

Paris MoU plans radical overhaul of inspections

THE Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control, in close co-operation with the European Commission, revealed yesterday it had embarked on a fundamental review of the way it targets and inspects ships.

Officials meeting in Denmark last week agreed to consider scrapping the existing 25% inspection quota that member states currently have to meet and replace it with "full coverage" of vessels entering the region.

Although the details are yet to be hammered out, the intention is to step up the fight against sub-standard shipping by embracing a more risk-based approach to targeting, while reducing the burden of inspections on quality operators.

The initiative comes as membership of the Paris MoU is set to rise to 25 countries in the near future.

"Since the memorandum's formation in 1982, our membership will have nearly doubled, setting us new challenges," said Alan Cubbin, chairman of the Paris MoU's Port State Control Committee.

"Consequently the time has come for us to undertake a root and branch review of the inspection policy of the Paris MoU.

"This will include challenging some of the long-standing concepts such as the 25% (quota) and the target factor, which have served us well for many years."

Under present rules, members of the Paris MoU are required to inspect a quarter of all the ships that enter the region.

But the focus on percentage goals means that quotas are often met by targeting vessels that present few problems and, as such, can be processed swiftly.

"As membership grows, we need a different method of targeting ships," said Richard Schiferli, general secretary of the Paris MoU.

"The 25% [quota] is hard to explain to the outside world."

Important issues under consideration include the criteria for follow-up inspections, with the periods between visit by inspectors likely to be

shortened depending on the risk profile of the ship.

The review will also consider extending the existing provisions for banning tankers, bulkers and passengerships to general cargoships, which the Paris MoU said presented a "disproportionate risk".

Under the present regime, rust-bucket general cargoships can carry on sailing within the region even if they have been detained numerous times within a short period.

Paris MoU officials are also looking at ways to ensure that vessels are properly targeted and inspected at anchorage, a key issue in peripheral ports such as Gibraltar and the Spanish north African enclave of Ceuta, which handle huge numbers of ships that call solely for bunkers.

Separately, the committee agreed revised criteria for allocating class responsibility in detention cases, bringing it in line with the Tokyo MoU and the US Coast Guard.

Brian Reyes
Lloyd's List Correspondent

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>ASTRIDA</i>	fishing	LVA	—	—	—	—	Sank while fishing in Swedish waters in the Baltic Sea about May 12. Boxes, fishing nets and and oil slick sighted. Crew lost. Possibly in collision with larger vessel.
<i>JEANETTE KRISTINA</i>	fishing	DNK	—	45	—	1957	Vessel sunk after it was in collision with fv <i>Nana Maria</i> in lat 55 17N, long 03 27E, May 8. All three crew rescued by <i>Nana Maria</i> and it is returning to Esbjerg.
<i>JONRIX</i>	general	GBR	GL	1,987	2,210	1977	Anchored in lat 52 06.89N, long 01 48.6E, May 7 due to main engine failure. In tow bound Ipswich same day. Arrived Ipswich May 7. Voyage: Hull (GBR) to Ipswich (GBR).
<i>LECONTE</i>	ro-ro	USA	AB	1,328	800	1974	Hit a rock, began taking on water and stuck on a rock in Peril Strait, north of Sitka, May 10. Hard aground, holed (30'x1') with water ingress but flooding controlled. Held in place by two tugs. Refloated May 18 and towed to Ketchikan.
<i>MONA LISA</i>	passenger	BHS	LR	28,891	5,572	1966	Grounded in dense fog in St. Marks basin, Venice, May 12. Refloated one hour later, with assistance of local tugs and berthed at allocated dock. No damages reported. Sailed May 13.
<i>NIKOLAY DOLINSKY</i>	general	RUS	RS	4,643	5,020	1988	Caught on a fixed shore net near Usitu lighthouse, Ishikawa prefecture, Apr 28 while drifting to avoid heavy weather. Freed by tugs Apr 29 and towed to Nanao, where arrived same day.
<i>NOTA A.</i>	bulker	MLT	NK	22,009	37,725	1984	Grounded by way of Km 340, Passage Isla Nueva, May 7. Refloated same day and anchored San Pedro Roads. Resumed voyage May 8 after Coast Guard inspection. Voyage: San Lorenzo(ARG) (ARG) to South Africa (ZAF). Cargo: 32,000 tonnes corn
<i>RETS TIMBER</i>	general/ container	IOM	GL	8,183	10,700	1984	Grounded while leaving the port of Corigliano early May 13. Being refloated by tugs.
<i>SPRING PEACOCK</i>	bulker	PAN	NK	37,689	72,497	1998	Salvors contracted to render assistance due grounding in lat 26 14.17S, long 48 78.6W, May 11. Still aground, on rocks, May 12. Hull breached, five tanks damaged, water ingress. To be lightered. Voyage: Sao Francisco do Sul (BRA) to Japan (JPN). Cargo: Soya beans.
<i>STEPHANE C.</i>	fishing	CAN	—	47	—	1974	Ran aground in Gulf of St. Lawrence May 8. Five crew members forced to abandon ship due to strong waves and winds. Crew safely rescued.

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



A.P.PRIDE (Malta)

Klaipeda, May 7 — A fire broke out in the engine-room of product tanker *A.P.Pride* (19171 gt, built 1974) at about 2200, local time, yesterday, while the vessel was being loaded at Klaipeda. At the time of the fire there was about 25,000 tonnes of liquid fertiliser on board. Reportedly the fire was extinguished in two hours and there were no casualties or damage to the environment. The cause of the fire was not reported. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *A.P.Pride* sailed from Brake Apr 30 bound for Klaipeda.)

Klaipeda, May 11 — Product tanker *A.P.Pride*: Fire broke out in the engine-room, the steam boiler caught fire presumably due to lack of water in it. After extinguishing the fire, loading was continued and completed successfully. As no substantial damage was caused to the vessel it left Klaipeda port 2150, local time, May 10, with intention to repair the fire damaged boiler later. — Lloyd's Agents.

ABALONE (Belize)

George Town, Grand Cayman, May 10 — General cargo *Abalone*, cargo about 1,100 tons of steel rods and about 800 tons of plywood, had been lying at anchor in the port of George Town since being towed in by Cayman owned tug *Point of Sand*, owned by Thompson Shipping of George Town, on Mar 2 following engine failure. On May 3 tug *Fort McHenry*, owned by MarineTech of Haiti, commenced towing *Abalone* to Belize City where it arrived May 6 to discharge the steel. Following this it is due to be towed by *Fort McHenry* to Tampico to discharge the remainder of the cargo and then to proceed to a port for main engine repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

AKITSU MARU NO.8 (Japan)

See *Mikhail Lukonin*.

ALGECIRAS CARRIER (Bahamas)

Flushing, May 8 — At 2115 hrs, today, ref *Algeciras Carrier* (15834 gt, built 1979), outbound from Antwerp, anchored between Flushing and pilot stations, with engine trouble. A tug is alongside and attempting to secure a line on the vessel. Repairs are expected to take one and a half hours. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Algeciras Carrier* sailed Antwerp 1844, May 8 for Hamburg.)

Flushing, May 8 — At 2330 hrs, today, ref *Algeciras Carrier* reported engine trouble resolved and vessel resuming passage. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Algeciras Carrier* subsequently arrived Hamburg 1945, May 9.)

London, May 10 — Ref *Algeciras Carrier* arrived at Hamburg at 1945, May 9, departing at 2300 hrs, today, destination Le Havre.

AMER THAMES (Panama)

Mumbai, May 7 — Chemical/oil carrier *Amer Thames* remains at Dahej anchorage and there have been no new developments. — Lloyd's Agents.

AMERICAN GLORY (U.S.A.)

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: A 168-foot-long cruise ship destroyed a section of the Downtown Marina dock in Beaufort, South Carolina, early today when the combination of a strong current and tide forced the stern into the pier. The Hilton Head Island-bound passenger *American Glory* (1148 gt, built 2002), owned by Connecticut-based American Cruise Lines, was leaving the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park sea wall at 0630 hrs when its stern was caught by the current and tide, destroying 40 feet of dock and damaging two berthed yachts. The four-deck, 49-passenger cruise ship had docked overnight at the sea wall and was facing the Richard V. Woods Memorial Bridge when it began thrusting from the wall to begin its turn. The ship, which often stops in Beaufort as it makes its way along the Intracoastal Waterway, was carrying passengers, but they were uninjured. The captain "decided to back the boat out stern-first, and once the boat caught the outgoing tide, that was all she wrote," said Beaufort Police Officer John O'Neill, who responded to the scene with officials from the Department of Natural Resources. "The dock stopped him." One of the ship's doors was damaged and two windows were shattered, O'Neill said. The cruise ship and its passengers continued to Hilton Head about 90 minutes after the incident. The Coast Guard in Savannah is investigating the crash. Lt. Willie Pittman, assistant chief of the inspections department with the Coast Guard in Savannah, said possible action by the agency could range from a warning letter to revocation of the captain's license. The captain's name was unavailable. Rick Griffin, harbourmaster at Downtown Marina, said smaller vessels have struck the dock, but never, in his memory, a cruise ship. He said the dock has been coming close to capacity since the warm spring weather, which means the marina will lose about \$100 a night in dock fees from passing vessels. Griffin said he wasn't sure of the estimated damage to the dock.

ANNA (Lebanon)

Cagliari, May 7 — General cargo *Anna*, Villanova to Tripoli, cargo of wood, cargo in hold shifted and deck cargo partly jettisoned to save the vessel in adverse weather conditions, early Apr 26. At the time of the shifting, prior releasing deck cargo, vessel had a considerable heel to the starboard side which pushed master to press the mayday button on his radio transceiver. Owners were notified by the local administration and steps were taken to improve vessel stability reducing the risk on the vessel and its crew. Owners cancelled the mayday call via local authorities. Italian coast guard came to the vicinity of the vessel. Master informed them that situation was under control and there was no need for

assistance. Vessel changed course to avoid bad weather and once stability improved, changed course back to resume voyage. Italian coast guard prohibited vessel from resuming its voyage and forced it to Cagliari anchorage. Owners contacted Cagliari Port Control for clarification. They were informed that the vessel must proceed to anchorage for checking vessel and crew documents prior to allowing the vessel to resume voyage. Master was instructed accordingly, inspectors visited the vessel in the late afternoon. Port State Control inspectors informed that they will come back on board again later. Port State Control boarded vessel Apr 27 and requested from master to appoint an agent, and also to proceed alongside berth to effect cargo shifting. Vessel is still currently without ship agency assistance and cargo not shifted yet. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ANTONIS P. (Greece)

Flushing, May 8 — At 2140 hrs, today, bulk *Antonis P.* (41726 gt, built 1984), outbound from Antwerp, anchored in Flushing Roads, with engine trouble. A tug is alongside and attempting to secure a line on the vessel. Duration of repairs is currently unknown. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Antonis P.* sailed Antwerp 1842, May 8 for Narvik.)

Flushing, May 9 — Bulk *Antonis P.*: Engine trouble resolved and vessel heaved up anchor and proceeded to Wandelaar at 2315, May 8. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ASTRIDA (Latvia)

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: All indications point to the fact that fishing *Astrida*, built in 1966, has sunk in the Baltic Sea. Understand from Naval Forces Search and Rescue Information Centre Chief Hermanis Cernovs, that about six miles from the point where the last signal was received from the ship, boxes, fishing nets and an oil slick were spotted. According to Cernovs, a Latvian patrol ship continued to search throughout the night, while Swedish authorities discontinued the search, as they were convinced that the ship had sunk. Swedish Coast Guard vessels specializing in mopping oil products will sail out to locate the wreck and pump out fuel. It was reported that *Astrida* was fishing in Swedish waters, and failed to return to Liepaja port at a scheduled time. The owners of the vessel therefore called the rescue centre. "Bute Ltd." executive director and owner of *Astrida*, Uldis Bruzis, informed that the vessel had to return to port yesterday morning. The last signal from the ship was received overnight May 10, when it was moored in the Baltic Sea, near Sweden's coast. The vessel has a crew of six. *Astrida* had undergone repairs in 2002. No technical problems were ascertained before sailing. The vessel left Liepaja port at 1705, local time, May 2. According to "Lursoft" data, Bruzis is the sole owner of "Bute Ltd."

AURA (Cambodia)

Bucharest, May 13 — Tulcea Port Authority report general cargo *Aura* is

presently under detention by Port State Control due deficiencies. It will remain in Tulcea until remedy of the deficiencies. — Lloyd's Agents.

AVEIRENSE (Portugal)

See "Portuguese Fishing Vessels Boarded by Canada" under "Miscellaneous."

B.S.BUSAN (South Korea)

Yokohama, May 7 — General cargo *B.S.Busan* (745 gt, built 1979) grounded in shallow water at Hitachi at 1500, Apr 26, due to strong winds while departing the port. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *B.S.Busan* subsequently sailed Hitachi Apr 27 and arrived Nagoya Apr 29.)

BAHLAWAN (Syria)

Aleppo, May 10 — Our Lattakia office have reported that the owners of general cargo *Bahlawan* have cancelled their request for a breakage permit, and have applied for a refloating formality. Operations will commence when the permit formalities are finished. — Lloyd's Agents.

BARONESSA (Norway)

London, May 11 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Ferry *Baronessa* is still at Oma Baatbyggeri (Leirvik), undergoing repairs. ETC unknown.

BB 1138 (Bangladesh)

Chittagong, May 13 — General cargo *BB 1138*, length 280 ft, was "rescued" from outer anchorage on May 4. It is reported that the vessel will be ready for oceangoing after necessary repair. — Lloyd's Agents.

BELL KOREA (South Korea)

Busan, May 7 — General cargo *Bell Korea* sustained only minor damage as a result of the fire and does not require any repairs except cleaning and painting. The vessel has now returned to normal service. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

BRITES (Portugal)

See "Portuguese Fishing Vessels Boarded by Canada" under "Miscellaneous."

CALYPSO GESPEG 1 (Canada)

London, May 10 — Fishing *Calypso Gespeg 1* (95 gt, built 1990) had a fire in its galley while at berth at Riviere-au-Renard, Quebec, at 0352, EDST, May 9. Fire was extinguished by shore fire brigade.

CAPE AFRICA (Taiwan)

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A South African navy vessel is the latest to join the operation to get bunker fuel out of holed bulk *Cape Africa* off the Cape coast, said the department of environmental affairs and tourism today. The *Umalusi* is to help anti-pollution patrol vessel *Kuswag IV* in the event of an oil spill. The Russian salvage tug, *Nikolay Chiker*, which was specially hired to speed up the transfer of about 1,900 tons of bunker fuel, was expected to rendezvous with *Cape Africa* at first light tomorrow. The *Nikolay Chiker* will be able to be used as a

temporary storage facility and take on about 1,000 tons of the bulk carrier's fuel. "Weather permitting, the salvage team hope to begin the fuel transfer operation during the day on Friday," said the joint operations committee. The condition of *Cape Africa*, under tow by salvage tug *Smit Amandla*, is reported to be stable. The South African Maritime Safety Authority has ordered that the bulk carrier remain at least 120 miles off Cape Town until all the bunker fuel has been transferred. (See issue of May 7.)

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Salvors are taking video footage of stricken bulk *Cape Africa* to ascertain its latest condition. A helicopter flew out to the vessel earlier this morning for an update on weather conditions and to see how stable the ship is. Salvage tug *Nikolay Chiker* has also departed for the vessel for a ship-to-ship oil transfer operation. Research/supply *S.A.Agulhas* has meanwhile arrived in Table Bay harbour and will be used as a base for salvage personnel, equipment storage, helicopter landings and will also assist with the transfer of oil. Equipment is currently being loaded on board *S.A.Agulhas* which is expected to leave the harbour later today.

Rotterdam, May 7 — A Smit chartered salvage tug carrying all equipment required for bulk *Cape Africa's* fuel transfer operation rendezvoused with the vessel and salvage tug *Smit Amandla* some 160 miles west of Cape Town during the night. At first light this morning, Smit Salvage personnel began transferring the approximately 30 tonnes of equipment required for this operation to *Cape Africa* and preparing to connect up in order that the fuel transfer operation can begin during the hours of daylight today or tomorrow, weather permitting. A helicopter flew out to the location at first light this morning in order to assist in moving the equipment from the tug to *Cape Africa*. In order to maximise the safety of salvage personnel working on *Cape Africa*, only essential personnel will work on the casualty and two teams, working alternate shifts, will be used so as to enable the operation to continue 24 hours a day, weather permitting. No members of the salvage team will live on *Cape Africa* and when not required for work, they will be transferred back to the salvage tug. The condition of the holed vessel, currently under tow by *Smit Amandla*, is reported to be stable. It has been determined that it has a hole by way of hold No 3, that extends approximately 20 metres by five metres. Tug *Nikolay Chiker* will be able to receive approximately 1000 tonnes of *Cape Africa's* bunker fuel during the fuel removal operation. *S.A.Agulhas* returned to Cape Town from Marion Island yesterday afternoon and is being prepared for its role in the fuel removal operation and will depart for the scene this evening. The transfer of the fuel to a receiving vessel is the first phase of the salvage operation, which is contingent on the bulk carrier's condition remaining stable and the absence of adverse weather and swell conditions - all of which is being closely monitored. The safety of salvage personnel and the

protection of the marine environment remain of paramount importance in this salvage operation. The South African Maritime Safety Authority has ordered that the vessel remain at least 120 miles off of Cape Town until such time as all bunker fuel has been transferred. The master and crew were flown off the casualty on Wednesday Apr 28, as a precautionary measure after reporting extensive structural damage in hold No 3 earlier. — SMIT Salvage Ltd.

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A heavy swell of about four metres, predicted for tomorrow as well, hampered salvage efforts today to start a ship-to-ship oil transfer of bulk *Cape Africa*, off the coast of Cape Town. "We are waiting for the swell conditions to abate," said Smit Salvage spokesperson Clare Gomes. Earlier in the day, salvage personnel began transferring approximately 30 tons of equipment to the stricken bulk carrier and prepared for the oil transfer to commence during the daylight hours of today and tomorrow. The condition of *Cape Africa*, with a cargo of iron ore, is described as stable

Rotterdam, May 9 — Inclement swell conditions have prevented the SMIT salvage team from beginning the bulk *Cape Africa* fuel transfer operation this weekend. While attempting to hook up to the casualty in the high swell yesterday morning, the salvage tug *Nikolay Chiker* took a rope into its port propeller. In view of the fact that the high swell condition precluded pumping operations, it was decided to bring *Nikolay Chiker* back to Cape Town in order to remove the rope. This has been done and it will leave Cape Town at midday, today. Vessel will rendezvous with *Cape Africa*, salvage tug *SMIT Amandla* and *S.A. Agulhas* later today, approximately 160 miles west of Cape Town. Weather forecasts would indicate that the high swell condition should begin to abate today and tomorrow. On Friday (May 7), approximately 30 tonnes of equipment required for the fuel transfer operation was transferred to *Cape Africa* via helicopter from *Nikolay Chiker* in preparation for the transfer operation. The salvage tug will be able to receive approximately 1000 tonnes of *Cape Africa*'s bunker fuel during the fuel removal operation. *S.A. Agulhas* returned to Cape Town from Marion Island on Thursday afternoon and met *Nikolay Chiker* yesterday. The transfer of the fuel to a receiving vessel is the first phase of the salvage operation, which is contingent on the bulk carrier's condition remaining stable and the absence of adverse weather and swell conditions - all of which is being closely monitored. The safety of salvage personnel and the protection of the marine environment remain of paramount importance in this salvage operation. In order to maximise the safety of salvage personnel working on *Cape Africa*, only essential personnel will work on the casualty during the fuel transfer and two teams, working alternate shifts, will be used so as to enable the operation to continue 24 hours a day, weather permitting. No members of the salvage team will live on

Cape Africa and when not required for work, they will be transferred back to the salvage tug. The South African Maritime Safety Authority has ordered that the bulk carrier remain at least 120 miles off of Cape Town until such time as all bunker fuel has been transferred. The condition of the holed *Cape Africa*, currently under tow by salvage tug *SMIT Amandla*, is reported to be stable. — SMIT Salvage B.V.

Rotterdam, May 10 — Joint Operations Committee report: At the first sign of a moderation in the high swell condition that prevented the SMIT Salvage team from beginning the transfer of fuel from bulk *Cape Africa* over the weekend, personnel began to prepare for another attempt at connecting up to salvage tug *Nikolay Chiker* this morning. The tug will receive approximately 1000 tonnes of fuel from the tanks of *Cape Africa*. It is hoped that an improvement in the swell condition, which peaked at 5 metres over the weekend, will enable the team to begin pumping as soon as conditions allow. *Cape Africa* is still under tow by salvage tug *Smit Amandla*, approximately 160 miles west of Cape Town. The transfer of the fuel to a receiving vessel is the first phase of the salvage operation, which is contingent on the bulk carrier's condition remaining stable and the absence of adverse weather and swell conditions - all of which is being closely monitored. The salvage tug will be able to receive approximately 1,000 tonnes of *Cape Africa*'s bunker fuel during the fuel removal operation. The safety of salvage personnel and the protection of the marine environment remain of paramount importance in this salvage operation. A helicopter is now based on research/supply *S.A. Agulhas* to assist in the transfer of personnel and equipment. The helicopter is also on CASEVAC standby as a precautionary measure, should any member of the team sustain an injury during the course of the salvage operation and require immediate evacuation and return to Cape Town. The South African Maritime Safety Authority has ordered that *Cape Africa* remain at least 120 miles off of Cape Town until such time as all bunker fuel has been transferred. The condition of *Cape Africa* is reported to be stable. It has been determined that the bulk carrier has a hole by way of No.3 hold that extends approximately 20 metres by 5 metres.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: A reduction in the five metre swell that hampered operations over the weekend has allowed salvors to get back to work on damaged bulk *Cape Africa*. This afternoon the team from Smit Salvage were working to connect fuel hoses from the Russian salvage tug *Nikolay Chiker*. The tug will receive approximately 1 000 tons of fuel from *Cape Africa*, which is being held 160 nautical miles west of Cape Town after reporting a massive hole in its hull. Clare Gomes, Smit's spokesperson, said pumping would begin as soon as conditions allowed.

London, May 11 — Following press release received today, states: Shortly after 0500, local time, today, SMIT

Salvage personnel began pumping fuel from bulk *Cape Africa* to the tanks of salvage tug *Nikolay Chiker*. Yesterday evening, with the connection in place and hoses pressure tested, the necessary adjustments to equipment were made. When the salvage team was transferred back to *Cape Africa* early this morning, conditions were deemed suitable for the pumping operation to begin. A pumping rate of approximately 50 tonnes per hour is currently being achieved and the operation will continue day and night, weather and swell conditions permitting. Yesterday, at the first sign of a moderation in the high swell condition that prevented the SMIT Salvage team from beginning the transfer of fuel from *Cape Africa* over the weekend, personnel began to prepare for another attempt at connecting up to *Nikolay Chiker*. *Cape Africa* is still under tow by the salvage tug *Smit Amandla*, approximately 160 miles west of Cape Town. The transfer of the fuel to a receiving vessel is the first phase of the salvage operation, which is contingent on the bulk carrier's condition remaining stable and the absence of adverse weather and swell conditions, all of which is being closely monitored. The salvage tug will be able to receive approximately 1000 tonnes of *Cape Africa*'s bunker fuel during the fuel removal operation. The safety of salvage personnel and the protection of the marine environment remain of paramount importance in this salvage operation. A helicopter is now based on *S.A. Agulhas* to assist in the transfer of personnel and equipment. The helicopter is also on CASEVAC standby as a precautionary measure, should any member of the team sustain an injury during the course of the salvage operation and require immediate evacuation and return to Cape Town. The condition of the holed vessel, currently under tow by *SMIT Amandla*, is reported to be stable.

London, May 12 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0922, UTC: Transfer of fuel from bulk *Cape Africa* is continuing today.

London, May 12 — Following press release, received today, states: SMIT Salvage were able to remove 903 tonnes of fuel from bulk *Cape Africa* during the course of yesterday and approximately 900 tonnes of fuel remains on board the vessel, still under tow by *Smit Amandla* some 160 miles west of Cape Town. Yesterday evening salvage tug *Nikolay Chiker* disconnected and returned to Cape Town to discharge the fuel pumped to it during the day, a process that began upon its arrival early today. *Nikolay Chiker* will return to the location to resume pumping as soon as possible, weather permitting. It is felt that this vessel is well suited to withstand the weather and swell conditions presently being experienced out at the location and has specialised positioning equipment on board that assists in this regard.

London, May 13 — Following press release received today: Salvage tug *Nikolay Chiker* discharged all 903 tonnes of fuel pumped to it from bulk carrier *Cape Africa* during the course of the day yesterday in the port of Cape Town and will rendezvous with *Cape Africa* and

salvage tug *Smit Amandla* some 160 miles west of Cape Town this afternoon. Weather permitting, the SMIT Salvage team will reconnect and resume the fuel transfer operation in order to remove the balance of the heavy fuel oil onboard *Cape Africa*, approximately 900 tonnes.

COASTAL SOUND (Republic of Ireland)

London, May 10 — General cargo *Coastal Sound* arrived at Bremen at 1400, May 9, sailing at 1915, same day, destination Kaliningrad. (See issue of May 6.)

CORNER BROOK (Bermuda)

London, May 10 — General cargo *Corner Brook* sailed from Newport News at 2000, May 5, destination Corner Brook, where it arrived at 1619, May 9.

CRIMSON DUKE (U.S.A.)

London, May 10 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1426, UTC: Tug *Crimson Duke* (1165 gt, built 1974), towing 42 barges, struck a bridge on the River Mississippi, near Caruthersville, Missouri, May 9. Four of the barges sank, two partially sank, six are currently aground and the remainder have been recovered. *Crimson Duke* is still afloat and is presently still in the vicinity of the accident.

London, May 11 — Following received from Coast Guard Memphis, dated May 10: The captain of the port at Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Memphis reopened the Mississippi River to restricted traffic today near Caruthersville, Mo, after locating three sunken barges in the river. The captain reopened the river shortly after 1700 today, to downbound traffic only, as workers from Budwine and Associates continue salvage operations on two grounded barges. Once the downbound queue is empty, the river will open to all traffic. The Coast Guard received the initial report that the downbound tug *Crimson Duke* pushing 42 barges stuck the I-155 bridge, causing 36 barges to break away in Caruthersville, shortly after 1400 yesterday. Local authorities and two tug companies quickly assisted in gathering all but three grain barges. As a safety precaution, the captain of the port in Memphis, ordered the Mississippi River to be closed from mile marker 838.9 to mile marker 830.0. Coast Guard investigators from MSO Memphis continue their investigation into the cause of the accident.

DELFINI II (Greece)

London, May 10 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the evening of May 7, while performing the voyage Poros-Hydra - Spetses-Porto Heli, hydrofoil *Delfini II* (142 gt, built 1977) sustained engine damage and proceeded to Hydra at reduced speed. The 73 passengers were disembarked there and proceeded to their destinations on ferry *Flying Cat*. Inspection by the marine inspectorate of Hydra confirmed irregular operation of the port main engine and the vessel was permitted to make one voyage, without passengers, to Ampelakia, Salamis in order to perform repairs.

DOLPHIN II (Turkey)

Ankara, May 11 — Ro/ro *Dolphin II* (848 gt) sank 16 km off northern Cyprus early today and all but three of the 27-member crew were rescued, Turkey's state Anatolian news agency said. A Turkish Cypriot search and rescue team was looking for the three missing crew members, it said. Anatolian quoted Captain Yusuf Burak as saying his vessel, broke in two in the early hours after leaving Mersin yesterday evening laden with large trucks and containers. It was not immediately clear why the vessel had broken up. — Reuters.

London, May 11 — Following received from Ankara MRCC, timed 2010, UTC: Ro/ro *Dolphin II* 5B751, 27 crew members, sunk 15 miles off north Cyprus early this morning. Two crew members are missing.

London, May 12 — Following received from Larnaca RCC, timed 0958, UTC: Ro/ro *Dolphin II* sank in lat 35 55N, long 34 41E, May 11. Twenty-four of the 26 persons on board were rescued by passenger ro/ro *Bozcaada*, and two are missing.

DOLPHSTAN (Canada)

London, May 6 — Fishing *Dolphstan* (57 gt, built 1985) with seven persons on board, reported ice related damage to the stem and requested an escort to open water in lat 51 10.28N, long 54 48.00W at 1217, UTC, today.

EIJIN (Panama)

Yokohama, May 10 — Repairs to vehicle *Eijin* were completed and the vessel set sail for Singapore on Apr 27. — Lloyd's Agents.

FEI YUN HE (China)

London, May 12 — C.c. *Fei Yun He* arrived Long Beach 0600, May 11.

FENGSHI 301

See *Guan Zhong 3*.

FORTLAND (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, May 10 — General cargo *Fortland* sailed from Shoreham at 1100, May 5.

FRONT SYMPHONY (Liberia)

Port Said, May 9 — Crude oil tanker *Front Symphony* completed repairs and sailed at 0700, May 1. — Lloyd's Agents.

FUKUSHO MARU NO.18 (Japan)

See *Kyokai Maru No.75*.

GENESIS (U.K.)

Aberdeen, May 6 — Trawler *Genesis*: The outrigger above the propeller developed a leak from inside. The vessel made its way to Fraserburgh where it was in dry dock for 24 hrs. It then moved to shiplift on Tuesday (May 4.) — Lloyd's Agents.

GLOBAL EXPRESS NO.2 (Panama)

Manila, May 12 — The Philippine Coast Guard reported that Panamanian registered lpg *Global Express No.2* (3516 gt, built 1996) ran aground 150 metres off Anibong wharf, Tacloban City, Leyte island, in central Philippines at about 0630, May 7. The fully laden tanker, which had originated from Singapore,

ran aground while it was maneuvering to dock at the said wharf. The Coast Guard said that the vessel was being piloted by Capt. Francisco Gomos Sr. of the Tacloban Harbour Pilots Association when the accident happened. *Global Express No.2* was refloated by Manila-based Malayan Towage and Salvage Corp tug *Primo* and was able to dock at the wharf in the afternoon of the same day. The Coast Guard said that no other details were available. — Lloyd's List Correspondent. (Note — *Global Express No.2* sailed Singapore 0135, May 2, bound for Tacloban.)

GLUECKSBURG (Liberia)

Limassol, May 10 — On May 8, c.c. *Gluecksburg* (18037 gt, built 1988), while berthing at Limassol port, contacted the west quay and as a result damage was caused to the vessels' side fuel tank and fuel spilled in the sea. The oil spillage was contained by the authorities. The vessel is now under detention at Limassol port pending repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: The government has imposed a 10,000 pound fine on the company which owns c.c. *Gluecksburg* that spilled around 40 cubic metres of oil off the Limassol coast. The ship apparently crashed into the Limassol port's breakwater which tore a hole into its side, resulting in the oil spill. The Fisheries and Oceanographic department, in coordination with the Ports Authority is in contact with the ship's insurance company to cover the costs of clean-up efforts. The spilled fuel has been pumped out of the sea using specialised equipment. Meanwhile, local authorities are already cleaning up two beaches where the oil washed ashore.

GOLDENEYE (Greece)

London, May 7 — Bulk *Goldeneye* (16344 gt, built 1986), proceeding downbound into the CŪte Ste-Catherine lock, struck the lock side at 2235, EDST, May 2. Damage were observed on starboard frame 180 to 183 in cargo hold No 1.

GUAN ZHONG 3

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: No deaths have been reported and all 102 people aboard passenger *Guan Zhong 3* were confirmed safe after it was in collision with non specific tanker *Fengshi 301* yesterday evening on the Yangtze River near Chongqing Municipality, south-west China, said the rescue work direction centre today. More than 70 people were injured in the accident, which occurred at 2020 hrs, yesterday some two kilometres away from the Chuanwei Wharf in Changshou District of Chongqing. *Guan Zhong 3*, with an accommodation capacity of 340 people, was carrying 90 passengers and 12 crew when it ran into oil tanker, *Fengshi 301*, which was loaded with 320 tons of gasoline. Around 40 of the injured passengers have been discharged from hospital and there was no report of deaths or missing people, said a local marine official earlier today. As of 1725 hrs, today, local firemen had successfully

separated the vessel from the oil tanker, which were connected in the collision. A team was afterwards organised to investigate the cause of the collision and identify the persons responsible for the accident. The hull of the passenger vessel was damaged in the incident, but the oil tanker had almost no breakage and no oil leaked into the river. Gasoline on the tanker has been siphoned to a rescue vessel and taken away safely.

HAI MING XING (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Yokohama, May 7 — General cargo *Hai Ming Xing* (1998 gt, built 1990) while leaving Ishigaki port damage to exhaust valve on main engine was observed at 0930, Apr 27. Vessel was towed and anchored in Bay of Nagura. Crew replaced the damaged valve and vessel sailed same day for "Taiwan". — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Hai Ming Xing* subsequently arrived Hong Kong May 2 and sailed same day for Zhanjiang.)

HAMANASU (Japan)

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire wreaked havoc on passenger ro/ro *Hamanasu* (18500 gt), under construction at a major shipyard in Nagasaki today, injuring one worker. Firefighters managed to extinguish the fire some 90 minutes later. The 224 metre long vessel had been on a test cruise and upon its return to the Nagasaki shipyard of the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries caught fire at about 1530 hrs. The fire burned a section close to the engine-room before being subdued. *Hamanasu* is being constructed for the Osaka-based Shinnihonkai Ferry company and was scheduled for completion in June.

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire broke out this afternoon on passenger ro/ro *Hamanasu* under construction at a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd shipyard in Nagasaki, the city fire department said. The fire was extinguished about two hours later. According to the fire department, the fire broke out at 1525 hrs and was extinguished at 1716 hrs. A 53-year-old worker from a sub-contractor suffered burns on his hands and was sent to a hospital. Police said the fire began in a turbine generator in the central section of the ferry. Oil leaking from the turbine was ignited by heat from the backup generator to which it was attached. A launch ceremony was held in January for *Hamanasu* and *Akashia*, another ferry of the same type, which was being built at the same time. *Hamanasu* has undergone test runs over the past several days, but it was docked earlier today. The ferries were scheduled to be delivered to ShinNihonkai in late June, after which they would begin service between Maizuru, Kyoto Prefecture, and Otaru, Hokkaido.

London, May 14 — Investigators from the fire and police departments of Nagasaki prefecture police will continue to comb over fire struck passenger ro/ro *Hamanasu* until the end of the week, but shipbuilder Mitsubishi Heavy Industries is already back at work on the vessel. The yard is confident that the damage is manageable and a June delivery date

may still be hit, one MHI source said. A yard official at the Nagasaki facility said the fire had done "minimal damage and our building schedule will account for it." Damage has been reported in the ventilation ducts and the engine-room, where the two hour fire is thought to have started as oil from a turbo-generator ignited following a test run into the sea. No estimate has yet been given on the damages to the Japanese insured vessel.

HEIJIN (Panama)

London, May 6 — Vehicle *Heijin* is still at Rotterdam.

London, May 12 — Vehicle *Heijin* departed from Rotterdam on May 8, bound for Bremerhaven, arriving there on May 9. Vessel departed the following day, for Emden, where it arrived on May 11. Vessel departed later that day, destination San Diego.

HINRICH OLDENDORFF (Liberia)

London, May 12 — Bulk *Hinrich Oldendorff* arrived at Geraldton May 3, sailing the next day for Fremantle, where it arrived on May 5. The vessel subsequently called at Albany (AUS), where it both arrived and departed on May 10 and then proceeded to Esperance, arriving and sailing on May 11. It's current destination is Thevenard. (See issue of Apr 16.)

HOLLYHOCK (U.S.A.)

See *Stewart J. Cort*

HYUNDAI GLORY (Panama)

Busan, May 11 — C.c. *Hyundai Glory* is still under repair at Hyundai Heavy Industry Co, Ulsan, ETC May 13. — Lloyd's Sub-agents

ISLE OF FIRE

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: A 60-foot research vessel sank overnight in New Bedford Harbor, the Coast Guard said yesterday. The wooden research *Isle of Fire* (built 1944), had been towed into the harbour late last week. Its owner, Joel Ducec, told Coast Guard officials that he would hire a private contractor and divers to raise the vessel. *Isle of Fire* will be salvaged, with work expected to begin today, the Coast Guard said. No one was on board at the time *Isle of Fire* sank, Lt. Daniel Ross of the Coast Guard's marine safety office in Providence, R.I., said. There were about 100 gallons of diesel fuel on board the vessel, and a drum on deck leaked less than five gallons of the fuel. The tank has been plugged and the spill contained, the Coast Guard said. When the vessel is raised, the cause of the sinking will be determined, he said. Someone from shore reported the sinking Tuesday morning. The vessel's pilot house and bow were still above the surface. It is located about 600 yards offshore. *Isle of Fire's* last port of call was New York City, Ross said.

JEANETTE KRISTINA (Denmark)

London, May 9 — Following received from Den Helder MRCC, timed 0445, UTC: A report was received at 2154, UTC, May 8 that fishing *Jeanette Kristina*, OUUW, (45 gt, built 1957) and

fishing *Nana Maria* (562 gt, built 1985) had been in collision in lat 55 17N, long 03 27E. As a result *Jeanette Kristina* sank and the three persons on board were rescued by *Nana Maria* which is now returning to Esbjerg.

JOANNA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, May 11 — General cargo *Joanna* departed Gdynia on May 5, bound for Klaipeda, where it arrived on May 6.

JONRIX (U.K.)

London, May 7 — Following received from Coastguard Thames MRSC, timed 1359, UTC: General cargo *Jonrix* (1987 gt, built 1977), Hull for Ipswich, with timber, anchored 7.9 nautical miles east of Aldeburgh, in lat 52 06.89N, long 01 48.6E, at 1315, UTC, due to main engine failure. Tug *Gray Test* is due on scene at 1700, UTC.

London, May 7 — Following received from Coastguard Thames MRSC timed 2120, UTC: General cargo *Jonrix* is currently in tow bound Ipswich to effect repairs. Pilot is due to meet the vessel at 2130, UTC.

London, May 10 — General cargo *Jonrix* arrived Ipswich at 2229, May 7.

KATRINE KROG (DIS)

London, May 12 — Following received from Aarhus RCC, timed 0939, UTC: General cargo *Katrine Krog* (1055 gt, built 1969) and general cargo *Ladoga 11* (1588 gt, built 1978) were in collision near Elsinore at 2237, UTC, May 11. *Katrine Krog* sustained bow damage and is presently in port at Copenhagen. *Ladoga 11* is proceeding to Tallinn.

KIAN (Denmark)

Gothenburg, May 11 — Danish fishing *Kian*, no call sign available, was reported on fire, in a location outside Vaederoarna (Weather Islands) in lat 58 30.3N, long 10 42.8E. Danish SOK called MRCC for assistance at 0745, local time, today. Coast Guard vessel attended and extinguished the fire on board. The crew of three men were rescued safely by another fishing vessel *Eica*. *Kian* was subsequently reported sunken at 1025, local time, at the same position. Reason unknown. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, May 12 — Coast Guard vessel *No. 307* attended to fishing *Kian* on fire all over while drifting outside the Weather Islands, before 0800, local time, May 11. "We used 5000 litres of foam," said the master on board. Despite our efforts the fire continued and rescue cruiser *Tanum* arrived with firemen on board. The only thing they could do was to fill up the casualty with foam. Also the aluminium was on fire and this was not put out. *Kian* had its trawl still in use and this pulled the vessel down into the water. At 1020, local time, the vessel sank in 140 metres of water. A salvage may be considered as the wreck is in the middle of a "trawling-channel" frequently used. — Westax Marine Services AB.

KINEI MARU (Japan)

Yokohama, May 11 — A collision occurred between general cargo *Kinei*

Maru (199 gt, built 1999), proceeding off Oita airport and chem.tank *Kojima Maru No.32* (699 gt, built 1987), anchoring, about 3,520 metres, 200 degs from Usushibana Lighthouse in Outa (?Oita) Prefecture at 0505, May 3. No one was injured and there was no water ingress or oil spillage. — Lloyd's Agents.

KOJIMA MARU NO.32 (Japan)

See *Kinei Maru*.

KOUTALIANOS (Cyprus)

Rotterdam, May 6 — Bulk *Koutalianos* ran aground off El Dekheila about May 3. Vessel is still aground and salvage operations are continuing. — SMIT Salvage B.V.

KTC 115 (Canada)

See *Tony Mackay*.

KYOKAI MARU NO.75 (Japan)

Yokohama, May 10 — Lpg *Kyokai Maru No.75* and fishing *Fukusho Maru No.18* have both now resumed their voyages. — Lloyd's Agents.

LADOGA 11 (Russia)

See *Katrine Krog*.

LECONTE (U.S.A.)

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Leconte* (1328 gt, built 1974) with more than 100 people aboard hit a rock today and began taking on water, the Coast Guard said. The vessel was stuck on a rock in Peril Strait about 30 miles north of Sitka, Petty Officer Sara Raymer said. "They are hard aground," she said. There were no immediate reports of injuries. The Coast Guard sent three helicopters and a cutter. The ferry run by the state, shuttles passengers between southeastern Alaska communities. There were 86 passengers and 23 crew members aboard.

London, May 10 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1950, UTC: Ro/ro *Leconte* stuck a reef in the Peril Strait at about 1800, UTC, today. Vessel is hard aground, passengers are currently being taken off the vessel. Vessel is holed, water ingress reported but the flooding has now been controlled. No injuries or pollution. Vessels are on scene.

London, May 11 — Following received from Alaska Marine Highway System, dated May 10: An incident has occurred involving the Alaska Marine Highway ro/ro *Leconte*. The ferry ran hard aground on Cozian Reef in Peril Straits at approximately 0955 hrs while enroute from Angoon to Sitka. Two forward spaces on the port side flooded and the ship is reported to be listing at 10 degrees. All 86 passengers were safely deployed to liferafts and are accounted for without injuries. Coast Guard cutters *Liberty* and *Maple* are underway to assist and a helicopter from Coast Guard Air Station Sitka is at the scene. NOAA's ship, *John Cobb*, has picked up most of the passengers. Those remaining were picked up by a Good Samaritan ship. Passengers are being transported to Sitka. Two boats from Allen Marine are scheduled to arrive at Cozian Reef at 1230 hrs to assist the damaged vessel.

All 24 crew members are still on board. The port side solid waste hold and bow thruster flooded. There is no spillage to report. Currently, water levels in the ship are decreasing due to the outgoing tide. Divers and a salvage team are responding to patch the hull and help guide the ship off the reef when the tide comes up at 1345 this afternoon. There has not yet been a report regarding the condition of the vehicles on board the vessel.

London, May 11 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 0035, UTC: Ro/ro *Leconte* is still aground with holes reported in three spaces. The tide is now coming in.

London, May 11 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1454, UTC: Ro/ro *Leconte* is still aground, and is being held in place by two tugs. Discussions are in progress regarding salvage operations.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Leconte* was en route between Angoon and Sitka, with continuing service to Kake and Petersburg, when it ran aground on Cozian Reef in Peril Strait. The US Coast Guard reported that the ship's crew responded quickly and all passengers were evacuated from *Leconte* via lifeboats. NOAA ship *John Cobb* was the first vessel on scene and assisted in coordinating the transfer of the passengers from the lifeboats to several Good Samaritan vessels, including two catamarans owned by Allen Marine and two smaller vessels. By 1400 yesterday, all passengers were evacuated from *Leconte* and safely transported to Sitka and Angoon. Two injured passengers were flown to Sitka Memorial Hospital. "DOT is in the process of stabilizing the ferry so it can be removed from the reef and taken to the shipyard in Ketchikan where permanent repairs can be made. All of the passengers have been safely removed from *Leconte* and are reportedly on their way to Sitka," Alaska Governor Frank Murkowski said. The Coast Guard Marine Safety Office continues to work with the State of Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) to save the ferry that ran aground at approximately 0955 yesterday. The Coast Guard and the State of Alaska have established a Unified Command to manage a coordinated response to the incident. The Unified Command's primary concerns are the safety of the passengers and crew and protection of the marine environment. Coast Guard, AMHS, and commercial salvage experts carried out an initial assessment of *Leconte's* stability. This assessment revealed the ferry was taking on water in five watertight compartments. After stabilizing the vessel, *Leconte's* crew was evacuated at approximately 1715 hrs due to safety concerns. Salvage personnel on scene will continue to monitor the condition of *Leconte* overnight. *Leconte* will remain on Cozian reef until temporary repairs are completed and the vessel can be safely extracted. Coast Guard Cutters *Liberty*, *Maple* and *Anacapa* remain at the scene. According to information provided by the USCG, there is no evidence that any oil has spilled from *Leconte*. "Our first

priority was the safety of the passengers and the crew," said Commander John Sifling, the Coast Guard Incident Commander. "Now that everyone is safe, we will focus on salvaging the vessel and preventing any oil from spilling. This effort will probably take several days." The Coast Guard has established a one-half mile radius safety zone around the ferry. Vessels are not permitted in the safety zone without the permission of the Coast Guard.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: Marine salvage companies geared up to make temporary repairs in hopes of floating ro/ro *Leconte* off a reef north of Sitka. Divers today found a second 30-foot gouge on the starboard side of the V-shape hull, roughly matching a similar hole found by divers last night on the port side. The holes near the keel are up to a foot wide. Five compartments were breached. "I imagine they're going to find some additional damage on the starboard side," said Coast Guard spokesman Lt. j.g. Dan Buchsbaum. The breached compartments included the bow thruster room and the sewage room. Salvors will continue tomorrow to assess the damage. Crowley Marine and Juneau salvor John Gitkov of Juneau were working at the scene, Buchsbaum said. A third salvage company was moving a vessel north from Seattle and had sent an advance crew. Emergency responders both yesterday and today worked to make sure the *Leconte* did not move. If the vessel had moved off the reef, Buchsbaum said, it would have sunk. Salvors made the vessel stable by setting out anchors to guard against wave action moving the boat and by allowing sea water to remain in breached compartments. Calm conditions are predicted for the next three days, Buchsbaum said. Investigators have given no indication how the ship ran aground in calm weather on a well-known hazard marked by a light. The vessel had no apparent mechanical problems, Buchsbaum said. Crew members were tested for drugs or alcohol. "There was no indication anyone used drugs or alcohol," Buchsbaum said, although the Coast Guard had not received tests back as of this afternoon. The Coast Guard and the National Transportation Safety Board will jointly investigate the incident. An NTSB representative arrived today and was making her way to the scene, Buchsbaum said. Crew members who could aid with the salvage remained in Sitka. One goal of the salvors was to remove luggage and the 15 vehicles on board. Two cutters, *Maple* from Sitka and *Anacapa* from Petersburg, remain on scene. A boom has been placed around the stricken vessel to minimize damage from leaks, Buchsbaum said.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: Ro/ro *Leconte* remained grounded on a reef in Peril Strait north of Sitka this morning with a gash 30-40 feet long and four to 12 inches wide torn along the port side of the hull near the bow, state officials said. With at least four large compartments flooded near the bow, the vessel could sink if it shifted off the rocks into deeper water. However, salvage experts and US

Coast Guard officials on scene reported that anchoring the stern and keeping the chambers flooded with seawater should keep the vessel stable until repairs can be made. The damage was "much more extensive than previously thought," said Nona Wilson, a spokeswoman for the Alaska Marine Highway System, said today. Figuring out exactly what must be done to save the vessel and then move it to a port could take several days, Coast Guard Petty Officer Douglas Green said. All 86 passengers and all 23 crew members were evacuated by yesterday evening, as US Coast Guard cutters and other vessels with salvage crews converged at Cozian Reef, near the northern tip of Baranof Island. Three passengers received medical treatment in Sitka. Two were believed to have possible back injuries, but no information was available on the third, ferry system spokeswoman Nona Wilson said. Other passengers rode to Sitka on high-speed tour-boat catamarans operated by Allen Marine. Fifteen vehicles remained in *Leconte's* hold. As the tide rose yesterday afternoon, Coast Guard and salvage experts went by helicopter and boat to try to stabilise the vessel so that it would not sink, said Wilson and Lt. j.g. Dan Buchsbaum, with the Coast Guard Marine Safety Office in Juneau. That task became increasingly critical with damage inspection. Initial reports suggested that compartments with a bow thruster and sewage tanks had been breached, but divers and other salvage workers later found that the ballast tank compartment was also punctured, Wilson said. The vessel would float with two of the chambers flooded but not with a third, officials said. "With that third hole, if it's not patched and it comes off the reef tonight, that vessel will sink," Wilson said. "So we have a really delicate situation. Now that our passengers are taken care of, we have to figure out how to get our boat off the reef and figure out how to fix it so it at least can be towed to Sitka." No pollution had been reported in the sea yesterday, and eight auxiliary pumps had been brought on board, Wilson said. The vessel was listing 10 degrees. Why the vessel apparently steered within a few hundred yards of shore and then struck a well-known marine hazard marked by a light was not clear yesterday, ferry officials and Coast Guard investigators said. "We don't know what happened," Wilson said. "I don't know if anything went haywire. I don't know if there was some kind of engine failure. But our primary concern right now is not to try to figure out what happened but to make sure our people are safe and how to help the vessel." The vessel's master was identified as Capt Harvey Williamson. An officer from the Coast Guard Marine Safety Office was on board and had begun an investigation, Buchsbaum said. He said the response crews would keep the holed chambers full of seawater to stabilise the vessel and try to patch the hull during low tides today. The vessel, valued at \$30-35 million, is insured by the state to \$1 million and by Lloyds of London beyond that, Wilson said.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Marine salvage companies planned today to move most of the fuel from grounded ro/ro *Leconte* in hopes of reducing the risk of a spill into Peril Strait. Marine salvage crews, the Coast Guard and Marine Highway System officials worked to stabilise the ferry in hopes of floating it off the reef it struck Monday (May 10) north of Sitka. The vessel has been stabilised with five anchors and 1,000 feet of containment boom has been placed around it, said Coast Guard Lieutenant Brett Farrell. A preliminary salvage plan must be approved before moving the fuel, he said. Several containment vessels with the Southeast Alaska Pollution Response Organisation were on hand in case of a spill. SEAPRO general manager Dave Owings said sensitive areas and wildlife that would be affected by a spill have been identified, and a plan was being devised to move wildlife if necessary. Divers yesterday found a 2-foot wide, 30-foot long gouge on the starboard side of the vessel's V-shape hull. The hole runs into void tanks under the vessel's main engine-room. A 40-foot gash was found on the port side. The holes near the keel are up to a foot wide. Five compartments were breached. The breached compartments included the bow thruster room and the sewage room. Crowley Marine and Juneau salvager John Gitkov were working at the scene, Coast Guard spokesman Lt. j.g. Dan Buchsbaum said. A third salvage company was moving a vessel north from Seattle and had sent an advance crew. If the vessel had moved off the reef, Buchsbaum said, it would have sunk. Calm conditions are predicted for the next three days, Buchsbaum said. Investigators have given no indication how the vessel ran aground in calm weather on a well-known hazard marked by a light. The vessel had no apparent mechanical problems, Buchsbaum said. Crew members were tested for drugs or alcohol. The luggage and personal belongings of the vessel's passengers have been delivered to Sitka, the Coast Guard said. Plans to remove the vehicles are still being made. Two cutters, *Maple* from Sitka and *Anacapa* from Petersburg, remain on scene.

London, May 12 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1930, UTC: Ro/ro *Leconte* remains aground. Vessel has four holes in its hull and a 30 foot by one foot gash. Fifteen cars remain on board the vessel. A contracted salvage tug is due on scene May 14 and salvage operations are due to commence on its arrival.

LT PEACE (Panama)

Taipei, May 12 — Owner/operator of c.c. *LT Peace* informs that vessel entered the drydock of China Shipbuilding Corp, in Kaohsiung on May 7, for repairs and expects to complete repairs on May 21. — Lloyd's Agents.

LJUN-I (North Korea)

Constantza, May 10 — General cargo *Lujin I* arrived at Midia May 8, from Istanbul. — Lloyd's Agents.

MANAFOSS (Liberia)

Reykjavik, May 12 — General cargo *Manafoss* returned to service at 2200, local time, May 7 and is presently sailing around Iceland. — Lloyd's Agents.

MIKHAIL LUKONIN (Russia)

Yokohama, May 7 — General cargo *Mikhail Lukonin* (4694 gt, built 1981) while leaving Pier No.4 of No.3 Wharf at Onahama contacted general cargo *Akitsu Maru No.8* (498 gt, built 1995) being moored alongside No.4 Wharf, at 1410, Apr 27. After contacting *Akitsu Maru No.8*, *Mikhail Lukonin* contacted pusher tug/sand carrier *Sumiwaka Maru No.56* (414 gt, built 2000) being moored behind *Mikhail Lukonin*. *Mikhail Lukonin* sustained scratching to starboard side in bow area. *Akitsu Maru No.8* sustained denting to port side shell plating and *Sumiwaka Maru No.56* sustaining scratching to bulwark on port side bow. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Mikhail Lukonin* subsequently arrived Vanino May 2 and sailed May 5.)

MONA LISA (Bahamas)

Venice, May 12 — While entering Venice port in dense fog this morning, passenger *Mona Lisa* (28891 gt, built 1966) ran aground in St. Marks basin. The vessel was refloated one hour later with the assistance of local tugs and berthed to allocated dock. No damages nor injuries to passengers and crew are reported. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger *Mona Lisa* ran aground near St. Mark's Square amid thick fog yesterday, prompting complaints from the mayor about large vessels travelling too close to the city's historic centre. None of the 1,000 passengers and crew on the vessel were hurt, city officials said. The German operator, Holiday Kreuzfahrten, said no damage resulted from the incident, in which the vessel got stuck in mud in a narrow channel but was towed straight out. Mayor Paolo Costa suggested that such vessels not be allowed to cross St. Mark's Basin, which is near the square. Instead, they should be anchored farther out, such as near the Lido island off the coast of the city centre.

NANA MARIA (Denmark)

See *Jeanette Kristina*.

NATIONAL DIGNITY (Hong Kong)

London, May 12 — General cargo *National Dignity* departed Hong Kong on Apr 1, destination Shekou, arriving at that port later the same day. Vessel was next reported arriving at Sandakan on Apr 27, from Shekou.)

NAYRESS EXPRESS (Sao Tome & Principe)

Aleppo, May 10 — Our Lattakia office have advised that breakage of general cargo *Nayress Express* started about three months ago and breakers have requested from the Administration of Syrian Harbours an extension of the appropriate permits, in order to complete break-up operations. — Lloyd's Agents.

NIKOLAY DOLINSKIY (Russia)

Yokohama, May 7 — General cargo *Nikolay Dolinskiy* (4643 gt, built 1988), while drifting around 1.7 miles, 199 degrees from Usitu lighthouse, Ishikawa Prefecture, to avoid heavy weather, “ran aground in a fixed shore net” at 0230, Apr 28. Salvage vessels commenced to detach/refloat the vessel at 0900, Apr 29 and a tug commenced towing the vessel at 1658 same day. It arrived Nanao port 2110 same day. — Lloyd’s Agents. (Note — *Nikolay Dolinskiy* was last reported to have sailed Nakhodka Apr 23.)

NO.1122 (New Hull)

Busan, May 11 — At approximately 2045, May 7 there was an explosion at the upper stool tank on board the newbuilding product tanker yard *No.1122* (28300 gt) at the premises of the STX shipyard, Jinhae (Chinhae). As a result, one dock worker was found dead and another suffered burns at his respiration tract and sent to a hospital at Jinhae. It was reported that the tank was being internally painted at the time. Understand that the vessel sustained minor damage to the tank as a result. — Lloyd’s Sub-agents. (Note — Understood Yard *No.1122* STX is being built for D’Amico Societa di Navigazione (S.p.A.), Rome.)

NORWAY (Bahamas)

London, May 10 — As at May 7, passenger *Norway* was still in port at Hamburg.

NOTA A. (Malta)

Buenos Aires, May 7 — Bulk *Nota A.* (22009 gt, built 1984) San Lorenzo for South Africa, cargo 32,000 tonnes of corn, grounded by way of Km 340, Passage Isla Nueva, at 0220, local time, today. The vessel is obstructing navigation and is not being assisted by any tug yet. — Lloyd’s Agents. (Note — *Nota A.* arrived San Lorenzo (ARG) May 5.)

London, May 7 — Understand bulk *Nota A.* was successfully refloated early this evening.

Buenos Aires, May 10 — Bulk *Nota A.* refloated at 1618, local time, May 7, with the assistance of tug *Tronador*, and anchored in San Pedro Roads. The vessel resumed its voyage May 8, following a Coast Guard inspection. — Lloyd’s Agents.

NYFJELL (Bahamas)

London, May 12 — Following received from Aarhus RCC, timed 0941, UTC: General cargo *Nyfjell* (1896 gt, built 1977) grounded on approach to Randers at 0835, UTC, May 11, due to dense fog. The vessel refloated by its own means at 1045, UTC, and is now in port at Randers, where it has been detained by Port State Control.

OKA (Russia)

Busan, May 11 — General cargo *Oka*, UDUP, arrived at Busan on May 5, from China, sailing later the same day for Vladivostok. — Lloyd’s Sub-agents.

ORATECA (DIS)

London, May 9 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed

0914, UTC: Edible oil tanker *Orateca* (1733 gt, built 1982), Rotterdam for St Nazaire, cargo 2,000 tonnes sunflower oil, anchored in lat 50 42.9N, long 00 32.8W at 0745, UTC with small defect to main engine turbo-charger using too much oil. Spare parts being delivered by local launch at 1400, UTC. (Note — *Orateca* sailed Rotterdam 0930, May 8 for St Nazaire.)

London, May 9 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 1753, UTC: Edible oil tanker *Orateca*: A new turbo-charger is due to arrive tomorrow and vessel is expected to sail at 2359, UTC, May 10. No use of engines at this time. Weather is not forecast to change significantly.

London, May 11 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 0004, UTC: Edible oil tanker *Orateca*: Repairs completed and vessel underway at 0001, UTC, today.

ORION I (Malta)

Venice, May 12 — The cargo which was discharged from general cargo *Orion I* has been loaded onto other vessels for onward shipping to the original destinations of Barcelona and the Azores. — Lloyd’s Agents.

PACIFIC SKY (U.K.)

See “Outbreak of Virus on United Kingdom Flagged Passenger Vessel” under “Miscellaneous.”

PASSATWIND (Antigua & Barbuda)

Helsinki, May 10 — General cargo *Passatwind* arrived at Loviisa on May 5, from Holmsund, and departed on May 6, destination Nantes. — Lloyd’s Agents.

PETE (U.S.A.)

See “Portland Harbour, Maine, United States” under “Pollution.”

POLAR STAR (Barbados)

Falmouth, May 6 — Repairs to icebreaker *Polar Star* are expected to be completed on or about May 25. — Lloyd’s Agents.

POSEIDON (DIS)

Bordeaux, May 11 — General cargo *Poseidon* is presently in port for repairs. Ship’s agent hopes the end of repairs about May 18 — Lloyd’s Agents.

RAMITA NAREE (Thailand)

St. Vincent, CV, May 10 — Bulk *Ramita Naree* berthed alongside pier No 2 at 0900, May 9, and repairs are under way, ETC May 11. — Lloyd’s Agents.

St. Vincent, CV, May 12 — Bulk *Ramita Naree* sailed at 1600, May 12 to Praia, Santiago Island, CVI, after completion of temporary repairs. — Lloyd’s Agents.

RETS TIMBER (Isle of Man)

Messina, May 7 — Part c.c. *Rets Timber* (8183 gt, built 1984) arrived Corigliano May 4 in tow of tug/supply *Marzameni*, reportedly due to the seizure of two main engine pistons. The vessel loaded 10,753 tonnes of clinker in Damietta on Apr 7, which was bound for Corigliano. Cargo operations are presently under way. — Lloyd’s Agents.

ROCKNES (Antigua & Barbuda)

Bergen, May 7 — Bulk *Rocknes* is under tow from Bergen to an, at the moment, unknown destination. Most likely the destination is Gdansk or Hamburg. It has been decided that the vessel, most likely, will be rebuilt. Time for repair, seven to 12 months. — Lloyd’s Sub-agents.

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Bulk *Rocknes* is to be rebuilt at a yard in Poland, and will now be towed there from its present harbour near Bergen. The cost of refurbishing the vessel is estimated at NOK 280 million. The ship will be back in service by January next year.

London, May 10 — Following received from Sandnes, dated today: Bulk *Rocknes* is now under tow, bound for the Polish shipyard, Rematowa, in Gdansk. The vessel will be repaired to an estimated cost of NOK. 280 million. The vessel will be back in service in Jan/Feb 2005.

SANTA III (Greece)

London, May 11 — Lloyd’s Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the afternoon of May 10, hydrofoil *Santa III* (142 gt, built 1981), Paxos to Kerkyra, with 12 passengers and six crew, sustained damage to the starboard main engine. The voyage was continued with only one engine and the vessel arrived safely at Kerkyra at 1900, local time, same day. Kerkyra Port Authority has prohibited departure pending inspection of the repairs.

SARAH (U.K.)

London, May 11 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 0323, UTC: Skye Bridge supervisor reported UK registered dive boat *Sarah*, overall length 19.8 metres, displacement 94 tonnes, aground on Kyleakin Beach, Isle of Skye, in lat 57 16.5N, long 05 44.5W, at 0012, UTC. Vessel has 1,000 gallons of diesel fuel, 20 gallons of lubricating oil in engine and 15 gallons in barrels. The vessel’s owner will make arrangements for a commercial tug to attempt to refloat the vessel at the next high tide. Low tide is at 0609 hrs, and high tide at 1217 hrs.

London, May 11 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 0503, UTC: Dive boat *Sarah*, a converted fishing vessel, is hard aground and stable. Nil pollution. Crew remaining on board. Tug to be arranged next high water at 1217, UTC.

London, May 11 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 1435, UTC: Dive boat *Sarah* was refloated at 1257, UTC and safely berthed alongside in Kyle harbour.

SETTEBELLO (Liberia)

London, May 12 — Crude oil tanker *Settebello* arrived at Fujairah Anchorage on Apr 30, from Suez and departed on May 5, destination Basrah.

SILVA (Cambodia)

Esbjerg, May 6 — General cargo *Silva* is awaiting nomination of date for public auction. — Lloyd’s Agents.

SPIRIT OF ONTARIO I (Bahamas)

Troy, Michigan, May 11 — Canadian American Transportation Systems (CATS), operators of passenger ro/ro *Spirit of Ontario I* from Rochester, N.Y. to Toronto, Ont., are telephoning thousands of customers to apologise for having to delay the launch of the ship. The vessel had been scheduled to begin service on May 1. But the vessel arrived at the Port of Rochester nearly 30 days later than expected, partly because it struck a dock last month in New York City and had to be repaired. The launch date has since been delayed indefinitely. CATS is calling customers who booked trips between May 15 and Jun 19, specific reservations weren't being accepted before May 15, and offering to refund their money or reschedule their voyages. The majority of customers are asking for refunds because their trips were tied to specific events such as weddings or family gatherings, said CATS President Howard Thomas. New reservations aren't being accepted until Jun 19. But that's not the expected launch date, Thomas said. The company needs time for the ship to undergo safety inspections by the U.S. Coast Guard and Canadian officials, train the crew and stock the vessel with equipment, Thomas said. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

SPIRIT OF TASMANIA III (Australia)

London, May 10 — Passenger ro/ro *Spirit of Tasmania III* sailed Devonport May 6, arriving at Sydney May 7.

SPRING PEACOCK (Panama)

London, May 11 — Owners/underwriters of bulk *Spring Peacock* (37689 gt, built 1998) laden with soya beans, have contracted Nippon Salvage in co-operation with SMIT Salvage to render their services after it ran aground in lat 26 14.17S, long 48 78.6W, at 0139, local time, today. Vessel ran aground after having left port, just off Sao Francisco do Sul. Salvage experts boarded the vessel shortly afterwards and additional team members are currently being mobilised.

Santos, May 12 — Following received from Itajaí Sub-agents: For reasons so far unknown, bulk *Spring Peacock* grounded at Sao Francisco do Sul at 0105, local time, May 11. The vessel is still aground with salvage operations in progress. — Lloyd's Agents.

Rio de Janeiro, May 12 — Bulk *Spring Peacock* which ran aground May 10, despite all efforts to bring vessel afloat again, nothing has been achieved so far. The vessel still remains aground thus blocking the main channel and it has interrupted the navigation in the port. It is not known when the channel will be free to resume navigation. — Correspondent.

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: Bulk *Spring Peacock* carrying 58,800 tonnes of soybeans for Japan, disrupted loading operations at Brazil's Sao Francisco do Sul port after running aground on rocks, shipping operators said today. One container vessel due to dock on Friday abandoned the port line-up because of the expected wait, said shipping agents

at the port, but they added that there were no cancellations of grain ships at the port. "The accident is creating general delays. A container ship already cancelled, and there are other ships analysing the situation," said one shipping agent. *Spring Peacock*, will have to unload until its hull is raised from the rocks in the port bay where it is stranded. Port loading operations remained limited today shipping agents said.

Rio de Janeiro, May 13 — Bulk *Spring Peacock* which grounded leaving the port of Sao Francisco do Sul, at 0100, May 11, has 58,900 tonnes tons of soya onboard. Vessel is 225 metres long, 22 meters wide and has a crew of 20. Apparently vessel is losing \$60,000 per day. New reports state situation is more critical as vessel is sitting on a rock not shown on nautical charts. Five tanks at least are damaged/holed, three are cofferdams of oil and two are ballast tanks. Since vessel is over drafted it will have to discharge part cargo in order to be able to refloat. Petrobras is lending rubber protection barriers to surround the ship and try avoid oil spillages, as the area is liable to heavy swells. The port was re-opened pm, yesterday and ships have started to work again, but there is a slight congestion, which should be over within next three to four days. — Correspondent.

STEPHANE C. (Canada)

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Five people had to be picked up by helicopter this morning after their fishing *Stephane C.* (47 gt, built 1974) ran aground in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The crew of the 19-metre-long vessel had anchored but around 0500 hrs strong waves and winds started pushing them towards Anticosti Island. The crew managed to call for help, then abandoned ship, making it to shore on board a lifeboat. A search and rescue vessel, along with a Hercules and a Cormorant helicopter were all dispatched to the scene. The Cormorant eventually picked up the crew and took them back to Gaspé, Que. There were no injuries reported.

STEWART J.CORT (U.S.A.)

London, May 10 — A press report, dated May 9, states: The US Coast Guard has punished the master of cutter *Hollyhock* for a collision this spring with lake freighter bulk *Stewart J.Cort*, but has not suspended him from his duties. Coast Guard officials this week in Cleveland had a formal disciplinary hearing, called an admiral's mast, for Lt Cmdr Mike McBrady. The hearing found that McBrady on Mar 25 improperly put his crew and vessel into hazard while navigating, violating a portion of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. That resulted in a collision with *Stewart J.Cort*. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Jeff Hall said McBrady would receive a letter of admonition in his permanent record but would not be relieved of his duties or suspended. "It has serious career implications," Hall said of the letter. "Any time he'd come up for promotion, it is in his records to be seen." Hall said Rear Adm Ronald Silva,

commander of the Coast Guard's 9th District in Cleveland, is confident in McBrady's ability to command *Hollyhock*. The Coast Guard's investigation into the collision is almost complete, Hall said, and he does not know if any other *Hollyhock* crew member would face penalties. Hall said McBrady was on the vessel's bridge when it collided with *Stewart J.Cort* during icebreaking duties in the St. Marys River in northern Michigan. *Stewart J.Cort* sustained cosmetic damage, a Coast Guard spokesman said, and *Hollyhock* sustained \$26,000 in damage to the upper bow. *Hollyhock* will go to the Coast Guard's Detroit Station the week of May 24 for repairs to the hull, Hall said. Workers will remove the portion of the damaged hull and replace it with a new piece made in Wisconsin, the site of the vessel's original assembly. Repairs could take up to two weeks.

SUMIWAKA MARU NO.56 (Japan)

See *Mikhail Lukonin*.

SUNG KYUNG 201 (South Korea)

Montevideo, May 10 — Fishing *Sung Kyung 201* (213 gt) had an explosion in a tank containing ammonia gas at 0200 today, while moored at Montevideo. Crew members on *Sung Kyung 201* and neighbouring vessels were affected by the gas. A total of 63 persons were hospitalised. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 80 people were treated for ammonia gas poisoning today, after an explosion aboard fishing *Sung Kyung 201* docked in Montevideo, fire officials said. No other vessel was damaged in the blast, which occurred at about 0200 hrs. The explosion occurred when tanks carrying the ammonia gas, used for refrigeration, leaked and poisoned many aboard the Korean vessel as they slept. Officials did not immediately disclose the cause of the blast.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: Officials in Uruguay say at least 74 people are being treated for gas poisoning following an explosion in Montevideo. The leak occurred early today when a tank containing ammonia gas exploded on South Korean fishing *Sung Kyung 201*. The gas was being used for refrigeration on board the vessel. The port was closed while officials investigated the blast, which happened at about 0200 hrs.

TAHAROA EXPRESS (Panama)

London, May 7 — Bulk *Taharoa Express* arrived at Kakogawa on May 5 from Taharua Terminal.

TIAN ZHU SHAN (China)

Yokohama, May 7 — General cargo *Tian Zhu Shan*, bound Mizushima, lost navigation 102 deg and 17 miles from Tsushima Kuroshima lighthouse, Nagasaki prefecture, at 0700, Apr 26, after a hawser became entangled in the vessel's propeller. The vessel was towed to Mutsure Shima by Nippon Salvage and then towed to Moji. The vessel sailed Moji at 2200, Apr 27, for Qingdao, after the hawser was removed. — Lloyd's Agents.

TK VENICE (Malta)

See "Brest Area, France" under "Pollution."

TONY MACKAY (Canada)

London, May 7 — Tug *Tony Mackay* (373 gt, built 1973) towing tank barge *KTC 115* (6430 gt, built 1968) reportedly lost control of the barge and struck bottom in the vicinity of Little Current, near Picnic Island, at 1830, EDT, May 5. A solar panel from buoy J56 was sheared off as a result of the incident.

WILDERNESS ADVENTURER (U.S.A.)

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger *Wilderness Adventurer* (89 gt, built 1983) had to evacuate 19 passengers and three crew members after striking ice and taking on water in Tracy Arm in southeastern Alaska. The passengers and crew were evacuated safely onto another cruise ship after the incident yesterday. The ice punctured a 3-inch hole into the hull of the vessel, Coast Guard Lt. Ashley Bodkin said. She said the vessel was not in danger of sinking or capsizing, but evacuation was the prudent course of action. Details of the incident were not immediately known today, but Bodkin said the vessel may have brushed up against some ice, causing damage to a weakened hull. "Marine safety personnel noticed the hull was corroded," Bodkin said. "It was already weak. They didn't slam into anything." The hole was shored and a single pump kept the water out of the vessel, which returned to Juneau, Bodkin said.

Port State Control**ROMANIA**

See *Aura* under "Marine."

Seizures & Arrests**AFRICAN PRIDE (Panama)**

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: Naval officer, Lt.-Commander Adetola Bamidele yesterday told a Federal High Court sitting in Lagos at the resumed trial of 13 Russians, who are facing a two-count charge of crude oil bunkering, that they had to fire gun shots into the air before the Russian crew of product tanker *African Pride* would follow them to Lagos, the day the Russians were arrested in Nigeria waters (Oct 8). Testifying at the continuation of the hearing into the matter, Lt Com Bamidele, one of the Prosecution witnesses also narrated how they found the vessel anchored at sea and

interrogated the crew only to discover they were carrying about 11,000 metric tones of crude oil.

AGIA ELENI (Greece)

Valletta, May 10 — We have been verbally informed by the owners of fishing *Agia Eleni* that they are trying to change the registration to Panamanian Register and also change the insurers. — Lloyd's Agents.

BIGA (Canary Islands)

Bilbao, May 4 — General cargo *Biga* is still under embargo in the port of Bilbao. — Lloyd's Agents.

BOREAS (Cyprus)

Bilbao, May 4 — General cargo *Boreas* is still under embargo at Bilbao. — Lloyd's Agents.

BYZANTIO (Malta)

London, May 13 — Reported that product tanker *Byzantio* (32453 gt, built 1976), which arrived at Hong Kong at 2355, May 12, is currently at the Reserved Dangerous Goods Anchorage, Hong Kong, under arrest.

CARMICA V (Panama)

Limassol, May 7 — Ro/ro *Carmica V* has been renamed *Jupiter V*. As the agent is abroad and port authorities have not yet been advised of any changes, the only information we can get at the moment is that the new flag is North Korea and new owners/managers are a company in India named Jupiter. — Lloyd's Agents.

DIAGORAS (Greece)

London, May 7 — A report in today's issue of "Newsfront" states: Passenger ro/ro *Diagoras* (6939 gt, built 1990) was seized at the beginning of May by Mantouvalos Bros Ship Supplies in respect of a Euros 105,725 claim against the vessel's owners. (Note — *Diagoras* sailed Rhodes Apr 28 for Kos.)

GLUECKSBURG (Liberia)

See under "Marine."

MARE NOSTRUM

London, May 10 — General cargo *Mare Nostrum*, OPWT, was reported passing Dover, eastward, on May 8.

NEGROS NAVIGATION CO INC

Manila, May 9 — Troubled Negros Navigation Co. (Nenaco) has resumed operations after the Supreme Court stopped the Court of Appeals and Tsuneishi Heavy Industries Inc. from implementing the temporary restraining order that suspended the operations of five vessels owned by Nenaco. Responding to an appeal by the Philippine's second largest domestic carrier, the High Court on May 4 barred the appeals court from implementing its Apr 29 order grounding five of Nenaco's vessels. The Supreme Court also ordered both the appeals court and Tsuneishi Heavy Industries (Cebu), Inc. to show cause why the vessels should be grounded. The appeals court grounded the vessels based on a petition from Tsuneishi's Philippine shipyard, which

is a major Nenaco creditor. Tsuneishi asked the vessels be grounded as guarantee Nenaco will pay the Pesos120 million in dry-docking and vessel repair services it owed the shipbuilder. The grounding of the bulk of Nenaco's fleet is the latest blow to hit the company. On Mar 20, Tsuneishi seized the Nenaco vessel *St.Peter the Apostle* for its failure to settle repair and drydocking bills from 2002. Two weeks ago, the Maritime Industry Authority grounded five of its vessels following findings that it was financially incapable of sustaining its operations. The ban was lifted only after Philippines President Gloria Arroyo intervened. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

NERVA (Bahamas)

London, May 9 — General cargo *Nerva* renamed *Stella* sailed Antwerp May 8.

SILVA (Cambodia)

See under "Marine."

ST.PETER THE APOSTLE (Philippines)

See "Negros Navigation Co Inc."

TK VENICE (Malta)

See "Brest Harbour, France" under "Pollution."

YOUNG HWA NO.99 (Uruguay)

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: A Uruguayan flagged jigger, fishing *Young Hwa No.99* (329 gt, built 1975), was caught last Sunday (May 9) by the Argentine Coast Guard fishing in the South Atlantic with its licence expired. The jigger was carrying 20 tons of squid when it was surprised 50 miles from the port of Quenquen and 300 miles south of Buenos Aires. According to the Argentine Coast Guard the 46 metre jigger has a crew of 28, half of them Uruguayans, the other half Asian. Following the detection, "We ordered the vessel to stop and personnel from *Azopardo* completed the inspection, confirming the existence of the (squid) cargo and the expired fishing licence", said Carlos Fernandez, commander of the Argentine Coast Guard. *Young Hwa No.99* was escorted to Mar del Plata where the case was analysed by Argentina's Minister of Interior and Justice Gustavo Beliz. "The documents of the vessel are not for fishing but rather for prospecting operations", said Mr. Beliz. The vessel remains arrested and its haul has been confiscated.

Pipeline Accidents**BASRAH AREA, IRAQ**

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

Pollution



BREST AREA, FRANCE

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *TK Venice* (4337 gt, built 1985), carrying 6,000 tonnes of wheat, was re-routed and kept at the port of Brest because it was suspected of dumping ballast in the Channel, French port authorities said yesterday. It was reported that authorities, monitoring the ship from a helicopter, saw a 3.6 kms long trail of pollution in the “immediate wake” of the vessel heading from Rouen to Tarragona, they said. The vessel was 46 kms off the coast but still in France’s exclusive economic zone. The ship will be kept at port until the payment of a Euro 250,000 deposit and the master will be called for questioning at a later stage, judicial sources in Le Havre said. (Note — *TK Venice* sailed Rouen May 6 for Tarragona.)

London, May 10 — General cargo *TK Venice*, which arrived at Brest on May 7, was reported departing on May 8, destination Tarragona.

Brest, May 12 — General cargo *TK Venice* sailed May 8 for Tarragona following the payment of the Euro250 000 deposit and the pumping/emptying of its dirty waters. — Lloyd’s Agents.

PORTLAND HARBOUR, MAINE, UNITED STATES

Portland, Org, May 6 — Workers completed the cleanup Tuesday morning (May 4) of diesel fuel that spilled from tug *Pete* in Portland a day earlier. Officials estimate crews recovered about 64 percent of the 1,000 gallons that were estimated to have spilled from the tug which was tied up at the Cianbro Corp side of the Maine State Pier. The fuel apparently leaked from a line that connects fuel tanks on either side of the tug and is used to equalise the levels in the tanks. Some time after the line between the tanks was opened Sunday night, it leaked into the bilge. The bilge pump pumped the contaminated bilge water into the harbour. The spill was discovered Monday morning when workers arrived at 0600 hrs. Portland Tugboat and Ship Docking Company, paid for the cleanup. — Lloyd’s Agents. (See issue of May 6.)

SPOKANE RIVER, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: An explosion blew a hole in a two million-gallon sewage tank yesterday, causing an undetermined amount of waste to spill into the Spokane River, a fire official said. Three workers were injured and one was missing. Rescue boats searched the river, and Spokane County sheriff’s deputies patrolled the river banks near Spokane’s Wastewater Treatment Plant, a few miles north-west of the city. Four plant workers had gone to check on a

pressure build-up at the tank and were on or near the tank at the time of the 1500, local time, explosion, Fire Chief Bobby Williams said. The cause was under investigation. One worker was hospitalised in a serious condition after he had difficulty breathing, while two others suffered minor injuries, authorities said. The explosion blew a “relatively small hole” near the top of the tank, Williams said. That loosened the tank’s lid, which fell into the tank, causing some of the contents to splash out. There was no immediate word on the size of the spill. State Department of Ecology spokeswoman Jani Gilbert said it was not known how much sewage sludge made it to the river, but the quantity was not believed to be significant. The Spokane Regional Health District warned people living downstream to avoid drinking water from the river for at least three days. Gilbert said the city does not draw drinking water downstream from the plant, which treats 44 million gallons of sewage a day. No evacuations were ordered, and Williams said there was no threat of additional explosions. City crews were to begin cleaning up spilled sludge around the tank on Tuesday, Gilbert said.

Weather & Navigation



AUSTRALIA

London, May 12 — Due to bad weather, the port of Newcastle is restricted to “selected outwards movements” only. At 1230, local time, today the duty Pilot classified conditions at the port entrance as heavy. This is likely to mean that loaded coal vessels may not sail on schedule until it is deemed safe and the restriction is lifted. The next entrance inspection will be carried out at 0630, local time, tomorrow.

BRAZIL

London, May 7 — A press report, dated May 6, states: Residents of coastal areas in Brazil’s four southernmost states were bracing for the second big South Atlantic storm of 2004, with high winds, rain and rough seas expected to hit by tonight, the National Weather Bureau said. A similar but stronger storm, characterised by the bureau as an extra tropical cyclone, hit the same region Mar 28-29, leaving four dead, 60 injured and about US\$350 million in property damage, mainly homes damaged or destroyed by winds as high as 90 mph. “We do not expect this one to be as bad as the Mar 28-29 storm,” said weather forecaster Gil Russo of the bureau’s southern department, located in the Rio Grande do Sul state capital of Porto Alegre. “Maximum wind speed is likely to hit about 55 mph.” Residents of the four states — Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Parana and Sao Paulo — will also be better prepared this time, officials said. “Civil defense officials have already mobilised in the four states,”

said Amilton Carvalho, an official at the weather bureau’s Brasilia headquarters. “The entire coastal population, including fishermen, has been warned about the storm already,” said Carvalho. “And thousands of civil defence workers are already on standby.” The earlier storm caught fishermen off guard, with a number of small craft still at sea when the storm hit. This time, fishermen are securing their boats even before the storm hits, said Carvalho. “This week’s phenomenon is certainly not a hurricane,” said Carvalho. He said the wind speed alone was too weak to characterise it as such. Nor has the storm earned a name yet, he added. Carvalho said the storm was expected to hit the coast tonight, with the worst effects felt tomorrow. “It should taper off on Saturday (May 8) and disappear by Sunday,” he said.

CANADA

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A spring snowstorm swept across the southern half of the Prairies yesterday, dumping snow from Calgary right through to Winnipeg and north-western Ontario. Flights were cancelled, schools were closed, power was knocked out and parts of highways were shut down while as much as 40 centimetres of snow was expected to fall on some areas. The brunt of the storm was felt along the US border south of the Trans-Canada Highway. It began in the early morning hours and by noon some areas had up to 25 centimetres of snow. One of the hardest hit places was Estevan, Sask., about 200 kilometres south-east of Regina. People there experienced everything from thunderstorms to rain to snow, Cormier said. Students had a snow day as schools shut down. Larry Christie, a spokesman with SaskPower, said nearly a dozen power poles crumpled due to heavy snow on the lines. In all about 7,000 Saskatchewan residents were without power at some point during the morning. About 1,000 rural residents faced a cold, dark night without electricity as crews shut down repair operations until the morning. WestJet cancelled all of its flights in and out of Winnipeg due to the bad weather, the company said in a news release. It expected to resume flights late yesterday, but advised customers to call or check WestJet’s website. As for drivers, RCMP closed the Trans-Canada Highway through most of Manitoba west of Winnipeg. Thousands of rural students who attend schools in Brandon and Portage la Prairie, Man., had to find another way home or be billeted with others as bus service was cancelled. Some school divisions have also cancelled buses for this morning as the snow continued to pile up. In Ontario, the storm also closed parts of the Trans-Canada Highway as it slammed into the region west of Thunder Bay. More than 20 centimetres fell on the Kenora and Dryden areas. The Ministry of Transportation issued a traveller’s advisory, asking motorists to cancel travel plans.

CHINA

London, May 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The bodies of three

people have been discovered from under the remains of houses torn down by a landslide yesterday evening in Qidong County, central China's Hunan Province, said a local official today. Since 1000 hrs, yesterday, heavy rains pounded for nearly seven hours in Gaoyuan Village, Baihepu Town, leading to the landslide of more than 30,000 cubic metres of soil and stones. As of noon, today, the landslide had destroyed 52 houses, 21 of which had collapsed, leaving four villagers buried under the remains.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Two people were killed and 85 others injured when a rare tornado twirled through southern China's Guangdong province, state media said today. The tornado hit Qishi township in Huilai county at noon yesterday, tearing down 204 houses, unroofing 270 others and making 462 people homeless, the Xinhua news agency said. One of those killed died of electric shock while trying to rescue a person buried in a collapsed house, Xinhua said. Twenty of the injured were seriously hurt, according to local officials. A witness said the tornado tore down the gate of the township government.

CYCLONE IN ARABIAN SEA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescuers were looking for 51 fishermen missing in the Arabian Sea after two days of torrential rain in southern Kerala state, an Indian government minister said today. Rough weather has hampered efforts of Indian navy and Coast Guard rescuers to find the fishermen who went out in their boats before the storm hit the districts of Cannanore and Calicut, Kerala Fisheries Minister K.V. Thomas said. "We are yet to ascertain the fate of these fishermen who had gone fishing," Thomas said. He said hundreds of residents in the districts were moved to rescue camps after their mud huts were leveled by heavy rains in the region, nearly 450km north of Trivandrum, the state capital. (See issue of May 7.)

London, May 8 — A press report, dated May 7, states: Indian rescue teams are searching for about 50 fisherman missing in the Arabian Sea off Kerala. Bad weather and rough seas have hampered attempts to find the men, who were caught by a sudden storm. People have also been moved away from low-lying coastal areas of Kerala, where nearly 300 houses collapsed in the heavy rain.

Karachi, May 10 — A local press report, dated May 9, states: A tropical cyclone in the Arabian Sea, which was 980 km from Karachi yesterday evening was gaining speed and moving in the north-north-westerly direction. The cyclone was 800 km from the city at midnight. Chief meteorologist of the Pakistan Meteorological Department Arif Mehmood said tonight that the cyclone, which had been moving at a speed of 3.7 nautical mile per hour yesterday, was heading in the north-north-westerly direction at a speed of 10 nautical mile per hour today. "The cyclone is moving with maximum sustained winds of 50 knots gusting to

60 knots. The speed of a cyclone, which is linked to the winds accompanying it, could increase or decrease. But the speed of a severe tropical cyclone usually goes up," he explained. A press release issued by the Met Office says that under the influence of the cyclone, widespread rains/dust-thundershowers are expected in lower Sindh, with some moderate to heavy falls in Badin and Thatta districts, and adjoining areas of the Balochistan coast during the next 48 hours. "The tropical cyclone (01A) is likely to enter the north Arabian sea tomorrow. The sea conditions are likely to be very rough. Fishermen of the Sindh coast and the Lasbella coast are strictly advised to stay away from their fishing activities for the next two to three days. However, fishermen of the Balochistan coast (west of Ormara) can continue their activities within an area of 30km tomorrow. All fishermen who are still in the open sea, especially on the eastern side of the Arabian Sea, are advised to return to their bases at the most by tomorrow evening," the press release says. — Lloyd's Agents.

Ahmedabad, India, May 10 — Villages and towns along a low-lying part of India's west coast have been placed on alert as a cyclone neared, a weather official said today. The storm was moving north towards the southern coast of Gujarat state and winds were blowing at 60-80 kph, India Meteorological Department official K.M. Patel said. The cyclone was expected to make landfall later in the day between the port towns of Porbandar and Veraval, near the border with Pakistan, he said. "This could cause heavy to very heavy rainfalls in the region," Patel said. The state government said it was ready to begin evacuating people if necessary. "We have set up control rooms and have an action plan to evacuate people on short notice," a government official said. The centre of the storm was in the Arabian Sea some 250 kms south of Veraval at midday today. A senior official at the port of Kandla said today the port had hoisted warning signal number four, meaning rough seas. — Reuters.

FRANCE

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Unseasonably heavy snowfall has caught parts of north-east France off guard where thousands of homes have faced power cuts and mountain roads were closed. Some 5,000 households were without electricity, including two old age people's homes, in the Doubs and Jura regions overnight, police, firemen and the electricity company said. Telephone lines were also cut in some regions. Up to 30 centimetres of snow has fallen in some areas at above 900 metres.

INDONESIA

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Floods hit several parts of Sulawesi island and the provinces of East and Central Kalimantan today, forcing thousands of local residents to flee to safer areas. No casualties were reported after the flooding, which was triggered by three days of heavy rain from Friday (May 7).

Rainfall continued today in the affected areas of North Sulawesi and Central Sulawesi. Victims included those living near Tondano Lake in Minahasa regency, some 37 kilometres south of the North Sulawesi capital of Manado. Houses in the hamlet of Sangian, Leleko village, Remboken subdistrict, were submerged by floodwater that reached up to two metres deep. The flood also inundated four neighbouring villages of Timu, Talikuran, Paslaten and Sendangan; as well as other houses in Roong and Tuutu neighborhoods, West Tondano subdistrict; and Taulour and Kinari neighborhoods in East Tondano subdistrict. Hundreds of hectares of farmland was also flooded, which will likely result in harvest failure. Data from local authorities showed at least 1,198 families in East Tondano, 304 in West Tondano and 403 others in Eris subdistrict had to flee their flooded villages. Floods also hit Samarinda and several other parts of East and Central Kalimantan after nearby rivers overflowed following days of rain.

KENYA

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: The countrywide floods death toll shot to 23 people yesterday after six new cases were reported in Western Kenya and Laikipia District. Police said they were investigating the discovery of the two male bodies retrieved from River Tonde in Muhoroni Division late Tuesday afternoon. Koru acting Officer Commanding Police Division (OCPD) Francis Lemangi said the victims drowned in Kipkelion of the Rift Valley before their bodies swept downstream to Nyanza. Police identified them as Daniel Musee Sambu and Philip Kisara Musirila. Lemangi said a 70-year-old lady, Isabella Awino, became another victim of the floods when she drowned in Miwani Division on Tuesday. Kericho District Medical Superintendent Dr Betty Langat said the bodies had been removed to the local mortuary for autopsies. Devastating floods in parts of the country have left a trail of destruction running into millions of shillings apart from claiming many human lives, domestic animals and crops. The torrential rains and floods have also destroyed buildings as well transport and communication infrastructure.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 50 people have drowned and up to 38,000 others affected by flooding, including 10,000 forced to flee their homes, since heavy rains started pounding Kenya early in April, police and aid officials said today. "Since heavy rains started in early April, at least 50 people have been drowned or died in incidents related to floods across the country," police spokesman Jasper Ombati said. "The latest incident happened in Lugari district in western Kenya where two people drowned this week," Ombati said. Kenya's Red Cross Society (KRCS), which has been coordinating relief, said that the floods had affected up to 38,000 people. "We can say that more than 10,000 people have been physically displaced from their homes while another 28,000 have

been affected by the floods, mostly in Nyando, Rachuonyo and Migori districts" in western Kenya, KRCS head of disaster response, Farid Abdulkadir, said.

NORWAY

London, May 7 — A press report, dated May 6, states: The railroad between Oslo and Bergen has been reopened, after it was closed between Gol and Torpo early today. Floodwaters washed out parts of the tracks. The Dovre railroad was also closed part of the day. Following heavy rain the past few days, in addition to smelting snow in the mountains, the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate has issued flood warnings for most of South Eastern Norway, Southern Norway and Northern Norway. A number of roads remained closed today, and several families were evacuated after their homes were threatened by mud and rock slides. So far, no one has been injured in the flooding, but damage to homes and infrastructure is estimated in the NOK millions. The rain and flooding is expected to continue until tomorrow.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "JUBA"

London, May 13 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone "Juba" was located near lat 12.8S, long 67.7E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement past six hours: 190 deg at six knots, position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, position based on centre located by satellite. Present wind distribution: Maximum sustained winds 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 20 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 65 nautical miles north semi-circle, 95 nautical miles south-east quadrant, and 85 nautical miles south-west quadrant. Forecast for 0600, UTC, May 14: Position predicted to be near lat 15.4S, long 67.5E with maximum sustained winds of 70 knots and gusts to 85 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 30 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 65 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 100 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 85 nautical miles south-west quadrant, and 60 nautical miles north-west quadrant.

UNITED STATES

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: A tornado derailed a Burlington Northern Santa Fe train late today in the Texas Panhandle, sending 15 empty coal cars and two engines off the tracks, officials said. Hartley County Sheriff Franky Scott says no one was injured, but one of the cars ended up on US Highway 385, about two miles south of Hartley. BNSF spokesman Joe Faust said he had no details on damage to the southbound train, but said no hazardous material spilled. "We don't know the condition yet. From what I understand, these cars were impacted by strong winds." Law enforcement reported the derailment, due to a tornado, at 1742 today, according to the National Weather Service. The tornado was moving north-east at 25 mph. Scott said he had heard of no other major damage from the fast-moving storm. He said it looked like the

tornado travelled up the highway, knocking down some power lines in the sparsely populated area. Hartley is a community of about 500 located roughly 55 miles north-west of Amarillo.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Severe storms moved through the Houston area yesterday, not once, but twice. A line of storms hit the Bayou City in the late morning through to lunch time. Although those heavy showers brought a considerable amount of rain, they didn't cause much damage. A second line of severe weather pushed through during the late afternoon, bringing high winds, heavy rain and lots of thunder and lightning. At least one possible tornado was reported in the Conroe area. Montgomery County EMS Director Allen Johnson confirmed a tornado touched down near the Conroe Regional Hospital. He reported about 10 homes had roofs torn off, and lots of tree limbs and power lines were downed. Johnson told Eyewitness News several minor injuries had been reported, but no one was seriously hurt. Some livestock was reportedly injured. Darlene Gold, owner of the Italian Market Deli on Scarborough, says the roof was torn off her restaurant and a nearby church sustained damage. All of Gold's customers were safe. The Precinct 4 Constable's officer reported a possible tornado went through a neighbourhood in north Harris County around 1600 hrs. Some trees were downed and an awning at an apartment complex was reportedly damaged. No injuries were reported. Street flooding was the primary concern as rush hour traffic snarled the freeways and roads. Wind gusts were clocked as high as 80mph in some places. The high winds were blamed for most of the downed power lines. At one point, officials reported as many as 20,000 customers were without power, mainly in the Katy area. Some delays were reported at Houston's airports.



CHINA

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 5.9 on the Richter Scale hit Delhi City, in northwest China's Qinghai Province, at 0727 today, according to China's Seismological Forecast Network. The epicentre of the earthquake was about 60 km west of the urban area of Delhi City, in lat 37.4N, long 96.7E. The central and provincial seismological bureaus have sent working groups to the affected areas for aftershock forecast and investigation.

INDONESIA

London, May 10 — An earthquake measuring 5.04 on the Richter scale jolted Pelabuhan Ratu sub-district in West Java at 0525 yesterday, an official said. The tremor was traced at lat 07 08S, long 106 31E, Meteorological and Geophysics Agency MG Taufik said

today. The earthquake occurred 28 km west of Pelabuhan Ratu sub-district town in Sukabumi district, 62.07 km beneath the Indian Ocean, he said.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake hit off the shore of Indonesia's western island of Sumatra, the Hong Kong Observatory said today. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The magnitude 6.1 quake struck at 1634, Hong Kong time, 1834, AEST, yesterday, said the observatory, which monitors seismic activity in the region. The quake's epicentre was located at sea and west of Sumatra, about 330km west-north-west of the provincial capital, Padang, the observatory said.

IRAN

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A moderate earthquake measuring 4.8 degrees on the Richter scale jolted an area near the city of Kazerun, in Iran's southern Fars province causing only property damage. Tehran University seismological unit registered the tremor at 0909 hrs (0439, UTC) today, with its epicenter near Kazerun 160 kilometres west of the provincial capital, Shiraz, the state IRNA news agency said. "The tremor inflicted financial damage in the town of Qa'emiyyeh, forcing local officials to close schools. According to reports we obtained so far, the earthquake has caused no deaths," Amir Taqizadeh, head of the province's natural disasters office said.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring four degrees on the open-ended Richter scale jolted the city of Ashkhaneh, in the north-eastern province of Khorassan, yesterday. According to the seismological base in Mashhad monitored by the Geophysics Institute of Tehran University, the tremor occurred at 1926, local time. There were no reports of any loss of life or damage to property caused by the mild tremor.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake, measuring 3.8 degrees on the Richter scale hit the city of Bam, in the south-eastern province of Kerman this morning. The seismological base of the Geophysics Institute of Tehran University registered the quake at 0807, local time with its epicenter somewhere in the vicinity of Bam. There were no immediate reports of any casualty or damage to property caused by the quake.

PAKISTAN

Quetta, May 9 — An earthquake jolted the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta this morning, injuring at least 15 people and waking up residents from their sleep. An official of the seismological office in Quetta said an earthquake measuring 4.7 on the Richter scale shook Quetta at 2011 GMT, causing widespread panic. — Reuters.

RUSSIA

See "Shiveluch, Russia" under "Volcanic Activity."

TAIWAN

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale jolted Taiwan today, but there were no reports of damage or casualties. The tremor hit at 0417 hrs with an epicentre 16 kilometres south of Chiahsien in southern Taiwan's Kaohsiung County and 6.9 kilometres underground, according to the Seismology Centre.

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Two moderate earthquakes rattled Taiwan today, a day after another two shook the island, the Seismology Centre said. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties from any of the quakes. The first tremor today measured 4.8 on the Richter scale and hit at 1402 hrs, with an epicentre 7.8 kilometres north-east of the southern Chiayi city and 7.1 kilometres underground, the centre said. The second one, with a magnitude of 4.2, followed at 1403 hrs with the epicentre near the previous one.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale rocked Taiwan this morning, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties, the Seismology Centre said. The tremor struck at 0406 hrs, with an epicentre 10 kilometres west of Suao township of the northeastern Ilan county and 67.1 kilometres underground, the centre said.

UNITED STATES

London, May 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A small earthquake centred in the Pacific Ocean rattled residents of Santa Barbara early today but apparently caused no injuries or damage, police said. The magnitude 4.6 earthquake struck at 0147 hrs, according to officials with the US Geological Survey and the California Institute of Technology. It was centred 10 miles west of Isla Vista, where the University of California, Santa Barbara, is located. We have no reports of any damage so far," said Terry Staten, a records supervisor with the Santa Barbara Police Department.

Volcanic Activity**KARYMSKY VOLCANO, RUSSIA**

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: Satellite images provided by an Alaskan volcano monitoring laboratory show an ash cloud from the Karymsky volcano, on the Kamchatka Peninsula, 125 km south of the city of Petropavlovsk Kamchatsky, extending as far as 16 km downwind, a Kamchatka seismological party told RIA Novosti today. In the past 24 hours, local seismological stations have recorded about 410 tremors in the Karymsky volcano. Some of the seismic activity episodes have been accompanied with the ejection of gas and ash columns 1,500 metres into the atmosphere. Ash

fallout has covered an area 10 km around the volcano with a blanket of ash three to five centimetres thick.

SHIVELUCH, RUSSIA

London, May 9 — A press report, dated May 7, states: A series of local earthquakes was recorded at Shiveluch Volcano on Kamchatka today. Ash discharges from the crater to a height of 3,000-4,400 metres accompanied the longest of the quakes that lasted for up to 3.5 minutes, a Kamchatka seismological party reported. Volcano rock fragments could fall from Shiveluch slopes because of the earth tremors. There is no threat to the nearest residential areas, specialists say. The volcano became more active on Jan 11 after it remained relatively calm from last November when its two-year eruption ended.

**AFGHANISTAN**

Kandahar, May 7 — Six Afghan soldiers were wounded overnight in an attack by Taliban guerrillas in the south of the country, a local commander said today. A Taliban spokesman said two Afghan soldiers were killed in the assault on a district building in Shah Wali Kot, just north of the city of Kandahar, but there was no independent confirmation of fatalities. "Six Afghan soldiers were wounded in the attack and five vehicles were destroyed," said General Abdul Wasi, spokesman for the corps commander of the southern province of Kandahar, once the bastion of the ousted Islamic regime. "They also destroyed a district building." The assailants used rifles, hand grenades and rocket-propelled grenades. Taliban spokesman Abdul Latif Hakimi said two Afghan soldiers were killed in the clash, which began at 2300 hrs and ended at 0300 hrs, today. "There were about 100 Taliban involved in the attack. We have the bodies of two Afghan soldiers with us now," he said. He added that the guerrillas took away ammunition stored in the district building they destroyed. — Reuters.

Kabul, May 8 — One U.S. Marine was killed and one wounded in a clash overnight with suspected Islamic militants in the central Afghan province of Uruzgan, a U.S. military spokesman said today. The soldiers were on patrol south of the town of Tirin Kot late yesterday when they came under attack, Lieutenant Colonel Tucker Mansager told reporters in Kabul. "Coalition forces have reported coming under attack overnight south of Tirin Kot. One U.S. Marine was killed and one wounded," he said. "That engagement just ended late last night and early this morning," Mansager added. "It was as the result of a direct fire engagement with anti-coalition militias in the area south of Tirin Kot." It appears that the Marines were part of a new 2,000-strong force

deployed in Afghanistan to join the hunt for members of the ousted Taliban regime and al Qaeda who are active in the south and east of the country. — Reuters.

Kandahar, May 13 — U.S. troops have killed five suspected members of Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime and arrested five more in a clash in the south, an Afghan official said today. There were no immediate reports of any U.S. military casualties from yesterday morning's encounter in Paj Kotal, a pass to the north of Kandahar province, said a police official in Kandahar city. General Salim Khan said Mullah Abdul Shukoor, a top Taliban commander for Kandahar province, was among five men arrested during the fighting and all five Taliban captives were in the custody of U.S. troops. The U.S. military's top commander, Lt. General David Barno, said on Tuesday (May 11) he expected a further increase in Taliban and Al Qaeda related attacks ahead of Afghanistan's landmark elections planned for September. The poll was delayed from June, partly due to security concerns. — Reuters.

BANGLADESH

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The government put thousands of security forces on the streets of Dhaka and nearby Tongi today as a strike to protest the killing of an opposition lawmaker brought Bangladesh to a standstill. Ahsanullah Master, a member of the main opposition Awami League, was gunned down at a party rally Friday (May 7) in Tongi. There have been no arrests and his killing has set off widespread unrest in the two cities. Authorities said they suspect his killing may be connected to a feud within his party. But Awami League blamed government supporters and called a one-day strike. In Dhaka, a city of 10 million, shops and schools were closed and streets were mostly empty today, a work day in mostly Muslim Bangladesh. Riot police manned barbed-wire barricades erected around the Awami League headquarters in central Dhaka, preventing its members from taking to the streets. Security was similarly tight in Tongi and more than 60 other cities and towns where the strike took hold, the opposition said. Authorities deployed several thousand police and paramilitary soldiers on the streets of Dhaka and Tongi to prevent violence, Dhaka police chief Ashraf Huda said. On Friday and yesterday, riot police clashed with thousands of opposition supporters who rampaged through Dhaka and Tongi to protest Master's shooting. Angry mobs attacked government buildings, shops, trains, cars and buses. One person was killed when police fired shots to disperse a mob in Tongi on Friday. Police have arrested nearly 150 opposition protesters for rioting, a police official said.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Kinshasa, May 8 — U.N. peacekeepers killed 10 ethnic Lendu militiamen who tried to ambush them yesterday in the Democratic Republic of Congo's volatile

northeastern province of Ituri, the U.N. said. Two Bangladeshi peacekeepers were injured in the fighting, which highlights the continued unrest in Ituri, where militiamen from the Lendu and Hema ethnic groups have clashed repeatedly. The peacekeepers had been on a routine patrol when they were attacked by fighters from the Lendu FNI faction near Kombokabo, 16 miles southwest of Bunia, the capital of Ituri, the U.N. said in a statement. Nepalese troops and an attack helicopter were sent as reinforcements and the militia group fled after an unknown number of their men were also injured, the U.N. said. The clashes come days before leaders of all Ituri factions are expected in the capital Kinshasa for talks with the government about their inclusion into the process meant to guide the country to democracy after a war that ended in late 2002. — Reuters.

GEORGIA

Istanbul, May 11 — Georgian Minister of Defence Gela Bezhuasvili has declared that mines have been laid at the petroleum installations in Batumi Port. The Minister further declared, during a MZE television broadcast, that it is not known who has laid the mines at the port. — Lloyd's Agents.

INDIA

London, May 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Two persons were killed in Punjab and one in Haryana during clashes between supporters of rival parties on polling day. There was a moderate voter turnout in north India, thanks to the heat. Punjab recorded a 55 per cent turnout, Haryana 61 per cent and Himachal Pradesh 50 to 55 per cent. A huge turnout was reported from rural Punjab and Haryana. This may spell trouble for the ruling Congress in Punjab, but the Opposition Congress is expected to benefit from it in Haryana. In Gurdaspur, where actor and minister of state for external affairs Vinod Khanna is the sitting MP, police had to fire in the air to disperse BJP and Congress workers. There were also reports of clashes between Shiromani Akali Dal and Congress supporters in Patiala where chief minister Amarinder Singh's wife Praneet Kaur is in the fray.

INDONESIA

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Fresh fighting between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia's Maluku islands has left two people dead, say official news reports. The clashes took place on Buru island yesterday, the Maluku governor is reported to have said. The report from Antara news agency said the two victims were shot while fishing in the island's Wamkana district, but gave no more details. Clashes in the provincial capital Ambon last week killed nearly 40 people, raising fears the region could plunge back into a Muslim-Christian war which killed 9,000 three years ago.

IRAQ

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: United States troops have killed 41 members of rebel cleric

Moqtada al-Sadr's militia in a firefight east of Najaf, and recaptured the governor's office in the city, a senior coalition military official said. "We have resecured the governor's building and we intend to have the governor reoccupy it to have the coalition retake control of the city," the official said of the office on the edge of the Iraqi city, which is holy to Shi'ite Muslims. The recapture of the building was largely unopposed, he said. US forces also pushed to the east of Najaf, across the Euphrates River, resulting in heavy clashes with Sadr's Mehdi Army militia in which 41 fighters were killed, the official said. He gave no details of US casualties. US forces have had Sadr and many of his militia fighters surrounded in the city for nearly a month. Plumes of smoke rose from a cemetery on the fringes of the city as US helicopters swooped low over the area. US forces say they will refrain from entering Shi'ite shrines in the city, which would incite widespread fury. Mr Bremer, as he appointed the new governor in Baghdad, denounced Sadr as an outlaw who used the holy sites of the region to launch a rebellion.

Najaf, May 7 — US troops have tightened their grip on Iraq's holiest Shi'ite city of Najaf and on the troublesome cleric who has launched a militia army against them. It was unclear whether Moqtada al-Sadr would preach in nearby Kufa as usual on the Muslim day of prayer after American tanks swept in to seize positions on the edge of Najaf in their boldest move yet to quell his month-old insurgency. US troops were massed about four km from Najaf's Imam Ali mosque today, one of Shi'ite Islam's holiest shrines, as well-armed militiamen milled around the shrine in the city centre. Spurred by growing anger against him among rival Shi'ite leaders, US troops yesterday pounced to tighten a squeeze on Sadr, who has taken refuge among Najaf's ancient mosques. American soldiers, whose commanders said they killed more than 40 fighters, took the local governor's mansion in Najaf. They also consolidated their hold on the holy city of Kerbala, 50 km north of Najaf. US Iraq administrator Paul Bremer — now with a bounty on his head, apparently put there by Osama bin Laden — called on Sadr to give himself up to face charges over the murder of a fellow cleric. "This does not signal the beginning of a new offensive," a senior US military official said. "However, we are prepared to continue steadily going after Sadr and his militia, to continue to keep up pressure on them, until we have Najaf completely back in our hands." US officials said US troops had no intention of charging into Najaf's city centre, where there are shrines which are the focus of million-strong pilgrimages by Shi'ites from Iraq, Iran and elsewhere. Sadr's whereabouts remain something of a mystery. He has been seen close to the Imam Ali mosque in Najaf, which houses the mausoleum of the 7th century leader whose followers founded the Shi'ite branch of Islam. But he has also appeared at Kufa, close to Najaf and where there was heavy fighting yesterday. He usually preaches fiery

Friday sermons in Kufa. Mainstream Iraqi Shi'ite leaders urged Sadr this week to disarm and resolve the stand-off, which US leaders seem keen to do before handing sovereignty to Iraqis on Jun 30. Yesterday's Baghdad suicide bombing outside the US compound was apparently claimed by a Muslim militant linked to al Qaeda and US officials said it bore the hallmarks of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an ally of Osama bin Laden. A recording described as the voice of bin Laden posted on the Internet offered bounties in gold to anyone who killed Bremer or UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. It said 10 kg in gold would also be given to anyone who killed UN envoy to Iraq Lakhdar Brahimi, who has just arrived in Baghdad to face the complex task of assembling an interim Iraqi government in time for the handover. He received a cool welcome from many Iraqi politicians anxious to preserve their influence in the new administration. Another militant group, the hitherto unheard-of Islamic Rage Squadrons, released a video showing a blindfolded American civilian held hostage in Iraq. Iraqi-born Aban Elias's family in Denver, Colorado made pleas to his captors to free him. — Reuters.

London, May 8 — A press report, dated May 7, states: Poland's best-known war correspondent and his producer have been shot dead by suspected Iraqi insurgents near Baghdad. Waldemar Milewicz and his Polish-Algerian colleague Mounir Bouamrane were travelling from the Iraqi capital to the central city of Hillah when their vehicle came under heavy fire, a Polish Embassy spokesman told CNN. Jerzy Ernst, a cameraman for Poland's state-run TVP network, was wounded in today's attack, which took place 30 kms south of Baghdad near Mahmoudiyah, the official said. An Italian journalist travelling in the same direction said the driver of the car was also wounded.

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Fighting between British soldiers and armed supporters of the radical cleric Muqtada al Sadr has eased around Basra. Hundreds of militants set up roadblocks and tried to prevent people entering or leaving the city in a day of clashes. The Ministry of Defence said at least two Iraqis died and seven UK troops were wounded in the violence in both Basra and nearby Amarah. None of the injuries were described as life-threatening. The MoD said calm was restored with the help of Iraqi police. The violence came a day after Mr Sadr's representative in Basra offered money for the capture or killing of coalition troops. This, in turn, was seen as a response to newspaper pictures allegedly showing Iraqi prisoners being abused by coalition troops. Witnesses said the militia attacked important buildings in Basra including the main oil company headquarters and the governor's office - where they were beaten back by British troops and Iraqi police. A military spokesman said the militia set up burning barricades and fought sporadic gun battles with the troops, fighting them with rocket-propelled grenades and rifles. A spokesman also told the AFP agency hundreds of members of the

militia mingled with demonstrators during the day and fired at British army and Iraqi police patrols. The escalation in fighting came as US troops stepped up the pressure on Mr Sadr. His militiamen have suffered dozens of casualties fighting coalition troops around the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. Sheikh Abdul-Sattar al-Bahadli, told worshippers at Basra's al-Hawi mosque he would give \$350 to anyone who captured a British soldier and \$150 for killing one. He also said any Iraqi who took a female soldier could keep her as a slave or gift to himself.

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: An oil pipeline supplying one of Iraq's southern exporting terminals was on fire today after a suspected sabotage attack, firemen said. Columns of flame and smoke were seen coming from the pipeline in an area 40km south of the southern city of Basra.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: At least one foreign worker has been killed after gunmen fired on a vehicle in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk. Police said a South African and an Iraqi man had been killed, and a New Zealander injured in the shooting which occurred as they drove into the city. The foreigners were engineers and the Iraqi was a driver, police said. The killing came as a US Marine convoy entered the flashpoint city of Falluja for the first time since last month's fierce fighting with insurgents. The convoy, accompanied by Iraqi security forces, is being seen as a test of the truce agreed with the insurgents at the end of April. No incidents were reported as the convoy entered the city centre. Iraqi security forces have been patrolling Falluja since the truce. In earlier violence, three people were killed by a bomb at a Baghdad market yesterday, and eight people were hurt in a blast at a hotel in the city. A bomb exploded outside the Four Seasons Hotel in Baghdad, which is frequently used by foreign contractors. A number of British guests were among those injured when the blast ripped through the hotel bar, tearing down the ceiling and smashing furniture. Earlier, nine civilians were wounded in the Bayaa market explosion, and six Iraqi police officers were also hurt in the 0430, UTC, blast. The explosion occurred when police attempted to dismantle two bombs hidden in vendors' stalls.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: The US Army says Iraq has halted oil exports from its southern terminals after a sabotage attack on a pipeline. The pipeline - on the southern tip of the Faw Peninsula - was blown up on Saturday morning (May 8), a US Army spokesman told Reuters news agency. The US Army Corps of Engineers says the damaged pipeline is still ablaze. The president of the South Oil Company, the company responsible for the oil industry in southern Iraq, told Reuters that Saturday's attack had drastically reduced Iraq's oil exports. "The situation is not good," Jabar al-Leaby said. He said the attack affected flows to the al-Basra terminal. The al-Basra terminal, together with the

smaller Khor al-Amaya terminal, in southern Iraq jointly export 1.6 million barrels daily.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A survey is being carried out today to assess damage to a supply pipeline to Basra and Khor Al Amya oil terminals that came under attack over the weekend. The pipeline, north of Basra, was sabotaged at the weekend. It is one of two pipelines that supply the terminals. The fire that followed the explosion was extinguished yesterday afternoon. Today's survey aims to assess how long repairs will take. The second pipeline, from Az Zubair, remains fully operational. According to local sources, Basra Oil Terminal remains operational, but its flow rate is decreased by more than 50% from a normal rate of approximately 70,000 barrels an hour to a current flow rate of about 31,000 barrels per hour.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: Just over a year after George Bush declared "major combat" to be over in Iraq, fighting is escalating between occupation troops and Iraqi fighters loyal to Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. The clashes have resulted from an offensive by the US military to crush the uprising among Iraqi Shiites that erupted in early April. Heavy combat took place on Wednesday and Thursday in the holy Shiite city of Najaf, and the nearby towns of Kufa and Karbala. Parts of all three cities are under the control of Sadr's Mahdi Army militia. Sadr and thousands of supporters have fortified themselves in the centre of Najaf around the Iman Ali Shrine, the most significant religious site of the Shiite faith. The US military has not attempted to enter the city centre thus far out of fears that any damage to the shrine by a US attack could trigger an even broader insurrection among Iraqi Shiites. As many as 40 Iraqi militiamen are believed to have been killed in clashes in Kufa on Thursday. In Najaf, US forces seized control of the governor's office which has been held by Sadr's supporters for over a month. The US military called in artillery and an air strike against Iraqi mortars that had been shelling American troops in the former Spanish base. A number of civilians, including three children, were killed when their house was hit by US artillery shells. In Karbala, US troops carried out a major assault on militia positions. Dozens of Iraqis were reportedly killed. The New York Times reported Bradley fighting vehicles firing 25 millimetre cannons at figures darting down alleyways. By the time the last bullet was fired, bodies of Iraqi men lay strewn across the roads. Shiite militiamen responded with a series of counter-attacks on coalition forces on Friday and over the weekend. The revelations that Iraqi prisoners are being tortured in US and British custody has become an additional factor in the armed resistance. At Friday prayers in mosques across Iraq, clerics aligned with Sadr denounced the hypocrisy of US claims that the invasion had brought "liberation" to the Iraqi people and called for Shiites to take up arms against the occupation. Speaking at the main

mosque in the city of Kufa, Sadr declared: "America claims that it is fighting terrorism, not sponsoring it, and that it is spreading justice and equality among peoples and freedom and democracy. Now it is doing the same acts done by the small devil Saddam and in the same place where Iraqis were oppressed." At the main mosque in Basra, a leading cleric held up photos showing three Iraqi women allegedly being raped by British troops, and called for attacks on the British forces in the city. A demonstration on Saturday by thousands of angry Iraqis outside the main government offices in Basra developed into an open battle between British troops and Shiite militiamen. According to wire reports, at least two Iraqis were killed and four British soldiers were wounded. In an attempt to restore control, British troops stormed the headquarters of Sadr's movement. Tanks and armoured vehicles have been stationed in the centre of the city. Hundreds of Iraqi militiamen have reportedly seized control of the northern working class suburb of Qarma and established roadblocks and defensive positions. A British military convoy was also attacked outside the city of Amarah, to the north of Basra. In response, British troops launched an assault on the suspected headquarters of Sadr's supporters in the city. At least three Iraqis were killed and two British soldiers were wounded in a 20-minute gun battle. In Nasiriyah, the Italian base was mortared on Friday, injuring two Italian police officers. In Baghdad, US troops with tanks and helicopter gunship support launched a raid on Saturday on an office building being used by Sadr's organisation in the poverty-stricken working class suburb of Sadr City, named after Sadr's father who was murdered on the orders of Saddam Hussein. Two leading supporters of al-Sadr were seized. In retaliation, Shiite militiamen launched co-ordinated attacks on several police stations and established barricades. American troops were rushed into the area to retake control. The US military claimed to have killed 19 militiamen in several hours of fighting. At least three Iraqi police and six civilians were also killed. Last night, the Four Seasons Hotel in Baghdad was bombed, wounding two British and two Nepalese security guards. The Coalition Provisional Authority and the US military continue to assert that the month-long uprising led by Sadr is isolated. There is every indication, however that the opposite is the case. On Friday, a joint Sunni-Shiite rally was held in support of al-Sadr in the Baghdad suburb of Adhamiya. Before an audience of thousands, a leading Sunni cleric declared: "They [the US] have tried to sow discord among us, as Sunnis and Shiites, but they have failed." The crowd reportedly chanted "Moqtada and Sunni, Shiite, unite!" The Shiite rebellion has severely undermined the morale of the US military. When the Bush administration launched the invasion of Iraq last March, it claimed that the Shiite population in particular would welcome American troops. Thirteen months on, the Shiite areas of the

country are becoming the focus of the Iraqi national resistance to the occupation. Whatever the immediate fate of Sadr, it is now apparent to the US military that it will be confronting a never-ending and escalating guerilla struggle.

Moscow, May 11 — One Russian worker has been killed and two others taken hostage in Iraq, Russia's foreign ministry said today, prompting the Russian contractor for which they worked to consider withdrawing its staff. The workers were from Interenergосervis, the engineering company from which eight workers were briefly kidnapped in Baghdad last month, the ministry said in a statement today, adding the attack had taken place yesterday. State television reported the workers had been travelling between Baghdad and Latifiya yesterday evening when their car was attacked by unknown assailants. "As a result of the incident one citizen died and two were taken hostage by the attackers," the ministry said. "All possible measures are being taken to free our citizens as quickly as possible." Itar-Tass quoted an Interenergосervis spokesman as saying the company was considering withdrawing all its workers from Iraq. Last month Russia airlifted out of Iraq more than three hundred of its workers and those from other ex-Soviet countries. Hundreds opted to remain in Baghdad, including many from Interenergосervis, a contractor involved in work on a power plant project 20 miles south of the Iraqi capital. — Reuters.

Kerbala, May 12 — U.S. troops killed at least 20 militiamen loyal to rebel Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr in fierce fighting in the Iraqi city of Kerbala, a senior U.S. military officer said. Locals said the fighting erupted yesterday evening and was still going on as dawn broke, with members of Sadr's Mehdi Army militia holed up in a mosque and surrounded by U.S. troops backed by tanks and armoured vehicles. Talks to try to end an uprising launched by Sadr's militia last month were set to resume today. A senior U.S. official in Baghdad said 20 to 25 militiamen had been killed and seven American soldiers wounded in the Kerbala fighting. Earlier, Kerbala health director Faleh al-Hasnawi told Reuters at least seven Iraqis had been killed. "Five Iraqis were killed in the clashes, two of them fighters from the Mehdi Army," he said. "Twelve people were wounded and a hotel and several houses near the Mehdi Army compound were destroyed." Witnesses said U.S. forces using loudspeakers were urging the militiamen to surrender their weapons and to leave the mosque compound. Iraqi police set up checkpoints around the city, 110 kms southwest of Baghdad. Senior aides to Sadr in Najaf said yesterday they had agreed with other Shi'ite Muslim factions that the cleric could pull his Mehdi Army militia out of the city if U.S. forces also withdrew. Yesterday, the U.S. commander in the area, Major General Martin Dempsey, said his forces were prepared to hand over security in Najaf to a locally raised security force which could include members of Sadr's

Mehdi Army. Rival Shi'ite leaders have appeared particularly anxious to end the standoff in Najaf as local irritation with its economic impact has grown and fears have mounted that fighting could break out among various armed Shi'ite groups across the south. — Reuters.

London, May 12 — A pres report, dated today, states: The Bush administration has vowed to catch the killers of American hostage Nick Berg who filmed themselves cutting off his head after seizing him in Iraq. His captors said they were avenging the abuse of Iraqi prisoners, new images of which are to be released today. For reasons that are not yet clear Mr Berg - a telecoms worker - was arrested by Iraqi police two months ago and handed over to the coalition authorities. According to his family he was held by them for 13 days before being released without charge. Mr Berg's father, Michael, said his son had been trying to come home before the violence in Iraq worsened. Mr Berg said the fact that his son was Jewish may have exacerbated his predicament. Nick Berg's abductors said they had offered to exchange him for inmates at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison but the coalition authorities had, they said, refused.

Moscow, May 12 — Two Russians seized in Iraq on Monday (May 10) are alive and well but their whereabouts are unknown, their employing company Interenergосervis was quoted by Interfax news agency as saying today. One other Russian engineer was killed when the group came under fire while they were driving home on Monday. Their company has been involved in a power plant project about 20 miles from Baghdad. Abramov said they had been seized when they unwisely stopped on the way home. "We always advised our workers in Iraq not to stop anywhere on the road to work considering the complex situation," he said. "However on Monday our workers decided to stop by the road for a snack. Someone saw that they were not locals and watched them. Fifteen minutes after they moved off, their car was caught up with, shot at, forced to stop and the two were seized." — Reuters.

Najaf, May 13 — Militiamen loyal to rebel Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr stormed the main police station in the holy Iraqi city of Najaf, held the police chief hostage and emptied the weapons store, police said today. The militiamen were driven off by the arrival of 10 US tanks, but not before taking dozens of AK-47 automatic rifles and pistols from the weapons store and all the ammunition it contained, policemen at the station said. More than 40 fighters from Sadr's Mehdi Army swept in, handcuffed the city police chief newly brought in from Baghdad and threatened to kill him if police fought back, they said. They left the police chief, but made off with three police vehicles when the US tanks arrived at the station, about 1.5 km from the shrines of Najaf, some of the holiest in the Shi'ite world. US commanders said they do not intend to penetrate the most sacred part of the city, but the overnight operation appeared to be the deepest they have advanced from the bases on

the outskirts they occupied earlier this month. American officers said relieving the police station was one of several US operations late yesterday, when the sound of some of the heaviest gunfire in days echoed through the town. Mehdi Army fighters staged several ambushes of US troops on the edge of town and "US forces conducted extensive operations" against them, Captain Brandon Anderson said. He said Iraqi police helped take back their headquarters. "The insurgent operation was a failure because the Iraqi police fought back and the US troops came in," he said. There were no American casualties and no immediate word on how many militiamen were killed or wounded, Anderson said. Officials at the main city hospital said two dead bodies and six wounded people had been brought in. — Reuters.

Kerbala, May 13 - Fresh fighting erupted between U.S. troops and militiamen loyal to rebel Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr in the holy Iraqi city of Kerbala today, residents said. Gunfire echoed from narrow streets just a few hundred yards from the Imam Hussein mosque, one of Shi'ite Islam's most revered shrines. A column of black smoke rose from behind the mosque. A Reuters TV correspondent at the scene said militiamen had attacked a U.S. Abrams tank with rocket-propelled grenades and damaged it seriously. The clashes followed a lull in fighting for several hours after fierce fighting yesterday, when the U.S. military said up to 20 militiamen might have been killed. U.S. commanders say they will avoid being drawn into fighting too close to shrines such as Imam Hussein and other important mosques in Kerbala and Najaf, fearing that could infuriate Shi'ites further and lead to a greater backlash. Away from the deserted area around the shrine and the hotels and shops located close by, there were signs of normal life in Kerbala. A market was open, people ate in restaurants and taxis were on the move. — Reuters.

ISRAEL

Kfar Shouba, Lebanon, May 7 — Hizbollah guerrillas said they had killed Israeli soldiers in fierce fighting today around the disputed Shebaa Farms border area. "During the infiltration of Zionist occupation forces...there was an ambush near Islamic resistance positions and an exchange of fire and rockets that led to deaths and injuries in enemy ranks," the Lebanese group said. The fighting erupted when Hizbollah launched at least 50 mortar rounds at three Israeli military positions in the Shebaa Farms area, causing fires to break out, a Reuters witness said. Israeli forces fired mortars in response and Israeli warplanes struck the eastern Shebaa Farms area, the witness said. There was no immediate word from the Israeli side on casualties, but the Israeli army confirmed there had been heavy clashes in the area, saying the fighting started when one of its military posts was fired on. A Lebanese security source confirmed there were casualties but said it was not yet clear if anyone had been killed. Hizbollah, which virtually

controls the border, claims Shebaa Farms is still-occupied Lebanese territory, while the United Nations describes it as Israeli-occupied Syrian land. The United Nations peacekeeping force in south Lebanon, UNIFIL, said it was investigating heavy clashes in the area. Today's clash was the third near the Israeli-Lebanese border in as many days. Hizbollah guerrillas tried to attack an Israeli military position in the disputed Shebaa Farms area yesterday, but were thwarted by troops who opened fire at them, Israel Radio reported. On Wednesday (May 5), Israeli warplanes bombed what the Israeli military said were Hizbollah artillery positions in south Lebanon after the group fired anti-aircraft shells at northern Israel in retaliation for extensive overflights by Israeli jets earlier in the day. The flareup came against a backdrop of reports that a new round of German-mediated prisoner swap negotiations between Israel and Hizbollah were close to a breakthrough. In the first phase in January, Hizbollah swapped a kidnapped Israeli businessman and the remains of three Israeli soldiers for more than 400 Arabs in Israeli detention. — Reuters.

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli troops say they have killed two Palestinian militants in a raid near the West Bank town of Tulkarm. In Nablus, Israeli troops on operation in the old city killed an 18-year-old Palestinian, reports say. In a separate development, the Israeli prime minister and defence minister have signed an order for the evacuation of three West Bank settlement outposts. Israel Radio said the evacuation of the unauthorised settlements, is scheduled for next week but can be appealed. An Israeli military spokesman said troops entered the Nour al-Shams refugee camp and surrounded a house containing three Islamic Jihad militants. Two men died in the ensuing gunfight, and one surrendered. The 18-year-old Palestinian killed in Nablus was shot as he stood on a rooftop. Witnesses said he was unarmed, but the Israeli army says troops opened fire when they spotted a man with a pistol. Also in Nablus, the Israeli army reports finding a car loaded with 100kg of explosives. The settlements evacuation orders were signed yesterday by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz for Negohot West, in the Hebron hills in the southern West Bank, Givat Assaf, near the West Bank city of Ramallah and Givat Hadegel, southwest of Nablus. Israel Radio said that there are five similar evacuation orders against settlement outposts that have not been enforced by the Israeli army.

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The Israeli army stationed northeast of Gaza City shot dead last night two Palestinian militants who approached the border between Israel and the Gaza Strip, Palestinian security sources said. The sources said that the soldiers saw the two Palestinians approaching the border and immediately fired intensive gunfire and several tanks shells. However, Israel Radio reported that the Israeli soldiers shot and killed

only one Palestinian on the road that leads to the Jewish settlement of Nitzarim north-east of Gaza City. The radio said that the soldiers killed an armed Palestinian who approached an Israeli army outpost near the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip last night.

Gaza, May 11 — An explosion ripped through an Israeli military vehicle in the Gaza Strip today, killing several soldiers during a raid in which troops shot dead three Palestinians, witnesses said. Six soldiers were killed in the blast, Dubai-based Al Arabiya television said, in escalating violence in the coastal territory since Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's right-wing Likud party voted against his Gaza pullout plan on May 2. Palestinian witnesses said they saw the armoured personnel carrier torn apart by an explosion as Israeli troops backed by tanks and helicopters raided the Zeitoun area of Gaza City. The militant Islamic group Hamas said its fighters ambushed the vehicle, stopping it with an anti-tank missile at a spot where they had previously planted bombs. Israeli troops fought fierce gunbattles against militants in Zeitoun, known as a stronghold of Hamas, the main group behind a campaign of suicide bombings against Israelis. Sharon, now preparing an amended Gaza pullout plan, has vowed to continue to strike against militant groups. Three Palestinians, at least two of them gunmen, were killed in the fighting and at least 40 people were wounded, witnesses and medics said. "A force has entered the (Zeitoun neighbourhood) and we are carrying out a pinpoint operation against the terrorist infrastructure," an Israeli military source said. The Gaza military operation began when Israeli undercover forces sped into Zeitoun in civilian taxis and jeeps, the witnesses said. They were later joined by tanks and armoured personnel carriers as helicopters fired their machine guns and loud explosions echoed across Gaza City. Israeli Army Radio said troops destroyed five workshops where Qassam rockets used by militants against Jewish settlements in Gaza and towns in southern Israel were being made. Troops surrounded homes belonging to militants from the Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups and blew off the doors of several buildings, where they set up rooftop observation posts, witnesses said. "We condemn with the strongest possible terms the Israeli military escalation," said Palestinian cabinet minister Saeb Erekat. Earlier in the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority said it planned to hold its first municipal elections, in an apparent concession to legislators who have long been pressing for an end to corruption in city halls. Palestinian officials said the balloting would begin in the usually peaceful city of Jericho in August and be completed in the 127 other municipal districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip within a year. But Prime Minister Ahmed Qurie said a general election, last held in 1996 and part of reforms sought by the international community, would have to await an Israeli troop pullout from areas seized after an uprising began in 2000. — Reuters.

Gaza, May 12 — An Israeli helicopter gunship fired a missile into a Gaza City neighbourhood today, a day after Palestinian militants blew up six Israeli soldiers in a troop carrier in the area, witnesses said. The air strike came in the midst of sporadic fighting in the Zeitoun district as Israeli forces searched house-to-house for the remains of the soldiers. There was no immediate word on casualties in the missile attack. — Reuters.

Gaza, May 13 — Israel killed seven Palestinians in a missile strike in southern Gaza today after back-to-back ambushes claimed the lives of 11 soldiers. Witnesses said two missiles hit a crowd in Rafah refugee camp near the spot where militants blew up an explosives-packed troop carrier yesterday, killing five soldiers. An Israeli military source said the missiles were fired at militants trying to plant bombs. Israeli forces pulled out of the Gaza neighbourhood early today in what Palestinian sources said was an Egyptian-mediated deal under which militants returned soldiers' remains. The new spiral of violence intensified debate between proponents and opponents of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to evacuate settlers from Gaza, now stalled by rightist hard-liners in his own Likud party. Polls show most Israelis see Gaza as a liability that should be abandoned. Sharon vows to pursue his plan despite its defeat in a May 2 Likud vote that also reflected fears Palestinian militants would seize on a unilateral pullout as a victory. Islamic Jihad, one of the main groups behind suicide bombings against Israelis, claimed responsibility for the Rafah ambush and said its fighters used an anti-tank rocket and a large bomb laid in the vehicle's path to destroy it. An army spokesman said the vehicle was on a mission to "neutralise" tunnels used to smuggle weapons to Gaza across the border from Egypt, and was unloading some of its explosives at the time it was struck. An Islamic Jihad statement said the ambush was to avenge Israel's killings of some of its leaders as well as Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of the largest militant movement Hamas. Palestinian security officials later handed over the soldiers' remains to Israel at a checkpoint north of Gaza, saying they were obtained under order from Palestinian President Yasser Arafat after militants gave them to Egyptian mediators. An Israeli military spokesman said only in a terse statement that forensics experts would identify the "findings." Israel had said troops would stay put until the bodies were recovered for a proper burial according to Jewish tradition and it would do no deals with "terrorists." The army said it raided Zeitoun to destroy weapons workshops used by militants. Palestinian medics said 16 people, including militants and bystanders, were killed and 185 were wounded during the two-day siege. — Reuters.

NEPAL

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials in Nepal say that 14 people have been killed by

Maoist rebels who attacked a bus heading for the capital, Kathmandu, from the north-eastern region, Dolakha. The dead included seven soldiers and one policeman. More than 20 people were injured. The attack follows an upsurge of violence in Nepal which has coincided with increasing political turmoil. The leader of the Maoist rebels, who want to overthrow the monarchy, has expressed a wish to forge closer ties with the mainstream opposition parties. Those parties have been organising daily mass protests demanding that King Gyanendra restore democratic government.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A general strike called by opposition parties in Nepal has brought the country to a virtual standstill. Schools and businesses were shut, and most vehicles stayed off the roads for the first of two days of action called as part of a pro-democracy campaign. The opposition wants King Gyanendra to restore democratic rule, after he sacked the elected government in 2002 for its handling of a Maoist rebellion. Yesterday, two main opposition parties rejected the king's talks offer. The Nepali Congress and the Communist Unified Marxist-Leninist party insisted that three other opposition parties should also take part in discussions. Today's strike went ahead despite the resignation last Friday of the prime minister, a royal appointee, and comes after weeks of mass street protests. Only a tiny handful of businesses are open, and party workers are much in evidence enforcing the shutdown. The opposition wants the king, who assumed executive powers in 2002, to either reinstate parliament or form an all-party government.

Kathmandu, May 12 — A general strike brought normal life in Nepal to a halt for the second straight day today as political parties pressed King Gyanendra to restore democracy and resolve a prolonged political crisis. Five key political parties had called the 48-hour strike yesterday after the monarch ignored weeks of sustained, often violent, street protests and calls for a multi-party government. Streets in the capital were deserted as taxis, public and private vehicles stayed off the roads, businesses downed shutters and schools as well as colleges closed. Flights operated normally but passengers had difficulty getting to airports. — Reuters.

NIGERIA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Militants from a predominantly Christian tribe killed at least 500 people in two attacks on a Muslim town in central Nigeria, a senior Red Cross official said yesterday. Although an exact toll from the raids Sunday (May 2) and Tuesday was unavailable, Red Cross workers who interviewed witnesses and families of victims, and inspected a mass burial site "estimate 500 to 600 dead," said Umar Abdu Mairiga, head of the Nigerian Red Cross team visiting the mostly Muslim town of Yelwa after the assaults by the Tarok tribe. Thousands of people fled the fighting, and at least 158 people were

wounded. About 100 people also were missing, many of them women and children allegedly abducted, Mairiga added. (See issue of May 7.)

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 10 people have been killed in the northern Nigerian city of Kano when Muslim youths rioted following a rally called to protest against a massacre carried out last week by a Christian ethnic militia. A reporter in Kano says he has counted 10 bodies in the streets after mobs set up roadblocks. Many of the victims had been burned. Gangs of youths also burned and looted at least five Christian properties and a truck in the city's mainly Muslim district. Late last week, a gang of militants from the Christian Tarok ethnic group stormed Yelwa in central Nigeria's Plateau State and killed between 200 and 300 people.

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Calm has been restored to the northern Nigerian town of Kano after two days of bloody violence, police have said. Hundreds of Muslim youths took to the streets on Tuesday (May 11) after a rally to protest at the recent killing of hundreds of Muslims in central Nigeria. Yesterday riots spread to suburbs not secured by police, after an overnight curfew was lifted. At least 30 people are reported to have been killed and 50 others injured in the two days of clashes. The attackers claimed to be taking revenge for the killing earlier this month of hundreds of Muslims by Christian militants in central Plateau State. But many also described the attackers as unemployed youth who were using religion as an excuse to loot and cause mayhem. Police commissioner Ganiyu Dawudu said that he believed the fighting was over following yesterday's clashes in an industrial section of the town. But he said a dusk-to-dawn curfew remained in place. Earlier Islamic leaders in the mainly Muslim town of Kano joined Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo in urging calm. Witnesses say that large mobs of young men were specifically targeting Christians, however this was denied by Kano's police commissioner. Thousands of Christians have been fleeing Kano's suburbs, including Sharada industrial district, seeking safety. "Many people have been killed in Sharada, but we have not been able to bring out their bodies, because we had to look to our own lives," 37-year-old foundry worker Joshua Adamu told AFP news agency. Tension has spread to other parts of the mainly Muslim north. In Kaduna, security has been increased, with some 40 different groups holding discussions about security with the state governor. In Bauchi State, the governor has assured Christian groups of their safety after leaflets were distributed given them until Friday (May 14) to leave the state. A leading Kano Muslim cleric, Ibrahim Kabo, has urged the federal government to prevent further killings of Muslims in the central Plateau State. Mr Kabo warned that if the government did not act, Muslims would "have no option but to defend themselves". Reuters news agency reports that some members of the Christian minority gathered in the

central Sabon Gari (foreigners' town) district and burned a mosque in retaliation for the burning of several churches by Muslims on Tuesday.

PAKISTAN

Karachi, May 7 — A large number of people are feared dead and injured after a big bomb blast rocked a mosque near Sindh Madaressah-tul-Islam off I.I Chundrigar Road in Karachi, Sindh Province of Pakistan at 1313, local time, today. The blast was so powerful and loud that its sound was heard miles away. The police, fire brigades and Edhi Ambulance immediately reached the scene and commenced rescue operations. The numbers of injured people are being shifted to the nearest civil hospital for treatment. Police fear many people have been wounded in the blast and that many were killed. It is not cleared where bomb was planted. The initial report says it damaged a substantial portion of the mosque when a large number of people were about to offer Friday's prayer. Police have cordoned off the whole area to avoid any mishap. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Gunmen on motorcycles opened fire and supporters of rival candidates clashed during by-elections in Karachi today leaving six people dead and 20 injured, police said. Scattered incidents of violence across Karachi marred the voting for three parliamentary seats and one seat at the provincial legislature. Tariq Jamil, deputy inspector-general of Karachi police, said six people - two of them members of the Mutahida Qami Movement party - were killed during the voting and 20 injured. Police arrested 15 for violence, but it was unclear whether any of them was suspected in the shooting. Political activists from rival parties clashed among themselves and with police. Several shootings were reported outside polling stations, and rioters also set fire to four vehicles, police said.

PHILIPPINES

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Soldiers killed three New People's Army (NPA) rebels in a clash in Barangay Anyaw, Catanawan, Quezon, the military said today. Reports reaching Camp Aquinaldo said soldiers from the Army's 74th Infantry Battalion were on patrol when they ran into some 40 NPA rebels. A firefight ensued, leaving three insurgents dead. Soldiers recovered the bodies of the rebels from the scene of the clash.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Filipinos voted for president yesterday amid high security and reports of violence. In a race pitting an incumbent who strongly backs the US war on terror against a film star whose best friend lost the job in disgrace three years ago, the final pre-election opinion polls showed President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo pulling ahead of actor Fernando Poe Jr. But the surveys also indicated as many as one-quarter of the nation's 43 million voters were undecided. Gun and grenade attacks killed nine people before the polls

opened, authorities said, and there were reports of abductions, a fire and election law violations. No major incidents were reported during the voting, although some people complained they were turned away because their names were not on voter lists.

RUSSIA

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The pro-Moscow President of Chechnya, Akhmad Kadyrov, and at least 30 other people have been killed in a bomb attack in the capital, Grozny. Russian President Vladimir Putin described the Chechen leader as a true hero and vowed revenge for the attack. Mr Kadyrov's death is being seen as a huge blow to Moscow's attempts to restore order in the troubled republic. Suspicion immediately fell on Chechen rebels, who have been fighting for independence for more than a decade. Security forces throughout Chechnya have been placed on high alert and the Russia's Itar-Tass news agency has reported that five people have already been detained on suspicion of involvement with the attack, according to interior ministry officials. Mr Kadyrov was fatally wounded when a device exploded at 1035, local time, during a ceremony marking victory in World War II. A spokesman for Russia's emergency situations ministry said the bomb had gone off in a VIP seating area of the packed Dynamo stadium. There is uncertainty over the fate of the commander of Russian troops in Chechnya, Gen Valery Baranov, who was also in the stadium at the time. Officials have denied reports that he was killed by the blast and said he was fighting for his life in hospital. The emergency ministry spokesman said a second device had been found following the evacuation of the stadium. Chechen interior ministry officials quoted by the AFP news agency said at least 32 people had been killed and 46 injured.

SOMALIA

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: Thousands of people have escaped from Somalia across the border into Kenya following fighting over the weekend in which at least seven people were killed, the Kenyan Red Cross said today. "At least 2,500 people, most of them women and children, crossed into Kenya yesterday. All of them have gathered at a border point near Mandera town", said Farid Abdulkadir of the Kenyan Red Cross. Fighting broke out between two sub-clans of the Mareehan clan on Saturday. The two groups are fighting for control over Bulahawa town on the Somali side of the border. "At least seven Somalis were killed in the fighting, and three Kenyans were wounded by stray bullets", said Abdulkadir. He said fighting in the area had increased recently and that the weekend's death toll was unusually high. The town of Bulahawa is located near the border between Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. It is 20 kilometres from the Kenyan town of Mandera. The south-western part of Somalia has been instable for almost a year, the Red Cross said.

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: Three days of clashes between rival gunmen have left at least 20 people dead in the Somalia capital, Mogadishu. Witnesses said heavy machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and anti-aircraft missiles were being used. The clashes began on Monday (May 10) after an argument between armed hotel guards and militiamen loyal to a businessman and is not a battle between rival factions. Many residents were seen fleeing their homes in the northern neighbourhood of Abdul Aziz where the fighting has been taking place. Hospital staff said more than 70 people were injured. The AFP news agency reports that fighting has intensified today and spread to new areas. Overnight attempts to mediate a ceasefire failed, elders said.

SUDAN

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: The main rebel group in Sudan today claimed 204 civilians have been killed in the south of the country over the past few days in renewed fighting with government forces and Khartoum-backed militias. "I can confirm that there has been fighting around Akobo (on the border with Ethiopia). Our sources on the ground indicate that 204 civilians were killed," Sudan People's Liberation Army's (SPLA) spokesman George Garang said by phone. There was no independent confirmation of the death toll but humanitarian sources said there had been fighting in the area and wounded civilians had been evacuated to a hospital in Lokichoggio, a Kenyan town on the Sudanese border that serves as a base for humanitarian operations in southern Sudan. The SPLA spokesman stressed the alleged ceasefire violation would not lead the SPLA to walk out of crucial peace talks with Khartoum, which have been going on in Kenya since 2002 and are nearing a conclusion. The town of Akobo has changed hands between the SPLA and a pro-Khartoum militia group several times since a ceasefire was signed in October 2002. "The attack is a campaign by the government to control Akobo and other towns near the Ethiopian, Ugandan and Kenyan borders, before a peace agreement is signed," said Garang.

VENEZUELA

London, May 10 — A press report, dated May 9, states: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez says his forces have captured a group of about 50 Colombian paramilitaries who were plotting to kill or overthrow him. According to Mr Chavez, the men had been trained by Venezuela's political opposition. Opposition leaders say the claim is a crude attempt to discredit them. The controversy comes at a time of rising political tension in Venezuela, with the opposition hoping to unseat Mr Chavez in a referendum. In a few weeks' time President Chavez will find out whether his opponents have gathered enough support to hold the referendum against him and possibly force him from office. The government says 56 Colombians were arrested in a dawn

raid at a farm on the outskirts of the capital, Caracas. State television has been showing pictures of armed police guarding groups of young men dressed in green camouflage. It has also shown what appears to be a camp complete with sleeping quarters and cooking facilities. Security officials say the men were using the camp to plan an attack on a military installation in Caracas. They say the farm belongs to a Cuban exile with close links to Venezuela's opposition.

Labour Disputes



BANGLADESH

See under "Political & Civil Unrest."

BANGLADESH AIRLINE PILOTS

Karachi, May 13 — Bangladesh's state owned airline, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, said today that its international and domestic operations have been partially disturbed for the last two days due to a stalemate between the airline's management and the Bangladesh Airlines Pilots Association (BAPA) over the latter's demands. According to Biman's Managing Director, Akhter Hossain Khan, the whole operation is being affected by a shortage of pilots but the situation worsened when existing flight personnel announced that they would work to rule and not work any overtime. As a result, a number of flights were canceled yesterday and some today. Khan said that about 50% of domestic flights and 20% of international flights were affected. The pilots' demands called for the suspension of the Deputy General Manager (PR), M. Zahirul Hoque for his "derogatory" remarks about the pilots, the renewal of an agreement with the captains and the withdrawal of the declaration of BAPA president Captain Nasimul Haq as medically unfit to fly. However, the managing director said that M. Zahirul Hoq had been transferred to another department and an enquiry was being carried out. A meeting with BAPA will be held today to discuss the issue. Biman management and the BAPA leadership met for over three and a half hours yesterday afternoon, but could not reach an agreement. "We have not gone on strike, but from 1000 yesterday, we have decided not to fly extra hours outside the agreed work schedule under any circumstances," a BAPA spokesman said. Four international flights, including two to London and Rome, and six domestic flights were cancelled yesterday. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

BRAZIL

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Brazilian federal workers started a strike after the government refused to raise its wage offer last week, increasing pressure on Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva to ease limits on government spending. The stoppage will build up in

coming weeks, as hundreds of union groups hold separate meetings to decide their stance, said Carla Lisboa, a spokeswoman for the National Coordination of Federal Workers Unions, known as CNESF. She didn't immediately have details of how many of the government's estimated 900,000 workers would go on strike. "We can't settle for less," Pedro Armengol, finance director at the National Confederation of Federal Public Service Workers, known as Condsef, said in a telephone interview from Brasilia. The strike adds to pressure from politicians from the opposition and within his ruling coalition to relax limits on spending in order to boost growth. Unions representing federal employees want a 59.2 percent raise in salaries, rejecting the government's offer to raise workers income through bonuses from 9 percent to 32 percent, said Armengol. About 400 workers protested outside the planning ministry today. A demonstration with workers all over the country will probably be slated for next week, said Armengol. Last year, 1.9 million government workers received average pay increases of 4 percent. Lula last month backtracked from plans to boost the minimum wage by as much as 30 percent, settling instead on an 8.3 percent increase in a bid to keep the social security deficit in check, as public pensions are pegged to the minimum wage.

COLOMBIA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A strike by workers for the state-owned oil company, whose fire-belching refinery is now guarded by troops and police, has entered its third week and become a test of will between Colombia's biggest union and President Alvaro Uribe. Gabriel Alvis, president of the Syndicated Workers Union, or USO, was fired by the Ecopetrol state oil monopoly this week, joining more than 20 union leaders and members who have been sacked because of the strike. In an interview, Alvis accused Uribe of mounting an offensive against organised labour. The union says it staged the strike — which Ecopetrol has deemed illegal — because it feels the company doesn't protect workers from layoffs and because it believes the government is planning to privatize Ecopetrol, allowing foreign oil firms to reap inflated profits. The compound was surrounded by barbed wire, three rows of metal barriers and Colombian Army troops, police and a 400-man riot squad sent in from Bogota. Confronted by the display of power, the marchers veered in another direction. Unwilling to give in to the strikers demands and frustrated after 17 months of negotiations failed to solve anything, the Uribe administration and Ecopetrol have declared the strike illegal. They say the oil workers perform an "essential service" the public cannot live without and have fired the union's brass and demanded the strikers return to their posts immediately. Half of Ecopetrol's 6,600 workers are USO members and have been on strike since Apr 22.

FRANCE

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: French commuters, especially those in the Paris area, braced today for widespread delays as rail workers called a 36-hour strike over plans to reorganise the freight sector of the national railway SNCF. The strike, due to last from 2000, today through 0800, on Friday (May 14), will see only two out of three high-speed trains and one of every two commuter trains running on time. Eurostar trains between Paris and London, and Thalys high-speed trains linking France, Belgium and the Netherlands, were expected to operate on schedule despite the strike, the SNCF said. But all domestic overnight trains were cancelled for today and tomorrow. Four trade unions launched the strike call in protest at the SNCF's three-year plan to restructure the freight sector, which calls for the elimination of 2,500 jobs in 2004. No one will be fired, according to SNCF management, but freight employees will be transferred to other posts. Union leaders met with aides to Transport Minister Gilles de Robien yesterday, but reiterated their strike call after the talks, saying the government had failed to offer a satisfactory compromise.

ITALY

London, May 10 — A press report, dated May 9, states: Union leaders today announced a tentative accord in the three-week strike at a Fiat factory in southern Italy which has cost the automaker tens of thousands of vehicles just as the company was trying to bounce back after years of losses. Labour leaders expressed satisfaction over the accord reached after one of Italy's longest and more violent walkouts in years. "We'll sign the pact after the workers approve it," said Gianni Rinaldini, secretary-general of the FIOM metalworkers' union. Discussion by the rank-and-file was expected to begin tomorrow, with balloting to follow in successive days. "Tonight at 10 p.m., it's back to work," a labour leader, Giuseppe Cillis, told the Italian news agency ANSA in Melfi, where the walkout began on Apr 19. Fiat's CEO Giuseppe Morchio called the settlement costly, but said in the end "the sense of responsibility prevailed," Apcom, another Italian news agency reported. Because Melfi's production line also supplies parts to other Fiat factories, the walkout hampered the company's assembly lines in much of Italy. At the start of the third week, the automaker had put its losses at 35,000 vehicles. The Italian news agency ANSA, reporting on the success of a marathon bargaining session between management and unions which ended shortly before dawn today, said the tentative pact calls for a monthly pay increase of 105 euros (\$126) starting in 2006, with some of that increase kicking in later this year. According to the proposed pact, workers will no longer be required to work back-to-back weeks of night shifts, ANSA said.

NEPAL

See under "Political & Civil Unrest."

PAKISTAN

Karachi, May 11 — Patkal Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad, the association representing the jute mills of Bangladesh has called once again for two days strike to press managements of six jute mills in Khulna district in the south-west of Pakistan, to accept their demands. As a result, about 20 thousand workers and staff of six jute mills in Khulna district began their 48-hour strike yesterday morning to realise their eleven-point charter of demands. Production in all the six jute mills has remained suspended following the work stoppage. The demands of the strikers include 10 percent dearness allowance, awarding permanent status to all ad-hoc appointees from the date of their joining, immediate payment of weekly wages to mill workers which have fallen into arrears, immediate clearance of all outstanding dues including gratuity and provident fund to the retired employees and workers and re-opening of the shut down Daulatpur Jute Mill. The six jute mills affected by the strike are: Peoples, Crescent, Platinum Jubilee, Star, Aleem and Eastern. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

SRI LANKAN AIRLINE PERSONNEL

Karachi, May 8 — Sri Lanka national airlines — SriLankan Airlines — said it cancelled a number of flights due to a token strike called by the Flight Attendants Union, consisting around 600 members, pressing demands over their salaries, crew rosters, flight hours and various other issues for the past several months. They went on strike from yesterday, putting forward their demands to the management. An airline spokesman said that a special meeting between the Flight Attendants Union and SriLankan Airlines is expected to take place this afternoon to find a settlement to the problem. Earlier, six flights, four scheduled to leave Colombo and two flights from Zurich, were affected by the strike. Meanwhile, the Flight Attendants Union in a statement said: "Flight Attendants Union of Sri Lanka has been compelled to take industrial action as demands made to the Company were not addressed." — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, May 9 — Sri Lankan Airlines said it has resumed flight operations which were suspended Friday (May 7) following the token strike staged by the Sri Lankan Airlines Flight Attendants Union (FAU) after core issues affecting them were discussed with the management. According to Ms Janice Jochim, Secretary of the Sri Lankan Airlines Flight Attendants Union, their union has had a fruitful discussion with Peter Hill, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sri Lankan Airlines regarding core issues affecting them. She said CEO, Hill had assured them that their grievances will be looked into in due course and had told them to submit the list of issues. Primal De Silva, Chairman of the Sri Lankan Flight Attendants Union said they had called off the strike and all Sri Lankan Airlines flights from London, Paris, Frankfurt and Zurich were operating from yesterday afternoon. The Flight Attendants Union

consisting around 600 members, had been making demands over their salaries, crew rosters, flight hours and various other issues for the past several months. As a result of the strike on Friday, six flights, four scheduled to leave Colombo and two flights from Zurich, were affected. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

UNITED STATES

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Angry truck drivers are continuing a two-day boycott of Hampton Roads port in Virginia, one of the busiest cargo ports on the East Coast. The independent truckers handle about 80% of the port's cargo and are upset over skyrocketing fuel costs. They're calling for a surcharge to help them pay. Union officials say about 200 truckers are taking part in the boycott. A Teamsters representative estimates another 300 have honoured the protest. The Virginia action follows similar trucker protests in California.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated May 9, states: Truckers and Port of Oakland officials anticipate the independent truckers strike at the port will end tomorrow. The truckers have been picketing at Oakland this week because trucking companies had refused to compensate the drivers for the recent hike in the price of diesel fuel. "They've apparently reached agreements with their respective trucking companies," said Harold Jones, spokesman for the Port of Oakland. Irvinder Dhanda, a spokesman for the independent truckers who banded together for the strike, said that truck company owners have now agreed to raise the rates they pay to cover fuel costs. This apparent breakthrough comes just days after the port won a temporary restraining order designed to stop the week-long sit-in at the entrance of the maritime terminal. Jones said that the restraining order might also have influenced many of the truckers' decision to return to work. "The restraining order allows law enforcement to remove them from blocking roadways, throwing rocks, and harassing those drivers who express willingness to work. With that in mind, we're optimistic that tomorrow the trucks will be rolling," Jones said.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: The majority of the independent truckers protesting contract negotiations at the Port of Oakland were back at work today.

VENEZUELA

Caracas, May 5 — A two-week-old strike at Venezuelan steel maker Sidor is costing local manufacturers \$11 million a day in lost production, industry representatives said today. Output and exports at Sidor (Siderurgica del Orinoco), the Andean region's No. 1 producer of finished steel goods, have been halted by the stoppage, which began Apr 22 when unionised workers walked out in a dispute over pay bonuses. The strike has also disrupted supplies to more than 1,000 local industries, including metal processors, food industry packagers and auto part manufacturers. "Due to the halt in

deliveries many companies have been forced to either close or substantially cut their output," Alfredo Gibbs, president of Venezuela's Mining and Metallurgical Industries Association, said. "This is causing losses of \$11 million a day in the manufacturing sector," Gibbs told a news conference. He added that if the strike continued, some 30,000 local manufacturing jobs could be at risk. The stoppage at Sidor, jointly owned by a group of South American companies and the Venezuelan government, has cost the steelworks at least \$30 million so far in lost production and sales, officials said. They said strikers were threatening other workers in a campaign to block any deliveries prepared from existing stocks from leaving the plant in Venezuela's southeastern Bolivar state. Since the protest started, strikers have clashed with National Guard troops brought in to protect the facility. "The plant is at a standstill. We've made some deliveries during the daytime and night, when we've been able," Gaston Montiel, Sidor's security director, told local radio. But these domestic deliveries were sporadic. "Only 11 trucks were sent out, and then supplies were halted again," Gibbs said. State oil firm PDVSA, among the companies affected by the strike, is not receiving deliveries from Sidor of laminated steel products it uses for tubes for drilling and transport of gas and crude. Montiel said the strikers had scattered nails to stop delivery trucks from leaving. He added they had also intimidated local dock contractors on the Orinoco river, preventing the loading of export deliveries on five waiting vessels. — Reuters.



MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, UNITED STATES

London, May 7 — A press report, dated May 6, states: A Volga, South Dakota couple have been awarded \$1.7 million in a malpractice suit against a former Brookings doctor. Lanita and Lyle Arndt sued Oldrich Bubenik, a surgeon who practiced in Brookings from 2000 to 2002, based on a surgery he performed on Lanita Arndt. She was diagnosed with a twisted colon and had to have part of her colon removed at a Brookings hospital in September 2001. The plaintiffs contended the doctor reattached the colon, which fell apart in less than 24 hours and caused a severe infection. They also said he mismanaged the woman's care while she was hospitalized in Brookings. The woman was later transferred to a Sioux Falls hospital and underwent another surgery, said Russell Janklow, a lawyer for the Arndts. A U.S. District Court jury deliberated six hours before returning the verdict on Apr 30. The average medical malpractice payment in South Dakota in 2002 was \$148,120, according to the National Practitioner Data Bank.

PRISON ATTACK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, May 8 — A press report, dated May 7, states: A Manhattan jury has awarded \$7.65 million to a Sing Sing inmate who claimed prison officials ignored warnings that a street gang had targeted him before a near-fatal razor attack. The verdict was reached Monday (May 3) following a weeklong trial in federal court in Manhattan. Defense lawyer Paul Kerson asked yesterday that his client not be identified because he remains in danger and has received death threats. The prisoner, who is serving 20 years to life for attempted murder at the Ossining facility, was attacked as he walked to his cell in 1998 by an inmate armed with a razor. His lawsuit claimed he nearly bled to death from deep slashes to his face and back. The victim had been an informant in an attempted-murder case against the gang's leader. The suit alleged that state Department of Correctional Services Commissioner Glenn Goord and a Sing Sing official, William Connolly, were liable because they ignored repeated requests to segregate him from the general prison population. A spokesman for the attorney general's office said the state had asked a federal judge to set aside the verdict. Correction spokesman Jim Flateau said the commissioner was planning to appeal because he believes the trial judge made errors in explaining the law to the jury. Flateau said the 31-year-old inmate is in prison for a brutal August 1995 attack that left his victim with a serious cut to the face, a collapsed lung and damage to other organs. Flateau said any award that survives appeals will go to the inmate's victim under the Son of Sam law, which was passed after Son of Sam serial killer David Berkowitz was offered a substantial sum of money for his story. Kerson said he will argue that the inmate is entitled to the jury award because he'll be receiving it as a crime victim.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: A two-week civil trial has ended in a \$2.5 million jury award to the parents of a Clinton man killed nearly three years ago when a delivery truck ploughed into his pickup on the Maine Turnpike near the Wells-Kennebunk line. The Cumberland County Superior Court jury deliberated for more than three hours today before finding that delivery truck driver Laura Morse of Scarborough and her employer were negligent in the Aug 10, 2001, crash that killed Dale Caverly, 27. The verdict was one of the largest in the state's history. Caverly was killed when Morse's truck hit his truck, smashing it into the back of a fish delivery truck. The impact reduced Caverly's truck to a crushed heap of metal buried under the frames of two larger trucks. Morse was a driver for Portland News Co., which became Hudson RPM after a merger. Jurors found that Cianbro Corp., which was doing construction work on the turnpike at the time of the crash, was not negligent. The nine jurors

unanimously decided to compensate Caverly's parents, Francis and Suzanne Caverly, \$500,000 for loss of comfort, society and companionship and emotional distress; \$2 million in economic loss; \$10,900 for damage to Caverly's truck and tools and \$8,704 for funeral expenses. The crash that killed Caverly happened about 0200 hrs, while vehicles were stopped in the northbound lane of the turnpike. Construction crews were moving a new steel bridge beam into place over the highway and a state trooper stopped traffic. A tractor-trailer was stopped, and behind it, the fish delivery truck was stopped. Police believe Caverly's pickup was behind that truck. The newspaper delivery truck carrying out-of-state newspapers for distribution in Maine never stopped, and slammed into Caverly's pickup. Morse, who was 56 at the time of the crash, was extricated from the truck and treated at Maine Medical Center.

SECURITIES FRAUD, UNITED STATES

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: In one of the largest securities fraud settlements ever, financial services giant Citigroup Inc has agreed to pay \$2.65 billion to settle a class action suit brought by investors who bought WorldCom Inc securities before the telecommunications company went bankrupt in 2002. The deal with Citigroup is just the first step, New York state Comptroller Alan G. Hevesi said yesterday in announcing the settlement. The comptroller, who is taking the lead in the class action case, said he was pursuing similar agreements with 17 other investment banks that could result in a further \$2.8 billion for WorldCom stock and bond holders. The other institutions include J.P. Morgan Chase & Co, which could be liable for up to \$1.2 billion, as well as Banc of America Securities and Deutsche Bank AG, he said. Hevesi said the other investment banks — which along with Citigroup underwrote some \$17 billion in WorldCom bond issues in 2000 and 2001 — have 45 days to agree to a settlement similar to Citigroup's or face trial next January. "This is not the end of our third-party litigation," Hevesi said in pledging to pursue all legal remedies against the institutions that backed WorldCom. Citigroup's brokerage division was a key backer of WorldCom securities before the firm filed for the biggest bankruptcy in history in July, 2002, amid accounting irregularities. Last month, the company — now known as MCI — emerged from bankruptcy and shed more than \$35 billion in debt. Hevesi said that the \$2.65 billion Citigroup is paying would be allocated with \$1.45 billion to bondholders and \$1.2 billion to shareholders. He and the state's attorneys declined to say what investors' total losses were or what percentage the settlement represented of those losses, saying that the size of the class was still an issue and valuing losses was complicated. Lawyers' fees will also come from the settlement amount. The settlement, which was negotiated by Citigroup chief executive Charles Prince and approved by the

Citigroup board during the weekend (May 8-9), covered allegations of misconduct by Citigroup and its investment divisions as well as former analyst Jack B. Grubman. Grubman, who worked at Salomon Smith Barney in the late 1990s, was fined \$15 million and permanently banned from the securities industry last year for what regulators called "fraudulent, misleading and otherwise flawed research reports." Citigroup has since reorganised its investment divisions to segregate analysis from investment banking operations. In its settlement announcement, Citigroup, which is headquartered in New York, denied violating any law but said it was settling "solely to eliminate the uncertainties, burden and expense of further protracted litigation." Prince said the settlement was designed "to put an unfortunate chapter behind us so we can focus on our continuing prospects for growth." Citigroup said that after the WorldCom settlement, its litigation reserve for investment cases would total \$6.7 billion. Pending claims against the bank are related to the collapse of Enron Corp, its April, 2003, settlement of federal inquiries into investment research activities and its involvement in preferential initial public stock offerings. The case involving WorldCom was brought on behalf of those who had purchased WorldCom stock and other securities from Apr 29, 1999, through Jun 25, 2002. Lawyers on the case said the starting date coincided with WorldCom's issuance of its first-quarter earnings report in 1999, which they allege included false revenue and earnings numbers. The closing date was when WorldCom announced it would restate results for all of 2001 and the first quarter of 2002.



Railway Accidents

HARTLEY AREA, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

See "United States" under "Weather & Navigation."

HELLIN, SPAIN

Madrid, May 7 — Five people were killed when the car they were travelling in was crushed by a train at a level crossing near Albacete in central Spain, local government officials said today. The impact caused the train's engine and nine carriages to derail. Two women passengers were hurt. All five people in the car, three women and two men, were killed. They were apparently Bolivian immigrants who were on their way to work, a government statement said. A local government spokeswoman had initially said they were Ecuadoreans. "Everything seems to indicate the accident happened because the car did not respect the barriers at the crossing," the statement said. The train dragged the wreckage of the car about 450 metres

to the station of the small town of Hellin. Traffic was interrupted on the line for just over two hours. — Reuters.

JOHOR, MALAYSIA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated May 6, states: A freight train derailed between Segamat and Genuang in Johor at 1525 hrs, today, disrupting services in the southern region. KTM Bhd said in a statement that the incident involved nine wagons carrying clinkers. Seven train services were affected and KTM had to arrange to transfer north and southbound passengers on four buses between the Labis and Segamat stations.

MATHURA AREA, INDIA

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: One person was killed and three others were injured when two goods trains collided near Mathura this afternoon leading to diversion of several trains. Of the four railways employees, one was killed and three others sustained injuries in the rear collision which occurred around 1430 hrs, Railway Ministry sources said. The injured have been admitted to a nearby hospital, they said. Traffic on the Delhi-Agra sector has been blocked following the mishap and work is on to restore normality.

MCBRIDE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Vancouver, May 12 — Criminal charges have been filed against Canadian National Railway in connection with a 2003 bridge collapse in British Columbia that killed two train crew members, officials said today. The railway, the country's largest, was charged with two labour code violations and one count of violating the railway safety code for failing to ensure that the wooden bridge could support the train, Transport Canada, the federal transportation department, said. If convicted, CN could be fined up to C\$1 million on each of the labour counts and C\$200,000 for each day that the court determines the bridge was unsafe, Transport Canada spokeswoman Cathy Cossaboom said. An interim report by the Transportation Safety Board said CN failed to fix key parts of the bridge despite finding problems with the structure in 1999. The board recommended the railway inspect all its wooden bridges. The engineer and conductor were killed when the two engines and four cars of an 86-car train derailed on the bridge and plunged into a ravine on May 14, 2003, near McBride in a remote area of north-eastern British Columbia. A VIA Rail passenger train was scheduled to cross the bridge after the freight train, which was traveling from Prince George, British Columbia, to Edmonton, Alberta, had cleared the line. CN spokesman Graham Dallas said the railway would respond to the charges in court, and stressed that the Transport Safety Board has not issued its final report on the cause of the accident. — Reuters.

MUNICH, GERMANY

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A suburban train collided with a freight train yesterday in the

southern German city of Munich, injuring 54 people, 10 seriously, police said. The commuter train, with about 100 people on board, was running at about 20 miles per hour at the time of the accident yesterday morning, police said. Police said that preliminary inquiries suggested that the driver of the freight train had failed to stop at a warning signal. Most of the injured were allowed to leave hospital after being treated for cuts caused by flying glass but others had to stay with broken limbs.

OTA, GUNMA PREFECTURE, JAPAN

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A man and a woman were killed last night when their car collided with a Tobu Railway Co local express train on the Iseaki Line at a railroad crossing in Ota, Gunma Prefecture, police said. The collision between the car and the train bound for Iseaki in Gunma Prefecture from Asakusa in Tokyo occurred at around 1920 hrs at the crossing and derailed the front car of the six-car train, the police said.

POWHATAN POINT, OHIO, STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A train derailed late last night in Powhatan Point. There's no word of any injuries. One of the train cars is reportedly leaking fuel, which has prompted a hazardous materials crew to respond to the crash.

SINDH PROVINCE, PAKISTAN

Karachi, May 6 — Pakistan Railway said that three passengers died and 58 were injured when six bogies out of 16 coaches of the Tezro express passenger train bound upcountry derailed and overturned near the Tando Adam railway station, in Sindh Province of Pakistan, on Wednesday afternoon. Following the incident DIG Hyderabad Mushtaq Shah, RPO Bachal Sangri, divisional superintendent Railways Israr Alvi and officials from the district administration of Sanghar rushed to the scene and reviewed the rescue operation. During the rescue work the traffic on the main railway track between Karachi and other parts of country remained suspended for six hours. The track was re-opened for railway traffic at about 0820, local time. Authorities were investigating whether it was a technical fault that caused the derailment or a sabotage act. An inquiry has been ordered. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, May 6 — Pakistan Railway Minister, Ghous Bux Maher has asked the Federal Inspector Railways to submit the interim enquiry report of the derailment of the Tezro Express within two days indicating the possible causes of the accident. He expressed that stern action shall be taken against all those found negligent in their duties. The Minister during his visit to Tando Adam Railway Station last night, reviewed the work of the repair and restoration of track which was damaged as a result of the derailment of eight coaches of the Tezro Express. The Minister personally supervised the restoration work of track

at Tando Adam and the rail traffic was restored after some time. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

TUALATIN, OREGON, UNITED STATES

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: A train engine and nine cars derailed near Southwest Tualatin-Sherwood Road at Southwest Boones Ferry Road in Tualatin just before 1500 yesterday, causing five cars carrying bark chips to topple onto their sides. No injuries were reported but about 200 gallons of diesel fuel leaked onto the ground, said Karen Eubanks of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue. The train made up of two engines and 35 cars was headed southbound from Beaverton to Albany at about 20 mph when the derailment occurred, said Jim Bearden, director of safety for Genesee & Wyoming Inc, parent company of Portland & Western Railroad Inc, which operates the line. The cause remained under investigation yesterday, he said. A tank on the second of two engines carried an estimated 1,200 to 1,500 gallons of diesel and was punctured as the engine jumped the tracks, causing the fuel leak, Eubanks said. Fire crews prevented the loss of additional fuel by flooding the fuel tank with water. Since diesel fuel floats on water, it remained at the top of the tank while water leaked from punctures at the bottom, giving time for crews to remove the fuel. Private crews began further cleanup work yesterday evening. The derailed cars sustained major damage, but no other property damage was reported.

London, Mar 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: The cause of a weekend train derailment in Tualatin remains under investigation. Several cars hauling wood chips jumped the tracks Saturday near Southwest Boones Ferry and Tualatin-Sherwood roads. No one was injured, but hazardous materials crews were called to contain about 200 gallons of diesel leaking from the wreckage. On Sunday, workers from Portland & Western Railroad and local agencies cooperated to clean up the scene, righting and re-railing the tipped train cars. Officials say the site is not yet safe, and train traffic is not expected to resume until at least tomorrow.

WHITE CITY AREA, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: British Transport Police say a Tube train has derailed in west London but no passengers were hurt. Officers were called at 1227, BST, today to a derailed west-bound train on the Central Line near White City. "There has been a minor derailment, there are no injuries and officers are on the scene," a spokeswoman said. The Central Line is currently not running between North Acton and Marble Arch stations.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: London Underground's Central Line has fully reopened following yesterday's train derailment. No-one was hurt in the accident but 150 passengers had to be led to safety when the eight-car train derailed near White City station.

Metronet, which maintains the track, said it would be looking into its work amid reports maintenance had only been carried out the night before. Mayor Ken Livingstone has also ordered London Underground to carry out an investigation. A Metronet spokesman said: "We don't know if our recent work and the derailment are connected and we are looking into the work we've been doing." The maintenance work was being carried out on the track on Monday night (May 10) in an attempt to remove the 20 mph speed limit, which had been in place on the section of track since April last year. LU said the rolling stock was unlikely to have caused the derailment, adding: "The initial investigation has focused on the track. The derailment occurred at a set of points that were immobilised while they were awaiting further track work."



SASSER WORM

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: The Sasser computer worm, which has disrupted thousands of businesses in Asia and Europe, is set to attack computers in China on May 8, following a seven-day holiday, because some government departments may not have installed fixes. Preventative patches available from Microsoft Corp and other software vendors may not have been installed over the break, China's National Computer Network Emergency Response Co-ordination Centre said on its Web site. The centre detected about 1.3 million transmissions of the worm in China by 0700, local time, yesterday. Sasser, a piece of software which exploits flaws in the XP and 2000 versions of Microsoft's Windows operating system, has disrupted business at companies from Goldman Sachs Group Inc in Hong Kong to Sampo Oyj in Finland. Microsoft, the world's biggest software maker, said about 1.5 million customers have visited its Web site to download patches to prevent infection by Sasser. "Sasser will continue to spread for another three months at least," said Jamz Yaneza, senior anti-virus consultant with Trend Micro Inc, the world's third-largest maker of security software. The most serious viruses to date including "Sobig" and "Mydoom" are still causing infections, he said. Sasser has mutated four times, with the latest version reported in France, the US and Canada, according to Yaneza. Infections will slow because people are starting to patch their computers to prevent Sasser's spread, he said. "We have seen a few variations of the Sasser worm since it was first released on the Internet last Friday," said Kang Meng Chow, chief security and privacy adviser for Microsoft in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan and other nations are likely to report increased infections as national holidays end. Japan may have a "little bump" in

Sasser infections once workers return to work today from a three-day holiday, said Vincent Gullotto, vice-president of McAfee Avert, the anti-virus laboratory of Network Associates Inc. Many companies would have had installed security software during the holidays, Gullotto said. The Japanese police agency on May 2 posted information about Sasser on its website, urging people to make sure their computers are secure and advising them about the software to install to prevent infection.

Berlin, May 8 — An 18-year-old man arrested by German police on suspicion of creating the destructive "Sasser" computer worm confessed to police that he had programmed the worm, a police spokesman said today. "He made a confession to police," said spokesman Frank Federau for Lower Saxony police. Federau did not give any details on where the admission was made or whether the man went to police before they searched his parents' home, where he also lives, yesterday afternoon. Sasser, a tenacious computer worm, is expected to infect millions of machines before it runs its course. Since appearing a week ago, it has wreaked havoc on personal computers running on the ubiquitous Microsoft Windows 2000, NT and XP operating systems, but is expected to slow down as computer users download anti-virus patches. — Reuters.

Miscellaneous



OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

Hanoi, May 6 — Bird flu has broken out in Vietnam more than a month after an outbreak that killed 16 people was declared over. The latest outbreak of the deadly H5N1 birdflu virus was found on a farm in the south of the country. It has been successfully contained, a senior agriculture official was quoted as saying today. "There is an outbreak in Dong Thap," Bui Quang Anh, director of the Agriculture Ministry's animal health department, told the state-run Tuoi Tre (Youth) newspaper, referring to a southern province. "After it was spotted, the outbreak was contained. Dead chickens have been treated to ensure the disease does not spread," he said. Vietnam had declared itself free of the disease on Mar 30. However, Thailand has twice delayed declaring itself free, most recently after a new outbreak was found on Apr 19. — Reuters.

OUTBREAK OF VIRUS ON UNITED KINGDOM FLAGGED PASSENGER VESSEL

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A cruise ship returned to Sydney today with 140 of its passengers complaining they were struck down by a stomach virus. P&O, which operates passenger *Pacific Sky* (46087 gt, built 1984), said it would consider refunds or

credits for future cruises on a case-by-case basis following the outbreak of the norovirus during the 11-day trip. It was not immediately clear how many passengers were on board or if the cruise was cut short. According to P&O's Web site, *Pacific Sky* can carry 1,550 passengers. P&O said the passengers themselves could be to blame for the outbreak. "Some passengers, when they're on holiday, are not as vigilant as we would like in terms of personal hygiene," P&O Cruises spokesman Gavin Smith said. Passenger Kevin O'Brien told Australia's Seven Network television that some passengers were quarantined in their cabins and complained they had not been fed. "A lot of them weren't happy at all with the way in which they were treated," he said. "They felt isolated, neglected and treated basically like lepers." A team of cleaners supervised by health officials scrubbed down the ship today before it set off on a new cruise.

PORTUGUESE FISHING VESSELS BOARDED BY CANADA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated May 6, states: Canadian Coast Guard and Navy vessels have spent the last week pursuing the "modern-day pirates" behind foreign overfishing, the federal fisheries minister said today. Geoff Regan said the boarding of five vessels just outside of Canada's 200-mile limit shows he is determined to put an end to the destruction of fish stocks on the Grand Banks. Fishing *Aveirens* was boarded, inspected and received two citations for illegal fishing practices. "We found moratoria species in very curious places like crew's quarters, as if they were really trying to hide what they were up to," said Regan during a news conference. Over the last 24 hours, *Aveirens*, trawler *Brites* (1513 gt, built 1971), and three other vessels that were inspected have been moving into deeper waters away from the normal breeding grounds of protected species. Early on May 4, under cover of darkness, a team from the Canadian frigate *Montreal* boarded *Aveirens* after its skipper ordered the crew to retrieve its catch, ignoring an order to the contrary from the Navy warship. The catch was dumped prior to the boarding, but inspectors spotted small American plaice — another species under moratorium — on the vessel's deck and inside the hull. "A crew member was observed shovelling the fish out through the discard chute," the Fisheries Department said in a statement. "It is unknown how much of the catch in the current tow was discarded overboard by the crew." Under a new agreement ratified by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Association (NAFO) — a voluntary group made up of 18 fishing nations — in January called the United Nations Fishing Agreement, Canada may board and seize vessels outside the economic zone if it suspects illegal activity. However, the vessels' flag state has three days after being cited to impose sanctions on the vessel. If no action is taken, the arresting country may haul the offending vessel into the nearest NAFO port for prosecution. Regan said Canadian vessels are

currently shadowing *Aveirens* and *Brites*, as negotiations between Canada and Portugal concerning appropriate sanctions play out.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: A Portuguese fishing vessel at the centre of a diplomatic tug of war after accusations that it caught endangered cod and flatfish in international waters is going home. The Portuguese government and the European Union yesterday ordered trawler *Brites* to return to an unspecified port in Portugal for an inspection. The Canadian navy frigate *Montreal* pursued the vessel last week as part of a crackdown on fishing in international waters on the Grand Banks. However, Canadian officials believe the vessel's crew cut its net and it sank to the ocean floor as the inspectors approached. A Canadian Coast Guard vessel hauled up the net and inspectors found cod and flatfish that are protected by an international moratorium. The Canadian government, which is staging a highly publicised inspection of foreign vessels on the Grand Banks, requested that the vessel come to a Newfoundland port to be examined and possibly prosecuted for violations of Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation regulations. Over the past decade, Canada has issued citations for fishing violations on more than 300 foreign boats that returned to their home ports, but only 21 convictions have resulted, with fines averaging about \$8,000. However, the European Union said in a statement yesterday that one of its fisheries inspectors will be on board *Brites* as it makes its way home and that the decision to send the vessel back shows its commitment to conservation. Under NAFO regulations, Canada cannot force a vessel from another country to come to a Canadian port — and many Newfoundlanders believe this allows European vessels to avoid prosecution for overfishing scarce cod and flatfish stocks. Federal Fisheries Minister Geoff Regan has said that if NAFO can't stop overfishing, Canadian officials will resort to a recently ratified United Nations agreement that allows seizure of vessels that are endangering fish stocks. Mr. Regan said yesterday that Canada's enforcement effort was successful because only five foreign vessels were now fishing in an area where 14 had cast their nets last week. He said that one of the reasons the Portuguese recalled *Brites* was the evidence that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans was able to present after recovering the net. "I think the evidence is very clear that there was overfishing," he said. A spokesman for DFO said the department was disappointed that *Brites* would not be sent to a Canadian port but was encouraged that the vessel is no longer fishing. Patrol vessels, whose crews have boarded seven foreign vessels over the past week, are continuing to monitor fishing activity on the Grand Banks, and diplomatic negotiations are continuing on Canada's request for another Portuguese vessel to be sent to a Newfoundland port for inspection.

VALVE MALFUNCTION, EFFLUENT TREATMENT PLANT, PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA, UNITED STATES

London, May 6 — A press report, dated May 5, states: A valve malfunction flooded Pima County's already controversial new effluent treatment plant at Reid Park with nearly a million gallons of drinkable water, causing "probably millions of dollars in damage." The \$39.9 million Randolph Park Water Reclamation Facility, built to treat effluent for use at Reid Park, Randolph Golf Course and a number of other parks and golf courses, started partial operations last month. It will be closed down indefinitely, Public Works Director John Bernal said. The plant is designed to treat up to three million gallons of high-quality reclaimed water a day for irrigation uses. The accident had no effect on irrigation at Reid Park or Randolph Golf Course, and city officials were unaware anything had happened, said City Parks Department spokesman Richard Symchak. The parks were only getting a portion of their water from the plant, which was still testing and refining its procedures, said County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry. The rest was coming from the existing reclaimed-water system, which will continue to be available to them until repairs are made and the plant is completed this fall. Bernal said that because the plant is just 95 percent complete, he expects all or part of the damage to be covered by the contractor. A spokesman for the company could not be reached for comment. The incident started about 1700 hrs, Sunday (May 2) when a six-inch line delivering potable water to a storage tank for use in the treatment process failed to shut off when the tank was full. That filled the basement and part of the first floor of the structure at East 22nd Street and South Alvernon Way. The line pumped out about 1,000 gallons a minute for 16 hours before it was discovered by workers on Monday morning (May 3), Bernal said. He said no effluent, treated or untreated, was released during the incident and at no time were the park or residents in the surrounding area in any danger. County Risk Manager Dave Parker said an accurate damage assessment won't be possible until the water is pumped out, which was still being done yesterday afternoon, and an insurance adjuster is brought in. But Bernal said the dollar figure is probably in the millions because the basement had "lots of electrical equipment that's beyond salvaging." He said inspectors haven't figured out why the valve failed.

Fires & Explosions**BOAT BUILDERS, WANGANUI, NEW ZEALAND**

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: One of New Zealand's largest boat building

operations has gone up in flames. Fire has destroyed the main building at the Q-West yard at Castlecliff in Wanganui. The blaze broke out just before 2200, yesterday and took firefighters more than three hours to bring under control. The building has been gutted, along with several boats, including a \$3.2 million catamaran due to be launched next week. The Fire Service remains at the scene dampening down hotspots. The blaze has caused millions of dollars worth of damage. It is not known if it is suspicious.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Wanganui firefighters are still dampening down hotspots after a fire which severely damaged a number of luxury boats and two sheds at the Q-West boat building yard at Castlecliff. Q-West employs 24 staff and is now trying to work out how quickly it can re-establish operations. The fire service is still investigating the cause of the blaze.

CHEMICAL PLANT, CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

London, May 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters and Hazmat crews have contained a fire that broke out this afternoon at a south Charlotte chemical plant. The four-alarm fire started at Reagents Chemicals on Sweden and England roads. The first call came in at 1345 hrs. The 18 employees at the plant were all accounted for, and none of them was injured. Authorities shut down parts of Hebron, England and Arrowood roads to contain the fire, and they later recommended that people stay away and stay indoors. "There is a long list of chemicals, and some are very dangerous and very flammable," said Capt. Rob Brisley of the Charlotte Fire Department. Brisley said it looks like the fire was an accident. "The preliminary look at this fire does not point to anything that was intentional," he said. Brisley confirmed that three firefighters were taken to the hospital with minor injuries. The building sustained extensive damage.

COAL MINE, GUANGDONG PROVINCE, CHINA

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Two miners were killed and three were missing after a blast in a coal mine in south China's Guangdong province, state media said today. A sixth miner was injured in the explosion, which occurred in a mine shaft last night, the Xinhua news agency said. Rescuers were still looking for the missing miners, Xinhua said.

FACTORY, GLASGOW, SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Emergency crews have been called to an explosion at a plastics company in Glasgow. Police said they were attending an incident at Stockline Plastics in Grovepark Street, off Maryhill Road. The fire brigade said the building has collapsed. The area has been sealed off and there are unconfirmed reports of casualties. A police helicopter has been called in to

assist in the operation. The plastics factory in Glasgow is thought to employ between 15 and 20 people.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Three people have died after a blast demolished most of a plastics factory in Glasgow, police said. Six survivors have been pulled from the rubble of the Stockline Plastics building in Grovepark Street. Five people are still trapped in the remains of the building and more than 30 have been injured. Fire crews have established contact with a number of people who are still trapped. About 100 people are thought to work in the west end plant. The building was all but destroyed in the blast shortly after 1200 BST, which was heard by people several miles away. Eyewitnesses reported that an industrial gas oven exploded. The blast brought down the roof of the four-storey building, with rubble collapsing onto parked cars nearby. Strathclyde Firemaster Brian Sweeney said six teams were working in separate parts of the building, with up to 200 firefighters from around the country involved in the rescue. Some were using thermal imaging cameras and heat-seeking equipment. Extensive work was being done to stabilise the building, which was in a precarious position. Mr Sweeney said contact had been made with four or five groups of people who were still trapped - including some who were speaking to emergency services on mobile phones. "We think we will be here for a long time - for a minimum of 48 hours in a rescue capacity," he said. "In some cases people are very seriously injured, in some cases people are making contact and others are very calm and relaxed and are only moderately injured." Police said that 37 people had been injured in the incident, 16 of them seriously. The Health and Safety Executive said it would be carrying out an investigation into the explosion. A number of inspectors are now at the scene, but their inquiry cannot get under way until the site has been made safe by the fire service.

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: An explosion destroyed part of a plastics factory in Glasgow yesterday, killing seven people, injuring dozens and burying an unknown number in the rubble, police and fire brigade rescuers said. Rescuers who had voice contact with some of those trapped worked painstakingly through the wreckage of the Stockline Plastics building and pulled out seven people alive before nightfall. Early today, the fire service raised the death toll to seven from four. Strathclyde firemaster Brian Sweeney also said he believed there were more survivors because noises were heard from the rubble at 0500 today. It was not clear what caused the blast, but Strathclyde Police Chief Superintendent David Christie said there was "absolutely no" indication that it was related to terrorism.

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: An eighth body has been recovered from the site of a Glasgow factory destroyed by an explosion on Tuesday (May 11). Rescue chiefs say the search will continue for as long as is necessary for the remaining

missing man following the the blast at Stockline Plastics. Strathclyde Firemaster Brian Sweeney insisted it was still possible that the man could be found alive. The eighth body was found at about 0045, BST, today after sections of the roof had been lifted off the building. By 0700 BST, less than 50% of the site had been searched, Sweeney told reporters. There had been no sound of voices from beneath the rubble since the early hours of yesterday morning, but he remained hopeful that the remaining victim of the blast could still be alive. Mr Sweeney said that fresh sniffer dogs had been drafted in because the noses of the previous ones had become contaminated by dust. He hoped that with 75% of the building's roof now removed, they would find it easier to detect any signs of life. Eighty firemen are still at the scene, among them crews from as far afield as Manchester and London. Yesterday, Strathclyde Police Chief Superintendent David Christie confirmed that 44 people were taken to hospital after the blast, with 16 in a serious condition.

FACTORY, SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters will continue to monitor a blaze which destroyed a factory in Sydney's west today, causing several million Australian dollars worth of damage. NSW Fire Brigades spokesman Ian Krimmer said the blaze at Jamisontown, at Penrith, was brought under control about 1230 hrs. The single level factory, at Pattys Place, contained packaging material and telecommunications equipment, he said. "It will smoulder for most of the night," Mr Krimmer said. "We have 80 firefighters from 12 surrounding areas attending the blaze.

FACTORY, TAANAYEL, LEBANON

Beirut, May 7 — At approximately, 0400, May 6, fire broke out at the Standard General Co. Ltd, factory in Taanayel village, Beka'a valley, east Lebanon. The factory produces plastic materials. The fire caused the complete loss of fabricated and raw materials, machinery and building. It took the fire brigade 10 hours to put out the fire. Loss is estimated at about US\$ three million. The factory is insured locally with Alpina & Co. S.a.r.l. — Lloyd's Agents.

FACTORY, TRANSCONA, WINNIPEG, UNITED STATES

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A Transcona factory was destroyed yesterday by a blaze firefighters had to battle without a local water supply. Firefighters used water brought by pumper trucks and railway cars to douse the flames at Hi-Qual Manufacturing, which is outside Winnipeg's water system and 3.2 km from the nearest hydrant. "It destroyed most of our manufacturing plant," said company president Alan Case, adding that the cause is unknown. Firefighters were called to the plant at 399 Ravenhurst St. at 0811 hrs. All employees had already escaped the burning building. Early estimates put

the damage at more than \$1 million, fire officials said. Fire filled the L-shaped factory, which produces livestock equipment. Thick, black, smoke wafted from the building over a yard filled with railings and other equipment and blew into the Rural Municipality of Springfield across nearby Dugald Road.

INSULATION FACTORY, CORBIN, KENTUCKY, UNITED STATES

London, May 8 — A press report, dated May 7, states: Corbin's largest manufacturing plant officially reopened today, 15 months after a powerful explosion killed seven workers and severely damaged the structure. CTA Acoustics, which makes insulation products for the auto industry, opened the \$56 million facility amid remembrances of the deadly blast on Feb 20, 2003. The new 360,000-square-foot plant includes 36-foot ceilings, long rows of air ducts and firewalls between separate areas, features that were included with the lessons of the old plant in mind, James Pike, chairman of CTA Acoustics and other officials said. The US Chemical Safety Board, one of several government agencies to investigate the blast, has said that an accumulation of flammable dust was a key cause. Pike said major improvements to the air-filtration systems inside the old plant were scheduled to be installed the week of the explosion, but had been delayed because windy conditions prevented a helicopter from installing some equipment on the roof. Based on promises that the company's employment will grow from about 550 at the time of the explosion to about 650, Kentucky officials have agreed to give the company up to \$33 million in tax credits over the next 15 years, said Donna Duncan, commissioner of Kentucky's department for financial incentives. Pike said yesterday that fewer than 300 workers are employed, but he does not expect more reductions unless the automotive industry takes a sharp downturn.

MANUFACTURING PLANT, TIJUANA, MEXICO

London, May 7 — A report from LaSalle, Quebec, dated May 3, states: Fan maker Merry Tech International SA de CV halted operations after Apr 24 and 27 fires destroyed three of its manufacturing buildings in Tijuana, Mexico. The Apr 24 fire destroyed an injection molding building, causing \$1.5 million in structural damage. The Apr 27 fire destroyed two buildings housing assembly lines, initial estimates placed the losses in the millions of dollars.

MUNITIONS DUMP, MELITOPOL AREA, UKRAINE

London, May 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Thousands of people have been evacuated after explosions ripped through a munitions dump in south-east Ukraine. Three people died, unnamed officials and hospital staff were quoted as saying, but the Defence Ministry has not confirmed the death toll. Reports speak of flames leaping up to 300m high at the depot - which is only

40km from one of Europe's biggest nuclear power stations. Ammunition was continuing to explode tonight, reports said. Some of the debris and ordnance has been thrown 10km away. Ordnance began exploding during a fire at the military base near the city of Melitopol in Zaporozhye region at about 1000 hrs (1300, UTC) today. The first building affected was said to store anti-tank mines. Other reports speak of artillery shells and rockets exploding. Soon after the blaze started, there were several huge explosions which destroyed many buildings within a three kilometre radius of the military base, including a local railway station. Some two dozen fire trucks rushed to the scene, along with about 120 firefighters and 100 soldiers, but continuing explosions severely hampered the operation. According to witnesses, explosions could be heard every few seconds hours after the fire began. Nearly 10,000 people from villages within a 10 km exclusion zone around the depot have been evacuated. The emergency ministry said the explosions sent burning debris up to 10 km away, causing more fires to start. Rail traffic has been blocked on the main line linking Crimea to the Russian capital, Moscow, and local roads are closed. A state of emergency has been declared in Melitopol - about 600 kms south-east of the capital Kiev - and authorities are telling people to stay indoors. President Leonid Kuchma has ordered a criminal investigation into the incident.

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: At least five people died and nine were injured today when a fire at a Ukrainian military base set off a series of huge explosions. The fire hit a munitions depot storing various rockets that began to explode. Police evacuated at least 6,000 people from a 70 kilometre radius around the base in south-eastern Ukraine. Officials said they were unable to approach the site because of the explosions and the blaze could continue to burn for days. Russia was sending a specialist team to help and the United States had also offered to help.

London, May 12, — Two soldiers smoking cigarettes were blamed yesterday for a huge blaze at a Ukrainian arms depot. Explosions sent shells and shrapnel hurtling into nearby villages, killing five people, forcing 7,000 to flee their homes and causing £425 million of damage. At the height of the fire, which began last Thursday (May 6), more than 5,000 explosions an hour were recorded at the Melitopol warehouse complex, where about 90,000 tons of munitions were stored. Two servicemen working in the arsenal started the fire, Hryhory Reva, the emergencies minister, told the Ukrainian parliament. People living within a 12-mile radius of the depot in the south-east of the country were moved to safety as ordnance rained down on their villages. They were returning yesterday, though two fires were still burning. Amid calls for his resignation, Yevhen Marchuk, the defence minister, urged radical military reforms. "The armed forces are becoming a threat to their own people," he said. — The Daily Telegraph.

PREMISES, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY, UNITED STATES

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: A turreted castle on Versailles Road, a heavily travelled four-lane highway between Lexington and Versailles, built about 30 years ago by real-estate developer Rex Martin, was heavily damaged in a fire last night.

Inside the castle wall, much of the house had collapsed. Woodford County Fire Chief Bennie Green said the cause was unknown but said one possibility was that lightning could have struck an inner turret, the Lexington Herald-Leader reported. Green said the investigation would continue today. No one was injured in the blaze, which was reported around 2030 hrs. Green said it was difficult to get water to the blaze because of ditches that had been dug as part of a renovation. The property, which Martin had built with the stated intention of living there but was never actually inhabited, had recently been sold for nearly \$1.8 million after Martin died last August. The castle was composed of an outer wall with turrets and parapets and an oversized central gate. Inside the wall was the main house. The fire appeared to have devoured everything inside the wall.

REFINERY, KASHIMA, IBARAKI PREFECTURE, JAPAN

Nicosia, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Japan Energy Corp. will implement emergency petroleum product supply measures to help make up for shortages resulting from the shutdown in April of its key Kashima refinery, located in Ibaraki Prefecture, as a result of a fire. This month, the company is increasing shipments from two other refineries by about 10% by increasing production and using up reserves. Shipments from the sites in May will total 1 million kilolitres. The firm will use a total of 25 tankers to move petroleum products domestically, up from the pre-fire 20. With the expanded fleet, Japan Energy will be able to better move products from refineries, including the one in Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

SHIPYARD, CHINHAE, SOUTH KOREA

See No. 1122 under "Marine."

TELECOMMUNICATIONS TUNNEL, MANCHESTER AREA, UNITED KINGDOM

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: The fire which plunged Manchester's phone lines into chaos was caused by electrics damaged during maintenance, BT has said. More than 130,000 lines were cut by the fire in a BT tunnel beneath Manchester city centre on Mar 29. The communication breakdown cost businesses an estimated £4.5m a day and business customers will be able to claim up to £25,000 compensation. BT says it is not admitting any liability for the blaze. "BT believes that during the course of work being undertaken in the tunnel before the fire, electrical fittings were damaged

and this damage may have caused the fire. Investigations are on going," said a spokeswoman. "We are sharing our investigation - we are not admitting liability. "Customers will be able to apply for compensation depending on their individual contract - we feel this is the right thing to do." The fire hit the ambulance service's communications, banks and businesses and thousands of people were unable to use their phones, faxes or send e-mails. BT is offering businesses and residential customers compensation according to their individual contracts. Residential customers will receive one month's line rental refund for up to three days loss of service and two months line rental for four to six days loss. Commercial customers could get up to £25,000 compensation if they can prove "actual loss".

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: The two most destructive wildfires burning across more than 29,000 acres in Southern California were nearly contained yesterday. Milder weather and higher humidity helped firefighters tame the fires in Riverside County, which together scorched more than 25,000 acres and damaged or destroyed dozens of structures in the inland region east of Los Angeles. The nearly 16,500-acre Cerrito Fire in Riverside County was 75 percent contained, and officials expected to have it fully surrounded by tonight. The 8,945-acre Eagle Fire, south of Temecula, was 80 percent contained, with full containment expected late yesterday. The blaze destroyed 41 structures, including 14 homes. Evacuation orders were lifted Wednesday (May 5) as firefighters gained the upper hand, allowing hundreds of people to return to their homes near the two blazes. The only big fire still largely uncontained was burning in Santa Barbara County, northwest of Los Angeles, in Los Padres National Forest. Firefighters had lines around 20 percent of the 1,127-acre fire. That blaze, which broke out on Monday, only increased by about 17 acres between Wednesday night and yesterday morning, said US Forest Service spokesman Barry Peckham. The fire burned one residence and more than 30 vehicles.

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters today finished surrounding the largest of the blazes that charred nearly 29,000 acres of southern California brushlands and forest. Evacuation orders were lifted for residents near two destructive blazes in Riverside County that burned more than 25,000 acres and damaged or destroyed dozens of structures in the inland region east of Los Angeles. The fires were declared fully contained this morning after cooler temperatures provided a measure of relief. In Riverside County, the two big fires that were contained were the nearly 16,500-acre Cerrito Fire between Corona and Lake Elsinore and the 8,900-acre Eagle Fire south of Temecula. Together, they destroyed 28

residences and 37 other structures. The 2,050-acre India Fire on the Marine Corps' Camp Pendleton in neighbouring San Diego County also was contained. Firefighters made headway on a fire burning in Santa Barbara County, northwest of Los Angeles, in Los Padres National Forest. The 1,127-acre Cachuma Fire was 80% contained. In the Sierra Nevada on Friday, a fast-moving wildfire forced the closure of Interstate 80 near the California-Nevada state line for about four hours. Fire officials said they were optimistic they would get the upper hand on the 150-acre blaze before tomorrow morning.

London, May 10 — A press report, dated May 9, states: Firefighters extinguished the nearly 16,500-acre Cerrito Fire near Corona and the 8,900-acre Eagle Fire south of Temecula. The fires each destroyed 14 residences, as well as about three dozen other structures. Firefighters were to remain nearby well into next week to keep on eye on areas still smoldering, said California Department of Forestry spokeswoman Tracy Hartman. A fourth blaze in San Diego County, the 2,050-acre India Fire on the Marine Corps' Camp Pendleton, was contained earlier this week. Firefighters yesterday had nearly contained the last of several wildfires that burned last week across thousands of acres of brushland and forest in Southern California. A Santa Barbara County blaze in Los Padres National Forest that blackened 1,127-acres was 95 percent surrounded, said U.S. Forest Service spokesman Joe Pasinato. Full containment of the Cachuma Fire, burning about 12 miles northeast of Santa Ynez, was expected this morning, he said. Firefighters concerned about new gusts blowing from the northeast were watching for possible flareups. "Those are very, unstable, highly erratic winds," Pasinato said. More than \$317 million in state and federal aid has been approved over the last six months to support Southern California areas ravaged by last fall's wildfires, officials said Friday (May 7). The aid, a mix of grants and loans, helps local governments and public agencies pay for emergency response and restoration costs incurred during the wildfires, said Greg Renick, information officer for the governor's Office of Emergency Services. It also benefits homeowners, renters and small businesses who suffered losses. It wasn't immediately known if any of the money had been distributed. Last October's firestorms swept through Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties, killing 24 people and destroying more than 3,600 homes. The blazes scorched some 750,000 acres. At least 40,794 residents and business owners affected by the fires and subsequent flooding and mudslides have registered for aid, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said. The funding comes from FEMA, the OES, the Small Business Administration and the state Department of Social Services.

**9V-SPK**

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Singapore Airlines (SIA) is insured against the US\$15 million in damages that a United States court has ordered it to pay the children of a couple killed in the SQ006 crash four years ago. SIA spokesman Rick Clements said yesterday: "The coverage is enough to meet all compensation." Businessman Sidney Wu and his sister Christina, a lawyer, who filed their wrongful death lawsuit in 2001, won the judgment in Los Angeles on Friday (May 7). Their parents, Mr Richard Wu Tzuen Ren, and Mrs Wu Ching Ying, died when the Los Angeles-bound aircraft (Boeing 747-412 9V-SPK) crashed in October, 2000, while attempting to take off from a closed runway at Chiang Kai-shek Airport in Taipei. Theirs was the first of such claims to go to court in the US over the crash, which killed 83 of the 179 people on board. Asked whether SIA would appeal, Mr Clements said it was up to the insurers. A lawyer instructed by four US law firms representing SQ006 victims to file 21 civil suits against SIA in Singapore, said six cases had been settled out of court. Of the remaining 15, four had been filed by Singaporeans.

ABORTED TAKE-OFF, ALBANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

London, May 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A Delta twin engine aircraft aborted take-off at Albany International Airport today after experiencing engine problems. The aircraft, carrying 97 passengers and five crew members, was en route from Albany to Atlanta. The aircraft exited the runway and was towed to the terminal where passengers were booked on other flights. There was no visible damage to the aircraft, but airport officials reported that damaged engine parts were found over a 300 feet long section of the airport's main runway. The incident is under investigation.

ACCIDENT AT CORK AIRPORT, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Three men have escaped injury after the small aircraft they were travelling in was forced to make a crash landing at Cork Airport last night. The landing gear on the aircraft was malfunctioning and the pilot was forced to make an emergency "belly landing" on the grass verge beside the main runway. The Authorities at Cork Airport declared a full emergency alert ahead of the landing, which happened at around 1900 hrs. The aircraft, which had travelled from Dublin, was badly damaged in the crash, but the three men on board escaped injury. The Department of Transport and the Irish

Aviation Authority have launched an investigation into the incident, which did not affect any scheduled flights at Cork Airport.

C-GKDF

London, May 11 — A press report, dated May 10, states: An aircraft crash in Kananaskis over the weekend (May 8-9) killed a well-known Calgary pilot and flying instructor, while the owner of the aircraft walked away with only minor injuries. Mitchell Todd Ford, died after the two-seater Piper PA-28 (Cherokee) he was flying in crashed into the side of a mountain in the Fisher range, about five kilometres east of Highway 40, near Porcupine Creek. Ford, who was president of Springbank Aero Services Inc, was giving lessons in mountain flying to a Kingston, Ontario, man, Reginald Butler, when the crash happened on Saturday afternoon. "My brother took control of the aircraft and attempted to pull it up," said Jason Ford. "The aircraft spun to the side and a tree hit his side." Jason Ford said his older brother was an experienced flyer who had made hundreds of trips over the mountains since obtaining his licence about five years ago. Butler, the only other occupant of the aircraft and sole survivor of the crash, managed to escape the wreckage and spent hours wandering through the area in search of help. Butler walked for several kilometres before he was picked by rescuers, who spotted him from a helicopter at about 2000 hrs. After rescuers found Butler, the Ontario businessman was transported to Foothills Hospital, where he was treated for a concussion and broken rib. He has since been released. The cause of the crash was under investigation. Jon Lee of the Canadian Transportation Safety Board said two investigators visited the crash site yesterday. The investigators will remain at the scene for up to four days, sifting through the wreckage for clues as to what happened.

London, May 11 — Piper PA-28-180 (Cherokee), C-GKDF, crashed in the Kananaskis River Valley, Alberta, at 1557, MDT, May 8, while on a local flight from Springbank, AB. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. One of the two persons on board was killed and the other suffered serious injuries.

CRASH LANDING, SCHWECAT AIRPORT, VIENNA, AUSTRIA

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A court in Hannover yesterday sentenced a German airline pilot to six months' probation for his part in the crash landing of an Airbus A310 four years ago in Vienna that injured 26 people. The court convicted Wolfgang Armingier of endangering air traffic. The aircraft, chartered by Hapag-Lloyd of Germany, touched down short of the runway on Jul 12, 2000, after running out of fuel on a flight from the Greek island of Crete to Hannover. The pilot had been unable to retract the landing gear after take-off, a malfunction that leads to increased fuel consumption. Prosecutors argued that he should have known the plane's fuel readings would be inaccurate.

CRASH NEAR GEORGE, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated May 6, states: The plane crash which killed former South African cricket captain Hanse Cronje was caused by bad weather and human error, an inquiry has found. Cronje died in June 2002, when the plane he was travelling in flew into a mountain near George, about 220 miles east of Cape Town. In its final report on the crash, the South African Civil Aviation Authority said some instruments on the plane's panel were not working. The report said: "The probable causes of the accident to be human factor-related, with weather and mechanical as well as technological factors contributing." Investigators said the pilots of the Hawker Siddeley aircraft had to carry out an instrument-guided approach due to overcast and rainy weather, but became lost after an initial missed approach. The report went on: "They flew the aircraft into a valley and crashed into the side of the mountains. The pilots and passenger suffered multiple injuries during the impact. The accident was considered unsurvivable."

CRASH, BOLIVAR STATE, VENEZUELA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated May 6, states: South-eastern Venezuelan Bolivar State authorities have announced that a light aircraft declared missing has crashed into a mountain tepuy on its journey from Ciudad Bolivar to the village of Wonken. Venezuelan Air Force (FAV) and State Search & Rescue Units have started a search for the bodies and an investigation into the crash itself. Two missionaries and five other passengers were aboard the Cessna flown by pilot, Adar Morillo and co-pilot, Lino Fuenmayor. The missionaries were travelling with three indigenous children, the cargo is said to have been a tonne of food for the region. The aircraft went missing on May 4 and S&R teams failed to find traces of the aircraft on overflights of Wonken and Luepa villages. A State Government spokesperson confirms that the aircraft crashed into the Chimata Tepuy situated south-east of Bolivar State. In his last radio message to base, pilot Morillo reported zero visibility at 11,000 ft, saying he was using his GPS as guide.

CRASH, CAREPA AREA, COLOMBIA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: At least three people were killed and four others wounded when a light aircraft crashed in Carepa municipality, Colombian authorities said yesterday. The aircraft crashed when it was approaching Los Cedros airport, killing the pilot, the co-pilot and one of the passengers. Authorities identified the pilot as Jaime Gutierrez, while still searching for the documents of the other two victims. The four survivors were receiving medical attention in nearby hospitals. An investigation was underway into the causes of the crash.

CRASH, CHIHUAHUA STATE, MEXICO

See XC-JEH.

CRASH, GULF ISLANDS, CANADA

London, May 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: An investigation is underway into a fatal crash in the Gulf Islands this morning. A Cessna float aircraft went down near the ferry terminal in Creedy Harbour on the west side of Thetis Island just after 1000 hrs. A civilian vessel was the first on the scene and rescued one person. The person was taken to hospital in Chemanius. A second person was rescued from the aircraft but died at the scene.

CRASH, JIECH, SUDAN

Nairobi, May 7 — Fourteen people, including 12 children, died in an aid plane crash in southern Sudan, aviation officials and aid workers in neighbouring Kenya said today. The Czech-designed Let-410 twin-engined turboprop crashed on take-off from Jiech in Western Upper Nile yesterday, the aid workers said, adding the dead included the pilot and an education co-ordinator. There was no immediate word on the cause of the crash. The co-pilot and four passengers injured in the incident were due to be flown to Kenya for treatment later today. The Let-410, a 1970s-era light commuter plane, has a payload capacity of 19 passengers, according to aviation websites. — Reuters.

London, May 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft carrying students on a field trip crashed in southern Sudan, killing 12 children, a pilot from New Zealand and an adult chaperone, an aid worker said today. The Czech-built LET-410 crashed shortly after takeoff yesterday on a trip between two towns in the Upper Nile province, said Dan Eiff, the Sudan co-ordinator for Norwegian People's Aid. "It was in the air and then it just collapsed. I think the engine failed," said Mr Eiff, who witnessed the crash near Nur. One of the pilots, from New Zealand, was killed, while the other survived. Four Sudanese children also survived and all were taken to a hospital for treatment, Mr Eiff said. The aircraft belonged to a charter company and regularly operated in Sudan, other aid workers said.

CRASH, MANILA AREA, PHILIPPINES

London, May 12 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A Philippine TV station reported today that at least 14 people were killed after a small aircraft crashed into the waters near Manila coast, but the accident has not yet been officially confirmed. The ABS-CBN TV station said that the aircraft carrying 29 passengers and five crew crashed at around 0600 hrs, yesterday. The TV quoted a witness as saying that thick smoke was coming from the aircraft minutes before it crashed into the water and the pilot apparently failed in making an emergency landing. After hours of search operations, rescue teams discovered 19 survivors and 14 bodies, including a three-year-old boy, a South Korean and a crew member, the report said. It also said that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had ordered an immediate investigation into the incident and designated Transportation

and Communications secretary to oversee the search and rescue work in person. The report said that the aviation authorities attributed the engine failure as one of the possible reasons for the crash of the aircraft, which had been in service for at least 16 years.

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Engine failure might be the reason why a plane with 29 passengers and five crewmen onboard plunged into the waters near Manila on Monday morning (May 10), a ranking official said. The ill-fated plane took off under fine weather condition, and there was no malfunction report from the pilots of the plane until it crashed, Assistant Secretary Adelberto Yap of the Philippine Air Transportation Office said. Yap confirmed that 13 people have been rescued so far, saying that the cause of the accident would come out in two or three days since the pilot, the co-pilot and three air hostesses are among the survivors. The survivors also include three Filipinos and an Australian. Yap said the actual number of survivors might be higher since the confirmed 13 were pulled out of water by several vessels, and there might be unaccounted survivors. Divers are still checking the wrecked plane, but Yap discounted the possibility to find more survivors there. The latest report in Manila said four have been confirmed dead from the disaster. The Fokker plane crashed shortly after it took off from a domestic airport. The co-pilot has been taken to the nearby Philippine Navy office for interrogation while the plane had to be ditched at the bay area after the attempt to bring it back to the airport failed. The plane crashed at around 0600 hrs on Monday. Chinese and Southern Korean passengers were reportedly onboard. It disappeared from Radar screen 30 minutes later.

CRASH, SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE AREA, COLOMBIA

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: Four people were killed and another four injured yesterday when a light aircraft which had been due to land at San Jose del Guaviare airport, in Colombia's southern jungles, crashed for unknown reasons, police said. The aircraft, operated by private company Aral, was flying from Miraflores to San Jose when it crashed six km from the airport. Guaviare's police commander, Col Hernando Gotia Gomez, said the four dead included the pilot, Carlos Enrique Campo, while the injured were two adults and two minors. Another of the deceased was identified as Luis Eduardo Suarez Melo, a regional political leader and candidate for Miraflores' mayorship in elections to be held in a few weeks. The four injured were taken to San Jose hospital. A commission is to investigate the cause of the accident.

CRASH, WINTON, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Six people escaped serious injury when their light aircraft hit an airport boundary fence after takeoff in outback Queensland today.

Police said the accident occurred at 0710 hrs with the single engine Piper Saratoga experiencing difficulties just as it left the tarmac, veering off the runway and crashing into the fence at Winton, south-west of Charters Towers. It had been bound for Boulia on a routine trip. The occupants suffered only bruising and shock. The Civil Aviation Safety Authority is investigating the crash.

EMERGENCY LANDING, FAIRBANKS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, ALASKA, UNITED STATES

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A Cargolux 747-400 made an emergency landing at Fairbanks International Airport yesterday evening. The pilot heard a pop during takeoff from the airport, and the plane had a fireball in one of its engines. The pilot dumped fuel southwest of Fairbanks and returned to the airport. The 747 had no visible damage, no one was hurt. "If you didn't know it, it would look like a normal four-engine landing," said George Earp, a safety inspector with the Federal Aviation Administration who was called to the airport. The aircraft was carrying a pilot, co-pilot and freight. The reason for the engine trouble is still under investigation. Preliminary investigation suggests a compressor stall in engine No. 1, Earp said. The aircraft departed between 1930 and 2000 hrs, officials said. The emergency landing did not appear to interrupt airport operations. At least two Alaska Airlines aircraft landed while the Cargolux aircraft was still in flight.

EMERGENCY LANDING, PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, MAINE, UNITED STATES

London May 11 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: An American Eagle aircraft bound Bangor, sustained engine failure and had to be diverted to the Portland International Jetport. A scheduled 65-minute flight from Boston to Bangor turned into an all-night voyage yesterday for passengers aboard American Eagle Flight 4645. Their first aircraft turned back to the gate because of mechanical problems. Passengers then boarded a second aircraft, leaving Boston about 90 minutes behind schedule at 2309 hrs. The twin-engine Embraer 135 regional jet landed in Portland less than 30 minutes later, diverted there after the aircraft's right engine failed. There were 38 passengers aboard the aircraft. None were injured in the landing, Bailey said. American Eagle paid for passengers to stay overnight in a hotel before they continued to Bangor by bus.

EMERGENCY LANDING, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: An aircraft laden with flammable cargo landed safely tonight after one of its engines failed en route to Sydney Airport. Police said emergency services were alerted about 2130, AEST, when the pilot of the twin-engined cargo aircraft reported an engine failure. The aircraft, with only the pilot on board, landed without

incident on schedule at 2145 hrs. Airport safety officials declared the aircraft safe at 2200 hrs, police said. AAP

EMERGENCY LANDING, WATERLOO REGIONAL AIRPORT, IOWA, UNITED STATES

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A single-engine aircraft landed safely at the Waterloo Regional Airport shortly before noon this morning following a harrowing drama for a pilot and three passengers. All on board walked away uninjured, despite an apparent malfunction in the hydraulic system that caused difficulty in the lowering of at least one landing gear. The aircraft landed without incident and taxied to Livingston Aviation, a private flight service at the airport. No information was immediately available as to who was on board or whether the aircraft was locally owned. The pilot reported problems at about 1015 hrs, and the aircraft was down by 1145 hrs. Airport Director Brad Hagen said he believed Waterloo was the final destination but could provide no additional details about the craft, pilot or passengers. Emergency crews, including firefighters, police officers and ambulance personnel, staged vehicles on the airfield as they anticipated the distressed craft's arrival. Police requested car traffic into the airport be shut off at about 1100 hrs, shortly after spotters on the ground confirmed problems with the aircraft's front landing gear. A Northwest Airlines commercial flight was delayed this morning, but airport officials said the delay was for non scheduled maintenance and was not related to the incident with the other aircraft. The airport was shut down during the incident.

FLIGHT SAFETY INCIDENTS, ISRAELI AIRLINE

London, May 10 — A press report, dated today, states: El Al is investigating a series of serious flight-safety incidents, including engines stalling in mid-flight. The incidents involved the engines of 747-200 aircraft, the oldest planes in El Al's fleet, which are used mainly for cargo transport. El Al has launched an internal investigation into each case. In one of the more serious incidents, two of the four engines of a 747-200 stalled while the plane was on an international route over Europe. The pilot declared a state of emergency, lowered the altitude, and managed to restart the engines. "The malfunction did not for one moment endanger the plane, the crew, or the cargo, and it is now undergoing the normal examination that occurs after any incident," El Al's management said.

GROUNDING OF AIRCRAFT, PAKISTAN

Karachi, May 13 — Pakistan state owned airlines, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), said two of its aircrafts were grounded for detailed checking and repair of technical faults, at Islamabad International and Karachi International Airports respectively yesterday. A source at the national airlines said flight PK 301 from Islamabad to Karachi was

retained at the airport following the detection of a technical fault, in the early morning. Passengers were later transferred to another flight. Similarly, flight PK 540, bound for Monjidar from Karachi had to return to Karachi after half an hour after senses showed a fault during the flight. Passengers were later sent on another flight. Both the Airbus and Fokker were being repaired. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

GROUNDING OF LARGE TANKER AIRCRAFT, UNITED STATES

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: The US Forest Service said today it would cost at least \$26 million to replace large air tankers grounded this week because of safety concerns. Officials hope to offset the loss of 33 air tankers with helicopters, single-engine tankers and military aircraft, said Mark Rey, the Agriculture undersecretary who directs forest policy. The decision to ground the tankers was "made with considerable sadness and regret," Rey said, but it was unavoidable in the wake of an Apr 23 report by the National Transportation Safety Board that said the safety and airworthiness of the aging fleet could not be assured. The Forest Service will devise a new strategy to fight wildfires without use of the large tankers, Rey told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "We will not be short-handed. We will have to stretch to reconfigure, but we should be just fine," Rey said. Some lawmakers were unconvinced. The Forest Service and the Interior Department said yesterday they were terminating contracts with private companies for use of the former military aircraft that had been powerful weapons against wildfires. The government said other aircraft would do the jobs that the air tankers had done, but Western officials, worried about fire danger in a region plagued by continuous drought, said the loss of the aircraft compounded their problems. Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth said the big aircraft had to be taken out of service. "Safety is a core value of the firefighting community, and it is nonnegotiable," he said. The aircraft pose an unacceptable risk to flyers, firefighters on the ground, and communities near fires, he said. Between 1994 and 2002, three aircraft crashed, killing seven crew members. After two of the aircraft went down in 2002, the Forest Service grounded the contracted tanker fleet. The aircraft were returned to service after a new inspection system was developed. However, last month, the NTSB said the safety and airworthiness of the fleet still could not be assured. The agency said information on the stresses that the aircraft underwent in fighting fires was incomplete, and there were gaps in maintenance and inspection records dating back to the aircrafts' military use. The aircrafts' average age is 48 years, yet some are as old as 60 years. The aircraft were capable of dumping 1,700 to 2,500 gallons of water a minute, and were used primarily in initial attacks on fires and for protecting buildings when fires advanced to urban areas, said Dan Jiron, a Forest Service spokesman.

However, the fire could be fought with other aircraft, including water-carrying helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft akin to crop-dusters, Jiron said. These aircraft can make much more accurate attacks, he said. Also, the smaller aircraft can make repeat trips from water sources, said Rose Davis, a spokeswoman for the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. "A helicopter can load and return 1,500 gallons four to five times as fast as an air tanker," she said. In any case, most of the effort to fight wildfires is not done from the air, Davis said. "Fires are put out on the ground," she said. "Air support means support." Firefighters have enough resources for the initial attack and can add helicopters and small fixed-wing aircraft later if needed, she said. Jiron said that firefighters can also activate eight military Lockheed C-130 (Hercules) aircraft equipped to dump water on fires. Despite the government's confidence that firefighters can cope without the aircraft tankers, some officials in the West remained worried and were examining alternatives.

HELICOPTER CRASH, GLENDALE AREA, OREGON, UNITED STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: An experienced Australian pilot died this morning when the rotor blades on the Kaman Kmax K-1200 lift helicopter he was flying struck a tree and sent him down a steep slope. At around 0800, James Ladd, 41, of Erowal Bay, New South Wales, Australia, was removing timber for Superior Helicopter LLC at a logging site 14 miles north-west of Glendale. The job was part of the Bear Pen timber sale on Bureau of Land Management property along Bobby Creek. Andy Mills, Superior's assistant general manager, said Ladd had been working for the corporation for about a year. He was a highly experienced pilot with over 9,700 flight hours in helicopters. Ladd was in the process of retrieving logs with a hydraulic grapple at the time of the incident, Mills said. Eyewitnesses on the ground reported the aircraft's rotor blades struck a tree before crashing and sliding down a steep slope. The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the accident. The helicopter, valued at \$4.5 million, was destroyed, Mills said.

HELICOPTER CRASH, MOSEDALE AREA, CUMBRIA, UNITED KINGDOM

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A flying lesson almost ended in tragedy today when a helicopter went down on a remote hillside on the edge of the Lake District. Two men - a learner pilot and his instructor - crashed two miles from the village of Mosedale, which is just to the north of the A66 trunk road. Air accident investigators are on their way to find out what caused the crash.

N304PA

London, May 11 — Piper PA-44-180 (Seminole), N304PA, crashed near Julian, California, at 0355, May 10, while on a flight from Phoenix, Arizona,

to Carlsbad, CA. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

London, May 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Two men were found dead today in the wreckage of an aircraft (N304PA) that crashed about 3.5 miles north of Julian The men, ages 20 and 24, were flying a twin-engine Piper from Phoenix to McClellan-Palomar Airport in Carlsbad when it was reported missing just before 2200 hrs, yesterday, said Kevin Kilday, communications supervisor for the San Diego County Sheriff's Department. The Federal Aviation Administration picked up an emergency signal from the aircraft, Kilday said, and members of the Air Force Auxiliary Civil Air Patrol found the wreckage around 0010 hrs near Farmer and Volcan roads, just outside the Volcan Mountain Wilderness Preserve.

N438AT

London, May 10 — A press report, dated May 9, states: An American Eagle ATR 72 tipped and skidded off a runway today when one of its tyres blew out upon touching down at San Juan's main airport, seriously injuring at least 13 people on board, authorities said. The incident involving American Eagle Flight 5401 happened at about 1450, ET, at Luis Munoz Marin International Airport, Port Authority executive director Miguel Soto Lacourt said. The Super ATR, carrying 22 passengers and four crew members from the west coast city of Mayaguez, was landing when one of the tyres blew out, Soto said. The aircraft lost its balance and one of its wings struck the runway. The pilot did not communicate with the control tower to request help or complain of any trouble prior to landing, Soto said. The 13 injured, including the pilot and co-pilot, were taken to local hospitals in stable condition, he said. Others were treated at the scene for minor cuts and bruises. Some of the injured were taken out on stretchers and others wore neck braces. The plane was tilted on its port side at an odd angle off a runway with dozens of emergency services vehicles at the scene. The port wing appeared to be damaged. One of the airport's two runways was shut down but flights were arriving and taking off on the other runway. Flights were running on schedule, Soto said. The aircraft sustained "substantial damage" but the fuselage was intact, Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said. The FAA was investigating the cause of the hard landing, she said. A team of investigators from the National Transportation Safety Board was also expected to arrive later today, Soto said. The plane, which was manufactured in 1995, would remain on the runway until NTSB officials arrived in San Juan.

London, May 11 — ATR 72-212, N438AT, operated by American Eagle, made a hard landing at San Juan, Puerto Rico, at 1850, May 9, following a flight from Mayaguez, and experienced landing gear collapse. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. Thirteen of the 26 persons on board were injured, one seriously.

N45P

London, May 8 — A press report, dated May 7, states: A small antique twin-engines Cessna T-50 seaplane crashed at the edge of a lake this afternoon, killing the pilot, officials said. No one else was inside the seaplane, which had pontoons but crashed into a wooded area near Massapoag Lake, about 25 miles southwest of Boston, Norfolk district attorney spokesman David Traub said. FAA spokesman Jim Peters said it was not clear whether the pilot was attempting to land on the lake. The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating.

London, May 11 — Cessna T-50, N45P, crashed near Sharon, Massachusetts, at 1846, May 7. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

N60618

London, May 12 — Eurocopter AS 350B (Ecureuil), N60618, operated by Temsco Helicopters Inc, crashed into water near Skagway, Alaska, at 2318, May 11, while on a local flight from Skagway. The aircraft was destroyed. The five persons on board were not injured.

N7123R

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A 74-year-old retired chemist from Elgin Crossroads is expected to recover after his aircraft crashed yesterday. Thomas Johnston is hospitalised at ECM Hospital in Florence. Investigators are still looking into the cause. But witnesses and other pilots say he was attempting to land and was too low, clipping some trees, which caused the aircraft to nosedive. The aircraft crashed around 1245 yesterday afternoon. Friends said Johnston has been flying for the past 30 years and is very experienced. He was flying his 4-seater Cherokee 140. A golfer who was on the Valley Landing Golf Course just next to where the aircraft crashed saw the whole thing. And says after the aircraft took a nosedive, spun around and did a somersault.

London, May 12 — Piper PA-28-140 (Cherokee Cruiser), N7123R, crashed near Courtland, Alabama, at 1745, May 11. The one person on board was seriously injured.

N91514

London, May 6 — A press report, dated May 5, states: A couple whose four-seater single-engine Mooney M20M (N91514) crashed into a lake at an apartment complex were a husband and wife from Arizona, a family member confirmed. Jerome Forrest Kurtz and Carolyn Kurtz of Payson were killed in the accident, their son Craig Kurtz said. Rescue divers located one body shortly after the aircraft went down in a shallow lake at the Brampton Moors apartments Monday afternoon (May 3). The plane clipped trees and barely missed the apartment complex before crashing into the lake and breaking apart. Remains of the second victim were pulled up yesterday by divers from beneath about three feet of water after the water was partially drained, said Susan Moran, a spokeswoman for the town of Cary. Craig Kurtz said his parents were on vacation

and planned to stop in Raleigh as part of a whimsical quest to visit the capital of every state. Monday's crash happened shortly after the plane's pilot sent a distress signal to the tower at Raleigh-Durham International Airport. About five miles from the airport, the plane suddenly veered off course and crashed. Authorities said the pilot made two attempts to land, but aborted both attempts. The aircraft was headed from Columbia, S.C., to Raleigh, said Kathleen Bergen, an FAA spokeswoman in Atlanta. It was registered in Delaware to TLSB Inc.

XC-JEH

London, May 10 — Twin Commander 840, XC-JEH, was destroyed following a loss of control after an encounter with weather while in cruise flight near Milpillas, State of Aguas Calientes, Mexico, at 1600, local time, May 2. The pilot, first officer and the five passengers on board were killed. The flight originated from Ciudad Juarez, State of Chihuahua, at approximately 1400 hrs, and was destined for the Mexico City International Airport, Mexico City.

Product Recalls



GENERAL MOTORS DAEWOO VEHICLES, KOREA

London, May 7 — A press report, dated today, states: GM Daewoo Auto & Technology Co will recall over 320,000 units of its Cielo, Espero and Nexia sedans due to a manufacturing defect, the Ministry of Construction and Transportation said today. The models are being recalled because of defective seat belts which don't lock properly, according to the ministry.

UNIVERSAL ELECTRIC OUTLET ADAPTOR PLUGS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, May 11 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of about 187,000 Universal Electric Outlet Adaptor Plugs in voluntary co-operation with E & B Giftware LLC, of Yonkers, N.Y. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. Multiple metal plugs can be extended from the product at one time. Consumers touching an exposed plug while the adaptor is inserted into an electric outlet can receive an electric shock. These universal electric outlet adaptor plugs were sold as either the Worldwide or Universal Adaptor Plug under four brand names: Samsonite, Royal Traveller, American Tourister and El Portal. "MODEL: 1804" is written on the bottom of the adaptor plug. They contain three adaptor plugs which are used by travelers world-wide to connect electrical plugs into electrical sockets. The adaptors include a hard plastic case which houses the three different plugs. A knob on the top of the product

Product Recalls/Port Conditions

can be turned to extend the plugs for use. Sold at travel stores, airport gift shops, gift stores, luggage stores and discount department stores nation-wide

from January 2001 through March 2004 for about \$13. Manufactured in China. Stop using the adaptor plugs immediately and call E & B Giftware

LLC for a replacement item of comparable value or a refund. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Port Delays

Country/Port	Date of report	No.of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbot Point	12-May-2004	Coal: 1 vessel loading; 5 vessels due by 23/5; no delays expected.
Dalrymple Bay	12-May-2004	Coal: 3 vessels berthed, 8 anchored; 38 vessels due by 28/6; vessels berthing in order of cargo availability; depending on type of cargo required, delays of up to 14 days can be expected. Following a roof collapse earlier this year at Moranbah North mine, Anglo Coal advise that they do not expect production to resume before end-May, with the first shipment in June.
Hay Point	12-May-2004	Coal: 1 vessel loading, 5 anchored; 12 vessels due by 21/5; up to 8 days berthing delay expected subject to cargo availability and berth congestion. Berth No. 1 will be closed until 17.00 hrs. 12/5.
Gladstone	12-May-2004	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 3 vessel berthed, 10 anchored; 27 vessels due by 5/6; up to 12 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Shiploader No. 1 will be shut down from 11.00 hrs. 11/5 to 21.00 hrs. 12/5 for testing and belt maintenance. Barney Point: 6 vessels due by 12/6; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Grain: 1 vessel berthed loading sorghum; no delays expected.
Newcastle	12-May-2004	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 2 vessels loading, 23 waiting; 7 vessels due by 15/5; Dykes 4+5: 2 vessels loading, 10 waiting; 7 vessels due by 15/5; no unallocated vessels due; 10-14 days delay expected prior to berthing due to planned maintenance at Kooragang terminal and heavy shipping schedule. Coal: At 10.45 hrs. 12/5 the duty pilot classified the harbour entrance as "heavy" and imposed restrictions on inward and outward movement. A further entrance inspection was carried out prior to the next inward movement at 12.00 hrs. At 12.30 hrs. the pilot again classified the entrance as "heavy", with the restrictions remaining in place. The next inspection will be carried out at 06.30 hrs. 13/5. Grain: 5 vessels due by 23/5, all to load wheat; up to 1 day's delay at present due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Kembla	12-May-2004	Coal: 1 vessel loading; 9 vessels due by 20/6; CB1: 4 vessels due by 3/7; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Grain: 4 vessels due by 1/6, all to load wheat; up to 5 days delay at present due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Hedland	12-May-2004	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel berth and loading, 3 anchored; 5 vessels due by 21/5; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; "B" berth: 1 vessel berth and loading, 3 anchored; 4 vessels due by 19/5; 1-3 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island): 1 vessel berthed and loading; 1 vessel due 10/5; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; Westyard "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 anchored; 3 vessels due by 16/5; up to 3 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Due to heavy demand for product, acute cargo shortages are being experienced at wharf stockpiles. Vessels will continue to berth as product becomes available.
Dampier	12-May-2004	Iron ore: Parker Point: force majeure is still in effect; 1 vessel berthed and loading, 3 anchored of which 1 awaiting product; 6 vessels due by 23/5; 1-4 days delay due to berth congestion and cargo availability; cargo shortages are evident and vessels may berth out of turn; East Intercourse Island: force majeure still in effect; 4 vessels anchored; 7 vessels due by 22/5; up to 8 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; cargo shortages are evident, delays are anticipated and vessels may berth out of turn.
Port Walcott	12-May-2004	Iron ore: force majeure is still in effect; 2 vessels berthed and loading; 18 vessels due by 29/5; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Melbourne	12-May-2004	1 vessel loading wheat; 4 vessels due by 7/6, 3 to load wheat, 1 barley; up to 7 days delay at present due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Geelong	12-May-2004	Grain: 5 vessels due by 20/5, 3 to load barley, 2 wheat; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Portland	12-May-2004	Grain: 1 vessel berthed to load wheat, 1 anchored to load canola; 5 vessels due by 10/6, 1 to load wheat, 1 wood-chips, 1 canola, 2 barley; up to 2 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Port Adelaide	12-May-2004	Grain: No. 27 berth: 14 vessels due by 30/6, 1 to load faba beans, 2 canola, 9 wheat, 2 barley; up to 6 days delay expected due to berth congestion.
Walleroo	12-May-2004	Grain: 3 vessels due by 23/5, 1 to load peas, 1 barley, 1 wheat; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Pirie	12-May-2004	No. 2 berth: no vessels scheduled. Berth will be closed to shipping from 1/7 to 9/8 for electrical upgrade in silo control room.
Port Lincoln	12-May-2004	Grain: 8 vessels due by 30/6, 2 to load wheat, 3 barley, 1 canola, 1 wheat/canola, 1 peas; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion.
Geraldton	12-May-2004	Grain: 4 vessels due by 29/5, all to load wheat; up to 1 day's delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion.

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Port Conditions

Kwinana	12-May-2004	Grain: 10 vessels due by 1/6, 9 to load wheat, 1 other grain; 1-4 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Albany	12-May-2004	Grain: 5 vessels due by 25/5, 3 to load wheat, 2 barley; 1-7 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Esperance	12-May-2004	Grain: 2 vessels due by 18/5, 1 to load wheat, 1 barley; 1-3 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Port Latta	12-May-2004	Iron ore: 3 vessels due by 20/5; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	10-May-2004	Eleven vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (1 profiles, 1 metal, 1 billets, 3 coils, 1 steel sheet, 1 containers), 3 discharging (1 billets, 1 containers, 1 zinc concentrate); 5 vessels waiting in roads, of which 4 to load (1 empty, 1 bagged ammonium nitrate, 1 copper cathodes, 1 coils), 1 for repairs; 8 vessels due of which 3 to load (2 coils, 1 containers), 2 to discharge (1 containers, 1 coal), 3 passenger vessels.
Egypt		
Alexandria	10-May-2004	Thirty-one vessels berthed (loading/discharging) of which 23 general cargo, 1 bulker, 3 containers, 2 reefers, 2 tankers; 8 vessels at inner anchorage, 11 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	10-May-2004	Fourteen vessels berthed (loading/discharging) of which 8 general cargo, 1 bulk carrier, 1 tanker, 4 containers; 2 vessels at outer anchorage, 1 at inner anchorage.
Suez Canal	10-May-2004	Nineteen vessels transiting Northbound, 22 Southbound.
Georgia		
Batumi	7-May-2004	Oil products: 2 vessel in roads, both to load, of which 1 fuel oil, 1 gasoil; 5 vessels due by 13/5, all to load, of which 2 crude oil, 1 gasoil, 1 naphtha, 1 gasoline.
Supsa	7-May-2004	Oil products: 1 vessel waiting in roads to load crude oil; 1 vessel due 23/5 to load crude oil.
Israel		
Haifa	11-May-2004	No labour problems. One bulker discharging at berth, 10 vessels loading/discharging at berth (4 containers, 2 car carriers, 4 tankers); 4 vessels waiting at anchor to load/discharge (1 containers, 3 tankers); 3 vessels under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 17 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Ashdod	11-May-2004	No labour problems. Two general cargo vessels loading at berth, 14 vessels discharging at berth (13 general cargo, 1 bulker), 5 vessels loading/discharging at berth (4 containers, 1 tanker); 5 vessels waiting at anchor to load/discharge (4 containers, 1 tanker); 1 vessel under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 21 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Kazakhstan		
Aktau	7-May-2004	Oil products: 4 vessels in roads, all waiting to load crude oil; 4 empty vessels due by 7/5.
Pakistan		
Karachi	10-May-2004	One naphtha vessel loading at berth, 4 vessels discharging at berth (1 general cargo, 2 jute, 1 phosphate), 2 container vessels loading/discharging at berth; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 crude oil, 1 MEG); no vessel under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 3 vessels due (2 containers, 1 general cargo), with no berthing delays expected.
Port Qasim	10-May-2004	Two vessels discharging at berth (1 palm oil, 1 iron ore); 3 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 4 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (3 containers, 1 fuel oil).
Panama		
Panama Canal	10-May-2004	Tentative dates for lock/lane outages are scheduled as follows: Miraflores lock: 31/5-10/6 (11 days); Pedro Miguel lock: 5-15/7 (11 days); Gatun lock: 31/5-10/6 (11 days), 5-15/7 (11 days), 9-19/8 (11 days), 13-23/9 (11 days), 18-28/10 (11 days).
Russia		
Novorossiysk	10-May-2004	Fifteen vessels in port operating, of which 14 loading (1 bulk urea/bulk NPK, 1 HBI, 2 scrap, 1 pipes/coils/vehicles, 2 pipes, 1 steel, 1 bulk urea, 1 containers, 1 aluminium, 1 bulk NPK, 1 UAN solution, 1 diesel oil), 1 discharging bulk sugar; 6 vessels waiting in roads, of which 3 to discharge bulk sugar, 3 to load (1 scrap, 1 pig-iron, 1 diesel oil); 57 vessels due of which 51 to load (4 scrap, 4 steel billets, 3 HBI, 4 pig-iron, 1 equipment, 5 copper, 7 coils, 1 coils/timber, 2 slabs, 3 steel sheet, 1 DRI, 2 zinc, 4 aluminium, 1 coils/steel sheet/vehicles, 2 pipes, 1 flowers, 2 bulk urea, 1 bulk NPK, 1 diesel oil, 2 cellulose), 3 to discharge (2 bulk sugar, 1 miscellaneous), 3 to discharge/load containers. Oil terminal: 2 tankers berthed, both loading crude oil; 3 tankers in roads, all to load crude oil; 10 tankers due, all to load, of which 8 crude oil, 1 fuel oil, 1 diesel oil.
Tuapse	10-May-2004	Oil products: 2 vessels berthed, of which 1 loading gasoil, 1 naphtha; 3 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 2 gasoil, 1 crude oil; 3 vessels due by 9/5, of which 1 to load naphtha, 2 gasoil.

Port Conditions

Sri Lanka

Colombo	10-May-2004	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, and vessels loading at Northern and Eastern ports of Sri Lanka are granted priority berthing. Conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 and 2 are facing navigation delays. Nine container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 21 vessels discharging at berth (13 containers/feeders, 2 bagged sugar, 1 steel cargo, 1 bagged soya bean meal, 1 bulk LPG, 1 bagged cement, 2 bulk cement); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 containers/feeders, 1 bulk cement); 3 vessels dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders, 1 at new tanker berth; 7 container/feeder vessels due, with no delays expected.
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Turkmenistan

Turkmenbashi	7-May-2004	Oil products: 4 vessels berthed of which 2 completed loading (1 gasoil, 1 kerosene), 1 loading gasoline, 1 to discharge crude oil; 1 vessel due 7/5 to load gasoline.
Okarem		Oil products: 1 vessel berthed loading crude oil; 2 vessels in roads, both waiting to load crude oil.

Ukraine

Odessa	7-May-2004	Eleven vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (5 metal, 1 scrap, 1 ferro alloy, 1 equipment), 2 discharging (2 luggage, 1 building materials), 1 discharging/loading containers; 3 vessels in roads, of which 1 to load paper, 1 to discharge sugar, 1 to discharge/load containers; 68 vessels due, of which 34 to load (25 metal, 1 pig-iron, 1 metal/wood, 1 corn, 2 wood, 1 coal, 2 ferro alloy, 1 metal/ferro alloy), 8 to discharge (5 metal, 1 citrus, 1 bananas, 1 oil), 26 to discharge/load containers.
Mariupol	7-May-2004	Ten vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 3 steel, 1 sulphur, 2 coal, 3 fire-clay, 1 fire-clay/kaolin; 1 coal vessel undergoing survey; 3 vessels in roads, of which 2 to load (1 steel, 1 fire-clay), 1 to discharge equipment; 40 vessels due, of which 39 to load (21 steel, 1 ferrous metals, 13 coal, 1 coke, 2 fire-clay, 1 sulphur), 1 to discharge/load containers/fire clay.
Ilichevsk	7-May-2004	Eight vessels in port operating, of which 7 loading (3 steel products, 2 equipment, 1 cardboard, 1 ore), 1 under repairs; 4 vessels in roads, of which 2 to load (1 oil, 1 petroleum), 1 to discharge tobacco, 1 to discharge/load containers; 16 vessels due, of which 12 to load (10 steel products, 2 oil), 4 to discharge (3 ore, 1 steel products).

United States

Houston	11-May-2004	Cargill terminal: 2-3 days delay expected.
Galveston	11-May-2004	ADM-Farmland terminal: 2-3 days delay expected.
New Orleans	11-May-2004	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: 3 days delay expected; Cargill-Westwego: 1 day's delay expected; ADM/Ama: 2 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: no delays; ADM/Destrehan: 2 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 2 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 1 day's delay expected; Peavey/Paulina: 4 days delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: 2 days delay expected.
Columbia River	11-May-2004	The John Day lock will be closed for 12 hours daily, excluding Sundays from 08:00-20:00 from 12 April to 5 June.
Tacoma, WA	11-May-2004	Temco terminal: 1 day's delay expected.
Kalama, WA	11-May-2004	Kalama export terminal: 4 days delay expected.
Vancouver, WA	11-May-2004	United Harvest terminal: 2 days delay expected.
Portland, OR	11-May-2004	Columbia Grain terminal: 2 days delay expected.

Yemen

Hodeidah	9-May-2004	Berths 5 and 7 are occupied; 2 vessels berthed (1 containers, 1 wheat), none anchored; expected waiting times: general cargo/bagged cargoes/containers: no delays; bulk cargoes: up to 2 days.
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