

September 17 2004

Dutch vessels fall foul of US Coast Guard security clampdown

ALL Dutch registered ships will be boarded by the US Coast Guard when calling in US ports, after falling foul of a targeting system for International Ship and Port Facility Security Code compliance.

The controversial decision ranks the well-regarded national flag alongside Bolivia, the Cayman Islands, Russia and Thailand.

A spokesman from the Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners KVNR said the organisation was "very surprised" at the news, and is trying to find more details about the decision.

The outcome is the result of a mathematical formula developed by the USCG to determine which countries' ships are singled out for special scrutiny.

Under the system, recognised security organisations are automatically assigned points to determine their priority for port state control examination.

RSOs scoring six points or fewer will be boarded on a random basis.

Those scoring seven to 16 points will be examined on arrival at a US

port, and those scoring 17 or above will be examined prior to entry.

All flags listed above are deemed to be on seven points. Non-Solas vessels flagged with the Cook Islands and Honduras are also deemed to be on seven points. The following nations are all on two points: Antigua & Barbuda, Cyprus, Hong Kong, Malta, Panama and Singapore.

A spokesman from the Netherlands shipping inspectorate said that two of the four relevant control actions were down to delays in getting ISPS certification to vessels. "This rating is nothing to do with real security," he maintained. Once the next calculations are made, the Netherlands will be off the target list, he predicted.

The inspectorate intends to raise the issue with the USCG, but in the meantime, it seems that Netherlands owners will have to live with the inconvenience.

Details of the way in which the formula is calculated can be found on the USCG website at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/gm/pscweb/RSO.htm>.

But essentially it is based on a so-called Control Action Ratio,

being the number of denials of entry and expulsions from port for RSO, as a percentage of the number of 2004 inspections.

A CAR of 1-5% starts to clock up points. If the ratio goes any higher, inspection is mandatory.

Leading classes are also hit. Lloyd's Register, Det Norske Veritas and ClassNK are all awarded two points, ranking them alongside such lesser known RSOs as Panama Maritime Quality Services and the Marine Security Bureau of Panama.

In addition, ships which have recently called in ports at 17 countries will face additional inspections because of those countries' port ISPS record.

The countries in question are: Albania, Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kiribati, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nauru, Nigeria, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands and Suriname.

David Osler and Helen Hill
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>BADGER II</i> | general | PHL | NK | 4,560 | 7,353 | 1997 | Grounded off New Ireland province in lat 03 27.7S, long 152 01.6E, Aug 23. Suspected propeller damage, refloated and proceeded under own power to Rabaul, where arrived Aug 30. |
| <i>BBC INDIA</i> | general | GIB | LR | 11,894 | 17,539 | 1998 | Had total engine failure near Cap-a-la-roche, in lat 46 33.58N, long 72 6.52W, Sep 7. Proceeded to emergency anchor. |
| <i>BLUE OCEAN</i> | general | KHM | — | 3,249 | 4,155 | 1983 | Reported Sep 7 to have sank in the port of Hiroshima during typhoon "Songda". Three crew found dead, one missing and 14 rescued. Partly visible in the water. |
| <i>BRECKLAND</i> | dredger | — | — | 1,181 | 387 | 1960 | Hit a rock at the mouth of the river Wye Sep 2 and subsequently sank. Lying almost totally submerged. |
| <i>CAPE BANKS</i> | chem/oil carrier | DEU | GL | 21,162 | 33,540 | 1997 | Grounded at Mersin Sep 4. |
| <i>CHIHAYA MARU</i> | cement | JPN | NK | 6,835 | 10,557 | 2000 | Grounded on Futagami Island, Sep 7, due typhoon "Songda". Master found dead Sep 8. |
| <i>CRISTOFORO COLOMBO</i> | dredger | BEL | BV | 8,123 | 10,252 | 1994 | Grounded near Kholmsk Sep 8. Three fuel tanks heavily damaged and leaked 100 tons of oil. Bad weather hampering rescue operations. Tug SMIT Sakhalin on scene. |
| <i>FREITIND</i> | general | NOR | — | 499 | 605 | 1962 | Had fire in wheelhouse and engine-room while alongside quay at Solskellsoya Island Sep 5. Extinguished same day, but heavy damage sustained. |
| <i>FU KUO HSIN NO.7</i> | bulker | PAN | NV | 16,788 | 17,162 | 1978 | Grounded on the shore of Kochi, Sep 7, due water ingress to engine-room hampering navigation. |
| <i>MARJA</i> | general | NLD | BV | 2,715 | 4,293 | 1993 | <i>Grounded at Carallas, just after leaving Ribadeo roads Sep 2. Tugs failed to refloat during high tide. Smit Salvage hired.</i> |
| <i>OESTERSOEN</i> | general | DIS | — | 778 | 857 | 1967 | Reported Sep 6 to have sustained serious main engine breakdown between Bornholm and Aalborg during week 32. To be demolished. Towed to Grenaa breakers. |
| <i>REDEEMER</i> | salvage | GBR | — | 116 | — | 1968 | <i>Reported Sep 6 to have been towed into Newhaven after sustaining engine problems off Beachy Head several weeks ago. Subsequently detained at Newhaven due several deficiencies.</i> |
| <i>ULLA</i> | general | VCT | — | 2,516 | 3,650 | 1969 | Sank in the harbour at Iskenderun Sep 6, after gradually rotting away. Two tonnes of potentially carcinogenic thermal waste on board. Clean-up negotiations under way. |
| <i>VANGUARD</i> | tug | GBR | — | 296 | — | 1965 | Sank in lat 57 34.86N, long 05 57.82W, close to land, North Rona inner sound, Sep 7. Hull damage observed to bottom. Tugs <i>Vanguard</i> and <i>Anglian Prince</i> on scene. Booms deployed. Later beached at north end of Rona. |
| <i>YUKON</i> | naval auxiliary | USA | AB | 25,742 | 24,852 | 1993 | Grounded on soft mud while anchored in the harbour of Yokosuka Naval Base, during tropical storm "Sarika" Sep 8. Three tugs assisting. No visible damage. |

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



ABRA (Marshall Islands)

Buenos Aires, Sep 6 — Bulk *Abra* (14335 gt, built 1981) grounded at 1540 hrs on Sep 4, at Par 3, Punta Indio Channel, River Plate. The vessel refloated at 1815 hrs, on the same day, by its owns and continued on passage towards San Nicolas and San Lorenzo to discharge 15,000 tonnes and 13300 tonnes, respectively, of fertilizer. — Lloyd's Agents.

ANJA-C. (U.K.)

London, Sep 4 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 1203, UTC: At 0936, UTC, general cargo *Anja-C.* (2237 gt, built 1991), King's Lynn for Marin, laden with 3,303 tonnes of wheat, reported drifting in lat 50 20.3N, long 01 07.5W, as a result of a broken fuel pump. By 1135, UTC, vessel had drifted, at 3.4 knots, to lat 50.20.55N, long 00 56.3W, 130 degs, 10 nautical miles from St. Catherines Point, Isle of Wight. Vessel should have completed repairs by 1235, UTC, and will be able to function at 50-60 percent power. Owners, who have been contacted by vessel, have arranged for a tug to proceed. Although name and ETA of tug are not known by MRSC, tug will assist vessel into Cowes, Isle of Wight, to complete repairs.

London, Sep 4 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 1243, UTC: General cargo *Anja-C.* is now underway and heading for the St. Helens anchorage, where ETA, 1535, UTC.

London, Sep 5 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 0840, UTC: General cargo *Anja-C.* is still at the St. Helens anchorage.

London, Sep 6 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 1455, UTC: According to information from VTS Southampton, general cargo *Anja-C.* is now in Cowes.

ANNA (Lebanon)

Cagliari, Sep 8 — General cargo *Anna*: Cargo operation has been completed but vessel still under court arrest and under Harbour Master detention. — Lloyd's Agents.

BADGER II (Philippines)

Port Moresby, Sep 5 — General cargo *Badger II* (4560 gt, built 1997), loaded with logs, grounded off New Ireland province, in lat 03 27.7S, long 152 01.6E, at 2130, local time, Aug 23. The vessel sustained suspected propeller damage, but refloated and proceeded to Rabaul under its own power. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 7 — General cargo *Badger II* arrived at Rabaul on Aug 30.

BANGLAR SHOURABH (Bangladesh)

See "Karnaphuli River, Bangladesh" under "Pollution".

BBC INDIA (Gibraltar)

London, Sep 9 — General Cargo *BBC India* (11894 gt, built 1998) had total engine failure near Cap-a-la-roche, in lat 46 33 58N, long 72 06 52W, at 1438, EDST, Sep 7. Vessel had to proceed to emergency anchor.

BENARITA (NIS)

London, Sep 3 — Bulk *Benarita* passed through the Straits of Gibraltar on Aug 24 and arrived at Monfalcone on Aug 30.

BLUE OCEAN (Cambodia)

See Typhoon "Songda" under "Weather & Navigation".

BRECKLAND

London, Sep 7 — Hopper dredger *Breckland*, which was reported arriving at Chepstow previous to Mar 8, 2002, is currently lying, almost totally submerged in the River Rye.

London, Sep 8 — Hopper dredger *Breckland* (1181 gt, built 1960), bound Chepstow, hit a rock at the mouth of the River Wye and sank Sep 2. The vessel is completely submerged at high tide and fully visible at low tide.

CALDIRAN (Turkey)

Istanbul, Sep 2 — General cargo *Caldiran* completed repairs by its own means and sailed Cannakale at 1635, local time, Sep 1, after completing inspection/formalities. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAPE AFRICA (Taiwan)

London, Sep 2 — Bulk *Cape Africa* arrived at Singapore at 0810, Aug 31.

CAPE BANKS (Germany)

Istanbul, Sep 6 — Chemical/oil carrier *Cape Banks* (21162 gt, built 1997) Tuapse for Mersin, cargo gas oil, grounded at Mersin Sep 4. There is no change in vessels' position. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Cape Banks* passed Dardanelles west Aug 28, Tuapse for Mersin.)

CAPE BOWEN (Marshall Islands)

London, Sep 9 — Crude oil tanker *Cape Bowen* arrived Singapore Aug 21 and sailed same day, subsequently arriving Fujairah Anchorage Aug 31.

CENTURY LEADER NO.3 (Japan)

London Sep 3 — Vehicle *Century Leader No.3* passed through the Panama Canal on Aug 29, on passage to Jacksonville.

CHEMBULK SINGAPORE (Liberia)

London, Sep 6 — Chem.tank *Chembulk Singapore* sailed Mokha on Sep 1.

CHIHAYA MARU (Japan)

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

CIMIL (Turkey)

See "Cap Couronne, Marseilles Area, Mediterranean Sea" under "Pollution."

CLIPPER ODYSSEY (Bahamas)

Anchorage, Sep 3 — Understand from the Marine Safety Office in Dutch

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

Harbour that passenger *Clipper Odyssey* completed temporary repairs at Dutch Harbour. Damage to the vessel included a 33-foot gash in the port side, which measured four feet at the widest point, and three smaller holes to a void area in the midsection. The vessel sailed Dutch Harbour on Aug 21 and is now at Vancouver, BC, for permanent repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

CORN DIVA (Malta)

London, Sep 2 — General cargo *Corn Diva* arrived at Bayonne on Aug 31.

London, Sep 7 — General cargo *Corn Diva* left Bayonne on Sep 2 for Huelva, without repairs.

CRISTOFORO COLOMBO (Belgium)

Vladivostok, Sep 9 — Hopper dredger *Cristoforo Colombo* (8123 gt, built 1994) grounded Sep 8 not far from Kholmsk port. Three fuel tanks were heavily damaged, leading to leakage of more than 100 tons of the oil on board the vessel. The brigade for emergency floods liquidation ("Ecoshelf" company) arrived at the scene. High winds and large wave activity hamper rescue operations and collection of petroleum product. The emergency co-ordination centre is organised in the Sakhalin western seaport of Kholmsk. There are 29 crew-members on board, no injuries reported. At present the vessel is located aground parallel with the coast, 50 metres off. *Cristoforo Colombo* is chartered by "Saypem" company, which works for "Sakhalin Energy" within the framework of an under sea conduit building agreement. At the present time a big oil pollution is spreading alongside the area of the Sea Commercial port of Kholmsk. — Lloyd's Agents.

Rotterdam, Sep 6 — Hopper dredger *Cristoforo Colombo*: Tug *SMIT Sakhalin* is at the grounding site. — SMIT salvage BV.

EAGLE STRENGTH (Panama)

Singapore, Sep 7 — C.c. *Eagle Strength* arrived Singapore Sep 6. — Lloyd's Agents.

EAGLE TAMPA (Singapore)

London, Sep 3 — Crude oil tanker *Eagle Tampa* sailed from Setubal on Aug 20, bound for Arzew.

ELBE (Netherlands)

London, Sep 7 — Information received, dated Aug 16, states: Tug *Elbe* has been partly repaired after she went into drydock at Vlaardingen Oost Shipyard. The vessel has been made watertight with a temporary repair. It has been towed out of the Dock by tug *Mehari* on Aug 13. Now the owner of the vessel is making negotiations with the insurance and the repair yard for a definitive repair of the damages sustained by the museum vessel.

ENERGY SEARCHER (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Singapore, Sep 3 — Collision between drill ship *Energy Searcher* and passenger *Leisure World* Jul 3: *Energy Searcher* sustained damages to side shell plating/internals in way of No.2(P)

spoonson tank. Bulwark structures and deck outfitting at accommodation decks and accommodation superstructure. Vessel sailed on completion of repairs. *Leisure World* sustained damages to forecastle deck/outfitting, including bulwarks, deck plating and deck fittings. Side shell/internals in way of bosun store. Stem plating/internals in way of paint store. Bulbous bow. Vessel completed permanent repairs at Nongsa Anchorage and docked at Singapore on Aug 25. — Lloyd's Agents.

EVERTON (Malta)

Dubai, Sep 9 — Crude oil tanker *Everton* is still in Dubai Drydocks for repairs and expected to complete on Sep 12. — Lloyd's Agents.

FAIRWEATHER (U.S.A.)

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 4, states: One of four engines on passenger ro/ro *Fairweather* (3424 gt) will have to be replaced, according to the state ferry system. A spokesman for Alaska Marine Highway System said on Thursday (Sep 2) that improperly installed parts in the exhaust manifold worked loose and rubbed a hole in the engine block, allowing water into the exhaust system. The vessel, based in Juneau, continues to operate, but service to Sitka and Skagway could be affected. Ferry system manager John Falvey said the engine manufacturer was trying to assist in repairs. "The engine manufacturer is currently searching for a new engine to replace the number-one engine, which has been damaged by loose parts caused during assembly," Falvey said. "Our hope is that the engine will be located and available for installing when the vessel is in for scheduled maintenance in mid-October." Department of Transportation spokesman John Manly said the vessel can operate on three engines, but scheduled trips to Skagway, Haines and Sitka would depend on tides and winds. Sailings to Sitka depend on tidal currents in Sergius Narrows. If they are too high, the vessel cannot negotiate the narrows safely with three engines. Trips to Skagway will be cancelled if winds are more than 25 knots. The vessel cannot dock at Skagway in high winds with three engines. Representatives from the German engine manufacturer will inspect the three other engines within the next few days to determine whether the same problem is present in other areas of the vessel. The Transportation Department said the vessel was under warranty and repairs would be paid for by the manufacturer. The ferry system advised travelers to contact local ferry terminals for schedule changes.

FEDERAL MAAS (Barbados)

London, Sep 7 — Reported that bulk *Federal Maas* arrived off Skikda on/about Aug 31, entering the port on/about Sep 3.

FENIX (Panama)

London, Sep 3 — Bulk/c.c. *Fenix* sailed from Newcastle, Australia, on Aug 30.

FLYING DOLPHIN XXIX (Greece)

London, Sep 3 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Hydrofoil *Flying Dolphin XXIX* (130 gt, built 1993) sustained engine damage while sailing from Aegina to Piraeus at 1600, Sep 1. The vessel returned to Aegina where the 78 passengers disembarked and were forwarded to Piraeus on another hydrofoil from the same company. The port authority of Aegina permitted the vessel to perform one voyage to Piraeus without passengers in order to carry out repairs.

FREITIND (Norway)

London, Sep 5 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: General cargo *Freitind* (499 gt, built 1962), loaded with sand, had fire break out in engine-room at 0230, local time, today while alongside quay at Solskjellsoya Island. Fire extinguished at 0930, local time. Vessel sustained heavy damage. There were no persons on board vessel there were loaded with sand.

Trondheim, Sep 6 — While general cargo *Freitind* was lying alongside quay at Solskjeloya, Tustna, More & Romsdal County, about 0230, Sep 5, a fire was detected in the wheelhouse and engine-room. Salvage vessels *Kaptein Skaugen* and *Knut Johan* assisted from the sea side in the fire extinguishing work, which ended at 0930. The vessel managed to keep on floating in spite of much water on board, and was emptied during Sep 5. *Freitind* has sustained severe damages during the fire. The cause has not yet been established. — Lloyd's Agents.

FU KUO HSIN NO.7 (Panama)

Yokohama, Sep 8 — Bulk *Fu Kuo Hsin No.7* (16788 gt, built 1978), Okinawa for Susaki, was reported to be running aground on the shore of Koudono, Kochi prefecture, at 1315, Sep 7. The vessel was taken to Nagahama, four km away, but ran aground again on the shore of Kochi, after becoming unable to navigate due to water ingress in the engine-room. There were no injuries and no oil spill. — Lloyd's Agents.

Haj Ibrahim (Cambodia)

Aleppo, Sep 9 — Bulk *Haj Ibrahim*, grounded at Tartous in strong winds Dec 19, 2002, has been sold to be cut as scrap. The cutting commenced this week. — Lloyd's Agents.

HAWK ARROW (Bahamas)

London, Sep 6 — Following received from Coastguard Dover MRSC, timed 0844, UTC: General cargo *Hawk Arrow* (28092 gt, built 1985), Antwerp for Jebel Ali, cargo steel pipes and liquid pitch, reported engine problem in lat 50 46.69N, long 00 48.7E at 0659, UTC, today.

IRAN ARDEBIL (Iran)

Aden, Sep 2 — C.c. *Iran Ardebil* is still aground. General cargo *Thor Sofia*, 80 TEU capacity, arrived alongside the grounded vessel pm, Sep 1. Work has reportedly commenced discharging to lighten vessel. Containers will be landed at Aden Container Terminal,

with *Thor Sofia* shuttling to and fro. Initial indications are that work will take at least two weeks. — Lloyd's Agents.

Aden, Sep 3 — C.c. *Iran Ardebil*: General cargo *Thor Sophia* is 175 TEU not 80 TEU capacity as previously reported. First discharge of containers from the vessel, due at Aden, pm, Sep 5. — Lloyd's Agents.

Aden, Sep 6 — General cargo *Thor Sophia* has discharged the first batch of containers, lightened from c.c. *Iran Ardebil*, at ACT, and has not departed for further lightening of the casualty. Two barges are also on the way from the Arabian Gulf for to assist in the lightening of the vessel. — Lloyd's Agents.

IVER LIBRA (Cyprus)

London, Sep 2 — Product tanker *Iver Libra* arrived Rotterdam 0150, Aug 14 and sailed 0130, Aug 17, bound for New York.

JACARANDA (Panama)

London, Sep 2 — Bulk *Jacaranda* arrived Kashima Sep 1.

JACKIE MOON (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Sep 2 — Following received from Coastguard Clyde MRCC, timed 1325, UTC: General cargo *Jackie Moon* remains at anchor in Clyde Bay.

London, Sep 2 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Jackie Moon* was eventually refloated and a Clyde Coastguard spokesman said neither the Ukrainian crew nor the vessel had been in any danger. A tug and the tide were used to move the ship late yesterday morning. Divers had checked that fuel from the ship's engine had not leaked into the sea before it began a journey to Greenock to undergo further inspections.

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated Sep 2, states: A man has been jailed for two weeks for breaching shipping laws after general cargo *Jackie Moon* ran aground in the Firth of Clyde off Dunoon yesterday morning. Mikola Necheporenko, from Ukraine, was a crew member on the vessel when it foundered. None of the six Ukrainian crew was injured when the vessel ran aground. Mr Necheporenko appeared in court on two charges - contraventions of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 and the Merchant Shipping Act 1995. The ship was refloated yesterday afternoon and anchored near Greenock. Divers are waiting to assess if there is any structural damage to the hull before it resumes the journey. The Marine Accident Investigation Branch and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency will also investigate the incident.

London, Sep 6 — General cargo *Jackie Moon* arrived at Tail of Bank on Sep 1. Vessel departed on Sep 4, bound for Glasgow, where it arrived later the same day.

JADE STAR (Canada)

Quebec City, Sep 2 — Temporary repairs to chemical/oil carrier *Jade Star* consisted of cropping all four propeller

blades which was done on Sep 1. It is back in service and will only effect repairs at the next drydocking in 2006. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

JOY VICTORY (Hong Kong)

London, Sep 3 — Following received from Hong Kong MRCC, timed 0820, UTC: Vessel Traffic Centre, Hong Kong, reported that a collision occurred between bulk *Joy Victory* (16761 gt, built 1996), bound for Hong Kong and bulk *New Hope II* (19452 gt, built 1976), bound for Qinghuangdao, in lat 22 09.5N, long 114 27.0E, near the water boundaries of Hong Kong near the Eastern Approach waterway at 0200 UTC, today. *Joy Victory* was damaged on the port side in way of No 3 and 4 cargo holds, causing cargo hold flooding. Vessel has rectified its starboard list and is proceeding to the North Lamma Anchorage in Hong Kong, for subsequent investigation. *New Hope II* sustained no significant damage and continued passage, but will probably divert to Kaohsiung under owner's instruction. No injuries were reported in the incident.

KELVIN (Norway)

Narvik, Sep 2 — Owners confirm that general cargo *Kelvin* is still repairing bottom grounding damage at Kvernhusvik shipyard, Hitra, Norway. Repairs expected to be completed middle of next week. — Lloyd's Agents.

KINEI MARU NO.18 (Japan)

Yokohama, Sep 7 — General cargo *Pokoj* arrived at Shimonoseki following temporary repairs. Permanent repairs will be carried out in China in September. Fishing *Kinei Maru No.18* did not effect repairs following the collision, however the vessel's aft bulwark will be repaired this month and the side shell plating will be repaired during the vessel's regular dry-docking in 2005. — Lloyd's Agents.

KLONDIKE EXPRESS (U.S.A.)

Anchorage, Sep 7 — Passenger *Klondike Express* is presently at Seward. The damage was restricted to the starboard engine, however the engine will need to be completely rebuilt. Repairs commenced today and are hoped to be completed over the next few weeks. — Lloyd's Agents.

LECONTE (U.S.A.)

Anchorage, Sep 3 — Ro/ro *Leconte* is currently under repair at Alaska Ship & Dry Dock. All the seal repairs are reportedly complete, and approximately 25% of the electrical repairs have been completed. Most of the flooding damage actually relates to the MSD system, and equipment related to this aspect of the repair was received this week. At this stage, the repairs are expected to be completed Oct 1. The vessel is expected to return to its normal route along the northern panhandle at that time. The anticipated cost of repairs will be in the region of US\$4 million. — Lloyd's Agents.

LEISURE WORLD (Bahamas)

See *Energy Searcher*.

MARJA (Netherlands)

Ferrol, Sep 3 — General cargo *Marja* (2715 gt, built 1993), Ribadeo for Rotterdam, loaded with a full cargo of paper-pulp, grounded at approximately 1700, Sep 2, just after leaving Ribadeo roads, at a point named Carallas. Tugs *Sertosa Veintitres* and *Ibaizabal Uno* unsuccessfully tried to refloat the vessel during this morning's high tide and will again try this evening. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Arklow Shipping, the owners of general cargo *Marja*, have hired SMIT Salvage to get the vessel moving again after it ran aground in the Ribadeo estuary off the coast of Galicia late on Sep 2.

MECIT KAPTAN (Turkey)

Bucharest, Sep 6 — General cargo *Mecit Kaptan* is still in the same position, no details are available yet as to the extent of the damage. General cargo *Boris Babochkin* sailed off Constantza at 1830, local time, Sep 3. — Lloyd's Agents.

Bucharest, Sep 9 — General cargo *Mecit Kaptan* is presently afloat at inner roads of Constantza South where it sustained provisional underwater repairs. Vessel is to sail, subject to Class approval, to Istanbul for permanent repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

MING ZHOU 28 (China)

London, Sep 3 — Following received from Australia RCC, timed 0350, UTC: Bulk *Ming Zhou 28* (35319 gt, built 1984), bound Newcastle, reported at 1930, UTC, Sep 1 proceeding at reduced speed due steering problem. Vessel was later reported adrift with steering problem. At 0001, UTC, today vessel was still adrift in lat 30 51S, long 153 30E. (Note — *Ming Zhou 28* sailed Hong Kong Aug 19 for Newcastle.)

MOHAWK II (Norway)

London, Sep 7 — The Norwegian Seascouts have bought back their sailing vessel, training *Mohawk II*, back from the Dutch Rijkswaterstaat for the symbolic price of one Euro. A spokeswoman of Rijkswaterstaat said that there was no reason to keep the vessel any longer in custody, because the state of the vessel will deteriorate. The scouts were not in Flushing to receive their vessel back, but their British agent paid the euro for them and did receive the damaged vessel on the side of the Scheldepoort yard at Vlissingen-Oost from Rijkswaterstaat. To raise funds for the restoration of the vessel the scouts collected money at Small Sail in Flushing which had been held in August. In total they have raised already 2679 euro.

MSC LAUREN (Panama)

See *Nordbeach*.

NEULAND (Germany)

See *Orion*.

NEW HOPE II (Panama)

See *Joy Victory*.

NEW POLAR (Falkland Islands)

Las Palmas, Sep 2 — Trawler *New Polar* arrived Las Palmas Aug 16, from Vigo. — Lloyd's Agents.

NONA MARY (Greece)

London, Sep 3 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Passenger ro/ro *Nona Mary* (2206 gt, built 1972), after arriving at the port of Naxos, the master advised the port authority that there was damage to the port main engine, early Sep 1. At the time, vessel was scheduled to continue the voyage Anafi-Thirasia-Santorini-Folegandros-Sikino-Ios-Naxos-Paros-Syros. After repair, the vessel was permitted to sail at 1010 hrs.

NORDBEACH (Cyprus)

London, Sep 8 — C.c. *Nordbeach* (11998 gt, built 1991) drifted and made contact with and anchored c.c. *MSC Lauren* (32238 gt, built 1982) at Durban outer anchorage about Sep 4/5. Understand the collision caused considerable damage bow of *MSC Lauren*. Both vessels remained entangled with *Nordbeach's* anchor chains snared with those of *MSC Lauren*, same day. Durban Port Control has issued a warning of 40ft container from *Nordbeach* which has gone overboard and is floating in sea.

NYSA (Singapore)

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

OAKLAWN (U.S.A.)

London, Sep 6 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1435, UTC: Supply *Oaklawn* (84 gt, built 1991) had fire on board in lat 28 36.05N, long 92 35.85W, at 0645, UTC, today. Crew were unable to control the fire and were forced to abandon; the deck was reportedly buckling. A vessel is going to the scene today to assess the situation.

OCEAN PRINCE (Hong Kong)

London, Sep 9 — Bulk *Ocean Prince* arrived Los Angeles Aug 23 and sailed Sep 6. It subsequently arrived and sailed San Francisco Sep 7.

OESTERSON (DIS)

Copenhagen, Sep 6 — General cargo *Oesterson* (778 gt, built 1967), deployed on a liner service from Bornholm Island to Aalborg and Horsens, encountered a serious main engine breakdown during week 32 en route from Bornholm to Aalborg, leading her owners and hull underwriters to agree upon demolition being the most reasonable solution, taking vessel's age into consideration. Consequently casualty towed to breakers at Grenaa by tug *Skansund*. — Correspondent.

OITUZ (Romania)

Coatzacoalcos, Aug 27 — General cargo *Oituz* (11025 gt, built 1979), Veracruz for Europe, sustained main engine damage in front of Frontera. Vessel at anchorage in Frontera for various years awaiting final disposition of cargo, crew on board. Vessel was towed into Coatzacoalcos, arriving Aug

1 1998, where, again, remained berthed without final disposition, until the cargo was discharged, sold, etc. Crew was finally disembarked and vessel remained iddled for some time. Vessel was purchased by an individual and has been dismantled almost completely. At present some remains of the hull are still in sight. — Lloyd's Agents.

ORION (Germany)

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated Sep 3, states: Product tanker *Orion* (356 gt, built 1991), loaded with gasoil, and general cargo *Neuland* (494 gt, built 1966), loaded, were in collision in the Nord-Ostsee-Kanal on Sep 2. According to data of the Water Protection Police both vessels continued their voyages. Chemical/oil carrier *Rheinstern* (11423 gt, built 1993) steered into the "kanalboschung" (?canal bank), so not to drive into the accident scene. The tug *Bugsier 11* brought the vessel off the "Boschung". (Note — *Neuland* sailed Rostock Sep 1 for Hohenhorn. *Rheinstern*, Riga for Fawley, passed Brunsbuttel Sep 2, and arrived Fawley Sep 6.)

OSIRIS (Netherlands)

Maassluis, Sep 3 — General cargo *Osiris* is currently under arrest, at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Agents.

PENG YANG (China)

London, Sep 9 — Following received from Hong Kong MRCC, timed 2311, UTC, Sep 8: Bulk *Peng Yang* is still aground and salvage operations are continuing.

POKOJ (Cyprus)

See *Kinei Maru No.18*.

POMMERN (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Sep 7 — General cargo *Pommern* arrived at Hamburg at 1932 hrs, Sep 5, from Poole and sailed at 20000 hrs, on Sep 6, bound for Izmir.

PONT-AVEN (France)

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated Sep 2, states: Another crossing between Plymouth and Roscoff was cancelled because of continuing problems affecting Brittany Ferries' flagship passenger ro/ro *Pont-Aven*. The company is trying to get the ferry back to full service after it developed faults last month. The crossing was cancelled on Tuesday (Aug 31) and passengers were rebooked on alternative sailings. A spokesman for Brittany Ferries said: "We understand the disappointment and frustration this causes our customers and offer our sincere apologies for this disruption, which is due to an unforeseen technical problem." The company's other ship, passenger ro/ro *Duc de Normandie*, was continuing services to Roscoff. *Pont-Aven* was due to sail to Santander in Spain as scheduled yesterday. The full service is due to be resumed on Sep 10.

London, Sep 7 — Passenger ro/ro *Pont-Aven* sailed from Santander on Sep 2, bound for Cork, arriving on Sep 4. The vessel departed Cork later that day, destination Roscoff.

PRESTIGE (Bahamas)

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: More than four-fifths of the fuel remaining in the crude oil tanker *Prestige* which sank off Spain's northwestern coast in November 2002 has been pumped out of the vessel, an official spokeswoman said today. According to the spokeswoman with the government commission overseeing the pumping operation, 2,389 tonnes of fuel remain in the vessel, lying at a depth of 4,000 metres some 250 kilometres off Spain's Atlantic coast. Work to extract the remaining 13,089 tonnes of fuel from the shattered hulk of the vessel began in June and the official spokeswoman said what now remained was due to be pumped by the end of September.

PRINCE MOUDI (Lebanon)

Beirut, Sep 7 — General cargo *Prince Moudi* arrived at Beirut on Sep 2, from Kavala. — Lloyd's Agents.

PRINCESS OF NEGROS (Philippines)

London, Sep 2 — Ferry *Princess of Negros* (4494 gt, built 1973) has been stranded in Manila Bay. The ferry, which left yesterday afternoon for Tagilaran, Bohol island, suffered engine trouble one hour after leaving the Port of Manila's North Harbour terminal. The vessel's engine broke down due to still unknown causes. As of 0130 today, crew was still attempting to restart engine. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Sep 4 — Ferry *Princess of Negros* arrived safely at Tagbilaran port, Bohol island, central Philippines, about 0900 today. The ferry was stranded for several hours while the crew undertook repairs. The ferry was finally able to continue its voyage yesterday morning. A spokesman for Negros Navigation said that "with the minor technical problem addressed, the ship's master decided to resume its voyage to Tagbilaran." The vessel will continue regular operations between Manila and Tagbilaran. The vessel is presently taking on passengers and cargo at Tagbilaran and is estimated to arrive in Manila at 2200 tomorrow. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

RED BOAT (North Korea)

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

REDEEMER (U.K.)

London, Sep 6 — Following received from Coastguard Dover MRSC, timed 1530, UTC: Salvage *Redeemer* (116 gt, built 1968) has been towed to Newhaven after it sustained engine problems off Beachy Head several weeks ago. The vessel has been subsequently detained at Newhaven for several deficiencies.

RHEINSTERN (Isle of Man)

See *Orion*.

RIVER DART (U.K.)

London, Sep 3 — General cargo *River Dart* was reported passing Dover on Sep 2, on passage from Rye for London.

RIX CONDOR (U.K.)

London, Sep 7 — Tank barge *Rix Condor* (827 gt, built 1967) was towed from Falmouth Bay into the docks for engine repairs. (Note — *Rix Condor* arrived Falmouth Aug 19.)

SAINT NICHOLAS (Greece)

London, Sep 3 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 1525, UTC: The lightering of bulk *Saint Nicholas* has progressed well and it is hoped that a refloating attempt will be made about 2200, UTC, tonight. (See issue of Sep 3.)

London, Sep 5 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0948, UTC: Bulk *Saint Nicholas* was refloated at 0210, UTC, Sep 4. Vessel is now anchored in Kalundborgfjord, awaiting the arrival of spare parts, for repairs. Understood spares are due on board tomorrow. SAR operations have terminated.

SEA EAGLE S.**(St. Vincent & Grenadines)**

Rijeka, Sep 9 — General cargo *Sea Eagle S.* (1799 gt, built 1973), with cargo of steel and timber, sailed from Rijeka Sep 6 for Casablanca. The vessel grounded near Plomin during the night of Sep 6/7, and returned to Rijeka in tow. There was no injuries reported. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — ISea Eagle S. arrived Rijeka Sep 1 from Pula.)

SHELLY (Panama)

See "Hong Kong" under "Weather & Navigation."

SHIN TSUNETOYO MARU (Japan)

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Shin Tsunetoyo Maru* (499 gt, built 2002) crashed into a coastal residential neighbourhood in western Japan early today, injuring one resident and demolishing two homes after the captain fell asleep at the helm, the coast guard said. A 76-year-old man whose seaside house collapsed from the tanker's impact suffered a bruised right shoulder, said the local branch of the coast guard in a statement. None of the six crew members aboard the ship was hurt. The 0230 hrs accident demolished a vacant house next to Mr Abe's and badly damaged another residence nearby on the island of Osaki Kamishima, about 640km south-west of Tokyo. Visibility was clear and waters were calm at the time of the incident, the coast guard's Kure office said. The captain told authorities that he had fallen asleep when the ship was on autopilot. The ship later continued its voyage after a tugboat detached it from the embankment. The vessel departed from a steel plant in Hiroshima prefecture last night carrying 1600 tonnes of slag, bound for Shunan, in the neighbouring prefecture of Yamaguchi.

London, Sep 4 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 1345, UTC: General cargo *Shin Tsunetoyo Maru* was only slightly damaged in the incident, at 0230 hrs, which was caused by the master falling asleep during navigation. The vessel was pulled clear by a tug and resumed passage for Yamaguchi Prefecture, under its own power, at 0515, UTC.

Yokohama, Sep 7 — General cargo *Shin Tsunetoyo Maru*, Fukuyama for Tokuyama, ran over a breakwater at Osakkikamashima, Hiroshima prefecture, at 0230, Sep 4. The vessel destroyed two houses and damaged a third. One resident was slightly injured. The vessel was refloated by a tug the same day. The vessel's master had reportedly fallen asleep while the vessel was on autopilot. — Lloyd's Agents.

SILVER PEARL**(St. Vincent & Grenadines)**

See "Yeu Island, France" under "Pollution."

SOUTHERN MOANA**(Antigua & Barbuda)**

Suva, Sep 7 — A surveyor has been appointed to inspect general cargo *Southern Moana*, in order to ascertain the damage sustained and also to report on Loss of Hire, planning of the repairs, obtaining bids, etc. Understand all the vessel's tanks are holed, the bottom plating is buckled/crumpled, there is rudder damage, and the propeller plates are buckled and torn. Understand the vessel will be towed to China for repairs once the owners have negotiated the best price with tug owners. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUPER JET (Greece)

London, Sep 3 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: At 2033, Sep 1, while proceeding off Folegandros, ferry *Super Jet* (ex *Jet One*, 499 gt, built 1995) sustained damage to the starboard main engine. At the time vessel was performing the schedule Piraeus-Serifos-Sifnos-Santorini-Ios. The Folegandros Port Authority permitted the vessel to sail for one voyage to Piraeus without passengers in order to carry out repairs. The 64 passengers on board for Santorini and 23 for Ios were forwarded to their destinations on passenger/ro-ro *Romilda*, which departed at 0300, Sep 2.

London, Sep 3 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Following successful repairs and survey by the marine inspectorate, ferry *Super Jet* was permitted to sail from Piraeus today.

THOR TRIBUTE (Thailand)

London, Sep 3 — Bulk *Thor Tribute* sailed from Philadelphia at 1815 hrs, Aug 18, bound for Halmstad, where it arrived on Aug 31.

TORM MARY (DIS)

London, Sep 7 — Product tanker *Torm Mary* arrived at Amsterdam at 1735 hrs, Sep 6. (See issue of Aug 26.)

TRI ARDHANTO (Indonesia)

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

ULLA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Ankara, Sep 6 — A ship containing toxic waste sank today after being moored in a Turkish harbour for four years, sparking fears among environmentalists of serious damage to local marine life. General cargo *Ulla*

(2516 gt, built 1969) had been moored in the port of Iskenderun since 2000 as officials tried to decide what to do about its two-tonne cargo, which Turkish media said was waste from the chimneys of thermal powers stations. Turkish television showed the ship, its bottom rotted away, gradually sinking beneath the waters. "Unfortunately this was something that was bound to happen," Banu Dokmecibasi of Greenpeace's Mediterranean office told the Anatolian state news agency. She said officials had ignored a report last year warning of the risk that the ship might sink and spill its contents into the sea. "The necessary measures were not taken," she said, adding that the authorities must now mount an urgent investigation to contain the effects of the spillage. Environmentalists fear the carcinogenic cargo could destroy local marine life and also enter the human food chain. Officials were not immediately available for comment. The Turkish-owned vessel had originally transported the waste from Spain to Algeria, but it was diverted to Turkey after Algeria declined to take the cargo, Anatolian said. — Reuters. (Note — *Ulla* arrived at Iskenderun arrived at Iskenderun on Feb 25, 2000.)

Iskenderun, Sep 7 — General cargo *Ulla* sank yesterday afternoon (at Iskenderun) with approximately 2200 tonnes of toxic cargo. on board. There were no crew on board at the time of sinking. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated Sep 8, states: Spain said today it was ready to help Turkey to dispose of some 2,200 tonnes of cancer-causing power station waste on board general cargo *Ulla*, which sank earlier this week in south-eastern Turkey. "Contacts are being set up today with the Turkish government via the foreign ministry and the environment ministry will offer its full collaboration," in line with the UN's Basel Convention on the Transport of Hazardous Waste, Environment Minister Cristina Carbona said. Earlier negotiations between Madrid and Ankara had reached deadlock on the fate of the vessel. The ship had been rusting off the coast of Turkey since leaving Algeria in February, 2000, carrying a cargo from Spanish firm Larfarge Asland SA, an offshoot of French cement group Lafarge. According to Lafarge Asland the Turks did not want to take in the cargo, alleging it had degenerated in transit. The Spanish company said today it had dispatched a team to work with the Turks on disposing of the waste, while stressing that under international law it has not owned the cargo since it left the Spanish port of Aviles in December, 1999. In 2001, the Spanish authorities fined the firm Euros 30,050 for having on 18 occasions transported similar material without authorisation. Turkey's official centre for maritime disasters said the vessel had enough environmentally toxic material on board to contaminate more than 300,000 tonnes of water and warned against diving or fishing in the area. Turkish Environment Minister Osman

Pepe said yesterday the Spanish government would have to assume responsibility for all damage caused to the environment.

VAL CADORE (Italy)

Zeebrugge, Sep 5 — Lpg *Val Cadore* sailed Flushing 1614, local time, Sep 4, for France. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

VANGUARD (U.K.)

London, Sep 7 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 1847, UTC: Tug *Vanguard* (296 gt, built 1965), 24 tonnes marine diesel, 380 gallons lube oil, sank in lat 57 34.86N, long 05 57.82W, at Para B, close to land, North Rona, inner sound, at 1636, UTC. Low water 1828, UTC, neap tides, wind calm. Engineer from vessel reports wing tanks intact, fuel valves closed. Hull damage to bottom. No pollution observed at the moment.

London, Sep 7 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 1918, UTC: Tug *Vanguard*: Tug *Anglian Prince* now on scene. Minimum oil sheen confirmed and contained within booms.

London, Sep 7 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 2205, UTC: Tug *Vanguard* has been beached at the north end of Rona. Counter-pollution measures have been taken. Tug *Anglian Prince* has been tasked to remain on scene. The situation will be reviewed in the morning.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: An operation will take place to assess whether or not an ocean-going tug *Vanguard* which sank off Skye can be refloated. Eight crew were rescued uninjured from the vessel which had been accompanying a foreign submarine undergoing sea trials in the area. The vessel started taking in water just before 1800, BST, yesterday, half a mile north of the island of Rona. The 128ft tug was beached on the island shore and the crew rescued using the Portree lifeboat. The vessel had been working for the Ministry of Defence accompanying a Canadian Navy submarine which is undergoing sea trials in the area. An attempt is being made to remove fuel and oil from the tug before an assessment is carried out to see if it can be refloated. The cause of the sinking is as yet unclear, however a number of dangerous submerged rocks lie up to a mile off the northern shore of Rona. The tug is lying at an angle of 45 degrees. There are no reports of any pollution.

London, Sep 8 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 1620, UTC: Tug *Vanguard*, beached North Rona: Titan Marine are due at Portree around midnight tonight when they can begin to assess the situation.

London, Sep 8 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 1828, UTC: Tug *Vanguard*: Engineer reports wing tanks intact, fuel valves closed, hull damage to bottom. Reportedly there was a minimum sheen of oil which was confirmed as contained within booms. Replacement booms have arrived on scene and are

being deployed by tug *Anglian Prince*. There is a Multi Cat Barge on its way to remove the remaining fuel from the casualty, ETA midnight, with a view to starting operations around first light. The *Anglian Prince* will be departing the scene to anchor to the west of Rona to allow underwater trials to continue.

London, Sep 9 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 1118, UTC: Tug *Vanguard*: Following received from Atlantic 405, overflying the area: In position lat 57 34.86N, long 05 57.8W, extending three square kms, approximate quantity five cubic metres.

VEGA (Liberia)

Rio de Janeiro, Sep 3 — General cargo *Vega* (6036 gt, built 1990) arrived at Guanabara Bay in tow from Cabo Frio, at 0700, Sep 2. Vessel sustained fuel injector problems in the main engine. — Lloyd's Agents.

VIHAN 5 (Vietnam)

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

YERSEKE 29 (Netherlands)

London, Sep 7 — Fishing *Yerseke 29*, 35 metres long, sank at about 0600, today, in the Juliana Harbour in the fishing town of Yerseke. *Yerseke 29*, equipped for oyster fishing, was moored in the harbour for repairs and sank without any persons on board. The cause of the sinking is not yet known.

London, Sep 8 — Fishing *Yerseke 29*, built 1978, owned by Prins Oesterkweek B.V. in Yerseke, had been moored on Monday (Sep 6) in Yerseke harbour and at low tide it stood dry, partly listed, to remove a rope from its propeller. As the tide came up again on Tuesday morning, water entered the vessel which sank. All day yesterday they tried to refloat the vessel by pumping air into it, but did not succeed. The vessel nearly capsized. Thereafter it has been decided after consulting the insurance company to raise the vessel by a floating sheerleg crane, which might be today.

London, Sep 9 — Fishing *Yerseke 29*, that sank Sep 7 in the Juliana Harbour in the fishing town Yerseke, has been raised by the floating sheerleg crane *Delta*, owned by Aannemingsbedrijf Van der Straaten at Hansweert, at 1730, local time, yesterday. There has been some oil leakage but there had been an oil boom laid around the vessel and the oil spilled has been removed by an oil cleaning truck of the company Martens from 's-Heerenhoek.

YUKON (U.S.A.)

See Tropical Storm "Sarika" under "Weather & Navigation".

Port State Control



UNITED KINGDOM

See *Redeemer* under "Marine".

Seizures & Arrests



ACRONEOS (Cayman Islands)

Maassluis, Sep 3 — Product tanker *Acroneos* (10937 gt, built 1985) is currently under detention at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Acroneos* arrived Rotterdam 0140, Sep 2.)

AGIOS SPYRIDON K. (Greece)

Piraeus, Sep 3 — Ro/ro *Agios Spyridon K.* has not been sold and still remains under arrest at Salamina. Prospects of its release unknown. — Lloyd's Agents.

ANGELIKI M. (Honduras)

Port Said, Sep 6 — General cargo *Angeliki M.* is still under arrest at Port Said. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Angeliki M.* was arrested at Port Said for carrying unauthorised weapons and ammunition, where arrived Jul 27, 1995.)

DELOS (Bahamas)

Port Said, Sep 6 — Chem.tank *Delos* is still under arrest at Port Said. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Delos* was placed under arrest at Port Said for non-payment of fees Feb 1, 2000.)

EAGLE STRENGTH (Panama)

See under "Marine."

ELEN (Honduras)

Port Said, Sep 6 — General cargo *Elen* is still under arrest at Port Said. — Lloyd's Agents.

ENDEAVOR II (Greece)

Karachi, Sep 3 — Crude oil tanker *Endeavor II* is still under arrest at Karachi, according to the Karachi Port Authority (KPT) and Partner Surridge & Beecheno, the counsel for M/s Andros Maritime of Greece, which owns it. The vessel arrived at Karachi on Aug 5. Meanwhile, the Sindh High Court (SHC) has fixed Sep 21 for the re-hearing of the case. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

GENERAL BERNARDINO CABALLERO (Paraguay)

Rio Grande, Sep 8 — General cargo *General Bernardino Caballero* remains under arrest at Porto Alegre. No date for release. — Lloyd's Agents.

GENI LISI (Spain)

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Fishing *Geni Lisi* has been detained off the west coast by the Naval Service for alleged breaches of fishing regulations. The Naval Service vessel *LE Aisling* detained the *Geni Lisi* 180 miles west of Galway. The *Geni Lisi* is being escorted to Galway to facilitate legal proceedings and is expected to arrive in Galway early tomorrow afternoon. On arrival it will undergo further inspection by Department of Marine officials.

GLORY SANYE (Panama)

London, Sep 9 — France has extended its battle against waste-dumping by vessels to the Indian Ocean island of REunion. The owners of bulk *Glory Sanye* (26040 gt, built 1994) have been ordered to pay Euros 250,000 (\$298,000) bail after being accused by a local prosecutor of causing marine pollution. The vessel, which was en route from Port Elizabeth to Singapore, was brought into Port Reunion under naval escort after being spotted from the air at the head of a 19 km-long pollution slick, 125 nautical miles south-west of the island. According to local reports, the Korean master of the vessel at first denied responsibility for the slick but agreed to come into port after a naval patrol vessel appeared on the scene to escort him. The vessels officers were questioned by maritime gendarmes after their arrival off Port Reunion early on Tuesday morning (Sep 7), while inspectors from the local maritime affairs department looked over the vessel. The case is believed to be the first of its kind in REunion, which is a French overseas territory. (Note — *Glory Sanye* sailed Port Elizabeth Sep 1.)

GULFBREEZE (Malta)

Maassluis, Sep 3 — Chemical/oil carrier *Gulfbreeze* (7498 gt, built 1982) is currently under detention in Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Gulfbreeze* arrived Rotterdam 1935, Aug 31.)

HANKO I (Honduras)

Port Said, Sep 6 — Tug *Hanko I* is still under arrest at Port Said. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Hanko I* was arrested at Port Said for unpaid canal fees, where arrived prev Nov 11, 2002.)

KHALED IBN AL WALEED (United Arab Emirates)

London, Sep 8 — The Pakistani master of c.c. *Khaled Ibn Al Waleed* has received what is thought to be the heaviest sentence imposed by a French court since the French authorities began taking tougher action to stamp out marine pollution off its coasts. The Marseilles criminal court imposed on 54-year-old Anis Yazdani Zuberi a 12-month suspended prison sentence and a Euros 500,000 (\$600,000) fine, although it stipulated that the bulk of the fine — Euros 485,000 — should be paid by the vessel's owner. The vessel was spotted from the air at the head of an 18 km long, 50 metre-wide, pollution slick off Cap Sicie, near La Seyne sur Mer on the French Mediterranean coast, on Feb 11 this year. Damages ranging from Euros 3,000-18,000 were also awarded to five environmental organisations, including Greenpeace France, which took legal action on its own account.

MACEDONIA HELLAS (Greece)

Port Said, Sep 6 — Bulk *Macedonia Hellas* has been released from arrest at Safaga at the end of Jun and sailed. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Macedonia Hellas* arrived Safaga Oct 10, 2002. Vessel subsequently passed Port Said Jul 2, bound Iskenderun.)

MARISCAL JOSE FELIX ESTIGARRIBIA (Paraguay)

Rio Grande, Sep 8 — General cargo *Mariscal Jose Felix Estigarribia* remains under arrest at Porto Alegre. No date for release. — Lloyd's Agents.

MAYA V (Uruguay)

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The master and first mate of fishing *Maya V* face deportation after admitting to poaching a multi-million-dollar haul of Patagonian toothfish. Uruguayan national Charles Thomas Pena and his Spanish deputy, Manuel Torres Regueira, pleaded guilty yesterday to two charges related to fishing for the protected toothfish in the Southern Ocean in January this year. Their vessel was intercepted by HMAS *Warramunga* in the Australian Fishing Zone around Heard and McDonald Islands, 4,100 nautical miles south-west of Fremantle. After boarding the vessel by helicopter, Australian authorities discovered 202 tonnes of toothfish in the vessel's freezers, with an estimated worth of between \$4 million and \$6 million. They also found long lines and 64 tonnes of sardines to be used as bait. Both men were released on bail yesterday, and will be sentenced tomorrow. After sentencing they are expected to be taken to a detention centre and deported. In a lengthy submission, counsel for the convicted men, Phillip Laskaris, said his clients were not in a position to pay large fines. The first charge — having a vessel equipped for illegal fishing in a protected zone — carries a fine of \$275,000, while the second charge of intentionally using that boat for commercial fishing carries a fine of \$550,000. Mr Laskaris said Regueira suffered from depression and paranoia and should not be detained ahead of sentencing. Mr Laskaris said Pena was "an old man of the sea", who felt remorse for his actions and was unlikely to find employment again in the commercial fishing industry. Crown prosecutor Darren Renton said the men had lied to Australian authorities and initially denied that they had fished for toothfish in the Australian Fishing Zone. He said there was evidence navigational equipment on the vessel had been tampered with, making it impossible to accurately track the vessel's movements. A total of 40 Uruguayan, Chilean, Spanish, and Caribbean crew were charged with using a foreign fishing vessel in the Australian Fishing Zone without a valid licence — the first time an entire crew has been charged with the poaching offence. Their illegal haul was sold by tender in April to deep-sea fishing company Austral Fisheries for more than \$2 million.

MEKHANIK YUZVOVICH (Ukraine)

Trieste, Sep 9 — General cargo *Mekhanik Yuzvovich* was eventually freed and left Porto Nogaro for Rijeka on Jul 27. — Lloyd's Agents.

MIRNA (Croatia)

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated Sep 7, states: The Indonesian navy has

impounded general cargo *Mirna* (13544 gt, built 1979), suspected of carrying 9,000 cubic meters of illegally cut timber, a spokesman said today. The patrol boat *KRI Sutanto* intercepted the *Mirna* on Sunday (Sep 5) in the Arafuru Sea in eastern Indonesia, said Lt Erwan. The vessel and its 20 crew members were now under guard at the naval base in the port city of Surabaya, the spokesman said. The *Mirna* was first spotted by a Nomad reconnaissance aircraft, which then directed surface vessels to hunt it down when it attempted to flee, the Kompas daily newspaper reported.

ORALAKE (Netherlands Antilles)

Maassluis, Sep 3 — Product tanker *Oralake* (1860 gt, built 2004) is currently under detention at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Oralake* arrived Rotterdam 0015, Aug 15.)

OSIRIS (Netherlands)

See under "Marine."

OSTWIND (Antigua & Barbuda)

Maassluis, Sep 3 — General cargo *Ostwind* remains under arrest at Vlaardingen. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

PATMOS (Greece)

Piraeus, Sep 7 — Passenger ro/ro *Patmos* sailed from Rhodes and called at Piraeus at the end of July. The exact date of sailing from Rhodes roads is not available from the relevant authorities. The vessel remains under arrest at Piraeus port. — Lloyd's Agents.

PAVEL YABLOCHKOV (Russia)

Leghorn, Aug 23 — Cargo/training *Pavel Yablochkov* is still under arrest at Leghorn. — Lloyd's Agents.

PHILIPPINE FISHING VESSELS SEIZED BY PHILIPPINE FISHERMEN OFF PAPUA NEW GUINEA COAST

Manila, Sep 3 — At least 152 Filipino fishermen seized 10 fishing vessels owned by a Philippine tuna cannery off Papua New Guinea in the Pacific. The restive fishermen commanded the vessels Monday (Aug 30) morning and brought them to Madang Port in Papua New Guinea, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said yesterday. The fishermen are reportedly unarmed. The Filipino crews seized the vessels to protest alleged unfair labour practices by their employer. Philippine Ambassador to Papua New Guinea Bienvenido Tejano said the fishermen claimed they were paid below International Labour Organisation (ILO) recognised rates, received no overtime pay, had no provision for workers' compensation coverage in cases of accident or loss of life and had suffered from incorrect calculation of bonus payments. The Filipinos also claimed the fishing vessels they crewed are not seaworthy due to lack of safety and fire fighting equipment. The fishermen are employed by RD Tuna, the largest Philippine-owned

cannery in the Pacific, although the fishing vessels they commandeered are only being chartered by RD Tuna from another Filipino company. Philippine Foreign Undersecretary Jose Brillantes of the Office of Migrant Workers Affairs said the incident is a "plain and simple" labour dispute between the Filipino workers and their employer and is not an incident of terrorism in the high seas. "Ambassador Tejano's instructions are to talk to the Filipino fishermen to return to work and begin the process of resolving the labour dispute with the ship owner and RD Tuna," he said. Brillantes said ship owner representative Rodrigo Rivera, the local fishing union in Papua New Guinea and representatives of the International Transport Federation (ITF) are currently negotiating with the protesting boat crewmen led by ship master Capt. Angelito Tabastas. RD Tuna said the Filipinos are considered local hires and not overseas Filipino workers. "This labor dispute is between Filipino nationals and Filipino corporations that occurred aboard Philippine-flagged fishing vessels. For this reason, Philippine laws will be applied in resolving this," Brillantes said. But he said the Philippine government will extend assistance to the fishermen and is willing to make arrangements for their repatriation to the Philippines if necessary. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

POLYMOK (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Mumbai, Sep 4 — General cargo *Polymok* sailed Mumbai Sep 2 for Mukalla. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Aug 30.)

SEAGREEN (Cyprus)

London, Sep 8 — C.c. *Seagreen* is today reported still at South East Lamma Anchorage, Hong Kong, under arrest.

SHAMROCK (French Southern Territories)

London, Sep 8 — A US federal court is scheduled to rule next Monday (Sep 13) on a motion brought by Fortis Bank for the sale of ro/ro *Shamrock* on an alleged \$14.3 million mortgage default. The vessel has been under arrest at Portland, Maine since July. Judge George Singal of the US District Court for the District of Maine will rule on Fortis Bank's motion for an interlocutory sale. The vessel's owner has opposed the motion. Fortis is understood to be claiming \$12.64 million in outstanding principal on the mortgage and \$1.33 million in interest. The plaintiffs argue that the vessel's maintenance, understood to be around \$3,000 a day excluding crew, is too heavy to justify its being held under arrest. A crew of nine is understood to be still on board. National Maritime Services, a division of National Liquidators, is functioning as substitute custodian in this case, and is in charge of the vessel's maintenance.

STRILBAS (Norway)

Maassluis, Sep 3 — Standby safety vessel *Strilbas* remains under arrest at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

THALASOPOROS (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Limassol, Sep 7 — Tug *Thalassoporos* was released from arrest on Sep 1. However, the vessel has remained at Limassol Breakwater. — Lloyd's Agents.

VOYAGER (Netherlands Antilles)

Maassluis, Sep 3 — General cargo *Voyager* is still under arrest at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Pipeline Accidents



RIAD AREA, IRAQ

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

Pollution



CAP COURONNE, MARSEILLE AREA, MEDITERRANEAN SEA

London, Sep 8 — The Marseilles criminal court imposed a Euros 300,000 fine on the Turkish master of c.c. *Cimil*, which was spotted on Jan 29 at the head of a five km-long, 50 metre-wide, slick off Cap Couronne, west of Marseilles. The vessel's owners were ordered to pay the bulk of the fine — in this case Euros 290,000.

KARNAPHULI RIVER, BANGLADESH

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 4, states: Crude oil pumped through a faulty hydraulic valve in the supply line of crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* caused an oil spillage in the Bay of Bengal on the night of Aug 27, according to a draft report by the two-member committee formed by Chittagong Port Authority to probe the oil spillage, it was learnt from official sources. The committee completed its draft report on Thursday (Sep 2) but did not submit it to the authorities. The vessel was carrying some 990.3 tonnes of crude. The report said the crude was loaded in ballast tanks instead of cargo tanks, where it was supposed to be kept. This is an irregularity, the committee said. The head of the probe body, Captain Faridul Alam, who is also the Assistant Harbour Master of CPA, unofficially informed the Shipping Secretary Ismail Jabiullah of the findings in a meeting at Chittagong Port rest house on Thursday. CPA Chairman AMM Shahadat Hossain, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation managing director Captain Azizul Haq and other officials concerned were also

present. The probe body also made six recommendations to prevent such an oil spillage in the future. These are precautionary measures while carrying oil in such tankers and replacement of the hydraulic valves of the supply lines. The oil spillage spread over an area of some 15 km in the Bay and in the port channel of the Karnaphuli River, causing extensive pollution. Scores of dead fish started surfacing on the sea, creating concern in different quarters. The spillage also prompted the formation of two other probe bodies, one by the Marine Fisheries Department and the other by the Bangladesh Forest Research Institute in Cox's Bazar.

Karachi, Sep 6 — Bangladesh Ministry of Shipping has formed a high-powered seven-member committee headed by Captain Ahsanul Azim, Director General of the Directorate of Shipping, to investigate the recent environmentally oil spillage at the Chittagong Port and its adjoining area from lighterage vessel crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* two weeks ago. According to a local report, the other members of the committee are Director of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority Captain Azizul Hasan, Principal Officer of Marine and Mercantile Department, Captain Shafique Ullah, Assistant Harbour Master of CPA Faridul Alam, Deputy Commandant of Marine Academy Captain Amirul Haque and two representatives from the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation and Eastern Refinery Limited. They are expected to submit the report within 15-day. Earlier, an official of Bangladesh state owned largest shipping company said that our finding says that mishap happened due to an accidental ingress of oil through a hole caused by corrosion of the ballast water pipe line which passed through cargo tanks. Hence, in that condition when the cargo was discharged completely, the trim of the vessel increased to about five metre by the aft and because of the backpressure and a crack opening of a ballast water ship side valve the oil possibly found its way to the river water, he revealed. Unfortunately, the vessels crew at the first instance could not detect it. However, at day light on Aug 28 they discovered that droplets of oil coming out of water close to side shell plating. Chittagong Port Authority in fact did not detain the vessel. He further added that at present we are rectifying the ballast water line leakage, which had been found in No.3 centre cargo oil tank. Besides that, we are trying to separate the contaminated oil on top of ballast water mainly in No.2 port ballast water tank. Three other tanks have also traces of oil. He had expressed hope that we are hopeful to get rid of all these unwanted contaminated oil-water mixture before commencement of the next lighterage operation, which is due on Sep 7. — Lloyd's List Correspondent

YEU ISLAND, FRANCE

London, Sep 3 — General cargo *Silver Pearl* arrived at Pasajes on Sep 2, and sailed later on that day, bound for Vigo.

Weather & Navigation

**AUSTRALIA**

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Thunderstorms have passed through south-east Queensland this afternoon, although there are no reports of any major damage. However the storms have caused blackouts in the Brisbane area. An Energex spokesman says about 1,100 homes in the city's south-west lost supply. Almost all of those homes have since been reconnected.

CHINA

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Days of torrential rains in south-west China unleashed floods and landslides that killed at least 19 people, the government said today. The downpours in Sichuan, a province prone to seasonal flooding, fell non-stop from Thursday (Sep 2) through to yesterday with more rain forecast, the official Xinhua News Agency said. In addition to the 19 confirmed dead, 21 others were missing, the report said. Rescue work was under way. The rains also damaged farmland and reservoirs and caused severe traffic jams, it said. In the hard-hit county of Quxian, rainfall reached 10 inches by yesterday and caused \$19 million in damage, the agency said.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: The death toll from torrential rainstorms in Sichuan province has risen to 44, with 37 people missing. Xinhua reported last night that Dazhou, north of Chongqing, sustained the most serious damage, with 21 people confirmed dead and 24 reported missing. In Nanchong, about halfway between Chongqing and Chengdu, 14 people were killed and six missing. Rescuers were trying to restore communications with Dazhou after they were cut off following four days of continuous downpours. "Dazhou became a 'lone island'," Xinhua said. "All transport links with the outside were suspended. Supplies of water, electricity and gas were cut. "In the southern district of the city, witnesses can see many residents trapped in their houses and police are trying to move them to safety in small boats." The downpours started on Thursday (Sep 2) and triggered landslides which destroyed farmland and reservoirs, the news agency said. Weather officials said Dazhou received more than 360 mm of rainfall in the past four days. An official from Dazhou city government said: "Several thousand people are trapped downtown. Casualty figures are being collected. The Sichuan provincial government has sent out officials to monitor the rescue work." Another official said: "All bridges in the city have been submerged and traffic from the city centre to the southern part of the city is totally paralysed." An official

with the Dazhou Flood Prevention Office said the level of the Zhou River, which flows through the city, was at least five metres above the safety level. It was estimated that about one million people in Dazhou and Kai county had been affected by the torrential rain and more than 3,000 houses destroyed or damaged.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 79 people have been killed and 74 are missing as torrential storms lash south-west China. Disaster relief officials say at least 55 are dead and 47 missing in Sichuan province, while 24 people died and 27 are missing in Chongqing municipality. They say many of the dead and missing are from Dazhou city.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Five days of torrential rain have left at least 91 people dead in Sichuan province and Chongqing, as local officials struggle to cope with the deluge. More than six million people have been affected by the incessant downpours. Officials from the Sichuan Flood Prevention Command Headquarters said the victims mostly drowned or were buried in landslides. The China News Service reported that at least 67 people had died in Sichuan and 50 others were missing. The downpour has forced 82,000 people in Chongqing to leave their homes. Twenty-four people have been killed, 27 are missing, thousands of homes have been destroyed and 1.2 million people are affected in the municipality. In Chongqing's Kai county, 87,000 people were stranded and rescuers had to evacuate 3,000 residents in the most dangerous areas. Tang Wanli, an official with the Chongqing Civil Affairs Bureau, said a teenage schoolboy was among the most recent deaths in the region. Yesterday, Xinhua reported that the central government had approved yuan 40 million in emergency aid for the victims. Military helicopters were sent to Dazhou city, one of the worst-hit regions, following an emergency request from the provincial government. However, floodwaters prevented the aircraft from landing at night. Military officials said another attempt to reach the city would be made during daylight. Reports said at least 300 armed police arrived in Dazhou in boats late on Sunday (Sep 5) to assist the rescue operations after the city's transport links were severed. Residents in Dazhou reportedly struggled yesterday to clean up the mess while rescue workers continued to search for those missing. According to Xinhua, most shops in Dazhou were still closed yesterday and there were long queues outside the few restaurants which had managed to open for business. The agency said many families had moved into hotels and guesthouses after their homes were flooded. It quoted local officials as saying at least 30,000 victims needed government assistance to find accommodation. The Dazhou government held an emergency meeting to discuss the disaster and set up a number of special task forces to study ways to restore the water supply and distribute food. "We have no fresh water

for several hundred thousand people. All mineral water in the shops has sold out and all instant noodles are gone," Vice-Mayor Zhang Zhike said. A local resident who posted a message on an internet chat room said: "Traffic is paralysed, there is no television signal and banks are all closed." Meanwhile, officials said the situation would begin to improve. "According to the meteorological bureau, the rain will stop this afternoon," said He Rongjun, a deputy director of the Sichuan Disaster-Relief Bureau.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Floods and landslides triggered by torrential summer rains have killed at least 118 people and left dozens missing in south-western China, officials and state television reported today. Thousands of army and navy personnel and other rescue workers were in Sichuan province helping displaced residents, unloading emergency supplies and guiding those trapped in muddy, swirling waters, the official Xinhua News Agency said. Authorities put the enormous Three Gorges hydroelectric project on alert as flood crests passed through the swollen Yangtze River and more rains were forecast, Xinhua said. China Central Television said 85 were killed and 53 were missing in Sichuan, while another 33 deaths were reported in sprawling Chongqing municipality, upstream from the Three Gorges. Some 33 people were also missing in Chongqing, even as some residents in the area's Kaixian county were being allowed back to their homes, it said. "The great needs are to ensure there is sufficient shelter and to get food in and to get in necessary medicine," said John Sparrow, regional information director for the Red Cross. More than 3,000 people left homeless by the flooding were sheltering in schools and government buildings, and rescuers were handing out quilts, medicine, bottled water and instant noodles, Xinhua said. Medical teams were sent to Kaixian county to help prevent disease outbreaks after 100,000 people there were left without safe drinking water, it said. Flooding losses were initially estimated at \$315 million, Xinhua said, with the greatest damage caused by landslides and flash floods sweeping through mountain valleys. The central government has allocated about \$5 million in relief funds to the region, Xinhua said. Another \$600,000 was set aside by the Sichuan government for Dazhou, its hardest-hit town where 46 of the deaths occurred, according to CCTV. In a separate report, Xinhua said heavy rains today caused a mudslide that killed one person and left five missing in Lijiang, a town in Yunnan province south of Sichuan. The halt to navigation on the Three Gorges Dam, the world's biggest hydroelectric project, was the first since the dam was reopened to river traffic in June 2003, the reports said. Efforts to help flood victims in Sichuan and Chongqing will continue until the danger level has dropped, Sparrow said. "I don't think we should say the worst is over," he said. "As long as it rains and as long as the forecast is telling us

there could be more rain, there is no reason to ease up on the operation.”

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Floods unleashed by torrential rains have killed at least 143 people and left dozens more missing in south-western China, prompting authorities to put the massive Three Gorges hydroelectric project on alert. Authorities have called in thousands of army and navy personnel to help after five days of continual downpours in Sichuan province. An alert was ordered and navigation halted as flood crests passed through the Three Gorges Dam along the flood-swollen Yangtze River, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. More rains were expected, it said. State television showed violent torrents of murky water spewing through the dam’s sluice gates. Navigation through its huge locks was not expected to resume until tomorrow, it said. Streets that were not under water were covered in rubbish and debris; buildings were in shambles. Scores of emergency workers were shown unloading cases of bottled water in a warehouse, while uniformed soldiers guided boats filled with huddled residents to safety. The greatest damage was from landslides and flash floods sweeping through mountain valleys. At least 81 people were confirmed dead and another 42 were missing in Sichuan, said He Rongjun, a spokesman for the province’s Disaster Relief Office. About 8,900 people were injured or sick due to the floods, he said. Forty-six of the deaths occurred in Dazhou town. Another 33 people were reported dead in sprawling Chongqing municipality along the Yangtze, upstream from the Three Gorges, official newspapers reported, citing local government spokesman He Lingyun. He said 33 people were missing there. The central government allocated 40 million yuan (US\$4.82 million) in relief funds to the region, the official Xinhua News Agency said. Flooding losses were initially estimated at 2.6 billion yuan (US\$315 million), it said. More than 3,000 people left homeless by the flooding were sheltering in schools and government buildings, and rescuers were handing out quilts, medicine, bottled water and instant noodles, the agency reported. Medical teams were sent to Chongqing’s Kaixian county to help prevent disease outbreaks after 100,000 people there were left without safe drinking water, it said. None of Kaixian’s 55 towns escaped flooding, and more than 87,000 people were still trapped by high waters, the reports said. In a separate report, Xinhua said heavy rains yesterday caused a mudslide that killed one person and left five missing in Lijiang, a town in Yunnan province south of Sichuan.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated Sep 8, states: Rain-soaked residents of south-western China began digging out today after floods and landslides that killed at least 161 people, while authorities warned of further rains over parts of the disaster area. Days-long showers had stopped over Sichuan province’s hard-hit Dazhou area, where

the death toll stood at 89, with 41 missing and about 10,000 people sick and injured, said He Rongjun, a spokesman for the provincial disaster relief office. In sprawling Chongqing municipality just east of Sichuan, 72 people were dead and 23 missing, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. However, He said meteorologists had warned at least three major storms would strike in coming weeks, and that authorities were alert for further damage. “Even though the rain has stopped, we will not be moving any rescue workers from the front line so soon,” He said by telephone from Sichuan’s capital, Chengdu. Authorities put the enormous Three Gorges hydroelectric project on alert as flood crests passed through the swollen Yangtze River. Navigation through the dam’s locks was suspended, although Xinhua said traffic would be restored tomorrow. Residents of Chongqing’s mountainous Kaixian county were being allowed back to homes devastated by the floods and mudslides, Xinhua said. The area accounted for 54 of Chongqing’s deaths. More than 200 medical workers were disinfecting the area and 18 disease monitoring stations were being set up to guard against outbreaks, Xinhua said. Electricity was expected to be restored to the entire county by today. More than 5,000 soldiers were taking part in the rescue efforts, and one 19-year-old recruit drowned while helping with evacuations, Xinhua said.

Beijing, Sep 9 — A massive floodcrest passed safely through the Three Gorges Dam on China’s Yangtze River today as devastated communities upstream cleaned up from floods that killed at least 177 people and injured thousands. Xinhua news agency has described the floods as the worst in a century as central Hubei and Hunan provinces downstream braced for the torrent of muddy water heading towards them. But Xinhua also said the floodcrest would not cause major damage as there had been no major rainfall downstream. “It is now moving forward swiftly and smoothly ... without the occurrence of major dangers along the river bank and will arrive at Wuhan (Hubei provincial capital) on Saturday,” it said, quoting experts. “It will not cause calamity on the lower reaches of the river.” An official with the Three Gorges Dam said water levels remained high and navigation on the reservoir was still suspended. “The peak passed early in the morning. Today the water flow is still high but not at its highest,” the official said. The locks would reopen and navigation could resume in two to three days, he said. The world’s largest hydroelectric project, built to tame the flood-prone Yangtze, now faces a test as residents downstream of the dam await the crest. With the rains passed, relief work in flood-damaged regions of southwestern Sichuan and Chongqing turned to cleaning up the mess and preventing epidemics. Sichuan disaster officials reported the toll had reached 102 dead and 25 missing. In neighbouring Chongqing, the death toll had risen to 75 and 25 were missing,

the official Xinhua news agency said. Most of the deaths were caused by mudslides and flash floods sweeping through mountain valleys after five days of heavy rains beginning last Thursday. The floodwaters destroyed more than 400,000 hectares (1 million acres) of cropland and caused damage estimated at more than 3.9 billion yuan (\$471 million). — Reuters.

HONG KONG

London, Sep 2 — General cargo *Shelly* arrived Hirohata Aug 24 and sailed Sep 1, bound for Keelung.

HURRICANE “FRANCES”

London, Sep 2 — A press report, dated today, states: More than a million people threatened by Hurricane “Frances” were told to clear out today, and residents scrambled to board up homes and stock up on water ahead of what could be Florida’s mightiest storm in a decade. A hurricane warning covered much of the state’s eastern coast - about 300 miles from Florida City, near the state’s southern tip, to Flagler Beach, north of Daytona Beach. The warning meant hurricane-force winds of at least 74 mph were likely by midmorning tomorrow. Most of the residents who were told to leave were in South Florida - 300,000 in Palm Beach County, 250,000 in Broward County and 320,000 in Miami-Dade County. States of emergency were declared in Florida and Georgia. Supermarkets along Florida’s Atlantic coast were stripped of bottled water and canned goods. In the pre-dawn hours today, long lines formed outside home supply stores in Palm Beach County, with dozens of people hoping for a chance to buy plywood or generators. Demand for gas was so great some stations were pumped dry. As of 1100 hrs, “Frances” centre was 450 miles east-south-east of the lower Florida coast. It was moving west-north-west near 13 mph, and was expected to continue that course for 24 hours. In the Caribbean, the storm’s lashing winds tore tin roofs off houses and plucked trees from the ground as it plowed through the Turks and Caicos. The Bahamas’ prime minister warned that “Frances” could be the worst in the archipelago nation’s history. Florida may reverse lanes on some highways to handle the evacuation traffic, state Emergency Management Director Craig Fugate said. Many businesses along the Atlantic coast began closing yesterday, some not planning to reopen until Sunday at the earliest. Cape Canaveral’s Kennedy Space Centre shut down, leery of the havoc “Frances” could bring. Court trials were canceled in 10 counties, cruise lines kept their ships away and schools in nine counties were shuttered for today; another three planned to do the same tomorrow. In St. Lucie County, a curfew was to go in effect tomorrow night. To make matters worse, many rivers and lakes in the Carolinas and Virginia are already swollen with rains from a series of August storms. The most recent of those came Monday, when the remnants of Tropical Storm “Gaston” brought heavy rain and knocked down trees and power lines.

Miami, Sep 3 — Port Everglades will be closed today. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: A hurricane warning is in effect for the east coast of Florida from Florida City northward to Flagler Beach, including Lake Okeechobee. A hurricane warning also remains in effect for the central and northwestern Bahamas. A tropical storm warning and a hurricane watch are in effect for the middle and upper Florida Keys from south of Florida City southward to the Seven Mile Bridge, including Florida Bay. At 0200 EDT, the eye of hurricane "Frances" was located by reconnaissance aircraft and radar near lat 24.7N, long 75.7W or near the northern end of Cat Island. This is also about 310 miles east-south-east of the Florida lower east coast. "Frances" is moving toward the west-north-west near nine mph and a west-north-west to north-westward motion with some decrease in forward speed expected during the next 24 hours. On this track, the core of hurricane "Frances" will continue to move near or over the central Bahamas this morning and over the northwestern Bahamas later today. Reports from an air force reserve hurricane hunter aircraft indicate maximum sustained winds are now near 120 mph with higher gusts. Hurricane force winds extend outward up to 80 miles from the centre, and tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 185 miles. The latest minimum central pressure reported by the hurricane hunter is 954 mb, 28.17 inches. Storm surge flooding of six to 14 feet above normal tide levels along with large and dangerous battering waves can be expected near the eye of "Frances" on the west side of Eleuthera Island and on the north side of Grand Bahama Island. Storm surge flooding of four to six feet above normal tide levels can be expected on the west side of the other islands of the Bahamas. Coastal storm surge flooding of six to 11 feet above normal tide levels, along with large and dangerous battering waves, can be expected near and to the north of where the centre makes landfall in Florida. Rainfall amounts of seven to 12 inches, locally as high as 20 inches, are possible in association with "Frances". Swells generated by "Frances" will be affecting portions of the southeastern coast of the United States. These swells could cause dangerous surf and rip currents.

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Dozens of UK flights to Florida and the Caribbean have been cancelled as hurricane "Frances" approaches the region. Orlando airport is closed and Miami routes badly disrupted as the hurricane heads towards Florida at up to 145mph. Virgin Atlantic has cancelled a total of 28 flights from today to Sunday (Sep 5), affecting about 9,000 passengers. Thomas Cook Airlines and British Airways have been forced to cancel nine flights from the UK to Florida and re-direct some Caribbean routes. Virgin has suspended its four daily routes to Orlando from Britain and the four daily flights back from the US after the

airport announced it will close over the weekend. The carrier has also cancelled its Heathrow to Miami routes today and tomorrow. A Virgin spokesman said: "It is our intention to carry passengers to their destination at the earliest opportunity, after the airport is reopened and the local infrastructure is safe. As things stand, we plan to continue to operate services to and from Miami airport but will review this if the airport authorities decide to also close that airport." Passengers in Orlando who were due to be flown back this weekend were being updated about the situation and would be able to stay on in their hotels, the spokesman added. Thomas Cook had been due to fly about 1,600 holidaymakers back this weekend and fly the same number out. Meanwhile, BA's twice daily Heathrow to Miami and once daily Gatwick to Orlando routes have been grounded today and tomorrow. Return flights from Florida have also been stopped, affecting an estimated 3,500 BA passengers. Its flight from Heathrow to Grand Cayman today will not stop at Nassau in the Bahamas. The airline said it was monitoring the situation.

London, Sep 3 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Hurricane "Frances" centre located near lat 24.9N, long 76.0W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-northwest or 300 degrees at 8 knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 954 mb. Maximum sustained winds 105 knots with gusts to 130 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 70 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 75 nautical miles south-west and north-west quadrants and 40 nautical miles south-west quadrant. Forecast position lat 25.7N, long 77.1W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 110 knots, gusts 135 knots. Forecast position lat 26.4N, long 78.3W at 0600, UTC, Sep 4. Maximum winds 115 knots, gusts 140 knots.

Freeport, Bahamas, Sep 3 — Understand that crude oil tanker *Nysa* (157814 gt, built 2000) has sustained machinery damages to an extent where it apparently could not sail from the BORCO oil terminal on completion of cargo operations. In the face of impending hurricane "Frances", Freeport Harbour company allowed the vessel to come in alongside one of the cruise ship docks inside Freeport Harbour. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated today, states: British airlines have cancelled dozens of flights to Florida as devastating Hurricane "Frances" bore down on the sunshine state. British Airways, Virgin Atlantic and Thomas Cook Airlines were among the UK carriers forced to axe flights as airports in Florida closed down. UK tour operators were in contact with an estimated 6,000 clients delayed from flying home from Florida. The holidaymakers were being updated on the situation while tour companies discussed plans to charter extra flights to get people home after the weekend. The 6,000 Britons due to fly out on package holidays to Florida this

weekend were being advised to contact their tour operator, travel agent or airline. British Airways said it had cancelled six return flights between London and Florida over the next two days. These include two Heathrow-Miami services today and two tomorrow, as well as one Gatwick-Orlando service today and one tomorrow. The airline said it was still hoping to operate its Gatwick-Tampa services today and tomorrow. BA also said that its flight from Heathrow to Grand Cayman today would not be stopping at Nassau in the Bahamas. Virgin Atlantic announced that a total of 28 flights had been cancelled today, tomorrow, and Sunday. Thomas Cook Airlines cancelled two UK-Orlando flights due to depart today and another UK-Orlando flight tomorrow. Thomson Holidays' airline, Britannia, also scrapped Florida flights. Britannia Airways said it had cancelled today's Birmingham-Orlando and Manchester-Orlando return flights as well as tomorrow's Manchester-Orlando and Gatwick-Orlando return services. The hurricane's arrival in Florida comes only three weeks after the devastation caused to the state by Hurricane Charley. Charley came in with 145mph winds, causing billions of pounds of damage and killing 27 people. Frances has already been recorded at 145mph and has forced hundreds from their homes in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane "Frances" pounded Florida relentlessly with high wind and heavy rain today after it smashed across the state's east coast, knocking out power to four million people and forcing residents to withstand a prolonged lashing that shredded roofs and uprooted trees. At dawn, the storm had weakened, with maximum sustained winds near 95 mph, making it a Category One hurricane, but forecasters warned the storm track would bring the centre of the hurricane back over the warm water of the northeastern Gulf of Mexico. They said it was possible "Frances" would regain intensity by tomorrow evening. The eye of the storm blew ashore at Sewall's Point, just east of Stuart, around 0100 hrs. "Frances" was expected to remain over the state for most of the day, dumping eight to 12 inches of rain, with up to 20 inches in some areas. "Frances" was so big that virtually the entire state feared damage from wind and heavy rain. About 230 miles of coastline from the Deerfield Beach area northward to Flagler Beach remained under a hurricane warning as dawn approached today. The largest evacuation in state history, with 2.8 million residents ordered inland, sent 86,000 residents and tourists into shelters. Miami-Dade County told about 320,000 residents they could return home today. The storm shut down much of Florida, including airports and amusement parks, at the start of the usually busy Labor Day weekend. President Bush declared a major disaster in the counties affected by "France", meaning residents will be eligible for federal aid. Four people

were hospitalized in Boynton Beach after breathing carbon monoxide fumes from a generator that was running in a house. No other injuries were immediately reported. Before moving into Florida, "Frances" shattered windows, toppled power lines and flooded neighbourhoods in the Bahamas, forcing thousands from their homes. The Freeport airport was partially submerged in water. At least two deaths in the Bahamas were blamed on the storm. In Palm Bay, winds pried off pieces of a banquet hall roof, striking some cars in the parking lot. Trees were bent and light posts wobbled in the howling gusts. Further south in Fort Pierce, the storm shredded awnings and blew out business signs. Many downtown streets were crisscrossed with toppled palm trees. In Stuart, where the eye came ashore, traffic lights dangled, and one hung by a single wire. Downed trees blocked at least one residential street, and signposts were bent to the ground. The facade of a flooring store collapsed, as did the roof of a storage shed at a car dealership. In Melbourne, 65 miles north of Stuart, the wind and rain looked like a giant fire hose going off at full blast. Roads, streets and beaches were mostly deserted. Roads were littered with palm fronds and other debris. Businesses were shuttered and even petrol stations were closed, their empty pumps covered with shrink wrap. At 0800 hrs, the centre of the hurricane was about 40 miles east of Sebring, which is 70 miles southeast of Tampa. The storm was crawling west at eight mph. Sustained winds were about 95 mph, down from 105 mph when it made landfall. The National Hurricane Center said one gust was registered at 115 mph at Fort Pierce. Florida Power & Light pulled crews off the streets because of heavy wind, meaning the four million customers without power would have to wait until the storm subsided, spokesman Bill Swank said. Nearly all of Vero Beach, 30 miles north of Stuart, was blackened, the city's utility said. Forecasters said the slow movement and large eye would mean several hours of calm for some locations after they were battered by the strongest winds.

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated today, states: British Airways is planning to resume flights to Florida tomorrow after a weekend of disruption caused by Hurricane "Frances." The airline had axed 12 flights in three days, with six being cancelled today. But while services to Orlando will remain grounded, routes to Miami and Tampa are expected to re-open. An estimated 6,000 British tourists are stranded in the US because of closed airports. Another 6,000 people have been unable to travel from the UK to Florida. Other airlines, including Virgin Atlantic, which cancelled 28 flights over the weekend, have been affected. A BA spokesman said it is hoped two return flights to Miami from Heathrow will run tomorrow. A return flight to Tampa, which was postponed today, is expected to leave Gatwick. But it is thought that a return flight to Orlando from Gatwick

will remain grounded. Hurricane "Frances" is currently hammering Florida's east coast, bringing 100 mph winds and torrential rain. Power lines have been torn down, leaving up to two million people without electricity. Houses have been damaged and trees uprooted. The storm is set to peak later today. BA passengers stranded in Florida had been told that they could fly to the UK at no extra cost if they could reach another major eastern US airport. But the airline has not paid to put people up in accommodation until services resume as the hurricane is "an act of God" and not a fault of the airline. However, many passengers will be able to reclaim expenses on their travel insurance and some were moved on to earlier flights before airports closed. Customers are still being urged to check before heading off to the airport to see if their flight will run. Forecasters say the storm has weakened but it could yet strengthen again after sweeping through the Bahamas, killing two people.

Cocoa, Florida, Sep 5 — Storm-weary Floridians emerged from east coast hurricane shelters today as hurricane "Frances" moved to the state's west coast after tearing off roofs, washing sailboats ashore and cutting power to four million people. The hurricane virtually shut down the fourth-largest US state, home to 16 million people, for two days and promised damage not only to buildings but to the state's economy on the usually busy Labour Day weekend, normally an end-of-summer bonanza for Florida's \$53 billion tourism industry. The state's largest population centre and big Latin American business hub, Miami, escaped the worst of the storm but the impact on Orlando, the main tourist playground, was uncertain as the hurricane lumbered across central Florida. The \$9.1 billion citrus industry, badly damaged by hurricane "Charley" three weeks ago, was likely to take another hard blow as the storm moved across the state's best growing regions today. Even as the large and slow-moving storm, from which 2.5 million people had been urged to flee, edged toward Tampa on the west coast, residents of east coast towns emerged from their hurricane cocoons to survey the damage. In St. Lucie County, where the eye of the storm came ashore, National Guard troops patrolled to deter looters and enforce a 24-hour curfew. Police and fire crews moved out into streets where "Frances" ripped off roofs, peeled away aluminium siding, tore boats from moorings, felled trees and shattered street signs and traffic signals. In Fort Pierce, sailboats washed into parking lots. "There's damage but not total destruction," said county emergency management spokeswoman Linette Trabulsi. "Parts of roofs are gone. Trees are down, big trees that you wouldn't expect to be snapped in half. It could have been a lot worse." A sinkhole opened up on Interstate 95, the region's main traffic artery, in Palm Beach County. "Frances" was weakening, with top sustained winds of 75 mph, down from 105 mph yesterday. However,

because it was lingering so long it increased the risk of flooding. State emergency managers said there were no confirmed reports of storm-related deaths. At 1400 hrs (1800, UTC), the centre of the storm was about 55 miles east of Tampa, the US National Hurricane Centre reported. It was moving west-north-west at nine mph and was expected to move into the Gulf of Mexico by late today or early tomorrow. A weakened "Frances" was expected to hit the Florida Panhandle tomorrow. The hurricane hit hardest along a 150-mile stretch of Florida's east coast from Palm Beach, to Titusville and the Space Coast, home to NASA's space shuttle fleet. Much of the state remained shut down today. Many airports were closed and big shopping malls and Disney World theme parks were shut. The only relief for hoteliers on the holiday weekend was the influx of tens of thousands of storm evacuees. Business activity ground to a halt on one of the four long weekends retailers count on for big sales. Wal-Mart Stores Inc had closed 59 stores by Friday (Sep 3). Lowe's Cos, the home improvement chain, had 44 stores closed today. However, flights resumed at Miami International Airport, the 20th busiest airport in the world, and some restaurants in Miami Beach opened. Florida Governor Jeb Bush said up to 1.9 million customers were without power. Power companies say a customer averages out at two people, meaning nearly four million people, or a quarter of the state's population, had no electricity. More than 85,000 people were housed in shelters. Federal Emergency Management Agency director Michael Brown said federal authorities were prepared for a huge relief effort. "We're moving right behind 'Frances'," he said. "Frances" could cause between \$2 billion and \$10 billion in insured losses, industry group Risk Management Solutions said. — Reuters.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 5, states: Bahamians emerged today from 48 hours of roaring winds and severe flooding to witness the destruction left by hurricane "Frances": wrecked homes and collapsed roofs, yards littered with mangled trees. The hurricane left at least two people dead and one missing, and officials said they feared the death toll could rise. The northern island of Grand Bahama appeared particularly hard-hit, with several neighbourhoods flooded, fallen trees blocking roads and severed power lines hidden amid debris. The hurricane stalled over Grand Bahama Island and caused widespread damage yesterday. It remained unclear how many homes were flooded in the Bahamas, but officials said they estimated that scores, perhaps hundreds, of homes were damaged on Grand Bahama Island alone. One man was found dead yesterday on the western end of Grand Bahama, police Superintendent Basil Rahming said. Police believed the man was trying to swim to safety. Another man was electrocuted on Friday (Sep 3) while trying to fill a generator with diesel fuel as the storm raged. Police said they feared a third man in his 80s

was probably killed in his wooden house when it collapsed yesterday near the western tip of Grand Bahama. His body had yet to be found. At least five people on the island sustained minor injuries during the storm, said Sharon Williams, the administrator of Rand Memorial Hospital. Power remained out in spots across the Bahamas, including Freeport, the Bahamas' second-largest commercial centre, where the brunt of the storm hit yesterday with sustained winds of up to 105 mph. More than 1,000 people rode out the storm in shelters. Parts of Grand Bahama Airport remained flooded, and electricity was out on the island of 50,000 people. Police said about a dozen businesses reported break-ins, and some residents said they feared looting.

London, Sep 6 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Hurricane "Frances", downgraded to tropical storm centre located near lat 28.7N, long 83.5W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-northwest or 300 degrees at 10 knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 981 mb. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots with gusts to 65 knots. Forecast position lat 29.9N, long 84.8W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 65 knots, gusts 80 knots. Forecast position lat 31.2N, long 85.5W at 0600, UTC, Sep 7. Maximum winds 40 knots, gusts 50 knots.

Tallahassee, Fla., Sep 6 — Tropical Storm "Frances" hit Florida for a second time today, weaker but still bearing torrential rains and high winds as it crossed from the Gulf of Mexico onto the northwestern Panhandle. "Frances" initially crossed the Florida peninsula into the warm Gulf of Mexico then made a second strike at the coastline. At 1400 hrs, the centre was moving ashore on the Florida Panhandle near the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge in Apalachee Bay, the U.S. National Hurricane Center reported. The storm was moving north-northwest at about eight mph and its 65-mph winds were expected to weaken quickly as it moved into Alabama and Georgia. Fresh evacuation orders were out for those in low-lying coastal areas on the Panhandle, and forecasters warned the storm could spin off tornadoes and dump 10 inches of rain as it moved through the southeastern United States. An insurance industry group, Risk Management Solutions, estimated "Frances" has caused between \$3 billion and \$6 billion of insured losses. About 3.3 million customers were without electricity this morning as winds toppled trees and downed power lines in 53 of Florida's 67 counties. The massive number of outages that we have will have us probably working up to two weeks to restore services," said Colleen Castille, secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Some 90,000 people were in shelters. Trucks of ice, water and prepackaged meals poured in to the state. "Frances" hit hardest along a 150-mile stretch of Florida's east coast, including the home of NASA's space

shuttle fleet. It peeled away aluminum siding, tore boats from moorings, felled trees and shattered traffic signals. By this morning, heavy rains and strong winds from the back of Frances pounded the heavily populated Tampa and St. Petersburg areas on Florida's west coast. Major bridges were closed and residents were urged to stay indoors. Populous Miami, Florida's business hub, escaped the worst of "Frances". Orlando's Disney World tourist playground reported little damage and reopened some parks today. Florida's \$9.1 billion citrus industry, hard hit by hurricane "Charley" last month, was likely to sustain another blow. — Reuters.

London, Sep 7 — Ports on the US Gulf Coast are recovering after Hurricane "Frances" struck yesterday (Sep 6). Port Canaveral suffered severe shoaling and displacement of marker buoys as a result of the hurricane. It is likely to remain closed for three-to-five days, in addition to possible extended delays in order to fully dredge the entrance channel. Tampa is currently closed, but is expected to open to traffic at about 0900, local time, today. West Palm Beach is currently not available, but an update of its status is expected today. Jacksonville is currently closed to all traffic, but may re-open this afternoon. Miami and Port Everglades are now fully operational. The ports of Wilmington, Charleston and Savannah are also open to all vessel traffic.

Miami, Sep 7 — Floridians have begun mopping up and counting the cost of hurricane "Frances" path through the state and thousands of people have joined long lines for ice, water and fuel. Power outages still affected 2.5 million customers today, or around five million people — a little less than a third of the state's total population — and topped a list of concerns as tanker-loads of gasoline arrived but could not be pumped because there was no electricity at many gas stations. More than 4,900 National Guard troops were deployed or were on standby as they prepared to shift from providing security in areas covered by night-time curfews to distributing humanitarian aid, state officials said. Ice to help people cool down without air conditioning in Florida's subtropical summer heat was also a priority. "Right now our main priority is life safety and getting water and ice to people. Once we get that under control then we'll start looking at the long-term issue of recovery," said Joan Heller, a spokeswoman for Brevard County, one of the hardest hit areas on Florida's Atlantic coast. Heller said distribution centres for water and ice had yet to open, but people were already waiting in line. "Frances", which at one point last week reached Category 4 strength with 145 mph winds as it bore down on the Florida peninsula, petered out over Georgia and Alabama last night after dousing the Florida Panhandle. It killed at least five people — two in the Bahamas and three in Florida — and smashed boats, tore roofs off houses, ripped away car ports, tiles and patios, snapped trees and downed power lines

across the state. There were also four traffic-related deaths in Georgia blamed on the hurricane, officials said. Florida's chief financial officer, Tom Gallagher, said today that initial estimates of the insured damage from "Frances" ranged from \$2 billion to \$4 billion. That was less than the \$7.4 billion in insured damages caused by the smaller but more powerful hurricane "Charley" after it came ashore on Aug 13 on Florida's south-west coast. However, Florida Agriculture Commissioner Charlie Bronson said "Frances" may have done more harm to the state's \$9.1 billion citrus industry than "Charley", which caused at least \$150 million in damages after uprooting trees and knocking down fruit. "We think there are going to be serious losses to the fresh fruit industry. The amount of fruit on the ground in some places is even greater than it was with 'Charley' in the west," Bronson said. The storm shut down large areas of the state over the three-day Labour Day holiday that is normally a busy shopping and travel weekend. More than 200 shelters remained open, providing housing for about 40,000 victims, including 5,000 with special needs. President George W. Bush asked Congress to approve \$2 billion in emergency aid for the state, and announced he would visit Florida on Wednesday. — Reuters.

Nassau, Sep 9 — Freeport, Grand Bahama is completely without communication and water. They will up and running in about five weeks with light. The essential areas such as hospital, work places, police and other essential areas are been worked on first. Water is 80% back on the entire island. Hundreds of persons are without homes. Domestic Airport complete damaged. Small settlements/towns completely devastated. No vessels have been in our port since Sep 3. Schedule of vessels are expected to resume regular service today. — Lloyd's Agents.

Freeport, Bahamas, Sep 8 — Freeport is starting to emerge from the devastation caused by hurricane "Frances." Property damages are significant with some marine related concerns. Oil terminals (BORCO and SRPH): All offshore jetties are extensively damaged with a large percentage of observable structures missing altogether. No information with regards to the potential for oil spills yet available and no oil spills reported. Crude oil tanker *Nysa* (157814 gt, built 2000) broke adrift at the height of the storm and drifted across the harbour, reportedly sinking a small tug in the process. No reports of injuries. The tanker effectively blocked the entire harbour for several days whilst the storm was in the area but has now been returned to its berth. Passenger *Red Boat* (32753 gt, built 1966) broke adrift during the storm and was blown across the harbour, contacting the container terminal. It also reportedly sank a small inter-island ro-ro vessel in the process. No reports of injuries. The vessel has now been returned to its normal berth. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated Sep 8, states: The remnants of

hurricane "Frances" poured drenching rain today from the Carolinas to the Great Lakes, causing flooding and mudslides in the central Appalachians and snarling the morning commuter rush in the Northeast. Mountainous western North Carolina was hardest hit. Just over 11 inches of rain fell at Rich Mountain, and nearly 10.5 inches at Highlands, the National Weather Service said. Rescuers were busy during the night pulling stranded people from rising water but no deaths or serious injuries were reported. Rainfall at Walhalla, South Carolina, measured nearly 9.5 inches over 30 hours. Heavy rain also fell in eastern sections of Tennessee and Kentucky, most of West Virginia and Virginia, and large parts of Maryland, Ohio and south-western Pennsylvania. More than eight inches of rain was reported in southern and western Virginia, and street flooding and power outages were reported in the southern city of Martinsville. Virginia Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency. "Streets are closing, small creeks are rising — things are just beginning to happen," said Bob Spieldenner of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. "They're still getting heavy rain." About 100 roads in western North Carolina were shut down, said Patty McQuillan, spokeswoman for the state Department of Crime Control and Public Safety. A rockslide blocked two of the four lanes on a stretch of Interstate 40 east of Asheville, she said. The Swannanoa River washed out roads and bridges, preventing safety workers from reaching the worst of the damage during the night. Flooding from the Swannanoa also blocked roads to the Biltmore Estate, the popular tourist destination near Asheville. Seventy families were evacuated from flood-prone areas along the Tuckasegee River, Jackson County Sheriff Jimmy Ashe said. In southern Virginia, about 25 families were evacuated from a mobile home park in Galax. North Carolina Governor Mike Easley declared a state of emergency yesterday and said 140 National Guard soldiers were sent to help out in the western part of the state. The Highway Patrol put 900 troopers on alert. As far north as New York City, the circulation around "Frances" was to blame for more than three inches of rain that swamped commuters during the morning rush hour, said National Weather Service meteorologist Ralph Izzo. Streets and pedestrian crosswalks were flooded all over the city, some commuter trains and subway lines shut down, and incoming airline flights were delayed up to 90 minutes. Extensive street flooding was reported in northern New Jersey, with numerous highway and local road closures, and firefighters rescued several motorists whose vehicles stalled in rising water. Heavy rain is likely in the area through Friday evening (Sep 10), forecasters said. Authorities in Georgia reported 180,000 customers remained without power today because of "Frances", which moved through the state yesterday.

London, Sep 9 — Following received from the Singapore based operators of crude oil tanker *Nysa*, dated today: Crude oil tanker *Nysa* did not sink a tug. The tug in question actually broke adrift from another location in the harbour and hit *Nysa* before coming to rest on the dock wall. *Nysa*, after breaking its stern moorings, the headlines remained fast, was ballasted down to keep it on the bottom until the storm had passed and assistance to reberth alongside was available. While the comment "effectively blocked the entire harbour for several days" may be technically accurate, it should be noted that the harbour was not in use and the vessel was deliberately held in that position as it was the safest option.

HURRICANE "HOWARD"

London, Sep 3 — Following received from Meteorological Office, dated today, states: Hurricane "Howard" centre located near lat 19.4N, long 115.2W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 25 nautical miles. Present movement toward the north-west or 310 degrees at 7 knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 955 mb. Maximum sustained winds 105 knots with gusts to 130 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 20 nautical miles all quadrants. Forecast position lat 20.1N, long 116.0W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 95 knots, gusts 115 knots. Forecast position lat 21.3N long 116.9W at 0600, UTC Sep 4. Maximum winds 85 knots, gusts 105 knots.

HURRICANE "IVAN"

London, Sep 5 — AQ press report, dated today, states: Hurricane "Ivan" formed today in the central Atlantic. The fifth hurricane of the season was about 1,210 miles east-southeast of the Lesser Antilles with winds of 75 mph.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Rapidly strengthening Hurricane "Ivan" churned closer to the Caribbean, packing sustained winds of 135 mph with meteorologists saying it's possible that the system could reach Category 5 status. Barbados has issued a hurricane watch for the entire island while a tropical storm watch has been issued for Grenada. "It could make a direct hit in Barbados," said Eric Blake, a meteorologist at the National Hurricane Center in Miami. The Category 4 storm was near lat 10.7N, long 50.6W, about 625 miles east-southeast of Barbados at 0200 hrs, the centre said. The hurricane is due to reach the island of 280,000 residents by tomorrow and was expected to keep strengthening, with hundreds of miles of warm water before the nearest land.

London, Sep 6 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Hurricane "Ivan" centre located near lat 10.8N, long 51.6W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west or 275 degrees at 20 knots. Maximum sustained winds 110 knots with gusts to 130 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 30 nautical miles all quadrants. Forecast position lat 11.6N, long 54.3W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 115 knots, gusts 140

knots. Forecast position lat 12.3N, long 57.5W at 0600, UTC, Sep 7. Maximum winds 120 knots, gusts 145 knots.

Miami, Sep 6 — Powerful Hurricane "Ivan" rushed over the Atlantic Ocean today and threatened the eastern Caribbean Windward Islands. "Ivan", the ninth tropical cyclone of the Atlantic hurricane season and the fourth major hurricane, had 125 mph winds and could gain more strength, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said. Warnings and watches were issued for Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and Martinique, alerting residents to expect hurricane and tropical storm conditions in 24 to 36 hours. At 1100 hrs (1500, UTC), the centre of "Ivan" was 435 miles east-southeast of Barbados at lat 11.2N, long 53.4W, the hurricane center said. It was racing west at around 22 mph. The hurricane center's long-range forecast, which has a large margin of error, had the storm crossing the Lesser Antilles near Barbados tomorrow and hitting Hispaniola, the island shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti, on Thursday (Sep 9). Forecasters said "Ivan" was the strongest cyclone to develop at such a low latitude in recorded Atlantic hurricane history. — Reuters.

Barbados, Sep 6 — Hurricane "Ivan" should probably pass about 30 miles south of Barbados tomorrow the morning. In addition, it looks like a Hurricane Hunter aircraft went on a reconnaissance mission into the storm, as the estimates for wind speed and pressure in way of the eye have been revised down and up respectively. "Ivan" has been downgraded to Category 2 which is good - Maximum wind is immediately around the eye 95 knots, gusting 115, with winds of 64 knots 60 miles north of the eye. Estimated position of the eye at 0300 GMT was lat 11.2N, long 57.2W at 0300, GMT. Wind has been slowly increasing this evening, and is probably about 20 knots gusting 30 at the moment, no sign of any thunder storms. "Ivan" is far south and heading west instead of north-west, then this means that both Tobago and Grenada are probably going to get more of the hurricane than us - and even Trinidad is probably going to get some wind and rain as well. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 7 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Hurricane "Ivan" centre located near lat 11.4, long 58.5W 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west or 280 degrees at 16 knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 965 mb. Eye diameter 20 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 95 knots with gusts to 115 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 60 nautical miles north-east and north-west quadrants and 15 nautical miles for south-east and south-west quadrants. Forecast position lat 12.0N, long 61.2W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 105 knots, gusts 130 knots. Forecast position lat 13.0N, long 64.5W at 0800, UTC, Sep 8. Maximum winds 110 knots, gusts 135 knots.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Hurricane “Ivan” blew off roofs and tore down trees today in Barbados as it churned toward Tobago and Grenada, where hundreds sought shelter just days after “Frances” swept through the Caribbean. “Ivan” raced toward the Windward Islands with sustained winds of 115 mph, making it a Category 3. Forecasters said the storm could become a Category 4 late today. A hurricane warning was issued for St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and its dependencies. A hurricane watch was in effect in Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao. A tropical storm warning was in effect for Martinique, St. Lucia and Barbados, where the island’s 280,000 residents had prepared for the worst. “We are very lucky,” said Chester Layne, the chief meteorological officer for the Barbados government. “Had we been impacted by the main core of “Ivan” it could have been catastrophic.” More than 550 people were in seven shelters in Tobago, the smaller island belonging to Trinidad and Tobago, authorities said. “Ivan’s” centre was expected to pass north of Tobago, where hurricane force winds would be felt later today. Schools, government offices and most private businesses were closed in Trinidad and Tobago and in Grenada today. Airports in Barbados, Tobago and Grenada were also closed. “It may directly hit Grenada or one of the Grenadines,” said Jennifer Pralgo, a meteorologist at the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Authorities evacuated a low-lying neighbourhood of several hundred people in the Grenadian capital of St. George’s for fear of flooding. Barbados felt hurricane-force gusts up to 90 mph this morning, the weather centre said. The whipping winds sent palm trees tumbling. Several islanders called radio stations to report that winds ripped off their roofs completely and others said they had minor roof damage. No injuries have been reported. Half of the roof of the temporary structure housing the retired British Airways Concorde jet blew off, authorities said. There was no reported damage to the aircraft, which was donated to Barbados in November. Barbadian authorities shut down electricity island-wide to prevent electrocution after fallen trees brought down power lines. Skies were dark, but there had been very little rain. At 1100, EDT, the hurricane’s centre was about 45 miles north-east of Tobago. It was moving west near 18 mph and was expected to turn gradually toward the west-northwest later today. It’s too early to say if “Ivan” could threaten Florida, meteorologists said. St. Lucia’s Agriculture Minister Ignatius Jean said yesterday he was worried about the storm’s possible effects on the region’s banana industry, which has struggled to deal with a 50 percent decline in production in the past decade due to both droughts and hurricanes.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Packing ferocious winds, hurricane “Ivan” made a direct hit on Grenada today, blasting apart scores of homes and hurling hundreds of the

island’s landmark red zinc roofs through the air. The storm also damaged homes in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and appeared set to cross the Caribbean Sea and bear down on Jamaica by Thursday (Sep 9). In Grenada, winds raged through the hilly streets of St. George’s, the capital, demolishing concrete homes and uprooting trees and utility poles, knocking out telephone service and electricity. Transmission was halted from the Grenada Broadcast Network, whose building sustained major damage. Several hundred people had been evacuated from low-lying areas of St. George’s. ChevronTexaco said it evacuated nonessential staff from a natural gas well off Venezuela’s Atlantic coast. There were no reports of injuries in Grenada, but emergency officials could not be reached. Their office building, the 19th century Great House at Mount Wheldale in the capital, sustained roof damage and its verandah completely collapsed. “Grenada felt the full brunt of this storm,” said Chris Hennon, a meteorologist at the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami. More than 1,000 people rushed to shelters. The hurricane’s sustained winds were clocked at 120 mph today as moved through the Windward Islands and forecasters said it could reach Category 4 strength by late today, with winds of more than 131 mph. At 1700, EDT, the hurricane’s centre was over Grenada and it was moving west at nearly 18 mph. Hurricane-force winds extended up to 70 miles from the centre and tropical storm-force winds another 160 miles. The storm caused battering waves and the Hurricane Center warned of possible storm flooding of 3-5 feet above normal with five to seven inches of rain that could cause flash floods and mudslides. Earlier today, “Ivan” damaged at least 176 homes in Barbados, which was buffeted by gusts up to 90 mph, officials said. The Atlantis Hotel and Ocean Spray Hotel, just outside Bridgetown, the capital, lost part of their roofs. In neighbouring St. Vincent and the Grenadines, about 600 people sought shelter and at least 45 houses were damaged, officials said. Half a dozen houses in St. Lucia lost roofs. Two people there fell while helping neighbours repair roofs and were hospitalised, officials said. In Tobago nearly 600 people were in shelters and two high schools lost roofs. Airports, schools, government offices and most private businesses were closed on affected islands. A hurricane warning remained in effect for Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. A hurricane watch was posted for the Dutch Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao. Tobago, Martinique, St. Lucia and Barbados were all under tropical storm warning. In Barbados, winds whipped away half the roof of the temporary structure housing the retired British Airways Concorde jet donated to Barbados in November, authorities said. The aircraft was not damaged, they said.

London, Sep 8 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Hurricane “Ivan” centre located

near lat 12.4N, long 64.8W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west or 280 degrees at 14 knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 946 mb. Eye diameter 20 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 120 knots with gusts to 145 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 60 nautical miles north-east and north-west quadrant, 20 nautical miles south-east and south-west quadrants. Forecast position near 13.1N, long 67.2W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 120 knots, gusts 145 knots. Forecast position lat 14.2N, long 70.1W at 0600, UTC, Sep 9. Maximum winds 125 knots, gusts 155 knots.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Three deaths in Grenada are being blamed on hurricane “Ivan” after the powerful storm swept across the Caribbean island nation devastating its capital, St. George’s, according to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA). The eye of the storm moved over Grenada early yesterday, with maximum sustained winds of 120 mph — a Category 3 storm. It has since intensified into a Category 4 hurricane and is heading westwards across the Caribbean Sea towards Jamaica. The hurricane destroyed the residence of Grenada’s prime minister, Dr Keith Mitchell, CDERA reported. Donovan Gentles, CDERA’s Preparedness And Response Manager, said the agency had lost contact with Grenada’s emergency operations centre and did not have any details on the deaths. The Caribbean Disaster Response Unit is deploying restoration teams to Grenada and power utility restoration teams from Belize, Turks and Caicos, Cayman Islands and Antigua will also head to the devastated island. CDERA also reported that HMS *Richmond*, the British Naval patrol vessel, is on stand-by to respond immediately to any emergencies in Grenada. The storm also damaged homes in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. “Grenada felt the full brunt of this storm,” said Chris Hennon, a meteorologist at the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami. “The eye was split in half over the island with the northern part in the eye wall, the most dangerous part,” he said. Earlier yesterday, “Ivan” damaged at least 176 homes in Barbados, which was buffeted by gusts up to 90 mph as it passed south of the island, according to relief director Judy Thomas and meteorologists. In neighbouring St. Vincent and the Grenadines, about 600 people sought shelter and at least 45 houses were damaged, officials said. Half a dozen houses in St. Lucia lost roofs. Two people there fell while helping neighbours repair roofs and were hospitalised, officials said. In Tobago, nearly 600 people were in shelters and two high schools lost roofs. Airports, schools, government offices and most private businesses were closed on affected islands. Unlike the Bahamas and the British territory of the Turks and Caicos, where Frances

blew off roofs and snapped trees in half, many of the Windward islands are poorer, with old wooden structures in flood-prone areas.

Barbados, Sep 8 — Some houses lost their roofs on Barbados due hurricane "Ivan" and various power/telephone lines came down. All vessels were required to leave the harbour; some of the buildings in the harbour sustained some damage but this was not severe. There were no reports of any marine casualties here, other than one yacht which was washed ashore on the beach in Carlisle Bay. "Ivan" is now heading for the Netherlands Antilles. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated Sep 8, states: Grenada's leader said today that at least nine people had died as a result of hurricane "Ivan" and incalculable damage had been done to the island in a direct hit that collapsed concrete homes into rubble and hurled landmark red zinc roofs through the air. "We are terribly devastated here in Grenada," Prime Minister Keith Mitchell said in comments broadcast today by radio stations in Barbados. "It's beyond any imagination." The most powerful storm to hit the Caribbean in 14 years reportedly destroyed numerous buildings in Grenada's capital, St. George's, yesterday and also damaged homes in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. Thousands were without water, electricity and telephone service. Mitchell said he feared the death toll would rise. "If you see the country today, it would be a surprise to anyone that we did not have more deaths than it appears at the moment," he said. "So, it is extremely tough on us." Mitchell, whose own home was destroyed, spoke from on board the British naval patrol vessel *Richmond*, apparently by satellite telephone. "I don't think anyone expected the kind of damage that they saw," he said. There were reports of sporadic looting in St. George's, a British Royal Navy spokesman said, speaking from London. *Richmond* and a British supply vessel were providing disaster relief to the former colony, he said.

Barbados, Sep 8 — Wind gradually picked up during the night, was blowing a fair bit this morning, but fortunately the eye of "Ivan" was still more than 60 miles south of here, hence we were getting about 70 knots in the gusts. "Ivan" was travelling fairly quickly, about 20 knots to the west, so by this afternoon the winds had eased off a bit, they had started from the north-east, and gradually veered round to the south-east, and south as the system went by. TV news this evening at 1900 said that there was various damages, mostly in the south of the island, where the wind would have been strongest, roofs gone, trees uprooted, a few power lines down, but generally not too bad. I doubt that many boats have been damaged, as many were able to go to the new Port St. Charles marina north of Speightstown, and many fishing boats were pulled up around the island yesterday. We were fortunate that Ivan stayed so far south, however this means that his eye has just gone right over

Grenada, and radio reports indicate that they have a lot of damages there, and 7 people already reported missing. Grenada is just south of 12N, the arbitrary line established by marine insurance companies re hurricanes, boats have to be below 12N, otherwise insurance isn't valid in the summer, hence the yards there are full of yachts being stored ashore for the summer. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 9 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Hurricane "Ivan" centre located near lat 13.9N, long 70.0W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 15 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-northwest or 290 degrees at 13 knots. Eye diameter 10 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 140 knots with gusts to 170 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 50 nautical miles north-east and north-west quadrants, 25 nautical miles south-east and south-west quadrants. Forecast position lat 14.8N, long 72.0W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 140 knots, gusts 170 knots. Forecast position lat 16.2N, long 74.3W at 0600, UTC, Sep 10. Maximum winds 135 knots, gusts 165 knots.

NYSA (Singapore)

See "Hurricane "Frances" / Nysa (Singapore)" under "Weather & Navigation".

RED BOAT (North Korea)

See "Hurricane "Frances" / Nysa (Singapore)" under "Weather & Navigation".

SLOVENIA

London, Sep 6 — The July floods in the Kosice and Presov regions caused damages of almost Sk1 billion, announced Environment Minister L-szlŰ Miklos at a press conference on August 30. The sum, however, does not include damages to agricultural land and forests. The ministry should submit a final report by September 15. Individuals and organisations would probably receive compensation payments in the second half of October, the SITA news agency wrote. The ministry is also trying to get resources for anti-flood measures from EU funds.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "PHOEBE"

London, Sep 3 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical cyclone "Phoebe" near lat 10.3S, long 92.0E, at 0000, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 165 degrees at 7 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles. Position based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots, gusts 70 knots. Forecast position lat 11.4S, long 91.9E at 0000, UTC, Sep 4. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "ISIS"

London, Sep 9 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Isis" centre located near lat 16.7N, long 113.1W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate

within 40 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-northwest or 295 degrees at 9 knots. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots with gusts to 55 knots. Forecast position lat 17.3N, long 114.3W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 50 knots, gusts 60 knots. Forecast position lat 17.9N, long 116.3W at 0600, UTC, Sep 10. Maximum wind 55 knots, gusts 65 kt.

TROPICAL STORM "IVAN"

London, Sep 3 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Ivan" centre located near lat 10.0N, long 30.7W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 45 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west or 280 degrees at 14 knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 1005 mb. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots with gusts to 45 knots. Forecast position lat 10.1N, long 33.0W at 1800, UTC, today. maximum winds 40 knots, gusts 50 knots. Forecast position lat 10.3N, long 36.3W at 0600, UTC, Sep 4. Maximum winds 50 knots, gusts 40 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "SARIKA"

London, Sep 6 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Sarika" near lat 19.8N, long 141.2E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 285 degrees at 17 knots. Position accurate to within 040 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots, gusts 75 knots. Radius of 50 knot winds 15 nautica, miles all quadrants. Foprecast position lat 20.8N, long 139.1E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots, gusts 75 knots. Forecast position lat 22.6N, long 137.5E at 0600, UTC, Sep 7. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots, gusts 70 knots.

London, Sep 7 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Sarika" near lat 23.0N, long 137.9E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for past the six hours 330 degrees at 14 knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Position based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots. Forecast position lat 25.0N, long 136.8E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots, gusts 45 knots. Forecast position lat 26.9N, long 135.4E at 0600, UTC, Sep 8. Maximum sustained winds 30 knots, gusts 40 knots.

London, Sep 8 — Following received from the Meteorological office, dated today: Tropical storm "Sarika" downgraded from tropical storm to depression near lat 24.8N, long 137.7E at 1800, UTC, Sep 7. Movement for the past six hours 355 degrees at 9 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 30 knots, gusts 40 knots. Forecast position lat 27.1N, long 137.4E at 0600, UTC, Sep 8. Maximum sustained winds 25 knots, gusts 35 knots. Forecast position lat 29.6N, long 137.1E, 1800, UTC, Sep 8. Maximum sustained winds 20 knots, gusts 30 knots.

London, Sep 9 — Naval auxiliary *Yukon* (25742 gt, built 1993) grounded

while anchored in the harbour of Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, during the early hours of Sep 8. Heavy winds, with gusts to 45 knots, moved the vessel from its anchorage onto a soft mud bottom approximately 400 yards away at 0325 hrs. The Commander, Fleet Activities, Yokosuka Port Operations department immediately dispatched three U.S. Navy tugs to assist the vessel. There appeared to be no damage to the vessel, however, a thorough assessment will take place. *Yukon* was anchored in Yokosuka for evasion of Tropical Storm "Sarika" and recently completed a period of logistics support for the USS *Kitty Hawk* Oilers are manned by a crew of approximately 89 civilian mariners and six active-duty U.S. Navy personnel. A full investigation will be conducted.

TYPHOON "CHABA"

Moji, Sep 3 — General cargo *Vihan 5*: Three crew members are still missing and no further developments on the vessel reported. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Chaba" that hit Russia's Pacific Coast, has ruined six bridges in the island of Sakhalin on the road between the city of Aleksandrovsk-Sakhalinsky and the town of Tymovskoye. Traffic along the 60-km highway has been utterly disrupted. In the village of Voskhod, the Tymovskoye district, the local river has overflowed to flood 54 homes. Nine people had to be evacuated from the area. The Sakhalin civil defense and emergency situations department has said 20 vehicles — dump trucks, crane shovels, graders and bulldozers have been dispatched to repair the damaged bridges and the road between Aleksandrovsk-Sakhalinsky and Tymovskoye. It remains unclear, though, when it will reopen to traffic. In the village of Voskhod the floodwaters have begun to retreat. The evacuees are returning to their homes. (See issue of Sep 6.)

TYPHOON "SONGDA"

London, Sep 3 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Typhoon "Songda" near lat 22.3N, long 135.2E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 285 degrees at 11 knots. Position accurate to within 30 nautical miles. Position based on eye fixed by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 115 knots, gusts 140 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 40 nautical miles for all quadrants. Forecast position lat 22.8N, long 133.0E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 110 knots, gusts 135 knots. Forecast position lat 23.0N, long 130.9E at 0600, UTC, Sep 4. Maximum sustained winds 105 knots, gusts 130 knots.

Tokyo, Sep 5 — High winds and heavy rain lashed Japan's southernmost prefecture of Okinawa today, swamping buildings and stranding holidaymakers, as the third powerful typhoon in three weeks neared the country's coast. "Songda", which could be the strongest storm to hit Okinawa since records began in 1972, paralysed transport in the popular tourist destination, as most

flights and ferries in and out of the prefecture were cancelled. Waves engulfed coastal roads and buildings, television pictures showed. One man had been injured, Kyodo news agency reported. Up to 300 mm of rain is forecast to fall in some areas of southern Japan by tomorrow evening. It was unclear whether the centre of Songda would make landfall on one of Japan's four main islands, the Meteorological Office said. As of 0700, UTC, today, the centre of Songda was about 30 km east of the city of Nago, which is 1,600 km south-west of Tokyo, the Meteorological Agency said. The storm was packing winds of up to 160 kph. "Songda", moving northwest at 10 kph, is forecast to swerve northeast along the Japan Sea coast and will likely batter many areas that are still repairing damage from the previous two typhoons. A Taiwan weather official said "Songda" would miss Taiwan but it could still bring heavy rain to Taiwan's coastal areas and trigger mudslides. — Reuters.

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Songda" bypassed Taiwan and veered toward southern Japan today, but its fringes could bring heavy rain to Taipei, Taiwan, meteorologists said. The typhoon was located in the Pacific Ocean about 230 km south-east of Japan's southern island of Okinawa, moving north-west toward Japan's main islands at a speed of 13 km an hour, forecasters said. "Songda" was heading west toward Taiwan before it changed course and veered north early today with sustained winds of 175 kph, the Central Weather Bureau said. "Songda" fringes could bring heavy rain to north and eastern parts of Taiwan today and tomorrow, forecasters said, warning people in mountainous areas to watch out for flash floods and landslides.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 5, states: Typhoon "Songda", billed as the strongest to hit southern Japan in at least three decades, lashed Okinawa island with heavy rains and high winds today and headed toward Japan's main islands. Fifteen people were injured, a news report said. Flights to and from Okinawa, about 1,000 miles south-west of Tokyo, were cancelled while trains and buses halted service as the typhoon moved over the island, after abruptly veering from a course that would have taken it to Taiwan. Television footage showed waves crashing over protective embankments and flooding the streets of coastal Okinawan towns. The Meteorological Agency warned of high tides and said that seas around south-western Japan would get increasingly rough. Public broadcaster NHK reported fifteen people were injured as the storm dumped heavy rains and unleashed powerful winds across the area. By this evening, the typhoon had passed over central Okinawa and was moving north-west, the agency said. It was expected to reach Kyushu, one of Japan's main islands, by tomorrow evening, the agency added. Songda was the strongest typhoon to lash Okinawa

since the Meteorological Agency started keeping records for the prefecture in 1972, when the United States returned the island to Japanese control after occupying it after World War II. The Meteorological Agency said "Songda" was expected to pour 12 inches of rain on the Okinawan and the Amami islands within the next 24 hours. The typhoon had been heading west towards Taiwan before it changed course and veered north early today, Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau said. Taiwan could still experience heavy rain today and tomorrow, forecasters said, warning people in mountainous areas to watch out for flash floods and landslides.

London, Sep 6 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Typhoon "Songda" near lat 29.3N, long 126.9E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 355 degrees at 10 knots. Position accurate to within 20 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 95 knots, gusts 115 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 35 nautical miles for all quadrants. Forecast: position lat 31.2N, long 127.8E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 90 knots, gusts 110 knots. Forecast position lat 34.1N, long 130.1E at 0600, UTC, Sep 7. today. Maximum sustained winds 80 knots, gusts 100 knots.

Tokyo, Sep 6 — Japan's southernmost main island of Kyushu was bracing for torrential rain and high winds today, as the third typhoon in three weeks threatened the region. Typhoon "Songda" wreaked havoc in more southerly islands over the past two days, injuring 21 people in and near Okinawa, cutting electricity to about 30,000 households and forcing tourists to close. The typhoon stranded tourists in the popular holiday area as flights and ferries were cancelled. As of 1700 today, the storm, with winds of up to 144 kph, was 280 km north-west of Naze city on the tiny island of Amami Oshima, north of Okinawa, and was moving north at 15 kph, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. Idemitsu Kosan, Japan's third-biggest refiner, said it had stopped shipping and loading at its Okinawa supply and storage facility because of the storm. "Songda" was expected to pound parts of Kyushu and inch its way along Japan's west coast facing the Sea of Japan over the next three days, battering many areas damaged in the previous two typhoons. Parts of south-western Japan can expect up to 500 mm of rain by tomorrow morning, the agency said. The latest data indicated the centre of the typhoon might make landfall tomorrow near Shimonoseki, at the south-western tip of Japan's main island of Honshu, the agency said. — Reuters.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated Sep 6, states: A powerful typhoon in southern Japan caused landslides and floods, left tens of thousands without power, and injured at least 23 people today. Typhoon "Songda", packing winds of up to 90 mph, headed north-east towards Japan's southernmost main island of Kyushu, the Meteorological Agency said. Late today,

it was about 140 miles south-west of Nagasaki, or 715 miles south-west of Tokyo. The typhoon had pelted outlying islands in southern Okinawa and Kagoshima prefectures with as much as eight inches of rain in the past 24 hours, the agency said. As much as 24 inches of rain were expected by tomorrow in parts of Kyushu. Police said 23 people had been injured, including two women with broken bones. About 40,000 homes in Kagoshima and 22,700 homes in Okinawa were without electricity late today, according to Kyushu Electric Power Co and local officials. More than 780 primary and junior high schools in the region were temporarily closed and about 1,029 were expected to shut down tomorrow. More than 200 airline flights were cancelled, and ferry and train services were suspended in southern Japan, the Kyodo news agency said. More cancellations were expected tomorrow.

Yokohama, Sep 7 — General cargo *Tri Ardhianto* with 22 crew members on board ran aground in shallow waters and is sinking due to water ingress. The vessel is anchored off Kasado Island in Yamaguchi prefecture to take shelter from a typhoon and contacted Japan Coast Guard at 1000, today. The vessel has not been found while a lifeboat without any crew was found afloat at around 1130, today. Japan Coast Guard are still searching for the vessel and crew. There were reports of an oil spill, but not confirmed. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Tri Ardhianto* (6315 gt, built 1992) ran aground and its 22 crew men went missing in the stormy Seto Inland Sea this morning, the Japan Coast Guard said. A crew man of the 6,315-ton vessel the Coast Guard's Fukuoka office around 1010 hrs that all crewmen were abandoning the vessel that was forced by strong winds of an approaching typhoon to run aground in waters off Kudamatsu, Yamaguchi Prefecture.

London, Sep 7 — Powerful Typhoon "Songda" hampered coast guards in western Japan in their search for 18 missing Russian seamen whose general cargo *Blue Ocean* (3249 gt, built 1983) sank. All 18 Russian crew aboard the freighter were missing after it sank in the port of Mokuza in Hiroshima prefecture as the typhoon pounded the area, the coast guard said. "We are still searching for the crew members. We have an unconfirmed report that six of the 18 crew members were rescued but we cannot confirm the information," a coast guard official said. "Our efforts to search the ship and the crew have been hampered by the strong typhoon." "Songda", the seventh typhoon to strike Japan this season, hit the southern islands of Kyushu and Okinawa with winds of up to 144km/h, the meteorological agency said.

Tokyo, Sep 7 — A powerful typhoon and a moderate earthquake halted oil movements in and out of Japan's top oil refineries today, oil companies said. Nippon Oil Corp., Japan's biggest refiner, suspended tanker berthing at its Mizushima and Marifu refineries in

western Japan because of strong winds and high waves from Typhoon "Songda". The company also stopped trucking operations from Marifu, a Nippon Oil spokesman said. Crude oil refining at the 127,000-barrels-per-day (bpd) Marifu and the 250,000 bpd Mizushima refineries were unaffected. Nippon Oil had adequate crude stocks, the spokesman said. In the eastern centre of Chiba, Idemitsu Kosan Co and Cosmo Oil Co, Japan's third and fourth-biggest refiners, halted berthing at their plants, with capacity of 220,000 barrels per day and 175,000 bpd respectively. In central and west Japan, Cosmo stopped berth operations at its 155,000-bpd Yokkaichi refinery and 120,000-bpd Sakaide plant because of the typhoon. Cosmo Oil also suspended berthing at its 80,000-bpd Sakai refinery, western Japan, for checks at around 0830 hrs, when the earthquake shook the region. "We expect to restart the operations soon after completing checks," a Cosmo Oil spokesman said. Kyushu Oil Corp. stopped all berth operations and product shipping by truck at its 155,000-bpd plant in Oita in the morning, a company spokesman said. In the late afternoon, Taiyo Oil Co. stopped berth operations and product shipment by truck at its 120,000 bpd refinery at Shikoku, western Japan. Showa Shell Sekiyu KK and Japan Energy Corp., the refining unit of Nippon Mining Holdings Inc., also suspended berth operations and products trucking at their facilities in western Japan because of the typhoon. As of 1700 hrs, (0800, UTC), typhoon "Songda" was located 30 km west-southwest of Saigo city in western Japan and heading northeast at 40 km per hour, unleashing winds of up to 144 km per hour, the meteorological agency said. — Reuters.

London, sep 7 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Typhoon "Songda" near lat 35.2N, long 132.3E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 40 degrees at 34 knots. Position accurate to within 55 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 85 knots, gusts 105 knots. Radius of 64 knot winds 40 nautical miles all quadrants. Forecast position lat 40.6N, long 137.9E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 70 knots, gusts 85 knots. Forecast position lat 46.1N, long 143.8E at 0600, UTC, Sep 8. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots, gusts 70 knots.

London, Sep 8 — Fears were growing yesterday for 22 crew members of general cargo *Tri Ardhianto*, which grounded off Japan during typhoon "Songda". The seafarers were reported missing, while a lifeboat with no-one on board was recovered nearby. Moreover, three bodies were found near the vessel, although they have not yet been identified. The vessel is thought to have got into difficulty at 1010, local time, yesterday, in waters off Kudamatsu, Yamaguchi prefecture. Reports suggested that the vessel was sinking due to ingress of water. On shore, at least eight Japanese people were reported dead as a result of the typhoon's torrential rain and winds of

up to 134 mph. The typhoon has cut electricity to 1.6 million homes and caused damage which has necessitated widespread cuts in airline, train and bus transport. South Korea was also affected, with local media reports suggesting that nearly 100 vessels were forced to anchor near ports. A 60-year-old shipowner, identified only by his family name Cho, was also reported missing at sea.

Yokohama, Sep 8 — General cargo *Tri Ardhianto* ran aground about 100 metres from Kojima, eastern Kasado Island. The bodies of three of the 22 crew were recovered from the shore, while the remaining crew members are missing. Fuel oil is floating on the water over an area of two km by 500 metres. At the time of grounding the vessel was bound for Hikari in order to load and was then due to proceed to Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

Yokohama, Sep 8 — General cargo *Blue Ocean*, which was anchored off port at Hatsukaichi, Hiroshima prefecture, sank at around 1425, Sep 7, after sending a distress signal. Two of the 18 Russian crew members have been found dead, two are missing and 14 have been rescued, one in serious condition. Part of the vessel is visible in the water. — Lloyd's Agents.

Yokohama, Sep 8 — Cement *Chihaya Maru* (6835 gt, built 2000) ran aground on Futagami Island, Ehime prefecture, Sep 7 due to strong winds. The vessel's master was found dead Sep 8 after reportedly falling into the sea while checking the vessel's hull. — Lloyd's Agents.

Moji, Sep 8 — At approximately 1010 hrs, Sep 7, general cargo *Tri Ardhianto*, in ballast, drifted ashore, while sheltering from typhoon "Songda", off Kasado Island in Japan Inland Sea. Later a "broken bow part" was discovered, but "after body" was missing. Three bodies of the 22 Indonesian crew were discovered but 19 crewmembers remain missing and the Japan Coast Guard are conducting searches to try to locate them. In another incident, the Cambodian general cargo *Blue Ocean* sank alongside its berth at Hatsukaichi, Hiroshima, at approximately 1430 hrs, Sep 7, as "Songda" passed through the area. Fourteen of the 18 Russian crew were rescued. Two bodies were discovered, but the other two crewmembers are still missing. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Japan's Coast Guard today found five more bodies from general cargo *Tri Ardhianto*, which ran aground during typhoon "Songda", bringing the death toll for the vessel to 11. The remainder of the 22-member crew of the *Tri Ardhianto* was still missing, a spokesman for the Sixth Regional Coast Guard Headquarters said. The vessel ran aground, broke in two and sank yesterday as typhoon "Songda" pummeled southern Japan with powerful winds and high waves. At least 22 people were killed and 718 injured as the storm roared across Japan. The tropical storm, which was downgraded today from a typhoon after

losing some of its devastating force, was headed north-west with sustained winds of up to 108 kilometers per hour.

Moji, Sep 9 — Eleven bodies have now been recovered from general cargo *Tri Ardhianto*. Japan Coast Guard are searching for the 11 missing crew. — Lloyd's Agents.

Moji, Sep 9 — Another body from general cargo *Blue Ocean* was discovered yesterday. One crew member is still missing. — Lloyd's Agents.

Tokyo, Sep 9 — Typhoon "Songda" disrupted oil movements in and out of Japan's top oil refineries for a second straight day yesterday as it lashed the northern part of the country, oil companies said. Nippon Oil Corp., Japan's biggest refiner, suspended tanker berthing, or waterborne product shipping and crude oil uploading, at its 180,000 barrels-per-day (bpd) refinery in Muroran, Hokkaido, amid strong winds and high waves, a company spokesman said. "We will wait for the typhoon to pass before restarting berthing operations," he said. Oil refining operations at the Muroran refinery were not affected, the spokesman said. He declined to specify the volume of crude stocks at the refinery. Idemitsu Kosan Co., Japan's third biggest refiner by capacity, halted berthing at its 140,000-bpd facility in Hokkaido and at a 220,000-bpd refinery in Chiba, eastern Japan. Cosmo Oil Corp. suspended berthing operations at its 175,000 bpd refinery in Chiba. In western and southern Japan, where the typhoon caused widespread damage a day earlier, killing at least 10 people and injuring hundreds, major refineries and others, including Taiyo Oil Co. and Kyushu Oil Corp., had restarted normal berthing operations, the companies said. The oil processing units at the refineries in western and southern Japan were not affected, the companies added. As of 0900, "Songda", was located 43.5 miles north north-east of Otaru city in Hokkaido. It was heading north-east at 35 kilometres-per-hour, unleashing winds of up to 108 kilometres-per-hour, Japan's Meteorological Agency said. — Reuters.

UNITED STATES

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated Sep 7, states: The frost that hit many parts of Minnesota late last month did an estimated \$190 million in damage to Minnesota crops, the state executive director of the Farm Service Agency said today. The agency expects to recommend as many as 27 counties to Gov. Tim Pawlenty for an agricultural disaster declaration, said John Monson, who heads the FSA in Minnesota. The FSA estimates that about 2.8 million acres were affected by frost or "freeze" on Aug 20-21, or about 14 percent of the total crop acreage in the state, and that crop revenues will be cut five percent by the frost and freeze alone, Monson said, adding that the estimates didn't take into account the effect of the generally cold growing season across Minnesota, which is expected to have an even greater impact on farmers' incomes. Agricultural officials from several agencies will meet tomorrow to

formalise the recommendations to the governor so that he can submit the disaster declaration request to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, Monson said. A disaster declaration would make farmers in the affected counties eligible for low-interest emergency loans. Monson said the affected counties are expected to be Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Chippewa, Chisago, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Douglas, Hubbard, Isanti, Itasca, Kanabec, Kittson, Koochiching, Mahnomon, Norman, Pennington, Pine, Polk, Red Lake, St. Louis, Swift, Todd and Wadena. The request will be in addition to an earlier agricultural disaster declaration sought for Roseau, Marshall and Lake of the Woods counties due to flooding earlier this year. That request is still awaiting approval from Washington, Monson said. The 27 counties were selected because at least one crop in each of them sustained more than a 30 percent loss of production from the frost or freeze, he said. More counties could be added later if there's another earlier-than-normal frost or freeze event, Monson said. Reports already indicate crop maturation is running around 10 days behind normal in southern Minnesota and four weeks behind in the north, he said. Gov. Tim Pawlenty said his administration would be putting the paperwork together for the disaster request in the next few days. He also said he planned to discuss with members of the state's congressional delegation whether there is any possibility of additional federal aid.



ARGENTINA

London, Sep 7 — A report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 1153, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.3 event has been located in Santiago del Estero Province, Argentina, lat 28.582S, long 65.827W, depth 22.1 km.

Buenos Aires, Sep 7 — An unusually strong earthquake with a magnitude of 6.3 shook Argentina today, killing at least one person, according to the U.S. Geological Survey and local officials. The quake's epicentre was about 10 miles south-west of Catamarca, Argentina, according to the agency's Earthquake Hazards Programme Web site. The quake killed an elderly woman who fell down a flight of stairs, said Cesar Romero, a police spokesman in the province of Catamarca, 750 miles northwest of Buenos Aires. Three children were slightly injured when debris fell from the roof of their school, he said. Local television showed some buildings with cracks in them and piles of debris that had fallen. The tremor was also felt in Buenos Aires, although with much less intensity. Several tall office buildings were temporarily evacuated. — Reuters.

CHILE

London, Sep 7 — A report, dated today, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 1233, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.6 event has been located near the coast of central Chile in lat 33.954S, long 71.856W, depth 14.7 km.

CHINA

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A magnitude 5 earthquake hit remote rural areas of Gansu province at 2015 yesterday, according to reports. "Officials say it is difficult to count the actual losses because most of the disaster-hit villages are located in high-altitude regions with no access to traffic," said the official Xinhua News Agency. It said no deaths had been reported, but more than 600 houses had been destroyed. The quake was centred on Minxian county, about 150 kilometers south of the provincial capital of Lanzhou, the agency said. The area is about 1,200 kilometres south-west of Beijing.

JAPAN

Tokyo, Sep 5 — An earthquake measuring 6.8 on the open-ended Richter scale hit western Japan today, setting off tsunami waves, measuring up to 24 inches in places, along the Pacific coast, but there were no reports of serious damage, national broadcaster NHK said. Two people were slightly injured in the city of Kyoto, although some of the strongest tremors were felt in the area of Nara. Train services including bullet-train runs were temporarily suspended after the quake struck shortly after 1900 hrs. The focus of the quake, which measured five on the Japanese intensity scale of seven, was in the seabed off the Kii Peninsula about 310 miles southwest of Tokyo at a depth of about six miles, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. Authorities lifted tsunami warnings about two hours after the quake, which was also felt in Tokyo. — Reuters.

London, Sep 5 — A report, dated today, states: A major earthquake occurred at 1007, UTC, today. The magnitude 7.0 event has been located near the south coast of western Honshu, Japan, in lat 33.092N, long 136.627E, depth 19.9 km. The hypocentral depth was poorly constrained.

London, Sep 5 — A report, dated today, states: A major earthquake occurred at 1457, UTC, today. The magnitude 7.1 event has been located in near the south coast of Honshu, Japan, in lat 33.152N, long 137.041E, depth 10 km.

Tokyo, Sep 5 — An earthquake measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale shook western Japan today, the second strong quake to hit the area in five hours, forcing hundreds to evacuate as quake-generated tsunami waves approached. Tsunamis measuring up to 90 cm hit some areas after the Japan Meteorological Agency issued a warning of potentially destructive waves of up to two metres. All warnings were lifted just less than three hours later. National broadcaster NHK said at least 28 people had been injured in the latest quake, which hit just before midnight (1500, UTC). Residents along the coast

of Mie and Wakayama Prefectures were ordered to evacuate to higher ground to avoid the tsunamis — water waves generated by seismic activity. Five fishing vessels were capsized in the port of Owase but there were no reports of injuries. Television pictures showed residents leaving home, carrying children and belongings. An official in Wakayama City said he saw what appeared to be a tidal wave one metre high surging up a river, NHK said. The second quake's initial reading was 7.3 on the Richter scale. At least three people were injured in the earlier quake, which measured 6.9, media reports said. Both quakes measured five on the Japanese intensity scale of seven. The US Geological Survey said they were centred about 10 km under the seabed about 175 km south-south-east of Tsu, in Mie Prefecture, or about 375 km south-west of Tokyo. There may be strong aftershocks, Katsuyuki Abe, a seismologist at University of Tokyo, told NHK. Much of the affected area relies on fishing and agriculture as well as tourism, centred on the cities of Nara and Kyoto. — Reuters.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Strong aftershocks rattled western Japan early today after two powerful earthquakes the evening before injured 38 people. The two offshore quakes yesterday — the first with a magnitude of 6.9 followed by a 7.3-magnitude tremor five hours later — were felt most strongly in sparsely populated areas in south-western Wakayama state, about 280 miles west of Tokyo. They also shook the major cities of Osaka, Kyoto and Nagoya, and caused buildings to sway in Tokyo. The National Police Agency said 38 people were hurt, including three people with broken bones. Most were injured in the second, more powerful quake. Aftershocks continued to rattle the region early today, including a magnitude-5.7 tremor, according to the Meteorological Agency. No damage or injuries were immediately reported. "A series of magnitude-5 aftershocks could continue up to the next 10 days. They could cause tsunami waves, and I urge people to evacuate to higher ground," public broadcaster NHK quoted Yoshinobu Tsuji, assistant professor at the University of Tokyo's Earthquake Research Institute, as saying today. Tsunami as high as three feet were recorded along the Pacific Coast yesterday, though the Meteorological Agency lifted its tsunami warnings early today. Kyodo News agency also reported that 600 homes were without electricity, while high-speed train services were temporarily suspended. The two quakes late yesterday occurred far off Japan's Pacific coast, which may have minimised damage. The first quake was centred about 70 miles off the coast of Wakayama on the Kii peninsula and the second was centred about 80 miles off the coast of Kochi state.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A magnitude 6.4 earthquake hit western Japan today, the latest aftershock to two major quakes that injured 43 people over the

weekend. The offshore jolt was centred 10 metres under the seabed near the epicentres of the earlier 6.9 and 7.4 magnitude quakes, the Meteorological Agency said. The jolt was felt most strongly in Wakayama prefecture, a relatively sparsely populated area about 450km west of Tokyo. The quake also shook the major cities of Kyoto and Osaka. Earlier aftershocks included a magnitude 5.7 tremor, according to the Meteorological Agency.

London, Sep 7 — A report, dated Sep 6, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 2329, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.3 event has been located near south coast of Honshu, Japan, lat 33.168N, long 137.218E, depth 10 km.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring a magnitude of 6.2 on the Richter scale jolted wide areas in central and western Japan at 2358, last night, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. The quake registered 3 on the Japanese seismic intensity scale of 7 in Nishio in Aichi Prefecture, Matsusaka in Mie Prefecture, Hikone in Shiga Prefecture, Shimokitayama in Nara Prefecture and several other locations. Its focus was 10 kilometres below surface of the sea in the Pacific Ocean off the Tokai area.

London, Sep 9 — A report, dated Sep 8, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 1458, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.2 event has been located near the south coast of Honshu, Japan, lat 33.144N, long 137.141E, depth 10 m.

MACQUARIE ISLANDS, AUSTRALIA

London, Sep 2 — A report, dated Sep 1, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 1513, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.8 event has been located in the Macquarie Island Region in lat 60.952S, long 160.564E, depth 10 km.

SANDWICH ISLANDS REGION

London, Sep 7 — A report, dated Sep 6, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 1242, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.6 event has been located in the south Sandwich Islands region in lat 55.306S, long 28.868W, depth 10 km.

TONGA

London, Sep 4 — A report, dated Sep 3, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 1904, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.7 event has been located in Tonga in lat 15.364S, long 173.191W, depth 10 km.

London, Sep 9 — A report, dated Sep 8, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 1100, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.9 event has been located in Tonga in lat 15.126S, long 173.470W, depth 10 km.



Volcanic Activity

KARYMSKY VOLCANO, RUSSIA

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: The volcano Karymsky on Kamchatka discharged unexpectedly

the ashes to the altitude of four kilometers above the sea level today. It was noticed from a Yak-40 aircraft that flew near the volcano, a source in the Kamchatka seismological service said. About 200 local earthquakes were registered in the area for the past day. The eruption does not pose a threat to settlements.

Political & Civil Unrest



BANGLADESH

Dhaka, Sep 5 — Two people were killed and 10 wounded in a bomb blast today in the town of Sylhet in northeastern Bangladesh, police said. They said the blast occurred outside a cinema hall in the town, 300 km from Dhaka, at 0930 hrs. Police were not immediately aware of who might be involved. Doctors at Sylhet Medical College Hospital said they had admitted seven blast victims, some of them in critical condition. Sylhet has been the scene of several blasts since May, in which at least seven people have been killed and more than 250 wounded, including British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury. The latest blast coincided with a visit to Dhaka by U.S. counter-terrorism expert J. Cofer Black who arrived today to help the government investigate a grenade attack at an opposition rally last month that killed 19 people and wounded 150. — Reuters.

BURUNDI

United Nations, Sep 3 — A U.N. inquiry into a massacre in Burundi has tentatively concluded that three armed groups carried out the attack, which was carefully planned and staged from neighbouring Congo, diplomats said today. The Forces for National Liberation, the lone Hutu rebel group refusing to join the peace process in Burundi, has previously claimed responsibility for the Aug 13 slaughter of more than 160 ethnic Tutsi Congolese refugees. But U.N. investigators have evidence that two other groups worked in conjunction with the FNL on the operation at the Gatumba refugee camp in western Burundi, the diplomats said. Aiding the FNL were Congolese Mai Mai tribal fighters and extremist Hutu fighters who were part of Rwanda's armed forces during the 1994 genocide in which some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered, they said after a closed-door briefing on the investigation by Hedi Annabi, U.N. assistant secretary-general for peacekeeping operations. The slaughter, launched from across the border in shaky eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, was "meticulously planned," the diplomats quoted Annabi as telling the 15-nation council. While Burundian refugee families were also staying in the Gatumba camp on the night of the attack, the armed groups singled out for death only the tents inhabited by Congolese Tutsis, he said. The U.N.

evidence came from an FNL combatant arrested in the Burundi capital of Bujumbura a few days after the attack and from eyewitnesses and survivors, who identified the perpetrators from their language and tactics, Annabi said. Because the U.N. inquiry was not yet over, the council planned no action for now but intended to crack down on the perpetrators once a final report was filed, diplomats said. — Reuters.

COLOMBIA

Bogota, Sep 5 — Hooded gunmen burst into an evangelical church packed with hymn-singing worshippers in southern Colombia and opened fire, killing three and wounding 14 others, authorities said today. The attack by the unknown assailants came yesterday night in the steamy town of Puerto Asis, a stronghold of far-right paramilitary outlaws in jungle near the border with Ecuador dotted with illegal coca plantations. The gunmen left propaganda in favour of Marxist rebels when they fled the bloody scene, local television reported, but pastor Francisco Sevillano said he knew of no threats against his church. — Rdeuters.

HAITI

Port-au-Prince, Sep 7 — Haitian police, backed by U.N. troops in armoured cars, raided the city of Saint-Marc and regained control today, a day after rebels took over the town north of the capital. U.N. troops and Haitian police now patrol the streets of Saint-Marc, 60 miles north of Port-au-Prince. No casualties were reported, but residents said they heard a lot of gunshots. Authorities ordered the national police yesterday to regain control of several towns held by rebel former soldiers who want to re-establish Haiti's army. Police carried out the raid with an Argentine contingent of the U.N. peacekeeping force sent to stabilise Haiti after the rebels drove out President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February. On Sunday (Sep 5), police backed by U.N. troops drove out a group of former soldiers who occupied a police station in the city of Thomazeau, near the capital. But the rebels held several cities and were a dominant force in numerous small towns deserted by police in February. They vowed defiance of an interim government they view as traitors. "We'll fight to the last man. We'd rather die in combat instead of dying on our knees," rebel leader Remissainthe Ravix told Reuters. He condemned the raid in Saint-Marc and promised to retaliate. "The fact that we left Saint-Marc does not mean that we gave up," said Ravix, who has demanded that the government pay former soldiers 10 years worth of back wages. Interim president Boniface Alexandre has said his administration would not give in to pressure from the rebels. Despite the presence of a nearly 3,000-strong, Brazilian-led U.N. force, the rebels and other armed gangs have been the dominant force in many areas and order has proved elusive. Gunfights in the slum of Cite Sole killed seven people today and six on Saturday (Sep 4), witnesses said. — Reuters.

INDIA

Guwahati, Sep 3 — A three-day strike against an unpopular anti-terror law began today in the Indian state of Manipur. More than 30 organisations, including human rights groups and teachers and students unions, have backed the strike called after Indian authorities refused to withdraw the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. The law grants soldiers the power to search and detain suspects without reference to civilian authorities in this remote and troubled region. Shops, offices and schools were closed in Imphal in response to the strike call. "It is a complete shutdown," Bimal Singh, a resident of Imphal, told Reuters. Soldiers patrolled the deserted streets in armoured personnel carriers. "This is a people's movement, an uprising against a draconian legislation. We will continue our agitation until the act is removed," said a statement by Apunba Lup, an umbrella group representing the strikers. There has been tension in Manipur since July when troops seized a 30-year-old woman from her house near the state capital Imphal and killed her. A forensic report revealed semen stains on the woman's clothes and locals said she was raped by soldiers before being killed. The army says the woman was wanted as a rebel and was shot dead while trying to escape. The army has agreed to a local court order that 33 soldiers be DNA tested to establish whether or not they raped the woman. Army chief General N.C. Vij and federal Home Minister Shivraj Patil are expected to visit Manipur on Sunday (Sep 5). The army says the anti-terror law is necessary to help soldiers keep peace in Manipur where some 20 insurgent groups operate. — Reuters.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Two policemen have been killed and five injured in Indian Kashmir, when suspected Islamic rebels blew up a convoy. A police spokesman says explosions destroyed two trucks of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) as they rolled into Buldoda village, 185 kilometres north-east of the winter capital Jammu. "Two CRPF trucks were travelling from Doda to Jammu when militants used powerful improvised explosive devices to target them. Two CRPF personnel died on the spot and five others were critically injured," he said. None of the dozen rebels groups fighting Indian troops in Kashmir has so far claimed responsibility.

INDONESIA

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: The Indonesian military says it has killed six separatist rebels and arrested five others in the latest encounters in the province of Aceh. The military launched a major operation to crush the separatists in May 2003, after the collapse of a brief truce.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The building of the Russian embassy in Jakarta has been inconsiderably damaged as a result of an explosion staged near the embassy of Australia situated not far from the Russian embassy, said spokesman for

the Russian Foreign Ministry Alexander Yakovenko today. The spokesman referred to the information he had just received from the Russian charge d' affairs in Jakarta. "It was a powerful blast caused by an explosion in a car parked nearby," the spokesman said. The blast smashed out window glass in several windows of the Russian embassy, Yakovenko said in an interview to First television channel. None of the embassy personnel has been hurt in the incident, Yakovenko said. According to reports available, at least three were killed and more than a hundred wounded as a result of the blast in the Indonesian capital.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Seven people have been killed and about 100 injured in a massive blast outside the Australian embassy in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta. Jakarta's police chief said the blast was possibly caused by a suicide car bombing. The blast left a large crater in the ground and damaged buildings and motor vehicles. Helicopters, ambulances and police units are now at the site, in Kuningan, a district to the south of the city. Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said the blast was a terrorist attack directed at Australia. Jakarta Governor Sutiyoso, who said the attack is "certainly a terrorist act", Reuters news agency reports. Seven people were killed in the attack, police and hospital officials say. Australian Prime Minister John Howard told a news conference in Melbourne "the evidence today indicates that it was a car bomb". Mr Howard said all embassy staff had been accounted for. He said the identity of the fatalities could not be certain, adding they may have been local security personnel or passers-by. Witnesses and reporters say they saw at least three bodies lying lifeless after the blast, which happened at about 1030, local time. The centre of the blast was the road just in front of the embassy, but office blocks on either side of the eight-lane highway have been severely damaged. A huge crowd of onlookers has massed, and plumes of smoke are rising into the air above the site of the blast. There are gaping holes where windows have been blown out. Glass, concrete and metal lie strewn across the ground. The explosion has come at a particularly sensitive time for Indonesia as the second and final round of presidential elections are due on Sep 20.

IRAQ

Baghdad, Sep 2 — Militants bombed Iraq's northern oil pipeline to Turkey today, halting exports. The bombing caused a huge blaze that was expected to take two days to put out, said a senior firefighter at the scene. Only last week Iraq had restored exports of about 600,000 bpd along the pipeline, the first deliveries from its northern oil fields since the end of May. "The explosion was enormous," said Major General Anwar Mohammed Amin, commander of the national guard in the region. A Reuters correspondent said he could see the blaze from the northern oil hub city of Kirkuk, about 70 km away. The

attack was partly responsible for pushing world oil prices higher, traders said. New York light crude gained as much as \$1.10 a barrel at one point, rising above \$45, before last trading five cents a barrel higher at \$44.05. In a hostage standoff, the editor of French newspaper *Le Figaro* said two French journalists held in Iraq had been turned over to a new militant group, prompting some suggestions they would be freed soon. Jean de Belot said the latest information on captive French journalists Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot was that they had been handed over by the Islamic Army in Iraq militant group to a Sunni Muslim guerrilla group. The new group favoured the hostages' release, he said. French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier said he understood the two journalists were "alive and getting good treatment". — Reuters.

Baghdad, Sep 3 — Export flows to Iraq's southern terminals were running normally at around two million barrels per day today, but sabotage kept the country's northern export pipeline shut, oil officials said. Fire was still raging in the northern pipeline after it was attacked yesterday in the Riad area, around 70 km south-west of the oil centre of Kirkuk. Firefighting units that have been at the scene withdrew, saying nothing could be done to put out the flames for now. The road between Kirkuk and the Baiji refinery was still cut, witnesses said. The pipeline runs from the Kirkuk oilfields to the Baiji refinery and then northwest to Turkey. — Reuters.

Kirkuk, Sep 4 — Saboteurs attacked a refined oil products pipeline in northern Iraq today, two days after the main crude export pipeline in the region was hit, a security official said. A bomb exploded underneath the pipeline, which runs from the oil centre of Kirkuk to Iraq's biggest refinery at Baiji, said Ahmad al-Ubaidi from the North Oil Company. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Sep 5 — The body of an Egyptian who was kidnapped in Iraq last month has been found in the northern part of the country, police said today, as France still awaited word on the fate of two seized French reporters. Police said the body of the Egyptian, who was snatched on Aug 27, was found in the town of Baiji, some 180 km north of Baghdad. Police said the body, which was found at a roadside some 15 km west of Baiji yesterday, bore signs of torture. They said the hands and legs of the man identified as Nasser Juma were bound together. Iraqi police said last month that Juma disappeared after assailants killed another Egyptian. Both men were working in Baiji. Meanwhile, French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin today expressed "prudence but confidence" about securing their release of journalists Georges Malbrunot and Christian Chesnot. In other developments, after a relative lull in violence in recent days, a suicide bomber detonated his vehicle near a police academy in the city of Kirkuk yesterday, killing at least 17 people and wounding 36, in the latest attack on Iraqi security forces. The

attack came as hundreds of police were leaving the building and the street was crowded, police said, adding at least 14 policemen were killed and three civilians. In Baghdad, three Iraqi policemen were killed during operations against insurgents, an Interior Ministry spokesman said. The three died when their car blew up in raids against insurgents in the Latifiya area, a hotbed of guerrilla activity just south of the capital. Also yesterday, U.S.-led forces backed by warplanes battled insurgents west of the city of Mosul. At least 13 people were killed and 52 wounded in the clashes in the town of Tallafar, doctors and the U.S. military said. A U.S. helicopter made a forced landing during the fighting, wounding two crew members, the military said. Doctors said nine civilians were killed, and many of the wounded were women and children. — Reuters.

Kirkuk, Sep 5 — The vital Iraq-Turkey oil pipeline was still on fire today, four days after saboteurs attacked it and cut 600,000 of barrels per day (bpd) of exports, North Oil Company officials said. Repairs to the pipeline would take at least one week after putting out the fire in the Riad area southwest of the oil centre of Kirkuk, they said. Another refined oil products pipeline near Kirkuk was attacked yesterday. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Sep 5 — A mortar attack on a US base near Baghdad killed two American soldiers and wounded 16 today, the US military says. It said one of those wounded in the attack this evening was in critical condition. The attack brought to at least 732 the number of US troops killed in action since the start of the war in Iraq last year. — Reuters.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: At least six US marines have been killed in an ambush on a military convoy on the outskirts of Falluja in Iraq, a US military official says. Several more were wounded in the attack, which was said to have involved a massive car bomb. Falluja, 65km west of Baghdad, has witnessed some of the strongest resistance to US-led forces. US troops have not patrolled inside the city since April after a three-week siege there in which hundreds died. The US military has launched several air strikes on suspected insurgents in the city in the past few months, with reports of many Iraqi casualties. Meanwhile, a report says that the number of US soldiers injured in Iraq in August is the highest since the war began.

Dubai, Sep 6 — A purported statement by Iraqi militants holding two French journalists hostage demanded a \$5 million ransom today and set a 48-hour deadline. The statement, posted on an Internet site in the name of the Islamic Army in Iraq, punctured a mood of cautious optimism in France that Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot would be freed soon. The militants had previously planned to release the men but attacks had prevented them from doing so, said the statement. Today's statement also called for a truce with al Qaeda leader

Osama bin Laden and a promise of no military and commercial dealings with Iraq — demands which appeared to be directed at France. The statement said the group would accept just one of its demands being met, but issued a warning against any attempt to attack it. — Reuters.

Kirkuk, Sep 6 — A four-day fire on Iraq's northern oil export pipeline was briefly extinguished today only for the surrounding oil spill to be re-ignited by saboteurs, preventing repairs, an oil official said. However, exports were flowing normally from the country's southern Basra offshore terminal at 1.75 million bpd. Repairs to the northern pipeline would take at least one week after putting out the fire in the Riad area southwest of the oil centre of Kirkuk, they said. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Sep 6 — A car bomb attack on a U.S. patrol outside the rebel-held city of Falluja today killed seven American marines and three Iraqi National Guardsmen, in the deadliest single attack on U.S. forces in five months. The attack raises the official Pentagon U.S. death toll for the Iraq war to at least 988, including three civilian Department of Defense employees. In another blow to Iraq's U.S.-backed government, officials retracted a claim to have captured the most wanted Saddam Hussein aide still on the run in Iraq. A day after several Iraqi officials reported the capture of Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, who was sixth on a U.S. list of the 55 most wanted members of Saddam's regime and had a \$10 million price on his head, the government had to make an embarrassing climbdown and say he had not been caught after all. "The person that has been arrested, after appropriate medical tests, was not al-Douri but somebody related to him, who is also wanted by the state," the Interior Ministry said. — Reuters.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Bloody clashes erupted today between US forces and Shiite militiamen in their Baghdad stronghold of Sadr City as 11 US soldiers were killed in a spate of attacks over 24 hours. Smoke was rising and US war planes roared overhead as armed members of radical cleric Moqtada Sadr's Mehdi Army ran through the streets of the Baghdad after a night of fighting that left one US soldier dead and scores of Iraqis killed and wounded. The Iraqi health ministry reported that 40 people were killed and more than 270 injured as a fragile week-long truce called by Sadr unravelled. Militia fighters killed a US soldier and wounded two others today in a small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade attack in the sprawling Baghdad district, US Lieutenant Colonel James Hutton said. US tanks rumbled around the neighbourhood and automatic fire echoed on Sadr City's main al-Shuhader Street. Four US military vehicles blocked off al-Hay square, site of Sadr's main office. Lieutenant Colonel Hutton reported a string of attacks overnight on US forces in the den of the young radical cleric who has organised a thousands-strong army of young and

unemployed Shiite men united under a banner of Islamic fundamentalism. Sadr aide Sheikh Naim al-Qabi said 15 Mehdi Army fighters were killed and 62 wounded in the strife.

Baghdad, Sep 8 — Two Italian woman aid workers and two Iraqis were kidnapped in a brazen broad daylight raid in central Baghdad today. Witnesses said that 20 men armed with AK-47 assault rifles and pistols with silencers stopped vehicles in a busy commercial area of the Iraqi capital and raided a building housing the humanitarian organisation Bridge to Baghdad. They seized Italians Simona Pari and Simona Torretta and the two Iraqis, a male employee of Bridge to Baghdad and a woman who worked for another Italian organisation Intersos. The latest abductions are likely to fuel uncertainty over the fate of two French journalists, Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot, still held hostage despite intense diplomatic efforts to free them. A statement posted on the Internet yesterday in the name of the Islamic Army in Iraq demanded a \$5 million ransom for the two journalists within 48 hours. The group said had it had planned to free the men but attacks by American troops had prevented the release. In the latest violence in Iraq, 24 Iraqi militants and a US soldier were killed in clashes in the Sadr City slums. The clashes threatened to wreck a cease-fire called by Shi'ite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who has his power base in Sadr City and has been involved in a long-running standoff with US forces. Sadr City was not included in a peace deal which ended three weeks of fighting in August in the Shi'ite holy city of Najaf between US and Iraqi troops and fighters loyal to Sadr. Sadr aides said last week the cleric intended to field candidates in elections due in January, campaigning on a platform calling for the withdrawal of US forces. In another incident, guerrillas killed a US soldier in western Baghdad, the US military said. The latest US casualties pushed the official American death toll to 994 since the US-led invasion in March last year to topple Saddam Hussein. Guerrillas ambushed the car of Baghdad's Iraqi governor today, opening fire and then detonating a roadside bomb as his convoy drove past. He was unhurt but an Iraqi in another car was killed. In the northern city of Mosul, the son of the governor was shot dead by guerrillas, hospital sources said. — Reuters.

Falluja, Sep 8 — U.S. warplanes launched air strikes on Falluja today, witnesses said, and a doctor said at least two Iraqi men were killed in the attack. Doctor Ali Salem told Reuters the air strike, which rocked southeast Falluja, had injured three other Iraqi men. A U.S. military spokesman said he had no immediate information on the strikes. The U.S. military said it killed as many as 100 insurgents in fierce clashes in Falluja yesterday. Elsewhere, iInsurgents attacked a U.S. military convoy in western Baghdad today, setting three military vehicles on fire and wounding at least three troops, a Reuters witness said. — Reuters.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: The pumping of Kirkuk crude oil to Turkey resumed at a rate of 200,000 barrels per day after sabotage attacks halted all exports last week. "Pumping resumed at midnight on a spare line to Ceyhan," said an official from the North Oil Co. "This is a first step immediately after we successfully put out the fire ignited by saboteurs" on Sep 2, he added today.

ISRAEL

Gaza, Sep 7 — Israeli tanks shelled a Hamas training camp in the central Gaza Strip today, killing at least 13 militants and wounding 30 people, witnesses and hospital sources said. Tanks stationed at a border crossing between Israel and Gaza early today fired into the outskirts of the town of Shijaia, a stronghold of Hamas, the militant group behind a double suicide bombing that killed 16 people on buses in southern Israel last week. Witnesses said explosions tore through a Hamas training ground after an exchange of fire with Palestinian gunmen in the area. Hospital sources said all of the dead were Hamas members but that the wounded included civilians. The Israeli army had no immediate comment. Israeli leaders had vowed to strike back hard in retaliation for last Tuesday's (Aug 31) twin bombings in Beersheba, the first suicide attacks in the Jewish state in nearly six months. In what appeared to be Israel's toughest response so far, a series of explosions could be heard just after midnight (2100, UTC, Sep 6) in nearby Gaza City as Israeli helicopter gunships roared overhead. Hamas, sworn to Israel's destruction, is the main militant group spearheading a campaign of suicide bombings against Israelis during a nearly four-year-old Palestinian uprising. — Reuters.

Gaza, Sep 8 — Israeli forces seized control of parts of the northern Gaza Strip today, a day after soldiers killed 14 Hamas fighters in the deadliest strike against the leading Palestinian militant group. Dozens of tanks and armoured vehicles sealed off two Palestinian towns and took up positions outside the Jabalya refugee camp in what the army said was an open-ended operation to stop militants from firing rockets into southern Israel. The incursion, one of the biggest in north Gaza in months, came a week after Hamas suicide bombers killed 16 people on Israeli buses in Beersheba. Israel struck back yesterday, hitting a Hamas training camp and triggering vows of revenge. Israeli forces met no resistance as they surrounded Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya — two towns that have been the target of frequent raids — while armoured bulldozers tore up stretches of road to block off the area. Helicopters fired heavy machineguns to keep residents away from farm fields and other open areas that have been used as rocket launching sites, witnesses said. Despite the operation in northern Gaza, militants managed to fire three makeshift Qassam rockets that landed near a collective farm in Israel's western Negev desert. The

army said there no reports of damage or casualties. Yesterday, Israeli warplanes, tanks and helicopters pounded a Hamas camp on the outskirts of Gaza City, killing 14 militants as they were being trained on a soccer field. The Israeli military said all those killed yesterday were Hamas members who had been learning to make suicide belts, plant explosives, launch rockets, infiltrate Jewish settlements and kidnap soldiers and civilians. Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurie, a moderate, gave an unusually strong response to the killings of the Hamas militants. "I'm sure there will be responses and such responses will be justified," he said. — Reuters.

NEPAL

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: A curfew is continuing in the Nepalese capital for the third straight day following riots over the killing of 12 Nepalese hostages in Iraq. The situation in Kathmandu is said to be uneasy but calm. The curfew was lifted for three hours this morning to allow people to shop for essential supplies. Two people were killed on Wednesday (Sep 1) when mobs attacked a mosque and ransacked government buildings and offices of Middle Eastern airlines. Today's prayers in the city's Jama mosque, which was damaged in the riots, have been cancelled because of the curfew. Extra security has been deployed outside mosques and other public buildings. Several international airlines, including Pakistan International Airlines, Qatar Airways, Gulf Airways, and India's Jet Airways have cancelled scheduled flights to Kathmandu.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Nepal today lifted the five-day curfew in Kathmandu and Lalitpur districts imposed after the country was rocked by violent protests against the killing of 12 Nepalese by Islamic militants in Iraq. The Government stepped up security arrangements in various sensitive places. Armed police and soldiers patrolled the cities and security was heavy but authorities said the situation was calm and was returning to normal with no reports of violence. The curfew imposed five days ago was lifted from 0300 today easing public life in the capital city and adjoining Lalitpur municipality. Transport services resumed, private offices opened and business activities started in full swing. However, government offices and schools and colleges remained closed today as the Hindu Kingdom observed the Sri Krishna Janmastami, a national holiday. The Home Ministry, in a statement, appealed to the public not to get involved in undesirable activities such as hooliganism, vandalizing and arson and not to encourage such activities to ensure social, religious and communal goodwill. The government accords first priority to maintaining law and order and protecting the life and property of the people, it added. All the domestic and international airlines except Pakistan International Airlines and Qatar Airways resumed flights

from Saturday. The government had imposed indefinite curfew on Sep 1 in the wake of violent protests, that left two dead and 50 injured, in the capital by groups demonstrating the killing of 12 Nepalese labourers in Iraq.

RUSSIA

Beslan, Sep 3 — An armed gang that stormed a school in southern Russia may be holding as many as 1,500 hostages, far above the official figure of 350, newspapers quoted freed hostages today as saying. The witnesses, among 26 women and infants released yesterday, said the group of up to 40 heavily armed captors was refusing to give hostages food and water. "The situation is serious. We have come up against very cruel people," Leonid Roshal, a paediatrician who has been mediating with the hostage-takers, told relatives. Officials say around 16 people were killed in the initial stages of the assault on Wednesday (Sep 1), the first day of the school year in Russia. Izvestiya said 860 pupils attended School No.1 in Beslan, North Ossetia, but the number of people on the campus would have been swelled by parents and relatives attending the first day ceremony traditional in Russian schools. Two women assailants blew themselves up in a corridor, killing a number of male hostages. Hostages were later herded into the school gym, an unidentified mother told Izvestiya. Dzandarova said some injured hostages were taken out of the sports hall into a corridor and "finished off". Others feeling unwell were sent to the changing rooms. The captors were well organised and resting in shifts. Russian officials have been negotiating off and on with the hostage takers. "At the moment, contact has been established with the terrorists and work is going on," Valery Andreyev, a top security official heading operations to free the hostages, said. — Reuters.

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Russian troops have stormed the school in North Ossetia where hundreds of children and adults have been held hostage since Wednesday (Sep 1). Unconfirmed reports say that at least 10 people have been killed and up to 200 wounded. Several of the hostage takers are also reported to have died in exchanges of fire with troops as they tried to escape, Reuters reports. Some are reported to have blown themselves up, but others appear to have got away. Correspondents say many of those released were desperate for water when they came out, and some were barely able to stand and at least 150 children have been taken to hospital. The attack started at 0905, UTC, when explosions and gunfire were heard and soldiers seen running to the building. One hour later, Russian troops were said to be nearly in full control and at 1115, UTC, all hostages were reported to be out of the school.

Beslan, Sep 4 — Russian President Vladimir Putin today demanded a drastic shakeup of security forces' tactics against terror after the seizure of a school by Chechen militants ended

in chaos and bloodshed. As the death toll from the furious battle that ended the siege in southern Russia rose to 330, nearly half of them children, Putin admitted authorities had failed to recognise or react effectively to the threats facing his country. Grief, anger and uncertainty pervaded Beslan, a day after the siege ended with wounded and half-naked children dodging hostage takers' bullets as they fled the school and security forces stormed the building. Putin denounced the gunmen who attacked "defenceless children". But, in the first criticism of his troops' handling of the siege, he said Russians had a right to demand more from security forces in times of crisis. Some Western experts have said the troops were unprepared and bungled their attack. Barely a family in Beslan was left untouched by the carnage at the Middle School No. 1, in which at least 155 children died as well as many parents and teachers. Officials have now ended their search of the charred ruins of the building. A total of 26 militants, 10 of them Arabs according to Russian officials, had seized the school, said Deputy Prosecutor-General Sergei Fridinsky. All had been killed. — Reuters. (See issue of Sep 6.)

Moscow, Sep 6 — Security forces bungled the handling of Russia's worst hostage drama because nobody was in charge and special forces were not ready when the shooting started, security analysts said today. "It's clear that it was a total mess," leading military analyst Alexander Golts told Reuters. "They were not prepared." As the death toll from the battle that ended the siege in the North Ossetian town of Beslan rose above 330, Russia's media asked how the vaunted special forces had allowed a two-day standoff to turn into a bloodbath. Authorities said they were forced to storm the school when the militants fired on hostages who were fleeing in the confusion following two explosions. With no security cordon to keep them back, armed local people pressed forward and were among the first to return fire. Local troops — unprepared and possibly short of ammunition — suddenly found themselves assaulting the school, while special forces moved in only half an hour after the battle began, Golts said. The newspaper Vremya Novostei said that when the fighting started, two special forces squads from the FSB security service were still discussing assault plans and had not even agreed on approach routes or where the defenders' firing points were. It said the two squads, Alfa and Vypel — equivalent to Britain's Special Air Service or the U.S. Delta Force — suffered unprecedented casualties totalling 10 dead and up to 31 wounded. Security expert Andrei Soldatov said on Ekho Moskvy radio that the battle began so suddenly that many of the special forces fought without bullet-proof vests. Western analysts said a key weakness was the lack of coordination between police, army, paramilitary and special forces each controlled by different ministries or the FSB. — Reuters.

Moscow, Sep 8 — The Russia government has offered a \$10 million reward for information to help it hunt down Chechen rebel leaders Shamil Basayev and Aslan Maskhadov, accused by Moscow of being behind last week's school siege, news agencies reported today. Interfax news agency quoted the FSB security service as saying it would pay up to 300 million roubles (\$10.3 million) for information that would lead to "neutralising" the two rebels. At least 335 people were killed — half of them children — in the siege. — Reuters.

SAUDI ARABIA

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Militants clashed with Saudi police today in a town north-east of the capital Riyadh, killing one officer and wounding three, Al-Arabiya television reported. The station quoted witnesses as saying one of the wounded was in critical condition from the clashes in al-Baradah, 50 miles north-east of Riyadh. The region has seen frequent attacks linked to al-Qaida in Saudi Arabia. Today's reports came a day after the surrender of a wanted militant identified by Saudi authorities as Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Moqrin. Al-Moqrin was accused in a May attack in the eastern city of Khobar that killed 22 people, most of them foreign oil industry workers. He is believed to be related to Abdul Aziz al-Moqrin, believed to have been al-Qaida's chief in Saudi Arabia when he was killed in June. Saudi Arabia offered a monthlong amnesty that expired in July to encourage wanted militants to surrender. The authorities pledged not to seek the death penalty against those who surrendered. Four men surrendered to Saudi authorities under the amnesty. None, however, was considered a hardcore militant.

SOMALIA

Nairobi, Sep 2 — Somalia's new parliament held its inaugural meeting today, but quickly adjourned to give its members more time to organise the business of returning government to the only nation without one. In the laborious, piecemeal manner that has characterized Somalia's 20-month peace process, the parliament, sitting in the capital of neighboring Kenya, called a one-day recess after naming its eldest member as temporary chairman. The decision to give 83-year-old Hirsi Bulhan Farah the chair was a formality, stipulated by the charter guiding the rebuilding of the Horn of Africa nation under the watch of African and international mediators. It is Somalia's 14th attempt at establishing a national government since 1991. Lack of security at home has forced parliament to meet in Nairobi. Underscoring the simmering tensions in the nascent assembly, a shoving match broke out on the assembly floor over the number of women in the parliament. The scuffle ended after two women spoke out and others urged parliamentarians to calm down. Farah called a brief recess that was soon extended until Friday, after many members found they were without some critical legislative tools. "I

had hoped they would set a date for elections today, but they require more time because some members have forgotten their charters and rules of procedure," said Bethuel Kiplagat, a top Kenyan mediator in the peace talks. The crucial job for the parliament is to name a permanent speaker, and then the president who will establish a new Somali administration in the capital of Mogadishu with a view to holding elections in five years. First, the parliament must set up a committee to create an electoral commission to oversee the votes, a decision likely to cause friction. All but two or three of the 275 members of the assembly were present today, although several still had not taken their oaths of office. Five did so today, leaving a dozen still to do so. International mediators, in an effort to pressure bickering clans who had repeatedly delayed the peace talks, had already sworn in 258 parliamentarians in two earlier meetings. — Reuters.

SUDAN

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated Sep 3, states: Sudan will not accept a peacekeeping force in the troubled Darfur region but may agree to extra monitors being deployed, its foreign minister says. Mustafa Osman Ismail was reacting to a suggestion from a UN envoy that several thousand military observers were urgently needed to improve security. Jan Pronk did not specify, but said the 3,000 troops which the African Union (AU) is considering were "not enough." Yesterday, the UN Security Council discussed Darfur. No action was agreed, but the United States is pressing for sanctions against Khartoum, insisting that it is still backing Arab militias. Up to 50,000 people have been killed in the 18-month conflict and more than a million have fled their homes. Some 300 AU troops are in Darfur to monitor a shaky ceasefire and Nigeria is planning to send another 1,500. Many non-Arab refugees say their villages were attacked by Janjaweed militias, working with government security forces. Such joint attacks have continued in the past week, said US ambassador to the UN John Danforth, citing a report from AU military observers. Presenting a UN report on Darfur to the Security Council, Mr Pronk also urged Sudan to accept extra monitors. Sudan insists that the extra police officers it has sent to Darfur will protect civilians. It denies arming the Janjaweed and blames the violence on two Darfur rebel groups which took up arms last year. Peace talks between the rebels and the government in Nigeria are deadlocked over disarmament and other security issues, the rebels say. Mr Pronk told the council the authorities had fulfilled a commitment to deploy extra police and improve security in some areas, but had not met its commitments in two respects: "First, it has not been able to stop attacks by militias, nor to disarm these militias. Second, no concrete steps have been taken to bring to justice or even to identify any of the militia's leaders or

the perpetrators of these attacks." The report, prepared by Mr Pronk on behalf of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, does not mention sanctions but Mr Danforth said they remain "on the table".

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 3,000 people have fled renewed violence in Sudan's troubled Darfur province in the past few days, the United Nations says. It was not clear who was behind the latest fighting near the town of Zam Zam in North Darfur, a UN report said. Last week, the UN said that the Sudan government had failed to stop the Arab Janjaweed militias from attacking black African villagers in Darfur. "Attacks on villages south of Zam Zam have resulted in a population movement of around 3,000 to 4,000 persons," said the UN report, adding that half of those who had fled their homes had been moved to a camp in Zam Zam, 17km south of the North Darfur capital, El Fasher. "There has been a sharp upturn in the number of attacks throughout the southern part of North Darfur," the report said.



Labour Disputes

BOTSWANA

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: After two weeks, a strike at some of De Beers' biggest diamond mines has ended, but talks between Debswana Diamond Co. and the Botswana Mining Workers Union are still continuing. Baagi Donald Lebotse, general secretary of the Botswana Mining Workers Union, said the striking workers had gone back to work. But 400 workers who had been dismissed for striking illegally haven't been rehired, he said. Talks will continue on their reinstatement, and the wage package. De Beers is a 45%-owned unit of diversified natural resources company Anglo American PLC. Debswana's final wage offer is a 10% increase in salary and a bonus of 10% of annual salary, according to Jacob Sesinyi, Debswana employee relations manager. Of those striking workers, around 400 were dismissed. These were workers, such as nurses, who are prohibited from striking because of the nature of their jobs. Talks between the union and Debswana will cover the wage package on offer and also the possible reinstatement of the dismissed workers, said the union's Lebotse.

CANADA

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: A long-running strike in Newfoundland and Quebec at the Iron Ore Company of Canada could come to an end today. Over 1,400 workers at the company's operations in Labrador City and Sept Isles will vote on a new contract offer. They've been on the

picket lines for seven weeks. Local steelworkers union president George Kean says the company has backed away from the concessions it was seeking. He also says there have been improvements in a number of benefits.

FRANCE

London, Sep 7 — SNCM ferry services between France and the island of Corsica were paralysed for the third day running yesterday due to a strike by shore staff at the French state-owned operator. The strike, in support of union demands to strengthen the company's Corsican department, has resulted in six SNCM vessels being immobilised at the island's ports. Passengers due to sail on the vessels have been redirected to SNCM's rival private sector operation, Corsica Ferries. The company was unable to say yesterday when normal service would be resumed, and a spokesman said that there were no immediate plans to meet representatives of the strikers. The strikers, who are based in the company's agencies in the Corsican ports of Bastia and Ajaccio and the French mainland port of Nice, say they want more managerial power to be given to SNCM's Bastia-based Corsican department, set up in 2002. The company said that it had made proposals representing a significant advance.

INDIA

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Delhi Manufacturers Federation has decided to go on an indefinite "industrial strike" from today. It is protesting the Delhi government's decision to close industries in all non-conforming areas. The federation, an umbrella body of 50 industrial associations accused the state government of going back on a resolution passed in July to amend the master plan for converting areas with an industrial concentration of 70 per cent or above as regular industrial areas. It said that closing down industrial units will directly hit 15 lakh workers, and another 10 lakh would be affected indirectly.

NEW ZEALAND

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: The Maritime Workers Union has confirmed a four-day strike starting tomorrow at Ports of Auckland. Around 260 workers will walk off the job from 0700 hrs. The union says it wants to improve the status of casual and part time workers. Maritime Union Local 13 Auckland Waterfront Branch President Denis Carlisle says the strike is about a fair go for the average worker. He says some workers employed by the Ports of Auckland were still casual after many years of employment. He says the Port has chosen to keep part-time casual workers in the limbo of insecure employment, where they live on the end of a telephone, not knowing from day to day whether they will be required to work and if they are, at very short notice. A continual picket for the strike

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duration will be held at Access Ferguson and Access Bledisloe at the Ports of Auckland with Maritime Union members starting from 0700 hrs.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Nearly half of the staff employed by New Zealand's largest port operator, Ports of Auckland, started a four-day strike today over a wage claim. The strike involves about 250 staff, mostly stevedores at the company's two container terminals. Four vessels will avoid the port during the strike, with the loss in cargo equating to about 3,500 containers, Ports of Auckland says. One shipping company, FESCO, says about 4,000 containers will be affected by the strike. FESCO has diverted two vessels to Wellington and will have to send containers back to Auckland overland. Spokesperson Craig Landon says the company has also held back containers, causing a backlog that could take months to clear. Rail operator Toll says it will put on extra services from Tauranga and Wellington to clear the cargo. Vessel movements in and out of the Auckland port and conventional wharves will not be affected by the action because they are staffed by labour from other companies.

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Pretoria station is back to normal after Friday's (Sep 3) strike by train drivers, Pretoria police reported. Trains are running as usual and police are patrolling the area, police spokesman Inspector Anton Breedt said. Train drivers went on strike after a woman train driver received "three cuts in the neck" when commuters became frustrated with trains not arriving on time. The driver was treated on the scene, Breedt said.

Awards & Settlements



FAILURE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SECURITY, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated today, states: A San Antonio upscale shopping mall has been hit with a \$6.5 million judgment in a lawsuit over a 2002 shooting death. A Bexar County jury found Thursday (Sep 2) that the Quarry Market bore responsibility for the death of Luis Gutierrez because the mall did not provide adequate security. Gutierrez's widow, Carol Furman, sued the mall after the February 2002 shooting outside the Quarry Market's movie theater. No one has been arrested for the killing. Gutierrez had been providing San Antonio police with information about a string of burglaries in the city. Juror Phillip Sanders told KENS-TV after the judgment that the Quarry Market clearly fell short in its security. Mall managers would not comment on the judgment, saying an appeal is likely.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated Sep 7, states: Durham County Hospital Corp. settled a malpractice lawsuit for \$4 million today, avoiding a lengthy trial on allegations that a newborn child developed cerebral palsy and other permanent neurological ailments because of negligent medical care. The settlement amount will be put into a trust and will provide a lifetime payout of \$13 million for the injured child, Jamion Cash of Person County. The settlement came just as the case was about to go to trial in Durham County Superior Court. Officials had predicted the proceedings would last about five weeks. The lawsuit alleged negligence on the part of Durham County Hospital Corp., which owns Durham Regional Hospital and contracts with Duke for its operation, and three physicians: Gregory Fisher, Stephanie Rand and Christine Hale, a pediatric resident at the time. The plaintiffs' attorney Tracy Lischer, without divulging the identity of her client, said the lawsuit might help prod medical-care providers into being more careful with newborn infants. She said the injury to Jamion Cash could easily have been prevented if the hospital had not discharged him too early, without properly examining and treating him. According to the lawsuit, Jamion was born prematurely Feb. 16, 2001, and soon was noted to be jaundiced. The infant was discharged two days later with no treatment for the jaundice and no scheduled follow-up appointment, the suit said. Four days after that, he was readmitted to the hospital for decreased feeding, fever and jaundice, the suit added. The suit said that Jamion developed kernicterus, a preventable, lifelong neurologic syndrome caused by severe jaundice. As a result, Jamion will suffer permanently from cerebral palsy, developmental disabilities and impaired vision, speech and hearing, according to the suit.

SEXUAL ASSAULT, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated Sep 2, states: Pennsylvania state police yesterday agreed to pay \$5 million to settle allegations that commanders failed to rein in a rogue trooper who was sexually assaulting women. The settlement covers civil lawsuits filed in federal court by four women, including one who was 14 in the late 1990s when she was assaulted by former trooper Michael Evans. Evans pleaded guilty to criminal charges in 2000 and is serving a five-to 10-year prison sentence. The women said several of his supervisors knew he had a history of unsavory conduct but never punished him or removed him from duty.

VICTIMS OF BANK ROBBERY, ISRAEL

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Israel Discount Bank has paid out \$10 million to settle 300 lawsuits filed by owners of safety deposit boxes robbed at its central branch in July, 2002. The bank is still

negotiating 70 more complex cases. The final compensation bill, estimated to reach \$20 million, will constitute the highest such award ever paid out in Israel. The awards are 75% of the value of the contents of the safes, even though legal sources say the rental contracts required clients to purchase insurance and exempted the bank from responsibility. The payments apparently stem from the bank's desire to avoid unnecessary legal proceedings. Only one client's lawsuit has so far actually gone to court. More than 400 safety deposit boxes were broken into and their contents stolen. The break-in was detected on a Sunday morning when the bank's employees arrived at work. According to an initial investigation, the burglars succeeded in breaking through one of the bank's entrances and then sawed through a reinforced cement wall to the room housing the safe deposit boxes. An eyewitness at the time reported the bank's alarm system rang for hours on the Saturday morning. A police source said at the time that the burglars were apparently extremely familiar with the location and its security measures. The source said it was not clear how many people took part in the robbery, but the job was clearly carried out by professionals with sophisticated equipment. As a result of the daring burglary, 360 lawsuits were filed against the bank. Some safety deposit box holders did not sue the bank as they had theft insurance on the contents of the boxes. In those cases, the claims were filed directly with the insurers. Discount Bank will eventually receive most of the payment back from its own insurer, Clal Insurance. Clal's reinsurers will end up footing the bill, so counsel to the reinsurance companies must vet every suit settled. Seventy clients are still negotiating with the bank. Reportedly, some customers were sent to take lie detector tests after they made initial statements regarding the lost contents of their boxes. They are represented by attorney Dror Hoter Ishai, while the bank is represented by Ram Caspi. The bank stated in response that it had reached compromise agreements with 70% of the safety deposit box holders affected by the robbery and that compensation was 75% of the debt.

Railway Accidents



ABERDEEN, MOORE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials are trying to figure out what caused a train derailment in Moore County. It happened this morning at South and Sycamore Streets in Aberdeen. Investigators say the CSX train was traveling from Hamlet to Raleigh. The

first 17 cars of the 80 car train derailed. Only 10 cars were loaded and none of the materials are hazardous. Crews are assessing damage to the cars and the tracks to see if the train can be righted. A two person crew was aboard the train but no one was injured.

BOLTON, MISSISSIPPI, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: At least one person was injured when a train carrying military equipment derailed in Bolton in central Mississippi on Sunday (Sep 5) and a boxcar slammed into a mobile home, officials said. Mississippi Emergency Management spokeswoman Lea Stokes said 20 cars belonging to the Kansas City Railroad left the track. She did not know where the train came from or where it was going. “The site of the wreck is mayhem with the scene of the box cars and iron crushed together,” said Steven Pickett, a deputy with the Hinds County Sheriff’s Department. “We’re very fortunate not to have sustained loss of life in this train derailment.” Pickett said rescuers from at least half a dozen law enforcement agencies and emergency services responded to the scene. Stokes said at least 10 M1 Abrams tanks overturned in the accident and FBI agents secured the scene. FBI agent Bob Garritty said the agency’s joint terrorism task force is on the scene because evidence of sabotage would give the federal agency jurisdiction over the investigation. Garritty said sabotage does not appear to be a factor. He said late Sunday officials with the National Transportation Safety Board and military officials would likely be on the scene soon. Pickett said a woman inside a mobile home that was struck by the train was taken to a hospital with nonlife-threatening injuries. Stokes said a box car also hit a gas line but crews on scene were able to stop that leak. There was also a diesel leak from one of the cars but that has been contained as well, she said.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials said a train track through Bolton should be ready for use today after almost 150 construction crew members, train workers, and military staff spent Labor Day moving rubble left by a derailment. At least one person was injured when a train carrying military equipment derailed Sunday (Sep 5) in Bolton and a boxcar slammed into a mobile home, officials said. FBI agents secured the scene. FBI agent Bob Garritty said the agency’s joint terrorism task force is at the scene because evidence of sabotage would give the federal agency jurisdiction over the investigation. Garritty said sabotage does not appear to be a factor.

FENI, BANGLADESH

Karachi, Sep 4 — Bangladesh Railways said three bogies of a Dhaka-bound goods train from Chittagong derailed early yesterday at Feni in south-eastern Bangladesh. As a result, traffic remained suspended between the port city and Dhaka and Sylhet for eight hours. Railway officials said the

bogies went off the tracks at about 0230 hrs, just after the train left Fazilpur Station. The incident also stranded other trains, at various points along the line. Train services on the routes resumed at about 1000 hrs after a relief train salvaged the bogies. — Lloyd’s List Correspondent.

KHANPUR AREA, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Sep 7 — Pakistan Railway said rail traffic on the main line between Karachi and Lahore was suspended yesterday evening after four bogies of the passengers train-Rohi Express (131-UP) derailed near Khanpur in Punjab Province of Pakistan. Mishap occurred soon after the train had left the Jaitha Buttha railway station. However, all the passengers were safe because the train was yet to pick up speed when the derailment occurred. Relief team was rushed to the spot from Sama Satta railway station. An official of railway said that track was cleared early this morning. He said that apparently the accident was caused by some technical fault but the accident will be investigated. — Lloyd’s List Correspondent.

SCHUYLER, HERKIMER COUNTY, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 5, states: Wreckage from yesterday’s accident in Schuyler along the Erie Canal is cleared. Twenty to thirty cars on a westbound CSX train flip off the track, sending emergency crews to the scene after learning one was carrying furfuryl alcohol, a potent chemical. The accident didn’t directly affect traffic on the Erie Canal, but the threat of a chemical spill led officials to shut it down between locks 19 and 20. That reopened at about 1000 this morning, but rail traffic was a different story. In Syracuse, Amtrak passengers headed to and from Albany are instead hopping aboard buses. It’s a temporary fix, but a problem during the busy Labor Day weekend. And back to the tracks, CSX is rushing to repair the damage. A test run at two yesterday is giving officials a ray of hope things will soon return to normal. Investigators still haven’t been able to determine the cause for the wreck. Rail safety officials are investigating.



ACCIDENTS IN COAL MINES, CHINA

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated today, states: A pair of coal mine accidents in a south China province killed at least 10 miners this weekend, leading local authorities to shut down other mines in the area for safety checks. A gas explosion yesterday at the Andesheng Coal Mine in Jinsha, a county in Guizhou province, killed 10 workers and an unknown number were

missing, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. Rescue efforts were under way, and the cause was being investigated. This morning, flooding at the Liuhe Coal Mine in Hezhang, also in Guizhou, trapped 10 miners underground, the agency reported. Rescuers were trying to reach them, and it wasn’t known whether they were dead or alive, it said. Following the accident in Jinsha, authorities closed all the mines in the county for inspections, Xinhua said.

COAL MINE FLOODED, GUIZHOU PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 5, states: Flooding this morning at the Liuhe Coal Mine in Hezhang, Guizhou province, trapped 10 miners underground, the Xinhua news agency reported. Rescuers were trying to reach them, and it was not known whether they were dead or alive, it said.

INFESTATION OF LOCUSTS ACROSS NORTH AND WEST AFRICA

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated Sep 4, states: Fresh appeals are being made for urgently needed international aid as swarms of locusts continue to spread across west Africa. The leaders of 12 nations have agreed a plan to fight the locusts. But a United Nations agency warns that it needs tens of millions of dollars in extra funding to stop a plague. The Food and Agriculture Organization says locusts have caused significant crop damage in several countries and the situation could worsen. It is warning that without urgent action this month the locusts could wreak havoc across west Africa. The locusts are multiplying at an alarming rate and many crops are coming close to harvest. In the past couple of months, huge swarms of locusts have moved from northern Africa to western African countries, in what is the worst such crisis to hit the region in 15 years. By responding quickly with pesticides, Arab countries managed to contain the damage, but in western Africa, where governments do not have the same resources to prevent the locusts from breeding, the situation is getting worse day by day. Many people in west Africa are small farmers and, if no way is found to stop the insects from breeding and spreading, there could be serious food shortages. West African leaders have pledged to co-operate with each other to combat the pests. They have appealed to international donors to help them by giving them pesticide and planes as soon as possible. The president of Mali and his cabinet said this week that they would forego a month’s salary, so the money could be used to help fight the locusts. But the FAO says only substantial and immediate international help can avert a crisis. It says of the \$100m it has repeatedly appealed for, it has only received or been pledged one-third of that amount.

OUTBREAK OF “BIRD FLU”

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Malaysia announced

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today its second outbreak of deadly bird flu in three weeks, near a northern village close to the border with Thailand where the disease was first detected. The Veterinary Department said the lethal H5N1 strain of avian influenza was believed to be the cause of the deaths of 10 chickens and 20 quail in Kampung Belian, a village five kilometres from the outbreak announced August 17. The discovery dashed plans to declare Malaysia free of the disease, which has caused massive losses among poultry farmers because of import bans imposed by the European Union, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan and the Philippines. Hawari Hussein, director-general of veterinary services, said the dead chickens and quails were recovered by inspection teams Friday (Sep 3) and that tests showed H5N1 was the likely culprit. The H5N1 strain of bird flu has been blamed for the deaths of at least 27 people this year in Vietnam and Thailand, and Asia has been on edge for months to stop it from spreading.

OVERSEAS MARILYN (U.S.A.)

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated Sep 8, states: Pathologists took extraordinary precautions today as they autopsied the body of a seafarer who may have died from a West African viral disease called Lassa fever on bulk *Overseas Marilyn* (15531 gt, built 1978), quarantined off the coast of Galveston. The man's name has not been released, but he was described as a healthy American in his early 30s. His body was brought to shore on Sunday (Sep 5) from the vessel. Although Lassa fever is hard to contract — humans usually catch it from contact with rodent droppings or urine — Galveston County Chief Medical Examiner Stephen Pustilnik closed down the building where he works during today's autopsy to avoid the risk of anyone becoming infected. Pustilnik, UTMB pathologist Dr. Judy Aronson and technicians who packaged body parts to be sent to the federal Centres for Disease Control donned suits that covered their bodies and used self-contained respirators with triple filters. The physicians also wore cut-resistant gloves to reduce the risk of any virus entering their bodies should a knife slip. Lassa fever is suspected in the death because the victim travelled through Nigeria during a voyage that brought him to the United States along with 19 other crew members. Lassa fever is common in West Africa, where most of the 150,000-300,000 annual cases occur and where about 5,000 people die from the disease each year, he said. "On the trip to the United States, the deceased began to show symptoms of headache, chills and nausea," Pustilnik said. "His illness progressed until he finally succumbed over approximately six days." The man first showed symptoms on Aug 25 and died on Aug 31, Pustilnik said. On that day, the vessel's operators, Pasadena-based OSG Shipping Management, contacted Galveston County health officials for advice on how to guard

against any infection spreading among the crew or on shore, Pustilnik said. County officials then called on University of Texas Medical Branch infectious disease and epidemiology experts, he said. It was decided the vessel would remain offshore of Galveston under voluntary quarantine until UTMB pathologists and federal Centres for Disease Control scientists determine the cause of the man's death, Pustilnik said. Pustilnik said it could take 24-48 hours after the federal laboratory in Atlanta receives tissue and fluids from the autopsy before the cause of the man's death is pinned down. (Note — *Overseas Marilyn* sailed Abidjan Aug 1.)



APARTMENT BUILDING, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: A Seattle man has been arrested in a major arson fire and authorities in his hometown say they want to question him about a rash of arson fires there. The 45-year-old man was arrested early yesterday as fire did an estimated US\$1.1 million in damage to a four-storey apartment building under construction in Vancouver, police said. Royal Canadian Mounted Police were investigating another overnight fire that destroyed a two-storey condominium complex under construction in suburban Richmond about an hour earlier.

COAL MINE, GUIZHOU PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 5, states: A gas explosion yesterday at the Andesheng Coal Mine in Jinsha, a county in Guizhou province, killed 10 workers and left an unknown number missing, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. Rescue efforts were under way, and the cause was being investigated. Following the accident, authorities closed all the mines in the county for inspections, Xinhua said.

FACTORY, COVENTRY, WEST MIDLANDS, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 120 firefighters have been tackling a severe blaze in Coventry. It broke out at the Timber To Go factory in Foleshill at around 0400, BST. The cause is under investigation. A fire service spokesman said there were no reports of any casualties and that it was one of the largest fires tackled in Coventry in recent years. Divisional Fire Officer Malcolm Hoare said it had been a difficult fire to tackle as it had found its way into the roof space of the factory. He said two or three other businesses nearby had also been affected by the blaze.

FOREST, INDONESIA

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Choking residents on Indonesia's haze-hit Sumatra island were today forced to inhale worsening fumes from forest and ground fires as authorities ran out of face masks to protect them, officials said. The governor of Sumatra's Jambi province had ordered health officials to distribute free masks as smoke from illegal land clearing practices thickened, disrupting flights and leaving residents with breathing problems. "We have already commandeered some 5,500 masks available from local pharmacies, and have directly distributed to residents downtown," said Wirman Nawawi, a health official in the provincial capital Jambi. "But we have no stocks at all, and we have to wait for the arrival of more from Jakarta," he added. The haze shortened visibility to about 100 metres by 0700, local time, but strong winds from the south began to dissipate clouds, extending visibility to 1,500 metres three hours later, said meteorologist Sahab. The early morning thick haze delayed an outgoing flight and an incoming one at Jambi's airport while another bound for Jakarta was cancelled, an airport official said. Education officials have called for temporary school closures if conditions worsen.

FORESTS, INDONESIA

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 1100 forest fires burning in central Indonesia have enveloped the region in a choking haze that's reduced air quality and delayed flights, officials said today. Bushfires have sent smoke billowing over large parts of Indonesia's Sumatra and Kalimantan islands in recent months, and the cloud has also spread to neighbouring Malaysia. Meteorologist Ahmad Hidayat said satellite images show 610 fires burning in Central Kalimantan and 502 in South Kalimantan. "The hot spots are spreading," he said. Air quality in both countries has dropped. Malaysian officials have warned the problem - which has occurred sporadically since 1997 - is hurting regional tourism. Commercial flights into Banjarmasin have been delayed since Thursday (Sep 2) as visibility dropped below 500 metres, said Lalu Sukaresi of the city's airport authority. Indonesia's central government has expressed concern about the fires, but insisted it was up to the regional governments to handle the matter. The regional governments, in turn, complain they have no money to fight the fires.

FURNITURE STORE, WREXHAM, WALES, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A serious fire in the centre of Wrexham has destroyed a furniture superstore and shut off roads in the middle of the town. Thirteen fire appliances have been fighting the blaze at Walmsley's Furnishings in Hill Street. The fire began just before 2330, BST, last night. Firefighters reported

that the building was on the verge of collapse by the early hours of this morning. The furniture store is at the rear of the historic Horse and Jockey pub in the centre of Wrexham's main shopping street. Roads in the area have been closed off and diversions are in place.

LIBRARY, WEIMAR, GERMANY

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of irreplaceable books were feared lost or damaged in a fire at one of Germany's most precious libraries, though some 6,000 historical works - including a 1534 Martin Luther Bible - were saved by a chain of people who spirited them away from the flames, officials said today. Officials were surveying the damage caused by yesterday night's fire in Weimar's Duchess Anna Amalia Library, housed in a 16th-century rococo-style palace. The fire broke out in a top floor and raged for two hours before firefighters put it out. The cause is under investigation. During the fire, workers managed to pass 6,000 books, including the Luther Bible and travel papers by naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt, hand-to-hand to safety before having to abandon their rescue attempts when the ceiling threatened to collapse, said Hellmut Seeman, president of the Weimar Classics Foundation. The area directly affected by the fire housed 12,000 to 13,000 historical books, according to Library director Michael Knoche. Officials were also worried about water and smoke damage to the rest of the collection.

MINE, KURE, TURKEY

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A fierce fire at a copper mine in north-western Turkey trapped dozens of workers inside, an official said. Five injured miners managed to escape. Rescue workers were unable to enter the mine in the town of Kure in Kastamonu province, some 185 miles north of the capital, said Gov. Alper Tanrisever. "There are some 30 or 35 workers trapped inside the mine," Tanrisever said. "We can't come near it, we're watching it from a distance." Tanrisever said smoke was seen raising from the air ventilation chimneys of the mine. Military units in the area provided gas masks for rescuers, but it was not clear when they would attempt to enter the mine. Five miners who managed to escape the flames injured were hospitalized, Tanrisever said. Some injured workers said the fire was very big inside the mine, private CNN-Turk television reported. Authorities said a spark during welding inside the tunnel apparently ignited gas squeezed inside. The copper mine is owned by Istanbul-based STFA company, company officials said.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire raged through a copper mine in northern Turkey yesterday, killing 19 workers and injuring 17 others. Rescuers were searching the smoke-clogged shafts to make sure no one was left inside. The miners were trapped 150m beneath the

surface when the blaze broke out yesterday morning in the mine in the town of Kure, 300km north of Ankara. A mine official said welding had sparked the flames. It took rescuers four hours to douse the blaze. They needed military-issue gas masks to enter the smoke-filled mine in search of survivors, who had fled to the lower levels. Relatives of the trapped miners waited for hours at the entrance of the mine as the tragedy unfolded. Seventeen miners, some suffering from smoke inhalation, and 19 bodies were brought to the surface by rescuers, the Anatolia news agency said.

PREMISES, SALEM, OREGON, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire demolished a Salem window-tinting business early yesterday at 1725 Silverton Road NE. The building had housed Creative Customs and was a storage space for a home-decor business. The two-alarm fire took 28 Salem firefighters 30 minutes to control from outside the structure, fire department spokesman Bill Holmstrom said. A battalion chief decided that it was unsafe for firefighters to go into the burning building. Flames shot 40 feet into the air as firefighters arrived at 0417 hrs. The roof collapsed about 15 minutes later, Holmstrom said, sending a ball of fire into the air. Damage was estimated at \$1 million for the building and contents, which included four vehicles inside the shop.

REFINERY, FALCONARA, ITALY

Ancona, Sep 9 — Bitumen deposit c/o local refinery A.P.I. S.p.A. in Falconara Marittima had a fire following an explosion Sep 8. One lorry driver was killed and three other drivers were seriously injured. Causes are still unknown. Authorities are investigating. — Lloyd's Agents.

SCHOOL, ARNOLD, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A comprehensive school in Nottinghamshire has been closed after a fire ripped through the site yesterday. More than 90 firefighters tackled the blaze at Arnold Hill Comprehensive School in Arnold. Around 1,500 pupils have been told by the headteacher to stay at home for the day. The building was badly damaged and an investigation into the cause of the fire is under way. Station officer Mick Straw said: "The premises have been badly damaged by fire and smoke with 50% to 60% of the lower school buildings effected - mostly classrooms." A section of Gedling Road in Arnold was closed off after the fire.

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Fire has destroyed 16 classrooms at a Nottinghamshire comprehensive school. More than 90 firefighters tackled the blaze at Arnold Hill School in Arnold yesterday. About 1,500 pupils have been told to stay at home by the head teacher who said staff were "devastated". The school is to re-

open on Monday (Sep 13). An investigation is under way into the cause of the fire, which started at about 2030 BST. Arson has not been ruled out by investigators. We will pick ourselves up and come back even stronger Robin Fugill, Head teacher Station officer Mick Straw said: "The premises have been badly damaged by fire and smoke with 50% to 60% of the lower school buildings effected - mostly classrooms." Head teacher Robin Fugill said: "It looks like we have got 16 classrooms that have definitely been damaged beyond repair. "There is a possibility, depending on access to the school, that that could extend to 25 classrooms."

SCHOOL, NAILSEA, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A school which was badly damaged after an arson attack in September 2003 reopened today. Kingshill Primary School in Nailsea moved to a temporary site at Four Oaks Infant School after the fire damaged the hall, kitchen and classrooms. The work, which cost £1m, saw the rooms redecorated, furniture replaced, and offices refurbished. Cllr Peter Kehoe said: "I would like to thank parents for their patience, understanding and support." The work, allowing the school's 153 pupils to return, was completed in mid-August.

STORAGE FACILITY, SAN DIEGO, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated today, states: A three-alarm fire raced through a south-eastern San Diego storage facility yesterday, triggering the evacuation of a nearby school and jamming area traffic. The blaze at Midtown Mini Storage began about 1330 hrs. It was brought under control in 90 minutes, after dozens of firefighters and four ladder trucks were sent to the building at Cedar and 38th streets, fire officials said. Firefighters tried to attack the fire from inside the building, but when the walls began to give way, they were ordered out, Battalion Chief Ron Ballard said. "The walls of the structure buckled and caved in," Ballard said. Firefighters on the ladder trucks and a cherry picker poured streams of water through the roof, which was quickly consumed by flames that reached 40 feet or more. For several minutes, flames whipped through the roof for nearly the entire length of the building, roughly that of a football field. The fire sent black smoke over the neighborhood, and onto the grounds of Rowan Elementary School. The cause of the fire has not been determined and damage estimates were not available yesterday.

WAREHOUSES, AL QUSAIS, DUBAI

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire engulfed four stationery warehouses in the Al Qusais industrial area No 3 yesterday before firefighters extinguished the blaze after battling it for more than five hours. "The fire began at about 0330 hrs in the corner of the middle warehouse and spread quickly due to the nature of the

materials inside and a strong wind," said Major Ebrahim Al Tamimi, chief of the operations department at Dubai Civil Defence. The warehouses were all housed in one structure. Firemen at the scene could not confirm what started the fire, which happened close to Damascus Street. Three ambulances were parked nearby, but paramedics reported no injuries. Maj Al Tamimi said fire trucks and water tanks were called to battle the fire. First on the scene were firemen from the Al Qusais fire station, quickly followed by firefighters from Hamriya, Karama and Rashidiya. With the fire still not under control and with winds fanning the flames, all fire crews were called in. An extra water tanker was needed from Sharjah as black smoke continued to pour out of one of the warehouses at 0800 hrs. At the same time, a Civil Defence demolition vehicle was used to knock down parts of the warehouse to allow firefighters to get inside. Sanjiv Paer, owner of one of the warehouses, had no idea what caused the fire as he watched supplies worth more than Dh2 million go up in smoke. "We check our fire alarms every evening... I don't know about the others," he said. Omar, an employee at Royal Papers Cardboard Trading, came with colleagues to watch the fire and salvage what they could. He said the warehouse stored materials worth about \$500,000. The owner of the structure, Saleh Mohammad Bin Ishaq, stood at another side of the building as his employees loaded undamaged wooden panels onto a pickup truck.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 2 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire in the Badlands burned about 4,000 acres and sent flames 80 feet into the air today, and fire officials feared the blaze could quickly grow because of high winds and drought conditions. "We have a very serious fire here," Forest Service spokeswoman Colleen Reinke said. "The fire weather is expected to be very severe today. It is zero percent contained." "In the worst-case scenario, this has the potential to go to 10,000 acres," she said. The fire, burning in a sparsely populated area full of dry grass and timber in south-western North Dakota, began yesterday afternoon. The fire was caused by people, although the exact cause was under investigation, said Ron Jablonski, a ranger for the U.S. Forest Service. Firefighters evacuated a lodge in the fire's path today. Reinke did not know how many people were involved. "This is burning in heavily timbered areas and grassy areas as well," Reinke said. "It's a real mix down there, but when it gets into the trees, the flame length is pretty extreme." Some stands of rare ponderosa pine burned, she said. The forecast called for temperatures in the 80s and wind up to 25 mph, making the blaze very dangerous for firefighters, Reinke said.

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A wildfire in north-western Colorado more than doubled in size today, growing to 550 acres from about 200. The fire has closed one

access road to Dinosaur National Monument and is threatening an unknown number of homes. One home has been evacuated. Other structures are being threatened. The Yampa Valley Electric Association reports that three power poles have burned. It's unclear how many electric customers have been affected. The fire started last night and is burning mostly on private land near the monument. The cause isn't known. Four heavy air tankers, five fire engines, two water tenders and 20 firefighters were on the scene earlier today. High winds grounded the air tankers for a while. (See issue of Sep 6.)

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated Sep 4, states: A wind-driven wildfire which started yesterday has quickly burned 14,000 acres of brush and timber yesterday as it bore down on Sonoma County's wine country and threatened to knock out power to parts of Northern California. Dana Cole, a division chief with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection who was monitoring the Sonoma blaze said "Right now we have no control on the head of the fire." By early afternoon, the fire had raced down the Mayacamas Mountains to within a few miles of vineyards in the Alexander Valley, which straddles the Russian River and draws tourists to dozens of wineries. Ash from the fire fell at the Sausal Winery in Healdsburg as helicopters did laps over the vineyard, scooping up water from nearby lakes to drop on the flames that CDF said were advancing at one mph. It was the largest of a several fires burning in California, where fire danger has been extreme due to low humidity, high winds and dry tinder. Another blaze sparked by a burning motor home yesterday destroyed 11 homes in the Sierra foothills of Calaveras County and burned 2,737 acres of grass, oaks and chaparral. It also forced 3,000 people to evacuate and threatened 1,400 homes and 100 businesses in rural subdivisions. It was 65 percent contained last night, said Ben Hector, a CDF spokeswoman. CDF estimated it would be fully contained by today.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 5, states: Firefighters today battled a 9,200-acre wildfire that was bearing down on California's prized wine country and threatening to knock out power to parts of northern California. A second blaze in the Sierra Nevada foothills destroyed 13 homes and 45 other buildings as low humidity, high winds and tinderbox-dry terrain made conditions throughout the state ideal for wildfires. The fire threatening Sonoma County's wine country began on Friday (Sep 3) and was fuelled by wind gusts of up to 20 mph, said Janet Marshall, spokeswoman for the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The blaze, which threatened about 100 homes, was only 10% contained by this morning, Marshall said. The fire raced down the Mayacamas Mountains to within a few miles of some of Sonoma County's many vineyards. Ash fell on Sausal Winery as helicopters did laps over the vineyard, scooping up water from nearby lakes to

drop on the flames. Major power lines from 21 generating plants in The Geysers, the world's largest geothermal power facility, also cross over rugged terrain near the fire, creating the possibility of black-outs. Two-thirds of the plants and two of three transmission lines were shut down yesterday, said Kent Robertson, a spokesman for Calpine Corp. Pacific Gas and Electric, which owns the lines, was rerouting electricity from other plants to keep the lights on, said spokesman David Eisenhauer. The Sierra foothills blaze, which was sparked on Friday by a burning recreational vehicle, had burned 2,676 acres by today. It forced 3,000 people to evacuate and threatened 1,400 homes and 100 businesses in rural subdivisions. The fire was 85% contained today.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Hot dry winds hampered the efforts of firefighters battling a 9,200-acre wildfire in California wine country today, and promised no respite for the next two days. The fire in Sonoma County began Friday (Sep 3) and was fed by tinder-dry vegetation and strong winds yesterday. It destroyed a handful of homes and threatened 125 more plus a geothermal energy plant near Geyserville. Fire officials said four homes, eight outbuildings and 12 cars were destroyed by the fire Saturday night. The area had been evacuated and one firefighter suffered a serious knee injury, said Janet Marshall, spokeswoman for the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. That fire was only 10% contained by yesterday afternoon, she said. A new 40-acre wildfire that broke out yesterday afternoon several hundred miles north in Amador County forced fire officials to divert some firefighting aircraft from Sonoma County, Marshall said. No structures were threatened and firefighters were making good progress in containing the Amador fire, CDF volunteer Rebecca Vatalaro said. A third fire in the Sierra foothills in Calaveras County destroyed 13 homes and 45 outbuildings but was expected to be fully contained by yesterday evening. The 2,676-acre fire was sparked by a burning motor home Friday and forced the evacuation of 3,000 people from rural subdivisions. By midday yesterday, winds were milder at 3 mph to 10 mph, but they were more erratic, making for difficult and dangerous firefighting conditions, Marshall said. Fire officials estimated it might be two or three more days before the Sonoma County fire would be contained. On Saturday, two-thirds of the plants and two of three transmission lines were shut down, said Kent Robertson, a spokesman for Calpine Corp. Pacific Gas and Electric, which owns the lines. The company rerouted electricity from other plants to keep the lights on. No outages were reported, though heavy smoke and soot on power lines could cause the lights to flicker in some homes, he said.

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Firefighters were

hampered by erratic wind and low humidity today as they made slow progress against a fire that had burned nearly 12,000 acres and four homes in the Northern California wine country. The fire, which started Friday north-east of here in Sonoma County, had been 20 percent contained, and full containment was not expected until Wednesday (Sep 8), said Janet Marshall, spokeswoman for the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The unpredictable wind and dry vegetation, compounded by uneven and often steep terrain, made the situation dangerous for the 1,875 firefighters, Marshall said. Six firefighters had been injured but none critically. In addition to the four homes, eight outbuildings and 12 cars had been destroyed. About 40 residents had been evacuated from the area, about 60 miles north of San Francisco, including occupants of six homes ordered evacuated this morning, Marshall said.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated Sep 7, states: An infusion of fresh manpower helped firefighters gain the upper hand today on a wildfire that had burned across more than 12,500 acres and destroyed four homes in Northern California's wine country. Cooler, moist air that had been forecast for the region failed to materialise during the night, but the extra personnel more than compensated for the poor weather, said Janet Marshall, spokeswoman for the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. With more than 2,600 firefighters on the front lines, up from 1,110 a day earlier, officials said the blaze in Sonoma and Lake counties was 85% contained this morning, up from just 35% the night before. Full containment of the fire, in uneven and often steep terrain, was not expected until tomorrow, she said. The blaze started on Friday (Sep 3) about 60 miles north of San Francisco and has fed on tinder-dry brush, with flames driven by dry, unpredictable wind. Authorities were initially concerned that the fire would threaten the vineyard area of Sonoma's Alexander Valley, but the fire shifted direction from south to east. The vineyards are not considered threatened now, Marshall said. In addition to the four vacation homes, the fire had destroyed eight outbuildings and an electrical equipment storage vault owned by a local utility, Marshall said. About 40 residents had been evacuated. Seven firefighters were injured. State officials gave Calpine Corp and Pacific Gas & Electric Co permission today to fire up major power lines through the area that had been shut down to prevent injuries to firefighters, Marshall said.

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: The threat of a wildfire to California's vineyards has declined. The blaze in Sonoma and Lake counties, which started on Friday (Sep 3) and threatened the vineyard area of Sonoma's Alexander Valley, was 85% contained yesterday morning, up from just 35% the night before. The wildfire has been mostly brought under control after an extra 1,500 firefighters were

sent in to tackle the blaze. The threat to vineyards receded when wind forced the blaze to change direction.



AIRCRAFT MISSING ON FLIGHT FROM GROZNY, CHECHNYA, TO NORTH OSSETIA

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A Russian helicopter with three crew members on board is reported to be missing, shortly after flying out of Chechnya's capital Grozny for the neighbouring republic of North Ossetia. The Interfax news agency says ground control lost contact with the Mi-8 transport helicopter half an hour after it took off and search efforts have since been launched. The Mi-8 is a twin-propeller helicopter designed in 1960 and several of the helicopters have crashed in recent years generally due to inadequate maintenance. However, the aircraft have also been a frequent target for Chechen rebels.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A missing Mi-8 helicopter of the Russian Interior Ministry has been found crashed in Ingushetia today, local press reported. Two crew members were found dead at the crash site while a third was seriously injured, the report said. The injured pilot has been taken to hospital in Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia, an official of the Defense Ministry told the Itar-Tass news agency. The official said bad weather was probably the main cause of the accident. The helicopter left from Grozny-Severny en route to Magas, Ingushetia, at 1830, Moscow time, yesterday and airport authorities lost contact with the aircraft half an hour later.

C-FPRU

London, Sep 7 — The float equipped Piper PA-11, registration C-FPRU, was landing at Wabigoon Lake, Ontario, at 1558, Sep 6. After landing the aircraft overturned and capsized. The pilot and passenger exited the aircraft without injury and were picked up by boaters. The pilot reported that the landing was into the wind, and as the aircraft came off the step, a gust of wind lifted the left wing, the right wing dipped into the water and the aircraft overturned.

C-GRKT

London, Sep 3 — Rockwell 114, C-GRKT, was cruising at approximately 1300 feet and 130 knots when the aircraft hit a large bird at 1329, PDT, Aug 6. The aircraft sustained substantial damage to the left outboard wing section. The pilot was able to fly the aircraft back to Ottawa where he declared an emergency and landed without further incident.

CRASH, BORNEO ISLAND, MALAYSIA

London, Sep 3 — A press report, dated today, states: A helicopter has crashed

in Malaysia's Sarawak state on Borneo island, killing all four people on board, the Bernama news agency reported. The privately chartered Bell helicopter, owned by Hornbill Skyways, crashed 112km from state capital Kuching, just fifteen minutes after take-off from the local airport, Sarawak Public Utility Minister Awang Tengah Ali Hassan was quoted as saying. "The helicopter crash site was in a forest near an oil palm estate. The helicopter was completely burnt. No one survived," he said, adding that the state government has ordered a suspension of all Hornbill Skyways flights.

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Life in Sarawak has been badly disrupted by the Malaysian government's grounding of the entire fleet of helicopters belonging to state-owned Hornbill Skyways. The grounding order was given after Sarawak's third helicopter crash in two months last Friday (Sep 3) claimed the lives of four people on board a Bell 206 JetRanger helicopter operated by Hornbill. Without the helicopters, Sarawak's flying doctor service to more than 100,000 people in remote areas will have to be suspended. Baram MP Datuk Jacob Sagan said residents depended entirely on the flying doctors for regular check-ups, treatment and medication. The state education department has also felt the effects of the grounding, being unable to send primary school assessment papers to outlying areas such as Kapit and Kanowit, which are inaccessible by road or river. The upcoming Ba'Kelalan by-election will also be affected by the grounding as helicopters are needed for commuting to the constituency. Engine failure was the probable cause of the latest crash, according to initial investigations by the Department of Civil Aviation. "The pilot made a mayday call seconds before the helicopter crashed. This indicates that he must have encountered serious mechanical problems," said DCA spokesman Yahaya Abdul Rahman. "We believe there was a sudden loss of power, indicating that it had something to do with the engine." Seven people died in a Hornbill helicopter crash on Jul 12.

CRASH, LA NORIA AREA, MEXICO

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated Sep 6, states: Three occupants of an Oaxaca state government Cessna aircraft died when the aircraft crashed, state government authorities said yesterday. Citizen Protection secretary JosE Manuel Vera Salinas announced that the aircraft apparently experienced mechanical problems on Saturday (Sep 4) as it was flying from the coastal resort town of Santa Maria Huatulco and crashed in the town of La Noria, in Ejutla de Crespo municipality, some 100 km south of the city of Oaxaca. The three men killed were aviation technicians who had been dispatched to that municipality to repair state Governor Jose Murat's aircraft, which broke down on Friday. The men who died were identified as pilot Capt. Armando Benjamin Tello and mechanics Regulo Garcia and Eliseo

Acosta Navarro. The authorities have begun an investigation into the crash. After having a look at the wreckage, officials speculated that one of the aircraft's wings broke off before the aircraft went down.

CRASH, PORT ANGELES AREA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Two men flying a search-and-rescue mission crashed their aircraft and walked away shaken but unhurt. Pilot Robert Losey, 56, of Silverdale, and passenger Paul Gardner, 40, of Olympia, were on a mission Sunday (Sep 5) for Washington State Aviation Air Search and Rescue. They were looking for Dr. Richard Meyers, 50, a Sequim dentist who has been missing since he left La Push Tuesday to go fishing. The Coast Guard suspended its search after finding the boat washed ashore with its engine running. The men's four-seat Cessna 172 crashed into a creek bed Sunday afternoon north of U.S. Highway 101 about 6 miles west of Port Angeles. Gardner said the aircraft ran out of gas. Paramedics treated the two at the scene and took them to Olympic Medical Center in Port Angeles for observation.

CRASH, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Two people are believed to have died in a helicopter crash on a property in Queensland's south-west. A police spokeswoman said the privately owned chopper was thought to have been carrying a male pilot and a passenger. The helicopter had taken off yesterday for a flight around the property near Mitchell and was due back at 1830 hrs. But it failed to return. Police found its wreckage this morning around 1.5 km from the property's airstrip.

EMERGENCY LANDING AT KANSAI AIRPORT, JAPAN

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A Federal Express cargo plane bound for Anchorage from Shenzhen in China made an emergency landing at Kansai International Airport near Osaka late tonight due to engine trouble, airport officials said. Federal Express Flight 24 reported the trouble to the airport office of the Land, Infrastructure and Transport Ministry at around 2245 hrs, and landed about 25 minutes later, the officials said. Federal Express is investigating the cause of the engine trouble, they said.

EMERGENCY LANDING, LAHORE AIRPORT, PAKISTAN

London, Sep 7 — A press report, dated today, states: A Pakistani aircraft with 276 people on board was forced to make an emergency landing soon after take-off from the eastern city of Lahore when one of its engines caught fire, an official said today. The state-run Pakistan International Airlines' Airbus 300 landed safely at Lahore airport, and no injuries or major damage was reported. The PIA flight PK-643 was carrying 261 passengers and 15 crew members to the Saudi capital, Riyadh. The engine fire

was caused by a "technical fault," said Nasrullah Khan, director of Lahore airport. Khan said the flight took off an hour later using a different PIA aircraft.

EMERGENCY LANDING, NAWABSHAH AIRPORT, SINDH PROVINCE, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Sep 6 — Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) said this morning that one of its aircraft made an emergency landing in interior Sindh yesterday due to engine problems. An official of state run national airline said the Fokker flight PK 50 with 16 passengers on board landed at the Nawabshah airport due to some technical problem on Sunday (Sep 5). The flight, which took off from Karachi, was bound for Moen-jo-Daro. The passengers left Nawabshah airport onboard another aircraft, which arrived from Karachi after three hours. The aircraft has been brought back, later at Karachi, after repair and an enquiry is being made to ascertain facts. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

EMERGENCY LANDING, PRESTWICK AIRPORT, SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM,

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: The pilot of a transatlantic aircraft carrying almost 300 people was forced to make an emergency landing at Prestwick Airport following a suspected fire in the cargo hold. The incident occurred at 0800, yesterday when an alarm light on board the McDonnell-Douglas DC10 belonging to Northwest Airlines, indicated a fire in the aircraft's hold. The pilot, who had been heading to Gatwick Airport in London from Minneapolis, diverted the aircraft - which was carrying 280 people - to Prestwick, the closest suitable airport, where three fire engines, a cherry picker and 20 fire men were waiting to deal with any potential blaze. A spokesman for Prestwick Airport said: "When the plane landed, it was discovered that there was in fact no fire in the hold, and that a faulty switch had caused the alarm. "The pilot was completely correct in his decision to bring the plane here."

INCIDENT AT HOBBY AIRPORT, HOUSTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 4 — A press report, dated Sep 3, states: A plane skidded off a runway at Hobby Airport this afternoon because of a tyre problem. The Gulfstream 4 plane landed between 1500 hrs and 1600 hrs, on Runway 12 Right when one of its tyres blew. The plane then skidded off the runway and got stuck in the mud. Airport officials estimate it will take several hours before the plane is moved and the runway is reopened. No one was injured. The accident will not delay any other flights, according to authorities.

INCIDENT AT LOS ANGELES AIRPORT, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated Sep 4, states: US officials at Los

Angeles International Airport (LAX) said an explosion of flashlight batteries and a screening breach caused the shutdown of the bustling airport this morning. Tom Bradley International Terminal was evacuated after a small explosion occurred at the screening station when passenger screeners were checking the bag of a passenger on the north side of the checkpoint. Several people were reported to be slightly injured in the blast. "The passenger with the bag is being questioned. Preliminary reports indicate the explosion may have been caused by flashlight batteries, but the investigation is ongoing," an unidentified airport official said. In another unrelated incident at 0730 hrs, (1530, UTC), a person reportedly went up the exit lane of passenger screening at Terminal 8 and bypassed security. The security breach forced the evacuation of terminals 5, 6, 7, and 8, which are connected, and the passengers inside the terminals were all re-screened. Paul Turk, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration, said flights were not being allowed to depart, while inbound flights were being allowed to land but passengers were not being taken off the plane. Traffic was diverted from the airport, and vehicles were ordered to park in the parking lots near the airport.

INCIDENT ON A FLIGHT FROM BRISBANE TO THEODORE AREA, AUSTRALIA

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: An investigation is underway after a rear cabin door fell off a twin-engine aircraft over central Queensland. The incident, involving a Beechcraft King-Air, happened yesterday on a flight from Brisbane to a property near Theodore. Two people were on board the aircraft that landed safely at the Thangool airport. Australian Transport Safety Bureau spokesman Alan Stray says they are hoping to recover the missing door.

N124A

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated Sep 8, states: A broken air filter and pilot error combined to cause an aircraft crash that killed the pilot and three skydivers last June, federal investigators said. Aluminum from the air filter went into the aircraft's combustion chamber, causing the aircraft to lose power, the National Transportation Safety Board found. In addition, the pilot killed in the crash was wrong not to try an emergency landing sooner after the aircraft lost power, the NTSB said. Charles Bryant, of Greensburg, the owner of the Cessna 205 (N124A) and the operator of a skydiving business, was one of three skydivers killed in the crash. A fourth skydiver was badly hurt, but he was unable to help investigators reconstruct the crash because he did not remember it. Authorities said they still did not know what caused the aircraft's air filter to break in the first place. The aircraft crashed on Jun 15, 2003, shortly after take-off from Greensburg-

Jeannette Regional Airport, about 20 miles south-east of Pittsburgh. Witnesses said they heard the aircraft's engine sputter shortly after take-off. It appeared that the pilot began turning back to the airport, but then attempted to continue flying when the engine regained power. The engine then cut completely and the aircraft crashed.

N1907Y

London, Sep 8 — Mooney M-20D (Master) N1907Y crashed near Pagosa Springs, Colorado, at 1510, Sep 6, following take-off from Pagosa Springs. The one person on board was killed.

N25646

London, Sep 9 — McDonnell Douglas DC-3 (Dakota) N25646 made an emergency landing at Laredo, Texas, at 1620, Sep 5, after losing an engine while on a flight from Laredo to Deming, New Mexico.

N2899M

London, Sep 6 — A press report, dated Sep 5, states: A small aircraft crashed in south-west Alaska, killing two men on a caribou hunting trip, Alaska State Troopers said today. The crash occurred Saturday (Sep 4) about 13 miles northeast of the village of Koliganek west of Iliamna, a popular fishing and hunting area. There were no known witnesses. The pilot is believed to be a 31-year-old resident of Bigfork, Mont., and the passenger a 37-year-old resident of Sykesville, Md., but authorities said they were waiting for the bodies to be positively identified by the state medical examiner before releasing their names. The two were the only people on board the aircraft when it went down. A pilot flying over the wreckage reported the crash Saturday afternoon, said trooper Jeff Laughlin in Dillingham. A flight plan had not been filed, which slowed efforts to identify the occupants of the single-engine Piper PA-12. The National Transportation Safety Board was en route to the crash site Saturday to begin its investigation, according to the Federal Aviation Administration.

London, Sep 8 — Piper PA-12 (Super Cruiser) N2899M crashed near Dillingham, Alaska, at 2225, Sep 4. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N3047A

London, Sep 8 — Air Tractor AT-401B N3047A crashed near Bainbridge, Georgia, at 0012, Sep 4. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

N79307

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated Sep 4, states: A vintage World War II plane crashed in a pasture shortly after it took off today, killing two men, authorities said. Witnesses Jeff Horn and his wife, Dora, told the Corsicana Daily Sun that the 1943 Fairchild PT26 had just taken off from the Corsicana Municipal Airport when the engine stalled, sending the plane crashing to the ground. Passenger Robert Bursleson of Corsicana was killed. The pilot, Cliff

McCluney of Kerens, died later at a hospital. Authorities said both men were in their 60s. The Federal Aviation Administration, the Texas Department of Public Safety and the local sheriff's department were investigating.

London, Sep 8 — Fairchild M-62A-3 (Cornell) N79307 crashed near Corsicana, Texas, at 1700, Sep 4. The aircraft was destroyed. One of the two persons on board was killed and the other was seriously injured.

RA-65080

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Russian police have arrested two suspects in connection with the crashes of two aircrafts a fortnight ago which are part of a string of attacks over the last month blamed on Chechen separatists. Local authorities initially said the nearly simultaneous downing of two airliners was a freak coincidence, but began a criminal investigation after finding traces of explosives in the wreckage of both aircrafts. At least 89 people died. Although Russian officials have declined to blame separatists for the crashes, the local media speculated that two passengers believed to be Chechen women blew up the aircrafts, which crashed days before an election in the war-torn province. An Islamic group, calling itself the "Islambouli Brigades", has also claimed responsibility in a statement released via the Internet.

Space Vehicles



GENESIS

London, Sep 8 — A press report, dated today, states: The Genesis space capsule, which had orbited the sun for more than three years in an attempt to find clues to the origin of the solar system, crashed to Earth today after its parachute failed to deploy. It wasn't immediately known whether cosmic samples it was carrying back as part of a six-year, \$260-million project had been destroyed. NASA officials believed the fragile disks that held the atoms would shatter even if the capsule hit the ground with a parachute. Hollywood stunt pilots had taken off in helicopters to hook the parachute but the refrigerator-sized capsule \emptyset holding a set of fragile disks containing billions of atoms collected from solar wind \emptyset hit the desert floor without the parachute opening. The impact drove the capsule halfway underground. NASA engineers feared the explosive for the parachute might still be alive and ready to fire, keeping helicopter crews at bay. "That presents a safety hazard to recovery crews," said Chris Jones, solar system exploration director for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The helicopters were supposed to snatch the capsule's parachute with a hook as it floated down at 400 feet a minute, or more than six feet per second. However, the capsule tumbled out of control. It was

supposed to be spinning at 15 revolutions a minute to slice evenly through the atmosphere but camera images showed it tumbling instead. Scientists hoped the capsule's charged atoms — a "billion billion" of them — would reveal clues about the origin and evolution of our solar system, said Don Burnett, Genesis principal investigator and a nuclear geochemist at California Institute of Technology. "We have for years wanted to know the composition of the sun," Burnett said before the crash. He said scientists had expected to analyse the material "one atom at a time." Genesis had been moving in tandem with Earth outside its magnetic shield on three orbits of the sun. Together, the charged atoms captured over 884 days on the capsule's disks of gold, sapphire, diamond and silicone were no bigger than a few grains of salt but scientists say that would be enough to reconstruct the chemical origin of the sun and its family of planets.

Product Recalls



AC POWER ADAPTERS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Sep 2 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of about 225,000 AC Power Adapters in voluntary cooperation with International Business Machines (IBM) Corp., of Armonk, N.Y. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. Manufacturer Delta Electronics Inc., of Taipei, Taiwan. The adapters can overheat, cause damage to the circuit board and melt through the housing, which poses a fire and electrical shock hazard to consumers. IBM has received six reports of incidents, including some with minor property damage. No injuries have been reported. The recalled 56W AC power adapters were shipped primarily with IBM ThinkPad i Series, 390 and 240 Series, and s Series notebook computers. The adapters have three hollow pins at the AC inlet and part number 02K6549 on a label on the top of the unit. The IBM logo appears on top of the unit. Adapters with solid pins are not included in this recall. Sold at electronics and computer stores nationwide, the IBM Web site, phone orders, mail-order catalogs, and resellers sold the adapters with the ThinkPad computers from January 1999 through August 2000. The adapters also were sold as an accessory during that time for about \$55. Manufactured in China. Consumers should unplug the recalled adapters from the wall outlet immediately and contact IBM for a free replacement unit. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

AC POWER ADAPTERS, WORLD-WIDE

London, Sep 5 — A press report, dated Sep 4, states: IBM said on Thursday

(Sep 1) it will recall about 553,000 AC power adapters world-wide for several models of its laptop computers because of potential fire and electrical shock hazards. The 56-watt adapters can overheat, because damage to the circuit board and melt through the case, the company and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission said. The agency said it received six reports of incidents and some property damage but no injuries. About 225,000 of the adapters are being recalled in the United States. The power adapters were shipped mostly with IBM ThinkPad i Series, ThinkPad 390 and 240 Series and a limited number of ThinkPad s Series laptop computers and have the part number 02K6549, the agency said. The computers were sold between January 1999 and August 2000, and the adapters were also available as an accessory for \$55. They were manufactured by Delta Electronics Inc. of Taipei, Taiwan. The CPSC urged owners to immediately unplug the adapters and contact IBM for a free replacement.

ELECTRIC SCOOTERS, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Target Corp. is recalling 58,950 electric scooters because faulty wiring and poor insulation can pose fire or shock hazards, the Consumer Product Safety Commission said today. Minneapolis-based Target has received five reports of property damage, including two house fires, caused by the Leoch Electric Scooters and 13 reports of scooters starting or moving on their own, with one person receiving minor scratches. The commission said the two-wheeled scooters, also known as Red Dragon or E-Scooter, may have improper wiring that causes a short circuit and bad insulation that exposes electrical wiring. The recalled scooters, manufactured by Leoch E-Vehicle Co. of China, bear model number DK24350-3. They were sold in Target stores nationwide for about \$200 from February 2003 through June 2004. Consumers are advised to stop using the scooters and return them to Target for a refund.

FORD MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated Sep 8, states: Ford Motor Co. is recalling 40,031 Ford Freestar and Mercury Monterey minivans because cracks could form in the wheel hubs, the company said yesterday. Minivans from the 2004 model year are involved in the recall. The Freestar and the Monterey were new vehicles in Ford's lineup this year. Ford spokesman Glenn Ray said internal testing showed that cracks could form in the steel hub, which connects the wheels to the axle. Ray said there have been no customer complaints or injuries due to that defect and dealers will correct the problem for free. Ray also said the company is recalling 1,700 F-150 pickups from the 2004 model year because the fuel tank could leak if it gets too hot. Ray said there also have been no customer complaints or injuries due to that

defect, which was discovered during company tests. Dealers also will correct that problem for free. Ford plans to begin notifying customers of both recalls within the next few weeks, Ray said.

HONDA MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Honda Motor Co. said today it is recalling 111,510 minivans sold in Japan to fix problems with the vehicles' headlights. Dealerships in Japan reported 42 cases of a defective seal around the headlamps letting in water, which short-circuited the lights, Honda said in a statement. There were no reports of accidents caused by the problem, it said. Affected by the recall are 111,510 Stream minivans sold in Japan and produced between October 2000 and February 2002. The model is sold overseas but those vehicles are fitted with different headlights, Honda spokesman Kazuro Suda said. The announcement comes after Honda on Tuesday (Sep 7) said it was recalling 158,187 other cars sold in Japan and some 40 other countries to fix similar problems with headlights or faulty taping that covers electric circuits in the trunks of some vehicles.

HONDA MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

Detroit, Sep 3 — Honda Motor Co. Ltd is recalling 69,538 of its popular Odyssey minivans because of potential engine stalling problems linked to their fuel pumps. — Reuters.

LASER PRINTERS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Sep 7 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of 39,431 Lexmark, Dell and IBM Laser Printers in voluntary co-operation with Lexmark International Inc., of Lexington, Ky. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. These printers can short-circuit, posing an electrical shock hazard to consumers. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibilities of incidents or injury. The recall includes Lexmark, Dell and IBM brand laser printers. The brand name and model number for the Lexmark and IBM laser printers can be found on the front of the printer. For Dell laser printers, the brand name is on the front of the printer and the model number is inside the front cover. The recall includes the following model numbers: Lexmark E232, E232t, E330, E332n, E332tn; IBM Infoprint 1412, 1412n; Dell 1700 and 1700n. These Lexmark printers were sold directly through distributors, and at electronic, office supply and computer stores. IBM printers were sold directly through authorized distributors and resellers and via IBM's web site. Dell printers were sold directly through the firm's Web site. These laser printers were sold from May 2004 through August 2004 for about \$200. Manufactured in China. Consumers should immediately stop using the laser printer, unplug it, and

contact their corresponding laser printer company to register their product to receive a free replacement laser printer. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

STROLLER ATTACHMENTS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Sep 1 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of about 11,500 Lascal "Buggy Board" stroller attachments in voluntary co-operation with Regal Lager Inc., of Kennesaw, Ga. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. The Buggy Board's red connecting pins can break, causing the board to partially detach from the stroller or carriage, posing a fall hazard to the user. Regal Lager Inc. has received two reports of the Buggy Board disengaging from a stroller or carriage, resulting in falls to children. One minor injury was reported. The Lascal "Buggy Board" is a wheeled board that attaches to a stroller or baby carriage, allowing an older child to stand on the board and ride behind the stroller between the arms of a parent or caregiver. The product comes in black, blue, red and techno styles, and has the words "Buggy Board" printed on the top center of the board, with the name "Lascal" molded into the plastic on the bottom center of the board. Buggy Boards with orange connecting pins are not included in the recall. Sold at specialty retail stores, catalogs and internet sites from January 2003 through July 2004 for about \$88. Manufactured in Sweden. The manufacturer is providing free repair kits to consumers consisting of orange replacement pins for these Buggy Boards. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

SUZUKI MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

Detroit, Sep 3 — Suzuki Motor Corp is recalling more than 172,000 Grand Vitara sport utility vehicles because of a fuel pressure problem that can trigger fires, US federal safety regulators said yesterday. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said the 172,093 SUVs affected were from the 1999-2004 model years. Dealers will replace the fuel pressure regulator on the vehicles, as well as a fuel delivery hose and a hose clamp, NHTSA said. — Reuters.

VOLVO MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Sep 9 — A press report, dated today, states: PAG Import Inc, the importer of Volvo automobiles in Japan, said today it will recall a total of 13,886 units of three Volvo passenger car models for free repairs due to a motor problem that could cause a fire. Subject to the recall are cars of the Volvo V70, S80 and S60 models manufactured between October 1995 and April 1998 and imported between July 1999 and November 2001, the importer said in a report presented to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport.

Port Conditions



PANAMA CANAL

London, Sep 7 — Lock works underway in the Panama Canal are expected to be completed on schedule at 2359, local time, today. Delays for vessels are currently as follows: Panamax vessels: 48-72 hours. Regular vessels: 24-48 hours. While it is anticipated that the backlog will be cleared by the middle of Week 38, this

may be hampered by additional work being carried out between 2000 and 0600 daily at Gatun Locks, for approximately one week.

UNITED STATES

Sydney, Sept 3 — Ships on the Australia/US west coast VSA are to start dropping port calls selectively to restore scheduling after the delays which have plagued their Pacific southwest call at Los Angeles for two months now. *P&O Nedlloyd Los Angeles* and *Direct Condor* are to drop their second southbound Australian call at Sydney, with cargo to be handled at their normal first inbound call at Melbourne. *Kapitan Afanasayev* will drop its Los Angeles call in favour of Pacific northwest calls, and call in

Melbourne first and then Sydney. *Valdivostok* will drop its Seattle call. *Columbus Florida* will drop its southbound Auckland call. It is understood that the objective is to minimise impact on any one single port and on the customer base as a whole. A larger number of calls covering the trans-Tasman leg of the trade are also being dropped, although there are more opportunities to cross over between different strings. The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach now have agreements to take on thousands more casual workers, although it may be some weeks before they have an impact. — Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News. (See also "Hurricane 'Frances'" under "Weather & Navigation.")

Port Delays

| Country/Port | Date of report | No.of vessels waiting and/or days delay |
|-------------------|----------------|--|
| Australia | | |
| Abbot Point | 06-Sep-2004 | Coal: One vessel at anchor; 11 vessels due by 3/10; 3-4 days delay expected. |
| Brisbane | 06-Sep-2004 | Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth; Five vessels due by 30/9; no delays expected. |
| Dalrymple Bay | 06-Sep-2004 | Coal: Three vessels at berth, 29 at anchor; 37 vessels due by 6/10; vessels are berthing in order of cargo availability; 5-10 days delay expected. |
| Dampier | 06-Sep-2004 | Iron ore: Parker Point: One vessel loading at berth, 2 at anchor; 9 vessels due by 24/9; up to 4 days delay expected; East Intercourse Island; One vessel loading at berth, 4 at anchor; 10 vessels due by 22/9; 1-5 days delay expected. |
| Gladstone | 06-Sep-2004 | Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: Two vessels at berth, 3 at anchor; 34 vessels due by 5/10; up to 6 days delay expected; Barney Point: 4 vessels due by 21/9; up to 1 day's delay expected. |
| Hay Point | 06-Sep-2004 | Coal: Two vessels at berth, 10 at anchor; 9 vessels due by 16/9; up to 8 days delay expected. |
| Newcastle | 06-Sep-2004 | Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: One vessel loading; 39 vessels due by 21/9; Dykes 4+5: 17 vessels due by 21/9; Kooragang and Dyke minals: 1-5 days delay expected. |
| Port Hedland | 06-Sep-2004 | Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: One vessel loading at berth, 2 at anchor; 5 vessels due by 13/9; up to 2 days delay expected; "B" berth: One vessel loading at berth, 2 at anchor; 6 vessels due by 15/9; up to 2 days delay expected; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island): 2 vessels due 13/9; up to 2 days delay expected; Westyard "D" berth: 1 vessel arrived at berth, 1 at anchor; 7 vessels due by 16/9; up to 2 days delay expected. |
| Port Kembla | 06-Sep-2004 | Coal: One vessel at anchor; 15 vessels due by 10/10; CB1: 3 vessels due by 18/9; up to 1 day's delay expected |
| Port Walcott | 06-Sep-2004 | Iron ore: Two vessels loading at berth, 3 at anchor; 16 vessels due by 25/9; up to 4 days delay expected; 2 ship loaders are being used on a more frequent basis, requiring 2 loading plans: one for single ship loader, 1 for dual loader operation; shippers request that load plans be submitted as early as possible (10 days) so they can co-ordinate stockpiles more effectively. |
| Azerbaijan | | |
| Baku | 06-Sep-2004 | Oil products: Bay of Baku: No vessels; Azerneftiyag terminal: no vessels; Azertrans terminal: Nobel Avenue: 1 vessel discharging at berth; 1 vessel in roads to discharge crude oil; Sangachal District: 1 vessel discharging fuel oil at berth; Transserve terminal: closed. |
| Bulgaria | | |
| Bourgas | 07-Sep-2004 | Two vessels in port of which 1 loading scrap, 1 empty; 5 vessels in roads of which 3 to load (1 empty, 1 scrap, 1 chemicals), 1 for bunkering, 1 for repairs; 12 vessels due of which 9 to load (3 scrap, 2 coils, 1 container, 1 steel sheets, 1 equipment, 1 passenger vessel), 3 to discharge (1 container, 1 coal, 1 jet oil). |
| Cyprus | | |
| Larnaca | 07-Sep-2004 | One conventional vessel discharging at berth; 2 conventional vessels due 8/9; no delays expected. |
| Limassol | 07-Sep-2004 | Two conventional vessels discharging at berth, 4 container vessels discharging/loading at berth; 8 vessels due 8/9 of which 2 containers, 2 conventional vessels, 3 passenger vessels, 1 cruise vessel; no delays expected. |

Port Conditions

Egypt

| | | |
|------------|-------------|--|
| Adabiya | 06-Sep-2004 | Five vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 1 general cargo, 2 bulkers, 2 tankers. |
| Alexandria | 06-Sep-2004 | Thirty-one vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 23 general cargo, 1 container, 2 tankers, 2 reefers, 1 Ro/Ro, 1 bulker, 1 passenger vessel; 7 vessels at inner anchorage, 9 at outer anchorage. |
| Damietta | 06-Sep-2004 | Fifteen vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 10 general cargo, 2 bulkers, 3 container vessels; 2 vessels at outer anchorage. |
| Dekheila | 06-Sep-2004 | Nine vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 3 containers, 6 bulk carriers. |

Iran

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|----------|-------------|--|
| Anzali | 06-Sep-2004 | Eight vessels at berth; 3 vessels at anchorage; 3 vessels due by 10/9. |
| Nowshahr | 06-Sep-2004 | One vessel at berth; 2 vessels at anchorage; 2 vessels due by 6/9. |

Israel

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|--------|-------------|---|
| Ashdod | 07-Sep-2004 | No labour problems; Two vessels loading general cargo at berth, 15 discharging at berth (11 general cargo, 4 bulkers), 5 loading/discharging at berth (3 containers, 1 car carrier, 1 tanker); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to load general cargo, 5 waiting at anchorage to discharge (4 general cargo, 1 bulker), 6 waiting at anchorage to load/discharge containers; 2 vessels awaiting orders; 13 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected. |
| Haifa | 07-Sep-2004 | No labour problems; Seven vessels discharging at berth (5 general cargo, 2 bulkers), 8 loading/discharging at berth (7 containers, 1 tanker); 6 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 general cargo, 4 bulkers), 7 waiting at anchorage to load/discharge (6 containers, 1 passenger vessel); 2 vessels under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 16 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected. |

Kazakhstan

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|-------|-------------|--|
| Aktau | 06-Sep-2004 | Oil products: One crude oil vessel at berth; 6 vessels in roads; 4 vessels due by 7/9. |
|-------|-------------|--|

Mozambique

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|--------|-------------|--|
| Maputo | 03-Sep-2004 | 24 hours berthing/sailing. Some restrictions to berthing at certain badly-lit wharves. For general cargo berths vessels have to be geared as no shore cranes are available. The port is working normally and is expected to continue so, hence vessels should berth on arrival, daylight, draught and weather permitting. No berthing delays. There is a shortage of equipment, except at container terminal. Shed space available. Two tugs operational. Leading lights lit. Transport car for pilots operational. One container gantry operational. Matola coal terminal, Ressano Garcia railway line, Goba Railway Line, Limpopo railway line: operational. Four vessels at berth of which 2 loading (1 heavy cargo, 1 magnetite), 1 discharging bulk wheat, 1 standby; 3 vessels due to berth 3/9 of which 2 to discharge (1 bulk wheat, 1 aluminium), 1 to discharge/load containers; 17 vessels due of which 5 to load, 5 to discharge, 7 to discharge/load. |
|--------|-------------|--|

Nigeria

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|----------------------|-------------|--|
| Bonny offshore | 03-Sep-2004 | No vessels loading at berth, 1 at anchorage; 5 vessels due. |
| Bonny river terminal | 03-Sep-2004 | No vessels loading at berth, 1 at anchorage; no vessels due. |
| Forcados terminal | 03-Sep-2004 | No vessels at berth, 1 at anchorage; 5 vessels due. |
| Qua-Iboe terminal | 03-Sep-2004 | One vessel loading at berth, 2 at anchorage; 2 vessels due. |

Pakistan

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|------------|-------------|---|
| Karachi | 06-Sep-2004 | Three vessels loading rice at berth, 4 discharging at berth (1 crude oil, 1 HSD, 1 general cargo, 1 phosphorus, 1 loading and discharging containers; 4 vessels due (2 containers, 1 lube oil, 1 crude oil), with no delays expected. |
| Port Qasim | 06-Sep-2004 | One vessel loading at berth, 3 discharging at berth; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to load (1 container, 1 other), 2 waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 LPG, 1 container); QICT berth: 1 vessel loading/discharging containers. |

Russia

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|--------------|-------------|---|
| Novorossiysk | 06-Sep-2004 | Oil products: Five crude oil vessels in roads; 8 crude oil vessels due by 16/9. |
| Tuapse | 06-Sep-2004 | Oil products: Two vessels in roads; 8 vessels due by 16/9. |

Slovenia

| | | |
|-------|-------------|---|
| Koper | 06-Sep-2004 | Port working normally; Thirteen vessels berthed of which 1 vessel discharging/loading containers, 5 bulk carriers discharging ore/minerals/agricultural products, 2 bulk carriers loading grain/coal, 3 vessels loading steel products/general cargo, 1 reefer discharging refrigerated goods, 1 tanker discharging mineral oils; 12 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 3 vessels to discharge/load containers, 3 bulk carriers to discharge minerals/fertiliser/grain, 1 barge to load coal, 3 vessels to load steel products/general cargo, 1 car carrier to discharge/load vehicles, 1 tanker to discharge mineral oils ; no delays expected. |
|-------|-------------|---|

Spain

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|--------|-------------|--|
| Bilbao | 07-Sep-2004 | Twenty-two vessels in port operating (6 tankers, 16 others), of which 8 loading, 8 discharging, 6 loading/discharging. |
| Cadiz | 07-Sep-2004 | Twelve vessels in port of which 3 Ro/Ros, 1 container, 2 tourist, 2 container, 1 cereal, 1 wheat, 3 under repairs; no delays expected. |

Port Conditions

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|----------------------|-------------|---|
| Sagunto | 07-Sep-2004 | Twenty-three vessels in port operating of which 4 loading (1 steel, 2 machinery, 1 cement), 15 discharging (14 steel products, 1 logs), 4 Ro/Ros discharging/loading general cargo; Outside commercial wharf: no vessels; 1 day's delay expected. |
| Sri Lanka | | |
| Colombo | 06-Sep-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 berthing at breakbulk berths if there is container congestion; conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 & 2 are facing delays in navigation after commissioning of SAGT 1 & 2 berths (former QEQ 1 & 2). Nine container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 8 discharging at berth; no vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 1 waiting at anchorage to discharge bagged wheat; 5 vessels dry-docked; SPBM: 1 vessel; 1 vessel at new tanker berth; 6 vessels due (5 container/feeders, 1 bulk cement), with no delays for general cargo, bagged cargo, containers/feeders expected. |
| Turkmenistan | | |
| Aladja | 06-Sep-2004 | Oil products: One vessel loading crude oil at berth; 1 vessel in roads to load crude oil. |
| Okarem | 06-Sep-2004 | Oil products: Two vessels in roads, both to load crude oil. |
| Ukraine | | |
| Ilichevsk | 06-Sep-2004 | Twelve vessels in port operating of which 7 loading (5 steel products, 1 barley, 1 fertiliser), 3 discharging ore, 2 discharging/loading containers; 4 vessels in roads, all to load (1 steel products, 2 oil, 1 granite); 14 vessels due of which 6 to load (5 steel products, 1 sulphur), 2 to discharge nickel ore, 6 to load/discharge containers. |
| Mariupol | 06-Sep-2004 | Eleven vessels in port operating of which 10 loading (7 steel, 1 fire-clay, 2 coal), 1 to discharge foodstuff; SRY: 1 wire rods; 2 vessels in roads, both to load coal; 59 vessels due of which 56 to load, 3 to discharge. |
| Odessa | 06-Sep-2004 | Eleven vessels in port operating of which 6 loading (4 metal, 1 scrap, 1 container), 3 discharging (1 sugar, 2 general cargo), 2 discharging/loading containers; 1 vessel in roads to load/discharge containers; 64 vessels due of which 29 to load, 5 to discharge, 30 to load/discharge containers. |
| United States | | |
| Houston | 07-Sep-2004 | Cargill terminal: 2 days delay expected. |
| Kalama, WA | 07-Sep-2004 | Kalama export terminal: 3 days delay expected. |
| New Orleans, LA | 07-Sep-2004 | Cargill-Westwego: 2 days delay expected. ADM/Ama: 2-3 days delay expected. Bunge/Destrehan: 5 days delay expected. ADM/ Destrehan: 2-3 days delay expected. ADM/Reserve: down for maintenance. Cargill/Reserve: 3 days delay expected. Peavey/Paulina: 2 days delay expected. Zen-Noh/Convent: 2 days delay expected. Cargill/Baton Rouge: 5 days delay expected. 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: 3 days delay expected; Mile 158.0 Cargill (K2) - Convent: 7 days delay expected; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: no delays expected. |
| Portland, OR | 07-Sep-2004 | Columbia Grain terminal: 2 days delay expected; CLD Irving terminal: 2 days delay expected. |
| Seattle, WA | 07-Sep-2004 | Louis Dreyfus (Pier 86) terminal: 3 days delay expected. |

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