

French unions to stage day of action at Alstom yard

FRENCH seafarers' and shipbuilding unions are planning to stage demonstrations on Nov 5 at the Alstom group's Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard at Saint Nazaire, where Gaz de France's newest LNG carrier, the Gaz de France energy, is due to be named.

The seafarers, who staged a strike this week on GdF's 1971-built Descartes at the port of Fos, say they will be coming to Saint Nazaire to protest over GdF's proposals for manning the Gaz de France energy with a majority Filipino crew.

Work stoppage

Meanwhile, at the shipyard itself, the CGT union confederation has called for a work stoppage this morning to protest at what it claims are Alstom Marine's "suicidal" plans to run down the workforce at the yard.

Both union organisations are planning to take advantage of the expected presence at today's naming ceremony of high-profile Minister of Finance Nicholas Sarkozy, a future presidential contender who is shortly to leave his ministerial post to take over the chairmanship of the governing UMP party.

They hope that the strong media following which Mr Sarkozy generally attracts will give them an opportunity to make heard their views and tempt the minister into making a statement supporting them.

Mr Sarkozy has already indicated that he would like to see Alstom Marine figure in the Franco-German naval shipbuilding grouping which the French government would like to see come into being in the future.

Reduce output

CGT representatives at the yard claim that the company is planning to run down the workforce to 2,500 by 2007 and reduce output from an average five large constructions a year to 2.5.

"For us, it is a suicidal plan for the shipbuilding industry, for the thousands of jobs it generates and for the Saint Nazaire region," the union said.

It claimed that the rundown would lead to the loss of vital know-how which would ultimately result in the delocalisation of construction work, leaving just a design office at Saint Nazaire.

Seafarers' unions are pressing for the preservation of seafarers' jobs aboard the 74,000 cu m Gaz de France energy, which is to be delivered to GdF before the end of the year.

They claim that GdF, which has until now had 100% French crews aboard its vessels, is proposing to crew the new vessel with six French officers, two other seafarers and 17 Filipinos.

Officers and seafarers staged separate 48-hour strikes aboard the 50,000 cu m Descartes when it called at the Fos LNG terminal at the start of this week to protest against the job losses which they say would be caused by the new crewing arrangements.

- The CGT dockers and port workers' federation is to stage a one-day strike on Tuesday to protest about job losses in the French port industry.

They are concerned about what they claim has been the rundown in public sector investment in ports, as well as the government's plans to put many medium-sized ports, including Calais, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Cherbourg, Dieppe and Brest, under full local control in future.

Andrew Spurrier
Lloyd's List Correspondent

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>ANNERDIEP</i>	general	CYP	(LR)	2,999	4,400	2003	Towed into Viana do Castelo 26 Oct 2004 due to fire in the engine-room. Repairs ETC 10 days.
<i>FEDERAL HUDSON</i>	bulker	HKG	NV	20,659	35,750	2000	In collision with unknown Chinese fishing boat in lat 34 19N 124 07E, 26 Oct 2004. Proceeded to South Korea. Fishing vessel sank. Five rescued, three missing.
<i>JOHN DE WOLF II</i>	fishing	USA	—	62	—	—	Struck a buoy in Barnegat Inlet 26 Oct 2004, damaging propeller, causing engine to break. Anchor line broke and vessel drifted to shore, where stuck in the sand. All crew safe.
<i>LINDSEY</i>	tug	USA	—	178	—	1989	Sank in 45 feet of water at the mouth of the Christina River (Delaware River) Oct 26. All three crew rescued.
<i>MOUNT AKABOSHI</i>	general	PAN	(NK)	9,582	12,024	—	While sheltering from typhoon "Tokage" in Saeki Bay, grounded Oct 20. Refloated Oct 21 and returned to shipyard.
<i>OCEANJET-6</i>	ferry	PHL	—	223	—	—	Had engine trouble 1.6 km from Talisay, Philippines. Crew and passengers taken on board <i>Oceanjet-2</i> . Towed to Cebu.
<i>SAN ROCHELLE</i>	fishing	NZL	—	—	—	—	Had fire 185 km north-west of Cape Reinga Oct 27. Crew rescued. Drifting, abandoned and on fire.
<i>SEEBRISE</i>	general	BLZ	LR	1990	1,530	1974	Grounded in stormy seas at the entrance to Kinsale Harbour Oct 28. Refloating attempt failed. Another attempt will be made on next tide.
<i>STEPAN RAZIN</i>	bulk/ container	RUS	RS	14,141	19,885	1980	"Sank/aground" exit of Kola Bay in lat 69 21.4N, long 33 28.7E, Oct 23. Wind wrenched it free from anchor and threw it onto rocks. Sprang leak and sank. Divers to assess if worth lifting. Crew evacuated. Oil leaking

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



AL FAHAD (Saudi Arabia)

Jeddah, Oct 24 — Understand from owners of passenger ro/ro *Al Fahad* that the vessel is still in the same position. — Lloyd's Agents.

ALESSIA (Switzerland)

Falmouth, Oct 25 — General cargo *Alessia* completed repairs and sailed Falmouth 1525, Oct 20 for Fowey. — Lloyd's Agents.

ALGOLAKE (Canada)

Montreal, Oct 22 — Bulk *Algolake* is back under way to Port Credit, Ont, from Ashtabula and is expected to arrive later today. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Oct 22 — Bulk *Algolake* (22851 gt, built 1977), while proceeding down the Welland Canal, near mile 9.4, the port shoulder of the vessel struck the west concrete abutment at 0217, EDST, today. Vessel secured for Seaway and Transport Canada inspection.

AMBAR

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

ANNERDIEP (Cyprus)

Oporto, Oct 28 — General cargo *Annerdiep* (2999 gt, built 2003) was towed into Viana do Castelo Oct 26 due to a fire which occurred in the engine-room. Repairs expected to be completed within about ten days. — Lloyd's Agents.

APOLLO DUA (Panama)

See *Eastern Princess*.

BANGLAR SHOURABH (Bangladesh)

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

BBC CHINA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Adverse weather conditions continued to delay the start of oil transfer operation from general cargo *BBC China*, authorities said today. The department of environmental affairs and tourism said the ship has about 120 tons of oil on board. "The department's marine pollution team together with the local authority's disaster management team, as well as members of the local communities, are continuing with a clean-up operation. A waste disposal unit deployed by the department started to remove bags of oiled sludge yesterday," the department said in a statement. It added standard precautionary response measures remained in place and the estuary at the Msikaba River near the stricken vessel would stay out of bounds. *Kuswag I*, an anti-pollution patrol vessel, together with anchor handling tug *Pentow Service*, remained on

standby at the scene and were monitoring the situation closely. *Kuswag V111*, an anti-pollution patrol aircraft, was also regularly surveying the surrounding marine environment from the air.

London, Oct 24 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *BBC China* had already transferred about three tons of oil since yesterday, the department of environmental affairs and tourism reported today. The oil transfer operation commenced late yesterday as weather conditions improved," said Carol Moses, a department spokesperson. She said the department's standard precautionary response measures remained in place. The estuary at the Msikaba River near the stricken vessel remain closed and anti-pollution patrol vessel *Kuswag I*, remained on standby at the scene and was monitoring the situation closely. "The department's anti-pollution patrol aircraft, *Kuswag VIII*, is regularly surveying the surrounding marine environment from the air and no visibility of oil or sheen has been reported today." Moses said the department had been receiving daily reports from the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) and the salvage company, Smit Marine and would issue regular updates on the status of the clean-up. She also said according to Smit Marine, the vessel was not showing signs of breaking up, as reported earlier in the media. "The salvage company has said that the vessel's condition is still the same as it was in the past couple of days".

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Operations have begun to remove cargo from general cargo *BBC China*, the Environmental Affairs and Tourism Department said today. Spokeswoman Carol Moses said at least three tons of cargo and a total of 25 tonnes of oil had been transferred from the vessel. "The cargo does not pose any threat to communities or the marine and coastal environment," Moses said. She said the vessel carried about 120 tons of fuel oil and 2 800 tons of cargo, of which 9.5 tons were batteries, paint and bottles of carbon dioxide. "The progress of both operations is subject to weather conditions," she said. The oil clean-up operation would be completed by Wednesday (Oct 27). Moses said an anti-pollution patrol vessel and aircraft were on stand-by monitoring the scene closely. An estuary at the Msikaba River near the scene remained closed. She said that according to salvors Smit Marine, the vessel was not showing signs of breaking up, as was reported earlier in the media. "The salvage company has said that the vessel's condition is still the same as it was in the past couple of days."

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: It will be impossible to save general cargo *BBC China* from where it was grounded at Port Grosvenor off the Wild Coast, Die Burger reported today. Captain William Dernier, industrial manager of the maritime safety authority in Cape

Town, said the ship's bottom was breaking up slowly. It was stuck fast and it wouldn't be possible to salve it. He said oil was being pumped from the air ducts in the ship's engine-room tanks, as the engine-room was flooded. Meanwhile, the department of environmental affairs said that oil and cargo transfer operations were being carried out in earnest, I-Net Bridge reported. Spokesperson Carol Moses said: "A total of 25 tons of oil has been transferred from the vessel so far. The salvors have also commenced with the cargo transfer operation and offloaded more than three tons of cargo today." The department's marine pollution team was expected to complete the oil clean-up operation along the coast within the next two days. Moses said the department's standard precautionary response measures remained in place. The estuary at the Msikaba River near the stricken vessel remained closed. The department was receiving daily reports from the maritime safety authority and the salvage company, Smit Marine, and would issue regular updates on the status of the clean-up.

BERGITTA (NIS)

London, Oct 25 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0924, UTC: Crude oil tanker *Bergitta* (56207 gt, built 2000) and c.c. *MSC Eyra* (21586 gt, built 1982) were in collision in the Great Belt, in lat 55 12N, long 11 05E, at 2021, UTC, Oct 24. *Bergitta* sustained a hull breach above the waterline, but there was no oil leakage. Both vessels are still at the scene. The cargo of oil on board *Bergitta* is to be transhipped to another vessel.

London, Oct 25 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 2230, UTC: Crude oil tanker *Bergitta* and c.c. *MSC Eyra* are both leaving the collision scene at this moment. *Bergitta* is proceeding to Rotterdam and will have a pilot on board while in Danish waters. *MSC Eyra*, which is holed, is proceeding to Aarhus.

Gothenburg, Oct 26 — Crude oil tanker *Bergitta*, loaded with 100,000 tonnes, should be emptied before allowed to leave the area of The Great Belt. No injuries and pollution. Damage to the tanker has led to the Board of Shipping to temporarily withdraw its permit to proceed. C.c. *MSC Eyra* has not been checked and is under investigation by Port Control Inspectors and also required same procedures. — Westax Marine Services AB.

London, Oct 26 — Following received from the managers of crude oil tanker *Bergitta*, dated today: The hull of *Bergitta* was not holed in the collision and the watertight integrity of the vessel was intact after the incident.

London, Oct 27 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0933, UTC: Crude oil tanker *Bergitta* has proceeded to Rotterdam, and c.c. *MSC Eyra* is in port at Aarhus.

BETSIAMITES (Canada)

Montreal, Oct 22 — Barge *Betsiamites* was refloated on the high tide after

pumping out its ballast. The local tug assisted. No damage found at all. Vessel was aground on clay and is back in service. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAPE AFRICA (Taiwan)

London, Oct 22 — Bulk *Cape Africa* sailed Singapore Oct 16 for Port Hedland, where anchored off about Oct 21.

CAPE BRETT (Marshall Islands)

Yokohama, Oct 25 — C.c. *Cape Brett* (8940 gt, built 1992) and vehicle *Koyo Maru No.23* (1737 gt, built 1987) were in collision 10,500 metres from Kansai Airport Access Base west breakwater, at 0316, Oct 20. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Cape Brett* arrived Kobe Oct 19, sailed Oct 20, arrived Sakai same day and sailed Oct 21 for Iwakuni.)

CEDARGLEN (Canada)

Montreal, Oct 22 — Bulk *Cedarglen* seems to have small bow damage. — Lloyd's Agents.

CHAINAT NAVEE (Thailand)

Hull, Oct 22 — The fire on board general cargo *Chainat Navee* was extinguished around 2300, GMT, Oct 20. Assessment of damage to cargo of plywood, steel, chemicals and general continues throughout Oct 21/22. Further assessment of structural damage to steelwork of vessel also ongoing. Discharge of cargo commenced on Oct 22. — Lloyd's Agents.

CHRISTINA IV (U.S.A.)

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

CMA CGM PUGET (Bahamas)

Barcelona, Oct 28 — A fire broke out in two containers in one of the holds of c.c. *CMA CGM Puget* (49855 gt, built 2002) at Barcelona during Tuesday night (Oct 26) and was extinguished successfully. Smoke was observed coming from the holds which were full of containers. Therefore the holds were completely closed while they were treated in order to put out any burning. Operations commenced again yesterday and the two containers were discharged in order to investigate the cause of the fire. — Lloyd's Agents.

CONTRADER (Panama)

See "Hurricane "Jeanne" under "Weather & Navigation."

CYPRESS PASS (NIS)

London, Oct 22 — Vehicle *Cypress Pass* sailed Bremerhaven 2345, Oct 21, for Gothenburg.

DEMARES (U.K.)

London, Oct 21 — Following received from Coastguard Aberdeen MRCC, timed 1456, UTC: Fishing *Demares* arrived Peterhead at 1432, UTC, Oct 21.

DEMIRYOLU III (Turkey)

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A train car with a cargo of electronic goods from Austria to Turkey went overboard ro/ro *Demiryolu III* (1232 gt, built 1983) during

transshipment from the station on the European shore to the Asian shores of Istanbul through the Bosphorus. Luckily, nobody was hurt during the incident. It took three hours for the floating crane and the divers to raise it from the water back to the ferry.

DONA NINA (Liberia)

See *North Countess*.

EASTERN PRINCESS (Panama)

Yokohama, Oct 26 — Ro/ro *Eastern Princess* arrived Kawasaki Oct 24 from Nagoya. General cargo *Apollo Dua* arrived Wakamatsu Oct 23 and sailed Oct 25. — Lloyd's Agents.

ERNA (Singapore)

See "Malacca Straits" under "Piracy."

EVER DYNAMIC (Panama)

Yokohama, Oct 25 — Fire broke out on c.c. *Ever Dynamic* (52090 gt, built 1998) at public berth C, Yume-Shima, Osaka, at 1200, Oct 19. The fire was controlled by the vessel's carbon dioxide system, however, vessel's main engine and generator sustained damage. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Ever Dynamic* sailed Hong Kong Oct 16 and arrived Osaka Oct 19.)

Yokohama, Oct 26 — C.c. *Ever Dynamic* sailed Osaka Oct 23, arriving Kobe same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

EVER UNIFIC (Panama)

Yokohama, Oct 26 — C.c. *Ever Unific* arrived Tokyo Oct 23 and sailed Oct 24. — Lloyd's Agents.

FEDERAL HUDSON (Hong Kong)

London, Oct 27 — Following received from Australia RCC, timed 0255, UTC: Bulk *Federal Hudson* (20659 gt, built 2000) was in collision with a Chinese fishing vessel, name not known, in lat 34 19N, long 124 07E, at 0418, UTC, Oct 26. Co-ordination passed to China MRCC.

London, Oct 27 — Following received from Beijing MRCC, timed 0510, UTC: Bulk *Federal Hudson* was in collision with a fishing vessel, name not known, which sank. Helicopters from South Korea have rescued five crew from the fishing vessel and another three persons are missing. *Federal Hudson* proceeded on voyage bound South Korea.

FEDERAL PESCADORES (Panama)

London, Oct 26 — Bulk *Federal Pescadores* sailed Port Everglades Oct 22.

FOTINI LADY (Liberia)

London, Oct 19 — Crude oil tanker *Fotini Lady* arrived and sailed Escombreras Oct 17.

FT SPIRIT

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Former America's Cup yacht *FT Spirit* hit rocks surrounding the Sydney Opera House today, throwing a number of sailors into the harbour and losing its keel. No-one was injured when the 22-metre yacht hit rocks near the seawall in Farm Cove at 1230, AEST. The boat

was on a charter sail for the Financial Times newspaper and had 12 people on board, most of whom were experienced yachtsmen, a spokeswoman for the company said. Deckhand Benny Mawson, 23, said the impact ripped the keel and ballast off the yacht. "We came in too close and hit the bottom and as we did the boat pivoted on the keel and it ripped the big 20-tonne of lead that keeps the boat upright right off," he said. The spokeswoman for the FT, which launched its newspaper in Australia five weeks ago, said a number of people fell into the water. *FT Spirit* is an international America's Cup Class yacht from the San Diego Challenge in 1992. Several crew members were in the water helping with the rescue of the yacht which was being moved away from the seawall under an escort from about 10 boats.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: The \$1.5 million, 22-metre yacht *FT Spirit* was on a charter sail for the Financial Times newspaper, which launched an Asia-Pacific edition five weeks ago, when its keel struck ground and split off near the Sydney Opera House just after midday yesterday. A company spokeswoman, Joanna Manning-Cooper, said the newspaper had planned to use the yacht in a marketing campaign launch this morning. "The damage was only cosmetic and we'll have the boat up and running again soon," Ms Manning-Cooper said. But a deckhand estimated repairs could cost up to \$500,000. He said the yacht's keel struck rocks in shallow water when it turned too close to the seawall in Farm Cove. "What's happened is we've come in too close to the wall, about 40 metres, and the keel has hit rocks and ripped a 20-tonne bulb off the bottom of it. That's what keeps the boat upright, and it's now at the bottom of the harbour." *FT Spirit* sailed as *Spirit of Australia* in the America's Cup in the San Diego Challenge in 1992. A tug eventually towed the yacht to Noakes Boatyard at Berrys Bay for repairs.

GEMINI (U.S.A.)

Troy, Michigan, Oct 24 — Yesterday afternoon chemical/oil carrier *Gemini* (5854 gt, built 1978) was upbound in the lower Detroit River below Grassy Island when a 35-ft wooden pleasure vessel misjudged the distance from *Gemini* and cut across the bow of the tanker. The pleasure craft was struck by the tanker, which had no way of stopping or adjusting course. The pleasure craft was destroyed, the wooden hull disintegrated. The crew on the *Gemini* responded by stopping the tanker and assisting the four occupants of the small vessel. All occupants were quickly recovered by another pleasure craft. The occupants of the vessel were taken to a local hospital but there were no updates on their condition or extent of injuries. Numerous agencies responded to the incident including local law enforcement. The Canadian Coast Guard was on scene and the US Coast Guard Station Belle Isle also responded to the scene. *Gemini*

continued up bound to the Belle Isle Anchorage off Detroit for inspection, there were no visible signs of damage to the vessel as it passed Detroit. The vessel arrived in the anchorage about 1800, local time, it is unknown how long it will remain anchored. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

London, Oct 24 — Following received Coast Guard Cleveland, timed, 1850, UTC: *Gemini* was in collision with unnamed pleasure craft yesterday afternoon. The pleasure craft sunk as a result of the collision, all the crew were rescued.

GENMAR TRANSPORTER (Marshall Islands)

Singapore, Oct 21— Crude oil tanker *GenMar Transporter* sailed Singapore Oct 20 for Ras Tanura. — Lloyd's Agents.

HALIFAX (Canada)

London, Oct 22 — Bulk *Halifax* (20646 gt, built 1963) made contact with a bridge in Chicago while manoeuvring with two tugs at 1120, EDST, Oct 13. The vessel sustained severe damage on poop-deck and had to be repaired prior departure.

HENRIETTE (NIS)

Trondheim, Oct 25 — General cargo *Henriette* (2900 gt, built 1971), which arrived at Holla from Parnu on Oct 19, remains in the port effecting repairs to damaged auxiliary engine. Expected repair time is 10 days. — Lloyd's Agents.

HUA SHAN HAI (China)

London, Oct 23 — Following received from Australia RCC, timed 0245, UTC: Bulk *Hua Shan Hai* (40215 gt, built 1998) returned to Newcastle 0400, Oct 21 with main engine problems. Vessel subsequently sailed 0845, UTC, Oct 22. (Note — *Hua Shan Hai* had sailed Newcastle Oct 20.)

HWAJIN NO.938 (South Korea)

Busan, Oct 22 — After completion of permanent repairs, fishing *Hwajin No.938* departed Oct 8 and returned to normal service as a coastal fishing vessel. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

HYUNDAI NO.105 (Panama)

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Indonesian authorities are mounting pressure on a vessel operator to remove the wreckage of vehicle *Hyundai No.105* that sank last May with more than 4,000 cars after a collision in the Singapore Strait, a spokesman said today. The Indonesian Directorate of Sea Communication has written again to Eukor Car Carriers Inc to salvage *Hyundai No.105* sitting at the bottom of the strait in Indonesian waters as it poses a navigational and environmental hazard. The Eukor spokesman said a decision on the salvage operation will be made by the end of the year. "It's not a matter of whether we're going to do something or not," he was quoted as saying. "It's a matter of what we're going to do." The exact method has not been determined yet, the spokesman

added. An environmental study is underway by a group of British experts who are using advanced computer modeling in their analysis, according to the report. The spokesman noted nearly 900 tons of bunker fuel and lubricants were removed by salvors within the first couple of months after the sinking. The top portion of the vessel is 17 metres below the water's surface. The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore has been assisting with radio navigational warnings broadcast that advise vessels to stay clear of the wreck.

IRINIKOS (Panama)

London, Oct 24 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed, 1620, UTC: Bulk *Irinikos* is still aground at Brindisi and general cargo *CEC Mistral* is currently at the scene recovering some of its cargo. After the cargo is removed there will be another attempt to refloat the vessel.

London, Oct 25 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 0909, UTC: Bulk *Irinikos* is still aground. Around 2,800 tons of cargo has been discharged onto general cargo *CEC Mistral*, and cargo discharge is continuing.

Rotterdam, Oct 26 — SMIT Salvage BV refloated bulk *Irinikos* off Brindisi this afternoon after discharging part of the cargo of coal. A lightering vessel was chartered in order to partly offload the cargo and tugs from Impresa Fratelli Barretta were employed during the refloating operation. — SMIT Salvage BV.

London, Oct 27 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 0927, UTC: Bulk *Irinikos* is now in port at Brindisi awaiting an underwater inspection, which is expected to be carried out Oct 28.

JACK-UP RIG BARGE WASHED ASHORE AT SEAFORD BAY, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 22 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 0747, UTC: Salvors Titan Maritime, with divers now on scene, intend to commence salvage operations after initial assessment. There is no sign of the lost container, although two broken legs remain in the vicinity. No oil pollution.

London, Oct 23 — Following received from Coastguard Solent MRSC, timed 1522, UTC: A small jack-up rig barge broke its moorings and washed up on shore. The jack-up rig barge remains in the surfline but has lost its watertight integrity and is now partially submerged. Salvage teams are in the process of clearing the beach of the debris. Navigational warning has been issued.

Newhaven, Oct 27 — Titan Salvage have successfully removed/recovered three of the rig's legs and dismantling is in progress. The recovering of the final leg is ongoing. The rig has been totally destroyed by the sea and the salvage operation is approximately 95 percent completed. — Titan Salvage.

JAG ARPAN (India)

Singapore, Oct 18 — Product tanker *Jag Arpan* sailed Singapore Oct 16 for Yanbu. — Lloyd's Agents.

**JOHANNA MARIA
(St. Vincent & Grenadines)**

London, Oct 22 — Following received from the owners of standby safety vessel *Johanna Maria*, dated today: *Johanna Maria* arrived Den Helder Oct 11 and is presently alongside, waiting to be scrapped.

JOHN DE WOLF II (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Fishing *John De Wolf II* (62 gt, built 1974) washed ashore after striking a buoy yesterday morning and remained stuck in the sand off 10th Avenue for most of the day. *John de Wolf II* was heading to sea to harvest scallops some time after midnight when it struck a buoy in Barnegat Inlet, damaging the vessel's propeller, which caused the engine to break, said Keith Larson, who maintains the vessel, which belongs to his father, John. The crew dropped anchor, but the line broke, and the vessel drifted to shore. The crew were safely ashore by 0530 hrs, officials said. Under the oversight of the Coast Guard and state Department of Environmental Protection, workers were pumping gas and potable water off the boat while a backhoe dug a trench around it in hopes of being able to float it away, said Rob Schrader, DEP emergency response specialist. Schrader said there were no environmental problems and the sand dug out would return naturally in about two days. Tow vessels were planning to tug the boat away at high tide, around 1900, yesterday.

KAIWO MARU (Japan)

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

KASTOR TOO (Cyprus)

London, Oct 27 — Three law lords, headed by Lord Bingham, the UK's senior law lord, have backed earlier court rulings in a legal battle over insurance pay outs in respect of bulk *Kastor Too* that was engulfed by fire as it was en route from Aqaba to Vizakhapatnam. The vessel sank after the fire. In December 2002, the High Court held that AGF M.A.T, AXA Global Risk and four other underwriters were liable to *Kastor Navigation and Atlantic Bank of New York* under a policy of marine insurance in respect of a \$3 million claim for the total loss of *Kastor Too* on Mar 10, 2000. That decision was upheld by the Court of Appeal in March this year and now, in a decision just published, it has been backed again by the Law Lords. They have refused permission for Allianz Marine and Aviation (formerly AGF MAT) and the others to appeal to the House of Lords against it.

KATERINA (Malta)

See under "Pollution."

KENT NAVIGATOR (Gibraltar)

Montreal, Oct 22 — General cargo *Kent Navigator*, grounded Oct 10, has been internally inspected after discharge in Hamilton. Vessel has

bottom damage in way of two double bottom's. Temporary repairs will be carried out at Pictou, Nova Scotia, starting Oct 24. Permanent repairs are deferred until the vessel's next drydocking in 2006. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Oct 18.)

KILSTRAUM (NIS)

London, Oct 28 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 0926, UTC: Chemical/oil carrier *Kilstraum* (2894 gt, built 1988) and submarine *Utstein* (1040 tons displacement, built 1991) were in collision approximately 18 miles east-south-east of Stornoway, in lat 58 03.5N, long 05 51.5W, at 0155, UTC, Oct 28. *Utstein* sustained slight rudder damage and is now in port at Stornoway to carry out further assessment. Communication with *Kilstraum* confirmed the vessel had sustained no damage or injuries, and was proceeding on voyage to Elnesvagen.

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: No one was hurt when chemical/oil carrier *Kilstraum* collided with submarine *Utstein* off the Isle of Lewis in the early hours of this morning. *Kilstraum's* owners, Anders Utkilens Rederi, has not received reports of injuries or leakages following the collision. There was radio contact between the vessels after the collision, and everything is under control. *Kilstraum* is continuing towards a Norwegian harbour as planned, said Utkilens director Ronald Hansen. The cause of the accident is not yet known, but according to NRK news, the submarine was on its way up to periscope depth when the collision occurred.

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Submarine *Utstein* was in collision with chemical/oil carrier *Kilstraum* off the coast of the Northern UK, broadcaster NRK reported, citing the NTB news service. Neither vessel sustained any major damage to hull or injuries to crew, NRK said. *Kilstraum* was on its way from Liverpool to western Norway without cargo when the collision occurred.

KOYO MARU NO.23 (Japan)

See *Cape Brett*.

LINDSEY (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated Oct 26, states: A tug (tug *Lindsey*, 178 gt, built 1989) sank in the Delaware River today, causing crew members to scramble for safety. The three crew members escaped and had to be rescued just minutes before the boat went down. Water and oil bubbled from the boat, easily marking its location along with cables from another boat. Although there is no official word on what caused the boat to sink, an investigation is underway.

London, Oct 27 — Following received from Coast Guard Portsmouth, Va, timed 0410, UTC: A report was received at 1957, UTC, Oct 26 that tug *Lindsey*, official number 957365, had sunk in 45 ft of water at the mouth of

the Christina River. The three person on board were rescued from the water safely. Salvors are on scene. Further details and cause of sinking not known at the moment.

LORD NELSON (U.K.)

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A mix-up over raising Tower Bridge led to tall ship *Lord Nelson* crashing into the Thames landmark, an accident report has said. *Lord Nelson* was damaged when it hit a buttress, said a Marine Accident Investigation Branch report. The MAIB recommended a tightening of procedures to ensure such an incident could not happen again.

LUCKY LADY (Malta)

London, Oct 27 — Crude oil tanker *Lucky Lady* passed Malacca Strait west Oct 23.

LUDVIG ANDERSEN (Panama)

London, Oct 24 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Ludvig Andersen* is presently undergoing repairs at Karmsund Shipyard, ETC not known.

**LYDIA OLDENDORFF
(Antigua & Barbuda)**

See "Antigua & Barbuda Vessel Moored off Malta with Asylum Seekers on Board" under "Miscellaneous."

**MAERSK SAN JUAN
(Antigua & Barbuda)**

Curacao, Oct 26 — C.c. *Maersk San Juan* sailed Curacao Oct 16. — Lloyd's Agents.

MAR B. (Canary Islands)

Vigo, Oct 22 — C.c. *Mar B.* (6532 gt, built 1982) is reportedly arriving at Marin tonight with suspected heavy weather damage to a container on board, containing a yacht. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Mar B.* sailed Santa Cruz de Tenerife Oct 20 for Marin.)

MARIE O. (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Oct 26 — General cargo *Marie O.* sailed Gdansk Oct 16, subsequently passing Brunsbuttel Oct 21.

MCT ALIOTH (Liberia)

See under "Miscellaneous."

MIRABELLA V (Isle of Man)

London, Oct 22 — Yacht *Mirabella V* arrived at Portsmouth on Oct 20. (See issue of Oct 19.)

MISTRAL (Honduras)

London, Oct 28 — As of Oct 13, product tanker *Mistral* was still laid up at Bari.

MOON LAKE (Honduras)

Varna, Oct 20 — General cargo *Moon Lake* is still aground. — Lloyd's Agents.

MOUNT AKABOSHI (Panama)

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

MSC EYRA (Panama)

See *Bergitta*.

NEUSE (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 24, states: State ferry *Neuse* (380 gt, built 1998) struck a ramp at the Cherry Branch (North Carolina) landing today, damaging the structure and several vehicles the boat was carrying. None of the ferry's 29 passengers was hurt. State Transportation Department officials were unsure how many cars were damaged. *Neuse* was operational, but the ramp was extensively damaged, said Operations Manager Bobby Hill. He estimated it would take at least a week for the ferry, which runs from Cherry Branch to Minnesott Beach, can resume normal operations. "Right now, there is no way we can operate, period," he said. "The vessel is operational. The ramp is not operational." The cause of the contact was not immediately known. The U.S. Coast Guard was investigating. The free ferry makes 22 round trips per day, taking 20 minutes to travel between its two destinations. The vessel can carry 30 vehicles. Passengers can reach the same destination by road, but the trip will take at least 30 additional miles.

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: An official investigation began yesterday into the cause of the Sunday morning (Oct 24) crash that will close the Cherry Branch ferry for at least 10 days, affecting an estimated 1,000 travellers a day. The Sunday crash, in which the ferry *Neuse* rammed into its loading ramp at almost full cruising speed, resulted in no injuries to the 29 people aboard or to the vessel, said Jerry Gaskill, N.C. Ferry System director. The ramp and boom, which supports hydraulics for the ramp lift, however, sustained damage that could cost more than \$100,000 and take as long as three weeks to repair, he said. Capt. Roger Resor was operating the ferry when it hit the ramp at about seven knots, "the same speed he went into the harbour," Gaskill said. "We don't know exactly what happened but apparently the thrust didn't come off, for whatever reason, as he approached the dock," he said. Gaskill said no problems were cited in the vessel's annual inspection on Sep 11. It is being rechecked by the US Coast Guard, which is in charge of the investigation. Gaskill said late Monday that the N.C. Department of Transportation had materials on hand to make needed repairs, and a contractor working on the Minnesott side could be diverted to expedite the process. A Coast Guard team from Fort Macon yesterday inspected damage to the A-frame and pilings.

NO.1 DAE BU (Panama)

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

NORTH COUNTESS (Greece)

Buenos Aires, Oct 25 — Bulk *North Countess*, collision with sand vessel *Dona Nina*: *North Countess*, after unloading cargo at San Nicolas and completing hold cleaning, moved into

new voyage charter and sailed Oct 15 bound for Necochea to load grain for Egypt. Vessel sustained only minor shell indentations/corresponding internals in way of waterlines 10/13 metres, port side forepeak tank from frame 253 to frame 249 H1 just aft of collision bulkhead. The vessel was inspected by classification society and final repairs were deferred until January. *Dona Nina* was drydocked immediately at Tandanor Shipyard, Buenos Aires, due to significant shell/structural damages in way of starboard side aft body — cofferdams 3, 4 and 5 — and aft poop deck. All going well, repairs should be completed by the end of this month. — Lloyd's Agents.

NYK ARGUS (Panama)

London, Oct 22 — C.c. *NYK Argus*, Singapore for Southampton, passed Tarifa 0104, Oct 21.

London, Oct 26 — C.c. *NYK Argus* arrived Southampton 2137, Oct 23.

London, Oct 27 — Following received from the operators of c.c. *NYK Argus*, dated today: Following the fire which occurred in the No 3 hold of *NYK Argus* on Oct 19, the vessel completed discharge of all Southampton cargo on Oct 25. On Oct 27, the UK Maritime Coastguard Authority completed its inspection of the vessel, together with the local fire authority who confirmed that the fire had been extinguished. Prior to the vessel being given permission to sail, some 300 bottles of carbon dioxide, used in the process of fighting the fire, were refilled. The vessel has now departed for the port of Rotterdam where the Rotterdam-bound cargo will be discharged and the "fire affected" No 3 hold opened for inspection. *NYK Line* is taking all steps to keep customers and partners informed regarding the position of their cargoes and those damaged by the fire.

OCEANJET-6 (Philippines)

Manila, Oct 27 — Ferry *Oceanjet-6* (223 gt, built 2003) was stranded off Talisay City, Cebu, in the central Philippines Tuesday evening (Oct 26), the Philippine Coast Guard reported. *Oceanjet-6* left Plaridel, Misamis Oriental on Tuesday and made port calls at Siquijor and Tagbilaran City, Bohol island before proceeding to Cebu. It was reported about 1.6 km away from Talisay when it encountered engine trouble. The ferry's 70 passengers and crew were taken on board the sister vessel, *Oceanjet-2* which responded to *Oceanjet-6's* call for assistance. The ferry was later towed to Cebu. — Lloyd's Agents.

ONLY ONE D (Honduras)

Halifax, NS, Oct 26 — General cargo *Only One D* is still at Shelburne. Indications damage may be more extensive than originally anticipated. — Lloyd's Agents.

OOCL SETO (Bahamas)

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

ORSTA (Norway)

London, Oct 21 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Ro/ro *Orsta* is still at shipyard, undergoing repairs, ETC unknown.

OSIRIS (Netherlands)

Maassluis, Oct 21 — General cargo *Osiris* remains under arrest at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

PLEIONE (Bahamas)

Yokohama, Oct 26 — Bulk *Pleione* arrived Kashima Oct 24. — Lloyd's Agents.

PRESTIGE (Bahamas)

London, Oct 22 — Offices in France and Spain handling claims arising from the crude oil tanker *Prestige* casualty have received a total of 927 applications amounting to E763.5m (\$920m). Latest updates presented to the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund show that at Sep 21 the claims office in La Corunna had received 633 claims adding up to E676.6m. These included a claim for E131.6m from representatives of 13,600 fishermen and shellfish harvesters in Galicia, Asturias and Cantabria. They also included three claims filed by the Spanish government amounting to E513.8m. Madrid is finalising a fourth claim for E120m. In France 294 claims totalling E86.9m had been received while the Portuguese government had also submitted a claim for E3m to cover the cost of clean-up and pollution prevention. Last May the fund's executive committee recognised that the total number of accepted claims would far exceed the E171.5m available under the 1992 fund and decided to limit payments to 15% of assessed claims. Following assessments of initial claims the fund has so far paid E57.6m to the Spanish government.

REGALIA (Bahamas)

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Statoil ASA said repairs to the multipurpose service platform *Regalia* (17624 gt, built 1985) will slightly delay its project to increase compressor capacity on the Troll A natural gas platform and add kroner 10-15 million to the project's cost. Prosafe, Stavanger, owns the vessel, which was found to have leaked 1,000 litres of hydraulic oil. About 120 project personnel were demobilized yesterday. *Regalia*, serving as a floating hotel during the compressor work, was towed to land for repairs, which should take a week. The compressor capacity is being increased to enable more partially processed well-stream gas to be piped from Troll A to the Kollsnes processing plant near Bergen for final processing and transportation to continental Europe through four pipeline systems.

SAN ROCHELLE (New Zealand)

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Three crew who abandoned the blazing tuna fishing *San Rochelle*, length 18 metres, off Cape Reinga early yesterday, escaped

with little more than smoke inhalation. "That soon cleared sitting in a liferaft in the fresh air," Auckland John Alexander, owner-skipper of *San Rochelle*, said after he and his two crewmen were picked up in a helicopter rescue and flown to Te Pahi, near Cape Reinga. After more than five hours in the liferaft they were deposited safely at the Department of Conservation field headquarters at Te Pahi where they were looked after by DoC staff and Houhora Senior Constable Chris Yarnon. *San Rochelle* had left Auckland to sail north on Sunday (Oct 24). Mr Alexander said he had no idea what started the fire in the engine-room of the vessel about 185 km north-west of Cape Reinga at 0400 yesterday. "It was pretty horrific. It just got away on us. We followed all the right procedures to restrict fuel, heat and air but it didn't make any difference. We couldn't control it," he said. The men sent out a Mayday (distress) call. The two crewmen got into the liferaft and used a tether line to secure it to *San Rochelle*. Mr Alexander said intense heat drove him off the steel boat about 0500 hrs. "By 0800 hrs the Orion was over us and by 1030 hrs it was the chopper." The Mayday call was cut short but enough was picked up by the Wellington-based Rescue Co-ordination Centre to despatch an RNZAF Orion. After the liferaft was sighted, Auckland's Westpac Rescue Helicopter was sent to rescue the men. The rescue took about 15 minutes. Mr Alexander said he would try to arrange a salvage operation for his boat. That would involve putting the fire out and towing it probably to the port of Whangarei, where it would be hauled on to a slip. Earlier, the Maritime Safety Authority issued a warning to shipping that *San Rochelle* was drifting, abandoned and on fire. The authority will investigate the cause of the fire.

SARAH 2 (Panama)

Hodeidah, Oct 23 — Understand from the Hodeidah port Harbour-master that the temporary repairs on the hull of general cargo *Sarah 2* have been completed. The vessel is still at Saleef anchorage and it appears that there is some crew dispute, which has to be sorted out by its owners. The Harbour-master expects the vessel to sail out of Saleef by pm, Oct 24 for Dubai. — Lloyd's Agents.

Hodidah, Oct 25 — Understand from the Hodeidah port Harbour-master that general cargo *Sarah 2* sailed out of Saleef Port, at 0940, Oct 25, bound for Jeddah. — Lloyd's Agents.

SEEBRISSE (Belize)

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Seebrisse* (1990 gt, built 1974) ran aground at the entrance to Kinsale Harbour. Kinsale lifeboat and a local fishing vessel assisted in attempts to refloat the vessel during high tide this morning, but they were unsuccessful and the manoeuvre will be tried again at high tide this evening. The vessel,

which ran aground in stormy seas, is not believed to pose any pollution risk to the area. (Note — *Seebrisse* sailed Szczecin Oct 17 for Kinsale.)

London, Oct 28 — Following received from Coastguard Dublin MRCC, timed 1030, UTC: *Seebrisse*, from Kinsale, in ballast, seven crew members, ran aground in bad weather off Kinsale at about 0600, local time, this morning. Vessel remains hard aground.

SHURI (Japan)

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

SILVA (Cambodia)

Esbjerg, Oct 26 — General cargo *Silva* remains in port at Esbjerg. — Lloyd's Agents.

SOZIDANIE (Vanuatu)

London, Oct 27 — Understand fish factory *Sozidanie* was still in port at Las Palmas as of Oct 13.

STEPAN RAZIN (Russia)

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 24, states: There has been a shipwreck in Kolskiy Zaliv. Bulk/c.c. *Stepan Razin* (14141 gt, built 1980), which was carrying "apatites", has sunk as a result of a storm. The wind wrenched the vessel free from its anchor and blew it on to rocks in the area of Cape Lodeynny. The vessel sprang a leak and quickly sank. The crew were able to send out a distress signal in time. All the 27 people on board were evacuated by helicopters. It has been decided to send divers to the vessel. They will decide whether it is worth lifting. Initial reports say there was no fuel spillage and there is no danger to the environment.

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 24, states: Rescuers and heads of the Murmansk Sea Shipping Company went to the scene of bulk/c.c. *Stepan Razin* this morning. The vessel ran aground at the exit from the Kola Bay yesterday. The rescuers and company heads will assess the damage and provide for the unloading of fuel and apatite concentrate. The vessel does not pose an environmental hazard at present, a source in the regional department for civil defence and emergencies told Itar-Tass. The company will investigate the wreck. None of 23 crew members was hurt. The crew was evacuated yesterday.

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Bulk/c.c. *Stepan Razin*, which ran aground outside Murmansk this weekend, is leaking a lot of oil, but nothing has been done to contain the spillage. The vessel, bound Finland, ran aground at Myslodinny at the seaward approach to Murmansk Saturday (Oct 23). The 19 people on board were evacuated, but the ship is still grounded, reported TV 2. The ship is leaking oil, but nothing has been done to contain the spillage. Lars Andre Jensen, master of salvage tug *Tambur*, said to TV 2 that there was a lot of oil in the sea. He had been travelling in oil for at least one hour in the Murmansk fjord.

St. Petersburg, Oct 27 — Murmask Sea Port Authority advise that bulk/c.c. *Stepan Razin* grounded in lat 69 21.4N, long 33 28.7E. on Oct 21. The crew was evacuated. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUK JEONG NO.505 (South Korea)

Busan, Oct 22 — General cargo *Suk Jeong No.505* will be towed from Mokpo to Fuzhou shortly. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (See issue of Oct 8.)

SUNRANA (NIS)

London, Oct 27 — General cargo *Sunrana* arrived Swinoujscie Oct 19 and sailed Oct 22 for Koping.

SUPERFLYTE (New Zealand)

Auckland, Oct 27 — Catamaran *Superflyte* has completed hull repairs following the fire Aug 22; however, it is currently undergoing repairs after experiencing engine failure. It is not expected to return to service for some weeks depending on the extent of damage that is found when the engine is dismantled. — Lloyd's Agents.

TAI PAN I (Panama)

Cape Town, Oct 25 — General cargo *Tai Pan I* arrived at Cape Town under tow on Oct 24. Understand that the main engine crankshaft has to be replaced and that repairs will probably take approximately 30 to 40 days. — Lloyd's Agents.

THE BOSS (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 21 — Following received from Coast Guard Seattle, dated Oct 20: Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Portland, Ore, is continuing to monitor the cleanup of fishing *The Boss* that went aground and sunk Oct. 7 inside the jetties of Yaquina Bay, Ore. The vessel was dragged into shallower water out of the Yaquina Bay Channel Monday (Oct 18) where divers assessed it and found significant damage to the hull. Divers also discovered that large amounts of oil are not leaking from the vessel, but a small amount did escape during the move. *The Boss* was originally estimated to have had 1,000 gallons of fuel oil onboard. About 300 gallons of pure oil product has been removed. Due to the amount of oil and hazardous materials on board, the threat of pollution remains. However, proactive measures by the Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Portland, Coast Guard Pacific Strike Team members from Novato, Ca., NRC Environmental Services, Northwest Marine Services and cooperative efforts by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon State Parks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers continue to mitigate the threat. The vessel has been fixed in place by a steel cable attached to a piling. Containment and sorbent boom has been placed around the vessel. NRC personnel are continuing to remove oil in an attempt to lighten the vessel. Pacific Strike Team members will assist in the removal of hazardous materials, which include marine batteries, paint and other chemicals. No adverse wildlife impact has been reported at this time. Weather, tidal

conditions and debris on board the vessel continue to pose a challenge to divers and response personnel.

THOR R. (Denmark)

Esbjerg, Oct 22 — Authorities and insurance company inform that the raising of trailing suction hopper dredge *Thor R.* has been postponed due to the weather. The vessel will be raised am, Oct 23, at the earliest. — Lloyd's Agents.

Esbjerg, Oct 26 — Trailing suction hopper dredge *Thor R.* was raised Oct 24 and brought into Esbjerg. The vessel will be moved to Esbjerg Dock Services Oct 26 for repairs. The shipping lane was closed from 1855, Oct 24, to 1500, Oct 25, due to the salvage operation. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Oct 27 — Multtraship Salvage has completed the delicate wreck removal of trailing suction hopper dredge *Thor R.*. The removal operation was complicated by a soft sand bottom and strong tides, which allowed only four hours of diving time per day. Multtraship managing director Leendert Muller said: "It has been a tough job, using our salvage crew and diving teams, plus the 1,500 tonne lift floating crane *Matador III* and two tugs."

TOM T. (Sao Tome & Principe)

Bucharest, Oct 28 — As of Oct 15, general cargo *Tom T.* is still laid up at Midia. — Lloyd's Agents.

TONG HAI (China)

Novorossiysk, Oct 23 — Bulk *Tong Hai* arrived Novorossiysk Oct 23 from Turkey. — Lloyd's Agents.

TONG YUN (China)

Yokohama, Oct 26 — Understand from the local agent, that c.c. *Tong Yun* will arrive at Yokohama at around 2000, local time, Oct 27. — Lloyd's Agents.

TRICOLOR (NIS)

London, Oct 27 — The Combinatie Berging Tricolor consortium reported today: The wreck removal of vehicle *Tricolor* has now been successfully completed. With a constant focus on safety and environment everyone involved in the removal operation have managed to prevent danger and further pollution. Last month all large sections of the *Tricolor* wreck had been removed. After this the salvage team focussed on removing the remaining debris and wrecked cargo.

UTSTEIN (Norway)

See *Kilstraum*.

VEGA DESGAGNES (Canada)

London, Oct 25 — Product tanker *Vega Desgagnes* (8806 gt, built 1982) sustained aftpeak damage while leaving Ultramar berth, Quebec, at 0500, EDST, Oct 22.

WILLIAM J. MOORE (Canada)

Montreal, Oct 22 — Tug *William J. Moore* had lines tangled in the propellers. Vessel continued to Hamilton where it was hauled out and the propellers repaired. — Lloyd's Agents.



MALACCA STRAITS

London, Oct 25 — Two crewmen of Tuvalu-registered anchor handling firefighting tug/supply *Erna*, kidnapped by pirates off North Sumatra earlier in the month, have been freed after a ransom was paid. The master and chief engineer of the Singapore operated tug were taken hostage on Sep 30 after their tug which was towing a Singapore-registered barge was attacked by armed pirates. The two Indonesian nationals were freed at the end of last week after the owner agreed to pay a ransom. Two Filipino crew of the tug, owned by Singapore's Kasel Salvage, who were kidnapped in a similar location two days later are still held. *Erna* was attacked twice in the space of a few hours by pirates armed with 79mm calibre weapons. The latest violent kidnappings come despite claims recently by the Indonesian navy that co-ordinated patrols started in July between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore had been successful in combating piracy in the Malacca Strait.



UNITED STATES

London, Oct 27 — Following received from the United States Coast Guard, dated today: A report from Galveston states: The crew of Coast Guard cutter *Manowar* terminated the voyage of fishing *Christina IV* (157 gt, built 1995) at 1700 yesterday for failing to meet safety requirements. *Manowar* was on patrol in the Gulf of Mexico and sighted the shrimp vessel fishing five miles south of the entrance to Galveston Bay. The purpose of the boarding was to ensure compliance with safety and fishing regulations. "We found that the boat's liferaft and Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon were overdue for inspection, which put the crew at very serious risk if the boat were to come into danger," said Lt JG Travis Emge, commanding officer of *Manowar*. "After the boarding, we escorted *Christina IV* back to Galveston. It cannot get under way until the owner has corrected the violations and been inspected by the Coast Guard." The home port of *Christina IV* is Seabrook, Texas.



AFRICAN PRIDE (Panama)

Lagos, Oct 28 — Three top Nigerian naval officers were arraigned in a military court yesterday over their alleged involvement in the disappearance of product tanker *African Pride*, which had been impounded for smuggling stolen crude oil. The vessel was impounded last year with 11,000 barrels of illicit oil, but went missing from navy custody in August. Three rear-admirals, Francis Agbiti, Samuel Kolawale and Anthonio Bob-Manuel, appeared before a court martial in Lagos, and the judge overruled a defence objection to the composition of the court. The prosecution asked for more time to prepare charges against them and Judge Rear-Admiral Joseph Ajayi adjourned the trial until Nov 1. Thirteen Russian crew members were charged after the vessel was originally impounded in October last year, the largest seizure made by Nigerian security forces. Their trial continues. — Reuters.

ARDEAL (Romania)

Khulna, Oct 24 — General cargo *Ardeal* is still under attachment at Mongla. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

CHEMSEA (Greece)

London, Oct 22 — A report in today's issue of "Newsfront" states: Chemical/oil carrier *Chemsea* (850 gt, built 1969), seized at the end of September by a private creditor in pursuit of a Euro166,200 claim in an action against the registered owners, has been listed for hammering down Nov 11. Vessel is currently lying at Eleusis.

DIAGORAS (Greece)

London, Oct 22 — A report in today's edition of "Newsfront" states: After being seized several times, passenger ro/ro *Diagoras* (6939 gt, built 1990) has been seized, this time by private creditors, in pursuit of a Euros 143,350 claim against the registered owners: Dane Sealanes.

EMERALD II (Panama)

Maassluis, Oct 22 — General cargo *Emerald II* (10993 gt, built 1979), which arrived at Rotterdam on Oct 18, is currently detained in the port. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ENDEAVOR II (Greece)

Karachi, Oct 28 — Crude oil tanker *Endeavor II* is still under arrest at Karachi, according to Karachi Port Authority. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

GISELA OLDENDORFF (Liberia)

Maassluis, Oct 22 — Bulk *Gisela Oldendorff* (13781 gt, built 1997),

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

which arrived at Rotterdam on Oct 20, is currently detained in the port. — Lloyd's Sub-agents

KAPTAN NEVZAT KACAR (Turkey)

Beirut, Oct 25 — Bulk *Kaptan Nevzat Kacar* (16502 gt, built 1984) has been detained by order of the Lebanese authorities for breach of the boycott laws. The vessel left the quay at 0600, local time, Oct 24 and laid anchor outside Beirut harbour. The Law Office of Baroudi & Associates is handling the matter on behalf of the vessel owners. — Lloyd's Agents.

LIDER SAFAK (Madeira)

Maassluis, Oct 22 — Ro/ro *Lider Safak* (5173 gt, built 1974), which arrived at Rotterdam on Oct 19, is currently detained in the port. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

MASAI (Togo)

Vigo, Oct 26 — Fishing *Masai* is under repair at Marin. — Lloyd's Agents.

NASR (Malta)

London, Oct 26 — Bulk/c.c. *Nasr* (16992 gt, built 1980), which arrived Tees Oct 24 and is loading for Iran, has been detained at the port. The vessel is expected to depart on Oct 29.

ORESTES (Panama)

Bari, Oct 13 — Passenger ro/ro *Orestes* is still under arrest at Bari. — Lloyd's Agents.

OSIRIS (Netherlands)

See under "Marine."

OSTWIND (Antigua & Barbuda)

Maassluis, Oct 22 — General cargo *Ostwind* remains under arrest at Vlaardingen. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

SENTINEL (Comoros)

Genoa, Oct 28 — General cargo *Sentinel* is still under arrest at Genoa. No prospects for release known at the moment. — Lloyd's Agents.

SHINSEI MARU NO.3 (Japan)

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 22, states: Fishing *Shinsei Maru No.3*, detained by Marine and Coastal Management (MCM) in the Western Cape last week, has been cleared of suspicions of poaching Patagonian toothfish. *Shinsei Maru No.3* had entered South Africa's waters around Marion Island in August to answer a distress call from weather station staff on the island who needed to get a sick member onto *SAS Agulhas*. *Shinsei Maru No.3* was closest and responded to the call. Speaking for MCM, Shaheen Moolla said MCM had confirmed this and allowed *Shinsei Maru No.3* to sail this week. Moolla said that before any fishing vessel entered port, it was required to submit documentation to the MCM showing where it had been. All toothfish vessels had to carry monitoring systems that recorded the boats' movements by satellite. This information was fed into the MCM's database, which translated the vessel's

co-ordinates into a pattern. "This showed a line to Marion Island and back and circular routes. The vessel had been steaming at between one and three knots in a fishing pattern," Moolla said. "The vessel was detained pending the outcome of an investigation. We were concerned about the fishing patterns in our exclusive economic zone. After much deliberation, our view is that the vessel was not fishing illegally." The vessel had a cargo of 50 tons of Patagonian toothfish on board. Marcel Kroese, head of MCM's law enforcement, noted last week that the vessel had a permit from Japan to catch toothfish on the high seas but not in South African waters.

STRILBAS (Norway)

London, Oct 27 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Standby safety vessel *Strilbas* arrived at Skudeneshavn last week for docking.

TRUBCHEVSK (Russia)

Busan, Oct 22 — Understand from the owners of ref *Trubchevsk*, that the vessel will be towed to a port in China soon for scrap. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

VOYAGER (Netherlands Antilles)

Maassluis, Oct 22 — General cargo *Voyager* is still under arrest at Rotterdam. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Pipeline Accidents



BATMAN PROVINCE, TURKEY

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

FONTANA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

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

KIRKUK AREA, IRAQ

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

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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

Pollution



KARNAPHULI RIVER, BANGLADESH

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A shipping ministry inquiry committee on pollution of the river Karnaphuli due to leakage of oil from crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* of Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) in August this year blamed it on three crew

members of the vessel. Master of the vessel Captain S M Saifullah, chief officer Ariful Islam Khan and second officer Shafiqul Islam were responsible for the river pollution caused by the oil leakage, said the probe report submitted to the ministry recently. The seven-member body led by Director General of the Department of Shipping Captain Ahsanul Azim also said in its report the extent of oil slick was not more than five tonnes. But a vested quarter in its own interest spread the news that several hundred tonnes of oil leaked causing river pollution and consequent dying of hilsha fish. The report recommended that the authorities concerned should hold a press conference to give correct information to the media in cases of such incidents. Otherwise, people will get misleading information that will create panic among them, it said. The committee also said it did not find any proof of excess oil in the tanker. The probe report suggested allocation of special funds for proper maintenance of two oil tankers of the BCS, which are more than 18-year-old. The Eastern Refinery Limited also should take adequate anti-pollution measures to check possible damages in incidents of oil leakage, it added. The report mentioned that *Banglar Shourabh* carried 6,336 tonnes of crude oil from a mother vessel anchored at Kutubdia. It reached Chittagong port on Aug 26 and after unloading oil at Eastern Refinery, it anchored at the dry dock next day. A tug found oil spill on the Karnaphuli waters and reported it to Chittagong Port Authority. The local and national dailies carried reports on the river pollution and death of hilsha fish. The probe report however attributed dying of hilsha to a trawler capsizing in the river on the same day.

KATERINA (Malta)

London, Oct 26 — Bulk *Katerina* sailed Long Beach Oct 23 for San Francisco.

LABUAN AREA, MALAYSIA

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: About 30 barrels of oil have been collected following an oil spill that caused a slick measuring 1.15km off the West Coast of Labuan on Monday (Oct 18). Aerial and marine surveillance teams were despatched to locate the source of the slick on Tuesday (Oct 19). An underwater pipelines inspection team was also mobilised to inspect the pipeline transporting offshore crude to the Labuan Crude Oil Terminal. At this point, neither the source and volume of the slick, nor the cause of the pollution, have been established. The slick was first spotted at 1445 hrs, on Monday and emergency and oil spill response teams were immediately activated. Following the sighting of the spill, undersea pipelines that deliver oil to the Labuan Crude Oil Terminal were shut as a preventive measure.

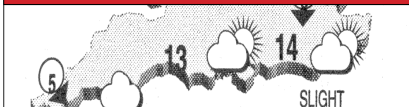
London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Some 100 workers have been despatched to clean up a two-kilometre oil slick off Kiansam in

south-west Labuan. Labuan Corporation chief executive Abidin Arsat said the cause of the oil slick, first spotted at 1445, Monday (Oct 18) near the Labuan Crude Oil Terminal, had not been determined. However, he did not dismiss the possibility of it being due to a leak in an underwater pipeline used for channelling crude oil from offshore drilling platforms to the island. "There is also a possibility that the oil could have been dumped from a passing ship and washed ashore," he said yesterday during a press conference after a meeting with Petronas, Shell and Department of Environment officials in Labuan. Petronas and Shell operate offshore platforms near Labuan. In a joint statement Petronas and Shell said workers from both companies as well as the Petroleum Industries Malaysia Mutual Aid Group were involved in the clean-up. The work began immediately after the slick was sighted and was suspended at 0100, yesterday because of high tide. It resumed five-and-a-half hours later. The statement said aerial, marine surveillance and underwater pipeline inspection teams were dispatched at first daylight yesterday to locate the source of the slick.

SWAN RIVER, PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A stretch of Perth's Swan River has been reopened, nine days after a big sewage spill forced its closure. The WA health department last night reopened the river at Caversham, in the city's east, which was closed on Oct 16 when an estimated 500,000 litres of sewage flowed into it. The river was closed to public access from Middle Swan Bridge to Fish Market Reserve as a result of the spill, which the department previously conceded could be the worst of its kind. Health department environment director Jim Dodds said the most recent laboratory tests on water samples had showed pollution levels had fallen to acceptable levels, allowing the river to reopen. Sewage poured into the river for eight hours when the Water Corp had trouble locating valves to shut them down. The river was then closed to recreational activities to help protect people against gastric illnesses.

Weather & Navigation



AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Councils on the mid-north coast of New South Wales estimate the violent weather that hit the region this week caused millions of dollars in damage. Road Transit Authority, State Emergency Service and council crews are mopping up after winds up to 120 km an hour and torrential rains caused flooding and

brought down power lines and trees, damaging homes. Emergency Services Minister Tony Kelly has declared the area a natural disaster zone. The Bellingen Council is still assessing damage and clean-up costs as floodwaters recede. The town was isolated by flooding for much of yesterday. There is concern that a major bridge in the town centre has suffered structural damage. Coffs Harbour Council's acting general manager, Steve Sawtell, says the cost of the clean-up and private insurance claims will most likely add up to millions of dollars in damage. SES spokesman Rick Stone says crews will work through today and into tomorrow to repair all the damage. The SES says rain has stopped falling across the region and the winds have dropped. However, many outlying communities remain isolated by flooding, including in the Macleay Valley west of Kempsey. In the Manning Valley, there is a minor flood warning current for the Manning River near Wingham and Taree. The river is expected to peak around midday and some bridge and road closures are expected.

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of New South Wales mid-north coast residents yesterday remained cut off by floodwaters and others were without power as the area counted the cost of this week's ferocious storms. Bellingen and Coffs Harbour were declared natural disaster zones on Wednesday (Oct 20) after a day and a half of torrential rains and wild winds caused the Bellinger River to flood, and 100 people to be evacuated. The State Emergency Service said roads to Bellingen, which was isolated by floodwaters on Wednesday, were reopened yesterday as river water levels continued to fall. But Bellingen council general manager Mr Peter Doyle said about 500 people living near the upper reaches of the Bellinger River were still cut off by road. Mr Doyle said council engineers estimated the flood had caused between Aus\$5 million (£2 million) and Aus\$6 million (£2.4 million) worth of damage. He said Waterfall Way, the main road artery between the coast and northern NSW, sustained the worst damage and was still closed. "There are landslides, with front-end loaders loading soil and rocks and carrying it away," he said. In Coffs Harbour, about 400 trees uprooted by the storm had been cleared and 35 roads reopened by 1500 hrs, yesterday, the city councils general manager Mr Stephen Sawtell said. The council had already tallied Aus\$1 million (£403,000) worth of damage to government buildings and infrastructure, but that figure could rise to Aus\$3 million (£1.2 million). The storm also brought down 100 power lines, cutting electricity to much of the towns population of 62,000, he said. The nearby village of Corindi and other villages west of the Pacific Highway were still without power. Country Energys regional general manager, Mr Peter Bereicua, said repair crews had worked around the clock in atrocious

conditions to restore power to almost 15,000 homes. Insurers said claims for water damage to homes and cars had so far been kept to a minimum. Meanwhile, Sydney dam levels have risen 0.4 per cent to 42.6 per cent since last Thursday (Oct 14).

London, Oct 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Thunderstorms pounded New South Wales tonight, damaging buildings, flooding city centres and collapsing the ceiling of a supermarket. Days after the region was declared a natural disaster area following severe storms and flooding, the State Emergency Service (SES) had taken 400 calls for help from residents and businesses by late tonight. Large hailstones pelted Muswellbrook, north of Newcastle, which was the worst-affected area, with residents placing more than 100 calls to the SES. The emergency service also took calls from the western and northern suburbs of Sydney, and through the Hunter and Oxley regions, SES spokeswoman Laura Goodin said. Flash floods affected the city centre at Taree, where the Coles supermarket's ceiling collapsed because gutters were blocked by hailstones, directing rainwater into the ceiling. The supermarket was evacuated. A nursing home had some skylights smashed by hail but it was not evacuated. "We anticipate that most of the jobs will be completed by late tomorrow," Ms Goodin said. She said the Rural Fire Service was helping operations. "However, weather conditions can change suddenly." She said most storms appeared to have passed out to sea by late this evening. Thunderstorms moved north-east across Sydney late today, dumping rain over Warragamba Dam the city's biggest source of drinking water. Warragamba was at 39.1 per cent of capacity last Thursday but was expected to rise as more rain falls and water from the catchment area runs off into the dam.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Trees were uprooted and roofs torn from homes as gale force winds wreaked havoc across NSW and left thousands of homes without power. Homes were evacuated as the winds brought down a wall of a fire-damaged factory in Sydney's south, trains and ferries were cancelled, and power lines damaged, leaving 10,000 homes in Sydney and the NSW central coast without electricity. The blustery conditions were the latest in a string of extreme weather episodes to hit the state this month. First there were record hot temperatures followed by huge downpours and wild storms. The weather bureau said today's strongest gust - 106kph - was recorded at Montague Island off the NSW south coast. Wind warnings were issued at Sydney Airport, and the State Emergency Services (SES) logged more than 100 calls for help, mainly for fallen trees and branches. Some homes lost their roofs and the wind damaged fences and sheds. Wollondilly in Sydney's outer south-west, Hornsby, Warringah and Pittwater in the north and Baulkham Hills in the north-west

were the areas hardest hit. Sydney Harbour's Manly ferry and jetcat services were cancelled and lengthy delays were experienced on the North Shore, Northern, Newcastle and Central Coast train lines because a fallen tree blocked the tracks at Normanhurst. CityRail and Sydney Ferries were struggling to get buses to replace their services and warned commuters could face a slow journey home. "The combination of the relatively cold air moving up into the warm air produced a strong pressure gradient leading to widespread windy conditions across NSW and Victoria," senior meteorologist Peter Dunda said. "This is the transition springtime from winter to summer. Whilst we don't frequently get these extremes in weather, this is the time of year they occur."

HURRICANE "IVAN"

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Three cruise lines indefinitely canceled visits to Grenada because of major damage caused by Hurricane "Ivan", officials said today. The cancellations are a blow to the tourism-dependent Caribbean nation as it attempts to recover from the Sep 7 storm that killed 39 people and damaged or destroyed 90 percent of buildings. Princess Cruises, part of Carnival Corp. & PLC and based in Santa Clarita, California, and Silversea Cruises, based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, were scheduled yesterday to be the first vessels to dock in Grenada since Hurricane "Ivan". Norwegian Cruise Line Corp., based in Miami, Florida, was scheduled to arrive today. But the visits were postponed indefinitely after the companies did assessments and decided the island wasn't ready to host visitors, said Nikoyan Roberts, a spokeswoman for the Grenada Tourism Board. "They reported outstanding issues like fallen poles and wires, and piles of debris on the streets that need collecting," Roberts said. She said the companies would send new assessment teams over the next month to decide when port calls might recommence. The former British colony of 100,000 depends heavily on tourism - over 28 percent of its US\$440 million gross domestic product came from the industry in 2003, according to the tourism board. None of the 35 cruise vessel companies that normally visit the island have made port calls since before the hurricane, Roberts said. Hotel occupancy is down 29 percent across the island, and tourism officials say they expect far fewer than the 145,350 non-cruise vessel tourists who visited in 2003. Last year, cruise lines brought in 146,925 passengers, who spent US\$4.4 million in the country, according to the tourism board.

HURRICANE "JEANNE"

Fort Lauderdale, Oct 22 — Titan barge *Karlissa-A* has arrived on scene to assist in stabilising cement *Contrader* for refloating. Rigging and

preparation now taking place and a refloating attempt is due Monday (Oct 25). — Titan Salvage.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated Oct 26, states: Factoring in a revised estimate of damages from hurricane "Jeanne", total insured damage caused by the four recent major hurricanes in the United States is estimated at \$20.49 billion, according to an analysis released today by the Insurance Services Office Inc's Property Claim Services unit. PCS said it now estimates insured damages from "Jeanne", the most recent of the quartet of storms, at \$3.25 billion. Florida sustained the most damage from "Jeanne", which made landfall in the state on Sep 25, with insured property damage of about \$2.79 billion. Pennsylvania sustained \$145 million in insured property damage, while Georgia incurred \$105 million. "Jeanne" has generated almost 385,000 claims so far, according to PCS. The four storms are expected to lead to more than two million property claims, said PCS.

PORTUGAL

London, Oct 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Strong winds and rain across Portugal have knocked down trees and caused flash floods, disrupting travel, and are blamed for the drowning of two people, officials and press reports said Thursday. A 63-year-old man drowned Wednesday after he was caught up in a flash flood in the northern town of Maia, located some 300 kilometres north of Lisbon, family members told daily newspaper *Jornal de Noticias*. A 26-year-old woman meanwhile drowned after she was swept up into a swollen river on the island of Sao Miguel, the main island of Portugal's mid-Atlantic Azores archipelago, daily *Correio da Manha* reported. Wind gusts of up to 100 kilometres an hour knocked down scores of trees yesterday, especially in the north of the country, blocking roads and damaging cars, emergency services officials said. Flooding at a subway station in second-city Oporto, in northern Portugal, forced the partial closure of the underground train system for some 90 minutes early yesterday, a subway spokesman said.

TYPHOON "MINDULLE"

Busan, Oct 22 — Permanent repairs of chemical/oil carrier *No.1 Dae Bu* were completed Oct 4. Vessel is presently lying afloat, berthed at the Yeosu Shipyard, without any schedule fixed. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

TYPHOON "NOCK-TEN"

London, Oct 22 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Nock-Ten" was located near lat 115.8N, long 135.7E, approximately 780 nautical miles south-east of Okinawa and has tracked northwestward, or 305 degs, at nine knots over the past six hours. The position is accurate to within 40 nautical miles and is based on the

centre being located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds are 100 knots with gusts to 125 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds: 25 nautical miles in the north-east quadrant, 20 nautical miles in the south-east and north-west quadrants and 30 nautical miles south-west quadrant. Maximum significant wave height is 30 feet. At 0600, UTC, Oct 22 the centre is predicted to be near 18.1N, long 130.5E, with maximum sustained winds 95 knots and gusts to 115 knots.

London, Oct 22 — Following received from Reuters, dated today: Typhoon "Nock-ten" is forecast to strike Taiwan at about 1200, GMT, Oct 25. Data supplied by the US Navy and Air Force Joint Typhoon Warning Centre suggest that the point of landfall will be near lat 24.1N, long 122.5E. "Nock-ten" is expected to bring 1-minute maximum sustained winds to the region of around 166 km/hr.

Taipei, Oct 25 — Howling winds and torrential rain lashed Taiwan today as a rare autumn typhoon bore down on the island's eastern shore, forcing schools and businesses in the capital and other regions to close. There were no immediate reports of casualties, though a 54-year-old fisherman was missing after his small raft flipped over in high waves off the northeastern coast of Ilan yesterday morning, said an official at the disaster recovery centre. Typhoon "Nock-Ten", with sustained winds of up to 145 km per hour, was moving north along Taiwan's eastern coast with its eye about 120 km offshore over the Pacific Ocean at 0300, GMT, the Central Weather Bureau said. Up to 1 metre of rain is expected to be dumped on some mountainous areas in the north, prone to deadly mudslides due to soil loosened by over-development. Much of Taiwan has been drenched by hours of rain, with flooding seen in some cities. Waves at least 14m high were pounding the coast, forcing Taiwan's second-largest port, Keelung, to close. Some international and domestic flights were also cancelled because of the storm, which is affecting much of the island. Businesses and schools in Taipei, which houses the stock and foreign exchanges, and the northern and eastern regions were closed today due to "Nock-Ten". The shopping mall in the world's tallest building, Taipei 101, will be closed until 1500 hrs. The 508-metre tower was built to withstand the strongest typhoon in a 100-year cycle, or gale force winds of more than 60 metres a second (216 km/h). Taiwan's main refiner, Chinese Petroleum Corp, said its operations were unaffected by the typhoon. Its three refineries are shielded by the island's central mountain range. — Reuters.

Taipei, Oct 25 — Howling winds and torrential rain battered Taiwan today, as a late-season typhoon struck the island, killing at least one person and forcing schools and businesses to close. Hardest hit today was the island's north-east where huge seas closed a major port and heavy rain triggered floods. In the capital Taipei, gale-force

winds forced buildings to sway so much some residents thought there had been an earthquake. Typhoon "Nock-Ten" had weakened a little by late today and had sustained winds of up to 130 kph. The eye was 80 km north of Taipei at 0800, UTC, and the storm was spinning north-east at 20 kph towards Japan, Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau said. A television reporter drowned in a flash flood in Taipei county, and a rescue worker was missing after being swept away by raging waters, Taiwan's disaster recovery centre said. A fisherman, whose small raft flipped over in high seas off the north-eastern coast yesterday, was also missing. The storm had churned up the east coast and drenched the entire island, and could dump up to one metre of rain on some northern mountainous areas, prone to landslides due to soil loosened by over-development. Waves at least 14 metres high pounded the north-eastern coast, forcing Keelung port, Taiwan's second largest, to close. Some international and domestic flights were also cancelled by the typhoon. Flash floods submerged some streets to waist levels in the north, though waters had mostly receded by late afternoon. With gusts of 180 kph whipping around high-rises in Taipei earlier today, some residents thought an earthquake had struck but the weather bureau said the winds were to blame. "Wind speeds are gradually weakening and we'll be seeing lesser rain," Joey Lee, a forecaster at the bureau, said. "The typhoon is leaving Taiwan soon and we should be able to lift the land warning by early tomorrow morning at the earliest." Businesses and schools in Taipei, which houses the stock and foreign exchanges, and the northern and eastern regions were closed today but expected to re-open tomorrow. The shopping mall in the world's tallest building, Taipei 101, was also closed for most of the day. — Reuters.

London, Oct 25 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Typhoon "Nock-Ten" near lat 25.2N, long 122.0E, at 0600, UTC, Oct 25. Movement past six hours 350 deg at 13 knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 85 knots with gusts to 105 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 20 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 25 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 35 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 75 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 90 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 95 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 1800, UTC: Position lat 27.6N, long 123.2E. Maximum sustained winds 70 knots with gusts to 85 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 25 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 45 nautical miles east semicircle, 35 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 105 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 95 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 85 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Oct 26: Position lat 28.9N, long 126.7E. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Radius of

50-knot winds 25 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 35 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 100 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 80 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 95 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Nock-ten" hit Taiwan with powerful winds and heavy rain, killing four people, leaving another two missing and disrupting road and air traffic. Among the dead was TV cameraman Ping Chung-cheng, who was trapped by a flash-flood on the Keelung River in the northern town of Juifang in Taipei County. Some streets in three towns near the river were flooded by chest-deep water. About 1,600 residents in the northern city of Keelung were trapped by surging floodwater. Rescuers found a crippled woman drowned on her bed at her home at Shuanghsi in Taipei County. Local television said her husband had to leave his wife on the bed when he rushed out to seek help. Rescuers found the body of a serviceman who was washed away by a flash-flood in Juifang. In Taipei a man died in a car accident blamed on the storm. A 54-year-old man was missing after his boat capsized off the north-eastern port of Suao in high waves triggered by the typhoon's 145-kilometre-per-hour winds, the National Fire Agency said. Also missing is an 28-year-old woman who was washed away by surging floods at Wanli in Taipei County. At least 100 people were injured, mostly by flying debris, the NFA said. In the northern county of Hsinchu, 440 residents were evacuated from their homes. Rescuers were searching for 260 mountain climbers who were hiking in 24 groups over the weekend, the NFA said. Some 5,300 mainland Chinese fisherman took shelter in Taiwanese ports as the storm lashed the island. Most rail services and some domestic and international flights were cancelled. The typhoon knocked out power supplies to 250,000 households, 110,000 of them in the north-east county of Ilan where the typhoon made landfall. Schools and offices in Taipei and some eastern cities were closed. Sandbags were piled at entrances to Taipei's subway system to prevent flooding. The typhoon, packing gusts of 180 kilometers per hour, caused high-rise buildings to sway so strongly that several residents feared there had been an earthquake. The centre of "Nock-ten" had moved out to sea by mid-afternoon, the weather bureau said.

London, Oct 26 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Nock-ten" near lat 28.4N, long 125.9E at 0001, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 65 degrees at 26 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots, gusts 70 knots. Forecast position lat 29.2N, long 131.6E at 1200, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots. Forecast position lat 29.9N, long 137.2E at 0000, UTC, Oct 27. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots, gusts 45 knots.

TYPHOON "TOKAGE"

London, Oct 22 — Passenger *Antonina Nezhdanova* has a 50-deg list with its hull cracked and flooded, at Fushiki, near Toyama on the central eastern coast of Honshu. The casualty came as Typhoon "Tokage", the deadliest in 22 years, passed through Japan causing huge damage to property and the deaths of at least 66 people. In addition, 167 students and teachers from the institute for sea training in Yokohama aboard the sea training vessel *Kaiwo Maru* were rescued. The vessel sustained a cracked hull in waters off Toyama port after grounding on a breakwater. Other vessels casualties included Yamato Kaiun's 1992-built 400 teu Bahamian-flagged c.c. *OOCL Seto*, which ran aground on Kakeroma Island, Kagoshima Prefecture, early on Wednesday (Oct 20). No injuries were reported among the 16 Filipino crew members, according to the Japan Coast Guard, Japanese media reported. The coastguard said that the vessel was pulled to safety in the afternoon and continued on to its destination of Hong Kong yesterday. Sino Kisen's 9,900 gt passenger ro/ro *Shuri* became stranded at around 0500 hrs on Uma Island in the Seto Inland Sea off Imabari, Ehime Prefecture. None of the 12 crew was injured.

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Tokage" left at least 67 people dead, 21 missing and 351 injured as it cleared Japan yesterday morning, and the government said the damage was the worst from a typhoon in 25 years. The typhoon brought downpours and strong winds, destroying houses and important cultural properties, derailing a train and disrupting transportation services across the country. According to the National Police Agency, about 70 houses nationwide have been completely destroyed or partly destroyed and more than 4,500 houses were flooded as of 1900 yesterday, while there were mudslides in more than 600 locations and nine flood-control dikes have broken. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi ordered an immediate dispatch of a government fact-finding team when he met Yoshitaka Murata, state minister in charge of disaster management, government officials said. Airlines cancelled a total of 119 domestic flights yesterday morning, affecting some 25,000 travellers. The flight schedule was expected to normalize beginning in the afternoon, airline officials said. A two-car train on the JR Iida Line was derailed in Tatsuno, Nagano Prefecture, and fell about 4 metres into a rice paddy, slightly injuring four passengers, police said. The typhoon also caused damage to some state-designated important cultural properties, including the roof of Tamura-do hall of Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto and the wall of Zuiryu Temple in Takaoka, Toyama Prefecture.

Yokohama, Oct 21 — General cargo *Mount Akaboshi* (9582 gt, new building) was in Saeki Bay sheltering from typhoon No.23 (typhoon "Tokage")

on Oct 20 when it grounded on the shore due to the strong wind at 1155, same day. Training vessel *Kaiwo Maru* was at Toyama anchorage Oct 20 when it experienced typhoon No.23 and ran aground on shore due to strong wind. It sustained heavy damage to hull. All crew were rescued by Japan Coast Guard Oct 21, however 11 persons injured. It is still aground. C.c. *OOCL Seto*, Hiroshima for Hong Kong, anchored Satsukawa Bay to shelter from typhoon No.23. However, it ran aground on shore at 0125, Oct 20. It was refloated at 1145 same day. Scratching and denting was observed on its bottom. There were no injuries or oil spilt. However, a pearl nursery equipment in Satsukawa Bay sustained damage due contact by the vessel. — Lloyd's Agents.

Yokohama, Oct 26 — While general cargo *Mount Akaboshi* was in the shipyard for fitting-out for sea, it stood out to Saeki Bay to shelter from the typhoon ("Tokage"). The vessel then ran aground. *Mount Akaboshi* was refloated at 1150, local time, Oct 21 and returned to the shipyard. — Lloyd's Agents.

Hong Kong, Oct 26 — C.c. *OOCL Seto* arrived and sailed Hong Kong Oct 24. — Lloyd's Agents.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Strong winds and flooding caused havoc for rail passengers yesterday as trains were seriously disrupted on Scottish and cross-Border lines. A fallen tree blocked the Dundee-Edinburgh line in Fife and flooding in Falkirk, Larbert and around Glasgow disrupted commuter services across the Central Belt. Power lines on the Edinburgh-London east coast main line were hit by high winds, while an emergency timetable was introduced on the west coast main line because of "heavy leaf fall" in the Midlands. On the roads, heavy rain and winds caused poor driving conditions and bridge restrictions, while Caledonian MacBrayne was forced to cancel sailings on several Hebridean routes. A Colonsay-bound ferry had to turn back three-quarters of the way into its journey from Oban.

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Heavy rain across large parts of Wales has caused flooding in several areas, particularly in the north. There are currently 12 flood warnings in place, and 38 flood watches. The Met Office is also warning motorists across the nation to take care on the roads, as driving conditions worsen due to strong winds. Floodwater has been reported pouring into a number of homes in Gwynedd and Anglesey, and some homeowners have placed sandbags outside their doors. Bangor is said to be gridlocked with traffic, and some roads on Anglesey and around Caernarfon have also been closed. Flood watches Conwy Valley and Llanrwst Dyfi Valley and Machynlleth Rivers Mawddach, Wnion and the town of Dolgellau River Severn from Caerhowel to Trewern River Vyrnwy River Neath at Resolven River Cynin at St. Clears River Usk, Brecon

to Glanrwyne River Towy at Abergwili River Severn from Llandinam to Glandulais including Caersws Upper Dee Valley down to Llangollen including Corwen Lower Dee Valley from Llangollen to Chester The Cambrian railway line is closed west of Llandudno Junction to Holyhead, between Caersws and Machynlleth and on the Blaenau Ffestiniog line. The Conwy Valley rail line has also been closed between Llandudno Junction and Blaenau Ffestiniog. The line was repaired earlier this year at a cost of thousands after severe flood damage. Flood watches are currently in place on the Rivers Usk, Clwyd, Aeron, Bran, Cothi, Loughor, as well as the Dee, Wye, Monnow, Tawe, Taf, Teifi, Towy and Rheidol. Many other smaller rivers, culverts and catchments across Wales have also been identified as at risk of flooding. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has taken over 100 calls, and dealt with around 50 incidents. Due to rough conditions in the Irish Sea, Irish Ferries have cancelled their fast ferry sailings between Holyhead and Dublin. Conventional ferries should be sailing, but delays to departures are possible.

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Rough seas were set to delay a Wales-Ireland ferry for up to 10 hours. Ten chalet park residents at Freshwater East had to be moved to safety following extensive damage to a clubhouse roof caused by high winds. The Irish Ferries service between Rosslare in Ireland and Pembroke Dock in west Wales is stuck out at sea and unable to dock because of the rough conditions. The ferry left Rosslare just before 0900, BST yesterday and should have arrived at about 1330, BST but was not expected to dock until nearly midnight. Irish Ferries have cancelled the two remaining sailings between the two ports yesterday. Further north, its passenger ro/ro *Jonathan Swift* fast ferry sailings between Dublin and Holyhead were all cancelled yesterday and today, although the regular cruise ferries are running as normal. Stena Line's 2115 Rosslare - Fishguard sailing was likely to be delayed or cancelled because of the weather, its website was reporting. Its Fastferry sailing between Dun Laoghaire and Holyhead was cancelled. Both companies strongly advised passengers to check the latest status of sailings before setting out to the ports. The AA and the Highways Agency warned motorists across Wales to take great care as heavy rain and high wind speeds are expected to make driving conditions difficult. A 40mph speed restriction was put in place on the M48 at the old Severn Road Bridge near Chepstow. The Cleddau Bridge on the A477 in west Wales is closed to high-sided vehicles because of the winds. Wind Speeds of 63 mph were recorded in Milford Haven yesterday and forecasters were predicting gusts could reach 80 mph in west Wales.

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated Oct 27, states: Ireland's second-largest city, Cork, experienced severe flooding today as the year's strongest Atlantic storm dumped several inches of rain and brought wind gusts of more than 70 mph. Water levels on several central Cork roads surged quickly, swamping parked cars up to their windows. Commuters struggling to get out of the city found several roads blocked by floodwaters. Firefighters helped people who were trapped in their cars on the city's Lower Glanmire Road. No deaths or injuries were reported. Earlier, more than 1,000 homes in Cork lost power for several hours. Sporadic blackouts continued as night fell. Cork's airport diverted most flights to other Irish airports. Elsewhere, ferry services on several routes to Britain and France were cancelled because of heavy seas. One Irish Ferries vessel with more than 200 people on board was caught in the storm as it crossed the Irish Sea to the southern Wales port of Pembroke. The master, unable to dock the vessel safely at Pembroke because of choppy seas, kept the vessel at sea for several hours after its intended arrival. In Dublin, the storm caused a tidal surge that trapped a Dutch man on a seaside walkway. Rescue workers in a helicopter used a line to pull him to safety. The Irish Coast Guard advised people to avoid harbours, piers, cliffs, coastal walkways and other exposed seaside spots because of the risk of being blown or swept into the ocean. Met Eireann, Ireland's weather forecasting service, said the storm would take two days to clear Ireland and could cause severe flooding in coastal parts of southern and eastern Ireland with more than three inches of rain.

UNITED STATES

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated Oct 21, states: Two pipelines, including one that supplies Arizona with about 70% of its gasoline, diesel and jet fuel, were expected to be back in operation by early tomorrow after being shut down in the aftermath of severe rain in Southern California. A 20-inch line to Phoenix shut down after a freight train derailed atop it and a nearby 16-inch line to Las Vegas was stopped when heavy rain washed out soil around it. Houston-based pipelines operator Kinder Morgan Energy Partners shut the lines yesterday. Company spokesman Jay Thorne said the 16-inch line was "back up and running" this evening with the 20-inch line expected to resume operations early tomorrow. "No leaks. No problems," Thorne said of the two pipelines. Heavy rain caused the train derailment near Fontana, Calif., that left two box cars and a tanker filled with chlorine gas atop the Phoenix pipeline. Soil underneath the tracks had been washed out by the water, according to Sue Hood, a dispatch supervisor for the San Bernardino County Fire Department. Thorne said Union Pacific was able to remove the train from atop the Phoenix line this

afternoon and inspect the pipeline. Thorne said a gasoline price spike wasn't expected from the current closures: "The shutdown didn't last long enough for any impact." Kinder Morgan officials had said earlier Thursday that shortages could occur at terminals in Las Vegas and Barstow, Calif.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated Oct 26, states: A powerful Alaskan storm descended on California, flooding homes, cutting power to thousands and dumping record-setting snow in the Sierra Nevada. A weather station in the central Sierra run by the University of California-Berkeley reported today that 48 inches of snow had fallen there this month, the most for October since record-keeping began at the site in 1945. The previous record was 36 inches in October, 2000. A surprise storm last week had already dumped up to three feet of snow. The storm was expected to linger through Thursday (Oct 28), dropping several inches of rain across the state and at least two feet of snow in the mountains. The weather service was predicting intense rain in Southern California, prompting flash flood warnings and fears of mudslides in mountain areas scarred by wildfires over the past year. Winds up to 65 mph were forecast for parts of Southern California, with areas above 5,000 feet expected to receive up to five inches of rain and snow. A man was rescued after being swept up in the current of the rain-swollen San Gabriel River, said Inspector John Mancha of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Two streets in the San Bernardino Mountains, about 60 miles east of Los Angeles, were under voluntary evacuation orders due to unstable soil and the possibility of flash floods. Rising water also flooded a mobile home park in the Santa Clarita area of Los Angeles County. In San Francisco, rain overwhelmed the city's storm drains early today. The storm also flooded freeways throughout the San Francisco Bay area and contributed to a clogged morning commute that included a toppled truck on Interstate 880 in San Leandro. Power was cut to about 13,600 Pacific Gas & Electric Co customers, including about 2,000 in coastal Marin County who were left in the dark after lightning struck a utility substation shortly after midnight. Power was restored to all but 2,800 customers by late this afternoon, PG&E spokesman Paul Moreno said. (See issue of Oct 25.)

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: California's second major storm this month dumped snow in the mountains north-east of Los Angeles and unleashed heavy rain yesterday across the entire southern part of the state. The downpour contributed to an accident in the Orange County suburb of Laguna Niguel, where a sport utility vehicle struck and killed a 14-year-old girl as she walked to school. In Los Angeles County, the body of a man was found Wednesday in the Los Angeles River. Nearly 17,300 Southern California

Edison customers were without power, a utility spokesman said. The storm was expected to linger through today, producing more rain and mountain snow, with occasional thunderstorms, according to the National Weather Service. In San Bernardino County, a mudslide forced authorities to close Interstate 215 in both directions north of Muscoy. No injuries were reported. Rain and snow soaked the San Bernardino Mountains, where wildfires last year destroyed dozens of homes and left hillsides bare of vegetation. Lake Arrowhead has received 3.85 inches of rain and 2 inches of snow this week, 2 feet of snow fell in Big Bear City, where a highway was closed for several hours after trees struck a power line. In Sun City, a suburb just south of Perris in Riverside County, authorities rescued seven people trapped in their vehicles by 4-foot-high floods, a county fire spokesman said.



BALLENY ISLANDS REGION

London, Oct 26 — A report, dated Oct 24, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 0537, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.5 event has been located in the Balleny Islands region in lat 62.30S, long 155.34E, depth 10 km.

BANDA SEA

London, Oct 26 — A report, dated Oct 24, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 1331, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.5 event has been located in the Banda Sea in lat 6.52S, long 130.19E, the hypocentral depth was estimated to be 69 km.

BULGARIA

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A 5.5 quake on the Richter scale rocked Bulgaria last night and was felt across the country. Residents of capital city Sofia and the rest of the country also felt the shaking which was registered at 2336 hrs, on Bulgarian territory. The epicentre of last night's quake was reported in Romania's region of Vranca, 438 km north-east of Bulgaria's capital Sofia, according to the Geoseismological Institute in Bucharest cited by the press office of Bulgarian Embassy. There were no immediate reports of damages or casualties.

CHINA

London, Oct 20 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake has rocked a densely populated city in south-western China, destroying more than 20 000 houses but killing no one, a local official said today. Twelve people were injured, one critically, in the tremor early yesterday morning, Xinhua news agency said, adding that tents had been provided for the

homeless. The earthquake, measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale, rocked Baoshan in Yunnan province, with the epicentre about 10 km from the city centre, Xinhua said. The collapsed buildings were mainly mud-built homes but included schools and 1,000 students had to stay at home, it said. "We suffered a four-scale aftershock and we're now evaluating the damage," the official said, adding that he had heard of only five people injured.

London, Oct 26 — A report, dated today, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 0211, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.6 event has been located in western Xizang in lat 30.96N, long 81.08E, depth 11 km.

JAPAN

London, Oct 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Several powerful earthquakes rattled north-western Japan over a two-hour span today, toppling homes, causing blackouts, cutting water and gas and derailing a bullet train. Media reported four people died and more than 300 injured. Several people also were reported missing. The quakes, the first of which measured magnitude 6.8 and struck at 1756, local time, were centred near the city of Ojiya about 12 miles beneath the earth's surface, the Meteorological Agency said. Ojiya is in Niigata prefecture (state), 160 miles northwest of Tokyo. At least a half dozen more tremors, the strongest of which hit intermittently over two hours, included quakes of magnitude 6.2 and 5.9. Aftershocks followed, some just as forceful, the agency said. "Strong aftershocks are continuing," agency official Masahiro Yamamoto said. Media reports said the shaking in some parts of Niigata was so severe that people had difficulty standing. Buildings in Tokyo swayed several times for up to a minute. Teams had been dispatched to assess the damage and offer assistance to residents but darkness and buckled roads were hampering their efforts, officials said. Eleven military helicopters fanned out to check the damage and help with rescue operations, a Defence Agency spokesman said. Two people in Ojiya died at a hospital after being hit by falling rocks and other objects, NHK and Kyodo News reported. A man was struck by a falling wall as he fled his home in Tokamachi and later died, media said. Later today, NHK reported a fourth death. Two others were stuck in a house that had been buried in a landslide in Ojiya, and four were missing in Nagaoka city after two homes collapsed, NHK said. Objects falling from shelves injured nearly 50 people in Tokamachi and Ojiya cities, media reports. At least 250 others were reported injured, some seriously in nearby towns and cities, including Nagaoka and Niigata, the reports said. Sewage and water mains burst, gas and telephone services were down and about 250,000 homes lost power, officials told Japanese media. Several homes were on fire after the tremors, which started around dinner time, Nagaoka city disaster official

Toshimoto Onda told NHK. Near Ojiya, trees and soil on a hillside sheared away, burying at least five cars and injuring several people, NHK said. Building windows shattered, walls cracked and books and files fell off shelves, Ojiya city official Ei Yoshizawa said. The jolt triggered an automatic safety device that temporarily halted train services, according to media reports. Railway officials said a bullet train carrying about 150 passengers derailed and some of the cars tipped to the side near Nagaoka city, in Niigata prefecture, but nobody appeared to be hurt. Another train headed to Niigata from Tokyo jumped its tracks but no injuries were reported, NHK said. The Meteorological Agency said there was no threat of tsunami, or potentially dangerous waves triggered by seismic activity.

Ojiya, Oct 25 — Japan resumed full-scale rescue efforts at first light today as aftershocks rattled the area where the country's deadliest earthquake in nine years killed at least 23 people and injured more than 2,000. A powerful quake with a magnitude of 5.6 struck rural Niigata prefecture, at 0605 today, two days after the first earthquake on Saturday, and was also felt in the capital. At least one building in Niigata collapsed but there were no reports of further injuries from the latest quake, one of hundreds of aftershocks. More than 80,000 people across the region had spent a second night in shelters or in the open air as temperatures fell below 10 Celsius overnight. Some had slept in their cars. Military helicopters were airlifting people out of the village of Yamakoshi and nearby city of Nagaoka, where hundreds of residents had been stranded by landslides since the first quake on Saturday, which had a magnitude of 6.8. Other helicopters were carrying food and supplies to areas that had been cut off. Rail lines, expressways and many other roads were severely damaged. Forecasts of rain for the evening threatened to hamper rescue efforts and raised the prospect of more landslides in areas lashed by recently heavy rain. Tohoku Electric Power struggled to restore electricity to the area, where 62,000 households still lacked power today. More than 2,000 houses were damaged, thousands of homes were without water. Phone services, including mobile phones, were also disrupted. Japan's military has sent 960 troops to the area to help with rescue efforts, mobilizing 39 helicopters, four planes and 90 vehicles, the defense ministry said. Experts said that Saturday's tremor had occurred in a "seismic gap" — the part of an active fault that had experienced little or no seismic activity for a long period, causing stress to build up and making an earthquake more likely. The area near the epicentre had not suffered a tremor resulting in fatalities since 1828, media said. There were no reports of significant damage to industry in the region, which includes chemical and textile manufacturing as well as electronics and food processing. Some factories had halted operations,

however, and damage to roads and railways raised concerns about distribution bottlenecks. Electronic components maker Alps Electric Co. Ltd. said it had halted production at its two magnetic devices plants in Niigata and did not know when operations would resume.

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: The death toll from the powerful earthquakes that rocked Japan over the weekend (Oct 23-24) jumped to 31 today as four people, mostly elderly, died from strokes or cerebral hemorrhages due to the stress of their ordeal. The National Police Agency said an 81-year-old man from Ojiya, one of the hardest hit towns, died at a hospital after suffering a stroke. A 73-year old man and a 68-year old woman suffered cerebral hemorrhages, a police official said. A 59-year old man who suffered breathing problems was also among the victims. The deadliest earthquakes to hit the country in nearly a decade started with a magnitude 6.8 temblor on Saturday evening. Strong aftershocks, ruined infrastructure and today's chilly rain hobbled relief efforts.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake hit a quake-ravaged area of northern Japan today, rocking buildings throughout the region. There were no immediate reports of injuries or fires. The 6.0-magnitude quake hit the same area where a 6.8-magnitude quake and a series of strong aftershocks struck on Saturday (Oct 23), killing at least 31 people and injuring some 2500. Homeless people in evacuation centres threw themselves to the floor and screamed in horror as today's tremor rumbled through the rural area of Niigata prefecture. A 4.2-magnitude aftershock hit about 25 minutes later. The Japan Meteorological Agency said the stronger quake was centred at a depth of 10 kilometres in Hirokami, a village of 9200 about 250km north-west of Tokyo. The quake, which hit at 1040, local time, was so strong that people in temporary shelters had difficulty standing, national broadcaster NHK reported. The tremor swayed buildings in the Japanese capital. NHK said a nearby nuclear plant was operating normally, but that Niigata Airport had temporarily closed.

PERU

London, Oct 21 — A report, dated Oct 20, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 1855, today. The magnitude 5.5 event has been located in southern Peru in lat 15.63S, long 73.91W, depth 75 km.

ROMANIA

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake shook Romania late yesterday, a Turkish seismology centre said. No damage or injuries were immediately reported. The Istanbul-based Kandilli Observatory's seismology centre said the quake had a preliminary magnitude of 6.5 and struck at 2334 hrs. The quake was also

felt in Turkey and other neighbouring regions, including Moldova and Ukraine, Turkey's private NTV television reported.

VANUATU

London, Oct 21 — A report, dated Oct 20, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 1832, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.1 event has been located in Vanuatu in lat 14.05S, long 166.56E, depth 82 km.



MOUNT IABU, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A volcano has erupted in northern Papua New Guinea, raising concerns for the safety of thousands of villagers. Mount Iabu on the northern PNG island of Manam started throwing up lava and ash over the weekend (Oct 23-24), prompting authorities to advise nearly 3,000 villagers to move to safer parts of the island, authorities said today. A spokesman for the National Disaster Management Office said there had been no reports of casualties but the island remained on a state of high alert with fears of further eruptions in the coming days. He said the eruption had sent thick clouds of smoke 6,000 metres into the air and lava flowing into the surrounding sea. "We are assisting the people on Manam Island to move to safer parts of the island where they can receive shelter and food," he said. Mount Iabu is about 100 km from the resort town of Madang in the country's north-west. The acting provincial administrator for Madang province, Galung Kassass, said nearly 3,000 people lived under the shadow of Mount Iabu, which last erupted in 1997. He said residents of four villages in the area had been moved to safer ground while authorities continued to assess the situation. Inter-Government Relations Minister Sir Peter Barter said the amount of ash and rock in the atmosphere had prevented authorities from conducting a comprehensive survey of the area. Barter said a one-km-wide section of the mountain had blown out, forcing lava to flow to the sea around the island. The volcano was still discharging lava into the sea between Warisi and Dugulava villages, he said. Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare flew to the area this afternoon to assess the impact of the eruption and was expected to make an announcement later in the day. Mount Iabu is one of 14 active volcanos in PNG.

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of people on the Papua New Guinea island of Manam were forced from their villages as an erupting volcano continued to spew hot ash across the island today. Mount Iabu, in PNG's

Madang province, started throwing up lava and ash on Sunday (Oct 24) prompting authorities to advise nearly 4000 villagers on the island to move to safer ground. Acting administrator for Madang province Robert Yass said rescue workers were assisting thousands of villagers affected by the eruption. He said about 2000 people were seeking shelter at a Catholic mission station on the island while thousands of others had moved "downwind" from the volcano to seek protection from the falling ash. "It's still spilling out hot ash and dust which has burnt large areas of trees and destroyed many food gardens," he said. Yass said there were no reports of injuries at this stage but officers were still on the ground monitoring the situation. He said while the volcano was continuing to throw hot ash across the island, it had stopped producing the lava which yesterday burnt a path down the side of the mountain. "The eruption seems to be in remission although we are keeping a close eye on developments in case there is another major eruption." Inter-Government Relations Minister Sir Peter Barter said the eruption had sent thick clouds of smoke 6000m into the air and lava flowing into the surrounding sea. He said a 1km-wide section of the mountain had blown out, forcing lava to flow to the sea around the island.

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated Oct 27, states: Rescue workers in Papua New Guinea were today trying to get fresh water and medical supplies to thousands of villagers sheltering from an erupting volcano on the northern PNG island of Manam. Mount Iabu, in PNG's Madang province, started throwing up lava and ash on Sunday (Oct 24), prompting authorities to advise nearly 4,000 villagers on the island to move to safer ground. A spokeswoman for PNG Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare said the villagers were in desperate need of fresh water, food and medical supplies. "The falling ash has contaminated what little water supplies there are on the island," she said. "Gardens have been buried, banana trees destroyed and there is only one trade store on the affected part of the island which is fast running out of food." She said most people were in church on Sunday morning when the volcano erupted, which may have saved them from falling fist-sized rocks and hot ash. "These were big rocks and could have done some serious damage if they'd hit people but most people were in church and remained there under shelter." She said several villages were covered in about a foot of ash with hot pumice landing on the roofs of houses. She said the ash was blown as far west as Wewak, about 100 km from Manam Island. Acting administrator for Madang province Robert Yass said officers from PNG's National Disaster Management Office were assisting an estimated 4,000 villagers affected by the eruption. "At the moment we are working to arrange supplies for about 4,000 people who have been affected by the volcanic ash which is still falling on the island, he said. He said about 2,000

people were seeking shelter at a Catholic mission station while thousands of others had moved to the island's south-east side to seek protection from the falling ash. "It's still spilling out hot ash and dust which has burnt large areas of trees and destroyed many food gardens," he said. Yass said there were no reports of injuries at this stage but officers were still on the ground monitoring the situation.

SHIVELUCH, RUSSIA

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 24, states: The Shiveluch volcano on Russia's Kamchatka peninsula is shooting ash 1.5 miles into the air and causing earthquakes, the Kamchatka Team for Seismic Research told RIA Novosti. Space photos from the Alaska Volcano Observatory showed an ash cloud extending 40 miles to the south-east. Seismic stations deployed in the area have detected earthquakes centred at a depth of three miles. Shiveluch, the northernmost active volcano of Kamchatka, became active in January after a long period of dormancy. The volcano is not currently dangerous to local residents, but its ash clouds are a problem for air traffic. They hinder navigation and could cause engine malfunctions in flight if ash enters the turbines through air intakes.



AFGHANISTAN

London, Oct 23 — A press report, dated today, states: A suicide bomber has struck Kabul's most famous shopping district, Chicken Street, injuring seven people. Three international peacekeepers are among the wounded and are believed to have been the target of the attack. The attack happened at about 1530 local time. A spokesman for the hard-line Islamic Taleban movement has said it was behind the attack. A spokesman for the Nato-led multinational force in Kabul said one of the peacekeepers was seriously hurt. He gave no further details on their nationality or gender. It is the first suicide bombing in the Afghan capital since January. The Taleban takes responsibility for the suicide attack in Kabul... We plan more attacks," spokesman Mufti Latifullah Hakimi said. Witnesses say a man approached several soldiers who had parked their vehicle outside a carpet shop. He then detonated several hand grenades he was carrying, killing himself in the blast. The ground and the carpet shop were spattered with blood. The man's body lay next to a vehicle bearing the insignia of the Nato security force, he said. There were also several unexploded hand grenades lying in the street, apparently sent flying by the blast. The fear is that this marks the start of new campaign of

violence in Kabul by anti-government militants, after the relatively peaceful presidential elections two weeks ago.

ALBANIA

Bari, Oct 13 — Product tanker *Ambar* is still under arrest at Bari. — Lloyd's Agents.

COLOMBIA

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated Oct 26, states: A former US-trained Colombian army officer who later joined an outlawed paramilitary group was killed in a clash with army troops today, the army said. Major David Hernandez, who was accused of murdering a state official while still in the army, became a leader of the right-wing United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia five years ago after he escaped from military prison. Hernandez and four other paramilitary fighters were killed in a clash with army troops in northern Colombia near the town of Mamón, 410 miles north of Bogotá, said Col Nestor Raul Espitia, commander of the army's 10th Brigade. The paramilitary groups were created in the 1980s to attack Marxist rebels at war with the government for the past 40 years. The conflict claims more than 3,000 lives a year.

IRAQ

Dubai, Oct 22 — British-Iraqi hostage Margaret Hassan made an emotional appeal for British forces to withdraw from Iraq, in a videotape broadcast on Arabic television channel Al Jazeera today. "Please, the British people, ask Mr. Blair to take the troops out of Iraq and not to bring them here ... That's why people like Mr. Bigley and myself are being caught," she said, referring to British hostage Kenneth Bigley, who was decapitated by his captors earlier this month. "I don't want to die like Bigley," Irish-born Hassan appealed, before burying her head in her hands in tears. Al Jazeera did not say how it obtained the tape, nor name the group holding Hassan. — Reuters.

London, Oct 23 — A press report, dated today, states: A suicide car bomber set off an explosion today at a police station near a US Marine base in western Iraq, killing at least 16 policemen and wounding 40 other people, officials said. The explosion occurred at about 0700, local time outside the gates of Marine Camp Al Asad in Baghdadi, about 140 miles west of Baghdad near Ramadi, US and Iraqi officials said. No American soldiers were hurt in the attack, the US military said. Some of the wounded were being treated at a US military medical facility, while others were flown to civilian hospitals, a spokesperson said. The blast came hours after the US military arrested an aide to Jordanian terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and five others during raids on a safe house in the insurgent stronghold of Fallujah, officials said. The aide had risen to prominence in recent weeks as other al-Zarqawi staff had been killed, according to intelligence sources. The raid that took place at 0130 local time

in southern Fallujah targeted a site being used as a safe haven by al-Zarqawi's inner circle, according to a military statement. Fallujah residents said the raid occurred at the home of Abdel-Hamid Fiyadh, who was arrested along with his two sons, Walid, and Majid, and three relatives. Relatives insisted the men had nothing to do with al-Zarqawi, who has a \$25 million (US) bounty on his head from the United States. American forces have stepped up operations in Fallujah in a bid to root out al-Zarqawi's terror group, Tawhid and Jihad, which is believed to operate from there. The group has been blamed in numerous suicide bombings including recent twin blasts inside Baghdad's Green Zone, which houses the US and Iraqi leadership.

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Saboteurs blew up a section of an oil pipeline in northern Iraq today, sparking a fire but failing to halt exports, police said. Firemen rushed to battle the flames spewing from a section of pipeline west of the oil centre of Kirkuk, said police colonel Hamad Latif. The blaze slowed the ability of fuel tankers to transport oil from Kirkuk to Tikrit and Mosul, but it had no impact on a small portion of oil exports that trickle from the north to the Turkish port of Ceyhan. Last week, Oil Minister Thamer Ghadban said attacks on the country's oil infrastructure and its import of oil products due to insufficient refining capacity has cost the country seven billion dollars since the US-led invasion of March 2003.

Ramadi, Oct 28 — U.S. troops stepped up pressure on Ramadi today, imposing a cordon around the rebel-held town and making arrests amid clashes with guerrillas, Iraqi police and witnesses said. Police said guerrillas fired three rocket-propelled grenades at a U.S. base and the regional government office in Ramadi, 110 km west of Baghdad. There was no immediate word on casualties. Hospital officials said two women were wounded in fighting in the eastern part of the town and ambulances could not reach other reported casualties because of the clashes. Police sources said several people were arrested. Iraq's U.S.-backed interim government has vowed to crush insurgents in Ramadi and other rebel strongholds ahead of national assembly elections scheduled for January. American troops are widely expected to mount an offensive on Falluja, Iraq's most rebellious town, but it is not clear whether they will try to pacify Ramadi at the same time. — Reuters.

ISRAEL

Gaza, Oct 22 — Israel killed Hamas's top bomb and rocket maker in Gaza and launched a missile strike on the home of another leading militant today in the run-up to a key parliamentary vote on a plan to quit the occupied territory. The assassination of Adnan al-Ghoul, number two in the Hamas military wing, dealt a major blow to fundamentalist Islamic group. It could also help Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

counter far-right opponents who say the plan he will bring to parliament on Monday to remove all 21 settlements in Gaza and four of the 120 in the West Bank would reward Palestinian attacks. In the biggest blow to Hamas since Israel assassinated the group's Gaza leader Abdel-Aziz al-Rantissi in April, a missile from an unmanned Israeli drone slammed into Ghoul's car, late yesterday, killing him and an aide, witnesses said. Militants from Hamas vowed suicide bombings in revenge for the Gaza City attack. Israel launched a missile attack today in the northern Gaza Strip on the home of Amer Qarmout, a leader of the Popular Resistance Committees, an umbrella militant group, witnesses said. They said neither he nor anyone else was hurt. The group earlier said it had fired homemade Nasser-3 rockets into the Israeli town of Sderot. The Israeli army said the missile was aimed at a building used for armaments production and which was also a weapons store for militants. — Reuters.

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Two Palestinian security service members and a civilian were killed in three Israeli missile strikes in the southern Gaza Strip, Palestinian security sources said today. Twenty other Palestinians, including civilians, were wounded, five of them seriously, when the Israeli army fired two air-to-ground missiles at a national security service position in the Khan Yunis sector, they said. A spokesman for the Israeli army said the two attacks had targeted "armed Palestinians who had approached (Israeli) forces". A third missile later hit the Palestinian position. The army spokesman said the military had stepped up its activities in the area following dozens of recent mortar attacks by Palestinians on Jewish settlements.

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli troops killed 14 Palestinians in a Gaza refugee camp today as parliament prepared, under tight security, to debate Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to withdraw from the occupied territory. Witnesses and medics said overnight air strikes killed seven Palestinians in Khan Younis camp, a bastion of militants. A tank shell killed two and soldiers shot dead five others. Three of the Palestinians killed by missiles launched from unmanned drone aircraft were policemen. Eight of the dead remained unidentified. At least 74 Palestinians and two soldiers were wounded in Israel's tank and infantry thrust into the camp. The Israeli army said it was targeting militants responsible for "ceaseless mortar attacks" on nearby Jewish settlements. The violence raged hours before parliament was due to begin a two-day debate on Sharon's move to dismantle all 21 Jewish settlements in Gaza and four of 120 in the West Bank in 2005.

IVORY COAST

Abidjan, Oct 26 — French troops traded fire with gunmen who attacked them in northern Ivory Coast today, the

French army said — the latest challenge to peacekeepers shoring up a peace deal in the divided West African country. Some of the group of about 15 unidentified attackers were wounded when the French responded after their armored vehicles came under machinegun fire some 30 miles south of the city of Korhogo, in the rebel-held north. French army spokesman Jacques Combarieu said no troops had been killed or wounded in the incident, which he said was the first time French soldiers had come under fire in Ivory Coast since June. French and U.N. forces are policing a cease-fire line between government and rebel forces in the world's top cocoa grower, divided in two since a civil war blew up out of a failed coup against President Laurent Gbagbo in Sept. 2002. — Reuters.

PAKISTAN

London, Oct 27 — The death toll in a mortar attack on tribesmen in Pakistan's South Waziristan region has risen to 11, officials there said. A barrage of mortars struck a tribal meeting in a village near the Afghan border in South Waziristan yesterday. About 100 tribesmen had gathered to discuss how to find militant leader Abdullah Mehsud. Meanwhile, Pakistan's army said it killed three militants today in a battle near Wana, South Waziristan's main town. The army has blamed Islamic militants for yesterday's mortar attack in the village of Sheikh Ziyarat, also near Wana. Tribesmen put the number of deaths at 17 while six people were reported wounded. The attack came a day before tribal elders were to launch a hunt for Mehsud, the leader of a militant group which kidnapped two Chinese engineers two weeks ago. Army spokesman Maj Gen Shaukat Sultan said an inquiry had been ordered into the mortar attack. Late yesterday, militants fired more than 40 rockets at soldiers near the village but missed, Gen Sultan said. In the gun battle today, Gen Sultan said six militants had stopped at a checkpoint near Azam Warsak, a village west of Wana, and fired on government soldiers. The troops returned fire, killing three of the suspected militants. Three more were injured and arrested. However, local tribesmen say the soldiers got into an argument with passengers which culminated in the army opening fire.

SPAIN

London, Oct 19 — A press report, dated today, states: Spanish police have arrested seven people in nationwide raids targeting a suspected Islamic terror group. The suspects were believed to have been planning a bomb attack on a key court building in Madrid. The interior ministry said those detained were Algerians and Moroccans living in Spain. They were believed to have "been in contact with individuals in other European countries, in Australia and the United States", the interior ministry said. The raids were ordered by Spain's top anti-terrorism prosecutor, Baltasar Garzon. In a separate incident, police found two new

arms caches belonging to ETA in south-west France, Spanish officials say. Officers seized 25 kilograms of dynamite, 188 guns, 30 homemade mortars, and 90,000 rounds of ammunition, Spain's Interior Ministry said in a statement yesterday. Forty-eight grenades were also seized in the raids near Saint Pierre d'Irube and Urrugne, along with 50 detonators and a set of magnets used to attach bombs underneath vehicles. Police also have found four computers that are being analyzed.

SUDAN

Khartoum, Oct 20 — A cease-fire in Sudan's Darfur region is not holding, with reports of an aerial bombardment and attacks by rebels, the United Nations said today. The top U.N. envoy in Sudan, Jan Pronk, will meet the Sudanese foreign minister tomorrow to discuss the deteriorating security situation in Darfur, which is hampering humanitarian operations, said Radhia Achouri, spokeswoman for the U.N. Advance Mission in Sudan. "Definitely the cease-fire is not holding," she told reporters in Khartoum. She said the United Nations had received reports of a heavy bombardment in North Darfur, but were waiting to hear confirmation from the African Union cease-fire commission. African Union-sponsored peace talks between the government and rebels are due to resume tomorrow in the Nigerian capital Abuja. Achouri also cited a confirmed rebel attack on government positions near Kutum in another area of North Darfur on Oct 19, where a number of people were injured. Teams from international aid agencies have been harassed by Arab militias, known as Janjaweed, rebels and at a military checkpoint where government soldiers fired into the air on Oct. 16 in areas near the site of the rebel attack, Achouri said. Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail said today that while it was possible there could be cease-fire violations from all sides, most of the violations were by the rebels. — Reuters.

London, Oct 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The African Union (AU) has agreed to increase its military force in Sudan's troubled Darfur region from under 400 to more than 3,000. The organisation hopes they will be deployed in Darfur by early next month for up to one year. However the agreed rise is less than the 4,500 hoped for by the AU chairman - Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria - to stem more than 18 months of violence. Sudan has already said it will accept an expanded AU force, but is opposed to any attempt to change its role to one of peacekeeping. Some 2,341 military personnel will be charged with guaranteeing the security in the region and reining in the Janjaweed militia blamed for displacing some 1.4 million people. Out of these troops 1,700 will be armed to protect 450 observers, up from 80 observers already on the ground. However, the troops' exact rules of engagement were not specified. Some 300 Rwandan and Nigerian unarmed

troops are already in Darfur. Meanwhile, 815 civilian police will be tasked with manning security in and around displaced people's camps. The force will be funded to the tune of \$220m mainly by the European Union, the AU says. "We hope to have the enhanced force in the region by the end of this month, or very early next month," Said Djinnit, head of the AU's Peace and Security Council is quoted by AP news agency as saying. If need be the force will be increased at a later date, AU officials said. Meanwhile, rebels say they want peace talks with the government to be postponed. The first round of peace talks, which are being organised by the AU between the Sudanese government and two Darfur rebel groups, ended last month without any concrete result. "The opening of the talks was meant to be [on Thursday] but now it will be on Saturday (Oct 23), because the AU until now has not managed to get our delegation to Abuja," rebel Sudan Liberation Army official Abdel Wahed Mohamed al-Nur told Reuters news agency. The second round is expected to last for three weeks.

Abuja, Nigeria, Oct 25 — Darfur peace talks kicked off four days late today amid mounting international concern about a resurgence of fighting in western Sudan. Previous talks between the government and rebels dragged on for three weeks only to collapse with no deal but pressure is mounting on both sides meeting in Nigeria to ease the plight of 1.5 million civilians made destitute by the conflict. "This time people are more willing to discuss," said Jan Pronk, the United Nations secretary-general's special representative in Sudan. Each side accused the other of breaking a cease-fire as delegates sat down for talks in Abuja after a delay caused by a transport mix-up that left rebel negotiators stranded across the continent. Meetings are expected to last for two weeks. Government spokesman Ibrahim Mohammed said that rebels were the first to attack in Allaiet and that troops retaliated. He said the government was complying with the cease-fire terms. In Khartoum, Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail said: "We are in full control. Yes there are some violations here and there but the government is in control ... the operations that are going on in Darfur are in self-defence." To complicate matters, two more rebel factions had emerged in Darfur, officials in Abuja said. European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana said yesterday he was increasingly worried by the renewed fighting and said a break in the cease-fire would be difficult to fix. The EU has promised more than \$100 million to fund an extra deployment of 3,000 African Union cease-fire monitors to Darfur, which AU officials said was now due to begin Thursday after a delay that contributor Rwanda blamed on poor logistics. There are only 300 AU soldiers now in Darfur protecting 150 AU observers monitoring the truce in an area the

size of France. The troops have a mandate to monitor cease-fire violations and protect civilians under imminent threat, according to a copy of the document agreed last week in Ethiopia. — Reuters.

THAILAND

Bangkok, Oct 25 — A gun battle erupted today between Thai police and Muslim villagers protesting outside a police station in Thailand's south. Thailand's ITV television reported that 20 people had been wounded in the clash outside the Tak Bai police station in Narathiwat province. It was not clear if any had been shot. A witness told Reuters the melee began after negotiations collapsed and police and soldiers fired tear gas at the crowd outside Tak Bai station in Narathiwat province. "Rocks came from the protesters and security officers fired into the air. Pistol shots then came from the demonstrators," the witness said. The villagers were demanding the release of six village defence volunteers arrested last week and accused of handing over their government-issued shotguns to militants. Narathiwat is one of three southern provinces where more than 360 people have been killed in gun attacks and bombings since January. The government has blamed Muslim militants for the attacks on state buildings and other symbols of the largely Buddhist central government. — Reuters.

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 84 people were killed in a crush in southern Thailand yesterday after police and troops fired shots to disperse a crowd of Muslim demonstrators outside a police station, a justice ministry official said. Police today stepped up efforts to find the organisers of the bloody rally and started questioning 300 protesters held at a military barracks in Pattani, 1,100 km south of Bangkok, after yesterday's clashes with security forces, the worst violence to hit the region near the Malaysian border since April. The predominantly Buddhist government says the violence, which has claimed at least 360 lives since January, appears to be fuelled by Muslim separatism, but it has yet to come up with a coherent plan to put an end to it. "We are interviewing them to find out who persuaded them to join and how they were mobilised," southern police chief Manote Graiwong told a Bangkok radio station. Many of the demonstrators, who massed outside a police station demanding the release of six villagers accused of handing over government-issued shotguns to militants, were armed and appeared to have taken drugs, he said. "We had to use force otherwise they could have ransacked the police station and set fire to it," Manote said. During a six-hour stand-off, troops and police in riot gear fired live ammunition, as well as water cannon and tear gas, to disperse 1,500 protesters. Shots were also fired from the crowd, officials said. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra praised security officials, but shed no light on who or what was behind the unrest in

the region where a handful of Muslim separatist rebels have fought a low-key insurgency for decades. Thailand's far south is home to most of its Muslims, who make up 10% of the mainly Buddhist nation's 63 million people. Thaksin said tough action had to be taken against the protesters. "They really set out to cause trouble so we had to take drastic action against them," Thaksin said. The prime minister is coming under increasing pressure to resolve the unrest, which analysts fear could turn the region into a fertile recruiting ground for militant networks, such as the al Qaeda-linked Jemaah Islamiah. "It's all building up to the point where we're in serious danger of what is so far a rather serious law and order issue turning into a broader insurgency," said Steve Wilford of Singapore-based Control Risks Group. Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar expressed his sadness at the latest incident and said Kuala Lumpur was monitoring the situation closely. As divers trawled through a river close to the scene, police said they had found seven automatic rifles, a pistol, four hand grenades and machetes discarded by the protesters. Senior security officials admitted they had known that a rally was being planned a couple of days in advance but not the exact target. They could not figure out how several thousand people from different towns had massed at one location. "If we had not set up road blocks on various highways, there could have been 10,000 people," Siwa Saengmanee, a senior Interior Ministry official, told a Bangkok radio station. Despite a curfew imposed in eight districts of Narathiwat province after the clashes, militants set fire to a school building and burned tyres on several highways. The unrest erupted in January when gunmen raided an army camp and killed four soldiers before escaping with about 300 assault rifles. Since then, there have been almost daily attacks on officials or symbols of the central government in the region which lies along the border with predominantly Muslim Malaysia. Victims have included both Muslims and Buddhists. On the bloodiest day, Apr 28, security forces killed 108 Muslim militants who attacked police posts across the three southernmost provinces.

TURKEY

Istanbul, Oct 26 — Kurdish guerrillas have staged a bomb attack on an oil pipeline in south-east Turkey, causing some damage in the third attack of its kind in three days, CNN Turk said today. The attack occurred near a village in the province of Batman, where CNN Turk said the rebels sabotaged a pipeline belonging to the state TPAO oil company. Some 200 barrels of oil seeped onto the surrounding area as a result of the latest sabotage. It was not clear exactly when the last attack happened. Employees from TPAO and the state pipeline company Botas repaired the damage and the spilled oil was

transported back to a Botas installation. The CNN Turk television channel said on its website that an operation had been carried out to catch the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) rebels believed to be behind the attack. — Reuters.

Diyarbakir, Oct 28 — Kurdish guerrillas ambushed a Turkish military convoy in southeastern Turkey yesterday evening, killing one soldier and injuring another three, military sources said. Rebels from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) first threw a grenade and then opened fire with rifles on the convoy which was returning from duty in a rural area of Bingol province, the military said. One soldier died at the scene and three others were taken to Bingol hospital for treatment. Troops backed by helicopters launched an operation in search of the guerrillas, who fled under cover of darkness into the surrounding mountainous region. — Reuters.



AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Customs officers around Australia are on a 24-hour strike, disrupting traffic at international air and sea ports. International air travellers have been advised to allow extra time for checking in. The 24-hour strike began at midnight and is affecting international air travel, shipping and international mail. A spokesman for the Customs service, Simon Latimer, says passengers arriving in, and leaving Australia will experience delays. "We're putting in place contingency arrangements, we'll do everything we can to minimise the impact and we're just asking for travellers to understand that and bear with us," he said. Evan Hall from the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) says the current pay rate for customs officers is leaving the service under-staffed and over-stretched. "Unbelievably they now have less staff than what they had a few years ago while the pressure and workload and security standards have just gone up dramatically," he said. "Most of the international airports across the country are understaffed by about 30 per cent on just about every shift and just recently they tried to recruit 30 people in Sydney, for example, and could only get 13 people to fill the vacant positions." Talks between the CPSU and Customs broke down this week after six months of negotiations. Mr Latimer says two separate pay offers have been put to the CPSU in that time. "The first was for an 8 per cent pay rise over two years, and the latest offer which was released earlier this week was for a 13 per cent pay rise over three-and-a-quarter years," he said. "Unfortunately the union has chosen to reject both

those offers." Mr Hall says the officers had no choice but to strike after five months of fruitless wage negotiations. "They are the front line protection against guns, drugs, criminals and terrorists entering the country, they've never been under greater pressure or been facing greater risks and amazingly their staffing numbers have reduced dramatically over the past couple of years," he said.

FRANCE

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of angry French farmers mounted blockades around the country today to hold up fuel shipments in protest at soaring diesel and gasoline prices and to press their demands for government aid. The farmers were responding to a protest call Friday (Oct 22) from Young Farmers, an agricultural union that is urging the government to exempt farmers from fuel taxes. Between 100 and 150 farmers blocked a river port near Lyon, setting up barricades and refusing to allow tanker trucks to pass, local authorities said. "We're letting the other truckers through," said Jerome Crozat, head of the Young Farmers' regional branch. Dozens more farm workers blocked several other fuel depots at sites across central and southern France. Union leaders said they planned to continue the protest at least until Wednesday. Young Farmers is also pressing the government to allow farmers to manufacture their own bio-fuels from vegetable oil and trade it tax-free. French Finance Minister Nicolas Sarkozy has already pledged to cut fuel taxes and the government has also announced aid for fishermen to offset the effect of soaring oil prices.

GERMANY

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Volkswagen AG, Europe's largest carmaker, faces production stoppages in November after the company and the IG Metall workers union failed to reach an agreement over planned cost cuts, job-security measures and pay raises. Chances of averting temporary walkouts next month at Volkswagen's German plants are "comparatively low," Hartmut Meine, IG Metall union's chief negotiator, said after more than 12 hours of contract talks in Hanover. Workers are resisting as Volkswagen, aiming to reverse seven consecutive quarters of declining profit, plans to cut costs 30 percent over the next seven years at its six western German plants. IG Metall, Germany's second-largest union, is allowed by law to stage warning strikes from midnight on Oct 28, when the next round of talks is scheduled, if no accord is reached by then.

NETHERLANDS

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Dutch steel-industry workers went on a 24-hour strike today, as labour unions stepped up opposition to government plans to curb employee benefits. Corus Group

Plc, the U.K.'s biggest steelmaker, and Mitsubishi Corp.'s Nedcar, a Dutch assembler of passenger vehicles, are among about 150 companies whose workers will stay away. Unions oppose cabinet plans to cut tax breaks on pensions. "Tens of thousands of workers" may take part in the strike, said Marco van Moort, a spokesman for the FNV Bondgenoten union, in a telephone interview from Utrecht. The strike will cost Nedcar about 800 vehicles, said Liz Tans, a company spokeswoman. London-based Corus's Dutch plant at Ijmijden accounts for about one-third of the company's total production. Corus employs about 11,400 people in the Netherlands, the company's largest workforce outside the U.K. Billionaire Lakshmi Mittal's Rotterdam-based Ispat International NV doesn't have factories in the Netherlands, only administrative offices, and won't be affected. Workers in construction, defense and health care plan to stage their own strikes in coming weeks in what the unions call a relay strike. Finance Minister Gerrit Zalm has since said the government will proceed with reforms, designed to ease the spending burden on the state as the government struggles to hold the Dutch budget deficit within European Union limits.

NORWAY

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: The Norwegian Shipowners Association today threatened to expand a lockout to shut Norway's oil and gas output in a bid to end a near four-month labour dispute. A strike by oil rig workers has so far affected only a fraction of the country's output. Workers said they would continue their strike despite the threat of a widening impact. The new threat boosted a market already jittery over a supply outage in the US Gulf and constant threats in Iraq, although Norway's Government has, in the past, stepped in to end labour disputes when they threaten oil and gas production.

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Norway's government intervened for the second time this year to forcibly end a labour conflict that threatened to shut down all oil and gas production from the world's third-largest crude exporter. The government ended a 16-week dispute over workers' benefits between the OFS labour union and the Norwegian Shipowners Association, said Labour Minister Dagfinn Hoeybraaten. The intervention comes after vessel and rig owners today threatened a lockout of workers next month that would have halted all of Norway's 3-million-barrel-a-day oil output. "The consequences would have been too great for Norwegian society and for our reputation," Hoeybraaten said outside the ministry in Oslo, after meeting with the union and employers to inform them of the decision. "We're a large gas supplier to Europe and a full closure would have been dramatic." The conflict, which began Jul 2, has shut down drilling at 12 offshore installations and stopped about 54,000

barrels of daily oil output from the North Sea Glitne and Varg fields. Statoil ASA, Norway's biggest oil producer, operates Glitne, while Varg is operated by a unit of Petroleum Geo-Services ASA, a Norwegian rig owner that also produces oil and gas. About 580 rig workers from OFS stopped work when the dispute began. Some workers had been striking since July when talks with employers collapsed, while others were locked out from work in September. In addition, about 700 non-OFS members were temporarily laid off from work at rigs affected by the dispute. The planned lockout from Nov 8 would have halted activity at 55 vessels that support production operations at Norwegian oil and gas fields. The action would also have prevented 19 shuttle tankers from carrying crude oil from Norwegian fields to onshore terminals.

SERBIA

Belgrade, Oct 24 — Aircraft mechanics at Serbian flag carrier JAT Airways called off their strike today and began preparing planes for a resumption of flights later in the day. "After a meeting of Capital Investments Minister Velimir Ilic, JAT management and representatives of striking aircraft mechanics, the strike was called off this morning," JAT said in a press release. Angered at their latest payments, mechanics launched the strike on Friday (Oct 22) afternoon and paralyzed Belgrade Airport, demanding management be sacked and calling for "a fairer distribution of wages". Local media reported that mechanics dropped their demand for the management to be sacked at an overnight meeting held outside Belgrade, but gave the board 30 days to change the wage calculations. JAT said it could now move on with plans to renew fleet, restore flights to the United States and earn an international certificate allowing its mechanics to maintain planes of any international airlines at Belgrade. to buy new planes, industry sources say. — Reuters.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A two day strike staged by baggage handlers at Gatwick has ended with "very minimal" disruption to passengers, airport management claims. About 600 members of the Transport and General Workers' Union employed by Servisair began their walkout at midnight on Friday (Oct 22). The strike is part of a row over working practices and the suspension of a union official. A spokesman for BAA Gatwick said 96% of flights had left on time. He claimed that contingency plans put in place by Servisair ensured disruptions were kept to a minimum. "We've had little or no disruption over the two days. The travelling public have not been inconvenienced greatly at all," he said. "Obviously we are hopeful we can get round the table and discuss an end to this." The workers have already staged six strikes in recent weeks, with the

firm saying they have caused minimal disruption. This weekend's strike was timed to coincide with the start of the school half-term holidays. A Servisair spokesman said: "This action is regrettable. "The union convenor at the centre of the dispute has agreed to participate in the proposed disciplinary process, which is scheduled to take place in early November. "Given that this process is central to the dispute, Servisair has urged the Transport and General Workers' Union to reconsider the action." However, Ian McCoulough, the union's regional organiser, said the charges faced by the steward for alleged gross misconduct, had not been spelt out clearly. He said the union had an agreement with Servisair in terms of disciplinary processes but the company had not abided by it. The origin of the dispute is over changed working practices which date back to February. The company has said only 4% of flights have been delayed during the walk-outs, but the T&G said the dispute was costing Servisair hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Awards & Settlements



FRAUD, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated Oct 27, states: A Texas jury on Oct 1 entered a \$5.8 million verdict in favour of Allstate Insurance Co and a subsidiary after finding that a statewide chiropractic chain and others conspired to defraud the insurers by overtreatment of patients and unnecessary referrals. The jury in the US District Court for the Northern District of Texas awarded Allstate Insurance Co and its subsidiary, Encompass Insurance, \$2.8 million in actual damages and \$3 million in punitive damages against the Texas chiropractic chain Accident & Injury Pain Center Inc. (A&I), several allegedly related corporate entities and a group of chiropractors, osteopaths and medical doctors. Judge David C. Godby presided. Allstate alleged common-law fraud and conspiracy to commit common-law fraud. The insurers alleged that auto accident victims were referred "between various defendants for a set course of chiropractic treatment, diagnostic tests and evaluation, medical consultation, and other services, regardless of medical/chiropractic need and necessity." Bills then would be prepared and presented to the insurers for the treatments. Allstate claimed that Receivable Finance Co was engaged in the unauthorised and corporate practice of medicine. Specifically, Allstate argued that patients were routinely referred to Lone Star Radiology for X-rays and to one of four centres owned by A&I's owner, Robert Smith, for MRIs. Allstate alleged that patients were referred to certain

doctors for “second opinion examinations” who then sold or “kicked back” their medical bills to Receivable Finance, also owned by Smith, for a fee or percentage payment. A&I on Oct 20 moved for judgment notwithstanding the verdict, arguing that the evidence did not support the jury’s finding of fraud and that there was no evidence of material misrepresentations of fact and no justifiable or actual reliance by the insurers.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A Cook County jury has awarded 32 million dollars to the family of a seven-year-old boy who was disabled at birth. The jury ruled yesterday that St. Francis Hospital in Blue Island and Doctor Mary Ann Dean-Onayemi were negligent in Tairay Sewell’s injuries. Tairay is confined to a wheelchair. He can’t walk, speak or eat on his own. Attorney Kevin Burke says his injuries occurred because the medical staff didn’t intervene when problems arose during his birth.

MISLEADING FINANCIAL INFORMATION, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated Oct 26, states: AT&T agreed to a \$100 million settlement of a shareholder class-action suit. The Bedminster, NJ, company said it would split the payment with its former broadband unit, which is now part of Comcast. AT&T said it also planned to seek reimbursement from insurers. The company said the suit sought damages of approximately \$2.4 billion for purchasers of AT&T common stock from Dec 6, 1999, to May 1, 2000. The suit was being tried in US District Court for the District of New Jersey. Plaintiffs claimed the company and then-Chairman Mike Armstrong misled investors about the company’s financial strength. At the time, AT&T was planning an initial public offering of its AT&T Wireless tracking stock along with an acquisition of cable system operator MediaOne. The suit claimed the company talked up its prospects to keep its stock from falling below a threshold that would have triggered a big payment. “As we have said all along, we categorically deny any wrongdoing by AT&T or any of its officers and remain confident that we would have been vindicated at the end of this trial,” said AT&T’s Edward R. Barillari. “But, given the size of the claims compared to the relatively low amount of the settlement, the inherent risk and uncertainty of legal proceedings, and the very substantial expense of those proceedings, this settlement is the prudent course for the company.”

ROAD ACCIDENT, OXON, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A former public schoolboy has been awarded £3m compensation after a judge heard his potential career in the City had been

ruined by a car crash. The judge agreed that Simon Dixon’s “considerable charm” and contacts would have got him a high-salary job. London’s High Court heard Mr Dixon’s personality changed when a car driven by a friend crashed in Oxon in 1997. Two other friends died in the crash and driver John Were was jailed for causing death by dangerous driving. Seatbelts had not been worn before the car hit a tree in the early hours. Before the crash, Mr Dixon, who was studying economics at Newcastle University, dreamed of going into the City and making a lot of money, the court heard. His QC, Susan Rodway, claimed Mr Dixon, who now lives in Putney, London, had been deprived of a career likely to have been successful and well remunerated. He remained a “spirited young man” but lacked motivation and needed the support of carers to plan, shop and eat regularly, the court heard. Mr Justice Gross said: “On the evidence which I have seen and heard, I am satisfied that he had an attractive personality and very considerable charm. This, together with his background, the fact of his degree and, to some extent, his contacts, would likely have secured entry into a good job at above national average figures.” Liability was admitted by Mr Were’s insurers, subject to an agreed discount of 27.5% for Mr Dixon’s contributory negligence.



DETROIT, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A CN freight train carrying a flammable material derailed today in a residential neighbourhood on Detroit’s east side, forcing the evacuation of hundreds of people in a 1.5-kilometre radius, the fire department said. There were no reports of injuries or illness related to the derailment. About 1,500 students at three city schools were also evacuated. Nine cars, including a few containing a flammable liquid, left the tracks about 1000, EDT, near Interstate 75. Some of the tankers were flipped over. Four of the nine derailed tank cars contained methanol, which is used as an antifreeze and is flammable. Some liquid reportedly leaked from the train, but fire officials described the leak as minimal. CN spokeswoman Gloria Combe said the methanol had been leaking at the rate of eight drops per minute and the leak was contained. Combe said railway employees were working with local emergency officials to assess the situation. Authorities did not know the cause of the derailment. A crew from Toledo, Ohio, was called to the scene to help the company lift the derailed cars.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated Oct 26, states: Evacuees of an east-side Detroit neighbourhood where

a train derailed yesterday morning were back home by last night, but the removal of the cars that toppled off the track is expected to continue today, a railroad spokesperson said. In addition, one of two tracks blocked by the accident was expected to open overnight, CN railroad spokeswoman Gloria Combe said yesterday. The reopening of the track will allow other freight trains and Amtrak to resume service. Amtrak rerouted six of its trains yesterday and bused passengers to their destinations, Combe said. Their were no injuries to residents living just west of I-75 between McNichols and 7 Mile roads. The engineer and conductor — the only people on the train — were also unharmed but were transported to a hospital for an examination, Combe said. The train was headed from Chicago to Detroit. The cause of the accident is unknown, but a black box may give clues as to what happened, Combe said. The derailment of nine cars on the 79-car train was initially thought to be far more threatening to the neighbourhood because four of the derailed cars were tankers carrying the flammable chemical methanol. The first fire and police crews to arrive at the site of the derailment about 1000 hrs believed the threat to public safety was extremely high, Detroit Fire Commissioner Tyrone Scott said. Believing that, fire and police officials decided to evacuate a one-square mile area, twice the usual area for what was rated a Level Three hazardous materials scene, Scott said. “We were concerned that one spark could cause a massive fire,” Scott said. Hundreds of people were asked to leave their homes. Greenfield Park and Greenfield Union elementary schools were closed after students were evacuated. Students were driven by school and city buses to Pershing High School. The schools were to reopen today. Inspection of the train cars found that only one of the tankers was leaking, and at a rate of eight drops per minute, police, fire and railroad officials said. By 1430 hrs, barricades started coming down, reopening streets to residents.

FONTANA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

See “United States” under “Weather & Navigation.”

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated Oct 21, states: Seven cars of a Union Pacific freight train jumped the tracks this evening in the southern part of Kansas City, Kansas. The 84-car train, carrying vehicles, originated in East St. Louis, Illinois. Railroad spokesman Mark Davis also says six of the derailed cars toppled onto their sides. He says no one was hurt, and damage to the tracks is minimal. The cause of the derailment is under investigation.

NAGAOKA CITY, NIIGATA, JAPAN

See “Japan” under “Earthquakes.”

NAKHON SAWAN PROVINCE, THAILAND

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A passenger train derailed in Thailand's northern province of Nakhon Sawan yesterday evening, injuring nearly 30 people. The incident occurred at Hua Ngiew Train Station in Nakhon Sawan at around 1700 hrs when the last two bogies of the Chiang Mai-Bangkok train disconnected from the rest and derailed. Most of the passengers in the two derailed bogies were unharmed, but 28 of them were injured and were sent to nearby hospitals, according to local journalists. State Railway of Thailand Governor, Chitsanti Dhanasobhon, went to inspect the scene himself and to take care of the injured passengers. Ms Sukhuman Sritula, Head of SRT's Public Relations Division, said the 28 passengers suffered minor injuries. She said that most of the passengers in the last two bogies were students from a commercial college in Bangkok who were returning from a youth camp in the North. The train later arrived in Bangkok without the two derailed carriages, which were being repaired. The railroad was re-opened just hours after the accident.

TATSUNO, NAGANO PREFECTURE, JAPAN

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

Robberies & Thefts



DESIGNER WATCHES, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Thieves stole £3million worth of designer watches from a London jeweller's, leaving no clue as to how they breached the hi-tech security, it emerged today. They opened the combination safe only hours after the store held an exhibition of Lange and Sohne hand-made platinum and gold watches which sell for between £6,000 and £100,000. The haul of more than 100 watches also included pieces by Cartier, Breitling and Jaeger. Neil Duckworth, the owner of the Watch Gallery in Fulham Road, Chelsea, said: "We had just had an event where we invited guests to view our new collection of Lange and Sohne watches. After we closed the shop someone revisited us. "I don't know whether they had hidden inside when we locked up, or whether they had some other means of access. They knew how to get into the safe and cleaned us out; we have almost nothing left now." It is understood a small camera was found inside the store which could have been used to check that it was empty before the thieves made their move.

GLASSWARE FROM MUSEUM, GINGINS, SWITZERLAND

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated Oct 27, states: Thieves broke into a museum and stole around a dozen glass artworks made by a French master craftsman, worth \$3.3 million, police said today. The robbers struck in the early hours at the Neumann Foundation in the village castle in Gingins, overlooking Lake Geneva, said Vaud state police. The stolen items were made by Emile Galle, who spurred a revival of glasswork in 19th Century Europe. The thieves disabled the security alarm around the building and used a ladder to climb to a second floor window, which they broke to enter the museum. They set off a second alarm and woke the resident curator, but managed to escape with the art before police arrived. The Neumann Foundation, which is closing in December, was celebrating Galle's career in its final exhibition and had combined its own collection with artworks from museums in France and Germany. It was not immediately clear if the borrowed artworks were among those stolen. Galle, who also worked with wood and ceramics, drew his inspiration from nature, particularly the shapes of plants, seaweed and insects. The missing objects include five "Coupes a La Libellule," or dragonfly cups, which Galle made shortly before he died. State justice authorities have opened a formal investigation of the theft.

JEWELLERY FROM CONVENTION CENTRE, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A brazen gang of South American thieves is suspected of ripping off \$2.5 million worth of gold and jewellery from a booth at the Javits Convention Centre in New York, authorities said yesterday. Two men and two women pulled off the "distraction robbery," in which the women managed to hold a jeweller's attention at the "Special Delivery" show, a three-day event that ended yesterday. Meanwhile, their male accomplices took off with the diamonds and gold, according to authorities, who did not say which day the heist took place. The unidentified merchant noticed the jewellery was missing and alerted Javits security, which detained two women who were later released, the sources said. The gang is known to follow trade shows across the country, ripping off booths. The thieves melt down the stolen gold and then sell the jewellery to fences operating in the 47th Street Diamond District, according to the sources. State Police, who are handling the investigation, said only that they were looking into a larceny complaint by a Javits exhibitor. "A metal diamond jewellery case containing assorted loose diamonds was removed from a booth," said State Police Sgt. Jack Keller. He put the loss at about \$800,000. However, another law-enforcement source said that was the wholesale cost, adding the retail value of the loot was about \$2.5

million. State Police Investigator Andre Hannah insisted it was not clear how much had been stolen. "We need to see the inventory list, we have to find out what he had, what was brought in, what was delivered," he said. "We know a theft took place, but we haven't confirmed the total amount." Hannah said the thieves used "distractions and diversionary tactics," adding, "We've seen this before."

Computer Systems



LOVGATE/NETSKY

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The computer viruses known as Lovgate and Netsky will attack China this week, but the damages will be limited, predicted the Tianjin-based National Computer Virus Emergency Response Centre. Experts at the centre — the only anti-virus products testing and certification centre authorized by the Chinese Ministry of Public Security — warned that the viruses, which will be spread via email in form of computer worms, are capable of damaging certain system files and disabling Microsoft Windows operating systems' anti-virus functions. Experts are asking computer users not to click on unfamiliar e-mail attachments as the viruses will be activated by a mouse click. To prevent the viruses from spreading, the centre suggests users shut down the Internet or the Local Area Network (LAN) if their computers become infected. Experts are also advising computer users to keep their anti-virus software current and start their real-time computer virus monitoring functions when surfing the Internet to avoid the viruses.

Miscellaneous



ANTIGUA & BARBUDA VESSEL MOORED OFF MALTA WITH ASYLUM SEEKERS ON BOARD

London, Oct 22 — A press release from the UN Refugee Agency, dated today, states: The UN refugee agency has expressed growing concern about an international impasse that has left 13 men who claim to be Turkish Kurds stuck for nearly two weeks on board c.c. *Lydia Oldendorff* (13066 gt, built 1998) in the Mediterranean after being denied access to the asylum system in Italy and Malta. The vessel has been moored in international waters about 15 miles off Malta since Oct 15, said spokesman Rupert Colville in a news briefing in Geneva. He said the situation onboard the vessel was "extremely tense" because of limited

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quarters and that at least one of the men has reportedly attempted suicide. He said UNHCR is increasingly concerned about the situation and urged Malta and Italy "to act in accordance with their responsibilities under international law without further delay." The vessel had sailed from Mersin and on Oct 9 docked in Gioia Tauro where the asylum seekers, including two believed to be 13 and 15 years old, were found hiding in a container that had been unloaded from the ship. The men were reportedly taken to a police station in Gioia Tauro, where they said they attempted to apply for asylum but were not allowed to do so. The police then put the men back on the container ship, which subsequently proceeded to its next port of call, Valletta. Although the ship was permitted to dock in Valletta on Oct 14 and disembark some cargo, the asylum seekers were not allowed ashore. The ship's next destination was back to Turkey - possibly the men's country of origin. "Returning an asylum seeker to his country of origin without hearing his or her claim is against the fundamental principles of international refugee law and may amount to refoulement," said Colville, referring to the illegal expulsion of a refugee to his or her home country. UNHCR's office in Berlin was contacted by the ship's owners last weekend, and since then UNHCR has been engaged in a dialogue with authorities in Italy and Malta in an attempt to end the impasse. The owner of the ship has agreed to delay its scheduled journey at the cost of heavy penalties for delayed cargo delivery in the hope that the situation would be swiftly resolved. Colville said under European Union law, Italy would appear to have responsibility for assessing the men's asylum claims. Under the terms of the EU Dublin Regulation, they can be disembarked in Malta and then transferred to Italy. Alternatively, the owner has said that he is prepared to send his ship back to Italy, providing he receives clear assurances within the next 36 hours from the Italian authorities that the 13 asylum seekers will be disembarked. "The 13 men have made three attempts to request asylum via faxes to the Maltese authorities, but to no avail," Colville said. The owner has flown to Malta and spent last night on the boat. UNHCR has sent two staff members to Malta who are closely monitoring the situation, in addition to negotiating with the authorities. The asylum seekers, 16 crew and four extra security guards flown in from England are living in very overcrowded conditions onboard the vessel. The owner told UNHCR by satellite phone from the boat this morning that the atmosphere on board has grown so tense that he is afraid some unfortunate incident could occur at any moment.

London, Oct 24 — A press report, dated today, states: The drama at sea of 13 Turkish Kurds and the 16 crew on board c.c. *Lydia Oldendorff* came to an end yesterday after Italy finally accepted to take in the illegal

immigrants. The news came about as two officials from the United Nations Commission for Human Rights embarked on the ship yesterday morning, amid claims that the Turkish Kurds were in an abysmal state. Italian Ambassador Alvise Memmo informed the Maltese government yesterday morning that Italy had decided to assume responsibility for the 13 men, including two teenagers. *Lydia Oldendorff* arrived in Augusta last night. The ship's legal representative, Ann Fenech, welcomed the news, saying that the stalemate was resolved as the issue was spiralling out of control. She said that the ship company had sustained hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses as a result of the incident. "The owners have just been concentrating on the human element for the time being - but sooner or later someone will have to pay for this," she charged.

INDONESIAN FISHING VESSELS DETAINED BY AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Australian authorities have caught three illegal fishing boats trying to flee into Indonesian waters. The Indonesian vessels were sighted illegally operating in Australia's northern fishing zone. The boats were part of a group of nine Indonesian vessels apprehended at various locations during a weekend blitz involving the Australian Defence Force, Customs and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority. Federal Fisheries Minister Ian Macdonald says when three of the vessels were confronted by navy patrol boats they made a dash towards Indonesian waters but were pursued and eventually caught. Senator Macdonald says there is no doubt the operators knew where they were given all the vessels had sophisticated global positioning systems and navigation charts. More than 30 Indonesian crew and most of the boats were taken to Gove or Darwin.

INFESTATION OF LOCUSTS ACROSS NORTH AND WEST AFRICA

Algiers, Oct 20 — Swarms of desert locusts have now made their way further north in Algeria due to hot temperatures and winds, state radio said today, and could start threatening the country's crops. Locusts have already eaten their way through parts of West and Central Africa this year and were again spotted in Algeria's south early this month but did not then pose a threat because of the lack of significant agricultural land in the Sahara. Now swarms have moved across most of the desert and reached the Ghardaia province some 700 km south of the capital Algiers. The insects, which can form swarms of tens of millions taking up hundreds of square kilometres, have moved into North Africa after months in the semi-desert Sahel region because vegetation there is drying up. Algerian authorities say they are prepared for the new invasion and are arming aircraft with pesticide to spray fields. — Reuters.

INTERNET FRAUD, BRAZIL

London, Oct 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Federal police in Brazil say they have arrested more than 50 people for allegedly stealing \$30m (£16m) from Brazilians through internet fraud. They said the arrests were made across four states in the north of Brazil. The group secured the money by sending email attachments infected with a virus able to store details of people's internet bank accounts, police said. Computer fraud experts said last month Brazil was now the global capital of hacking and internet fraud. At a conference in the capital, Brasilia, in September, federal police said the country was home to eight out of 10 of the world's hackers. The amount of money lost in internet financial fraud in Brazil outstripped that lost through bank robberies, the conference was told. And security experts from other countries said some 96,000 hacking attacks were launched from Brazil last year - six times more than any other country. The explosion in hacking was blamed, in part, on weak legislation. Police have to prove fraud has taken place in order to prosecute, as hacking itself is not a crime in the country.

MCT ALIOTH (Liberia)

Gothenburg, Oct 25 — The Norwegian pilot who arrived on board to assist the master of chemical/oil carrier *MCT Alioth* (12358 gt, built 1999) after it had berthed at Mongstad terminal allegedly found the Russian master so drunk that he decided to take over the command of the vessel. The pilot contacted the police ashore and dropped the anchors in the fairway. The vessel is not allowed to leave this position until a new master has arrived on scene. The vessel has been fined Nk5,000. — Westax Marine Services AB.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

Bangkok, Oct 20 — Thailand ordered a cull of 40 tigers suspected of suffering from bird flu today after seven more of the big cats died, bringing the tiger death toll at an infected zoo to 30. "We need to cull 40 sick tigers with a potassium chloride injection," Thawat Suntrajarn, head of the health ministry's Department of Disease Control, told Reuters. "Otherwise they will become a reservoir for the disease." The cull will take place on this evening to prevent the risk of further infection. "They all died after three days of showing symptoms so there is no need to keep them," he said, referring to the first 23 tigers to die of flu-like symptoms after eating raw chicken at the Sri Racha Tiger Zoo, 80 km east of Bangkok. Health experts fear bird flu, which has killed 31 people in southeast Asia this year as well as domestic cats, a leopard and tigers in Thailand, may mutate to become highly infectious in humans and unleash a global flu pandemic. Tests on the 23 dead tigers, aged between eight months and two years, showed they were infected with the H5N1 virus, Charal Trinwuthipong, an adviser to the ministry's bird flu

committee told reporters yesterday. Seven more died with similar symptoms on yesterday evening, he said. The zoo, which has some 400 tigers, was closed yesterday after tigers started dying a week ago. — Reuters.

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Three more tigers died yesterday at Sri Racha Tiger Zoo, as veterinarians were giving anti-bird flu shots to the remaining big cats at the private zoo in Chon Buri. As of yesterday the zoo has lost 63 tigers out of the previous population of 441. The latest tiger deaths were disclosed yesterday by Somchuan Rattanamongklanondh, a veterinarian at the Animals Research and Development Centre for the Eastern Region. The vet said the remaining 378 tigers had been injected with Tamiflu, developed by Swiss Hoffmann-La Roche company and Gilead Sciences of America, to fight influenza. The provincial committee fighting bird flu yesterday questioned Somjit sae Seow, believed to be the middleman who supplied raw chicken carcasses fed to the tigers at the zoo, in a bid to identify the slaughterhouses where infected chicken carcasses may have originated. However, no details came out of the meeting. In Trat, a farm with 170 fighting cocks in Ban Udomsuk village, Khao Saming district, was awaiting a cull, as an initial test showed the roosters could be infected with bird flu. The farm has been losing about 7-10 birds daily since Oct 11 and has already been sealed off. Village head Banthom Plainern said initial lab test results obtained Wednesday (Oct 20) showed the farm's dead fighting cocks had been infected, possibly by bird flu. Somsin Chaivichit, the provincial public health chief, said culling at the farm had been delayed pending the outcome of second-round lab testing. Premature culling could hurt the farm as well as the province's image, he added. If avian flu infection at the farm is confirmed, anti-bird flu measures will be implemented with a five-kilometre radius including a ban on poultry movement, culling and sterilisation. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who had set a one-month deadline for ridding Thailand of bird flu by Oct 31, yesterday said relevant authorities have yet to reach a conclusion on the exact situation of the epidemic throughout the country. Officials were looking into bird flu possibilities in every province, he said.

Jakarta, Oct 26 — Thousands of fowl have died from bird flu in eight villages at the western end of Indonesia's main island of Java in recent weeks, prompting affected districts to order vaccinations, officials said today. Sporadic attacks of bird-flu have hit parts of the sprawling archipelago since the disease emerged nearly a year ago, with Java island the worst affected, but the government has insisted that overall the sickness is under control. "The tests concluded that the fowls have died from bird flu," said Cahyan Sofyan, the district head of the animal husbandry office for

Pandeglang regency in Banten province. Sofyan said around 12,000 fowl died in the last month in the eight villages on small chicken farms that have also struggled with Newcastle disease. He added that the spread of the disease may have been caused by villagers who threw the carcasses into a nearby river. The Indonesian government has said bird flu is endemic and that it would take another three years to fully stamp out the H5N1 strain that has ravaged other countries in the region, killing 32 people and tens of millions of fowl. None of the human casualties reported so far have been in Indonesia and officials say there is no evidence the disease has spread to people in the country. — Reuters.

OUTBREAK OF BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY, UNITED STATES

Tokyo, Oct 22 — The United States insisted Japan further ease its mad cow testing policy to meet global standards but Japanese officials said there would be no more compromise as the two sides stayed at odds at high-level talks aimed at resuming U.S. beef imports. Japan set out its latest plan for easing a 10-month ban on U.S. beef, telling U.S. officials it would exclude animals aged 20 months or younger from its controversial policy of testing all cattle for mad cow disease, officials said. Washington wants the 20-month threshold to be a tentative condition to allow the resumption of beef trade between the two countries, and that the limit eventually should be raised to the internationally accepted level of 30 months. "We are confident that our safety policy is right," Japanese Agriculture Minister Yoshinobu Shimamura said today, the second day of talks, which were scheduled to end in the evening. "We will not adjust to their stance. We want them to accept our policy," Shimamura, who was not directly participating in the talks, told a news conference. The two-day meeting is being attended by U.S. Agriculture Undersecretary J.B. Penn. Japanese participants include Hiroshi Nakagawa, director-general of the Farm Ministry's food safety and consumer affairs bureau. It is the first meeting of senior government officials from the two countries to discuss normalising beef trade, which came to a halt last December after the discovery of mad cow disease in the United States. Japan's plan to ease its policy of blanket BSE testing was based on a report compiled last month by Japan's Food Safety Commission. In the report, the commission acknowledged that the youngest case of BSE found in Japan was in an animal aged 21 months, and that it was hard to detect the disease in younger animals using test methods now available. But the United States has said it wants cattle under 30 months old to be exempted from testing. It currently carries out only spot tests for BSE on animals 30 months old or older. At the meeting the two countries were also at odds over methods for

identifying age, officials said. Japan has a system that records the date of birth for all domestic cattle. But in the United States such a system is not in place, and it is difficult to determine a precise age. In previous talks, U.S. officials had said they could estimate the age of cattle by checking the maturity of meat and bones. But Japanese officials had said the method was not accurate enough. Tokyo had also asked that all U.S. cattle be tested for mad cow disease before the meat was exported to Japan, which Washington rejected as unnecessary and too costly. — Reuters.

POWER OUTAGE, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: About 100 buildings in the centre of Sydney's central business district are blacked out. Energy Australia says power was cut to buildings in the vicinity of Margaret, York and Clarence Streets about 1330, AEST. It is not yet known what caused the blackout and crews are working to restore power in the area. Meanwhile, Energy Australia says power has been restored to 40,000 houses on Sydney's north shore. Power was cut to homes in Mosman and Castle Cove this afternoon while crews were undertaking repair work at substations.

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Energy Australia says power has been restored to nearly all of the 100 buildings in the Sydney's central business district, which had been blacked out since 1330, AEST. The company says restricted power is being supplied to the buildings in the vicinity of York, Margaret and Clarence Streets, while technicians attempt to find and fix an underground cable fault. Energy Australia says Wynyard Mall is the only building that remains in the dark.

Fires & Explosions



CHEMICAL PLANT, SECUNDA, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: An inquiry into the cause of an explosion at Sasol's ethylene plant in Secunda, South Africa, last month, which left 10 people dead and more than 100 injured, began today, the labour department said. Spokesperson Page Boikanyo said 40 witnesses, including workers and subcontractors, would be questioned during the inquiry, which was due to end on Friday (Oct 29). It was being held at the petrochemical company's Brandspruit mine near Secunda. Solidarity spokesperson Chris Pienaar said the explosion, which occurred during maintenance work on the C2 ethylene pipe on Sep 1, had been caused by a gas leak when the pipe was opened, causing a gas cloud which

ignited. He said the investigation would focus on finding the source of the flame which ignited the gas as well as why there had been gas in the pipe in the first place, since it was supposed to be switched off. Although the inquiry was scheduled to end on Friday, Pienaar said he expected the probe to continue into November due to the formal and technical nature of the process, with a large number of documents having to be presented. A report would then be handed to the national Public Prosecutor for a decision on whether those responsible should be prosecuted. Chemical, Energy, Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers Union (Ceppwawu) general secretary Welile Nolingolo said representatives from his union, the labour department, Sasol and Solidarity were in attendance.

COAL MINE, BELOV, KEMEROVO REGION, SIBERIA, RUSSIA

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 10 miners have been killed in an explosion in a coal mine in Siberia, a Russian regional spokesman says. About 100 people were trapped by the blast in a mine near Russia's border with Mongolia, a representative of the Kemerovo region said. It is not clear how many are still underground, but operations to rescue survivors were said to be under way. "Sadly, the news is very unpleasant. Ten people were killed, 30 people have been evacuated and are all injured in one way or another," said spokesman Sergei Chernov. "Around 100 people were underground at the time, but only 45 were in the region of the accident." The mine is in the town of Belov, about 3,000km east of Moscow. The Russian emergencies ministry said the alarm was raised at around 0145, GMT, and the signal for a methane blast was sounded. "We are not ruling out that the explosion of methane that had accumulated in the mine could have been the cause," said the spokesman, according to the Russian Interfax agency.

COAL MINE, XINMI, HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Oct 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The death toll of the Daping coal mine gas blast climbed to 62, as rescuers found two more bodies there last night. The whereabouts of 86 others are still unknown. Two hundred and ninety-eight miners managed to escape after the blast happened, while the rest were trapped underground. The provincial government has quickly organized the rescue operation while a 14-member working team of the State Council, headed by Secretary-General of the State Council Hua Jianmin, arrived at the mine yesterday afternoon. As of 2318 hrs, the death toll had risen to 62, 55 died from suffocation, but 86 others are still missing. Local source said the trapped miners are mostly from Henan Province, and that the survival chance for the missing is quite slim.

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 200

workers had been killed in a gas explosion deep underground in China. The disaster happened close to midnight on Wednesday (Oct 20) in the Daping coal mine near Xinmi city in central Henan province, while hundreds of workers toiled at change-of-shift time. Fifty-six bodies had been recovered by last night and more than 100 rescuers were deep in the mine searching for 148 people still missing but presumed dead.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: The death toll from China's worst coal mine accident in four years rose to 129 today, the government said, as rescuers searched for 19 more missing miners. The blast occurred on Oct 20 at the Daping Mine near the central city of Zhangzhou. Rescuers looking for the missing workers have had to dig through rubble and drain water from a 1,200-metre-long passage. They "are still searching for the other 19 missing miners, whose survival chances are slim," the official Xinhua News Agency said. Authorities have not said what caused the explosion.

FACTORY, BURY ST EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated Oct 27, states: Bosses at a Branston pickle factory are assessing the damage after a damaging fire. More than 200 firefighters tackled the blaze which broke out at the Premier Foods factory in Bury St Edmunds early today. Commercial director Dominic Box said it was too early to speculate about job losses at the factory, which employs more than 300, including temporary staff. He said: "We are still trying to assess the damage and once we have done that one of the first things we will be doing is to get production going as soon as possible." There were 40 people on the site, which operates 24 hours a day, when the fire broke out at 0145 hrs in a central storage area containing wooden pallets. An explosion was heard as the fire spread to a gas cylinder, but by that time everyone had left safely. Two main manufacturing areas on either side of a central corridor were also affected. Firefighters were still there yesterday afternoon checking for pockets of fire. Crews from across Suffolk as well as Norfolk and Cambridgeshire helped to tackle the blaze. Assistant chief fire officer Lee Howell said: "The first crews to arrive were confronted with a significant fire with flames and a lot of smoke. About 30% of the factory has been fire damaged and there is considerable smoke damage." The former Hayward's pickle factory has been the country's main source of Branston pickle since production switched there from Derbyshire last year. It also makes Loyd Grossman sauces. But the company says it hopes there will be no Branston pickle shortage this Christmas.

HOSPITAL, STAFFORDSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Detectives have

released pictures of a man they want to talk to about an arson attack on a hospital which caused damage put at £1m. More than 100 operations were cancelled after the fire at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire in August this year. Around 40 firefighters tackled the blaze at the Stoke-on-Trent hospital.

PREMISES, DIAMOND BAR, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated Oct 21, states: A fire caused about \$7 million in damage today to several businesses in a two-storey commercial building in Diamond Bar, Calif., but no one was hurt, authorities said. The blaze was reported at 2040 S. Brea Canyon Road about 0225 hrs, said Los Angeles County fire Capt. Mark Savage. One hundred firefighters doused the flames by 0600 hrs, Savage said, although firefighters stayed on the scene to guard against flareups. Heavily damaged were the Shanghai Palace restaurant and a liquor store on the first floor, and two dental offices, an accountant's office and some other offices on the second floor, Savage said. The cause of the fire was under investigation. Sheriff's arson investigators were sent to the scene.

PREMISES, THE BRONX, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A fast moving fire broke out just after 0800 today in a vacant building at 1984 Davidson Avenue The Bronx before quickly spreading to the other stores. For many people living in this neighbourhood, the corner where the fire occurred was an "anchor" of the neighbourhood containing a row of stores that had been around for decades. Now, arson investigators are now focusing in on one particular shop and that is a beauty saloon. It is where this morning's fire may have started. Newscopter Seven caught the images of the blaze that swept through a row of businesses, a church, clothing store, beauty supply shop and Santiago's grocery. Over 150 firefighters responded to the corner W. Tremont Avenue and Davidson just after 0800 today. By then, flames were shooting out of three stores and were spreading to seven more. Several businesses shared a ceiling space providing an ideal track for the fire to race across. More than a dozen firefighters were treated for minor injuries and they will recover. A total of 16 firefighters were brought to the hospital with things like cuts, bruises and smoke inhalation. At one point, firefighters thought they would have to evacuate people living in a neighbouring apartment building but they didn't have to do that because they were able to hold back the fire.

PREMISES, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 23, states: Firemen in south-western Victoria are still trying to find the cause of a A\$2 million fire that has destroyed the Hamilton Target store. They are being hampered by an unsafe

structure and a number of hard to get at hot spots. Steve Cooper from the Country Fire Authority (CFA) says he is waiting for an engineer's clearance before moving in to investigate the fire. "The adjoining buildings are in fact evacuated," he said.

REFINERY, DAQING, CHINA

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Up to seven workers were killed in a fire at northeastern China's Daqing oil refinery, an official said today. The blaze was ignited around 0944, yesterday by a stray spark caused by a worker performing maintenance on a water tank at the refinery's sulfur recovery workshop, said Zou Ling, an official at the provincial Work Safety Bureau said. Zou said the blaze was extinguished in about an hour, but only two bodies were recovered. Rescuers believe the other five may have been overcome by fumes and fallen into a massive tank of highly toxic sulfurated hydrogen, she said. Workers are draining the tank, but the process is expected to take until tomorrow."

SCHOOLS, LAKE STATION, INDIANA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire yesterday morning caused an estimated \$2 million in damage and will close parts of River Forest Senior High School for up to six months wasn't an accident, authorities said. While the majority of fire damage occurred on the second floor of the high school, the adjoining River Forest Junior High School and Elementary School also were affected. All three schools were closed Thursday. No injuries were reported in the blaze. The 335 high school students will use existing classrooms that can be salvaged and portable classrooms brought in for extra space.

STEEL COMPLEX, AJAOKUTA, NIGERIA

London, Oct 23 — Following received from LaSalle, dated Oct 22: A press report, dated today, states: A heavy explosion Wednesday (Oct 20) rocked Ajaokuta Steel Complex Limited (ASCL) thereby saling up the hope of early commencement of steel production in Nigeria. The explosion affected some portions of the plant, blowing up the huge electric motor in the circulating water pump of the thermal power plant (TPP), regarded as the heart of the entire complex. Reports from Ajaokuta said it took serious effort on the part of the fire service to put out the fire which started in the early hours of the morning. No casualty was however reported in the inferno.

WAREHOUSE, SOUTH BOSTON, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: The former Planters Tobacco warehouse in South Boston burned to the ground early this morning. Firefighters do not know what started the fire. Witnesses tell police that electric transformers near the building exploded during the fire.

Cleanup crews say the fire also scorched several nearby buildings and knocked out electricity to most businesses on the block. Firefighters had to call in help from Danville and North Carolina to help put out the flames.



C-GLTA

London, Oct 22 — The flight crew of Air Canada Dash 8, C-GLTA, owned by Jazz Air Inc., initiating a departure from Harrisburg, PA, had started No.2 engine and were in the process of starting No.1 engine, smoke observed coming from the No.2 engine at 2020, UTC, Oct 20. The captain ordered an evacuation of passengers and requested ARFF. The engine ceased to smoke and the aircraft was towed off the gate. Alleghany maintenance in Harrisburg will do an initial inspection.

C-GOES

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated Oct 21, states: Authorities worked today to determine what caused a fatal plane crash near the North Dakota-South Dakota border and identify the pilot believed to be the lone occupant. Residents reported the fiery crash shortly before 2000 hrs, yesterday in a farm pasture in south central North Dakota's McIntosh County. Sheriff Paul Peters said the Cessna airplane apparently originated from Bemidji, Minn. The pilot, who had not been positively identified, is believed to be a man from the Bemidji area, Peters said. "We believe it took off from Bemidji about 1700 hrs headed for a destination about 20 miles south of the crash site," Peters said. "I talked to a friend down there who was expecting (the pilot) to show up, and he hasn't." The sheriff said the pilot is believed to have been on his way to meet with friends in South Dakota's McPherson County for pheasant hunting. He said his office was trying to locate dental records to identify the victim. The National Transportation Safety Board is leading the crash investigation, assisted by officials from the Federal Aviation Administration and Cessna. Burn marks and debris from the crash were spread in a circular area about 60 feet across in the pasture northwest of Ashley, Peters said. "There were very few parts that were recognisable as an airplane," he said. Witnesses reported an explosion in a field owned by Glenn Baumann, who said the wreckage was still aflame when he arrived at the scene. "We just let it burn itself out," Peters said. The pilot was pronounced dead at the scene, and the body was sent to the state medical examiner for an autopsy, he said. The sheriff said the weather was foggy, with light rain at the time of the crash.

London, Oct 22 — Cessna 152, C-GOES, crashed near Ashley, North Dakota, at 0113, Oct 21. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

C-GORO

London, Oct 21 — Bell 206B, C-GORO, owned by The Vancouver Island Helicopters, was making the inaugural landing on a hillside helipad near Darkis Lake when the main rotor blades contacted a stump at 1150, PST, Oct 14. The pilot then flew the aircraft to a logging road below the helipad. There were no injuries. The helicopter was trucked to the company's maintenance facility where the main rotor blades were removed and scrapped, and a Sudden Stoppage Inspection was carried out. No other significant damage was found.

C-GPLD

London, Oct 21 — The float-equipped Cessna 170B, C-GPLD, being flown from Prince George for Vanderhoof, made an intermediate stop on the Nechaco River, about three miles from the Vanderhoof Airport, where the pilot removed all unnecessary weight, such as the paddles and survival equipment, before continuing to Vanderhoof at 1815, PST, Oct 16. After touching down on the turf runway, the aircraft nosed over and came to rest inverted. The pilot was not injured but the aircraft was substantially damaged.

C-GTDK

London, Oct 22 — Airbus A320, C-GTDK, owned by Skyservice Airlines Inc., commenced take-off from Manchester, United Kingdom, and as power was increased, a loud bang was heard at 1308, UTC, Oct 14. The aircraft veered slightly to the left. A low speed rejected take-off was carried out and the aircraft returned to the gate. An initial borescope inspection of the No.1 engine was completed at Manchester. This inspection revealed that a failure occurred at the Stage 4 compressor. The engine manufacturer is investigating the cause of the compressor failure.

CRASH INTO SEA OFF BERGEN, NORWAY

Gothenburg, Oct 25 — A helicopter crashed into the sea near a ferry berth at Breistein, just north of Bergen, approximately noon yesterday. Two persons survived the crash but a third was trapped inside the helicopter when it sank. Rescue attempts commenced immediately and divers were quickly on scene but no news as yet of the missing person. — Westax Marine Services AB.

CRASH, BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A twin-engine aircraft crashed soon after takeoff yesterday after the pilot reported mechanical problems. All four people aboard were killed. The private Beechcraft BE60 went down about a

mile from the Asheville Regional Airport after taking off for Greensboro, in rural southern Buncombe County. Before the crash, the pilot contacted the control tower to report mechanical problems, officials said.

CRASH, NEW PROVIDENCE, BAHAMAS

Freeport, Oct 22 — We have received brief preliminary information that a twin engine commuter aircraft reportedly owned and/or operated by Southern Air, has crash-landed in shallow water close to the south shore of New Providence. No details immediately available, however the local salvage company Marine Towing and Salvage have a vessel standing by close to the aircraft. They have reported to us that there were no injuries and that all passengers and crew have been evacuated, presumably by a local Defence Force vessel. — Lloyd's Agents.

Freeport, Oct 23 — Salvage of the aircraft off the coast of Nassau in the area of South Beach has been offered. We have been in contact with West Atlantic Marine, Freeport and placed initial claim to the vessel with Lloyds of London. We performed a general inspection of the aircraft for feasibility of salvage. The initial survey found the aircraft in good condition. — Lloyd's Agents.

CRASH, OMURA BAY, NAGASAKI, JAPAN

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A pilot was rescued after a small aircraft he was flying made an emergency landing in Omura Bay, last night, police said. The pilot, 41-year-old Teruhisa Eguchi, escaped unhurt. Local police are investigating the cause of the accident. At around 1930 hrs, a light aircraft flown by Eguchi made an emergency landing into Omura Bay off the Nagasaki Prefecture city of Omura, police said. Crewmembers of a pleasure boat carrying anglers quickly rescued Eguchi. He was not injured in the accident. Eguchi boarded the aircraft by himself and took off from Nagasaki Airport for Fukuoka Airport at around 1910 hrs. However, he radioed to air traffic controllers some 15 minutes later that the engine was sounding strange, and that he would return to Nagasaki. However, before the aircraft could reach the airport, the pilot was forced to make an emergency landing into Omura Bay. Eguchi, a company president living in Chikushino, Fukuoka Prefecture, belongs to an aviation club in Nagasaki Prefecture, police said.

CRASH, WESTER ROSS, SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 23, states: Rescuers looking for an aircraft which went missing on a flight have found the body of the pilot at the crash site following a major search operation, police said tonight. The remains of 35-year-old Timothy Cook were discovered shortly after debris from the crash was located at

Meall Feith na Slataich, Wester Ross, around two miles from the last recorded radar sighting of the aircraft. Poor light and the inhospitable environment hampered the rescue operation, meaning that Mr Cook's body will not be recovered from the crash site until tomorrow. The twin-turbo light aircraft disappeared from radar near Loch Broom in the Ullapool area of Wester Ross at around 1130, yesterday. The 10-seater commercial aircraft took off from Stornoway Airport at 1116 hrs and had been expected to arrive at Inverness Airport around 1145 hrs. The aircraft was last seen on radar north east of Beinn Dearg, to the east of Loch Broom, but vanished suddenly from the radar screen at RAF Lossiemouth. Mr Cook, who was the only person on board, had delivered newspapers to the Western Isles and was flying back to Inverness when his aircraft was lost from radar.

EMERGENCY LANDING, CITY OF DERRY AIRPORT, NORTHERN IRELAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 23 — A press report, dated today, states: A six-seater aircraft carrying four passengers has had to make an emergency landing at City of Derry airport. A fault was reported in the landing equipment on its way from Waterford shortly after midday today. It landed successfully at City of Derry about an hour later. The landing equipment was fully operational. Airport manager Seamus Devine said minimal intervention was ended by the on-site emergency team.

EMERGENCY LANDING, O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, CHICAGO, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A United Airlines flight to Brazil was forced to make an emergency landing yesterday at O'Hare International Airport because of mechanical trouble in one of the aircraft's engines. United Flight 835 to Sao Paulo landed without incident about 40 minutes after takeoff, United spokeswoman Andrea Arroyo said. The Boeing 767 was carrying 179 passengers and 12 crew members when it departed, she said. The pilot was forced to shut down one of the aircraft's two engines. No injuries were reported, Arroyo said. The Federal Aviation Administration said the aircraft's crew reported a problem with one of its engines shortly after its departure from O'Hare at about 2150 hrs. The pilot reported "a compressor stall, something that caused flames to shoot out from the engine," according to the FAA. The Elk Grove Village Fire Department said residents of the suburban Chicago community called 911 and reported seeing flames coming from the aircraft.

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A preliminary investigation blamed a bird strike for forcing a United Airlines flight bound for Brazil to make an emergency landing at O'Hare Airport shortly after leaving the airfield, a United

spokesman said today. "All signs tell us it was a bird strike," United spokesman Jeff Green said. He said feathers were found in the engine as soon as the aircraft landed last night. None of the 179 passengers and 12 crew members aboard the Boeing 767 were injured, and Green said that all the passengers were on their way to Sao Paulo aboard another aircraft today.

EMERGENCY LANDING, SANTA BARBARA AIRPORT, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: An American Eagle flight en route to Monterey from Los Angeles today was diverted to Santa Barbara. A spokeswoman for the airline says passengers and crew smelled an acrid odour in the cabin shortly after the flight left Los Angeles this morning. The captain declared an emergency and landed the Saab three-40-B at the Santa Barbara airport. All 25 passengers were taken off the aircraft and put onto another aircraft. Maintenance crews were checking the aircraft for any problems.

N14053

Washington, Oct 26 — The co-pilot of an American Airlines Airbus A300-600 (N14053), which crashed nearly three years ago in New York killing 265 people, made aggressive rudder movements that snapped the tail fin from the aircraft, investigators have concluded. The National Transportation Safety Board said elements of pilot training at the world's biggest airline and the sensitivity of flight controls on the Airbus A300-600 also contributed to the crash. "Several human performance and aircraft characteristics combined, in a most unfortunate way, to cause the accident," lead crash investigator Robert Benzon told the five-member safety board before a vote on the accident's cause today. The airline and its pilots had vigorously opposed placing the blame on co-pilot Sten Molin, saying the Airbus flight control system was dangerously sensitive. Flight 587 crashed into a residential area of Queens shortly after takeoff from John F. Kennedy Airport on Nov 12, 2001. Coming just two months after the Sep 11 hijack attacks, the crash immediately stoked fears of sabotage. The board dismissed that scenario at the time and investigators did not conclude differently today. The NTSB recommended the Federal Aviation Administration revise standards for the design of aircraft rudder controls to ensure their safe operation. The safety board also wants the FAA to consider whether to order modifications to the rudders of Airbus A300-600 and A310 aircraft. Airbus said it was surprised by the board's concern about rudder pedal sensitivity. "We do not believe the facts of the investigation point to sensitivity of the rudder as contributing to the accident," said company spokesman Clay McConnell. American and Airbus, the world's biggest commercial plane maker, have waged a bitter finger-pointing

campaign over liability for the crash of the flight bound for the Dominican Republic. Co-pilot Molin activated multiple full rudder swings in an attempt to control the aircraft after it was buffeted by two waves of strong turbulence from another aircraft flying ahead. The A300 fish-tailed before sliding sideways. The enormous build-up of side forces exceeded the fin's design tolerance and it broke at the point where it joined the fuselage. However, Benzon's team concluded Molin should not have used the rudder and other flight controls the way he did with the aircraft slightly out of configuration and flying at 276 mph. Molin's response was unnecessary and overly aggressive, investigators said. They said American's pilot training program before the crash encouraged rudder use to regain control of an aircraft during an in-flight upset. Rudder is generally applied at much slower speeds to counter crosswinds during landing or take-off. "The rest of the time your feet should be on the floor," said Dave Ivey, an NTSB investigator. Investigators also found that the A300-600 rudder system could be too sensitive, supporting part of American's contention that Molin sought only a small amount of rudder but got far more than he intended. "We don't believe you can blame the pilot," American spokesman Bruce Hicks said. American charges Airbus knew there were potential problems with the flight control system after an in-flight incident involving another American A300 in 1997 and withheld that information from the airline and the safety board. Investigators found no meaningful connection between the crash and the other incident although they sharply criticised Airbus for not producing more timely data. — Reuters.

N18303

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 24, states: A man was killed yesterday as the small Cessna aircraft he was piloting crashed into a shallow gully near a rural road in Dana, North Carolina. The man's name was not immediately released, but authorities said he was from Florida. He died on impact when the single-engine aircraft crashed shortly after 1100 hrs, said Henderson County Sheriff's Sgt Randy Stepp. The cause of the accident was being investigated. Fire Chief Jimmy Womack said the crash may have been due to engine failure, though the overcast, foggy skies might also have played a role. The aircraft crashed into a narrow valley between rolling hills of pasture, only about four miles from the Hendersonville Airport but reachable by four-wheel drive or all-terrain vehicle. Residents in the area said they heard the aircraft flying low, its engine sputtering, moments before the crash. London, Oct 25 — Beechcraft Bonanza F33A, N18303, crashed near Hendersonville, North Carolina, at 1446, Oct 23, while on a flight from Hendersonville to Norfolk, Virginia. The aircraft was destroyed. The one person on board was killed.

N230SB

London, Oct 26 — Pitts S-1S N230SB crashed near Liberal, Kansas, Oct 24 while on a local flight from Liberal. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N2703F

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A Cessna 182, crashed while approaching Springfield airport, killing two of three people aboard and seriously injuring the survivor, officials said. The aircraft which seats up to six people, was en route from Oklahoma to the Springfield-Branson Regional Airport when it crashed about a half-mile away last night, said Tony Molinaro, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration in Chicago. The cause was not known. Three people were aboard; two were killed and one was seriously injured, Molinaro said. Gary Cyr, acting director of aviation at the airport, said the aircraft was trying to land when it crashed in a farm field. "It appears that it hit trees initially, and then it hit the ground," Cyr said. He said the aircraft broke in half. Cyr said there was no indication that anyone had radioed to report a problem.

London, Oct 27 — Cessna 182J N2703F crashed near Springfield, Missouri, at 0040, Oct 26, while on a flight from Ardmore, Oklahoma, to Springfield. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N30DK

London, Oct 24 — A press report, dated today, states: An ambulance airplane crashed in a remote, mountainous area near the Mexican border early today, shortly after taking off from a small San Diego air field, killing all five people on board, authorities said. The Learjet carried two pilots, two paramedics and a nurse on a flight bound for Albuquerque, New Mexico, said Larry Levy, CEO and medical director of Albuquerque-based Med Flight Air Ambulance, which owned the aircraft. The plane went down around 0030, local time, about two miles east of Brown Field. Emergency personnel had to hike to the largely inaccessible crash site, said Larri Frelow, an operations manager for the Federal Aviation Administration. The cause of the crash had not been determined. The FAA and National Transportation Safety Board were investigating, Levy said. The crew was returning to Albuquerque after carrying a patient from Mexico to San Diego, Levy said. Med Flight Air Ambulance suspended operations "to give the crews time to debrief and cope with the circumstances," Levy said. The company withheld the names of the victims, but Levy said four were based at Albuquerque and the fifth worked out of El Paso.

London, Oct 25 — Learjet 35A, N30DK, crashed near San Diego, California, at 0730, Oct 23, while on a flight from San Diego to Albuquerque, New Mexico. The aircraft was destroyed. The five persons on board were killed.

N32AB

London, Oct 26 — Beechcraft Bonanza P35 N32AB crashed near Aiken, South Carolina, at 1225, Oct 25, while on a flight from Spartansburg, SC, to Aiken. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. The one person on board was killed.

N3889B

London, Oct 22 — Beechcraft Bonanza F35, N3889B, crashed near Chester, Arkansas, Oct 20. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N501RH

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 24, states: One of auto racing's most successful dynasties was in mourning after an aircraft owned by Hendrick Motorsports crashed in thick fog en route to a NASCAR race, killing all 10 people on board, including the son, brother and two nieces of owner Rick Hendrick. The Beechcraft King Air 200 took off from Concord, North Carolina, and crashed today in the Bull Mountain area seven miles from Blue Ridge Regional Airport in Spencer, Virginia, near the Martinsville Speedway, said Arlene Murray, spokeswoman for the Federal Aviation Administration. The cause of the crash was not immediately known, but it occurred in rough, hard-to-reach terrain in weather described as "extremely foggy" by Dale Greeson, who lives about a mile from the site. National Transportation Safety Board investigators were to begin their investigation tomorrow.

London, Oct 25 — Beechcraft King Air 200, N501RH, crashed near Martinsville, Virginia, at 1630, Oct 24, while on a flight from Concord, North Carolina, to Martinsville. The aircraft was destroyed. The 10 persons on board were killed.

London, Oct 28 — A press report, dated Oct 27, states: Federal accident investigators have examined the crash site and wreckage of a Beechcraft King Air 200 (N501RH) that went down on Sunday (Oct 24) in south-west Virginia, killing 10 people related to NASCAR's Hendrick Motorsports. There were no additional details as to what may have caused the crash. A spokesman for the National Transportation Safety Board said an investigation team had been documenting the site and the wreckage remaining from the aircraft which struck Bull Mountain near the remote town of Patrick Springs, VA, near the border with North Carolina. Officials have said the aircraft's crew had aborted an attempted landing because of low visibility as they approached nearby Martinsville Airport. The aircraft then struck the mountain as they began to circle for another try. In addition to documenting the crash site, the investigation is also examining aircraft maintenance records, the training and performance of the crew, prevailing weather conditions, and other factors that could explain why the aircraft struck the mountain. There were no flight data or voice recorders on board the aircraft, officials said. An

NTSB spokesman in Washington said investigators were also questioning local residents in the sparsely populated area as to whether they saw or heard anything leading up to the crash as a way to help establish a timeline of events. The spokesman said the pieces of the aircraft would be gathered up and brought down from the mountain in the days ahead for additional testing and analysis. The aircraft went down as the group travelled to Sunday's Subway 500 race in Martinsville. At the time of the mid-day accident, heavy clouds in the mountainous area were just 600 feet above the runway, although lateral visibility below that level was said to be at five miles. All on board were killed, including Ricky Hendrick, son of company owner Rick Hendrick. Before impact, the aircraft hit tree tops for about 100 feet, and then burst into flames as it hit the ground. "The main wreckage in the fuselage and the cockpit area was damaged extensively by fire," said Brian Rayner, the NTSB's investigator-in-charge. The wings, tail section and engines were also damaged by fire. Investigators with the medical examiner's office and the Virginia State Police recovered the remains on Monday.

N5485W

London, Oct 27 — Cessna P210N (Centurion II) N5485W crashed near Wautoma, Wisconsin, at 1630, Oct 26, while on a flight from Milwaukee, WI, to Pine River, Minnesota. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N709CK

Troy, Michigan, Oct 22 — A cargo jet departing Chicago's O'Hare International Airport experienced engine trouble late Wednesday (Oct 20) and may have dropped one of its engines into Lake Michigan, authorities said. The Boeing 741-R (N709CK), owned by Kalitta Air bound for New York landed safely in Detroit. Its crew reported engine problems with one of its engines over Michigan. When the aircraft landed, the crew discovered the engine had fallen off. Michigan authorities searched for the engine yesterday, but the Federal Aviation Administration said it might have fallen into Lake Michigan. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated Oct 26, states: The search for a cargo plane (Boeing 747 N709CK) engine that fell off during a Kalitta Air LLC flight has been narrowed to a two-square-mile area of Lake Michigan, a company official said today. The flight took off from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport late on Oct 20, bound for New York's Kennedy International Airport. About 15 miles east of Battle Creek, the flight crew of the Boeing 747 reported mechanical problems with one of the plane's four engines. The aircraft was diverted to Detroit Metropolitan Airport. When it landed, flight officials discovered the missing engine. Authorities originally suspected that it fell into Lake

Michigan. Radar equipment and computer modelling were used to narrow down the search area, said Pete Sanderlin, general manager and director of operations for Ypsilanti-based Kalitta. He did not provide more specific information about the search area. The worldwide air freight carrier is awaiting further direction from the National Transportation Safety Board, which is leading the investigation, and the Federal Aviation Administration, he said. Sanderlin said Kalitta does not yet know why the engine fell from the airplane. The flight originally departed Hong Kong with a full load of general merchandise cargo. From there, it made fuel stops in Khabarovsk, Russia, and Anchorage, Alaska, before stopping at O'Hare.

N875JX

London, Oct 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A commuter aircraft (N875JX) that crashed while approaching an airport this week lacked an updated system that warns pilots who fly too low, equipment that will be required next year, investigators said. Instead, the Corporate Airlines twin-engine turboprop had an earlier version of the terrain warning system that met current regulations, National Transportation Safety Board spokesman Keith Holloway said. The 19-seat Jetstream 32 was en route from St. Louis to Kirksville Regional Airport in northeastern Missouri when it crashed Tuesday (Oct 19), killing 13 of the 15 people aboard. Information from the voice and data recorders and traffic control tapes suggest the aircraft's approach to the airport was routine, said Carol Carmody, who is leading the team of NTSB investigators. The data show the aircraft descending steadily, then climbing slightly in the last four seconds, she said. Investigators were still determining exactly how far above the ground the aircraft was at that point. The flight was the sixth of the day for the crew, who had been on duty nearly 15 hours that day, within FAA-approved limits, investigators said. The Federal Aviation Administration ordered the terrain-warning system installed by next Mar 29 in commercial aircrafts with at least six seats. It displays the surrounding area on a cockpit screen. If the plane flies dangerously near the ground or an obstacle, such as a building, a computer-generated voice calls out a warning.

N894AA

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated Oct 23, states: A Boeing 727 loaded with 68 federal prisoners tipped over on a wing after mechanics jacked up a set of wheels to replace a worn tyre at Salt Lake City Airport. No one was injured. The aircraft was making a weekly stop in Salt Lake City yesterday to pick up federal prisoners and drop others off when mechanics began working on the aircraft. Airport spokeswoman Barbara Gann said the aircraft was jacked up on asphalt not strong enough to handle the weight of a

fully fueled Boeing 727. Mechanics also miscalculated the aircraft's centre of gravity. "They should have either moved it, drained it of fuel or made other accommodations," Gann said. Maintenance workers and firefighters righted the aircraft using heavy equipment. The inmates are being held in area jails while the aircraft is repaired, which officials said could take until Tuesday (Oct 26). The chartered aircraft was owned by Planet Airways Inc of Orlando, Florida.

London, Oct 25 — Boeing 727-200, N894AA, collapse onto its tail at Salt Lake City, Utah, at 2220, Oct 22, after being jacked up for repairs to the left main tyre. The passengers were safely deplaned.

ZK-CSM

London, Oct 26 — Cessna 188 (AG Wagon), ZK-CSM, operated by Falcon Agricultural Aviation, crashed near Omihi Oct 23 and caught fire. The one person on board was killed.



BICYCLES, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 26 — A report from Product recalls Australia, dated Oct 25, states: Bicycles Victoria "Great Victorian" pedal bicycles, all sizes - 26" x 16", 18", 21" and 23" - Purple/Orange Colour. No serial numbers available, Model FC30CS, dispatched between Oct 4 and 11, are being recalled as the front fork is designed to be fitted with a bolt on hub but has been supplied with a quick release hub. The product fails the Front Hub Retention Test in Appendix C of the Australian Standard with this configuration. The associated risk is if the quick release was released the wheel could detach from the bicycle and cause injury to the rider. Customers should cease using the bike until the new skewer is fitted. Market coverage/recall national.

GAS GRILLS, UNITED STATES

Washington, DC, Oct 21 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission announces the recall of 10,900 Beefmaster Explorer Outdoor Gas Grill Model Number 720-0001 in voluntary co-operation with Nexgrill Industries Inc., of Walnut, Calif. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. As consumers adjust the gas pressure regulator (on/off gauge) leading to the propane cylinder, the label on the valve can become positioned in such a manner that it is difficult to read. This can cause consumers to inadvertently leave the gas valve on, posing a fire hazard. Nexgrill has received two reports of consumers leaving the gas valve on. No injuries or property damage has been reported. This recall involves the Beefmaster Explorer Outdoor Gas Grill

Model Number 720-0001. The table top grill is made of stainless steel and is used with a disposable propane cylinder, which is purchased separately. Each grill has one main burner and a cooking grid that sits over the burner. Model numbers are located on the back panel of the grill. The brand name "Nexgrill" is on a plate on the grill lid. Sold at Academy, Bar-B-Que Galore, Crate & Barrel, Home Town and discount department stores nationwide. Crate & Barrel also sold the grills through their catalog and at www.crateandbarrel.com. The grills were sold from January 2002 through June 2003 for about \$100. Manufactured in China. Consumers should contact Nexgrill to obtain a free replacement gauge. Consumers can also return the product to the company for installation of the replacement gauge at no charge. In addition, Crate & Barrel customers should contact Crate & Barrel to obtain a free replacement gauge or to make arrangements to return the product to the company for installation of the replacement gauge at no charge. — Consumer Product Safety Commission.

POLARIS INDUSTRIES UTILITY VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Polaris Industries are recalling about 2,150 Ranger 4x4" utility vehicles. The lower steering shaft assembly may have a missing or misplaced weld that connects the steering wheel to the steering gear box assembly. If a weld is missing or misplaced, the lower steering shaft assembly could fail, causing the operator to lose control of the vehicle. There have been 2 reports of the lower steering shaft assembly failing. No injuries have been reported. Polaris dealers sold these Utility Vehicles nationwide from June 2004 to September 2004 for about \$8,899.

REEBOK TRAINERS, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Sportswear maker Reebok is voluntarily recalling 140,000 of its Allen Iverson toddler shoes because of a potential choking hazard, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The commission said the logo tag on the tongue of the shoe can be peeled off,

posing a risk to young children. There have been no reports of injuries, but the CPSC said an 8-month-old child did put the logo tag in its mouth. It was removed by the youngster's mother and resulted in no injury. The mid-and low-style athletic shoes were sold in toddler sizes 2 through 10 at Reebok, children's apparel and athletic shoe stores nationwide from March through August, the agency said. Model numbers included in the recall are: 99553, B99553, 99554, B99554, 105155, B105155, 105158 and B105158. They cost about \$35. The model number can be found on a label on the underside of the tongue.

TOYOTA MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Oct 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Toyota Motor Corp said today it is recalling some 340,000 units of five sport-utility and commercial vehicle models for free replacement of defective parts. The total includes 330,496 units of the Toyota Hilux Surf, Hilux Surf 4WD and Hilux Surf Wagon whose steering wheels could become uncontrollable because of weak relay rods, Toyota said in a report to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport. The vehicles were manufactured between December 1988 and May 1996.



INDIA

London, Oct 27 — The severe congestion plaguing the Jawaharlal Nehru port, near Mumbai, has goaded all container lines using the port to recover additional charges from shippers moving cargo to the West. Container lines operating out of the port to the US and Canada have decided to levy a \$50 per teu and \$100 per feu congestion surcharge on all shipments moving out to those two countries from both the P&O Ports run Nhava Sheva International Container Terminal and the state-run box terminal. The Indamex consortium, comprising the government-owned Shipping Corporation of India, Contship Container Lines, CMA CGM

and APL, has already started imposing the surcharge from Oct 15. Other lines serving the India-US sector, including Maersk Sealand, Safmarine, Evergreen Marine, P&O Nedlloyd, NYK Line, United Arab Shipping Corporation and Hapag Lloyd, will recover the levy from Nov 6. The India-Pakistan-Bangladesh-Ceylon Conference has gone a step further and decided to impose a surcharge of \$55 per teu and \$110 per feu on all Europe-bound cargo from Nov 25 onwards. "The congestion surcharge levied by the Indamex consortium is only on cargoes shipped from NSICT to the US," said Sudhir Rangnekar, SCI's director for liner shipping. "We had seen the situation developing, and filed notice of our intention with the Federal Maritime Commission of the US on Sep 15, for applicability from Oct 15, as per the law. Lines have been losing heavily, since containers have to wait outside the port premises for days before they can come in." The extra levy will further increase the cost of Indian exports to the US and Canada, since JNPT handles almost 60% of the containerised cargo in the country. Estimates reveal that some 13,000 boxes are awaiting shipment at NSICT. The figure has come down over the last one week, from a high of 20,000 containers, after sustained efforts on the part of the P&O Ports team.

SYRIA

Lattakia, Oct 16 — Waiting time is presently 24 hours at Lattakia and five days at Tartous. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

UNITED STATES

London, Oct 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Some of the worst gridlock in Southern California is at its ports. Today, 32 freighters were anchored around the twin ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach waiting to unload — about three times more than usual. A labour shortage on the docks and a spike in cargo shipments from the Far East have snarled the flow of goods. The delays have forced cargo to be diverted to other West Coast ports. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union is training about five-thousand workers to fill in when needed. But union leaders say the ports need to hire one-thousand additional full-time dockworkers and extend benefits to thousands more standby employees.

Port Delays

Country/Port	Date of report	No.of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbot Point	25-27-Oct-2004	Coal: 1 vessel berthed, 1 anchored; 6 vessels due by 8/11; 1-3 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Brisbane	25-27-Oct-2004	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 4 vessels due by 12/11; no delays expected. Grain: 3 vessels due by 13/11, all to load wheat; 1-2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Dalrymple Bay	25-27-Oct-2004	Coal: 3 vessels berthed, 15 anchored; 39 vessels due by 20/12; vessels berthing in order of cargo availability; up to 15 days berthing delay subject to cargo availability and berth congestion can be expected, although vessels with other stems are experiencing longer berthing delays.
Dampier	25-27-Oct-2004	Iron ore: Parker Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 anchored; 8 vessels due by 8/11; up to 5 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; there will be a two day maintenance shutdown starting ca. 2/11; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 5 anchored; 7 vessels due by 3/11; up to 7 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; shippers will always consider a shift to a lay-by berth for loaded vessels awaiting HW; cargo shortages are evident, delays are anticipated and vessels may berth out of turn.
Gladstone	25-27-Oct-2004	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 3 vessels berthed, 5 anchored; 36 vessels due by 12/12; up to 9 days berthing delay expected subject to port congestion and cargo availability; there will be a 4 day maintenance shutdown on shiploader No. 1, starting 1/11; Barney Point: 1 vessel anchored; 5 vessels due by 12/11; up to 7 days delay expected due to port congestion and cargo availability. There will be maintenance shutdowns from 12.00 hrs. 15/10 to 18.00 hrs. 26/10 and from 08.00 hrs. 15/10 to 08.00 hrs. 31/10. Grain: 1 vessel due 28/10 to load sorghum; no delays expected.
Hay Point	25-27-Oct-2004	Coal: 2 vessels berthed, 6 anchored; 6 vessels due by 1/11; up to 6 days berthing delay expected subject to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Newcastle	25-27-Oct-2004	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 2 vessels berthed, 1 anchored; 28 vessels due by 10/11; Dykes 4+5: 1 vessel berthed, 4 anchored; 11 vessels due by 8/11; 1-8 days delay expected prior to berthing due to planned maintenance at Kooragang terminal and cargo receipt. Grain: 1 vessel due 21/10 to load wheat; no delays expected. Maintenance work will be carried out from 1/11 to ca. 1/12; during this time, there will be no loading but towards the end of this period, 1 vessel will be used for testing etc.
Port Adelaide	25-27-Oct-2004	Grain: No. 27 berth: 6 vessels due by 1/11, 4 to load barley, 1 barley/wheat, 1 wheat; 2-9 days delay expected due to berth congestion.
Port Hedland	25-27-Oct-2004	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 5 vessels due by 4/11; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; "B" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 4 vessels due by 1/11; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "C" berth: 2 vessels due by 1/11; no delays expected; Westyard "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 4 vessels due by 2/11; no delays expected. Due to heavy demand for product, acute cargo shortages are being experienced at wharf stockpiles. Vessels will continue to berth as product becomes available.
Port Kembla	25-27-Oct-2004	Coal: 16 vessels due by 26/11; CB1: 1 vessel due 26/10; up to 5 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Grain: 6 vessels due by 11/11, all to load wheat; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Grain: 6 vessels due by 11/11, all to load wheat; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Walcott	25-27-Oct-2004	Iron ore: 2 vessels berthed and loading, 6 anchored; 13 vessels due by 19/11; up to 5 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. Every effort will be made to ensure that vessels berth in order of arrival; however, due to product constraints, this may not be possible. Shippers advise that stores, air freight and crew baggage can no longer be delivered to vessels or taken off at berth. With immediate effect, all stores, airfreight and bags must be delivered/removed by launch.
Portland	25-27-Oct-2004	Grain: 6 vessels due by 13/11, 2 to load wood-chips, 2 barley, 2 wheat; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Brazil		
Paranagua	26-Oct-2004	Fourteen vessels berthed of which 5 fertiliser dischargers, 1 container discharger, 1 reefer loader, 2 pellets loaders, 2 sugar loaders, 3 other loaders/dischargers; 10 vessels waiting in roads of which 4 to load (3 sugar, 1 other), 6 to discharge (4 fertiliser, 2 containers); 36 vessels due over the next 7 days.

Port Conditions

Rio Grande	26-Oct-2004	Two vessels berthed, both fertiliser dischargers; 3 vessels waiting in roads; 28 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Santos	26-Oct-2004	Twenty-four vessels berthed of which 3 bulk fertiliser dischargers, 1 bulk pellets loader, 1 bulk sulphur discharger, 2 full container loaders/dischargers, 12 sugar loaders, 2 chemical products loaders/dischargers, 1 other loader, 1 bulk wheat discharger; 25 vessels waiting in roads; 113 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Sao Sebastiao	26-Oct-2004	Six vessels berthed, 3 waiting in roads; 5 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Vitoria	26-Oct-2004	Five vessels berthed of which 1 sugar loader, 1 granite loader, 1 fertiliser discharger, 1 containers, 1 pig-iron loader; Terminal Vila Velha: 1 malt discharger; Tubarao: 3 iron ore loaders, 1 steel products loader, 1 fertiliser discharger; Praia Mole: 2 coal dischargers, 3 steel products loaders; Portocel: no vessels; Ubu: 2 iron ore loaders; 33 vessels waiting in roads; 12 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	25-Oct-2004	Eleven vessels in port operating, of which 4 loading (1 baryte concentrate, 1 copper anodes, 1 coils, 1 containers), 7 discharging (1 metals, 1 billets, 2 zinc concentrate, 1 coal, 1 iron ore, 1 containers); 6 vessels waiting in roads, of which 4 to load (1 coils, 1 cigarettes, 2 empty), 2 to discharge (1 equipment, 1 coal); 7 vessels due of which 3 to load (1 profiles, 1 sulphur, 1 gasoil), 4 to discharge (1 coils, 1 LAB, 1 coal, 1 zinc concentrate).
Chile		
Valparaiso	26-Oct-2004	Three vessels berthed, 5 berths vacant; 2 vessels anchored; 13 vessels due this week.
Egypt		
Alexandria	25-Oct-2004	Thirty-one vessels berthed (loading/discharging) of which 24 general cargo, 1 containers, 3 bulkers, 1 Ro/Ro, 1 tanker, 1 passenger vessel; 22 vessels at inner anchorage, 5 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	25-Oct-2004	Twenty-three vessels berthed (loading/discharging) of which 15 general cargo, 4 bulk carriers, 4 containers; 6 vessels at outer anchorage, 2 at inner anchorage.
Suez Canal	25-Oct-2004	Nineteen vessels transiting Northbound, 25 Southbound.
Israel		
Ashdod	26-Oct-2004	No labour problems. Two general cargo vessels loading at berth, 12 vessels discharging at berth (8 general cargo, 4 bulkers), 4 vessels loading/discharging at berth (3 containers, 1 car carrier); 2 general cargo vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge, 3 container vessels waiting at anchor to load/discharge; 1 vessel awaiting orders; 12 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Mozambique		
Maputo	22-Oct-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, day light, draft and weather permitting. No berthing delays. There is a shortage of equipment, except at container terminal. Shed space available. Safe draft for transiting the channel is: 9.1 m plus the tide of the day. Density of water varies from 1.018 to 1.023. Vessels with ramps on starboard side can berth with the ebbing tide. Should the ramps be portside vessels berth with the flowing tide. Pilot launch: operational. Two tugs operational. Leading lights: lit. Transport car for pilots: operational. Two container gantrys operational. Matola coal terminal, Ressano Garcia railway line, Goba Railway Line, Limpopo railway line: operational. Six vessels at berth of which 2 loading (1 scrap, 1 coal), 4 discharging (1 diesel, 1 vehicles, 1 bulk wheat, 1 clinker); 5 vessels due 15/10; 18 vessels due by 20/11 of which 4 to load, 10 to discharge, 4 to discharge/load containers.
Pakistan		
Karachi	25-Oct-2004	One container vessel loading/discharging at berth; 1 rice vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 1 chemicals vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge; no vessels bunkering, none under repairs/dry-docked, none awaiting orders; 8 vessels due (5 containers, 2 general cargo, 1 MOL), with no berthing delays expected.
Port Qasim	25-Oct-2004	Two vessels discharging at berth (1 iron ore, 1 wheat), 1 container vessel loading/discharging at QICT berth; 2 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 containers, 1 HSD).
Poland		
Gdansk	25-Oct-2004	Seven vessels loading at berth (4 coal, 2 bulkers, 1 tanker), 1 bulker discharging at berth; 9 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 25 vessels due.
Gdynia	25-Oct-2004	Four vessels loading at berth (2 general cargo, 1 bulker, 1 coal), 6 discharging at berth (1 general cargo, 2 grain, 2 bulkers, 1 coal); 15 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 33 vessels due.

Port Conditions

Russia

Novorossiysk	25-Oct-2004	Twelve vessels in port operating, of which 11 loading (1 DRI, 1 pig-iron, 2 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 steel sheets, 1 equipment, 1 coils/vehicles, 1 aluminium, 1 wheat, 1 diesel oil, 1 coils), 1 discharging/loading containers; 5 vessels waiting in roads, of which 4 to load (2 scrap, 1 bulk urea, 1 wheat), 1 to discharge sugar; 63 vessels due, of which 59 to load (2 pig-iron, 9 copper, 4 bulk ammonium nitrate, 2 slabs, 1 HBI, 1 coils/WRIC, 1 scrap, 1 sunflower oil, 2 DRI, 6 steel sheets, 3 aluminium, 1 zinc/lead, 3 bulk NPK, 3 steel billets, 10 coils, 1 bulk urea, 2 WRIC, 1 UAN solution, 2 wheat, 1 pipes, 1 bulk cement, 1 steel sheets/coils, 1 diesel oil), 2 to discharge (1 bulk sugar, 1 miscellaneous), 2 to load/discharge containers. Oil terminal: 1 tanker berthed loading crude oil; 3 tankers in roads, all to load crude oil; 11 tankers due, all to load, of which 9 crude oil, 2 fuel oil.
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Spain

Cadiz	26-Oct-2004	Eight vessels in port of which 4 operating (3 Ro/Ros, 1 containers), 4 vessels under repair; no delays.
Sagunto	26-Oct-2004	Twenty-six vessels in port operating of which 15 discharging steel products, 5 loading (2 steel products, 1 cement, 1 vehicles, 1 bulk fertiliser), 4 Ro/Ros discharging/loading general cargo, 2 vessels loading/discharging steel products; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays.

Sri Lanka

Colombo	25-Oct-2004	Berthing/unberthing (pilotage) delays being experienced on breakbulk/conventional vessels. Delays to conventional vessels are due to the fact that container/feeder vessels are given priority at breakbulk berths if there is container congestion. Conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 and 2 are facing navigation delays. Occasional heavy rains being experienced at present. Five container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 17 vessels discharging at berth (11 containers/feeders, 1 bulk cement, 1 bagged fertiliser, 1 frozen fish, 1 bagged maize, 1 bulk palm oil, 1 bagged cement); 2 container/feeder vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge; 4 vessels dry-docked, 1 under arrest, 2 awaiting orders from principals, 1 at new tanker berth; 4 container/feeder vessels due, with no delays expected.
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Ukraine

Ilichevsk	25-Oct-2004	Eleven vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (3 steel products, 1 oil, 2 wheat, 1 equipment, 1 timber), 1 discharging pipes, 2 discharging/loading containers; 5 vessels in roads of which 3 to load (2 wheat, 1 steel products), 2 to load/discharge containers; 12 vessels due, of which 8 to load (7 steel products, 1 sulphur), 4 to load/discharge containers.
Mariupol	25-Oct-2004	Ten vessels in port operating, of which 9 loading (6 steel, 1 fire-clay, 2 coal), 1 to discharge foodstuffs; 12 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 8 steel, 1 pig-iron, 1 coal, 2 fire-clay; 49 vessels due, of which 46 to load (23 steel, 2 pig-iron, 10 coal, 5 fire-clay, 1 ammonium nitrate, 1 containers, 2 wheat, 1 barley, 1 sunflower beans), 2 to discharge (1 chrome ore, 1 heavy lifts), 1 to discharge/load containers/steel.
Odessa	25-Oct-2004	Twenty-two vessels in port operating, of which 17 loading (3 scrap, 10 metal, 2 wheat, 1 paper, 1 wood), 3 to discharge (1 luggage, 1 citrus, 1 sugar), 1 passenger vessel; 7 vessels in roads, of which 3 to load (1metal, 1 wheat, 1 scrap), 1 to discharge flour, 3 to discharge/load containers; 59 vessels due, of which 33 to load (29 metal, 1 barley, 1 coal, 1 ferro alloy, 1 wood), 5 to discharge (1 fish, 1 wood, 3 oil), 21 to discharge/load containers.

United States

Houston	26-Oct-2004	Channel open under normal traffic. Pilots report normal 40 ft. 0 ins. max. draft in Houston ship channel; Cargill terminal: no delays; LDC Dreyfus terminal: 1-2 days delay.
Kalama	26-Oct-2004	Kalama export terminal: 1 day's delay; United Harvest terminal: 1 day's delay.
New Orleans	26-Oct-2004	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: no delays; Cargill-Westwego: 2 days delay expected; ADM/Ama: 4-5 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: 3 days delay expected; ADM/Destrehan: 4-5 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 4-5 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 2 days delay expected; Peavey/Paulina: 2 days delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: 2-3 days delay expected; Cargill/Baton Rouge: no delays; Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: 4 days delay expected; Mile 158.0 Cargill (K2) - Convent: 2 days delay expected; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: 3 days delay expected. Nine-day forecast for Carrolton Gauge/New Orleans: expected to increase to 4.2 ft. by 4/11. Mississippi River recommended draft restrictions: SW Pass to New Orleans (Mile 090.0) - 47 ft. for all vessels;
New Orleans	26-Oct-2004	(Mile 090) to Baton Rouge (Mile 233.5) - 45 ft. for all vessels; Mississippi River Gulf outlet: 36 ft. bw.; vessels with drafts up to 47 ft. have been handled up to Mile 180 in the past, but are approved by pilots on a case by case basis, based on current river conditions.
Portland	26-Oct-2004	Columbia Grain terminal: 2 days delay; CLD Irving terminal: 2 days delay; CLD, O Dock terminals: 2 days delay.
Tacoma	26-Oct-2004	Temco terminal: 6 days delay.

Yemen

Hodeidah

24-Oct-2004

All berths are occupied; 4 vessels berthed (2 bulk wheat, 1 general cargo, 1 rice); no vessels anchored; expected waiting times: general cargo: up to 2 days delay; bagged cargoes: 2-3 days delay; bulk cargoes: 3-4 days delay; no delays for containers.

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