

Massive costs of Tricolor salvage bode ill for Hyundai No. 105

JUDGING by the spiralling cost of clearing the wreck of the car carrier **Tricolor**, it was yesterday looking unlikely that the **Hyundai No. 105** would be salvaged unless it is demanded by the Indonesian authorities.

The **Tricolor** project is proving to be one of the most costly and complex salvage operations ever attempted.

But the consortium responsible for removing the sunken car carrier from the middle of the English Channel and the hundreds of luxury vehicles still on the seabed will not make any money from the huge undertaking.

Final bill

Under the terms of their contract, salvors will be paid 45m, Lloyd's List understands, but the final bill is expected to be much higher because of the length of time taken.

By the time the mangled remains of the **Tricolor** and 2,800 cars it was carrying are finally removed, it will be

almost two years since the accident — assuming salvage work this summer goes according to plan.

The 15,536 dwt **Tricolor** was involved in a collision in December 2002, and capsized within about 30 minutes, raising questions about the design of these ships that do not have to comply with the stability rules required for passenger ro-ros which were brought in after the **Herald of Free Enterprise** tragedy.

Nightmare

The ship also created a navigational nightmare as the hull was hit by two other vessels in the days following the initial impact.

Because the ship was on its side in the middle of some of the world's busiest shipping lanes, the French authorities ordered its removal.

The vessel's owner, Wilh Wilhelmsen, and P&I club Gard signed a contract with Smit Salvage, Scaldis Salvage & Marine Contractors, URS Salvage &

Maritime Contracting, and Multiship Salvage.

With the ship, lying some 20 miles off shore and in 30 m of water, too heavy and badly damaged to be lifted in one piece, the consortium sliced it into nine sections last summer and was able to remove five before the suspension of work during the winter.

Worse state

Salvage operations resumed at the start of the month, but with the wreck in a much worse state, the rest of the debris will be removed from the sea floor with a grab.

The work is expected to be completed in September.

The **Tricolor** operation is thought to be the second most expensive salvage operation ever, topped only by the Russian submarine **Kursk**.

Janet Porter
Lloyd's List Editorial

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

| Vessel | Type | Flag | Class | GT | DWT | Bit | Casualty |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------|-------|--------|--------|------|---|
| <i>AN LU JIANG</i> | general | CHN | CS | 9,182 | 15,210 | 1978 | Grounded after entering Chittagong outer anchorage May 11. Water ingress to hatches. Divers trying to locate and seal holes. Towed to sea May 12 where struck submerged object and sunk. 600 tonnes bunker oil extracted from vessel. Cargo: Bagged fertiliser (12,500 tonnes). |
| <i>BERGE NICE</i> | lpg | ATF | NV | 35,346 | 44,639 | 2003 | In collision with Seacor Laredo due that vessel having alleged machinery failure, five miles north of the entrance to the first narrowness, Punta Arenas area, May 12. Arrived Punta Arenas May 13. Sailed May 15. Arrived Quintero May 19. |
| <i>DONA ELVIRA</i> | ro-ro | PAN | — | 343 | — | 1963 | Drifting without working engines, made a distress call off the Ivorian Coast May 18. About 430 refugees are on board. Naval vessel rescued passengers May 20. Towed into Abidjan May 21. Voyage: Apapa-Lagos (NGA) to San Pedro(CIV). |
| <i>GULF HORIZON</i> | barge | USA | — | 3,859 | — | 1968 | Fire broke out while towing tug <i>Gulf Ace II</i> in lat 30 14.6N, long 72 14.6W, May 18. Still on fire May 19. All crew safely rescued. Being towed to USA with list. |
| <i>MANILA HARMONY</i> | general | PHL | NK | 4,887 | 6,095 | 1990 | In collision with <i>New Ace</i> in about lat 34 08.8N, long 125 44.6E, May 3. Heavy damage to its starboard side shell plating in way of No.1 cargo hold. Considerable amount of cargo lost overboard from damaged hold. Arrived Mokpo prev May 18 for repairs. |
| <i>MIYA</i> | general | BLZ | — | 1,205 | 1,600 | 1981 | Sank after collision with mv <i>Li Da</i> off Imabari, Japan, May 14. Crew rescued. Wreck exists in lat 34 07.9N, long 132 59.16E, May 18. Voyage: Osaka (JPN) to Haimen (CHN). |
| <i>NAUTICAL CHAMPION</i> | fishing | CAN | — | 183 | — | 1989 | A wave broke a window in the wheelhouse in lat 44 25.49N, long 56 02.18W, Apr 18. Vessel lost electronics due to water and engine failed shortly after. Coast Guard towed vessel back to port. |
| <i>NIXE</i> | ferry | ESP | — | 300 | — | 2004 | Went missing on its maiden voyage between Singapore, departed May 16, and Galle ETA May 17. Re-established contact May 20, reportedly damaged. Reported May 21 to dry-dock in Sri Lanka. Voyage: Singapore (SGP) to Spain (ESP). |
| <i>RETS TIMBER</i> | container/ general | IOM | GL | 8,183 | 10,700 | 1984 | Grounded while leaving the port of Corigliano early May 13. Being refloated by tugs. |
| <i>SEACOR LAREDO</i> | tug | CHL | AB | 1,376 | 1,283 | 1982 | Due alleged machinery failure, was in collision with Lpg <i>Berge Nice</i> , five miles north of the first narrowness, Punta Arenas area, May 12. Three crew injured. Arrived Punta Arenas May 13. |
| <i>SUNCRUZ V</i> | passenger | USA | — | 98 | — | 1996 | Had fire in engine-room three miles off Port Everglades May 16. Towed to Port Everglades for fire to be extinguished. Fire due to faulty electrical wire housing in the engine-room. Under repair at Port Everglades May 19. ETC May 26. |

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



Marine

AART MAASKANT (Netherlands)

Maassluis, May 17 — Repairs to trawler *Aart Maaskant* were completed 10 days ago and the vessel returned to service about a week ago. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

AEOLUS EXPRESS II (Greece)

London, May 17 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0830, UTC: The current voyage of ro/ro *Aeolos Express II* (5364 gt, built 2001) has been cancelled after the vessels' No.3 engine failed today, while on passage Piraeus for Syros. Vessel is now arriving at Syros, where the voyage will be terminated and the passengers transferred to alternate vessels in order to complete their passages. *Aeolos Express II* will return to Piraeus for repairs.

London, May 17 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Passenger ro/ro *Aeolos Express II* sustained damage to one of the four main engines while sailing 20 nautical miles off Syros at 1000, May 17. Vessel was performing the schedule Piraeus-Syros-Tinos-Mykonos with 79 passengers on board. At 1100 hrs, vessel arrived at Syros where departure was prohibited pending inspection of the repairs. The passengers for Tinos-Mykonos were forwarded to their destinations at 1115 hrs on passenger ro/ro *Blue Star Ithaki*.

ALEUTIAN ISLE (U.S.A.)

London, May 19 — On May 17, fishing *Aleutian Isle* (62 gt, built 1974) reported engine failure, while enroute in Johnstone Strait, BC, in lat 50 29N, long 126 13W.

ALFRED (New Zealand)

Wellington, May 17 — The skipper of fishing *Alfred*, who briefly abandoned his watch to make a cup of tea, has been fined for his role in a collision that killed a crewman two years ago. Tony Peter Phillipson was fined \$2000 by Judge David Ongley in the Nelson District Court and ordered to pay \$8000 reparation to crewman Michael Bowler's family. *Alfred* was heading out before sunrise on Oct 16, 2002, to dredge for scallops when it hit an 85-metre Seatow barge that had anchored overnight. Mr Bowler became tangled in gear and was pulled under when the vessel sank minutes later. — Lloyd's Agents.

ALPINA (Belize)

See *Kormoran*.

AN LU JIANG (China)

Chittagong, May 13 — General cargo *An Lu Jiang* (9182 gt, built 1978), 12,500 tonnes of bagged T.S.P fertiliser, arrived at Chittagong outer anchorage at 0730, local time, May 11. The vessel has grounded, as reported by Raj Shipping, local agent. Understand that water entered into the hatches. Agent with

their representative and local drivers are presently trying to locate the damaged area and endeavouring to seal of the holes to prevent further water ingress. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *An Lu Jiang* sailed Guangzhou Apr 22.)

London, May 16 — A press report, dated May 15, states: General cargo *An Lu Jiang*, carrying 12,500 tonnes of TSP fertiliser from China, is sinking at the Outer Anchorage of Chittagong port as several cracks have developed in its hull. According to CPA sources, the vessel arrived at Chittagong Outer Anchorage May 11. On the following day the vessel drifted to the coastal area of Anowara thana. Later it was dragged out to the deep sea by a CPA salvage vessel. However, it struck a submerged object, resulting in several cracks developing in the hull. Water started entering into the vessel, causing it to begin sinking. CPA sources said that, despite efforts, the authorities have failed to salvage the vessel. The current position of the *An Lu Jiang* is 10.5 miles away from the Patenga Lighthouse. It will not hamper the movement of other vessels in Chittagong port, CPA sources said.

Chittagong, May 16 — General cargo *An Lu Jiang* was approaching towards pilot boarding ground at 0424, local time, May 12, during the flood tide amid slight drizzle and moderate wind. Reportedly, the weather during that period was bad, associated with sudden rain and a squally and gusty wind. As the weather was bad, the pilot instructed the master of the vessel to go back to anchorage as the pilot vessel was not in a position to reach alongside *An Lu Jiang* due to rough sea and swell. While following the pilots instruction, the master turned the vessel to port. When he realised that he was only a few metres off No.1 hold from No.1 Green fairbuoy and after several manoeuvres with slow and full ahead, it was found that the vessel was drifting to starboard with a strong flood tide and south-westerly wind. At 0520, the master detected that the vessel wasn't making any way, but remained stationary. It was then confirmed from Radar and GPS that the vessel had grounded on a wreck in two metres of contour water, one cable off and on starboard of No.1 Green fairway buoy. The incident was reported to the port. Accordingly, the port sent tug *Kandari 10* to refloat *An Lu Jiang*. The tug arrived at 0748 and refloated the vessel at 0833. At 0850 the vessel was anchored in position Patenga Beacon to return the tugline. After taking a sounding of all tanks and bilges, it was confirmed that water had ingress into hold Nos.2, 3 and 4. At 1055 the vessel hove off anchor and reported to have re-anchored at 1139, in position Patenga Beacon. It appeared that the re-anchored position was unsafe as the vessel was losing ground and taking in water through ingress to holds No.2, 3 and 4 which was indicating that the vessel was sinking. As a result, the master reportedly proceeded to shallow water for beaching the vessel for possible hull repairs. Vessel was beached in position lat 22 08.849N, long 91 37.970E, west of anchorage Bravo 1, six nautical miles

outside port limit. Understand that as many as 12 holes to the starboard side were sustained, which were patched from the outside by port divers in No.3 and 4 holds starboard side. Pumping of water from the vessel turned out futile, as *An Lu Jiang* reportedly continues to settle down in the seabed with the passage of time. Understand that some crew and their personal belongings have been shifted to a local hotel. Presently efforts are reported to be continuing to recover bunkers from the vessel to prevent an oil slick. — Lloyd's Agents.

Karachi, May 18 — Chittagong Port Authority said it has extracted 600 tonnes of bunker oil from sunken general cargo *An Lu Jiang* to save the sea from pollution and rescued its 28 crew and master on Sunday night (May 16). The vessel, laden with 12,500 tons of Triple Super Phosphate imported fertiliser, began sinking at the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port in the Bay waters last week. According to port sources, 90% of the vessel went under and only the rear portion of the vessel could be seen yesterday evening. Authorities had tried to repair the damage till Friday, but failed. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Chittagong, May 18 — Local agent, Raj Shipping Agency, reports: General cargo *An Lu Jiang* is presently in unsafe condition, as the sea water reportedly reached very close to accommodation. We further understand master and all other crews have returned to shore. Understood one generator stopped functioning due to forward trim being increasing gradually. Prevailing weather condition gradually worsening, due to monsoon which has already started. According to Meteorological Department, storm warning signal No. 3 is being hoisted and sea is rough/heavy swell, accompanied with monsoon gusts and rain. — Lloyd's Agents.

Karachi, May 18 — Chittagong Port Authority said this afternoon that general cargo *An Lu Jiang* had completely sunk and is a total loss. A source at CPA pointed out that a small quantity of bunker/heavy oil could not be syphoned out due to sinking of vessel. Current position of vessel is 10.5 miles away from the Patenga Lighthouse waters at the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port. A committee is yet to be formed to ascertain the cause of sinking and future action programme. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

AN PING 6 (China)

London, May 15 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0925, UTC: Following received from master of bulk *Heraklia* (35063 gt, built 1982), SWYR, dated today: Our vessel departed Qinhuangdao today and at 1015 hrs, the local pilot disembarked. At 1040 hrs, there was a violent collision, when our vessel was struck on the starboard side by the forecastle of bulk *An Ping 6* (24389 gt, built 1987), BPOF, which had just departed from Qinhuangdao anchorage. The collision occurred in lat 39 52.1N, long 119 38.6E. *Heraklia* sustained damage to No 3 hold, No 3 topside tank on the starboard side and No 3 bottom water ballast tank, on the

starboard side. *Heraklia* is currently at an anchorage. The local port authorities, vessels' owners and class society have been informed and representatives from the class society are due on board the vessel am, tomorrow. At this stage, subject to class approval, it is anticipated the vessel will effect repairs at a facility in North China. There were no injuries to members of either crew and there has been no pollution.

London, May 15 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Bulk *An Ping 6* and bulk *Heraklia* were in collision during manoeuvres to depart from Qinhuangdao, China, yesterday afternoon. *Heraklia* sustained a hull fracture and remains anchored at the port for repairs and survey by class. There were no injuries and no pollution or water ingress.

ANDREW J. BARBERI (U.S.A.)

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: Last year's deadly crash of ferry *Andrew J. Barberi* continues to take a heavy toll on the New York city treasury. The city has already agreed to spend \$4.3 million on private lawyers with expertise in criminal and admiralty law, according to testimony yesterday at a City Council budget hearing. Those attorneys will not represent the city in some 157 civil suits seeking \$3.39 billion from the city for the Oct 15 crash that killed 11 passengers and injured dozens more. The city has settled 19 suits, paying out \$266,500. Two of the private firms will get at least \$3.7 million, while another 15 firms would share \$600,000 in contracts. Because they provide specialised services, the city was able to hire them without competitive bidding, which prompted several council members to criticize Corporation Counsel Michael Cardozo. Cardozo, who oversees 650 lawyers, said lawyers who specialise in criminal and admiralty law are not kept on staff, and outside experts had to be quickly hired when the crash happened. The crash is still being investigated by a Brooklyn federal grand jury, which could bring charges against the city and some of its employees.

ANGELIA P. (Greece)

London, May 17 — General cargo *Angelia P.* sailed Singapore 1900, May 12, destination Maputo.

ANTONIS P. (Greece)

London, May 13 — Salvage vessel *Union Beaver* recovered an anchor and chain, with a weight of about 40 tons, lost from bulk *Antonis P.* on the seabed on Flushing Roads. *Antonis P.* had to go at anchor after it had engine problems on May 8 on Flushing Roads, south of the Roeiershoofd.

AQUA SIERRA (Cyprus)

Monrovia, May 11 — General cargo *Aqua Sierra*, which arrived Monrovia Jan 14, 2003, with diesel generator problems, is still in port at Monrovia. — Lloyd's Agents.

ARION (Panama)

London, May 18 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report:

During the afternoon of May 17, general cargo *Arion* (4362 gt, built 1985) sustained a small fire in the forecastle, in material stored in that location which had spontaneously combusted. The incident was immediately attended by fire brigade and Coast Guard personnel. The fire was quickly extinguished by the crew, without the vessel sustaining damages. At the time *Arion* was in Vassiliadis drydock in the central port of Piraeus. At the time that the fire occurred, a member of the workshop crew ran to the location of the fire to assist and as a result sustained smoke inhalation. Immediately he was removed from the area and after being checked by the ambulance crew which had arrived in the area, he was sent home. The port authority has prohibited further works to take place on the vessel until the combustible materials have been removed. (Note — *Arion* arrived Piraeus Apr 29.)

ASTRIDA (Latvia)

Riga, May 14 — Small trawler *Astrida* fishing in the Baltic Sea was anchored. The last message from it was received 0014, May 10. Swedish authorities found the vessel at a depth of 27 metres. Four seamen were found dead on board, two are missing. Understand the hull has damage that looks like after a collision. According to Swedish authorities two vessels were in the same area at that time. One of them was inspected in Tallinn, but no trace of a collision found. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, May 17 — The sinking of fishing *Astrida* off the coast of Sweden last week, and the death of its crew of six, was most likely caused by a collision with a larger vessel, according to a Latvian maritime investigator. Stanislav Cakss, chief accident investigator with the Latvian Maritime Administration, said that a large hole in the vessel's side indicated the vessel sank after colliding with a larger vessel. He ruled out the possibility of an explosion on board. "It appears *Astrida* was at anchor and was waiting to pull up its nets when it was hit by a larger vessel," Mr Cakss said. He said two vessels passed through the area, 65 km south-east of the Swedish island of Oland, around the time the vessel sank. Mr Cakss said divers investigated a British vessel docked in Tallinn and found no evidence that it could have collided with *Astrida*. He said investigators would search other Baltic Sea ports in Finland, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, but did not specify which vessels would be examined. Swedish divers located four of the six crew but were only able to retrieve two of them before bad weather hampered the recovery efforts. The other two crew are still missing, but presumed dead.

AVEIRENSE (Portugal)

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

BEAR COVE POINT (Canada)

London, May 14 — Fishing *Bear Cove Point* (206 gt, built 1987) reported disabled with engine failure due to a

small explosion and requested assistance in lat 44 33.00N, long 53 43W at 2042, UTC, May 6.

**BERGE NICE
(French Southern Territories)**

See *Seacor Laredo*.

BLUE BRIDGE (Cyprus)

London, May 14 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the evening of May 12 (? May 13), while sailing from Brindisi to Kerkyra, with 68 passengers and five vehicles onboard, ro/ro/c.c. *Blue Bridge* (16537 gt, built 1976) sustained damage to the port main engine. Vessel proceeded to Igoumenitsa on one main engine, arriving at 2300 hrs, where the passengers were disembarked. They continued to their destinations on other vessels. The port authority at Igoumenitsa prohibited the vessels departure pending inspection of the repairs and issuance of class "maintain" certificate. (Note — *Blue Bridge* was reported sailing from Brindisi on May 13, for Corfu.)

London, May 15 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Ro/ro/c.c. *Blue Bridge* was permitted by Igoumenitsa port authority to sail yesterday after repairs to the damage had been performed and seaworthiness certificate had been issued.

BOKA STAR (Tonga)

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

BOSPORUS (Cyprus)

London, May 14 — Bulk *Bosporus*, which arrived Rotterdam 0805, Apr 28, in tow of tug *Alphonse Letzer* is current still in port at Rotterdam, at "2E Werkhaven".

BRITES (Portugal)

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

CALA PANAMA (Antigua & Barbuda)

Curacao, May 18 — C.c. *Cala Panama* is scheduled to remain in Curacao Drydock undergoing repairs until Jul 10. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAPE AFRICA (Taiwan)

London, May 14 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0940, UTC: The pumping of fuel from bulk *Cape Africa* should be completed today.

Rotterdam, May 14 — Following the conclusion of the first phase of bulk *Cape Africa's* salvage operation, which entailed the removal of approximately 1,800 tonnes of fuel from the bulk carrier, located some 160 miles west of Cape Town, the Joint Response Committee has been examining various options open to them regarding the repair of the holed vessel. Earlier in the operation, it was determined that the bulk carrier had a hole by way of Hold No.3 that extends approximately 20 metres by five metres. Up until the point that all pumpable fuel had been transferred off *Cape Africa*, the South African Maritime Safety Authority

stipulated to the owners that the bulk carrier was to remain a minimum of 120 miles off Cape Town. Under tow by the salvage tug *Smit Amandla*, this was complied with. SMIT Salvage has been able to remove the pumpable heavy fuel oil and have also been instructed to remove all non-essential oils. Given that no South African port can accommodate the draft of the vessel, the only viable alternative is the repair of the structural damage in a sheltered anchorage. Given the extensive nature of the damage, *Cape Africa* will have to be towed into a bay, where it will be naturally protected from adverse sea and weather conditions during the repair process. The South African Maritime Safety Authority, after consultation with the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism, has given permission to conduct this repair in False Bay, which is considered the most suitable option given its close proximity to the bulk carrier's current position, as well as the natural protection it will offer. The Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism and the South African Maritime Safety Authority subscribe to the precautionary approach as outlined in South Africa's environmental legislation. In line with this approach a series of discussions were held and analysis undertaken that lead to a number of agreements and conditions to safeguard South Africa's sensitive coastline. These include an agreement that if there was a high risk of the vessel sinking, the vessel will not be allowed to enter South Africa's nearshore coastal waters; an initial offshore location with favourable current patterns that would minimise any risk in the event of an oil spill; the removal of oil from the vessel before it is allowed closer than 120 miles from the coast; the availability of an oil pollution abatement vessel on site with additional backup vessels on standby; regular overflights by the patrol aircraft 'Kuswag VIII'; to effect repairs in False Bay and not the environmentally more sensitive Saldanha Bay - which was later also found to be too shallow for the vessels draft-; need for financial guarantees by the ship's owners; proactively putting in place measures to safeguard sea birds (particularly penguins); and agreeing on the best route for the vessel to False Bay. There are ongoing discussions between the South African Maritime Safety Authority, environmental stakeholders and salvors to ensure that any risk of environmental pollution is kept to the absolute minimum. It is appreciated by all parties concerned that False Bay is an environmentally sensitive area and that it merits taking various additional environmental precautions that will not normally be undertaken by other countries, such as removal of all oils and sealing off fuel tanks offshore. In consultation with various environmental organizations, a variety of precautionary measures will be put in place prior to the arrival of *Cape Africa* in False Bay. This includes anti-pollution measures along the coastline, the continued presence of the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism's oil pollution abatement vessel *Kuswag IV* and regular overflights by the patrol aircraft 'Kuswag

VIII', ongoing consultation with and observation by marine biologists and other such professionals, as well as any such short term measures considered prudent by environmentalists. The salvage tug *Smit Amandla* will tow *Cape Africa* from its current position, stern first, to the most suitable anchorage in False Bay - located some three kilometres south-east of Simonstown. Once anchored in position, a purpose built structure known as a cofferdam will be towed out to the location on the barge *Njord*. This structure is being built in Durban by Dormac (Pty) Ltd, the ship repairer contracted for the repair operation, and will be brought down to Cape Town in several sections by road. The *Njord* will be secured into position alongside *Cape Africa*, adjacent to the area of structural damage. The 'cofferdam', a metal structure some 26m x 11m x 1.5m in size, will be hoisted up and into position over the area of damage and held in place. The outside pressure of the water on the cofferdam assists in sealing the cofferdam against the ship's side shell plating. Once in place, it is secured to the ship's side by welding. This then creates a safe and water-free environment in which to conduct the necessary repairs - a process that will take approximately two-three weeks. — SMIT Salvage BV.

Rotterdam, May 17 — A SMIT Salvage team completed the removal of approximately 1900 tonnes of bunker fuel from bulk *Cape Africa* May 14. With the first phase of the salvage operation completed, the vessel is presently under tow, stern first, by the salvage tug *Smit Amandla*, en route to False Bay for repairs to structural damage. The convoy was 60 km from False Bay this morning and, after a further inspection by a SAMS Surveyor, will enter the Bay tomorrow - proceeding to the most suitable anchorage point, located some 3 km south east of Simon's Town, where it will be naturally protected from adverse sea and weather conditions during the repair process. Once anchored in position, the initial repair process - phase two of the salvage operation - will begin with the fitment of a structure known as a cofferdam, followed by 2-3 weeks of repair. The Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism and the South African Maritime Safety Authority subscribe to a precautionary approach and in this regard several measures are in place, including a recommendation as to the best route into the Bay for the convoy. Also in place are anti-pollution measures along the coastline, the continued presence of the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism's oil pollution abatement vessel *Kuswag IV* and regular overflights by the patrol aircraft *Kuswag VIII*, ongoing consultation with and observation by marine biologists and other such professionals, as well as any such short term measures considered prudent by environmentalists. — SMIT Salvage B.V.

London, May 18 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0945, UTC: Bulk *Cape Africa* is being towed by salvage tug *Smit Amandla* to False Bay for repairs. Its latest position as reported to us was just off False Bay.

Rotterdam, May 18 — Bulk *Cape Africa*, under tow by tug *Smit Amandla*, arrived in False Bay early this morning and by 1000 hrs the convoy was en route to the predetermined anchorage located some three kilometres off Simon's Town. Under escort by a harbour tug from Simon's Town, the convoy had reached the anchorage position by 1600 today. A SMIT Salvage team completed the removal of approximately 1,800 tonnes of bunker fuel from the vessel May 14. The second phase of the operation — the repair process — will begin with the fitment of a habitat over the area of structural damage on the bulk carrier. The vessel's condition is reported as stable and the weather outlook for the rest of the week is considered favourable. The Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism and the South African Maritime Safety Authority subscribe to a precautionary approach and in this regard several measures are in place, including anti-pollution measures along the coastline, the continued presence of the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism's oil pollution abatement vessel *Kuswag IV* and regular overflights by the patrol aircraft "Kuswag VIII", ongoing consultation with and observation by marine biologists and other such professionals, as well as any such short-term measures considered prudent by environmentalists. — SMIT Salvage BV.

CONTSHIP AUCKLAND (Liberia)

London, May 18 — Reported c.c. *Contship Auckland* (26131 gt, built 1998) was damaged as a result of striking a barge when departing from Singapore and as a result put back to Singapore for repairs. Vessel is now not expected at UK/Continental ports until around Jun 9. (Note — *Contship Auckland* loaded/discharged at various Australian ports, the last of which was Fremantle, from where it departed on May 1. Vessel arrived at Singapore on May 6 and was reported arriving again on May 7.)

London, May 18 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, dated today: C.c. *Contship Auckland* entered a floating dock within Tuas Shipyard, Singapore, on May 16 and is currently still there. At present there is no ETD listed for the vessel.

DIAMOND RAY (Malta)

Busan, May 17 — Repairs to vehicle *Diamond Ray* are still under way at Ulsan and are expected to be completed by the end of June. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

DOLPHIN II (Turkey)

London, May 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescue efforts, which started after ro/ro *Dolphin II* sank off Karpas cape in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on May 11, have been called off. Sources said today rescue efforts to find two crew members Rahmi Yildiz and Fehmi Oztekin were called off 72 hours after the accident.

DONA ELVIRA (Panama)

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: A dramatic rescue

mission is underway off the West African coast, where some 430 Liberian refugees are on board ro/ro *Dona Elvira* (343 gt, built 1963) drifting without working engines. A spotter aircraft was sent to locate the vessel followed by two rescue helicopters. Commandoes then dropped rations and drinking water down ropes dangled from the helicopters to the deck. A French naval vessel has now drawn up alongside the vessel, which had drifted 220 km off the Ivorian coast, and officers are undecided how best to proceed, either by trying to mend the broken down engine or to tow it to safety. A merchant vessel has also reportedly changed course to help the refugees, who are mostly women and children. The vessel made a distress call on Tuesday (May 18) after its engines failed 40 km from land. (Note — *Dona Elvira* was last reported sailing Apapa/Lagos May 3 for Monrovia.)

EASTWIND (Greece)

London, May 18 — Following received from the managers of bulk *Eastwind*, dated today: Vessel arrived Piraeus May 6 and is currently undergoing repairs.

EN AVANT 18 (Netherlands)

London, May 16 — Tug *En Avant 18*, length 16.47 metres, capsized on the Oude Maas off the Devo harbour near the Noordweg at Zwijndrecht about 0100, local time, May 14. The tug was towing a vessel which was bound for Dordrecht for the steam event "Dordt in Stoom" this weekend. The tug was manned by a professional mate and three volunteers of the rescue brigade of Dordrecht. They were members of the Dordtse reddingsbrigade (the Dordrecht life saving brigade). The mate acted as master and had the tug on loan from his employer for assisting vessels during the festivities. The mate is missing now after the capsizing of the tug. The other three crewmen were saved, although one was slightly hurt. Search and rescue teams are looking for the missing man and divers have already looked in the wheelhouse of the capsized tug but no result. A floating sheerlegged crane is to lift the capsized tug.

London, May 16 — About 80 people were involved in the search and rescue of the three rescued crew and the missing person from tug *En Avant 18*. Even a helicopter from the police with a special camera came to search for the missing person. So far he has not been found. The cause of the accident is still unknown.

EVERTON (Malta)

London, May 18 — Following received from the managers of crude oil tanker *Everton*, dated today: Vessel is still in Dubai Drydocks undergoing repairs.

FEI YUN HE (China)

London, May 13 — C.c. *Fei Yun He* departed from Los Angeles at 0615, May 12, destination Shanghai.

FLAMINGO (Belgium)

Zeebrugge, May 13 — Fishing *Flamingo* left the port of Bruges-Zeebrugge 0740, Dec 20, for Rotterdam with a tug. — Lloyd's Agents.

FOUR ETOILES (Italy)

London, May 15 — Bulk/oil *Four Etoiles*, in tow of tug *Ievoli White*, passed Dardanelles 1617, May 13, bound Tuzla.

GENESIS (U.K.)

Aberdeen, May 18 — Trawler *Genesis* had a number of plates replaced on outrigger and vessel sailed to Macduff 1815, Friday, May 14. — Lloyd's Agents.

GLOBAL EXPRESS NO.2 (Panama)

London, May 17 — Lpg *Global Express No.2* arrived at Hong Kong at 1404, May 16.

Manila, May 19 — Lpg *Global Express No.2* was reported to have arrived at the Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp refinery at Tabangao in Batangas city in the island of Luzon on May 13. The vessel had left Singapore on May 2 bound for Tacloban when it ran aground off Anibong Wharf in Tacloban City, Leyte island on May 7. The vessel was refloated by Salvage tug *Primo* of Manila-based Malayan Towage and Salvage Corp. on May 9. According to Malayan Towage, underwater inspection revealed no damage to the hull. Malayan Towage officials said the vessel then docked at Tacloban port to discharge its cargo. The vessel then proceeded to the Shell refinery in Batangas, arriving on May 13. After taking on cargo, the vessel left on the morning of May 14. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, May 19 — Lpg *Global Express No.2* sailed Hong Kong 1004, May 17, for Singapore.

GREAT MOON (South Korea)

London, May 19 — Bulk *Great Moon* arrived Gijon 1700, May 14, from Hay Point.

GULF ACE II (U.S.A.)

See *Gulf Horizon*.

GULF HORIZON (U.S.A.)

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire that broke out yesterday on a Horizon Offshore Inc barge *Gulf Horizon* (3859 gt, built 1968), in tow of tug *Gulf Ace II*, continues to burn, temporarily staving off the company's efforts to determine the cause of the blaze and the extent of the damage. All personnel on board the barge were evacuated to the supporting tug, and no injuries were reported. The barge was being towed about 400 miles off the coast of Georgia when the fire broke out. The barge was en route to Israel to perform a job for Israel Electric Corp. Ltd. Horizon Offshore expects that *Gulf Horizon* will not be able to perform this job and is considering moving the work to other assets within its fleet. Horizon is working with Israel Electric Co. regarding the substitution. Undamaged by the fire, the tug will offload personnel onto another vessel or bring them into port at the earliest opportunity, the company said.

London, May 19 — Following received from Coast Guard Portsmouth, Va, timed 1540, UTC: Barge *Gulf Horizon* in tow of a tug had a fire on board in lat 30 14.6N, long 72 14.6W at about 1735, UTC, May 18.

Freeport, Bahamas, May 19 — Unconfirmed information states that the fire on barge *Gulf Horizon* has burnt itself out and the barge is still afloat. Tug *Gulf Ace II* is proceeding to the US with the rescued crew and another tug has been dispatched to take the barge in tow, back to the US. — Lloyd's Agents.

HAMNAVOE (U.K.)

London, May 20 — Passenger ro/ro *Hamnao* arrived Bremerhaven May 18 from Ireland.

HAVSEL (Norway)

Reykjavik, May 17 — Understand from Akureyri harbour authorities that on completion of hull repairs, fishing *Havsel* sailed from Akureyri at 2200, local time, May 9 and returned to the hunting grounds. — Lloyd's Agents.

HERAKLIA (Greece)

See *An Ping 6*.

HYUNDAI GLORY (Panama)

Busan, May 17 — C.c. *Hyundai Glory* completed repairs at Hyundai Heavy Industry Co, Ulsan, and sailed Ulsan May 14 for Busan to load cargo. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ILKNUR 2 (Turkey)

See "Gibraltar" under "Port State Control."

IONIAN SEA (Cyprus)

Istanbul, May 17 — Bulk *Ionian Sea* (5784 gt, built 1985), Odessa for Port Said, sustained engine breakdown while transiting Dardanelles at 1200, local time, May 17. Vessel completed repairs by its own means and upon inspection, proceeded on voyage. — Lloyd's Agents.

Istanbul, May 18 — Bulk *Ionian Sea* completed necessary repairs by its own means and upon inspection, sailed from Canakkale at 1930, local time, May 17. — Lloyd's Agents.

IONIS (Greece)

London, May 14 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: At 1050, May 13, after departure from Killini for Argostoli, the master of passenger ro/ro *Ionis* (2963 gt, built 1977) advised the port authority that one of the mooring lines had caught around the propeller. The vessel with 29 passengers on board anchored outside Killini where, with the assistance of divers, the line was removed from the propeller. After a survey by the marine inspectorate the vessel was permitted to depart at 1355 hrs and continue normal scheduling.

JAG PANKHI (India)

London, May 17 — Product tanker *Jag Pankhi* was reported arriving at Apapa/Lagos on Apr 28, from Lome.

JOTUNHEIM (Malta)

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

KATRINE KROG (DIS)

London, May 15 — General cargo *Katrine Krog* sailed Copenhagen May 13 for Gdansk.

Tallinn, May 18 — General cargo *Ladoga 11* and general cargo *Katrine Krog* collided in the Sound at 2153, UTC, May 11. *Ladoga 11* subsequently arrived at Tallinn on May 14, for discharging and damage survey. The vessel had sustained damage to its starboard bulwark and No 1 hatch coaming. Following discharging of soya in bulk on May 16, the vessel proceeded to Tallinn Shipyard for repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

KORMORAN (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, May 19 — Following received from Coastguard Falmouth MRCC, timed 0827, UTC: General cargo *Kormoran* (298 gt, built 1966), Cardiff for Rotterdam, in ballast, five persons on board, was in collision with c.c. *Alpina* (2135 gt, built 1970), Newport to Riga, in ballast, eight persons on board, in lat 50 17.5N, long 05 47.8WE at 0635, UTC, today. Damage is serious but no assistance required and *Alpina* continued its voyage. *Kormoran* reported to have stopped to effect engine repairs at the time of collision. Damage limited to all above deck level and is continuing on voyage.

London, May 19 — Following received from the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE), dated today: The International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize wishes to announce that it has initiated an immediate investigation into the collision of c.c. *Alpina* with Antigua & Barbuda registered general cargo *Kormoran* in UK waters on May 19. It has instructed its General Safety Inspectors in Latvia and Holland to attend both vessels and obtain full details of this casualty. There are no reports of any crew members having been injured as the result of the collision.

KOUTALIANOS (Cyprus)

Rotterdam, May 13 — Salvors SMIT Salvage successfully refloated bulk *Koutalianos* this evening after having offloaded part of its cargo. Four cargo barges, a crane barge and tugs were employed to receive and shuttle the cargo to the terminal. The vessel is currently at anchor and an extensive dive survey is planned for tomorrow morning to establish the post grounding condition. The operation was conducted in close cooperation with local authorities. — SMIT Salvage B.V.

Alexandria, May 17 — Bulk *Koutalianos* was refloated May 13 and berthed at quay 90/1 May 14. Vessel is now discharging its cargo after the bottom hull was found to be undamaged.

LADOGA 11 (Russia)

See *Katrine Krog*.

LECONTE (U.S.A.)

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: The last of the fuel and other oil products to be removed from grounded ro/ro *Leconte* was lightered yesterday before any of it had polluted the waters of Peril Strait, authorities said. The vessel struck Cozian Reef north of Sitka early this week. The ferry remains stuck on the reef, but salvage crews consider the

vessel stabilised, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation. Estimates of the amounts of fuel, other petroleum products and lubricants aboard have changed as the efforts to save the vessel have progressed. Cmdr. John Sifling of the US Coast Guard in Juneau said yesterday night that about 8,500 gallons remained on board, including about 3,000 gallons of diesel fuel, all of it to be used to operate the badly damaged vessel if and when it is refloated. The remaining fuel and lubricants were well inside the skin of the vessel and therefore protected, Sifling said. A total of five anchors fore and aft are keeping the ferry pinned to the rocks. But it can shift with a change in weight, as it did Wednesday evening (May 12) while the fuel was being lightered, Nona Wilson, a spokeswoman for the Alaska Marine Highway System, said. The Coast Guard and the state Department of Transportation are investigating the grounding. No cause has been determined. Routine tests have shown that the four crew members on watch during the grounding had not been drinking at the time, the Coast Guard said yesterday. The principal goal now, Sifling said, is to salvage the \$30 million-\$35 million vessel, whose hull was badly gashed while the vessel was en route from Angoon to Sitka. If it were to slip off the reef, it would sink. Crowley Marine, the salvage company, was expected by yesterday evening to submit a plan for refloating, Sifling said. A specially outfitted salvage vessel from Seattle was due in Peril Strait by Saturday, he said. Crews are facing the challenge of keeping the vessel upright, said Wilson. Fifteen vehicles, most of them owned by Alaskans, remain on the ferry, safe for the time being, she said. The Marine Highway System hopes to get the vehicles off the ferry in Sitka, if the vessel can be floated and docked there. Otherwise, plans call for the vehicles to be driven off the ferry onto a barge, using a ramp. The 15 vehicles provide some of the stabilising weight, Wilson said. "So we need to bring on ballast" to compensate for their removal. "The issue here is the stability of the ship," she said. "We have to worry about the cars. We don't want the ship to move and have the cars go in the water." Attempts to move the vehicles may occur as early as Sunday, but it also could be later than that, said Wilson.

London, May 16 — A press report, dated May 15, states: Salvors have removed all 15 vehicles from ro/ro *Leconte*. Offloading began shortly after 1400 yesterday and vehicles were moved four at a time to a barge, said a Coast Guard spokesman in Juneau. They were to be taken to Sitka, about 30 miles away, last night. Salvage vessel *American Salvor* was expected on scene by noon today. Divers found two gashes on *Leconte* about eight feet apart on the port and starboard sides of the V-shape keel. Both gashes are 30 to 40 feet long. The starboard-side gash is up to two feet wide and the port-side gash is four to 12 inches wide. Breached compartments on the \$30-\$35 million vessel included the bow thruster-room and the sewage-room. No cause has been announced for the

grounding, which occurred in calm conditions. Salvors say the vessel will sink if it is moved off the reef before temporary repairs are made. Much of the work since the accident has been to stabilise and anchor the vessel. The Coast Guard has approved a preliminary plan for salvaging the ferry. The plan will be made final after the arrival of *American Salvor*. The vessel contains equipment for pumping, pressurising a compartment, patching and diving.

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Salvage crews today planned to use the high tide to help tow grounded ro/ro *Leconte* from the reef where it's been wedged for the past week. The Coast Guard also said today an announcement was imminent in the investigation of the grounding. Officials investigating the grounding have not disclosed a cause for the accident. An announcement on the investigation was being prepared for today or tomorrow. Workers spent the weekend patching and plugging leaks in the vessel and scouting a safe towing route to use for today's float. The vessel was fitted with a bridle and bracket for towing by salvage *American Salvor* and a barge at high tide at 1305 today. A tugboat will be on hand for stability. Crowley Marine Services is in charge of the salvage. The Coast Guard said the \$30 million to \$35 million vessel would sink if it moved off the reef before temporary repairs. The vessel, after being towed from the reef, was to be brought to the nearby Nismeni Cove, where a complete damage assessment was to be made, Department of Environmental Conservation spokeswoman Linda Giguere said. Officials anticipate the vessel will remain in the cove for a day or two, depending on whether additional repairs are needed, Giguere said. From there, the vessel is to be towed to Ketchikan, where it will be repaired and eventually returned to service. Alaska Marine Highway System spokeswoman Nona Wilson said the ferry will be brought back regardless of the damage because the cost of a new vessel would probably be twice the value of *Leconte*.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Leconte* broke free on its own from a reef in Peril Strait where it had been grounded for a week — more than an hour before yesterday's high tide that crews were hoping would help them tow the vessel away. Lynda Giguere, of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, said the ferry broke free at 1143 hrs and was then eased off the reef by a tug towards Nismeni Cove just to the south of Cozian Reef. At 1450 hrs the tug began towing *Leconte* to Ketchikan, where it will be repaired. Salvage crews inspected the ferry's damaged hull and determined temporary patching was adequate for the two-and-a-half-day trip. Salvage vessel *American Salvor* was escorting the vessel, Giguere said. The Coast Guard also said yesterday an announcement was imminent in the investigation of the grounding. Officials have not yet disclosed a cause. Coast Guard spokesman Dan Buchsbaum said an announcement on the investigation was being prepared. Workers spent the

weekend patching and plugging leaks in *Leconte* and scouting a safe towing route. *Leconte* had two gashes 30 to 40 feet long on the port and starboard sides of its V-shape keel. Nona Wilson of the Alaska Marine Highway System said the ferry would be returned to service.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Leconte* became grounded on a reef earlier this month because of a "navigational error," but officials stopped short of blaming the vessel's captain or crew. "That depends on all the factors involved and we don't have all of that available to us," Nona Wilson, a spokeswoman for the Alaska Marine Highway System, said yesterday. An investigation by the state Transportation Department revealed that the vessel's grounding was not due to mechanical problems, Wilson said. The Coast Guard is also investigating. Coast Guard spokesman Dan Buchsbaum declined to give details, but said "somebody will be implicated in the case." Four crew members showed no indication of alcohol use when the vessel ran aground, the Coast Guard said.

London, May 20 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 2258, UTC, May 19: Ro/ro *Leconte* is due to arrive Ketchikan in tow May 20, after which the vessel will enter dry dock.

LI DA (Mongolia)

London, May 14 — A press release from the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize, dated today, states: The International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize wishes to announce that it has initiated an immediate investigation into the sinking of general cargo *Miya* (1205 gt, built 1981), which was in collision with general cargo *Li Da* (952 gt, built 2002) off Imabari, Japan, May 14. It has instructed its General Safety Inspector in the area to attend and obtain full details of this casualty. All crew members are reported as having been rescued and are safely ashore. (Note — *Miya* sailed Osaka May 13 for Haimen.)

London, May 19 — Following received from the Japan Navigational Warnings, dated yesterday: General cargo *Miya*, sunken wreck, exists in lat 34 07.9N, long 132 59.16E.

LORD NELSON (U.K.)

London, May 15 — Following received from Coastguard London MRSC, timed 1124, UTC: Yacht *Lord Nelson* (368 gt, built 1986), bound central London, struck the southern buttress of Tower Bridge while bridge was in down position in lat 50 30N, long 00 04W, at 0909, UTC, today. Yacht was pulled clear by tug *Merit*. It was found to have sustained damage to its port side and proceeded to West India Docks escorted by the Port of London Authority. Superficial damage to Tower Bridge.

London, May 15 — A press report, dated today, states: A tall ship carrying 50 people struck Tower Bridge in central London today as its skipper tried to turn it around against a strong tide. Yacht *Lord Nelson's* skipper tried to avoid the bridge, which he realised was not going to open, just after 1000, BST. But his vessel could not turn in time and struck

the south buttress, resulting in "superficial" damage, but no injuries. Two vessels kept it steady against the tide to stop it being pushed under the bridge, while a tug pulled it free. The Port of London Authority said the damage to the ship was limited to "a scrape and a bump". There was a fear that the ship's bow could be pushed under the bridge, snapping its three masts across the road where a small crowd had gathered. But it was kept steady by a Tower Pier lifeboat and a launch vessel from the Port of London Authority, while a tug towing empty rubbish barges down the Thames towed it clear. The operators of *Lord Nelson* thought they had requested the bridge open for its journey from Southampton to West India Dock. Andy Spark, from the Jubilee Sailing Trust, said: "We believed the bridge was booked, but it didn't open - we don't know why yet. The master took avoiding action but it bumped the south tower. No one was hurt and there's only superficial damage to the yacht." But the Corporation of London, which owns Tower Bridge, said: "No lifting of the bridge had been booked in." The Marine Accident Investigation branch is to investigate the accident. *Lord Nelson*, a training vessel for both able-bodied and disabled people, has now moored at West India Dock.

M.SOMA (Cambodia)

See "Japan" under "Port State Control."

MANILA HARMONY (Philippines)

Busan, May 18 — At 0825, May 3, general cargo *New Ace* (5004 gt, built 1982), Nakhodka for Pyeongteak, with 3,004 tonnes of steel scrap, was struck on the starboard amidship by the bow of general cargo *Manila Harmony* (4887 gt, built 1990), Iligan for Incheon, with 6,300 tonnes of copra solvent extraction meals pellets in bulk. The incident occurred in approximately lat 34 08.8N, long 125 44.6E, off Mokpo. As a result of the collision *New Ace* sustained damage to its bow area in way of the forepeak tank and *Manila Harmony* sustained heavy damage to its starboard side shell plating in way of No 1 cargo hold. No oil pollution or crew injuries were reported but a considerable amount of cargo stowed in No 1 cargo hold of *Manila Harmony* was reportedly lost overboard. *New Ace* arrived Pyeongteak May 8, discharged cargo, and is presently lying berthed at Hanbo Pier, Pyeongtaek, unrepaired and under arrest. *Manila Harmony* is presently lying berthed at Mokpo for cargo discharge and the vessel will proceed to Mokpo Shipyard for permanent repairs once the cargo has been offloaded. Repairs to *Manila Harmony* will commence by May 19. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

MARCOMMANDER (Antigua & Barbuda)

Cadiz, May 17 — C.c. *Marcommander* sailed Algeciras May 16. — Lloyd's Agents.

MARGARETHA (Cyprus)

London, May 17 — C.c. *Margaretha* (9881 gt, built 2001), which sailed St. Petersburg May 12 for Hamburg, had

engine problems and was taken in tow by tugs *Bugsier 12* and *Bugsier 19*, passing Brunsbittel at 2335, May 16. The vessel has now arrived in Hamburg and the problems have been rectified.

METIN KA (Turkey)

Muscat, May 17 — chem.tank *Metin KA*, in tow of tug *Kapitan Maryskin*, sailed from her anchor position at 1915, May 3. — Lloyd's Agents.

MIYA (Belize)

See *Li Da*.

MONA LISA (Bahamas)

London, May 17 — Passenger *Mona Lisa*, which departed Venice May 13, for Naples, arrived Naples May 16, and sailed later the same day, destination Civitavecchia.

MONTE VENTOSO (Spain)

St. Vincent, CVI, May 17 — Fishing *Monte Ventoso*, EBUM, 248 gt, length 32 metres, grounded on Sal Island at Pedra Lume on a place called Parada at 0100, May 13, and to date has not yet been refloated. Tomorrow local tug *Monte Cara* will make one last attempt to refloat and if not successful they will arrange another tug with more power. — Lloyd's Agents.

NAUTICAL CHAMPION (Canada)

London, May 17 — Fishing *Nautical Champion* (183 gt, built 1989), while slow steaming in storm force wind, a wave broke a window in the wheelhouse 180 nautical miles south-east of Scatarie Island, Nova Scotia, in lat 44 25.49N, long 56 02.18W, Apr 18. The vessel lost electronics due to the water and the engine failed shortly after. The Coast Guard towed the vessel back to port.

NEW ACE (Belize)

See *Manila Harmony*.

NICHOLAS SMILE (Cyprus)

London, May 13 — Bulk *Nicholas Smile* sailed from Gladston on Apr 30, bound for Brisbane, where it arrived on May 1. Vessel departed on May 9, destination Hay Point, arriving on May 12. Vessel is now named *Harmonic Progress*. (See issue of May 3.)

NIKOLAY DOLINSKIY (Russia)

London, May 17 — General cargo *Nikolay Dolinskiy* departed Nanao May 4, bound Nakhodka, where it arrived May 9.

Vladivostok, May 19 — General cargo *Nikolay Dolinskiy* sailed Nakhodka May 15 for Incheon. — Lloyd's Agents.

NIPE

London, May 19 — Information received from Lloyd's Agents Douala, dated Dec 17, states: Bulk *Nipe* (9071 gt, built 1977) has been anchored in the fairway leading to Douala Port since Dec 31, 1998. The vessel has been abandoned by its owners since main engine crankshaft damage occurred on Nov 4, 1998, leaving the crankshaft beyond repair. We understand the last attempt to sell the vessel was in 1999.

NIXE (Spain)

London, May 20 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Newly built Spanish-owned ferry *Nixe* (300 gt, built 2004) on its maiden voyage has gone missing between Singapore and Sri Lanka with 12 crew on board, Spanish officials say. The 500-seat high-speed catamaran was built in Singapore and was on its way to Spain, where it was to ferry passengers to and from Morocco. It had been due to arrive at Galle, Sri Lanka, at 1000 GMT, Monday (May 17). The crew last made contact at 1700, GMT on Sunday as they were leaving the Strait of Malacca. On board were 10 Spaniards and two technicians of unknown nationality who worked for the company that built the ship, MarinTeknik. The ferry, valued at \$18m, was owned by Spanish firm Balearia. Spain says it has asked a search and rescue team to head to the area. It has also asked its diplomats in the region to press local governments for an investigation. (Note — *Nixe* sailed Singapore May 16 for Galle.)

Madrid, May 20 — Ferry *Nixe* that went missing in the Indian Ocean on its maiden voyage re-established radio contact today, the ferry company Balearia said. The crew of 10 Spaniards and two others were safe but the prow of the 500-seat high-speed catamaran was damaged and it was heading back to Singapore where it was built, the company said on its web page. — Reuters.

NYFJELL (Bahamas)

Aalborg, May 17 — General cargo *Nyffjell* passed Skaw northbound May 15. — Lloyd's Agents.

PONTOMEDON (Cyprus)

London, May 18 — Bulk *Pontomedon* sailed Shanghai Apr 30 bound Port Hedland, where it arrived today.

PORTUGAL SENATOR (Germany)

Port Said, May 17 — C.c. *Portugal Senator* (53324 gt, built 1998) underway to enter Canal with the southbound convoy May 14, sustained windlass trouble and vessel's crew effected minor repairs. Vessel entered Canal same day, but after clearing Canal, about 11 km away from Suez port, lost its anchor in the Red Sea. Vessel sailed to its destination. Suez are endeavouring to retrieve anchor. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Portugal Senator* sailed Felixstowe May 7 for Singapore.)

QUEEN MARY 2 (United Kingdom)

See "Collapse of Gangway, Shipyard, St. Nazaire, France" under "Miscellaneous."

REMOYFJORD (Russia)

St. John's, NF, May 18 — Trawler *Remoyfjord* completed repairs and sailed. — Lloyd's Agents.

RETS TIMBER (Isle of Man)

Messina, May 13 — Understand discharge of part c.c. *Rets Timber* proceeded regularly and that main engine repairs were effected locally and vessel left Corigliano port. — Lloyd's Agents.

Messina, May 13 — Understand that while part c.c. *Rets Timber* (8183 gt, built 1984) leaving port of Corigliano, it grounded either pm, May 12 or early am, May 13. Vessel is being refloated by tugs. — Lloyd's Agents

RIVER EMPRESS (Switzerland)

London, May 17 — Inland passenger *River Empress* and a Bulgarian cargo pusher convoy collided on Wednesday evening (May 12) on the German part of the River Danube near Passau. *River Empress* belongs to Global River Cruises in Basle, a subsidiary of the US river cruise and tour operator Uniworld, and was to take its mostly American passengers from Budapest via Nuremberg to Prague. Both vessels tried to enter a lock at the same time. Windows on *River Empress* were crushed, the deck was compressed and bulkheads burst. Two of the 89 passengers were slightly injured. The others were transported to Linz by bus. The cause of the accident is not yet clear.

ROBERT Y.LOVE (U.S.A.)

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: Oklahoma has settled its lawsuit with three defendants in the Interstate 40 bridge collapse near Webbers Falls, Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson announced yesterday. The settlement calls for Magnolia Marine Transport Co, Ergon Inc and William Joe Dedmon to pay the state \$4.5 million. Magnolia Marine Transport owned the tug (*Robert Y.Love*) that rammed two barges into the Interstate 40 bridge over the Arkansas River near Webbers Falls on May 26, 2002. The roadway collapsed, killing 14 people. Dedmon was the pilot of the tug, and the barges were owned by Jackson, Mississippi-based Ergon Inc. The accident occurred when Dedmon suffered a form of cardiac arrhythmia that caused him to lose consciousness for several minutes, according to court documents. "The federal government will reimburse the state for all but about \$1.5 million in repairs to the bridge," Edmondson said. "We have already received about \$14 million from the federal government. This settlement will ensure that the state will be made whole, and cover our investigative and legal expenses." Gary Ridley, the director of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, said the bridge construction cost the state about \$15 million. An additional \$15 million was spent on a detour for Interstate 40 traffic while the new bridge was constructed. Ridley said all of the money spent on the detour and 90% of the bridge construction costs were eligible for federal emergency relief funding. When Oklahoma filed its lawsuit, Vicksburg, MS-based Magnolia simultaneously filed a motion asking a Mississippi federal court to limit its liability under maritime law. Magnolia claimed the law limited its liability to the value of the vessel and its cargo, or about \$1.2 million. Last week, the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals refused to dismiss the company's petition limiting its liability. Yesterday's settlement has no impact on any individual lawsuits brought by the families of those killed or injured in the collision, Edmondson said.

ROCKNES (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, May 17 — Bulk *Rocknes* arrived Gdansk in tow of tug *Alphonse Letzer* May 14. (See issue of May 11.)

Gothenburg, May 18 — The owner of bulk *Rocknes* and their insurance company are suing the Norwegian authorities, claiming that they knew about the rock that the vessel struck but refrained from making this information available. The damaged vessel is at Remontowa yard, Gdansk, to effect extensive repairs, valued at E35 million. — Westax Marine Services AB.

SALAMAT 2 (Panama)

London, May 17 — Asphalt tanker *Salamat 2* which entered Chittagong port May 3, sailed May 13, destination Haldia.

SAND HARRIER (U.K.)

Falmouth, May 20 — Repairs to sand suction dredger *Sand Harrier* are still ongoing, ETC mid-June at the earliest. — Lloyd's Agents.

SEACOR LAREDO (Chile)

Santiago, Chile, May 13 — Lpg *Berge Nice* (35346 gt, built 2003), from Bahia Blanca, Arg, for Quintero, Chile, in collision with anchor handling tug/supply *Seacor Laredo* (1376 gt, built 1982), from Atlantic to Pacific, five miles north of the entrance to the first narrowness, at 0310, May 12. Collision due alleged machinery failure on *Seacor Laredo*. Damages not yet quantified. Three people on *Seacor Laredo* with minor injuries. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Berge Nice* sailed Bahia Posesion May 12.)

London, May 15 — Anchor handling tug/supply *Seacor Laredo* and lpg *Berge Nice* both arrived Punta Arenas May 13.

London, May 17 — Lpg *Berge Nice* sailed Punta Arenas May 15.

SHOUN MARU NO.21 (Japan)

Cape Town, May 20 — Fishing *Shoun Maru No.21*: Agent advises that repairs have been completed and that a new crew will be arriving this weekend. Vessel is expected to sail for fishing grounds around the middle of next week. — Lloyd's Agents.

SOUTHERN HARRIER

Cape Town, May 15 — Trawler *Southern Harrier* is still lying sunk, alongside Berth 702, Cape Town.. — Lloyd's Agents.

SPIRIT OF ONTARIO I (Bahamas)

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: The engines on the passenger ro/ro *Spirit of Ontario I* need up to \$1 million worth of repairs before the new high-speed ferry is cleared to sail, Canadian American Transportation Systems officials said this morning. The vessel will leave the Port of Rochester tomorrow morning and head to Toronto, where a team of workers from Germany will work on modifying the engines. Some other repairs, including painting, also will be made, officials added. Workers discovered that one of the vessel's four engines was "leaking water" on the voyage from western Australia, where the vessel was built by Austal

Ships. CATS officials said in an hour-long interview today that they are making sure the vessel is in ship-shape condition before they take ownership of it. The engine work in Toronto is expected to take two to three weeks, technical director Bob Mansfield said. CATS is not paying for the repairs since it hasn't taken ownership of the vessel yet. The engine problems don't prevent the vessel from operating but would pose long-term problems if they weren't fixed, Mansfield said. While the engines are repaired, the vessel will be fitted to the Toronto port, and CATS will hold several promotional events for tourism officials and political leaders. After the engine work is complete, the company still must receive certifications from the U.S. Coast Guard and Transport Canada to operate, train its crew and stock the vessel.

Toronto, May 19 — Passenger ro/ro *Spirit of Ontario I* arrived Toronto May 14 and is currently docked at the Toronto Port. — Lloyd's Agents.

SPRING PEACOCK (Panama)

Santos, May 14 — Information received from Itajaí Sub-Agents: Bulk *Spring Peacock*, loaded with 59,000 metric tons of soya, bound for Japan, grounded when it left Sao Francisco and hit a rock at the end of the bay. A vessel of more than 210 metres length can neither enter nor sail because of the grounding position. The 20 crew members are safe. The probable cause of the grounding was that the buoy used to mark the rock has changed its place. The cargo will be removed to another vessel. Protection barriers were placed around the vessel to avoid pollution in case of oil leakage, but nothing has been observed so far. Salvage company Smit Tak is working the case to refloat the vessel, which should occur this weekend or the beginning of next week. — Lloyd's Agents.

Santos, May 14 — Bulk *Spring Peacock*: Ballast tanks Nos 4/5, afterpeak tank, cofferdam and engine-room were breached by sea water. The situation is being controlled by pumps. Also, a bunker tank was breached, inside which there was a small quantity of oil, but there is no signs of leak to the sea so far. — Lloyd's Agents.

Santos, May 18 — Bulk *Spring Peacock*: The refloating operation started May 16. General cargo *Natasha-C* anchored alongside *Spring Peacock* to receive 10,100 tonnes of soya. Following transshipment, vessel is expected to refloat, whereupon it will anchor around five kilometres from the port for necessary inspections. The cargo transshipment is occurring without problems and *Spring Peacock* should refloat this afternoon. — Lloyd's Agents.

Santos, May 19 — Bulk *Spring Peacock* refloated at 1425, local time, yesterday, and dropped anchor in a safe area of Sao Francisco do Sul bay at 1620, local time. The total cargo transhipped to *Natasha-C* was around 7,000 tonnes. No signs of pollution. An underwater inspection will be performed to establish the extent of damages. — Lloyd's Agents.

ST. MARTIN

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

SUNCRUZ V (U.S.A.)

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: A fire broke out today on board a gambling cruise ship carrying about 160 people off the coast of Fort Lauderdale, Coast Guard officials said. No one was injured. The fire on the SunCruz passenger *SunCruz V* (98 gt, built 1996) started in the engine-room and was reported at about 1230 hrs, the Coast Guard said in a statement. The vessel, which left at noon for a five-hour sail, was three miles south of Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale. The 160-foot vessel, that can hold 560 people, was being towed to Port Everglades so the fire can be extinguished, officials said. The cause of the fire was unknown, but an investigation was planned, Petty Officer Anastasia Burns said. Leslie Ford, a ticket sales representative for SunCruz, confirmed that a fire broke out on the vessel but had no other details of the incident. The ship's evening sail has been cancelled, Ford said. Eight rescue boats and a Coast Guard helicopter are responding, as well as two firefighting tugs. The ship has not been evacuated, Burns said.

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: A fire broke out today on passenger *SunCruz V*, sending about 160 people on board scrambling for the top deck, officials said. Several passengers were treated for minor smoke inhalation. The fire ship was reported in the engine-room about half an hour after it left for a five-hour sail from nearby Hollywood, Coast Guard Petty Officer Anastasia Burns said. The blaze was extinguished about three hours later, after the ship was towed into Port Everglades, she said. The 160-foot ship was not evacuated before it docked. About a dozen people were examined as a precaution after the ship docked, but all were released, said Lt. David Erdman of the Broward County fire department. Some were treated for minor smoke inhalation, according to the Coast Guard. Firefighters reached the ship while it still was at sea and sealed the engine-room's doors to contain the blaze, Erdman said. The cause of the fire was unknown. An investigation was planned, Burns said.

London, May 17 — Following received from Coast Guard Miami, timed 1540, UTC: Passenger *SunCruz V* had a serious fire on board off Fort Lauderdale May 16. Vessel has been towed to Port Everglades for inspection. No injuries reported.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: An electrical fire on board passenger *SunCruz V* Sunday (May 16) most likely will keep the vessel from sailing until next week, a SunCruz official said. The vessel was brought to a halt at 1237, May 16 as it churned towards international waters, where gaming is allowed, with 158 passengers and crew aboard. When smoke alarms sounded, the captain shut off power, and the crew directed the 114 passengers to the top deck and handed out lifejackets. No one was injured. SunCruz

spokesman Steve Rinaldi said the fire was caused by a faulty electrical wire housing in the engine-room which heated and melted insulation. It wasn't clear how the wire housing failed. After the fire, the Coast Guard issued an order prohibiting the vessel from sailing until repairs have been made and the vessel passes inspection. "Our first concern is always for the safety of our passengers and crew. Our personnel train twice per month to prepare for situations like this and we feel our officers and crew handled the matter in a very professional manner," Rinaldi said. "Fortunately, the damage is limited to electrical wiring in the engine-room." Rinaldi said repairs would take about a week. The U.S. Coast Guard is investigating the incident and the crew's response.

Miami, May 19 — Passenger *SunCruz V* is currently being repaired at Port Everglades and it is expected that it will sail again in a week. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUNG KYUNG 201 (South Korea)

Montevideo, May 13 — Fishing *Sung Kyung 201* will remain at Montevideo for some months with only three crew members onboard. Remaining crew members will fly back to Korea. A damage survey will be held today. It is not yet known what repairs are required. The vessel was not expected to sail for the time being. — Lloyd's Agents.

TENAGA LIMA (Malaysia)

Busan, May 18 — Lng *Tenaga Lima* (80346 gt, built 1981), Incheon for Bintulu in ballast, diverted to Mokpo at 0200, Apr 10, due to seawater leakage from stern seal. The vessel's owners arranged for local divers to check the underwater area and the divers found various ropes were entangled in the propeller shaft. The ropes were removed on Apr 11. At 2118, Apr 11, while the vessel was proceeding to open sea after disembarking a pilot, it made contact with a submerged rock in lat 34 23.3N, long 125 57.2E, due to a strong southerly current. The vessel proceeded to Mokpo outer harbour anchorage to ascertain damage. The starboard side shell plating in way of No 1 membrane tank was reportedly heavily damaged but did not require temporary repairs at Mokpo. The vessel sailed Mokpo at 1020, Apr 21, bound Yokohama for permanent repairs. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Tenaga Lima* subsequently arrived Yokohama Apr 25.)

THOR KIS (Isle of Man)

Las Palmas, May 14 — General cargo *Thor Kis* (3132 gt, built 1987) arrived at Las Palmas, in tow, at 1900 hrs yesterday. At this moment it is repairing in Astican shipyard and is expected to repair for approximately five days. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Thor Kis* sailed Chaguaramas on Mar 26, bound for Vibo Valentia, Italy.)

TRICOLOR (NIS)

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Efforts resume this weekend to remove the wreck of vehicle *Tricolor* which sank in the English Channel with thousands of luxury cars

on board in 2002, the salvage group said in Brussels. Salvage work was abandoned in November because of bad weather. *Tricolor* sank in December, 2002, after a collision with c.c *Kariba* in thick fog in Belgian waters north of Dunkirk. The consortium hopes to lift the remaining four sections and transport them to the Belgian port of Zeebrugge by September. Work is to resume tomorrow with an anti-pollution vessel on standby to prevent any oil leaks, although only small quantities of fuel are believed to still be on board.

TRINACRIA (Italy)

London, May 15 — Ro/ro *Trinacria* quickly returned to service after the collision with the fishing vessel outside Catania on May 4. It sailed Catania May 5, arrived Naples May 6 and sailed same day, arriving back at Catania May 7.

WAHIB M. (Syria)

London, May 15 — General cargo *Wahib M.*, Tartous for Sea of Marmara, passed Dardanelles May 6.

YUNG KUO (Taiwan)

Montevideo, May 14 — Fishing *Yung Kuo* arrived at Montevideo on May 10. The fishing net was removed from the propeller. The vessel is still in port with no news yet if repairs will be undertaken. — Lloyd's Agents.

Port State Control



GIBRALTAR

Gibraltar, May 19 — General cargo *Ilknur 2* (1214 gt, built 1979) was detained by port surveyors on a number of deficiencies on May 12 and is presently at anchor at Gibraltar Bay. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Ilknur 2* arrived Gibraltar 1640, May 12.)

JAPAN

London, May 14 — General cargo *M.Soma* (1586 gt, built 1983), which arrived at Osaka previous to Apr 16, has been detained by Port State Control due crew's certificate, SMC, DoC, ISM codes and the emergency operation for fixed fire extinguishing system.

UNITED KINGDOM

Ipswich, May 13 — Agents of ro/ro *Jotunheim* report that name change certification was duly sorted to the satisfaction of the MCA and *Viking* sailed Apr 30 for Bilbao. — Lloyd's Agents.

Seizures & Arrests



BYZANTIO (Malta)

London, May 17 — Product tanker *Byzantio* sailed Hong Kong 0138, May 15, destination Singapore.

CAPE GOOD HOPE (Malta)

Maassluis, May 19 — Bulk *Cape Good Hope* (74672 gt, built 1981) was placed under arrest at Rotterdam, at 1730, May 18. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Cape Good Hope* arrived Rotterdam May 18 from Port Cartier.)

DIAGORAS (Greece)

Piraeus, May 17 — Passenger ro/ro *Diagoras* arrived Rhodes May 7 from Kos and sailed May 7 to Kos. It arrived and sailed Rhodes May 9, subsequently arriving back at Rhodes May 12 and sailing the same day to Kos. — Lloyd's Agents.

DUIVELAND (Netherlands)

London, May 18 — General cargo *Duiveland* is reported currently still at Ridderkerk.

ELKE (Antigua & Barbuda)

Maassluis, May 19 — General cargo *Elke* (1299 gt, built 1984) is currently under detention in the Rotterdam area. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Elke* arrived Moerdijk May 12.)

FESTIVAL CRUISES INC

London, May 14 — The sale of former Festival Cruises passenger *Mistral*, which should have taken place yesterday at the Marseilles High Court, has been postponed until Jun 10. Marseilles lawyer, Alain Provansal, who had been charged with organising the sale, said that he had decided to postpone the sale for four weeks after talking to lawyers representing potential clients who had indicated that they were "not ready." He said that the sale had been "a little bit rapid" and that the Euro130m reserve price placed on the vessel had also meant that certain buyers had been reticent about bidding. He was optimistic nevertheless that a buyer would be found on Jun 10, when the reserve price will be maintained at Euro130m.

FOREST LINK (Panama)

See "Tordenskjold A/S."

HIGHLANDER

Cape Town, May 15 — Fishing *Highlander* remains under arrest at Cape Town. — Lloyd's Agents.

INXORTA MENDI (Spain)

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Fishing *Inxorta Mendi* (441 gt, built 2002) has been detained for an alleged breach of fishing regulations, approximately 35 miles west of Kerry. The vessel has been escorted to Castletownbere where it will be inspected by officials from the Department of the Marine.

MIDHAVID (South Africa)

Cape Town, May 15 — Fishing *Midhavid* remains at Cape Town to be broken up. — Lloyd's Agents.

MISTRAL (Wallis & Futuna)

See "Festival Cruises Inc."

NAVIGATOR

Cape Town, May 15 — Tug/supply *Navigator* remains under arrest at Berth No.6, Cape Town. — Lloyd's Agents.

NEW ACE (Belize)

See *Manila Harmony* under "Marine."

OSTWIND (Antigua & Barbuda)

Maassluis, May 19 — General cargo *Ostwind* is still under arrest at Vlaardingen. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

SAMURAY (Turkey)

Alexandria, May 13 — General cargo *Samuray* remains sunk at Alexandria. — Lloyd's Agents.

SANTA GIULIETTA (Liberia)

Lima, May 14 — C.c. *Santa Giulietta* remains berthed at the Port of Callao, as the legal situation has not been resolved. As per our inquiries, this matter is currently being handled at diplomatic level. — Lloyd's Agents.

SIMWER (Netherlands)

Maassluis, May 19 — General cargo *Simwer* is still under arrest in the Rotterdam area. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

STRILBAS (Norway)

Maassluis, May 19 — Standby safety vessel *Strilbas* is still under arrest at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

TORDENSKJOLD A/S

Mobile, May 11 — Ro/ro *Forest Link* said Mobile May 8 for Kingston (JAM). — Alabama State Port Authority.

VOYAGER (Netherlands Antilles)

Maassluis, May 19 — General cargo *Voyager* is still under arrest at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Pollution**BIG SANDY RIVER, KENTUCKY, UNITED STATES**

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Marathon Ashland Petroleum blamed a power failure for an equipment malfunction that caused about 20,000 gallons of partially refined crude oil to spray out of a flare at its refinery. The substance fouled the Big Sandy River, blackened trees along the shoreline and stained cars parked at a nearby plant. Maleva Chamberlain, a spokeswoman for the state Division of Water, said MAP's cleanup contractor had recovered about 12,000 gallons of the substance from the river. "They seem to have recovered pretty much all they can," she said. The contractor will use fire hoses to create a fine mist to wash the oil off the trees and down to the bank where it can be recovered, Chamberlain said. The leak occurred Sunday (May 9) as one of the plant's refining units was powering back up after an electrical outage, said MAP spokesman Chuck Rice. The flare, which normally burns off excess product, had gone out during the outage, he said. As a result, the oil sprayed out of the flare. Rice described the substance as partially refined hydrocarbon with the consistency of heating fuel. Most of it landed around

the refinery's loading docks. The company immediately notified environmental officials, Rice said. Chamberlain said it was too early to tell whether MAP would face any penalties.

THOUSAND ISLANDS MARITIME NATIONAL PARK, INDONESIA

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The head of the Jakarta Environmental Management Agency (BPLHD), Kosasih Wirahadikusumah said on Tuesday (May 18) that an oil spill which caused serious pollution at the Thousand Islands Maritime National Park occurred last week but so far no party had claimed responsibility for it. He said the incident had caused serious environmental damage both to seawater and to islands surrounding the maritime park because oil waste had spread over a wide area. He added there were two possibilities on the source of the pollution. "We cannot decide whether the oil come from an offshore oil rig or a passing tanker. There are dozens of rigs in the area and dozens of tankers passing through." Kosasih said the investigation into the incident was the responsibility of the Office of the State Minister of the Environment, while the BPLHD would only be responsible for treating areas that had sustained environmental damage.

Weather & Navigation**CHINA**

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Seven people have been reported dead after floods in China's Jiangxi Province. The province suffered torrential rains during record high rainfall from May 11 to 15. The rain has also caused landslides and the collapse of houses. It's estimated the province has suffered economic losses totalling 439 million yuan (US\$53.5 million). Weather forecast shows that the rain belt is moving southward and the province remains on high flooding alert.

CYCLONE IN BAY OF BENGAL

Chittagong, May 19 — According to the local met office a cyclone storm was reported at 1000, today, located 350 km south-south-east of Chittagong port, 520 km south-south-east of Mongla port and from Cox's Bazar. The wind velocity at the centre and adjoining areas is 54 kilometres-per-hour which is rising with rain and thunderstorm up to 62-to-69 kilometres-per-hour. Maritime port of Chittagong have been advised to keep signal No. 5, Cox's Bazar signal No. 7 while Mongla port is been advised to hoist cautionary signal No.3. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: A cyclone slammed into Bangladesh's south-east coast today, swamping low-lying areas and forcing

tens of thousands of people to flee. Five fishermen were missing. High winds and heavy rains forced up to 50,000 people to evacuate low-lying homes and seek shelter in multi-storey buildings, said Akhtar-uz Zaman, an official at a storm monitoring centre in Cox's Bazar. Gales also flattened about 30 flimsy huts on nearby St. Martins island in the Bay of Bengal, rescue officials said. The fishermen disappeared after their two vessels capsized off Cox's Bazar. Fishing trawlers were advised to return to shore. The storm knocked over trees and electricity poles before it weakened and crossed into neighbouring Myanmar, the officials said. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society asked more than 33,000 volunteers to be on standby to help move people to safer areas, said official Golam Rabbani. A tropical depression strengthened into the cyclone late yesterday and moved towards Cox's Bazar, 185 miles south-east of Dhaka, the Meteorological Department said.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The cyclonic storm which formed over the Bay three days ago, crossed Cox's Bazar-Akiab coast at around 1800, yesterday. According to the Met official, the maximum wind speed within 54 km of the storm centre was 65 kmph and was rising to 90 kmph in gusts. There was no immediate reports of casualties or damage to properties. Low-lying areas of the coastal districts of Cox's Bazar, Chittagong and the off-shore islands were inundated with storm surge about 2-4ft high. The cyclonic storm helped ease the heat wave that was firmly in place over the country since May 1. The cyclonic storm is likely to move in a northeasterly direction further inland and weaken gradually. Maritime ports of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar have been advised to lower danger signal number five and instead hoist local cautionary signal number three. Maritime port of Mongla has been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary signal number three. All fishing boats and trawlers over North Bay have been advised to remain in shelter till this morning, according to a special weather bulletin.

Chittagong, May 20 — The cyclone storm hit the coastal area of Saint Martain & Teknaf at 1230, May 19. During the cyclone the wind speed was 120 kilometres-per-hour. Fifteen fishing trawlers are reported to have been sunk due to the cyclone. According to local met office maritime port of Chittagong has been advised to hoist cautionary signal No. 3. — Lloyd's Agents.

RUSSIA

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Six motor and pedestrian bridges were destroyed and more than 200 houses were damaged over the flood on the rivers after torrential rains in the Kurchaloi and Gudermes districts of Chechnya, the press service of the republic's Emergencies Ministry said today. The motor traffic was disrupted between Grozny and Gudermes over the breakage of the bridge on the federal highway Caucasus. The water supply system was damaged in Gudermes. Gas and

electricity are supplied to the city on the per-hour basis. Tsentoroi, the native settlement of late Chechen president Akhmat Kadyrov, was damaged over the flood on the Mechig River. About 150 houses are destroyed in the settlement. Crops are damaged on the fields. No one of local residents was unhurt. Rescue teams and special machinery were sent to the affected districts, restoration works of damaged communications, gas pipelines and power lines began. The water level has fallen a little bit by this morning, but the flood hazard still exists.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "FAY"

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Marine scientists say they are shocked at the extent of cyclone damage to a north-west coral reef in Western Australia. Scott Reef is situated 400 km north of Broome and was directly in the path of category five Tropical Cyclone "Fay," which ripped through the area in late March. Biologists from the Australian Institute of Marine Science say damage to the reef is extensive, with all coral outcrops obliterated and deeper sections also destroyed. Scientist-in-charge Luke Smith says cyclonic waves pulled up hardened coral boulders from deep below, smashing them onto the reef surface. "Some of these boulders weigh tonnes and tonnes and they're actually sitting down in 12 metres of water and there's actually been enough force in the water to actually push that up an almost vertical slope onto the reef flat," he said.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "JUBA"

London, May 14 — Following received from Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of tropical cyclone "Juba" was located near lat 15.5S, long 67.9E. Movement over the past six hours: 160 degs at six knots. The position is accurate to within 60 nautical miles and based on the centre located by satellite. Present wind distribution: maximum sustained winds: 55 knots, with gusts to 70 knots. Radius of 50 knot winds: 20 nautical miles in all four quadrants. At 0600, UTC, May 15, the centre is predicted to be near lat 18.9S, long 69.1E, with maximum sustained winds of 30 knots and gusts to 40 knots, but dissipating as a significant tropical cyclone over water.

TURKEY

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 15, states: Flood waters triggered by torrential rains have inundated some houses and business places in southern province of Antakya. Sources said today that torrential rains paralyzed daily life in the province. Kitchen part of a house collapsed in Bagriyanik neighborhood in the city center. There were not any immediate reports of casualties. Antakya Police Chief Cafer Sahin said that many houses and business places were inundated.

TYPHOON "NIDA"

Manila, May 17 — Thousands of passengers and scores of vessels were stranded in the central Philippines today as authorities ordered vessels to remain

in port as typhoon "Nida" battered the country. The Cebu Coast Guard said that it had prohibited at least 40 passenger vessels from leaving Cebu port since Saturday morning (May 15). Coast Guard officials said regulations require that all passenger vessels with gross tonnage of below 1,000 be kept in port once public storm signal warning No 3 comes into effect. The Office of the Civil Defence regional office in Eastern Visayas also reported that close to 1,400 passengers from Mindanao and Eastern Visayas were stranded in two ferry terminals in Allen town in Northern Samar, as trips had been cancelled since Saturday morning. Authorities were also trying to verify reports that three fishermen were missing off the central island of Leyte due to heavy rains. Packing maximum winds of up to 170 kph near the centre and gusts of up to 205 kph, the typhoon's eye was tracked at 60 km east-south-east of Virac city, on the eastern island of Catanduanes, as of this morning, the state weather bureau said. The typhoon is expected to move north-east of Batanes island on the northern tip of the Philippines by Wednesday, the weather bureau said. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, May 17 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Typhoon "Nida" near lat 14.7N, long 123.8E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 325 degrees at 11 knots. Position accurate to within 20 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 135 knots, gusts 165 knots, radius of 100 knot winds 25 nautical miles, north-east quadrant 25 nautical miles, south-east quadrant 25 nautical miles, south-west quadrant 25 nautical miles. Forecast position at 1800, UTC lat 16.5N, long 123.3E, maximum sustained winds 140 knots, gusts 170 knots. Forecast position at 0600, UTC: lat 18.2N, long 123.3E, maximum sustained winds 135 knots, gusts 165 knots, radius of 100 knot winds 25 nautical miles.

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Three fishermen were missing and more than 7,000 ferry passengers stranded in the eastern and central Philippines today as hurricane-force winds from Typhoon "Nida" forced ports to close, officials said. The Coast Guard suspended domestic shipping in areas in the path of the typhoon, which was streaking north-west with maximum sustained winds of 170 kilometers an hour and with gusts of 205 kilometers an hour. "Nida" slammed into the eastern Catanduanes island mid-morning, the weather bureau said. There were reports of heavy damage to crops on the island, home to more than 200,000 people, and nearby areas, with strong winds blowing off roofs on wooden houses and huts. There were also disruptions in the power supply and all travel was deemed dangerous. The typhoon was bearing down on Isabela and Cagayan provinces on the north-eastern coast of the main island of Luzon, the weather bureau said. The civil defense office said three fishermen reported missing off the coast of the central island of Leyte Saturday had still not been found. More than 7,000

passengers were stranded at five ferry crossings in the central Philippines and the eastern Bicol region, it said.

Manila, May 17 — The Philippine Coast Guard in its latest report said that a total of 18 vessels remained stranded today in nine central Philippine ports affected by typhoon "Nida." The Coast Guard said that these vessels, made up mostly of inter-island passenger ferries, have been ordered to remain in port since Saturday (May 15) because of heavy seas and strong winds brought about by the powerful typhoon. Stranded in the port of Tabaco in the province of Albay were 10 vessels. At the port of Allen in the island of Samar, three vessels were stranded. At the port of Pilar, in Sorsogon province, two vessels were stranded. At the port of Masbate, in Masbate province, two vessels were stranded. At the port of Bulan, also in Sorsogon province, one vessel has been confined to port. With their vessels unable to leave, about 5,258 passengers have also been stranded at these ports, the Coast Guard said. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: The Philippine Department of Agriculture said today that up to 95,000 hectares of agriculture crops in the central Philippines had been damaged by typhoon "Nida". According to the Philippine News Agency, Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr told a news conference that initial reports revealed that 40,000 hectares planted to palay in Alang-Alang, Leyte province, was completely destroyed by the typhoon. The Philippine weather bureau said earlier that the eye of the storm was located 60 km east-south-east of Virac town, in Catanduanes province on Luzon Island, at 0400 hrs and was carrying sustained winds of 170 kph. The typhoon was moving at about 17 kph and was heading towards Metro Manila, and the rest of northern and central Luzon, as well as some provinces in Northern Visayas and Mindanao, the bureau said. The Office of Civil Defence said that more than 7,000 people and around 370 ferries were stranded by the typhoon. The authority said that it was also searching for three fishermen who were reported missing in the typhoon.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Nida" with winds over 200 kilometres per hour is battering central and northern Philippines. At least two people are missing and several other people are reported to have been injured in landslides. Power supplies have been disrupted and communication lines severed in most of 30 provinces affected. Local air and water travel has also been affected, and up to 16,000 passengers have been left stranded. About 8,000 people were affected by the stormy weather while 2,000 others were evacuated to safer ground. Camarines province south of Luzon island has been placed under a state of calamity. Three nearby provinces are expected to follow suit.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: A fisherman was missing and more than 11,000 people displaced as Typhoon "Nida" whipped

the Philippines, causing landslides that wiped out entire villages, officials said today. The eastern island of Catanduanes appeared to bear the brunt of the damage though there have been no reported deaths, the civil defence office said. Heavy rain induced by the typhoon's 170-kilometre an hour winds triggered landslides that obliterated three villages around the coastal town of Gigmoto on Sunday (May 16), leaving about 700 families homeless, it added. A fisherman was reported missing off the town of Mercedes on the south-east coast of the main island of Luzon, while 14 people were injured in highway accidents caused by poor visibility in Pamplona town and Cauayan city in northern Luzon. A government helicopter is on standby to inspect the damage in isolated villages of Catanduanes once the weather clears up, officials said. Thirteen crewmen of a cargo vessel were rescued after it ran aground near Magallanes town off the south-eastern tip of Luzon. The eye of the typhoon hovered on the Philippine Sea off the east coast of northern Luzon early today, tracking a north-west course toward northern Taiwan with gusts of up to 205 kilometres an hour, the weather bureau said. The typhoon however has a 400-kilometre footprint and hurricane-force winds of up to 185 kilometres an hour continued to whip the east coast of Luzon. Government rescuers said more than 11,000 people have been displaced from their homes, while about 15,000 others were stranded as ferry services between Luzon and the central islands were suspended since Sunday. The central island of Samar also sustained substantial damage to crops, infrastructure and private property, the civil defence office said.

London, May 18 — Following received from Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Nida" was located near lat 17.6N, long 123.6E, approximately 550 nautical miles south-south-west of Kadena, Okinawa and has tracked northward, 10 degs, at six knots over the past six hours. Position is accurate to within 20 nautical miles and based on eye fixed by satellite. Present wind distribution: maximum sustained winds: 130 knots, with gusts to 160 knots. Radius of 100 knot winds: 20 nautical miles in all four quadrants. Maximum significant wave height is 33 feet. At 0600, UTC, May 19, the centre is predicted to be near lat 21.3N, long 126.1E, with maximum sustained winds of 110 knots and gusts to 135 knots.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The number of dead and missing from Typhoon "Nida" rose to 23 with more than 28,000 displaced by the storm this week, Philippine civil defence agencies said today. At least 13 people were confirmed dead, mostly from drowning while 10 others are still missing with one person injured, the government said. In the worst single incident, eight people were killed and four were still missing after a small inter-island ferry capsized off the Camotes Island in the central Philippines yesterday, the civil defence office said. Initial damage estimates

were placed at 72.6 million pesos (1.3 million dollars), with the agricultural sector sustaining the worst damage. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo declared the heavily hit eastern Bicol region and the islands of Masbate and Samar under a state of calamity, which would give them faster access to emergency funds. Typhoon "Nida", with winds of up to 150 kilometres-per-hour was charted before dawn today, 330 kilometres north-east of the northern city of Aparri, moving north-east away from the Philippines at 19 kilometres-per-hour. Storm alerts have been lowered throughout the country except for the lowest-level alert, still raised over the northernmost islands of Batanes. "Nida" lashed the eastern side of the central and northern Philippines from Sunday (May 16) to Tuesday, causing widespread damage. Landslides destroyed at least three villages and thousands of people were left stranded after sea travel was suspended in the affected areas.

London, May 19 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Typhoon "Nida" near lat 21.2N, long 126.4E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 50 degrees at 15 knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 100 knots, gusts 125 knots, radius of 50 knot winds 60 nautical miles, north-east quadrant 60 nautical miles, south-east quadrant 60 nautical miles, south-west quadrant 60 nautical miles. Radius of 34 knot winds 150 nautical miles, north-east quadrant 120 nautical miles, south-east quadrant 120 nautical miles, south-west quadrant 120 nautical miles. Forecast position at 1800, UTC, today, lat 23.6N, long 129.0E, maximum sustained winds 85 knots, gusts 105 knots, radius of 50 knot winds 55 nautical miles. Forecast position at 0600, UTC, May 20, lat 27.2N, long 132.8E, maximum sustained winds 70 knots, gusts 85 knots becoming extratropical.

London, May 20 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Typhoon "Nida" near lat 26.7N, long 134.4E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 55 degrees at 30 knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds: 80 knots with gusts to 100 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 50 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 150 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 100 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, May 21: Centre predicted to be near lat 36.0N, long 144.3E with maximum sustained winds of 60 knots and gusts to 75 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 40 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 130 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 90 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 110 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 90 nautical miles north-west quadrant.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Nida" triggered landslides, destroyed houses and capsized a ferry, killing at least 19 people and leaving hundreds homeless in the Philippines, officials said yesterday as the storm blew toward Japan. Typhoon "Nida," packing winds of 150

kph and gusts of 185 kph, headed away from the northern Philippines after ravaging several eastern provinces. At least eight people were killed and several others were reported missing after the wooden-hulled ferry *St. Martin* overturned late Tuesday (May 18) when its bamboo outrigger broke in choppy waters off the central Camotes islands, Coast Guard chief Vice Admiral Arturo Gosingan said. It was carrying 168 passengers and crew. Nearby fishing boats rescued some passengers and Coast Guard divers scoured the sea for others. Authorities were trying to determine how many people were missing, Gosingan said. Eleven others were killed elsewhere, including a man hit by lightning on central Antique island and a 65-year-old woman pinned by a fallen coconut tree. At least 10 people, mostly fishermen, were reported missing, officials said. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo placed eight eastern provinces under a "state of calamity," enabling local officials to draw money for relief efforts from emergency funds. In Catanduanes Province, hundreds of houses were destroyed by landslides in three villages in mountainous Gigmoto town, leaving about 700 families homeless, the government's disaster response agency said. Gigmoto Mayor Amando Guerrero, who was in Manila when the typhoon struck, headed home yesterday with other officials and a truckload of food and clothes. He said some of the homeless had moved to a school, a church and the town hall. "Nida" also stranded more than 15,000 people after authorities halted sea travel to prevent accidents. As the weather improved some ferries were allowed to sail, officials said. Nearly 3,000 people were evacuated in areas where the typhoon passed, including northern Nueva Ecija Province, where hurricane-force winds destroyed houses in at least seven villages, officials said.

TYPHOON "OMAI"

London, May 18 — Following received from Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Omais" was located near lat 09.1N, long 137.1E, approximately 70 nm west-south-west of Yap, and has tracked west-north-westward, 295 degs, at 11 knots over the past six hours. Position is accurate to within 60 nautical miles and based on the 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 in the north-east and north-west quadrants and 30 nautical miles in the south-east and south-west quadrants. Maximum significant wave height is 14 feet. At 0600, May 19, the centre is predicted to be near lat 11.9N, long 134.9E, with maximum sustained winds of 65 knots and gusts to 80 knots.

London, May 19 — Following received from Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Omais" was located near lat 10.9N, long 134.0E. Position is accurate to within 40 nautical miles and based on the centre located by satellite. Present wind distribution: maximum sustained

winds: 65 knots, with gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 20 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 50 nautical miles in the north-east quadrant and 60 nautical miles elsewhere. At 0600, May 20, the centre is predicted to be near lat 17.0N, long 131.1E, with maximum sustained winds of 65 knots and gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 25 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 95 nautical miles in the north-east quadrant, 65 nautical miles in the south-east quadrant, 55 nautical miles in the south-west quadrant and 90 nautical miles in the north-west quadrant.

London, May 20 — Following received from Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Omais" was located near lat 13.5N, long 133.6E, position accurate to within 40 nautical miles and based on the centre located by satellite. Present wind distribution: maximum sustained winds 55 knots with gusts to 70 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 10 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 55 nautical miles in the north-east quadrant and 65 nautical miles elsewhere. At 0600, May 21, the centre is predicted to be near lat 16.4N, long 133.9E, with maximum sustained winds of 60 knots and gusts to 75 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 30 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 80 nautical miles in the north-east quadrant, 60 nautical miles in the south-east and south-west quadrants and 80 nautical miles in the north-west quadrant. (See issue of May 20.)

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

London, May 14 — Bad weather has forced three Abu Dhabi oil terminals to close for vessels' operations, as follows: Ruwais closed at 1830, local time, May 13, Zirku Island closed at 2230, local time, May 13 and Das Island closed at 0600, local time, May 14.

UNITED STATES

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 18, states: More than \$3 million in damage to homes and vehicles was caused by last weekend's hail storm in the northern Iowa city of Charles City, insurance officials said. "There's no doubt in my mind we're going to be over the \$3 million mark," said Tom Rouse a State Farm Insurance agent. "My office alone is looking at three-quarters of a million dollars just in auto claims." Nearly every vehicle at three car dealerships in town were heavily damaged. The Floyd County Farm Bureau Insurance Office reported it had received over 100 different calls from insured customers so far, mostly a mixture of vehicle and roof claims.

VIETNAM

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Three women were killed after heavy rains triggered flash floods in Vietnam's central coastal province of Binh Thuan, officials said today. The accident happened on Monday (May 17) evening when they were crossing a spring in Tien Thanh commune, a local flood and storm control official said. "The flash floods and mud

flows have drowned the victims. One of them was swept to the sea and we could only retrieve her body one day later," he said. The women were on their way home after a day of collecting shells and mussels at a nearby beach. Heavy rains and storms have struck Vietnam in the past few days destroying hundreds of houses in the central regions and causing floods in several provinces and cities in the south.



BULGARIA

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 4 on the Richter scale jolted northeastern Bulgaria shortly after 1400, today. The epicentre was 300 kilometres north-east of capital Sofia. No damages or casualties were reported

IRAN

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 3.7 degrees on the open-ended Richter scale jolted the city of Dezful, in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, this morning. According to the seismological base of Tehran University's Geophysics Institute, the tremor was felt in the city at 0210, local time. There were no reports of any casualty or damage to property that may have been caused by the mild quake.

JAPAN

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring an estimated magnitude of 5.2 hit Tokunoshima and Okinoerabu islands in Kagoshima Prefecture and Okinawa's main island this morning, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage from the 0604 quake. No tsunami warning was issued.

PAKISTAN

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A moderate earthquake shook a town in south-western Pakistan today, damaging three homes, but there were no immediate reports of injuries, government officials and police said. The 5.5 magnitude quake was felt at Sibi, a remote town about 150 kilometres south-west of Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's south-western Baluchistan province, Pakistan's Seismological Centre said.

Karachi, May 14 — An earthquake of moderate intensity jolted vast areas of Sibi and Bolan districts in Balochistan Province of Pakistan this morning, according to seismological department. Officials of the Geophysical Centre in Quetta said that tremors struck plains of Sibi and mountainous areas of Bolan district at 0901 hrs. The magnitude of the earthquake was 5.5 on the Richter scale and its epicentre was located some 160 km south-west of Quetta in the Suleman Mountain Range. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

PHILIPPINES

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake of tectonic origin jolted several areas in Mindanao at 1910, last night, the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC) reported today. The epicentre of the quake measuring five in the Richter scale was located 47 kilometres north-east of Tagum City, Davao del Norte, the RDCC said. Compostela Valley Province also experienced an intensity five quake. The quake also shook Mati in Davao Oriental, Davao City, Cagayan de Oro City, and Butuan.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: An Intensity 5 tectonic earthquake jolted Tagum City in Davao province on Sunday (May 15) night, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said yesterday. "The earthquake which registered a Magnitude 6.1 on the Richter Scale was also felt an Intensity 4 in Mati, Davao Oriental; at Intensity 3 in Bislig, Surigao del Sur and Cagayan de Oro City, Misamis Oriental; and at Intensity 2 in Butuan City and Davao City," Phivolcs said. According to Phivolcs, the earthquake was triggered by movement of the Philippine Fault Zone which traverses the Philippine Archipelago from Luzon to Mindanao.

TAIWAN

London, May 17 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A powerful earthquake measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale hit Taiwan today, shaking buildings in Taipei, the Seismology Centre said. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The tremor struck at 1404 hrs, with an epicentre 64.3 kilometres east of Chengkung, a coastal town in the south-east of the island. Its focus was 12.5 kilometres below sea level.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale has hit Taiwan, shaking buildings in the capital, Taipei. There are no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The Seismology Centre says the quake was felt island wide and buildings in the capital shook for about a minute. The epicentre of the quake was 25.6 kilometres east of Chengkung, a coastal town in the southeast of the island.

TURKEY

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: An earthquake measuring 4.2 on the Richter scale struck Istanbul and the surrounding towns, early today, but no damage or casualties were reported. The epicentre was registered some 25 kilometres south-east of Istanbul in the Marble Sea.

UNITED STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: A minor quake struck in Riverside County last night, but there were no reports of injury or damage, officials said. The magnitude-3.2 quake hit at 2304 hrs and was centred about seven miles south-southwest of Idyllwild, according to a preliminary report by the US Geological

Survey. A Riverside County sheriff's deputy said there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage.

Volcanic Activity



MOUNT AWU, INDONESIA

London, May 20 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Mount Awu, an active volcano on an island in the northernmost Indonesian province of North Sulawesi, has shown increased activity, spewing flames and smoke, a volcanologist said today. "We have already raised the status of danger from normal active to alert and it looks like we may have to further raise the status by one rung soon," said Syamsurizal from the directorat of vulcanology in the West Java city of Bandung. Some villagers had already left their homes on the slope of the 1,320-metre high volcano. Local officials could not be reached immediately for confirmation. Syamsurizal said Mount Awu has begun producing small eruptions, spewing flames and thick smoke since late yesterday. He said that a team of geologists were travelling to Sangihe island where the mountain is located to gather more data. Under the new alert status, the population at the foot of the mountain has been warned to remain vigilant for any signs of more volcanic activities, he said.

MOUNT SAKURAJIMA, JAPAN

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 15, states: A volcano has erupted in southern Japan, shaking the nearby area with an explosion and spewing smoke high into the air, an official said. There were no reports of damage or injuries. The explosion of Mount Sakurajima registered as "large" on the Meteorological Agency's scale for both the sound and the strength of the tremors it caused, an official at the local agency office in Kagoshima said. Officials could not tell how high the smoke rose due to cloudy weather, he said. The 3,686-foot high Sakurajima is one of Japan's most active volcanoes. Clouds of ash constantly drift from its crater. It sits in Kagoshima Bay, about 590 miles south-west of Tokyo.

MOUNT SIRUNG, INDONESIA

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 15, states: Hundreds of people on an eastern Indonesian island have reportedly been forced from their homes by a volcanic eruption. Mount Sirung on Pantar Island in East Nusa Tenggara province began spewing smoke and dust about two days ago. A local government official said hundreds of residents within one or two kilometres of the volcano had been moved further away. No damage had yet been reported.

NYAMURAGIRA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

London, May 12 — A press report, dated May 11, states: The Nyamuragira

volcano, in the far east of the Democratic Republic of Congo near the Rwandan border, has been erupting since the weekend (May 8-9), forcing people to flee their homes, but military movements have prevented access to the site, officials said today. "Nyamuragira began erupting at 0548 (0348, UTC), on Saturday" volcanologist Celestin Kasereka said by telephone from Goma, some 40 km south of the volcano. An officer stationed in the region added: "It began Saturday. There are people who are fleeing their homes and herds of livestock that have been evacuated." Kasereka said the area, where rebels are hiding out in forests at the foot of the volcano, was off limits to experts and aid agencies. "The UN and local administrative authorities say we shouldn't go there because there are lots of movements of rebels and government troops," he said. "So far most of the activity has been concentrated in the main crater. A fissure opened on the north-north-west, and several cones formed. All of the fissure faces the nature reserve and people say clouds of ash are falling towards Kichanga," Kasereka said, referring to a village some 40 km north-west of the volcano.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: The Afghan government has launched a nationwide campaign to disarm the country's militia forces, seen as crucial to the holding of elections. The Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) initiative has been running as a pilot programme in five Afghan regions since October. The United Nations-backed plan is for 40,000 former fighters to be demobilised by the end of June. The campaign was launched at a Kabul military base where a former anti-aircraft defence unit ceremonially handed over its missiles. But most of the missiles did not look especially threatening. Many had holes in, and several were missing their nose cones. Major Jerry Knight, a British officer watching the handover, admitted that in their current state none of them would work. The UN officials who run it admit that it is going to be difficult, especially when it comes to persuading powerful regional leaders to comply: men such as Ismail Khan, the governor of Herat, or Mohammed Atta in Mazar-e-Sharif. One issue is that no-one really knows how many men they control. Nationwide, the estimate is that there are a 100,000 militia fighters, but no-one believes that. In many cases commanders have given inflated figures, partly to enhance their local status and power, but also in the hope of claiming more funds for demobilising their men. Yet some Afghans are concerned the Western-backed disarmament programme is uneven, pressuring some commanders

but not others, and therefore risking renewed instability. The picture is just as confusing with heavy weapons like missiles and tanks. They are all supposed to be in central government control by the time elections are held in September. But disarmament officials still do not have an accurate inventory of what is hidden around the country. Some Western diplomats say even the Defence Minister, Qasim Fahim, is a problem on this issue, dragging his feet on revealing what weapons his supporters still control.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: A remote-controlled roadside bomb destroyed a vehicle carrying election workers in southeastern Afghanistan today, wounding six people, police said. It was the latest in a string of attacks on preparations for the country's September elections. The victims were traveling through the Jaji Maydan district of Khost province, about 80 miles south of the capital, Kabul, district police chief Haji Bakhti said. Three election workers, two police guards and the driver were hurt and taken to Khost city by helicopter, Bakhti said. Bakhti blamed al-Qaida militants for the attack but offered no evidence of their involvement. He said police found 30 yards of wire trailing away from the scene of the blast, indicating it was triggered remotely.

ALGERIA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Two booby-trap bombs laid by armed Islamic extremists killed two soldiers and wounded 13 others on patrol in highlands near the north-east Algerian town of Setif, newspapers reported today. The bombs were laid on and beside a track regularly taken by an army patrol in a region where units of the radical Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) are known to be based. Four of the wounded soldiers sustained serious injuries, the press reports said. Since the beginning of May, violence involving Muslim fundamentalists waging a guerrilla war against the secular government of the north African country has claimed 21 lives, according to official statements and press reports.

BURUNDI

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: A former rebel group promised to rejoin the transitional government and parliament at the end of the week if its members are appointed to diplomatic and local administrative positions as provided under peace deals, a senior official said today. Two weeks ago the Forces for the Defense of Democracy pulled out of the government and parliament, accusing the two largest political parties in the transitional government of failing to consult other parties and abide by accords intended to end more than a decade of civil war. "They promised all the appointments will have been done by the end of the week. In that case, there will be no reason for us to stay out," said Pierre Nkurunziza, head of the former rebel group and senior government minister,

adding: "Our action did not aim at destabilising the institutions. All what we want is the implementation of the cease-fire deal."

COLOMBIA

Bogota, May 19 — Colombia says it needs up to \$150 million in international aid to disarm 20,000 paramilitary gunmen. Chief peace negotiator Luis Carlos Restrepo told Reuters in an interview that Colombia was unable to shoulder the entire cost of the disarmament — an essential component of Bogota's strategy to end the long years of fighting, and stamp out the world's largest cocaine industry. "If we're talking about demobilising 15,000 to 20,000 combatants, it's obvious that it will completely surpass the state's budget," he said from his offices at the presidential palace late yesterday. In a breakthrough, leaders of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, a banned far-right group known by the Spanish initials AUC, agreed last week to confine themselves to a small rural area under the eyes of international observers. They will be joined by 400 armed bodyguards. The accord appeared to move the paramilitary leaders one step closer to demobilising and disarming their fighters, which use guerrilla tactics to hunt down and kill Marxist rebels, and any suspected civilian collaborators. The negotiations were threatened by repeated violations of a year-old AUC cease-fire, and insistence by paramilitary leaders that any settlement keep them out of jail. Last month, the government warned the AUC that if its troops did not move into "concentration zones" it would "annihilate" them. The United States, which provides hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid to Colombia, has said it is studying whether it will finance the demobilisation. Washington provided \$2 million for the planning of a small-scale paramilitary demobilization in Medellin, but later criticized the process. U.S. Ambassador William Wood said in March that the fate of the former paramilitary fighters who had been disarmed was unknown. — Reuters.

GREECE

London, May 14 — A press report, dated May 13, states: A makeshift bomb exploded outside an Athens bank today and a Greek fringe group claimed responsibility for three blasts in the city last week, saying they were to protest heavy security measures for the Olympics. Today's early morning blast outside a branch of Alpha Bank caused minor damage and no casualties. The group "Revolutionary Struggle" told the newspaper "To Pontiki" last week's bombs which damaged a police station but caused no casualties were a response to Olympic security plans. "With regard to the Olympic Games we say that Greece's transformation into a fortress, NATO's involvement, the presence and activities of foreign intelligence units show clearly that (the Olympics) are not a festival like Games organisers say, but it's a war," it said in a statement sent to the newspaper. "All members representing the international capital,

global mercenary killers and state officials, as well as well-off western Olympic tourists planning to be here, are not welcome," it said. Today's blast was triggered by gas canisters. Bomb squads also located a bag containing another similar home-made device outside an HSBC bank, that did not go off.

INDIA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: Security officials in India's north-eastern state of Tripura say separatist rebels have killed at least six soldiers in an attack near the border with Bangladesh. The officials said the rebels, from a faction of the National Liberation Front of Tripura, attacked a patrol on a remote road bordering the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh. It is the first major attack by separatists in five months. Most factions of the rebel group are now involved in peace talks with the Indian government, but some 200 fighters loyal to the chairman of the National Liberation Front have not joined the ceasefire.

INDONESIA

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: Separatist rebels in the Indonesian province of Aceh have freed two hostages including an Indonesian cameraman held for nearly a year. It came a day after the Free Aceh Movement (Gam) released 22 captives from among 200 people detained over the last year. The hostages were handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "We had to walk for two days and two nights and we just met with the ICRC vehicle," Mr Santoro told the AFP news agency shortly after his release. Mr Santoro and his journalist colleague Ersu Siregar were captured last June along with the wives of two soldiers. Mr Siregar was killed in a shoot-out between the rebels and government troops in December, and the two women were rescued in January. The identity of the second man released was not immediately known. Although from 19 May, martial law in the province is to be downgraded to a state of civil emergency government troops will remain in the area, and the authorities will still have the power to impose curfews, house searches and indefinite detentions.

Jakarta, May 18 — Indonesia will formally end martial law in Aceh at midnight, exactly one year after generals took over the restive province and launched their biggest offensive against rebels. President Megawati Sukarnoputri said in a speech today that military rule would be replaced by a civil emergency which means a civilian authority will govern the province, but it still can enforce extraordinary security measures such as curfews and house searches. "From the hour 0000 on May 19, I change the martial law status in Aceh province to become a civil emergency," she said. In a written presidential decree, Megawati said the civil emergency would be reviewed after six months and that government forces would continue operations against rebels. Last week, the government said it had agreed to lift martial law and

impose a civil emergency instead, but had left the precise timing vague. It has also decided to keep a heavy military presence in the rebellious territory. Rebels have freed 150 civilian hostages, but a group of local reporters who helped negotiate the deal were not held against their will, a Red Cross official said today. It was unclear how long rebels of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) had held the hostages, mainly local villagers. Seven Indonesian reporters who went to the GAM headquarters over the weekend (May 15-16) to seek the release of a local television cameraman had returned, the official added. There had been concerns yesterday they might also have been taken hostage. It was unclear if GAM was holding more hostages. The military says it has killed around 2,000 GAM members and captured 3,000 more since May 19, 2003, but the figure is hard to verify as foreign media and non-governmental agencies are largely prevented from working in Aceh, where the separatist rebellion has simmered for decades. — Reuters.

IRAQ

Najaf, May 14 — U.S. forces intensified their war against Iraqi cleric Moqtada al-Sadr today, sending tanks into Najaf's vast cemetery to blast guerrilla positions among its ancient tombs for the first time. Explosions and gunfire rocked the city, with much of the fighting apparently around the main police station, less than a mile from some of the holiest Shi'ite shrines. The streets were deserted and the city paralysed by fighting which began at breakfast time and was still raging in the early afternoon. There were also clashes with Sadr's Shi'ite Mehdi Army militia in the nearby holy city of Kerbala. U.S. troops as close as half a mile from Kerbala's most sacred buildings made loudspeaker announcements calling on people to stay out of the area. Helicopters dropped leaflets urging Sadr's men to give in. In other events, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld made a flying visit to Iraq yesterday as Washington tried to contain the prisoner abuse scandal. He said the scandal would not wreck America's mission when he made a surprise visit to Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison where U.S. troops abused and sexually humiliated Iraqi detainees. Rumsfeld has been fending off calls for his resignation over the crisis. Major U.S. newspapers said the first Abu Ghraib soldier to face trial would tell his court martial in Baghdad next week the abuse was committed without the knowledge of commanders — a view contradicting defenses being aired by some of Specialist Jeremy Sivits's co-accused. Sivits will plead guilty, they said, citing legal documents. — Reuters.

London, May 16 — A press report, dated today, states: The US military said yesterday it killed 18 gunmen believed loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in Baghdad, while jet fighters bombarded militia positions on the capital's outskirts. Skirmishes persisted in the southern holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. The US military also announced the deaths of five soldiers, including three killed by rebel attacks. In northern Iraq, rebels fired a mortar

round at an Iraqi army recruiting centre, killing four volunteers, hospital officials said. US troops are trying to disband the cleric's army and sideline its radical leadership before handing power to a new Iraqi government Jun 30. Al-Sadr is a fierce opponent of the U.S.-led occupation who launched an uprising last month and faces an arrest warrant for the death of a rival moderate cleric last year. In Najaf, militiamen fired a rocket-propelled grenade at a US tank stationed at the city's Police Directorate. The rocket missed its target and the two sides exchanged gunfire. Elsewhere, a shell landed on a house, wounding a woman. The normally bustling area around Karbala's Imam Hussein shrine, one of the holiest centres for Shiite Muslims, was silent except for intermittent blasts and machine-gun fire. After one blast, a huge column of black smoke wafted over the golden-domed shrine. One Polish soldier was wounded in yesterday's skirmishes, the Polish military said in Warsaw. The confrontations in the two holy cities in Iraq's southern Shiite heartland were less intense than in previous days. In Baghdad, coalition forces killed 18 fighters, many of them in the eastern Sadr City neighbourhood, a stronghold of al-Sadr, in a dozen separate engagements Friday (May 14) and yesterday, the military said in a statement. Troops also killed seven gunmen who attacked them in western Baghdad yesterday morning, said Brig-Gen Mark Kimmitt, the chief military spokesman in Iraq. Guerrillas fired a mortar round at an Iraqi army recruiting centre in the northern city of Mosul, killing four people and wounding 19, hospital officials said. The shell landed in a crowd of people waiting to sign up for the military. Kimmitt said the projectile was a mortar shell or a rocket-propelled grenade. Insurgents have previously targeted police and army recruitment centers in an effort to undermine Iraqi involvement in the US-led coalition. The coalition announced a reorganisation of its military command structure yesterday, creating a new headquarters with broad responsibility for operations in Iraq, including the training of Iraqi security forces and involvement in the political transition, and another headquarters that will handle daily tactical operations against the insurgency. Lt-Gen Ricardo Sanchez, a three-star general who was in charge of the previous, unified command, will oversee all operations from the Multinational Forces Iraq headquarters, Kimmitt said. Lt-Gen Thomas Metz, a three-star general who commands the US Army's 3rd Corps, will direct daily military operations from a headquarters called Multinational Corps Iraq. British troops killed up to 16 Iraqi insurgents after their patrol was ambushed between the southern cities of Amarah and Basra on Friday and two British soldiers were wounded, the Ministry of Defense said in London. However, Iraqi witnesses said 21 militiamen were killed and that they were loyalists of al-Sadr. The US military said three soldiers died from wounds suffered in rebel attacks Friday, one died in a vehicle accident

and one from "natural causes." Also yesterday, a rocket landed in the compound housing the headquarters of the US-led coalition in Baghdad, wounding one soldier and a civilian, both of whom later returned to duty, Kimmitt said. US jet fighters bombarded the outskirts of Sadr City overnight, forcing militiamen to flee positions, the witnesses said. In Najaf, gunmen from al-Sadr's militia controlled the city centre. They had replaced a special force assigned to protect the Shrine of Imam Ali, one of Shia Islam's holiest sites. Bands of fighters stood at almost every street corner around the shrine, and some patrolled the area in a commandeered police pickup truck. On Friday, apparent gunfire slightly damaged a shrine, prompting calls for revenge and even suicide attacks.

Baghdad, May 17 — A suicide car bomb killed at least nine people outside the main coalition headquarters in Baghdad today, including the head of the U.S.-appointed Governing Council, officials said. Abdul Zahra Othman Mohammad, a Shi'ite council member also known as Izzedin Salim, had been waiting at a checkpoint to enter the "Green Zone" compound in Baghdad when the bomb went off, Deputy Foreign Minister Hamed al-Bayati told Reuters, adding that Salim's car had been the last in a convoy which included other council members. "The other members escaped unharmed. They managed to get through the checkpoint before the explosion. Salim was still waiting to enter. It is too early to say whether the attack specifically targeted the Governing Council convoy," he said. Salim, who had been the current holder of the rotating Governing Council presidency, was the second of the 25-member Council to be killed. U.S. officers said the explosion had been caused by a car bomb. The checkpoint was crowded with civilian cars and minibuses. More than a dozen vehicles were destroyed by the blast. — Reuters.

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Ten Iraqis were killed and six wounded today in the car bomb blast near a checkpoint of the Green Zone containing the headquarters of the US-led coalition in Iraq, according to the US military.

Washington, May 17 — The United States, which invaded Iraq over alleged weapons of mass destruction, said today an exploded artillery shell found there will be tested further to confirm indications that it was armed with sarin nerve agent. It would be the first time any chemical weapon has been found in Iraq since the US led an invasion of that country last year, accusing then-President Saddam Hussein of developing chemical, biological and possibly nuclear weapons. Failure to find such weapons has stirred criticism in the United States and Britain, Washington's closest ally in the war. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and other US officials in Washington and Baghdad said today that initial field tests indicated that the 155mm shell contained sarin. "Additional testing will be done outside of Iraq, more detailed testing. But the initial tests in the field show the

presence of sarin," one US official said today. "Whether the person who rigged it up as an improvised explosive device knew what they had or not is open to question," the official added. US Brig Gen Mark Kimmitt told a news conference in Iraq that the substance had been found in an artillery shell inside a bag discovered by a US convoy a few days ago. The round had exploded, causing a small release of the substance, he said. David Kay, who last year led the post-invasion hunt for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq before stepping down, said the sarin was probably left over from the 1980s, produced either during the Iraq-Iran war or before the 1991 Gulf War. "It was probably just scavenged from one of the 125-plus ammunition storage points that still remain," Kay said. More forensic testing should determine with some confidence when it was produced, he said. Rumsfeld, responding to questions after a speech on Monday to the Heritage Foundation, a Washington think tank, said the testing could take some time. In Baghdad, Kimmitt told a news conference that two members of a US explosives team had been treated for exposure to the substance. Kimmitt said the round, designed to mix the sarin in flight, belonged to a class of ordnance that the ousted government of Saddam claimed to have destroyed before the 1991 Gulf war. Improvised explosive devices are bombs usually planted at the side of Iraqi roads to explode as coalition vehicles pass. — Reuters.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: Two Russian hostages captured in Iraq earlier this month have been released in Baghdad. The pair, who were employed by a Russian energy company, were freed on the southern outskirts of the capital. Andrei Meshcheryakov, 33, and Alexander Gordiyenko, 27, were said to be in good health after their ordeal. Gunmen kidnapped the pair - employees of Interenergosservis - on May 10, in an ambush near Baghdad, in which one of their colleagues was killed. Interenergosservis' director general said that no ransom had been paid, Russia's Itar-Tass news agency reported. Their release came on the same day that Interenergosservis was taking all of its Russian staff out of Iraq. The Russian foreign ministry repeated its call to all Russians to leave the country. Russia is not part of the US-led coalition, but has many workers in Iraq to restore the energy sector. Last month, Moscow evacuated some 365 citizens of ex-Soviet countries after a spate of kidnappings of foreign nationals. However, about 300 workers chose to stay behind - the great majority of them were Interenergosservis workers.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Repairs have this morning been completed to the pipeline supplying Basrah Oil Terminal which was damaged in an attack earlier this month. Tests are now being carried out on the pipeline. It has not yet been established when it will be back in full operation again. Currently, delays of approximately six days are being experienced at the terminal.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 18, states: A sabotaged pipeline in southern Iraq has been repaired and exports are to resume at pre-May 9 levels, an official at the oil terminal said. "Pumping through the pipeline that has just been repaired started at 0900 hrs (0500, UTC) and we expect the crude to reach the terminal around noon," Moayad Hashem, the official at the offshore terminal, said. He said exports should reach the same level as before the pipeline was sabotaged near Basra on May 9. The sabotage halved tanker loadings of about 1.7 million barrels per day.

Baghdad, May 19 — A U.S. soldier was jailed for a year for abusing Iraqi prisoners today, but an Arab media report that U.S. warplanes killed at least 41 people in a village threatened to fan anti-American feeling anew. Military policeman Jeremy Sivits wept as he confessed he and colleagues abused Iraqi detainees. U.S. officials have said the abuses were confined to a small group of guards at the Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad, but a top U.S. commander, General John Abizaid, suggested today mistreatment was more extensive than previously acknowledged. Abizaid told a Senate hearing in Washington the military had investigated 75 cases of abuse in Iraq and Afghanistan since late 2002. Meanwhile, Dubai-based Al Arabiya television quoted witnesses as saying U.S. warplanes had bombarded the village of Makr al-Deeb near the Syrian border while families were attending a wedding party. In Baghdad, a U.S. military spokesman said the report was being investigated. Arabiya said casualties included women and children and showed pictures of several shrouded bodies lined up on a dirt road. "The U.S. planes dropped more than 100 bombs on us," an unidentified man, who said he was from the village, told the television station. "They hit two homes where the wedding was being held and then they leveled the whole village. No bullets were fired by us, nothing was happening," he said. — Reuters.

Baghdad, May 19 — The US army said it killed around 40 people in an attack on suspected foreign fighters in Iraq near the Syrian border, but disputed reports that the victims were members of a wedding party. Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, deputy director of operations for the US military in Iraq, said the attack early today was within the military's rules of engagement. "At 0300 we conducted an operation about 85 km south-west of al-Qaim...against suspected foreign fighters in a safe house," Kimmitt said. "We took ground fire and we returned fire." Kimmitt said there were no indications that the victims of the attack were part of a wedding party. He said a large amount of money, Syrian passports and satellite communications equipment had been found at the site after the attack. However, Dubai-based Al Arabiya television, quoting eyewitnesses, said the raid on the village of Makr al-Deeb before dawn had targeted people celebrating a wedding and had killed at least 41 civilians. "We received about 40 martyrs today, mainly women and

children below the age of 12," Hamdy al-Lousy, the director of Qaim hospital, told Al Arabiya. "We also have 11 people wounded, most of them in critical condition." The United States, which is facing a Shi'ite and Sunni Muslim insurgency in Iraq, says foreign fighters are entering Iraq from Syria. — Reuters.

IRAQ-KUWAIT

Rijeka, May 12 — *Ro/ro Star*, ex *Boka Star*, is still laid up at Rijeka. Court proceedings are under way, however, there is no prospect of vessel's destiny at the moment. — Lloyd's Agents.

ISRAEL

London, May 15 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli helicopter gunships have carried out strikes in Gaza City, apparently targeting the militant group Islamic Jihad. The attacks early today hit a building on the seafloor, and then offices in the city. However, both buildings were empty and casualties are thought to be light. The raids came after two Israeli soldiers and at least two Palestinians died in clashes at Rafah refugee camp, in the southern Gaza Strip. The fighting occurred as troops moved in to demolish homes and expand a buffer zone along the Egyptian border. In Gaza City, the helicopter gunships came in low over the city centre soon after 0100 hrs today (2200 UTC, yesterday). There is speculation that the intended target was an Islamic study centre linked to Islamic Jihad on a floor below. The premises are linked to a senior Islamic Jihad leader Mohammed al-Hindi. Soon afterwards, the helicopters fired two missiles at another site run by a figure with Islamic Jihad connections. They hit his offices, which distribute money to the families of suicide bombers. The Israelis say both targets were involved in terrorist activity. The attacks followed a day of violence at the opposite end of the Gaza Strip. In Rafah the Israeli army said two of its soldiers died from sniper fire as they were helping a Palestinian woman, rejecting militant claims of an attack on their vehicle. The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade said it had carried out the attack. The incident brought to 13 the number of Israelis who have died in the Gaza Strip this week. At least two Palestinians died in yesterday's clashes. More than 30 others have been killed this week. Today an army official quoted by AFP news agency said Israeli troops had withdrawn from Rafah. Officials at the refugee camp estimated that 80 houses had been destroyed since Wednesday (May 12). Israel calls the demolitions a "legitimate defensive measure". The Palestinian authority has urged the international community to help prevent them.

Jerusalem, May 16 — Israeli soldiers killed four Palestinians as they tried to cross the border into Israel from the Gaza Strip this evening, Israel Radio reported. The report indicated that the Palestinians were armed and said they were trying to cross the border unobserved near the community of Nahal Oz in Israel when they were killed. Earlier in the day soldiers found and safely detonated a large bomb

planted in the same area, Israeli military sources said. Gaza was unusually tense today as Palestinian witnesses reported Israeli armoured vehicles massing in the southern district of Rafah, where seven Israeli soldiers have been killed in ambushes in recent days. — Reuters.

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli helicopters fired five missile at an office of the Fatah movement in a Gaza City neighbourhood early today, witnesses said. The office is in an office building in the Zeitoun neighbourhood, they said. Ambulances rushed to the scene, but there were no reports of casualties. The air strike came just after midnight, when offices are usually empty. The Israeli military had no immediate comment. The attack came hours after Israel's defence minister told his Cabinet that air strikes in Gaza would be intensified after a week of fighting in which 13 Israeli soldiers and 31 Palestinians were killed. The missiles set the second floor of the four-story building on fire. Fatah is the movement of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Residents said the small Democratic Front also had an office in the building. The Zeitoun neighbourhood was the scene of heavy fighting last week after Palestinians blew up an Israeli armoured personnel carrier, killing six soldiers.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli bulldozers began knocking down structures at the edge of a Palestinian refugee camp early today, minutes after residents said a helicopter fired three missiles that killed three Palestinians and wounded six others. Residents said the bulldozers moved to the edge of the Rafah camp near the border with Egypt and began demolishing structures in what appeared to be the beginning of a large-scale Israeli operation aimed at widening a border buffer zone. The Israeli helicopter fired three missiles at the surrounded refugee camp, killing three people, and wounding seven, one critically. Hospital officials said at least two of the dead were gunmen, but the wounded were civilians, including a 35-year-old woman. The Israeli military said the target was a group of armed Palestinians approaching Israeli forces. Israeli tanks and troops surrounded the camp, cutting it off from the rest of Gaza. Israel Radio reported that troops were prepared to fight from house to house in the camp. Israeli forces have entered the camp many times during more than three years of conflict, looking for tunnels the Palestinians use to smuggle in weapons under the Egyptian border. Last week, Palestinians blew up an Israeli armoured vehicle on the border road next to the camp, killing five soldiers, leading Israel to declare it would widen the buffer zone by tearing down houses in the camp.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Under heavy cover fire from helicopters, Israeli troops combed the refugee camp of Rafah for weapons and gunmen today in the biggest Gaza offensive in years. Twenty Palestinians were killed, including two teenagers shot as they gathered laundry.

International condemnation mounted of the operation, and the United States said it was asking Israel for "clarification." The United Nations and European Union demanded an end to the incursion, which Israeli security officials said would last at least a week. In Rafah, a crowded camp of 90,000 people near the Egyptian border, Palestinian families sought refuge from the rocket and machine-gun fire in the innermost rooms of their homes. The Israeli army said the aim of Operation Rainbow was to destroy weapons-smuggling tunnels and arrest Palestinian militants. It said it did not intend to demolish large numbers of Palestinian homes. Troops tore down four homes today, witnesses said. Troops moved today into the Tel Sultan neighbourhood on the outskirts of the Rafah camp. Bulldozers began tearing up a road to separate the neighbourhood from the rest of the camp, and soldiers backed by about 70 armoured vehicles conducted house-to-house searches, sometimes using bulldozers to knock down doors. The army said most of the casualties were gunmen killed by missiles or machine-gun fire as they prepared to attack troops. Residents said at least nine civilians were among the dead. At least 42 Palestinians were wounded. Some Palestinians tried to reach safer ground. Thousands have left their homes in Rafah since the weekend, hauling away their possessions on tractors and donkey carts. In all, 19 Palestinians in Rafah were killed by Israeli fire: 10 in two missile strikes, and nine by machine-gun fire, said Dr. Moawiya Hassanain, a Palestinian Health Ministry official. A 20th man was killed while handling explosives. Israel said both missile strikes, including one outside a mosque, were aimed at gunmen. Palestinian ambulance drivers reported coming under fire, and Hassanain said several ambulances were unable to evacuate the wounded. The army denied soldiers fired at ambulances, and said it was allowing some ambulances to drive to Khan Younis, which has a better-equipped hospital than Rafah, along an otherwise closed road. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat denounced the operation as a "planned massacre." Although Israel says it is targeting Rafah to destroy arms-smuggling tunnels, security officials have said the army also planned to widen a patrol road between the camp and Egypt, which would mean demolishing rows of houses. Israeli army chief Lt.-Gen. Moshe Yaalon said homes would only be demolished if gunmen used them as firing positions or to cover up tunnels. The threat of mass house demolitions drew strong international criticism, including from the United States. President George W. Bush termed the violence "troubling," but said Israel had the right to defend itself from terrorism. In other violence today, two Palestinians were killed by Israeli army fire in the West Bank, one in Nablus and one near Jenin.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli troops have opened fire during a protest by Palestinian demonstrators in the town of

Rafah in southern Gaza. At least 10 people were killed and 60 injured, though some reports put the number of casualties higher. The army expressed deep sorrow for the loss of innocent life, but said tanks and a helicopter had fired warning shots to stop crowds entering the area. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat called for international observers to protect his people, describing the events in Rafah as "atrocious crimes". The Israeli military said it was too early to say exactly what had happened, although it suggested that explosives laid by Palestinians could have been responsible. Army spokeswoman Brigadier General Ruth Yaron said that Israeli forces had fired warning shots after seeing "armed men in the midst of the demonstration". Thousands of people were demonstrating against a massive Israeli operation in the refugee camp on the edge of Rafah yesterday.

LIBERIA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: U.N. peacekeepers fired tear gas to quell a deadly riot by Liberian fighters today in the latest violence stemming from a U.N. disarmament programme. Witnesses said between 50 and 100 fighters loyal to ex-President Charles Taylor confronted the peacekeepers, demanding full payment in connection with a U.N. programme meant to collect weapons used in more than a decade of near-constant war. "We are going to maintain a substantial presence in the area," said the U.N. police commander in Liberia, Mark Kroeker, of the Monrovia suburb where the militia fighters rampaged after being told they wouldn't be given money immediately. Kroeker, a former Los Angeles deputy police chief, said that one man was "seriously assaulted" by rioters and died before Jordanian peace forces firing tear gas restored calm. Four others were injured in the riot, he said. Kroeker called the violence "unfortunate and unnecessary" in the midst of a disarmament process that has taken guns from 25,000 of Liberia's estimated 40,000 fighters since its violence-marred beginning last year. U.N. officials say it will likely take months to disarm all of Liberia's ill-trained, often-drugged fighters.

NEPAL

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 18 communist rebels and two police officers were killed in gunbattles in Nepal yesterday, government officials said. A security patrol encountered a group of rebels of the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) in Bhojpur district of eastern Nepal, triggering a five-hour firefight in the morning.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Troops have been given shoot-on-sight orders as Nepal was shut down at the start of a three-day strike called by Maoist rebels, two of whom died trying to bomb a government office. The only vehicles that dared defy the strike concealed their license plates. Most businesses and schools from the university to kindergarten level closed down in Kathmandu and other major

cities. "The disruption is causing a shortage of fresh vegetables and other essential goods imported from districts outside the capital and from India," said Harendra Bahadur Shrestha, head of the Nepal Consumers Forum. Two Maoists trying to plant a bomb at the Nepal Electricity Authority branch office at Banepa in Kathmandu's outskirts were killed when the explosive went off, police said. Heavily armed troops and police were posted across Kathmandu and state radio said they received orders "to shoot on sight anybody obstructing public life." The rebels, who are fighting to overthrow the monarchy, called the strike in part to show solidarity with opposition parties that have held more than a month of noisy demonstrations in Kathmandu. The Maoists said the strike should pressure King Gyanendra to meet their demands including a "round-table meeting" on Nepal's future among all key actors in the Himalayan kingdom and a special convention to redraft the constitution.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 29 Maoist rebels and eight Nepalese security officials were killed in armed clashes between Maoist rebels and government troops yesterday as a strike in Nepal enters its third day. According to the local media reports, 29 Maoists and eight security personnel were killed in coordinated land and aerial retaliatory attacks against Maoist rebels in Jogimara area of Dhading district. Meanwhile, a crippling general strike dragged yesterday, putting growing pressure on Nepal's king to restore a democratically elected government. Supporters of the strike burned tyres in the capital, Kathmandu, and attacked vehicles that appeared on its otherwise deserted streets. Two taxis defying the general strike were destroyed by the suspected Maoists in Swyambhu and Chabahil. The trolley and Sajha Yatayat buses continued to operate yesterday. Shops and businesses were shut for a second day as hundreds of police guarded the capital, other towns and highways. Airline flights were cancelled. The three-day strike was called by Nepal's five largest political parties, which want King Gyanendra to give up the executive powers he took two years ago when he dissolved Parliament and appointed a pro-monarchy government. The parties want to form a new government and have a say in who should succeed Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa, who resigned last week after anti-government protests. Nepalese Opposition stepped up its campaign to restore democracy last week when tens of thousands of their supporters took to the streets to back their demands.

NIGERIA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo declared a state of emergency in the violence torn central state of Plateau today, where hundreds of Muslims were killed in a land dispute earlier this month. The killings by Christian militia in Yelwa town sparked bloody reprisal riots in Nigeria's second largest city Kano last week, where

hundreds of Christians were slain by avenging Muslim youths. Mr Obasanjo said Plateau state governor Joshua Dariye, who he called "weak and incompetent" and accused of fomenting the violence, was removed from office for six months under the measure. He appointed a former chief of army staff as interim administrator of the state. The violence has had no impact on oil supplies from the world's seventh largest exporter, because Plateau state and Kano are hundreds of miles from the nearest oilfield.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Fresh fighting broke out in Nigeria's central state of Plateau, hours after a state of emergency was proclaimed in the area by President Olusegun Obasanjo to stem the wave of violence there, local media said today. Militants suspected to be Muslim Fulani invaded Sabori-gida village in Shendam local government area, leaving five persons dead and property worth millions of naira destroyed, the Guardian newspaper said. Innocent Ilozoke, Plateau state police commissioner, confirmed the killings, saying that more troops have been deployed to the area to check the mayhem. Plateau has suffered intermittent clashes since 2001, when more than 1,000 people were killed during a week of sectarian violence in the state capital of Jos.

PAKISTAN

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states; Sixteen died and over 50 were wounded in an armed clash between two communities in the Pakistani western Punjab province. Representatives of the communities quarreled at negotiations on a territorial dispute and the fire exchange happened, a police source said.

RUSSIA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Eleven Russian soldiers were killed in an ambush in Chechnya, an unidentified official at the Russian forces headquarters in the separatist republic was quoted as saying by the Interfax-AVN news agency early today. The eleven men, who served with the Russian interior ministry forces, died after they were attacked by Chechen rebel fighters in Chechnya's central Urus-Martan region yesterday. Some of the men, driving in a car, "fell into an ambush last Monday. The rebel fighters blew up the car and shot at the soldiers," the official said, without elaborating. A Russian armoured vehicle then came to the men's rescue, but Chechen fighters also blew it up and started shooting at its passengers as well, the official added. As a result, "11 soldiers were killed, five were injured and one is missing", the official said.

SUDAN

Khartoum, May 17 — Sudan said today its westerly Darfur region was stable after the military quelled a revolt there and security would now be maintained by police. "The situation in Darfur is stable and the threat indicator has been brought down from the color red to the

color yellow," said Ahmed Mohamed Haroun, state minister for internal affairs at a ceremony to see off more than a thousand police to Darfur. The U.N. estimates that around 120,000 people have fled across the border to Chad and about one million are displaced within the arid region. Interior Minister Abdel Rahim Mohamed Hussein told reporters the rebels were no longer a military force and had resorted to banditry. The United States accused Sudan of obstructing its attempts to send a humanitarian team to Darfur to survey the destruction. Sudan issued 11 Americans permits to travel to Darfur, State Department spokesman Adam Ereli told reporters. But the permits expired after three days — and the government required three days' notice of travel. — Reuters.

THAILAND

Bangkok, May 16 — Bomb blasts rocked three Buddhist temples in Thailand's troubled Muslim south today, wounding at least one person in the latest violence to hit the restive region, police said. The temples, located in three separate districts of Narathiwat province, were hit by bombs within minutes of each other. One temple sustained damage to its roof and pillars. "Three temples were attacked with explosives," said Police Major General Kathane Kochapalayuk. A bystander was slightly wounded outside one temple. The bomb blasts constituted the first major incident in the region since security forces killed 108 Muslim militants who attacked police outposts across three southern provinces on Apr 28. Many within the predominantly Muslim local community were outraged at what they said was an excessive use of force. The bloodiest fighting of that day occurred when soldiers and police stormed a historic mosque in the southern town of Pattani and killed 32 militants hiding inside. Narathiwat escaped the Islamic uprising that erupted in its three sister provinces on Apr 28 but security forces across the region are on high alert for the start of a new school semester tomorrow. Hundreds of heavily-armed soldiers are protecting teachers and guarding state schools, often targeted as symbols of central authority. "We plan to maintain tight security at schools. Each branch of the security forces has been assigned to a specific area," a Narathiwat district official told a Bangkok radio station. More than 20 schools were torched and an army camp raided for weapons in Narathiwat in January, triggering four months of violence in which scores of police and government employees have been killed in bombings, drive-by shootings and machete attacks. — Reuters.

UGANDA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Rebels killed 28 civilians and wounded 18 others in their raid late Sunday (May 16) on a camp for the displaced people in war-torn northern Ugandan, Paddy Ankunda, spokesman of the Ugandan government forces in the north told Xinhua

yesterday. He said in telephone that the death toll has increased to 28 from the earlier reported 22, and three members of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) were also killed by the government forces, the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF).

Kidnappings



PERU

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: The head of Hamburg-S,d Columbus Line, Jorn Baetke, who was kidnapped from outside Club Terrazon in Lima on May 8, is reported to have been freed by his kidnapers. A \$US2 million ransom was initially demanded and local officials have intimated a financial payment was made to secure the release. Police had earlier reported that the victim was forced to take money out of two automated teller machines.

Labour Disputes



BANGLADESH AIRLINE PILOTS

Karachi, May 15 — Bangladesh state owned airline Biman Bangladesh Airlines, said it resumed its regular flight operations in the early hours of yesterday after over 40 hours of disruptions as Biman management successfully negotiated a settlement with the striking pilots. As a result, domestic and international flights resumed regular operations from 0500 hrs yesterday, an official of the airlines said. In the last two days of strike, which pilots preferred to describe as 'fly by book', all Biman flights on international and domestic routes were either delayed or cancelled as pilots refused to fly extra hours until their demands were met. It is reported that the management has agreed that the salary and facilities of pilots will be increased by 15.5 percent effective from Jul 1, 2002, as demanded by Bapa, the association of 165 pilots of Biman. Regarding action against the official, who reportedly made derogatory remarks about the pilots, the deputy general manager (Public Relations Department) had already been transferred to the flight catering centre. On the reinstatement of Bapa President Captain SM Nasimul Haq, who was earlier declared unfit due to diabetes complications, the Biman official pointed out, Haq will be sent to London for a medical check-up by doctors approved by the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Department. If doctors suggest that his diabetes can be kept in control by medication, he will be reinstated. — Lloyd's List Correspondent

BRAZIL

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states Brazil's federal police called off a two-month-old strike for higher pay that has seriously disrupted airports and seaports, a police union official said late yesterday. The police will continue negotiations with the government through politicians, Francisco Carlos Garisto of the National Federation of Federal Police said. "We are ending this strike in the same position but we maintain our demands," Garisto said. The strike started on Mar 9 after the government rejected the police union's claim for an 85 percent pay rise to 7,700 reais a month. Brazil's federal police handle immigration services at ports of entry are involved in customs inspections. The strike caused chaos at airports and complicated export and import procedures.

ITALIAN AIRLINE PERSONNEL

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Workers at Rome's two airports will stage a four-hour strike today in a sign of the continuing threat posed by labour unrest to the recovery plans of Alitalia, Italy's financially stricken national airline. The industrial action is backed by the country's three largest trade unions and comes three weeks after another strike cost the loss-making airline E30m-E40m after it was forced to cancel more than 1,400 flights over five days. However, the planned strikes at Fiumicino and Ciampino airports reflect a dispute between management and workers at Aeroporti di Roma, the company that runs the airports, rather than between Alitalia's management and staff. Hence, the action does not contravene the terms of a May 6 deal under which the Italian government blocked proposals to cut jobs at Alitalia in return for trade union promises to halt labour unrest.

LEBANON

Beirut, May 20 — The General Labor Confederation invited all Lebanese to join in a strike today protesting the government's decision to cap the price of 20 litres of gasoline at the high level of LL25,000. GLC President Ghassan Ghosn urged all Lebanese to join in the protest, stressing that "rights and demands can not be met by weeping and complaining, but by hitting the streets and pressuring the government into changing its decision." Ghosn said the protest will start at 1000 hrs near the Grand Serail, adding that it will be peaceful and last until the Cabinet session is over. A strike will also be staged with both private and public sectors expected to shut down. The Catholic Information Centre announced that private schools and universities will not participate in the strike and will stick to regular schedules. A "support meeting" was held yesterday at the GLC offices to discuss fixing the price of 20-litres at LL15,000. The meeting included various participants, such as the Phalange Party, the Progressive Socialist Party and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party; private and public school teachers' leagues; committees from the orders of physicians and engineers; and for the first time, the Lebanese Industrialists' Association President

Fadi Abboud. In a statement yesterday, Metn MP Emile Lahoud expressed support for the strike and denounced the government's decision. Lahoud said the ceiling should be reduced to less than LL20,000. He added that gasoline prices were unbearable and only added to citizens' burdens. Lahoud said the government should not ignore the GLC's demands. The National Liberal Party described today's rally as a stand against "depriving citizens from a decent living." The National Social Security Fund and Electricite du Liban (EDL) employee unions asked all members to participate in the strike and the protest. The National Gathering for Salvation refused categorically the government's decision and urged officials to reconsider the prices of oil derivatives, reduce taxation on gasoline and set a comprehensive plan for public transport. In a statement, the gathering called on all parties, union committees and the people to express their refusal to the government policy through all possible democratic means and to participate in today's protest. It attributed EDL's failure to provide steady power to all areas of the country as a result of the absence of a radical settlement to the electricity crisis. The gathering called for investigations into the government's efforts to solve the crisis. The Confederation of Bank Employees Unions and the Union of Central Bank Employees also condemned the government's methods in dealing with the socioeconomic issue and called for a re-examination of the policy in all fuel sectors. — Lloyd's Agents.

NEPAL

See under "Political & Civil Unrest."

UNITED KINGDOM

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: About 5,000 MoT tests and 500 practical driving tests may have to be cancelled this week as civil servants in Northern Ireland continue their industrial action. The Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency has warned of disruption to appointments at its centres at Armagh, Belfast, Craigavon, Lisburn, Mallusk, Newry and Newtownards. Civil servants in a number of other departments are also taking industrial action, in the latest in a series of strikes by members of the public service union Nipsa. The indefinite strike action, which begins today, is expected to have major repercussions for drivers, as cars cannot be taxed without an MoT certificate. Nipsa has been involved in strike action since December over what they said was the government's refusal to give civil service staff any cost of living increases in rates of pay since April last year. The government has imposed a pay package which will add 3.67% to the wage bill of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. However, union officials say that was part of a pre-agreed increment and takes no account of the rise in the cost of living.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters in Greater Manchester are to be balloted on strike action following a day of unofficial action which has spread across the UK. The decision by many crews to take only 999 calls follows the suspension of 19

Salford firefighters in a pay dispute. The suspended crews had refused to use new anti-terror equipment, saying they had not received an agreed pay rise. FBU representatives and fire chiefs met today after a day during which protests spread to fire stations across England, parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland. Greater Manchester County Fire Officer Barry Dixon said the action being taken by his firefighters was "illegal" and could put lives at risk. He said 32 firefighters from three stations had been sent home after refusing to operate the anti-terror incident response unit in protest over the failure to finalise last year's pay deal. They would be allowed to return to work only if they agreed to "undertake the normal duties of a firefighter", Mr Dixon added. Mr Dixon rejected claims management had been heavy-handed in their treatment of staff. But a spokesman for the FBU blamed bosses for the dispute. The FBU called on employers to stop "dragging their feet" and make a "sensible and constructive decision" at a meeting scheduled for tomorrow. The Salford firefighters were sent home without pay yesterday after following Welsh colleagues by refusing to use the new units, which contain mass decontamination equipment. Crews at Ashton under Lyne, in Greater Manchester, have also been sent home without pay after supporting their Salford colleagues. Discussions were also held with firefighters at Farnworth and Broughton. Following agreements made last June for a staged 16% rise - which settled the previous year's nationwide pay dispute - fire crews were expecting a rise in November. But the FBU has withdrawn from the deal, saying the money has still not been delivered. Last week, Welsh firefighters refused to run the equipment, which could be used to decontaminate up to 400 people every hour in the event of a chemical attack. Crews in Merseyside, Essex, Wiltshire, Bedfordshire, Norfolk, Somerset, Devon and parts of Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, the West Midlands, Derbyshire and Staffordshire are answering 999 calls but not doing fire prevention work. Some fire stations in East Sussex and Kent are also working to rule but a Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue spokeswoman denied reports its crews were involved. The FBU said its members in Cornwall and Gloucestershire would only go back to work when the Salford firefighters were reinstated. Crews in Northern Ireland are only taking 999 calls, the FBU said. Three Tayside fire stations were affected, with about 30 firefighters answering emergency calls only. Crews across Strathclyde have also taken part in unofficial action.

Awards & Settlements**DEATH DUE TO TAKING WEIGHT-LOSS PILLS, UNITED STATES**

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 18, states: A Texas judge yesterday affirmed a jury's award of

more than \$1 billion in damages against drug maker Wyeth to the family of a woman who took Pondimin, part of the now-banned weight-loss combination fen-phen. A jury in Beaumont, Texas, granted the award on Apr 27 to the family of Cynthia Cappel-Coffey, who died in 2003, a year after she was diagnosed with primary pulmonary hypertension, a condition her attorneys said resulted from taking the drug. District Court Judge Donald Floyd affirmed the jury's decision, declining to lower the amount. Wyeth, which produced Pondimin, has vowed to appeal the verdict, saying the judge made numerous errors during the trial. The company also said it had provided adequate warnings about the heart risks associated with the drug and had complied with federal regulations. Madison, NJ-based Wyeth has set aside \$16.6 billion to settle fen-phen cases since it pulled both drugs, Pondimin and Redux, off the market in 1997 amid mounting reports they had caused heart valve and lung damage in some of the roughly 5.8 million Americans who took them.

IMPROPER MARKETING TACTICS, UNITED STATES

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer agreed to pay some \$430 million to settle charges of improper marketing tactics for its Neurontin epilepsy drug, according to company and government officials. The Justice Department said the settlement includes a \$240 million fine for "illegal and fraudulent promotion of unapproved uses" for the drug. The tactics by the Warner-Lambert division predate the 2000 acquisition of that firm by Pfizer, the company noted. A Justice Department statement said that Warner Lambert "aggressively marketed (Neurontin) to treat a wide array of ailments for which the drug was not approved." The company promoted Neurontin for bipolar mental disorder, various pain disorders, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, attention deficit disorder, migraine, drug and alcohol withdrawal seizures, restless leg syndrome, and as a first-line treatment for epilepsy, though it had been approved as a supplemental treatment for epilepsy. These actions, the government said, defrauded a number of government-funded health care programs. "This illegal and fraudulent promotion scheme corrupted the information process relied upon by doctors in their medical decision making, thereby putting patients at risk," said US Attorney Michael Sullivan. "The pharmaceutical industry will not be allowed to profit from such conduct nor subject the poor, the elderly and other persons insured by state and federal health care programs to experimental drug uses which have not been determined to be safe and effective." The statement said Warner-Lambert paid doctors to attend so-called "consultants meetings" including weekends and trips to Florida, the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and to Hawaii. Pfizer said that it had set aside \$427 million for the settlement,

resolving the allegations. "The settlement reached today is a full and final resolution by Warner-Lambert of all outstanding federal and state governmental investigations related to the promotion and marketing of Neurontin by Warner-Lambert's Parke-Davis Division," Pfizer said. "The underlying allegations and related investigations originated in 1996, well before Pfizer's acquisition of Warner-Lambert in 2000. The allegations and conduct pertain solely to Warner-Lambert practices." Neurontin was approved in 1993 for the treatment of partial seizures in adults with epilepsy. In 2002, Pfizer received approval for Neurontin for treatment of a shingles-like condition.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: John Penner has been granted a \$1.5 million settlement as a result of a traumatic brain injury received while working on a road improvement project for the Wayne County Road Commission. Penner, 43, of Westland was working as a road field engineer on May 3, 2000, on a road improvement project on Grand River between Fenkel and Greenfield. While working Penner was struck on the back of the head by a 50-pound cement chute being lowered by an employee of Koenig Fuel & Supply Co., Inc. Penner was knocked to the ground, momentarily lost consciousness, felt head pain, and was taken to the hospital where he received five stitches to close the external wound. He returned to work the next day, not to learn until at least a year later that the accident had caused a traumatic brain injury. In the weeks following the accident CAT scans and MRIs were administered to Penner and the tests showed the brain was normal. Within six months of the accident, Penner began to show signs of mood swings, behavioral disorder, and personality change in addition to headaches, nausea, ringing in the ears, forgetfulness, and sleeping problems. After being diagnosed as being manic-depressive, Penner underwent several treatments including electroshock therapy and being admitted to a psychiatric hospital before the traumatic brain injury was diagnosed. The cause of the injury also was traced to the work accident on May 3, 2000.

LOSS OF PENSION FUNDS, UNITED STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: Former Enron employees who lost millions in retirement money in the company's collapse would get \$85 million in a partial settlement of their lawsuit, while former directors agreed to pay \$1.5 million to resolve a related suit by the US Labour Department, attorneys said today. In their class-action suit, the employees alleged that the now-bankrupt energy company and its officers failed to execute their duties in administering Enron's pension plan. The partial settlement calls for the company to hand over an \$85 million insurance policy. It resolves the claims against

Enron's human resource staff and company directors, but not those against Kenneth Lay, who had been Enron's chairman, and former chief executive Jeffrey Skilling. The Labour Department's civil suit, filed last June, also named Lay and Skilling. The government sought to recover hundreds of millions of dollars in lost employees' retirement money, alleging that Enron and its top executives mismanaged retirement plans full of overpriced company stock. Both suits were filed in federal court in Houston, where Enron had its headquarters, and the settlements must be approved by the court. Attorneys for the Enron employees said their deal would be the largest settlement ever of a case involving company stock in retirement plans. More than 20,700 participants in Enron's 401(k) plan had nearly two-thirds of their assets invested in company stock. The suit filed on the employees' behalf alleged that they lost more than \$1 billion. The company spiraled toward bankruptcy in late 2001 and the stock collapsed. Employees were not told about the deteriorating finances and were blocked for a time from selling the declining Enron stock in their retirement accounts. The Labour Department's specific allegation against the outside directors was that they failed to appoint a trustee to manage the Enron stock held by the employee stock ownership plan, which was separate from the company's 401(k) plans. The allegation was disputed by Neil Eggleston, a Washington lawyer representing the outside directors. The board did appoint Northern Trust Co as trustee in August, 1999, and it was later replaced by another bank, he has said. Under the directors' accord with the department, up to \$300,000 of the \$1.5 million would be paid as a penalty and the remainder would go to the employees. The directors — who include Wendy Gramm, former head of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and wife of ex-Senator Phil Gramm of Texas — did not admit wrongdoing under the settlement. "The former outside directors are pleased that this part of the Enron tragedy is being resolved and that funds can now flow to the pension plan participants," Eggleston said today. Labour Secretary Elaine Chao has said that Lay "went so far as to tout the Enron stock as a good investment for his own employees, even after he had been warned that a wave of accounting scandals was about to engulf the corporation." Lay has also disputed the government's allegations. His attorney has said the Labour Department was trying to create new law by requiring a company to apply a strict new standard for evaluating its own stock that is held in employee retirement plans. No criminal charges have been brought against Lay. Federal prosecutors in February charged Skilling with nearly three dozen counts of fraud and other crimes stemming from Enron's collapse.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, ALBERTA, CANADA

London, May 19 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A wheel-chair bound woman who sued over botched

dental surgery 12 years ago has won \$3 million payout. Tammy Bergland-Jaster, originally sued dentist Douglas Vincelli for \$7 million. She has a rare form of muscle fibrosis in her legs and arms as a result of medication she took to counter the pain caused by the surgery.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, UNITED STATES

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: A Fort Myers attorney who is in a permanent vegetative state because of a kidney stone surgery that went awry and his wife will receive \$8.75 million after settling a lawsuit yesterday against Naples Community Hospital and several Naples doctors. Deborah Meisenberg approved the settlement on behalf of herself and her husband, Jay, in Collier Circuit Court. Jay Meisenberg had been admitted Dec 20, 2001, into NCH for removal of an "extremely large" kidney stone, according to the lawsuit. During the surgery, Meisenberg went into shock and heart failure and lost oxygen to his brain. He "remains catastrophically injured with permanent and total disability," according to the suit. Almost a dozen attorneys representing various parties in the suit were present or on conference calls yesterday in a hearing before Collier Circuit Judge Ted Brousseau to approve the terms of the settlement. After asking that the terms be kept confidential, an attorney representing the Meisenbergs asked the judge to clear the courtroom of everyone not a party to the case. Brousseau refused to order anyone removed from the courtroom but agreed to seal the terms of the settlement. Under the terms, NCH will pay \$4.25 million. Dr. Karl Heinrich Horsten, who administered the anesthetic during the surgery, will pay \$2 million. Some of the other doctors named in the suit will divide responsibility for the remaining \$2.5 million among them. Of the settlement, \$2.2 million will be placed in a trust for Jay Meisenberg. He remains in a nursing home in Fort Myers and may need to be moved to a different care provider in the future. He continues to receive Medicare and Social Security benefits, Meisenberg's guardian ad litem told Brousseau. Deborah Meisenberg, also of Fort Myers, will receive \$4 million. Her sons, Jeremy and Paul, waive any claim to the settlement, according to court records. All three family members were present in court yesterday to say they agreed to the terms and found them to be a reasonable outcome to the case. The suit was filed March 21, 2003. According to the suit, Meisenberg had a history of kidney stones that had been treated successfully in the past but had recurred. He asked for a heart test before scheduling surgery for kidney stones because he suffered from chest pains during exercise. "Mr Meisenberg was a smoker, somewhat overweight and used alcohol on a regular basis," according to the suit. Some heart-related tests were run several months before the surgery, but new ones weren't before Meisenberg was admitted, according to the suit. During the

surgery, he went into heart failure and was revived, but he had permanent brain damage from oxygen deprivation.

RECEIPT OF UNAUTHORISED PAYMENTS, UNITED STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: A former member of media baron Conrad Black's executive team, Peter Atkinson, agreed to pay \$2.8 million to settle charges he received unauthorised payments from operating firm Hollinger International, the company said. The settlement was the latest development in the feud involving Black and the US operating company he created for the Daily Telegraph, the Chicago Sun-Times, the Jerusalem Post and other news organisations. Atkinson, who at one time had been executive vice president of Hollinger International, resigned last year when the scandal over improper payments to Black and others surfaced. Last week, Hollinger International revised its estimate of the losses attributed to Black and his aides and filed an amended lawsuit seeking \$1.25 billion in damages. According to the Financial Times, the suit alleges that Black, along with his associates and private companies, diverted \$391 million from Hollinger's coffers between 1997 and 2003. Under the settlement, Atkinson agreed to pay \$2.8 million, of which \$350,000 was already paid in November and December, 2003. This represents 100% of the amounts he received, plus interest, in payments previously characterised as "non-compete" payments, and amounts under the company's "Digital Management Incentive Plan." The company said the settlement is awaiting the approval of the Delaware Chancery Court, where a lawsuit has been filed. Atkinson was not named in an amended complaint filed in federal court last Friday (May 7) against Black and others under US racketeering laws.

THEFT OF DESIGN, UNITED STATES

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Swedish goods giant Electrolux will pay US dollars 30 million to a British inventor in an out of court settlement over his claim that the company stole his design for an upright, bagless vacuum cleaner. The settlement brings to an end a lawsuit filed by John North against Electrolux in an El Paso, Texas court in May 2002, in which he sought the estimated profits of 100 million dollars made by the company from the sale of three million vacuum cleaners of his design, as well as punitive damages. In the lawsuit, North claimed he had held a series of meetings with Electrolux where he presented his idea. The company later released a vacuum cleaner using a similar concept without his knowledge, he said. The case went to trial in Texas in April, and was still underway when Electrolux decided to reach the 30-million-dollar settlement. In return for the money, North has agreed to drop all claims, including future claims against Electrolux in the matter. As a result, the case will not be decided by a jury in El Paso and the matter is concluded, Electrolux said.

Despite the pay-out, Electrolux maintained that North's case had no merit. "Electrolux entered into the settlement because it brought the matter to an end with a known outcome rather than the uncertainty of a jury decision. The group maintains that there is no merit to the charges," it said in a statement.

Railway Accidents



DENVER, COLORADO, UNITED STATES

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Fifteen cars were derailed at about 1300 on Thursday (May 13) as a train crossed the South Platte River at Fox Street, in Denver, near Coors Field. No one was hurt. The cause was still under investigation, said Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Co spokeswoman Lena Kent. The wreck was cleaned up by 1000 on Friday, she said.

GOONDIWINDI AREA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Three men were taken to hospital after a collision between a road train and an empty freight train, which partially derailed, near the Queensland border town of Goondiwindi today. Two train drivers and the truck driver were taken to Goondiwindi Hospital after the accident at a level crossing on the Cunningham Way, 2km north-east of Goondiwindi at 1115, AEST, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) area director Mike Flanigan said. A spokeswoman for Queensland Ambulance Service said the train driver has a ruptured liver, the train supervisor spinal injuries and the truck driver a suspected ruptured spleen. All were reported in a stable condition today. Mr Flanigan said the collision involved a double-headed freight train travelling towards Brisbane and the semi-trailer carrying a vast amount of barley seed. He said the spilled barley seed had soaked up much of the estimated 400 litres of diesel fuel from one of the locomotives. Police were diverting traffic and the Cunningham Highway north of Goondiwindi was likely to remain closed until well into the night. The south-west freight line, which does not carry passenger traffic, also suffered damage. A spokesman for Queensland Rail (QR) said the Brisbane-bound train had been pulling 16 fuel wagons but was empty at the time of the crash. QR personnel were at the scene and an investigation was underway, he said.

GRANBY AREA, COLORADO, UNITED STATES

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Two engines and a rail car were derailed at about 2130, Thursday (May 13) in Fraser Canyon, about three miles east of Granby,

Colorado. Officials said the coal train was struck by a rock slide, trapping two of the three employees on board in an overturned locomotive. Neither was seriously injured. About 300 people travelling either way between Denver and Salt Lake City on Amtrak had to detour through Wyoming, Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari said. The rock slide was about 80 feet long, with boulders the size of railroad cars, said Union Pacific Railroad spokesman John Bromley. The engine leaked a small amount of fuel into the Fraser River. Union Pacific officials put up booms to contain the spill, said Grand County Undersheriff Glen Trainor.

GUNTER AREA, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Two freight trains collided just outside of the small North Texas town of Gunter yesterday, killing one person and injuring four others, authorities said. About 20 cars derailed. Lt. David Hawley of the Grayson County Sheriff's Department said the four injured were taken to area hospitals. Hawley said the rail cars on one of the trains was empty and the other was hauling rocks. There were no evacuations. Joe Faust, a spokesman for Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp., said both of the trains belonged to the company. The northbound and southbound trains collided head-on, and at least one of the locomotives burned. The cause of the accident wasn't immediately known. Officials from the National Transportation Safety Board were en route, Hawley said. The accident occurred in a rural area about 50 miles north of Dallas.

LIBARNA AREA, ITALY

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: An Italian passenger train jumped the rails and hit a goods train travelling on the adjoining tracks, injuring around 30 people, a spokesman for Italy's state railways has said. The incident happened at around 1630 today near the northern Italian town of Libarna. State railways said the passenger train was an inter-regional service running from Livorno to Turin. "A locomotive and carriage also hit a building which appears to have been uninhabited," said Claudio Cristofani, the railway's chief spokesman.

LIVERPOOL, MERSEYSIDE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: A train derailment caused massive disruption to Merseyrail commuters at the height of yesterday afternoon's rush hour. All services from Hamilton Square on the Wirral Line were suspended after the 1623 hrs service from New Brighton to Liverpool derailed just outside Birkenhead North station. Around 20 passengers had to wait on the stationary train for about an hour before they were let off by Merseyrail staff. Nobody was injured. The derailment paralysed train services in and out of Wirral and led to chaotic scenes at stations along the route as commuters waited for replacement bus

services. Merseyrail and Network Rail were last night carrying out an investigation into what caused the accident, but British Transport Police have ruled out criminal activity. Passengers travelling home from Liverpool were only able to take a train as far as Hamilton Square, where they were loaded on to buses. Merseyrail spokesman Rudi Boersma last night apologised for the disruption. He said: "The first four wheels of the front carriage came off the track on the curve into the platform. The train remained perfectly upright. "It was going very slowly and there were no injuries to passengers. "This is a rare occurrence and Network Rail and British Transport Police are now investigating why the accident happened. "All services have been suspended between Hamilton Square and New Brighton and it is likely to be today before services are back to normal." A spokesman for British Transport Police said: "There was no criminal activity and the train appears to have slipped its points."

NORTH HUNTINGDON, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES

London, May 18 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Crews are responding to a train derailment late this afternoon in Westmoreland County in which more than 20 cars have left the tracks in North Huntingdon Township. The DEP says two cars of the CSX train actually fell into the Youghiogheny River, but a spokesperson tells KDKA that one was empty and the other had plastic pellets inside — so there aren't any leaks causing any environmental problems.

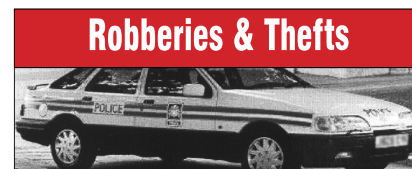
ODESSA AREA, UKRAINE

Kiev, May 16 — A freight train slammed into a bus at a level crossing in southwestern Ukraine today, killing 15 people and injuring 29 others, the ex-Soviet state's Emergencies Ministry said. A ministry spokesman said the early morning accident occurred at a village crossing south-west of Odessa equipped with lights and a buzzer but no gate. The train was bound for the Danube river port of Izmail. News reports said the bus, carrying 45 passengers, had stalled on the crossing and was pushed 500 metres down the line before the train came to a stop. The driver, unhurt in the incident, was being questioned by police. There was no damage to the track and traffic was restored later in the day. — Reuters.

SERRAVALLE SCRIVIA AREA, ITALY

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: About 30 people were injured when two trains derailed today in northern Italy between Genoa and Milan, firefighters told Italian television. The ANSA news agency said the accident occurred near the town of Serravalle Scrivia, about 50 km north of Genoa. A regional passenger train derailed and hit a locomotive travelling in the other direction, the state television network RAI reported. Firefighters deployed to the scene told Rai that 30 people were injured, none seriously. The cause of the accident was not yet known. Several teams of rescue

workers were flown to the scene of the accident by helicopter.



CELLO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 18, states: A priceless Stradivarius cello stolen from a musician's home has been recovered, police said today. The 1684 cello was recovered over the weekend (May 15-16), but no arrests have been made, said Officer Eduardo Funes, a police spokesman. The \$3.5 million cello belongs to the Los Angeles Philharmonic and a news conference was scheduled for tomorrow afternoon to release more details, Funes said. An anonymous donor had offered a \$50,000 reward for the return of the cello, which is considered priceless because it cannot be replaced. It was not immediately known if anyone would be given the reward. The cello was played by principal cellist Peter Stumpf, who was out of town when it was stolen Apr 25 at a Los Feliz home. Surveillance video from a neighbour's home showed a man riding away on a bicycle with a silver-colored cello case holding the instrument in one hand, police said. The instrument was one of only about 60 made by master craftsman Antonio Stradivari and was purchased about 30 years ago by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association.

JEWELLERY, SWINDON, UNITED KINGDOM

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: A briefcase containing jewellery worth nearly £1m has been stolen from a car parked on a petrol station forecourt. The owner of the vehicle said he had left it for only a couple of minutes as he paid for fuel at the filling station in Swindon, Wiltshire, on Monday (May 17). When he returned, the case of platinum, gold and diamond jewellery was missing. Police said the man was travelling from his Oxfordshire home to an undisclosed location when the theft took place. The exact value of the missing jewellery has not been confirmed, but it is believed to run into many hundreds of thousands of pounds. Det Con Paul Hacker of Wiltshire Police said while thefts from cars in Swindon is not unusual, the high value involved in this case was "very rare." An inquiry into the incident is under way and detectives are examining CCTV footage from the garage.



COLLAPSE OF GANGWAY, SHIPYARD, ST. NAZAIRE, FRANCE

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: The collapse last

year of a walkway on passenger *Queen Mary 2* that killed 15 people was due to a technical problem, public prosecutors in western France said today. "There were a design problem with the walkway," prosecutor Pierre-Marie Block told a press conference, presenting the conclusions of a report drafted by three experts about the deadly Nov 15 accident. Block explained that the gangway connecting the deck of the vessel to the quayside lacked diagonal support beams, causing it to collapse. He said the number of people on the walkway at the time was not a factor. The accident, which took place in the shipyard in the port of St Nazaire while the vessel was still undergoing offshore testing, also left 28 people injured.

EQUIPMENT FAILURE AT REFINERY, ST. PAUL PARK, MINNESOTA, UNITED STATES

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 15, states: A breakdown at a refinery that supplies much of Minnesota's gasoline could send regional pump prices even higher than the \$2 a gallon. Officials at the Marathon Ashland Petroleum Refinery in St. Paul Park - which normally produces 26,000 gallons of gas per day - declined to discuss details of the production problem. But state and federal officials say there has been a major equipment failure at the refinery, which supplies Minnesota with an estimated 15 percent to 20 percent of its gasoline. "I understand the plant has fully shut down operations due to this malfunction and it likely will be down for approximately 14 days to fix the problem," Leslie Kupchella, a spokeswoman for Gov. Tim Pawlenty, said today. But company officials said they expected no disruption in supply, thanks to pipeline networks from its other refineries in nearby states and contracts with other refining companies to pick up the slack in such cases. Most of Minnesota's gasoline comes from the Marathon Ashland refinery, the Flint Hills (formerly Koch) refinery in Rosemount, the Murphy Oil refinery in Superior, Wis., and three pipelines. Since those refineries run at full capacity nearly all the time, pump prices could rise with any disruption in operations, the state Commerce Department said.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 12, states: Public health authorities closed an elementary school in Abbotsford yesterday after a new strain of avian flu was found on a nearby farm. King Traditional Elementary School in Abbotsford was closed at noon yesterday and its 365 students will not be permitted to return until Monday (May 17). The bird flu outbreak in the Fraser Valley has, until now, only involved a strain of the virus known as H7N3, a strain that is fatal to birds but poses little or no risk to humans. So far, the only cases of human infection have involved two farm workers who developed mild cases of pink eye. But on Monday (May 10), routine government surveillance tests on geese at the Fraser Valley Duck and Goose Farm showed

antibodies for the H5 subtype of avian flu, suggesting the birds may have been exposed to a new strain of the virus. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency said yesterday it had not confirmed that the birds had been exposed to an H5 type of the virus. They also stressed that even if the virus turns out to be of the H5 variety, it could be a relatively harmless strain. There are nine types of H5 virus. The strain of the virus that has led to more than 20 deaths in Asia over the past year is the H5N1 strain. It has never been identified in North America. Samples from birds at the farm have been sent to the government's labs in Winnipeg and Kiley said they hope to have results within days.

OUTBREAK OF SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: The World Health Organisation (WHO) today declared the latest SARS outbreak in China contained, saying in a statement the chain of human-to-human transmission appeared to have been broken. "It has been more than three weeks since the last case was placed in isolation in China's latest SARS outbreak," the WHO said. However, the WHO said its experts and Chinese authorities were still not completely sure about the exact cause of the outbreak, widely believed to be at a Beijing laboratory. "The investigation has centred primarily on the National Institute of Virology in Beijing where experiments using live and inactivated SARS coronavirus have been carried out," the WHO said in the statement. "Preliminary findings in the investigation have yet to identify a single infectious source or single procedural error at the Institute, and it is conceivable that an exact answer may never be arrived at," it said. China's health ministry said today two SARS patients were still hospitalised in Beijing from the most recent outbreak. Nine people, all linked to the virology institute, had been confirmed as having SARS, including one who later died.

PORTUGUESE FISHING VESSELS BOARDED BY CANADA

London, May 16 — A press report, dated May 14, states: The European Commission is supporting Canada's demand that its officials be present for the inspection of trawler *Brites*, suspected of illegal fishing on the Grand Banks, the federal government said today. The vessel has been accused of trawling for protected fish in international waters but was allowed earlier this week by the European body to return home to face inspection there. Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham today gained European Union support to have Canadian observers present when that inspection occurs, a spokeswoman for the minister said. "The minister has obtained assurances that the European Union is in favour of having Canadian observers (present) when the EU inspectors will inspect the ship," Isabelle Savard said from Washington. However, Portugal must also agree to give Canada observer status. It is not clear when *Brites* will return home for that

inspection. *Brites* was one of seven vessels inspected last week on the Grand Banks just outside Canada's 200-mile economic zone. There was no evidence of illegal fishing on five of the vessels. Portuguese fishing *Aveirense* was cited for two violations, including fishing banned species. Under Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) rules, Canada cannot order the vessels to port for investigation. Instead, they must ask the flag country to investigate or ask permission to take the vessels to the nearest NAFO port.

Fires & Explosions



COAL MINE, HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE, CHINA

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: Twelve workers were killed in a gas explosion at a coal mine in China's north-eastern Heilongjiang province, state media reported today. The blast happened at 2300, yesterday when 50 miners were in a shaft at the Xinxing coalmine at Qitaihe city, Xinhua news agency said. Thirty-eight of them were rescued, but 12 died.

COAL MINE, SHANXI, CHINA

London, May 19 — A serious accident happened last night when a mine in Shanxi province was hit by a gas explosion, trapping 34 miners. "One miner was found alive and 15 bodies of miners have been recovered. The rescue work is still going on," an official at the Luliang Coal Mine Safety Supervision Bureau told AFP. The 18 others were still missing, he said. The mine did not have an operating licence and was shut down twice in May but the owner of the mine continued to operate the mine illegally, the China News Service said.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: An explosion and a fire ripped through a mine in Luliang, a city in Shanxi province, yesterday evening while 34 workers were in its shaft, the official Xinhua News Agency said today. Eighteen bodies were recovered and 15 miners were trapped in the accident, state television said. One other worker escaped with injuries, it reported. Rescue efforts were hampered because the miners were scattered in "dozens of spots" throughout the shaft, making it difficult to locate them, Xinhua said. Police have detained the mine manager, who was not at the scene at the time of the explosion, Xinhua said. The facility, which produces 20,000 tons of coal annually, had been operating without the approval of authorities.

COAL MINE, SHUOZHOU, SHANGXI PROVINCE, CHINA

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: A fire in a Shanxi mine killed four workers and trapped 10, state-television said. Forty-seven others managed to escape the mine in the city of Shuozhou after the blaze started yesterday.

**COMMERCIAL PREMISES,
STRUBENS VALLEY,
SOUTH AFRICA**

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: It is estimated that millions of rand worth of damage has been caused by a fire that gutted Makro Cash and Carry in Strubens Valley, northwest of Johannesburg. The fire apparently started on the northwest side of the 13 000 square metre store near the liquor depot where construction was under way. Authorities say the fire is directly linked to construction work being carried out to extend the store. Malcolm Midgley, a fire-fighter and Johannesburg Emergency Services spokesperson, was among the first to arrive on the scene. He says: "(It) started northwest, quickly spread to the whole place. At least 12 trucks were used in containing the fire and several other support vehicles, 60 fire fighters and support staff. It looks like it had something to do with construction." Midgley said it took them about an hour and half to contain the fire. The structure, he adds, is still unstable. Four people sustained minor injuries. A full investigation will be launched to determine the exact cause of the fire. Lamberti says the damage is quite extensive. "R60 million (US\$8.7 million) of stock went in flames," he said. The building is expected to smoulder for a few days and the fire department will monitor the situation. Lamberti says that once investigations are completed, everything will be done to re-open the store as soon as possible.

**FACTORY, SOUTH MOLTON,
DEVON, UNITED KINGDOM**

London, May 15 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 80 workers at a chipboard factory in north Devon escaped injury after an explosion at the site. About 60 firefighters were called to the Nexfor chipboard company in South Molton at about 1900 BST yesterday. It is thought the explosion occurred in the glue kitchen area of the large single-storey building. One person was inside the building at the time. About 80 other people were working elsewhere on the site. All escaped injury. The building at Nadder Lane was seriously damaged and police said debris from the blast was thrown up to 100 metres away. It is thought a fault with one of the machines may have been to blame for the start of the fire. Fire crews were still at the scene this morning.

**FOREST, NORTHERN IRELAND,
UNITED KINGDOM**

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The Fire Service is calling on people to take more care in the countryside following a number of gorse fires. A hundred acres of forest was destroyed in a fire at Davagh forest in County Tyrone last night.

**HOUSES UNDER CONSTRUCTION,
CARDIFF BAY, WALES,
UNITED KINGDOM**

London, May 14 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The cost of a blaze that ripped through 10 new homes has been put at around £2.5m. Fire

investigators were back at the site today on Harrowby Street, opposite Butetown Police Station on James Street, in Cardiff Bay, where the fire destroyed the three-storey homes yesterday. The partial terrace was being built by Wimpey and would have been sold for around £250,000. Greg O'Neil, Cardiff manager at Porter's Estate Agents on Cowbridge Road East, Canton, said: "This will be a huge blow to Wimpey - houses like that would have sold for around £250,000 each." Scenes of crime police officers were at the site yesterday and were expected to return today once the site had been made safe.

**NUCLEAR POWER PLANT,
CATTENOM, FRANCE**

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: A nuclear power plant in eastern France was shut down as a precautionary measure today after a fire broke out in a thicket of electrical cables at the site, plant officials said. Firefighters were called to the Cattenom plant in the eastern Moselle region to put out the blaze that erupted just after noon, officials said. The second of the plant's four reactors was halted. The fire broke out in a non-nuclear area of the site, and there was no threat to any reactor or environmental damage, officials said. No one was injured. The No 2 reactor remained shut down, and an investigation was under way.

OIL WELL, NIGERIA

Lagos, May 18 — At least three people died in a fire that engulfed Royal Dutch Shell's disused Afam Well-16 in south-eastern Nigeria, the company said today. Shell, Nigeria's biggest producer, said in a statement the dead were members of a gang of suspected oil thieves who ruptured parts of the wellhead. A helicopter overfly sighted a burning tanker at the scene. Shell said it had mobilised oil well fire experts Boots and Coots International to the facility because of the "intensity and complexity" of the inferno which has been raging since Sunday (May 16). "Casualty figures are not known but it appears that three people may have died," the statement said. The Anglo-Dutch oil giant said it had informed appropriate government and regulatory agencies about the fire at the well in Oyigbo district of Rivers state. Shell withdrew from the Afam field in 1999 after a string of violent attacks by local militants. — Reuters.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: Over 29 persons were killed in a fire outbreak at a Shell oil well at Afam in Oyigbo local government area of Rivers State on Sunday (May 16). A source told Daily Champion that the fire was caused by a disagreement among indigenes of the three communities in Afam over the sharing formula for "royalties" from the illegal bunkerers who have turned the Shell oil well head into an illegal bunkering. The three communities had been contesting the ownership of the land on which the well head is sited with each insisting on taking the lion's share of the booty. It was learnt that during the disagreement, one of the people

brought out a lighter and cigarette and ignited the fire. A police source said that 10 persons were buried at Afam Uta, another 10 at Obe Akpu and nine at Afam Ukuru while others with five burns are in unknown hospitals in the area. The source who trailed some of the victims to a private hospital in Okwali said they saw four victims who were badly burnt but when the police left they were evacuated from the hospital. Before the fire outbreak, two tankers had already loaded that Sunday and left and when the fire erupted the third tanker and all persons present were trapped by the inferno. Deputy Governor, Sir Gabriel Toby, when he visited the scene sympathised with the families of the victims. He warned the people to desist from illegal bunkering and other activities that are illegitimate, pointing out that many have perished in the quest of looking for little things whereas there is no compensation for loss of lives. General Manager, Eastern Operation, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Mr. Mutiu Sunmonu lamented that the company lost 40,000 barrels per day to illegal bunkering. Sunmonu stated that Shell cannot at present quantify its loss in the Afam vandalism. The fire was still raging at noon yesterday, and more than 22 firefighting machines were at the scene.

**PREMISES, MURRAY BRIDGE,
AUSTRALIA**

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters have contained a blaze in a recycling yard at Murray Bridge. The fire broke out in the Thomas Street premises at about 1130, ACST, today and quickly spread from bales of paper to a stack of tyres and plastic. Residents were told to stay away from the fire to avoid toxic fumes. At least seven CFS units were called to the scene and are expected to remain for several hours.

**PREMISES, RIO DE JANEIRO,
BRAZIL**

Rio de Janeiro, May 19 — About 0001 today a fire broke out on the 25th floor of the Petrobras building in the center of Rio de Janeiro. Employees working in the telephone section on this floor, scented burned rubber and immediately called internal fire brigade and local fire brigade. Fire was controlled after about two hours with assistance of 20 firemen. No casualties reported. Building is working normally except for the 25th floor which is closed, for investigations. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Rio de Janeiro, May 19 — The building has been now closed by the Fire Brigade and all workers requested to leave building. Fire destroyed all the telephone system on the 25th floor and also the 26th floor, building has 26 floors. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

**PREMISES, SEVERNA PARK,
MARYLAND, UNITED STATES**

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: A two-alarm fire at a small, two-storey apartment building in Severna Park early yesterday displaced six families and caused nearly \$1 million in damage, officials said. It

took about 90 minutes to bring the blaze under control, but no one was injured in the fire, said Capt. Lee Cornwell of the Anne Arundel County Fire Department. Dispatchers received a call reporting the fire at 0540 hrs, Cornwell said. A second alarm was sounded 15 minutes later. A total of 57 firefighters from the Anne Arundel County Fire Department and the U.S. Naval Academy responded, Cornwell said.

PREMISES, THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS

London, May 15 — A press report, dated today, states: One person has been killed in a fire that broke out in the official residence of the Prime Minister, Jan Peter Balkenende. The fire started during maintenance work as the building in the Hague was being prepared to host European leaders later this year, when the Netherlands takes over the EU presidency. The man killed in the fire was a painter working in the building. Mr Balkenende was not in the Hague at the time of the incident. The fire wrecked the ground floor and badly damaged the upper storeys of the 350-year-old building, which has been renovated at a cost of more than \$17m.

PREMISES, WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: It took dozens of firefighters from five localities to battle Saturday night's (May 15) fire at the Patriot Plaza Shopping Centre off Richmond Road. No one was hurt, but the Plow and Hearth outlet store, where the fire apparently started, was destroyed. Ben & Jerry's ice cream shop and the Totes sunglasses factory outlet sustained minor smoke and water damage. Williamsburg Fire Department Battalion Chief, Eric Stone said the fire started around 2130 hrs. Firefighters arrived on the scene within four minutes of the emergency call. Smoke was billowing out of the store when they arrived. Firefighters tried to battle the flames inside, Stone said, but they immediately came out after noticing the intense heat and large amount of smoke weakening the roof and making the structure unsafe. Roughly 30 seconds after they emerged, the roof collapsed, Stone said. Williamsburg ended up bringing firefighters from James City County, York County, the Yorktown Naval Weapons Station and Camp Peary to help put out the fire. Stone said it took the crews about an hour and a half to contain the fire. The cause of the fire still is under investigation. Officials are waiting for a crew to come in today with a crane to remove part of the collapsed roof, making the building safe to continue the investigation, Stone said.

PRISON, SAN PEDRO SULA, HONDURAS

San Pedro Sula, May 17 — A huge fire at a prison in northern Honduras killed 103 inmates today, all of them members of a violent street gang the government has targeted in a controversial crackdown. Police said the early-morning fire at the prison in the northern city of San Pedro Sula followed

an explosion caused by a short circuit. The fire spread rapidly through an area housing members of the infamous Mara Salvatrucha youth gang. Most died from suffocation and about 25 more were being treated in hospital. — Reuters.

RACETRACK, WINNIPEG AREA, MANITOBA, CANADA

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 17, states: An early-morning fire today resulted in extensive damage to Assiniboia Downs race track just west of Winnipeg. The fire was first noticed in the roof of the grandstand at around 0330 today. Witnesses said flames reached up to six metres high. Ten fire trucks worked for several hours to put out the blaze. No injuries were reported to people or to horses, but the fire caused extensive damage to an area above the grandstand that housed all the Downs' broadcast technology. Damage to equipment alone was estimated at \$1 million, not including the cost of structural damage to the grandstand or water damage. "The unfortunate part is that this area contains the equipment that would ultimately pump the lifeblood of our whole operation in terms of the television equipment, the simulcast equipment, the photo-finish equipment," said Harvey Warner, president of the Manitoba Jockey Club. Darren Dunn, director of operations and track announcer, said all live racing at the Downs over the May long weekend had been cancelled. The city's arson task force and the fire commissioner's office are investigating.

REFINERY, CHALMETTE, NEW ORLEANS, UNITED STATES

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire broke out but was quickly brought under control today at about 1225 hrs at the Murphy Oil refinery in Chalmette. Refinery officials said all workers were accounted for and no evacuations were ordered. No injuries were reported. The fire generated a significant amount of thick, black smoke that could be seen for miles. The fire broke out in a crude unit, where a pump seal ignited. The cause is under investigation. Neighbours reported hearing a loud explosion, but refinery officials would not confirm that an explosion occurred.

TRAWLER, GLADSTONE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: A man is in a stable condition in hospital in the central Queensland city of Gladstone after an explosion on a trawler this morning. The incident happened at about 1100, AEST. The fire is believed to have started in the engine-room of the trawler, which was berthed at the Gladstone Marina. A spokesman from the Gladstone hospital says the man is in a stable condition and his injuries are not life-threatening.

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters will spend the night battling a bushfire in the Namadgi National Park south of Canberra, the ACT Emergency Services

Bureau (ESB) said today. About 50 firefighters and a water-bombing helicopter from NSW were this afternoon fighting the blaze which stretched over about 51 hectares. The fire was about 50km from the outer Canberra suburb of Banks, but an ESB spokeswoman said it was not expected to threaten homes. Strong winds and spot fires were a cause of concern but Acting Chief Fire Control Officer Tony Graham said dropping temperatures were slowing the progress of the fire.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters have contained a bushfire burning south of Canberra. ACT Emergency Services Bureau spokesman Graham Blinksell said firefighters today had secured the fire to 250 hectares of the Namadgi National Park. Mr Blinksell said fire crews would remain at the scene overnight to strengthen and secure containment lines. "The risk to Canberra city residents is very low, as wind is still driving the fire away from inhabited areas of the territory," he said. "The risk to NSW communities is also low, however we continue to keep the NSW Rural Fire Service updated." Firefighters began battling the blaze soon after it broke out on Monday (May 17) afternoon. No injuries have been reported.

WILDFIRES, RUSSIA

London, May 14 — A press report, dated May 13, states: The area of forest fires has increased in Russia three times since yesterday morning and makes 2,868 hectares. All in all, 85 spots of fire were registered in forests, an official at the information department of the Russian Emergencies Ministry told Itar-Tass today. The source noted that more than 6,000 hectares of forests burnt down yesterday. Four large fires are presently registered in Russian forests, three of them in the Chelyabinsk region and one in the Sverdlov region. "About 2,000 hectares of forest are ablaze in the Chelyabinsk region, but fires pose no threat to settlements," he emphasised. More than 3,000 people are putting out fires in the affected regions. Fires are also being extinguished from the air. About 50,000 hectares of forests have burnt down in Russia since the beginning of the year. More than 5,000 forest fires broke out since the beginning of the fire-prone season, the source pointed out. Most blazes usually occur in the forests of Siberia and Far East. However the most difficult situation emerged in the Volga-Ural region. Sixty-five fires are registered there, their total area exceeds 2,000 hectares. Forests are burning in the Chelyabinsk, Sverdlov, Kirov and Tyumen regions. Forest fires are also registered in the Novosibirsk, Chita regions, the republics of Buryatia and Altai, and in the Krasnoyarsk territory. All in all 18 spots of fire are presently registered in the Siberian region.

London, May 17 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Eight people have been killed by forest fires which have raged for two days in Russia's Kurgan region in the eastern Urals, according to official figures published by

the Interfax news agency today. The toll included seven victims in the town of Chashinsk. A dozen fires in the region have destroyed more than 5,000 hectares of forest since Friday (May 14), Interfax reported. Some 400 homes have been set ablaze, leaving more than 1,000 people without a roof over their heads. They have been temporarily lodged in hotels in the region. More than 1,500 firefighters, aided by planes and helicopters, are fighting the fires, but high winds and high temperatures in west Siberia were hampering their efforts.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Fires have covered about 8,000 hectares in the Kurgan region. The situation is under control, the regional emergencies department said. The blaze raging in the forests for a fourth day poses no threat any longer to residents of the Kosobrodsk station, head of the operational headquarters Yuri Ivanov said. The fire in the direction is brought under control and does not move forward any longer, he said, adding that no house burned in the region on May 17. At the same time, the situation in some areas worsened by yesterday evening. The blaze was approaching the settlement of Pervomayskoye. It was seven-eight kilometres from the residential area by this morning as the south wind replaced the wind from the north. The main forces were sent to the area of Pervomayskoye where more than 700 people were trying to protect the settlement from the blaze. The situation remains tense near the settlement of Sary Prosvet. More than 1,000 people were fighting the blaze there. The military and local residents help the firemen. Emergencies Ministry aircraft are participating in the work. Aircraft begin operating from 05:00 in the morning and work until midnight. Two Il-76 aircraft and four Mi-26 and Mi-8 helicopters carried out 39 flights yesterday. A total of 4,011 tonnes of water was poured onto the fires. There is a forest fire near the village of Sosnovka. The blaze was raging six kilometres from it, the operational centre head said. Damage from the fires is preliminary estimated at more than 350 million roubles, the regional government's press service said. More than 1,000 people suffered losses due to the fires in the region. More than 600 people were evacuated. Many lost their homes. People left their homes in a hurry, having no time to take even documents. Eight people died in the fires. Medical aid was rendered to 180. About 400 houses burned up. The village of Chashinsky burned completely.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: Fires, raging for the fifth straight day, have destroyed 6,000 hectares of the forest in the Sverdlovsk region adjacent to Yekaterinburg, the first city of the Urals region. The fires have caused no victims, a spokesman at the Volga-Urals regional emergencies centre said today. He said fire-fighting efforts engage more than 100 rescuers and 12 units of machinery. The ground is being ploughed around residential areas

close to the fires. The fires have been the largest in the Middle Urals in the past decade.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 18, states: The forest fire zone in the Kurgan region has reduced by 70% to nearly 8,000 hectares, assistant to the head of the Volga-Urals regional centre for civil defence and emergencies Nikolai Gerasimov said today. Grass is still burning near Zhikino, 18 km north of Sosnovka, as well as near Krasny Oktyabr, Glot and Borovlyanka. Il-76 aircraft and Mi-26 and Mi-8 helicopters of the Russian Ministry for Civil Defense and Emergencies are dumping water on the blaze.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: Forest fires in the Kurgan region are localised, there is no threat to settlements and economic facilities, said an aide to the chief of the Volga-Urals emergencies regional centre for emergency situations. It had been drizzling in the area swept by fires this morning. The spread of the fire had been barred by 0600 today. The area swept by fires had been patrolled from the air. Since this morning two Il-76 aircraft and a Mi-8 helicopter have been patrolling the territory near the settlement of Krasny Oktyabr and Okunevka that were worst hit by forest fires. Two more helicopters have been working near the settlement of Sary Prosvet, Glot and Redkino. A total of 2,034 people, nine helicopters and aircraft and 202 pieces of fire fighting machinery have been involved in fire extinguishing. The drizzle that began in the morning gave hope that the fire situation might improve. Meanwhile, the death toll from the fires in the Kurgan region rose to nine, and the remains of another person reported missing have been found, Kurgan regional prosecutor Valery Machinsky told journalists. More than 50 lawsuits had been filed already against those responsible for mass forest destruction and unintentional damage caused to private property. The fires have destroyed more than 400 houses in the region. The damages caused by the fires were put at more than 350 million roubles, preliminary reports said. Meanwhile governor of the Kemerovo region Aman Tuleyev transferred 300,000 roubles to accounts opened by the authorities in the Kurgan province for victims of the fire that had destroyed more than 400 houses since May 14, a local administration official said today. The Kurgan region authorities promised to rebuild the village of Chashinsk which had been completely destroyed by the fire on May 14. At a meeting with governor Oleg Bogomolov, a majority of the fire victims said they wished to live in the proximity of their burnt down dwellings. Presidential envoy Pyotr Latyshev appealed to residents of the Ural Federal District, and its organizations and companies to provide assistance to victims of the forest fire in the Kurgan region.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire burning in the Tonto National Forest charred at least 1,150 acres by yesterday evening but

was 65 percent contained and not threatening this small community, authorities said. "The fire is moving away from Sunflower and Sunflower is the only community that's anywhere near the fire," said forest spokeswoman Emily Garber. She said the blaze still was expected to be fully contained by tomorrow morning. Five hotshot crews were among the 200 people battling the fire, which started Sunday afternoon (May 16) and was burning mainly grass and chaparral. Eight fire engines, four air tankers and three helicopters also were at the scene and two large helicopters were en route, Garber said. The north-east corner of the fire flared up on Diamond Mountain on Monday morning with some flames reaching the mountaintop, but Garber said that was terrain-driven and not wind-driven. Strong winds propelled the so-called Diamond fire on Sunday from 40 acres and it came within a quarter mile of Sunflower, a community of some 20 homes located about 50 miles north-east of Phoenix. There were no plans to evacuate Sunflower, Garber said. The cause of the fire was under investigation and lightning had already been ruled out, said forest spokesman Vinnie Picard. "It's probably human caused," he said.



AIRCRAFT GROUNDED, BEIJING AIRPORT, CHINA

Karachi, May 17 — Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) this afternoon said that one of its aircraft was grounded at Beijing airport in China yesterday morning, following a detection of a major technical fault in one of its engines before it could take-off. The airbus with flight tag of PK flight PK 153 bound for Islamabad via China from Tokyo (Narita), with 150 passengers on board is being repaired. A new engine was on its way through another jumbo flight of the national airline. According to a public relations officer at the airline, the passengers are expected to arrive at Islamabad International airport by another flight PK 853 tonight. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

C-GHMI

London, May 14 — During a westbound landing at Victoria Inner Harbour, DeHavilland Beaver, C-GHMI, was substantially damaged when it impacted the water at 1035, May 11. The aircraft was returning from a sightseeing flight with four passengers on board. One of the passengers sustained a minor injury, and the aircraft's right wing was substantially damaged. The pilot taxied the aircraft under its own power to the company dock where paramedics attended to the occupants.

C-GOOP

London, May 14 — Privately owned Cessna 175, C-GOOP, was on a flight

from Edmonton/Josephburg, AB to Edmonton, AB, on the final approach the landing was aborted due to a wind shift to the direction of flight of the aircraft at 1840, May 12. The aircraft struck trees past the end of the strip and came to rest on the ground. The pilot was not injured, however, the aircraft was substantially damaged.

C-GYHF

London, May 13 — Cessna 305A, C-GYHF, was manoeuvring to photograph the start line of a sailboat race when it abruptly pitched down, decended, and crashed into Preedy Harbour at 1020, May 8. The pilot died and the passenger was seriously injured. The aircraft was recovered for examination.

COLLISION IN MID-AIR, SOUTHERN GERMANY

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: German investigators said today the Swiss air traffic control agency, Skyguide, was partly to blame for a fatal mid-air collision which killed 71 people. Germany's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau said the crash of two aircraft over Lake Constance in 2002 was caused primarily by human error. A Russian Tupolev Tu-154 charter aircraft carrying over 40 schoolchildren en route to Spain collided with a DHL Boeing 757 cargo aircraft while flying in Swiss-controlled airspace over the German town of Oberlingen on Jul 1, 2002. In their final report published today, the German authorities blamed both the lone Swiss air traffic controller on duty at the time of the crash and the pilots of the Russian aircraft. The report found that the controller only gave the two aircraft instructions to avoid a collision 43 seconds before impact. The crew of the Tupolev obeyed the controller's instruction to descend, but failed to listen to their on-board collision warning system which advised them to climb. As the aircraft lost altitude, it crashed into the DHL aircraft which was also descending in accordance with its own collision-avoidance equipment. According to international aviation rules, on-board collision warning systems should take precedence over instructions from air traffic controllers. The report called for greater efforts to ensure that such regulations are applied in the same way worldwide. Skyguide came in for criticism for allowing only one controller to be in charge of air traffic surveillance at the time of the crash. Investigators pointed out that the lone controller had been left to monitor two work stations because a colleague was taking a break. "This accident happened because many actions and failures to act came together that, viewed on their own, might only have a small significance for air safety," said the investigators in their summary of the report. The Swiss president, Joseph Deiss, has written to his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, to express his regret about the accident. He added that the government would find out where responsibility lay and take action, including criminal proceedings if

appropriate. Skyguide — which is majority-owned by the Swiss government — said it accepted responsibility for the chain of events that led to the collision. "Skyguide accepts full responsibility for its errors and is dismayed that its safety system failed on the night of this tragic accident," the air traffic control agency said in a statement. The director of Skyguide, Alain Rossier, apologised for the first time to the relatives of those killed in the crash. "We offer our sincere apologies to the families of the 71 individuals who lost their lives," he said. Investigators have urged the Swiss authorities to ensure that in future two controllers are on duty at all times. Skyguide said it was in the process of adopting safety recommendations contained in the report. Compensation packages have been agreed with 13 of the victims' families following an out-of-court settlement with Skyguide. Talks are continuing with the relatives of other victims. Peter Nielsen, the Skyguide controller who was on duty at the time of the crash, was stabbed to death outside his home near Zurich in February. The chief murder suspect, Vitaly Kaloyev, lost his wife and two children in the crash.

CRASH, AKTYUBINSK REGION, KAZAKHSTAN

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states; A small aircraft crashed in northwestern Kazakhstan, injuring 14 people onboard, two of them seriously, emergency officials said today. The An-2 aircraft crashed yesterday while trying to take off in the Bozoi settlement in the Aktyubinsk region, the Emergencies Agency said. The aircraft was carrying anti-plague specialists who were planning to inspect the former Soviet biological weapons test site on Vozrozhdeniye island in the Aral Sea. Officials said 14 people were injured, including two seriously. The aircraft's two pilots received light injuries. The cause of the crash is being investigated, emergency officials said.

CRASH, FAWCETT LAKE, ONTARIO, CANADA

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: A pilot and three passengers were killed in a float plane crash at Fawcett Lake, about 85 km north of Sioux Lookout, police said today. The crash late yesterday afternoon occurred about an hour after the De Havilland DHC-2 (Beaver) took off from Pickerel Arm Camp at Sioux Lookout, heading for Fawcett Lake, Sgt Dean Barclay of Kenora Ontario Provincial Police said. An hour later, a second aircraft took off from the same camp. When the second aircraft arrived at the lake, the pilot did not see the first aircraft, police said. He dropped off his passengers and returned to Sioux Lookout, where he contacted emergency personnel. A Canadian Forces search-and-rescue team travelled to Fawcett Lake from Winnipeg in a Hercules aircraft, a spokesman said. Rescuers searched the lake and shoreline from the air. Around the same time, the

passengers from the second aircraft took a boat out on the lake and located the downed aircraft.

CRASH, GULF ISLANDS, CANADA

See C-GYHF.

CRASH, JIZAN, SAUDI ARABIA

London, May 20 — A press report, dated today, states: One Saudi and 10 Yemeni nationals were injured when a helicopter belonging to a German company demarcating the border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen crashed, a newspaper reported yesterday. The accident, which occurred Tuesday (May 18) in a mountainous area of Jizan in the south of the Kingdom, was due to a technical failure, Okaz said. It did not give further details, saying only that the 11 people injured in the crash were hospitalized.

CRASH, MALE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, MALDIVES

London, May 18 — A press report, dated May 17, states: A De Havilland DHC-6 (Twin Otter), operated by Trans Maldivian Airways, crashed onto the runway at Male International Airport on Hulhule today as it took off from the island's lagoon. All 17 people on board the aircraft were safe, according to the Civil Aviation Department of Maldives. There were three Maldivians on board; they were the pilot, co-pilot and a cabin crew. The other 14 were 10 German tourists and four Swiss tourists who were on their way to the Velaavaru resort in Dhaalu atoll. A Velaavaru resort official, who was at the Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Male, said that one German woman tourist was seriously injured. Another German, had a screw lodged in his skull which has now been removed, according to a doctor at IGMH. He is now in stable condition. A total of four persons were brought to IGMH for treatment. They included the two German tourists, and the Maldivian pilot and co-pilot. The plane is reported to have sustained extensive damage. The crew said that one of the aircraft's floats came off when the aircraft hit the side of the runway because it could not pick up enough speed during take-off. The airport was briefly closed down which saw a short delay in the departure of an Emirates Airline flight, but was reopened at 1230, local time. TMA is one of the private operators of domestic seaplane carriers which shuttle foreign tourists from the airport to the resort islands.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 18, states: Authorities were investigating whether a Trans Maldivian Airways De Havilland DHC-6 (Twin Otter) crashed yesterday due to mechanical failure or human error, the President's Office said today. State Minister of Defence and National Security Lt Gen Abdul Sattar said that investigations were launched in collaboration with the Civil Aviation Department immediately after the aircraft crashed. All the 17 people on board survived but a German tourist and the Maldivian co-pilot were seriously injured when the aircraft crashed onto

the runway of Male International Airport, on Hulhule island, immediately after taking off from the island's water aerodrome at 1100 hrs. There were three Maldivian crew members and 10 Germans, three Swiss and one American on board on their way to the Velavaru island resort in Dhaalu atoll. The injured German tourist was flown to Sri Lanka last night by a chartered Dornier flight. The co-pilot was flown to Singapore last night for treatment while the pilot was sent to Sri Lanka this morning. The aircraft crashed after hitting the breakwater during take off. The aircraft's front sustained severe damage, with two of its floats broken off. The left wing had broken off along with the engine, while the right wing's engine had also come off. The breakwater was also damaged. The passengers said that those sitting in front suffered the most serious injuries.

Karachi, May 20 — The Civil Aviation Department of Maldives has launched an investigation into the crash of a seaplane of Trans Maldivian Airways at the runway of Male International Airport at Hulhule island on Monday morning (May 17). All the crew of the aircraft will be questioned as soon as the two pilots return from abroad. The pilot Mohamed Thiham and co-pilot Mohamed Hamza are being treated in other South Asian countries. Thiham is presently in Sri Lanka being treated for two broken ribs and a gash on his arm while Hamza is undergoing treatment in Singapore for three broken vertebrae from the neck. The aircraft had a Maldivian crew, 10 Germans, three Swiss and an American when it took off for Velavaru island resort in Dhaalu atoll. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

CRASH, MANAUS AREA, BRAZIL

Brasilia, May 15 — A Brasilia Embraer 120 aircraft carrying a full load of passengers to Manaus from Sao Paulo de Olivenca in western Amazonas state crashed in the Amazon jungle just minutes from its scheduled landing today, killing all 33 persons on board, aviation authorities said. The propeller aircraft operated by Rico Linhas Aereas fell into dense jungle about nine miles from Manaus airport at 1837 yesterday in north-west Amazonas state, 1,200 miles north-west of the capital, Brasilia. The airline said the passengers were all Brazilians over the age of 12. Rescue crews abandoned the search for survivors and wreckage along the banks of the Rio Negro River today after only finding scattered human remains and unidentifiable fragments of the aircraft. "They only found small wreckage. No survivors," a spokesman for Rico Linhas Aereas told national radio. The lack of any large pieces of wreckage indicated the aircraft exploded, the company spokesman said. — Reuters.

CRASH, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES

London, May 14 — A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft crashed in a residential neighbourhood just east of Baltimore-Washington International Airport this morning, killing the pilot, an airport spokesman

said. No one was believed to be hit on the ground, and a search of the aircraft found only one person, Battalion Chief John Scholz of the Anne Arundel County Fire Department said. He said authorities were checking with the aircraft's carrier to make sure there was no one else on board. The aircraft took off from Philadelphia and was headed to BWI when it crashed about 0725, said airport spokeswoman Cheryl Stewart. She said it was an MU2 "high-wing" turboprop aircraft. It was carrying a cargo of financial documents, airport spokesman Jonathan Dean said. The aircraft crashed in front of a home less than a half-mile from the nearest runway. The FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board were en route to the scene to begin an investigation, Dean said. Atlanta-based Epps Aviation registered the aircraft with the Federal Aviation Administration.

CRASH, ROJOOL EL TABALDI AREA, SUDAN

London, May 17 — A press report, dated May 16, states: An Antonov An-12, operated by Al Majal air transport company, on a flight from Juba to El Obayyid, crashed in Rojool El Tabaldi, 35 km from the Habeela region of South Kordofan state, the Sudanese general authority for Civil Aviation announced yesterday. The aircraft's seven-member crew — three Sudanese, two Iraqis and two Armenians — were killed in the accident. Lt Gen Ishaq, the owner of the company which owned the aircraft, said that a thunderstorm was behind the accident. It caused the aircraft to tip off in the air before it nose-dived to earth and caught fire. An investigation team has begun an inquiry into the cause of the incident.

CRASH, XINJIANG AREA, CHINA

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: An Azerbaijani cargo aircraft crashed today in a forest after taking off from an airport in China's northwest, killing its seven-member crew and igniting a blaze that destroyed the aircraft, the government said. The Ilyushin 76 jet, with a seven-member crew, went down about 6 miles from the Urumqi International Airport in the Xinjiang region at about 1100, local time, the Xinhua News Agency said. "Rescuers have found seven charred bodies of the crew of the Azerbaijani cargo plane," Xinhua said. "The plane was completely burned by a fire after the crash. Only debris was left." There were no reports of deaths or injuries among people on the ground. The aircraft was bound from the central Chinese city of Taiyuan to Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, with a stop in Urumqi, Xinhua said. It was on a charter flight and belonged to an Azerbaijani company, according to a spokeswoman for China's airline regulator, the Civil Aviation Administration of China. The aircraft crashed in a forest west of the runway, Zhong said. She said there were "no reports of ground casualties." Police sealed off the area and were searching for the "black box" flight data and voice recorders, Xinhua said, citing local authorities.

London, May 18 — A press report, dated today, states: All the seven crew members of the Azerbaijan cargo aircraft that crashed early today in Xinjiang, north-west China, had been confirmed dead and Chinese technical staff had found the black box undamaged in the rear part of the aircraft by this evening. The bodies were sent to a hospital in Urumqi, Xinjiang's capital city, and the experts will examine and analyse the black box as soon as possible, said Liu Shaoyong, deputy director of the General Administration of the Civil Aviation of China (CAAC). An 11-member team led by Liu arrived at Urumqi and started investigation this afternoon. The Chinese government will carry out an objective, scientific investigation into the case in line with common international practices, said Liu. The Azerbaijan cargo liner, a Russian-made IL-76, crashed at 1050, local time, today, shortly after its take-off from Urumqi. The head of the chartered cargo aircraft first touched the earth, causing explosions and sending off dense smoke, eyewitnesses said. No people on the ground were hurt when parts of the shattered aircraft and cargo it carried were scattered inside the two-square-kilometre area around the site, which has been sealed off by the police. Firefighters have exterminated the fire caused by the crash. The aircraft was loaded with clothes and shoes that were purchased in Beijing and it also stopped over in Taiyuan, capital of north China's Shanxi province. It arrived at Taiyuan at 1530 on May 15 and set off at 0550 today, said Qiao Xuezheng, an official with the management of Shanxi airports. It passed through security checks on cargo, flight affairs and pilot operation before taking off from Taiyuan, said Qiao.

London, May 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The rescue operation for the crashed Azerbaijan cargo aircraft has ended and investigation into the tragedy has begun, announced Liu Enxiang, deputy director of the Office for Aviation Safety with the National Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC). Liu, chief inspector of the accident, said the fuel remaining in both oil tanks in the two wings of the aircraft was all pumped out, but measures had also been taken to prevent further explosion and occurrence of new accident from the fuel spilled on the ground. According to Liu, seven groups of specialists in aspects ranging from flights, airworthiness, air control have been assigned with the task of investigating the accident as of today.

DELAYS DUE RADAR PROBLEMS, DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, UNITED STATES

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: Denver International Airport was having serious delays in arrivals and departures yesterday evening due to a radar failure at the Federal Aviation Administration. Departures were being delayed 45 minutes to an hour and more, the FAA said. For an extended period, no aircraft were going in or out of Denver International Airport at all.

**EMERGENCY LANDING,
ITAMI AIRPORT, OSAKA, JAPAN**

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: An All Nippon Airways flight bound for Hiroshima from Tokyo made an emergency landing at Osaka's Itami airport this morning, after reporting engine trouble, airport officials said. Flight 671, a Boeing 767-300 service out of Tokyo's Haneda airport, landed at Itami airport at 0829 after the trouble was detected and one of the aircraft's two engines was shut down around 0810.

**EMERGENCY LANDING,
NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA**

London, May 19 — A press report, dated May 17, states: An RCMP helicopter remained stuck on a sand bar off New Brunswick's north-east coast today following an emergency landing. The three officers on board were not hurt. A spokesman said the experienced pilot made the quick decision to land late Saturday (May 15) after the aircraft began shaking violently. A barge will be used to get the helicopter to shore for repair. The helicopter went into service last fall, replacing one that had been in use for 25 years. It is still under warranty.

**HELICOPTER CRASH, GLENDALE
AREA, OREGON, UNITED STATES**

See N162KA.

N115ES

London, May 17 — Hughes 269A-1, N115ES, operated by Franklin County Sheriff, a public use aircraft, crashed under unknown circumstances at Louisburg, North Carolina, at 1910, local time, May 14. There were two persons on board, one was fatally injured, the other received unknown injuries. The aircraft was destroyed.

London, May 20 — A press report, dated May 19, states: The pilot of a helicopter (N115ES) that crashed and killed a passenger on Friday (May 14) at Louisburg, North Carolina, didn't have a helicopter pilot's certification, federal authorities said. Federal Aviation Administration records show Benjamin T. Barrick, 33, had not applied for a helicopter pilot's certification, said Kathleen Bergen, an FAA spokeswoman in Atlanta. A pilot's certification is not required to fly a helicopter by a "public entity for public purposes," but about "99 percent of all public use operators do have pilots' certificates," Bergen said. The crash killed Ted Horton, 53, who worked with Barrick as a deputy at the Franklin County Sheriff's Office. The accident is being investigated.

N162KA

London, May 14 — Kaman Aerospace Corp K-1200, N162KA, operated by Superior Helicopter LLC, crashed under unknown circumstances during logging operations near Roseburg, Oregon, at 1530, local time, May 12. The one person on board was fatally injured. The aircraft sustained substantial damage.

N230MJ

Guernsey, May 17 — Piper PA 30, N230MJ, owned by Hughston Aircraft

Corporation, Exeter to Guernsey, made normal landing, but progressively veered off runway onto northern hard shoulder at 1257, UTC, May 15. Damage to main wheel, tyre, rim and propeller. Accident is subject to AAIB investigation. — Lloyd's Agents.

N299SD

London, May 17 — Lancair IV P, N299SD, crashed under unknown circumstances 45 miles north-west of the Grand Canyon, Arizona, at 0031, local time, May 15. The three persons on board were fatally injured, the aircraft was destroyed.

N3161M

London, May 17 — press report, dated May 16, states: A pilot was killed when his plane crashed yesterday in Willoughby. It was reported that the twin-engine plane went down just after 0530 hrs on the north side of Vine Street near Skiff Road. The pilot, Mehdi Azali, 35, of Lakewood was flying a twin-engine Cessna 310 from Lost Nation Airport to Dayton when he experienced mechanical problems with the plane, the Ohio Highway Patrol said. Azali attempted to make it back to Lost Nation but was unsuccessful, crashing on railroad tracks in an industrial area. There were no injuries on the ground, but the crash caused the closure of Norfolk and Southern Railroad for approximately two hours, and the CSX Railroad for most of the day. Azali was the only passenger on the plane, which is owned by Carto Flight Inc. and operated by Kucera International, both of Willoughby. While preliminary reports point to mechanical problems, investigators from the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board have responded to the scene and will further investigate to determine the exact cause of the crash.

London, May 17 — Cessna 310R, N3161M, owned by Canto Flight Inc, crashed under unknown circumstances at Willoughby, Ohio, at 0923, local time, May 15. The one person on board was fatally injured, the aircraft was destroyed.

N3329S

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: Two small planes collided over a rural area south of Olympia, leaving one pilot dead and the other injured, authorities and eyewitnesses said. The crash occurred about 800 feet over the ground shortly after 2030 hrs, yesterday roughly 10 miles south of the state capital, said Nancy Corey, a Federal Aviation Administration operations officer. The FAA and National Transportation Safety Board were investigating. The two Cessnas were heading north and crashed about a quarter-mile apart, Thurston County sheriff's Capt. David A. Pearsall said. One pilot died at the scene. The other was conscious and talking when deputies arrived and was taken to Providence St. Peter Hospital in Olympia, Pearsall said. The plane flown by the survivor took down some power lines as the pilot tried to land in a field,

causing an outage lasting a few hours for Puget Sound Energy customers, officials said. The injured pilot told witnesses he never saw the other plane.

London, May 17 — Cessna 210J, N3329S, collided in mid-air with Cessna 170B, N3510D, under unknown circumstances at Tenino, Washington, at 0330, local time, May 16. The one person on board N3329S was fatally injured, the aircraft sustained substantial damage. The one person on board N3510D sustained minor injuries, the damage to the aircraft is unknown.

N3510D

See N3329S.

N45505

London, May 17 — A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft crashed short of a runway last night at Raleigh-Durham International Airport, a spokeswoman for the Federal Aviation Administration said. There was no immediate word on survivors. A Beech Bonanza registered to FCA Inc of Raleigh crashed about 2115 hrs on approach to the airport, according to FAA spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen in Atlanta. The aircraft had taken off from Wilmington, she said. There was no word on the number of passengers on board the aircraft, which can carry four to six people, or their conditions. The airport lost power for about an hour after the crash.

London, May 17 — Beech 36 Bonanza, N45505, lost an engine on approach to runway 23L and crashed at Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, at 0116, local time, May 17. The one person on board was fatally injured. The aircraft was destroyed.

N755AF

London, May 15 — A press report, dated May 14, states: A small cargo plane preparing to land at BWI Airport slammed into a Ferndale neighbourhood this morning, killing the pilot, an airport official said. The Mitsubishi MU-2 flying a load of cancelled cheques from Philadelphia crashed about 0725 hrs. just east of the airport, said Tracy Newman, a spokesman for Baltimore-Washington International. Despite crashing between two houses - the fuselage came to rest in a driveway 300 feet from a school bus stop - no-one on the ground was hurt. The pilot is believed to have been the only person on board the "high-wing" turboprop, registered to Epps Aviation of Atlanta. The plane crashed on a street that dead-ends at the edge of airport property less than a half-mile from the nearest runway. The plane appeared to land on a truck and at least one boat. Its fuselage rested on the truck hood. The plane damaged three vehicles on the ground, said Lt. David Price, a county Fire Department spokesman. The bulk of the wreck landed between two houses, causing structural damage to one. About 45 county firefighters and six engines arrived at the crash scene, along with three ladder trucks, two paramedic units and a hazardous materials unit among other emergency vehicles. Firefighters spread thick foam over five yards as fuel

from the plane spilled out, Ms. Newman said. County Fire Division Chief John Scholz said firefighters quickly extinguished a small fire in woods behind one of the houses. They believe the fire started when the plane's wings were sheered off and fuel spilled out. National Transportation Safety Board investigators were headed to the scene this morning to begin looking for the cause of the crash, said Jonathan Dean, director of communications at BWI. Before they arrived, state police troopers were searching the area to look for other pieces of the aircraft state police Maj. Greg Shipley said. Airport operations were unaffected by the crash and no flights were delayed.

London, May 17 — Mitsubishi MU-2B-60, N755AF, owned by Epps Air Service Inc, crashed under unknown circumstances into a residential area, while inbound to Baltimore, Maryland, at 1118, local time, May 14. The one person on board was fatally injured, the aircraft was destroyed. No ground injuries were reported.

Product Recalls



BUNK BEDS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, May 13 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with Coaster Co. of America, Santa Fe Springs, Calif., today announced voluntary recalls of 22,000 Metal Twin/Twin and Twin/Full Bunk Beds. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. A gap between the step of the built-in ladder and the top bunk allows enough room for a child's body to slip through but will not allow for a child's head to pass through. This poses a serious strangulation risk. Federal standards for bunk beds are designed to protect children against entrapment and strangulation. No incidents/injuries reported. The recall involves model 2008, 2056, 2256 and 2258 bunk beds. The metal bunk beds were sold in twin/twin and twin/full sizes. A Coaster Company of America label can be found on the bed frame of the top bunk. The enamel finishes come in blue, black, red, yellow, or white. Furniture stores nation-wide sold the bunk beds from June 2000 through February 2004 for between \$150 and \$250. Manufactured in China. Consumers should stop using the bunk beds immediately and call Coaster of America for a free repair kit. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS, UNITED STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: DK Publishing Inc. is recalling some 214,000 children's books because sound makers on the last page pose a choking hazard to young children. No injuries have been reported, but the New York company did receive a report of a 22-month-old boy who

detached a sound device and put it in his mouth, the Consumer Product Safety Commission said today. The cardboard books were sold under eight titles: "Dinosaurs," "Kitty's Adventure," "On The Road," "Puppy's Busy Day," "Tractors," "Trains," "Emergency!" and "Trucks." The books were sold for about \$8 from March 2001 through April 2004 at bookstores, gift stores, news stands, discount department stores and warehouse clubs nationwide, and through direct phone orders. The government recommends taking the books away from children.

CHRYSLER MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 11, states: DaimlerChrysler AG's Chrysler Group is recalling 320,188 Dodge Durango sport utility vehicles and Dakota pickups because of a potential safety hazard involving the windshield wipers, federal regulators said Tuesday. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said water could get into the windshield wiper motor on some vehicles, causing corrosion and malfunctions of the wipers. Vehicles involved are 2002-2003 Durangos and 2002-2004 Dakotas, NHTSA said. Dealers will replace the front windshield wiper module, the agency said.

HOLDEN MOTOR VEHICLES, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE MIDDLE EAST

London, May 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Holden is to recall 135,000 locally built cars to fix a potential problem with the power steering. The company said today reports from owners had revealed the power-steering cooler hose might rupture during cornering. It said that could affect vehicle control with a possible loss of steering assistance. "We initially thought the problem might only be associated with severe cornering," Holden spokesman Jason Laird said. "But we have subsequently found that the material used for the hoses needed to be reviewed." Mr Laird said there had been no reports of incidents as a result of the problem. The recall would affect Commodore, Calais, Crewman, One-tonner and utility models built between August 26, 2002 and September 2, 2003 and Statesman and Caprice models built between March 20, 2003 and September 2, 2003. That included 115,000 V8 and V6 cars sold in Australia, 11,000 V8s exported to the Middle East and 8,500 V8 and V6 vehicles shipped to New Zealand. Holden said it would send letters to customers this week advising them of the recall and advertisements would be placed in national newspapers early next week. Replacement of the hoses, one on V6 cars and two on V8s, would take about 30 minutes.

KINETIC LIGHTING PICTURES, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, May 18 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of 17,760 Kinetic Lighting Pictures, moveable waterfall pictures, in voluntary co-operation with Genan Import Inc., of Chicago, Ill.

Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. These pictures have inadequate construction, incorrect wiring, and use flammable materials, all of which pose fire and electric shock hazards to consumers. Genan Import has not received any reports of incidents. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injuries. The recalled Kinetic Lighting Pictures are framed artwork that utilise electric lights and sound and feature moving background scenes, including waterfalls and snow. Some of the pictures have nature scenes with a church or a barn in the background. The paintings come with wooden, glass mirror, or plastic frames that depict wolves, elephants, or dolphins. The pictures come in seven different sizes: 178cm x 112cm; 148cm x 99cm; 118cm x 74cm; 110cm x 74cm; 99cm x 48cm; 65cm x 47cm; and 41cm x 32cm. Sold at Dollar and furniture stores nation-wide from June 2002 through February 2003 for between \$20 and \$150, depending on the size of the picture. Manufactured in China. Return the picture to Genan Import for a refund. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

MERCEDES-BENZ MOTOR VEHICLES, WORLDWIDE

London, May 13 — A press report, dated today, states: Mercedes has issued a recall of E-Class and SL-Class cars because "a small number" have developed faults in the Sensotronic Brake Control system. These have shown up in cars whose working life includes high mileage and frequent braking - E-Class taxis, for instance, on the Continent. The models involved are E-Class saloons built from March 2002, E-Class estates from March 2003, and SL-Class roadsters from October 2001. Symptoms of the problem are long pedal travel and more force needed to depress the pedal. Owners should take their cars to an authorised Mercedes workshop for a free check.

MITSUBISHI MOTOR VEHICLES, WORLD-WIDE

Tokyo, May 20 — The head of Japan's Mitsubishi Fuso Truck and Bus Corp said the recall of about 190,000 trucks and buses announced today should have been issued in 1996 and he blamed the company's corporate culture of concealment for the delay. "I personally feel strong anger with the fact that a critical issue like the clutch-housing failure was untouched until today, neglecting company responsibility," President Wilfried Porth, a former DaimlerChrysler official, told a hastily called news conference. "The matter should clearly have been treated as a recall back in 1996. However, only limited modifications were ordered, leaving the failure without resolution. This was the result of the corporate culture of concealment," he said, adding that the concealment was a "violation of law". — Reuters.

TREE STAND LEVELLERS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, May 18 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

announces the recall of 15,000 “Tree Lounge” tree stand levellers in voluntary co-operation with CESSO, LLC, of Cumming, Ga. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. If the “Tree Lounge” is subjected to significant impact from a heavy load, a tube on the leveller can crack. If the leveller is installed beneath the “Tree Lounge,” the bolts attaching the leveller to the “Tree Lounge” can bend or begin to pull through the leveller. In either of these circumstances, users can lose their balance and possibly fall. CESSO has received three reports of consumer injury associated with leveller failure. Levellers are designed for use with the “Tree Lounge” tree stand. The levellers are powder-coated green, with a T handle screw that spreads or contracts the two tubes of the leveller as necessary in order to level the “Tree Lounge” as the diameter of the tree changes during ascent or descent. Sold by firm’s Web site, mail-order catalogue and at outdoor specialty stores nation-wide from January 2001 through December 2003 for about \$70. Manufactured in U.S.A. and China. Consumers should return their levellers to the firm for a free repair. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

WRONGLY PACKAGED COOKIES, CANADA /UNITED STATES

London, May 13 — A press report, dated May 11, states: A Canadian baker is voluntarily recalling cookies distributed by the Idaho-based Albertsons Inc. grocery chain because they contained macadamia nuts that were not listed in the ingredients statement. Colonial Cookies of Kitchener, Ontario, is recalling a limited quantity of 7.2 oz. Essensia Milk Chocolate Chunk Cookies. The company mistakenly put white chocolate chunk macadamia cookies in the packages. “People who have an allergy to macadamia nuts run the risk of serious or life-threatening allergic reactions if they consume these products,” the company said in its Tuesday announcement. No allergic reactions have been reported, the company said. Colonial Cookies said the problem was caused by a temporary breakdown in production. The problem has been corrected, and current production runs are accurately labeled. Recalled were packages of the cookies carrying the UPC number 41163-55285. The packages also say “Best If Used By 08 13 04 E.” The cookies were

distributed in Albertsons stores in Idaho, Arizona, California, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas and Washington. Customers who bought the cookies should return the product to the store for a full refund.



ITALY

Genoa, May 18 — Port situation May 18: Genoa: One vessel awaiting berth. Average delay 12-24 hours. Savona: No vessels awaiting berths. La Spezia: No vessels awaiting berths. — Lloyd’s Agents.

SYRIA

Lattakia, May 1 — Waiting time is presently one day at Lattakia and six days at Tartous. — Lloyd’s Agents.

Lattakia, May 8 — Waiting time is presently one day at Lattakia and six days at Tartous. — Lloyd’s Agents.

Port Delays

| Country/Port | Date of report | No.of vessels waiting and/or days delay |
|------------------|----------------|--|
| Australia | | |
| Abbot Point | 19-May-2004 | Coal: 8 vessels due by 31/5; 1-2 days delay expected due to berth congestion. |
| Dalrymple Bay | 19-May-2004 | Coal: 1 vessel loading, 4 anchored; 40 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 Moranhah North mine, Anglo Coal advise that they do not expect production to resume before end-May, with the first shipment in June. |
| Hay Point | 19-May-2004 | Coal: 2 vessels loading, 5 anchored; 12 vessels due by 30/5; up to 7 days berthing delay expected subject to cargo availability and berth congestion. |
| Gladstone | 19-May-2004 | Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 2 vessel loading, 10 anchored; 25 vessels due by 5/6; 3-4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Some vessels berthing out of turn on arrival. Barney Point: 1 vessel loading, 1 waiting; 4 vessels due by 5/6; 1-2 days delay expected due to berth congestion. |
| Newcastle | 19-May-2004 | Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 3 vessels loading, 20 waiting; 7 vessels due by 24/5; Dykes 4+5: 2 vessels loading, 9 waiting; 8 vessels due by 27/5; no unallocated vessels due; 10-14 days delay expected prior to berthing due to planned maintenance at Kooragang terminal and heavy shipping schedule. Grain: 3 vessels due by 2/6, all to load wheat; up to 4 days delay at present due to berth congestion and cargo availability. |
| Port Kembla | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 5 vessels due by 6/6, all to load wheat; 1-11 days delay at present due to berth congestion and cargo availability. |
| Port Hedland | 19-May-2004 | Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), “A” berth: 1 vessel berth and loading, 2 anchored; 5 vessels due by 25/5; 4-5 days delay expected; “B” berth: 1 vessel berth and loading, 3 anchored; 7 vessels due by 25/5; 2-3 days delay expected; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island): 1 vessel anchored; 3 vessels due by 24/5; Westyard “D” berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored; 4 vessels due by 23/5; berth delays subject 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 | 19-May-2004 | Iron ore: Parker Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 9 vessels due by 1/6; a 3 day maintenance shutdown is scheduled to start ca. 17/5; cargo shortages are evident, long delays are anticipated and vessels may berth out of turn; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 anchored; 6 vessels due by 1/6; cargo shortages are evident, delays are anticipated and vessels may berth out of turn. |
| Port Walcott | 19-May-2004 | Iron ore: force majeure is still in effect; 2 vessels berthed and loading, 2 anchored; 15 vessels due by 5/6. |
| Melbourne | 19-May-2004 | 1 vessel loading wheat; 4 vessels due by 7/6, 3 to load wheat, 1 wheat/barley; up to 3 days delay at present due to berth congestion and cargo availability. |

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Port Conditions

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--|
| Geelong | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 1 vessel berthed to load barley; 2 vessels due by 20/5, both to load barley; 1-6 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. |
| Port Adelaide | 19-May-2004 | Grain: No. 27 berth: 13 vessels due by 30/6, 10 to load wheat, 2 barley, 1 canola; up to 8 days delay expected due to berth congestion. |
| Port Giles | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 2 vessels due by 25/5, both to load barley; 1-3 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. |
| Walleroo | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 4 vessels due by 25/5, 1 to load peas, 1 barley, 2 wheat; 1-3 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. |
| Port Pirie | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 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 | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 5 vessels due by 7/6, 1 to load peas/wheat, 1 wheat/canola, 2 barley, 1 wheat; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion. |
| Geraldton | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 6 vessels due by 12/6, 5 to load wheat, 1 barley; 1-4 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion. |
| Kwinana | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 13 vessels due by 11/6, 12 to load wheat, 1 other grain; 1-6 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion. |
| Albany | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 7 vessels due by 1/6, 3 to load barley, 4 wheat; 3-8 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion. |
| Esperance | 19-May-2004 | Grain: 3 vessels due by 9/5, 2 to load wheat, 1 barley; up to 1 day's delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion. |
| Brazil | | |
| Santos | 18-May-2004 | Twenty vessels berthed; 13 vessels waiting in roads; 91 vessels due over the next 7 days. |
| Rio Grande | 18-May-2004 | Six vessels berthed; 6 vessels waiting in roads; 31 vessels due over the next 10 days. |
| Paranagua | 18-May-2004 | Eighteen vessels berthed; 13 vessels waiting in roads of which 8 to load (2 pellets, 1 reefer, 1 sugar, 2 soya, 2 others), 7 to discharge (3 fertiliser, 4 containers); 52 vessels due over the next 7 days. |
| Vitoria | 18-May-2004 | Ubu: 1 iron ore loader; 26 vessels waiting in roads; 12 vessels due over the next 7 days. |
| Bulgaria | | |
| Bourgas | 17-May-2004 | Six vessels in port operating; 8 vessels waiting in roads, of which 6 to load (3 empty, 2 coils, 1 scrap), 2 to discharge (1 coal, 1 crude oil); 14 vessels due. |
| Chile | | |
| Valparaiso | 18-May-2004 | Five vessels berthed, 3 berths vacant; 1 vessel anchored; 20 vessels due this week. |
| Egypt | | |
| Alexandria | 17-May-2004 | Twenty-six vessels berthed (loading/discharging); 7 vessels at inner anchorage, 3 at outer anchorage. |
| Damietta | 17-May-2004 | Fourteen vessels berthed (loading/discharging); 5 vessels at outer anchorage, 1 at inner anchorage. |
| Suez Canal | 17-May-2004 | Twenty-two vessels transiting Northbound, 23 Southbound. |
| Georgia | | |
| Supsa | 14-May-2004 | Oil products: SPM berth: One vessel in roads to load crude oil, 2 due by 10/6 to load crude oil. |
| India | | |
| Mumbai | 18-May-2004 | Two vessels loading at berth, 4 discharging at berth; expected delays: container vessels: 12 hours; bulkers: 1-2 days on completion of 50% of cargo documents; general cargo vessels: berthing within 24 hours of arrival. |
| Cochin | 18-May-2004 | Two vessels loading at berth, 4 discharging at berth, 2 other vessels in port; 1 vessel waiting at anchorage; 1 vessel under repairs, 2 dry-docked; 9 vessels due, with no delays expected. |
| Chennai | 18-May-2004 | Eight vessels loading at berth, 12 discharging at berth, 1 other vessel at berth; 3 vessels at outer anchorage in not ready status; 33 vessels due, with the following delays expected: TNEB coal, steaming coal, fertiliser, others: up to 1 day; scrap, iron ore: up to 2 days; containers: no delays expected. |
| Mormugao | 18-May-2004 | One vessel loading at berth, 2 discharging at berth; 5 vessels loading at anchorage; 12 vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 1 waiting at anchorage to discharge; 5 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 15 vessels due with the following delays expected: 6-7 days for CP coke, 4-5 days for coking coal, no delays for iron ore/phosphoric acid/HSD/containers. |
| Kandla | 18-May-2004 | Eight vessels loading at berth, 4 discharging at berth; 6 vessels waiting to load, 1 waiting to discharge; 2 tankers discharging at berth; 23 vessels due, with 4-5 days delay expected; 12 tankers due, with up to 1 day's delay for edible oil/chemicals expected. |
| Mangalore | 18-May-2004 | Two vessels loading at berth, 1 discharging at berth; 2 vessels waiting for berth to discharge; 1 vessel under arrest; 12 vessels due, with no delays expected. |
| Paradip | 18-May-2004 | Five vessels loading at berth, 2 discharging at berth; 1 vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 3 waiting at anchorage to discharge; 9 vessels due, with no delays expected. |
| Tuticorin | 18-May-2004 | Three vessels loading at berth, 4 discharging at berth; 1 vessel waiting to load at anchorage, 1 waiting to discharge at anchorage; 1 vessel awaiting orders; 11 vessels due, with no delays expected. |
| Visakhapatnam | 18-May-2004 | Two vessels discharging at berth; 1 vessel waiting to load at anchorage; 33 vessels due, with up to 3 days delay expected. |

Port Conditions

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| Iran | | |
| Neka | 14-May-2004 | Oil products: Six vessels discharging crude oil at berth; 10 crude oil vessels at anchorage. |
| Kazakhstan | | |
| Aktau | 14-May-2004 | Oil products: Two vessels loading crude oil at berth; 3 vessels in roads; 2 vessels due by 15/5. |
| Mozambique | | |
| Maputo | 14-May-2004 | Twenty-four hour berthing/sailing. Some restrictions to berthing at certain badly-lit wharves. Vessels have to be geared for general cargo berths as no shore cranes available. The Port is working normally and is expected to remain so, hence vessels should berth on arrival, daylight, draught and weather permitting. Three vessels are currently operating, all discharging; 3 vessels on stand-by; 22 vessels due. |
| Nigeria | | |
| Forcados terminal | 17-May-2004 | No vessels berthed, 1 anchored, 4 due. |
| Qua Iboe terminal | 17-May-2004 | Production at Oso platform remains low. Eket: no vessels berthed, 2 anchored, 5 due. |
| Escravos terminal | 17-May-2004 | One vessel berthed, none anchored, 2 due. |
| Bonny LNG | 17-May-2004 | One vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored, 1 due. |
| Brass offshore | 17-May-2004 | No vessels berthed, none anchored, 1 due. |
| Pakistan | | |
| Karachi | 18-May-2004 | Two vessels loading at berth, 5 discharging at berth, 1 container vessel loading/discharging at berth; 1 container vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 1 container vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge; no vessel under repairs/dry-docked, 3 awaiting orders; 5 vessels due with no berthing delays expected. |
| Port Qasim | 18-May-2004 | Three vessels discharging at berth, 2 container vessels loading/discharging at QICT berth; 2 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 containers, 1 coal). |
| Panama | | |
| Panama Canal | 17-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). |
| Poland | | |
| Gdansk | 17-May-2004 | Twelve vessels in port operating of which 7 loading at berth, 5 discharging at berth; 1 coal vessel waiting in roads; 8 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 21 vessels due. |
| Russia | | |
| Novorossiysk | 17-May-2004 | Seventeen vessels in port operating, of which 12 loading, 3 discharging, 2 discharging/loading containers; 8 vessels waiting in roads, of which 4 to discharge (3 bulk sugar, 1 miscellaneous), 4 to load (2 scrap, 1 copper, 1 steel billets); 60 vessels due. Oil terminal: 4 tankers berthed, all loading, of which 3 crude oil, 1 fuel oil; 6 tankers in roads, all to load crude oil; 6 tankers due, all to load, of which 5 crude oil, 1 fuel oil. |
| Tuapse | 17-May-2004 | Oil products: Three vessels loading at berth; 1 gasoil vessel in roads; 6 vessels due by 23/5 |
| Sri Lanka | | |
| Colombo | 17-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. Six container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 16 vessels discharging at berth; 4 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 containers/feeders, 1 bulk cement, 1 bulk LPG, 1 bulk maize); 3 vessels dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders, 1 at new tanker berth; 5 container/feeder vessels due, with no delays expected. |
| Turkmenistan | | |
| Turkmenbashi | 14-May-2004 | Oil products: Two vessels completed loading at berth, 1 loading fuel oil at berth, 1 discharging crude oil at berth; 1 vessel in roads to load gasoil; 1 vessel due 15/5 to load fuel oil. |
| Ukraine | | |
| Odessa | 17-May-2004 | Twelve vessels in port operating; 4 vessels in roads, of which 3 to load (2 metal, 1 scrap), 1 to discharge sugar; 67 vessels due. |
| Theodosia | 17-May-2004 | Oil products: One vessel in roads to load rebco. |
| Mariupol | 17-May-2004 | Ten vessels in port operating, all loading; 2 vessels in roads, both to load steel; 35 vessels due, |
| Ilichevsk | 17-May-2004 | Nine vessels in port operating; 1 vessel in roads to load steel products; 27 vessels due. |
| Sevastopol | 17-May-2004 | Two vessels in port, both loading, of which 1 steel, 1 fuel oil; no vessels in roads; 6 vessels due, all to load, of which 2 fuel oil, 4 steel. |

United States

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| New Orleans | 18-May-2004 | Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: 2 days delay expected; Cargill-Westwego: 1 day's delay expected; ADM/Ama: 3-4 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: no delays; ADM/Destrehan: 3-4 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 3-4 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 2 days delay expected; Peavey/Paulina: 2 days delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: 2 days delay expected; Cargill/Baton Rouge: no delays; Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: 2 days delay expected; Mile 158.0 Cargill (K2) - Convent: 7 days delay expected; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: no delays. Nine-day forecast for Carrolton Gauge/New Orleans: expected to decrease to 10.2 ft. by 27/5. Mississippi River recommended draft restrictions: SW Pass to New Orleans (Mile 090.0) - 47 ft. for all vessels; New Orleans (Mile 090) to Baton Rouge (Mile 233.5) - 45 ft. for all vessels; Mississippi River Gulf outlet: 36 ft. bw.; vessels with drafts up to 47 ft. have been handled up to Mile 180 in the past, but are approved by pilots on a case by case basis, based on current river conditions. |
| Seattle, WA | 18-May-2004 | Louis Dreyfus (Pier 86) terminal: 2 days delay expected. |
| Tacoma, WA | 18-May-2004 | Temco terminal: 2 days delay expected. |
| Kalama, WA | 18-May-2004 | Kalama export terminal: 5 days delay expected. |
| Vancouver, WA | 18-May-2004 | United Harvest terminal: 2 days delay expected. |
| Portland, OR | 18-May-2004 | Columbia Grain terminal: 2 days delay expected. |

Yemen

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| Hodeidah | 16-May-2004 | Berths 1, 4, 6 and 7 are occupied; 4 vessels berthed (2 containers, 1 equipment, 1 timber), none anchored; expected waiting times: general cargo/bagged cargoes/containers: no delays; bulk cargoes: up to 2 days. |
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