, built 1979), loaded with 18,321 tonnes of bulk

cement, departed Mariel Sep 19 for San Pedro de Macoris, but due to Hurricane "Rita" deviated in opposite direction. Proceeded down the west coast of Cuba, rounded the western end and proceeded south-east. When 17 miles south of Cayman Brac, south of the Bluff, had engine failure and "dead" in the water at 2200, local time, Sep 22. According to master, ship's engineers commenced work at 2300 hrs to remove cooling system No.5 cylinder. Replacement cylinder on board. At 0800 hrs, Sep 23, repairs completed and vessel had drifted to 12 miles south of Cayman Brac. Left location 0800, Sep 23, for Mariel, where ETA Sep 25/26.

MATTERHORN (Liberia)

Gdynia, Oct 5 -- Ref Matterhorn is still at a shiprepair yard in Gdansk. The expected date for completion of repairs is Oct 15-20. -- Correspondents.

MILANO (Bahamas)

Lisbon, Oct 4 -- Ref Milano sailed from Lisbon on Sep 20, destination unknown. -- Lloyd's Agents.

MSC AL AMINE (Morocco)

Tunis, Oct 3 -- General cargo MSC Al Amine: According to repair workshop in Menzel Bourguiba, vessel is expected to sail within two weeks. -- Lloyd's Agents.

MURAT KIRAN (Turkey)

Chittagong, Oct 5 -- Bulk Murat Kiran (22145 gt, built 1985) was lying at Chittagong outer anchorage, bulk wheat on board, proceeding to pilot ground to pick up pilot for entering to the berth, had an engine problem. As a result it drifted and came in contact with bulk KS Glory (23479 gt, built 1980) at about 1055, yesterday. We understand anchor chain of both vessels fouled to each other but were subsequently freed. Reportedly both vessels sustained damages and they are presently lying at Chittagong outer anchorage. -- Lloyd's Agents.

NAZEK T. (North Korea)

London, Sep 29 -- General cargo Cpt George, ex Nazek T., sailed from Alexandria on Sep 25, bound for Syria.

NCC MADINAH (NIS)

Genoa, Oct 6 -- Chem.tank NCC Madinah (17561 gt, built 1976) during berthing manoeuvre at Genoa hit wharf and sustained hull damage and part of cargo of palm oil was lost at sea, Oct 5. Understand cargo dispersed (insured by Assicurazioni Generali) and barges attended in order to avoid pollution. Damage to vessel and pier being ascertained by interested parties. -- Lloyd's Agents.

NIL DERYA (Turkey)

Messina, Oct 3 -- General cargo Nil Derya is still at Crotone and its situation will be crystallized for quite a long time yet, as the court may not examine the case for many months. Therefore, a definitive ruling allowing the sale for scrap may be a long way away. -- Lloyd's Agents.

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NT EXPRESS (Singapore)

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: The master of general cargo NT Express (3949 gt, built 1985) has been charged with maritime offences after hitting a fishing boat in Darwin harbour. Bandara Dugganna, master of the NT Express, was charged with failing to keep proper look-out, failing to avoid a collision and failing to proceed at a safe speed. It is understood the ship reversed into the fishing boat on Sep 12 this year. Commonwealth prosecutor Natalie Sheridan-Smith said Mr Dugganna, a Sri Lankan national, was facing a maximum two years in prison or a \$10,000 fine. Mr Dugganna was granted bail until his next court appearance on Oct 14. But it is possible the case will be heard before an east coast court. (Note -- NT Express arrived Darwin Sep 13 from Dili and sailed same day for Singapore.)

NYK PROCYON (Panama)

London, Sep 30 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 2013, UTC: C.c. NYK Procyon (60117 gt, built 1995), Ymuiden for Southampton, is currently reported not under command in lat 52 29.8N, long 03 59.8E.

London, Oct 1 -- Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 0554, UTC: C.c. NYK Procyon proceeded on voyage at 2200, UTC, Sep 30.

London, Oct 5 -- C.c. NYK Procyon sailed Southampton Oct 2 for Gioia Tauro.

OCEAN DIRK (Egypt)

London, Oct 4 -- Following press release from SMIT Salvage, states: Anchor handling firefighting tug/supply Ocean Dirk (863 gt, built 1981) sank after colliding with an object in the South Belayim Field, Egypt, Sep 20-22. Urgent removal of the Ocean Dirk was required in order to safeguard safe navigation in the South Belayim Field. A SMIT salvage team executed a diving survey. The SMIT Sheerleg Taklift 7 removed the wreck.

OCEAN FOXTROT (Canada)

London, Oct 4 -- At 1945 hrs, Sep 30, the upbound anchor handling tug/supply Ocean Foxtrot (700 gt, built 1971), with the barge Betsiamites, lost power on one engine, in lat 46 34.10N, long 72 03.31W, near Grondines, Quebec. Assistance was requested from another tug.

OLTENITA (Romania)

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: A riverboat caught fire while cruising the Danube River on the border between Slovakia and Hungary on Sunday (Oct 2). The rescue operation was described as "chaotic." Slovakian firefighters tried to extinguish the fire on the Romanian riverboat after passengers were evacuated. The fire broke out on board the riverboat Oltenita, which was cruising from Bucharest to Vienna. A total of 77 tourists from Belgium,

Denmark and Norway fled as flames gutted the four-storey, 100-metre, Romanian cruise ship after the captain managed to manoeuvre it to a river bank near the Slovak capital Bratislava so passengers could get to land. The fire reportedly spread quickly, and some passengers had to climb out of their cabin windows during the evacuation. Embassy officials in nearby Bratislava helped passengers replace travel documents lost in the blaze. Fire fighters found a body some seven hours after the blaze broke out in one of the vessel's kitchens at around 1500. It was believed to be the singer in the ship's band, said Ivan Petko, spokesman for the regional fire brigade in the western town of Trnava. "Since only one member of the crew was missing after the evacuation of the ship, we assume that it is the body of the missing woman," said Petko. The remaining 42 Romanian and two Serbian crew members managed to escape from the vessel. Petko said some of the tourists were in shock, but none was injured and all were transported by bus to Bratislava. The vessel was 40 years old and once was the favourite riverboat of former Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: The fire which started on Romanian passenger Oltenita near the town of Gabcikovo on the Danube in western Slovakia yesterday afternoon, has been extinguished, but it claimed one life, local firefighter head Tibor Candal said. "The fire has been extinguished, but there are still some 20 firefighters on the spot. At about two o'clock in the night, the ship partly broke and one half of it sunk under water," Candal said. The four-storey, 100-metre-long ship is moored at the Danube embankment near the village of Sap, between the towns of Gabcikovo and Medvedov. The victim of the fire was probably a professional singer who worked on the ship. She was reportedly a Romanian or Serbian girl. Traffic on the Danube has been temporarily stopped and police are investigating the cause of the fire. According to latest information, about 120 tourists from Belgium and Denmark were on the ship. Rescuers evacuated them to a hotel immediately after the fire broke out. None of the tourists was seriously injured.

OSTFRIESLAND (Germany)

Maassluis, Oct 5 -- Ro/ro Ostfriesland arrived Eemshaven Oct 3 from Borkum. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

OURO DO BRASIL (Liberia)

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Court of Marine Inquiry, which will investigate the shipping disaster in which trawler Lindsay sank with the loss of 14 lives, will convene on Oct 31. The inquiry will take place just short of six months after the May 8 tragedy. Lindsay sank within minutes after colliding with fruit juice tanker Ouro do Brasil 12 km off Sardinia Bay, near Port Elizabeth. Only the skipper and one

other crew member from Lindsay survived. Transport Minister Jeff Radebe had approved the convening of the inquiry following preliminary findings that the conduct of both Lindsay and Ouro do Brasil "were apparently not consistent with international regulations for prevention of collision at sea". Transport ministry spokesman Collen Msibi said that a presiding officer had been appointed to head up the inquiry. The preliminary report was the outcome of an investigation led by the Institute for Maritime Technology and the SA Maritime Authority.

PACIFIC DOLPHIN (Liberia)

Manila, Oct 6 -- Bulk Pacific Dolphin (27763 gt, built 1996) and general cargo Blue Ribbon (5416 gt, built 1981) were in collision in the vicinity of Selat Philip Channel, Singapore, in lat 01 07 01N, long 103 45 02E, at about 1340, UTC, Sep 23. Blue Ribbon reportedly sustained damage to the starboard side shell plates, deck plates and hatch coaming plates, which were heavily twisted/indented. The vessel is presently at Subic Shipyard undergoing repairs which are expected to be completed in 20-30 days. -- Lloyd's Agents. (Note -- Pacific Dolphin sailed Singapore Sep 24. Blue Ribbon arrived Manila Sep 29.)

PASCAL PAOLI (France)

See "France" under "Labour Disputes."

POCHARD (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Oct 3 -- At 0630 hrs, Oct 2, bulk Pochard (22655 gt, built 2003) experienced engine problems while entering Lock 3 at Beauharnois. Similar problems occurred at Eisenhower Lock. (Note -- Pochard, laden with 21,772 tonnes of canola seed departed from Thunder Bay on Sep 27 and was reported arriving at Montreal on Oct 2.)

PONTOON SANK, RIVER THAMES, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: An oil slick has formed on the River Thames after a refuelling pontoon containing 50 tonnes of diesel sank. The pontoon took two light tugs down with it, near Cherry Garden Pier in Bermondsey, south-east London, early this morning. A barge which filters oil from water is working at the scene and booms are in place to prevent further leakage. No-one was hurt when the pontoon, which is used by City Cruises to refuel their boats, sank in a storage area. A Port of London Authority spokesman said: "We don't actually know how much oil has come out of the tanks. We know some has come out because there's iridescence on the water and we have some bits which the barge has been collecting." The spokesman said they would be able to review the damage when low tide comes at about 1000, BST. The Thames Clipper passenger services are not thought to be affected. It is not known why the pontoon sank at about 0100 GMT, but an investigation is being launched.

PRIMA INDAH (Indonesia)

See "Indonesia" under "Piracy".

PRINSENBORG (Netherlands)

London, Oct 6 -- Information received from Kiel, dated today: Bulk Prinsenberg (13340 gt, built 2003) ran aground on the river Weser close to Brake near buoy 46, yesterday. Three tugs came to assist.

Bremen, Oct 6 -- Bulk Prinsenberg, leaving from Brake, made contact with the ground in the height of Grossensiel Oct 5. The vessel was fast until 0015, this morning. The vessel was subsequently scheduled to call at Columbuspier at 0115, today, for further investigations. -- Lloyd's Agents.

PUERTO DE ALTAMIRA (Panama)

Veracruz, Sep 30 -- Cutter suction hopper dredger Puerto de Altamira reportedly sank in the port of Veracruz at about 2230 hrs, Sep 7. The next day it was expected to start its work of dredging the port so larger ships could come in. Apparently, as it was undocking from the "T" Dock in the port, it was pushed by the northerly wind that was blowing and made two holes in its hull on the starboard side aft, in way of the engine-room. The dredger has not yet been refloated. It is now lying with its stern on the bottom and its bow floating about 75 metres from shore in the port basin, near the tourist dock. It is understood, unofficially, that the first quote obtained for the refloating of the dredger was considered too high and they were awaiting two more before making a decision. The public television newscast today indicated that the dredger's insurers had not so far responded and so nothing was moving. It also said that the dredging company had been given until Oct 5 to remove the dredger from the port. -- Lloyd's Agents.

REINE (Panama)

Santo Domingo, Sep 29 -- Ro/ro Reine: Information from Ciramar SA indicates that the above vessel's name has been changed to Sea Mermaid and that its repairs have been completed; however, it still remains at the port due not having effected payment of the said repairs yet. -- Lloyd's Agents.

RICH SPRING (Cambodia)

London, Oct 2 -- General cargo Rich Spring arrived Incheon Sep 23 and sailed Sep 24 for Dalian.

ROTA (Belize)

Liverpool, Oct 3 -- General cargo Rota is still being detained at Liverpool and in the hands of the Russian owners. Sailing date unknown. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ROTORUA**(St. Vincent & Grenadines)**

London, Sep 28 -- Ro/ro Rotorua sailed from Montreal on/about Sep 20 and was next reported arriving at New York at 1050 hrs, Sep 28.

ROYAL PACIFIC (Panama)

Taipei, Oct 4 -- Understand from the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau that due to the many typhoons that have been engulfing Taiwan recently, passenger Royal Pacific is still berthed at pier No. 54 in Kaohsiung port, awaiting scrapping operations, which are expected to complete on/around Oct 31. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SATSANG (Panama)

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: A tug and her 12 crew have disappeared without trace while towing a bulk carrier to a breakers yards in India. The bulker has been found drifting in the Indian Ocean, her tow wire hanging down into the sea. However, there is no sign of the tug or her crew. Salvage tug Jupiter 6 sailed from Walvis Bay at the end of August, towing the 16 000-ton bulk Satsang to India for scrapping. The tug and her charge had spent four weeks at Walvis Bay for repairs to the tug's props and engines. The Jupiter 6 and the Satsang had originally set sail from Cuba. Then, after leaving Walvis Bay, both ships disappeared. No radio contact could be made with the Jupiter 6 and no ship on the busy sea-lanes around the Cape reported seeing the two vessels. But, on Monday, bulk Poseidon spotted the Satsang drifting dead in the water about 250 miles south of Port Elizabeth. A South African tug is currently steaming to the bulker to pick up the tow and bring her under control, to prevent her from becoming a danger to shipping, and to search for clues to what really happened. The salvage tug Smit Amandla is expected to reach the "dead" ship tomorrow, said David Main of Smit Marine South Africa. He explained how a bulk carrier sailing from Durban at the weekend had come across the Satsang. "The master of the bulk carrier reported that the tow wire was hanging down into the water and that there was no sign of life. He reported her position," Main said. "We will probably send an aircraft to find her again because she would have drifted away from the position supplied by the bulk carrier over the past few days. When we get to her, we hope to find some indication of what might have happened to her and the tug that was towing her." They plan to bring the Satsang closer to shore and "hold" her until a new towing arrangement is made. "We won't be towing her to India with the Amandla. That is not the Amandla's business. The Satsang will have no power, so we will have to put people aboard to connect a tow. Indications are that there is an emergency tow connection. The master of the Poseidon reported that the two anchor chains of the Satsang were both connected to a tow wire hanging into the sea. We obviously don't know whether there is seven metres of tow wire on it, or 700m. We will just have to wait and see," said Main.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Vessels have been asked to be on full alert for a tug (salvage

tug Jupiter 6), with about 13 people on board, after it went missing early last month while towing a disused bulk carrier to a scrapyard in India. Bulk Satsang, which had presumably been adrift since then, was spotted 220 miles off Port Elizabeth by a passing vessel last week and had drifted even closer to the coast by yesterday. The Smit salvage tug Smit Amandla was dispatched from Durban harbour on Thursday afternoon (Sep 29) after being contracted to find the drifting bulk carrier and take it under tow. Smit spokeswoman Clare Gomes said the bulk carrier was found 165 miles south of Port Elizabeth yesterday, but that bad weather had prevented them from boarding it. The Smit Amandla would stay at the location and observe the carrier until the weather improved. An official at the maritime rescue and co-ordination centre in Cape Town said they were aware of the missing tug but did not have any details. South African Maritime Safety Authority (Samsa) acting operations manager Saleem Modak said they believed there were 13 crew members on board the missing tug. "All ships have to report to the owners regularly," said Modak. He said the tug had last reported to its owners on Sep 5 and an alert had been put out to other vessels to be on the lookout for the vessel. Modak said Samsa could not speculate on what could have happened to the tug. "We have no idea where it is. We are searching and listening. All ships have been called to keep a lookout for it. But at least the carrier has been found," said Modak.

SEA ELEGANCE (Vanuatu)

Kolkata, Oct 4 -- After loading cargo of iron ore, bulk Sea Elegance left Haldia on Sep 25. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SHAN HAI (China)

Durban, Oct 3 -- According to local agents, bulk Shan Hai was not detained. The vessel sailed on Oct 1 for Saldanah Bay. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SHINSEI MARU NO.3 (Japan)

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Japan Coast Guard (JCG) has concluded that an Israeli container vessel hit a Japanese fishing boat that capsized off the northernmost prefecture late last month, officials said today. Nemuro Coast Guard Office officials said that traces of paint stuck to the 19-ton fishing Shinsei Maru No.3 matched that on the Israeli vessel, which is now at anchor at Pusan Port. Yesterday, the Japanese Coast Guard raised the sunken fishing vessel and found a metre-long crack in its bow and a deep scratch some six to seven metres long along its side. At the request of the JCG, South Korea's maritime police took paint samples from the Israeli vessel, c.c. Zim Asia (41507 gt, built 1996), and provided them to the JCG. The JCG is analyzing records of the vessel's course on a global positioning system (GPS) in a bid to specify the exact location and time of the accident, and

is poised to ask the Israeli government to cooperate with investigations into the accident. The owner of the vessel has reportedly denied the vessel's involvement in the accident, according to JCG officials. The Shinsei Maru No.3 capsized in the Pacific Ocean off Cape Nosappu in Nemuro on Sep 28 after being hit by another vessel. One crewmember was rescued but the other seven died. (Note -- Zim Asia sailed Seattle Sep 18 for Busan.)

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Zim shipping company on Sunday (Oct 2) announced that if it were to be discovered that one of its vessels had been involved in the hit-and-run maritime collision off the coast of Japan last Wednesday that killed seven Japanese fisherman, the company would accept responsibility. Zim spokesperson said the company is fully prepared to cooperate with all investigations of the incident. "If it is discovered that c.c. Zim Asia was involved with the accident, the Zim company will accept responsibility," the company said in a statement. The spokesperson also said the company is conducting an internal investigation into the matter. He said the chairman of Zim's Asia region, Captain Yigal Dafne, was sent to the vessel to question the crew, and that a group of company representatives had been sent to Japan to participate in the investigation there. The spokesperson said initial reports of the internal investigation indicated that the crew had not felt any contact with another boat. But the results of the external investigation thus far have strengthened suspicions that Zim Asia was the culprit. The accident took place near Hokkaido, Japan's northern island, at about 0300 on Wednesday, when a large vessel collided with a fishing boat (fishing Shinsei Maru No.3), causing it to capsize. The vessel then allegedly sped away from the scene of the accident without reporting the collision or trying to assist the fishermen. As a result, seven of the eight crew members drowned. On Sunday, the Japanese Coast Guard raised the sunken fishing boat and found a metre-long crack in its bow and a deep scratch some six to seven metres long along its side. The investigation is now focusing on comparing the paint that was scraped from the fishing boat in the collision with the paint found in several dents on the Zim Asia. An inspection of the latter that was carried out at the South Korean port of Busan, where the Zim Asia docked on Friday, discovered two places, one on the vessel's bow and one on its belly, that bore marks as if the vessel had struck something, and white paint was found in both places. This indicates that if the Zim Asia was the culprit, it hit the fishing boat at least twice. Samples of the paint found on the Zim Asia have been sent to Japan for comparison with the fishing boat's paint. However, according to the Japanese authorities, all of the 16 vessels known to be in the vicinity of the collision last Wednesday

have been examined, and only the Israeli vessel bore the marks of a collision. The Zim Asia first emerged as a suspect when an examination of the radar signals emitted by the vessel that hit the fishing boat discovered that this radar signature is unique to Israeli vessels. A check of which Israeli vessels had been in the area at the time then pointed to the Zim Asia as the most likely culprit. As a result, the Japanese asked the Korean authorities to inspect the vessel when it docked at Busan, its next stop. The collision was also observed by another nearby fishing boat, whose crew said that the vessel in question had almost collided with their boat as well. Crew members said that after the collision, the vessel responsible for the accident blinked its lights and then sailed away at high speed. It was the crew of this second fishing boat that recorded the guilty vessel's radar signals and transferred them to the Japanese authorities for identification. The Israeli embassy in Japan said Sunday that the Japanese authorities have not yet contacted them officially about the investigation. However, both the embassy and the Israeli Transportation Ministry confirmed that the Israel Shipping Administration has decided to send an investigator of its own to Hong Kong to question the Zim Asia's crew. The vessel is slated to dock in Hong Kong on Oct 5. While Korean policemen questioned the Zim Asia's crew in Busan, the crew reportedly refused to cooperate. The Zim Asia was supposed to have docked at Shanghai Sunday morning, but was delayed by the interrogation of its crew in Busan. It will therefore arrive there today. The Zim shipping company insisted Sunday that none of its vessels has been involved in a collision of any kind in recent weeks.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Israeli vessel involved in a collision off the coast of Japan last Thursday (Sep 29) had identified the Japanese fishing boat shortly before the accident took place but failed to take any evasive actions, the captain actually being asleep at the time, it was alleged today. Seven fisherman died in the collision between c.c. Zim Asia and Japanese fishing Shinsei Maru No.3 off the coast of the northern Japanese island, Hokkaido. They also noted the suspicion that the Israeli vessel had fled the scene of the accident without searching for survivors or reporting it to the authorities. Zim Asia's crew, who were briefly questioned by local police in Pusan, South Korea in relation to the incident, denied any knowledge of it. The vessel's navigational equipment did in fact alert the crew to the presence of the Japanese boat on Thursday night, according to a series of dispatches sent between the Zim Asia and its company headquarters in Israel. However, the vessel's second-in-command on duty at the time failed to respond to the warnings and did not wake up the vessel's captain, Moshe Ben David, as

required by protocol. Furthermore, Zim Asia's crew admitted changing course around the time of the collision, but claimed they had done so without being aware a collision had taken place. However, the radar-tracking log on the nearby Japanese fishing boat Fushimi Maru 13 recorded that the change in vessel's course occurred immediately after the Japanese fishing boat had disappeared from its screens. When Korean police asked captain Ben David whether his vessel had been near Okaido on the night of the collision, he said: "Hokkaido, I've never heard of such a place." The vessel soon left South Korea on the way to its next port of call, Shanghai, before police could come to any conclusions. Zim headquarters initially denied that one of their vessels had been involved in the accident but after a preliminary inquiry admitted that Zim Asia had indeed collided with Shinsei Maru No.3, but said the crew and captain had no idea that anything had taken place. Ben David is to be suspended until further notice upon arrival in Hong Kong. Zim president, Doron Guder, arrived in Japan today and will travel to Hokkaido to meet with the fisherman's families and offer them a public apology and financial compensation.

London, Oct 6 -- Four Japanese coastguard officials will arrive in Hong Kong today as part of their investigation into last week's collision between fishing Shinsei Maru No.3 and c.c. Zim Asia off the Japanese coast, which killed seven fishermen. Paint marks indicate Zim Asia hit Shinsei Maru No.3, causing it to capsize. Seven fishermen were later found dead inside the trawler, an eighth man was rescued. Japan's deputy consul general in Hong Kong, Mikio Numata, confirmed that the inspectors' arrival would coincide with that of Zim Asia, which is due to berth around 1700, local time. Investigators hope to board the vessel, talk to the crew and inspect log books, although final approval rests with the Israeli government. An official from Israel's Department of Transport was due to arrive in Hong Kong yesterday. Zim Asia Pacific president, Igal Dafni, who is heading Zim's in-house investigation, told Kyoto news agency that 12 vessels, including seven fishing vessels, were in the area at the time of the accident. He said Zim Asia was trying to avoid another vessel and was unaware of Shinsei Maru No.3. The company is investigating whether the radar system failed to sound an alert. A report in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz said a collision warning was sounded but the chief officer failed to respond to the warnings and did not alert the master, Moshe Ben David, who was asleep in his cabin. The master will be suspended when the vessel arrives in Hong Kong. Both the transport department and Zim are carrying out separate investigations into the incident.

SIGAS MONARCH (Singapore)

London, Oct 4 -- Lpg Sigas Monarch sailed Rotterdam Oct 2.

SKS TAGUS (NIS)

London, Oct 4 -- Bulk/oil SKS Tagus sailed Muuga Sep 29 for New York.

SOUTHERN TIARE (New Zealand)

Wellington, Oct 3 -- General cargo Southern Tiare arrived back at Napier anchorage at 1000, local time, Sep 29, on 29th in tow of the Eastland Port Ltd tug Titirangi. The Napier tug Maungatea berthed the casualty during the afternoon. Repairs to the gearbox/clutch/differential are expected to take about a week. -- Lloyd's Agents.

STEN EMBLA (NIS)

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Chemical/oil carrier Sten Embla (8594 gt, built 1999) carrying over 10,000 tonnes of oil, under pilotage when it ran aground at Dublin Jul 3. It was later towed off by a Dublin port tug at high tide. (Note -- Sten Embla arrived Dublin Jul 3 and sailed Jul 4. Vessel subsequently arrived Mongstad Jul 6.)

STURDY FALCON (Vietnam)

East London, Oct 3 -- General cargo Sturdy Falcon sailed East London Oct 3 for Lome. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

TMM OAXACA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Oct 4 -- C.c. TMM Oaxaca sailed Puerto Limon Sep 26 for Manzanillo.

TORKSEY

London, Oct 5 -- Following received from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, dated, today: Vessel Torksey lost all power and was drifting off Sizewell, Suffolk at 0845, yesterday morning. The vessel is a former 49 metre gravel barge, on passage from Hull to Plymouth, with five persons on board. Thames Coastguard requested the launch of the Aldeburgh RNLi all weather lifeboat to assist the vessel. The lifeboat managed to place a line on the vessel and assist them to a point where they could anchor. The vessel was taken to an anchorage off Southwold. At 0800, this morning, Thames Coastguard were further alerted by a member of the public that this vessel was aground on the beach at Dunwich. The vessel had taken on water and dragged its anchor, but without any power, the tide placed it on the beach. The vessel is disabled with no main engine, no working generator, no navigation lights and no VHF communication. A Marine Casualty Officer from the Maritime and coastguard Agency has been despatched to the scene. The owners have informed the Maritime and Coastguard Agency that they have contracted salvage resources to remove the vessel.

London, Oct 5 -- Following received from Coastguard Thames MRCC, timed 1550, UTC: Vessel Torksey remains aground. Vessel has no

insurance and a small tug from Woodbridge is proceeding to the casualty tonight.

TYPHOON (production platform)

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

URANUS (North Korea)

London, Oct 6 -- Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0850, UTC: General cargo Uranus (2288 gt, built 1975), bound Limassol, cargo timber, was not under command due fuel oil pump damaged in lat 39 14.27N, long 25 47.68E, around 1416, local time, Oct 4. A sistership proceeded and took vessel in tow towards Chios for repairs but the master of the Uranus reported after a few hours that the problem had been solved and no further assistance was required. This morning the Uranus was anchored off Chios, in lat 38 18.4N, long 26 15E, at 0650, UTC. It was about to resume voyage to Limassol.

VASSILIKI T. (Greece)

Piraeus, Oct 3 -- Bulk Vassiliki T. was refloated and sailed from Nafplion on Sep 30 bound for Tinos Island. -- Lloyd's Agents.

VILLA (Turkey)

Buenos Aires, Oct 4 -- Bulk Villa (10513 gt, built 1978) grounded at Km 457, Parana River, at 1615, Oct 1, without obstructing navigation. The vessel is currently being assisted by tugs Alianza Rosario and Buni. -- Lloyd's Agents.

XIANG TU (China)

London, Oct 4 -- General cargo Xiang Tu arrived Hakata Sep 30 and sailed same day for China.

ZIM ASIA (Israel)

See Shinsei Maru No.3.

**INDONESIA**

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: Armed pirates have hijacked general cargo Prima Indah (938 gt, built 1993), carrying a cargo of tin ingots, an official said today. The vessel left Pangkalbalam port late on Friday (Sep 30) and was boarded off Bangka Island in Indonesian waters shortly afterwards, said Noel Choong, head of the Piracy Reporting Centre of the International Maritime Bureau. "Our alert is going out. We have notified the regional authorities. The Indonesian navy is combing the area for the missing vessel and its cargo," he said. The vessel, bound for Singapore, was carrying 660 tons of tin ingots, he said. The cargo is estimated to be worth several million dollars. All 14 of the vessel's crew were set adrift in a boat but were now safe in Indonesia, he added.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: Pirates armed with guns hijacked a shipload of tin worth more than \$6 million in Indonesian waters but released crew members, say trade sources. The general cargo Prima Indah carrying 660 tonnes of refined tin was boarded on Friday (Sep 30) three hours after it left the main producing island of Bangka en route to Singapore, they said. The tin was produced by local miner PT Koba Tin. "The crew members said the pirates were armed with automatic rifles and knives. Fourteen crew members, including the captain, were released unharmed and rescued by some passing fishing boats," said one source in Malaysia. "The vessel is not located yet. The tin is estimated to be worth \$US4.7 million," he said.

SOMALIA

Nairobi, Oct 2 -- Somali pirates today freed a vessel carrying U.N. food aid they hijacked nearly 100 days ago and the vessel was bound for a safe port under friendly guard, the vessel's owner said. The crew of eight Kenyans, a Tanzanian engineer and a Sri Lankan captain were all safe and well, said Inayet Kudrati, director of the Motaku Shipping Agency, which owns general cargo Semlow, and leased it to the U.N.'s World Food Programme (WFP). "The hijackers have disembarked from the ship, and security people from El Maan port have embarked and are now on board," Kudrati said from the agency's headquarters in Mombasa. The pirates left the vessel this afternoon, 98 days after they first seized it at gunpoint in Indian Ocean waters off Somalia. Kenya's Ambassador to Somalia, Mohamed Affey, said the crew had told him they had been freed when he spoke to them by satellite phone today. The WFP could not immediately confirm the release, but said that the vessel was bound for El Maan after weighing anchor on Friday (Sep 30) off the coast of the pirate's central Somalia base, Harardheere. Kudrati said the vessel was due to arrive in El Maan, north of Mogadishu, on Monday or Tuesday morning at the latest. Numerous efforts to free the vessel, its crew and cargo fell through as the hijackers changed their demands, which had included ransom of \$500,000 and the forfeiting of the cargo in exchange for the vessel and its crew. The latest deal, which sources close to the talks said was negotiated with the assistance of Somali businessmen, appeared to be holding. Kudrati said most, if not all of the cargo, appeared to be intact. "It does have the cargo still on board, but what has been discharged so far we are not sure," he said. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: General cargo Semlow, carrying food aid, is being towed to the Somali port of El-Maan after being released by pirates, the UN says. It ran out of fuel and is being towed by another ship carrying an Egyptian cargo which was also seized. The UN is concerned that some of the grain on

board could be sold off once it docks. It believes the owners have done a deal to get the pirates off their ship.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: General cargo Semlow, carrying food aid that was hijacked by pirates, has arrived in the Somali port of El-Maan, the UN says. Owners of the vessel, which was hijacked in June, said the 10 crew members were now released and unharmed. Despite initial fears of plunder, most of its rice cargo intended for Somali victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami, is intact, the United Nations says. The vessel was finally released at the weekend in a deal brokered between the pirates and a Somali businessman. The cargo of 850 tons of rice will be unloaded and is to remain at El-Maan, 35km north of the capital, Mogadishu, until its fate is decided, the UN Nations World Food Programme said. Haji Mohamud Omar Adan, a spokesman for El-Maan port authorities, said the pirates were not paid and had released the vessel unconditionally. He said the vessel would continue its journey to its home port of Mombasa within five days.

Port State Control



KHUDOZHNIK KUSTODIYEV (Russia)

See "Netherlands -- Port State Control.

NETHERLANDS

Maassluis, Oct 5 -- Bulk Khudozhnik Kustodiyev sailed Rotterdam Oct 4 for Szczecin. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Seizures & Arrests



ARDEAL (Romania)

Chittagong, Sep 29 -- General cargo Ardeal has been towed from Mongla to Chittagong by tug GPS Pioneer. The vessel arrived at the breaking yard located at Kadam Rosul, Sitakuandu, Chittagong. Six Star Corporation, present owner of the vessel inform that it beached in their scrap yard and has since been demolished. -- Lloyd's Agents.

AUDREY (Ghana)

London, Sep 30 -- Humanitarian support to four Filipino sailors stranded for months on tug Audrey off the coast of Bahrain will continue as the Philippine Embassy tries to persuade port officials to allow the vessel to dock at Mina Salman. If authorities approve the request, the next step is to find a way to send the seamen back to their waiting families

in the Philippines as soon as possible. A formal request for a space at the pier for Audrey will be sent by the embassy on Sunday when it reopens after the weekend. The decision was taken at a meeting between consular assistant Ramon Nerida and officials at the Gulf Agency Company (GAC), the tug's Bahrain agent, yesterday. Acting deck officer Romeo Dacanay, able seaman Novi Peregua, oiler Ruben Archangel and third engineer Luis Lamigo have been forced to live on the ship, which has been anchored about two kilometres off the coast of Bahrain for months, after being caught in the middle of a legal dispute between the vessel's UAE-based owner and charter. The 100-foot tug, owned by Dubai-based Filipino Richard V Jorge and flying the Ghana flag, reached Bahrain's waters in December last year from the UAE. Sources said that because of a financial dispute, Audrey's charter had the vessel detained following approval by Bahrain's courts. After its detention, it was moved from a mooring buoy to its current location in March. The seamen have sought assistance from the Philippine Embassy, which has pledged to intervene on their behalf. A GAC spokesman confirmed that the company was to continue providing the sailors with humanitarian support throughout their ordeal. Mr Dacanay, the most senior of the crew onboard Audrey, said GAC provided them with fresh water yesterday. Anchored off the coast of Mina Salman, the crew was fast running out of food and clean water. After the ship's air-conditioning unit broke down, they have been forced to sleep on deck using makeshift beds. They also claim their employer owes them thousands of dollars worth of unpaid wages, dating back to October last year. The Bahrain International Seafarers' Society (BISS) has been visiting the crew and providing them with foodstuff, prepaid mobile phone cards, toiletries and other necessities. Mr Dacanay, who earns \$385 a month, estimated that they are jointly owed about \$17,000 in unpaid salaries. The last time they were in the Philippines was in October 2003. The Philippine Consulate in Dubai, Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration in Manila are reportedly also investigating the case.

BIGA (Canary Islands)

Bilbao, Oct 4 -- General cargo Biga is still under embargo at Bilbao. -- Lloyd's Agents.

BOREAS (Cyprus)

Bilbao, Oct 4 -- General cargo Boreas is still under embargo at the port of Bilbao. -- Lloyd's Agents.

MAJU JAYA (Malaysia)

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated Oct 6, states: The Indonesian Navy has apprehended two vessels carrying tens of thousands of litres of fuel over the past week, one in the Riau Islands and the other in Maluku

waters. The vessels were seized for allegedly hoarding fuel and smuggling. The arrest in Riau Islands waters happened on Tuesday evening (Oct 4) when a Navy patrol vessel spotted the general cargo Maju Jaya (1163 gt, built 2002) carrying 50,000 liters of kerosene and 65,000 litres of diesel in Malacca Strait waters. The vessel was on its way to Rokan Hilir regency, said chief of Dumai naval base, Col. Alex Kekung. Naval personnel checked the vessel's manifest and it was discovered that the fuel was purchased through delivery orders dated Sep 19 and Sep 23. The fuel should have been distributed to fuel stations for public consumption as soon as the fuel was taken from depots belonged to state oil and gas company PT Pertamina, but instead of distributing the fuel on Sep 19 and Sep 23, the fuel was hoarded until Oct 2, the day after fuel price increase were announced by the government, Alex said, as quoted by Antara news agency. The belated shipment of fuel has sparked suspicion that the owners had hoarded the it for their own gain, said Alex. The government announced the fuel price hike on Saturday, with fuel prices jumping by 126 percent on average. Separately, Navy personnel also nabbed a vessel in Arafura waters on Thursday last week carrying 1,100 tons of diesel fuel. The arrest was made as the diesel was not accompanied by legal documents. The vessel and its crew have been handed over to police for further investigation. Spokesman for Maluku provincial police Adj. Sr. Comr. Artsianto Dharmawan said yesterday that police were investigating two crew members from North Sulawesi and Thailand respectively. The fuel was believed to be on its way to Thailand, the police spokesman said. (Note -- Maju Jaya sailed Port Klang Oct 4 for Sungei Rajang.)

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: General cargo Maju Jaya (1163 gt, built 2002) with 50,000 litres of kerosene and 65,000 litres of diesel seized in Maluku waters by an Indonesian Navy patrol vessel. Vessels were seized for allegedly hoarding fuel and smuggling in wake of the tsunami.

MAZNAH (Indonesia)

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Singapore-based general cargo Maznah, has been detained following an order by the High Court of Sabah and Sarawak for non-payment of fuel supplied by a local company. The ship, owned by E-Maritime Pty Ltd, and its Indonesian crew, are still stranded at sea off Tawau port since the court order was meted out on Jun 5. According to the Captain Silas Zola Makalew, 41, the vessel with a crew of 21 arrived in Tawau with an empty hold on May 27 from a port in northern China. The ship was transporting a consignment of steel and iron from India to the Chinese port, before the journey to Tawau to upload some timber

consignment. Silas said that while in Tawau, the vessel ran out of fuel to generate power during the first week of July. Money was also running out for purchase of clean water and food. Most of the time, the crew had to use candles for light and containers for rain water. Silas, who is from Jakarta, said they were now dependent on the generosity of the International Transport Workers Federation, Malaysian Trade Union Congress and Sabah Banking Union, which in some way had contributed food and essential supplies. He claimed there had been no word from the ship owners in Singapore regarding their predicament and the morale among the crew members had become relatively low, considering they have not been paid their salaries since May. He hoped the problem could be resolved soon as possible so that they could be able to return home in Indonesia.

MICRONESIAN NAVIGATOR (Marshall Islands)

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: A financial dispute between a shipping company and a stevedoring company has left a cargo vessel sitting in Honolulu Harbor with all of its containers left aboard. C.c. Micronesian Navigator was seized by U-S marshals on Aug 23, after McCabe, Hamilton and Renny Company Limited filed a claim in the federal court against Philippines, Micronesia and Orient Navigation Company. The stevedoring company claims P-M-and-O Line owes \$302,000 for past work. P-M-and-O Line President Robert Colson says only \$127,000 is owed and the company is willing to pay it. Since the ship has been seized, anyone going aboard would have to sign a liability waiver. McCabe President Tim Guard says his workers won't waive their rights and board the vessel for fear they may be injured while unloading it.

Honolulu, Oct 4 -- C.c. Micronesian Navigator is still under seizure in Honolulu harbour. Understand attorneys for McCabe are filing documents in court this week to allow the sale of the vessel. A skeleton crew remains on board for vessel maintenance. -- Lloyd's Agents.

NIL DERVA (Turkey)

See under "Marine."

QIANG RONG 1 (Panama)

Kolkata, Sep 30 -- Bulk Qiang Rong 1 is now free from all obligation following agreement between the owner of the vessel and the cargo owners. The vessel is now expected to load its cargo at Haldia port and sail in due course. -- Lloyd's Agents.

SANTORINI SKY (Greece)

London, Sep 30 -- A report in the Sep 30 edition of "Newsfront" states:ro/ro Santorini Sky has been seized once again in the second half of Sep by Eltons E.E.V.E. in pursuit of 32,471.23Euro claim against owners Golden Ferries N.E.

TALavera (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Venice, Oct 4 -- General cargo Talavera is still at Chioggia under arrest. -- Lloyd's Agents.

TIOMAN (Honduras)

Jakarta, Sep 30 -- Product tanker Tioman is still under arrest and investigation by Indonesian Navy. -- Lloyd's Agents.



NORIO AREA, GEORGIA

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

TURKEY

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Turkey stopped the flow of natural gas from neighbouring Iran today after an explosion believed to have been caused by a leak damaged the pipeline, the state-run oil and gas company BOTAS said. 'A tear formed in the pipeline due to an explosion' at 0520 hrs (0220, UTC), 16 kilometres from the border with Iran, it said in a statement. 'We were forced to intervene and stop the purchase of gas from Iran.' BOTAS said a gas leak was believed to be the cause of the blast and teams were on their way to repair the pipeline. 'Repair and maintenance work will be completed in the shortest time possible and the purchase of gas from Iran will resume,' it said.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: Turkey resumed the flow of natural gas from Iran after a 48-hour cut caused by a pipeline explosion, the state-run oil and gas company BOTAS said. "The breakdown in the pipeline was repaired in ... 48 hours and the purchase of gas from Iran, which was temporarily cut off, was resumed," the Turkish firm said today. Turkey had stopped the gas flow on Monday (Oct 3) after a blast, believed to have been caused by a leak, hit the pipeline 16 kilometres from the border with Iran, damaging the structure.



ASSAM, INDIA

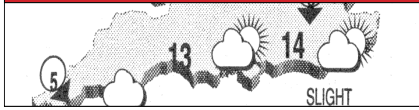
London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters were expected to launch a final assault today to douse a towering 16-day blaze at an oil well in India's northeastern state of Assam, officials said. An official for the state-owned exploration firm, Oil India Limited (OIL), said a team of eight firefighters, led by four experts from the Texas-based Boots and Coots International Well Control,

would be involved to put out the blaze at Dikom, 520 kilometers east of Assam's main city of Guwahati. "If everything goes according to plans, the countdown is likely to begin this afternoon to cap the well and put out the fire," OIL spokesman Phanindra Kumar Deva Choudhury said. US firefighters and four experts from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGCL), another premier exploration company in India, will use a 60 feet boom attached to an equipment called the Athey wagon and maneuvered by a bulldozer to break the Christmas tree. In petroleum extraction, a Christmas tree is an assembly of valves, spools and fittings for an oil well, named for its resemblance to a decorated tree, and are used to both prevent the release of oil and gas from an oil well into the environment. "Once the Christmas tree is blown up, the flame might leap to a great height but there is nothing to be worried," the OIL spokesman said. To reduce the heat, firefighters would be spraying water and sand at a very high pressure. "The second phase would involve putting a tapered gadget called stinger into the well tubing to kill the leaking well. Once capped, the actual repairing work of the damaged well would begin," Choudhury said. Experts were refusing to hazard a guess as to how long it would take to complete the exercise. "One cannot say for sure how long it would take to complete the mission. Nobody can predict what happens once the Christmas tree is removed," OIL's group general manager J.K. Talukdar said. The operation is considered hazardous with OIL authorities stationing four ambulances equipped with a mobile operation theater with doctors and paramedics at the fire site.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters have doused a massive oil well fire that blazed for three weeks in India's resource-rich north-east, an official said today. "The fire is now completely extinguished and the leaking well capped. The crisis is over," J.K. Talukdar, general manager for state-owned exploration company Oil India Ltd, said from Duliagan in Assam state. Talukdar said firefighters, led by four US specialists and four experts from India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp, another state-owned exploration company, put out the fire at the Dikom oil field late yesterday. Company officials said they might be able to resume production in a week at the field which has a total of 30 wells producing 6,000 barrels daily. "First we need to complete the exercise of sealing the damaged well and then probably in a week's time we could resume operations," Talukdar said. All other wells at the field, 520 km east of Guwahati, were shut after the fire forced the evacuation of 5,000 people amid fears the blaze might spread. The evacuees, mostly workers and their families from nearby tea plantations in the remote oil- and tea-rich state, have since returned home. OIL officials tried to douse the flames

but lacked the expertise and summoned help from Texas-based Boots and Coots International Well Control, which specialises in tackling oil well blazes. It sent four experts. The Indian company said equipment shortages delayed putting out the fire. OIL's production losses total some 132,000 barrels of crude so far.

Weather & Navigation



BANGLADESH

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Flash floods caused by monsoon rains in north-western Bangladesh killed at least eight people and forced thousands of people to take refuge in temporary shelters, reports said today. Around 30 villages were inundated and hundreds of thatched houses collapsed during incessant monsoon rains over the past five days, a report by the official BSS news agency said. Four people were electrocuted, two died when a wall collapsed, and two children drowned, the English-language Daily Star said. More than 1,000 families had taken refuge in temporary shelters set up in government buildings, the BSS report added. Meteorological Office data showed that the worst affected part of the north-western Rajshahi division recorded 452 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours to this morning, BSS said.

CANADA

London, Sep 29 -- A press report, dated Sep 28, states: Hundreds of people remain out of their homes in the Stephenville, Newfoundland area. A state of emergency was declared yesterday because of extensive flooding. Heavy rains caused two rivers to spill over their banks, forcing hundreds of people to flee their homes. About 140-mm of rain had fallen by late yesterday afternoon. Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams toured the flooded area yesterday. He said Prime Minister Paul Martin has extended an offer of federal assistance to the province. Officials began a door-to-door evacuation of low-lying areas at 0730 yesterday as the flooding began. About 200 homes were flooded, some with water up to the windows, and several dozen vehicles were submerged. The province and the Canadian Red Cross have set up a reception centre in the provincial armoury. Although the three bridges in Stephenville are intact, the roadways leading to the bridges have washed away.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: Many residents of Stephenville, Newfoundland and Labrador, tried to return home yesterday but were told to stay away. Approximately 180 residents had been evacuated from the town because of flooding. Over 70 homes were flooded.

Mayor Cec Stein says it will probably be next year at the earliest before families can move back in to their homes. The government says people who can't return will get up to \$650 a month for accommodation. Those staying with family or friends could get up to \$400. Some parts of the town have begun to return to normal. By yesterday, all of the roads in Stephenville except for one bridge had reopened, and power was gradually being restored. The province has hired a Newfoundland-based engineering consulting company, BAE Newplan, to help figure out which homes are still safe to live in.

CENTRAL AMERICA / MEXICO

Tecpan, Guatemala, Oct 6 -- Raging brown floodwater and banks of mud covered chunks of Central America and southern Mexico today after days of torrential rain and mudslides killed at least 162 across the region. Rescue workers battled to get to remote villages, where hillsides have collapsed under the downpour, and thousands of evacuees from urban shantytowns hunkered down in emergency shelters as rain continued to pound the region. The death toll soared yesterday as rivers swollen by rain from Hurricane "Stan" burst their banks in southern Mexico, and emergency teams found dozens of bodies buried under banks of mud in remote towns in Guatemala and El Salvador. Tens of thousands of people fled their homes in Chiapas and the neighboring state of Veracruz after "Stan", now reduced to a tropical depression, swept in from the Atlantic this week. -- Reuters.

CHINA

Beijing, Oct 4 -- Authorities have evacuated about 13,000 people from a flood hit region of central China along the banks of a tributary of the Yangtze River, the official Xinhua news agency said. More heavy rain is expected to fall in the next two days in the province of Hubei and the local government is on alert for further flooding along the Hanjiang River, Xinhua said in an overnight report seen today. "The flood is still under control though it seems still severe," Cai Qihua, deputy director of the Yangtze flood control headquarters, was quoted as saying. There was no mention of any casualties. The China Daily said three people have been killed by floods which have swept through central Shaanxi province since late September. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Flooding of the Yellow River's biggest tributary, Weihe, and the Yangtze River's biggest tributary, Hanjiang, has left 16 dead four others missing, local officials said yesterday. The floods have receded in north-west China's Shaanxi Province, the provincial bureau of civil affairs said. The floods and mudslides they triggered have affected 4.61 million local residents, destroying 79,800 hectares of crops and pulling down 39,200 houses, with direct economic

losses estimated at yuan 1.94 billion (US\$239 million) in the province, the bureau said. The floods also damaged railways, highways, cable lines and irrigation infrastructures. A total of 359,200 people have been evacuated, the bureau said. Continued heavy rains from Sep 24 to Oct 2 caused the biggest flood in ten years along the lower reaches of the Weihe River and the main reaches of the Hanjiang River.

EL SALVADOR AND GUATEMALA

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: Heavy rains triggered landslides that killed 15 people -- including children -- in El Salvador today, while rising rivers forced the evacuation of dozens of people there and in neighbouring Guatemala. Both countries put their Pacific coasts on alert as a tropical weather front swept over Central America, unleashing downpours and causing principal rivers to overflow. A landslide buried several houses in El Salvador's capital of San Salvador, killing a two-month-old baby, her two-year-old and four-year-old brothers, and their parents, Interior Minister Rene Figueroa said. Another 10 people, who have not been identified, died in landslides in the nation's central region, authorities said. Dozens of towns in Guatemala were cut off by floods as rescue workers tried to identify the number of people affected. No deaths were reported in Guatemala. "We are noticing a critical situation in the south where the rivers have overflowed their banks," said Hugo Hernandez, executive secretary of Guatemala's National Centre for Disaster Reduction. Salvadoran Interior Minister Rene Figueroa said disaster agencies were working "on responding to the emergency." El Salvador's airport was still open, but landslides cut off major roadways. Schools and universities suspended classes indefinitely.

GEORGIA

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Eight villages of the Chokhotauri District of Western Georgia have been cut off from the rest of the country by landslides and floods, brought about by torrential rains. Numerous roads, bridges, power transmission lines and buildings were destroyed. Hundreds of hectares of farmlands were flooded. According to preliminary reports, one local resident died and another five were injured. Twenty families were evacuated to safe places, a representative of the district administration said. The natural calamity seriously damaged a number of villages on the Black Sea coast in the Khelvachauri and Zugdidi Districts of Western Georgia. The waves destroyed coast-protection structures. Dozens of houses were flooded. Fortunately, no casualties were reported.

HURRICANE "KATRINA"

Miami, Sep 29 -- Flooding and storm surge from hurricane "Katrina" caused about \$44 billion of property damage

in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, risk analysis company AIR Worldwide estimated today. "While the flooding of New Orleans in the aftermath of the storm has garnered the most attention, we estimate that the devastating storm surge along the Gulf Coast, including southern Louisiana, was equally destructive," Dr. Jayanta Guin, vice president of research and modeling at AIR Worldwide, said in a news release. The estimate includes both insured and uninsured losses, company spokesman Michael Gannon said. "That is exclusive of wind damage. That is just water," he said. "A portion of this is obviously going to be insured." The company gave the following breakdown: New Orleans \$22.6 billion, the rest of Louisiana \$16.2 billion, Mississippi \$4.4 billion, Alabama \$793 million and Florida \$32 million. The Boston-based company has not changed its previous estimate that insured losses from "Katrina" would be between \$17 billion and \$25 billion, Gannon said. "However, that does not include the potential impact of demand surge, the upward press on prices on labour and material after a catastrophe," he said. Storm surge is the water forced ashore by a hurricane and is highest to the right of the storm's centre. The force of the water can knock buildings off their foundations and move them a considerable distance from their original locations. AIR Worldwide said it used aerial images from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and digital elevation models to determine water levels block by block. Then it used its detailed exposure database to calculate the total property damage within the flooded area. The company uses risk modeling to help insurance companies and governments gauge the losses they may ultimately have to cover. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated Sep 30, states: Exxon Mobil said its joint venture refinery in Chalmette, Louisiana, will restart in November after being shut in late August by Hurricane "Katrina." "Electrical power should be restored in October, which will allow the refinery to start operations in November," the company said in a release issued late yesterday. The 190,000 bpd Chalmette refinery is co-owned by Venezuela's PDVSA.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: The search for bodies of people killed by hurricane "Katrina" has ended in Louisiana, and more searches will be conducted only if someone reports seeing a body, a state official said today. All agencies conducting the searches have finished their sweeps for remains. However, Kenyon International Emergency Services, the private company hired by the state to remove the bodies, is on call if any other body is found, said Bob Johannessen, a spokesman with the state Department of Health and Hospitals. "There might still be bodies found -- for instance, if a house was locked and nobody able to go into it,"

Johannessen said. Last week, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said it had completed its role in the search, because its specialties were no longer needed. Those services include getting to bodies in attics or other hard-to-reach places or in buildings that may be structurally unsound. FEMA did nearly 23,000 secondary searches in New Orleans with about a dozen teams. As of today, the death toll in Louisiana stood at 964.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: The door-to-door search for corpses from in Hurricane "Katrina" has ended in Louisiana. The death toll stands at 972, substantially fewer than the 10,000 New Orleans' Mayor, Ray Nagin, had feared. Mississippi's death toll remains at 221. A private company is on call in Louisiana if more corpses are found. "There might still be bodies found, for instance, if a house was locked and nobody able to go into it," said Bob Johannessen, a spokesman for the state Department of Health and Hospitals. As schoolchildren are starting to return to classes and New Orleans accelerates its efforts to recover from "Katrina", job losses are taking their toll. Mr Nagin said that up to 3,000 employees, half of those on the city's payroll, will lose their jobs because of the damage done to New Orleans' finances.

HURRICANE "KENNETH"

London, Sep 30 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical depression "Kenneth" in lat 19.2N, long 152.7W at 0900, UTC, today. Maximum winds 25 knots. Forecast position lat 19.3N, long 154.5W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 25 knots. Forecast position lat 19.1N, long 156.7W at 0600, UTC, Oct 1.

HURRICANE "OTIS"

London, Sep 30 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today, states: Hurricane "Otis" centre located near lat 20.7N, long 110.3W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 25 nautical miles. Present movement toward the north-west or 325 degrees at eight knots. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Forecast position lat 21.5N, long 110.9W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 70 knots, gusts 85 knots. Forecast position lat 22.4N, long 111.6W at 0600, UTC, Oct 1. Maximum winds 75 knots, gusts 90 knots.

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: Newly formed Hurricane "Otis" swept toward a sparsely populated stretch of Baja California yesterday, forcing dozens of people to evacuate low-lying neighborhoods on the outskirts of Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. On the outskirts of town officials were bracing for heavy winds and driving downpours that could spark flash flooding. Authorities opened 14 shelters to accommodate evacuees and Diaz said he expected as many as 1,000 people to head for higher ground by late last night, amid

increased fears as the storm approached land. Extended forecasts expected a weakened "Otis" to bring rain to parts of the southwestern United States by early next week. The storm had maximum sustained winds of about 85 mph late yesterday and was about 120 miles south-west of the nearby city of Los Cabos, at the tip of the peninsula, according to the U.S. National Hurricane Center. "Otis" was still growing and the center said it could become a Category 2 hurricane with winds of 96 mph or above by today. Cabo San Lucas port was closed, but the airport remained open. The storm was moving at 8 mph toward a sparsely populated central section of the Baja peninsula. The Hurricane Center said the storm's outer bands could bring up to 4 inches of rain over the southern end of the peninsula by late yesterday.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: Hurricane "Otis" weakened to a tropical storm today and headed north towards an unpopulated stretch of the Baja California Peninsula. The Mexican government issued a tropical storm warning for the southern tip of the Baja California peninsula as the storm continued to sideswipe the narrow stretch of land. No injuries have been reported. The slow-moving storm was inching along the coastline at three mph and was expected to hit a deserted stretch of coastline late today or early tomorrow. It carried maximum sustained winds of 70 mph and was expected to weaken over the next 24 hours, the National Hurricane Centre in Miami said. Preparing for the storm, Baja California state officials had asked soldiers to help evacuate the islands of Magdalena and Margarita, off the coast of Comondú. Over 1,000 people evacuated by yesterday as rains from the storm's outer bands led to flooding in the poor outskirts of Cabo San Lucas, where many homes are little more than wooden shacks. Officials went door-to-door as part of a voluntary evacuation plan. The resort's hotels in Cabo San Lucas escaped major flooding.

HURRICANE "RITA"

London, Sep 29 -- A press report, dated today, states: Chevron's Typhoon platform capsized in hurricane "Rita," drifting 70 miles. Tugs have secured the upside-down platform and Chevron is investigating what caused Typhoon to topple, according to spokesman Mickey Driver. Typhoon, which was owned in conjunction with BHP Billiton, started pumping oil and gas in 2001 and was expected to have a lifespan of five to eight years. It had the capacity to pump 40,000 barrels of oil and 60 million cubic feet of gas a day but with its fields in decline, it was producing only half that amount. When hurricane "Rita" took a last-minute turn, veering north and east to spare much of the onshore energy infrastructure along the Houston Ship Channel, it barreled straight through one of the most prolific oil and natural gas production areas in the Gulf

before slamming into the coast and pounding the refining hub of Port Arthur and Beaumont. Hundreds of production platforms that pull oil and gas out of the ground were in the hurricane's way in places like the East Cameron Block off Lake Charles. Several drilling rigs, used to explore for more oil and gas, lost their moorings. They broke loose and drifted up to 100 miles, propelled by turgid waters. Some ran aground. Others are still drifting and will have to be corralled and dragged back into place. (See issue of Sep 30.)

London, Sep 29 -- A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane "Rita" may have caused more damage to rigs and platforms than any Gulf of Mexico storm -- including hurricane "Katrina," oil and gas analysts said yesterday. The combined effect of those hurricanes has already cost the Gulf almost 7% of its annual oil production and 5% of its yearly natural gas output, according to a US Minerals Management Service report yesterday. "The impact on the rigs is something that's never been seen by this country before," said Daniel Naatz, director of federal resources for the Independent Petroleum Association of America. ODS-Petrodata, which provides data and information to the industry, reported 13 rigs already seriously damaged or destroyed by "Rita." Platform damage was still being assessed, said Tom Marsh, ODS analyst. Meanwhile, nine of 12 pipelines that move gas and oil onshore remain shut down or operate at less than 100% capacity, according to the latest report by the Association of Oil Pipelines. Refineries in the hardest-hit area of Beaumont and Port Arthur, Texas, plus Lake Charles, La, are still not operating, costing about 1.7 million barrels a day of refined products, according to the US Department of Energy. The slow pace of recovery for the Gulf refineries, rigs and platforms and concerns about demand for heating oil this winter drove up oil futures yesterday. Light, sweet crude for November delivery rose \$1.28 to \$66.35 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Natural gas futures for October rose more than \$1 to \$13.907 per million British thermal units. Heating oil gained more than seven cents to settle at \$2.1411 a gallon, while gasoline gained more than 17 cents to settle at \$2.3393 a gallon.

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Shipping activity in the Houston Ship Channel returned to normal today as restrictions preventing larger vessels from entering were lifted. However, transit restrictions at nearby ports and waterways, particularly those east of Houston that were hit hard by Hurricane "Rita", remained in place. At the Port of Houston, two oil tankers with drafts of more than 40 feet were allowed in this afternoon. A survey of the bottom of the Ship Channel was conducted earlier in the week to make sure there were no obstacles to safe transit.

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane damage could halt production from BHP Billiton's Typhoon field in the Gulf of Mexico for more than six months, according to chief executive Chip Goodyear. The Chevron-operated Typhoon platform broke from its moorings during Hurricane "Rita," drifting more than 150 km and suffering severe damage. BHP, which owns half the venture, expected to restart the rest of its Gulf of Mexico oil and gas fields within one or two weeks, Mr Goodyear said in an interview in Shanghai. "The other facilities we have (in the Gulf) are in the process of being inspected and as of the current time we would expect those to be on stream in the next week or two but Typhoon will certainly take longer than that," Mr Goodyear said. A shutdown of between six and 12 months "doesn't seem unreasonable," he said. The Typhoon and Boris fields contributed about 4.3 million barrels of oil and seven billion cubic feet of natural gas to BHP's production in the year to Jun 30. That is about 4.6 per cent of the company's oil and gas operations, which had earnings of \$US1.83 billion (\$A2.4 billion) in 2004-05. UBS cut its estimate for BHP's 2006 earnings by 0.2% as a result of the damage, assuming a six-month shutdown. UBS said getting the equipment needed to repair the Typhoon platform might take longer than usual because of increased demand for vessels and cranes for restoration work since the hurricane. BHP spokeswoman Emma Meade said yesterday the company had not yet been updated on the extent of the damage to the platform. Chevron is assessing the damage and it is not yet known whether the platform can be repaired or will be written off. For its forecasts Merrill Lynch is assuming Typhoon will not restart before the end of the year. The bank said that would cut earnings before interest and tax from BHP Billiton's petroleum unit by 1.9%.

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated Sep 30, states: Exxon have said that its mammoth 557,000 bpd Baytown, Texas, refinery, shut in advance of Hurricane "Rita," would likely reach full operations in "days" after the plant began to restart earlier this week. "Based on our current assessments, we believe that the overall process will take days to complete," Exxon said. "However, this is the first time in its 88-year history that the entire Complex has been shut down in advance of a hurricane. As such, we can not speculate exactly when the plants will resume full operations."

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: GlobalSantaFe has located its two missing jackup rigs in shallow waters off Louisiana Coast, 80 miles from their drilling sites. The GSF Adriatic VII and GSF High Island III appeared have sustained severe damage during Hurricane "Rita", but thorough assessment required before company can determine extent of damage &

economic feasibility of repairs. Assessment teams boarded and inspecting the rigs. All of company's rigs insured under a hull & machinery policy subject to a total deductible of US\$10M for this event.

Washington, Oct 4 -- About 30 percent of offshore oil and natural gas production currently shut in may be due to hurricane damage to onshore oil refineries and natural gas processing plants, Minerals Management Service Director Johnnie Burton said today. Interior Secretary Gale Norton said the department will not know for sure for several more weeks how much shut-in oil and gas production is due to refineries and gas processing plants that are shut down and how much damaged offshore platforms and underwater pipelines are at fault. -- Reuters.

HURRICANE "STAN"

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Mexican authorities have started evacuating people from areas of the Gulf of Mexico coast threatened by Hurricane "Stan". The storm has already killed dozens of people in Central America. Forecasters say the category one hurricane is expected to hit the coast of the Mexican state of Veracruz later today or tomorrow. Schools have suspended classes there. The Mexican state oil company, Pemex, has evacuated several rigs in the area. Mexican officials issued a hurricane warning for much of the Gulf coast, from Cabo Rojo southward to Punta el Lagarto, and set up dozens of shelters, Associated Press reported. "Hurricane conditions are expected within the warning area within the next 24 hours," including sustained winds of over 75 mph, advised the National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Meanwhile, thousands of evacuees remain in shelters in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, where heavy rain caused by the storm is expected to continue. At least 39 people across Central America have been killed in flooding and landslides triggered by the deluge, which swept across Mexico's Yucatan peninsula over the weekend before moving into the Gulf of Mexico. El Salvador was worst hit with at least 31 deaths. The government declared a state of emergency and is evacuating thousands. "Sixty percent of the country is in danger of landslides," El Salvador's President Tony Saca warned. "The risk caused by this accumulation of water is worrying." The country's director of the National Emergency Centre, Mauricio Ferrer, said some 300 communities had been flooded. More than 8,500 people had been forced to flee their homes, and were being accommodated in 122 shelters, he added. Emergency personnel were trying to reach stricken areas, but were hampered as landslides and swollen rivers cut off major routes. "Stan"'s trail of misery also extended elsewhere, killing at least four people in Guatemala and four in Honduras. A state of

emergency was declared in parts of Guatemala, after dozens of communities were also stranded by floods.

San Salvador, Oct 4 -- Tropical storm "Stan" has caused excessive rains throughout the country causing over 300 landslides and several main roads are blocked. Thirty two deaths have been attributed to the rains and 15,000 refugees are being housed in 133 shelters nation-wide. Schools are closed Commerce closed early yesterday to allow staff to get home. -- Lloyd's Agents.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane "Stan" barreled into Mexico's Gulf coast today, pummeling the major port city of Veracruz with heavy rain and punishing waves, and forcing the evacuation of thousands of residents and several offshore oil platforms. "Stan" packed maximum sustained winds near 80 mph, the National Hurricane Centre in Miami reported. It was centred just inland about 85 miles southeast of the city of 425,000 people and was moving southwest at about 7 mph. Forecasters said wind and rain from the Category 1 hurricane were also reaching Central America, causing floods and landslides and leaving at least 38 people dead in El Salvador. Rain was still falling today in much of Central America, driving thousands from their homes in El Salvador and Guatemala. Veracruz's busy port was closed, schools cancelled classes and officials at a nearby nuclear power plant prepared the facility for the hurricane's arrival. Thousands of residents abandoned their homes and stayed in dozens of shelters set up all along the coast. It was unclear how the oil platform evacuations would affect production at Pemex, the world's third-biggest oil producer and a major supplier to the United States. The company pumps about 3.4 million barrels a day of crude, just over half of which it exports. Forecasters said the storm could dump up to 10 inches of rain in some areas, and warned residents that flooding and landslides were possible.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane "Stan" has made landfall in Mexico after killing dozens in Central America and has now been downgraded to a tropical storm. The hurricane, carrying winds of 80mph, came ashore south of the port of Veracruz. Mexican authorities had evacuated the affected areas but there is no word on new casualties. The storm is heading slowly south-west and weakening further. There were reports of flooding and of trees being knocked down in Veracruz as the outer bands of the storm struck. The Mexican state oil company, Pemex, evacuated several rigs in the area and Mexican officials set up dozens of shelters.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated Oct 4, states: Hurricane "Stan" smacked into Mexico's Gulf coast today, dumping rain on low-lying areas, closing ports and whipping up winds of nearly 80 mph. The

hurricane, a Category One on the Saffir-Simpson scale, came ashore 85 miles south-east of the city of Veracruz, the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami said. Maritime authorities closed Dos Bocas and Cayo Arcos, two of Mexico's main oil exporting ports, but it was not clear if deliveries were affected. State oil monopoly Pemex evacuated 270 workers from five oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico ahead of the hurricane's arrival. Mexico's civil protection agency said it was considering evacuating several thousand people in the state of Veracruz. Some coffee is grown in the state's hilly inland region but it was not immediately clear whether any damage to the crop had occurred or was likely.

London, Oct 5 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today, states: Tropical depression "Stan" centre located near lat 16.9N, long 97.3W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 40 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-southwest or 240 degrees at five knots. Maximum sustained winds 25 knots with gusts to 35 knots. Forecast position lat 16.7N, long 97.7W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 20 knots, gusts 25 knots.

Veracruz, Oct 5 -- Torrential rains and flooding from Hurricane "Stan" killed six people in southern Mexico today after claiming more than 70 lives in Central America. Rivers washed away a major bridge and ripped apart houses and buildings when they burst their banks in the city of Tapachula, on Mexico's southern border with Guatemala. "We have news that there are six dead in total," said Jose Ortiz, a senior official from Chiapas, the poor southern state where damage was worse. Tens of thousands of people fled their homes in Chiapas and the neighbouring state of Veracruz after "Stan", now reduced to a tropical depression, swept in from the Atlantic this week. "There is flooding, in some communities mudslides, there is no access by road, no telephone communication," said Jordan Jimenez of Mexico's civil protection agency in Chiapas. "There are people missing, some in shelters." At least 49 people were killed in El Salvador and 19 in Guatemala, most of them buried alive in mud as hillsides collapsed on their flimsy homes. Six people were killed in Nicaragua and three in Honduras. "Stan" came ashore yesterday near the city of Veracruz as a Category One hurricane with winds of nearly 80 mph. In Veracruz state, it blew the roofs off shacks, injuring four people, and forced hundreds to evacuate when rivers overflowed. Lucas Lopez, an organic coffee salesman in Tapachula, said many homes and a railroad bridge had been washed away. "The river is huge, people have lost their things. It rained all night and it's still raining," he said. -- Reuters.

Tapachula, Oct 5 -- Huge mudslides, flooding and torrential rains from hurricane "Stan" have killed at least

117 people in Central American and southern Mexico, rescue workers said today. Relentless rain pounded mountain villages and urban shanty towns across the impoverished region, and hillsides collapsed under the weight of four days of downpours. The death toll nearly doubled today when rivers burst their banks in southern Mexico, and emergency teams found another 42 people buried under several feet of mud in remote Guatemalan towns. Unconfirmed reports said hundreds may have died there. Fifty people have now been killed in both El Salvador and Guatemala, including the latest deaths, and another 17 total in Mexico, Nicaragua and Honduras, authorities said. Many of the victims in the worst-hit areas lived in flimsy, wooden and iron huts that were swallowed by landslides. Swollen rivers washed away a major bridge and ripped apart houses and buildings when they burst their banks at the city of Tapachula, in Mexico's Chiapas state. "There is flooding, in some communities mudslides, there is no access by road, no telephone communication," said Jordan Jimenez of Mexico's civil protection agency in Chiapas. "There are people missing, some in shelters." Tens of thousands of people fled their homes in Chiapas and the neighbouring state of Veracruz after "Stan," now reduced to a tropical depression, swept in from the Atlantic this week. It came ashore yesterday near the city of Veracruz as a Category One hurricane with winds of nearly 80 mph. Lucas Lopez, an organic coffee salesman in Tapachula, said many homes and a railroad bridge had been washed away. In Veracruz state, the storm blew the roofs off shacks, injuring four people, and forced hundreds to evacuate when rivers overflowed. Mexico's three main oil exporting ports, on the Gulf of Mexico, reopened after closing as the hurricane approached. President Vicente Fox travelled to Chiapas today to inspect the damage. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Huge mudslides, flooding and torrential rains from Hurricane "Stan" have killed at least 133 people in Central America and southern Mexico, according to rescue workers. Rain has fallen relentlessly on mountain villages and urban shanty towns across the impoverished region, and hillsides have collapsed under four days of downpours. The death toll nearly doubled when rivers burst their banks in southern Mexico, and emergency teams found another 42 people buried under several feet of mud in remote Guatemalan towns. The Government says the death toll will rise, and unconfirmed reports say hundreds may have been killed in an isolated region of western Guatemala.

El Salvador, Oct 6 -- As of this morning 52 deaths have been attributed to the excessive rain and 17,000 refugees are in shelters nationwide (due Hurricane "Stan".) Forecast is for rain until the weekend. Schools remain closed until further notice.

TROPICAL STORM "STAN"

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: A tropical depression strengthened to a tropical storm just before hitting land in southern Mexico today. Tropical storm "Stan" formed before dawn today and then ploughed into land about 40 miles south-west of Tulum, on the Yucatan Peninsula. It carried maximum sustained winds of 45 mph, the National Hurricane Centre in Miami said. The storm was expected to dump up to 15 inches of rain in some areas of the Yucatan Peninsula and Belize before weakening to a tropical depression. No major damage or injuries were immediately reported, and the storm was expected to move mostly south of the popular resort of Cancun.

London, Oct 4 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Stan" centre located near lat 19.3N, long 94.1W at 0600, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement towards the west-southwest or 240 degrees at nine knots. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots with gusts to 70 knots. Forecast position lat 19.0N, long 94.6W at 1200, UTC, today. Maximum wind 70 knots, gusts 85 knots. Forecast position lat 18.7N, long 95.2W at 1200, UTC, Oct 5.

NEPAL

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 32 people have died till yesterday due to floods and landslides last week in a village of far-western district of Nepal, a member of a rescue team said from Kathmandu today. "A total of 32 bodies have been discovered till yesterday out of the people missing due to landslides in Sirsha village of Dadeldhura district, some 800 km west of Kathmandu," Ganesh Raj Bhatta, leader of Nepal Bar Association, a non-government organization involved in the rescue team, told reporters. As many as 39 people are still missing and feared dead, Bhatta noted. Rescue operation led by NBA team and the Nepal Red Cross Society is going on.

TROPICAL STORM "TAMMY"

Miami, Oct 5 -- The 19th tropical storm of an unusually active Atlantic hurricane season formed north of the Bahamas today and was expected to drop heavy rain on Florida and Georgia as it hit the U.S. East Coast. Tropical Storm Tammy took shape near the same area where hurricanes "Katrina" and "Rita" formed over the past two months, but it was not expected to steer into the Gulf of Mexico nor to become a hurricane. At 1100 hrs (1500, UTC), "Tammy" was about 40 miles north-northeast of Cape Canaveral and about 130 miles south-east of Jacksonville, said the U.S. National Hurricane Centre in Miami. The storm was moving north at 14 mph. It was traveling almost parallel to the Florida coast and was expected to move ashore over northeast Florida and Georgia by tomorrow. Maximum sustained winds

had reached 40 mph and "Tammy" could bring up to five inches of rainfall to north Florida, southeast Georgia and parts of the Carolinas. Rainfall could reach 10 inches in places, the hurricane centre said. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: The center of Tropical Storm "Tammy" came ashore in north Florida yesterday after skirting the coast and sending heavy rain and gusty winds toward Georgia and the Carolinas. The storm's centre came ashore near Mayport, home to a major naval station about 15 miles east of Jacksonville. But much of the worst weather remained offshore, the National Hurricane Centre said. At 2300, EDT, "Tammy's" winds had decreased to 40 mph. The storm was moving northwest at about 13 mph, and was expected to swirl farther inland. "We'll probably see most of the brunt of the storm hitting the southeastern coast of Georgia," meteorologist Chris Sisko said. "They'll get some pretty squally weather." "Tammy" formed just off Florida's east coast early yesterday, dropping rain into north Florida and soaking parts of Georgia and South Carolina. As it tracked along the coast, the worst of its weather remained offshore, north and east of its centre. "It does appear that heavy rainfall from "Tammy" in Florida is not going to unfold," Sisko said. A tropical storm warning was in effect from Fernandina Beach north to the Santee River in South Carolina, meaning tropical storm conditions were expected in those areas within the next 24 hours. Tropical storm-force winds extended outward up to 200 miles.

London, Oct 6 -- Following received from Reuters, dated today: Tropical storm "Tammy" struck the United States at about 0300, GMT, today. Data supplied by the US National Hurricane Center suggest that the point of landfall was near lat 30.8N, long 82.1W. Tammy brought 1-minute maximum sustained winds to the region of around 64 km/hr. Wind gusts in the area may have been considerably higher.

TURKEY

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Seven people died, two were injured and one was reported missing on Monday (Oct 3) as a result of floods and landslides in the Black Sea province of Rize, officials from the Prime Ministry Emergency said.

TYPHOON "DAMREY"

Hanoi, Sep 30 -- The death toll from Typhoon "Damrey" and the flash floods it spawned in several Asian countries rose to at least 120 today. The official Vietnam News Agency said all 51 people swept away by flash floods in the northern province of Yen Bai, 180 km northwest of Hanoi, had died although a provincial disaster official told Reuters only 33 bodies had been found. China, where "Damrey" caused huge damage on the southern island of Hainan, raised its toll from 16 to 25

and Thailand said two more people had been killed in flash floods in the north, taking its total to nine. While "Damrey" killed only five people as it roared ashore in northern Vietnam on Tuesday (Sep 27), 65 people were killed by flash floods as it also lashed parts of Laos and northern Thailand with torrential rain. The Philippines reported 16 deaths in Damrey's rampage across its main island of Luzon while the official Xinhua news agency quoted a Chinese official as saying it caused economic losses of 11.6 billion yuan. "Damrey" nearly wiped out the aquaculture industry on Hainan and damaged the power grid and rubber plantations there, Xinhua quoted the official as saying. Yesterday, Vietnam Communist Party General Secretary Nong Duc Manh toured Yen Bai and urged officials to speed up the distribution of relief. Prime Minister Phan Van Khai told provincial governments to evacuate people in areas at risk from landslides and flash floods. More than 2,400 people have been evacuated for a second time in Thanh Hoa province, one of the two provinces where "Damrey" landed, as rivers swelled and breached sea dykes still posed a danger. About 330,000 people were evacuated in advance of the typhoon's arrival. More than 10,400 homes and schools in Vietnam were destroyed or damaged. "Damrey" also shattered nearly 120 km of dykes built to protect rice fields from the sea, the government's Committee for Flood and Storm Prevention said. Power supplies and telecommunications were hit when the typhoon landed blowing at more than 130 kph and a preliminary government estimate put losses at 699 billion dong. State television said salt farmers on the northern coast, where the typhoon struck, were without food and local authorities had run out of stocks of noodles. Rice, instant noodles and bottled water have been rushed to flood-hit areas while state media said cholera -- a disease caught from polluted water -- had broken out in many places and the Health Ministry was sending experts and medical aid. Workers were repairing dykes to help farmers finish harvesting rice in a region which is Vietnam's second-most important producer of the staple food after the Mekong Delta in the south. -- Reuters.

London, Sep 30 -- Death toll from tropical depression "Damrey" has risen to nine in Thailand as heavy flood continued to plague the country's North and North-east region. Samart Chokkhanapitak, chief of the Irrigation Department, said the conditions were more worrisome in Lampang since water levels at the major dam the Kiew Lom had reached the peak. Floodwater overflowed from several rivers in Lampang inundated downtown area and several other districts. The water level at Chaomae Suchada bridge was expected to rise to five metres last night, the worst in the past 10 years. Flash floods which intruded some 40 villages in the provinces left six people dead and one

missing with the initial damage estimated at 500 million baht (US\$12 million), said Lampang Governor Amornthai Niratsayakul. A committee has been set up to monitor the release of water from dams and reservoirs and seek ways to tackle the problem of dams bursting. Meanwhile, water levels in Ping river continued to rise putting downtown Chiang Mai at a fresh round of flash floods.

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 10 people have been killed and three are still missing in northern Thailand in the aftermath of Typhoon "Damrey," officials said. Seven died in Lampang province where one villager was reported missing, and three were killed when floods hit the tourist resort province of Chiang Mai, the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation said. Two villagers were missing in Mae Hong Son province in the far north-east. Thai authorities evacuated some 2,000 people and more than 32,000 have had their homes or property damaged. The disaster prevention department said 40 roads, 24 bridges and one reservoir were damaged in the floods, which began on Tuesday (Sep 27). Flooding has eased in several provinces, the department added.

TYPHOON "LONGWANG"

London, Sep 30 -- Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Typhoon "Longwang" near 22.0N long 132.1E at 0000, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 255 degrees at nine knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 130 knots, gusts 160 knots. Forecast position lat 21.8N, long 129.8E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 130 knots, gusts 160 knots. Forecast position lat 22.2N, long 127.0E at 0000, UTC, Oct 1. Maximum sustained winds 125 knots, gusts 150 knots.

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Longwang" headed for China after swirling through Taiwan today, injuring at least 34 people. Most of the injuries were from broken glass, while strong winds lifted roofs off four homes and a university dormitory in Hualien, disaster response officials at Taiwan's National Fire Administration said. The storm's eye was over the ocean 70 km west-south-west of Taichung by 1230 hrs, and the storm was headed west-north-west at 18 km/h, though much of the island remained under its influence, Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau said. "Longwang" had maximum sustained winds of 137 km/h and gusts of up to 173 km/h, but had weakened as it passed over Taiwan's central mountains, the weather bureau said.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Bulk Golden Dragon (7855 gt, built 1982) lost power, ran aground and broke in two near Hualien, Taiwan, as a result of typhoon "Longwang" at the weekend (Oct 1-2). All 15 crew escaped unhurt, according to island emergency services.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: Rescuers were searching last night for 59 police academy students missing after a landslide in East China triggered by typhoon "Longwang." Following on from the deaths of three people in Fujian Province over the past two days as a result of the storm, the landslide happened in Minhou County of Fujian's provincial capital, Fuzhou, China Central Television reported. Torrential rains brought by the typhoon caused the hillside to give way above the civilian buildings where the students were staying, sweeping them away. President Hu Jintao yesterday made a phone call and asked for every effort to be made to find the missing. The typhoon raged across Taiwan at the weekend (Oct 1-2) before moving on to Fujian. About 537,000 people had been evacuated to safety, officials said, and 2.46 million people were affected. Although downgraded to a tropical depression yesterday, "Longwang" had already damaged 60,000 hectares of crops, with 12,500 "completely damaged," Xinhua reported. Economic damage was estimated at yuan 1.2 billion (US\$150 million). Officials and residents of Fuzhou were cleaning up today as the storm brought rain described as being on a scale of "once-a-century." One resident said he was confined to his 16th-floor apartment on Hualin Road, with no water or electricity. "A nearby river flooded the road, and the water rose to a depth of two metres," he said. "The underground parking lot of my building is completely submerged." Cars whose engines were stopped by water could be seen everywhere. Some drivers were forced to stay in their cars on Sunday night. Downpours from the typhoon began at noon on Sunday in Fuzhou and lasted for 14 hours, dumping 111 mm of rain, according to the provincial meteorological bureau. The rain paralysed Fuzhou's transport system. Pools of water on the main streets were about 70 centimetres deep. The city imposed traffic control yesterday on more than a dozen main streets in the downtown area. The meteorological bureau reported that the storm first struck Weitou town, Jinjiang city, with winds of up to 120 kph at its centre.

Beijing, Oct 4 -- The death toll from Typhoon "Longwang" in China climbed to 15 people and dozens of military students were still missing, media reported today. In the central province of Hubei authorities evacuated about 24,000 people from along the banks of a tributary of the Yangtze River, in what the official Xinhua news agency said was the worst flooding since 1981. Xinhua said 730,000 people in all had been evacuated to protect them from the 19th typhoon to hit China this year, in the provinces of Fujian, Zhejiang and Guangdong. The China Daily said that 59 Chinese military students were still missing after torrential rain from the typhoon rushed down a hillside and swept

away their school buildings in the southeastern Chinese city of Fuzhou. State television said life was returning to normal in Fujian, and rail services out of Fuzhou had resumed. More heavy rain is expected to fall in the next two days in the province of Hubei and the local government is on alert for further flooding along the Hanjiang River, Xinhua said. The typhoon, which raged across Taiwan on the weekend before moving on to China's adjacent Fujian province, also damaged 60,000 hectares of crops and caused economic damage of around 1.2 billion yuan (\$148 million). -- Reuters.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: The death toll from Typhoon "Longwang" rose to 65 yesterday, while in other parts of the country, flooding has inundated thousands of hectares. Grave fears were held yesterday for 36 police cadets still missing after a landslide killed 50 of their colleagues, as masses of people were evacuated from the worst floods in a decade swamping north China. More than 7,000 soldiers, police and local residents were carrying out a search-and-rescue operation to find the young recruits who were swept away by torrents of mud that engulfed their training academy on Sunday (Oct 2). The death of the trainees from the Fuzhou Command School of Armed Police in Fujian Province took the death toll from Typhoon "Longwang" that landed in south-eastern China late on Sunday to 65. Of the 15 others killed, five died in landslides, five were swept away by floods and the remaining five were drowned, the "China Daily" reported. Along with the havoc triggered by the typhoon, parts of northern and central China were dealing with torrential rains and severe flooding along major tributaries of the Yellow and Yangtze rivers. According to Xinhua, flooding of the Weihe River in Shaanxi Province, a tributary of the Yellow River, is the worst seen in 10 years. So far 315,000 people have been evacuated to safe places, while 30,000 others have been mobilized to reinforce embankments, it said. The flood crest has inundated an area of 180,000 hectares, washed down 12,000 houses and endangered another 25,000 in 11 counties and districts of Weinan City, city officials said. "These are the worst floods we have had in years. But this time we were well prepared so there is no big danger to the population and no large number of casualties," an official at the flood control bureau of Weinan City said. Reports on Tuesday said three people had died from flooding in Shaanxi. The central province of Hubei was also struggling with heavy rain and the threat of widespread flooding, state media said.

TYPHOON "NABI"

Busan, Oct 5 -- General cargo Long Xuyen arrived Busan Sep 24 and commenced repairs the same day at Kang Nam Shipyard Corporation, ETC Oct 6. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

UNITED STATES

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Portions of Montana, the Dakotas and Wyoming were hit by a slow-moving snowstorm that knocked out power, closed roads and dumped up to 13 inches by today. Thousands of power outages were reported and some schools were closed by the storm, which began yesterday. Drifting snow contributed to road closures and the National Guard was called out to rescue stranded motorists in south-western North Dakota. "It's really treacherous -- heavy, deep snow. Visibility is just really poor. It's so heavy that vehicles just can't push through it," North Dakota Highway Patrol Capt. Mark Bethke said. As much as 11 inches of snow had fallen in south-eastern Montana by early today. Billings had received 10.8 inches and set a record for snowfall yesterday with 9.9 inches, National Weather Service meteorologist Tom Humphrey said. At least 11,000 customers throughout the region lost power due to the storm, officials said. The storm, which moved in from the Rockies overnight, dropped more than a foot of wet snow in parts of western and central North Dakota, and winds up to 50 mph created blizzard conditions in some areas. "It is, on our records, probably one of the earliest ones, as far as our recorded history goes, in 126, 130 years," said Sam Walker, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Bismarck, ND. In Dickinson, ND, an estimated 13 inches of snow had fallen by noon, forcing authorities to pull their vehicles off the road. There were no reports of injuries.

Earthquakes**ARGENTINA**

London, Oct 2 -- A report, dated Oct 1, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 2154, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.6 event has been located in Salta, Argentina, in lat 23 47S, long 63 58W.

INDONESIA

London, Oct 4 -- An earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale jolted Banda Aceh this morning. The ANTARA news agency quoted Aceh Besar district meteorological and geophysics agency head Syahnan as saying today, the tremor which occurred at 0509, local time, rattled the capital of Aceh province for two minutes but the people could feel the quake for only 40 seconds. The quake's epicentre was located 68 km west of here and 60 km below the sea. According to Syahnan, today's quake was the second strong tremor in October following an earlier one which jolted Banda Aceh on Oct 3.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale rocked the Indonesian province of Aceh today, causing initial panic but no damage or casualties, witnesses and the meteorology agency said. The earthquake struck at around 1546 hrs and was centred some 33 kilometres under the ocean floor and 75 kilometres south-west of the Acehnese capital Banda Aceh, said the Meteorology and Geophysics Agency in Jakarta in its preliminary analysis of the data.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

London, Sep 30 -- A series of earthquakes had rattled the eastern reaches of Papua New Guinea but there were no reports of tidal waves, officials said today. The first and largest tremor, measuring about 6.5 on the Richter scale, hit off the coast of the island of New Britain about 140km south of Rabaul about 0250, AEST. It was followed by quakes measuring 5.9 and 5.6 within three hours, seismologist at Geoscience Australia David Jepsen said. Earlier, the Hong Kong Observatory had measured the first quake at 6.8 on the Richter scale. "It would have been felt widely. It would have been felt up to 500km away," Mr Jepsen said.

London, Oct 3 -- A report, dated Oct 2, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 2359, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.8 event has been located in the New Britain region, Papua New Guinea, in lat 05 53S, long 151 49E, estimated depth 57 km.

PERU

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated Oct 4, states: The Peruvian Council of Ministers is expected to declare a state of emergency today following Saturday's (Oct 1) earthquake in the Moquegua region 621 miles south of Lima, that left hundreds of people without water, food and accommodation. The roads have been cleared but bureaucratic procedures are hindering the provision of assistance and support to that Southern region. A preliminary report released by the Institute of Civil Defense (INDECI) informed that although no deaths have been reported, 10 people were injured, and 471 houses were destroyed and another 379 partially damaged. President of the region Cristala Constantinides called on the central government to declare the state of emergency immediately so that her administration can assign resources to the region. People from Calacoa, Cuchumbaya and San Cristóbal are still spending nights out in the open, sleeping on very thin mattresses with worn-out blankets. They are less afraid of the Andean cold than they are of a new earthquake. Two earthquakes of 4.2 and 4.0 respectively on the open Richter scale shook the Moquegua region, spreading panic among the 10,000 inhabitants of this Peruvian territory. An earthquake registering 7 shook North Peru a week

earlier, leaving five dead and causing serious damage.

TONGA

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 1007, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.1 event has been located in Tonga in lat 20.57S, long 174.29W, depth 10 km.

Volcanic Activity**MOUNT ARTEALE, ETHIOPIA**

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: Some 50,000 nomads in Ethiopia's Afar region were displaced as a result of last week's eruption of a volcano, officials there said today. Mount Arteale, about 1,000 kilometres north-east of Addis Ababa, erupted on Sep 26 after an earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale. There were no human casualties but hundreds of head of livestock were killed. Afar state officials said a team had been formed to address the woes facing those displaced. Large areas of land they used for grazing are now covered by lava. "A committee has been set up at regional level to study the magnitude of the damage caused as a result of the earthquake and volcano... and to relocate or resettle more than 50,000 people from the area," state-run Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) quoted Afar state chief administrator Ishmael Alisero as saying.

SANTA ANA, EL SALVADOR

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated Oct 1, states: The Santa Ana volcano, El Salvador's largest, erupted today after being dormant for more than a century, leaving at least two dead people and forcing more than 2,000 others to flee home. The volcano, also known as the Ilamatepec volcano, located 66 km west of San Salvador, started this morning to belch out thick plumes of ashes, which reached more than 15 km into the sky. Soon after the volcano began casting hot rocks and ash from its crater, military emergency sirens blasted to signal an immediate area evacuation of the hamlets in the coffee growing area, where some 20,000 people live. Salvador's Interior Minister Rene Figueroa said that two people were killed as 200 residents fled the hamlet of Palo Campana, which lies just two kilometers from the crater. The police said that at least seven people were injured by red hot rocks hurled into the air by the eruption. Officials with the National Emergency Committee said 2,250 people had been evacuated from the danger zone by 1300, local time, 1900, GMT. A red alert had been declared in a four-kilometer radius around the volcano while a lesser "yellow alert" was issued for nearby areas.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: A volcano in western El Salvador erupted yesterday, sending a column of ash 50,000 feet into the air and killing two farmers buried by chunks of earth and boiling water that tumbled down the slopes. Authorities ordered the evacuation of three communities in the shadow of the Ilamatepec volcano, which towers near Santa Ana, the country's second largest city, 40 miles from San Salvador. "The volcano has entered an eruptive phase that consists of ash and gases," Interior Secretary Rene Figueroa said. It was unclear how many people had been ordered to leave their homes. Figueroa said as many as 10,000 residents live close to the volcano, but that most areas were not evacuated. Emergency response officials said two farmers died and two other residents of the coffee-growing town of Palo Campana were missing. The ground was smouldering when soldiers arrived to assist in the evacuations. Falling ash had destroyed coffee crops and damaged trees in surrounding forests. Small bodies of water were steaming and bubbling from the heat, and ash covered the ground. Problems with landslides worsened as afternoon rains pelted the area. "We have had an eruption of moderate magnitude," President Tony Saca said during a visit to the country's national emergency response headquarters. But he added that "there was no lava." "Everyone is helping, first to save lives and get people out, because we don't know what is going to happen," he said. Figueroa said air force flights over Ilamatepec "confirmed that it emitted a column of ash that reached 50,000 feet high."

El Salvador, Oct 3 -- The volcano "Llamatepec", also known as Santa Ana, erupted on Oct 1. Mostly rocks and hot mud so far. Over 4,000 people reported as having been evacuated. -- Lloyd's Agents.

San Salvador, Oct 4 -- The volcano "Llamatepec" continues erupting and is being closely monitored. -- Lloyd's Agents.

El Salvador, Oct 6 -- Santa Ana continues to erupt and it's activity has intensified. Yesterday we had a 4.8 "temblor" at 1500 hrs and so far no damage or loss of life have been reported.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: A US soldier and an Afghan soldier have been killed in an attack in southern Afghanistan, the US military said yesterday. The small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade attack Friday (Sep 30) also wounded another US soldier and two

Afghan National Army troops during combat operations north of the city of Kandahar, the military said. The three wounded soldiers were taken to a nearby forward operating base for treatment.

Kabul, Oct 3 -- Afghan government troops killed 31 insurgents in weekend fighting in southeastern Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan, a Defense Ministry spokesman said today. Twenty-eight militants were killed yesterday night after they attacked an army position in the Angor Ada area of Paktika province, Zahir Azimi said. He said eight government troops were wounded in more than four hours of fighting in which both sides used heavy machineguns and rockets. Three more militants were killed early yesterday in a separate clash in Paktika province, Azimi said. He said it was unclear if the militants killed were Taliban fighters or their al Qaeda allies known to be holed up in the border area. The increased violence comes as NATO members have tried to resolve differences over the role of their forces as the alliance moves toward taking over foreign military operations in Afghanistan. NATO's plans to expand into the troubled south will be discussed when NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visits Kabul from tomorrow at the head of a delegation of the North Atlantic Council, the alliance's top political decision-making body. The United States, which has about two-thirds of the foreign troops in Afghanistan, is looking to cut its commitment given pressures in Iraq and has been trying to get European allies to take on more of the burden of battling the stubborn insurgency. Last month, France and Spain insisted the NATO peacekeeping mission and the U.S.-led force chasing militants should remain separate, and Germany said it would not like to expose its soldiers to more danger by linking the mandates. -- Reuters.

ALGERIA

Algiers, Oct 1 -- An Internet statement attributed to Algeria's largest outlawed Islamic militant group, aligned with al-Qaeda, said it opposed an amnesty in exchange for laying down its arms and would continue its "Jihad", or holy war. In a Sep 29 referendum, Algerians overwhelmingly approved a government offer of partial amnesty for militants fighting for a purist Islamic state, in a bid to end more than a decade of civil war. "This vote is a waste of time. Algeria is not in need of a charter for peace and national reconciliation but in need of a charter for Islam," said the statement on an Islamist Website, dated Sep 27 and attributed to the leader of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC). It was the first time the GSPC had apparently commented on the amnesty project but the statement's authenticity could not be immediately verified. -- Reuters.

COLOMBIA

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: One policeman has died and six have been injured during a rebel attack on a village in the north-west of Colombia, officials say. A police chief, Luis Ruiz, told local media that the attack was carried out by the left-wing Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc). He added that dozens of officers were abducted - their fate is unknown. The rebels entered the remote village of Sipi, in the province of Choco, during the night and attacked the local police station. A official in Sipi, Armando Albornoz, told local radio that the last time the authorities had had contact with the policemen was yesterday afternoon. The officers were stationed in Sipi to guard the village. In December, the Farc had tried to take control of the town, which can only be accessed by river.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Suspected leftist rebels killed at least 13 coca harvesters as part of a struggle with far-right paramilitary gangs for control of Colombia's lucrative cocaine trade, police said today. The attack occurred between Sunday (Oct 2) and Monday in an isolated, largely roadless region near Vistahermosa, 120 miles south of the capital, Bogota, said Gen. Alberto Ruiz of the Colombian National Police. The farmers were picking coca, the green bush used to make cocaine, for a paramilitary militia when they came under attack from the rival leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, Ruiz said. He said the killings were linked to a territorial fight over control of the coca market and at least 13 coca-pickers were believed killed.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

United Nations, Oct 4 -- The U.N. Security Council today lamented the failure of Rwandan rebels to leave Congo by a September 30 deadline and urged them to do so now without further delay. Foreign armed groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo "continue to pose a serious threat to stability in the eastern part of the country," said a statement adopted unanimously by the 15-nation council, singling out the Democratic Force for the Liberation of Rwanda, known by its French acronym FDLR. "The Security Council demands that FDLR seize this opportunity to proceed voluntarily with their disarmament and return to Rwanda without any delay or preconditions," it said. Under an agreement reached in August among Congo, Rwanda and Uganda, thousands of Rwandan as well as Ugandan rebels had pledged to leave Congo by last Friday. The deadline was mainly aimed at an estimated 10,000 Rwandan Hutu rebels who fled to Congo after helping carry out the 1994 Rwandan genocide targeting primarily Rwandan Tutsis. But it also applied to just over 1,000 Ugandan rebels. Very few of the foreign rebels

returned home ahead of the deadline, however, ignoring urgent appeals from all three governments and the United Nations. Aggravating an already tense situation, some 400 heavily armed rebels from the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) crossed into a remote corner of eastern Congo in September and have defied demands from government and U.N. peacekeeping forces to leave or disarm. The LRA troops are remnants of a rebel movement which has devastated northern Uganda and is accused of massacring civilians and mutilating victims over a 19-year period. Two Congolese soldiers died in a plane crash today during an airlift of local troops to the remote border area to force the LRA rebels to lay down their weapons. The council statement welcomed the moves by the Congolese armed forces to disarm the group with U.N. help. The United Nations has nearly 17,000 soldiers and international police in Congo, making it the world body's largest and costliest peacekeeping mission, with an annual budget of about \$1 billion, but they are spread across a country the size of western Europe as they struggle to confront armed groups still preying on civilians and prepare for the country's first elections in 45 years, due to be held by June 30, 2006. -- Reuters.

ETHIOPIA-ERITREA

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: The United Nations Security Council has called on Eritrea immediately to reverse its decision to ban all helicopter flights by UN peacekeepers. Eritrea announced yesterday that it was banning the flights, which are used to supply peacekeepers, to move troops and to carry out monitoring. UN troops are patrolling the Eritrea-Ethiopia border zone in terms of a peace plan signed in 2000. The agreement followed a two-year border war in which 70,000 people died. The Security Council reacted to Eritrea's ban on helicopter flights by UN peacekeepers with a quickly arranged meeting. A strongly-worded statement approved by all 15 members expressed grave concern at the decision saying it would have serious implications. The UN's under secretary for peacekeeping, Jean-Marie Guehenno, said the flight ban "would very gravely impede our capability to do our job in the peacekeeping mission". He said he hoped the Eritrean government would reverse its decision. "If we are not able to move around effectively with our helicopters, we will have much less visibility on what is going on on the ground, which can in turn create suspicions and create more instability," Mr Guehenno told Reuters news agency. The ban is due to take effect today. The two countries ended their border war after a peace agreement which provided for an independent commission to rule on their disputed border. However, the commission's findings have yet to be implemented, and Ethiopia continues

to occupy the town of Badme, which the commission ruled belonged to Eritrea. Last month, Eritrea warned it might re-start its war with Ethiopia if the United Nations failed to resolve a border dispute between the two neighbours. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan emphasised that both governments had the primary responsibility to bring about peace and security. Earlier this year, the UN expressed concern over a build-up of Ethiopian and Eritrean troops close to the border zone.

GEORGIA

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated yesterday, states: Sixty tons of oil leaked from the Baku-Supsa pipeline in the village of Norio in the Gardabani district in southern Georgia on October 4. Oil thieves, who were stealing oil from the pipeline, were blamed as the cause of the leak. The Georgian Ministry of Environment reported that the problem was promptly rectified and no major damage to the area occurred. Only 250 sq/m of land was polluted, Badri Tsatava, chief of the Ecology Service at the Ministry of Environment, said.

INDIA

Guwahati, India, Oct 1 -- India deployed troops in its troubled north-east today, a day after 10 students were shot dead by police in protests for better schooling. Soldiers patrolled the deserted streets of Tura, a small town 400 km west of the Meghalaya state capital of Shillong, where hundreds of students hurled stones at police and broke through bamboo barricades yesterday. "Lots of soldiers being brought in and no one is allowed to move out of their homes as the curfew is still in force," Purno Agitok Sangma, a member of parliament, said by telephone. A senior state official said six students died at the scene of yesterday's rally and four died in hospital from bullet wounds. Five more students were in a critical condition and another 15 injured from the shooting. In total around 50 people, including students and police, were hurt in the violence. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Five militants, including a self-styled district commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, three members of a family and two army personnel were among 11 persons killed in militancy related incidents in Jammu and Kashmir since Tuesday night (Oct 4). A Hizbul militant was killed in an encounter with security forces at Kharoon-Kandi in Rajouri district today, an official spokesman said. He said an AK rifle, three magazines, a wireless set and 40 rounds were recovered from the slain militant. Two militants of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen were killed in a fierce gunbattle at Devpora-Nagbal in Pulwama district early today, he said adding an AK rifle, a pistol, two grenades and a wireless set were seized from the killed militants.

INDONESIA

Bali, Oct 1 -- Two bomb blasts ripped through popular tourist areas on the Indonesian resort island of Bali today, killing at least 17 people and wounding dozens more, officials said. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono condemned the nearly simultaneous blasts, which come three years since militants linked to al-Qaeda bombed two nightclubs on Bali's Kuta Beach in October 2002, killing 202 people, mainly foreign tourists. Police confirmed two bomb blasts near separate cafes, one in Kuta Beach and the other Jimbaran Beach, while local Metro TV said there had been four blasts. Officials at Bali's Sanglah hospital, told Reuters that 17 dead had been brought in. "Many" were foreigners, said an official. At least 35 wounded foreigners had been taken there, other hospital officials said. One witness told El Shinta radio that there were at least 30 casualties at the other blast in the Jimbaran Beach area, although he did not say if any victims were killed. Local Metro TV said there were two blasts at Jimbaran and two at Kuta. It quoted witnesses who said one of the Jimbaran explosions was near the upmarket Four Seasons Hotel. Indonesian officials have not blamed anyone yet for the attacks but officials have been warning for months that the shadowy Jemaah Islamiah militant network, seen as the regional arm of al-Qaeda, was planning more bombing attacks in the world's most populous Muslim nation. Police have blamed the group for a series of bombing attacks in recent years that have hit Western targets, including the 2002 Bali nightclub attacks. Yudhoyono condemned the blasts and would head to the island, his spokesman said. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Indonesian police are trying to find the identities of three suspected suicide bombers who killed at least 19 people in attacks in Bali yesterday. Video footage has been released showing one of the suspected bombers walking into a restaurant in the Kuta area moments before an explosion. Three bombs exploded in tourist areas within moments of each other. Police said the remains of three bombers were found at the scenes of the latest attacks, which took place in the tourist areas of Jimbaran and Kuta. "There is evidence that the explosive materials were attached to the body," police chief Made Mangku Pastika told a news conference. He said the bombs appeared to have been built using TNT and metal slugs. "There are pieces from either a jacket or a bag that were attached to the bodies," the police chief said. Indonesian investigators have said the bombings bear the hallmarks of regional militant group Jemaah Islamiah (JI), which was also blamed for the 2002 attacks. At least 19 people are known to have been killed in last night's attack - not including the three suspected bombers. Most of those killed were Indonesian, but casualties are also believed to include

people from Australia, Japan, South Korea and the US. More than 100 people were wounded, 17 of them seriously.

Kuta Beach, Oct 4 -- Indonesian police had questioned dozens of people by today in a widening hunt for the masterminds of suicide bombs that killed 22 people on the holiday island of Bali, but have so far made no arrests. The top targets in the nationwide search were Malaysians Azahari bin Husin and Noordin M. Top, fugitive leaders of the al Qaeda-linked Jemaah Islamiah militant Islamic network. Police say Azahari and Top helped plan the Bali blasts of 2002, which killed 202 people, as well as subsequent deadly attacks on a luxury hotel and an embassy in Jakarta. Bali police chief Made Mangku Pastika said that two non-Balinese had been taken in for questioning two days earlier over suspected involvement in Saturday night's (Oct 1) suicide bombings at beach restaurants, which a hospital official said killed 22 people and wounded 135. "We have some progress," Pastika said. Deputy national police spokesman Soenarko Artanto, however, made clear there had been no formal arrests. "The number of the witnesses until now we have questioned is 39. So far they are just witnesses," he told a news conference. Under Indonesian law, police may hold people for questioning for several days without bringing charges or arresting them. Police in Java island neighbouring Bali were also searching for five men in an area near Jakarta in connection with the blasts, the police chief in Banten, 50 km west of the capital, told El Shinta radio. "We are suspicious they have a link," Badrudin Haiti said, adding the men were not at their homes. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on Tuesday visited some of the wounded, telling one: "We will chase those perpetrators and bring them to court. Please be patient." Police spokesman Artanto said Jemaah Islamiah leaders Azahari and Top were prime targets of the hunt. "After the recent incidents, our hunt for them has been stepped up," he said. Officials and terrorism experts say the tactics in the latest blasts, including using suicide bombers, are among the reasons they suspect Jemaah Islamiah and the fugitive Malaysians. Police today gave further details of the bombs, which appeared to be made relatively cheaply. In addition to TNT, the bombers used ball bearings, bolts and a detonator packed into blue pastic containers. The bombs may have been triggered using mobile phones, officers have said. Some 200,000 police officers were on top alert nationwide. A large contingent of Australian police officers arrived in Bali this week. Japan also sent a special anti-terrorist unit. At least one national each from the two countries was killed and others were injured in the three blasts that tore through restaurants packed with Saturday evening diners. With Western or

tourist-linked sites the main target of the major bombings in the last several years, tourism has been hurt and security fears raised among investors. Some visitors have cut short their stays on Bali, Indonesia's prime tourism destination, 960 km east of Jakarta. -- Reuters.

Kuta Beach, Oct 5 -- Indonesian police today widened their search for those behind weekend (Oct 1-2) suicide blasts in Bali, and there were fears fresh attacks were in the advanced stages of preparation. On the resort island, Balinese Hindus paused for a holy day of prayer four days after bombs ripped through packed restaurants. The three young bombers killed themselves and 19 others, and wounded 138. Blasts at two eateries in Jimbaran and a cafe in Kuta Beach were almost simultaneous on Saturday night. Police today said they had nearly finished their forensic examination of the sites, and were considering reopening them to let people get on with their lives. "The work here is almost done," Bali police chief Made Mangku Pastika said as he surveyed the Kuta Beach area. "Public activity needs to resume soon." Police have launched a nationwide manhunt and a senior officer said it was focussed on Bali and the capital Jakarta. Attention has centred on the al Qaeda-linked Jemaah Islamiah network or an offshoot of it. In particular, police are hunting Malaysian militants Azahari bin Husin and Noordin M. Top. Both are senior figures in the shadowy JI network, blamed for a string of attacks in Indonesia, including nightclub bombings in Bali three years ago that killed 202, most of them foreign tourists. Several countries, including the United States and Australia, have warned in recent days of possible new attacks in Indonesia. "We continue to receive information that attacks are in the advanced stages of planning," New Zealand's foreign ministry said in travel advice issued today. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said today he had asked the country's military to help in the anti-terror fight. Police say they have questioned at least 75 people about the attacks. Two non-Balinese were being interrogated for suspected involvement. Police said they would also question individuals across Indonesia with links to previous attacks, including some of those prosecuted and jailed. However, while police say they are making progress, no one has yet been formally arrested or charged. In Banten province on Java island, police said they were seeking five men linked to a convicted 2002 Bali bomber now on death row. They said the men, several of whom have served jail time for possession of explosives, were wanted for questioning but not at this point considered suspects. Jakarta's police chief said members of the cell responsible could be hiding in the capital, a sprawling city of 12 million. "After Bali, that is the biggest possibility," Firman Gani said, adding Jakarta police were on high alert for

more attacks. At least one hotel and apartment complex in the capital was evacuated today after a phoned threat. No bomb was found. -- Reuters.

IRAQ

Baghdad, Sep 29 -- Up to 50 people were killed in three apparently coordinated car bomb attacks in the mixed Shi'ite and Sunni Arab town of Balad north of Baghdad today, Iraqi police sources said. One source in the regional police force put the death toll at 37 dead and 50 wounded. Others spoke of 50 dead and up to 100 wounded. They said the first two bombs went off 10 minutes apart at dusk near a busy market in a predominantly Shi'ite area, in a street with a bank and next to a police station in the town about 90 km north of the capital. A third bomb went off about half an hour later, one police source said. -- Reuters.

Balad, Sep 30 -- Car bombs have killed more than 110 people, 25 of them children, in a surge of violence in Iraq ahead of an Oct 15 referendum on a new constitution. One of the four car bombs ripped through a crowded market in the southern town of Hilla killing at least 12 people and wounding 47 on today, police and health officials said. In the mainly Shi'ite town of Balad, north of Baghdad, the death toll from three huge car bombs yesterday rose to 98 today, hospital director Kassim Aboud said. Outside a hospital a doctor, Dawoud Allam, posted lists of the dead and the 119 wounded on a wall. Of the dead, 25 were children under 15, while 14 could not be identified, he said. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: Hundreds of US troops combed through a village near the Syrian border today, breaking into houses and fighting sporadic gun battles with gunmen on the second day of a new offensive against al-Qaida insurgents. At least eight militants were killed, the military said. Many residents fled Sadah village into Syria before the offensive began, witnesses said, and the 1,000 US troops involved appeared to be widening the sweep into two nearby towns. In Karabila, troops with loudspeakers warned residents to stay inside their homes for their own safety today, witnesses said. In Rumana, a town on the other side of the Euphrates River, helicopters fired on several houses, sending plumes of black smoke up into the air, the witnesses said. No American casualties were reported in the offensive, which is aimed at rooting out al-Qaida militants the military believes have been using Sadah as a "sanctuary," closing insurgent supply routes and stemming violence ahead of Iraq's crucial vote on a new constitution on Oct 15. However, al-Qaida in Iraq claimed to have captured two US Marines participating in the offensive and threatened in a Web statement issued Sunday to kill them within 24 hours. The statement, posted on a Islamic militant Web forum and signed by al-

Qaida in Iraq's spokesman, Abu Maysara al-Iraqi, did not include any identifying images or details. A US military spokesman said he believed the claim was false. "I have not heard anything about any of our folks being taken," Lt Col Steve Boylan, a spokesman for US forces in Iraq, said in a statement. "I would suspect that these are unfounded rumors, as that is what has happened in the past." Also, a senior military commander said today he was not backing off his assessment that US forces in Iraq could be reduced early next year, even though an Army general has said the number of battle-ready battalions of Iraqi soldiers has fallen by two-thirds. Appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," Gen John P. Abizaid did not offer a reason for the decrease in top-level Iraqi troops from three battalions to one, but he said more Iraqis were in the field at various levels of training and were participating in security operations than before. Elsewhere in Iraq, insurgents kidnapped the brother of Interior Minister Bayan Jabr, the Shiite official who heads police forces, in Baghdad yesterday, and the son of another top ministry official was kidnapped north of the capital, police said. Jabr was visiting Amman, discussing ways to cooperate with Jordan against terrorism, when his brother was snatched late yesterday. The minister said today the abduction ultimately targeted him. "They wanted to pressure me," Jabr told Jordan's state-run Petra news agency. Sunni insurgents have vowed to derail the constitutional referendum and have launched a wave of violence that has killed at least 202 people, including 15 US service members, in Iraq in the past seven days. Two US soldiers were killed by explosions while on patrols yesterday - one in Baghdad and another in Beiji, 155 miles north of the capital, the military said. At least 1,935 service members have died since the Iraq war started in March 2003. In new violence, two Iraqis were killed today in drive-by shootings -- a businessman in Baghdad and Iraqi soldier in Karbala, 50 miles to the south, police said. Police also found the bodies of four Iraqis in three different areas of Baghdad today, with their hands tied behind their backs. Suspected insurgents often kidnap and kill Iraqis, dumping their bodies in isolated areas. The US military reported that a 60-year-old Iraqi detainee who fell ill at Abu Ghraib prison died of a heart attack during surgery there. The assault on Sadah, called Operation Iron Fist, was the fourth large US offensive near the Syrian border since May. However, the militants running rampant in large parts of western Iraq have proven difficult to put down, fleeing in the face of the assaults, then moving back in after the assaults end and the bulk of troops withdraw. Insurgents hiding in houses fired sporadically on US troops in the street from time to time today but Sadah was largely calm, said residents in the village eight

miles east of the Syrian border. On the offensive's first day, troops destroyed several car bombs and at least one roadside bomb, and there were two clashes with gunmen, the military said today in its first detailed report on the operation. Insurgents drove two vehicles toward a US Marine position, dismounted and began to attack with small-arms fire, the military said today. One vehicle was found to be rigged with explosives. The battle left four insurgents dead, the military said, and a fifth surrendered. North of Sadah, US forces killed three members of the al-Qaida in Iraq insurgent group after they attacked a US checkpoint with small-arms fire, the military said. Another militant was killed when a US Cobra helicopter destroyed a vehicle after its driver fired on a Marine position with a rocket-propelled grenade, the military said. The Cobra also destroyed a second vehicle believed to be carrying grenades, but the vehicle's driver and passenger escaped, the military said. Sadah, 180 miles north-west of Baghdad, is an isolated village of about 2,000 people, with one main road and about 200 houses scattered in a rural area near Qaim in Iraq's western province of Anbar. The US military said al-Qaida in Iraq, the country's most fearsome militant group that has launched a wave of suicide bombings, had taken control of Sadah, and foreign fighters were using it as a way station as they enter from Syria to join the insurgency. Al-Qaida and other Sunni-led insurgents have stepped up their campaign of violence, killing at least 205 people this week in an attempt to wreck the upcoming constitutional referendum, a vital step in Iraq's political process.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: A roadside bomb has struck the convoy of Iraqi Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloum, killing two guards but missing the minister's vehicle. The attack occurred at about 0930 hrs (0630, UTC) in west Baghdad as the minister was travelling north to Beiji to open a rebuilt oil refinery. Two of seven vehicles were destroyed by the blast, but the minister was unharmed and returned to his office. It follows the abduction of the brother of the interior minister on Saturday (Oct 1).

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: With snipers on rooftops and helicopters hovering overhead, US forces clashed with insurgent fighters today while searching homes in a town near the Syrian border. In Baghdad, Iraq's oil minister narrowly escaped an assassination attempt when a bomb hit his motorcade. While US forces pushed ahead with their offensive further west, fighting erupted in the capital of Iraq's Anbar province, with masked militants attacking an Iraqi patrol and sparking a gunbattle in the streets of Ramadi. Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloum was headed out of the capital to attend the opening of a rebuilt refinery to the north when the roadside bomb hit his seven-car motorcade this morning,

killing three of his bodyguards, the ministry said. Bahr al-Uloum was unhurt. The assassination attempt came a week after a car bomb at a checkpoint near the Oil Ministry killed at least three ministry employees and seven policemen. Iraq has the world's third-largest known oil reserves, but the industry has been crippled by war, sanctions during Saddam Hussein's rule and the anti-US insurgency. Oil production remains limited, curbed by decaying infrastructure and frequent militant attacks on pipelines and refineries. The violence came less than two weeks before a national referendum on a new constitution. Al-Qaida in Iraq and other groups in the Sunni-led insurgency have launched a wave of violence to wreck the Oct 15 vote, killing at least 207 people in the past eight days, including 16 US forces. Bahr al-Uloum vowed that the insurgents would fail and that Iraqis will approve the new constitution. However, leaders of Iraq's Sunni Arab minority have rejected the constitution and are trying to defeat it at the polls, saying it will tear the country apart into Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish fiefdoms, the Sunnis being the weakest. The US offensive near the western border aims to sweep out al-Qaida in Iraq insurgents who have made the area a stronghold and used it to bring foreign fighters in from Syria. The sweep, codenamed Operation Iron Fist, began on Saturday (Oct 1) in the village of Sadah and has spread to Karabilah and Rumana on the banks of the Euphrates River, 180 miles north-west of the capital. US helicopters fired rockets at targets in Rumana, where a roadside bomb blew up near an American armoured vehicle, sending up a plume of black smoke, witnesses said, but no US casualties were reported. In Karabilah, troops searched house-to-house for militants, apparently meeting stiffer resistance than in Sadah, which most fighters fled before the US troops moved in. Marine snipers fired from rooftops and US helicopters flew overhead as the advance was slowed for about an hour by insurgent fire, a CNN journalist embedded with the Marines said. The military said it confirmed at least 21 militants killed, two in fighting today and 19 from an airstrike the day before, bringing the three-day total to 57. No US troops have been killed or seriously injured in the offensive, the military said. An American soldier died of wounds suffered from indirect fire on Saturday in Ramadi, the military said today. The death raised to 1,936 the number of US military members who have died since the Iraq war began in 2003. The US military also dismissed as "patently false" a claim by al-Qaida in Iraq that its insurgents had captured two US Marines in the fighting, even as the group issued a claim it had killed them. The military said no Marines had been captured and all its service members were accounted for. Iron Fist is the latest offensive in the border

region in the far western reaches of Anbar provinces, where US and Iraqi forces are sparse and insurgents hold sway in many towns. But even in Anbar towns closer to Baghdad, where US troops have a stronger presence, militants have remained active. In Ramadi, 70 miles west of Baghdad, insurgents attacked an Iraqi army patrol, setting one vehicle on fire and sparking a gunbattle. Gunmen in black hoods were seen carrying machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades in Ramadi's streets, and Iraqi civilians gathered around the two burning Iraqi army pickup trucks. Some civilians celebrated the destruction by carrying around Iraqi military helmets and a military uniform taken from the wreckage. However, the insurgents appeared to have taken the worst of the fight. Seven gunmen were killed, said Capt Jeffrey Pool, a US military spokesman. No casualties were reported among the Iraqi troops. In other violence, a drive-by shooting in the northern city of Mosul killed Nafi'a Aziz, a female member of Ninevah's provincial council, and her son, police said. A bomb went off in a restaurant, killing the owner, in the southern Shiite town of Hillah, and two policemen were killed when their car was ambushed in the northern city of Kirkuk.

Baghdad, Oct 4 -- A suicide car bomber drove into Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone complex with a convoy of other vehicles today and blew up, killing three people and wounding six, Iraqi police said. The vehicle entered the Green Zone, which houses the U.S. and British embassies and the Iraqi government, by an entrance used by Iraqi employees, journalists and others to enter the complex. Police said the car exploded as it was being searched at a checkpoint inside the zone. The attack came on the first day of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which has been marked by surges in violence in the past. Those killed today were two Iraqi soldiers and a civilian, police said. The six wounded were four Iraqi soldiers and two policemen. It was not immediately clear what sort of convoy was entering the area at the time. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: US marines say they have launched the biggest offensive yet against insurgents in western Iraq. The military says 2,500 troops are taking part in the offensive, named Operation River Gate, which is aimed at stopping Al Qaeda from operating in Haditha and two nearby towns, Haqlaniya and Barwana. But as the operation was launched, the US military announced four of its troops had been killed in the area. A military statement said three soldiers were killed in bomb attacks near Haqlaniya yesterday, while a fourth, a marine, was killed on the Syrian border. Meanwhile, in Baghdad, two Iraqi soldiers and a civilian were killed and six security men wounded when a suicide car bomb exploded after

entering the city's heavily fortified Green Zone, home to the Iraqi Government and the US and British embassies. The US military says Operation River Gate is intended to "free the local citizens from the terrorists' campaign of murder and intimidation". Haditha, one of the towns targeted by the operation, is among several in the Euphrates valley where local people have said Islamist fighters have taken control and imposed Taliban-style Islamic rule, despite frequent US offensives. "Fighter jets and helicopters are over the city now," a local resident said. "The US Iraqi forces distributed leaflets with phone numbers asking people to call if they want to inform on the insurgents." US vehicles are also patrolling the streets, calling on people to provide information against the militants. Another operation, called Iron Fist, is also under way near Qaim on the Syrian border. The US military says about 1,000 troops have been fighting Al Qaeda militants there. "There are now two major operations going on simultaneously," a US military spokesman in Baghdad said.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Britain has accused Iran of responsibility for explosions which have caused the deaths of all eight UK soldiers killed in Iraq this year. A senior British official, briefing correspondents in London, blamed Iranian Revolutionary Guards. He said they provided the technology to a Shia group in southern Iraq. The Iranians had denied this, he added. While UK officials have hinted at an Iranian link before, this is the first specific allegation to be made. They may feel there is little to lose right now by making such accusations, given that diplomatic relations are already low following the breakdown of talks over Iran's nuclear programme. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the technology had come from Hezbollah in Lebanon via Iran and produced an "explosively shaped projectile". He said that dissidents from the Mehdi army, a militia controlled by the radical Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr, were suspected of carrying out the attacks. One of their leaders, Ahmed al-Fartusi, was arrested by British forces recently and was "currently enjoying British hospitality", as the official put it. It was that arrest which sparked off an anti-British protest in Basra recently. The official said that protests had been made to Iran and that the Iranian government had denied responsibility.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: A bomb has killed at least 25 people and wounded 87 others at a mosque in Hilla, south of Baghdad. The bomb exploded as worshippers were gathering for prayers on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan according to Shia Muslims. Police said the roof of the mosque had collapsed and people were trapped in the rubble. Iraqi Sunnis began Ramadan yesterday, the third

year in a row the two groups began fasting on different days. Today's blast happened just before 1800 hrs (1500, UTC) today, as Shias came to the historic Ibn al-Nama mosque for prayers, before returning home to eat after the day-long fast. Reports said half of the mosque roof collapsed due to the force of the blast and several shop fronts were damaged. Al-Qaeda in Iraq - one of the deadliest Sunni extremist groups - has called for more attacks against Shias during Ramadan, having already declared all-out war on them.

London, Oct 6 - A press report, dated today, states: Gunmen shot dead five Iraqi Oil Ministry security guards who were driving to the northern city of Kirkuk today, police said. Lieutenant Jawaad Abdullah said they were shot in the town of Uthaim south of Kirkuk. The attack came a day after a car bomb critically wounded six security guards for the state-owned North Oil Company in Kirkuk, an oil centre.

ISRAEL

Nablus, West Bank, Sep 30 -- Israeli forces killed three Palestinian gunmen in the occupied West Bank today, pressing ahead with raids against militants despite a halt to cross-border rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip. Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, part of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction, announced the deaths of the three gunmen over loudspeakers in Balata refugee camp in the city of Nablus, saying they were killed by soldiers mounting a raid. An Israeli military spokeswoman said Palestinians fired at troops who entered Balata and nearby Askar refugee camp to arrest militants in the pre-dawn operation. "The soldiers shot back, and several (gunmen) were hit. One soldier was slightly wounded. In all, 11 terrorists were detained," she said. The latest bloodshed came hours after Palestinians finished voting in a third round of local elections in the West Bank. Fatah won control of 65 of the 104 municipal councils up for grabs compared with 22 for Hamas and 17 percent for other factions, said Firas Yaghi, executive director of Higher Commission for Local Elections. Turnout was 85 percent. The preliminary results -- final official figures are due tomorrow -- could signal a strong showing for Hamas in the coming legislative election. Hamas, sworn to Israel's destruction, boycotted the only previous parliamentary ballot in 1996. Yesterday's ballot, the third phase of elections for more than 1,000 West Bank council seats, was the first Palestinian vote since Israel completed its Gaza pullout on September 12. -- Reuters.

Gaza, Oct 2 -- A Gaza police commander and two civilians were killed in gunbattles with Hamas gunmen today in the worst outbreak of Palestinian infighting since Israel withdrew from the coastal strip last month, police sources said. Fifty other people were wounded, including

children and two militants, after members of the Islamic group tried to storm a police station in a refugee camp stronghold outside Gaza City, medics and witnesses said. The fighting underscored the struggle Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas faces to consolidate control in Gaza, erupting just days after he enforced a ban on public displays of weapons, amid US and Israeli pressure to rein in militants. Hours beforehand, Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had agreed in their first telephone conversation in weeks to meet soon and improve co-operation. Israel scaled back its own offensive against militants after five days without rocket fire from Gaza, to give Abbas a chance to prevent attacks on Israel, Israeli security sources said. Both Palestinian police and militants accused each other of sparking the confrontation. Police said Hamas gunmen threw grenades and fired guns at a police patrol, then tried to storm two police stations in Gaza City and in Shati refugee camp, two militant strongholds, killing a commander of the Shati station. Medics said two civilians, including a woman, had also died. Hamas denied starting the melee. A spokesman said police provoked the fighting by stopping a car with two of its members apparently to arrest them, and that angry Palestinians had attacked police stations in response. Tension between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA) had been high after an explosion killed 17 people last month at a Hamas rally. The PA denied Hamas allegations Israel was to blame, saying Hamas had set off the blast by accident. Hamas, the leading Islamic militant group whose suicide bombings won it popularity in a five-year uprising against Israel, has been locked in a power struggle with the PA, fuelled by the Israeli pullout that has both vying for control of Gaza. Israel withdrew its army from Gaza last month after demolishing Jewish settlements in August. Palestinian security forces had begun to ban weapons displays last Thursday (Sep 29), patrolling the streets and inspecting cars for arms, after securing the consent of other militant factions to the policy. At the centre of today's dispute was a son of Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi, a Hamas leader assassinated by Israel last year. Hamas accused Palestinian police of attempting to arrest or kill Rantissi's son in Gaza City and said supporters had rushed to his defence. Hamas also denied Palestinian police statements that two of its members had been placed under arrest. Hamas also charged that Palestinian security men shot at the home of Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Zahar, and that his sons returned fire but he was unharmed. Palestinian police put its forces on high alert. Efforts were made to ease tensions. Militants from other Palestinian factions called for a cease-fire and dozens of Gaza residents telephoned radio stations to urge an end to fighting which threatened to

fuel fears of lawlessness in the territory. Abbas's earlier telephone conversation with Sharon had raised expectations after a surge of Israeli-Palestinian violence had damaged hopes stirred by Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, which ended 38 years of military rule there. A statement from Sharon's office said they "agreed to tighten co-operation between them and to work together to advance the process. They also agreed to meet soon in order to advance various issues that are on the agenda. No exact date was set. "Both leaders expressed hope that the new year would be more successful, a year of peace and hope," it said. Israeli airstrikes prompted by rocket salvos killed four gunmen in Gaza last week. Israeli forces also raided the West Bank to arrest hundreds of suspected militants. Five gunmen and a teenager were killed during raids. Israel's army suspended a commander today during a probe of the West Bank teen's death. -- Reuters.

Nablus, West Bank -- Israeli troops shot dead a Palestinian woman who attacked a soldier at a checkpoint in the West Bank today, Palestinian medics said. An army commander said the attacker was knocked to the ground after stabbing and lightly wounding a female soldier and that soldiers opened fire when the Palestinian woman, still armed with a knife, tried to get up to attack them. An army commander who gave his name as Major Yaniv said that a preliminary investigation showed that soldiers opened fire when the woman tried to attack them again. -- Reuters.

NIGERIA

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated Sep 29, states: Two British oil workers who were kidnapped in southern Nigeria have been freed after a rescue mission. Eight suspects were arrested during the military raid in the Delta state, shortly after the men were abducted in a bar, a police spokesman said. The Foreign Office said the two men were unharmed and were being dealt with by consular staff. The pair worked for oil exploration and production company Pan Ocean, said a spokesman for oil company Shell. Police sources had told Reuters that a ransom of 50 million naira (£213,000) was demanded after the men were taken by bus in the city of Warri to a boat. Less than 24 hours after the kidnapping, Brigadier-General Elias Zamani, who heads the military task force in the restive wetlands region, told the agency that the pair had been freed without a fight. The commander of a military taskforce that provides security for the oil industry said the men were thought to have been held in a swamp area. Paul Alford, one of the freed hostages, told Reuters that he and the other man had been taken from a bar yesterday evening. "They came in, all guns blazing, into the bar and told everyone to get on the floor. They took us away on a bus. Then we got onto a

boat and they took us to a house in the swamp," he said. "It was just a financial thing. They wanted money."

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today states: Three Nigerians have died in clashes in Lagos as soldiers fought running battles with police. The dead were civilians caught in the crossfire of a battle that began when a soldier and policeman argued over who had the right to a free ride on a bus. The police officer hit out at the soldier, who raised the alarm at a nearby barracks, sparking violence. Soldiers and police then exchanged live fire across the main highway in Lagos, the country's largest city. Some 60 vehicles, including 20 police cars, were set ablaze during the clashes.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Soldiers and policemen are undertaking joint patrols in Nigeria's main city, Lagos, after a running battle between them yesterday left three dead. President Olusegun Obasanjo has called the army and police chiefs to the capital for a meeting to clear the air. He wants the two sides to resolve their differences over the clash. The dead were civilians caught in the crossfire of a battle that began when a soldier and policeman argued over who had the right to a free ride on a bus. The police officer hit out at the soldier, who raised the alarm at a nearby barracks, sparking violence. Soldiers and police then exchanged live fire across the main highway in Lagos, the country's largest city. Some 60 vehicles, including 20 police cars, were set ablaze during the clashes. Troops were reported to have stormed a police station, setting it on fire and freeing scores of prisoners. The situation there was tense today as policemen counted the cost of the mayhem. There were several different versions of how the violence began, but the most common account was that the soldier and policeman came to blows after disagreeing over which of them had the right to a free ride in a bus. The established practice is that one member of the security forces does not have to pay a fare on any bus. The violence that followed was the worst of its kind in recent years. Law enforcement throughout Lagos broke down for about five hours, as uniformed policemen deserted streets across the city for fear of being attacked. Senior officers eventually visited the scene of the clashes and re-asserted control. The governor of Lagos, Bola Tinubu, and Police Commissioner Ade Ajakaye appealed for calm from all sides.

PAKISTAN

Wana, Pakistan, Sep 29 -- Gunmen killed four Pakistani paramilitary troops and a government official today in a restive tribal region infested with al-Qaeda-linked militants, district officials said. The five men were travelling in a car when the unidentified attackers ambushed them on the outskirts of Wana, the main town in the South Waziristan tribal region, near the Afghan border. Their

driver escaped unhurt. South Waziristan, about 400 km south-west of the capital, Islamabad, has been the scene of fierce battles between security forces and militants in the past year and a half in which hundreds of people have been killed. Pakistani officials said hundreds of al-Qaeda-linked militants, most of them from Central Asia, had come to South Waziristan. Most had now been killed or arrested while some had fled into neighbouring North Waziristan, they said. Also today two soldiers were wounded in an exchange of fire between security forces and militants in North Waziristan. Security forces arrested dozens of suspected militants in a series of search operations in North Waziristan this month. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Assailants fired rockets at a Pakistani army base yesterday, killing a soldier and three government employees in a spate of violence in the lawless tribal area along the Afghan border, security and intelligence officials said. About 20 rockets were fired before dawn on the base in North Waziristan east of Miran Shah, said an intelligence official. A soldier and three government employees died while sleeping in their barracks, an intelligence official said. Meanwhile, in South Waziristan, masked gunmen killed the 20-year-old son of an elder who helped track down Islamic militants last year, another intelligence official said. A security official said two suspected militants were killed at a checkpoint.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Unidentified tribal insurgents today blew up a pipeline supplying natural gas in Pakistan's restive southwestern Baluchistan province. The early attack damaged the pipeline and disrupted gas supplies to Quetta, the provincial capital of Baluchistan, Hasan Nawab, spokesman for Pakistan's state-run Sui Southern Gas Pipeline told private Geo TV. "Saboteurs detonated a bomb which damaged the pipeline in Mastung area," Nawab said. He said the bomb was planted under the pipeline, which runs 1.3 meters deep. Technical staff have been sent to the area and started repair work, which can take 24 hours, the spokesman said.

Karachi, Oct 4 -- Pakistan State owned gas utility-Sui Southern Gas Company Limited said this morning that supply of gas to some parts of Quetta in Balochistan province of Pakistan has been restored at 0600 today. A spokesman of company said its pipeline from Shikarpur to Quetta was damaged near Kolpur, about 27 km from Quetta at about 0230 hrs between Oct 2 and 3 apparently due to a severe blast caused by an act of sabotage at the hands of unknown miscreants. As a result, it said the powerful explosion caused major damage to the main SSGC pipeline feeding gas to Quetta and its suburbs. Earlier, a press release of company said the SSGC took immediate action

to shut off the supply of gas for the safety of the pipeline and the area around the blast, adding emergency crews were immediately dispatched to the site of the explosion to undertake initial repairs, as the damage to the pipeline is fairly extensive and heavy equipment is being transported to the site of the explosion for repairs. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Oct 4 -- Pakistan State owned gas utility-Sui Southern Gas Company Limited said this morning that supply of gas was fully restored this morning in all districts of Balochistan, affected by the high-intensity bomb blast near Kolpur about 27 km from Quetta late Sunday (Oct 2) night / early yesterday morning. A spokesman of company in a statement said working under the directives of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Resources to complete the repair work as expeditiously as possible, the company put all its resources and people on the job within a record time of 20 hours. SSGC had to move heavy equipment and material from Quetta and Shikarpur to the site of the blast. SSGC engineers and emergency crew also rushed to the site from Karachi and Quetta and worked round the clock to successfully repair the damage late last night. The company only restored full pressure of gas early this morning as a safety precaution, and to avoid any untoward incident that may have occurred in case gas appliances were not properly shut off the night before. The incident affected customers in Quetta, Mastung, Pishin, Ziarat and towns and villages along the route. Kalat was also shut down as a result. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

RUSSIA

Moscow, Oct 1 -- Rebels killed two pro-Moscow police and wounded another five in battles in Russia's disputed Chechnya, local media reported today. News agencies reported that rebels opened fire on police checking houses in the village of Terskoye just outside regional capital Grozny, killing two people and wounding two more. In a separate incident, three servicemen were injured in a bomb explosion in the village of Avtury in the Shali region. -- Reuters.

SOMALIA

Nairobi, Oct 4 -- Gunmen shot dead a U.N. security officer outside his home in southern Somalia in the latest assassination linked to foreign targets in the country, the world body said today. "He had just been dropped off by his driver when he was shot and killed by two people," Sandra Macharia, spokeswoman for the U.N. Development Program's Somalia operation, told Reuters. The Somali worker, Mohamuud Musse Gurage, 42, was killed yesterday night in the Lower Juba area of Somalia, she added, prompting a pullout of some U.N. staff in the area. Macharia, speaking from U.N. offices in Nairobi, said the identity of the assailants was

unknown. "The United Nations has strongly condemned the killing of UN staff member and Somali national Mohamuud Musse Gurage," a U.N. statement said. "Consequently, the U.N. has relocated 12 nationals and one international staff member from the area." The United Nations said the local Juba Valley Alliance -- a militia force that controls the southern port town of Kismayo -- was investigating the incident. U.N. agencies employ about 600 people in Somalia, of whom roughly 100 are international staff. -- Reuters.

SRI LANKA

London, Oct 6 -- A powerful explosion ripped through a parked van in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo today, wounding a pedestrian and causing damage to several buildings, police said. The vehicle was parked at Colombo's Wellawatte area, where minority Tamils are concentrated, a police official said, adding that the newspaper office of a moderate Tamil party was damaged. "We are still not sure how the blast was triggered. Initially it looked like a grenade that went off in a van," the officer said. "Now it seems a more powerful device had been planted in the vehicle." A pedestrian was wounded in the explosion that went off before the morning rush hour, police said. They said a newspaper office run by the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), was damaged in the explosion. The EPDP is part of the Sri Lankan Government and is bitterly opposed to Tamil Tiger rebels. Windows of neighbouring buildings were shattered.

SUDAN

Geneva, Sep 29 -- The UN refugee agency expressed grave concern today over an unprecedented attack on a camp for thousands of internally displaced people in Sudan's West Darfur region that reportedly left 29 dead and another ten seriously wounded. Initial reports received by UNHCR indicate a group of 250-300 armed Arab men on horses and camels attacked Aro Sharow camp, in the northern part of West Darfur, on Wednesday afternoon, sending thousands of camp residents fleeing into the countryside. The attackers reportedly burned about 80 makeshift shelters -- about one-quarter of the total number in the camp. Initial reports indicated that 29 people were killed and 10 seriously wounded. While many villages have been attacked in this way, this was the first such direct attack on a camp for displaced people anywhere in Darfur since the conflict began in early 2003. Aro Sharow is located 16 km north of the town of Saleah. Between 4,000 and 5,000 internally displaced Sudanese were believed to be living in the camp and most have apparently fled. The nearby village of Gosmeina was also reportedly attacked and burned. High Commissioner Ant nio Guterres called on the Sudanese government to do everything it could meet its

responsibility to protect the internally displaced people in Darfur. "As long as this insecurity continues, the international community cannot provide the assistance that is so desperately needed by hundreds of thousands of people," said Guterres. "The government of Sudan has a responsibility to ensure security for all of its citizens." -- Reuters.

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated Sep 30, states: Escalating violence in Sudan's Darfur region could lead to the United Nations halting relief efforts there, says their chief aid coordinator. Jan Egeland said violence in Darfur had become so bad that the UN operation could "all end tomorrow - it's as serious as that." He was speaking as reports were made that 29 refugees were killed by Arab militias in their refugee camp. Mr Egeland said international aid workers were being targeted. The UN refugee agency said it had received reports that some 300 armed men attacked the Aro Sharow camp in West Darfur. They burnt 80 shelters, forcing thousands of people who had already fled their homes to run away once more.

Khartoum, Oct 1 -- The African Union accused the Sudanese government today of co-ordinating with Arab militias in attacks on civilians in Darfur and said all parties to the conflict were violating ceasefire agreements. Despite AU-sponsored peace talks in Nigeria and the ceasefire, violence has spiralled in the region over the past two weeks as rebel forces attacked a government garrison and Arab militias, known as Janjaweed, rampaged through a refugee camp, killing at least 32, the AU said. "We must conclude that there is neither good faith nor commitment on the part of any of the parties," Baba Gana Kingibe, head of the AU mission in Sudan, said in Khartoum. About the Janjaweed attacks on villages and refugee camps in Darfur, he said government helicopters had been seen flying in the area at the time of at least one of the attacks. "This apparent land and air assault gives credence to the repeated claim by the rebel movements of collusion between the government of Sudan (GOS) forces and the Janjaweed," he said. -- Reuters.

THAILAND

Bangkok, Sep 30 -- Suspected Muslim militants killed one policeman and wounded five in a roadside ambush on a motorcycle patrol in restive southern Thailand today, a police official said. In one of the most clinical attacks in 21 months of violence in the Muslim-majority region, the militants detonated a bomb and used small arms fire, and then blocked army reinforcements from reaching the victims. Soldiers in an armoured vehicle eventually managed to manoeuvre through the roadblocks to recover the dead policeman and his five colleagues, two of whom had been wounded severely by AK-47 rifle fire, the policeman said. -- Reuters.

TURKEY

Diyarbakir, Sep 29 -- Turkish security forces have killed two Kurdish rebels in a clash in south-eastern Turkey, a provincial governor said today, the second such incident in just two days. The clash occurred yesterday when rebels ignored a call to give up their weapons and opened fire on a military patrol in a remote part of Sirkak Province near the border with Iraq, the governor said in a statement. -- Reuters.

UGANDA

London, Oct 4 -- Four people were killed in a rare afternoon ambush on a civilian pick-up truck in north east Uganda by rebels yesterday, officials say. Members of the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) are suspected of shooting the driver and two passengers, and killing a fourth with an axe. Several other passengers were wounded in the heavy gunfire. Survivors of the ambush say the vehicle, which was heading from Kitgum town to Orom in the north east, came under heavy gunfire and then caught fire. The wounded were taken to hospital in Kitgum town where they are being treated for gunshot wounds. Amongst them a pregnant mother who had a lucky escape - she was shot in the stomach but both the mother and the unborn baby survived. In recent days hundreds of people fled their homes after suspected LRA rebels burnt down up to 200 huts in the east of Uganda in Teso region - an area which has been relatively free from LRA attacks for almost two years.

Kidnappings



NIGERIA

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

Labour Disputes



FRANCE

London, Sep 29 -- A press report, dated today, states: Yesterday evening French police released most of the Corsican seamen who had hijacked passenger ro/ro Pascal Paoli the day before. However, Jacques Baume, Marseille's public prosecutor, announced that "the four people mainly responsible" for the hijacking would be interrogated further. Hijacking a vessel carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in jail. On the orders of the French Prime Minister, Dominique de Villepin, an operation was organised by the police to regain control of the vessel. While it was

lying off the Corsican port of Bastia, five helicopters of the GIGN intervention force approached at 0830 hrs and about 50 officers abseiled onto the vessel. The 60 seamen who had commandeered the vessel did not put up any resistance, as requested by Alain Mosconi, the leader of the nationalist Corsican Workers' Trade Union (STC).

Paris, Sep 29 -- The French government backed away from fully privatising a loss-making ferry company today to try to quell protests that have blocked the country's main Mediterranean oil port. Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin said the state was prepared to keep a minority stake in the SNCM ferry company, shifting policy the day after ordering elite forces to storm passenger ro/ro Pascal Paoli hijacked by seamen protesting against the sell-off plans. "I want to save this company," he told a news conference. "It has 2,400 workers, it has a public service mission." He said he was inviting Connex, the transport arm of French utility firm Veolia, to invest in and run the Corsica ferry operator. Overnight disturbances on Corsica, the French-run Mediterranean island served by SNCM, reflected the passions enflamed by the dispute. Protesters set fire to vehicles and threw stones at police in a three-hour stand-off. A sympathy strike by shipworkers at the Fos-Lavera oil terminal near Marseille ran into a third day today but refineries that depend on the port were operating smoothly. The SNCM crisis foreshadows a day of union protests next Tuesday (Oct 4) over the conservative government's reforms and highlighted tensions between Villepin's drive to cut high unemployment, reduce state spending and sell nationalised firms. The government had picked French firm Butler Capital Partners to take over the ferry operator but staff are angry over sell-off plans they say could lead to the loss of 400 jobs. Villepin struck a consensual tone today, saying the state was responsible for SNCM's future and was prepared to retain a minority stake while bringing in private investors. In a compromise deal, he said the state would keep 25% and employees another 5%. Butler had agreed to keep 40% and sell on the rest to Connex. A Veolia Environment spokesman said Walter Butler, head of Butler Capital Partners, and Connex boss Stephane Richard would meet unions in Marseille today to discuss the rescue deal. However, leaders of the Corsican Workers' Union (STC) said they would boycott all meetings until four seamen detained for commandeering the ferry were released and charges dropped. Finance Minister Thierry Breton said he would go to Brussels tomorrow to clear the rescue plan with European Union competition authorities. A private group also runs ferries between Corsica and mainland France. "The question for Brussels is not how much is owned by the state and how much is

owned privately," said EU Transport Commissioner Jacques Barrot on LCI television. "The question is working out whether the company will be able to respect the rules of fair competition," he said. -- Reuters.

Paris, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin said yesterday he was concerned about the situation in Corsica after protests forced the government to rethink plans to privatise a ferry operator to the island. France won the promise of a quick European Union verdict on a new rescue plan for the loss-making ferry operator, SNCM. However, the impasse in talks with trade unions and a rocket attack on a top French government official's headquarters on the Mediterranean island on Thursday (Sep 29) deepened the government's fears it could face a long and damaging political crisis. "I am concerned about Corsica's political situation," Villepin said. The Fos-Lavera oil terminal near Marseille, France's main Mediterranean oil port, remained blocked by port and ferry workers who have been on strike since Tuesday in sympathy with ferry workers. A trade union source said the strike, which has hit oil markets at a time when consumer nations are looking for fuel, would continue until Monday. France's oil industry body UFIP and oil major Shell have warned that refining at Fos-Lavera could slow down if the strike is extended. The conservative government announced plans this week to save SNCM by privatising it but Villepin backed off the plan on Thursday after staff went on strike because they feared it could lead to the loss of 400 jobs. He unveiled a new plan, under which the government would keep a 25% stake, and hopes to defuse the crisis before a day of nationwide anti-government strikes planned for Tuesday. The plan needs EU approval because it involves state aid. Finance Minister Thierry Breton, who went to Brussels to explain the proposal, made clear the EU would attach strict conditions if it were approved but won assurances that the issue would be dealt with urgently. Villepin and Breton said they could make no further concessions. "We are at the limit of what the state can do," Breton said after meeting European Transport Commissioner Jacques Barrot. He said SNCM would soon be bankrupt if nothing was done. Unions oppose Villepin's rescue plan. They also wanted police to release four men who they say led a group of about 50 seamen which seized passenger ro/ro Pascal Paoli for about 24 hours. The men were released yesterday evening but remain under investigation. In the Corsican city of Ajaccio, a rocket hit the prefecture, the offices of the city's top French representative, on Thursday, causing damage but no injuries. It was not clear who fired the rocket. Protesters set fire to vehicles in Corsica on Wednesday and fears of more violence prompted two national soccer league matches to be cancelled tomorrow and

Monday. Under the new plan for the ferry company, the state would keep a 25% stake and employees would have 5%. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated Oct 1, states: Riot police today forcibly expelled striking union workers who had blockaded ports in Corsica and south-eastern France for days to protest against the planned privatization of a state-run ferry operator, officials said. In the Corsican port of Ajaccio, police backed by an EC-145 helicopter and armored vehicles removed trucks, trailers and about 10 striking workers who had blocked access to the only cargo vessel in the port, police officials said. No injuries were reported. Flights were gradually returning today. But the top French official in Corsica said some 15,000 people remained stranded on the island. "It was absolutely essential to restart these vessels' round trips for the sake of public health. Our stocks of some medicines and blood products were not going to last beyond Monday (Oct 3)night," Prefect Pierre-Rene Lemas said. Shortly after the raid on the Corsica port, police stormed two oil terminals in the port blocked since Monday in Marseille, opening them up to provide crude oil to refineries, regional official Christian Fremont said. The police operations were the latest clashes this week with angry union members. Corsican nationalists have joined strikers protesting against government plans to privatize ferry operator SNCM, which links Corsica with mainland France.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Around 7,000 stranded tourists were leaving Corsica yesterday and workers striking over a ferry privatisation said they would lift a blockade of the French island's other ports until tomorrow. Finance Minister Thierry Breton and Transport Minister Dominique Perben will visit Marseille today to meet unions striking over the privatisation of ferry company SNCM. Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin faces criticism that he failed to handle the SNCM privatisation delicately enough given its link to Corsica and its volatile politics. Police in riot gear intervened on Saturday (Oct 1) to reopen the blocked port of Ajaccio, to allow in food and medical supplies and let the first tourists leave. Port authorities said all holidaymakers should be able to leave by this evening. Ajaccio had been the only open port until Corsica's main union decided at a meeting yesterday to allow traffic at other ports to pass. The union plans to resume its blockade tomorrow, when workers across France will strike to protest against high unemployment, low wages and several privatisations. "We would like to respond in a thoughtful way without suffocating the economy of the island and to allow the tourists, who are suffering on the quays of the port of Corsica, to leave," said Corsican workers' union head Alain Mosconi. Police on Saturday removed workers from passenger ro/ro Girolata,

which they had been occupying since Wednesday, blocking Ajaccio to other vessels carrying cargo and passengers. The strikes were called over the government's planned privatisation of SNCM, with the expected loss of 400 jobs including some in Corsica. They have provoked violent protests and ignited political tensions on the island where separatists have carried out low-key attacks since the 1970s. Groups of youths wearing balaclavas threw stones and bolts at police when 2,000 protesters -- including several leading separatists -- marched in the town of Bastia on Saturday. Police responded with tear gas and one officer among the 500-strong force was injured. Five ferries collected thousands more holidaymakers yesterday after about 7,000 of them were taken to the French ports of Nice, Toulon and to the Italian port of Savona during the night. Around 15,000 tourists had been stuck on the island, some for nearly a week. Each vessel was searched before departure in order to prevent a repeat of the bomb alert on Girolata, which left on Saturday morning with 525 passengers. A bomb squad was forced to land on the vessel by helicopter in the middle of the sea, causing concern to passengers. It was found to be a false alert. French police also intervened on Saturday to clear the mainland southern port of Marseille, including the Lavera and Fos petrochemical and oil terminals, which had also been blocked by workers protesting the SNCM privatisation. Dock workers declared a strike in response to the police action, meaning any incoming vessels could not be unloaded. Breton told TF1 television station yesterday that he would explain the government's plans when he met with unions today. "I want to respond, as transparently as I can, to all the questions, to everybody," he said.

London, Oct 3 -- A report, dated Oct 2, states: Lavera/Fos Terminals Port access are currently under Police Control but situation unchanged regarding strike affecting public terminals. Executive port staff operated two crude oil vessels at Fos on Oct 1. But understand that they refuse to work anymore. Besides, French Unions called for National Actions on Oct 4. Fearing present strike might extend until those next actions on Oct 4. Towage Company presently working but there will be no tug available from 0700, Oct 4 until 0700, Oct 5.

Paris, Oct 3 -- French strikers have cut operations at a BP refinery and may force its closure if the dispute is not resolved by Wednesday (Oct 5), the oil giant said today. As fears grow over global fuel supplies after the U.S. hurricanes' assault on oil refineries, strikers have blockaded France's Mediterranean energy hub and also closed its biggest refinery, Total's Gonfreville plant in the north. One of two separate strikes a week ago completely shut the 328,000 barrel per day (bpd) Total refinery in Normandy,

over a wage dispute. A second strike, sparked off by a protest over the privatisation of a ferry company, continues to block tankers from loading and discharging oil from the Fos-Lavera Mediterranean hub, home to a cluster of refineries amounting to more than 600,000 bpd capacity. A company spokeswoman said BP subsidiary Innovene cut runs at the 220,000 bpd Lavera plant on Saturday (Oct 1), and could completely shut the whole plant down by Wednesday if the strike continues past a general strike in France tomorrow. "Effectively, runs have been reduced since Saturday. It could shut down completely if the strike continues after Tuesday," said an Innovene spokeswoman. She declined to specify how much production was affected as there were different units which had reduced rates. A spokesman at the UFIP oil industry body estimated the Lavera plant's runs could be reduced by as much as 25 to 30 percent. He said the dockers were likely to extend their strike at least until the October 4 strike against the government's economic reforms. The general strike is already threatening French refining capacity of just below two million bpd, with a call by the main unions to cut running rates but not shut down Total's refineries of over a million bpd. The CGT union said workers at other oil firms would also hold protests tomorrow but not aim to cut refinery production. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: French train, bus and other public services were disrupted after a call by unions for a nationwide strike today to demand higher wages and protest new labour laws that make it easier to fire workers. Unions asked workers from the public and private sector to walk off their jobs between 2000, yesterday and 0800, tomorrow. Strikers plan to cut transport, school, hospital and other services in major cities to demand that employers and the government restart negotiations on working conditions and wages. The walkout will be the first against Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, who was appointed May 31. Unions have forecast more than 150 protest marches, with rallies in all major French cities including Paris, Marseille, Lyon, Toulouse and Rennes. In the French capital, the march will start off at 1430 hrs at Republique then to Bastille and ending at Nation. Thalys trains, which connect Paris and Brussels, won't be affected by the strike, the SNCF said, although one Eurostar was canceled, according to the train operator's Web site. Two in three high-speed trains, or TGV, within France will run normally. One in three trains not departing from Paris will run, SNCF said. RATP, Air France Traffic in Paris suburbs was disrupted, the train company said. Air France-KLM Group, Europe's biggest airline, will have some of its medium-haul flights disrupted, while it will insure the entirety of its long-haul flights, a company spokeswoman who declined to be named said by phone. A strike of

traffic controllers may disrupt flights at Paris Charles de Gaulle-Roissy and Orly airports, she said.

Paris, Oct 4 -- Hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated across France today as a one-day strike snarled public transport, putting pressure on the government to change its labour and economic policies. Some of the protesters demanded the resignation of conservative Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin after only four months in power as they marched through major cities such as Paris, Marseille, Bordeaux, Toulouse and Lyon. Union organisers said at least a million people took part in 150 protests around France. The strike was called by all of France's main trade unions over low pay, high unemployment of 9.9% of the workforce, falling living standards and a new law which makes it easier for small firms to sack staff. They also want to preserve the 35-hour working week. Most public transport did not run in Marseille and Bordeaux and hundreds of flights were cancelled, most of them domestic. Trains, buses and subway services were affected to a lesser extent in many other cities. "We're protesting against the insecurity of our jobs, over our salaries and because we're generally fed up," said Philippe du Pire, a transport worker marching under a white and red trade union flag in Paris. Trade unions vowed to hold more protests unless their demands are met, sending a warning to Villepin that any reforms he plans could face major obstacles from the restive workforce. "All the unions have already agreed to assess the action today and consider more if we do not get the appropriate responses to the complaints voiced in the street," Bernard Thibault, head of the large CGT union, told France 2 television. Facing his toughest challenge since he took office, Villepin said he would listen to the protesters' demands and vowed to press on with policies intended to reduce high unemployment, boost industry and restore voters' confidence. In Corsica, police used tear gas on around 50 protesters in the port of Ajaccio where workers have been striking for several days over the privatisation of ferry operator SNCM. SNCM workers headed up the protests in Corsica and in Grenoble, Hewlett-Packard workers led the crowd. The US computer giant has announced 1,240 job cuts in France. The SNCF state rail firm said 40% of regional services were affected and 60 percent of high-speed TGV inter-city services were guaranteed. High-speed international trains ran on time. Strikes by energy workers reduced power production, but there were no power cuts. The Ministry of Education said 30% of school workers went on strike, noting that it was fewer than unions had forecast. -- Reuters.

London, Oct 5 -- A nationwide strike in France yesterday caused widespread disruptions in citizen traffic services and cancellations and delays of up to two hours at Paris's two airports. According to official figures, some 30 percent of railway staff and teachers, 23 percent of electricity workers and

between 15 and 30 percent of post office staff, as well as some hospital staff and government office workers joined the one-day strike. Some 880,000 people according to organizers, 340,000 according to the police, marched today in the planned 150 demonstrations in France. Paris was served with only a third of suburban train services. Passengers were also dealing with cancellations of bus and subway system, while around half of regional and TGV inter-city fast trains ran on schedule, according to the state-owned SNCF rail company. People living in other cities such as Marseille and Bordeaux were less lucky, for most public transport there was out of service. France's civil aviation authority predicted 175 short and medium-haul flights would be cancelled from Paris Orly airport in south Paris and 212 from Roissy Charles de Gaulle airport in north Paris.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: A strike affecting the ports of Fos and Lavera on the French Riviera could force refineries owned by Royal Dutch Shell PLC, Total SA, and BP-Innovene to shut down for lack of feedstock if it does not end within a few days. The Marseille Port Authority, which operates the ports, indicated that 26 oil tankers, six gas carriers, and five chemical carriers were among the 39 vessels blocked. Members of the leftist labor union CGT began the strike Sep 26 to protest the announced privatization of the maritime company SociÉTÉ National Corse MÉditerranÉE, which provides links between Corsica and the French continent. The BP-Innovene refinery and petrochemical site at Lavera is running at reduced capacity, but its other downstream production - 215,000 tonnes/year of high density polyethylene, 220,000 tonnes/year of ethylene oxide, and 110,000 tonnes/year of glycol ether - has not been affected. Total said its La MÈde refinery is running normally because stocks are sufficient, and no tanker was scheduled this week. Workers voted Oct 3 to continue their movement until the Oct 8-9 weekend. Total spokeswoman Bertille Aron told OJG that the group's 11 refineries in Europe have taken up the slack to ensure supply to customers. However, the company declared force majeure last week on paraxylene and orthoxylene production. Shell's spokeswoman Mathilde Mithard told OJG that an oil tanker was able to pass through the blockade last weekend, when public forces opened the ports to ensure safety of the installations.

INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 5 -- Loading and unloading operations at Jawaharlal Nehru Port will be affected from today, with the 12 unions representing the transport operators at the port giving a call for an indefinite strike. The transport operators are demanding withdrawal of the toll levied on trucks that ply the 26 km entrance road to the port. The road, which is the only link between the port and the Pune expressway, was constructed by JNPT

Road Co, a special purposes vehicle (SPV) formed by JNPT, the National Highways Authority of India and CIDCO. The SPV, through a tendering process, contracted with a private company to collect toll on all trucks that entered or exited the port through the road. After the private contractor began to charge a toll of Rs.130 for every truck that entered or exited the port through the road, the transport operators went on strike last month. They had subsequently withdrawn the strike, after the toll charges were reduced by about 30 per cent with an assurance that it would be abolished within a month. -- Lloyd's Agents.

ITALY

Savona, Oct 4 -- The trade union strike of tugs service in Savona and Vado Ligure started Jun 10 has been extended up to Oct 31 and the service is granted as follow :

From 0600 hrs to 1200 hrs - four tugs
From 1200 hrs to 1400 hrs - three tugs
From 1400 hrs to 1700 hrs - four tugs
From 1700 hrs to 2200 hrs - two tugs
From 2200 hrs to 0600 hrs - one tug
On Sunday :

From 0001 hrs to 0800 hrs - one tug
From 0800 hrs to 10.00 hrs - two tugs
From 1000 hrs to 1400 hrs - one tug
From 1400 hrs to 2200 hrs - two tugs
From 2200 hrs to 0600 hrs - one tug.
Furthermore, according to last information received from trade union the above mentioned strike has been increased on Oct 3 - 5 without services from 0600 hrs to 1800 hrs excepted the emergency service. -- Lloyd's Sub-agents.

PAKISTAN

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated Oct 4, states: An effective strike was observed by the transport operators today in protest against the frequent raise in prices of petroleum. The strike was observed on the call given by a major group of transport operators Karachi Transport Ittehad and the call was supported by its opponent group National Transport Ittehad. Almost all minibuses, buses and coaches remained off the road in the morning causing immense problems to commuters. However, taxis, yellow cabs, and rickshaws remained plying on road as they were exempted from taking part in the strike by the KTI. Buses, minibuses, and coaches were off the road in the morning and some of them appeared on roads by the afternoon. People were seen standing at bus stops in different localities. Attendance in offices and factories remained thin due to the effective strike of the transport operators. The people, who were compelled to travel, had to hire taxis, yellow cabs, and rickshaws on excessive fares. The buses under the umbrella of Urban Transport Scheme as well as Metro buses were seen on roads. Despite the absence of commercial vehicles, traffic congestions were witnessed at different places, including I.I. Chundrigar Road, Sarwar Shaheed Road, Zaibunnisa Street, S.M. Taufeeq

Road in Liaquatabad, Hassan Square, NIPA intersection, Shaharah-i-Liaquat and parts of M.A. Jinnah Road. At most of these places, traffic police officials were not present and the civilians were seen clearing the traffic mess. Schools, colleges and universities were open but the attendance was thin. Markets and shops remained open in all parts of the city. Commuters generally held the government responsible for increase in petroleum prices. Terming the strike successful, KTI chief Irshad Bokhari said that the KTI had exempted small vehicles from joining the strike. He said: "We did not want to disturb commuters, but we wanted to voice our concerns and send a strong message to Islamabad against injustice by the Oil Companies' Advisory Committee." He said that the KTI had succeeded in sending its message to the power corridors but warned that if the government did not disband the advisory committee, the transporters would be compelled to go on an indefinite strike. The NTI had earlier announced a two-day strike but it called off the strike for the second day (i.e. today) in respect of the holy month of Ramadan.

UNITED STATES

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Workers at US aircraft giant Boeing have overwhelmingly voted to back a revised offer on pay and conditions, bringing to an end a four week strike. More than 80% of unionised Boeing machinists voted to back the proposals. Although staff are not required to resume work until Oct 12, many are expected to return today. Workers said they believed that union representatives had secured vital concessions over healthcare and pension payments. Boeing said it was pleased about the outcome of the vote while stressing that the financial terms of the agreement were similar to those originally rejected by unions. The strike has caused a delay in deliveries of more than 20 planes and could cost Boeing more than \$2bn (£1.1bn), analysts estimate.

Awards & Settlements



ACCOUNTING FRAUD, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: MCI has agreed to pay \$331 million to 16 states and the District of Columbia to settle accusations that it engaged in accounting fraud, the company and the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office said yesterday. The two settlements dealt with MCI-WorldCom tax filings from 1999 to 2002, in which state authorities alleged transfers between subsidiaries were illegally classified as a business expense

exempt from state tax laws. One agreement will give \$315 million to 15 states and the District of Columbia, while North Carolina negotiated a separate agreement for \$16 million, MCI said in a statement. The Virginia-based telecommunications giant said it admitted no wrongdoing in either settlement. "These agreements benefit MCI and the states alike by enabling us to put this issue behind us in a fair and equitable manner," MCI's deputy general counsel, Carol Ann Petren, said in a statement. The money, to be paid this month, constitutes 78% of the amount that state investigators said was owed by the company, said Chris Momjian, a senior deputy Pennsylvania attorney general. Momjian said the states were willing to settle because the money is to be paid immediately and because they may not have gotten as much in a trial. Besides Pennsylvania and North Carolina, the other affected states are Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio and Wisconsin. New Jersey will be the biggest beneficiary at \$53 million and Pennsylvania will get the second-most at \$46.5 million. MCI also is negotiating separately with South Carolina, it said. State authorities said they were alerted to the alleged scheme by disaffected WorldCom bondholders who were seeking an ally during the telecommunications giant's bankruptcy in 2003. Momjian said MCI subsidiaries were transferring the money to another MCI subsidiary in Mississippi, a holding company for intellectual property that was charging them a royalty that was tax exempt under Mississippi law. The transfers were being classified illegally as tax-exempt business expenses in the 15 states and Washington, D.C., he said. The government accused WorldCom officials of committing an \$11 billion fraud by making adjustments to the company's financial statements to give investors a misleading picture of the company's performance. WorldCom declared bankruptcy and is now operating under the name MCI.

CHILD-NEGLECT, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: Lawyers for four boys who were found severely malnourished in a New Jersey foster home in 2003 said today that they have agreed to settle their lawsuit against the state's child welfare agency for \$12.5 million, one of the largest settlements in the nation for a child-neglect case. The discovery two years ago of the four emaciated children in a Camden County home prompted national outrage and spurred calls for changes to the state's child welfare agency, which months earlier had agreed to an overhaul as part of the settlement of a class-action lawsuit brought on behalf of foster children. Under the terms of the settlement involving the boys, Bruce Jackson, who is now 21 and living on his own, will receive \$7.5

million. His three brothers, Keith, 15, Tyrone, 11, and Michael, 11, who are living in foster care, will split \$5 million. Bruce is receiving more money than his brothers because he had been in the custody of the boys' adoptive parents, Raymond and Vanessa Jackson, for four years longer than his siblings. The state also agreed to pay their medical costs until each was 21 and an additional \$185,000 in education costs for all boys. The authorities learned of the condition the boys were living in when Bruce, then 19 and weighing 45 pounds, was found rummaging through a garbage can for food on October 10, 2003. The foster parents said that they fed the boys a diet that included pancake batter and cereal because they believed that the boys had eating disorders. The refrigerator was kept locked, they said, out of fear that the boys would overeat and then regurgitate their food. Mr. Jackson died in December; Mrs. Jackson is awaiting trial on child endangerment charges.

CLASS-ACTION SETTLEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated Sep 30, states: Big Four accounting firm KPMG and law firm Sidley Austin Brown & Wood have agreed to pay \$195 million to investors to settle a lawsuit over questionable tax shelters, KPMG said today. The class action centered on tax shelters such as BLIPS, OPIS and FLIP sold by KPMG from 1996 to 2002. These same shelters were involved in KPMG's agreement in August to pay \$456 million to settle a federal tax shelters investigation. That settlement, in which KPMG agreed to make internal changes and to be overseen by an outside monitor, allowed it to avoid a criminal indictment that might have crippled the firm. The latest settlement, which also involved payment of up to \$30 million in attorney's fees, "is consistent with KPMG's goal of putting past tax shelter matters behind us," the firm said. The class-action lawsuit just settled was brought by the law firm Milberg Weiss Bershad and Schulman. The settlement was filed in U.S. District Court in Newark, New Jersey.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: Microsoft this month is expected to begin paying US\$72 million to nearly 8,600 former contract workers who were part of a 1992 class-action lawsuit claiming they were denied benefits. The workers, "permatemps" who were hired during Microsoft's early growth spurt, won a \$97 million settlement in 2001 after a court found they were improperly restricted from the company stock-purchase plan. The ruling forced Microsoft to change its temporary-worker policies and limit contract lengths. There have been years of delays and procedural haggling since the verdict, and several of the original plaintiffs sued because they thought their lawyers'

\$27 million share was too much. Then the courts had to review the cases of individual plaintiffs who felt shorted. The IRS also had to determine how much to tax the payouts. But on Friday, a federal judge overseeing the case approved a payout plan. Checks are expected to be mailed Oct 17, said Judith Bendich, one of the plaintiffs' lawyers. After legal fees, processing costs and early payouts to a small group of plaintiffs, along with interest the money earned since 2001, there's \$72 million left to distribute to the remaining class members. That is \$8,429 each, on average, before payroll taxes.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Farmworkers who sued after being forced to work unpaid hours in California's grape fields reached a \$1.7 million settlement. The farmworkers had filed a federal class-action suit in Fresno against Kovacevich Five Farms. About 500 workers claimed the Tulare County grower didn't pay them to set up equipment for harvesting. A federal judge agreed, approving a settlement Friday (Sep 30). He called it a significant victory for the workers.

NEGLIGENCE BY CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: In what is being called the largest liability settlement involving a Big Dig worker since the project began, a New Bedford labourer will receive at least \$8 million and potentially nearly twice that for injuries suffered when an 8-foot long piece of steel fell from a crane and impaled his skull. Natalio Elias, a 42-year-old construction worker, had sued the two companies managing the project and a subcontractor, arguing that they were negligent in the July 2000 accident that left him permanently brain-damaged and unable to work. Under the settlement, Elias, who immigrated to the US from Portugal in 1994, and his family will receive \$8 million in damages plus payment of all future medical expenses. If he reaches a normal life expectancy, which doctors say is possible despite his injury, the medical payments would total an estimated \$7.3 million, according to the agreement. Lawyers for Elias and for Bechtel Corp. and Parsons Brinckerhoff, the construction and engineering firms overseeing the mammoth project, declined comment. The agreement contains a provision forbidding both sides from publicly discussing it. Ordinarily, settlements of civil suits remain secret. But the settlement terms were spelled out in a public file because a Suffolk Superior Court judge had to approve provisions concerning Elias's 17-year-old daughter, a minor who will receive some of the money.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Texas jury ordered

Ford Motor Co. today to pay the family of a 16-year-old girl \$30.4 million to compensate for a fatal 2004 rollover crash in which a pickup truck's roof collapsed. The attorneys for Jessica Garcia argued that the F-150's roof crushed, and the girl was ejected when her seat belt failed to keep her inside the vehicle when the pickup rolled over. They said Ford's design wasn't safe. The jury in Brownsville awarded the family \$20.4 million in actual damages and \$10 million in punitive damages. Ford said it would appeal the verdict. The company argued that the evidence showed Garcia was not wearing a seat belt, and the crash was caused by a negligent driver striking her vehicle at highway speeds. Legal observers said that juries are questioning whether automakers have done enough to make top-heavy trucks and SUVs safer in crashes. "Jurors are finding that manufacturers have done little or nothing to protect occupants in rollovers," said Sean Kane, president of SRS Inc., a Massachusetts safety research firm.

TOBACCO-RELATED ILLNESS, CANADA

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated Sep 30, states: The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that the provincial government can sue the tobacco industry to recover health care costs associated with smoking. The province of British Columbia filed a suit against several tobacco companies last year. The industry fought back, arguing the government's case was unconstitutional. Yesterday's ruling means the case can go ahead. It is likely to spark further lawsuits which could cost the industry tens of billions of dollars in Canada. British Columbia says it spends millions of dollars each year treating people suffering from tobacco-related illness. Last year, it drafted a law that let it sue tobacco companies in Canada and overseas to recover some of that money. It based the legislation on a Florida law that has led to huge payouts by tobacco companies in the US. But the Canadian tobacco industry appealed all the way to the Supreme Court, calling the British Columbia law unconstitutional and arguing it overstepped the powers of a mere provincial government. The industry also argued that it was unfair for the government to allow the sale of tobacco but then punish companies for doing so. But the industry has clearly lost its battle here. The Supreme Court sided unanimously with the province, clearing the way for it to resume its legal action against the tobacco companies. Lawyers for the British Columbia authorities say they will resume their lawsuit immediately. The case was being watched closely here, as many as eight other governments say they too could launch similar cases in the coming months. Potential costs from the lawsuit are hard to estimate, as no government has yet announced target figures. But some observers say damages could run to \$7-8bn in the British Columbia case alone.

Railway Accidents



CASSELTON AREA, NORTH DAKOTA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 17 cars of a BNSF Railway train went off the tracks northwest of this Casselton, North Dakota, but no one was hurt. Crews were trying to salvage as much of the spilled grain as they could after the accident around 1230, yesterday. The railroad said the cause of the wreck was not immediately determined. Officials expected the track to reopen sometime today. The grain was being hauled from Finley to Illinois.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: Attorneys for victims of last month's deadly Metra train derailment have filed at least 40 lawsuits against the commuter rail operator, plaintiffs' lawyers said today. Metra and victims' attorneys were before Cook County Circuit Court Judge Kathy M. Flanagan today to discuss the preservation of evidence from the Sep 17 accident. Flanagan last week ordered Metra lawyers to itemise evidence from the crash after plaintiffs' attorneys said they were concerned that some key materials might have been thrown out when crews cleared the scene. Metra attorney Sue Ann Rosen told Flanagan the rail cars, switch equipment, railroad ties and spikes and other debris from the accident had been preserved. Kevin Durkin of Clifford Law Offices, which is representing several victims, said an estimated 40-50 lawsuits have been filed against Metra and the engineer operating the train when the accident occurred. The train derailed on Chicago's South Side while en route from Joliet, killing two passengers and injuring 80 others. Five people remained hospitalised with non-life-threatening injuries today and a pregnant woman in her 20s remained in critical condition, said Metra spokeswoman Judy Pardonnet. National Transportation Safety Board investigators have said signals appeared to have directed the engineer to slow to 10 mph to change tracks just before the derailment. Instead, the train hit the crossover at 69 mph, causing the train to leave the tracks, according to the NTSB. According to a union official, the train's engineer maintains he saw "all clear" signals just before the crash, indicating that he would not have to switch tracks and could continue travelling near the speed limit of 70 mph. The NTSB's investigation is expected to take up to two years.

DATIA AREA, INDIA

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: At least 14 people have been killed and dozens injured in a train crash in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh this morning. The accident happened when six carriages of the Bundelkhand Express derailed near Datia town, a police officer said. Rescue teams, including soldiers, are at the site about 250 miles north of the state capital, Bhopal. A police officer says the train derailed near the Datia station and rescue teams, including soldiers, have reached the site and are removing passengers from the cars. "We suspect the brakes of the train failed," he said. He says the train sped through the station where it was due to stop and jumped the tracks in the area ahead where coaches are serviced and cleaned. The train was going from the Hindu holy town of Varanasi in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh to Gwalior city in Madhya Pradesh.

Bhopal, Oct 3 -- A crowded, speeding train jumped the tracks in central India today and crashed into a signal cabin, killing 18 passengers and injuring about 100, authorities said. At least 40 of the injured were in critical condition and had been removed to hospitals, police said as rescue efforts closed for the night. Six coaches of the Bundelkhand Express derailed at Datia town in Madhya Pradesh, about 400 km north of the state capital, Bhopal, a police officer said. He said the train derailed near the Datia station and rescue teams, including soldiers, had reached the site and were removing passengers from the cars. The officer said the train had been due to stop at the station but sped through and jumped the tracks in an area where coaches are serviced and cleaned. "We suspect the brakes of the train failed," he added. It crashed into the signal cabin beside the tracks and the impact left coaches piled one on top of the other, railway officials said. "We have people trapped in the carriages. The rescue teams are cutting into the carriages and we will see how many people are trapped inside," Datia district administrator Caroline Khongwar told NDTV news channel. A.K. Soni, a senior state police officer, said 18 bodies had been found. Many of the injured had been taken to hospitals in nearby Jhansi town as Datia did not have adequate medical facilities. The driver of the train was among the dead. "The train's speed limit was supposed to be 15 kph but as far as I have been able to find out, it was going at 90 kph at the station," said Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav. The train was going from the Hindu holy town of Varanasi in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh to Gwalior city in Madhya Pradesh. -- Reuters.

GRIMES COUNTY, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated Oct 6, states: Yesterday, Grimes County officials were trying to discern why a cargo train carrying potentially hazardous material derailed Tuesday evening (Oct 4) at State Highway 105

east of Farm Road 362. According to Grimes County Sheriff Don Sowell, the train was hauling seven cars and six hopper cars carrying plastic pellets and a tanker carrying propylene, a potentially hazardous component used in plastics manufacturing. "Grimes County deputies, along with Texas Department of Public Safety and Navasota Fire Department personnel responded to the derailment," Sowell said in a release to the Item. "On arrival, it was determined that the train, which was travelling westbound approaching the 362 intersection was owned by Union Pacific." Grimes County Fire Marshall Gary Schroeder was called to the scene to coordinate activities with the respect to the handling of the hazardous material. The propylene car only contained a small amount of residue, and no material leaked during the derailment. Schroeder collected samples of the material onboard for further examination, but said there should be no cause for concern. "Union Pacific cleanup crews arrived on scene at approximately 2200 and began the task of clearing the wreckage," Sowell said. Texas Department of Public Safety troopers, Grimes County Sheriff's Office personnel and the Navasota Fire Department responded to the scene. The cause of the wreck is still unknown.

WATERFORD, CONNECTICUT, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 29 -- A press report, dated today, states: A high-speed Amtrak passenger train struck a car at a crossing yesterday, killing a woman and her grandson and causing major delays along the Boston-to-Washington corridor. The accident happened around 0730 hrs, Amtrak spokeswoman Tracy Connell said. The train hit the car and dragged it several hundred yards, with the engine coming to rest on top of the demolished vehicle. Patricia Metzermacher, 61, and Zachary Joseph Metzermacher were killed, police said. A granddaughter, Courtney Metzermacher, 4, was critically injured. None of the 116 passengers and four crew members on the train were hurt, police said. Waterford First Selectman Paul Eccard said witnesses told police the gates at the crossing were working when the accident happened. He said police had not determined how the car got onto the tracks. Train service was halted for about six hours. The Acela express train can travel up to 241 kph but goes much slower through Connecticut.

Miscellaneous



COLLAPSE OF MINE, JHARKHAND STATE, INDIA

London, Sep 29 -- At least three people have been killed and another

10 trapped after a coal mine collapsed in eastern India. The mine in mineral-rich Jharkhand state caved in when some villagers were stealing coal, authorities said. Rescuers are trying to reach the trapped villagers in the state-owned mine in Rajrapa, a town 80km north of the capital, Ranchi. Rescue operations had been delayed by the late arrival of coal company officials at the site. There is a fear that 10 to 15 people were trapped in the debris.

FLOODED COAL MINE, SICHUAN PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Ten miners were killed and 18 others were reported missing during a coal mine flooding, which took place in southwest China's Sichuan Province around 2100, local time, yesterday. The flooding occurred at an uphill driving face beneath the Longtan Coal Mine, which is situated at Xiaojing Township in Guang'an City, according to the Sichuan Provincial Work Safety Office. The coal mine is administered by Guang'an Energy Group Co. Ltd. of Sichuan Provincial Coal Industry Corporation. A rescue operation is going on. The cause of the accident is under investigation.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: A 23-year-old man has become Indonesia's seventh bird flu victim, dying in hospital last week after being confirmed as suffering from the disease. "He died on Thursday, one day after he was admitted here," said Ilham Patu, a spokesman on bird flu cases at the Sulianti Saroso hospital for infectious diseases in Jakarta. Slamet Wibowo, who was referred to Sulianti Saroso from a private hospital in Cibinong south of here, registered positive for the bird flu virus in both clinical and blood tests shortly after being admitted. Dr Patu says Mr Wibowo had direct contact with birds and poultry as he bred birds and many of his neighbours raised chickens.

OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE, RUSSIA

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: A total of 78 cows have died in the settlement of Lugovoe in Russia's Maritime region, where an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease was registered earlier in eight districts, sources from the Far Eastern regional centre of the Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations reported today. The first 57 cows died on Oct 1, when the herd was being brought in from pasture for an evening milking. A group of specialists arrived in the settlement immediately. Early results said mortality was a result of protein toxicity (eating of raw clover and soy). Samples of water and fodder were taken for analysis. Already 78 out of 230 cows have died in the village. Meanwhile, quarantine measures against foot-and-mouth disease have

been lifted for the past few days in the Maritime region. An outbreak of the disease was registered in eight districts, including the Khorolsky district where the settlement of Lugovoe is situated. A total of 1,715 head of cattle had to be killed because of the outbreak.

Fires & Explosions



COAL MINE, BAICHENG COUNTY, CHINA

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: Rescuers have found two bodies of trapped miners in a coal mine blast that occurred this morning in north-west China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Fourteen miners were trapped and 11 escaped from the disaster after the accident happened at 1045, local time, in Yatuer Colliery, Baicheng County. Rescuers said there is slim hope for the other 12 trapped miners to survive. Rescue work is still under way, but rescuers said another blast is possible because of thick gas density underground. They are taking measures to reduce the density.

COAL MINE, HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: An explosion at one of the Chinese mainland's top coal mines yesterday left 34 miners dead. The blast occurred early in the morning at the No 2 Coal Mine run by the Hebi Coal Industry (Group) Corp in Henan province. Xinhua said 53 miners were working underground at the time of the blast and 19 managed to escape. The other 34 were confirmed dead. Xinhua reported that Henan party secretary Xu Guangchun and Vice-Governor Shi Jichun had arrived at the scene to direct an investigation into the explosion. Zhao Tiechui, director of the State Administration of Coal Mine Safety, also arrived in Hebi after the accident. Under regulations issued in July, yesterday's accident would be classified as a serious industrial accident because it killed more than 30 people. Xinhua reported that the mine started production as early as 1958 and was equipped with "all necessary licences". The cause of the blast was still under investigation. It hinted the mine was operating within its production capacity, reporting that it produced 518,000 tonnes of coal in the first nine months of the year, compared with 693,000 tonnes last year.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: The bodies of 27 miners caught in a coal mine explosion in central China's Henan Province have been brought to the surface. The explosion occurred at 0445 on Monday (Oct 3) in a coal mine belonging to the Henan Hebi Coal Company, with 34 miners confirmed dead, said Feng

Shubao, head of the rescue team. Nineteen miners were injured and then hospitalised, and another two were found safe. Underground rescue work ended at 2000 today. Xu Guangchun, secretary of the provincial committee of the Communist Party of China, and vice provincial governor Shi Jichun went to the site to guide the rescue work. Zhao Tiechui, director of the State Administration of Coal Mine Safety Supervision, also arrived at the site to direct the rescue efforts, heading an expert team.

FACTORY, SAN GWANN, MALTA

Malta, Sep 30 -- Schools in and around San Gwann were evacuated and residents told to stay indoors as much as possible yesterday as a huge plume of toxic smoke from a burning paint factory at the locality's industrial estate rose high into the sky. The fire broke out at about 0830 hrs and took the best part of the day to put out. Civil Protection Department chief Peter Cordina told journalists on site that the evacuation of the schools situated in the smoke's trajectory was a mere precaution. The fire broke out in one of Trimate Ltd's stores and after gutting the whole factory extended to the store of an adjacent silk-screen printing press, Perfect Screen Ltd. Luckily nobody was in the Trimate's chemicals store when a small explosion took place. The large amount of chemicals stored at Trimate proved the hardest to overwhelm. Gallons of water were pumped onto the fire without making any apparent difference. After some three hours the fire at Trimate was quelled, however, the flames by then had extended to Perfect Screen's adjacent stores, also containing flammable materials and a stock of T-shirts. The store's roof and part of the façade did not withstand the heat and collapsed, forming another pall. This second fire was less menacing and was put out in a couple of hours. Why Trimate's store caught fire is still a mystery and is now the subject of an inquiry being conducted by Duty Magistrate Joseph Cassar. -- Lloyd's Agents.

FOREST, RUSSIA

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Far Eastern forests are on fire on an area of 513 hectares. Four forest fires are raging today at a distance of less than 10 km from Dzhalinda and Gryaznushka villages in Amur Region, and Litovko and Pobeda townships in Khabarovsk Territory. According to the Far Eastern regional centre of the Russian Ministry for Emergencies, more than 150 people and 38 vehicles, including five aircraft and helicopters, were involved in efforts to put out the fires over the past 24 hours. People managed to extinguish seven fires. However, at the same time, 13 new foci of fire emerged in the taiga. Fires assumed the widest scope in Khabarovsk Territory, spreading over to an area of 350 hectares.

OIL STORAGE TANK, SKIKDA, ALGERIA

Algiers, Oct 5 -- Firefighters brought a blaze at Algeria's Skikda oil terminal under control today and the facility is expected to restart by Friday (Oct 7), officials said. Two people were killed and four were wounded when fire broke out in a crude oil storage tank at the port of Skikda yesterday, media reports said. Television footage showed fire crews pumping foam onto the flames. A refinery official said the 335,000 barrels-per-day Skikda plant should restart by Friday. "There is no problem with exports," he said. "But the refinery will be closed until the fire is put out -- possibly tomorrow, but by Friday at the latest." Algeria's energy minister said although flames from Tuesday's fire had spread to a second storage tank, the situation was now under control. "The Skikda petrochemical complex, the refinery and citizens are far from any danger," Energy and Mines Minister Chakib Khelil told state radio Chaîne 1. -- Reuters.

OIL TERMINAL, SKIKDA, ALGERIA

Algiers, Oct 5 -- Firefighters brought a blaze at Algeria's Skikda oil terminal under control today, the government said, but according to oil traders the country's biggest refinery remained shut. Two people were killed and four were wounded when fire broke out in a crude oil storage tank at the Mediterranean port of Skikda yesterday, media reports said. Television footage showed fire crews pumping foam onto the flames. Skikda is a major export port for liquefied natural gas and naphtha, which is used to make gasoline. Algeria's energy minister said that flames from yesterday's fire had spread to a second storage tank but that the situation was now under control. "The Skikda petrochemical complex, the refinery and citizens are far from any danger," Energy and Mines Minister Chakib Khelil told state radio Chaîne 1 after visiting injured workers in hospital and attending the funeral of one of those killed. Oil traders said the 335,000 barrels-per-day Skikda refinery was shut but cargoes of refined oil products continued to load. The Skikda refinery is an important supplier to export markets in Europe, Asia and the United States. "It's fine to say loadings are proceeding because they might have product still in tanks, but the question in the market is what next," an oil trader said. -- Reuters.

PREMISES, LAHORE, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Oct 6 -- A private Brokerage House owned by Mian Nusratuddin at 5th floor of the Lahore Stock Exchange, LSE, building in Punjab Province of Pakistan was gutted, after a fire broke out, causing millions of rupees' loss to the owner of house yesterday. Fire broke out at about 0800 hrs and computers, share certificates and other articles in the house valuing millions of rupees burnt. Fire fighters reached the spot and controlled the blaze after two

hours' hectic efforts. No loss of life was reported. A press release issued by the LSE management said at 0800 today, a fire broke out in room No 509 of the LSE building, the brokerage house of Mian Nusratuddin, member of LSE. The fire brigade staff arrived promptly at the scene and with the help of LSE administration was able to timely extinguish fire before it could spread to other parts of the building. The cause of the fire has not been determined yet, the release concluded. -- Lloyd's List Correspondent.

PREMISES, MUMBAI, INDIA

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: A massive fire broke out at a transport company godown in MIDC industrial area in Navi Mumbai today, fire brigade sources said. The fire started at 0450 hrs at A D Transport, located in Pavana MIDC. About twenty fire tenders from nearby fire stations have rushed to the spot, and are fighting the blaze according to sources. However, no casualty has been reported so far.

SPORTS CENTRE, CORBY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: About 45 firefighters are tackling a huge blaze at a sports and social club in Corby. The fire started in the early hours of this morning at the Luminar Leisure on Occupation Road. It is believed that the roof of the building has collapsed after the fire took hold on the first floor and basement of the building. Crews from across Northamptonshire have been called to attend the fire with relief crews being called in.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Crews were damping down this afternoon after a fire ruined a sports and social club in Northants. At its height 45 fire fighters tackled the blaze, at the Luminar Leisure on Occupation Road, Corby, which began in the early hours of this morning. For much of the night crews were pulled back because of explosions and the danger of a collapsing roof. The fire at one of the town's biggest nightspots is believed to have taken hold on the first floor and basement. Investigators are to try to establish the cause of the fire.

TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, EAST BERGHOLT, SUFFOLK, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Police are blaming arsonists for an attack on a telephone exchange which has left about 1300 people cut off. The blaze has gutted the exchange's single storey building in Gaston Street, East Bergholt. Operator BT has brought in a mobile exchange which is now being linked into the network and a spokesman said the "huge job" would take several days. "We are working 24 hours a day to link in individual customers and some have already had services restored." Services are expected to be

back to normal tomorrow. The East Bergholt exchange could take months to restore because of the damage, the spokesman said. Fire crews from Hadleigh, Holbrook, Manningtree and Colchester tackled the fire late on Friday night. A commercial vehicle parked near the exchange was also destroyed. Firefighters took more than two hours to bring the blaze under control.

WAREHOUSE, LANCASTER, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated Oct 5, states: More than 40 firefighters have been tackling a blaze at a warehouse in Lancaster. The fire broke out at the Caton Road building, which is used to store old tyres, Tuesday (Oct 4)night. Eight fire engines carrying special equipment were called to the scene and spent several hours bringing the fire under control. Fire crews were still at the scene this morning carrying out damping-down operations.

WILDFIRE, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 29 -- A press report, dated today, states: A wind-whipped brush fire quickly tripled in size early today to more than 9,300 acres, destroying at least one home and prompting evacuations as a ridge of flames was visible for miles. The blaze burned to the edge of a number of multimillion-dollar homes that abut rural, picturesque hillsides in the San Fernando Valley. Homes in several communities in Los Angeles and Ventura counties were evacuated, but officials did not release an exact number. Los Angeles County Fire Department spokesman Ron Haralson said more than 700 firefighters were on the scene.

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated Sep 29, states: A wind-whipped 16,000-acre wildfire raced across hills and canyons along the Los Angeles' northwestern edge today, threatening homes and forcing hundreds of people to evacuate. Some 3,000 firefighters aided by aircraft struggled to protect ridgetop houses along the Los Angeles-Ventura county line, a rugged, brushy landscape west of Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. Officials said the blaze was five percent contained as it burned toward such communities as Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Calabasas and Agoura. "If it wasn't for the wind changing, it would have gone all the way to the coast," said Joey Escobar, 45, who was among a group of people who gathered to watch the flames near Highway 101. Numerous homes were evacuated in nine areas, and the Red Cross reported 600 people had signed up to stay at five of its shelters. Poor air quality forced California State University at Northridge to cancel classes for the day. At least one home and five other structures were lost, but 2,000 buildings had been saved by firefighters, Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky said.

Temperatures were in the high 90s but were expected to drop over the next few days while humidity rises. "The winds have died down substantially and that's going to be a big advantage for us in getting control," said Los Angeles County fire Capt. Kurt Schaefer. "With the weather changing, we should start to see the containment numbers go up." The fire moved west much of the day, menacing Ventura County communities, then sent flanks in the opposite direction as winds shifted from the Pacific. As night fell, long lines of fire marched east toward the wealthy enclave of Hidden Hills and the western fringes of Los Angeles. The cause of the fire was not immediately known. Another large wildfire in Southern California was fully contained after burning 1,160 acres in Riverside County. No homes were threatened.

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 6 -- Residents chose to evacuate homes today as hot, dry and gusty winds fuelled a string of ferocious fires in south-east Queensland. A huge bushfire had burned more than 100ha at the Gap in Brisbane's north-west since it flared just after 1000, AEST, today, a Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) spokeswoman said this afternoon. Two helicopters were water bombing in a bid to stall the fire, which reached within metres of homes along Kimruska Place, Keryn Place and Settlement Road, she said. Fire crews were still battling the blaze amid extreme conditions. People chose to leave their homes despite no formal evacuation order, a police spokeswoman said. Police closed off Settlement Road at both ends between the Gap and Keperra because of the fires, and urged motorists to cautiously approach thick smoke on nearby roads. Meanwhile, another blaze erupted at Bundamba, at Ipswich west of Brisbane, at 1030, today.

WILDFIRES, PORTUGAL

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: Eleven wildfires burned out of control today in northern and central Portugal amid the country's worst drought on record. Nearly 1,700 firefighters were deployed, as were 450 vehicles and 15 water-dumping aircraft, including a large Canadair aircraft from Spain, the Civil Protection Service said. High winds fanned the flames burning through parched forests. Overnight, 18 people were treated for smoke inhalation near Viseu, a city 120 miles north of Lisbon, TSF radio reported. The Weather Service estimated temperatures in the 70s and 80s, and the hot weather was forecast to continue tomorrow. The Forestry Service estimated 706,700 acres of woodland had been burned this year up to Sep 25, while the Agriculture Ministry said fires in 2005 had caused over \$350 million in damages.

WILDFIRES, RUSSIA

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: Forest fires rage on a territory of over four thousand hectares in a remote nature preserve in Magadan region. Firemen hope the rain that began on Friday will help stop the blaze from spreading. One fire was extinguished in Magadan region on a territory of 145 hectares and another fire was localised on a territory of 125 hectares, Yulia Belovodskya from the Northeastern airbase for forest protection said on Friday. According to the Russian Emergencies ministry, a major fire is also raging in Amur region on a territory of 740 hectares. Overall 584 people and 100 pieces of hardware, including nine planes and helicopters, were engaged in fire fighting across Russia yesterday.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: Far Eastern forests are on fire on an area of 513 hectares. Four forest fires are raging today at a distance of less than ten kilometres from Dzhaldinda and Gryaznushka villages in Amur Region, and Litovko and Pobeda townships in Khabarovsk Territory. According to the Far Eastern regional centre of the Russian Ministry for Emergencies, more than 150 people and 38 vehicles, including five aircraft and helicopters, were involved in efforts to put out the fires over the past 24 hours. People managed to extinguish seven fires.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated today, states: An army of firefighters has got the upper hand in a battle against wildfires that have charred 8,000 hectares of suburban Los Angeles, forcing 410 people to flee their homes. Helped by improving weather, more than 3,000 firefighters backed by a flotilla of helicopters began bringing the blazes raging through the residential San Fernando Valley under control. Inspector Andrew Olvera of the Los Angeles County Fire Department said: "The Santa Ana winds have diminished, we have moist and cool air coming on. We have over 3,000 firefighters, we have bulldozers, helicopters, we have many resources. We are optimistic." The blaze, which has so far ripped through 8,260 hectares, was 20% under control early yesterday, compared to just 5% 24 hours earlier, Inspector Olvera said. Residents of parts of the suburbs of Chatsworth, Oak Park, Box Canyon, Woolsey Canyon, Bell Canyon, Lake Manor and Old Agoura and Topanga Canyon have evacuated. Firefighters frantically chopped fire breaks across the area to halt the advance of the flames, as 11 helicopters and fixed wing aircraft dumped water and fire retardant on the menacing flames. Los Angeles and neighbouring Ventura counties declared states of emergency on Thursday in parts of the fire-stricken zones in order to unblock disaster funds to help fight the blaze and house evacuees. As firefighters brought the largest of the series of fires burning in the area under

control, a fresh blaze erupted nearby. The new blaze broke out overnight in the area of Burbank and expanded to about 20 hectares, but no homes were threatened, authorities said.

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated Oct 1, states: The widespread brush fire in two southern California counties was largely contained late today and affected homeowners were allowed to return to their residences, fire officials said. About 2,300 firefighters continued an air-ground assault on the wildfire, which has destroyed at least three homes and cost some \$6.7 million in firefighting expenses since its breakout Wednesday (Sep 28). As of 1800 today, the blaze was 60% contained, and all evacuation orders had been lifted, said Martin Johnson, a spokesman for the Santa Barbara Fire Department. All evacuation shelters were closed and roads in the area re-opened. Full containment was expected in 24 hours if the weather condition cooperates, said Los Angeles County Fire Department Inspector Jason Hurd. Authorities said the fire affected an area of nearly 100 square kilometers, altogether destroying three homes, a commercial building, and nearly 40 vehicles.

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: Firefighters gained ground today against three wildfires burning across Southern California but worried about a forecast for hot winds. A 1,045-acre fire in Burbank was 67% contained after firefighters were aided by cooler, overnight breezes, said Capt Ron Bell of the Burbank Fire Department. Residents returned to about 70 evacuated homes in Sunset Canyon, but firefighters were concerned about a forecast for warmer winds that could bring 50 mph gusts and re-ignite what appeared to be a "cold mountain," Bell said. "A little wind could blow those embers into the green and then we'd be starting from scratch," Bell said. "Things look excellent today, and we will be very aggressive. But the wind event is our biggest 'what if' right now." Crews were kept at the scene a little longer and positioned near homes that could be threatened if the winds kicked up. Elsewhere, more than 1,000 emergency personnel battled a blaze in steep, rugged terrain in and around San Bernardino National Forest, about 70 miles east of Los Angeles. The 935-acre fire was 60% contained today but had the potential to flare up in windy conditions because of dead trees and grass in the area, according to the US Forest Service. About 1,200 people were evacuated from several small communities on Friday (Sep 30). Some residents were allowed to return late yesterday, but mandatory evacuations remained today for Seven Oaks, Barton Flats and Angelus Oaks. A wildfire that torched more than 24,000 acres on the border of Los Angeles and Ventura counties was 65% contained and cooler weather helped firefighters as they tried to extinguish hot spots, said Mike Horst, a Ventura County

fire dispatcher. All evacuation orders and road closures were lifted on the Topanga Fire, which raged much of last week.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated Oct 3, states: Firefighters scrambled today to mop up hot spots from three Southern California wildfires before the expected return of high winds that could fan new blazes or rekindle smoldering embers. The National Weather Service forecast hot, dry winds with gusts of 50 mph for late today through Wednesday (Oct 5) in Ventura, Los Angeles and southern Santa Barbara counties, causing concern among fire officials. An 1,100-acre fire in rugged terrain in Burbank was 70% contained, with crews working to tamp down hot spots by evening, said Capt Ron Bell of the Burbank Fire Department. "We're up there cutting line as fast as we can, trying to get all the hot spots around the edges taken care of before these winds kick in this afternoon," he said. Residents evacuated from about 70 homes in Sunset Canyon were able to return over the weekend. The region's largest blaze, the 24,175-acre Topanga Fire, was 85% contained, with full containment expected by nightfall, said Inspector Ron Haralson of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Haralson said he was worried about the weather forecast. Further east, in San Bernardino County, a 935-acre fire was 78% contained, said Carol Beckley, spokeswoman for the US Forest Service. The fire was burning in steep, rugged terrain in and around San Bernardino National Forest, about 70 miles east of Los Angeles. All evacuated residents were allowed back into the area late yesterday. Highway 38 reopened, but officials warned people to be alert for flare-ups or new blazes.

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters were on high alert yesterday as winds gusting up to 50 mph threatened to flare up hot spots from three Southern California wildfires. The winds and forecasts of low humidity prompted the National Weather Service to issue a red flag warning until this afternoon. The warning advises that conditions could lead to explosive fire growth. The region's largest blaze, at more than 24,000 acres on the border of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, was fully contained, officials with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said. The blaze destroyed three homes. Firefighters surrounded a 1,100-acre fire in rugged terrain in the hills above Burbank, said Capt. Ron Bell of the Burbank Fire Department. Crews remained on the scene to tamp down hot spots from the blaze that started Thursday (Sep 29). In San Bernardino County, a 935-acre fire was 85 percent contained, said Carol Beckley, spokeswoman for the US Forest Service. The fire was burning in steep, rugged terrain in and around San Bernardino National Forest, about 70 miles east of Los Angeles.

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: A wildfire erupted yesterday in an area east of Los Angeles, quickly consuming at least 1,000 acres of brush, threatening about 100 homes and burning to the edge of a freeway. Motorists passed within yards of a huge wall of flames before authorities closed a 10-mile stretch of the 60 Freeway yesterday evening, said Jane Scribner, a spokeswoman for the Riverside County Fire Department. The fire, which broke out about 1500, local time, was only 5 percent contained, said Patrick Chandler, a spokesman for the state Department of Forestry and the county Fire Department. Residents of about 20 homes closest to the fire were encouraged to evacuate, officials said. Wind gusts up to 60 mph in canyon passes, warm weather and low humidity prompted the weather service to issue red flag warnings for much of Southern California, meaning conditions favored fires growing rapidly. The Los Angeles County Fire Department posted extra firefighters in Santa Clarita and Malibu, two areas with a history of fire danger. Firefighters continued to put out hot spots from a 24,000-acre blaze on the border of Los Angeles and Ventura counties that was fully contained Tuesday (Oct 4). In San Bernardino County, a 935-acre fire burning in rugged terrain in and around San Bernardino National Forest was 85 percent contained, said Robin Prince, a forest spokeswoman.



9Q-CWC

London, Oct 6 -- Antonov 12, 9Q-CWC, departed Kisangani on a troop movement flight, carrying about 100 Congolese Army soldiers to Bunia Oct 4. At Bunia the aircraft landed heavy, causing the right hand main undercarriage to be pushed through the fuselage into the cabin. Reportedly two passengers were killed and five seriously injured as a result.

C-FOAS

London, Sep 30 -- Bell 206B JetRanger C-FOAS crashed seven miles north of Hope, British Columbia, at 2030, PDT, Sep 26, and caught fire. The two persons on board were killed.

CRASH AT GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: A private twin-engined 1968 Beechcraft aircraft from Norfolk, Virginia, made an emergency crash landing at Greensboro's White Street Landfill. "The landing gear broke, it folded up and broke off under the plane," says Greensboro Police

Captain Robert Flynt. The aircraft went down just after 1000 yesterday morning. The pilot, 82-year-old Angus Hines, of Norfolk, Virginia, made a distress call to the Greensboro tower just moments before the crash, reporting that both engines had failed. "It was a very skilled crash landing. The pilot landed on a hill and thick grass" says Capt. Flynt. Hines and the other passengers walked away with minor scratches and bruises. The group had flown into the area earlier in the week for the Chrysler Classic of Greensboro. Hines told crash investigators that he was flying over the city headed home when he had failure in both engines. Federal investigators are at the landfill examining the aircraft and trying to figure out exactly what caused the engines to fail, and if anything else contributed to the crash. Both the FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board are assisting in the investigation.

CRASH INTO LAKE ERIE, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: New York State police divers yesterday located at least two bodies and the wreckage of a small plane that disappeared over Lake Erie last month during a flight arranged by a passenger who wanted to propose to his girlfriend over Niagara Falls, according to a published report. The single-engine Piper Arrow was found in 80 feet of water less than a mile from the centre of Lake Erie and about nine miles off the Dunkirk shore.

CRASH NEAR LYMINGTON, HAMPSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: Two people have been killed in a light aircraft crash in Hampshire. It is not known what time the accident happened. A local farmer found the wreckage and called police shortly after 1400, BST, today. The aircraft came down in a field at Snooks Farm, Snooks Lane, South Baddesley, near Lymington. The pilot and passenger, a man and woman in their late 40s or early 50s, were found dead. Air accident investigators are to visit the scene. Police said the wreckage of the single-engined aircraft would remain in place overnight and the area had been cordoned off.

CRASH, CRYSTAL SPRINGS AREA, MISSISSIPPI, UNITED STATES

See N45339.

CRASH, GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

See N5606S.

CRASH, HAARLEM, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Rescuers have found the remains of the Red Cross air ambulance that crashed last night. The wreckage was found early this morning in mountainous terrain.

Three crew members and a patient were killed, when the BO105 helicopter crashed at Haarlem, near Uniondale in the Southern Cape. Officials lost contact with them just after 2000 hrs, last night. The helicopter was dispatched yesterday afternoon from George Airport to airlift a patient involved in a motor car accident at Haarlem. On its way back to Lamprecht clinic in George it crashed below a peak in the Langkloof Mountains, between Haarlem and Plettenberg Bay. The cause of the crash is not yet known.

CRASH, HOPE AREA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

See C-FOAS.

CRASH, IGHREM, MOROCCO

Rabat, Oct 4 -- A small Swiss aircraft crashed today in southern Morocco and its four Swiss passengers are missing, the airports authority ONDA said. The aircraft crashed in the village of Ighrem in the southern Anti-Atlas mountains on its way from Marrakesh to Ouarzazate, two favourite spots for tourists. "Four Swiss young people were on board the plane. They apparently did not see the mountains as their aircraft was basic and they were piloting the plane using visual navigation." ONDA spokeswoman Nadia Benzakour said. There was no crew on board, she added. -- Reuters.

CRASH, LAURENTIANS, QUEBEC, CANADA

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: A Japanese man died and four Japanese female tourists were injured yesterday when a hydroplane carrying them crashed into a lake right after taking off in the Laurentians region of the Canadian province of Quebec, officials at the Japanese Consulate General in Montreal said. The fate of the pilot of the aircraft remains unknown. The accident occurred around 1500, local time in Lake Ouimet, officials at the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo said. Officials said the aircraft was buffeted by a gust of wind immediately after taking off from the water, and it nosedived into the lake.

CRASH, MOAMA AREA, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: An injured pilot has managed to land his crop duster with one wing on fire and the cockpit full of black smoke. The pilot was flying the Weatherly crop duster near Moama on the New South Wales-Victorian border about 1700, AEST, yesterday, when he heard a loud bang at an altitude of about 30 metres. Within seconds the right wing was ablaze and the cockpit quickly filled with smoke, but the pilot, despite suffering burns, held on long enough to land the aircraft safely at Bunnaloo. Emergency fire crews on standby at the airstrip soon extinguished the flames and the pilot was taken to Deniliquin Hospital. It is believed the fire may have been the result of an incorrectly fitted fuel cap.

CRASH, SALMON AREA, IDAHO, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft crashed as it took off from a resort ranch south-west of Salmon, killing the two California men on board, the Lemhi County sheriff's office said yesterday. The pilot, Alfred S. Wilsey and his passenger, Richard Ongaro, were killed. The aircraft crashed around 1730, Wednesday (Sep 28) as it departed the Flying B Resort Ranch about 120 miles north-east of Boise in the Salmon River Mountains. A witness told deputies that the turbine-converted Cessna 210 left the runway and was struggling to gain altitude when the aircraft suddenly veered to the left, crossed the Salmon River and crashed about 300 yards away, Chief Deputy Jeff Stokes said in a statement. The aircraft caught fire on impact, and the bodies were not recovered until yesterday, officials said.

CRASH, UNIONDALE AREA, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated today, states: Four people died when a Red Cross helicopter crashed near Uniondale in the Western Cape, the SA Red Cross Air Mercy Service said today. The Eurocopter BO105 helicopter crashed on Sunday night (Oct 2) with a patient and three aircrew on board. The wreckage was found at first light today. "The SA Red Cross Air Mercy Service air ambulance aeroplane and a helicopter based in Knysna located the burnt-out wreckage of the organisation's BO105 helicopter near Haarlem (near Uniondale) just after first light this morning," spokeswoman Susann Elphick said. "There were no survivors and the cause of the crash is not yet known." Elphick said the helicopter was dispatched to Haarlem at 1815 from George Airport to airlift a patient involved in a motor vehicle accident to Lamprecht Clinic in George. "Our information is that they departed Haarlem for George at 1950 with the patient on board. A radio call was received at approximately 2020 from the helicopter, but no communication was received after this. The flight from Haarlem to George normally takes approximately thirty-minutes (approximately 100 kilometres)," Elphick said.

London, Oct 4 -- A press report, dated today, states: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and Wilderness Search-and-Rescue (WSAR) have called off operations at the B0105 helicopter crash site in the Langkloof Mountains due to bad weather conditions, the SA Red Cross Air Mercy Service said today. The area was blanketed by low cloud, poor visibility and rain, spokesperson Susann Elphick said. The CAA and WSAR had left the site and would wait until the weather cleared before recovering the bodies. Nine-year-old patient Medicine Miller from the Eastern Cape, volunteer medical crew member Carlos Julius, 28, of Mossel

Bay, AMS Flight paramedic Paul Alexander, 26, of Glencairn, and AMS Pilot Jeremy Wood, 36, of Pietermaritzburg, died in the crash on Sunday night (Oct 2).

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

London, Sep 30 -- A press report, dated Sep 29, states: A plane carrying 90 people from Norfolk, Va., to Atlanta made an emergency landing at Raleigh-Durham International Airport today after crew members smelled smoke near the cockpit, officials said. Delta Airlines flight No. 1229 landed about 1335 hrs, said Mindy Hamlin, spokeswoman for RDU. All of the passengers were put on to other flights while mechanics investigated the smoky odour, said Delta Airlines spokesman Anthony Black. Airline officials hadn't determined the source of the problem today and didn't know how soon the plane would be returned to the air, Black said.

EMERGENCY LANDING, BANGALORE, INDIA

London, Oct 4 -- SriLankan Airlines flight bound to Muscat, Oman, made an emergency landing in Bangalore, India, due to a problem with one of its engines, airline officials said today. The UL320 aircraft was diverted to neighbouring India late yesterday, about two hours after taking off from the Sri Lankan capital Colombo, airline spokeswoman Ruvini Jayasinghe said. The Airbus 320 had "technical error in one of the engines," she said. The 101 passengers on board were forced to stay overnight at Bangalore's international airport because regulations do not permit flights from there to Muscat, she said.

EMERGENCY LANDING, KENYA

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated Nairobi, Oct 1, states: Several passengers were stranded in Kenya after a cargo jet made an emergency landing at the country's main international airport about 0200 hrs, 2300, GMT, leading to the temporary closure of the airport. Kenya Airways Head of Marketing Michael Okwiri said the mishap forced airlines to divert flights to Mombasa, Dar es Salaam and Entebbe. He said the Air Atlanta aircraft was heading to Holland when pilots sensed mechanical problems in the landing gear, an hour after take off, forcing them to fly back to the airport. "The aircraft made an emergency landing an hour after take off and it became stuck. We have not established the cause of the emergency landing," Okwiri said. The aircraft was carrying 120 tonnes of vegetables, fruits and flowers. The three crew members escaped unhurt but Okwiri said the operations were expected to resume after 1300 hrs.

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated today, states: International flights have resumed at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport after they were diverted for over 10 hours following a mishap. Pilots of the Air Atlanta cargo aircraft had to fly back to the airport early this morning when the aircraft developed mechanical problems in the landing gear leading to the closure of the airport. The mishap forced airlines to divert flights to Mombasa Airport among others.

EMERGENCY LANDING, NEWFOUNDLAND, CANADA

London, Oct 2 -- A press report, dated Oct 1, states: A Continental Airlines Boeing 767, en route from Newark, NJ, to Paris with 178 people on board, made an emergency landing in Gander, Newfoundland, this morning, reports said. There were no casualties. An airport official said crew reported low oil pressure in one of the engines. The aircraft landed safely with one engine idling.

EMERGENCY LANDING, SANGSTER'S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA

London, Oct 6 -- A press report, dated today, states: American Airline Flight 1152 flight which took off at 1145, yesterday, from the Sangster's International Airport, bound for Miami with 146 passengers aboard, was forced to land five minutes from take-off after about three birds flew into the engine and caused it to develop problems. Curtis Grad, vice-president in charge of operations at MJB Airport Limited, said the airport's fire units swiftly responded as a precautionary measure after the aircraft landed. The aircraft, he said, was unloaded and the airline crew immediately commenced examination to diagnose the problem. Some of the passengers were subsequently rerouted on other carriers. Meanwhile, Minnette Valez, the Puerto Rico-based communication officer of American Airlines, said mechanics would be deployed from Suan Juan to Jamaica to repair the grounded aircraft at the Sangster's International Airport. Valez added that each passenger's case would be evaluated individually and that the airline would assist them in whatever way necessary.

FLIGHTS DIVERTED DUE TO FOG, BRISBANE AIRPORT, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 4 -- Heavy fog over Brisbane Airport has disrupted flights by more than two hours and passengers have been told to expect delays. Brisbane Airport Corp spokesman Jim Carden said six flights had to be diverted to Sydney, Gold Coast and Rockhampton airports this morning. The first aircraft that managed to land was an Emirates flight, which landed at 0820, AEST. "The fog has lifted but we have a build-up of planes which are holding so there still may be more diversions," Mr Carden said.

FLIGHTS GROUNDED DUE POWER FAILURE, LONDON HEATHROW AIRPORT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated Sep 30, states: British Airways had to cancel flights to Europe from Heathrow's Terminal 4 after a power failure meant planes could not be refuelled. Fourteen return short-haul flights were cancelled while other airlines have also been affected. Flights from terminals 1, 2 or 3 have not been affected. BA has apologised to travellers saying the problem was due to a "power outage" which had affected its ability to refuel aircraft. "We apologise to customers for the disruption to their travel arrangements. These circumstances are outside our control and we are doing everything possible to minimise disruption," British Airways said. The problems have affected not only the flights leaving Heathrow but flights returning from Zurich, Copenhagen, Lyon, Amsterdam, Paris Charles de Gaulle, Brussels, Oslo, Geneva and Basle. A British Airways spokeswoman said passengers affected were being booked onto other flights.

INCIDENT AT MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, UNITED STATES

Chicago, Oct 3 -- A Northwest Airlines flight aborted take-off in Minneapolis today after crew members noticed a problem with one of the engines, an airline spokesman said. Flight 1467, bound for Minot, North Dakota, was carrying 64 passengers and four crew members. No one was injured and Northwest brought in another plane to take the passengers to Minot, the airline said. "The crew noticed an issue with one of the aircraft engines on take-off and discontinued the take-off," Northwest spokesman Kurt Ebenhoch said. Local press reports said flames were seen shooting from an engine. Northwest declined to confirm or comment on the reports. Ebenhoch said the incident had nothing to do with the airline's use of replacement mechanics and outside vendors to maintain planes during a mechanics strike. -- Reuters.

INCIDENT AT NOTTINGHAM EAST MIDLANDS AIRPORT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 13 -- 6 A press report, dated today, states: Fire crews were called to Nottingham East Midlands airport this morning after reports of an aircraft fire. The fire was reported in the brakes of an Airbus 300 at about 0340, BST. It is believed the freight carrier had just landed when the small fire was reported. The incident was dealt with by the airport's fire brigade. Crews were also called from Leicestershire fire service. No-one was injured and there are no delays reported to the flight schedule.

N1236Q

London, Oct 3 -- Cessna 150L N1236Q crashed near Taft, California, at 0001, Sep 29, while on a flight from

Taft. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

N201SC

London, Oct 4 -- Bell 206B JetRanger N201SC crashed near Visalia, California, at 1615, Oct 2. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The one person on board was seriously injured.

N45339

London, Oct 3 -- A press report, dated Oct 2, states: A couple from Crystal Springs, Mississippi, were killed in an aircraft crash near Copiah County Airport, Crystal Springs, authorities said. The pilot, Eugene Randall, and his wife, Karen, died on Friday night (Sep 30) when their Cessna 150 crashed a few feet south-west of the airport. Eugene Randall received his pilot's license in December of 2003, a Jackson television station reported yesterday. The sheriff's department received a call from someone who thought they had seen an aircraft go down near the airport, but deputies could not find the crash site until daylight yesterday. "We went out there with our units, but where the aircraft was sitting we couldn't see it from the airport property itself," Copiah County Sheriff Harold Jones told WLBT. "When we went back this morning we did locate the aircraft and determined two people inside had died instantly." The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board were investigating the crash.

London, Oct 4 -- Cessna 150M N45339 crashed near Crystal Springs, Mississippi, Sep 30. The two persons on board were killed.

N5606S

London, Oct 4 -- Beechcraft Travel Air D95A N5606S crashed near Greensboro, North Carolina, at 1424, Oct 1, while on a local flight from Greensboro. The four persons on board were not injured.

N655GS

London, Oct 1 -- A press report, dated Sep 30, states: Human remains and aircraft wreckage were found early today in Puget Sound from a medical transport helicopter with three people on board that crashed the night before, police said. The debris was found about 0100 hrs in an area of Puget Sound called Browns Bay, just north of Edmonds and about eight miles north of Seattle. Edmonds police Sgt. Jeff Jones said papers found floating about a mile offshore identified the aircraft as the Airlift Northwest helicopter that disappeared shortly after 2100 yesterday. Aboard the aircraft were a pilot and two nurses, all Airlift Northwest employees. No patient was on board, the company said. Jones said the helicopter apparently sank in 300 feet of water. The U.S. Coast Guard kept a boat at the scene overnight, and search efforts were to resume at daylight. Airlift Northwest said the helicopter left Harborview

Medical Center in Seattle at 2104 yesterday bound for its home base at the Arlington airport, about 40 miles north. A regional supervisor for the Federal Aviation Administration said helicopters often fly along the coastline to aid in navigation on nights when visibility is limited. The company's dispatcher had contact with the pilot at 2114 hrs but was unable to contact the aircraft 10 minutes later, Airlift Northwest said in a statement. An Edmonds-area resident called 911 shortly after 2100 hrs to report having heard a helicopter fly over, Jones said. The caller reported "shortly after that it sounded 'funny' and then they heard an explosion," Jones said.

London, Oct 3 -- Agusta A109A N655GS crashed into the sea near Shoreline, Washington, Sep 30 while on a flight from Seattle, WA, to Arlington, WA. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The three persons on board were killed.

N7895J

London, Oct 4 -- Pilatus PC-6/B2-H2 (Turbo-Porter), N7895J, operated by Vertical Air Inc., crashed on departure from Deland, Florida, at 1927, local time, Oct 3. There were 11 persons on board, one sustained serious injuries, seven sustained minor injuries. The aircraft sustained substantial damage.

YV-1020

London, Oct 4 -- Grumman G-159 Gulfstream I, YV-1020, was detected on an illegal airstrip by Colombian Air Force aircrafts at about 1830, Sep 26. Two tons of cocaine were being loaded onto the aircraft when the two Cessna A-37 Dragonfly jets and a Bell 212 Rapaz helicopter destroyed the runway as well as the aircraft. The aircraft was considered damaged beyond repair and set on fire by the authorities.

Product Recalls

BEEF, TAIWAN

London, Oct 5 -- A press report, dated today, states: Taiwan has recalled nearly two tonnes of New Zealand beef after being notified by New Zealand that the meat contains high levels of residual insecticide. "New Zealand has notified Taiwan that 77 boxes of New Zealand beef exported to Taiwan carry high residual levels of the insecticide endosulfan. The 77 boxes of New Zealand beef total 1.9 tonnes. So Taiwan launched the recall," the Broadcasting Corporation of China (BCC) reported. "So far Taiwan has recalled 76 boxes and is looking for the remaining one box," BCC said. BCC said some New Zealand cattle farmers had applied the endosulfan to their herds to kill fleas. Lee Chun-chang, a toxicology professor at the Cheng Kung University, said endosulfan could harm a person's nervous system if a large amount was consumed, for example 700 grams a day.

CHAINSAWS, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 1 -- A report from Product Recalls, Australia, dated Sep 28, states: Super Works 200W chainsaws, nationally supplied by Supercheap Auto, model number CS2000, sold from November 2004 to date, are being recalled as contamination of a micro switch may occur, which could potentially lead to the cutting mechanism carrying current. Consumers should return the product immediately to the nearest Super Cheap Auto store for a full refund. Market/recall coverage National.

KIA MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 30 -- Kia Motors America, Kia Motors Corp.'s U.S. distributor, said yesterday it will recall 70,000 LD Spectra compact sedans because of defective parts. The recall, effective from the end of October, affects 2004-2005 LD Spectra models, according to Kia Motors America. The vehicle's faulty air bag system recognizes a child as an adult, and children can suffocate from an adult-sized air bag if an accident occurs, the company said.

MERCEDES MOTOR VEHICLES, WORLDWIDE

London, Sep 30 -- DaimlerChrysler AG said today that its Mercedes Car Group was recalling some 50,000 cars because of a potential problem with the windshield wipers. The recall, which will affect mostly buyers in the German market, includes Vaneo models built between April 2002 and March 2003, as well as A-Class models built between April 2002 and 2003. The carmaker didn't say how much the recall would cost and added that the problem had not caused any accidents or fatalities.

Port Conditions



IRAQ

London, Oct 4 -- Berth 2 at Basrah Oil Terminal will not be available for berthing and loading operations for two months (October & November).

SYRIA

Lattakia, Sep 24 -- Waiting time presently 24 hours at Lattakia and seven 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	04-Oct-2005	Coal: 11 vessels due by 25/10; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; terminal closed from 07.00 hrs. 3/10 to 07.00 hrs. 9/10.
Brisbane	04-Oct-2005	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 8 vessels due by 23/10; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Dalrymple Bay	04-Oct-2005	Coal: 2 vessels berthed and loading; 31 vessels due by 13/11; vessels usually berthing in order of arrival and cargo availability; up to 12 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Dampier	04-Oct-2005	Iron ore: Parker Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 waiting to load; 8 vessels due by 13/10; up to 7 days berthing delay expected; ca. 24 hour maintenance shutdown scheduled from 19-20/10; Parker Point 2: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 2 vessels due by 5/10; no delays expected; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 waiting to load; 15 vessels due by 16/10; up to 7 days berthing delay expected; ca. 24 hour maintenance shutdown scheduled for 27-28/10; 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	04-Oct-2005	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 44 vessels due by 28/11; up to 1 day's berthing delay expected subject to port congestion and cargo availability; Barney Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 5 vessels due by 25/10; no delays expected.
Hay Point	04-Oct-2005	Coal: 2 vessels berthed and loading; 15 vessels due by 13/10; up to 10 days berthing delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Newcastle	04-Oct-2005	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 2 vessel berthed and loading; 20 vessels due by 20/11; Dykes 4+5: 2 vessels berthed and loading, 1 waiting to load; 43 vessels by 20/11; no unallocated vessels; 8-12 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	04-Oct-2005	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 4 vessels due by 12/10; "B" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 3 waiting; 3 vessels due by 10/10; 7 other vessels due by 17/10, no eta received; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "C" berth: 1 vessel waiting; 1 vessel due 5/10; "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored; 5 vessels due by 12/10.
Port Walcott	04-Oct-2005	Iron ore: 2 vessels berthed and loading, 6 vessels waiting; 16 vessels due by 25/10; up to 7 days delay expected due to berth congestion; Line-up expected to change at short notice. Cargo grade shortages and stockpile problems may result in vessels berthing out of turn.
Azerbaijan		
Baku	30-Sep-2005	Oil products: Bay of Baku: no vessels; Azerneftiyag terminal: no vessels; AzerTrans terminal - Nobel avenue: 1 vessel berthed, discharging crude oil; 3 vessels due by 1/10, all to discharge crude oil; Sangachal district: 1 vessel due 30/9 to discharge crude oil; Transserve terminal: closed.
Brazil		
Santos	04-Oct-2005	Twenty-three vessels berthed of which 9 sugar loaders, 2 bulk soya loaders, 3 fertiliser dischargers, 4 chemical products dischargers, 1 wheat discharger, 1 bulk salt discharger, 3 full container loaders/dischargers; 33 vessels waiting in roads; 26 vessels due over the next 7 days; Private terminals: Terminal 37: no vessels; Tecondi: 2 full container loaders/dischargers; Termars: no vessels; Rodrimar: 2 full container loaders/dischargers; Cosipa: 1 coal discharger, 2 steel products loaders, 1 other loader; Ultrafertil: 1 fertiliser discharger; Cargill: 1 pellets loader, 1 sugar loader; Santos Brasil: 2 full container loaders/dischargers; Cutrale: 1 bulk juice loader; Dow: 1 chemical products discharger
Paranagua	04-Oct-2005	Fourteen vessels berthed of which 4 reefer loaders, 3 sugar loaders, 3 other loaders, 4 fertiliser dischargers; 20 vessels waiting in roads, of which 14 to load (1 reefer, 5 pellets, 1 soya, 3 sugar, 4 others), 6 to discharge fertiliser; 38 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Rio Grande	04-Oct-2005	Five vessels berthed of which 1 soya meal loader, 1 lumber loader, 3 fertiliser dischargers; 3 vessels waiting in roads; 53 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Sao Sebastiao	04-Oct-2005	Six vessels berthed, 5 waiting in roads; 3 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	03-Oct-2005	Five vessels in port operating, of which 3 loading coils, 2 discharging (1 billets, 1 metals); 5 vessels in roads, of which 1 to load equipment, 1 to discharge billets, 1 empty vessel, 2 for repairs; 13 vessels due, of which 6 to load (1 equipment, 1 reinforced concrete, 1 wheat, 1 baryte concentrate, 2 containers), 3 to discharge (1 metals, 2 containers), 4 passenger vessels.
Varna	03-Oct-2005	Varna East, Varna West, Electrical Power Station, Balchik: Conditions 25 September - 2 October: Forty vessels in port operating of which 24 loading (4 bulk soda, 1 kaolin, 1 cement, 1 barley, 2 clinker, 4 sunflowers, 2 scrap, 5 silica sand, 1 equipment in packing cases, 1 liquid urea, 1 wood-pulp, 1 bran), 8 discharging (5 coal, 1 urea, 1 bagged cement, 1 clay), 8 discharging/loading containers; no vessels waiting in roads.

Port Conditions

Chile

Antofagasta	04-Oct-2005	Four vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 11 vessels due this week to load/discharge concentrates, bulk copper, containers and general cargo..
Arica	04-Oct-2005	Four vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 14 vessels due this week.
Iquique	04-Oct-2005	Three vessels berthed, 4 berths vacant; 14 vessels due this week.
Valparaiso	04-Oct-2005	Three vessels berthed, 5 berths vacant; 2 vessels anchored; 16 vessels due this week.

Colombia

Buenaventura	27-Sep-2005	Eight vessels berthed (3 general cargo, 5 bulkers), 3 vessels anchored (2 general cargo, 1 bulker); 32 vessels due (23 containers, 3 general cargo, 6 bulkers), with 2 days delay expected for general cargo/bulkers.
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Egypt

Adabiya	03-Oct-2005	Ten vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 4 general cargo, 2 bulk carriers, 1 livestock, 1 tanker, 2 containers
Alexandria	03-Oct-2005	Thirty-eight vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 27 general cargo, 6 bulk carriers, 2 tankers, 2 container vessel, 1 passenger vessels; 19 vessels dry-docked; 20 vessels at inner anchorage, 6 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	03-Oct-2005	Nineteen vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 12 general cargo, 4 bulk carriers, 1 Ro/Ro, 2 containers; 3 vessels at outer anchorage, 1 at inner anchorage.
Dekheila	03-Oct-2005	Five vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 4 bulk carriers, 1 container vessel; 2 vessels at outer anchorage.
Port Said	03-Oct-2005	Eight vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 1 general cargo, 7 containers.
Suez	03-Oct-2005	Nine vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 2 general cargo, 1 tanker, 3 reefers, 3 passenger vessels; 2 tugs, 1 vessel dry-docked.
Suez Canal	03-Oct-2005	Twenty-two vessels transiting Northbound, 25 Southbound.

Estonia

Tallinn	03-Oct-2005	Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): 1 coal vessel loading at berth, 1 vessel discharging at berth; no vessels waiting at anchorage; 2 vessels due, with 10 days berthing delay expected.
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India

Kolkata	03-Oct-2005	9 vessels operating at berth of which 5 loading (Containers-2, Steel, Machine, General Cargo); 4 vessels discharging (Containers-2, Timber Logs, Pluses); 3 vessels under repair; 1 vessel under dry docked.
Haldia	03-Oct-2005	16 vessels operating at berth of which 6 loading (Product, Ore-3, Thermal Coal, Steel), 8 vessels discharging (LPG, Crude, Net Coke, Soya, Mag. Machine, Rock Phosphate, Fertilizer), 2 vessels Loading and discharging Containers; 8 vessels awaiting berth (4 to discharge, 4 to load); 5 vessels waiting at anchorage (1 to discharge, 4 to load); 7 vessels due (Crude-2, Coke, Ore-3, Steel).
Paradip	03-Oct-2005	11 vessels operating at berth of which 7 loading (Iron ore-3, Crome Concentrate-2, Thermal Coal, Fe.Chrome), 4 vessels discharging (Coking Coal-2, S.Coal, MOP); 13 vessel awaiting berth (3 to discharge, 10 to load); 5 vessels waiting at anchorage (3 to discharge, 2 to load).
Visakhapatnam	03-Oct-2005	18 vessels operating at berth of which 8 loading (Iron ore-3, Food Grains-2, Alumina, Steel Cargo, POL), 10 vessels discharging (Sugar, Crude Oil, Urea, MOP, Alumina, Steam Coal, POL, Steel Scrap, Rock Phosphate, Ammonia Nitrate); 4 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (3 to discharge, 1 to load); 1 vessel under repair(MV Chin Shwe Haw at HSY Jetty which was collided with MV Uttar Kasi); 34 vessels due (Iron ore-9, Steel-3, Food Grains, Alumina, Ferro Chorme, Granite Blocks-2, C.P.Coke, POL-3, Ammonia, L. Ammonia, Rock Phosphate, Coking Coal-2, Containers, Styrene Monomer, Steam Coal, Caustic Soda, Phosphoric Acid, General Cargo, Steel Cargo, Crude).
Chennai	03-Oct-2005	12 vessels operating at berth of which 3 loading (Furnace Oil, Iron ore, Containers), 3 vessels discharging (Timber Logs, Rock Phosphate, HM Scrap/S.Scrap); 5 vessels loading and discharging (St. Plate/Granit Blocks, S.Coil/General Cargo/Granite Blocks, HSD, Containers-2), 1 Passenger/General vessel; 1 vessel awaiting berth to load; 5 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (3 to discharge, 2 to load); 3 vessels due (Crude Oil, Rock Phosphate, Containers).
Tuticorin	03-Oct-2005	7 vessels operating at berth of which 2 vessels discharging (General Cargo, Cement); 5 vessels loading and discharging (Thermal Coal-2, Timber Logs, Oil Cake, L.Coal); 1 vessel not ready to work and waiting at anchorage to load.
Cochin	03-Oct-2005	5 vessels operating at berth of which 3 vessels discharging (Salt, Crude, Sulphur), 2 vessels loading and discharging Containers.
New Mangalore	03-Oct-2005	6 vessels operating at berth of which 2 vessels loading POL Product, 4 vessels discharging (Fertiliser-2, LPG, Timber Logs); 3 vessels waiting at anchorage (2 to discharge, 1 to load); 12 vessels due (Iron Ore Fines-2, POL Product-2, Crude Palm Oil-2, Granite Stone-2, POL Crude-2, Containers, Methanol).
Mormugao	03-Oct-2005	2 vessels operating at berth of which 1 vessels discharging MOP, 1 loading and discharging Containers; 4 vessels working at mid stream and loading Iron Ore; 6 vessels waiting at anchorage to load Iron Ore; 5 vessels under repairs/dry dock; 6 vessels due (Coking Coal, Met Coke, Iron ore-4).
Mumbai	03-Oct-2005	17 vessels operating at berth of which 4 loading General Cargo, 10 vessels discharging (Bulk Salt, Fertilizer (RM)-4, General Cargo-4, POL), 3 vessels loading and discharging (General Cargo-2, Containers); 2 vessels awaiting order to discharge; 17 vessels under repairs/dry docked; 6 vessels under arrest; 20 vessels under laid up (Berths not required for cargo operations); 28 vessels due (Containers-3, Oil, General Cargo-24) with no delays expected.

Port Conditions

J.N.P.T.	03-Oct-2005	7 vessels operating at berth of which 2 vessels discharging (Edible Oil, Furnace Oil), 5 vessels loading and discharging Containers; 2 vessels awaiting berth to load and discharge, 1 vessel not ready to work and waiting at anchorage to discharge; 2 Containers vessels due.
Kandla	03-Oct-2005	17 vessels operating at berth of which 8 discharging (Butane, DSBO, FO, Timber Logs-2, Fertilizer, Sulphur, Chemical), 7 vessels loading (Rice-2, Cement, St. Pipes, SBM, Chemical, Castor Oil), 2 vessels loading and discharging Containers; 8 vessels awaiting berth (5 to discharge, 1 to load, 2 to load and discharge); 7 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (2 to discharge, 5 to load).
Ennore	03-Oct-2005	4 vessels due (Thermal Coal-3,(MV APJ Sreedevi, MV Rani Padmini, MV Gem of Emmore, POL (MT Port Arthur).
Kazakhstan		
Aktau	30-Sep-2005	Oil products: 2 vessels berthed, both loading crude oil; 3 vessels in roads, all to load crude oil; 2 vessels due by 1/10, both to load unknown cargoes..
Pakistan		
Karachi	03-Oct-2005	Three cement vessels loading at berth, 11 vessels discharging at berth (1 chemicals, 2 general cargo, 2 DAP, 4 sugar, 1 urea, 1 MAP), 1 container vessel loading/discharging at berth; 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 sugar, 1 vehicles, 1 crude oil); no vessels bunkering, none under repairs/dry-docked, none awaiting orders; 3 vessels due (1 general cargo, 2 containers), with 1-2 days berthing delay expected.
Port Qasim	03-Oct-2005	Three vessels discharging at berth (2 sugar, 1 wheat); 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to load (1 rice, 2 containers), 6 waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 sugar, 2 containers, 1 MEG, 1 rape seed, 1 palm oil).
Russia		
Novorossiysk	03-Oct-2005	Fifteen vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 2 DRI, 1 scrap, 3 steel billets, 1 coils/other, 1 wheat, 1 equipment, 1 coils, 1 bulk urea, 1 slabs, 1 barley, 1 aluminium, 1 diesel oil; 6 vessels waiting in roads, all to load, of which 1 equipment, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 2 scrap, 1 DRI, 1 diesel oil; 59 vessels due, of which 53 to load (8 copper, 9 steel billets, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate/bulk urea, 2 DRI, 1 equipment/cars, 1 scrap, 3 aluminium, 2 bulk NPK, 1 UAN solution, 1 coils/steel billets/tin plates, 6 wheat, 1 bulk cement, 4 pig-iron, 2 bulk ammonium nitrate, 2 bulk urea, 1 WRIC, 1 pipes, 3 coils, 1 slabs, 1 equipment, 2 diesel oil), 4 to discharge (1 construction materials, 1 zinc ore, 1 coils, 1 bulk sugar), 2 to discharge/load containers; Oil terminal: 4 tankers berthed, all loading, of which 2 crude oil, 1 diesel oil, 1 fuel oil; 1 tanker in roads to load crude oil; 5 tankers due, all to load crude oil.
Slovenia		
Koper	03-Oct-2005	Nine vessels berthed of which 2 vessels loading sawn timber, 5 bulk carriers discharging ore/coal/fertiliser/minerals, 2 tankers discharging mineral oil; 1 bulk carrier waiting at anchorage to discharge bulk chemicals; 21 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 4 to load/discharge containers, 1 to discharge aluminium products, 5 to load sawn timber/steel products/livestock, 5 bulk carriers to load coal/general cargo, 2 bulk carriers to discharge ore/minerals, 2 car carriers to discharge/load vehicles, 2 reefers to discharge refrigerated goods.
Spain		
Bilbao	03-Oct-2005	Twenty vessels operating (4 tankers, 16 other vessels), of which 4 loading, 8 discharging, 8 loading/discharging.
Sagunto	02-Oct-2005	Twenty-one vessels in port operating of which 2 loading (1 cement, 1 machinery), (Oct 2)15 discharging (12 steel products, 1 vehicles, 2 fruit), 4 discharging/loading (1 steel products, 3 general cargo); no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present.
Sri Lanka		
Colombo	03-Oct-2005	Berthing/unberthing (pilotage) delays being experienced on breakbulk/conventional vessels. Delays to conventional vessels are due to the fact that container/feeder vessels are given priority at breakbulk berths if there is container congestion. Conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 and 2 are facing navigation delays. Eight vessels loading at berth (7 containers/feeders, 1 cement blocks), 21 vessels discharging at berth (12 containers/feeders, 2 bagged soya bean meal, 3 bulk palm oil, 1 bagged maize, 1 Ro/Ro, 1 bulk clinker, 1 bulk cement); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 container/feeder, 1 bagged maize); 4 vessels dry-docked, 1 at new tanker berth; 9 vessels due (8 containers/feeders, 1 bagged sugar), with no delays expected.
Turkmenistan		
Turkmenbashi	30-Sep-2005	Oil products: 2 vessels berthed, of which 1 completed loading gasoil, 1 heating oil; 1 vessel in roads to load gasoil; 1 vessel due 30/9 to discharge crude oil.
Ukraine		
Ilichevsk	03-Oct-2005	Twelve vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (4 steel products, 2 grain, 1 sulphur, 1 sunflower seed oil), 1 discharging nickel ore, 3 discharging/loading containers; 7 vessels in roads, of which 4 to load (2 grain, 1 steel products, 1 vegetable oil), 3 to discharge/load containers; 30 vessels due, of which 13 to load (8 steel products, 2 grain, 3 vegetable oil), 9 to discharge (8 steel products, 1 ore), 8 to discharge/load containers.

Port Conditions

Mariupol	03-Oct-2005	Five vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 2 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 equipment; no vessels in roads; 56 vessels due, of which 54 to load (27 steel, 14 coal, 5 fire-clay, 1 equipment, 1 coke, 2 sulphur, 1 barley, 1 sunflower seeds, 1 wheat, 1 bran), 2 to discharge/load containers.
Odessa	03-Oct-2005	Seventeen vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (4 metal, 1 scrap, 1 ore, 1 wheat, 1 barley), 4 discharging (1 bananas, 1 citrus, 1 sugar, 1 fat), 2 loading/discharging containers, 3 passenger vessels; 7 vessels in roads, of which 5 to load (4 metal, 1 pig-iron), 1 to discharge general cargo, 1 to discharge/load containers; 48 vessels due, of which 23 to load (12 metal, 1 scrap, 2 pig-iron, 1 general cargo, 1 ferro alloy, 1 ore, 1 wood, 1 wheat, 1 barley, 1 oil, 1 corn), 2 to discharge (1 citrus, 1 bananas), 23 to discharge/load containers.
United States		
Beaumont	04-Oct-2005	Seasonal cold fronts may reduce available deep draft sailing drafts. No new restrictions in draft (normal 40 ft. 0 ins. f.w. max. deep draft enforced). Traffic schedule: 4/10: inbound traffic a.m., outbound traffic to follow; due to damage from hurricane Rita, channel open under following conditions: one way, daylight traffic only with max. transit draft 32 ft. until further notice; shoaling has been observed in some parts of the Sabine waterway; much of the port is still without power and city services. Louis Dreyfus terminal: elevator not working due to damage from hurricane Rita.
Galveston	04-Oct-2005	Seasonal cold fronts may reduce available deep draft sailing drafts. No new restriction in draft (normal 39 ft. 6 ins. b.w. max. deep draft enforced - 40 ft. with ideal conditions). Channel open under normal traffic; ADM-Farmland terminal: 4-5 days delay.
Houston	04-Oct-2005	Seasonal cold fronts may reduce available deep draft sailing drafts. Pilots report normal 45 ft. 0 ins. max. draft up to Shell terminal, 40 ft. 0 ins. max. draft after Shell terminal in Houston ship channel; Cargill terminal: 2-3 days delay; LDC Dreyfus terminal: 4-5 days delay.
Kalama, WA	04-Oct-2005	Kalama export terminal: 6 days delay; United Harvest terminal: 2 days delay.
New Orelans	04-Oct-2005	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: no information available; Cargill-Westwego: no information available; ADM/Ama: 5-7 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: 10 days delay expected; ADM/Destrehan: 5-7 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 5-7 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 1-2 days delay expected; ADM/Paulina: 5-7 days delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: 5-6 days delay expected; Cargill/Baton Rouge: no delays; maintenance being carried out; Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: no information available; Mile 158.0 Cargill (K2) - Convent: 3 days delay expected; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: 5 days delay expected. Nine-day forecast for Carrolton Gauge/New Orleans: expected to decrease to 3.3 ft. by 13/10. Mississippi River recommended draft restrictions: SW Pass to Pilottown - 47 ft. for all vessels (daylight only); Pilottown to Nola - 47 ft. for all vessels; New Orleans (Mile 090) to Baton Rouge (Mile 233.5) - 45 ft. for all vessels; vessels with drafts up to 47 ft. have been handled up to Mile 180 in the past, but are approved by pilots on a case by case basis, based on current river conditions; Mississippi River Gulf outlet: 25 ft.
Seattle	04-Oct-2005	Louis Dreyfus (Pier 86) terminal: 2 days delay.

Published by Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit, part of T&F Informa plc, Sheepen Place, Colchester, Essex CO3 3LP.

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ISSN 0047 4908

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