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Star Cruises in fresh row over Norway

Company hits back after environmental group alleges it withheld vital information on cruiseship from German authorities, writes James Brewer — Friday July 07 2006

STAR Cruises has denied misleading the authorities over its plans for the huge cruiseship Norway in a new controversy over the demolition of ships potentially blighted by carcinogenic material.

Recently sold to an Indian shipbreaker and renamed Blue Lady, the ship is anchored off the Gujarat coast pending clearance by India for break-up.

A Star Cruises spokesman has hit back strongly at allegations by the NGO Platform on Shipbreaking, a coalition of human rights and environmental groups, that it withheld vital information from German authorities in seeking permission for its ship to depart from the port of Bremerhaven in May last year.

The NGO Platform released a report* which claimed that as early as December, 2004, Star and its subsidiary Norwegian Cruise Lines formed an intent to dispose of the vessel, but claimed that it was going to Asia for repairs.

According to the NGO group, information in the 2005 annual report of Norwegian Cruise Line, submitted to the US Securities and Exchange Commission in March this year, explained how the line reduced the value of the Norway by \$14.5m in a span of months in 2004. This diminished it to a scrap value of \$12.3m.

"The public disclosure further reveals that by December, 2004, Norwegian Cruise Line's management concluded that the sale of the Norway to a third party for re-use was not likely," said the NGO report.

Citing confidential information from Pierre & Vacances, a French company said to have had access to internal documents, the report said there was at least 1,200 tonnes of asbestos in the Norway.

It said that at least €17m (\$19.9m) would have been needed to decontaminate partially the asbestos in the vessel, more than the scrap value.

Ingvild Jessen, co-ordinator of the NGO Platform, called on the German government to hold the cruise company to account for covering up its actions "to pass on tonnes of toxic wastes to unsuspecting workers in India or Bangladesh and laying waste to the environment of south Asia".

The environmental group has urged Germany to comply with the Basel convention obligations prohibiting the export of hazardous wastes from developed nations to poorer countries and to recall the Norway to Germany to be decontaminated.

Sale discussions

Countering the allegations, Star Cruises said that when the Norway was under its ownership it held sale discussions with about 20 groups which expressed an interest in acquiring the ship for future trading. In more than a dozen instances the discussions developed to the point where draft sale contracts were exchanged and sale contracts were signed with three trade buyers, but each time buyers failed to meet their payment obligations.

A final round of discussions for a trading sale came to an end last December, at which point Star Cruises decided to sell the ship for recycling.

A contract was signed earlier this year with a party which agreed to comply with the laws and practices over hazardous substances, including the industry code of practice on ship re-cycling.

Although the book value of the ship was written down to its estimated salvage value at the end of 2004, this step was taken to comply with accounting standards and did not reflect an internal decision to sell the ship for recycling when it left Germany.

At that time there were good grounds to believe it would be possible to sell for further trading or to redeploy within the group

From the time the book value was written down, disclosed as early as February last year, until the sale Star continued to crew and maintain the ship at a direct cost of about \$600,000 a month, or \$7.5m over the whole period, said Star Cruises.

"Both the fact and scale of this investment give the lie to the unfounded assertion that, before the ship's departure from Germany in 2005, the former owners had resolved to sell the ship for recycling," said Star Cruises.

The NGO Platform refers in the report to an environmental fine on Norwegian Cruise Line, but Star Cruises said that the infractions concerned took place prior to it gaining control of that company in 2000.

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
BANGLAR SHOURABH	crude oil tanker	BGD	BV	8,672	14,494	1987	Had explosion at Chittagong outer anchorage Jun 24. Vessel left fully ablaze and subsequently submerged. Crew rescued.
CONRAD OLDENDORFF	bulker	MLT	NK	39,727	9,744	2002	Grounded on Bornholm Island, Denmark, in lat 54 52N, long 14 44E, Jun 27. Still aground Jun 28. LOF signed with Tsavlis. Two tugs due on scene.
CRIMSON VENUS	woodchip carrier	PAN	NK	40,252	49,673	1996	Grounded at Km 316, River Parana, Jun 26. Trying to refloat with tug assistance. Still aground Jun 28.
EVANS McKEIL	tug	CAN	—	284	—	1936	Experienced steering gear problems during towing operation at section 52, Montreal, Jun 25.
FORTUNE BRIGHT	bulker	HKG	KR	29,862	53,343	2003	In collision with general cargo <i>Golden Hope</i> at Chittagong outer anchorage Jun 7. Damage sustained. Completed discharge Jun 25 and sailed to Singapore without repair.
NAPOCOR POWER BARGE NO.105	barge	PHL	—	2,311	—	1992	Had fire while docked at Masbate pier, Philippines, Jun 23. Extinguished same day by Coast Guard vessel. Damage assessment underway. Extensice damage revealed.
PACIFIC ADVENTURER	general	HKG	LR	18,391	23,737	1991	In collision with an Chinese military vessel in the Pearl River, near Zhuhai, Jun 22, causing it to sink. Investigation under way.
REEF ZANZIBAR	ro-ro	VCT	KR	7,373	6,537	1981	Taking water at a fast rate through a broken propeller shaft in lat 05 49N, long 60 51.5E, Jun 26. Tug requested. Shaft secured same day and distress signal cancelled. Tug proceeding. ETA Jun 30.
RT ZOE	tug	MLT	LR	343	130	2006	Reported Jun 26 repairs to the wheelhouse, which had been completely destroyed during the salvage of <i>Hyundai Fortune</i> , have been completed.
SAFMARINE AGULHAS	container	LBR	LR	16,800	22,900	1995	Lost power and grounded on a sandbank just after leaving East London 26 Jun 2006. Two tugs currently attempting to refloat. Three further tugs enroute. Next attempt to refloat Jun 29.
SILVER LAKE	passenger	USA	—	688	469	—	Reported Jun 27 in Manns Harbor shipyard, North Carolina, with gearbox problems. ETC two weeks.
SOFRANA MAGELLAN	general/ container	ATG	GL	6,638	9,729	1986	Towed into Noumea Jun 10 due engine failure. Due to depart Jun 26.
STOLT PERSEVERANCE	chem/ oil tanker	CYM	LR	25,196	37,059	2001	Lost steering and in collision with tug <i>Jeck</i> , near mile 64, Myrtle Grove, Mississippi River Jun 26. Bow slightly damaged above waterline. Some minor steelwork required.

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



AL SALAM BOCCACCIO 98 (Panama)

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A committee investigating the sinking of passenger ro/ro *Al Salam Boccaccio 98*, which claimed the lives of over 1,000 people, widened the blame for the disaster to include Panama, under whose flag the vessel was sailing. The vessel sank in February while en route to Egypt from Saudi Arabia. Six Egyptians, including the vessel's owner Mamdouh Ismail, face charges of manslaughter over the disaster. "We must start with shortcomings on the part of the flagging country's government, because it is responsible for inspecting the rescue equipment and the safety of the vessel," committee member Mohamed Mahmoud Abdel Naby told reporters. Transport Minister Mohamed Mansour said the committee's job was to identify what made the ferry sink and not to apportion blame. Committee head Mohamed Abdel Fatah Shamma said the Panamanian delegation had withdrawn from the committee. They had insisted on focusing on the direct causes of the sinking, without examining failings by the various parties, Shamma said. After examining the vessel's voyage data recorder, recovered from the wreck at a depth of 920 metres, the committee concluded that several factors were to blame. A fire in the garage had spread widely before it was discovered because the attendant was away from his post. Problems with drainage outlets then meant water pumped in to put out the fire flooded the vessel's starboard side, causing it to list dangerously and eventually sink. The vessel's master did not order an evacuation when the fire started or when the vessel was listing at a significant angle, the committee said. A parliamentary report on the disaster had blamed Ismail for serious violations of safety regulations. Ismail is thought to be in Britain, the Egyptian authorities say. The vessel was originally licensed in Italy to carry 1,187 people but the owners obtained an Egyptian licence to carry 2,890 people, in violation of international standards, the parliamentary report said. It was carrying 1,400 when it sank.

ALEXANDRIA (Cyprus)

Limassol, Jun 27 — Fishing (general) *Alexandria* (138 gt), which had been laid up at Larnaca, was sunk "out of Larnaca port", on her way to Limassol, on Jun 24. — Lloyd's Agents.

Limassol, Jun 28 — Owners of fishing (general) *Alexandria* are Spathias Shipping Co. — Lloyd's Agents.

APL PANAMA (Antigua & Barbuda)

Manila, Jun 29 — Container Carrier *APL Panama* is presently undergoing bottom and side shell plate repairs at Subic Shipyard, however, estimated time of completion still undetermined. — Lloyd's Agents.

AQUA JEWEL (Greece)

Piraeus, Jun 26 — Passenger ro/ro *Aqua Jewel* (4300 gt, built 2002) experienced mechanical failure with its fore anchor mechanism at Mykonos on Jun 23. Vessel's schedule from Mykonos to Tinos, Andros and Rafina was cancelled and it sailed from Mykonos with no passengers on board for Rafina for repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

ARATERE (New Zealand)

See "New Zealand" under "Weather & Navigation."

ARCTIC VOYAGER (Malta)

London, Jun 23 — Bulker *Arctic Voyager* sailed Singapore Jun 21 for Lagos.

ATLANTIC PEGGY (Uruguay)

London, Jun 27 — Following Argentinian Navigation Warning issued Jun 26: Fishing *Atlantic Peggy* (624 gt, built 1967) is being towed by fishing *Atlantic Margaret* in lat 39 05S, long 55 44W, course 355 deg, speed five knots, bound Montevideo.

BANGLAR SHOURABH (Bangladesh)

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* at outer anchorage at Chittagong is gradually sinking in the Bay due to cracks developed at the bottom of the vessel following a fire on board. The incident left at least eight crewmen injured and two missing. The vessel was in a submerged position as of 1900, local time, Jun 24. The vessel has a capacity of 11,000 tonnes and is owned by the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC). The crack at the bottom reportedly developed due to the eruption of fire inside the vessel during cleaning the deck of the vessel. The critically injured four crew members were taken to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital for treatment. The vessel with 48 crew members went to the outer anchorage on Jun 23 to lighter oil. The vessel anchored in the Charley area, some 4 km from the port estuary. Understand two salvage vessels of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA), tug *Kandari 10* and *Dishari 7* proceeded there and rescued all the crew members, who jumped into the sea from the burning vessel. The fire brigade unit of Chittagong port, along with the Coast Guard and Bangladesh Navy extinguished the fire after three hours at 1500 hrs.

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* caught fire at the Chittagong Port outer

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anchorage this morning and the vessel was seen sinking in the sea gradually. Port sources said a large explosion rocked the middle part of the tanker, anchored at the 'C' anchorage of the Bay of Bengal, 10 km off the Patenga beach, at around 1100 hrs. The fire broke out in that part following the explosion and large cracks developed soon after that. At one point, the middle part of the vessel split up and it started to sink forcing the people on board to jump in the sea for their lives. Two rescue boats of the Bangladesh Navy raced to the scene and rescued all the 65 people on board, including 36 crew and labourers of the vessel, with the help of the local people who reached there by fishing and speedboats. Sources, however, claimed that a crewman of the tanker was missing. The Navy managed to bring the raging blaze under control at around 1430 hrs. The cause of the accident, however, could not be confirmed.

Chittagong, Jun 25 — Crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* was at anchor at "C" anchorage (designated anchorage for shallow draft vessels / waiting vessels), Chittagong outer anchorage when there was an explosion on board the vessel at around noontime on Jun 24. Explosion was followed by fire, which spread very quickly. The tanker was empty and went to the anchorage about two days ago after discharging its last parcel of crude oil. At the time of the incident, there were 68 personnel on board including 48 crew members and 20 cleaning gang labours. Immediately after the incident, vessels at the anchorage came forward to rescue the crews and port authority sent their tugboats to fight the fire led by *Kandari-10* and *Kandari -7*. Later on, Coast Guard vessels, Navy tugs and nearby supply vessel of off shore SANGU gas field joined in the fire fighting and the fire was put out later in the evening on Jun 24. Meantime, 45 crew members were rescued and three crew members remained missing until this morning. Twenty of the cleaning gang personnel jumped to the sea and were rescued later on. Apparently the explosion took place in one of the starboard side cargo tank forward of the accommodation. The vessel has been reportedly ruptured which extends from starboard to port side breaking the vessel almost into two halves. Probably the keel plate and other pipelines are holding the vessel together. Forward part having most of the cargo tanks appeared to be floating in upright condition and the after part having the accommodation is gradually sinking and has taken a list of about 10-15 degrees. The vessel is still at anchor and has swung with the change of tide suggesting that after part has not sunk and or touched bottom as yet. It is presently unmanned and is being watched from close proximity by port authority tugboats, coast guard vessels and navy ships. A four-member investigation committee headed by

the Principal Officer, marine department has been formed to find out the cause of the accident. Higher officials from the owners and investigation team are scheduled to visit the incident area this morning. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* remained submerged at the outer anchorage of Chittagong port. The vessel is now waiting to be declared a scrap vessel, sources said. Bangladesh Shipping Corporation is likely to hold a board meeting in Dhaka tomorrow to decide if the damaged vessel should be salvaged and sold as scrap that would bring the authority only Tk 15 crore, sources said. Meanwhile, two members of the crew on board during the fire remained missing.

BILLY STAR (Philippines)

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

BINA TA FA (Indonesia)

Colombo, Jun 29 — The name of the fishing vessel which had a fire off Colombo Jun 14 was *Bina Ta Fa*, not *Weilai Lanka*. "Weilai Lanka" is the name of the owners. Currently vessel is at outer anchorage and the owners do not have any plans to repairing it. Understand the vessel was completely destroyed after the fire and only the wreckage is remaining. — Lloyd's Agents.

BIRCHGLEN (Barbados)

London, Jun 22 — Bulker *Birchglen* was reported arriving at Thunder Bay on Jun 19. The vessel loaded 25,292 tonnes of wheat at the Cargill Elevator and departed on Jun 21, for Comeau Bay.

BLACK SWAN (Bahamas)

Port Said, Jun 28 — Bulker *Black Swan* is still under arrest at Great Bitter Lakes. — Lloyd's Agents.

BULOU NI CEVA (Fiji)

Suva, Jun 27 — Passenger (cruise) *Bulou Ni Ceva* is still aground. A team is expected to leave this weekend in a chartered aircraft to assess the damages sustained and also to determine whether the vessel can be salvaged. — Lloyd's Agents.

CEMFJORD (Cyprus)

Hull, Jun 27 — Bulk cement carrier *Cemfjord* is due to complete repairs this afternoon, after which the vessel is due to sail for Denmark. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jun 29 — Bulk cement carrier *Cemfjord* sailed from Hull on Jun 27 bound for Aalborg.

CHANG JIANG BRIDGE (Panama)

See *CMA CGM Capella*.

CHEMBULK HONGKONG (Marshall Islands)

Shanghai, Jun 28 — While chemical tanker *Chembulk Hongkong* was proceeding to berth at the Yueyang wharf, Zhangjiagang port at about

1420, local time, on Jun 15 with two tugs assisting, she collided with bulker *Taiglad*, which dropped anchor at the downriver anchorage of the Yue Yang wharf, due to a strong ebb-tide. *Chembulk Hongkong* was holed at portside No.6 ballast water tank, the hole was located at the waterline of the portside No.6 ballast water tank. Fast ingress of water to the tank caused the vessel to list to port side. The Nantong Maritime Safety Administration arranged about 10 tugs and security boats to assist the tanker to move to the safety anchorage, where she remains anchored. — Lloyd's Agents.

Shanghai, Jun 28 — Chemical tanker *Chembulk Hongkong* will go to a shipyard in Zhoushan tomorrow or the day after for repair work. — Lloyd's Agents.

CLEVELAND (U.S.A.)

Freetown, Jun 27 — General cargo *Cleveland* arrived at Freetown, with an engine problem on Jun 10, berthed on Jun 16, discharged cargo and sailed for Monrovia on Jun 21. — Lloyd's Agents.

CMA CGM CAPELLA (Germany)

Antwerp, Jun 29 — On the afternoon of Jun 28, container carrier *CMA CGM Capella* (35595 gt, built 1995) that was going to berth at a terminal of Shanghai, drifted to another berthing vessel container carrier *Chang Jiang Bridge* (48237 gt, built 1992) and dragged the latter's fastened mooring ropes to break. *Chang Jiang Bridge* also sustained damage to her hull on the stern. After the accident, it is reported that the main engine of *CMA CGM Capella* was not under control. *CMA CGM Capella* sailed from Shanghai for Ningbo at about 0400 hrs, Jun 29, 2006. *Chang Jiang Bridge* departed Shanghai at noon, today. — DPS Teamhead Surveyors.

CONRAD OLDENDORFF (Malta)

London, Jun 28 — Following received from Aarhus Marine Assistance Service, timed 0938, UTC: Bulker *Conrad Oldendorff* (39727 gt, built 2002), Gdansk for Alexandria with coal, grounded on Bornholm Island, in lat 54 52.7N, long 14 44.5E, at 1555, local time, Jun 27. The vessel is still aground.

Piraeus, Jun 28 — Bulker *Conrad Oldendorff*, aground on Bornholm Island: Lloyd's Standard Form salvage contract was signed with Tsavlis yesterday and tugs *Stevns Icecap* and *Stevns Iceflower* are expected on scene this afternoon. A salvage team from Greece should be arriving around the same time. — Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd.

Copenhagen, Jun 28 — At 2000 hrs, yesterday, the Maltese-flagged bulker *Conrad Oldendorff* ran aground south of Bornholm, in Danish waters. According to initial information, the ship is hard aground and will need to have part of its cargo transferred before it can be refloated. The vessel was on a voyage from Poland to Egypt

with a full cargo of coal. No leakage has been reported so far. — Correspondent.

Piraeus, Jun 29 — Bulker *Conrad Oldendorff*: Tugs *Stevns Icecap* and *Stevns Iceflower* and the salvage team from Greece arrived on scene yesterday afternoon. We are currently looking to fix a bunker barge and a lightering vessel to proceed to the scene. — Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd.

CONSING (Philippines)

Manila, Jun 23 — Landing craft *Consing* was not refloated today as earlier promised by its charterer and owner. “We are still trying to raise the *Consing*”, a spokesperson for Asian Shipping Corp., the owner of the vessel, said today. She, however, refused to divulge the reasons for the delay in the refloating of the vessel. On Tuesday (Jun 20), Asian Shipping Corp. and Hanjin Heavy Industries had advised the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) Ecology Department that the *Consing* would be refloated within three days. — Lloyd’s List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 27 — Refloating of the sunken landing craft *Consing* in Navotas, Manila, resumed today after work was interrupted by bad weather, Hanjin Heavy Industries officials said. Refloating of *Consing* had to stop last week after tropical storm “Domeng” brought heavy winds and rain to Subic Bay. “This is the first day since last week that the weather had cleared,” a Hanjin spokesperson said. Salvors from Asian Shipping Corp, which owns the vessel, are now working to raise the forward deck, which continues to be completely submerged. Last week, Hanjin had promised the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority that it would be able to raise and remove *Consing* by Jun 25. Hanjin officials are now hoping to get the work done by the end of the week. *Consing*, which sank on Jun 10, off Cawag town, Subic Bay, was chartered by Hanjin to move construction supplies to Cawag where South Korean shipbuilder Hanjin is building a shipyard. Cawag town is part of the Subic Bay Freeport which is administered by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. — Lloyd’s List Correspondent.

CRIMSON VENUS (Panama)

Buenos Aires, Jun 26 — Wood-chip carrier *Crimson Venus* (40252 gt, built 1996), bound Durban with 40,000 tonnes of Soya, grounded at Km 316, River Parana, at 0045 today. Vessel is presently trying to refloat by its own means. — Lloyd’s Agents.

Buenos Aires, Jun 28 — Wood-chip carrier *Crimson Venus* is still aground and performing refloating operations with the assistance of tugs *Conquistador* and *Rua II*. — Lloyd’s Agents.

DANIELLA NATIVIDAD (Philippines)

Manila, Jun 23 — Philippine-registered product tanker *Daniella*

Natividad is back to its normal cruising speed of seven knots following hull and engine cleaning. Shogun Ships, owner and operator of the *Daniella Natividad*, said that the vessel had left the Petron Refinery in Lamao, Bataan at 1500 hrs, yesterday, and was doing good time. It is expected to arrive at its destination in Poro Point La Union in northern Luzon island tonight. — Lloyd’s List Correspondent. (See issue of Jun 22.)

DEEP BLUE (Virgin Islands, British)

London, Jun 26 — Lloyd’s Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: At 1910, local time, Jun 25, fire broke out on board yacht *Deep Blue*, while sailing near Aspro, Syros island with six passengers on board (three men and three women). Coast Guard salvage craft, a tug from Neorion Shipyards proceeded to the area, also passenger ro/ro *Panagia Tinou*, which rescued four of the passengers and took them to Syros. The yacht proceeded to Syros under the command of two persons, arriving safely at 2020 hrs, accompanied by the Coast Guard and the tug. Fire Brigade vehicles were waiting at the quay and had extinguished the fire by 2030 hrs. The fire had broken out in the forward part of the accommodation. After the fire had been extinguished a woman passenger fell into a hatch and was injured, so she was taken to the General hospital of Syros for first aid. The remainder of the passengers were also transported to the hospital for precautionary reasons and were found to be in excellent health.

DION (Panama)

Antwerp, Jun 29 — On Jun 24, the fastened combined ore and oil carrier *Dion* (78543 gt, built 1981) at Changxing Island, Shanghai, was blown away from her berthing place due to all 19 mooring lines being broken in a sudden squall. The vessel drifted downstream in the Yangtze River and finally struck the pier of another shipyard. The pier sustained some physical damages and further technical detection is in progress. The vessel’s hull sustained two holes in way of a fresh tank on port quarter and all fresh water in that tank leaked overboard. She will stay in her original shipyard for the rest of the repair work, about five days. — DPS Teamhead Surveyors.

EGRETTA (Malta)

London, Jun 29 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Early today, general cargo *Egretta* (9678 gt, built 1976) ran aground in the River Schelde, in the Ghent Canal, near Terneuzen. Tug *Braakman* refloated the vessel. (Note — According to Lloyd’s MIU AIS, at 0555 hrs, today, *Egretta* was stationary in lat 51 05 26.42N, long 03 45 14.98E, 1.6 nautical miles from Langerbrugge, Belgium.)

London, Jun 29 — Following received from the managers of general cargo

Egretta, dated today: *Egretta*, Kakinada for Ghent with a cargo of rice in bulk, did not sustain any damage. It is now at Ghent, carrying out cargo discharge. The incident was extremely minor.

ELEVEN

Suva, Jun 28 — According to Fiji Customs, fishing *Eleven* is still aground and no efforts has been made yet to refloat it. — Lloyd’s Agents.

EMERALD PRINCESS (Bermuda)

Trieste, Jun 23 — Passenger (cruise) *Emerald Princess* will undergo sea-trials during the next few months. It is anticipated it will depart around the end of March 2007. — Lloyd’s Agents.

EVANS MCKEIL (Canada)

London, Jun 27 — Tug *Evans McKeil* (284 gt, built 1936) experienced steering gear problems during towing operation at Section 52, Montreal, at 1355, Jun 25.

FALAK G. (Slovakia)

Rijeka, Jun 26 — General cargo *Falak G.* is still under arrest at Rijeka. There is no prospect of her sailing at this moment. — Lloyd’s Agents.

FLYINGCAT 3 (Greece)

Piraeus, Jun 26 — Ferry *Flyingcat 3* (613 gt, built 1998) experienced mechanical failure of starboard main engine at Thessaloniki Jun 23. Vessel’s schedule from Thessaloniki to Skopelos, Alonissos, Skiathos and Aghios Konstantinos was cancelled. Its sailing was prohibited pending inspection by class surveyor. — Lloyd’s Agents.

FOLEGANDROS (Greece)

London, Jun 28 — Eletson Corporation, owners and managers of the double hull product tanker *Folegandros* (29506 gt, built 1992) report that the vessel, with pilot on board, went aground between buoys 33/34 in the middle of Maracaibo Channel, Venezuela at approximately 0445, local time, Jun 27. The seabed in the area is mud and silt and there appears to be no damage to the vessel’s hull, with no reported pollution or injuries. The vessel is loaded with around 36,600 tonnes of crude oil on route from Bago Grande to Richmond. At the time of departure, the advised permissible draft- as provided by the local authorities was thirty seven feet and three inches. The vessel’s draft was thirty six feet. Attempts to re-float the vessel are in progress. Representatives of the Owner, P+I Club and Agent are attending the vessel and working with the local authorities to achieve a swift resolution to the incident.

FORTUNE BRIGHT (Hong Kong)

Chittagong, Jun 15 — While bulker *Fortune Bright* (29862 gt, built 2003), which arrived at Chittagong outer anchorage on May 31, with 50,626

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tonnes of bulk rape seeds and yellow peas, was lightening her cargo into various inland coaster vessels on Jun 7, she collided with (inland coaster) general cargo *Golden Hope*. Both vessels are reported to have sustained damages. *Golden Hope* is presently lying at Rupshi Ghat, Dhaka awaiting to offload her cargo there and is expected to return to Chittagong after five or six days. — Lloyd's Agents.

Chittagong, Jun 28 — *Fortune Bright* completed cargo discharge on Jun 25 and departed for Singapore, same day, without any repairs to her damages. — Lloyd's Agents.

FRONT SUNDA (Marshall Islands)

London, Jun 22 — Following received from the operators of crude oil tanker *Front Sunda*, dated today: *Front Sunda* has now been successfully towed to a Batam anchorage, off Singapore. The vessel remains in a watertight condition, and there has been no pollution. The vessel is in a safe and stable condition, and will remain at the anchorage until further inspections have been carried out. Eleven crew members, as well as company superintendents, are presently on board the vessel and are carrying out initial inspections and safety checks. The search and rescue operation to locate the missing seafarer continues in the area of the incident. A helicopter has also joined the search. The 25 crew members who were brought to Singapore after abandoning ship following the explosion remain in good health. Both Frontline and ITM, the vessel's managers, will co-operate closely with the authorities in order to establish how this incident occurred.

London, Jun 26 — A South China Sea search and rescue operation for the Filipino rating lost after a tank explosion on crude oil tanker *Front Sunda* was called off at the weekend. Helicopter patrols had been unable to locate the crew member who was reported missing following the tank blast and fire on board the suezmax *Front Sunda*. The 142,031 dwt oil tanker was towed to an anchorage near the Indonesian island of Batam after it was abandoned by the 25 Indian officers and Filipino ratings. The Marshall Islands-registered and DNV-classed vessel was only last month at the centre of a terminal discharging spill accident in the Pacific Ocean. An emergency response spokesman for Frontline and Dubai technical manager International Tanker Management, based in London, said there had been no pollution last week and the vessel remained watertight. "She is in a safe and stable condition and will remain at the anchorage until further inspections have been carried out", he added. *Front Sunda* was initially left unmanned last week almost 220 nautical miles northeast of Singapore after it was abandoned following the explosion in its number six cargo tank. All but one of the crew members

were picked up and taken safely to Singapore by the passing K-Line boxship *Bay Bridge*. Eleven crew members and company superintendents reboarded the vessel at its anchorage at the end of the week to carry out initial inspections and safety checks. The rest of the crew members remained at a hotel in Singapore, where protection and indemnity club Skuld was understood to have held interviews. Two vessels continued search and rescue operation until Friday (Jun 23) after a boarding party from the platform support vessel *Geco Topazhad* failed to find the missing mariner. Frontline reported in midweek that the fire was out and there was no pollution, with emergency generators running on board and electrical power available. Frontline and ITM said that they would co-operate closely with the authorities to establish how the incident had occurred. Shipping in the South China Sea has been notified of the missing seafarer, although there is little hope that he will be found.

London, Jun 27 — Crude oil tanker *Front Sunda* remains at Batam anchorage, where it is being inspected. Unfortunately the missing crew member was never found.

GAVALIS (Netherlands)

Maassluis, Jun 27 — Non specific tanker *Gavialis*, 110 metres in length, 3,213 gt, built 2006, was repaired in Werkendam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

GOLDEN BELLS 2

Belfast, Jun 23 — Fishing (general) *Golden Bells 2* now completed repairs and sailed from Kilkeel at around 1600, yesterday or fishing grounds — Lloyd's Agents.

GOLDEN HOPE (Bangladesh)

See *Fortune Bright*.

GOVERNOR JAMES BAXTER HUNT JR. (U.S.A.)

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The Knotts Island passenger (cruise) *Governor James Baxter Hunt Jr.* (462 gt, built 1984) ran aground in the Currituck Sound early today, stranding 26 people and 13 vehicles about 200 feet from the landing dock. The ferry was turning around, preparing to leave the Knotts Island side when an engine failed and strong winds blew the vessel into shallow water, said Carolyn McDaniel, spokeswoman for the North Carolina Ferry Division. There were no injuries, she said. By noon, the crew had restarted the engine and dislodged the ferry, but it will not be allowed to operate again without Coast Guard inspection and approval, McDaniel said. The ferry was later towed to shore.

HAMILTON BANKER (Canada)

St. John's, NF, Jun 27 — Fishing *Hamilton Banker* was refloated and has been taken to the adjacent marine haul-out. — Lloyd's Agents.

HAWK (Cyprus)

London, Jun 23 — Bulker *Hawk* arrived Rio de Janeiro Jun 19.

HOHEBANK (U.K.)

Liverpool, Jun 22 — General cargo *Hohebank* went into Cammell Lairds Dry Dock and then the wet basin Jun 19 to undergo repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

HONG YUAN 189 (China)

See *Sea Breeze*.

IZVORUL MARE 1

Bucharest, Jun 23 — Pusher tug *Izvorul Mare 1*: Salvors cannot proceed earlier than Jun 26 as the access in the area of the accident is still restricted by the public prosecutors' order, due to the fact that the investigations of the competent authorities have not yet been completed. — Lloyd's Agents.

Bucharest, Jun 26 — Pusher tug *Izvorul Mare 1*: Salvors today began cutting and removing parts of floating crane No.682 with a view to removing/lifting the collapsed portal crane. — Lloyd's Agents.

JECK (U.S.A.)

London, Jun 26 — Stolt-Nielsen S.A. announced that at approximately 0409, local time, this morning, combined chemical and oil tank *Stolt Perseverance* (25196 gt, built 2001) was involved in a collision with a tug *Jeck* (116 gt, built 1968) near mile 64; Myrtle Grove, LA; on the Mississippi River. All of the *Stolt Perseverance's* crew are safe and accounted for. It is understood that the tug, which was moored by the Harvest States Grain Elevator, has since sunk. No crew members from the tug, or other personnel, have been reported as missing. The outer hull of the *Stolt Perseverance's* bow was slightly damaged above the waterline in the collision, however, her inner hull was not penetrated, and all cargo and bunker tanks remain intact, there is no reported pollution. The vessel, which was under pilotage at the time of the incident, is presently at anchorage where she will remain for the time being. Stolt-Nielsen Transportation Group, operator of the ship, is cooperating with the authorities to establish the cause of the incident.

London, Jun 26 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1815, UTC: *Stolt Perseverance* lost steering control at Mile 61, Mississippi River at 0923, UTC, this morning. Vessel contacted Harvest States Elevator dock and collided with tug *Jeck* which was pushing a grain barge. The barge was set free and the *Jeck* subsequently sank. Three persons on board *Jeck* safely rescued. Grain barge retrieved.

London, Jun 27 — Following received from the managers of combined chemical and oil tank *Stolt Perseverance*, dated today: *Stolt Perseverance* sustained minor bow damage in the collision with tug *Jeck* and this is presently being inspected

by classification society with a view to ascertaining necessary temporary repairs. Some minor steelwork will be required. It is hoped vessel will be allowed to proceed shortly, once the Coast Guard are satisfied that there is no damage to the rudder.

London, Jun 29 — Following received from the managers of Combined chemical and oil tank *Stolt Perseverance*, dated today: The *Stolt Perseverance* has carried out the minor repairs that were required following the contact with tug *Jeck* and the vessel has sailed for Europe following Coast Guard clearance.

KAGHAN (Pakistan)

Port Said, Jun 25 — While bulker *Kaghan* (36098 gt, built 1986) was clearing the canal with the northbound convoy on Jun 24, she went aground on HM 50, at 2130 hrs, at the entrance of the eastern branch of the Suez Canal. S.C.A tugs succeeded in refloating vessel at 0945 hrs today. *Kaghan* resumed passage having sustained no damages. — Lloyd's Agents.

Karachi, Jun 28 — Understand from Pakistan National Shipping Corp. (PNSC) that their bulker *Kaghan* is on her way to Spain and will reach there on schedule. The mishap has only caused a 12-hour delay in voyage time. The vessel is safe and sound. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

KARIM I (Cambodia)

Bucharest, Jun 26 — General cargo *Karim I* has not yet been refloated. — Lloyd's Agents.

KOMETIK (Canada)

London, Jun 28 — Crude oil tanker *Kometik* sailed from Halifax on Jun 25.

KONEMU (New Caledonia)

Noumea, Jun 22 — According to port authorities, the official receiver of product tanker *Konemu* is still waiting for Government authorisation to dynamite the vessel. — Lloyd's Agents.

KOTA PAHLAWAN (Liberia)

Brisbane, Jun 23 — Part of the port of Brisbane was cordoned off yesterday and today, due to leakage of gas from a consignment of SIPX (sodium isopropyl xanthate). The vessel was diverted to Brisbane, where eight containers were unloaded and monitored, with the area cordoned off with Police, State and Emergency services etc. Present situation is that the cargo has been made safe, but further action is at present pending. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Container Carrier *Kota Pahlawan*, which berthed at Brisbane yesterday with toxic and highly flammable cleaning chemicals leaking on board, has now left for Sydney. South-east Queensland emergency crews have removed the chemicals from four of the eight containers, which are now on the docks at Fisherman Islands.

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service spokesman Rod Kidner said the chemicals were not bound for Brisbane and authorities are now deciding what to do with them. "We're currently in contact the owners of the chemicals and chasing supporting data to find out where they're going to be relocated to, which mines," he said. "We're preparing a plan throughout the day to work out how we get those containers to those locations."

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Emergency crews in Brisbane have started decontaminating containers that leaked toxic, flammable fumes onboard container Carrier *Kota Pahlawan*. Emergency workers Thursday night (Jun 22) discovered eight containers of the chemical potassium ethyl xanthate were emitting fumes on the vessel after it tied up in the Port of Brisbane. A 300-metre exclusion zone was immediately set up around the Liberian-registered vessel. 30 emergency crew workers began neutralising the chemical by pumping nitrogen gas into the containers, which had been unloaded onto the docks at Fisherman's Island. A Queensland Fire and Rescue Service spokeswoman said the first phase of decontamination was completed by mid-afternoon when all the containers were pumped full of nitrogen. She said the containers would be monitored over the weekend after they had again with pumped with nitrogen. "We will be extra cautious and have a second round of purging (pumping nitrogen) done by tonight," the QFRS spokeswoman said. "We will continue to monitor that and keep doing readings over the weekend to see if there is a need for more nitrogen. "We are still trying to establish the owners of those containers. "Once it is declared safe, the containers are given to the shipping agent and they, along with the containers' owner, will decide what to do with them." The Fremantle-bound vessel has already left Brisbane and is due to call at Sydney.

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Container Carrier *Kota Pahlawan* has resumed its voyage to Sydney after Port of Brisbane emergency services neutralised a dangerous chemical leak. Queensland Fire and Rescue Services (QFRS) spokesman Andrew Berkman said the containers had all been neutralised and put back on board the vessel before it sailed about 0500, AEST, today. He said a QFRS scientific officer was remaining on board for the trip to Sydney, en route to Fremantle. "It is certainly stabilised at the moment, but (the QFRS officer) has got equipment with him that will monitor the containers," Mr Berkman said. "The containers have been put in an area of the vessel that is well away from any crew. So effectively, if there is any odour, it won't be affecting anyone." Mr Berkman said all QFRS crews, police and ambulance services had left Brisbane port.

LAVADARA (Greece)

London, Jun 23 — Following received from the managers of bulker *Lavadara*, dated today: *Lavadara* has been refloated and is expected alongside at San Nicolas, Arg, for discharge this afternoon.

Buenos Aires, Jun 27 — Bulker *Lavadara* is currently moored at Carbon Siderar pier in the port of San Nicolas, for discharge. — Lloyd's Agents.

LIN I

See "Somalia" under "Piracy".

LOMUR (Norway (Int. Register))

London, Jun 27 — General cargo *Lomur* sailed from Neap House on Jun 23.

MAERSK DOUALA (Germany)

London, Jun 27 — Container Carrier *Maersk Douala* sailed from Jawaharlal Nehru on Jun 21 for Salalah.

MARJOLAINE II (Canada)

London, Jun 27 — Passenger (cruise) *Marjolaine II* (399 gt, built 1904) made contact with the bottom near the entrance to the Chicoutimi channel in lat 48 25 21N, long 70 52.51W at 2230, Jun 24. Vessel proceeding to Ile au Coudre for repairs.

MCASPALT 401 (Canada)

London, Jun 23 — Tank barge *McAsphalt 401* in collision in Lake Erie, lat 42 09 41N, long 81 04 53W, at 2038, EST, Dec 16, arrived Hamilton (Can) Jun 20.

MICHELLE (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Jun 26 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Sheerleg *Taklift 7* is presently berthed in Den Helder with tug *Asterix*. It is contracted to raise the wreck of general cargo *Michelle* which sank after collision with general cargo *Kiefernwald* off the Dutch coast.

MOBY FANTASY (Italy)

Genoa, Jun 28 — Passenger ro/ro *Moby Fantasy* is presently under repair at Palumbo shipyard, Naples, where she arrived in tow. Ferry *Nuraghes* is still due to sail for Naples (it is unknown at present whether by her own means or in tow) where she will be repaired at Cantieri Navali del Mediterraneo shipyard. — Lloyd's Agents.

NAPOCOR POWER BARGE 105 (Philippines)

Manila, Jun 23 — The Philippine Coast Guard reported today that barge *Napocor Power Barge 105* (2311 gt, built 1992) caught fire at 0015 hrs, this morning, while docked at Masbate pier, in central Philippines. The vessel was crewed by four men and carried 400,000 litres of bunker fuel and 60,000 liters of fuel oil. The Coast Guard ordered all vessels docked near the burning barge to pull out and transfer to a safer side of the pier. Coast Guard search and rescue

vessel *BRP Romblon* was also dispatched to help combat the fire. An oil spill boom was laid out to prevent a possible oil spill. The fire was declared out at 0810 hrs. There were no casualties. Cause of the fire is still unknown. Extent of damage is still to be determined. Philippine Coast Guard commandant Admiral Arthur Gosingan said he had directed an immediate investigation on the accident. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 23 — The state-owned National Power Corporation (Napocor) denied that the fire which damaged barge *Napocor Power Barge 105* was an act of sabotage or terrorism. "The fire was an accident and we are still in the process of investigating how it started," Napocor vice-president for Small Power Utilities Group Lorenzo Marcelo said Friday. The 7.6 MW capacity vessel has been based in Masbate island in central Philippines since December 2005. It supplies 80 percent of the power needs of Masbate island and its shut down has caused widespread power outages on the island. The Philippine Coast Guard, which is also investigating the incident, is looking at all angles including sabotage. Since the government of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo put down a coup attempt early this year, there have been sporadic bomb attacks in Manila and other areas of the country. The Napocor also reported that there was no oil spillage from the barge. "All of the fuel in the barge is intact," Marcelo pointed out. To restore power on Masbate island, Napocor said that it may either deliver land-based generation sets to augment existing power supply or send a replacement power barge. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 28 — Barge *Napocor Power Barge 105* is still docked at the Masbate City Port after catching fire around 0015, Jun 23, which disrupted power service to the entire province. The Masbate fire department team is still investigating the cause of fire. The damage is estimated to be 30 million pesos, no advice regarding the repair. — Lloyd's Agents.

Manila, Jun 28 — Initial inspection by officials of barge *Napocor Power Barge 105* revealed that the fire caused extensive damage to the vessel. She sustained 100% damage to its control-room, a flooded engine-room and burned electrical cables. The vessel's power generators appeared not have been affected by the fire. A more thorough inspection will be conducted by insurance adjusters who are scheduled to visit the barge on Friday (Jun 30). Napocor sources said that the barge could be declared a total loss because of the severity of the damage. The company also said that it was still awaiting an official report from the Bureau of Fire Protection on the exact cause of the fire. The company continues to maintain that the fire was an accident and not caused by sabotage. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

NEW FERRY LXXXV (Hong Kong)

London, Jun 27 — Following received from Hong Kong MRCC, timed 1240, UTC: Macau-Hong Kong fast ferry *New Ferry LXXXV* is currently in Hong Kong waters, no further information available.

NORWAY (Bahamas)

Mumbai, Jun 29 — Understand passenger (cruise) *Norway*, now renamed *Blue Lady*, has not yet arrived at Alang. Also understand that the vessel not been declared by the Agents with Alang/Bhavnagar Port & Customs authorities. M/s. Haryana Ship Demolition Pvt.Ltd. are the end-buyers, and the vessel is likely to be beached/scrapped at their Yard (Plot No: V-4). — Lloyd's Agents.

NURAGHES (Italy)

Genoa, Jun 29 — Ferry *Nuraghes* will sail for Naples at 1800 hrs, today, under her own power. — Lloyd's Agents.

OCEAN D. (Malta)

Dubai, Jun 24 — Understand that bulker *Ocean D.* has arrived in Dubai (Port Rashid) on Jun 23 and is presently undergoing repairs. No further details made available. — Lloyd's Agents.

OCEAN SERAYA (Panama)

London, Jun 27 — Following received from managers of bulker *Ocean Seraya*, dated today: Managers of *Ocean Seraya* continue to work in close cooperation with the local port authorities in Karwar and salvage teams in relation to pollution prevention and clean up measures, including removal of any remaining fuel oil from the casualty. International salvors, Smit Salvage, whom owners engaged immediately following the grounding on May 30, have worked round the clock to save the fuel oil remaining on board, despite increasingly challenging weather conditions. Managers' casualty representative, who is currently overseeing operations on site, reported that an independent joint inspection of both sections of the ship, conducted in the presence of the Karwar Port Authority on Jun 23, showed that the oil had successfully been removed from all accessible tanks and compartments of the forward and aft sections of the vessel. In relation to the future salvage plan, owners have chartered tug *Mahanuwara* to be on site, with a view to safely removing the forward section of the grounded vessel from the rocks. It is noted, however, that with the onset of the monsoon season, *Ocean Seraya* has sustained substantial damage over the past two days. While Managers of *Ocean Seraya* had hoped to safely remove the forward section of the grounded ship from the rocks, refloating operations have been severely hampered by the onset of the monsoon season and the prevailing conditions are likely to make any such operations extremely dangerous and ill-advised.

Nevertheless, Managers and Salvors will monitor the condition of the casualty very closely over the coming days and intend to re-assess the possibility of refloating operations after the monsoon has passed. Managers of *Ocean Seraya* reiterate that they have done everything possible to complete the salvage operation quickly and safely.

OCEAN SPRING (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Jun 28 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: At 1100, local time, today, when arriving at Myre, general cargo *Ocean Spring* (1827 gt, built 1969) grounded outside the harbour. The vessel was refloated on the second attempt by Coast Guard vessel *Malene Ostervold* and moored to Myre for diving inspections. Only minor damage to vessel and no injuries to crew.

PACIFIC ADVENTURER (Hong Kong)

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Chinese military vessel sank in waters off southern China's Guangdong Province last Thursday (Jun 22) after colliding with general cargo *Pacific Adventurer* (18391 gt, built 1991), local and oversea media reported today. The U.S.-based Boxun news website reported that 13 of the 63 naval personnel onboard went missing and four others sustained serious injuries after the two vessels collided in the Pearl River near Zhuhai. Hong Kong's Apple Daily, quoting a military news program of China's state-run CCTV, also confirmed the date of the collision and that 13 naval personnel were missing, but it did not reveal the type of the military vessel. The daily quoted another source as saying a third of the boat was cut off and sank in the sea, killing four people. A Hong Kong Marine Department spokeswoman confirmed the 23,700-ton displacement *Pacific Adventurer*, which belongs to Swire Group subsidiary China Navigation Co., had collided with a Chinese military patrol boat at the mouth of the Pearl River on Jun 22, and the Chinese marine authorities had asked to meet with China Navigation. "The cargo ship remains in China for investigation," the spokeswoman said. "Whether anyone was injured or missing onboard the Chinese boat is still under investigation." China Navigation spokeswoman Maisie Shunwah said they do not know the cause of the collision, adding all 28 crew members aboard the cargo vessel, which was heading from China to Thailand, were uninjured. China's Communications Ministry and Guangdong's Maritime Safety Administration, which oversee the investigation, both declined to confirm casualties or the type of vessel involved.

London, Jun 28 — At least three separate investigations have been launched into last Thursday's (Jun 22)

collision between China Navigation's multi-purpose tweendecker *Pacific Adventurer* and a Chinese naval vessel in which four military personnel were reported to have been killed with 13 still missing. None of the 26 crew aboard the 1991-built, 25,561 dwt *Pacific Adventurer* was reported to have been hurt. The Hong Kong-flagged vessel collided with the People's Liberation Army patrol vessel near Zhuhai in the Pearl River estuary in southern China at 0351, local time, Jun 22. Hong Kong's Marine Department confirmed it had instigated a probe into the incident because the tweendecker was Hong Kong registered. China's Maritime Safety Administration has also begun an investigation while China Navigation, part of John Swire & Sons in London, has conducted an internal inquiry. Marine Department marine accident investigation chief Leung Hou-kin said an investigator was due to meet MSA officials in Guangzhou and take statements from the crew yesterday and today. He confirmed that the *Pacific Adventurer* and the crew had been detained near Guangzhou. But Mr Leung added that the Marine Department had been assured by MSA's Guangzhou regional office and headquarters in Beijing that both the vessel and crew would be released in "one or two days." Both vessels were plotted on radar by Hong Kong's vessel traffic centre, but the Marine Department has very little information so far on what happened. Mr Leung said the incident is sensitive because it involved a Chinese naval vessel. Swire Group spokeswoman Maisie Shun Wah said there was slight damage to the tweendecker. The crew, comprising an Australian master, British chief engineer, a Tuvaluan second engineer and 23 Chinese seafarers, "were totally unharmed". In a statement issued by Swire yesterday, the firm said the master immediately came to the bridge following "a loud noise [that] came from the port quarter." Ms Shun emphatically denied Chinese television reports that the *Pacific Adventurer* had been involved in a hit-and-run incident and had left the scene of the collision. She said: "It did nothing of the sort. I want to stress that under international safety guidelines we have to check our own ship to make sure it was undamaged and the crew unhurt." Swire said the master "after assessing the situation, slowed the ship down and checked his vessel for any casualties and structural damage to the hull, including all tanks". "Once the ship was found to be in a safe condition with no personnel injuries, he turned the ship around and immediately returned to the site of the incident," it added. The firm said the master saw the naval vessel had some damage to its bow and bridge and a liferaft had been launched. Marine authorities in Guangzhou were contacted but Swire said officials refused to give details of the vessel or allow the *Pacific Adventurer* crew to directly

communicate with the naval vessel. As there was no information forthcoming from either the naval vessel or the Guangzhou authorities, China Navigation staff in Hong Kong advised the crew to resume the voyage to Sri Racha. But the Guangzhou MSA office asked the vessel to return to Guangzhou three or four hours later to assist in a full investigation. Ms Shun rejected other reports and said the patrol boat "definitely did not sink" after the collision. She was unable to confirm Chinese media stories that four military personnel were killed and another 13 were missing after the collision or that the military vessel had 63 personnel on board. China Navigation managing director Geoff Cundle added: "Unfortunately, we had no knowledge of any casualties on the other ship until the media reports." "Firstly, we offer our deepest condolences to the families of the crew who died in this accident. As a company, we have a longstanding commercial relationship with China and we have offered our full co-operation to the Chinese authorities in their investigation into this tragic accident." Media identified the vessel as one of six missile patrol boats China has in its military arsenal, with four based at the naval garrison in Hong Kong. But Mr Leung said: "At the time of the accident the Chinese military vessel was not based in Hong Kong."

PORTUNUS (U.K.)

Hull, Jun 27 — Fishing (general) *Portunus* is currently berthed at Allerton's repair yard, Lowestoft, waiting for approval to commence repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

PXXI P21 (oil platform)

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Salvage tug *Zouros Hellas* was expected off Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic Ocean yesterday to take over of the recovery of the semi submersible platform *PXXI P21*, which went aground on the south-east of the island near Trypot Bay. The platform, which was being towed behind the tug *Mighty Deliverer* from Brazil to Singapore via Cape Town, became separated in March during a patch of adverse weather. Visual contact was maintained until mid May when further bad weather separated the two vessels. A second tug *Ruby Deliverer* subsequently arrived to assist in locating the whereabouts of the missing rig and to help secure a new tow but neither had any success - the rig had disappeared into the vastness of one of the world's emptiest oceans. The owners appointed SMIT Salvage of South Africa to refloat the rig and they have dispatched the tug *Zouros Hellas* which was expected at the island yesterday afternoon. During the crossing extremely rough seas were encountered leaving many of the tug's crew stricken with seasickness. With the tug on the scene salvage operations are expected to get

underway, weather permitting - but possibly as early as this weekend. Once the platform has been refloated the plan is to take it to Cape Town for a full survey and any necessary repairs before continuing the interrupted voyage to Singapore.

Rotterdam, Jun 23 — Salvage tug *Zouros Hellas* arrived at the location of semi submersible platform *PXXI P21* at Tristan da Cunha at 1600, UTC, Jun 22. A survey of the platform is to be carried out prior to refloating efforts. — SMIT Salvage BV.

QUEEN OF THE NORTH (Canada)

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Investigators are trying to retrieve data from a key piece of navigation gear recovered from the sunken passenger ro/ro *Queen of the North*. Transportation Safety Board spokesman John Cottreau said the vessel's electronic chart device was plucked from its bridge by the crew of a mini-sub during a dive last week. He said the device included a computer hard drive, but it was too early to say whether data on the drive would be intact. "We're working on it at present," Mr. Cottreau said. "I'm very confident in the video data and the still data. I can't even make a guess as to whether the disc data will lead to recoverable data." The electronic chart device was identified in a May 11 TSB advisory letter to BC Ferries that said not everyone on the bridge knew how to dim the monitor. Mr. Cottreau said the mini-sub also made a complete video and photographic record of the bridge, including documenting the settings on dials and the way switches were thrown.

REEF ZANZIBAR (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Jun 26 — Following received from Coast Guard San Francisco, timed 1023, UTC: Roll Off *Reef Zanzibar* (7337 gt, built 1981) is reporting taking water at a high rate approximately 600 nautical miles off Somalia, in lat 05 49N, long 60 51.5E, and is requesting tug assistance.

London, Jun 26 — Following received from the operators of roll on roll off *Reef Zanzibar*, dated today: *Reef Zanzibar*, Port Rashid for Mahe with general cargo, was taking water through a broken propeller shaft. The shaft has now been secured and the distress signal has been cancelled. A tug is proceeding to take the vessel in tow, ETA on scene Jun 30.

London, Jun 29 — Following received from the operators of roll on roll off *Reef Zanzibar*, dated today: *Reef Zanzibar* is still awaiting a tug, which is now expected to arrive on scene in two to three days. The vessel reports no problems on board.

RISING OM (Panama)

See under "Miscellaneous".

RT ZOE (Malta)

London, Jun 26 — Blohm + Voss in Hamburg has finished repair work on

the newbuilding tug *RT Zoe* (343 gt, built 2006) after the wheelhouse had been completely destroyed during a salvage operation for burning container carrier *Hyundai Fortune*. The tug, owned by Kotug of Rotterdam, was on a positioning voyage from its builders in Singapore to Hamburg, when it collided with the bow of *Hyundai Fortune*. (Note — *RT Zoe* sailed Singapore Mar 9.)

SAFMARINE AGULHAS (Liberia)

London, Jun 26 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 2000, UTC: Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* (16800 gt, built 1995) is currently aground off East London.

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated Jun 26, states: Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* ran aground moments after leaving East London on Monday night (Jun 26). Port spokesperson Terry Taylor said the 184m-long vessel was nearly a kilometre offshore when it lost power and strong onshore winds pushed it towards the western breakwater. It ran aground on a sandbank 200m from the breakwater. There were two tugs trying to attach lines to the vessel and tow it off the sand bank when the tide had come in. "The two tugs are changing their towlines and will attempt to pull her off," he said. The crew was not in any immediate danger and power had been restored to the engines. He said the damage, if any, was not known and the vessel was not taking on water. The vessel's next port of call was Port Elizabeth. Taylor said the vessel did not have a full load when it left port in three-metre swells.

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* is still aground off the East London harbour, said National Port Authority spokesperson Terry Taylor today. "There's no change. She's still aground about 50m off the breakwall," said Taylor. He said the ship was apparently aground on sand. "We're awaiting a salvage crew from Cape Town which will work with our harbour craft. "They will go aboard by helicopter and assess the situation." *Safmarine Agulhas* ran aground shortly after leaving harbour at about 1830, local time, last night, about two hours after high tide. The ship lost power and ran aground off the harbour's western breakwall. She was on her way to Durban. East London harbour tugs tried to pull her off but the line snapped and the tugs could not get close enough again due to heavy swells of up to 5m, said Taylor. "They tried on numerous occasions after that but there were huge sea conditions." The crew of 22 are still aboard the *Agulhas*. "They're all fine." High tide is at about 1600, local time, and salvors may wait until then to make another attempt to pull the ship free.

London, Jun 27 — Following press release received today: *Safmarine* confirms that container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas*, a 1,706 nominal

TEU container ship owned by F.A Vinnen & Co Gmbh & Co and deployed on the Europe/South Africa Intermediate service, ran aground in rough seas at approximately 2115 hrs, on Monday Jun 26, while leaving the port of East London, South Africa. The vessel is currently on charter to *Safmarine Container Lines N.V.* All persons on board are unharmed and the vessel is sound. No oil spill has been reported and all relevant authorities have been informed of the incident. Immediate attempts were made to refloat her. Regrettably, these attempts have been unsuccessful due to rough seas, which are preventing the National Port Authority (NPA) tugs from getting close enough to get the lines on board the vessel. *Safmarine* is working closely with the vessel owners, Vinnen & Co., the NPA, SAMSAs (South African Maritime Safety Authorities) and the appointed salvors, Smit Marine, providing all appropriate support to the salvage operation. The salvors will begin operations to remove bunkers from the vessel this morning. The vessel has 662mt of heavy fuel on board (HFO), 88mt of diesel oil (DO) and is carrying 469 loaded containers and 112 empty containers.

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated Jun 27, states: The grounded container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* is not causing pollution and three vessels are heading to East London to help it, the South African Maritime Safety Authority (Samsa) said today. "There is no pollution from the vessel at the moment and a close watch is being kept so that any pollution may be detected early," said Samsa's general manager: operations, Captain Saleem Modak, from Pretoria. He said a salvage tug and two pollution abatement vessels were heading to East London for the salvage operation, which is being coordinated by Samsa in East London. National Port Authority spokesperson in East London, Terry Taylor, said earlier there were 22 crew on board and they were all fine. Modak said removing the vessel's fuel was a priority, together with refloating the vessel. He said there were 662 metric tonnes of fuel oil, 88 metric tonnes of marine diesel and 37 metric tonnes of lube oils onboard. "The ship's cargo includes some containerised hazardous materials and marine pollutants. At the moment these cargoes are safe on board but plans are being put in place for landing this ashore should the need arise," said Modak. He would not identify the hazardous materials, but said a wide range of substances, including paint and aerosol spray, was defined as hazardous. "It's not radioactive and it's not explosive, not heavy toxins." Modak said Samsa had ordered the Department of Transport's contract pollution prevention standby tug, the *Smit Amandla*, to go to East London from False Bay, Cape Town. It was expected on Wednesday afternoon (Jun 28). "In the meantime the East London harbour tugs and equipment

are being used to mitigate the incident." The *Safmarine Agulhas*'s owners have awarded the salvage contract to Smit Marine South Africa, which operates the *Smit Amandla*. *Smit Amandla* is also sending the pollution abatement vessel *Kuswag IV* from Mossel Bay, which is expected on Thursday. Smit Marine's Clare du Plooy-Gomes said from Cape Town that a salvage team travelled to East London on Monday night. Modak said the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism was sending an anti-pollution vessel to help deal with any pollution and this would arrive on this afternoon. The department was also sending equipment and a team.

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Hopes of refloating the firmly grounded container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* from its precarious position just behind the East London harbour breakwater hinge on the world's most powerful deep sea salvage tug, *Smit Amandla*, which is expected to reach East London tonight. *Safmarine Agulhas* remains intact and salvors already on board say there are no signs of pollution, according to a statement issued last night by a joint operations committee set up to drive the rescue/salvage operation.

London, Jun 28 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0949, UTC: Container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* is still aground. A refloating attempt will be made later today, at high tide.

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Attempts to salvage container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas*, which is stranded off East London harbour, will only begin tomorrow. Terry Taylor, the National Port Authority spokesperson, says this is because the salvage tug *Smit Amandla* will only arrive in East London late today after leaving False Bay in Cape Town last night. He says nothing will be happening this morning except to prepare for the actual towing tomorrow. The ship's 22 crew remain on board.

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated today, states: An attempt to refloat the stranded container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* at East London has been postponed. After putting cables in place on Wednesday afternoon, the salvors, Smit Amandla Marine, delayed the attempt so that connections between the salvage tug *Smit Amandla* and the ship could be made in daylight, said company spokesperson Clare Gomes. The attempt would go ahead at high tide today, she said. A team of salvors on board would monitor the structural integrity of the vessel overnight. As they were not in danger, the crew of 22 had not left the vessel, which ran aground on sand off the East London harbour breakwater on Monday night. East London National Port Authority spokesperson Terry Taylor said that *Smit Amandla*, a Transport Department pollution standby tug managed by the South African Maritime Safety Authority, had

arrived from Cape Town at 1430 hrs, on Wednesday. Gomes said the safety and protection of the marine environment were the priorities. The environmental affairs department's patrol vessel *Victoria Mxenge* and its oil pollution patrol aircraft Kuswag VIII were monitoring any pollution threat. The German-owned *Safmarine Agulhas* is on charter to Safmarine Container Lines.

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* remains firmly aground behind the East London breakwater, but with salvage tug *Smit Amandla* having attached a line to her last night and two East London harbour tugs set to take up tow lines this morning, it's all systems go for an attempt to free her to be made late this afternoon. Yesterday's rescue attempt of the Liberian registered freighter, which ran aground just off the breakwater on Monday night after losing her engines as she was leaving for Durban, was called off as fast-approaching darkness overtook the operation. People thronged the Esplanade to watch, but left, disappointed. If the ship is freed today it will be moved about 10km offshore, where experts will assess the ship's condition. Then she is likely to be brought into port.

London, June 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Salvors are waiting for the afternoon high tide to try again to pull the grounded Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* free, the National Port Authority (NPA) said today. "They're preparing everything again for high tide this afternoon. From 1500 hrs onwards they'll try again," said NPA East London spokesperson Terry Taylor. High tide is at about 1800 hrs. Smit Salvage teams started attempts to pull the ship free this morning after attaching cables to three tugs. Taylor said there was still a "light pull" on the cable from salvage tug *Smit Amandla* to the ship. "The first full attempt will be made this evening," said the spokesperson for Smit Salvage, Clare Gomes of Smit Amandla Marine. She said the salvage team had decided to "reconfigure" the tugs, moving them to different positions. Taylor said weather conditions were still good and the ship remained in good condition.

SALONA (Honduras)

London, Jun 29 — Following received from Coast Guard Gothenburg, timed 0917, UTC: General cargo *Salona* (886 gt, built 1973), from Kristinehamn with 1,200 tonnes wooden pallets, was reported aground in Lake Vanern, in lat 58 45N, long 13 15.121E, at about 0630, local time today. The vessel has a hole in the forepeak and another hole in the No 2 starboard ballast tank. No oil leakage reported. A Coast Guard vessel is on scene.

SEA BREEZE (Slovakia)

Antwerp, Jun 29 — At about 0100 hrs, Jun 26, general cargo *Sea Breeze*

(13521 gt, built 1983) contacted with barge *Hong Yuan 189* near the berth of a Shanghai terminal. At the time of contact, *Sea Breeze*, laden with some cargo loaded in her first port in China, was moving to terminal and intended to turn around to berth. This accident did not cause major damage to either ship and was soon settled by an agreement. *Sea Breeze* departed Shanghai on Jun 28 for Singapore and Indonesian ports. — DPS Teamhead Surveyors.

SEA LION (Isle of Man)

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

SEA TAXI (Cambodia)

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A US Coast Guard official said general cargo *Sea Taxi*, which reported taking on water last night was safely towed to shore. Petty Officer James Judge said six people were on board the vessel but were uninjured, and pumps prevented more water from flooding the vessel. The vessel was about 12 miles off the coast when it reported running aground at around 2330 hrs. The Coast Guard responded and stopped water from flooding the vessel. The vessel was towed to an anchorage area in Government Cut. The Coast Guard said it would be taken up the Miami River, where it would be repaired.

London, Jun 22 — Following received from Coast Guard Miami, timed 2101, UTC: General cargo *Sea Taxi* is currently moored at Miami, awaiting a diver's inspection.

London, Jun 23 — Following received from Coast Guard Miami, timed 1425, UTC: General cargo *Sea Taxi* remains at Miami undergoing inspections.

SHANGHAI PRIDE (Panama)

London, Jun 29 — General cargo *Shanghai Pride* arrived at New Orleans on Jun 28.

SHENANDOAH HIGHWAY (Panama)

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated Jun 25, states: Vehicle carrier *Shenandoah Highway* (47368 gt, built 1992), that ran aground earlier today, has been pulled to deeper water and is being held offshore of Port Canaveral until it is safe to enter port. The *Shenandoah Highway*, carrying automobiles, left Southampton, and attempted to enter Port Canaveral today at about 0530. A few minutes later the vessel ran aground. Coast Guard inspectors from Marine Safety Detachment Port Canaveral boarded tugs and a small boat crew from Station Port Canaveral to assess the situation. Crews didn't spot any pollution when they arrived at the vessel's position and started making preparations to remove the vessel from the sandy bottom. Using four contracted tugs, the vessel was pulled from the bottom and is being held offshore until divers can inspect the hull to insure that vessel is

structurally sound. (Note — *Shenandoah Highway* sailed Southampton Jun 15.)

SILVER LAKE (U.S.A.)

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A series of mechanical problems on several of the N.C. Ferry Division's sound-class vessels have put them in the shipyard for repairs and left travellers vying for available slots on limited runs. As of yesterday, the motor vessels *Hyde* and passenger (cruise) *Silver Lake* (688 gt, built 1951) remained in the Manns Harbor shipyard. Passengers on the Swan Quarter to Ocracoke route and the Cedar Island to Ocracoke route have felt the pinch, with boats running at off-season schedules instead of offering the additional runs that typically go into effect on Memorial Day. During a routine inspection of the *Hyde* a few months ago, workers discovered asbestos falling off the vessel. The *Silver Lake* is expected to be out of commission another two weeks as officials wait for repairs to a gear box.

SKAGERN (Sweden)

Hull, Jun 23 — General cargo *Skagern* was lifted at about noon, yesterday. Cargo discharge is continuing. Operations should be completed by tomorrow afternoon. — United Salvage Limited.

Hull, Jun 26 — General cargo *Skagern* was redelivered to owners at Hull on Jun 25. — United Salvage Limited.

SOFRANA MAGELLAN (Antigua & Barbuda)

Wellington, Jun 25 — A local press report, dated Jun 24, states: Additional repair work ordered by the insurers and underwriters of part containerised general cargo *Sofrana Magellan* (6638 gt, built 1986) has caused a major reshuffle in Sofrana's New Zealand-West Pac schedule. Having departed Auckland on voyage 101 on Jun 6, the vessel was about 100 nautical miles short of Noumea when it sustained a significant engine failure and had to be towed into port in the morning of Jun 10. Discovering the problem was a broken clutch, a replacement part was then airfreighted from Germany and fitted on Monday this week (Jun 19). However, it was subsequently identified foundation bolts needed to be replaced and the gearbox realigned to the main engine. As a consequence, Sofrana New Zealand managing director BenoOt Marcenac said a decision was made to divert the *Sofrana Kermadec* voyage 122 to Noumea this week. "The *Sofrana Kermadec* was coming south from the Solomon Islands and was more or less around New Caledonia any way," said Mr Marcenac. "It is going to take everything the *Sofrana Magellan* had on board and the *Sofrana Magellan* will come back to New Zealand with the *Sofrana Kermadec's* cargo when it is fixed." The *Sofrana Kermadec* is now expected to arrive in Brisbane on

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Jun 24 on voyage 123 and then progress to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. The *Sofrana Magellan* is due to depart Noumea on Jun 26 and arrive in Tauranga on Jul 1. It will then commence voyage 102, taking over from the *Sofrana Kermadec* voyage 123. Sofrana is advising shippers to expect a delay of about eight days against its previously-advertised schedule for the *Sofrana Kermadec* voyage 123. Had the remedial action not been taken, the two vessels were likely to be calling at the West Pac ports at about the same time. — Lloyd's Agents.

ST.LUC EXPRESS (Honduras)

Miami, Jun 26 — General cargo *St.Luc Express*: Have been advised that Beyel Brothers, the company which is holding this vessel, had 30 days to remove it but still have not done so. The Fish and Wildlife and State Attorney may be filing charges against Beyel Brothers or the owners of the vessel, who have still not been located. — Lloyd's Agents.

STOLT PERSEVERANCE (Cayman Islands)

See *Jeck*.

SUN ISLAND (Panama)

London, June 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials at the Bach Dang shipyard in Haiphong said yesterday that the newly built general cargo *Sun Island* that got hung up on its own launch rails has now been towed into the water without further damage. *Sun Island* was resurrected by high tide, after which it was easily towed to the water with the support of a cable network. Truong Hoang Cao, Deputy Director of the shipyard said the incident caused no delays in the planned August handover to the shipowner.

SURYA MAKMUR INDAH

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 31 people including an Australian and two Americans were missing after ferry *Surya Makmur Indah*, with 116 people on board, sank in waters off North Sumatra Province in western Indonesia, a local police officer said today. The wreckage of the vessel was found on the island of Bintanak near the town of Sibolga today, the police officer in the province's Tapanuli Tengah Regency told Kyodo News. "All but 31 have survived the incident," the officer said. Twelve crew members were among the 116 people. "The ferry left the town of Gunungsitoli on Nias Island at 2130 yesterday and was on its way to Sibolga when it was probably hit by high waves and strong winds," the officer said. Indonesia's navy had pulled 73 survivors from choppy seas, Lieutenant Colonel Jaka Santosa, chief of the Sibolga naval base, said earlier. An Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade spokesman said officials were making inquiries. "We are aware of reports a ferry has sunk between Nias Island and Sibolga," the spokesman

said. "Consular officials from our Jakarta embassy are liaising with local authorities to determine whether any Australians are on board." Sibolga is about 1,200 km north-west of Jakarta, while Bintanak is six km west of Sibolga. It was not immediately known when the vessel sank but most probably early today. "I received the report about the accident at 0830 today," Lt Col Jaka Sentosa, navy base commander in Sibolga, told Kyodo News.

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescue vessels picked up 73 people from ferry *Surya Makmur Indah*, which that sank off Sumatra Island yesterday, but were searching last night for at least 43 missing people, an Indonesian navy spokesman said. The accident occurred about 64km off the port of Sibolga, on western Sumatra, said Lieutenant Colonel Jaka Sentosa. "The information we have received is that the boat sprang a leak and that the weather was very bad," he said. He said at least three foreigners were believed to be on the boat, which was heading to the island of Nias, a popular spot for foreign surfers.

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescuers plucked a survivor from the sea today close to where ferry *Surya Makmur Indah* sank, but bad weather and heavy waves hampered their search for about 30 others still missing, a navy spokesman said. The 20-year-old man was the 94th survivor to be rescued from the vessel, which sank yesterday off the western coast of Sumatra island after being swamped by waves, said Lt Col Jaka Sentosa. A helicopter spotted two people — apparently alive and wearing lifejackets — in the sea, but strong winds and heavy seas prevented its crew from attempting a rescue, Jaka said. Smaller rescue vessels could not leave harbour because of the bad weather, he said. Eleven survivors were rescued by a vessel operated by the World Food Program, a spokesman for the UN agency said. The exact number of people on board *Surya Makmur Indah* was not known because its manifest was incomplete, but authorities believed they were searching for around 30 others, a figure based on accounts from survivors, Jaka said. Survivors have said most passengers had time to don life jackets before the vessel sank. Earlier reports that three foreigners were on board were incorrect, Jaka said.

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescue teams found 12 more passengers yesterday from ferry *Surya Makmur Indah*, which capsized off North Sumatra, bringing the number of survivors to 94 with at least 39 others still unaccounted for. The vessel, bound for Nias Island from Sibolga port with 133 passengers and crew, sank during a storm late Wednesday night (Jun 21). Officials confirmed that three U.S. citizens were not on the vessel, despite initial reports. Sibolga Port administrator Frits Agamsyah said

the three foreigners left Sibolga for Nias on the similarly named *KM Surya Makmur Jaya*, which arrived safely on the island on Thursday. Frits believed the actual number of missing was probably much higher. "From our data, many passengers on board the ship did not purchase tickets, making the real number of passengers higher than the listed passengers." He said it was common practice for passengers to board the ship without tickets, because they knew they could pay a smaller amount when officials did their rounds. Chief of Sibolga Naval Base, Lt. Col. Jaka Santoso, said that based on its data, there were 120 passengers and 13 crew on board the ferry, and 94 survivors were confirmed as of yesterday afternoon. The search yesterday was hampered by bad weather, with smaller vessels forced to return to port. "There was a storm at sea today so it's hard for the team to find victims due to the high waves. But five big ships have continued the search, and the team has kept on by using a Casa aircraft," Jaka said. No dead bodies have been found around the hull of the vessel, which was located at a depth of 50 meters underwater.

Jakarta, Jun 26 — Nine people have been confirmed dead and 25 were still missing after the sinking of ferry *Surya Makmur Indah* last week off Sumatra island's west coast, a search and rescue official said today. Zaenul Tahar also said that 95 people had been saved since the vessel ran into bad weather and high waves early last Thursday (Jun 22) and sank. That figure was just one higher than the number as of Friday. Tahar said rough weather had hampered the search for survivors and casualties, but conditions were favorable today. "We found eight bodies just now, early this morning," Tahar said. "I think they were too long in the sea and suffered from dehydration. It's hard to identify who they are." The vessel, which regularly took people to Nias island, sprang a leak before it hit huge waves. — Reuters.

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A rescue team has found 16 bodies in the waters off Sumatera island after ferry *Surya Makmur Indah* sank last week, a navy commander said today. Lt-Col Jaka Santosa, commander of navy base in Sibolga district of North Sumatera Province, said that some 20 others, who were still missing, were also feared died due to a long stay in the sea. He said the search for the missing would end tomorrow. "We have found 16 bodies. The possibility of those missing being alive is very small," he said. There were about 120 passengers and 13 crew members on the ferry. Altogether 94 survivors were confirmed as of last Friday afternoon (Jun 23).

Jakarta, Jun 29 — Indonesia has called off the search for survivors and bodies from ferry *Surya Makmur Indah*, that sank off western Sumatra a week ago, a navy officer said today.

Nearly 100 passengers were rescued after the ferry sank in bad weather. Officials said 16 people were confirmed dead and around 20 were still missing. Lieutenant-Colonel Jaka Santoso, commander of the Sibolga naval base, told Reuters that the search ended yesteryday after efforts, including an aerial hunt, failed to yield survivors or bodies. Precise figures on the missing and presumed dead are often difficult to obtain because manifests do not always list last-minute passengers, while some manage to get aboard without paying. — Reuters.

SWAN (Netherlands Antilles)

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated Jun 25, states: Semi-sub HL/tank *Swan* (22788 gt, built 1981), carrying huge road-deck sections for the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge, had to turn back when the giant load brushed the underside of the existing bridge. The deck sections were stacked on the semi-submersible vessel *Swan* when the mishap occurred Friday (Jun 23). The deck sections themselves didn't strike the old bridge, but some scaffolding atop the sections grazed it. The vessel immediately stopped, turned around and headed back to Tacoma's Commencement Bay. No one was hurt and apparently no damage was done to the existing bridge. Erin Hunter, a spokeswoman for Tacoma Narrows Constructors, which is building the bridge, said that more ballast might have to be added to the vessel to lower it farther in the water. Engineers had calculated that the *Swan* would fit neatly under the bridge. They were working Saturday to figure out how their calculations went astray, Hunter said. State Department of Transportation employees examined the bridge and found some minor scratches, but determined there was no serious damage, spokeswoman Claudia Cornish said. The vessel arrived at Tacoma on Jun 8 from South Korea. The plan is to anchor the *Swan* under the new bridge and hoist the deck sections into place using gantry cranes that are in place on the bridge cables. The sections weigh an average of 450 tons apiece. No date had been set for another attempt to move the vessel into place, Hunter said. (Note — According to LMIU AIS *Swan* was stationary in lat 47 17 8.04N, long 122 25 17.28W at 0134, UTC, today.

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated Jun 28, states: Semi-sub HL/tank *Swan*, carrying deck sections for the new Tacoma Narrows bridge, hit the old bridge last week because engineers miscalculated the height of the underside of the old bridge, the state's project manager says. The vessel had 16 deck sections stacked 135 feet above the water level. The bridge builders thought it would glide under the sidespan of the old bridge with 36 feet to spare. But temporary scaffolding on top of the deck sections hit the underside of the bridge and toppled over on Friday (Jun 23). No

one was hurt and there was no damage to the existing bridge, said Linea Laird, project manager for the state Department of Transportation. "It was an error in a calculation," she said Tuesday. "An elevation was wrong. It was based on an erroneous assumption, and it just got carried on through the process." Laird said that because the elevation error was used in all calculations for the complex four and a half month deck-lifting process, everything has to be rethought, from the timing of lifts to the length of anchor chains used to keep the vessel in position. "A lot of things have to be reconsidered and re-evaluated," she said. "There's no sense in being shortsighted at this point. The important thing is to get it right." Tacoma Narrows Constructors, the bridge's builder, has not commented except to say that the accident was still being evaluated. Laird said she does not expect the setback to further delay the \$849 million bridge project, which already is three months behind schedule. In May, the bridge builders told the state the opening would be delayed until at least July 2007. The delay will cost the bridge builder significant fines. The contract calls for penalties of \$12,500 a day for the first 90 days the bridge is late. If the bridge is not open by Jul 2, 2007, the penalty will jump to \$125,000 a day, up to a maximum of \$45 million. When the new bridge opens, all traffic will temporarily be shifted to the new bridge so retrofitting work can begin on the existing 1950 span. There is 11 months of work to do on the existing bridge, said Claudia Cornish, a spokeswoman for the bridge project. The company is contracted to complete the entire project by Feb 26, 2008. Missing that deadline would trigger more penalties.

SYMS SONGSHAN (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Jun 28 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0940, UTC: General cargo *SYMS Songshan* (9957 gt, built 2005), China for Osaka with 540 containers, grounded off Imabari, in lat 34 07.4N, long 132 59.6E, at 0325, local time, Jun 27. Vessel remains aground.

London, Jun 29 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 0500, UTC: General cargo *SYMS Songshan* was refloated yesterday, with assistance from three tugs, and is now at anchor near the grounding position.

TAI HUA HAI (China)

Antwerp, Jun 29 — About 0230 hrs, Jun 17, bulker *Tai Hua Hai* (27598 gt, built 1991), on her way from Bointan, Indonesia for Qingdao, China, fully laden with about 45,400 tonnes of Indonesia Metallurgical Grade Bauxite, collided with bulker *Xinshi Hai* (38236 gt, built 1995) in the waters of Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province, China. *Tai Hua Hai* sustained a hole in her forepeak tank and cargo hold No.1 and soon sank by head nine metres. Relevant salvage

work was carried out in the next several days. She was going to have a permanent repair in a nearby shipyard at the end of June. *Xinshi Hai* proceeded to a nearby shipyard for permanent repairs. — DPS Teamhead Surveyors.

TIRTA NIAGA I (Indonesia)

Kolkata, Jun 23 — Product tanker *Tirta Niaga I* was anchored off Paradip with engine problem. The vessel transferred its cargo to tanker *Belicia*. It is now proceeding for repairs, however, the exact place of repair is not known at this stage. — Lloyd's Agents.

TUTUMA (Nigeria)

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated Jun 24, states: Seven out of the 24 crew members from product tanker *Tutuma* that exploded during the week are feared dead. Sources said that seven were feared dead when the manifest of the vessel was seen and out of the 24 crew members, 17 were accounted for while 7 were missing. Assistant General Manager (AGM) Public Affairs of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mr. Christopher Borha, yesterday said that from investigation carried out by the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), it was discovered that the explosion was caused by a problem in the "change over switch that controls the ship to shore. Although the NPA refused to comment on inquires whether there were any death or injury to crew members, an unconfirmed report said that three persons may have died while two others with critically burns are in a private hospital. A source in the safety department of Obat Petroleum, owners of the vessel said that the corpse of an unidentified male was found floating around the area of the vessel.

VERRAZANO BRIDGE (Panama)

London, Jun 27 — Container Carrier *Verrazano Bridge* sailed from Tokyo on Jun 23 for Tacoma.

VIRGINIA C. (U.S.A.)

London, Jun 26 — Following received from Coast Guard Boston, timed 1611, UTC: There has been no change in the situation of barge *Virginia C*.

VOLGONEFT 120 (Russia)

Mariupol, Jun 23 — Agents of product tanker *Volgoneft 120* have advised that the vessel completed the repairs at Sevastopol and at the beginning of April 2006, sailed for Russian port Rostov-Don. — Lloyd's Agents.

WAPPEN VON HAMBURG (Germany)

London, Jun 23 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: Passenger (cruise) *Wappen von Hamburg*, which experienced engine damage en route to Helgoland, has completed repairs and will resume its schedule today. Passenger *AtlantiS2* which temporarily replaced the vessel

returns to Bremerhaven from Cuxhaven and will resume its normal schedule on Jun 24.

WEILAI LANKA (Indonesia)

See *Bina Ta Fa*.

XINSHI HAI (Hong Kong)

See *Tai Hua Hai*.

ZHOU SHAN 611 (Japan)

Yokohama, Jun 28 — Fishing *Zhou Shan 611* was towed to China after experiencing engine trouble. — Lloyd's Agents.



SOMALIA

Manila, Jun 27 — Negotiations between Somali pirates and the owner of the hijacked product tanker *Lin I* to secure the release of the tanker and its 19 Filipino crew are on-going, Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs Gilbert Asuque said today. He said that the Philippine government is closely monitoring the negotiations and hopes for a positive outcome. He noted, however, that the government will not pay any ransom for the hostages and the hostaged Philippine seamen. He added, that it would not object if the shipowner decides that it is in its best interest to pay a ransom for the release of the ship and its crew. Asuque gave no other details. The pirates are believed to be demanding a ransom in the region of US\$400,000. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.



UNITED STATES

London, Jun 23 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1445, UTC: Container carrier *Sea Lion* has been released. (Note — According to LMIU AIS, *Sea Lion* was subsequently reported in lat 28 58 17.63N, long 94 25 25.75W, at 0243, UTC, Jun 22.)



AEGEAN I (Greece)

Piraeus, Jun 28 — Passenger *Aegean I* laid up Eleusis Jun 1. — Lloyd's Agents.

ALALAA 1 (North Korea)

Bucharest, Jun 26 — General cargo *Alalaa 1* is still under arrest at

Constantza and the prospects for her release are remote. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAPE ENDURANCE (Panama)

Cape Town, Jun 29 — The port of Cape Town have confirmed that standby safety vessel *Cape Endurance* is still under arrest at this port. No further information is available. — Lloyd's Agents.

DAHOMEY EXPRESS (Bolivia)

Miami, Jun 26 — US Customs & Border Patrol advise general cargo *Dahomey Express* was sold at an auction one month ago to an unknown party. Also, this vessel was renamed the *Broddon Express* and was seen on the Miami River last week. — Lloyd's Agents.

FISHING VESSEL SEIZED BY AUSTRALIA

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Russian border authorities seized a Japanese fishing boat operating out of a port in northeastern Japan, a Japanese coast guard official said yesterday. The six-man boat from the port of Nemuro in northeastern Hokkaido Prefecture was seized in waters approximately 250 kilometres northeast of the city, said coast guard official Kazumi Konno. Russian authorities later told the coast guard that the boat was in waters Russia claims as lying within its exclusive economic zone, Kyodo News agency reported. They seized the drift-net fishing boat for engaging in activities not permitted after it was found to be carrying salmon, trout and salmon roe, it said. The report also indicated the seizure took place on Thursday (Jun 22). No explanation was given for the delay in notification. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, coastal nations can claim an EEZ extending 200 nautical miles (370 kilometres) from their shores in which they have exclusive rights over the exploration and use of marine resources. Nemuro is about 36 kilometres south of disputed territory held by Russia but claimed by Japan.

GRAMPIAN DAWN (U.K.)

See *Grampian Princess*.

GRAMPIAN PRINCESS (U.K.)

Hull, Jun 27 — Standby safety vessel *Grampian Princess* and support *Grampian Dawn* are still at Ipswich. The possibility of scrapping the vessels is currently being investigated. — Lloyd's Agents.

PATRICIA III (Poland)

London, Jun 23 — The Admiralty Marshal, London, has sold trawler (All types) *Patricia III* (1126 gt, built 1972) of the port of Szczecin, by order of the Admiralty High Court, in an action in rem against the vessel by Grimsby Fish Dock Enterprises Ltd, in action 2005 folio 809. The gross proceeds of the sale, in the sum of £66,610 have been paid into court. The order of priority of the claims

against the sale of the vessel will not be determined by the court until after the expiration of 60 days from today.



LITTLE FALLS AREA, MINNESOTA, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Clean-up efforts are under way after a crude oil pipeline ruptured near Little Falls. Morrison County authorities were notified before 2130 hrs, last night that oil was shooting out of the ground about two-and-a-half miles south of Little Falls, near Highway Ten and the B-N-S-F Railway tracks. Firefighters and deputies were able to shut down the leak. State pipeline safety and pollution control officials arrived, and they determined there was no immediate risk to public safety, and no evacuation was necessary. Officials are still assessing the damage.



CALCASIEU RIVER, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 23 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1435, UTC: Traffic into Lake Charles is being affected by the oil released into the Calcasieu River from the CITGO Facility on Jun 21. By tonight, we expect 20 vessels to be queuing, awaiting entry into the port. Of the 71,000 barrels that were released due to the overflowing of two tanks at the facility, 30,000 were discharged into a dry river bed at Indian Marais, while another 17,400 were discharged into the Calcasieu River. Containment and recovery efforts continue. (See issue of Jun 23.)

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated Jun 25, states: Approximately 22 miles of the Calcasieu Ship Channel remain closed due to the spread of oil from a spill at the CITGO Lake Charles manufacturing complex last Tuesday (Jun 20). The Intracoastal Waterway also remains closed from the Calcasieu Lock to mile marker 242. As of yesterday morning, an estimated 5,254 barrels of oil had been removed from the river and another 18,836 barrels from the Indian Marais. Overall response information as of Saturday: More than 75,000 feet of boom has been deployed, with an additional 40,000 feet en route; 28 skimmers, 44 vacuum trucks, 14 barges and 26 boats are being used to clean the spill; one high capacity pumping system in

operation and another en route. Air monitoring and site safety continues to be conducted by response personnel. Approximately 700 response personnel are working around the clock to safely remove the oil. On Saturday morning, there were 28 vessels in the safety zone and 10 waiting to enter the port. The Intracoastal Waterway closing has affected 49 vessels. Response personnel continue to monitor the impact to the environment and wildlife. One cormorant, which is a type of waterfowl, was impacted by the spill and transported to a rehabilitation facility, by wildlife specialists for treatment, where it died. The cause of the spill remains under investigation.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated Jun 25, states: The US Coast Guard is authorizing a limited amount of tug and barge traffic to transit through the intersection of the Calcasieu Ship Channel and the Intracoastal Waterway. Forty-two tugs and barges have moved through this portion of the ICW since 1700 hrs, yesterday. Five vessels are waiting to transit. A temporary Vessel Traffic Service, staffed by Coast Guard personnel and industry stakeholders, is co-ordinating the tug and barge transit. Approximately 22 miles of the Calcasieu Ship Channel remain closed due to the spread of oil from a spill at the CITGO Lake Charles Manufacturing Complex Tuesday (Jun 20). The Coast Guard has established a safety zone in this area and is enforcing it with patrol boats. The southern boundary of the safety zone was moved north to light 56. The Calcasieu Ship Channel remains closed from light 116, north of the Interstate 210 bridge, to light 56, south of Big Lake. Prien Lake also remains closed. Response personnel have recovered about 31,000 barrels of oil. An estimated 30,000 barrels of oil leaked into the Indian Marais, CITGO's on-site drainage feature, and an additional 15,000 barrels of oil into the Calcasieu Ship Channel. About 950 personnel are working around the clock to safely remove the oil. To date, 49 skimmers, 47 vacuum trucks, 20 oil storage trucks, 14 barges, seven pumps and 75 boats are being used to clean the spill. Air monitoring and site safety continues. There are 30 vessels in the Coast Guard's safety zone waiting to depart the area; 10 vessels are offshore waiting to enter the port and 49 vessels were impacted by the ICW closure. The Cameron Parish Ferry will be allowed to continue operations while the southern boundary of the safety zone remains at light 56. Response personnel continue to monitor the impact to the environment and wildlife. The cause of the spill remains under investigation.

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated Jun 27, states: Oil prices rose slightly today as traders focused on shipping delays along the Louisiana Gulf Coast and Iran's supreme leader rejected the need for nuclear talks

with the United States. The US Coast Guard says only limited tug and barge traffic had resumed through the Calcasieu Ship Channel, which had been off limits due to the spread of oil from a spill last week at the Citgo Petroleum Corp. facility in Lake Charles. The closure, which has lasted for six days, has forced four refineries on the Gulf Coast to reduce runs. The Wall Street Journal reported today that because of the backlog ConocoPhillips' 250,000-barrel-a-day refinery in Lake Charles is running at minimal rates, while Calcasieu Refining's plant is running at 25 percent of its 85,000-barrel-a-day capacity. The paper said the backlog already has contributed to gasoline price increases over the past week and that some analysts fear prices could rise higher with increased demand over the Jul 4 weekend. Meanwhile, the Coast Guard estimates the shipping channel may not reopen until Friday (Jun 30).

London, Jun 28 — The Coast Guard is enforcing a safety zone and approximately 20 miles of the Calcasieu ship channel and adjacent lakes from just north of the I-210 bridge (Light 116) to one mile south of Calcasieu Lake (Light 56) remain closed to private vessels. The Intracoastal Waterway from the Calcasieu Lock to Mile Marker 242 is also closed to private vessels.

New York, Jun 28 — About nine miles of the Calcasieu Ship Channel near Lake Charles, Louisiana, was reopened, although about 11 miles remained closed and vessel traffic to three refineries was still cut off after an oil spill last week, the US Coast Guard said today. The decision to reopen that portion of the channel was made earlier today, according to Petty Officer Chad Saylor. He said there was no estimate for the reopening of the rest of the channel. The Coast Guard had said yesterday the channel would be reopened in two to four days. The Calcasieu Ship Channel connects the Lake Charles oil refining hub with the Gulf of Mexico. Calcasieu Refining Co., Citgo Petroleum Corp. and ConocoPhillips have a combined capacity of 765,000 barrels per day along the channel and their production has suffered. After being without new crude supplies for six days, Citgo, the US unit of Venezuela's state-owned PDVSA oil company, said late yesterday the US Department of Energy approved a request for a loan of 250,000 bpd from the national Strategic Petroleum Reserve for its 440,000-bpd refinery. ConocoPhillips yesterday requested the release of 500,000 barrels of crude oil from the SPR for its 255,000 bpd refinery in Lake Charles. The channel has been shut since early morning Jun 21 after oil spilled from a Citgo facility in Lake Charles was discovered on Jun 20. — Reuters.

INDIA

London, Jun 28 — Following Navigation Warning issued at 1241, UTC, Jun 27: A large oil slick has

been reported off the coast of India between Panaji, lat 15 30N, long 73 50E, and Karwar, lat 14 49N, long 74 08E. Vessels are to transit the area with caution and report any sightings to the Indian Coast Guard.

MENAI STRAIT, NORTH WALES

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated today, states: An eight-mile fuel slick has been spotted in an environmentally sensitive area off the north Wales coast. Coastguards received the first sightings this morning from yachts in the Menai Strait, which separates Anglesey from the mainland. Boats were urged to stay away from the area and people were warned not to go into the water. The Marine and Coastguard Agency (MCA) is trying to trace the source and identify it, with the help of aircraft. At first, the slick was said to cover about four miles, between Port Dinorwic and the Britannia Bridge. But the Environment Agency said later that a "thin film" of pollution stretched from Bangor to Caernarfon - almost the entire length of the strait and a distance of about eight miles. An agency spokeswoman said: "We do not know the extent or the source, or what the pollution is. We have been out with the Coastguard Agency to look at it. There's a thin film so we are trying to assess that." The MCA said it had not been confirmed that it was diesel. "An investigation has been started and it looks like the source might be coming from the mainland," said an MCA spokeswoman. The MCA described it as a "particularly sensitive environmental area". It received initial reports of pollution "in the nature of a large diesel slick" at 0815, BST. The local Coastguard sent a rescue team to investigate and informed the MCA. Barry Priddis, of Holyhead Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, said it was working with the Environment Agency, the local council and the Countryside Council for Wales to try to find the source of the pollution and clean it up. An MCA surveillance aircraft and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Valley on Anglesey are flying over the area.

Weather & Navigation



CHINA

Beijing, Jun 26 — Flash floods from heavy rains killed 18 people in the central Chinese province of Hunan over the weekend (Jun 24-25), with another 18 people missing, the Ministry of Civil Affairs said today. Eleven people died in the city of Shaoyang, the second consecutive year the city has been hit by floods, the ministry said in a statement. Earlier this month, state media reported that floods had killed over 50 people in south-western Guizhou

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province. Since late May, heavy rains in the southern provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Guangxi and Jiangxi have killed about 100 people in floods, landslides and collapsing houses and forced the evacuation of hundreds of thousands. — Reuters.

Beijing, Jun 29 — A tornado ripped through a village school in eastern China today, killing at least two students and injuring dozens, state media said, as heavy rainfall caused fresh casualties in the south-west. The pupils were about to take an end-term exam at the Zhupeng elementary school in Si County in Anhui Province when the tornado hit in the early morning, Xinhua news agency said. “Two students were killed and 46 more were injured, including four in critical condition,” Xinhua said. Earlier reports had put the death toll at three. All elementary and middle schools in Si County have been ordered to suspend classes for safety checks, state radio said, adding the children were crushed by collapsing walls. Eleven middle school students in Anhui’s Lingbi county died last July when a tornado collapsed their classroom’s roof. Separately, heavy rains since yesterday have killed seven people and left one missing in Gulin County in the south-western province of Sichuan, Xinhua said, quoting the local government. “The rainstorm has spoiled 20,000 hectares of farmland and destroyed 190 houses,” it said. Landslides triggered by strong rainfall also claimed two lives in Dagan County in the neighbouring Yunnan Province, Xinhua said. Another five were missing and the chance for their survival was slim. — Reuters.

INDONESIA

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Soldiers pulled bodies from villages razed by floods and landslides in central Indonesia today, bringing the death toll from days of heavy rain to more than 200 people, officials said. Another 135 people were missing. At least two roads were blocked by landslides, and water and mud reached almost seven feet high in Sinjai, the hardest hit district of southern Sulawesi province, where rescuers scrambled to evacuate survivors. The number of dead climbed to 201 and hopes of finding the scores of people still missing were quickly fading, said Dadang, an official at the island’s disaster relief coordination office who goes by one name. “Rescuers say most of the missing people are likely to have been swept out to sea,” said Ode Parmodes, also of the relief office. The flash floods and landslides were triggered by incessant rains since Monday (Jun 19), and the government has promised an investigation into claims that illegal logging may have been a contributory factor.

Jakarta, Jun 23 — Indonesian search and rescue operations turned to the sea today in the search for missing victims after landslides and floods on eastern Sulawesi island

killed at least 215 people. A senior Red Cross official said some people might have been swept away after two days of torrential rain in South Sulawesi province at the beginning of the week flattened homes and turned vast swathes of land into lakes. More than 60 people are still missing in the area where rescuers have been scouring mud-filled homes and digging into mud from landslides or left behind by the floods in their search for survivors. Worst-hit Sinjai regency accounted for 185 deaths while the rest of the deaths occurred in other regencies in the province. Rescue efforts have been hampered by the inaccessibility of some areas because roads and bridges have been damaged. Many villages on river banks in the area have been damaged with traditional wooden houses flattened and concrete buildings covered with mud. Aid workers have set up public kitchens and the central government has sent medicines, blankets and sarongs and instructed local officials to help people move to safer areas. — Reuters.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 21 people were killed and tens of others went missing after flood and landslide hit a number of villages in the Indonesian province of South Kalimantan, a report said today. The flood and landslide occurred in the early hours of yesterday as local people were still asleep, reported the national Antara news agency. Tens of houses were either buried in mud and carried away by water currents. South Kalimantan Governor H. Rudy Ariffin who is also chairman of the provincial natural disaster mitigation task force had ordered a team of rescue workers to leave for flood-and landslide-stricken areas soon. The team of rescue workers was equipped with five rubber boats, cars, medical equipment and kitchen implements to help victims who lost their houses in the floods and landslides.

JAPAN

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Heavy rain pounded Japan’s southern main island of Kyushu yesterday, causing mudslides, killing one person and injuring five others in Kumamoto Prefecture. The Japan Meteorological Agency warned that the downpour, which has so far hit Kumamoto the hardest, will likely continue through this morning. In Yamato, Kumamoto Prefecture, a large amount of mud poured into a timber processing factory at about 1400, engulfing three men working there, according to police. The three were all rescued about an hour later but one of them died of suffocation at the hospital to which he was taken. Mudslides were reported at least 85 locations in Kyushu from Thursday (Jun 22), when it started raining, to yesterday evening, according to the meteorological agency’s Kyushu regional office.

NEW ZEALAND

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A maritime expert has testified that “foolhardy” decisions by an Interislander ferry captain almost caused roll on roll off *Aratere* to capsize during a crossing of Cook Strait in rough seas. Captain Wayne Osmond was suspended by Maritime New Zealand as a master after the Mar 3 journey, when the vessel heeled over 45 and 50 deg on two separate occasions. Mr Osmond — in the Wellington District Court — claims the suspension was unreasonable and unjustified. The court has heard how Mr Osmond’s control of the vessel during the crossing had been criticised, the Dominion Post reported. During the sailing, five rail freight carriages were toppled and trucks and cars were damaged. Three passengers and a crew member were injured. One suffered a broken arm and the others had minor injuries. Maritime NZ’s expert witness Gordon Wood, a former ferry master, said at the hearing’s first day yesterday that Mr Osmond’s captaining of the vessel during the crossing was flawed and “foolhardy”. Mr Wood said if the vessel had capsized most passengers would have been trapped inside and would have had no warning or time to put on lifejackets. “It is not unreasonable to conclude that heavy loss of life would have occurred.” Mr Wood’s evidence is strongly disputed by Mr Osmond, who will call a string of witnesses. Under cross-examination, Mr Wood conceded he was not familiar with all *Aratere*’s characteristics and had not examined data on the vessel’s stability. He had applied for a master’s position with the Interislander that Mr Osmond was later appointed to, the court was told. Maritime NZ and Transport Accident Investigation Commission investigations into the sailing are continuing.

London, Jun 26 — Insurers have raised their estimate of the cost of the South Island snowstorms from NZ\$5 million to NZ\$35 million (£21 million) as the Government promised more aid for farmers. Insurance Council chief executive Chris Ryan said: “It’s possibly the biggest claim for a snowstorm in two decades.” The Government announced yesterday that it would give more help to snow-bound Canterbury farmers and communities amid growing concerns of long-term economic crisis. About 150 households faced a 15th day without power yesterday. Thousands of homes in South Canterbury were left without electricity two weeks ago when snow brought down power lines. Homes near Wairoa in the North Island were also cut off this week after a storm. More damage has been revealed as snow thaws in the South Island. Some buildings collapsed as many as 10 or 12 days after the snow fell. Mr Ryan said he did not have an estimate for claims from Wairoa. The estimate for the South Island storms compared to \$50 million of claims for floods in Queenstown in 1999, and \$110 million for the Manawatu floods.

ROMANIA

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Twelve people are dead and three missing after heavy rains flooded villages across Romania in the past five days, the Interior Ministry said today. "Twelve people died because of the water wave ... and our staff are still looking for three more people," the ministry said in a statement. The most affected county was Bistrita Nasaud in central Romania, where ten deaths occurred. One person died in the county of Arad, close to the border with Hungary, and another one in the northern county of Maramures. About 127 people were evacuated and around 1,440 homes were damaged in 87 villages affected by flooding across the country.

TROPICAL STORM "ALBERTO"

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: One week after the remnants of Tropical Storm "Alberto" moved through the Triangle area, the cost of clean-up continues to climb, as residents and business owners slowly work toward restoring their lives and property. Wake County (North Carolina) officials said yesterday that last week's flooding caused about \$1.7 million in damage — not including crop damage — to the county alone. The majority of the damage included in that estimate involves damage at the Milner Inn and Rose and Maitland lane in Cary, and the area near Crabtree Valley Mall. State officials said there is not yet a statewide damage estimate and that no counties have asked for state assistance after the flooding. State agricultural officials also said that there is no estimate yet on how many crops were affected by the flooding, and that rising river levels may still pose a threat to some area farms. In Nash County, neighbourhoods have dried out, but the water damage remains and residents are still hard at work cleaning up flood damage. Clean-up also continued in Nashville, N.C. In Cary, where Lake Lochmere overflowed and flooded the Edinborough Pointe subdivision, located downstream, residents are also cleaning-up and also working to have water levels lowered during the dry season.

TROPICAL STORM "JELAWAT"

London, — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical Storm "Jelawat" near lat 19.7N, long 111.1E, at 0600, UTC. Movement past six hours 310 deg at eight knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, position based on center located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots, gusts 45 knots. Forecast for 1800, UTC: Lat 20.7N, long 109.9E. Maximum sustained winds 25 knots, gusts 35 knots.

TYPHOON "CHANCHU"

London, Jun 24 — A report from LaSalle, Quebec, dated today, states: Tank barge *Billy Star*, loaded with 1,270 tons of sulfuric acid, sank off

Batangas today, the Coast Guard said, sparking fears of environmental damage. The sinking of the barge caused a "minimal spill" in Batangas Bay and the Coast Guard's marine environmental protection crews had deployed in the area to contain the spill, a spokesman said. The vessel had docked at a repair yard earlier after the right side of its hull was holed below the waterline, and the breach was apparently the cause of the sinking, the Coast Guard said. There were no reports of casualties and the extent of the environmental damage was not immediately known.

Manila, Jun 25 — The refloated tank barge *Billy Star* sank again before it could be repaired at at Keppel Batangas shipyard. The vessel sank at 0040 yesterday while moored at the shipyard. There were no reported deaths or injuries. Philippine Coast Guard Batangas detachment officials said that the sinking was likely due to its highly corrosive cargo of sulphuric acid which burned through both its storage tanks and hull. The Coast Guard said that the vessel was completely submerged as it had sunk in eight meters of water. Authorities are now facing a serious environmental crisis as the vessel was carrying a highly toxic cargo of 1,250 tonnes of sulphuric acid, which is now escaping into the waters around Keppel Batangas shipyard. The Coast Guard said that it had deployed marine environmental protection teams to contain the spill. It is unclear, however, how the Coast Guard would be able to prevent the sulphuric acid from spreading as they had admitted earlier that they did not have the equipment for this type of marine accident. The *Billy Star* had been docked at Keppel Batangas shipyard since Jun 11 awaiting repairs after it ran aground in Romblon Province. While aground, the vessel's cargo of sulphuric acid had become contaminated with seawater. After the vessel was refloated it was towed to Keppel Batangas shipyard for drydocking. However, it could not be repaired until it had offloaded its cargo of sulphuric acid. The shipowners reported that the cargo could not be immediately offloaded because the insurance adjusters had not yet finished their report. In the meantime, the combination of seawater and sulphuric acid had turned into a highly corrosive mixture which had melted holes into the hull and causing the sinking. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 25 — The Philippine Coast Guard has given the owners of the Philippine-registered tank barge *Billy Star* a week to remove the wreck from the pier of Keppel Batangas Shipyard where it sank yesterday. The vessel is owned by Manila-based Grand Asian Shipping. The barge sank with 1,250 tonnes of sulphuric acid in its storage tanks. "Sulphuric acid and sea water make for a highly explosive mixture," Philippine Coast Guard spokesperson Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Coyne Jr. said. "We are

therefore pressuring the owner to immediately remove the vessel as its presence poses an imminent threat to people and property in the vicinity of the sinking. Most at risk from a chemical explosion is Keppel Batangas Shipyard, where the barge sank. Lt. Coyne said that a salvage barge of Malayan Towage and Salvage was already at the site to conduct refloating operations — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 25 — The Philippine Coast Guard reported today that it had established an exclusion zone around the area where tank barge *Billy Star* sank. The Philippine Coast Guard is concerned that the mixture of seawater and sulphuric acid could cause a chemical explosion or at the very least a toxic chemical spill in the waters around the Keppel Batangas Shipyard Pier. The Coast Guard has sealed off the area within the exclusion zone while advising people around the zone to move to safer areas. The Coast Guard, however, failed to mention the size of the exclusion zone and if the exclusion zone includes Keppel Batangas Shipyard. If within the exclusion zone, Keppel Batangas Shipyard will have to close down temporarily and evacuate its workers. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated Jun 25, states: The Philippine Coast Guard today assured the public that tank barge *Billy Star*, loaded with sulphuric acid, which was reported early yesterday to have sunk off the waters of Bauan, Batangas, did not cause a major spill in the Batangas Bay. Lieutenant Commander Darryl Vargas, duty officer of the Coast Guard regional office in Batangas City, said they had completely contained the toxic chemical from the barge. He said they had cordoned off the sunken vessel to avoid any potential environmental destruction it might bring. Vargas said that despite heavy rains, Coast Guard personnel were able to bring the barge to a dry dock.

Manila, Jun 26 — Keppel Batangas Shipyard has pinned the blame on the sinking of tank barge *Billy Star* on the owners of the vessel, who docked the vessel at the shipyard's pier on Jun 11 without permission. "Keppel Batangas said that, as a policy, a vessel will not be allowed into the yard unless it has been certified gas-free by yard safety personnel. The shipyard advised the owners, Manila-based Grand Asian Shipping Lines Inc, several times to relocate the vessel but no action was taken," Keppel Batangas said in a statement. The *Billy Star* was carrying 1,250 tonnes of sulphuric acid when it entered Keppel Batangas. Instead of leaving, Keppel Batangas reported that Grand Asian Shipping presented a letter on Jun 20 from Henderson International, representing the hull underwriters and the owners' P & I Club, advising the yard that "the vessel and its cargo are currently unsafe to move." On Jun 23, Keppel Batangas said it notified

Grand Asian Shipping that their barge was listing due to water ingress. The following day, the *Billy Star* sank. Keppel Batangas said that it was now working with the Philippine Coast Guard, other government officials and Grand Asian Shipping on the next course of action. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 27 — Operations to raise the tank barge *Billy Star* and its cargo of 1,270 tons of highly toxic sulphuric acid are unlikely to commence within the "immediate future" as the vessels' owner is still in the process of collecting tenders from salvors. Over the week-end the Philippine Coast Guard reported that Malayan Towage and Salvage Co had begun salvage work on the vessel. This was denied, however, by Malayan Towage officials who said that they were only approached by Grand Asian Shipping for a quotation. They had not been contracted to refloat the *Billy Star*, they said. The Coast Guard wants the *Billy Star* removed within a week from Keppel Batangas Shipyard pier, because of the highly explosive and toxic nature of its cargo. This however, seems unlikely to happen, as Grand Asian Shipping, is "going by the book", which means that before any serious salvage work is undertaken, it will have to consult with its insurance adjuster, hold a tender for the most economical salvor and obtain the approval of its insurers. This is a process which will take more than a week. There is no salvor in the Philippines with any experience in handling sulphuric acid. Even Malayan Towage, the leading salvor in the country, says that it would have to get foreign technical expertise to safely refloat the vessel. By their estimates, the whole exercise would take at least a month to complete. Malayan Towage said that if contracted to do the job, one option they are looking at is to refloat the storage tanks before the vessel itself. The sulphuric acid is held in four bullet storage tanks bolted to the deck. These will have to be detached one at a time and moved to shore from where the chemicals would be transferred to a safer location. This would be a delicate and dangerous procedure. In the meantime, with the *Billy Star* continuing to leak sulphuric acid, the people and establishments in the immediate area of the wreck run the risk of a toxic chemical spill or a possible chemical explosion. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 28 — Grand Asian Shipping said today (June 28) that it had asked Malayan Towage and Salvage Co. and Harbor Star Shipping Services to submit tenders for the refloating of tank barge *Billy Star* and its cargo of 1,270 tons of sulphuric acid. Only Malayan Towage has submitted a formal tender. Harbor Star officials said that they were studying the project carefully as they had no experience in handling sulphuric acid. Harbor Star officials said that a salvage of this nature would require special acid resistant

equipment which would have to be imported and the hiring of foreign consultants. At the moment, there is no one in the Philippines with expertise in recovering toxic chemicals from the bottom of the sea. Both salvors noted that the refloating would take at least a month to accomplish. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jun 29 — The Philippine Coast Guard reported that it was taking over the refloating and removal of the Philippine-registered tank barge *Billy Star* and its cargo of 1,270 tons of highly toxic sulphuric acid, on Jun 30, because of inaction by its owner. "We are taking over in the interest of public safety," Philippine Coast Guard spokesperson Lt. Cdr. Joseph Coyne, Jr. said today. "A formal ultimatum was issued to the shipowner which was ignored so we have no choice but to salvage the vessel ourselves. All costs, however, will be charged to the shipowner," he added. The *Billy Star* is owned by Manila-based Grand Asian Shipping. According to Coyne, the shipowner has been unable to contract a salvor because of "unreasonable" conditions imposed by its insurance adjuster. One such condition is that the salvor should not only refloat the vessel but should also handle the transfer of the sulphuric acid to a safer location. All salvors contacted by Grand Asian Shipping have refused to handle the transfer/transport of the sulphuric acid as they neither have the equipment nor vessels for moving toxic cargo. The Coast Guard wants the *Billy Star* removed immediately from Keppel Batangas Shipyard pier, where it sank last Saturday (Jun 24), because of the highly explosive and toxic nature of its cargo. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

UNITED STATES

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Bob Taft yesterday surveyed damage from two days of severe storms and declared emergencies in two northern Ohio counties. Floodwaters had mostly receded in Norwalk, about halfway between Cleveland and Toledo, which was one of the hardest-hit areas. About 800 homes in Huron County were damaged in the storms, including at least 45 with major damage, said Bill Ommert, director of the county's emergency management agency. He estimated the damage at \$2 million to homes and businesses and \$5 million to farmers' crops. The governor's emergency declaration for Huron and Erie counties clears the way for state resources to be used in the cleanup efforts and allows the state to seek potential federal aid. The storms, which began Wednesday night (Jun 21) and continued into Friday morning, killed two people, produced several tornadoes and knocked out power to thousands. About 30,000 American Electric Power customers remained without electricity yesterday, spokesman Doug Flowers said. The storms also damaged

hundreds of homes and businesses in Cuyahoga County. In southeastern Pennsylvania, heavy rain fell on Chester County yesterday, damaging a railroad bridge, blocking underpasses, stranding motorists and causing minor mudslides. Up to 5 inches of rain fell within a few hours, according to the National Weather Service.

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Heavy rains caused serious flooding today in parts of Maryland's Eastern Shore, washing out roads and forcing evacuations. Federalsburg Mayor Betty Ballas declared an emergency for the town of about 2,600 this morning after 10 to 12 inches of rain fell overnight. About 30 people had to evacuate, police said. There were reports of 4 to 5 feet of water in some areas, said Jeff Welsh, a spokesman for the Maryland Emergency Management Agency. Some residents evacuated homes in the Galestown area, said Mike Ziegler, an assistant director of the emergency agency. At least 20 roads were closed in Dorchester County, said a spokesman for the Maryland State Police.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Waves of heavy showers and thunderstorms drenched Washington and the surrounding mid-Atlantic on Sunday, triggering flash flooding that swelled streams over their banks and shut roads throughout the region. "Washington up through Baltimore has received between five and seven inches of rain today and most of it was in about a six-hour period," National Weather Service meteorologist Andy Woodcock said. "In many, many counties, rescues ... cars that got stuck in water, many road closures. It's been a very bad day, he said. Up to two more inches of rain were predicted in some locations before showers and thunderstorms were expected to begin tapering off around 3 a.m. EDT, The National Weather Service said. A flash flood warning was in effect for the entire Washington metropolitan area, which includes Montgomery and Prince Georges counties in Maryland, Arlington and Fairfax counties in Virginia. The heavy rainfall in a such a short time-frame was unusual for Washington, destroying a single-day record for Jun 25 that goes back to 1870, Woodcock said. Police blocked off traffic on major thoroughfares throughout the region as heavy rains caused flooding of underpasses, streams and low-lying streets, including a stretch of Constitution Avenue, a major Washington thoroughfare, and Massachusetts Avenue in suburban Maryland. In Germantown, Maryland, off-duty firefighters jumped into action to rescue a woman trapped in a car that had been caught by water from a swollen creek, local Fox TV News reported. "My car was stuck against the guardrail and the water started coming up from under the car. It was up to the windows, So I was flipping out," Patti Damiano told Fox after she was plucked from the car. "Thank God

they came and got me out.” The concluding round of the Booz Allen Classic golf tournament in Potomac, Maryland, was suspended because of lightning after teeing off six hours behind schedule because of drenching rain. Play was scheduled to resume early on Monday. The National Weather Service forecast for the area did not look good. “I think we’re going to have rain for the next couple of days,” Woodcock said. “We have the potential for more problems, especially on Tuesday.”

London, Jun 28 — Storms swept into the Northeast today, forcing thousands of people from their homes, including more than 2,200 who fled from a rising Maryland lake. A section of interstate highway was washed out in New York state and at least nine deaths were blamed on the stormy weather. Three people were missing. The highway washout in New York reportedly killed two, while the weather was blamed for one traffic death in Pennsylvania and one in Maryland. A 15-year-old boy drowned in a lake in Pennsylvania’s Luzerne County and his mother’s boyfriend drowned trying to rescue him, police said. Three young adults died in western Maryland when they were washed out of the bed of a pickup; they had just been rescued from their car, which had stalled in high water late yesterday, authorities said. But then the rescuers’ pickup got stuck in rushing water, which swept the three away, said Frederick County fire and rescue services spokesman Michael Dmuchowski. Elsewhere in Maryland, a search resumed today for two youths, ages 14 and 15, who were reported missing near a swollen creek at Keymar, said state police 1st Sgt. Russell Newell. Searchers found a bicycle and clothing near the creek. Teams in Virginia searched for an 8-year-old girl swept away by high water in Alleghany County. After days of heavy rain and floods, the sun was shining in Washington, D.C. as the storm moved into New York and New England. Rivers were still rising in Virginia after four days of downpours and highways across the region were blocked by flooding and washouts.

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated today, states: At least nine people have been killed and hundreds of thousands evacuated as north-eastern United States suffered its worst flooding in years. Up to 200,000 people were evacuated from their homes in north-eastern Pennsylvania alone because of rising waters on the Susquehanna River. A state of emergency has been declared across large parts of New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania states. The flooding follows days of torrential rain along the east coast. New York Governor George Pataki, who ordered the National Guard to help with evacuation efforts, said it was by far the worst flooding he had seen in his 12 years in the job. The largest evacuation effort was taking place in Wilkes-Barre, in Pennsylvania, where

rising waters were expected to crest a few feet from the top of the 41ft (12.3m) levees protecting the town from Susquehanna’s rising waters. Luzerne County Commissioner Todd Vonderheid said the evacuation of 200,000 residents was “honestly precautionary”. “We have great faith the levees are going to hold,” he said. Across the region, emergency helicopters, divers and boats were rescuing people left stranded by the floods. A group of children were ferried out of a tennis camp by raft in Philadelphia as flooding closed many roads in and around the city. The National Weather Service reported nine fatalities across the eastern US. Two truckers were killed on Interstate 88 in Sidney, New York, after part of the motorway was washed away by flood waters. A motorist died as he swerved to avoid a washed-out road in Holmesville, New York. Three people who had been rescued from a stalled car in Maryland, were swept away from the bed of a pick-up truck by a flash flood, officials said. A man drowned trying to rescue his son who was swept away in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. At least three deaths were reported in New York state, and searches were under way for several people missing feared dead including two teenagers in Keymar, Maryland. Roads across the region have been closed, and motorists have been warned to be cautious if out in their cars. “We tell people, ‘Turn around, don’t drown,’” Edward J McDonough, a spokesman for the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, told the New York Times. “If you see rainwater on the road, don’t cross it, because you don’t know how deep it is or how fast it’s moving.”

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Michigan’s Otsego County suffered the worst disaster in its history after four days of heavy rain, the county’s emergency services co-ordinator said yesterday night. Lyle “Butch” Jones Jr. gave a “conservative” damage estimate for public infrastructure losses in the county of \$15 to \$20 million. There will also be considerable losses to private property measured as relief efforts continue, Jones said. Otsego County is one of 13 counties declared a disaster area by Gov. George E. Pataki. The flooding affected 175 roads within the county with six bridges wiped out or currently under water. The several man-made dams within the county all appeared to have held firm in the flooding, according to city and county emergency officials. However, Jones said many of the numerous beaver dams throughout the county are suspected to have burst, compounding an already severe flooding situation. A formal request has been made for National Guard assistance, Jones said. Jones said that if approved, the Guard would assist the town of Oneonta with highway projects and the city with its wastewater-treatment plant.

Earthquakes



INDIA

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Two moderate earthquakes hit western India’s Gujarat state but caused no damage, the India Meteorological Department said today. A magnitude 4 quake hit the Kutch region early today at a depth of 15 kilometers, the department’s website said. The area had been hit by another earthquake of magnitude 4.6 yesterday, the department said

INDONESIA

Jakarta, Jun 25 — A powerful undersea earthquake with a magnitude of 5.8 struck off the Indonesian island of Sulawesi today, but the state meteorology and geophysics agency said there were no reports of casualties or damage. An agency official said the quake’s epicentre was 45 miles beneath the sea bed, about 70 miles from the city of Gorontalo in northern Sulawesi. It did not generate a tsunami. — Reuters.

JAPAN

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude 5.7 struck off the coast of Japan’s northernmost island of Hokkaido, near Russia’s Kuril Islands, Japan’s Meteorological Agency said today. The quake struck at 1954 hrs at a depth of 56 miles about 62 miles east of Kuril’sk in the Kuril Islands, according to the agency. There were also no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Chittagong, Jun 27 — General cargo *Jaami* was beached for demolition on Apr 12.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

Kabul, Jun 23 — U.S.-led forces have killed 14 Taliban fighters in clashes during a major operation against rebels in volatile southern Afghanistan, the U.S. military said. Eight insurgents were killed in a raid yesterday on a cave complex used as a “meeting place and sanctuary” for Taliban bomb-makers in Uruzgan province. Six rebels were arrested while a cache containing AK-47 assault rifles, rocket propelled grenades and two machine guns was

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also recovered, a spokesman for the U.S. military said in a statement late yesterday. The coalition forces did not suffer any losses. Six other Taliban fighters were killed in an attack in neighbouring Helmand province on Wednesday (Jun 21), the spokesman said. Afghan President Hamid Karzai on Thursday voiced his concern over the growing violence and urged the world to extend war against militants beyond his country's borders — an oblique reference to neighbouring Pakistan from where the Afghan officials say the Taliban organize and launch attacks. — Reuters.

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: US-led coalition forces in Afghanistan say they have killed at least 65 Taleban militants in fresh offensives in the south. Coalition and Afghan forces attacked a large group of militants and fought a three-hour battle in Zharie district in Kandahar province yesterday. Troops fought a five-hour battle on the same day with Taleban fighters in neighbouring Uruzgan province. A statement released by US-led coalition forces and the Afghan National Army said that in the fighting in Zharie district several militants fled to nearby villages and took civilians with them as human shields. It said that around 40 insurgents were killed in the fighting in Uruzgan province after troops exchanged fire for more than five hours with extremists hiding in an orchard north-east of Tirin Kot, the Uruzgan capital. The Afghan army commander for the south, Gen Rahmatullah Raufi, confirmed that a battle had taken place in the area. He said about 20 Taleban members were killed and 18 wounded. The general said three coalition soldiers were hurt in the clash. Rifles, machine guns and five rocket-launchers were seized.

Bagram, Jun 26 — Two Afghan boys were wounded today when a suspected Taliban suicide bomber blew himself up near a convoy of US troops, the latest attack in the worst spell of violence in the country since 2001. None of the soldiers was hurt in the blast on a road near the Bagram airbase, the hub of US military operations in Afghanistan, police said. "It was a suicide bomb. Two boys on bicycles passing by were wounded," said a police officer at the scene. Police said earlier the bomber had hit the convoy, about one kilometre from the main entrance to the base, 50 km north of Kabul, but later said the bomb exploded prematurely. Mohammad Hanif, a spokesman for the Taliban, claimed responsibility. One soldier from the US-led force died of wounds suffered during combat in the eastern province of Kunar yesterday, the US military said in a statement. Five health officials kidnapped by the Taliban last week in the eastern province of Nuristan had been released, provincial officials said. Two were doctors, two were provincial health officials and one worked for a Swedish aid group. — Reuters.

Kandahar, Jun 27 — Two British soldiers were killed in fighting in Afghanistan today in the latest clashes in the worst spell of violence in the country since 2001. BBC radio said the two died during an attack in the Sangin area of Helmand province in the south of the country, but the Defense Ministry spokeswoman could not confirm any details. A British military spokesman in the Afghan south confirmed there had been "an incident" in the north of Helmand but declined to give details. A spokesman for the Taliban said its fighters had killed a large number of foreign and Afghan troops in Helmand and destroyed three trucks carrying supplies for foreign forces. The spokesman, Qari Mohammad Yousuf, said the fighting went on for four hours. Residents in the area reported heavy fighting including airstrikes by foreign forces. Helmand police chief, Nabi Mullahkhail, said 13 Taliban had been killed in the fighting early today. He said no Afghan troops were killed. — Reuters.

ALGERIA

Algiers, Jun 22 — Suspected Islamist gunmen killed six soldiers in an ambush east of Algiers, a security source said today, in the latest in an escalating series of attacks apparently aimed at wrecking Algerian peace efforts. Three soldiers were also wounded in the attack yesterday evening 15 kms east of Bouira, a provincial town about 120 kms east of the capital. "The convoy was surprised by an ambush when it was returning to a military camp," the source said. "Six men were killed." It was the largest single loss sustained by the army in several weeks. Analysts say Islamist fighters are stepping up attacks to torpedo government efforts to end years of violence and raise morale in an insurgency long in decline. Security experts attribute the rebel attacks to the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), radical Islamists who have rejected an amnesty offered by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to try to end more than a decade of violence. — Reuters.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Kinshasa, Jun 27 — Congolese militia fighters today released two of seven Nepalese U.N. peacekeepers they have been holding hostage in the violent east of the country for over a month, U.N. officials said. "Two of our men have been released. They were freed early this morning and have come back unharmed," a U.N. military source told Reuters. A separate U.N. source and a Western diplomat confirmed the releases. "They were released after Lendu members of parliament became involved," said another U.N. source, who added that the released men were in good health. "They (the MPs) made it clear (to the militia) that it would be the Lendu community that would lose out if this continued." The U.N. earlier this

month sent in hostage negotiators to join local community chiefs in trying to secure the release of the soldiers, part of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Congo — the largest in the world. Militia fighters seized the soldiers on May 28 in the Ituri district. A militia loyal to a local warlord yesterday threatened to order their execution after clashes last week, but U.N. sources questioned whether the group of gunmen holding the troops would follow the order. — Reuters.

ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa, Jun 27 — Ethiopian forces killed 111 rebels and took 107 others who crossed over from Eritrea earlier this month, the state news agency said today. Another 18 of the Ethiopian rebels were injured during a major military sweep in the remote north, Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) said, quoting the defence ministry. Ministry officials could not immediately be reached, and there was no independent confirmation from the remote region of Ethiopia where various armed groups opposed to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi are said to be operating. "Of the anti-peace group who crossed into Ethiopia at Quara, Armacheo and Metema in the north of the country from Eritrea recently, 111 have been decimated and 18 others were injured in a joint military action taken by the Ethiopian Defence Forces and the people of the region," ENA said in its report. "Eighty six others were captured and 21 handed themselves to Ethiopian forces," it added. It was not clear exactly when the operations took place or which rebel groups were said to be involved. Eritrea called the report a "total fabrication" intended to divert attention from Ethiopian troop movements on the border with Somalia, where Addis Ababa has watched the rise of Islamists in Mogadishu with nervousness. Mogadishu's newly-ruling Islamists have accused Ethiopia of sending troops over the border. Addis Ababa denies that. "I know there are rebels inside Ethiopia, but this whole story is a total fabrication with the aim of diverting attention from their internal crisis and their incursion in Somalia," Information Minister Ali Abdu told Reuters in Nairobi by phone. "We have made it clear time and time again, we believe in mutual respect and non-interference, that is our foreign policy," he added, denying Ethiopian rebels have a footing in Eritrea. The ENA report named six rebel leaders it said had been killed in the fighting. — Reuters.

INDIA

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Eight people were killed in Indian Kashmir, including four Islamic militants shot dead in a gunbattle while trying to cross over from the Pakistan-held sector of the region. They said 14 militants were trying to sneak across the Line of Control that divides the disputed region when the gunbattle took place

yesterday around 150 kilometres from Srinagar, Indian Kashmir's summer capital. "The gunbattle continued for several hours and the bodies of four militants were later found at the scene," a police spokesman said. The others were believed to have fled into dense forests nearby. A fifth militant was killed elsewhere in a bid to flush out militants from a village, he said. Meanwhile a former militant who was helping Indian security personnel in anti-insurgency operations was shot dead by suspected Islamic rebels at Bandipora, 60 kilometres from Srinagar, he said. Two other people, one a police constable, were found in other locations with their throats slit after separate incidents, the spokesman said.

INDONESIA

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: East Timor's Premier Mari Alkatiri has resigned from his job in the wake of mounting pressure. President Xanana Gusmao accepted the decision with immediate effect. Mr Alkatiri had been widely blamed for triggering recent violence in the capital, Dili, because of his decision to sack 600 soldiers. While the ruling party, Fretilin, continued to back the prime minister, President Gusmao urged him to quit, as did thousands of street protesters. Australian Prime Minister John Howard also welcomed the news, saying it was "evidence we are moving to the resolution of the issue". Ever since Mr Alkatiri made the decision to sack 600 disgruntled soldiers in March, his critics have urged him to resign. Gun battles between the rebel soldiers and those loyal to the government then broke out, with machete-wielding youths forcing thousands to flee their homes in fear. The unrest turned into East Timor's worst violence since it voted for independence from Indonesia in 1999, and led to the young nation asking foreign peacekeepers to come to its aid. As well as blaming him for triggering the violence, Mr Alkatiri's opponents also allege that he formed a hit squad to kill his political rivals - a charge he firmly denies. But despite the enormous pressure on him, from important donor countries and even from East Timor's popular president, the prime minister had - until today - adamantly refused to step down. It is unclear what caused him to change his mind. The resignation yesterday of the popular foreign minister, Jose Ramos Horta, was undoubtedly a blow. But last week Mr Alkatiri had stood firm against a much more serious resignation threat from President Gusmao himself - a threat the president later rescinded. There has been no indication so far of who will succeed Mr Alkatiri. Fretilin will select his replacement.

IRAQ

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Iraqi police stormed a farm north of Baghdad early today and freed at least 17

people who were snatched a day earlier in a mass kidnapping of 64 workers and family members at the end of a factory shift. The US military today reported four Marines and a soldier were killed in operations south and west of Baghdad, and an explosion of sectarian and revenge killings in Mosul over the past three days claimed 24 lives. Nine days into a security crackdown in Baghdad, meanwhile, insurgent and sectarian violence was muted, with no major incidents reported by midday. A bomb planted on a motorcycle exploded near a popular market in central Baghdad's Alawi district, killing two people and injuring 25 others. A roadside bomb in Jibla town killed an Iraqi army soldier and a civilian. In Kut, police said they found six bullet-riddled bodies floating down the Tigris river. The freed kidnap victims brought to 49 the number of captives who have been either released by their captors or extricated by police. About 30 of the hostages, mainly women and children, were released shortly after they were taken captive. Industry Minister Fowzi Hariri told state-run Iraqiya TV that 64 people were kidnapped as they were heading home and two people were killed when they resisted. One kidnap victim, a Shiite Muslim, said he was set free last night after showing the kidnappers a forged ID card listing him as a Sunni. He said two hostages had been killed trying to escape. A National Security Ministry official said that several insurgents holding the kidnap victims were captured during this morning's raid on the farm in the Mishada area, 20 miles north of the capital. Police operations were continuing in the area, the official said, in a bid to locate the rest of the victims who were taken at the end of the day shift at al-Nasr General Complex, a former military plant that now makes metal doors, windows and pipes. The military said the four Marines were killed on Tuesday (Jun 20) in insurgency-ridden Anbar province, three of them in a roadside bombing and a fourth in a separate operation. A soldier died yesterday south of the capital, the military said. The killings in Mosul occurred primarily in groups of ones and two, with several of the dead found dumped throughout the city. All the victims died in targeted shooting attacks, Mosul police Capt Ahmed Khalil said. About a dozen people were killed in other violence nation-wide yesterday, and an al-Qaida-led insurgent group announced it would execute four Russian hostages who were kidnapped on Jun 3. The Russian Embassy in Baghdad said it had no new information on the fate of the four. A fifth Russian was killed when the men were captured.

Baghdad, Jun 23 — The U.S. military said today it had captured a senior al Qaeda in Iraq member near an area where the group's leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was killed in a U.S. air strike two weeks ago. It said three other militants were detained during U.S.-led raids on Monday (Jun 19)

southwest of Baquba, 65 kms north of Baghdad. The statement did not mention the name of the senior al Qaeda militant but said he was known for "facilitating" foreign fighters throughout central Iraq. — Reuters.

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: The Iraqi government declared a state of emergency in Baghdad today, after clashes broke out in a central district. It also imposed a 1400-0600 hrs curfew. The prime minister's office did not immediately give more details about the state of emergency, but it was announced after police said gunmen opened fire on a joint U.S.-Iraqi patrol in the Shwaka district of central Baghdad. The patrolling forces returned fire and sealed off the area as they clashed with the gunmen, Iraqi army Maj. Ihssan Abdul Hamza said. Elsewhere, at least 14 people have been killed in two bomb attacks, according to police. At least 10 people died in a blast outside a mosque near Baquba, while four people were killed in an explosion near a petrol station in Basra. The attack near Baquba occurred outside the village of Hibhib, 65 kms north of Baghdad. The bomb went off in a bag which had been left outside the gates of the Sunni mosque, police said. In the south of the country, an explosion ripped through a queue of people waiting for fuel at a petrol station in Basra. All of the dead were civilians, while two police officers were among the wounded, police said. Meanwhile some 500 detainees were due to be released from Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad on Friday, as part of the reconciliation programme. About 2,300 detainees, said to have renounced violence, have been released from the prison since the beginning of the month.

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: The kidnappers of more than 100 Iraqi government employees have freed about half of their hostages, releasing all their Sunni captives in a clear sign the seizure had been sectarian in nature. The Industry Ministry workers were snatched by gunmen on Wednesday (Jun 21) after their shift ended at a factory north of Baghdad. "Women hostages and those who were Sunnis were set free, and we believe that now about 40 to 50 employees are still held captive," an Interior Ministry official said. The workers at the Hateen and Nasr factories in Taji, 30km north of the capital, were seized by at least 50 gunmen and spirited away on the same buses they had boarded to take them home. Those still held captive are believed to be Shi'ites from Baghdad's Sadr City and the neighbourhoods of Shuala and Hurriyah. The kidnappers apparently separated the two groups by checking the names on individual identity cards, the official said. As a state of emergency was declared in the capital yesterday, at least 10 people were killed and 18 others injured in an apparent suicide car bomb attack in the southern city of Basra. Police said

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the suicide bomber's car exploded near a service station in the centre of the city at noon local time. The violence in the south came at the end of a week in which at least 25 people were executed gangland-style in Iraq's third-largest city, Mosul, with residents gunned down in ones and twos and bodies found scattered throughout the city.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Insurgents in Iraq say they have killed four Russian embassy workers kidnapped at the start of June. The Mujahideen Shura Council, an umbrella group incorporating al-Qaeda in Iraq, released an internet video and a statement announcing their deaths. The video showed one man being beheaded and another shot dead, as well as the body of a third, but there was no sign of the fourth hostage. Russia said it recognised its diplomats but could not confirm their deaths. "This footage is not new. It dates from mid-June. It featured members of staff of our embassy, who named themselves, and that was indeed them," said Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. "Experts possessing the necessary equipment and experience are now studying the footage as thoroughly as possible," he added. The men were seized in Baghdad on June 3, and kidnappers said the executions were in revenge for "torture, killing and displacement by the infidel Russian government" in Chechnya. The Mujahideen Shura Council, which said it was holding the men, had threatened to kill them if Russia did not pull its troops out of Chechnya.

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated Jun 26, states: Bombs killed at least 40 people at markets in two Iraqi cities today, hours after key lawmakers said seven Sunni Arab insurgent groups offered the government a conditional truce. Despite the fresh opening between the government and the militant organizations, which do not include al-Qaida or Islamic terror groups, a top Iraqi commander said Baghdad's forces would not be ready to keep the peace for at least a year in Anbar province, the insurgent heartland. And President Bush brushed aside expectations of a significant US troop drawdown starting in September. He said decisions on troop strength would be made by the new Iraqi government and based upon recommendations from Gen. George W. Casey, the US commander in Iraq. The deadliest attack was a bicycle bombing in Baqouba, the Sunni insurgent stronghold 35 miles northeast of Baghdad. The bombing killed at least 25 and wounded 33, according to Dr. Ahmed Fouad, director of the morgue at Baqouba General Hospital. Minutes earlier, a blast killed at least 15 people and wounded 56 in Hillah, a mainly Shiite city 65 miles south of the capital, said police Capt. Muthana Khalid. Police reports from across the country listed at least 22 other deaths today, victims of sectarian murders or bomb and shooting attacks. The US

military, meanwhile, said a Marine died of wounds suffered in combat in Anbar province.

Kirkuk, Jun 27 — A car bomb exploded in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk today, killing at least three people, police said. Police Brigadier Adel Zein al-Abeddine also said 21 people were wounded. Police said they were looking into reports that the attack was carried out by a suicide bomber. The attack in the ethnically divided oil centre of Kirkuk came two days after Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki unveiled a national reconciliation plan aimed at tackling the Sunni Arab insurgency and easing sectarian tensions. — Reuters.

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Violence in Iraq has left at least 25 people dead as bombers struck busy markets in two mainly Shia towns. A bomb strapped to a motorcycle killed at least seven in a village near Baquba, north-east of Baghdad. Another bomb blast ripped through the central shopping area in Hilla, 90km south of Baghdad, killing another seven people and wounding 56. At least 11 others were reported killed in shootings and other incidents across the country. The attacks come a day after the Iraqi prime minister announced a unity plan aimed at stemming sectarian violence. The bomb near Baquba exploded at about 2000 local time (1600, UTC) in Khairnabat, a village 70kms north-east of the capital. Hospital sources said many of the dead were children. About 30 minutes later a second explosion ripped through central Hilla, the capital of the mixed Sunni and Shia province of Babel which has been targeted frequently in attacks by insurgents. In a separate incident yesterday, 10 male students, all Sunnis, were abducted by gunmen from the a building in the capital, police said. The wave of bloodshed comes as Iraqi political factions responded to Prime Minister Nouri Maliki's national reconciliation plan, unveiled on Sunday (Jun 25). The 23-point plan aims to stem violence in the country by disarming militias and beefing up Iraqi security forces ahead of a takeover from coalition forces. Seven Sunni insurgent groups have contacted the government about joining the reconciliation initiative, an Iraqi lawmaker and member of Mr Maliki's Dawa party told the Associated Press. Iraq's most senior Sunni Arab politician, Vice-President Tareq al-Hashemi, reportedly criticised the plan for its lack of a withdrawal date for US forces and apparent exclusion of hardcore Baathists - former members of Saddam Hussein's Baath party, but radical Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr was reported to have said the plan was too soft on Baathists.

NIGERIA

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Two Filipino oilworkers taken hostage this week in the Niger delta are in good health, their employer, Norwegian oil services

company Petroleum Geo-Services (PGS), said on Friday (Jun 23). The two Filipinos working near Port Harcourt were abducted on Tuesday at Aker, near a navy base in the city, by six armed men in a speedboat, but no group has claimed responsibility for the attack. "PGS is pleased to report that it has received further information concerning the state of the two hostages and confirms that they are both in good health," company spokesman Ola Boesterud told Agence France-Presse. "The company hopes that contact can soon be established with the hostage takers and is coordinating efforts to bring this situation to a quick and successful conclusion," he said. Boesterud declined to say whether any demand for ransom had been received, or what his sources of information were. Earlier Friday, Nigerian officials said security services appeared to have established contact with the kidnappers.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Two Filipino oil workers captured in Nigeria's restive Niger Delta region last week, were released on Sunday (Jun 25), Emmanuel Okah, spokesman for Rivers state, told Agence France-Presse by telephone. "They have been released a bit earlier today," he said. "They are now with security officials on their way to government house in Port Harcourt." "Government officials and Filipino embassy officials are there waiting for them." Unidentified armed men captured the two oil workers last Tuesday while they were working on an oil platform in Aker, near Port Harcourt, the capital of oil-rich Rivers state.

PAKISTAN

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Suspected rebels blew up a gas pipeline in southwest Pakistan and fired a rocket that hit a hotel and a residential compound for army medical staff in the city of Quetta overnight, police said. One person was wounded in the rocket attack in the suburbs of Baluchistan's provincial capital, while the pipeline attack disrupted gas supplies in the east of the province.

London, Jun 27 — A press report dated Jun 26, states: A suicide car bomber has rammed a Pakistani paramilitary checkpost, killing six troopers in a tribal region where the army has been fighting Al Qaeda and pro-Taliban militants for months, officials said. The attack in North Waziristan came a day after a militant commander said a month-long ceasefire had been called to give time for tribal elders to broker a settlement to end the conflict in the semi-autonomous region. "It was an attempt to sabotage our call for a ceasefire. Local Taliban have no connection with this attack," Abdullah Farhad, the militant commander, who declared the ceasefire, said. Military spokesman Major-General Shaukat Sultan said six paramilitary troops

were killed in the attack and several more were wounded, some of them seriously.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Jun 23 — A bomb killed five people at a crowded public market in the southern Philippines today in an attack that police said was aimed at a powerful provincial governor allied with President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. One army officer, Colonel Felipe Sabot, said there were indications the bombing was carried out by Jemaah Islamiyah, a regional network of Muslim militants linked to al Qaeda. But Andal Ampatuan, governor of Maguindanao province on the troubled island of Mindanao, dismissed that idea and said he suspected his attackers came from another group “considered as an enemy of the state”, which he did not identify. A spokesman for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) said the country’s largest Muslim rebel group was not responsible. The MILF has held to a truce during Malaysian-brokered peace talks with the government of the mainly Roman Catholic country. Philippine security forces are also fighting communist rebels and Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent Muslim rebel group with ties to Jemaah Islamiyah. Police and army officials said the explosives, made from a mortar shell, were hidden in a van and detonated as Ampatuan’s motorcade was passing by the market in Sharif Aguak town. — Reuters.

Manila, Jun 27 — At least 25 people have been killed in the southern Philippines in fighting between a local Muslim clan and mountain tribesmen over a land dispute, an army spokesman said today. Captain Jose Pabilonia said hundreds of villagers in Bukidnon province on the southern island of Mindanao had fled their homes since the feud began in the remote area last week. “We’ve sent a team of soldiers and police officers to break up the two warring groups,” Pabilonia said. He said 23 Muslims and two mountain tribesmen had died. Four tribesmen were wounded. Clan wars, known locally as “rido,” are common in communities in the southern Philippines, and analysts say they pose a threat to a fragile 21-month truce between the government and Muslim separatist guerrillas. — Reuters.

SAUDI ARABIA

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Six militants linked to al-Qaeda have been killed by police in Riyadh, the Saudi interior ministry says. One policeman was killed and a seventh man arrested, the ministry said. The group, cornered in the al-Nakhil district of the capital, was on the verge of launching attacks, according to officials quoted by al-Arabiya TV. Saudi Arabia has seen a three-year campaign by militants, including an apparent suicide bomb attack on a major oil facility in February. Several other members of the security forces were injured in the

gun battle, officials said. “The security forces at dawn today pursued seven members of the ‘deviant minority’ to a house in the al-Nakhil district of Riyadh, where they suddenly came under sustained automatic weapons fire,” an interior ministry spokesman told the AFP news agency. Internal struggle February’s attempted attack on the Abqaiq oil facility was the first physical attack on the kingdom’s vastly important oil production facilities.

SOMALIA

Khartoum, Jun 22 — The interim government of Somalia and the Islamic Courts movement which controls the capital Mogadishu agreed today to stop military campaigns, recognise each other and meet again on July 15. Separately, the United States, which long opposed the courts, said it wanted their help in extraditing three foreigners from Somalia in connection with bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. After their first direct high-level talks, held under Arab League sponsorship in Sudan’s capital Khartoum today, the government and the Islamists signed a document meant to avert a confrontation that could extend years of conflict in Somalia. It included a mutual commitment to suspend propaganda and military campaigns and continue talks without preconditions. The interim government, which has little power and is based in the southern provincial town of Baidoa, recognised “the reality” of the Islamist movement, which in turn recognised “the legality” of the government. The Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which drove warlords out of Mogadishu on June 5 and has since advanced into the hinterland, has not been directly at war with the government, but the government said this week that it was expecting the Islamists to attack its Baidoa headquarters. The signing ceremony in Khartoum was attended by Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Somali interim President Abdullahi Yusuf and Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa. ICU chairman Sheikh Sharif Ahmed did not come in person but sent a 10-man delegation led by Mohamed Ali Ibrahim. Bashir and Moussa were the main mediators in a day on which it was not clear until mid-afternoon whether the government delegation would agree to direct talks. In the morning the two Somali delegations had separate talks with mediators. The government has infuriated the Islamists by calling for international peacekeepers and saying Muslim fundamentalists from around the world helped them secure Mogadishu. Ibrahim told Reuters at the end of the ceremony that peacekeepers and power sharing would be discussed at the next round of talks in Khartoum. — Reuters.

SRI LANKA

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A powerful

explosion in Sri Lanka’s capital killed the army deputy chief, his driver and a civilian today, the military said. The blast struck the car of Maj. Gen. Parami Kulatunga as well as a nearby bus that was carrying commuters during the morning rush hour, the military said. Kulatunga was taken to the National Hospital, where he was declared dead, hospital accident unit chief Dr. Anil Jayasinghe said. The general’s driver and an unidentified civilian also were dead, Jayasinghe said. Several other casualties were feared among passengers of the commuter bus, police spokesman Rienzie Perera said. The cause of the explosion was not immediately known. Meanwhile, UNI reports that The Tamil Tiger rebels on Sunday night (Jun 25) have rejected President Mahindra Rajapakse’s offer of a direct peace deal with the rebel outfit mainly to curb the threatening truce-related violence, which has taken the lives of over 800 people since last December.

Colombo, Jun 27 — Four Tamil Tiger fighters were killed in an attack by a rival group of ex-rebels in Sri Lanka early today and a soldier was shot dead overnight, officials said, amid growing fears of renewed civil war. The attack in an area controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the restive east came a day after a suspected Tiger suicide bomber assassinated the army deputy chief of staff. Police deputy inspector general Nihal Karunaratne and a spokesman for the renegade Karuna group said four Tigers had been killed in the attack on their camp in the eastern Batticaloa district. The Tigers said they had only lost one fighter, and blamed the army. Analysts say that the incidents are further hurting a tattered 2002 ceasefire between the Sri Lankan military and the Tigers. But the Karuna group warned of more attacks on the Tigers, whom they accuse of ignoring eastern Tamils. “Wherever their camps are, we will search and attack them,” said Karuna group spokesman Thuyawan. “We know the Tiger strategy because we were once part of the Tigers.” Thuyawan said Karuna spies had been watching the small Tiger camp for some time. Fighters attacked it at dawn, he said, destroying everything and taking weapons. A military spokesman said a soldier had been shot dead by suspected Tigers in a separate incident in the district of Trincomalee, further north. He also said troops had found three fragmentation mines primed for an ambush. — Reuters.

THAILAND

Bangkok, Jun 27 — Suspected militants blew up a truck and shot dead five security volunteers today while a police informant was killed in a drive-by shooting in Thailand’s rebellious Muslim south, police said. The militants ambushed a group of security guards on the way to pick up teachers and take them to school, blew up their truck, and then shot

them. The militants seized the guards' weapons and fled in the southern province of Yala, officials said. "That is the only route we can use every day to escort teachers going to school," local district chief Aya Ditapinan said in a region where militants see schools and their teachers as symbols of the predominantly Buddhist government. — Reuters.

Labour Disputes



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

London, Jun 23 — The strike which began in Matadi port in the Democratic Republic of Congo at the beginning of June has ended after agreement was reached between the unions and the National Transport Office (ONATRA). The strike, which affected all areas of the port, was called by workers protesting against management whom they accused of malpractice and mismanagement. It has been estimated the strike cost the port US \$ 500,000 a day throughout the duration.

NEW CALEDONIA

Sydney, Jun 27 — MSC has reached an agreement with a New Caledonia labour union to end almost two months of industrial standoff that has badly disrupted the first two voyages of the line's new weekly Australia/New Caledonia service. Stevedoring members of the Union of Kanak Workers and the Exploited (USTKE) in late May blockaded the port of Noumea to prevent the MSC Caledonia from discharging her maiden cargo. The ship stood off for three weeks before police broke up armed picket lines as a general strike threatened over the issue. The union claimed that the 600 teu capacity of the MSC ship would swamp regionally-owned shipping services, and threaten stevedoring jobs in Noumea. MSC claimed in turn that the union was co-operating with commercial rivals of the stevedoring contractor it had chosen. An MSC spokesman said that the agreement, signed between the union and MSC representatives from Geneva, contained general undertakings on commercial operations and to contribute to development in New Caledonia. Under the deal, MSC will also seek talks with regionally-owned operators, although the spokesman stressed that there is no agreement on any specific volume sharing. "The good news is that it allows us to work normally," he said. MSC has also indicated that the service is not aimed at the Australia/New Caledonia market, but at offering connections with its other services into French overseas territories such Reunion in the Indian Ocean. — Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News."

NORWAY

London, Jun 23 — A strike by oilfield service workers could halt a large part of drilling operations off Norway in the next week or two and drive up already high oil prices. The industry said it could affect output if it dragged on. The Norwegian Shipowners' Association, which represents the rig owners, said in a statement three rigs had already been taken out of operation and added that 10-12 drilling projects could be stopped in the course of the next week or two. "This will also affect oil and gas production on the Norwegian continental shelf because the drilling includes production wells," the association said. "This can have an influence on already high oil prices and on the Norwegian shelf's reputation as a stable supplier and interesting area for investment," it said. Eighty-seven members of the NOPEF oil workers' union began a strike on Wednesday after pay talks failed. The union has said the action would affect "to a greater or lesser extent" well completion work on close to 30 rigs and installations. Norway's biggest oil and gas producer Statoil said earlier that completion of an injection well at its Sn'hvít gas project in the Barents Sea was halted and the strike could delay further Arctic exploration planned for this summer and autumn. Norway's second biggest petroleum producer Norsk Hydro said that the strike could stop production drilling on several floating units and fixed installations from next week, but it had not yet seen any impact.

London, Jun 26 — Norwegian oil production and exports are being hit by the ongoing offshore workers strike in Europe's largest oil and gas exporter. The Norwegian Oil and Petrochemical Workers Union Nopef started the strike last week, taking 87 offshore workers away from their jobs and threatening to halt operations on 30 facilities. Drilling operations on the Sn'hvít project in the Barents Sea and on the Kristin field in the Norwegian Sea were halted last week delaying new production coming on-stream. Oil companies expect activities on the Ekofisk, Gullfaks, Oseberg, Snorre, Statfjord and Visund platforms to also be affected as the dispute drags on. The Norwegian Oil Industry Association fears a long strike will have negative effects including stalling drilling on existing platforms and on other production growth projects.

PERU

London, Jun 26 — Talks between Chinese-owned iron miner Shougang Hierro Peru and its striking workers broke down at the weekend, Reuters reports. A union leader said the Peruvian government must now resolve the four-day walkout that has halted production. The company has declared force majeure on iron shipments to Japan and China, protecting it against legal action for failing to meet its supply contracts.

Some 700 workers at the mine, 325 km south of Lima, went on strike last week to seek a wage increase equivalent to \$1.69 a day. "Shougang will not give any ground and so our conversations have failed," said union leader Cirilo Yarihuaman after leaving a meeting in Lima. "There will not be any more talks. It is up to the government to decide." The labour ministry, which declined to comment, says the strike is legal, meaning the company cannot force miners back to work without pay negotiations. Under Peruvian law the government can now require Shougang to increase workers' salaries so they can return to work. Shougang, owned by Chinese state-run steelmaker Shougang Group, was not immediately available for comment. Workers say they deserve a higher slice of Shougang Peru's record profits generated by soaring mineral prices. Mine workers say they earn an average of \$13 a day, not including benefits. That is below the average miners' wage in Peru of \$33 a day, according to Peru's private National Society of Mining, Petroleum and Energy. The company said the income of each worker was \$40.40 a day if benefits such as free electricity and water were added.

SOUTH KOREA

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: On Friday (Jun 23), unionized workers at Korea's largest automaker Hyundai Motor Co. voted in favour of waging the group's cyclical walkout. Nearly 80 percent of the union's 39,902 members voted to give an affirmative over a four-day partial walkout. They were demanding 9.1 percent basic pay raise and an extension of the mandatory retirement age, among others. Hyundai Motor union currently has 43,890 members. For four days beginning today, the union members at Hyundai Motor will carry out 2-hour partial strikes, with day-shifters taking two hours off from 1300 and night-shifters clocking off at 2300, the union said. SsangYong Motors Co., Korea's fourth largest carmaker is also about to kick off a strike, seeking a 10.5 percent raise in basic salary and a settlement over the voluntary retirement terms. The company union held a unionized workers assembly last week. However, since less than the majority of members turned up, the meeting had to be called off. SsangYong Motor's union is seeking opinions from members over its next move. Workers at Kumho Tire Co. are currently demanding a whopping 52 new terms, including 9.1 percent basic pay raise and an extension of the mandatory retirement age. After failing to reach an agreement with the management, workers at the nation's second largest tire manufacturer have been on partial strike since Tuesday. Kia Motors Corp., an affiliate of Hyundai Motor, is also going through the fourth in series of talks with its workers union; the union is seeking to strike a 7.8 percent raise in basic salary, and bonus payments to its

manufacturers and factory engineers. Though the auto industry is taking the lead in the summer labour struggle, the nation's other manufacturing sectors are likewise facing walkout threats. Leading shipbuilders like Hyundai Heavy Industries Co. and Daewoo Shipbuilding and Engineering Co. are close to settling terms with their unions. Nation's major oil refiners S-Oil Corp. and GS Caltex Corp. recently sat down with their unionized workers to make an agreement. S-Oil workers agreed to freeze their wages while GS Caltex management agreed to raise wages by 3 percent. SK Corp., the nation's largest oil refiner, however, is making turtle strides in dealing with its workers' union; it is demanding that the annual and bi-annual bonuses be raised to 900 percent from the previous 800 percent, and a cut in weekly working hours to 38 per week. Amid an economic downturn, general sentiment on the workers' strike is negative if not hostile. "It is about time that the unions at conglomerate firms drop the habitual walkouts and emerge as more responsible and mature workers' assemblies," a Labour Ministry official said. "The national economy has gone under an unstable phase, and they should take it into account," he added.

Seoul, Jun 26 — Unionised workers at South Korea's Hyundai Motor Co. kicked off a four-day strike today, demanding a 9.1 percent wage increase, in the latest setback for the country's top auto maker. The company, which faces tough wage talks every summer and has been hit by strikes in 17 of the past 18 years, has been struggling with soaring raw material prices, a stronger local currency and the arrest of its Chairman Chung Mong-koo. Hyundai's 43,890-member union, the country's biggest and the most powerful arm of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, is seeking a 9.1 percent rise in basic salary and incentive payments among other requests, or about three times estimated annual inflation in the country. The union stopped work for two hours today and planned to sit out for a few hours each day until Thursday (Jun 29). A Hyundai spokesman said that the union's four-day labour action was estimated to cost 100.3 billion won (57.4 million pounds), or 7,389 vehicles in lost output. It is less than 1 percent of Hyundai's 2005 revenue at 27.4 trillion won. The union received a 6.9 percent increase in basic salary last year after a two-week partial strike in August and September 2005 cost the company 591 billion won in lost production. — Reuters.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Production at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port plant has been halted after an unofficial walkout by staff at a supply company in a row over redundancies. About 240

jobs are under threat at TDS Automotive Logistics, which is based next to the car plant in Cheshire. A statement from TDS said the company was discussing cutting the jobs in order to move from three to two shifts. The Transport and General Workers' Union and Amicus rejected proposals for redundancy terms today. The T&G said it did not support the walkout and its main priority was resolving the differences and getting staff back to work. Production of the Astra stopped at about 0730, BST, today. Vauxhall said it was due to a lack of a number of parts being supplied by the company. The staff returned to work ahead of a meeting, scheduled to take place at 1400, BST. The redundancies at TDS are a direct result of a decision by General Motors deciding to axe one of three shifts at the Vauxhall plant. The move will lead to the loss of about 900 jobs at Vauxhall, with a knock-on effect to suppliers. A statement from TDS plant manager Colin Harwood said: "The company met the T&G and Amicus trade unions on 23rd June 2006, to continue discussions on moving from three to two shifts. Both trade unions rejected the company proposal for redundancy terms. Further consultation meetings will be held shortly." A T&G spokesman said that the problems arose over the redundancy packages that have been offered.



MISUSE OF INSIDER INFORMATION, UNITED STATES

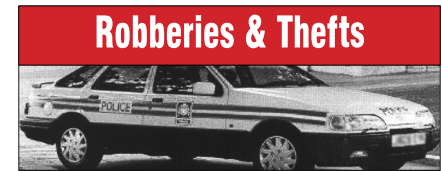
Washington, Jun 27 — Federal securities regulators said today that Morgan Stanley had agreed to pay \$10 million to settle claims that it failed to maintain proper procedures to prevent the misuse of insider information. "Morgan Stanley failed to conduct any surveillance of a massive number of employee accounts held at the firm and trading in certain securities in those and other accounts," the Securities and Exchange Commission said. The firm had a "systematic breakdown" in the mandatory compliance function of monitoring accounts and the trading of certain securities to detect insider trading, the S.E.C. said. The agency detailed five violations, some of which began as early as 1997 and continued through this year. According to the S.E.C., Morgan Stanley did not conduct any "watch list" surveillance on hundreds of thousands of employee and employee-related accounts to search for possible insider trading. A company is added to a brokerage's watch list if the brokerage has inside information on that company. Although Morgan Stanley had put about 3,000 companies on its watch list, it failed to monitor trading in those securities, the S.E.C. charged.

The commission also said that Morgan Stanley failed to conduct any insider-trading surveillance of 30,000 accounts held by its employees. As is typical in such settlements, Morgan Stanley agreed to the settlement without admitting or denying the charges. — Reuters.

PATENT INFRINGEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Finisar Corp., the Sunnyvale, Calif., provider of fiber-optic solutions for high-speed data networks, said a jury awarded the company \$78.9 million in damages from DirecTV. The jury found that DirecTV and affiliates infringed a Finisar information-transmission patent, Finisar said. Finisar said the case against the El Segundo, Calif., provider of digital television entertainment was heard in U.S. District Court in Beaumont, Texas.

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated Jun 28, states: Crossroads Systems, Inc., a leading provider of Business Information Assurance solutions for guaranteed access, resiliency and security of enterprise information, today announced it has settled its outstanding patent litigation with Carlsbad, California-based Dot Hill Systems Corp., a provider of storage networking solutions. In the settlement, Crossroads will receive a one-time \$10.5 million cash payment and a 2.5% ongoing royalty on net sales of products utilizing Crossroads patented access controls technology. Originally filed Oct 17, 2003, the lawsuit claimed that Dot Hill sold solutions that violated U.S. patent Nos. 5,941,972 and 6,425,035 which cover the ability to control access between hosts and storage devices in a networked storage environment. Crossroads is the exclusive owner of these patents. In exchange for the one-time cash payment and running royalty, Crossroads granted Dot Hill a nonexclusive license to these patents and the parties settled all claims arising out of the litigation.



CASH FROM SECURITY DEPOT, TONBRIDGE, KENT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Moroccan police arrested four Britons overnight sought for the United Kingdom's biggest cash robbery, a £53million raid four months ago, police said. The four were seized as they were shopping in Rabat's largest supermarket, police said, adding that police mounted a sizeable operation because the suspects were "specialists in martial arts and the use of weapons". British police have charged

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seven people in connection with the Feb 22 robbery on a Securitas depot in southern England. The arrests came after a three-month investigation by Moroccan police in cooperation with their British counterparts, the Moroccan statement added. Moroccan police did not say if or when the four arrested suspects would be handed over to Britain. The statement did not name those arrested.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A 26-year-old man from south London has been arrested in Morocco in connection with a £53m heist in south-east England, Kent Police have said. He was arrested along with three other British men at a shopping centre in the capital Rabat on Sunday. The other Britons are not wanted over the holding up of the Securitas depot in Tonbridge, Kent, in February. The man was reportedly detained for “offences linked to the raid” following a three-month investigation. He was held by Moroccan police working closely with officers from Kent Police. A spokesman for the Moroccan authorities said about 50 officers had been “deployed strategically around the shopping centre” before the arrests. The man is now in custody in Morocco pending extradition proceedings. Five men and two women face various charges in connection with the robbery on Feb 22. John Fowler, 60, of Staplehurst in Kent, is charged with three counts of kidnap, conspiracy to rob and handling stolen goods. Raluca Millen, 25, of Dudley Road, in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, is accused of conspiracy to rob and conspiracy to kidnap. Stuart Royle, 47, from Maidstone, Jetmir Bucpapa, 25, from Tonbridge, Lea Rusha, 33, from Southborough, all in Kent, and Ermir Hysenaj, 26, from Crowborough in East Sussex, are all charged with conspiracy to rob. Kim Shackleton, 38, from Maidstone, has been charged with handling stolen goods. They are all due back in court on Jul 10. More than £30m of the stolen cash is still missing.

Miscellaneous



AUSTRALIAN WHEAT SHIPMENTS UNDER INVESTIGATION BY INDIA

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Australia has decided to move ahead with a 500,000 tonne wheat shipment, which had been held up over quarantine concerns, after it resolved a long-running dispute with India over the \$90 million grain deal. “AWB has successfully resolved key issues relating to its current Indian contract and is now moving to finalise its shipping programme for our customer,” Australian Wheat Board spokesperson Peter McBride told the media in Melbourne today. About

100,000 tonnes of the contract has already been delivered to the southern Indian ports of Tuticorn and Chennai, but several other shipments had been held up because of quarantine concerns. The company, however, described the problem largely as a technical issue. Apart from filling the 500,000 tonne contract, AWB has also won a second similar deal that is likely to be filled over the next four months, he said. The one million tonne will come out of the national wheat pool. The initial contract was India’s first large grain import in nearly a decade after being self-sufficient over that time. The two contracts are some of the first major sales since trade with Iraq was suspended over claims AWB paid \$300 million in kickbacks to the former regime of Saddam Hussein.

RISING OM (Panama)

London, Jun 26 — Chemical tanker *Rising Om* sailed Kochi Jun 15.

SHUTDOWN OF NUCLEAR REACTOR, HAMAOKA, JAPAN

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated Jun 23, states: A broken turbine blade led to the shutdown of a nuclear reactor at a plant in central Japan last week, a government official said today. No release of radioactivity was reported in the incident. The No. 5 reactor at the Hamaoka nuclear power plant was automatically shut down on Jun 15, when one of its four turbines started rumbling. Chubu Electric Power Co. officials investigating the shutdown have found a 53-centimetre by 12-centimetre blade that was broken at its base and had fallen onto the floor, said Industry Ministry spokesman Kazuhiro Nakajima. Only one case of a broken turbine has been reported in Japan in the past, Nakajima said. He said Industry Ministry officials will look into whether there were any design flaws, and whether a regular inspection conducted from January to April by Chubu Electric Power Co. was thorough.

Fires & Explosions



BOATYARD, POTTER HEIGHAM, NORFOLK, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Environment Agency officials are today investigating possible river contamination after a major fire at Herbert Woods Boatyard, Bridge Road, Potter Heigham. Two fire crews and a rescue boat from Yarmouth were initially sent when a blaze in a boatshed containing pleasure craft was reported at 2.44am today. Extra crews were later called from Martham, Stalham, Acle, Wroxham, Gorleston and Wymondham. Firefighters used water from the river

to fight the blaze with hose reel jets and took more than an hour to put it out. The fire service requested the attendance of Environment Agency officers to check for contamination.

CAR DEALERSHIP, LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated Jun 28, states: Fire gutted the repair shop of one of the oldest car dealerships in the city; officials estimated damage could reach \$3 million. The yesterday night fire at Santos Ford Lincoln Mercury destroyed 10 vehicles, tools and other equipment and threatened neighboring homes. One firefighter suffered cuts that required stitches; no other injuries were reported. Firefighters responded to the dealership in the 600 block of West Pacheco Boulevard at 2307 hrs. When they arrived, flames were escaping from three doors in the 6,500-square-foot building. “When we got there, about 80 percent of the building was involved,” Assistant Fire Chief Tim Marrison said. Marrison said he immediately called a second alarm and asked the Merced County Fire Department to help fight the blaze. It took 24 city firefighters and several more county firefighters just under half an hour to contain the fire, Marrison said. The repair shop, a separate building behind the showroom, was an original part of the five-decade-old dealership and was built before many modern fire codes took effect. “The big contributing factor was that it was one building, no fire walls, no alarm system, no sprinklers, nothing to hamper the fire,” Marrison said. Michael Santos, one of the owners of the dealership, said the fire consumed 10 vehicles, seven of which were being kept at the shop for repairs. He’s unsure if insurance will cover that loss. One of them, Marrison said, was a PG&E truck with equipment worth more than \$100,000. In addition, the building was filled with specialized tools, diagnostic computers and chemicals. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

COAL MINE, COAHUILA STATE, MEXICO

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescuers have found the first of 65 bodies believed to have been left in a northern Mexican mine following a February explosion, a Mexican newspaper reported today. The body was found about dawn as workers were removing debris from one of the shafts at the Pasta de Conchos mine in northern Coahuila state, the Reforma newspaper said, citing a spokeswoman from mine owner Grupo Mexico.

COAL MINE, FUXIN CITY, CHINA

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Thirteen miners were confirmed dead and seven others injured in a gas-related accident this morning in a coal mine in Fuxin City of north-east China’s Liaoning

Province, said the provincial coal mine safety watchdog. The accident occurred at around 0900, today in the Wulong Coal Mine of the Fuxin Mining Industrial Group, according to the Liaoning Provincial Coal Mine Safety Supervision Administration. Twelve miners managed to escape, but the number of missing miners remained unknown, Xinhua learned from the administration.

EXPLOSIVES FACTORY, MIDDLE WALLOP, HAMPSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jun 27 — A blast at a factory supplying explosives to the Ministry of Defence yesterday killed one man, injured four others and ripped the building apart. Police said the cause was unclear but there had been an explosion inside an oven at the building, belonging to Wallop Defence Systems, close to the army camp at Middle Wallop. — “The Daily Telegraph”.

FOREST, CANADA

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: The wind pushed a major forest fire away from three northern Saskatchewan communities yesterday, but roughly 300 people were airlifted out of the area as a precaution. All 170 residents of Stony Rapids, who left their homes Sunday (Jun25) when the fire first threatened, were flown to Prince Albert, Sask, along with those “at-risk” living in nearby Black Lake and Fond-du-Lac. Provincial officials said the “at-risk” group included seniors, people with asthma and anyone who was ill and would require extra time to move in case of an emergency. Residents of Stony Rapids had originally been evacuated to Black Lake, but were airlifted Monday night to a hotel in Prince Albert.

FOREST, ISRAEL

London, Jun 23 — A huge forest fire broke out near a Kibbutz in the Beit Shemesh area in northern Israel yesterday, according to local media reports. A spokesman for the Fire and Rescue Service establishment told Xinhua that the blazing area, near the Mishmar Ha'emek Kibbutz, was about 102 acres. “For the time being, 25 firefighters and four planes have been mobilized to extinguish the fire,” said the spokesman, expecting the fire to be put out before evening. There was no report of any casualties, he said, adding that residents of the Mishmar Ha'emek Kibbutz had been evacuated. The cause of the fire was not immediately clear.

MINE, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: The Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) says it is satisfied a piece of equipment that caused an overnight fire at the Savage River iron ore mine was not faulty. A loose electrical connection started the blaze, causing more than Aus\$10 million (£4.02 million) damage. Workers were using a large heating

mat to weld metal in the mine’s mill when a connection sparked, igniting some rubber. TFS spokesman Rob Deverill says workers were having similar problems earlier in the week but investigators believe the fire was accidental. “The possible cause could have been vibrations with the workmen in the area,” he said. It is hoped some of the mine’s 240 employees and 150 contractors will be able to return to work in two weeks. The mine’s general manager, Dave Sandy, says the mill is at the start of the production line, so even workers at Port Latta will be affected. “For us, time is of the essence - we need to get back into production as soon as we possibly can,” he said. Mine fire teams are still monitoring hot spots at the scene.

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Operators of Tasmania’s Savage River iron ore mine in north-west Tasmania say damage from last week’s fire might not be as bad as was first thought. The fire caused Aus\$10 million (£4.02 million) damage to the main processing mill. However, there was some good news at the weekend when engineers managed to get the pipe that pumps the iron ore slurry from Savage River to Port Latta for shipping operating again. The managing director of Australian Bulk Minerals, Dave Sandy, says it is good to have one part of the plant back on line. “To be in a position where on the weekend we actually pumped out the last remaining slurry down the pipeline was unimaginable at the start of this crisis,” he said.

MOTEL, BREMEN, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Police officials said a gas leak may be to blame for a blast that heavily damaged a motel in west Georgia. The two-story motel partially collapsed after an explosion and fire Tuesday, authorities said. Images: Hotel Explosion The blast rattled the Great Western Inn motel shortly after 0900 hrs, collapsing a section of roof over a corner of rooms and dumping debris on cars parked below. One maintenance worker at the 73-room motel was missing, said Glenn Allen, a spokesman for the Georgia Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner’s Office. A police captain said only three or four people were in the motel when the blast hit.

OFFSHORE FORT, NORTH SEA, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated Jun 24, states: A former wartime fortress which is now a self-proclaimed independent state has been left devastated after a fierce blaze tore through the structure. The so-called Principality of Sealand, seven miles off the coast of Felixstowe and Harwich, was evacuated at lunchtime yesterday after a generator caught fire. Thames Coastguard, Harwich RNLi lifeboat, Felixstowe Coastguard rescue teams, firefighting

tug *Brightwell*, the RAF rescue helicopter from Wattisham and 15 Suffolk based firefighters from the National Maritime Incident Response Group (MIRG) were all called into action to tackle the blaze. One man, believed to be a security guard, was airlifted from the scene and taken to Ipswich Hospital with smoke inhalation but no one else was on the Second World War gun emplacement. Emergency services were first alerted to the drama just after midday when eyewitnesses noticed huge clouds of black smoke billowing out of the concrete structure, which is owned by self-styled King Roy Bates. Andrew Beal, a council worker from Trimley who watched events unfold from his beach hut at Brackenbury, said: “There was thick black smoke billowing out of the gun emplacement. Air sea rescue was heading out at high speed and hovered over the platform and appeared to be taking someone off. “There were several other vessels heading out, including a lifeboat, and there was a boat out there hosing it down. The smoke was hundreds of feet high in the air. Firefighting tug *Brightwell* from the port of Felixstowe was despatched to the scene and doused the flames with vast amounts of water. A team of 15 off-shore firefighters from the National Maritime Incident Response Group (MIRG) were also assembled but after a reconnaissance of the area from the air it was decided it was too dangerous to land. Keith Churchman, of Harwich Royal National Lifeboat Institution, said: “The damage is very extensive. The fire started in a generator and spread quickly to the accommodation. “There have been a number of explosions on board as the fire has engulfed gas bottles and batteries. Only one person was on Sealand at the time, whom we understand to be a watchman whose job was to maintain the generators and equipment. “A team of firefighters was flown to the scene but because of the damage to the structure they decided not to go on board. “A firefighting tug sprayed the whole structure with water in the hope this would eventually cool the fire and starve it of oxygen.” A spokesperson for Suffolk Fire Service confirmed the fire was left to burn itself out and was under control by 3.10pm.

London, Jun 26 — The cost of repairing the fire-damaged Principality of Sealand could be as high as £500,000, it emerged yesterday. The former offshore anti-aircraft facility originally known as Rough’s Tower was hit by a fierce blaze on Friday (Jun 23). The fire started in a generator and quickly spread, leading to the winch rescue of an injured security guard. He was treated for smoke inhalation and has been released from hospital.

PREMISES, CHUNGLI, TAIWAN

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Advanced Semiconductor Engineering has

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reached a settlement with insurers for compensation of NT\$8.07 billion, US\$247.49 million, following fire damage at its Chungli, Taiwan, plant in May 2005, according to the company. The insurers had already paid ASE an interim payment of NT\$2.3 billion in mid October 2005, and this amount will be deducted from the final settlement, with a remaining NT\$5.77 billion to be paid. ASE expects to recognize approximately NT\$3.4 billion of non-operating income in the second quarter of 2006. The company said it is still repairing certain assets damaged by the fire and determining how much of the losses originally resulting from the fire will be reversed as a result of such repairs. ASE said it would announce the impact on its earnings when it reports its second quarter consolidated financial results, on Aug 1, 2006.

PREMISES, SHAANXI PROVINCE, CHINA

Beijing, Jun 27 — An explosion of illegally stored dynamite in north-west China killed 11 people, injured 20 and flattened buildings and the death toll is expected to rise, state media said today. The storage of explosives in houses is common in Shaanxi Province, the heart of the country's coal-mining industry. "Most of the victims are migrant workers," Xinhua news agency said, citing a local official. Yesterday's explosion "flattened 23 rooms," Xinhua said without elaborating. — Reuters.

THEATRE AND COMMERCIAL PREMISES, DALLAS, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A six-alarm fire destroyed five businesses in the 2000 block of Greenville Avenue, Dallas, yesterday, and at least one of those businesses had historical significance for the city, authorities said. The Arcadia Theatre, the Nuevo Leon restaurant, Cafe Nostra, the Syn Bar and Condom Sense were all occupants of a shopping centre at Greenville and Prospect avenues that went up in flames about 1600 hrs, said Annette Ponce, a Dallas Fire Department spokeswoman. No one was injured, she said, but smoke from the blaze could be seen from miles away. The fire made the building unstable, and parts of it collapsed as firefighters battled the blaze, Ponce said. "It was too dangerous to fight from the inside," Ponce said. The Arcadia Theatre, the Syn Bar and the Nuevo Leon restaurant sustained most of the fire damage. The other businesses in the building have sustained such heavy smoke and water damage they will probably have to be rebuilt, Ponce said. The theatre was built in 1926 as a neighbourhood vaudeville and silent picture house seating about 900. The cause of the fire was under investigation late yesterday.

UNIVERSITY PREMISES, BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated Jun 24, states: It will cost more than \$1.3 million to repair Western Kentucky University's Cherry Hall, which was damaged by an arson fire April 23. Western's President Gary Ransdell said the university has about half the money it needs from its insurer and is working toward obtaining the rest. The university may also see if it can get money from restitution payments through the criminal court system. Four teenagers this week were charged with arson in connection with the fire. Work on the interactive classroom and offices damaged in the fire should be complete by August, Ransdell said.

WILDFIRE, VIOTIA, GREECE

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire that broke out in the central Greek prefecture of Viotia, some 60 kilometres north-west of Athens, has burned 200 hectares of forest before being brought under partial control. The blaze reached within 200 metres of the village of Kleidi but fire-fighters managed to drive it off, Net state television reported today, giving an early estimate of the damage. The fire department said that 160 firemen, 15 fire-fighting planes and two helicopters were participating in the effort to put out the blaze, now "under partial control", but declined to give further details as the operation is still in progress.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated today, states: The commander of a crew battling a wildfire near Sedona, Arizona, called today "a critical day" for stopping the blaze's advance, while in Colorado, cooler temperatures and higher humidity were expected to help crews fighting an 11,800-acre fire. The 3,260-acre blaze just north of Sedona has forced the evacuation of roughly 460 homes and businesses. None has been lost, but officials warned that more homes could be in danger if crews cannot stop the fire's northern advance. If the blaze crosses the northern line crews are building and continues up the edge of Oak Creek Canyon, the next possible place to stop it is 2.5 miles to the north, said Paul Broyles, commander of the 700-member firefighting crew. "Today's a critical day," Broyles said early today. "I won't say it's a last ditch, but there's lot of potential. This is our good shot." The fire was approaching Slide Rock State Park, a popular recreation spot that draws hundreds of thousands of visitors a year. "Things are going well out there," said Larry Sears, a divisional commander. "Now we need to get to that north side and find a good place to hold it." The blaze started on Sunday (Jun 18) in a camp used by transients and spread quickly, forcing evacuations in the canyon 90 miles north of Phoenix. The Forest

Service is offering a reward up to \$5,000 for information leading to a conviction of those responsible for the fire. In Colorado, favorable weather conditions helped firefighters hoping to expand containment lines around a wildfire that has forced residents from 300 homes. No houses have been lost, but US 160, a major thoroughfare, remained closed for a fourth day about 150 miles south of Denver. The same weather that was helping keep the flames in check also kept the highway closed, fire information officer Steve Segin said. Fire managers need to burn off nearby vegetation that could ignite should the wildfire return that way, but the weather was too damp to keep a backfire burning. Citing dangerously dry conditions, Governor Bill Owens yesterday issued an order banning open burning and fireworks on all state-owned land and urged local officials to do the same. In New Mexico, heat, wind and rugged terrain slowed efforts to control fires that have burned nearly 70,000 acres of forest. The largest blaze, burning across about 33,250 acres in south-western New Mexico, continued to threaten cabins in the Willow Creek area, fire officials warned. In California, firefighters battled a blaze of more than 13,000 acres that had stopped short of a critical ridgeline in Los Padres National Forest. No homes were threatened as the fire burned away from the small town of New Cuyama, about 45 miles east of Santa Maria.

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire officials watched out for high wind today while battling a wildfire outside Sedona, Arizona, worried that burning branches and embers could be blown "all over the place." The 3,200-acre fire threatening the scenic community was 17% contained early today, up from 7% on Wednesday (Jun 21). Firefighters were prepared to protect the roughly 460 homes and businesses in nearby Oak Creek Canyon that were evacuated after the fire began on Sunday with a transient's campfire, but the danger of wind from thunderstorms was in the forecast. "That's a red flag. That's a watch-out situation," said Mike Dondero, deputy incident commander for the fire. "It could hit and blow stuff all over the place." In southern Colorado, a 13,100-acre wildfire was 35% contained. Residents from a 62-house subdivision were heading home today, and motorists were being allowed to travel again on US160, which had been closed since Monday. In western Colorado, a 1,530-acre wildfire started by a car wreck on Tuesday was 25% contained. The fire was burning in juniper, oak and ponderosa pine in the Manti-La Sal National Forest, about 225 miles south-west of Denver near the Utah border. Firefighters in New Mexico, facing fires that have scorched more than 70,000 acres, were dealing with more hot weather yesterday, but forecast storms and erratic winds did not materialise. The

largest fire — a 33,250-acre blaze in south-western New Mexico — threatened cabins and other structures in the Willow Creek area. In southern California, firefighters were holding their ground against a wildfire that had consumed nearly 15,000 acres of chaparral, pine and grasslands in Los Padres National Forest, officials said. Fire crews prevented a 10-mile-long swath of flames from rolling over a ridge line bordering a wilderness area that has larger trees and brush, said Forest Service spokesman Joe Pasinato. The fire was 57% contained, officials said.

London, Jun 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A 15,500-acre wildfire in Grand Canyon National Park prompted officials to close several roads, blocking the exits for an unknown number of tourists on the North Rim on Saturday (Jun 24). Crews worked on a plan to escort visitors out of the park as soon as possible, but it depended upon fire conditions. The North Rim is significantly more remote and less popular than the park's main South Rim entrance. The blaze, which had not threatened any property, was allowed to burn since it was discovered Jun 8 in the Kaibab National Forest after a series of lightning strikes. But strong winds pushed the flames into areas without fire lines this week and forced the roads closed Saturday morning, said Steve Ritchie, a spokesman with the team fighting the fire. Arizona Highway 89A is closed about 10 miles east of Jacob Lake because of the fire, and officials closed Highway 67, the North Rim Parkway to Grand Canyon National Park. Near Sedona, dozens of residents who were evacuated from scenic Oak Creek Canyon because of a 4,200-acre wildfire a week ago returned to their homes Saturday as crews reinforced the lines around the blaze, officials said. Still hundreds more residents from the roughly 430 homes lining the narrow canyon in northern Arizona must continue to stay elsewhere. Crews had become confident that two days of work to strengthen the lines keeping flames from moving farther north up the canyon had been successful. No homes have burned. Officials said the fire was 20 percent contained, with full containment predicted by Wednesday, barring any weather disturbances that could push the flames. The fire started Jun 18 north of Sedona as a transient's campfire. About 720 firefighters have been clearing brush, wetting down buildings and setting backfires to remove fuel from the fire's path. It is the second fire in the Sedona area, about 90 miles north of Phoenix, in the past month. An 836-acre wildfire destroyed five buildings near the Village of Oak Creek, south of Sedona, in early June and forced the evacuation of about 200 people. Elsewhere, a nearly 48,000-acre blaze in southwestern New Mexico's Gila National Forest was 23 percent contained Saturday. It had destroyed a cabin and was threatening about 80

other structures. It was started by a campfire, forest officials said. Thunderstorms were forecast. In Southern California, a 15,000-acre wildfire in Los Padres National Forest was 78 percent contained and crews hoped to have it fully contained by late today, a US Forest Service statement said. The blaze 45 miles east of Santa Maria was started Monday by an electrical short circuit, and had destroyed two sheds and three oil company trailers. Wildfires have charred nearly 3.2 million acres nationwide so far this year, well ahead of the average of just over 1 million acres by this time, the National Interagency Fire Centre reported. Huge grass fires that swept Texas and Oklahoma this spring account for much of the increase.

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Containment of a 4,200-acre wildfire just north of Sedona grew to 50 percent by Sunday night (Jun 25) as authorities expressed confidence in the strength of protection lines around the blaze. High winds from thunderstorms that blew over the fire didn't push flames across protection lines at scenic Oak Creek Canyon. Crews continued to build protection lines on the canyon's southern end, where hundreds of homes remained evacuated. People living in about 75 homes and four resorts on the fire's northern flank were allowed to return home Saturday after the fire's danger there subsided. While full containment was expected by Wednesday evening, it wasn't known when the remaining evacuees will be allowed to return home. The fire hasn't burned any homes. Officials had been concerned that the thunderstorms, which produced little rain but whipped up winds, would complicate firefighting efforts. In southern New Mexico, a fire burning in the Gila National Forest was held back as thunderstorms brought rain and cooler temperatures to the area. The blaze has charred 50,688 acres of dense stands of ponderosa pine and spruce fir. A 2,300-acre wildfire blazing a mile west of the northern New Mexico town of Gallina has forced residents of three small communities nearby to flee their homes. In southern Colorado, all evacuation orders were lifted Sunday for homes near a 13,780-acre wildfire as firefighters got help from cooler, more humid weather. Residents of about 50 homes in the area were allowed back into the area in the afternoon. At one point, about 300 homes had been asked to evacuate after the fire started Jun 18. Fire officials warned that residents could be asked to evacuate again if the weather and fire activity shift.

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Lightning-sparked wildfires burned across more than 50,000 acres of northern Nevada yesterday, closing Interstate 80 for a second day, forcing evacuations in some rural areas. At least a half-dozen new fires were spotted around the Reno and Carson City area after

another round of thunderstorms packing lightning rolled through the area yesterday. Nearly 1,000 firefighters were fighting about two dozen blazes from the heavily timbered western front of the Sierra Nevada near Reno to the sage- and grass-filled rangeland near Elko, 300 miles east. In Arizona, a 58,300-acre wildfire north of Grand Canyon National Park jumped the only highway leading to the remote North Rim, closing the road and marooning hundreds of tourists and workers. With the fire burning national forest land about 30 miles from the park, officials said no one was in any danger. As many as 300 homes and businesses east of Carson City in the Mound House area were threatened by a pair of brush fires, covering an estimated 500 acres, that forced the closure of part of US Highway 50. Nevada officials ordered evacuations in two rural communities near Elko and flames burned within a quarter mile of homes northwest of Reno, but no injuries were reported and no homes faced immediate threat. The state's biggest fire yesterday surpassed 40,000 acres about 20 miles west of Elko near Carlin, where the University of Nevada Fire Science Academy is located along I-80. Flames burned 350 acres of the training grounds on the 426-acre campus and came within several hundred yards of the main academy building, said Denise Baclawski, the academy's executive director. Fifteen students were at the academy, learning about wildland fires, but they left the firefighting chores to staff, Baclawski said. The academy building was no longer threatened by yesterday afternoon, but firefighters were still working to protect its power supply. Sections of the interstate in the area were closed Sunday night (Jun 25) because of the fires and reopened Monday morning, but nearly the entire 20-mile stretch from Carlin to Elko was closed again Monday afternoon. Near Reno, a wildfire in the Sierra just across the California line tripled in size overnight to nearly 1,000 acres. The fire near the North Rim grew by 17,000 acres Monday, but officials fighting the blaze were pleased because it had spread even faster on Sunday, aided by high temperatures, winds and low humidity. With the only highway leading off the North Rim closed by fire since late Sunday, an estimated 800 tourists and 150 employees were stranded at the park's lodge, cabins and campgrounds, said Leah McGinnis, a park spokeswoman. Rangers went out on trails to notify backpackers, she said. Trees fell on the highway, which was expected to remain closed until at least Tuesday, but park officials said the campgrounds and resorts where tourists are staying have enough supplies for several days. Near Sedona, Ariz., fire officials predicted that a 4,200-acre fire that forced hundreds to evacuate would be contained Wednesday. Owners of the

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roughly 400 homes and scattered businesses still evacuated were expected to be allowed to return Tuesday night. Elsewhere, a 3,200-acre blaze a mile west of the northern New Mexico town of Gallina calmed somewhat. Crews were still fighting the fire, though evacuees from 120 homes in three subdivisions were allowed to return Monday. As of Monday, wildfires around the United States had blackened 3.3 million acres this year, compared with 1.2 million acres on average at this point in the fire season, the National Interagency Fire Center reported. However, much of this year's acreage resulted from huge grass fires in Texas and Oklahoma this spring, not from forest fires.

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn declared a state of emergency yesterday as state and federal crews put practically every available piece of equipment on the lines to combat dozens of lightning-sparked fires that have burned more than 100,000 acres in the state. More than 1,000 firefighters were battling dozens of fires, from a 57,000-acre fire on uninhabited rangeland in northeast Nevada to a complex of a dozen smaller fires around Reno and Carson City. No injuries were reported in any of the fires and no buildings burned. However, the blazes at times closed two major highways, scorched part of the training grounds at the state fire academy and forced evacuations of homes and businesses, including a legal brothel. The Suzie Fire 10 miles north of Elko was the biggest. It had scorched 57,000 acres of sagebrush and grass, and closed Interstate 80 for about three hours Monday (Jun 26). Just east of that was a 12,600-acre fire, and a third burned 6,000 acres of grass and brush. Firefighters welcomed a slight improvement in the weather there yesterday, after three consecutive days of temperatures in the 90s, low humidity, strong erratic winds and dry lightning. In the area east of Carson City, a fire grew to 6,000 acres overnight and had looped north around Carson City, sending a mile-long snake of fire down a hillside near McClellan Peak. Some residents also left their homes voluntarily north of Reno, where an estimated 120 firefighters were working a complex of fires as large as 800 acres in Palomino Valley and Lemmon Valley. Near Sedona, Ariz., rain dampened the smoldering 4,200-acre wildfire that has threatened scenic Oak Creek Canyon for more than a week, as fire managers lifted the evacuation order that sent about 400 people fleeing from their homes.

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Two of the top firefighting teams in the nation led the attack from the air and the ground yesterday in fire-plagued Nevada, where scores of wildland blazes continued to burn across more than 140,000 acres from the Sierra to the Utah state line. Cooler weather helped an estimated 1,400 firefighters

on the fire lines state-wide make some progress against the two big fires of most concern, but late afternoon winds fanned a pair of newer fires north and east of Reno, forcing the closure of stretches of U.S. Highway 95-A and State Highway 447. One federal Type I incident management team moved in to battle the 8,000-acre Sierra-Tahoe complex of fires in western Nevada near Reno and Carson City, and another team was preparing to assume command of the huge Suzie fire in north-east Nevada, which grew to more than 78,000 acres near Elko. In all, some 210 square miles of the state has been charred since lightning began sparking dozens of fires over the weekend (Jun 24-25). Of the 33 major large fires burning in the United States, 10 are in Nevada. The nearby Lineham fire, which began Monday near Mound House just east of Carson City near the historic Pony Express trail, was estimated at 4,500 acres after a satellite measurement lowered the size from 6,000 acres. Voluntary evacuations were in place when as many as 200 homes were threatened Tuesday, but most residents were returning to their homes yesterday. Some 300 miles to the east, the 62,500-acre Suzie blaze burned toward a subdivision in north-western Elko late Tuesday, but stopped 1 1/2 miles short at a green belt. No one was evacuated. Rowdy Muir, incident commander for the Sierra-Tahoe complex, said his team would deploy about 800 firefighters and related vehicles and aircraft against fires in an area from Reno north to Pyramid Lake, south-east to Silver Springs, back east to Carson City and north again toward Reno along the eastern front of the Sierra. Another 600 firefighters were working the fires in the Elko area. About 30 miles east of Reno, a growing wildfire in Lyon County has forced the Nevada Highway Patrol to shut down a 15-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 95-A connecting Fernley to Silver Springs at U.S. Highway 50. East of the Suzie fire, the Elburz fire blackened 9,600 acres before it was contained. But zero containment was reported for the Sneekie fire burning 7,200 acres in the Red Springs Wilderness Study Area south-west of Elko. The 210 square miles of burned land is about 134,000 acres, more than four times the size of San Francisco. No injuries have been reported and no structures have burned, but there have been a number of close calls, including fires that threatened homes Monday in Palomino Valley and Lemmon Valley on the outskirts of Reno. The 2,000-acre Balls Canyon fire near the California line northwest of Reno and the 3,000-acre Empire fire near Gerlach were expected to be contained by late yesterday. Fire officials declared the Sage fire fully contained yesterday at 20,000 acres north-west of Lovelock in north-central Nevada. But a new blaze, the North Antelope fire south-east of Midas, was burning out of control and had scorched an estimated 5,000 acres. The 7,700-acre

Sherwood fire was 70% contained south-west of Ely in the Grant Range, about 15 miles north of the ghost town Adaven, which is Nevada spelled backward.



C-GRSG

London, Jun 27 — Bowers Flybaby 1 aircraft, C-GRSG, was departing the Upper Kent private airstrip on a local pleasure flight and was at an altitude of between 50 and 75 feet when the pilot observed that the aircraft was no longer climbing and that the airspeed was low. The pilot felt that there was an engine power loss, so he lowered the nose to gain airspeed and made a slight turn to the left to avoid trees ahead on the extended centerline of the runway. The aircraft then entered an aerodynamic stall and struck the ground in a nose down attitude and came to rest in an inverted position at 1715, Jun 25. The pilot, who was wearing a four point safety harness, suffered only minor bruising.

C-GSMZ

London, Jun 22 — Bell 206L LongRanger C-GSMZ, operated by Expedition Helicopters Inc, crashed near Smooth Rock Falls, Ontario, at 1010, EDT, Jun 21, while on a flight from Smooth Rock Falls. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board suffered minor injuries.

C-GVQU

London, Jun 27 — Cessna A185F, C-GVQU, operated by The Air Mikisew Ltd, was landing on Third Lake adjacent to the Ft. Chipewyan, AB airport at 1430, MDT, Jun 23. Glassy water conditions existed on portions of the lake and for that reason, the pilot elected to land on a section of the lake that had some ripples. On touchdown, the left float dug and the aircraft nosed over. The aircraft came to rest inverted and the pilot, the sole occupant, was able to egress through the left door. A helicopter from the Ft. Chipewyan airport picked up the pilot and returned him to the shore. The aircraft sustained substantial damage to both wings and the pilot received multiple bruises from the deceleration forces.

CANCELLATION OF FLIGHTS, BRAZIL

London, Jun 26 — A press report, dated Jun 23, states: A Brazilian bankruptcy judge has cancelled the sale of the country's heavily indebted national airline, Varig, to a consortium of employees. The group failed to deliver its first payment of \$75m (£41m; 59m euros) by today's deadline. The group, which had offered \$449m for the ailing airline, said it had failed "to reach an agreement with investors". The judge

said prosecutors and the firm's bankruptcy administrators would now decide what to do. Judge Roberto Ayoub had delayed the initial deadline for a further six hours, but when the deposit was not made by the second deadline, Mr Ayoub annulled the sale. Liquidating the firm, arranging another auction or setting meetings for creditors and the firm were all options, he said. The sole offer made by the TGV, which also included foreign investors, at an auction on June 8, was well below the \$860m minimum asking price. One of the conditions stated at the auction was that the initial \$75m had to be delivered by today. By 1700, UTC, today, the airline had cancelled 142 - the majority - of its flights. Services to 10 cities including New York, Paris, Los Angeles and Milan had all been suspended. It is thought that 28,000 Varig customers are currently abroad between now and June 30, including many at the World Cup in Germany. Before today, the airline promised to provide alternative arrangements for people affected by the cancellations. Some travellers however said they could not get on other flights and had been stranded. The airline has been under increasing pressure recently after missing payments to jet leasing firms, which provide 80% of its planes.

CRASH, POCONOS, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A Florida man was piloting a small aircraft that crashed near a Poconos housing development over the weekend (Jun 24-25), killing him, his father and sister, officials said. The family was flying from back to Maine in North Carolina on Sunday when the aircraft crashed in a wooded area, authorities said. Witnesses said the aircraft crashed about 100 ft from the nearest homes.

EMERGENCY LANDING, LOUISVILLE AIRPORT, KENTUCKY, UNITED STATES

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A Delta Connection flight made an emergency landing at the Louisville airport shortly after takeoff today because of smoke in the cockpit, an airport spokeswoman said. There were no reported injuries aboard the flight, which had 49 passengers plus crew, said Trish Burke, a spokeswoman for the Louisville Regional Airport Authority. "It immediately returned to the field, landed safely, the passengers were safely evacuated," Burke said. The flight was operated for Delta Airlines by Chautauqua Airlines, Burke said. She didn't know where the flight was headed or what had caused the smoke. The incident is under investigation.

EMERGENCY LANDING, VICTORIA FALLS AIRPORT, ZIMBABWE

London, Jun 29 — A press report, dated today, states: An Air Zimbabwe

Chinese-made MA60 aircraft last night burst its four main tyres after being forced into an emergency landing at Victoria Falls Airport as it developed engine failure soon after take off. The airline announced on Jun 16 it was temporarily grounding two of its three new aircraft sourced from China. The MA60 aircraft are said to have developed mechanical faults that the airline has been struggling to deal with. The one that was still operational and is now stuck at Victoria Falls Airport was on its way to Harare from the resort town when its engine started to fail. Public Relations Manager David Mwenga confirmed the incident last night but could not provide more details. "The aircraft had to make an emergency landing in Victoria Falls yes but there were no injuries at all," he said though some passengers said there were a few with minor injuries. A Boeing 737 that was on its way to Bulawayo from South Africa had to divert to Victoria Falls to fly the passengers to Harare. According to the state-owned Herald newspaper, Air Zimbabwe's acting Chief Executive Officer, Captain Oscar Madombwe, said the incident would be thoroughly investigated to ascertain the cause of the engine failure. "Every aircraft undergoes maintenance everyday. The accident will be thoroughly investigated by our engineers," he said.

FLIGHTS DELAYED DUE TO FOG, AUSTRALIA

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Flights bound for Sydney have been delayed around the country while fog persists in the harbour city. A Qantas spokesman says the airline wants to avoid repeating the lengthy fog-induced delays experienced yesterday at Sydney airport. She says flights will not be allowed to take off for Sydney until 0800, AEST. There is already a three-hour delay out of Darwin. There is also extreme fog at Canberra airport, which will not open until 1000, AEST.

INCIDENT AT ABERDEEN AIRPORT, SCOTLAND

London, Jun 23 — An investigation is under way after an aircraft with 19 people on board overshot the end of Aberdeen Airport runway by hundreds of yards. The Air Accidents Investigation Branch will undertake an examination of the plane. One passenger reported there had been a problem with the throttle. The incident, which disrupted evening flights in and out of Aberdeen, happened at about 2100, BST, yesterday. An airport spokeswoman said the City Star flight had travelled from Norway. Three Grampian Fire and Rescue units and two ambulances were called out but were not required. The 30-seat twin propeller Dornier 328 was travelling from Stavanger. City Star Airlines spokeswoman Eleanor Jones said: "The aircraft containing 16 passengers and three

crew overran the end of the runway. "We would confirm that no passengers or crew were injured during this incident. "We have their welfare as our priority." The airport's runway had been closed while flights were diverted to Edinburgh. It reopened at 2230, BST to clear a backlog of arrivals and departures.

INCIDENT AT NUREMBERG AIRPORT, GERMANY

London, Jun 28 — A Swiss aircraft went off a runway after landing at Nuremberg airport today, but none of the 52 people on board were injured, an official said. The aircraft, operated by Swiss International Air Lines, came to a halt in a field next to the runway, airport spokesman Reto Manitz said. The cause of the accident was unclear, although it was raining at the time. The 49 passengers and three crew members were able to leave the aircraft by the normal steps, Manitz said. The aircraft had taken off from Nuremberg for Zurich shortly before the incident and then returned. Manitz said it was not immediately clear why the pilot had turned back.

N20

London, Jun 24 — A press report, dated Jun 23, states: The main runway at Bradley International Airport was shut down for 3 and a half hours today after the landing gear on an aircraft owned and operated by the Federal Aviation Administration collapsed. Nobody was injured and flights were moved to a secondary runway at the airport, said John Wallace, an airport spokesman. "The airport stayed open the entire time," he said. The seven-seat Beechcraft King Air 90 was practicing touch-and-go landings and was on the ground when the landing gear collapsed at 1235 said Jim Peters, an FAA spokesman. "The gear was fully extended and they were taxiing when it collapsed," he said. Two FAA inspectors were the only people aboard the plane, he said.

London, Jun 27 — Beechcraft King Air C90 N20 had landing gear collapse on landing at Bradley, Connecticut, at 1637, Jun 23. The one person on board was not injured.

N202EN

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated Jun 26, states: A New Hampshire-based developer was flying through misty rain and fog when his plane crashed in southern Albemarle County, according to a preliminary accident report from the National Transportation Safety Board. The a six-passenger Beechcraft airplane crashed at around 1115 hrs, on June 14, in a Bundoran Farm meadow, killing 55-year-old David Brown and Robert Baldwin, 75. Brown, a certified commercial pilot, was flying the plane. Baldwin was the only passenger. The pair departed from Nashua, N.H. Once in the area, Brown was trying to land on a 3,000-foot grass runway on the farm, according to the NTSB report,

released this weekend. According to the report, there was no evidence that the plane hit anything before crashing. Also, an examination of the engine revealed no anomalies that would have precluded normal operation, the report states. At the time of the accident, low cloud cover and light rain were reported in the area. Brown had landed at the farm between 25 and 30 times before, but never during a rainstorm, according to the report. If conditions were bad, Brown would usually land at Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport and the Bundoran Farms site manager would pick him up, according to the report. The report includes a transcript of the last communications from the aircraft. As the plane approached the farm, a Warrenton-based air traffic controller told Brown the landing strip was about two miles ahead. "It's a little too cloudy at the moment ... at four thousand," Brown said. The controller told Brown to turn left, and said he could "get a little lower when we get you northeast." "Actually the field is directly under me if I could spiral down," Brown said, according to the report. The controller gave Brown the go-ahead for a visual landing. "Ah, roger two echo November, I'm not going to give up yet," was the last communication from Brown before the plane crashed and burst into flames.

N23AP

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated Jun 27, states: A small plane crashed this morning near Ocean City, killing the pilot. There was no one else aboard. Ocean City Police Chief Bernadette DiPino said the pilot appeared to be the only fatality in the crash. The plane went down in a wooded area near Ocean City Municipal Airport at about 1030 hrs, DiPino said. She could not identify the pilot or the type of plane, though she said it was a small, privately owned plane. Maryland State Police and local fire officials were at the scene, she said.

London, Jun 29 — Acrojet Special N23AP crashed near Ocean City, Maryland, at 1440, Jun 27. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

N316PR

London, Jun 27 — Mitsubishi MU-2B-60 N316PR crashed near Fort Pierce, Florida, at 1624, Jun 25, while on a flight from Fort Pierce to Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

N486SB

London, Jun 27 — Cessna Citation V N486SB crashed near Upland, California, at 0525, Jun 24, while on a flight from San Diego, CA, to Upland. The aircraft was destroyed. The three persons on board were seriously injured.

N56246

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated Jun 26, states: A Piper Arrow

carrying four people in bad weather crashed this morning in a remote part of central Pennsylvania, killing the pilot and injuring the three passengers, officials said. The Piper Arrow was flying from Tennessee to Philipsburg, where it had been given clearance to land at 0247 hrs, shortly before the crash, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. The National Weather Service said visibility in the area had dropped about a half-hour before the crash. The three injured passengers, also from Tennessee, were taken to hospitals, said Lt. Linda Irwin, a Civil Air Patrol spokeswoman. The aircraft was registered to Hastings Transportation System Inc., of Paducah, Ky. The National Transportation Safety Board was investigating.

London, Jun 27 — Piper PA-28-200R (Arrow II) N56246 crashed near Philipsburg, Pennsylvania, at 0247, Jun 26, while on a flight from Springfield, Tennessee, to Philipsburg. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. One of the four persons on board was killed and the other three were injured.

N572BA

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated Jun 22, states: A light plane carrying a pilot and three passengers on an introductory flying lesson crashed today on a remote western Maine mountainside, killing everyone aboard. Emergency crews reached the wreckage of the Cessna 172 on Barker Mountain near the Sunday River ski area at dusk and confirmed that there were no survivors. The victims' names were not immediately released. Officials decided to wait until first light tomorrow before recovering the bodies. The plane, operated by Twin Cities Air Service in Auburn, had picked up the passengers at the Bethel airport around mid-afternoon, an hour or so before the crash. Twin Cities President Nate Humphrey said the pilot was a 24-year-old certified flight instructor with more than 900 hours of flight experience. A National Transportation Safety Board investigator was expected to arrive at the scene tomorrow.

London, Jun 23 — Cessna 172N (Skyhawk) N572BA crashed near Bethel, Maine, at 1830, Jun 22, while on a flight from Bethel to Lewiston, ME. The aircraft was destroyed. The four persons on board were killed.

N6720T

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated Jun 27, states: A landing-gear malfunction caused a twin-engine Beechcraft to skid to a premature stop after it made an emergency landing today at Gillespie Field, authorities reported. The pilot of the aircraft reported a possible problem with the aircraft's retractable wheel assemblies while on approach to the airstrip shortly before 1100 hrs, according to fire department officials. The aircraft was able to make a safe landing, but

one of its landing-gear mechanisms collapsed moments later, causing its left wing to crash to the ground, said Monica Zech of the El Cajon Fire Department. None of the three occupants was injured, Zech said. The accident caused a minor fuel spill and briefly blocked one of the airport's two runways.

London, Jun 29 — Beechcraft Duchess 76 N6720T had landing gear collapse on landing at Gillespie Field near San Diego, California, at 1815, Jun 27, following a flight from Brown Field, San Diego. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The one person on board was not injured.

N768H

London, Jun 27 — Pilatus PC-12 N768H crashed near Big Timber, Montana, at 2030, Jun 24, following take-off from Big Timber. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N8371X

London, Jun 27 — Piper PA-34 (Seneca) N8371X crashed near Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, at 1650, Jun 25, while on a flight from Greensboro, North Carolina, to Sanford, Maine. The aircraft was destroyed. The three persons on board were killed.

N8649U

London, Jun 22 — A press report, dated Jun 21, states: The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating the crash of a single-engine airplane that left a Texas man injured. Dale Robin Spannagel, 39, sustained head and external injuries in the Tuesday night accident north of the McGehee Airstrip near Marietta, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol reported. As Spannagel was taking off from the airstrip, the 1965 Cessna 172f fixed wing plane he was piloting failed to gain altitude and struck a tree, troopers said. Spannagel, of Keller, Texas, was transported to Parkland Hospital in Dallas, where he was listed in stable condition, the patrol reported today. The FAA's Oklahoma City Flight Standards district office will investigate the crash, officials said.

London, Jun 22 — Cessna 172F N8649U crashed near Marietta, Oklahoma, at 0200, Jun 21. The aircraft was destroyed. One of the two persons on board was seriously injured and the other suffered minor injuries.

N983T

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated Jun 26, states: A Beechcraft Bonanza went down south-west of the Lincoln Airport, Nebraska, about 1615 today, but all four people on board are expected to be OK. The Beechcraft Bonanza went down near Northwest 27th and Vine streets. The aircraft hit trees as it made its approach to the airport, authorities said. It ended up in a creek, but did not catch fire. It landed on its belly. The aircraft is considered a total loss. Two people

were taken to a Lincoln hospital. Two others on board were OK, according to Lincoln Airport Authority Director John Wood. The Federal Aviation Administration is on the scene. Records show the aircraft was owned and operated out of Lincoln. The aircraft left Amarillo, Texas, at 1300 hrs.

London, Jun 27 — Beechcraft Bonanza 35 N983T made an emergency landing near Lincoln, Nebraska, at 2112, Jun 26, while on a flight from Amarillo, Texas, to Lincoln. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The four persons on board were not injured.

London, Jun 28 — A press report, dated Jun 27, states: The Beechcraft Bonanza 35 (N983T) that crashed near Lincoln's airport yesterday afternoon has been removed. Lincoln Airport Authority Director John Wood said today that the aircraft has been removed from the crash site. It's now sitting in a hangar. Two people were hospitalized after the crash. The pilot suffered head lacerations, and he has been released from the hospital. The Federal Aviation Administration is looking into the cause of the crash.

N99355

London, Jun 22 — Ercoupe 415-C N99355 crashed near Panacea, Florida, at 0200, Jun 22. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

SU-BOZ

London, Jun 26 — McDonnell Douglas MD-83, SU-BOZ, operated by AMC Aviation, 14 persons on board, after landing at Juba Airport, Sudan, overran runway at 1330, Jun 23. Damage to the aircraft is substantial.

VH-PYN

London, Jun 27 — A press report, dated today, states: The plane that crashed killing cattle baron Peter Menegazzo and three others broke apart as it flew into the middle of a big storm, an inquiry has found. The Piper Chieftain light plane, that crashed about 20km west of Condobolin in New South Wales, on December 2 last year, was not fitted with a weather radar, an interim

Australian Transport Safety Bureau Report released today said. "The aircraft had broken up during flight and wreckage was spread along a line extending beyond four kilometres. Both wings had failed outboard of the engine(s) ...," the report said. The aircraft was being flown by a commercial pilot from Brisbane's Archerfield aerodrome to the Menegazzo's home in Swan Hill, north-west Victoria. The ATSB report said the plane was surrounded by storms about an hour after the pilot had changed course due to the weather. "Recorded weather radar data indicated that individual storm cells were located very close to the last recorded location of the aircraft, which was not fitted with weather radar," the ATSB report said. "There was evidence that immediately before the accident, the aircraft was likely to have been surrounded to the east, west, and south by a large complex of storms." Mr Menegazzo and his wife Angela died in the crash, along with the male pilot and another man who was travelling as an observer pilot learning how to operate the aircraft. The pilot in command was appropriately qualified and licensed to undertake the flight. He had been flying that type of plane for 13 years. "There was no evidence to suggest that either pilot suffered any incapacitation before the break-up," the report said. Julian Walsh, ATSB deputy director of aviation safety, said the investigation would continue to establish detail such as the altitude at which the plane broke up. "Four kilometres is a significant wreckage trail quite clearly showing the aircraft commenced breaking up while it was in the air," Mr Walsh. The pilot amended the flight plan at 1305 hrs. At 1316 hrs, 1337 hrs, and again at 1348 hrs, the pilot reported that he was diverting left of track due to weather. "The aircraft disappeared from radar at 1350 hrs and no further radio transmission was received," the report said. At 1400 hrs, an aircraft was reported to have crashed on a property near Condobolin. "At the time of the accident, a severe storm front was passing through the area," the report said.

Product Recalls

NISSAN MOTOR VEHICLES, WORLDWIDE

London, Jun 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Nissan North America is preparing to recall 97,000 Altima and Sentra sedans because of problems with maintaining oil levels in the engines, which in extreme cases can cause engine fires. The potential recall for the soon-to-be Nashville-based automaker involves Nissan's 2.5-liter, four-cylinder engine made at its factory in Decherd and installed on Altima sedans at the company's plants in Smyrna and Canton, Miss., from January through May. The Sentra SE-R sedans with the same engine were assembled at a Nissan plant in Mexico from February through May. Nissan halted sales of those vehicles earlier this month, saying there was a potential problem with oil consumption. It notified the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on Tuesday that about 85,000 vehicles in the United States and about 12,000 abroad could be affected by the problem, which can lead to engine fires or other damage if oil levels fall too low. The company hasn't found the cause of the problem, but in a letter to NHTSA, Nissan reported that it suspects it may involve the engine pistons. Until the company knows for certain what is causing the problem, it has asked that owners of those vehicles check their oil levels every 700 miles. "They can take it to the dealer any time they want," Nissan spokesman Fred Standish said. "If you maintain proper oil levels, there's no risk of engine damage." Letters were sent to affected car owners June 9, according to NHTSA. The potential recall could involve about 95,000 Altima and 2,000 Sentra SE-R sedans. It would affect about 85% of the Altima sedans assembled in the United States between January and May. Some of the cars were sold, but many remain on dealer lots and in Nissan's distribution system, Standish said.

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
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	03-Jul-06	Twelve vessels in port operating, of which 6 loading (1 baryte concentrate, 3 coils, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 barley), 6 discharging (1 wheat, 1 scrap, 1 billets, 1 coal, 1 sugar, 1 copper concentrate); 5 vessels in roads, of which 1 to load coils, 4 to discharge (1 iron ore, 1 coal, 1 zinc concentrate, 1 copper concentrate); 11 vessels due, of which 5 to load (1 barley, 1 containers, 1 sulphur, 1 bagged ammonium nitrate, 1 coils), 6 to discharge (1 containers, 2 metals, 1 coal, 1 copper concentrate, 1 manganese ore) .
Varna	03-Jul-06	Varna East, Varna West, Electrical Power Station, Balchik: Conditions 26 June - 2 July: Thirty-four vessels in port operating of which 20 loading (1 wheat, 3 equipment in packing cases, 2 scrap, 1 maize, 5 soda, 2 bulk sulphuric acid, 1 bulk clinker, 1 TSP, 1 silica sand, 1 silica sand/soda, 1 kaolin, 1 soda/TSP), 7 discharging (1 wire rods/coils, 2 bulk coal, 1 equipment in packing cases, 1 raw phosphate, 1 fire bricks on pallets, 1 clay), 7 discharging/loading (5 containers, 1 dolomite/silica sand, 1 equipment in packing cases); no vessels waiting in roads. .
Cyprus		
Laranaca	03-Jul-06	Two conventional vessels discharging at berth; 1 conventional vessel due 4/7; no delays expected.
Limassol	03-Jul-06	Five container vessels discharging/loading at berth, 3 conventional vessels discharging at berth; 4 container vessels, 1 Ro/Ro, 4 passenger vessels due 4/7; no delays expected.
Egypt		
Adabiya	03-Jul-06	Four vessels berthed (loading/discharging), all general cargo.
Alexandria	03-Jul-06	Thirty-two vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 26 general cargo, 2 bulk carriers, 1 tanker, 3 container vessels; 11 vessels at inner anchorage, 7 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	03-Jul-06	Twenty-five vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 17 general cargo, 1 bulk carrier, 2 tankers, 5 container vessels; 19 vessel at outer anchorage, 1 at inner anchorage.
Dekheila	03-Jul-06	Eight vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 1 general cargo, 7 bulk carriers; 2 vessels at outer anchorage.
Port Said	03-Jul-06	Six vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 2 general cargo, 4 container vessels.
Suez	03-Jul-06	Six vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 3 general cargo, 3 passenger vessels; 3 tugs, 1 vessel dry-docked.
Suez Canal	03-Jul-06	Twenty-seven vessels transiting Northbound, 26 Southbound.
Estonia		
Tallinn	03-Jul-06	Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): 2 vessels berthed and loading, of which 1 wood bark, 1 malt; no vessels waiting at anchorage; 2 vessels due, with 7 days berthing delay expected.
Georgia		
Batumi	03-Jul-06	Oil products: 1 vessel berthed at CBM loading crude oil, 1 vessel berthed loading, gasoil; 4 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 1 crude oil, 2 fuel oil, 1 gasoil; 8 vessels due by 12/7, all to load, of which 4 crude oil, 1 kerosene, 2 LPG, 1 gasoil.
Poti	03-Jul-06	Oil products: 1 vessel due 6/7 to load gasoil.
Supsa	03-Jul-06	Oil products: 1 vessel in roads to load crude oil; 2 vessels due by 11/7, both to load crude oil
Israel		
Ashdod	04-Jul-06	Twelve vessels loading at berth (4 general cargo, 8 bulkers), 14 discharging at berth (6 general cargo, 8 bulkers), 4 container vessels loading/discharging at berth; 2 container vessels waiting at anchorage load/discharge; 20 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Eilat	04-Jul-06	No vessels berthed; 1 car carrier waiting at anchorage to load/discharge; 1 vessel due, with no delays expected.
Haifa	04-Jul-06	Five vessels loading at berth (2 general cargo, 3 bulkers), 9 discharging at berth (6 general cargo, 3 bulkers), 6 vessels loading/discharging at berth (2 containers, 4 tankers); 1 tanker waiting at anchorage to load, 1 waiting at anchorage to discharge, 1 general cargo vessel waiting at anchorage to load/discharge; 5 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 21 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.

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

Port Conditions

Kazakhstan

Aktau 04-Jul-06 Oil products: 1 vessel berthed, loading crude oil; 3 vessels due by 3/7, all to load crude oil.

Mozambique

Maputo 04-Jul-06 Seven vessels in port operating, of which 2 loading (1 mineral coal, 1 magnetite), 2 discharging (1 containers/general cargo, 1 mineral coal), 1 loading/discharging containers, 2 other vessels; 1 vessel due to berth 4/7, to discharge fuel; 25 vessels due by 25/6 of which 5 to load (1 mineral coal, 2 ferro chrome, 1 citrus, 1 bulk sugar), 12 to discharge (1 clinker, 2 bulk aluminium, 1 heavy machinery, 1 bulk wheat, 1 petcoke, 1 fuel, 1 bulk maize, 1 vegetable oil, 1 bagged rice, 1 bulk wheat, 1 other vessel), 8 to discharge/load (3 containers, 2 containers/general cargo, 1 containers/vehicles, 1 containers/ petcoke, 1 containers/steel sheets/rolls).

Poland

Gdansk 03-Jul-06 Six vessels loading at berth (1 coal, 4 general cargo, 1 bulker), 1 bulker discharging at berth; 11 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, 1 tanker waiting in roads; 23 vessels due.

Gdynia 03-Jul-06 Four vessels loading at berth (1 coal, 3 general cargo), 3 discharging at berth (1 grain, 2 general cargo); 26 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 54 vessels due.

Russia

Novorossiysk 03-Jul-06 Twelve vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (1 DRI, 1 cement, 1 bulk urea, 1 scrap, 1 pig-iron, 1 steel billets, 1 pipes, 1 cellulose), 4 discharging (1 coils, 2 bulk sugar, 1 vegetable oil); 10 vessels waiting in roads, of which 8 to load (1 pipes/steel sheets/coils/cars/H-beams/tin plate, 1 coils/pipes/ steel billets, 2 steel billets, 1 wire rods, 1 vegetable oil, 1 pipes, 1 diesel oil), 1 to discharge coils; 54 vessels due, of which 52 to load (2 bulk NPK, 2 steel blooms, 7 slabs, 6 copper, 2 scrap, 2 DRI, 1 HBI, 2 pig-iron, 5 steel billets, 1 equipment, 2 cellulose, 1 soda ash, 1 wheat, 4 aluminium, 1 steel billets/ coils, 1 slabs/coils, 1 UAN solution, 2 barley, 1 H-beams, 1 tin plate, 1 cement, 1 bulk NPK/ammonium nitrate, 1 steel billets/WRIC, 1 vegetable oil, 1 WRIC, 1 WRIC/coils, 1 diesel oil), 1 to discharge debars, 1 to discharge/load containers; Oil terminal: 1 tanker berthed, loading crude oil; 3 tankers in roads, all to load crude oil; 5 tankers due, all to load crude oil.

Slovenia

Koper 03-Jul-06 Port working normally. Six vessels berthed of which 1 discharging/loading containers, 1 car carrier discharging/loading vehicles, 4 vessels discharging bulk cargo; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage, both to discharge bulk cargo; 19 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 5 to discharge/load containers, 2 car carriers to discharge/load vehicles, 4 vessels to load sawn timber/general cargo, 3 to load bulk cargo, 4 to discharge bulk cargo, 1 passenger vessel.

Spain

Bilbao 03-Jul-06 Twenty-nine vessels operating (7 tankers, 22 other vessels), of which 9 loading, 13 discharging, 7 loading/discharging.

Sagunto 03-Jul-06 Fourteen vessels in port operating, of which 3 loading (2 steel products, 1 bulk fertiliser), 10 discharging (8 steel products, 1 gas, 1 logs), 1 loading/discharging steel products; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present

Sri Lanka

Colombo 03-Jul-06 Berthing/unberthing (pilotage) delays being experienced on breakbulk/conventional vessels. Delays to conventional vessels are due to the fact that container/feeder vessels are given priority at breakbulk berths if there is container congestion. Conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 and 2 are facing navigation delays. Sixteen vessels loading at berth (14 containers/feeders, 1 general cargo, 1 essential services), 22 discharging at berth (16 containers/feeders, 2 motor vehicles, 2 bagged fertiliser, 2 bulk cement); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 container/feeder, 1 bulk cement); 5 vessels dry-docked, 2 under repairs, 2 bunkering; 1 vessel at new tanker berth; 12 vessels due (10 containers/ feeders, 1 Ro/Ro, 1 bulk cement), with no delays expected.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenbashi 03-Jul-06 Oil products: 4 vessels berthed, of which 2 completed loading (1 fuel oil, 1 gasoil), 1 loading gasoline, 1 to load gasoil; 2 vessels in roads, 1 in transhipment with fuel oil, 1 to load gasoil.

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Ukraine

Illichevsk	03-Jul-06	Five vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 3 steel products, 1 wheat, 1 gasoline; 5 vessel in roads, of which 4 to load (3 steel products, 1 sunflower oil), 1 to load/discharge containers; 19 vessels due, of which 10 to load (7 steel products, 1 sunflower oil, 1 iron ore concentrate, 1 ferronickel), 9 to load/discharge containers.
Mariupol	03-Jul-06	Fourteen vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 9 steel, 4 fire-clay, 1 coal; 19 vessels in roads, of which 14 to load (12 steel, 2 fire-clay), 2 to discharge equipment, 3 to discharge/load (1 containers/ fire-clay, 1 feldspar/coal, containers/steel); 42 vessels due, all to load, of which 25 steel, 7 coal, 5 fire-clay, 1 pitch, 2 kaolin, 1 coke, 1 sunflower beans/husks.
Odessa	03-Jul-06	Twenty vessels in port operating, of which 10 loading (5 metal, 1 metal/ferro alloy, 2 wheat, 2 timber), 6 discharging (3 luggage, 1 bananas, 1 wheat, 1 meat), 4 passenger vessels; 3 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 1 barley, 2 metal; 93 vessels due, of which 43 to load (26 metal, 6 pig-iron, 3 scrap, 3 ferro alloy, 1 timber, 2 corn, 1 wheat, 1 general cargo), 7 to discharge (3 metal, 1 general cargo, 1 oil, 1 sugar, 1 equipment), 43 to discharge/load containers.

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