

Southeast Asia hijackings spark 'phantom tugs' fears

PIRACY watchdog the International Maritime Bureau warns that a fleet of phantom tugs may be plying southeast Asian waters after a spate of hijackings.

"The number of tugs and tows being stolen in southeast Asia has prompted fears that a new trade in phantom tugs may be emerging and preparing to operate in much the way that phantom ships did," said Commercial Crime Services, part of the International Chamber of Commerce.

The number of tugs and barges hijacked in southeast Asia has been steadily rising and there were 24 attacks worldwide last year. The piracy attack figures are compiled by the IMB, which is part of the ICC's commercial crime services unit.

Phantom vessels

Investigators believe that the hijacked tugboats could well be being used as phantom vessels much as hijacked ships were in the region in the late 1990s.

The geographical nature of the region, with a large number of shallow drafted rivers and inlets where tugs gain access to smaller ports, makes it suitable for organised criminal gangs to operate pirate ships.

In small ports it is relatively easy for a tug and barge to come in, load cargo and then take the cargo out to sea where it is transhipped.

"Evidence for this claim can be seen in several recent cases where tugs and tows have been hijacked and their identities quickly changed in an operation almost

certainly controlled by organised crime gangs," the CCS said.

An Indonesian tug, Christian, and a barge it was towing, hijacked on December 14 last year, were found in a Malaysian shipyard with the tug's name and port of registry changed. The yard had been paid in advance for the work, which was done with care to wipe out traces of the previous names.

"This suggests the tug was being prepared to re-enter the market as a phantom," CCS said.

Repainted

In another case the tug Surya Wira 1 had its name changed and superstructure repainted in the 36 hours it took the Indonesian navy to recover it after a hijacking.

In other case cargoes have been loaded by tugs and barges whose names have been later found out to be falsified and the cargo has disappeared.

While the CCS is worried about the rise of phantom tugboats operating in the region, it is the fate of crew on board the vessel when hijackings take place that is the real concern of investigators.

Some are put ashore, some are held for ransom, while others simply disappear much as crew did in phantom ship hijackings in the late 1990s, in which crew dumped overboard were often left to drown in the open sea.

The nine crew of the Christian have not been heard of since the hijacking on December 14. "They have not returned

home and none of their families has heard from them since the tug was hijacked," CCS said.

The crew, who were long-standing employees, were not believed to be involved in the hijacking and the pirates found on board the vessel claim none of the crew was on board when they joined the vessel.

IMB director Potengal Mukundan said the fact the crew were still missing was the matter of greatest concern.

"The spate of attacks on tugs and the hijacking of five tugs and tows in southeast Asian waters last year, together with the evident sophisticated way in which these operations were planned and carried out, suggests there is now a real possibility that phantom tugs controlled by commercial crime syndicates will be trading in this region," he said.

Satellite

He urged tugboat owners and operators to fit satellite tracking devices noting how much quicker the Surya Wira 1, which was fitted with such a device, was located than the Christian, which was not.

Although pirate activity in the northern Malacca Strait has ceased since the tsunami in December the IMB expects it to rear its head again as economic conditions improve.

"Law enforcement needs to be aware of this and be prepared to act quickly to ensure it does not spiral out of control," Capt Mukundan said.

Marcus Hand

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
ALGA	general	VCT	LR	1,858	2,480	1976	Grounded in lat 55 41.97N, long 10 41.34E, Jan 19. Vessel still aground Jan 27, tugs and divers on scene. All oil and water removed from the vessel.
CEMSTAR	cement	SWE	NV	3,998	6,088	1977	Vessel aground near Haugsholmen Jan 24. 5,000 tonnes dry cement jettisoned prior to refloating. Vessel sustained extensive bottom damage. No injuries. Refloated same day. Vessel proceeded to Aalesund. Arrived Molde prev Jan 26.
DIA P.	bulker	PAN	BV	21,910	36,763	1977	Vessel stranded near Tartous Port breakwater Jan 23. Measures will be taken to refloat vessel after discharging part of its cargo. LOF awarded to Tsavliris Salvage. Still aground Jan 27. Tug due on scene Jan 29.
DORINE BRUSCO	tug	USA	—	129	—	1954	Reported steering failure and taking water west of Queets River, Washington, Jan 16. Towed to Port Angeles same day.
EXPLORER	passenger	BHS	GL	24,318	1,800	2002	Vessel disabled in lat 40 56N, long 177 55E, Jan 26 after it was struck by large wave. Vessel sustained damage to its bridge. Vessel regained propulsive power and is maintaining its station. Vessel to continue to Midway Island.
JOHN I:I	tug	USA	—	140	—	1974	Vessel sank near mile marker 120, Lower Mississippi River, Jan 25.
KASCO	chem tanker	LBR	RS	18,812	31,745	1981	Struck pier at Cat Lai on Dong Nai River, Vietnam, Jan 21. Thousands of tonnes of diesel oil leaked, remaining oil transhipped. River traffic disrupted, operations at Berth B suspended. Oil clean-up continuing Jan 27. Temporarily detained.
OCEAN GAIN	fishing	GBR	—	—	—	—	Reported taking water in lat 57 30N, long 07 08W, Jan 21, and required assistance. Crew evacuated to liferaft and recovered. Vessel subsequently sank. No pollution found.
PAULA	trawler	IRL	NV	1,302	130	1995	Vessel sank during cleaning of the vessel in Maaloy Jan 24. Vessel's bow remains above water alongside quay. 11 crew are safe. Tenders for salvage now invited. Refloated Jan 25 and will be put on the slipway for temporary repairs.

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



ADVENTURER II (U.K.)

London, Jan 20 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 1835, UTC: Fishing *Adventurer II* currently under tow of fishing *Endurance*, bound Scrabster. Co-ordination passed to Aberdeen MRCC at 1751, UTC.

London, Jan 21 — Following received from Coastguard Aberdeen MRCC, timed 0500, UTC: Fishing *Adventurer II* has just arrived at Scrabster under tow of fishing *Endurance* and is safely tied up at berth. Due to the rough weather conditions, the vessels were assisted into port as a precaution by Scrabster lifeboat and the pilot vessel. Scrabster lifeboat has now returned to its station.

London, Jan 25 — Following received from Scrabster Harbour, dated today: Fishing *Adventurer II* discharged some cargo at Scrabster Jan 21 and departed same day. Understand vessel was towed to Fraserburgh.

ALGA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Jan 24 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 1210, UTC: General cargo *Alga* (1858 gt, built 1976) grounded in lat 55 41.97N, long 10 41.34E on Jan 19. Vessel is still aground with tugs and divers on scene. (Note — *Alga* arrived Odense Jan 18 from Fredericia and sailed Jan 19 for Copenhagen.)

London, Jan 25 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 1200, UTC: General cargo *Alga* is still aground.

London, Jan 26 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0945, UTC: General cargo *Alga* is still aground.

London, Jan 27 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0951, UTC: General cargo *Alga* is still aground. Representatives of the vessel's P+I Club are onboard today, so hopefully a decision on salvage will be made later today. Yesterday the remaining 19 tons of oil and water were taken off the vessel.

ALIANCA SAO PAULO (Liberia)

Hamburg, Jan 24 — C.c. *Alianca Sao Paulo* is still in dock for repair and is scheduled to sail on Feb 11. — Lloyd's Agents.

AMENITY (U.K.)

London, Jan 23 — Following received from Coastguard Humber MRSC, timed 0535, UTC: Product tanker *Amenity* (1453 gt, built 1980) and ro/ro *Tor Dania* (21850 gt, built 1978) reported in collision in lat 53 35.4N, long 00 00.1E, at 0444 today. Extent of damage etc unknown. Both vessels proceeding alongside Immingham; ro/ro *Tor Dania* with tug help.

London, Jan 23 — Following received from Coastguard Humber MRSC, timed 0911, UTC: Product tanker *Amenity* is now alongside at Immingham and ro/ro *Tor Dania* is anchored in the harbour. No pollution reported.

Hull, Jan 26 — Product tanker *Amenity* discharged its cargo and sailed Immingham Jan 25 for Hull, where the vessel is expected to enter dry dock. Ro/ro *Tor Dania* is currently alongside at Immingham and discharging its cargo. — Lloyd's Agents.

AN HUA JIANG (China)

London, Jan 22 — General cargo *An Hua Jiang* arrived Rouen Jan 19.

ANJA FUNK (Antigua & Barbuda)

Maassluis, Jan 19 — General cargo *Anja Funk* arrived Hamburg Jan 18. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ANL INDONESIA (Netherlands)

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The Singapore Government is filing a civil suit against the owners of c.c. *ANL Indonesia*, which collided with the navy's *RSS Courageous* on Jan 3, 2003. The collision led to the death of four naval officers. In a suit filed by senior counsel Steven Chong of the law firm of Rajah & Tann, the Government is asking for "loss, damage and/or expense suffered as a result of the collision." It is accusing the owners of *ANL Indonesia*, which has since been renamed *Maersk Darwin*, of being solely responsible for the accident. This move is made despite criminal court findings that both parties were to be blamed for the mishap. The amount claimed is not stated in the suit and Rajah & Tann declined to go beyond the bare contents of the writ of summons. But sources said it will amount to millions "as the sophisticated equipment in the ship was very expensive." The *RSS Courageous* is almost a total loss and is berthed at the naval facilities in Tuas. The suit, issued in November last year to *Maersk Darwin's* lawyers, Drew & Napier, came after the publication of the written report by Chief Justice Yong Pung How, head of the Appeals Court. The report rejected the appeals of two navy officers, Lieutenants Ng Keng Yong, 28, and Chua Chue Teng, 24, who were found guilty of negligence. On Apr 2 last year, Ng was fined \$10,000 and Chua, \$8,000, by a district court for negligently causing the deaths of four officers after the two vessels collided off the Horsburgh Lighthouse on Pedra Branca. But district Judge Tan Boon Gin also noted that while Captain Petrus Paulus Maria Koop of *ANL Indonesia* and his duty officer, Mr Gerrit Easge Botma, did some things wrong when they tried to avoid the smaller navy vessel, their failings "certainly did not eclipse" the faults of the *RSS Courageous*. "At best, it could only be said that there was not much to choose between the culpability of the *ANL Indonesia* and Ng and Chua," the district judge said. SC Chong, who had defended the two officers, had told the district court that the *ANL Indonesia* was as much to blame as it could have avoided the collision if it had swung right quickly using its manual steering mode rather than its slower auto-pilot function. The judge had agreed that Capt Koop and Mr Botma should have switched modes so that *ANL Indonesia* could make a bigger turn at a faster speed. But it was still "a short reaction time and allowances must be given for *ANL Indonesia* reacting

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imperfectly to the situation”, the judge noted. He said *ANL Indonesia* had to take action because the navy vessel had altered course and cut across its path. It was therefore the RSS *Courageous* which triggered off the chain of events leading to the collision which left servicewomen Goh Hui Ling, Heng Sock Ling, Seah Ai Leng and Chua Bee Lin dead. Legal sources expect the suit to be settled out of court by both parties.

ARKTIKA (Russia)

Busan, Jan 25 — The permanent repairs of fishing *Arktika* are being carried out at Busan and expected to be completed about Jan 31. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ATHOS I (Cyprus)

Mobile, Jan 20 — Repairs to crude oil tanker *Athos I* continue. Vessel repairs expected to be completed Jan 23. Next port currently unknown by local agents. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Tsakos Shipping and Trading has paid US\$90.3 million so far for cleaning up after crude oil tanker *Athos I* spilled 265,000 gallons of crude oil into the Delaware River in November, the US Coast Guard said. US federal law sets a cap of US\$45.5 million on how much companies must pay in damages relating to oil spills. The Nov 26 spill from *Athos I* disrupted ship traffic, killed 174 birds and fouled 57 miles of shoreline, the coast guard said in a statement. “They have definitely funded the clean-up far past what the cap requires,” said coast guard spokeswoman Kimberly Smith. The clean-up cost is expected to top US\$100 million, she said. The coast guard has also identified two new possible causes for the oil spill. A steel anchor and a concrete slab were found in the seabed near where *Athos I* was ruptured. The anchor did not have traces of paint on it that investigators use to match it to the hull of the tanker, Ms Smith said. She said the slab did have paint traces on it that could have been left from the tanker. A metal pipe sticking up from the riverbed has also been identified as a possible cause.

London, Jan 27 — A press report, dated Jan 26, states: The owner and operator of crude oil tanker *Athos I*, which spewed an estimated 265,000 gallons of oil into the Delaware River, have filed a petition in federal court seeking to thwart — or at least limit — any damage claims not related to oil pollution. The petition was filed on Friday (Jan 21) in US District Court in Philadelphia by Frescati Shipping Co Ltd, the vessel's owner, and Tsakos Shipping & Trading SA, the vessel's operator. The action is one piece of a legal strategy to control expenses for a spill that has cost millions to clean up. Citing 154-year-old maritime law, the petition asks a judge for “exoneration” from any liability unrelated to oil pollution, or at least a \$5 million cap on total awards — the proposed value of the damaged tanker. The petition does not apply to property or environmental damage caused by the oil, which is covered by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. “This is pretty standard legal practice,” Tsakos spokesman Jim Lawrence said yesterday. “It's designed to protect our interests and bring some order and, hopefully, some efficiency to the

claims process.” Though the filing does not name any potential claimants, the petition, if granted, could include damages sought by Citgo Petroleum Corp for loss of its oil cargo. The spill occurred on Nov 26 as the vessel was preparing to deliver nearly 14 million gallons of oil from Venezuela to Citgo's asphalt refinery in West Deptford. Before reaching Citgo's dock, the vessel struck an object sticking up from the river bottom in the federally maintained Mantua Creek anchorage. Oil gushed from a six-foot-long gash and a nearly two-foot-wide puncture in the hull. Coast Guard investigators last month announced the discovery of a large piece of cast-iron pump housing, which they believed had caused the spill. However, this month, divers hired by the vessel's insurer, UK P&I Club, found two more suspects: a concrete slab and a large anchor, both on the river bottom in the anchorage. The Oil Pollution Act limits the vessel's liability to about \$45 million. Tsakos has spent twice that amount on the clean-up, but can recoup expenses above the limit from the federal Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, which is financed, in part, by a special industry tax. To do so, the company must prove that a third party was responsible for the spill. Maritime lawyer Edward R. Petkevis said Tsakos would have an interest in helping Coast Guard investigators uncover the origin of whatever tore the vessel's hull. “They are looking for any clues as to what caused this, because it's going to be their position that they didn't put that stuff on the bottom of the river,” Petkevis said.

AURORA (U.K.)

London, Jan 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The ill-fated world cruise on passenger *Aurora* was finally scrapped today. The decision is likely to cost the company £30m. About 1,400 passengers who paid up to £40,000 each for a 103-day cruise were told the planned ‘Grand Voyage’ has been cancelled after only ever reaching the Isle of Wight. The embarrassing decision comes after almost two weeks of delays caused by problems with the vessel's propulsion motor.

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated Jan 20, states: Ten days of patient waiting by more than 1,400 passengers on board passenger *Aurora* was finally over, after persistent technical problems with the vessel saw its round-the-world cruise finally cancelled following another false start. P&O announced that the 103-day cruise, billed as the trip of a lifetime, was being called off after the vessel returned to Southampton for a second time. A spokesman for P&O said: “P&O Cruises apologises for the disappointment this has caused passengers and offers its assurance that everything possible was done to get the voyage under way before this difficult but unavoidable decision was taken.” A first start on Jan 9 got no farther than the Isle of Wight. A second attempt late yesterday saw the vessel forced to turn back off Spain, in the Bay of Biscay, when it became clear the vessel could not “achieve the required speed to complete” the trip, according to the spokesman. He said passengers would be “refunded their full fare together with compensation of 25% of the amount paid for their holiday to be used as a future cruise credit” on a

cruise booked before the end of January 2007. Estimates today said the latest set back could cost Carnival up to £30 million.

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated Jan 21, states: The fate of passenger *Aurora* will not be known until late next week, P&O said today. The vessel was meant to leave for a round-the-world cruise on Jan 9 but problems with the propulsion system meant the voyage had to be cancelled. A P&O Cruises spokeswoman said they would have more information about the fault after a repairer was selected. “At the moment we are in the process of considering a number of offers from ship repairers. The decision where the vessel is to go for repairs is likely to be made late next week. Until that work commences we won't have a clear picture as to what caused the problem.” The vessel had finally set-sail on Wednesday night (Jan 19), 10 days after its scheduled departure date. But after travelling just 110 miles, the decision to abort the world cruise was taken by operators P&O Cruises. It is thought the total cost of the cancelled cruise could be as much as £30 million.

BARGE BREAKAWAYS, OHIO RIVER, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated Jan 20, states: Crews keep working through snow and cold weather, trying to free four sunken barges at the Belleville locks and dam on the Ohio River. By afternoon, the river level at Belleville had fallen below four feet. All navigational traffic near the locks has been halted. US Army Corps of Engineers spokesman Chuck Minsker said crews today had been working to free the most difficult of the four barges which have been blocking the lock channels. Minsker said that this week's snowy, cold and icy conditions had been slowing down the recovery process but that it had not brought it to a standstill.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Cold weather has hampered efforts to clear barges blocking an Ohio River dam's gates in the open position, and the resulting low water level may have caused the collapse of a section of river bank about 1,000 feet long and up to 40 feet deep along an Ohio tributary. No homes were damaged by the slip on the Little Kanawha River, but several retaining walls and patios cracked, Wood County Emergency Services Director Ed Hupp said today. Workers trying to remove the four sunken coal barges were able to remove half of one barge this afternoon. The barges are blocking water control gates at the Belleville Lock and Dam, about 16 miles downstream from Parkersburg. With the gates open, water levels on a 42-mile section of river between Belleville and the Willow Island Lock and Dam are too low for barge traffic. The half of the barge that was removed cleared one gate, but another four of the dam's eight gates remain blocked, said US Army Corps of Engineers spokesman Chuck Minsker. The barges are among several that broke loose from a vessel on Jan 6. Crews can only work to free the barges during daylight hours because it is too dangerous to be on the river at night, and they have been hampered by the cold. “It makes for slow going because of the ice,” Minsker said

today. The US Army Corps of Engineers has warned residents along the Ohio River and its tributaries to watch for bank slippages as water levels drop.

BAUMWALL (Gibraltar)

London, Jan 20 — Ro/ro *Baumwall* arrived Helsinki Jan 11, sailed Jan 12, arrived Rauma Jan 14 and sailed same day for Hull.

BELMONTE (Netherlands Antilles)

London, Jan 20 — Following received from Victoria RCC, timed 1830, UTC: Bulk *Belmonte* was in lat 48 06N, long 126 48W at 1435, UTC. ETA Port Angeles Pilot Station 0200, UTC, Jan 21.

Seattle, Jan 21 — Bulk *Belmonte* now alongside at lay berth Pier 66. Shipyard and owner representative to attend this morning. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jan 21 — Bulk *Belmonte* arrived Seattle at 2310, Jan 20.

Seattle, Jan 21 — Bulk *Belmonte*: Repairs to hull reportedly in progress while at lay berth, Pier 66. Repairs expected to be completed on Jan 25. — Lloyd's Agents.

CANADIAN EXPRESS (Liberia)

See "South-East Asia" under "Earthquakes."

CEMSTAR (Sweden)

London, Jan 24 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Cement *Cemstar* (3,998 gt, built 1977), Brevik for Aalesund, grounded near Haugsholmen at 0030, local time, today. The vessel sustained some damages to the bow section. An attempt to refloat the vessel will be made later today. No injuries to the crew.

London, Jan 24 — Cement *Cemstar*, that grounded at Haugsholmen at Stadlandet in Norway 0020, today, was refloated at 0830 this morning. Vessel is now steaming for its original destination Spjelkavik were ETA 1400. In Spjelkavik the vessel will be examined by divers before the decision is made whether it shall be drydocked.

London, Jan 24 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Cement *Cemstar* was refloated at 0830, local time, today. Vessel is damaged in bow section but proceeded to Aalesund under own means. No pollution in the area and no injuries to the crew of 11.

Gothenburg, Jan 24 — Cement *Cemstar* refloated using its own engines and called Aalesund under escort by two tugs. Vessel sustained bow damage but there was no leakage or injuries. Some of the cargo of 5,000 tons dry cement had to be jettisoned overboard in order to refloat the vessel. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Trondheim, Jan 25 — Cement *Cemstar* grounded near Haugsholmen, Sunnmore, West Norway, just after midnight Jan 24. After having dumped some of the cargo, total about 5000 tons dry cement, the vessel was afloat about 0830 the same day, assisted by two tugs from Odegaard Berging, Aalesund. Crew of 11 OK. No oil pollution. Vessel arrived Aalesund by own power about 1530, same day, escorted by two tugs. The remaining cargo onboard is scheduled to be discharged at Molde, Kristiansund and Trondheim, but according to vessel's crew no decision taken yet as regards possible

permission to sail/repairs as the bottom damage is said to be rather extensive. — Lloyd's Agents.

Trondheim, Jan 26 — Cement *Cemstar* is now at Molde, where the cargo scheduled for Molde is being discharged. The vessel will then proceed to Spjelkavik, where the cargo intended for Kristiansund and Trondheim will be transhipped to another vessel. This operation is expected to take place Jan 30-31. Repairs will probably be carried out at a yard in Floro, Olen or Stavanger. — Lloyd's Agents.

COURAGEOUS (Singapore)

See *ANL Indonesia*.

DANIELLA (Netherlands Antilles)

London, Jan 20 — General cargo *Daniella* (5818 gt, built 1989) struck the approach wall while approaching Beauharnois Lock 3, in lat 45 18.22N, long 73 54.30W at 1800, Nov 25. Vessel sustained some minor damage to the port side shell plating.

DELVINA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

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

DIA P. (Panama)

Aleppo, Jan 25 — Our Tartous office has reported that bulk *Dia P.* (21910 gt, built 1977), loaded with 31000 tonnes of soya beans and maize, has stranded near Tartous Port Breakwater on Jan 23. Measures will be taken to refloat the vessel after discharging part of its cargo. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Dia P.* sailed San Lorenzo, Arg, Dec 16, and subsequently passed Tarifa Jan 10, bound Tartous.)

London, Jan 26 — Salvage services have been rendered to bulk *Dia P.* under LOF by Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd.

London, Jan 26 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Bulk *Dia P.* remains aground outside the harbour. It is understood a Lloyd's Open Form was signed between salvors Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd. and the vessels owners yesterday with the approval of the Italian Underwriters. Adverse weather conditions continue to prevail in the area.

Piraeus, Jan 27 — Bulk *Dia P.*: Tug *Megas Alexandros* left Piraeus yesterday and is due on scene Saturday (Jan 29). We are currently in the process of arranging lightering, which is expected to commence at the weekend. Salvage equipment is being mobilised. — Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd.

DOCTOR HOOK

See *Quickcat*

DOLLART (Gibraltar)

Visby, Jan 25 — General cargo *Dollart* (2532 gt, built 1995) arrived at Visby with engine problems and was expected to stay at here for repairs, although how long was difficult to determine. However this morning they managed to get the machinery up and running (albeit with a reduced capacity) and the vessel was then ordered by its owners to sail as soon as possible from Visby, for Kiel, for further repairs. The vessel duly sailed from Visby at 1000 hrs, today. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Dollart* arrived at Visby on Jan

20. Vessel was due to arrive at Rochester on Jan 23 from Skutskar, but the ETA was put back to Jan 31, following a reported "breakdown".)

DONG YIH (Taiwan)

See "Mutiny on Taiwan-Flagged Vessel in Indian Ocean" under "Miscellaneous."

DORINE BRUSCO (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 21 — A Coast Guard Seattle press release, dated Jan 18, states: The Coast Guard escorted tug *Dorine Brusco* (144 gt, built 1954) after it lost its steering and began taking on water Sunday (Jan 16), 16 miles west of the mouth of the Queets River, Wash. *Dorine Brusco* contacted the Coast Guard on VHF Channel 16 at 1141 hrs, reporting that they were disabled, adrift and taking on water. A Coast Guard HH-60 Jayhawk helicopter from Air Station Astoria, Ore, and a motor lifeboat from Station Quillayute River, Wash, were launched at 1142 hrs, to assist. The tug's crew reported they were unable to dewater the vessel, but were able to stabilize it by transferring fuel between tanks. Tug *Edward Brusco* launched from Grays Harbour, Wash, to take the disabled tug in tow, but it would not arrive for five hours. Due to this delay, and the danger of the prevailing 12-foot seas, the motor lifeboat remained with the disabled tug until it was relieved. *Edward Brusco* rendezvoused with *Dorine Brusco* and its Coast Guard escort at 1800 hrs and was safely towed to Port Angeles, Wash. Weather conditions during the response were winds of 12 mph and an air and water temperature of about 50 degrees.

DOROUSA (Panama)

Falmouth, Jan 20 — Crude oil tanker *Doroussa* sailed Falmouth Bay at 0830, Jan 20. — Lloyd's Agents.

ECO PRINCESS (Panama)

Dakar, Jan 22 — Chemical/oil carrier *Eco Princess* completed repairs Jan 21 and sailed the same day for Brazil. — Lloyd's Agents.

ELIZABETH M. (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 27 — A press report, dated Jan 26, states: The Coast Guard will launch a formal investigation Monday (Jan 31) of the Jan 9 accident of tug *Elizabeth M.* on the Ohio River. Three crew members died, one is missing and six barges sank at the Montgomery Locks and Dam. A hearing will begin at 1300 hrs at the Sheraton Station Square Hotel, Pittsburgh. It is open to the public and expected to last several days.

EMC 423 (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 21 — A Coast Guard Chicago press release, dated Jan 20, states: An explosion onboard tank barge *EMC 423* on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal yesterday evening has resulted in the presumed death of a crewmember and the closure of the waterway. The tank barge was carrying approximately 588,000 gallons of clarified slurry oil. It was loaded onto the barge at the Exxon Mobile Plant in Joilet, Ill., and was destined for the Ameropan Oil Corporation facility in Cicero, IL. The Coast Guard Captain of the Port has closed the Chicago Sanitary and Ship canal between South Harlem Avenue

Bridge and the South Pulaski Road Bridge to all vessel traffic. The canal will be reopened as soon as it has been determined that it is safe for vessel traffic and that opening the waterway will not adversely affect the ongoing clean up and salvage operation. Heritage Environmental Corporation has been contracted by the barge's owner Egan Marine to clean up the spill. The Coast Guard is working closely with Heritage Environmental, Egan Marine, and state and local agencies to mitigate any environmental impacts and ensure that the spill is contained and cleaned up efficiently. Marine Safety Office Chicago has initiated an investigation to determine the cause of this accident. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) is assisting the Coast Guard with this investigation and is providing significant technical and investigative expertise.

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Police and US Coast Guard officials yesterday called off their search for an Oak Lawn man missing after a barge (tank barge *EMC 423*) carrying barrels of a petroleum byproduct exploded and sank in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. He was one of four crewman on board the barge when it exploded near Cicero Avenue and the Stevenson Expy. around 1645, Wednesday, (Jan 19), Coast Guard spokesman Lt. Gen. Wayne Reed said and was presumed dead. The cause has not been determined, but early reports suggest a diesel-fueled boiler may have exploded when crew members tried to light it, igniting the clarified slurry oil aboard the barge, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency spokeswoman Maggie Carson said. "Unfortunately, most of the evidence is at the bottom of the canal," said Reed. The barge, owned by Lemont-based Egan Marine Corp., was shipping 588,000 gallons of a byproduct of the oil-refining process from an Exxon-Mobil facility in Joliet. Carson said it was too soon to tell how much of the vessel's cargo leaked into the canal, making it hard to determine what the environmental impact of the blast will be. The canal links the Mississippi River to Lake Michigan. "From what I can see, the fact that they apparently did a good job of containing the petroleum will make the cleanup easier," she said. Egan Marine has contracted an outside environmental consultant to help clean up the spill and retrieve the barge. Officials said it was too early to know whether the firm will face charges or fines. The Coast Guard has closed the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal between South Harlem Avenue Bridge and the South Pulaski Road Bridge until the waterway is deemed safe for vessel traffic.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: The Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal will remain closed to vessel traffic today while a second survey is conducted to gauge how much debris remains from Wednesday's (Jan 19) explosion on board tank barge *EMC 423*. The US Army Corps of Engineers yesterday used sonar and Global Positioning System equipment to conduct an underwater survey of the canal to try to establish the extent to which it is blocked by the sunken barge. That information was presented to the Coast Guard, which called for a second survey. "Based on the

uncertainty of what's down there, the decision was made not to reopen the canal," Coast Guard spokesman Wayne Reed said. "We want to make sure the canal is navigable before we decide to reopen it. There were a few spots on the survey that showed light grey areas. That means the area below is between three feet and six feet deep. It could be air bubbles, or it could be debris from the barge. That's why we want a second survey. We want to be sure." Ron Fournier, a spokesman with the Army Corps, said more depth readings need to be taken to determine whether the canal can reopen to vessel traffic. Fournier said the barge sank in between 12 and 15 feet of water near the 4000 block of Cicero Avenue. Egan Marine, which owned the barge, hired divers to evaluate its condition and recommend how and when it could be brought up. That information was not expected to be available until today at the earliest. Meanwhile, the Coast Guard called off the search for the missing crewman on Thursday. The barge was carrying roughly 14,000 barrels of clarified slurry oil and was three miles from its destination in Lemont when it exploded near the Cicero Avenue Bridge. The barge skipper survived the blast, which hurled shrapnel into the air. The cause of the explosion remains under investigation. Authorities said one of the men on board was attempting to light a boiler used to heat the slurry oil so it maintained a specific consistency. The boiler apparently exploded, igniting the oil, which is a petroleum byproduct typically used to fuel industrial boilers.

London, Jan 24 — Following received from Coast Guard Cleveland, timed 1300, UTC: Tank barge *EMC 423*: Waterway traffic is still restricted, it is hoped to open up one-way traffic today.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: Tank barge *EMC 423*: Part of the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal closed since an explosion aboard the barge last week was reopened today by the Coast Guard. A 1,500-foot stretch of the canal west of the Cicero Avenue bridge was reopened based on results of a hydrographic survey conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers. "After carefully examining the survey data provided by the Army Corps of Engineers, we have verified that the previously closed section is safe for navigation," said Wayne Reed, a Coast Guard spokesman. The canal remains closed between the Cicero Avenue bridge and the Chicago Belt Railway bridge. Reopening this portion of the canal will benefit a handful of businesses that barges have been unable to reach since Wednesday (Jan 19), when the barge exploded near the Cicero Avenue bridge. More than 170 barges use the waterway each week to haul coal, scrap metal, gravel and salt to businesses along the route, Reed said. One of two crewmen aboard the barge is still missing. (See issue of Jan 25.)

London, Jan 26 — Following received from Coast Guard Cleveland, timed 1245, UTC: Tank barge *EMC 423* is still in the same position.

Troy, Michigan, Jan 26 — Tank barge *EMC 423*: The Coast Guard Captain of the Port has opened the section of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC) between the Cicero Avenue Bridge and the Chicago Belt Railway Railroad Bridge to

commercial barge traffic. Vessels are permitted to transit this section of the CSSC under the following restrictions: 1. Routine vessel traffic will be allowed to transit this area between the hours of 1800 and 0600. 2. Tow size past the sunken barge is limited to a single, loaded 35 foot wide dry cargo barge, or two end-to-end 35 foot wide empty dry cargo barges. 3. Vessel drafts may not exceed nine feet. 4. All tows require a bow assist boat. 5. All traffic wishing to transit the area must contact the motor vessel *David E* on channel 19 prior to reaching the Cicero or Belt Railway Bridge for further instruction. 6. This section remains closed to non-commercial vessel traffic. Seventeen barges safely transited past the sunken barge overnight and into this morning. The Coast Guard, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and the Army Corps of Engineers will continue to closely oversee all salvage and recovery operations until the threat of pollution has been eliminated and the barge has been removed from the channel. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

EMMA FOSS (U.S.A.)

See *Foss 180-C6*.

ESTONIA (Estonia)

Stockholm, Jan 21 — Passenger ro/ro *Estonia* was not carrying explosives when it sank in 1994, as suggested by media reports, but had been used to transport military equipment in preceding weeks, a Swedish government inquiry has found. The vessel sank on Sep 28, 1994, en route from Tallinn to Stockholm, killing 852 people. The inquiry confirmed that military equipment had been carried on the vessel, but said today it was electronic and had no connection to weapons systems. "There is no basis for me to assume that the defence authority of the defence procurement office tried to transport defence material on board *Estonia* when the vessel sank," Judge Johan Hirschfeldt, who headed the inquiry, told a news conference. He said the Swedish defence authority had only used the vessel on Sep 14 and 20 to transport military equipment. An official investigation into the sinking found that rough seas had torn open the bow door, allowing water to flood onto the car deck. Some have questioned the official findings, however, saying some kind of explosion might have caused the disaster. The latest inquiry was launched last year after a television report that suggested the vessel had carried defence hardware, possibly including explosives. — Reuters.

EWL CURACAO (Antigua & Barbuda)

Maassluis, Jan 26 — C.c. *EWL Curacao* (9528 gt, built 1998) is currently at Rotterdam with engine breakdown. Repairs will take another week and vessel is expected to be ready Feb 1, after which it is going to load containers. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *EWL Curacao* arrived Rotterdam Jan 20.)

EXPLORER (Bahamas)

London, Jan 26 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 2110, UTC: Passenger *Explorer*, C6TN4, (24318

gt, built 2002) is disabled in lat 40 56N, long 177 55E. (Note — *Explorer* sailed Vancouver Jan 18.)

London, Jan 27 — Following received from MTI Network, dated Jan 26: Passenger *Explorer* was struck by a large wave which caused damage to the bridge at 2024, GMT. The vessel temporarily lost propulsive power, but maintained lighting and other electrical controls. The vessel is on charter to Semester at Sea and is carrying 681 students, 113 faculty and staff, and 196 crew. There were some injuries to the vessel's crew prior to the incident, but nothing critical. Following the incident there are no serious injuries to report among the students, teachers or crew. An experienced medical staff is on the vessel. The vessel is en route from Vancouver to Hakodate, where it has an interim-fueling stop. VShips, the vessel's technical managers, have advised all relevant parties including the US Coast Guard and advises the vessel has regained propulsive power. The vessel is currently maintaining its station and assessing damage. The US Coast Guard is responding to the vessel.

London, Jan 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A 15m Pacific wave temporarily disabled passenger *Explorer*, a "Semester at Sea" vessel filled with hundreds of college students, injuring two crew members as it broke windows and damaged the vessel's controls, the US Coast Guard said. Coast Guard vessels and aircraft from Alaska and Hawaii were dispatched to help *Explorer*, about 1045 km south of the Aleutian Islands and about 2575 km from Honolulu. The vessel for a time operated on just one of its four engines and could do little more than keep the bow headed into heavy seas using emergency steering. By yesterday evening, a second engine had been started and the vessel was making headway at a speed of about 10 knots, or about 18.5km/h, said Coast Guard spokesperson Lieutenant Commander Glynn Smith in Alameda, California. Jim Lawrence, a spokesperson for V Ships, the technical managers of the vessel, said no one was critically hurt but he did not have details on injuries. He said the vessel may head to Midway Island, about 1300 km away. The weather in the region has been unsettled recently, with winds gusting to 80km/h or more. Semester at Sea is a global comparative study-abroad program for undergraduate students, said Paul Watson, director of enrollment management for the Institute for Shipboard Education. The program is academically sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh. The 100-day voyage began Jan 18 in Vancouver, British Columbia, with 990 people aboard: 681 students, 113 faculty and staff and 196 crew members. The vessel never lost internal electrical power and maintained good communications with the Coast Guard, Smith said. A medical staff of two doctors and two nurses is on board.

London, Jan 27 — Following press release received from Coast Guard San Francisco, timed 2230, EST, Jan 26: Passenger *Explorer*, previously disabled by a reported 50-foot wave, is now under way and holding its position approximately 650 miles south of Adak, Alaska, until the storm passes, which is expected to be in the next 12 hours. The vessel will continue

to Midway Island after clearing the storm and make port to evaluate its condition. Crew members were able to bring a second of the vessel's four engines back online, enabling it to make headway. The vessel's passengers and crew are not considered to be in any imminent danger. They have good communications with the Coast Guard, internal electrical power, medical staff on board, and the injuries to the two crew members are considered minor. The Coast Guard's current plan of action is to have the first Kodiak, AK-based Lockheed C-130 continue its flight out to the vessel. The second Kodiak based aircraft is returning to Kodiak. Coast Guard cutter *Jarvis* will depart Dutch Harbor and rendezvous with *Explorer*.

FOSS 180-C6 (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 26 — A Coast Guard Seattle press release, dated today, states: The Coast Guard received a report at 0520 hrs, from tug *Emma Foss* (192 gt, built 1970) that a barge (*Foss 180-C6*, 946 gt, built 1967) carrying wood chips was taking on water. The master of the tug later confirmed that the chip barge was listing. The master reported no injuries or pollution and remains in contact with the Coast Guard. Salvage action by the tug's crew is currently underway which includes precautionary deployment of boom. The tug master has received permission from the Coast Guard to intentionally beach the barge in order to fully evaluate the situation. The tug and barge are currently located two miles southwest of Shilshole Bay, Wash. Washington State Department of Ecology has been notified however, there is no threat to the safety of any persons, no oil on the barge or threat of pollution to the environment. The Coast Guard will remain in contact with *Emma Foss* throughout the entire situation and *Emma Foss* remains in control of the barge. A Coast Guard 41-foot utility boat from Coast Guard Station Seattle is on scene and is investigating the cause.

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A barge carrying wood chips was intentionally grounded on a beach near Shilshole Marina early today after tug operators feared it might sink. Tug *Emma Foss* was towing two barges and around 0520 hrs, discovered that one was taking on water near Edmonds. The tug turned the barges around and headed south toward Shilshole and decided to beach the barge so it would not sink. There were no injuries or threat of oil pollution, said Don Knesebeck, command duty officer with the U.S. Coast Guard. He said marine safety investigators were heading to the scene this morning.

London, Jan 26 — Following received from the owners of barge *Foss 180-C6*, timed Seattle 1930, UTC: *Foss 180-C6*, official No.507641, is still in the same position. A salvage plan is being prepared and salvors should be on scene shortly.

GAZ DE FRANCE ENERGY (French Southern Territories)

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Lng *Gaz de France Energy* (48700 gt), dedicated last November and due for delivery at the end of 2004, is being investigated for faults detected during tests at sea. Delivery of the ship,

built by Alstom Group's Chantiers de l'Atlantique at Saint-Nazaire, France, at a cost of Euro 150 million, has been postponed indefinitely. The secondary protective membrane, which does not come in contact with the LNG, has shown signs of leaks, and its materials have behaved abnormally under pressure. The membrane technology was developed by Gaztransport et Technigaz (GTT), a joint affiliate of Gaz de France, Total, and Italy's Saipem. Its new version, Cryogenic Cargo Containment System, was used for the first time on *Gaz de France Energy*. Chantiers is using the technology in two 154,000-cu-m LNG carriers ordered by Gaz de France. The first one, *Provalys*, is due for delivery at the end of 2005. At this stage, there is no talk of postponement. But GTT has sold its manufacturing license to LNG-carrier builders worldwide, and pinpointing weaknesses in the secondary membrane is a delicate task on a tanker that has been completed and should take some time, according to Gaz de France

GIBB GILCHRIST (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger ro/ro *Gibb Gilchrist* (1145 gt, built 1977), which shuttles travellers between Galveston and Port Bolivar, is operational again after running aground yesterday morning. The vessel was sent into Port Bolivar's north landing to test the depth of the water at about 0745 yesterday, when it got stuck in the mud, said Capt John Shaw, the deck supervisor. The north landing has been closed while crews construct a third landing on the Bolivar Peninsula, he said. At about 1215 yesterday, the tides rose enough to allow the vessel to back out of the landing, said Bill Mallini, the ferry's operations manager. Passengers were not on board the vessel, Shaw said, and operations were not affected.

GILIAN (Cyprus)

Singapore, Jan 21 — C.c. *Gilian* is still at Eastern Working Anchorage, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jan 26 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 0139, UTC: C.c. *Gilian* remains at Eastern Working Anchorage, Singapore.

GLUTRA (Norway)

London, Jan 24 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: At 0845, local time, today, ferry *Glutra* (1651 gt, built 2000) experienced engine problems and made hard contact with the pier in Tommervaagen when arriving. Six of the 12 cars onboard were damaged. No injuries to the 24 passengers, but one of the crew was injured. The ferry is now taken out of service and moored to a shipyard. Ferry *Aukra* replaced the vessel in the service between Seivika-Tommervaagen.

GREENWICH MAERSK (U.K.)

See "Salalah, Oman" under "Pollution."

HENRIETTE (NIS)

London, Jan 24 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: General cargo *Henriette* is still under repair at Karmsund Shipyard, ETC unknown.

HOO FALCON (U.K.)

London, Jan 23 — General cargo *Hoo Falcon* arrived Terneuzen Jan 21.

London, Jan 24 — General cargo *Hoo Falcon* sailed Terneuzen Jan 22.

HYUNDAI ADVANCE (Panama)

Singapore, Jan 21 — C.c. *Hyundai Advance* is still at Berth 19, Sembawang Shipyard, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

ICE PRINCE (Greece)

Gothenburg, Jan 22 — General cargo *Ice Prince* (6467 gt, built 1990), 19 persons on board, got into problems last night in bad weather in the Baltic north-east of island Blajungfrun, Kalmarsund. Several coast guard and rescue vessels attended and two helicopters were ready to assist vessel which had a heavy list of up to 30 degrees. At noon today the list became better, due to shifting of ballast, and a Finnish tug was able to connect a towline and bring the vessel inside a safe anchorage at port of Moenstraas. Operations will take the full day and divers to attend later. — Westax Marine Services AB. (Note — *Ice Prince* sailed Iggesund Jan 17 for Oskarshamn.)

Gothenburg, Jan 22 — Tug *Beau* towed general cargo *Ice Prince* to place of anchor. Out of the crew of 19, 12 remain on board, seven evacuated ashore. — Westax Marine Services AB.

London, Jan 23 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 0802, UTC: General cargo *Ice Prince* is now anchored off Oskarshamn. A leakage of oil has been observed.

Gothenburg, Jan 23 — General cargo *Ice Prince*, from Norrköping and last port Oskarshamn, destination unknown, loading full deckload of timber/sawn products, was towed back to Oskarshamn by tug *Baus* and at quay with a list of 20 degrees. No survey yet. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Jan 24 — General cargo *Ice Prince*: The incident and average of heavy list, between 15-30 deg, was reported one-and-a-half hours after departing Oskarshamn. The pilot noted a certain instability and a few degrees list at departure. Vessel noted, "stability slightly weak and soft but not instable." Something happened during the shifting of ballast, and tanks became slack where deck cargo of timber moved approximately two metres towards port and created the list. It is also possible that some goods down in the hold shifted, but could not be checked at this time. Vessel now at a temporary berth at Oskarshamn due to depth to discharge some bundles and later this afternoon to move to an ordinary berth for discharging of the goods and to straighten vessel up. Securing of timber/deckload otherwise intact and no cargo went overboard in the sea. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Jan 24 — General cargo *Ice Prince* is still discharging bundles of timber from deck cargo. It is believed sea water may have penetrated into the vessel's hold. — Westax Marine Services AB.

London, Jan 24 — Understood salvage services were rendered to general cargo *Ice Prince* by salvors Alfons Hakans under Lloyd's Open Form.

Gothenburg, Jan 25 — The list on general cargo *Ice Prince* has increased to 30 degrees, and the vessel's stability is poor.

The vessel has water in the engine-room, and pumps are trying to empty the vessel and to keep it afloat. At present, high wind, sea and swell are causing the vessel to move, making the risk too great to carry out discharge operations. Very little discharging has been carried out and most of the deck cargo is still on board. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Jan 27 — Salvage company Alfons Hakan is acting for and also owner of tug *Baus*, which assisted general cargo *Ice Prince* at sea. Some bundles of wood have been discharged from the deck cargo, but there is still a considerable list. Pumps operating at full speed around the clock and the discharge of wood has lightened the vessel. The situation will remain the same for the next few days — Westax Marine Services AB.

ILKA (Germany)

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: In heavy weather in the North Sea general cargo *Ilka* (1366 gt, built 1985) had an old fishing net in its propeller and could not manoeuvre on Jan 22. Vessel was finally towed to Husum port where the propeller was freed by the vessel's crew. (Note — *Ilka* sailed Rotterdam 1800, Jan 18 for Husum. Vessel was subsequently reported to have sailed Hamburg 2010, Jan 23 for Gunness.)

IRMGARD (Malta)

Bilbao, Jan 25 — Information received states that repairs to ref *Irmgard* were completed on Jan 21/22. The reloading operations of the cargo, unloaded at Santander, have commenced today and are expected to be completed in four or five days. — Lloyd's Agents.

IVY ROSE (Canada)

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: A coast guard vessel was slowly towing a disabled fishing vessel back to Nova Scotia last night through high seas and freezing spray. The seven-member crew of fishing *Ivy Rose* (298 gt, built 1999) contacted the coast guard around noon Friday (Jan 21), and said their vessel was experiencing propulsion problems off Cape Breton, according to the rescue co-ordination centre in Halifax. A coast guard light icebreaker was dispatched and met up with the 25-metre fishing vessel early yesterday morning to begin the tow. The vessels were about 185 km southeast of Louisbourg yesterday evening, and were facing harsh weather, with six-metre seas. The rescue co-ordination centre said the vessels were making good progress, even though they were only moving at about five kilometres an hour. "It's pretty rough," said Coast Guard Officer Donnie Billard. "There's no troubles, they're just working away on it, hoping for the wind to drop out." If it drops out, they'll be able to pick up a few knots probably." The vessels changed their heading to Chedabucto Bay in the Canso area because of the worsening weather. Billard said a pending blizzard, which was expected to bring heavy snow and winds gusting to 100 kilometres per hour to Atlantic Canada tomorrow, was a concern. He estimated it could be tomorrow morning before the vessels reached shore.

London, Jan 24 — Following received from Halifax RCC, timed 2055, UTC: Fishing *Ivy Rose* arrived Mulgrave, NS, safely at 2300, UTC, yesterday.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A coast guard vessel has successfully towed disabled fishing *Ivy Rose* back to shore in Nova Scotia. *Sir William Alexander*, a light icebreaker, had been towing the fishing vessel since early Saturday (Jan 22). The seven-member crew of the vessel called for help Friday after experiencing propulsion problems off Cape Breton. The coast guard vessel slowly pulled the vessel through six-metre seas and freezing spray, before finally returning to Mulgrave in the Canso area yesterday night. The rescue co-ordination centre in Halifax says the trip in to shore was uneventful, despite the poor weather.

JOHN G. LEMOS (Cyprus)

See under "Miscellaneous."

JOHN I:I (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 25 — A Coast Guard New Orleans press release, dated today, states: Coast Guard crews continue their search today for the master of tug *John I:I* (140 gt, built 1974) which sank this morning near mile marker 120 of the Lower Mississippi River approximately four miles south of the I-310 bridge, in the vicinity of Destrahan, La. The Coast Guard was notified at about 0153 hrs that the tug was sinking and required assistance. Two of the three crewmembers reportedly made it offboard while the master remained onboard. Coast Guard Group New Orleans immediately launched a rescue boat crew from Station New Orleans and a rescue helicopter crew from Air Station New Orleans to search. Search crews from the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office conducted patrols of the nearby levee with negative results. A safety zone has been established from mile marker 117 to 115 with a one-way traffic restriction. The cause of the accident is unknown at this time and is under investigation by the Coast Guard.

New Orleans, Jan 25 — A local press report, dated today, states: Tug *John I:I* sank on the Mississippi River early today and the vessel's master is missing. The Coast Guard said *John I:I* went down about 4.5 miles south of the Interstate 310 bridge in St. Charles Parish. Two crew members were onboard a barge that the tug was preparing to take control of when the accident occurred. Petty Officer Tara Mitchell said the boat sank with the master onboard. An aerial search lasting more than six hours was called off this afternoon, but the Coast Guard and local harbour officials continue to search the river with boats. The Coast Guard is investigating why the vessel went down. The river level is high and the current is especially strong because of upriver snow melt and spring rains, but the Coast Guard did not know whether that was a factor in the sinking of the tug. — Lloyd's Agents.

JOWI (Netherlands)

London, Jan 24 — General cargo *Jowi* (4520 gt, built 1998), Rotterdam for Germersheim, loaded with containers, had a fire in its engine-room near Rhens on the River Rhine Jan 22. The German fire brigade had a lot of work to extinguish the engine-room fire, which gave off much

smoke. The master anchored the vessel after the fire broke out, so that the German fire brigade could come alongside with their boats. The Wasserschutzpolizei Koblenz could not tell yet this morning anything about the cause of the fire and the amount of damage. With a length of 134 metres and a width of 16.90 metres it is the biggest inland container vessel in Europe.

KASCO (Liberia)

Hanoi, Jan 22 — Chem.tank *Kasco* (18812 gt, built 1981) leaked thousands of tonnes of diesel oil into a river in Vietnam's rice basket Mekong Delta region but damage from the spill seemed limited after the remaining oil was transferred to other vessels, state media said today. Oil spilled from the vessel after it struck a pier at Cat Lai port on the Dong Nai River in southern Vietnam yesterday, causing disruption to river traffic. The vessel was carrying 30,000 tonnes of diesel oil for state-owned oil importer Saigon Petrol. Officials from Saigon Petrol said they had dispatched nine vessels to the area in an effort to contain the leak, the Saigon Giai Phong (Saigon Liberation) reported. — Reuters.

London, Jan 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Operations at Berth B of Saigon Petro Cat Lai terminal remain suspended today, following an oil leak last week. Operations at Berth A, however, are normal. Chem.tank *Kasco* leaked thousands of tonnes of diesel oil into the Dong Nai River river in Vietnam's Mekong Delta region after it struck Pier B at Saigon Petro Cat Lai port on Jan 21, causing disruption to river traffic. However, damage from the spill appears to be limited after the remaining oil was transferred to other vessels. The vessel was carrying 30,000 tonnes of diesel oil and is now being detained in port.

Hanoi, Jan 27 — On Jan 21, chem.tank *Kasco* struck a pier at Cat Lai, on the Dong Nai River, Vietnam. It is estimated that 400 tonnes of diesel oil leaked into the Dong Nai river. The authorities have successfully isolated the oil by "surround buoy" and then "sucked it out". The vessel is now under temporary detention at the port. A representative of the P&I Club is discussing the matter with consignees and concerned parties. — Lloyd's Agents.

KENAI (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: A fire broke out on board crude oil tanker *Kenai* (60384 gt, built 1979) at Valdez yesterday, but emergency crews quickly put it out and no one was injured, according to the vessel's operators. *Kenai*, chartered by oil company BP to carry North Slope crude to West Coast refineries, was berthed at Valdez preparing to take on a load of oil when a small fire broke out at about 1340 hrs, sending off thick black smoke, said Anil Mathur, president of Alaska Tanker Co, the vessel's operator. Emergency response crews for Alyeska Pipeline Service Co, operator of the Valdez tanker port, were called to support the vessel's crew in dealing with the fire, which was confined to a room housing an emergency diesel generator. No one was injured, the fire was put out quickly and no oil spilled, Mathur said. The cause remained unknown, he said. The US Coast Guard is investigating,

along with local fire officials and state pollution regulators. The vessel will remain in the Port of Valdez for "quite a while," Mathur said, until the emergency power system is repaired. At the time of the fire, the vessel had offloaded ballast water before taking on oil.

KERAVNOS (Greece)

London, Jan 26 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the morning of Jan 25, ferry *Keravnos* (195 gt, built 1972), while 20 minutes into the voyage from Aegina to Piraeus, sustained damage to the starboard main engine. Following the incident the vessel returned to Aegina where the 116 passengers were safely disembarked and forwarded to their destinations on passenger ro-ro *Saronikos*. Following repair to the damage and a survey by the Marine Inspectorate, *Keravnos* was permitted to continue normal scheduling the same day.

LADY O. (North Korea)

London, Jan 22 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0821, UTC: The missing crew members from general cargo *Lady O.* have not been located, and the search has been called off.

LOUIE (U.S.A.)

San Francisco, Jan 20 — Sinking incident of tug *Louie* is under investigation by Coast Guard. The tugboat is old and it is not utilized for purpose of towing, it is for show only. — Lloyd's Agents.

LT LLOYDIANA (Italy)

Singapore, Jan 26 — Cc. *LT Lloydiana* is still in port. — Lloyd's Agents.

MALINDO NO.2 (Malaysia)

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated Jan 20, states: Barge *Malindo No.2*, and not an oil spill, had damaged about seven hectares of coral reefs in Palawan, a local official clarified yesterday. Arthur Ventura, chair of the provincial council's committee on environment and natural resources, said this after he inspected the damage in Barangay Cheey, Busuanga, Palawan. Ventura quoted reports from a non-government organization and local officials, that an oil spill from the Malaysian-registered barge had caused the damage. He said the report was inaccurate. There were no traces of oil, but thin layers of gasoline. According to a Coast Guard report, the damage was caused by the grounding of barge *Malindo No.2* that split in two due to large waves. The barge is sinking slowly and needs to be towed to avoid further coral reef destruction, he said. Officials estimate the damage at P10 million. Ventura said the foreign company that owns the barge should pay for damages.

MARINER OF THE SEAS (Bahamas)

See "Outbreak of Norovirus on Bahamas-Flagged Passenger Vessel" under "Miscellaneous."

MARY (North Korea)

Beirut, Jan 25 — General cargo *Mary*, HMWD4, built 1968, grounded at Khalde, about 10 miles south of Beirut, at daybreak, Jan 24, due to very heavy

weather and engine trouble, according to the vessel's master. The master, chief engineer and the Georgian cook were rescued by the civil defence team. Two other Bangladeshi crew members are still missing. The master and rescued crew are being investigated by the local police. The master reported that the vessel left Port Said late Jan 22 for Lattakia. — Lloyd's Agents.

London Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Two Bangladeshis were missing yesterday after North Korean registered general cargo *Mary* capsized off the coast of Lebanon, officials said. Rescue teams were alerted at dawn when residents in Khalde saw the 25-metre *Mary* capsize in rough seas. A civil defence team managed to rescue three Georgians out of the sea, including the master and two crew members, but two Bangladeshi sailors have been reported missing, the sources said. The vessel capsized after wires got entangled in its propeller and was left badly damaged, according to the initial findings of an investigation. The master told police that *Mary* left Port Said for Lattakia on Saturday (Jan 22).

Beirut, Jan 27 — The position of general cargo *Mary* remains unchanged and the vessel has been abandoned, with nobody on board. The master, chief officer and cook have been repatriated by their embassy. The two other Bangladeshi crew members are so far still missing. — Lloyd's Agents.

MATOULA P. (North Korea)

London, Jan 24 — Lloyd's Casualty Representatives in Piraeus report: General cargo *Matoula P.* sustained engine damage Jan 19 while manoeuvring to depart from Iraklion for Cyprus, and returned to Iraklion in order to effect repairs. Iraklion Port Authority permitted the vessel to depart Jan 22, after repairs and inspection by class had been carried out. During the morning of Jan 23, the vessel arrived at Foiniki in tow of passenger *Athina*, after sustaining engine damage again the previous day 10 nautical miles south-east of Kassos. The five crew members are good in health.

London, Jan 27 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: General cargo *Matoula P.* remains at Kassos port awaiting surveyors. During the morning of Jan 23 the vessel had proceeded under tow of passenger ro-ro *Athia* to Foiniki, Karpathos, but had been unable to berth due to strong winds, therefore proceeded instead to nearby Kassos.

MINERVA ELEONORA (Greece)

Zeebrugge, Jan 24 — Crude oil tanker *Minerva Eleonora* (58156 gt, built 2004), bound Flushing, passed Wandelaar pilot station at 0835, local time and grounded at 1036, today. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Zeebrugge, Jan 24 — Crude oil tanker *Minerva Eleonora* was refloated at 1140, local time. — Lloyd's Sub-agents

Maassluis, Jan 24 — At 1036, local time, today, crude oil tanker *Minerva Eleonora* grounded in the vicinity of de scheur 3 and 5 by unknown cause. Tugs were requested. Damage unknown. Vessel refloated at 1140 and is proceeding to Flushing to anchor in the Wielingen Zuid. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Jan 25 — Crude oil tanker *Minerva Eleonora* ran aground on a sandbank off Zeebrugge yesterday morning, Jan 24. The vessel had a cargo of 103,000 tons of crude oil on board and was bound for Antwerp. Several tugs pulled the tanker clear of the bank just after midday, after which the ship was granted permission to sail for Flushing Roads with the tug *Banckert*, escorting. The cause of this accident is yet unknown. Later *Minerva Eleonora* sailed for Antwerp where currently discharging cargo.

London, Jan 26 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the morning of Jan 24, the master of crude oil tanker *Minerva Eleonora* advised the ministry that while entering the port of Antwerp the vessel had run aground at the entrance to the channel. At the time vessel was loaded with 99,380 tons of crude oil. All the crewmembers are in good health, there was no pollution caused nor was their damages to the vessel. With the assistance of tugs the vessel was refloated and proceeded to berth.

MISSISSAGI (Canada)

London, Jan 26 — While turning in the CDN channel of St.Marys River, with tug *Avenger IV* assisting, the rudder of bulk *Mississagi* (9706 gt, built 1943) sustained ice damage at 1632, Jan 17 and became inoperative. The vessel was berthed at Algoma Steel dock for repairs.

MIYUKI MARU

Dover, Jan 21 — Ferry *Miyuki Maru* was on its voyage to Acorn Wharf transiting the river Medway when at Gillingham Reach at about 1230, Jan 13, it appears an electrical fire took place and the vessel called into Collier Lock, Chatham Docks, where emergency services attended. Vessel is still berthed at Collier Lock and as yet the extent of the fire is unknown and no decision on its future has been taken. — Lloyd's Agents.

MSC ILONA (Germany)

Singapore, Jan 21 — C.c. *MSC Ilona* arrived Singapore Jan 20. — Lloyd's Agents.

NORMANDY (Bahamas)

See *Severn Fisher*.

OCEAN GAIN (U.K.)

London, Jan 21 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 0509, UTC: Fishing *Ocean Gain*, length 17 metres, two persons on board, sent Mayday (distress) in lat 57 30N, long 07 08W, stating that they were taking water and in need of immediate assistance. Crew evacuated to liferaft and picked up by Coastguard Rescue helicopter at 0302, UTC. Tug *Anglian Prince* proceeded to the scene and now remains checking for pollution and debris.

London, Jan 21 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 0555, UTC: Fishing *Ocean Gain* is confirmed to have sunk. Vessel had 600 gallons of diesel oil and 25 gallons of lubricating oil on board. Tug *Anglian Prince* on scene assessing extent of pollution. Tidal prediction indicates any pollution will drift east-north-east offshore into the Minch.

London, Jan 21 — Following received from Coastguard Stornoway MRSC, timed 0929, UTC: Fishing *Ocean Gain*: Salvage tug *Anglian Prince* on scene and area searched extensively with no pollution found.

ORFEO (Mexico)

Coatzacoalcos, Jan 24 — Product tanker *Orfeo* is still aground. There has been two attempts to refloat the vessel without success. — Lloyd's Agents.

P&O NEDLLOYD OBOCK (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Jan 25 — General cargo *P&O Nedlloyd Obock* refloated Jan 10 and berthed at Jeddah for damage assessment and repairs. The underwater inspection indicated damage to the bulbous bow, in way of the forepeak tank. Temporary repairs were completed Jan 13 and the vessel sailed the same day for Massawa.

PAULA (Republic of Ireland)

Trondheim, Jan 24 — A local newspaper reports that trawler *Paula* (1302 gt, built 1995), with 250 tons of fresh mackerel on board arrived at the Domstein factory, in Selje, West Norway. During cleaning of the vessel this morning, the vessel's aft end sank to the bottom of the sea, while the bow is still above water alongside the quay. The crew managed to get ashore. Tenders for salvage now invited. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: 60-metre trawler *Paula*, one of the largest fishing vessels in the Killybegs-based fleet, has sunk at a port in the Norwegian town of Maaloy. All 11 crew members managed to escape before the vessel flooded and sank shortly after 0700 hrs, today. An alarm had gone off on board the vessel 15 minutes earlier, but the cause of the sinking is still not known. The trawler, which was worth around Euros 15m, had docked in Maaloy last night with a catch of mackerel on board. (See issue of Jan 25.)

Trondheim, Jan 25 — A crane barge arrived Domstein, Selje, in order to prevent trawler *Paula* from capsizing. An attempt to get the vessel's aft end afloat will possibly be made this afternoon. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A group of Irish fishermen who had a narrow escape when their Donegal-based trawler *Paula* sank in a Norwegian port were today waiting for the vessel to be refloated. The 11 men were asleep on board *Paula* which was docked in the port of Maaloy, when they were awakened by the alarm going off in the engine-room at around 0600 yesterday. Skipper Tom Doyle said they had little time to evacuate when they realised the boat was filling up with water and there was nothing they could do to save it. "Within 10 to 15 minutes everybody was off the boat and it had sunk," he said. The vessel had been fishing for mackerel and horse mackerel in the North Sea for the previous four days and had pulled into the Norwegian port on Sunday night in preparation for off-loading its catch at a local fish-processing plant yesterday. Separate investigations by the Republic's Department of the Marine and the Marine Casualty Investigation Board into the

sinking of *Paula* were begun yesterday, with initial evidence pointing to a malfunction on board. A team of insurance investigators was also due to travel to Norway to carry out an examination of the vessel which was almost totally submerged. Norwegian police confirmed that they did not suspect foul play. A spokesman for the local police force in Floroe, which is responsible for the harbour where the trawler sank, said they were aware of the incident and had spoken to the skipper. "We think it's an accident and not criminal. We have spoken with the master and he told us what happened," he said. Speaking in Killybegs yesterday evening, a visibly upset owner of *Paula*, Mick Doyle, said that the extent of the damage or the cause of the sinking could not be established until the vessel was refloated which he hoped could happen in the coming days.

Trondheim, Jan 26 — Trawler *Paula* was refloated at about 2030 yesterday and towed to Maaloy by two tugs from Odegaard Salvage Co. The vessel arrived Maaloy this morning. The vessel will now discharge the cargo of 260 tons fresh mackerel, and will then be put on the slipway at Baatbygg Yard, Maaloy, for temporary repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

PIONEER NAYA (South Korea)

London, Jan 20 — A press report, dated today, states: A South Korean maritime police vessel crossed the inter-Korean sea border on the East Sea (Sea of Japan) late today to the scene where South Korean general cargo *Pioneer Naya* sank, and started rescue work, reported South Korean Yonhap News Agency. Earlier today, the South Korean vessel sank in international waters, about 260 kilometres northeast of Jeojin, Gangwon Province on South Korea's east coast. As the scene is closer to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), South Korea asked Pyongyang's approval to let its rescuing vessel take a short cut. The DPRK side gave a green light to South Korea's request earlier today after receiving information about the sunken vessel. It is the first time that a South Korean patrol boat has been officially allowed by DPRK to sail into its waters. The South Korean vessel, carrying iron frames, was heading to Qingdao, China, after departing Vladivostok, Russia, when it went down in high waves. Four crewmembers were rescued by a Russian vessel passing by, while the other 14 were still listed as missing, Yonhap quoted maritime police as saying. According to South Korean maritime police, the vessel's 18 crewmen included nine from South Korea, one from China and eight from Vietnam. Moreover, a consulate in China's Consulate General in Seoul confirmed one Chinese Korean was among the missing.

London, Jan 21 — A maritime disaster brought a rare moment of inter-Korean co-operation yesterday. Following the sinking of general cargo *Pioneer Naya*, the Stalinist Pyongyang regime granted access for two South Korean ships to help out in the rescue operation. Four survivors, two from South Korea and two Vietnamese, have been plucked out of the icy seas by a Russian ship, while 14 others, seven Korean, one Chinese and six Vietnamese remain missing. Three Russian ships in the

area, 160 miles north-east of Jeonju in the South's Gangwon Province, combed the area looking for survivors while Seoul petitioned successfully to mount its first ever rescue operation in North Korean waters. The vessel, owned by small South Korean owner Garim Shipping, was travelling from Vladivostok to Qingdao, carrying steel coils and steel plate when the accident occurred. The ship hit heavy waters and overturned. A spokesman for the Seoul headquartered shipping firm told Lloyd's List that details about the accident and the ensuing rescue operation were scarce: "Since it happened in the North Korean sea area I do not have any information from anywhere. We have just received minimal information from the navy and maritime police," he said. Two South Korean patrol vessels and a helicopter have been dispatched to the scene after Pyongyang was satisfied with the information provided about the nature and route of the sunken vessel, which is insured by the Japan Shipowners Mutual Protection and Indemnity Association.

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The search for the crew of general cargo *Pioneer Naya*, wrecked in the Sea of Japan yesterday, was suspended due to the coming night and bad weather. According to preliminary information, the shipwreck was caused by a shift of the load. The crew included 18 people, only four sailors have been saved so far.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: The search for survivors from the sinking of general cargo *Pioneer Naya* continued today in North Korea's economic exclusive zone in the East Sea, the Korea Coast Guard said. Officials said today that cutter *Sambong-ho* arrived in the area yesterday and was leading the search in waters close to where the vessel sank.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: South Korea's Coast Guard recovered the body of a Vietnamese sailor during a fourth day of rescue efforts for general cargo *Pioneer Naya* that sank on Thursday (Jan 20). The South Korean Coast Guard has been searching for 14 missing crew members, including seven Koreans, six Vietnamese and one Korean-Chinese. Four were rescued earlier by a passing Russian vessel. Separately, the South Korean Coast Guard rescued two North Koreans whose fishing boat had been drifting for two weeks due to engine failure in the area where rescue operations are under way. An official said the North Koreans will be returned to their country as soon as possible.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Two of eight Vietnamese crew members from general cargo *Pioneer Naya*, which sank off North Korea, have been rescued. The men were taken to the Russian port of Nakhodka on Jan 21 and are waiting to return to Vietnam. The vessel sank off the Democratic People's Republic of Korea eastern coast early on Jan 20, leaving 14 out of 18 crew members missing, including eight Vietnamese. The eight Vietnamese sailors, all belonged to the Vietnam Maritime University and worked on the vessel under a cooperation contract between the VMU and South Korea's maritime transport agencies.

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated Jan 25, states: A South Korean vessel will

resume its search for the missing crew members of general cargo *Pioneer Naya*, which sank last week in North Korea's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), the Korea Coast Guard said today. It said that starting tomorrow, cutter *Sambong* will take over search duties from a 1,500-ton patrol vessel that had been conducting the search. *Sambong* is the largest vessel in the Coast Guard fleet and can be used for helicopter take-offs and landings.

PORVENIR I (Chile)

Santiago, Jan 25 — Ro/ro *Porvenir I* (3316 gt, built 1972), Talcahuano for Punta Arenas, touched bottom in the Zarmiento Channel, approximately 320 nautical miles north of Punta Arenas, at 0455 yesterday. The vessel sustained a crack in the hull, with an ingress of water that has been partly controlled using pumps. The crack is near two fuel tanks, damaging one of them. The vessel's master reported that there was no major spillage of fuel. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Porvenir I* sailed Talcahuano Jan 19.)

Santiago, Jan 26 — Ro/ro *Porvenir I*: The 40 cm fissure found has been plugged temporarily to avoid water entrance. A further inspection by divers found another 40 cm fissure in the sector of the engine-room that cannot be repaired where the accident happened due to strong currents. Therefore the vessel will be towed to Puerto Mayne, 17 nautical miles south of the location where the accident happened, as this is more sheltered and permits temporary repairs. Vessel will then be towed to Punta Arenas and enter Asmar shipyard for final repairs. Vessel has a list of 8 degrees to port with a good floatability and stability condition. — Lloyd's Agents.

PROVIDER (U.S.A.)

London, Jan 21 — Following received from Coastguard Portsmouth (Va), timed 1356, UTC Fishing *Provider*, in tow of tug *Hawk*, arrived at Rhode Island on Jan 20. Case closed.

PRUVA (Turkey)

Honolulu, Jan 24 — Reported that bulk *Pruva* (38433 gt, built 1995) sustained turbo-charger damage. It is reportedly to arrive off port Honolulu Jan 26 to effect repairs.

QUICKCAT (New Zealand)

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A woman who was injured in a vessel collision in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf has died. Moira Newman was on board charter vessel *Doctor Hook* when it collided with ferry *Quickcat* earlier this month. Ms Newman died in hospital yesterday. The accident is being investigated by the Maritime Safety Authority, Transport Accident Investigation Commission and police. (See issue of Jan 11.)

RAVAN RIVER (Liberia)

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Liberian product tanker *Ravan River* (23100 gt, built 1981) collided with a local Turkish ferry in front of the Haydarpaşa Breakwater at around 2215 hrs, last night, as a result of poor visibility due to dense fog. According to pilots, the tanker sustained slight damage

as a result of the collision, but continued its northbound passage without interruption. Five people injured on the ferry were taken to hospital. (Note — *Ravan River* sailed Mersin Jan 12 for Midia.)

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated Jan 21, states: Three people were slightly injured overnight when their ferry collided with an oil tanker (product tanker *Ravan River*) in the Bosphorus strait, the Anatolia news agency reported today. The agency quoted port authorities as saying the tanker, that was heading to Romania, was not transporting any oil when the accident happened. It said poor visibility may have caused the incident that prompted authorities to shut down the strait to maritime traffic during the night. The daily newspaper *Hurriyet* said all of those injured were passengers on board the ferry that shuttles people between the eastern and western part of Istanbul.

REGENSBURG

Mannheim, Jan 21 — Inland waterways tanker *Regensburg*, allegedly belonging to a company located in Vienna, was on its way from Rotterdam to BASF, Ludwigshafen, cargo 2,300 tonnes industrial gasoline, when it was likely that the ship touched the ground near Nackenheim. When near Guntersblum, the vessel's master noticed water penetrating into the vessel's engine-room. In order to avoid sinking, the master left the fairway providing sufficient width and dept. As far as we understand, the the ship's cargo was not affected. The water was pumped out of the engine-room by the Guntersblum fire brigade and while still pumping *Regensburg* was towed, side by side, by a Netherlands container vessel into Oppenheim harbour. There a hole, said to be approximately 20 cm long and 5 cm wide, was temporarily repairs by divers. Subsequently the cargo was delivered to BASF, Ludwigshafen. In the meantime the ship is on its way to Duisburg, where the damage will be repaired at a shipyard. — Lloyd's Agents.

RIALTO (Panama)

Barcelona, Jan 24 — C.c. *Rialto* is still under repair. — Lloyd's Agents.

RIVER PRINCESS

London, Jan 24 — A press report states: The state government has finalized its plans to salvage ore *River Princess* with a UK-based company being awarded the contract after it submitted the winning bid, though Tourism Department officials refused to divulge any information. According to reliable sources, the British company Crosschem International Limited (CIL) outbid an Indian company, which was the only competitor, in the race to salvage the ship. It is learnt, however, that the Indian company's bid called for the state government to pay for the salvage process. CIL, as part of its bid, has offered to pay the state government a sum of Rs 81 lakhs to salvage, refloat and take possession of the ship. The state will not have to shell out any money towards the salvage effort since the ownership of the vessel will pass from the state to the salvors. It is learnt that the authorities have clearly informed CIL that the ship should not be broken up in Goa and that no waste should be

allowed into the water. Apparently, the plan is for CIL to first patch up the holes that had been cut into the hull of the vessel and then efforts would be made to refloat the ship. Sources said that the decision to accept Crosschem as the winning bidder was taken some time ago but the paperwork, finalizing the plans, were delayed due to problems in transferring the funds from the UK to India. However, the Tourism Department is expected to announce the deal in the next few days. When contacted, Tourism Director Elvis Gomes declined to comment on the matter and would only say the process was "on track." Meanwhile, it is learnt that CIL has already started taking preliminary steps to prepare for the salvage process. At least four shack owners, whose establishments were located on the beach opposite the grounded vessel, have been asked to move to alternate locations and have been offered compensation to do so. In addition, CIL officials have also contacted local suppliers located along the coastal belt for supplies of food, water, transport and other basic necessities that will be required by their team. The company is also believed to have placed private security guards to protect equipment that has already been stored onboard the ship.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: After some four and a half years when ore *River Princess* ran aground one stormy monsoon night off Sinquerim coast in North Goa, the state government finally awarded the tender to a foreign firm Crosschem International for it to be floated and towed away. The government had floated an international tender. The state government will pay Rs 85.41 lakh to the British firm. The firm has been given 110 days for the vessel to be taken away from the coast and would be at its liberty to dispose it. The charterer of the vessel, a local mining company, fought a bitter legal battle for possession of the ship. There were fears that the vessel might be cut at its present site causing extensive marine pollution. The state government and the charterer entered into a long protracted legal battle. But even when the government won the case in the high court, it failed in an earlier attempt to tow away the ship.

SAINT ENOGAT (South Africa)

Cape Town, Jan 21 — As at Jan 15, fish factory *Saint Enogat* was still lying sunk at Berth LW4, Cape Town. — Lloyd's Agents.

SAKAERU (Panama)

London, Jan 20 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 1521, UTC: General cargo *Sakaeru* was taken in tow by tug *Heian Maru* and towed to a position off Satsuma-hanto, Kagoshima. As of 1400, UTC, the vessel was lying in lat 31 10N, long 130 28E, under tug escort, and awaiting instructions from the owners.

SANDETTIE (Netherlands)

London, Jan 26 — General cargo *Sandettie* passed through the Dover Strait Jan 23, bound Piraeus.)

SANKO ROYAL (Panama)

Vancouver, Jan 24 — Bulk *Sanko Royal* sailed Vancouver Jan 21. — Lloyd's Agents.

SCHIEBORG (Netherlands)

Ymuiden, Jan 21 — Wijsmuller Salvage B.V. at 0900 today re-delivered ro/ro *Schieborg* back to its owners after the vessel was declared gas-free and the fires confirmed out. The salvage team and the remaining standby fire-fighting tug *Simson* were demobilised back to their respective base. The operation to save *Schieborg* started on Jan 8 with the vessel ending up without steering and on fire off the Danish coast in extremely bad weather. The crew abandoned the vessel that night and were rescued by SvitzerWijsmuller tugs, which later the next day also were able to connect up to the drifting vessel, some 10 miles off the coast and just in time to prevent a grounding. Under control of a Wijsmuller salvage team, including fire fighting and chemical experts, who boarded the casualty by helicopter, the vessel then was towed in continuous bad weather to Eemshaven. Further SvitzerWijsmuller fire fighting tugs were moved in to assist with a first attempt to enter port but it was made impossible due to again deteriorating weather conditions during Jan 12. With two additional seagoing SvitzerWijsmuller terminal tugs having been brought in from Denmark the approaches to Eemshaven in between the sand banks were successfully taken during the next weather window with the vessel entering port at slack tide during the evening of Jan 14. Works then continued in getting the smouldering fires under control and to ensure the vessel was gas free, whereby chemical experts in special gas protective clothing were involved in discharging the cargo remains from the weather deck. The operations were completed today (Jan 21) to the full satisfaction of the owners and the (Dutch) authorities involved. — Wijsmuller Salvage BV.

SEA VENTURE II (Cyprus)

London, Jan 24 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 1210, UTC: General cargo *Sea Venture II* (6395 gt, built 1989) is currently in Kalundborg Fjord undergoing inspection and investigation after fuel oil was released from a leaking fuel tank into the Great Belt. Around 200 tonnes of fuel oil have been transferred into another vessel. Protection vessels are on scene. (Note — *Sea Venture II* sailed Kotka Jan 15 for Casablanca.)

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: The owners of a Cypriot vessel which leaked oil in the waters between Zealand and Funen have agreed to pay a fine of DKK 160,000 (EUR 21,500) plus clean-up costs and costs of flights to survey the oil slick. The vessel is being held at anchor in a fjord while the leak is being investigated. Divers have found a 40-metre long crack in the hull plus holes in three of the vessel's fuel tanks. All the oil had earlier been pumped out of the vessel. It won't be released until repairs are made and it is certified seaworthy.

Ymuiden, Jan 24 — On Friday (Jan 21) Wijsmuller Salvage B.V. was engaged by the owners/managers of general cargo *Sea Venture II* to assist in resolving the problems created by the crack in its bottom. A team of salvage experts was moved in immediately, as was a truck with necessary salvage (and pumping) equipment. A diver inspection was

executed to determine the extent of the damage. Lighterage tonnage was arranged to receive fuel from the breached tanks in an 'over the top' pumping operation, ongoing at present with expected completion, tomorrow. — Wijsmuller Salvage B.V.

London, Jan 27 — Following received from Aarhus MRCC, timed 0951, UTC: General cargo *Sea Venture II* remains anchored in Kalundborg Fjord.

SEAFRANCE RODIN (France)

London, Jan 27 — A press report, dated Jan 26, states: Due technical problems with car deck access on ro/ro *SeaFrance Rodin* (33796 gt, built 2001) ferries between Dover and Calais have been disrupted.

SELENDANG AYU (Malaysia)

London, Jan 24 — A US Coast Guard Kodiak press release, dated Jan 23, states: Bulk *Selendang Ayu* update at 1300, Jan 23: Dependent on weather, today's response activities will include shoreline cleanup, water quality sampling and wildlife recovery operations. Due to inclement weather, today's air operations will be on hold until weather permits. As a result the shoreline assessment team will not be surveying any areas and there will be no lightering operations today. The protection group will continue to assess sites with protective booms and reconfigured the boom to increase effectiveness and remove boom that is ineffective or no longer needed. When weather permits the lightering team will resume pumping fuel oil from the Intermediate Fuel Oil (IFO) No.4 port tank. Oil sampling using net tows are scheduled for the Unalaska transit lane, Iliuliuk Bay, and vessel anchoring areas in Broad and Captains Bay. Yesterday shoreline cleanup crews worked in Skan Bay, Portage Bay and Humpback Bay. They collected 1,593 bags of oily waste (27 cubic yards). To date, cleanup crews have collected 25,868 bags (431 cubic yards) of oily solid waste. The lightering team removed 17,216 gallons of fuel oil from No.4 port tank. The total volume lightered from the vessel to date is 76,937 gallons of fuel oil/water and 2,647 gallons of diesel for a total of 79,584 gallons of fuel oil/water/diesel. Yesterday, the wildlife recovery team reported 72 additional bird carcasses and one dead oiled fox. Also, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported that a total of 967 dead birds have been recovered. To date, 29 live oiled birds have been captured and sent for rehabilitation, 10 were later released, 17 died and two were euthanized. To date, five sea otter carcasses including two skeletons (cause of deaths unknown) have been recovered. Water quality sampling continues in the Akutan and Unalaska areas and the team encountered one BB sized tarball and three oil smears in Iliuliuk Bay. There has been no evidence of oil in Akutan Bay or east of Priest Rock, in outer Unalaska Bay or in Broad Bay since Jan 18. A new *Selendang Ayu* Oil Spill Fisheries Water Quality Sampling Plan is being developed for the next phase of the program. To date, seafood inspections at the Dutch Harbor and Akutan processing plants have found all products free of oil contamination.

Inspections are conducted days and nights to check crab and pollock as they arrive at the docks. Vessels from the Opilio crab fishery in the Bering Sea continued their return to Dutch Harbor and Akutan to deliver their catch for processing. The Unified Command provided the crab fleet advisories to minimize contact with random tarballs that may be encountered during the vessels return to port. The crab fleet left Dutch Harbor and Akutan on Jan 13, and the fleet has not reported any incidents of contamination thus far. The Unified Command has implemented an enhanced program to protect seafood quality. Shorelines were surveyed in Unalaska Bay and Captains Bay for tarballs and tar patties, vessels are using crab pots and tow nets to detect submerged oil, aerial surveys are checking for floating oil, and additional staff from the ADEC-Environmental Health seafood program are inspecting seafood at Dutch Harbor and Akutan processors. Predicted weather in Dutch Harbor for today is cloudy, temperatures low to upper 30s, southeast winds building to 10-20 knots, and seas four feet. Tomorrow weather forecast calls for rain and snow, temperatures low to high 30s, southeast winds 35-40 knots, seas at six feet.

SEVERN FISHER (Gibraltar)

Belfast, Jan 26 — Product tanker *Severn Fisher* and passenger ro/ro *Normandy* are still in port. Both vessels were already in port for repair before the contact happened. *Normandy* is in port for a general refit and has an ETC of Feb 28. *Severn Fisher* is in port for repair due to engine problems and has an ETC of Mar 2. — Lloyd's Agents.

SNORRE A

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The Norwegian Petroleum Safety Authority rejected Statoil's plan to resume full production from its *Snorre A* field in the North Sea, nearly two months after a gas leak shut it down. The agency said today that it wants more data from the already approved restart of about half the production before allowing full flows from *Snorre A* and the adjacent Vigdis field, which have a combined capacity of 205,000 barrels of oil per day. A week ago, the authority gave Statoil permission to resume production of about 100,000 barrels per day from parts of the two fields that were not affected by the gas leak. Statoil said production is increasing very slowly due to the length of the shutdown.

SONIA (Bahamas)

Port of Spain, Jan 21 — The following statement, from the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, appears in local newspapers today: The Authority regrets that passenger ro/ro *Sonia* did not sail on Jan 18 as promised. This was due to the fact that solving the technical problem turned out to be more time consuming than previously envisaged. Management is monitoring the situation and will continue to furnish status reports to both the line minister and the Chairman of the Board. The public is informed that the contract with ISP provides for suspension of lease payments for the period that the vessel is out of service and for ISP to undertake all repairs to the vessel. We wish to reassure the public that in spite of this setback the

sea bridge will continue uninterruptedly with the three vessels *Panorama*, *Beauport* and *The Cat*. We regret any inconvenience caused to persons who had purchased tickets for *Sonia* and be assured that we are working assiduously to return the vessel to service in the shortest possible time. — Lloyd's Agents.

SOUTHERN HARRIER

Cape Town, Jan 21 — As at Jan 15, fishing *Southern Harrier* was still lying sunk at Berth 702, Cape Town. — Lloyd's Agents.

STADIONGRACHT (Netherlands)

Wilmington, Jan 21 — General cargo *Stadiongracht* arrived Wilmington Jan 20. — Lloyd's Agents.

Wilmington, Jan 24 — General cargo *Stadiongracht* sailed Wilmington Jan 21. — Lloyd's Agents.

SUSANNE (Germany)

Hamburg, Jan 21 — Trawler *Susanne* arrived Cuxhaven 0105, Jan 14, departing 1610 hrs later the same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

SVEAFJELL (Norway)

Trondheim, Jan 20 — General cargo *Sveafjell* is still at Kvernhusvik Shipyard. There is no further news regarding its departure. — Lloyd's Agents.

Trondheim, Jan 26 — General cargo *Sveafjell* is still at Kvernhusvik Shipyard, Hitra. The vessel's departure has been delayed due to financial problems. — Lloyd's Agents.

TASMAN ENDEAVOUR (Hong Kong)

Singapore, Jan 21 — General cargo *Tasman Endeavour* is currently at Hitachi Shipyard Quay No 1, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

TERNINGEN II (Norway)

Trondheim, Jan 20 — The repair yard estimate to complete repairs to general cargo *Terningen II* on/about Feb 4. — Lloyd's Agents.

Trondheim, Jan 26 — General cargo *Terningen II* still expects to complete repairs around Feb 4. — Lloyd's Agents.

THEOFILOS (Greece)

London, Jan 24 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Passenger ro/ro *Theofilos* (19212 gt, built 1975) experienced problems with its starboard propeller at 0435, Jan 21, while manoeuvring to berth at Chios, and lightly contacted the quay as a result. Following the incident, the vessel berthed safely and the passengers were not injured. Following a survey by the marine inspectorate and the issuing of a class maintain certificate, the vessel departed at 0625 the same day for Mytilene, with 188 passengers, 20 trucks and 18 motorcycles on board.

THRASYVOULOS V (Greece)

London, Jan 20 — Bulk *Thrasyvoulos V* (37094 gt, built 1984) struck the dock fender while berthing alongside the dock in Esquimalt, BC, in lat 48 25.59N, long 123 25.59W, on Nov 25. The shell plating in way of No.4 FOTP became holed and dents in way of holds 1, 2 and 3. All 50 cm above waterline.

TIGER III (New Zealand)

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: An engine from written-off passenger *Tiger III* will be removed from the wreckage to find out why it failed. The skipper could not stop the \$2 million ferry being rammed into the rocks and within minutes the port hull had filled with water. The ferry was declared a total loss but it took a month to remove the wreckage from the rocks. Fullers Bay of Islands chief executive Kit Nixon told NZPA today the ferry would not go back to sea. He said an independent engineer would remove the port engine in the next few days in an effort to find out why it failed and led to the loss of the vessel. "There are lots of questions and they will be answered by the official investigation." New Zealand Diving and Salvage managing director Dougal Fergus said the aluminium ferry had been cut into several big pieces. His team of three divers and four other workers removed the superstructure before a barge lifted the hull off the rocks which were jutting up through it.

TOR DANIA (NIS)

See *Amenity*

TOR DANIA (NIS)

See *Amenity*.

TRANSFER (Antigua & Barbuda)

Belize City, Jan 20 — Part c.c. *Transfer* is still aground. Its engine-room is now flooded. The entire crew have abandoned the vessel. An attempt is being made to transfer the bunker to another vessel, which is moored alongside; however, the progress is difficult due to very rough seas. — Lloyd's Agents.

Belize City, Jan 24 — Bunkers have been partially removed from part c.c. *Transfer*. It is expected that all will have been taken off within the week. It is understood that the fuel is being pumped into a barge moored alongside *Transfer*. At the moment, the ocean-tug, with which the operation is being carried out, is at the port of Belize City to refuel. This also has some problem, since the port officials/customs personnel are on a go-slow, work to rule. There exists a dispute with the local unions and the Government of Belize. With regard to salvage of the vessel it is understood that todate no contract has yet been awarded. — Lloyd's Agents.

ULLA

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: A report by Umit Sahin, public health specialist, indicates general cargo *Ulla*, which has not been raised from the Iskenderun Gulf from where it sank, has hit fish sales because of chromium danger. Fishermen state that although fish prices have fallen by 50%, fish demand abroad and home almost has come to a halt. *Ulla* carrying 2,200 tons of toxic wastes sank five months ago.

VICUNA (Chile)

Santos, Jan 24 — Following received from Sub-agents Paranagua: The bow of chemical/oil carrier *Vicuna* was cut and removed from the shipwreck last week to a barge. The Brazilian environmental authorities did not allow the bow to be stored at Pontal do Parana area to avoid

eventual contamination by oil. The piece will be cut into small pieces in the barge. It was reported that Smit Tak will try to remove the main engine and commence to cut the hull into three to five pieces. — Lloyd's Agents.

VIVITA (Malta)

Tallinn, Jan 24 — General cargo *Vivita* (2120 gt, built 1981) is lying afloat at the Vene-Balti Harbour, premises of Tallinn Shipyard, under repairs. The vessel had sustained serious damage to the main engine crankshaft on Jul 31, 2004. — Lloyd's Agents.



UNITED KINGDOM

Falmouth, Jan 26 — General cargo *Delvina* was released from detention and sailed Falmouth 1500, Jan 25, bound for Turkey via Gibraltar. — Lloyd's Agents.



ABDUL RAHMAN (Lebanon)

London, Jan 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The government of Honduras today released Canadian-owned, Lebanese-flagged general cargo *Abdul Rahman* that had been held for 59 days after officials discovered an improperly reported cargo of explosives. The director of prosecutors, Danelia Ferrera, said a criminal case against the vessel's operators will continue, but *Abdul Rahman* was being allowed to depart without its cargo. "The explosives will stay in Honduras because they are part of the crime that is being investigated," she said. "The ship was held because the captain did not give notice of the type of cargo it transported," she said. She identified the vessel's owner as Ozor Ziad. The vessel has been held since arriving at Puerto Cortes on Nov 23. Officials discovered 48 containers packed with blasting material and fuses that investigators later said were ill-packed. The vessel was moved and held 10 nautical miles offshore, although it was later moved back to a dock at the port. The vessel's Canadian owner, its Egyptian captain and a first officer from the Sudan were charged by Honduran prosecutors with illegally transporting explosives and threatening the environmental security of Puerto Cortes. They were fined about \$12,340 Cdn.

CAPE ENDURANCE (Panama)

Cape Town, Jan 21 — As at Jan 15, standby safety vessel *Cape Endurance* remains under arrest at Cape Town. — Lloyd's Agents.

EMIR (Turkey)

Taranto, Jan 24 — General cargo *Emir* is still laid up at Cantieri Navali Stanisci, in Taranto, under judicial seizure. At present the vessel's destiny remains uncertain, but it is believed it will be scrapped once final judgement is pronounced. — Lloyd's Agents.

FISHING VESSEL DETAINED BY REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: The Naval Service Patrol Vessel *LE Roisin* has detained an Irish-registered vessel for alleged breach of fishing regulations. The boat was detained at approximately 1700, yesterday, about 30 miles west of Killybegs in Co Donegal. The fishing vessel has been escorted to Killybegs, where legal proceedings and further investigations are ongoing.

HIGHLANDER

Cape Town, Jan 21 — As of Jan 15, fishing *Highlander* was still lying at Berth LW4, at Cape Town, under detention. — Lloyd's Agents.

JIHAN (Comoros)

London, Jan 24 — General cargo *Jihan* sailed Limassol Jan 15 and subsequently arrived Danmietta Jan 17.

MARK AMAY (Republic of Ireland)

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: The Naval Service has detained an Irish-registered trawler off the south-west coast for alleged breaches of fishing regulations. Fishing *Mark Amay* (600 gt, built 2000) was detained by patrol vessel *LE Roisin* around 190 nautical miles west of Mizen Head this morning and is currently being escorted to port in Cobh. The vessel will be inspected by officials from the Department of the Marine when it arrives in the Co Cork town early tomorrow.

NAVIGATOR

Cape Town, Jan 21 — As at Jan 15, tug/supply *Navigator* was still lying at Berth No.6, in Cape Town, under arrest. — Lloyd's Agents.

RIKA (Estonia)

Tallinn, Jan 21 — General cargo *Rika* (486 gt, built 1958) was arrested due to unpaid wages in Sep 2003 and is presently lying afloat, without anyone on board, at Meeruse Harbour, Tallinn. The owners have reportedly abandoned the ship, which we understand has now been offered for sale, by the bailiff. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Rika* arrived Tallinn Jul 12, 2003.)



JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated Jan 20, states: The main water pipeline in north-west Johannesburg has burst leaving several suburbs without water, the city's

water supplier said today. Spokesperson for Johannesburg Water, Jameel Chad, said staff had been on site since this afternoon trying to fix the problem. "We are hoping to have the water restored by tomorrow (Friday) morning, if all goes well," he said. The affected areas include part of Fourways, Diepsloot, Dainfern, and Witkoppen. "Since this is the main pipeline, it is highly pressured. Therefore we can not rush the repair work as it could even cause more inconvenience for the residents". Chad said there were three water tankers to provide to the suburbs and two additional tankers for Diepsloot.

SARUPATHAR BONGALIGAON, INDIA

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



DONG NAI RIVER, VIETNAM

See *Kasco* under "Marine."

PEARL CITY, HAWAII, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: About two-point-three million gallons of sewage spilled out from Pearl City Wastewater pumping station yesterday. The spill is among Oahu's worst spills in recent years. The spill, which began at about noon, damaged several homes when sewage backed up inside them. Chief of the city's wastewater division, Athan Adachi, says improvements were being made at the pump station when a contractor opened a pressurized sewage pipe causing the spill. Adachi says about one-point-four million gallons of the sewage wound up in Waiawa Stream and Pearl Harbour's Middle Loch. Flow from the spill was stopped by about 1830, last night.

SALALAH, OMAN

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Pollution control authorities have swung into action to contain an oil spill that occurred when a routine bunkering operation went awry at the Port of Salalah. Around three tonnes of heavy fuel oil spilled into the harbour basin when c.c. *Greenwich Maersk* (50698 gt, built 2000) was being fuelled on Wednesday night (Jan 19), according to a senior official. The head of Oman's pollution control apparatus, who has rushed to Salalah to oversee the cleanup operation, described the leak as "moderate". Sulaiman bin Mohammed al Busaidi, Superintendent General of Pollution Control at the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment & Water Resources, said the spill was now under control, with emergency crews working non-stop from the outset of the incident to clean up areas soiled by the heavy oil. It is learnt that human error is to blame for the oil spill. *Greenwich Maersk* was allowed to depart Salalah on Wednesday night after furnishing insurance guarantees to underwrite costs towards pollution

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damage, cleanup, penalties, and so on, the official said. While much of the spill was contained immediately after the incident, part of the oil that was trapped between the vessel and the jetty however managed to escape into the waters beyond the harbour basin. The resulting slick partly ended up at the adjoining Raysut fishing jetty and along the beach near the Hilton Salalah resort. "We are now focusing our efforts on tackling pollution along the beach and around the port area," said Al Busaidi. "Our objective is to contain the oil within one area, but heavy fuel oil is such that it is less predictable to handle. We have used chemical dispersants and other mechanical means to combat the spill, which is now under control." A number of ships and craft that were berthed in the harbour during the spill were also left with heavy fuel oil coating their hulls. Salalah Port Services, which operates and manages the Port of Salalah, is now engaged in cleaning these vessels, it is learnt. Underscoring efforts to bring about a speedy and successful resolution of the crisis, a special task force has now been set up under Al Busaidi's leadership, to coordinate the anti-pollution and cleanup drive involving multiple government and public sector agencies. Towards this end, the pollution control apparatus has shifted its headquarters from Muscat to Salalah for the duration of the operation, the official stated. Yesterday, specialist pollution control equipment supplied by Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) and other agencies was despatched to Salalah for deployment in the emergency effort. While part of the gear was airfreighted to Salalah early yesterday, another batch of equipment was trucked in a 40-foot transporter. Both sets of equipment have since been pressed into service, said Al Busaidi. "The pollution control and cleanup effort is ongoing. We are continuously monitoring the situation, and if the need arises, we will also consider seeking assistance from neighbouring countries, such as the United Arab Emirates," the official added.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: Authorities in Oman may seek assistance from United Arab Emirates experts to contain an oil spill near the Port of Salalah. More than three tonnes of heavy fuel oil spilled into the harbour basin when c.c. *Greenwich Maersk* was being fuelled, according to an official from Salalah. The spill was almost brought under control on Thursday (Jan 20). The incident occurred on Wednesday night, and is believed to be one of the worst oil spills at Salalah Port in recent years. The vessel was allowed to leave Port Salalah after furnishing insurance guarantees to underwrite the costs. The slick extended to the adjoining Raysut fishing jetty and along the beach near the Hilton Salalah resort. A number of vessels berthed in the harbour were stained with a heavy fuel oil coating. Pollution control equipment supplied by Petroleum Development Oman and other agencies was immediately sent to Salalah. Ministry of Regional Municipality, Environment and Water Resources officials are busy with the clean-up effort and constantly monitoring the situation. Omani officials will seek help from agencies in the UAE if the need arises.

Karachi, Jan 23 — Oman's government said the port of Salalah had resumed operations after remaining closed for 48 hours due to an oil spill in the harbour from c.c. *Greenwich Maersk* on Wednesday (Jan 19). The vessel has already departed after submitting a guarantee. Salalah Port Services ordered the closure of the transshipment terminal to new shipping after about three tonnes of heavy fuel oil spilled into the harbour during a routine bunkering operation. According to local media reports, the spill triggered a major pollution control and clean-up exercise by the authorities. Officials of the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment & Water Resources set up a task force bringing together the capabilities of several government and public sector agencies, including the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment & Water Resources, the Ministry of Transport & Communications, the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard, and Salalah Port Services. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Muscat, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: A temporary closure of the Port of Salalah, sparked by an oil spill in the harbour, was due to be partially lifted last night after a berth was made safe for shipping, the head of Oman's pollution control apparatus said. Booms and pollution containment equipment were deployed to keep the floating oil in check within the port area. In the meanwhile, arriving container ships and other vessels have been either diverted to neighbouring ports or asked to wait in the anchorage area outside the port. The beach area adjoining the Hilton Salalah Resort was given a clean bill of health by the authorities after anti-pollution crew completed a mop-up of the minor quantities of oil that ended up along that stretch.

Muscat, Jan 24 — A local press report states: Officials have launched an investigation into last week's oil spill that partially crippled transshipment operations at the Port of Salalah and also triggered a major pollution control and clean-up exercise. Berth capacity at the terminal remains cut by half, with only two of the port's four container berths now open to maritime traffic. The other berths remain off-bounds to shipping as the authorities pursue an urgent clean-up of the oil-contaminated harbour basin, Oman's pollution control chief Sulaiman bin Mohammed al Busaidi said. The disruption followed last Tuesday night's oil spill in the harbour basin during a routine bunkering operation. Around three tonnes of heavy fuel oil leaked into the harbour when c.c. *Greenwich Maersk*, operated by Maersk-Sealand, was being fuelled by a bunkering craft. The spill, blamed on "human error" on the part of the concerned crew of *Maersk Greenwich*, fouled up other ships within the harbour as well as contaminated berths and much of the basin. In a major emergency operation that followed, a task force was scrambled bringing together the anti-pollution capabilities of several government and public sector agencies, including the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment & Water Resources, the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard, and Salalah Port Services (which operates and

manages the Port of Salalah). Al Busaidi, who heads the task force, also temporarily relocated his headquarters from Muscat to Salalah to oversee the operation. A number of vessels were diverted to neighbouring ports or advised to remain in anchorage while the port remained closed for at least 48 hours to facilitate a huge clean-up within the basin. The measure was necessitated by concerns that any ship contaminated with oil cannot enter international waters or call at a foreign port. Such vessels are liable to severe penalties and criminal action under international maritime law, Al Busaidi explained. On Saturday, Jan 23, new vessel calls were permitted for the first time since the crisis after Berth No 1, scrubbed screen of polluting oil, was declared safe for shipping. A second berth (No 4) was opened for traffic later that evening, while frenetic efforts are underway to free up the remaining berths as well, Al Busaidi said. Asked how long it would take for the port to be declared completely pollution-free, the official replied: "I reckon it would take between seven to 10 days for us to issue a clean bill of health, upon which normal operations can be fully restored at the Port of Salalah. Ships are now calling at Berths 1 and 4, which are cleaned of any pollution. Nevertheless, as an added precaution, we are placing booms around these vessels to prevent any stray contamination fouling their hulls." With the partial opening of the port, Salalah Port Services (SPS) is working at a frenzied pace to turnaround arriving ships and clear the backlog of vessels lying in anchorage, Al Busaidi said. As of yesterday, around seven ships remained in anchorage. Authorities have also stopped rerouting ships to other ports, optimistic they can now handle all scheduled traffic at Salalah itself. Meanwhile, the authorities have initiated an official investigation into the oil spill, Al Busaidi, who is Superintendent General of Pollution Control at the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment & Water Resources, said. Separate enquiries are also under way by SPS, as well as the company that operates the bunkering service at the Port of Salalah. *Maersk Greenwich*, whose crew have been blamed for the spill, was allowed to depart after furnishing insurance guarantees undertaking to pick up the clean-up bill and pay other costs as well. Meanwhile, a round-the-clock clean-up effort, centring on the port basin area, is now in its fifth day. "The operation is progressing very well, with the weather working so far in our favour. Our teams are working day and night, with the aid of powerful lights for night-time operations. We have also enlisted the services of specialists from abroad to support the clean-up, given the scale of the operation and the need to restore normality at the port as quickly as possible," the official stated. On Saturday, equipment and personnel from a company based at Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates arrived in Salalah to help in the clean-up of four ships whose hulls were left smeared with oil during last week's spill. The vessels concerned were inside the port area when the spill occurred, it is learnt. Earlier, Petroleum Development Oman had rushed booms and dispersant equipment to help local pollution control staff deal with

the spill. Providentially, the leak of heavy fuel oil has caused no environmental damage within or outside the harbour, according to Al Busaidi. Part of the slick that managed to escape from the harbour basin at the outset of the crisis and threatened Raysut's sandy beaches, was contained by a combination of natural and human means. Much of this contamination was caught in seaweed before it ended up on the beach, while booms and dispersants tackled the rest. "We have completed a physical inspection of the shores adjoining the port. There is no pollution on the beaches, neither has any oil reached the fishing jetty at Raysut. The contamination is now limited to the port basin, which is now the focus of our ongoing clean-up operation," Al Busaidi explained. The official voiced appreciation for the unstinted help extended by the various government, public sector and private agencies in the cleanup exercise, despite the Eid al Adha holiday.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COAST, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Investigators are testing oil wiped from the coated bodies of birds to try to determine the origin of a mysterious oil spill somewhere along a 90-mile stretch of the Southern California coast. More than 1,100 birds have been brought to a bird care centre in San Pedro, and a sea lion was taken to a nearby marine mammal centre. Officials are searching for the spill somewhere between Venice and Santa Barbara County. Possible sources of the oil include pipes broken in mudslides, natural seepage exacerbated by seismic activity, or even cars and trucks submerged in floods, officials said. "We've done several overflights. We haven't been able to find any source at all," Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer Lance Jones said. Finding a source is especially difficult because there does not seem to be one spot in the water with a high concentration of oil. State wildlife officials were only tipped off to the problem when oil-coated birds were found on shore. "Unlike a lot of spills, there isn't a big oil slick out in the bay," said Dana Michaels, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Fish and Game's Office of Spill Prevention and Response. A total of 1,141 live birds had been taken to the Los Angeles Oiled Bird Care and Education Centre in San Pedro. Investigators are intrigued by the timing of the spill, which coincided with heavy rains and mudslides. "It could just be from the heavy runoff that washed dirt down and maybe old oil that was spilled from production sites or some really old wells," Michaels said. (See "United States under Weather & Navigation in issue of Jan 17.)

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: A mysterious oil spill that's believed to have caused more bird injuries and deaths than any spill in the state in 15 years most likely came from an onshore source in Ventura County, state officials said Friday. An estimated 3,000 to 5,000 seabirds, mostly Western grebes, were injured or killed by the spill, officials said. More than 1,400 of the birds were brought to the Los Angeles Oiled Bird Care and Education Centre in San Pedro, where University of California at Davis veterinarians and volunteers tried to

rehabilitate the injured ones. While further tests will be needed to determine the source, state officials believe the spill occurred in Ventura County because the oil-coated birds were first spotted there Jan 11. Also, they said, the largest number of dead and injured birds came from Ventura County. Kenneth Mayer, scientific branch chief of the state Fish and Game Department's Office of Spill Prevention and Response, said the tarry substance removed from the birds is "weathered" crude oil, or oil exposed to the air and the environment for some time. As a result, he said it most likely came from an onshore source, rather than offshore oil production or naturally occurring seeps of oil. He said the oil most likely washed into the ocean in last week's rainstorms. "It came out in the environment near the shore because that is where these grebes live," he said. Ventura County was one of the hardest-hit areas during the 15 days of record-setting rainstorms in Southern California in late December and early January. Lisa Curtis, Office of Spill Prevention and Response deputy administrator, said so many roads were washed out or blocked that many oil companies haven't been able to get to their drilling operations to determine if oil has spilled. In the meantime, bird rescuers celebrated the release of 19 seabirds Friday (Jan 21), a sign that they're beginning to turn the corner in the rescue efforts. "There are still a lot of challenges ahead," said UC-Davis wildlife veterinarian Greg Massey. "At least we are not getting 200 to 300 birds a day in now. We can focus on those we already have." Grebes are not endangered, but their numbers have been dwindling, making them a "species of special concern." They spend their lives on the water. Their feathers link together, like Velcro, to create a watertight covering against icy waters. Massey said oil on their feathers is "like a rip in a diver's dry suit." The feathers can't stick together anymore. The cold water seeps in. At the Oiled Bird Care and Education Center, volunteers placed injured birds in pens to be warmed, fed and hydrated. As soon as blood tests showed the birds were stable, volunteers washed them in tubs of soapy water. Using toothbrushes and cotton swabs, they scrubbed away every spot of oil on the squealing birds' bodies. At nearby Cabrillo Beach on Friday, state officials gently lowered the cleaned seabirds into the ocean's edge. Each flapped its wings furiously, desperate to get away from the humans who had saved it from a certain death.

UNALASKA ISLAND, ALASKA, UNITED STATES

See *Selendang Ayu* under "Marine."



AUSTRALIA

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: A huge clean-up effort is underway across New South Wales after violent storms lashed the north-west and Riverina regions, lifting roofs off houses

and cutting electricity to more than 3,000 households. More than 600 people had contacted the State Emergency Service for assistance since the severe line of storms hit yesterday afternoon, an SES spokesman said. Among the worst hit areas of the state was Narrabri in the north west and the Riverina district, he said. "There was a very, very small but intense windstorm that swept through the town of Narrabri and left it without power all night." My understanding is that there are some 20 homes that have been partially or completely unroofed and are completely uninhabitable." The Riverina region including Wagga Wagga and Griffith were also badly hit by the storms as was the NSW south coast, the Shoalhaven area and Campbelltown in Sydney's south-west. An Integral Energy spokeswoman said about 3,000 customers scattered across the state were without power today, although efforts were being made to fix the problem as soon as possible. Those without power were mostly in areas such as Camden, Narellan and Moss Vale. The spokeswoman warned people to stay away from any power lines that had been downed during the storms. Wind gusts of up to 124 kmh were recorded at Yanco, in the Riverina, just before 1300, AEDT, the Bureau of Meteorology said. The storms dumped hail and caused widespread mayhem in the Riverina before moving east and striking the southern tablelands, Illawarra and parts of Sydney. Strong winds flipped a seaplane over as it attempted to take off in Sydney Harbour. The pilot of the seaplane was trying to take off from Rose Bay, in the city's east, when a strong gust of wind caused a wing to dip about 1740, AEDT, yesterday. Another gust of wind caused the wing to touch the water and the aircraft flipped over, police said. The pilot and three passengers all escaped uninjured. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau was investigating the incident. In Griffith, the TAFE college lost part of its roof and there were numerous reports of damage to farmhouses, the State Emergency Service said. Hailstones up to three centimetres in diameter fell in Leeton and there was localised flooding in Captains Flat, near Canberra, weather bureau meteorologist Peter Dunda said. The small town of Culcairn, near the Victorian border, received roughly its average monthly rainfall yesterday when storms dumped 45 millimetres in two-and-a-half hours, Mr Dunda said. Flights out of Sydney airport were delayed by 30 minutes because baggage handlers could not go out on the tarmac when there was lightning around, Sydney Airport Corporation said. A spokesman for the ACT Emergency Services Authority said the SES received 19 calls for help around Canberra, mainly in the southern and western suburbs. Country Energy spokeswoman Nicole Leedham said up to 8,000 customers were without power in Temora, Coolamon, Junee, Cootamundra and West Wyalong. "We think we've had a direct lightning strike on one of the main feeders into Temora," she said. "We're working to get the power up and running and all available crews are out." A spokeswoman for Integral Energy said about 22,000 homes and businesses were without power in the Illawarra, southern highlands and Blue

Mountains areas. "We've got crews out assessing the damage and repairing it," she said. Mr Dunda said the storms were caused by an intense low which developed near Adelaide yesterday and moved east across NSW. "We expect that the thunderstorm activity will spread further east towards Sydney and coastal areas and clear up overnight," he said. Sydney train commuters faced delays heading home as the storms took their toll on the city's rail network. CityRail said trains were delayed by up to 30 minutes on the Blue Mountains line after lightning strikes damaged equipment at Blackheath. On the south coast line, buses were replacing trains between Waterfall and Corrimall, Oak Flats and Kiama, and supplementing trains between Kiama and Bomaderry.

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 11,000 homes are without power in South-East Queensland after storms with large hailstones lashed the region. Hundreds of lightning strikes were recorded. Energex crews were working to restore power at 2000, AEST, after a series of storms carved a path of destruction from the Darling Downs to Brisbane. The storms interrupted the one-day cricket match at the Gabba just five overs into Australia's run chase against West Indies. More storms were forecast to hit the region later tonight. About 56 suburbs and townships in and west of Brisbane lost power after powerlines came down and trees fell into homes. Winds reached speeds of 80km/h in the south-western suburb of Amberley, a weather spokeswoman said. State Emergency Services volunteers conducted traffic control at Willowbank during peak hour after downed powerlines closed the Cunningham Highway, west of Brisbane. Police were later able to reopen the road. Residents were spared after the storm warnings were downgraded within an hour. A severe thunderstorm warning issued by Bureau of Meteorology at 1800, AEST was cancelled at 1900, AEST. Energex said the areas hit worst by power loss were in Ipswich and surrounding areas, with 7639 losing power.

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Dozens of Energex crews have been kept busy restoring power to thousands of users overnight, after a series of damaging storm cells swept across the south-east corner of Queensland yesterday. Crews are working to restore power to 300 customers in the Lockyer Valley, west of Brisbane. Energex says homes at Murphy's Creek and Glenore Grove should have their power restored by mid morning. In the state's north rain continues to fall but not as heavily as in previous days. Cairns has seen the most rain since yesterday morning with 127 mm, the Low Isles off Port Douglas received 92. The wet weather is being generated by a low pressure system over Cape York.

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Energex crews have been worked throughout the night to reconnect customers affected by a line of storms which swept across the Queensland's south-east corner last night. At its peak the storms blacked out 16,000 homes and businesses. The efforts overnight of Energex crews to fix the faults were hampered by heavy rain and lightning bolts. Currently Energex 98% of users back on

line, with 600 customers without power at Ipswich and surrounding areas. Other less affected areas include Burpengary and Morayfield on Brisbane's north and Lockyer Valley west of the city. Energex is also reconnecting homes at Ascot, Hamilton and Hendra, on Brisbane's inner north, after power lines came down at local intersections this morning. The cause was a bird flying into power lines.

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Some wine grape growers around New South Wales are reporting losses of up to 50% due to storm damage. One of the regions worst hit by Thursday's (Jan 19) storms was the Riverina, where the grapes were just ripe for harvesting. Chief executive of the Winegrapes Marketing Board Brian Simpson says some growers have reported losses of up to 50%, but on average most have lost about 10%. He says some have reported hail the size of tennis balls, but the wind was the most destructive force. "There are growers that are reporting that they've had whole rows blown over," Mr Simpson said. The Mudgee wine district has suffered losses of about 100 tonnes of fruit, worth about \$100,000.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Storms in Sydney have caused a number of fires and brought a tree down on a home in the western suburbs. Integral Energy says crews are working to restore power to about 16,000 homes from Penrith to Dundas. Fire Superintendent Ian Krimmer says the storms brought powerlines down at Emu Plains, Penrith, Leftbridge Park and Blacktown. The State Emergency Service and the fire brigade say they have received calls for help from people living in the western and northern suburbs, particularly in the Penrith and Mount Druitt area. SuperIntendent Krimmer says crews have contained a number small fires caused by lightning.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Heavy rain and strong winds are currently affecting North Queensland. Abbot Point, Dalrymple Bay and Hay Point Coal Terminals have been affected. Numerous roads in North Queensland are also cut. This is as a result of a tropical low off the coast. Winds of 25-33 knots are expected along the North Queensland coast. At Abbot Point, bulk *Sage Sagittareus* currently alongside and loading has just resumed after a 36-hour suspension of loading operations due to extremely heavy rain. This will affect the one vessel currently at anchor. *Sage Sagittareus* is now scheduled to sail at 0700 hrs, Jan 25, provided the weather remains fair. At Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal bulk *Stellar Navigator* and bulk *Tenyo* are alongside and currently not loading. Loading will resume when the weather improves. The port of Hay Point is currently officially open. The two terminals within the port have been affected. Loading at Hay Point is currently suspended. The two vessels currently alongside, bulk *Saraji Trader* and bulk *Pacific Tiara*, will sail today with no further shipping movements expected today. Berthing of vessels at Hay Point will be reviewed tomorrow (Jan 25). At this stage, Gladstone is continuing to work normally.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Bad weather and heavy rain

continues to affect the North Queensland coal terminals. The Abbot Point Coal Terminal continues to operate. The loading of bulk *Sage Sagittareus* continues, but loading rates are reduced due to heavy rain. The vessel is scheduled to depart later today. The one vessel currently at anchor is expected to berth on the sailing of the vessel currently on the berth. Both Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay coal terminals remain closed and the situation will again be reviewed on tomorrow morning (Jan 26). A severe weather warning is still current with winds expected to reach 30-40 knots today with a swell of 2.5-3.5 metres. At this stage, the Harbour Master at the Port of Hay Point has not closed the port. Gladstone continues to operate as normal.

CANADA

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: Travel for trains, aircraft and automobiles was disrupted across most of southern Ontario today by a deep blanket of snow and arctic temperatures. Between 15 and 30 cm of snow was forecast for the cities of Windsor and Belleville. Black ice and whiteouts caused at least 150 collisions on Ontario streets and highways. Police warned Toronto residents to stay off the roads and highways, and most of them did. Air travel out of Pearson International Airport was also delayed.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: A fierce blizzard that left much of Atlantic Canada buried under half-a-metre of snow was expected to keep battering the region tomorrow, especially parts of Cape Breton and Newfoundland. The storm, the third blizzard to hit the East Coast in a week, pummelled Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and much of New Brunswick today with heavy snow and gusting winds, disrupting flights in all three provinces. The storm today played havoc with transportation services, as flights at airports in Halifax, Charlottetown and Saint John, N.B., were cancelled until tomorrow morning. "The problem is visibility for the pilots," said Gina Connell, a spokeswoman for the Halifax airport authority. "With the blowing snow it makes it very difficult." The road conditions were also treacherous, and a six-car pile up on Highway 1 between Sussex and Saint John, N.B., was being blamed on whiteout conditions, ATV News reported. Snow removal crews were expected to work through the night, although plows had been ordered off several sections of highway in Nova Scotia because of the hazardous conditions. Wind gusts reached 128 kilometers per hour in southern Nova Scotia, and windchill in the region was reaching -35 C, according to forecasters. While the snow was expected to come to an end in much of the region overnight, the winds were to continue into tomorrow. The weekend storm, which rolled through Ontario yesterday before reaching Atlantic Canada, followed two other heavy snowfalls on the East Coast, one last Monday, followed by a second Thursday. The latest storm, the strongest of the three blasts from Old Man Winter, drew comparisons with another blizzard that hit the region in February 2004. Comparing storms to the White Juan blizzard has become common since the record-setting storm dropped almost a metre of snow on

some parts of the region last year. "It's certainly starting to look like the February blizzard of 2004," said Mike Myette of Nova Scotia's Emergency Measures Organization. "People should be prepared to look after themselves for a period of about 72 hours," said Myette. "A battery operated flashlight and a battery operated radio, really at this point in time, with what we've gone through have to be key elements in every household."

CROATIA

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Heavy snowfall today affected road and maritime traffic throughout Croatia, authorities said. The snow, which has been falling for more than 24 hours, forced the shutdown of some roads to trucks, including in the central town of Gorski Kotar, where 64 centimetres of snow fell. Traffic was also affected on the highway between Zagreb and Split as well as in the northern region of Bjelovar, and between Rijeka and Zadar. Heavy winds also forced authorities to suspend ferry traffic between the mainland and the islands of Pag, Cres and Krk.

GUYANA

Georgetown, Guyana, Jan 20 — Guyana appealed to the international community today to send food, boats, power generators and water pumps to help thousands of its inhabitants forced from their homes by the worst floods in more than a century. President Bharrat Jagdeo's government made the appeal to diplomats in Georgetown after declaring the capital and outlying areas disaster zones, government officials said. In the heaviest rains to hit the South American state in more than 100 years, at least one person drowned and thousands more were sheltering in schools and churches to escape floodwaters that swamped Georgetown and settlements to the east and west on the Atlantic coast. A Brazilian military aircraft was due to fly in a donation of 16 tonnes of food today, Brazil's embassy said. Guyana's army was helping to distribute food to flood victims, using boats to reach areas cut off by the water. The US Embassy in Georgetown, which was closed earlier this week because of the floods, said it was allowing the voluntary evacuation of non-essential personnel and families. It warned Americans who chose to stay that the floods had disrupted power and traffic and police had reported thieves were taking advantage of the floods to try to rob motorists. — Reuters.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A US aid official rejected claims that donors have been slow to respond to the severe flooding in Guyana, saying the first US relief shipment would arrive tomorrow. The South American nation last week appealed for international aid after more than 40 inches of rain in three weeks — the most in a century — caused flooding that killed at least six people and drove thousands from their homes. President Bharrat Jagdeo complained yesterday about the pace of international relief efforts, saying most aid agencies and donors have been sending assessment teams before approving aid. Mike Sarhan, mission director of the US

Agency for International Development in Guyana, rejected such claims, saying complete information on specific needs after the rains was not immediately available. "But now we have a matrix and things should start to move a little quicker," he said. The supplies will include 10,000 blankets, hygiene kits and water cans, Sarhan said today. Flood waters continued to recede today, but forecasters said there could be more rain this week. Jagdeo has said the floods had affected more than half the population of 750,000. Most Guyanese live on the low-lying coast.

IRAQ

London, Jan 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The weather has improved in the area of Basrah Oil Terminal. Terminal tugs left Umm Qasr at 0600 hrs, this morning with berthing scheduled to recommence at 1600 hrs, today.

NORTHERN EUROPE

London, Jan 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The Latvian timber industry faces huge losses of more than one hundred million euros due to a devastating storm that raged across northern Europe earlier this month, Latvian Agriculture Minister said today. "According to a rough estimate, losses from the storm in Latvia on Jan 9 stand at about 70-90 million lats (100 million euros-128 million euros)," Martins Roze, Latvian Agriculture minister said. "These are rough estimates, we will make them more precise during the forthcoming weeks, but it shows the extent of the huge damages done by the storm," Roze said. At least 7.3 million cubic metres of wood came down during the storm, according to estimates by the Latvian state forest service. Northern Europe, including the Baltic states, was lashed by the storm on Jan 9, which packed winds of up to 144 kilometres per hour. Huge damages have also been done to electricity industry. The Latvian government declared a national energy crisis on Jan 9, allowing it to deploy all emergency services to repair damage to the power network since most of the country was left without electricity. Losses still has not been estimated for the power industry.

London, Jan 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Last week's storms are now estimated to have caused more than £13m damage to farms, homes and businesses insured by NFU Mutual. The rural insurer has increased its estimate following the gales which struck Northern Ireland, the Western Isles and northern Scotland last Tuesday (Jan 11), and a clearer picture is emerging of the damage caused by the previous weekend's storms. "It looks likely that over 4,000 of our policyholders have suffered damage in the storms and that the bill could exceed £13m, making it the worst UK weather event since October 2000 when storms and floods led to policyholders' claims totalling £20m," said David Sweeney, chief claims manager. "We're working flat out to help customers get repairs underway and dry out flood damaged buildings. "Some of the worst damage has been reported in remote locations, such as the Western Isles, and our local office network is proving invaluable for affected people to report damage even when power and phone lines

are down. "In Stornoway, alone, our office is dealing with over 300 claims ranging from damaged roofs to farm buildings which have been completely destroyed."

ROMANIA

Bucharest, Jan 25 — Sulina Channel was closed at 1030 today due to bad weather, wind force six (strong breeze), sea state five-six. Mangalia port was also closed at 0830 today due to bad weather, wind force four-six ashore, force six-seven (near gale) offshore, sea state three-four ashore, five-six offshore. — Lloyd's Agents.

SAUDI ARABIA

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Eight people were killed after being washed away by flood waters near the western city of Medina during the worst torrential storm to hit Saudi Arabia in 20 years, newspapers reported today. Many residents of Medina were forced to leave their homes after they were flooded while a dam outside the city collapsed, isolating villages where fire brigades rescued 43 stranded people. Two pilgrims on the annual hajj pilgrimage reportedly died and 196 others suffered fractures when they fell down during rare heavy rains which lashed the Mecca region Saturday (Jan 22), partly flooding pilgrim camps in Mina and causing traffic jams.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Heavy rain and flash floods have killed 29 people in Saudi Arabia's western city of Medina, according to reports. The storm, which disrupted the last day of the annual Hajj pilgrimage, is believed to have been the worst to hit the desert kingdom in some 20 years. Regional governor Prince Muqrin bin Abdul Aziz said another 17 people were injured, al-Madina newspaper reported. The governor said the storm had caused enormous damage to roads, electricity and communications networks, but he said the floods had not affected the thousands of pilgrims who came to Medina after completing the Hajj in Mecca and Mina at the weekend. According to the Arab News paper, more than 400 buses left Mecca for Medina, taking pilgrims to visit the Prophet Mohammed's mosque and tomb in Islam's second-most sacred city. Prince Muqrin said most of the 29 people killed had underestimated the danger of walking or driving down Medina's valleys after heavy rains.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "ERNEST"

London, Jan 21 — Following received from Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of tropical cyclone "Ernest" was located near lat 16.0S, long 42.1E, approximately 340 nautical miles north-west of Antananarivo, Madagascar, and has tracked south-south-westward, or 205 degs, at 12 knots over the past six hours. The position is accurate to within 40 nautical miles and based on the centre being located by satellite. Present wind distribution: maximum sustained winds: 65 knots, gusts 80 knots. Radius of 50 knot winds: 40 nautical miles in all four quadrants. Maximum significant wave height is 25 feet. At 0600, UTC, Jan 22, the centre is predicted to be near lat 20.3S, long 41.1E, with maximum sustained winds of 90 knots, with gusts to 110 knots.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Tropical cyclone “Ernest” was downgraded to a tropical storm before it reached southern Madagascar today, packing winds of 100km/h. The storm system was earlier expected to miss the Indian Ocean state but changed direction and reached Tsiombe district at around 1500 hrs, meteorologist Hubert Andriamparison told reporters. The storm is moving at about 22km/h and has gusts of up to 150km/h, he said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or material damage.

London, Jan 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today the centre of tropical cyclone “Ernest” was within a 20 nautical mile radius of lat 29.0S, long 49.3E. Central pressure: 987 hpa. Maximum average wind speed: 50 knots. The radius of 50 knot winds: 20 nautical miles in all four quadrants. At 0600, UTC, Jan 25, the centre is predicted to be near lat 35.8S, long 58.2E, with maximum winds of 50 knots, extratropical. As “Ernest” shifts southeastwards rather quickly, it will become extratropical very shortly. Convective activity is weakening, but winds remain strong, especially northeast of the system with the gradient effect with subtropical high pressures north of the system, added to the speed of the system.

TROPICAL CYCLONE “TIM”

London, Jan 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of tropical cyclone “Tim” was located near lat 16.1S, long 108.1E, approximately 500 nautical miles north-west of Learmonth, Australia, and has tracked westward, or 260 degs, at five knots over the past six hours. The position is accurate to within 60 nautical miles and based on the centre located by satellite. Present wind distribution: maximum sustained winds: 35 knots, gusts 45 knots. The maximum significant wave height is 12 feet. At 0600, UTC, Jan 25, the centre is predicted to be near lat 17.1S, long 105.2E, with maximum sustained winds of 40 knots and gusts to 50 knots.

London, Jan 25 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone “Tim” near lat 16.5S, long 103.7E, at 0600, UTC, Jan 25. Movement past six hours 275 deg at 14 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 30 knots with gusts to 40 knots. Dissipating as a significant tropical cyclone over water. Forecast for 1800, UTC: Position lat 16.6S, long 101.8E. Maximum sustained winds 25 knots with gusts to 35 knots. Dissipated as a significant tropical cyclone over water.

TURKEY

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Traffic in the Canakkale Strait was suspended due to dense fog this morning. In the Istanbul Strait, however, traffic resumed yesterday after being suspended on Wednesday night (Jan 19).

UNITED STATES

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of airline flights were cancelled today and fleets of road

plows were warmed up as a paralyzing snowstorm barreled out of the Midwest and spread across the northeast with a potential for up to 20 inches of snow driven by 50 mph wind. Storm warnings were posted from Wisconsin to New England, where the National Weather Service posted blizzard warnings in effect through tomorrow. By afternoon, snow was falling across a region stretching from Wisconsin and Illinois to Virginia and the New England states. One man died after falling through ice on a pond in Ohio, where two others died of apparent heart attacks while removing snow, authorities said. Temperatures in Maine fell to 36 below zero at Masardis, and Bangor dropped to a record low of 29 below. Meteorologists predicted wind up to 50 mph would push wind chill readings to 8 below zero in New York and New Jersey. Many people rushed out to stock up on supplies to ride out the storm at home. Up to a foot of snow had fallen in Wisconsin and Michigan, and wind gusted to more than 60 mph across Iowa. As much as 18 inches of snow was forecast in northern New Jersey and accumulations of up to 20 inches were possible in parts of New England and the New York City area, the weather service said. A foot was likely in northern sections of Ohio and Pennsylvania. While crews in the Midwest labored to remove what already had fallen, highway departments in the Northeast readied hundreds of plows and salt-spreading trucks. New York City cancelled all vacations for its sanitation workers and called people in on their days off to handle the snow. Kennedy International Airport had machines capable of melting 500 tons of snow an hour. If 20 inches of snow fell in New York, the cost of cleanup could hit \$20 million, but Mayor Michael Bloomberg said that was a problem for another day. The blowing snow caused frustrating delays as airlines called off flights. About 400 flights were cancelled today at Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport and dozens more were called off at the city’s Midway Airport. More than 200 people stayed the night at the two airports because of flights cancelled the night before. Even more chain-reaction cancellations were expected at Chicago and elsewhere as the storm clamped down on airports on the East Coast, said Chicago Department of Aviation spokeswoman Annette Martinez. The New York metropolitan area’s Kennedy and Newark airports had dozens of cancellations as the storm arrived this afternoon, said Port Authority spokesman Alan Hicks. LaGuardia had nearly 200 cancellations by 1400. By noon at Philadelphia International Airport, the storm had already wiped out about 25 percent of the normal load of 1,100 daily arrivals and departures. A private jet and a commuter aircraft slid off a taxiway at Pittsburgh International Airport; no one was injured. On the highways, Pennsylvania State Police reported dozens of accidents, including one involving 11 cars. New Jersey banned tractor-trailer rigs and motorcycles from the New Jersey Turnpike and slashed the speed limit to 45 mph. Detroit delayed the opening of its first annual Motown Winter Blast for several hours to give road crews a chance to clear highways.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 1,000 flights have been cancelled in America’s Midwest and North-east because of snowstorms. The worst-hit airport is Chicago’s O’Hare, with some 400 cancellations. Airports in New York, Boston and Philadelphia are also affected. Drivers have been warned of blizzards across large areas of the US - from Wisconsin to Virginia and New England. A series of power cuts have been reported and conditions are expected to get even worse, meteorologists warn. They say the collision of an cold front moving in from the Great Lakes region and warmer air from the Atlantic will produce ferocious blizzards and winds of up to 50 mph. The snow has already been falling for several hours across the North-east, with up to 21 inches of snow forecast in parts of New England and New York. Heavy snow means that already dozens of international flights to and from America’s eastern seaboard have been cancelled. Snowstorm warning have been posted across a number of cities, including New York and Boston. “This really is a dangerous storm,” New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg said at a news conference yesterday.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: A fierce winter storm expected to dump a foot of snow on the city shut down Philadelphia International Airport today for the first time in nine years. The airport was closed at 1500 hrs and will reopen at 2000 hrs. About 1,000 passengers will need to spend the night at the airport. In New Jersey, Acting Governor Richard Codey has declared a state of emergency. It is in effect from 2000 today until 0800 tomorrow. All motorists are asked to stay off the roads for that period. But both Newark Liberty International and Atlantic City airports remain open at this hour, even though a winter storm continues to dump several inches of snow and ice on the region. Some minimal delays and cancellations are being reported at both sites, so passengers are urged to call their carrier before heading out to the airport. As of this afternoon, snowfall ranged from two inches in some Pittsburgh suburbs to six inches in portions of Mercer County, about 60 miles north of Pittsburgh, and in the Laurel Highlands. At Pittsburgh International Airport, two aircraft slid off a taxi-way while trying to take off this morning. Airport officials said no one on the private jet or the commuter aircraft was injured.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: A howling blizzard slammed the Northeast today with more than two feet of snow and hurricane-strength wind gusts, halting air travel for thousands of people, keeping others off slippery highways and burying parked cars under deep drifts. Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney and Rhode Island Gov. Don Carcieri both declared states of emergency. Up to 29 inches of snow fell north of Boston, parts of New Hampshire got two feet, New York’s Catskills collected at least 20 inches and 18 inches fell on parts of Connecticut, New Jersey, Rhode Island and the eastern tip of New York’s Long Island. The weather system had earlier piled a foot of snow across parts of Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana and

northern Ohio. At least six deaths were linked to the weather, three in Ohio, two in Wisconsin and one in Pennsylvania. Wind gusted to 84 mph on Nantucket and the entire island off the south-east coast of Massachusetts and its 9,400 winter customers were plunged into darkness today. On the mainland, some 16,000 customers lost power, the utility InStar said. Smaller outages were reported elsewhere around the North-east. Because the wind blowing off the ocean coincided with a full moon and high tide, coastal communities were warned of flooding. "There's a lot of self-evacuations going on. People simply got out of Dodge," Peter Judge, spokesman for the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, said this morning. National Guard troops helped evacuate part of Scituate, 20 miles south of Boston, but morning high tide receded without significant flooding, he said. As state and city officials urged residents to stay off the roads, many people tried to take the storm in stride. Boston's Logan International Airport closed early today because snowplow crews couldn't keep up with the blinding snow. "It's more likely we'll open tomorrow morning," said Phil Orlandella, a spokesman for the airport that normally has 900 flights on a Sunday. Nearly 500 flights were cancelled this morning at the New York metropolitan area's Newark, Kennedy and LaGuardia airports, in addition to about 700 that were grounded yesterday, Port Authority officials said. Philadelphia's airport was open again today, after a shutdown and flight cancellations yesterday stranded hundreds of travellers at the terminal overnight, but more than 70 departures were cancelled. Nearly 600 flights were canceled yesterday at Chicago's O'Hare International.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: Snowdrifts 6 feet high kept some Massachusetts residents trapped in their homes and commuters across the North-east limped back to work on icy roads and packed trains today as the region struggled to dig out from a paralysing weekend blizzard. About 20 deaths were believed linked to the weather. Massachusetts saw the most snow in cities north and south of Boston. As much as 21 in of snow blanketed parts of New Jersey, where the morning commute was crippled by delays of more than an hour. Cities to the south of Boston got heavy, wet snow that that turned to ice in single-digit overnight weather, creating problems on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, where scattered power outages persisted and roads remained unplowed this afternoon. A state of emergency remained in effect for Massachusetts, but Gov. Mitt Romney ordered state employees to return to work tomorrow after giving non-essential personnel the day off today. Most Rhode Island government workers also got the day off. After a weekend in which flights were grounded from New England to Chicago, Boston's Logan International Airport reopened today after a 30-hour storm shutdown. But then it was hit by an hour-long power outage that shut down elevators and escalators. School closings were reported today from Virginia to Maine.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: The record-setting storms

this month caused at least \$27.5 million worth of damage to roads in Ventura and Los Angeles counties, though final estimates won't be available for several weeks. The next storm is expected to arrive in the Southland tomorrow night and stay through Wednesday (Jan 26.)

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: Union Pacific has re-opened the last two of five lines that were closed because of damage caused by the recent storms, which the railroad said could have cost the company some \$200 million. The two lines that have been reopened are the California "Coast Line" and the Nevada "Caliente Line." UP said traffic on both lines will be limited for a short period as final work is completed. The railroad said it expected to resume commuter operations on the "Coast Line" between Los Angeles and Oxnard today. "We are still assessing the financial impact of the storm," said Dick Davidson, chairman and chief executive officer of UP. "However, at this time our best estimate is that it could approach or even exceed \$200 million in total," he added. "About \$100 million of that would be the capital expenditure for the repairs. The remainder would hit operating income through lost revenue and higher costs. We do have insurance coverage, but there is a \$50 million deductible and it will take some time to sort this all out with our insurance carriers, so these estimates don't yet include any insurance recovery."



CHINA

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Three people have been injured as a result of earth tremors with a magnitude of five points on the Richter scale that hit the province of Yunnan in the south-west of China this morning. The quake has damaged many buildings and caused some of them to collapse. Rescue teams have been working in the calamity area. No people have been spotted yet under the debris of the ruined buildings, Xinhua New Agency said.

ECUADOR

London, Jan 25 — A report, dated Jan 24, states: A moderate earthquake occurred at 0611, UTC, today. The magnitude 5.6 event has been located near the coast of Ecuador in lat 02.35S, long 80.59W, depth 30 km.

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated Jan 25, states: A strong earthquake shook Ecuador's pacific coastal regions late today causing landslides and damage to some homes, but no casualties, the national geophysical institute said. The earthquake measured 6.1 on the open-ended Richter scale and its epicentre was located 60 km south-west of the port city of Manta, 12 km underground. It struck at 1825 hrs and lasted some 20 seconds. A few homes collapsed in Puerto Lopez, landslides and damage to some homes were reported in Salango and a wall collapsed in Manta, the institute reported in a statement. The quake

was felt in Quito, especially in high rises many of which were evacuated by their tenants.

INDONESIA

London, Jan 21 — A 5.6 earthquake, depth 10 km, was recorded at Kepulauan Talaud, Indonesia at 1647, Jan 20.

London, Jan 24 — A report, dated Jan 23, states: A strong earthquake occurred at 2010, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.3 event has been located in Sulawesi, Indonesia, in lat 01.25S, long 119.79E, depth 10 km.

Jakarta, Jan 24 — A large earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale shook Indonesia's eastern Sulawesi island today, killing one person, damaging buildings and spreading panic among residents. A large quake was also felt in the Aceh provincial capital, Banda Aceh, this morning, rattling buildings and sending residents running into the streets. One person died and another was badly injured in the Central Sulawesi quake, which hit at 0310 hrs (2110, UTC, Jan 23), police said. "We have reports of one dead and one seriously injured from the West Donggala district. In Palu, several shops have been damaged," police commissioner Victor Batara said from Central Sulawesi's provincial capital of Palu, 1,500 km north-east of Jakarta. Police went around the streets calming residents, many of whom feared a tsunami could be on its way. The coastal city of Palu is about 16 km from the quake's epicentre. At Palu's main hospital, patients fled the building in panic, some carrying intravenous drips. Residents said the earthquake had been followed by several aftershocks. Media reported the airport in Palu had been closed due to damage. — Reuters.

NEW ZEALAND

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: A 5.5 magnitude earthquake shook the Wellington region just before 0800 today. Geonet says the quake was centred 5 km from Upper Hutt, 30 km below ground. Just minutes later at 0802 hrs a second quake measuring 3.7 on the Richter scale was recorded in the same location but 25 km deep, GNS said. This morning's quakes followed a flurry of seismic activity in the lower North Island on Tuesday (Jan 18) when 10 earthquakes were recorded over a 10-hour period — the biggest reaching 5.3 on the Richter scale and centred 40 km south-east of Martinborough in the Wairarapa. GNS scientists are continuing to investigate this week's quakes and what they meant for the plates under the Wellington region.

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake struck the lower North Island of New Zealand this morning, but there are no immediate reports of injuries or damage. The Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences recorded the tremor, with a magnitude of 5.5, at 0756 hrs, 0556, AEDT. The government institute said it was centred 30 km north-east of the capital Wellington and was 30 km below ground. The earthquake shook buildings, rattled desks and set off car alarms.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

London, Jan 24 — A report, dated Jan 22, states: A strong earthquake occurred at

2030, UTC, today. The magnitude 6.4 event has been located in the Solomon Islands in lat 07.71S, long 159.46E, depth 10 km.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The United Nations Environment Programme today estimated damage from Asia's tsunami disaster to Indonesia's environment would amount to US\$675 million. The preliminary report, the first made by the UN Environment Programme on the tsunami's environmental costs, put the damage in Indonesia at Rp 5.1 trillion (\$675 million). In Aceh province alone, the disaster damaged 25,000 hectares of mangroves, some 29,200 hectares of coral reefs and 120 hectares of seagrass beds, the report said. Coastal forests and a 300-kilometre stretch of coastal lands were also damaged or lost, the report said. Other problem areas were the debris and waste caused by the tsunami, destruction of local environmental capacity - such as solid-waste management - and damage to oil depots and other industrial sites that could lead to leaks of harmful chemicals. Indonesia has asked UNEP to establish an environmental crisis centre, and the Maldives has requested emergency waste management help and impact studies on coral reefs. Sri Lanka and Thailand have also asked for assistance in gauging damage to the environment, the UNEP said.

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Amidst speculation on the geographical impact of the recent disastrous earthquake and the tsunami, officials today said that an area in Port Blair may have sunk by a metre while the Andaman island appear to have twisted. "According to the recordings made by a tide gauge that was placed at a location in Port Blair, tsunami hit the area at 0714, Dec 26," Secretary of the Department of Ocean Development Harsh Gupta said in New Delhi. "The record also indicates that base of the tide gauge went down in Port Blair," Gupta said, adding the record is visible as a graph whose base went down. It means that the place sunk by about a metre due to the earthquake, which was the fifth largest to be recorded in history. The recording by another tide gauge at Chennai did not indicate such shifting in the baseline of the graph. The tsunami hit Chennai at 0906 hrs and Cochin at 1112 hrs, according to the records by these tide gauges, he said. Dr V S Ramamurthy, Secretary Department of Science and Technology, said that studies being carried out by various agencies in Andamans appear to indicate that the island has twisted. Gupta said four vessels were cruising the different tsunami affected regions. Preliminary results had started coming in, he said.

Langkawi, Malaysia, Jan 24 — The Indian Ocean tsunami is likely to cost Thailand's lucrative tourism industry around 30 billion baht (\$780 million) in lost revenues in 2005, its vice-minister for tourism said today. "We have noticed quite a drastic drop-off after the incident," Krirk-krai Jirapaet told reporters at a meeting of tourism officials from the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the Malaysian resort

isle of Langkawi. "There were cancellations. We had a look at the possible annual performance of our industry, and the effect on the economy of Thailand. We thought we would lose about 30 billion baht of tourism, which is about 10 percent of revenue in the previous years," he said. The government has announced a series of soft loans for affected businesses, and hotel operators on the resort island of Phuket, which sustained localised damage, are trying to lure holidaymakers back with cut-price deals. Nearly 13,000 of the more than 41,000 hotel rooms on Phuket and the mainland provinces of Krabi and Phang Nga were destroyed, analysts say. However, the destruction will not dent the overall Thai economy, which is still expected to grow at between 5.5 and 6.5 percent in 2005, the state economic planning agency said nearly two weeks after the disaster. The National Economic and Social Development Board said the reconstruction effort would offset property losses and business setbacks in the tourism sector, which accounts for around six percent of the economy. — Reuters.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: A strong earthquake today rocked Andaman and Nicobar Islands and parts of southern Indian metropolis of Chennai, where panic-struck residents were seen running out of their houses in some areas. One of the strongest aftershocks since the Dec 26 earthquake that triggered killer tsunami waves, the tremor measuring 6.5 on the Richter Scale was recorded at 0417, GMT off the west coast of Great Nicobar Islands, the MET Department said in New Delhi.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Coral reefs surrounding Sri Lanka may not have suffered as much damage from the Indian Ocean tsunami as initially feared. Jerker Tamelander, marine program co-ordinator of the World Conservation Union in Sri Lanka, explained, "A lot of the mechanical damage seems to have been caused by boats washing over coral reefs and in turn pushing over large boulders, so there's very site-specific damage — whereas on the broad scale, the mechanical damage is much less." Some of this damage came from material washed back from land — "including motorbikes and TV sets" — that resulted in "quite significant amounts of debris on several reefs." Tamelander has completed a survey of reefs on Sri Lanka's southwest coast. The area was badly affected on land, with "significant destruction" of terrestrial ecosystems. But in comparison, the underwater coral has not been badly affected, the BBC reported yesterday. The survey also found that the tsunami had had little obvious effect on marine and fish populations. Tamelander said that fish looked "reasonably normal, both in terms of species composition and abundance." However, he warned there may be problems yet with destruction to fish habitats and nursery grounds.

Singapore, Jan 20 — General cargo *Canadian Express* arrived Singapore Jan 19 and sailed the same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

Jakarta, Jan 25 — Indonesia's health ministry said today a total of 228,164 people are dead or missing in the Dec 26 earthquake and tsunami. The ministry's

crisis centre said 95,992 bodies have been recovered and buried and another 132,172 people were missing. The health ministry last week raised its death toll from the disaster to 173,981 by adding some 70,000 missing and presumed dead to its figure for confirmed deaths. The ministry's crisis centre said many of the 132,172 missing are presumed to be dead, four weeks after the magnitude 9.0 earthquake and the tsunami it produced. However, an undetermined number of them may be alive and living in temporary camps or otherwise unaccounted for. — Reuters.

London, Jan 26 — Following press release received from the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, dated today: Changes in the depths of waters, particularly the waters in the northern approach to the Straits of Malacca and Singapore were reported following the earthquake/tsunami incident in the Indian Ocean and the Andaman Sea on Dec 26. There has been close liaison between the Hydrographic offices of Indonesia and Singapore to monitor the situation. Ships transiting the area have also been asked to report any changes in water depths. Since the initial unconfirmed reports on Jan 6, many ships have passed the area. No reported changes in water depths have been received and shipping traffic through the Straits remains smooth. However, as a precaution, ships transiting the Straits should continue to listen for broadcast of changes in depths, to turn on their echo sounders to check the depths of water and to advise the coastal VTS Authority of any depths less than charted. The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) will continue to monitor the situation in the northern approach to the Straits of Malacca and Singapore together with the Indonesian Hydrographic office and the industry.

TURKEY

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale was reported off the southern Turkish port of Kas late yesterday, France's earth sciences observatory in Strasbourg reported. The epicentre of the quake, which hit at 2236, GMT, was recorded at lat 36N, long 29.90E. There were no initial reports on any damage or casualties.

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated Jan 25, states: A string of moderate earthquakes shook Turkey's border with Iran this evening, killing two people and damaging dozens of buildings, seismologists and officials said. The temblors cracked walls or caused other damage to about 80 buildings, sending people fleeing from their homes into freezing temperatures in snow-covered Hakkari province, the Anatolia news agency reported. The quakes — the strongest with a preliminary magnitude of 5.5 — destroyed a house in the village of Kaymakli, crushing two people to death, Governor Erdogan Gurbuz said. At least 22 people were injured when they jumped from windows or balconies in panic, officials and news reports said. Four others were treated for shock. The quakes occurred about 870 miles south-east of Ankara, the Istanbul-based Kandilli Observatory said. Anatolia said authorities were preparing to set up a tent city to house hundreds of people in Hakkari, a

remote city in mountains where the borders of Iran and Iraq meet. The Red Crescent sent tents, blankets and a portable kitchen to the region, while soldiers sought to assess damage in mountain villages isolated by snowy and icy roads. The first earthquake, with a preliminary magnitude of 4.8, struck at 1724 hrs, the Kandilli Observatory said. A quake of 4.4 magnitude struck the same area at 1832 hrs, followed by the strongest one 12 minutes later, Kandilli said. Four aftershocks, the strongest with a 4.3 magnitude, also jolted the area.

Political & Civil Unrest



ALGERIA

Algiers, Jan 21 — Algeria's top Islamic rebel group, which has ties to al Qaeda, is reeling from the arrests and killings of hundreds of members, but a deadly ambush on a military convoy shows it is far from eliminated. The Jan 3 attack by the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) killed 13 soldiers and five militiamen, according to diplomats, and may mark the emergence of a dangerous new leader. A U.S. military source familiar with the region said it looked like the work of Mokhtar Belmokhtar, a GSPC desert chief newly returned from hiding in northern Mali and keen to show that he is a force to be reckoned with. The deaths last year of 321 rebels, most of them GSPC, will boost foreign investor confidence in the OPEC member's ability to crack down on Islamist militancy. In 2004, the army stepped up its military offensive and was helped with intelligence obtained from those who surrendered or were captured. "Security is improving gradually and obviously 2004 was quite a bad year for the GSPC, losing its leader and many followers," said Sarah Meyers, a Middle East and North Africa analyst for London-based risk consultant Control Risks Group. "But it will be a long process to eradicate its cells." The security risk remains high, according to diplomats and security analysts, because of 300 to 500 armed and well-funded and trained rebels still operational across Algeria. Foreign firms and many embassies have heavy security. Last year was the least violent since 1992. There were 668 deaths, half of them civilian and military, according to media and official statements. Interior Minister Noureddine Zerhouni insisted the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), a forerunner of the GSPC, had been dismantled and that "only a few pockets of GSPC terrorists remained" and would soon be crushed. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's government hopes many of the rebels have tired of the war and want to surrender, but the GSPC's die-hard leadership has repeatedly warned their members against giving up. "No truce, no dialogue, no reconciliation and no peace with the enemies of God," GSPC spokesman Abou Yasser Siab said in a statement on Jan 6. — Reuters.

BELIZE

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Some 500 protesters clashed with police yesterday in front of Belize's House of Representatives, as lawmakers voted to approve tax hikes opposed by a majority of the country's 250,000 people. Two people were slightly injured when police fired rubber bullets and pepper spray at some demonstrators who had hurled rocks at police lines. Schools, businesses and workers showed their opposition to the proposal by staging a two-day strike that ended late yesterday. The work action shuttered most businesses and schools and even left Belize City without water. Protesters gathered outside the Caribbean country's congressional building, throwing rocks, bottles and eggs at police, before the officers forced them to disperse. The commotion forced lawmakers to halt debate periodically throughout the day. However, late in the day, lawmakers voted to approve the tax hikes on businesses, land owners, real estate commissions and imports. The measure — which raises some taxes by as much as 22% — will now be sent to the Senate for debate. Earlier yesterday, Prime Minister Said Musa said he would review the tax measures in six months, but refused to withdraw the proposal. He said the increases are necessary to help pay spiraling international debt. His administration has been plagued by financial scandals and higher living costs, which have prompted his opponents to call for his resignation.

BURUNDI

Bujumbura, Jan 24 — Burundian Hutu rebels killed a provincial governor and his bodyguard in an ambush outside the capital, the army said today. Yesterday's attack underlined the threat posed by guerrillas despite advances in the country's peace process. The army blamed the Forces for National Liberation (FNL), which unlike the country's main Hutu rebel group, the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), has not signed up to a peace deal aimed at ending a decade of civil war. "The governor of Bubanza, Isaie Bigirimana, and his bodyguard were killed on Sunday afternoon, around 1715 hrs (1515, UTC)," army spokesman Adolphe Manirakiza said. "They fell into an ambush by elements of the FNL coming from Rukoko forest (northwest of Bujumbura)," he said. The FNL was not immediately available for comment. — Reuters.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Nairobi, Jan 20 — Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) has suspended aid activities in one of the most war-torn areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)'s North Kivu Province after people in army uniform attacked the charity's facility late Tuesday (Jan 18). "They took money, communication equipment and one of our vehicles from our base in the village of Kabati," Jean-Christophe Dolle, the head of the MSF mission in Goma, told IRIN yesterday. "The continuation of project activities are severely hampered," he added. MSF had been using its base in Kabati to provide help to some 100,000 people in the districts of Masisi and Rutshuru, many of whom had fled from

nearby Kanyabayonga where regular army units were recently fighting each other. "I don't know what will happen to the thousands of displaced civilians there as there are few other humanitarian agencies currently in the area," Dolle said. "But we need a minimum of security in order to be able to function. MSF is still able to provide assistance to those civilians who fled north from Kanyabayonga out of a mobile clinic in the town of Kayna," said Dolle.

GUINEA

Conakry, Jan 20 — Dissident soldiers are thought to have been behind yesterday's attempt to assassinate Guinean President Lansana Conte, a top police official said. But Conte's opponents, who have dismissed some previous coup rumours as pretexts for clampdowns by the president's loyalists, were sceptical about the official version of events. "It is difficult to believe that individuals, at 11 o'clock (1100, UTC), so in broad daylight, can attack the presidential convoy," said Mohamed Diane, a member of the main opposition party, the Rally of the Guinean People. "This is why a lot of people think it was a set-up," Diane told Reuters. "We strongly suspect (the attackers) were from the military because the weapons seized were army stock," the police official told Reuters late yesterday. "We have arrested some, others are on the run but we are looking for them." Police set up roadblocks across Conakry late yesterday, stopping and searching cars. The roadblocks had been lifted by this morning, but security remained tight around the presidential palace and the state television station. Conte spoke of "external manipulations" on state television late yesterday but added: "Personally, I only fear my close aides who pretend they are with me while they are not sincere." — Reuters.

INDIA

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: ULFA has blown up a pipeline of the Oil India Limited (OIL) in Assam's Dibrugarh district despite beefed up security in view of the Republic Day boycott called by the banned outfit. The militants detonated a powerful bomb and blew up the 'dead' pipeline at Sarupathar Bongaligaon under Chhabua police station late last night, police said today. As the pipeline was not operational and declared 'dead' there was no oil spillage but one of the pipes was totally damaged, company sources said.

INDONESIA

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Indonesia and separatist rebels from Aceh province will hold talks in Helsinki next week, mediated by former Finnish president Martti Ahtisaari, his office has said. The talks between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) will be in Helsinki towards the end of next week, Mr Ahtisaari's Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) group said.

IRAQ

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: A car bomb exploded outside a Shiite mosque in Baghdad today, killing

at least six people and wounding 29, Iraqi police said. The car exploded outside the al-Taf mosque in southwestern Baghdad, where Shiites were celebrating one of Islam's most important holidays, the Eid al-Adha, or Feast of Sacrifice. The feast coincides with the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

Hit, Iraq, Jan 21 — Gunmen attacked a police station in Iraq's restive western town of Hit today, chasing away police officers and stealing their weapons, police said. They said around 15 gunmen attacked the police station using explosives and took it over, stealing assault rifles and other small arms they found inside. No one was killed or wounded. — Reuters.

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated Jan 21, states: A car bomb exploded outside a Shiite mosque packed with worshippers celebrating a major Muslim holiday today, and a suicide driver blew up an ambulance at the wedding of a Shiite couple south of the capital. At least 21 people died and dozens were wounded. The attacks came a day after Iraq's most feared terror leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, denounced Shiites in a recording that appeared aimed at sowing division ahead of the Jan 30 elections. Shiites, long the oppressed majority in Iraq, are expected to take power in the balloting, which Sunni Muslim extremists have vowed to disrupt. Also today, a US soldier died in an operation north of Baghdad, and an Italian soldier was killed by a burst of gunfire while patrolling in a helicopter near the southern city of Nasiriyah. Insurgents attacked several designated polling places outside Baghdad. The car bombing at the al-Taf mosque in Baghdad occurred just as worshippers were leaving services marking one of Islam's most important holidays, Eid al-Adha, or Feast of Sacrifice. It was the second car bombing at a Shiite mosque in Baghdad this week. An official at Yarmouk Hospital said 14 people died and 40 were wounded in the blast, which set several cars on fire and scattered debris across the street. Later in the day, a suicide driver rammed an ambulance into a crowd of Shiites celebrating a wedding near Youssifiyah, a village 12 miles south of the capital. Seven people were killed and 16 wounded. Salah al-Ameri, the groom's cousin, said the suicide attacker stormed a garden where the wedding was taking place and detonated the vehicle. The bride and groom were hurt, he said. The Buamer tribe has had tense relations with Sunni clans in the area, and several of their members have been killed or kidnapped by Sunni insurgents. Differences between Shiites and Sunnis over the upcoming elections have widened the gap between the two religious communities, raising fears of even more turmoil in a nation racked by insurgency. Shiites had no public response to today's bombings. Their leadership has said after previous attacks that they would not be provoked into retaliating. Iraqi Shiites strongly support the elections, believing they will propel them to a position of influence equal to their standing as the country's majority group. They make up an estimated 60% of Iraq's 26 million people. Militants among the Sunni Arab minority have vowed to disrupt the vote, the first in Iraq since Saddam Hussein was ousted in April,

2003. Some Sunni clerics and politicians have called for a boycott. US and Iraqi officials fear a wave of violence in the run-up to the election and have announced sweeping security measures to protect voters, including closing the nation's borders and restricting traffic. American troops have stepped up security operations, arresting hundreds of people in recent weeks. In other developments today, US troops killed three insurgents who attacked a police vehicle near the northern city of Mosul, an American military spokesman said. A dozen gunmen stormed a police station in the Euphrates Valley town of Hit and blew it up, police said. No one was hurt in the attack, but the militants reportedly made off with weapons and other gear. Insurgents attacked four schools in northern Iraq that will be used as polling stations, wounding two people. Three of the schools were hit by rockets and mortars, and police said they dismantled a bomb planted at the fourth.

Baghdad, Jan 22 — Insurgents in Iraq said today they had released eight Chinese hostages, as an Islamist militant group said it had shot dead 15 kidnapped Iraqi soldiers in continued violence ahead of this month's election. Another group said today it had abducted a Brazilian man, Arab satellite television Al Jazeera reported. It aired an Internet video which showed an identification card but not the hostage. A leader of Iraq's Shi'ite community said his supporters would not be drawn into civil war despite being targeted by mainly Sunni militants, and the interim government announced extraordinary security measures for the Jan 30 vote. A video produced by insurgents showed the eight Chinese labourers kidnapped earlier this month standing or kneeling in the desert holding their passports. A man with his face covered by a traditional chequered headdress shook hands with each of them before they walked off camera. The speaker on the tape said they were being released. The Chinese embassy in Baghdad confirmed the men had been freed, but by nightfall said it was trying to locate them. Guerrillas fighting US-led troops and Iraq's American-backed government have kidnapped more than 100 foreigners over the past year and killed around a third of them. They are also waging a campaign of suicide attacks and ambushes ahead of the election, targeting Iraqi security forces, election officials and the country's Shi'ite majority. Abdel Aziz al-Hakim, the top candidate on a mainly Shi'ite list expected to dominate the elections, said Shi'ites would not respond to the attacks with violence of their own. "We are strongly standing in the face of this evil plan and any sectarian sedition," Hakim, head of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, said. At least 25 Shi'ites were killed in two suicide car bomb attacks in and near Baghdad yesterday. The first targeted a mosque in the suburbs of the capital, killing 14, while the second ripped through a wedding party, leaving at least 11 dead. Shi'ite Muslims have been repeatedly attacked ahead of the election, which is expected to cement the new political dominance of the 60% majority after years of oppression under Saddam Hussein. Many Sunni Arabs, from whom Saddam drew his ruling class, fear they will be marginalised. Several leading

Sunni groups have announced an election boycott. The insurgency raging in Iraq's Sunni Muslim heartlands means that many Sunnis who want to vote say they do not dare. In a sign of the insurgents' confidence, a group beheaded an Iraqi soldier in broad daylight in the restive rebel town of Ramadi yesterday. They left the body, still dressed in army fatigues, in the street with the severed head placed on the torso and a note warning other Iraqi troops to quit their jobs. One group, the Army of Ansar al-Sunna, said on its Web site it had killed 15 Iraqi soldiers it captured last week. Al Jazeera later said a group calling itself Al Mujahideen Squadrons said it had in co-operation with Army of Ansar al-Sunna abducted a Brazilian man in an attack on a US firm in which it also killed a Briton and another Brazilian. It was not clear if it was the same operation claimed by Army of Ansar al-Sunna on Thursday (Jan 20) in which it said it abducted and killed a Swede and a Briton in the central city of Baiji. A Briton and an Iraqi employed by London-based Janusian Security Risk Management were killed on Wednesday in an ambush while travelling in a convoy near Baiji. The US military said a third foreign national missing was Brazilian. Sweden today denied that a Swede had been killed. The Internet video aired by Al Jazeera showed an identification card with the name Joao Jose Vasconcelos Jr. The tape, which has not appeared on main Islamist sites, showed four masked men, one of whom was reading a statement but his remarks were not audible. Brazil's Foreign Ministry said the government, which did not support the US-led invasion of Iraq, was aware of the report and was investigating the incident. Faced with such attacks, Iraq has said it will close its land borders and impose strict restrictions on traffic on election day to prevent non-official vehicles getting near polling stations. Baghdad airport will be closed on Jan 29 and 30 and night-time curfews will be extended in several cities. The Geneva-based International Organisation for Migration said it was extending by two days the registration deadline for Iraqis voting abroad because of low turnout in some countries. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Jan 24 — A suicide car bomber struck near a checkpoint on a street leading to Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's party office today, wounding at least 10 people in the latest guerrilla attack before Jan 30 elections. Officials in Allawi's office said today the prime minister was not in the area in western Baghdad at the time. Health Ministry officials said seven policemen and three civilians were wounded. The blast echoed across central Baghdad, and a plume of smoke rose from the scene of the bombing. US and Iraqi troops sealed off the area and helicopters flew overhead. Guerrillas fighting US-led troops and Iraq's interim government have mounted frequent suicide car bomb attacks and ambushes on Iraqi security forces and Shi'ite targets in the run-up to the elections. Al Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi yesterday declared all-out war on the elections, berating the Shi'ite majority for embracing the poll and urging Sunnis to fight against what he called infidel voters. Allawi vowed his US-backed government would do everything possible

to safeguard more than 5,000 polling stations against "evil forces determined to hurt Iraq". The US military said one of its soldiers was killed by small arms fire in the northern city of Mosul on Saturday (Jan 22), bringing to 1,080 the number of US troops killed in action in Iraq since the invasion. A mystery surrounding the fate of eight Chinese labourers taken hostage this month was resolved when the Chinese embassy tracked them down a day after guerrillas said they had freed them. Their captors had originally threatened them with death. China, a critic of the invasion, had appealed for their release, saying it had warned its citizens to stay out of Iraq. The eight young men smiled and shook hands with Chinese officials who greeted them at a mosque in the western city of Ramadi. A Chinese diplomat said no ransom had been paid. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Jan 25 — Gunmen assassinated an Iraqi judge as he was leaving his home in eastern Baghdad, police sources said today. The judge, identified as Qais Hashim Shameri, was killed along with his son in a roadside ambush, the sources said. It was the latest killing in a campaign of attacks by insurgents seeking to disrupt elections set for Sunday (Jan 30). The shooting followed the Iraqi government's announcement yesterday of the capture of a senior aide to al Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who tops the US military's wanted list in Iraq and has declared all-out war on the elections. Insurgents have assassinated Baghdad's provincial governor and the capital's deputy police chief in recent weeks. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Jan 25 — An insurgent video distributed in Iraq and seen by Reuters appears to show an American citizen being held hostage by militants and pleading for his life as a gun is held to his head. The 60-second video, seen today, shows a man identifying himself as U.S. citizen Roy Hallams sitting against a black background with his legs crossed, anxiously rubbing his hands together as he appeals to the camera. "I have been arrested by a resistance group in Iraq. I'm asking for help because my life is in danger because it's been proved that I work for American forces," he says on the tape. The authenticity of the video could not immediately be verified. The U.S. embassy in Iraq said it had no immediate information. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Jan 25 — Five American soldiers were killed and two injured in a vehicle accident north of Baghdad, the U.S. military said today. It said the accident happened near the town of Khan Bani Saad yesterday night, but gave no more details. One of the injured soldiers was in serious condition. — Reuters.

ISRAEL

Jerusalem, Jan 23 — Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has secured an agreement with leading Palestinian militant groups for a cease-fire of about a month in the Middle East conflict, according to Israeli Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz. Hamas and Islamic Jihad had agreed to the cease-fire in return for a future role in the Palestinian Authority, Mofaz told Israel Radio in an interview today. "As far as we understand, there is an agreement between Abbas and the heads of Hamas and Islamic Jihad for a cease-fire

for a certain period ... about a month," said Mofaz. Abbas has been holding ceasefire talks with militant factions in the Gaza Strip in the last few days. A Hamas official said yesterday the group, which is sworn to Israel's destruction, would need an Israeli commitment to halt military operations in return for a cease-fire. Mofaz said Israel had made no promises but that the army would curtail its activities if there was a halt to more than four years of violence in a Palestinian uprising for statehood. "As long as there is quiet there is no reason for us to act," he said. Since Abbas embarked on the talks, there have been no mortar or rocket attacks against Israel or Jewish settlements in Gaza. The Israeli army said it had also noticed a steep decline in shootings and other violent incidents against Israeli forces in Gaza. — Reuters.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: One of the largest Hamas bomb factories found in the West Bank in the past three years was discovered early this morning by security forces in the basement of an inhabited apartment building in Nablus's Raffidiyah neighbourhood. In the framework of ongoing activities to destroy the Hamas infrastructure in the city, soldiers from the Haruv Battalion surrounded the building after receiving intelligence on its location late yesterday night. Searching the premises, the soldiers discovered 25 kilograms of explosives that had been dried and placed underneath mattresses, an additional 125 liters of raw materials used to prepare explosives and bombs, three partially prepared explosives belts, electronic detonators and other components. Troops later blew up the factory rooms without damaging the rest of the building.

IVORY COAST

Abidjan, Jan 26 — Hopes for a quick breakthrough in Ivory Coast's political deadlock waned today as key opponents to President Laurent Gbagbo stood by their demands and a row simmered over the rebuilding of the country's airforce. Guillaume Soro, the rebel leader whose forces control the northern half of the West African country, insisted his fighters would not disarm until Gbagbo fully implements political reforms agreed in a 2003 peace deal. Key opposition figure Alassane Ouattara — whose exclusion from 2000 polls is at the heart of the crisis — said the United Nations should take charge of elections due this year and that there was no time for a referendum on who should stand as Gbagbo demands. Soro and Ouattara were speaking in South Africa, where they met President Thabo Mbeki. Mbeki is trying to mediate an end to a months-old stalemate in the country's peace process and prevent a return to the all-out war that followed a failed coup in 2002, splitting the country in two. "The agreements we have signed demand that we have a reconciliation government of national unity and we shall not lay down arms before that is achieved," Soro said late yesterday. Ouattara blamed Gbagbo for preventing the country's fragile power-sharing government from functioning properly in the run-up to the polls, which the international community wants to be open to all of Gbagbo's rivals. "This election process should be given to the

U.N.," Ouattara told reporters in Johannesburg. Presidential elections are tentatively scheduled for October but it is still unclear who will be able to stand. Ouattara, a former prime minister who enjoys support in the mainly Muslim north, was excluded from the 2000 polls as his father was not of Ivorian origin. The constitution says a candidate's parents must both be Ivorian. Back in Abidjan, a row over whether the government should be allowed to repair its military aircraft, crippled by French troops in the country last November, showed no sign of abating. The French wiped out Ivory Coast's small fleet of warplanes and helicopter gunships after Ivorian jets killed nine French soldiers in bombing raids that broke an 18-month old ceasefire. A U.N. spokesman said on Saturday (Jan 22) that U.N. and French troops policing the truce had agreed to a request by the Ivorian army to repair the aircraft on condition they were not rearmed. But the spokesman later rowed back, saying the U.N. had only authorised the aircraft to be brought back to the main city Abidjan from the capital Yamoussoukro — not the repairs. Ivory Coast is under a United Nations arms embargo and the spokesman said any request over the repairs was likely to have to be submitted to the Security Council. The French Foreign Ministry said the agreement between the French, the U.N. and the army did not mention the repairs. "The question (in the agreement) was in no way to authorise the repair, but only the transport of the aircraft from Yamoussoukro to Abidjan," ministry spokesman Herve Ladsous said. The agreement on the aircraft infuriated the rebels who said it would hinder the peace process, even though the government has said it does not want to resume hostilities. "If we have the means to repair them, we will do so responsibly," Gbagbo's defence adviser Kadet Bertin said. — Reuters.

PAKISTAN

Quetta, Jan 21 — A prominent Pakistani tribal chief today warned of more violence after security forces demolished houses used by tribesmen to launch an attack on the country's main gas field. Security forces bulldozed the houses yesterday, saying they were used by tribesmen to fire rockets at the Sui field in a Jan 11 attack which killed as many as 15 people and damaged the main purification plant and pipelines. It was the latest in a string of attacks by tribesmen seeking more autonomy, development funds and royalties from gas. Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, the chief of the Bugti tribe and a former chief minister of Baluchistan where the Sui field is located, said anger was growing following the military's action. "People will resist because they are being uprooted from their homes and hearth," he said. "The number of militant groups will multiply now. The government alone will be responsible for aggravating the situation," he said, claiming the army has moved in tanks and artillery in his area to strengthen its grip. Officials say the damage at the Sui field had been repaired and supplies to consumers whose gas was cut off partially restored. Residents of Sui, which produces up to 45 percent of Pakistan's gas, said government security forces in the area did not demolish or

search houses this morning, as Muslims celebrated the festival of Eid al-Adha. But later in the day they resumed their activity, searching houses while helicopters flew overhead. Provincial government and military sources said new bunkers and fences were being built around the gasfields to counter any fresh assaults by the tribesmen. Two little known groups — the Baluchistan Liberation Army and Baluchistan Liberation Front — have claimed responsibility for most attacks. The mainstream Baluch nationalist forces, including Bugti, who leads his Jamhoori Watan Party (Democratic National Party) deny any link with the militants. Security officials said today that Marris — another powerful tribe in Baluchistan — had set up militant training camps in the remote parts of the province, posing a serious challenge to the government. Many Baluch tribesmen, who are heavily armed, see development projects including a deep seaport being built in the Gawadar coastal town with Chinese help, as a threat to their way of life. The unrest has been a blow to Pakistan's efforts to attract foreign investment into oil and gas exploration and has also called into question its security guarantees for a proposed gas pipeline from Iran to India that would run through Baluchistan. The government, which says the development projects will bring jobs and prosperity to the locals, wants to solve the Baluchistan problem through talks. But Bugti said there could be no negotiations under threat of violence. — Reuters.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Jan 20 — Philippine soldiers disarmed two improvised bombs on southern Mindanao island today, a senior army official said. The military said one of the home-made bombs was found at a packed bus terminal in a public market in Midsayap town, North Cotabato province. The other was discovered at the house of a sister of the Palembang town mayor in Sultan Kudarat province. "It's too early to pin the blame on any group for the bombs," said Major-General Raul Rellano, the army's regional commander. "We are still investigating. We don't want to speculate." Army bomb experts said the two devices were almost identical, made from 60 mm mortar shells. They were similar to one found last week in a Roman Catholic Cathedral in Mindanao's Cotabato City. Peace negotiations with the largest Muslim rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), remain on track despite heavy fighting that left 28 soldiers and guerrillas killed in Mamasapano town in central Mindanao last week. Talks aimed at ending a 35-year-old separatist rebellion are due to resume next month in Kuala Lumpur. Eid Kabalu, a spokesman for the MILF, denied any rebel role in the latest bomb scare. "No matter what happens, peace negotiations in Malaysia will push through as scheduled," he told Reuters by telephone. "There's no turning back now." Kabalu said the MILF is worried that groups opposed to the peace effort could be orchestrating the planting of bombs to scare people and sabotage the talks. — Reuters.

RUSSIA

Moscow, Jan 20 — Chechnya's pro-Moscow government hopes to sign an

agreement with Moscow soon that will give it "the broadest autonomy", a senior Chechen official said today. The deal the Chechens are proposing gives them the right to all the region's natural resources and taxes, and denies Russian forces the right to intervene without Chechen government permission. Moscow has long sought to cement a deal giving the region broad freedom within Russia, hoping this would undermine separatists who have fought Moscow for a decade. But analysts doubted the deal would appeal either to Russian hawks or to separatists, both of whom dislike the pro-Moscow Chechen government dominated by former rebel Ramzan Kadyrov. Taus Dzhabrailov, head of Chechnya's interim parliament said the document, which has taken almost two years to draw up and would give Chechnya greater autonomy than any other Russian region, would be signed "in the first quarter, or anyway in the first half, of this year". Russian newspapers saw the deal as a sell-out by Moscow to try to end a war that has killed thousands of soldiers and tens of thousands of Chechens, and caused chaos in the Caucasus. Analysts doubted that such an agreement would bring peace to Chechnya, already mired in corruption and chaos. "I do not think this agreement could be signed by Moscow ... It is above all convenient for Ramzan Kadyrov and his team, but the generals and the defence ministry would not like it," said Alexei Malashenko of the Carnegie Centre thinktank. "They would not want to have defeated (the rebels), and end up giving everything to Ramzan Kadyrov." Rebel spokesmen were not available for comment, but Malashenko said they too would be likely to oppose it. — Reuters.

SOMALIA

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Gunmen in Somalia have shot dead the police chief in the capital, Mogadishu. It is not clear why Gen Yusuf Ahmed Sarinle was targeted, but correspondents suggest it may be because he backed the deployment of foreign peacekeepers. Somalia has not had a functioning national government since 1991 with militias dividing it into fiefdoms. A new Somali government has been named and is due to start relocating to Mogadishu from Kenya on Feb 1. Gen Sarinle's relatives said four men armed with pistols and AK-47 guns forced entry into the police chief's flat in his home village of Hamar-bile south of Mogadishu at 0800 hrs (0500, UTC) today. The general was reportedly shot seven times in the chest and head. Insecurity, organised crime and lawlessness have reached alarming proportions in Mogadishu since the formation of the government. Islamic courts, which have sought to extend their influence in the absence of a government, have vowed to fight the peacekeepers. But another reason for his killing has been advanced: Gen Sarinle had also been in charge of investigating the recent destruction of an Italian colonial cemetery by militiamen in Mogadishu. Some 700 graves in the cemetery were destroyed and their human remains dumped elsewhere.

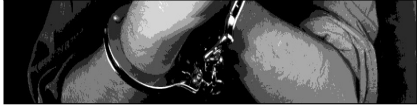
Nairobi, Jan 26 — Clan fighting has forced humanitarian workers to leave the Somali town of Huddur, threatening the delivery of aid to a region beset by drought

and 14 years of violence, aid officials said today. The workers were flown out yesterday from an airstrip in Wajid, a relatively secure town 90 km to the southwest that has a small aid agency presence. They worked for Italian, German and religious aid organisations, officials said. Tensions in the city rose on Monday (Jan 24) following the arrival of a warlord from Baidoa and a subsequent gun battle between two sub-clans, during which no one was killed. "It's an inter-clan rivalry that the elders haven't resolved and it's just not safe for them to work there right now," a United Nations security official told Reuters. — Reuters.

SUDAN

Nairobi, Jan 24 — Eight villages in the western Sudanese region of Darfur were reportedly burned to the ground on Friday (Jan 21) in a fresh outbreak of violence, sources said. An unspecified number of people were killed, the sources added. "The police have reported the attacks and the African Union monitoring team is investigating what exactly happened," a humanitarian worker in the region, told IRIN today. Radhia Achouri, spokeswoman for the United Nations Advance Mission in Sudan said the incident had not yet been formally reported to the mission. "We have heard about the attacks, but are trying to get confirmation," she said. The official Sudan News Agency reported that the attacks were carried out by Darfur rebels and took place near Malam, about 100 km north of Nyala, the capital of South Darfur State. "The rebels have carried out a heinous attack on the areas of Malam, burning down eight villages and killing and injuring a number of civilians and looting properties," the agency quoted a government statement as saying. Other international media reported that the two main rebel groups, Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A), had denied any involvement in the incidents. The violence came a day after the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Sudan, Jan Pronk, said fighting between government troops and rebels in Darfur had decreased over the past month, but that Arab militias were still attacking villagers. "The violence is still perpetrated by pro-government militias and other armed groups that are very difficult to control; they attack villages, abduct people and increasingly use rape as a tool of war," Pronk told reporters. "But between the government and the rebel movements, there is more adherence to the ceasefire than a month ago - and that is a step forward," he added. Meanwhile, Human Rights Watch (HRW) has called for international prosecutions to deter continuing violence in Darfur. In a report documenting crimes in the region, HRW accused the Sudanese government and its allied militias of committing atrocities. "Regardless of whether there has been genocide, the scale and severity of the ongoing atrocities in Darfur demand an urgent international response," Peter Takirambudde, HRW's Africa Director, said. "Given Sudan's continuing failure to prosecute the perpetrators, the [UN] Security Council needs to refer the situation to the International Criminal Court," he added. — Reuters.

Kidnappings



VENEZUELA

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated Jan 25, states: Kidnappers holding the mother of the Detroit Tigers (Baseball Team) reliever Ugueth Urbina have demanded a \$3 million ransom, but have not contacted the family in several weeks, Venezuelan police said today. Ten police detectives in an anti-kidnapping unit are on the case and believe Maura Villarreal, 54, is still being held hostage. Police said the strategy of making no contact is a common ploy used by kidnappers in the South American country. Urbina's mother disappeared from her home on the outskirts of Caracas on Sep 1. Police have said they believe she was taken by four men who arrived wearing police uniforms. Police also have said they believe a mechanic who happened to be working on a motorcycle at the house was taken away along with Urbina's mother. The Associated Press said it had been difficult for the family to accept police involvement because it fears for Villarreal's life. The AP confirmed Venezuelan news reports the amount of ransom demanded was about \$3 million but said the figure had varied over time and that initially the kidnappers had demanded \$6 million. Urbina left the Tigers in September to travel to Venezuela following his mother's disappearance. He has declined comment on the case.

Labour Disputes



AUSTRALIA

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: The Hobart ship builder Incat is playing down the impact of industrial action by about 100 of its award workers. The trade workers went on strike on Thursday (Jan 20) and will not return until Monday. They say the company is refusing to negotiate a new enterprise agreement with the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union. The union says workers have not received a pay rise in seven years and are asking for a 5% wage increase, as well as a shorter week. Craig Clifford from Incat refused to speak about the action in detail, except to say it has not had a major impact on operations.

FRANCE

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: School classes and government offices across France were closed today as teachers and civil servants kept up the pressure on President Jacques Chirac's government with a third day of stoppages in the state sector. Five million state-paid employees in schools, hospitals and government administration were urged to stop work in what was billed by unions as a campaign to defend public services. In

Paris several major museums including the Louvre and the Musee d'Orsay were closed, and at Bordeaux airport air-traffic was disrupted by striking controllers. Tens of thousands of civil servants and teachers joined a series of marches in cities across the country, with the largest taking place during the afternoon in Paris. Some 40 percent of teachers stayed away from school and just over 20 percent of civil servants, according to ministry figures. On Tuesday (Jan 18) postal workers launched the protest movement, which was followed on Wednesday by thousands of rail and electricity workers. Train services, which were badly disrupted, returned to normal today.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Due to a national strike, no tugs will be available at Fos and Lavera, as follows: between 2200 hrs on Jan 27 and 0600-0700 hrs on Jan 28; between 2200 hrs on Jan 28 and 0600-0700 hrs on Jan 29 and between 2200 hrs on Jan 29 and 0600-0700 hrs on Jan 30.

Awards & Settlements



ATTACK ON AIRCRAFT, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated Jan 21, states: A federal judge today ordered Cuba to pay \$1.75 million to a Miami pilot who survived a midair attack by Cuban MiGs over the Florida Straits in 1996. The pilot, Jose Basulto, evaded the jets and was able to fly home, but was traumatised by the knowledge that two other aircraft operated by the group Brothers to the Rescue had been downed, killing the four people on board, said US District Judge Kenneth A. Marra. "He has suffered greatly, and perhaps the judgment will help ease the pain a bit," said Larry Klayman, the lawyer who filed the suit. Marra cited testimony that Basulto was "scared to death" during the February, 1996, attacks on the unarmed aircraft in international waters. Basulto founded Brothers to the Rescue to do aerial searches for rafters fleeing Cuba and directed rescuers to hundreds of them over the years. It was unclear when Basulto would be able to collect the money from the Cuban government, which sent no one to court to defend against the lawsuit. The families of three of the slain fliers won \$188 million in damages in 1997 in a lawsuit that Cuba also did not contest. In April, 2000, they collected \$38 million from frozen US bank accounts belonging to Cuban telephone companies. The family of the fourth victim, Pablo Morales, could not sue because he was not a US citizen, although the other families shared some of their awards with them. In August, 2003, a Miami federal grand jury indicted a Cuban general and the two MiG pilots on charges of murder, aircraft destruction and conspiracy in the 1996 attack. The United States has no active extradition process with Cuba.

AVIATION ACCIDENT, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: The families of five Virginia National Guardsmen killed when their transport aircraft crashed in Georgia four years ago settled claims yesterday against the aircraft's manufacturers. The families will receive \$3.75 million from the companies that made and maintained the C-23 B+ Sherpa cargo aircraft and its parts: Montreal-based Bombardier Inc. and its subsidiary, maker Short Bros. PLC; Duncan Aviation Inc., of Lincoln, Neb.; and Rockwell International, of Milwaukee, and its former subsidiary, Rockwell Collins Inc., of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Eighteen Virginia guardsmen and three Florida airmen died when the aircraft crashed near Unadilla, Ga., on Mar 3, 2001. Lawsuits filed by the families of the three Florida airmen and 13 other Guard members were consolidated into one case that is scheduled for a trial in April in Tampa federal court, Don Maciejewski, an attorney for the families, said yesterday. Military investigators blamed the crash on the crew for improper loading, but the general who ordered the probe later blamed bad weather and equipment malfunctions. Short Bros made the aircraft in Northern Ireland. Bombardier converted the civilian aircraft for the military in Bridgeport, W.Va. Duncan helped with the conversion and handled maintenance. Rockwell made the autopilot. The aircraft had been modified for the military by cutting six feet from its length and making a change in the tail. "These modifications had a substantial effect on the stability of the aircraft, yet the design was never fully tested, and the National Guard was never warned of the potentially catastrophic problems," said Bob Spohrer, a pilot and an aircraft accident attorney. Spohrer said the settlement would have to be approved by probate judges in Virginia. Attorney Ron Sprague, who represents Bombardier, said, "I think it was a reasonable settlement. It was certainly a tragic accident."

AVOIDANCE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACCESS FEES, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: Telecommunications giant SBC Communications Inc. has won at least \$6.1 million in a lawsuit that accused a San Marcos long-distance carrier of connecting calls on its phone network without paying proper charges. A jury in US District Court in Indiana made the award last Wednesday (Jan 19). San Antonio-based SBC had sued Thrifty Call Inc, alleging the company secretly routed long-distance calls to Indiana-area customers to avoid "termination charges," the fees long-distance firms pay to complete calls on local phone networks. The jury ordered Thrifty Call's former owners to pay \$3.1 million SBC allegedly lost as a result of the scheme. It also gave SBC the choice of sharing \$5 million in punitive damages with the state of Indiana or collecting \$3 million in additional damages. SBC attorneys will meet with a judge next week to decide which it will take. "The whole issue of avoiding access fees has been a huge trend," SBC spokesman Dave Pacholczyk said. "This is

the first access-fee case for us that's gone to trial and gone to jury." San Marcos-based phone and cable provider Grande Communications Inc purchased Thrifty Call's assets four years ago but was not named in SBC's suit. Grande CEO Bill Morrow said his company did not purchase Thrifty Call's liabilities and was therefore not involved.

DEFAMATION AND EMOTIONAL DISTRESS, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A jury today awarded more than \$4.4 million to a high school girls basketball coach who was accused of molesting a student but was never charged with a crime. Patrick Gillan sued the San Marino Police Department in May 2002, claiming defamation and intentional infliction of emotional distress arising from false arrest. The jury awarded Gillan \$1.93 million for past damages and \$2.5 million for future loss of earnings. Jurors also awarded him \$17,430 in punitive damages. Gillan was coach of the girls basketball team at San Marino High School when he was arrested in December 2001 for investigation of sexually assaulting a female student who alleged she was molested several times when she was 17. Police later held a news conference and showed Gillan's picture, which was then broadcast on television stations and published in newspapers. Superior Court Judge Robert O'Brien ruled today that there was no probable cause for the arrest. Attorneys for police argued that officers were doing their job to investigate the girl's claims and were not liable for damages. But Gillan's attorney, John Burton, said some people still see his client as a threat, and the negative publicity has damaged Gillan's reputation.

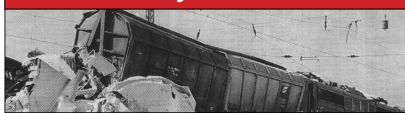
WRONGFUL DEATH, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 20 — A press report, dated today, states: The family of an 11-year-old West Springfield boy who fell to his death while climbing a factory smokestack more than two years ago was awarded \$6.5 million by a Superior Court Judge in a wrongful death lawsuit. Paul H. Rothschild, a Springfield lawyer representing the family of Andrew J. Mann, said yesterday that the judgment was against the trustees of the West Springfield Trade Centre Condominium Trust, CGS Enterprises. The trade centre controls the property where the smokestack was located on Western Avenue. In her ruling that was issued Dec 23, Hampden County Superior Court Judge Tina Page found that trustees of the property were grossly negligent and awarded compensatory and punitive damages for wrongful death to the boy's family. According to court documents, the boy was climbing a ladder inside the smokestack which was part of the abandoned Gilbarco complex on Aug 22, 2003. When a rung on the ladder gave way, he plunged 80 feet to his death. State law provides for punitive damages if the owner is found willful, wanton and reckless. "We showed evidence that there was no effort to prevent kids from going in there," Rothschild said.

WRONGFUL IMPRISONMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A federal jury awarded a former Chicago policeman who served 14 years in prison more than \$6.5 million in damages today, finding that two FBI agents had framed him for murder and kidnapping. Steven Manning, 54, spent eight years on death row in Illinois before his murder conviction was reversed, and several more years in prison in Missouri. He claimed in his civil suit that the agents had a grudge against him and framed him after he tried to stop working as an FBI informant and filed a lawsuit against them, his attorney, Jon Loevy said. Government attorneys claimed in court that the two agents acted in good faith in investigating Manning. Both Gary Miller and Robert Buchan remain with the FBI. Federal officials issued a statement saying they "respect the jury system, the work of this jury and its verdict." But they said they remained "confident that the agents who were sued did not engage in any misconduct in this matter." The jury deliberated for six and half days over evidence in the month-long trial before awarding Manning a total of \$6,581,000 in damages against the two agents. US District Judge Matthew F. Kennelly has yet to decide two other claims by Manning against the FBI itself. More than a dozen witnesses testified in the civil suit, including Manning, who spent a day and a half on the stand telling a harrowing tale of life on death row. Manning had left the Chicago police and was working as a limousine driver and security guard when he was arrested. He was convicted in 1992 of taking part in the 1984 kidnapping of two reputed Kansas City drug traffickers and was sentenced to two life terms plus 100 years. The next year, he was convicted of the 1990 murder of suburban Chicago trucking company owner Jimmy Pellegrino and was sentenced to death. Miller and Buchan had investigated the Illinois case, and Buchan had investigated the Missouri case. The Illinois Supreme Court ruled in 1998 that Cook County prosecutors used improper evidence, including faulty testimony from jailhouse informant Tommy Dye. The murder conviction was reversed and a new trial was ordered, but Cook County prosecutors dropped the case in 2000. Manning was serving time for the Missouri conviction when a federal appeals court ruled that he should get a new trial, saying his lawyer had been ineffective and that the FBI improperly used Manning's girlfriend as a government agent. The Missouri charges were later dismissed.

Railway Accidents



BANGKOK, THAILAND

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: An initial analysis showed the subway signalling system was working perfectly before and during the train collision Monday (Jan 17), train-maker Siemens said yesterday. The mid-morning accident injured at least 200 people, six of

them seriously, and shut down the underground. In a statement, Siemens said there were no mechanical problems. "The signalling system worked perfectly before and during the incident. The recorded data analysed by our engineers in the meantime proves there was no fault with the signalling system." The initial analysis was conducted on Monday in conjunction with the Transport Ministry, which is preparing an in-depth report into the crash. "On the basis of the information available at the time, the accident was not caused by a technical problem but by human error," the company said. The subway authority and the ministry said the accident happened because the driver of an empty train misunderstood instructions from the control centre and released the wrong brake, sending the train rolling down an incline and into a train packed with 700 passengers stopped at the Thailand Cultural Centre station. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said a statement attributed to Huay Kwang police investigator Pol Lt-Col Sumit Srinuan that the accident was caused by an engine malfunction was wrong.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: The Transport Ministry is expected today to release the investigation report on the subway collision that injured about 200 passengers. A ministry source said the result would be disclosed after Transport Minister Suriya Jungreangkit visits the office of Bangkok Metro Co Ltd (BMCL), which runs the service. After an empty train ran into a passenger train at the Thai Cultural Centre station last Monday, transport deputy permanent secretary Sommart Yolpak was assigned to lead the probe on the accident, past records and safety procedures. Mr Sommart's study also involved injured passengers and it has indicated that the accident was caused by human error rather than system flaws. The subway service has been suspended following the smash. The minister said yesterday he expected the service to reopen Feb 1, but insisted safety issues would be paramount before a decision was made.

COOKHOUSE AREA, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: A passenger train travelling to Port Elizabeth was derailed by a rock near Cookhouse yesterday evening, Eastern Cape police said. None of the passengers were injured when the train left the rails at around 1900 hrs. They were later taken to their destination by bus, Inspector Eric Verster said. The line had been cleared by Saturday morning.

DAYTON, OHIO, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: Investigators with the National Transportation Safety Bureau are still trying to determine why a train derailed in Dayton. Six cars left the track and toppled onto their sides near Webster Street Friday night (Jan 21). The cars were full of steel and headed for Middletown. The cars collided with a propane tank used to heat the switches. The propane started leaking. Right now, it's not known what caused the cars to jump the track. No one was hurt and there were no evacuations.

GRANITEVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Norfolk Southern Corp., the nation's fourth-largest railroad, estimates it will have first-quarter pretax costs of between \$30 million to \$40 million stemming from the Jan 6 derailment in Graniteville, South Carolina. The company said it expects to have adequate insurance to cover potential claims or settlement. The cost estimate doesn't include any fines or penalties that might be imposed, the Norfolk-based company said in a statement released yesterday. Late last week, a South Carolina law firm, with a national reputation for its aggressiveness, filed a lawsuit against Norfolk Southern and others, seeking relief for people who suffered property damage from the train wreck and chlorine spill. Besides Norfolk Southern, the suit named Union Tank Car Co., which built and owned the tank car that ruptured; Olin Corp., which produced and shipped the chlorine; and Benjamin Aiken, Mike Ford and James Thornton, the railroad workers who allegedly failed to reset the switch, which caused the deadly accident. The firm, Motley Rice LLC, filed the suit Friday in the Aiken County Court of Common Pleas. The suit is seeking class-action status naming Jessica Curtis, Shelton Davis and "all others similarly situated" as the plaintiffs. The suit is one of several filed in Aiken seeking damages for the Graniteville accident, which claimed nine lives and hospitalized about two dozen others. About 550 people were treated for chlorine exposure. "Our community welcomed and trusted the railroad, but now our community is damaged and citizens need immediate help in the clean-up and replacement of their property," said Joe Rice, a founding member of Motley Rice, in a statement. The Motley Rice suit seeks an immediate cleanup program for everyone in the vicinity of the train accident with property damage. Buildings and houses need to be cleaned, repainted, re-wired and inspected; personal property needs to be cleaned, repaired or replaced, the firm said in its press release. The release by Norfolk Southern, issued after the markets closed, was its first estimate of the accident's impact on the company's finances.

KAMALAPUR, BANGLADESH

Karachi, Jan 21 — Bangladesh Railway said two bogies from a Dinajpur-bound express train crashed into a platform at Kamalapur Station in northern Bangladesh yesterday. It is reported that the inter-district train Ekata Express, which was scheduled to leave for Dinajpur at 0900 hrs, broke through the platform while being positioned at about 1125 hrs. As a result, the train tore apart the grille placed at the end of the track and ran straight into the platform, railway police said. Bangladesh Railway authorities later removed the two badly-damaged compartments, and the train set off for its destination at 1230 hrs. No one was injured in the crash. A three-member committee has been formed to investigate the accident. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

MANITOBA, CANADA

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Crews are investigating a Canadian National Railway derailment that left several vehicles strewn across the tracks in eastern Manitoba yesterday morning. RCMP say a number of flat-deck cars carrying the vehicles appear to have jack-knifed. The accident happened about 75 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg. Mounties say no one was injured and no hazardous substances were spilled. It's expected the cleanup will be done by this morning. CN spokesman Jim Feeny says the company's mainline east of Winnipeg should be reopened by noon.

SCHOOLCRAFT AREA, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated Jan 20, states: Rail traffic resumed and clean-up efforts continued today after a freight train heading for South Bend derailed in south-west Michigan. The westbound Canadian National train slid off its track around 2100 Tuesday (Jan 18) in a rural area near Marcellus, south-west of Kalamazoo. Twenty-four rail cars in the middle of the train derailed and 14 of them tipped over. Ten of those cars were empty but three tanker cars were carrying nonflammable petroleum lubricant. One tanker was punctured and lubricant spilled out of a football-sized hole and onto the ground. A fourth car that tipped over was carrying steel rods. No injuries were reported but various streets and intersections in Cass, St. Joseph and Kalamazoo counties were blocked off as Marcellus firefighters responded to the scene. Canadian National is still investigating the cause of the accident, said Jim Kvedaras, senior manager for US public and government affairs. The National Transportation Safety Board, Federal Railroad Administration and US Environmental Protection Agency were all notified of the incident Tuesday after Canadian National called the National Response Centre. Canadian National also contacted the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality about the spill, Kvedaras said, and clean-up efforts were to begin today after the derailed cars are moved. The cleanup could last several days, Kvedaras said. The track affected is part of Canadian National's busy Chicago-to-Canada line. Train service was stopped in both directions while crews repaired the line. With a delay of only 12 hours, Canadian National chose not to reroute approaching trains. About 800 ft of track will have to be replaced, Kvedaras said. Large cranes were brought in yesterday to move the derailed cars out of the way. "The trains do some damage (when they derail) but the real damage is done by the heavy equipment," Kvedaras said. The Marcellus Township Fire Department, Cass County Sheriff's Office and Michigan State Police assisted at the scene.

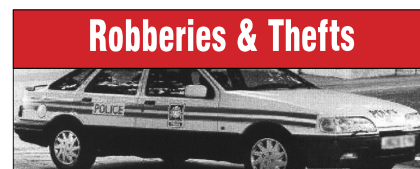
TILRATH AREA, INDIA

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Five passengers on the Delhi-bound North East Express from Guwahati were injured today when five

of the train's bogies jumped the tracks near Tilrath station, Sonepur division, early today. The five passengers suffered minor injuries in the mishap, which occurred at 0145 hrs. According to officials, 15 of the bogies that were on the tracks have now carried on with the onward journey. Following the mishap, the routes of several trains, including the Delhi-New Jalpaiguri Express, the Mahananda Express, the Awadh-Assam Express and the Delhi-Guwahati Northeast Express, have been changed. Police and railway authorities are investigating whether the accident was caused by sabotage. Senior railway officials are at the scene to oversee the repair work.

WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Limited northbound service on Amtrak and commuter railroads resumed yesterday from Washington's Union Station after a three-hour halt because of a derailment outside the terminal. Amtrak said a switch malfunction might have caused some of the wheels on two cars of New York-bound train to partially derail just after 0900 hrs. No one was hurt, and all seven cars remained upright. Passengers traveling south toward Washington still had to get off at the New Carrollton, Md., station. From there they were told to take Washington's subway to reach Union Station or other area stops. The service problems affected both Amtrak and the MARC commuter trains serving the Maryland suburbs.



FUNDS, BANK, HARBIN, CHINA

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: The Bank of China, the country's largest foreign exchange bank, confirmed yesterday that one of its sub-branches in Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province was involved in financial fraud. The scandal emerged on Jan 15 when Northeast Expressway, a Shanghai-listed A share company, announced that 290 million yuan (US\$34.9 million) of shareholders' funds deposited with the branch was missing. Gao Shan, director of a division of the branch, reportedly vanished following the disappearance of the money. Deposits by other companies, amounting to as much as 700 million yuan (US\$84.3 million), also vanished. Another official of the branch was also missing and the two are believed to have fled to the United States or Canada, according to the South China Morning Post. Newspapers in Hunan and Shanxi reported that Northeast Expressway chairman Zhang Xiaoguang had been arrested for misappropriating funds, the Hong Kong-based paper said. A Bank of China official said yesterday government departments are investigating the case.

Computer Systems



CROWT-A VIRUS

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated Jan 21, states: Researchers have identified a new computer virus that masquerades as news headlines from CNN's Web site. Sophos, an anti-virus firm, said the virus — identified as "Crowt-A" — pulls headlines, subject lines and other content from CNN.com. Once opened, the virus can then scan the user's address book and try to email itself to those users. The virus' subject line and attachment share the same name, Sophos researchers said, but change continually to match headlines from CNN.com's home page. "Virus writers are always looking for new tricks to entice innocent computer users into running their malicious code," Carole Theriault, security consultant at Sophos, said in a statement. "This latest ploy feeds on people's desire for the latest news." Although the number of PCs possibly infected was not immediately known, Sophos said there had been only a small number of sightings. In addition to emailing itself to other users, the virus also installs a "backdoor Trojan function," according to Sophos. This function can pick up and send data such as keystrokes to a remote user — a practice sometimes used by hackers to obtain sensitive information such as passwords.

Miscellaneous



FLOODING OF COLLIERY, NORTHUMBERLAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of gallons of floodwater is threatening the future of the north-east of England's last remaining deep coal mine. Ellington Colliery in Northumberland employs about 500 people. At one point, more than 1,000 gallons a minute was flooding into the pit's only workable seam of coal. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has blamed the situation on bad management by owners UK Coal and urged the company not to close the site. Production at the colliery has been at a standstill since water found its way into the seam two weeks ago. UK Coal says it is waiting on geological reports before deciding how to proceed. Massive pumps are currently in operation underground - but the pit remains unworkable.

JOHN G. LEMOS (Cyprus)

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated Jan 20, states: The owner of bulk *John G. Lemos* (11031 gt, built 1986) caught with its pollution-control system bypassed to allow illegal oil dumping agreed yesterday to pay \$500,000 to settle a felony charge. Half the money from the

settlement will pay for fish and wildlife conservation, according to the plea agreement announced by the US attorney's office in Portland, Oreg. The investigation began less than three weeks ago, after a routine inspection of the vessel in Portland. US Coast Guard inspectors noticed suspicious plumbing modifications, which they found allowed the vessel's crew to pump oil-laden wastewater overboard through an oil-water separator. Inspectors ordered a test of the separators and found that oil overwhelmed the system and reached outgoing pipes. According to the Justice Department, several crew members confessed that the vessel's chief engineer had ordered them to pump oil-contaminated water overboard in excess of legal limits. Records showed that the crew did not record the discharges. Pacific & Atlantic Corp, the Greece-based owner of the vessel, pleaded guilty to keeping false records of oil disposal. In addition to the fine, the settlement puts the company on probation for four years and requires the company to develop an environmental compliance programme for its entire fleet. The \$250,000 of the fine set aside for conservation will go to a fund administered by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The fund was started last spring with \$1.3 million that came as part of a settlement with other shipping company polluters.

MUTINY ON TAIWAN-FLAGGED VESSEL IN INDIAN OCEAN

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: The Malaysian authorities rescued the captain of a Taiwanese fishing boat yesterday after its mutinous crew seized the vessel in the Indian Ocean. Captain Chen Kuoching, 44, was rescued after the Taipei authorities suspected that a mutiny had occurred onboard ref *Dong Yih* (2912 gt, built 1969) after leaving Singapore on Jan 13 for a two-week trip to catch tuna in the Indian Ocean. The marine police's PX 8 patrol vessel and Royal Malaysian Navy's *KD Laksamana Muhamad Amin* intercepted the Singapore-based fishing vessel near Pulau Pisang, off Pontian, at 0900. Marine police (southern region) chief, Superintendent Abdul Aziz Yusof, said the southern region centre received information from the Maritime Enforcement Co-ordination Centre (MECC) and a patrol team comprising 40 men were despatched to the area. "We spotted the fishing vessel near Pulau Pisang and together with a naval ship managed to intercept it. After confirming that it was the reported vessel, we escorted it to the harbourmaster's jetty for the next course of action," he said at a press conference yesterday. Supt Aziz said the ship's Taiwanese captain, and 28 men, comprising three other Taiwanese, 19 Chinese national and six Philippines, aged between 30 and 50, were on board and only one sustained light injuries in the mutiny. He said the Malaysian authorities could not take any action against the crewmembers over the incident as it did not happen in Malaysian waters and it was a Taiwanese-registered vessel. The navy's fleet headquarters chief staff of operations Commander Jamel Abdul Rahman said the navy was alerted by the MECC about the matter on Jan 20. At 1700 on Saturday (Jan 22), the vessel was located off Port Klang

on the navy's radar and *KD Laksamana Muhamad Amin* was despatched to track the vessel. It was spotted at 2340, off Tanjung Tuan, Malacca. A representative of Taipei's Economic and Culture Office in Kuala Lumpur said the captain's family suspected something amiss when he failed to contact them on Jan 14. The executive assistance to the Office representative, Odi S.R. Sun, said Chen would contact his family daily via satellite phone and they were worried when they failed to contact him on that day. "The family then alerted the Taiwanese authorities on Jan 19. A message was sent out and we contacted Wisma Putra asking for assistance to trace the vessel," he added.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Further testing has shown that a dead man from Vietnam's northern Thai Binh province had been infected with bird flu as his alive younger brother, local newspaper Labor today quoted the National Hygiene and Epidemiology Institute as saying. "The third testing by our institute showed that samples from the 47-year-old patient Nguyen Huu Viet were positive to H5N1," said Institute Director Nguyen Tran Hien, noting that samples from his 42-year-old brother named Nguyen Thanh Hung were earlier tested positive to the bird flu virus. Viet had been looked after by Hung, who lived in Hanoi before he died on Jan 9 at the Tropical Disease Institute in the capital. "H5N1 spreading from persons to persons is merely hypothetical. It can't be concluded that this is a human-to-human transmission case," the director noted. Two previous tests indicated that Viet had not been infected with H5N1. On the contrary, the first testing on samples from Hung showed that the younger man had not contracted the virus, but the two following tests proved that he is a bird flu victim. Hung, admitted to the Tropical Disease Institute on Jan 13 with symptoms of high temperature and damaged lungs, is now in stable health condition. His life will certainly be saved, local doctors said, noting that he has had no contact with fowls or lived in bird flu-hit areas. Yesterday, the Tropical Disease Institute received three suspected cases of bird flu infection, of whom one is Viet's younger brother. Now, it is treating seven patients, including six suspected cases. Also on Thursday, the Hanoi-based National Hospital of Pediatrics received a 10-year-old child from northern Ha Tay province. The patient is suspected to have contracted H5N1. Vietnam's Ministry of Health confirmed six cases of bird flu infections between Dec. 28, 2004 and Jan. 18, 2005.

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Vietnam today reported the deaths of two more people from bird flu, pushing the toll to nine dead in three weeks, officials said. A 35-year-old woman from the southern Mekong Delta province of Dong Thap died after being hospitalised, said Nguyen Ngoc An, director of Dong Thap's Preventive Medicine Centre. She tested positive for the H5N1 strain of bird flu, An said. The woman developed a high fever a week after slaughtering a duck she received from her neighbour. She did not eat the poultry, however, and none of her relatives who ate

it showed signs of the disease, An said. An said authorities suspected the woman might also have been infected by stork droppings in a pond where she often worked. The World Health Organisation and other health experts fear that avian influenza could evolve into the next global pandemic if the virus mutates and human-to-human transmission occurs. There is, however, no evidence of that yet. Last year, the virus spread to 10 Asian countries, killing or forcing the slaughter of about 100 million birds. Since that outbreak, 29 people have died in Vietnam and 12 in Thailand. The WHO also has cautioned against transporting poultry from places affected by bird flu to areas devastated by last month's tsunami. The agency stressed that infected poultry must be "kept out of the food chain, including emergency food relief activities."

OUTBREAK OF NOROVIRUS ON BAHAMAS-FLAGGED PASSENGER VESSEL

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Nearly 20 percent of the people on a Caribbean cruise ship headed toward Florida were suffering from a stomach virus today. Officials believe a passenger on passenger *Mariner of the Seas* (138279 gt, built 2003) brought the Norwalk-like virus on the vessel, which has 3,465 guests and 1,190 crew. The vessel is due to arrive in Port Canaveral, Fla., tomorrow. Medical personnel say 229 guests and 18 staffers have been infected, a spokesman for Royal Caribbean said yesterday. He added patients were treated and "responded well" to over-the-counter medication. The shipping company sent three extra doctors and a nurse to assist the vessel's medical team and implemented a program of heightened sanitation procedures for crew members.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: More than 250 people on board passenger *Mariner of the Seas* fell ill with a stomach virus while touring the western Caribbean, cruise line officials said today. About 233 of the 3,465 passengers on board became sick after the vessel left Port Canaveral on Jan 16 for a seven-day cruise through the western Caribbean. The ship was expected to return early tomorrow. Twenty of the vessel's 1,190 crew members also showed symptoms. Michael Sheehan, a spokesman for Royal Caribbean International, described the illness as "your typical 24-hour stomach virus and nothing more" and blamed a sick passenger for bringing it on board. *Mariner of the Seas* was also being checked for bacteria, the company said.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger *Mariner of the Seas*, with more than 250 of its 3,465 passengers ill with a stomach upsetting novovirus pathogen, will dock at Port Canaveral today. The passengers went down with the illness after the vessel left Port Canaveral on Jan 16 for a seven-day cruise through the western Caribbean region. Of the 1,190 crew members on the vessel, 20 are suffering from the infection. Royal Caribbean has sent three additional doctors and a nurse to assist the vessel's medical team and has implemented a program of heightened sanitation procedures for crew members.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Centres for Disease Control investigators met passenger *Mariner of the Seas* as part of a routine check early today as it pulled into Port Canaveral. The 3,400 passengers were cleared to leave the vessel about 0800. During the week at sea, cruise employees scoured everything with disinfectant, from elevator buttons and poker chips to tables, officials said. The vessel was able to clean up and depart for its next voyage by 1730, today. It was unknown how many, if any, customers refused to board after finding out about the sick passengers.

POWER OUTAGE, CANADA

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: A broken water main caused flooding at a power substation in Canada's largest city today, forcing store closures and a loss of power to some residents for nearly 12 hours. Automatic pumps could not keep up with the water flow, leading electricity crews to shut off a downtown power station before 0900 hrs, said Toronto Hydro spokesman Blair Peberdy. Electrical equipment was not severely damaged, he added. "All the customers should have their power restored by now," Peberdy said just before 2000 today. Toronto officials opened a government office building for condominium and apartment-dwellers who were left without heat as outside temperatures plummeted well below freezing. Red Cross workers were on site. Police said they had called in officers to direct traffic at major intersections. The Toronto Eaton Centre, a four-storey mall that lines a city block, was shut down for the day. The Hockey Hall of Fame also was closed. Peberdy said weather was likely a factor in the water main burst. Toronto was hit by a blizzard yesterday and temperatures dipped to minus 22 with the wind chill.

Fires & Explosions



AIRPORT, GLASGOW, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Police believe a fire which damaged an aircraft at Glasgow Airport was started deliberately, leading to an inquiry into security. The blaze at 0410 yesterday caused flights to be delayed for several hours. Strathclyde Police have said they are keeping an open mind about the incident but are currently treating it as wilful fire-raising. Airport insiders have said that the blaze was being regarded as "suspicious." The blaze was discovered on the airfield near a 49-seater aircraft operated by British Midland Airways. As a result of the blaze, an Embraer 145 aircraft suffered minor damage to a rear window. The aircraft was empty at the time of the fire but will not be able to fly. A spokeswoman for BAA Scotland, the owner of Glasgow Airport, said: "It is believed the fire started beneath the rear of an aircraft." Four international and three domestic flights were delayed because of the fire, and the airfield was closed until

shortly after 0900 hrs. The fire was extinguished by airport firefighters and a full security search was carried out. Several outbound flights were delayed, including services running to cities including Amsterdam, Gatwick, Prague, Birmingham, Paris, Alicante and Manchester. In-bound flights from Dublin and New York were diverted to Edinburgh Airport. Glasgow-bound flights from Prague and Salzburg were also delayed. Operations got back to normal at 0925 hrs, when the first outbound flight departed to Gatwick.

AMUSEMENT ARCADE, WELLS, NORFOLK, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A seaside resort amusement arcade has been destroyed by flames despite the efforts of 80 firefighters. The fire broke out just before 1500, today at the arcade in The Quay at Wells-next-the-Sea, in north Norfolk. The building was evacuated as were premises nearby because of fears the fire could spread. A Norfolk Fire Services spokesman said prevailing winds had made the job more difficult for crews who spent nearly three hours bringing it under control. Divisional officer Edward Zipfell says those involved in the fire had a lucky escape. "We expect to be on scene damping down hotspots until the early hours of tomorrow. Our fire inspection teams will be brought in when it is safe to find out the cause of the fire."

COAL MINE, KEMEROVO REGION, SIBERIA, RUSSIA

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: All miners from a Russian coal mine struck by fire yesterday have been saved by rescue workers, including nine people feared missing. "Rescue workers have managed to save all 215 miners, including the nine we previously could not find," said an Emergencies Ministry spokesman, referring to the mine in Siberia's Kemerovo region. "The fire started without an explosion in a shaft 450 metres below the ground we don't know the reason."

FLOUR MILL, ENID, OKLAHOMA, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: An explosion at an Enid flour mill sent two people to the hospital this afternoon and forced the evacuation of nearby residents. The Enid Fire Department reported that a fire broke out and subsequently ignited an flour-dust explosion at the Archer Daniels Midland flour mill just north of downtown Enid. The blast occurred as wheat-flour was being loaded into rail cars and reportedly threw large concrete chunks several hundred feet. Several buildings at the plant sustained major damage. The building where the explosion occurred holds up to 1.5 million pounds of flour, however only about 280,000 pounds of flour were in the building at the time. The Enid Fire department requested help from neighbouring area fire departments as well as reserve fire fighters from nearby Vance Air Force Base. The area immediately surrounding the mill was evacuated, as fire officials feared there might be a second explosion. Authorities are taking a cautious approach as they size up the

extent of the damage. They say the plant is too unstable to explore from the inside. As of late afternoon, investigators were waiting on a crane to arrive the unstable portions of the structure could be removed.

HOSPITAL, NASIRIYAH, IRAQ

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Fire swept through the general hospital in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah early today, killing 14 people and injuring 75, said a spokesman for the Italian military forces based in the city. The blaze at the Nasiriyah General Hospital was believed to have been caused by an electrical fault, the fire department said. The injured were transferred to another hospital in the city, about 200 miles south-east of Baghdad. Col. Francesco Tirino, a spokesman for the Italian contingent in Nasiriyah, said that 14 people died and 75 were injured. The Italians received an emergency call at around 0200 hrs, shortly after the fire broke out. The blaze was extinguished four hours later, Tirino said, and the Italians returned to their base. Most of the injured were taken to a paediatric hospital in Nasiriyah, while three, who were in serious condition, were taken to a field hospital run by the Italians.

OFFICE BUILDING, SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: San Rafael fire investigators said yesterday they still do not know the cause of a five-alarm fire that destroyed a downtown office building that was home to the popular Salute Ristorante. The damage estimate was increased to at least \$2 million. Kentfield resident Pat Burke, owner of the 95-year-old building at 901 Tamalpais Ave., plans to meet with his insurance company today. He said the 11,000-square-foot structure was fully insured. He said his tenants, including the restaurant, also had insurance. Tamalpais Avenue remained closed yesterday between Third and Fourth streets and will remain so for at least another day, Fire Division Chief Brian Waterbury said. The fire was reported at 0140 hrs, yesterday in the back of the building near the restaurant's kitchen. Nearly 80 firefighters from 11 agencies battled the stubborn blaze, finally bringing it under control at 0433 hrs. San Rafael fire investigators and officials with the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms spent yesterday sifting shovel by shovel through the ashes at the rear of the building, which collapsed during the blaze. The investigation is likely to continue through this week. Burke said he bought the two-story Victorian building in 1997 and it did not have fire sprinklers, although he plans to install them when the time comes to rebuild.

OIL PRODUCTION PLANT, ALBERTA, CANADA

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated Jan 20, states: Suncor Energy Inc will not return to normal production at its fire-damaged oilsands plant in northern Alberta until this summer, the Calgary company said today. Suncor said a preliminary assessment of the damage caused by the fire in early January indicates production would not resume to full rates until

sometime in the summer quarter, which ends Sep 30. "The recovery plan is focused on investigating the cause of the fire, completing a damage assessment, completing repairs and working to mitigate the impact of the outage to Suncor and its customers," Rick George, president and chief executive of the integrated oil company, said after stock markets had closed. During the repair period, oilsands production is expected to average about 110,000 barrels a day, less than half of the plant's current normal capacity of about 225,000 barrels a day. Suncor said it would carry out as many maintenance projects as possible on the oilsands operations during the repair period, including most or all of a maintenance shutdown previously planned for this fall. The Jan 4 fire was confined to one of Suncor's two coker fractionators — a large vessel that separates the various crude products that come out of the oily mud. However, it also damaged supporting equipment such as structural steel, piping, electrical supply and heat equipment. Suncor said it carries property loss and business interruption insurance of up to \$1.15 billion so the financial impact from the fire is "expected to be substantially mitigated until full production is resumed." However, the company faces a deductible on property losses of \$10 million. Suncor stands to lose millions of dollars each day that production is less than half of its 225,000 barrels per day capacity.

PREMISES, BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Bethlehem has given the owners of the Main Street building destroyed in a four-alarm fire Sunday (Jan 23) morning 72 hours to raze or repair it. Craig Hynes, chief of the city's code enforcement bureau, inspected the building in the historic district yesterday and said it is in danger of collapsing. "At this point I just put the ball in the owners' court," Hynes said. "They have to determine whether they want to take the whole building down." A half-block section of Main Street's historic downtown remained closed to traffic yesterday, and Hynes said it would reopen only after the third-floor wall of 574 Main St. is secured or torn down. "We are going to push as hard as we can to reopen the street, but obviously we are going to work with the owner and we want to save as much of the building too," he said. Hynes said as long as the owners, George and Shaku Jain-Cocks, get the "ball rolling" on stabilising the wall before Thursday (Jan 27), the city won't step in. The Jain-Cocks could not be reached for comment yesterday, but said Sunday they were "devastated" by the fire and it is too early to tell what they'll do with the property. Their building is believed to have been built around 1850. The cause of Sunday's fire, which started around 0100 hrs and took more than four hours for firefighters to put out, is still unknown, although Deputy Fire Commissioner Gene Novak said he does not suspect foul play was involved. Novak said the fire started in a second-floor storage room of Alpha Graphics, a printing and graphics company that has rented space there since the early 1990s. In addition to damaging the Main Street

building, the fire gutted the Creative Custom Designs building, a floral arrangement gift store around the corner at 99 W. Broad St., and caused water and smoke damage to the Brownstone Design Group building at 97 W. Broad St., where seven tenants lived on the second and third floors. None of the tenants were injured in the fire. Hynes said neither of the other two buildings are in danger of collapsing. Owners of the businesses and buildings affected by the fire spent yesterday assessing damage and beginning cleanup. Art Schmidt, who owns 99 W. Broad St. with his wife, Tammy, said he hopes to have his building, which he said was built around 1860, renovated within six months. The owners of Brownstone said they hoped to have their business up and running again by April, while Creative Custom Design's owner Nanette Ronyack said she hoped to open as soon as possible, although she didn't pinpoint a date.

PREMISES, EVERETT, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire destroyed a central Everett building yesterday that housed a plasma centre and a warehouse for a sporting-goods store. The fire started around 0845 hrs in the basement of Grifols Biomat USA Plasma Centre, firefighters said. No one was injured, but neighboring businesses were evacuated while as many as 60 firefighters battled the blaze. Because the fire started in the front, and the lone entrance was in the rear, fire crews had trouble getting in, said Everett Fire Department Battalion Chief Dave Neyens. Fire investigators probably won't be able to get inside to determine the cause for days.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A fire that caused more than \$2 million in damage to the Grifols Biomat USA Plasma Center in Everett was still smoldering today as investigators got their first look inside the building. Thousands of gallons of water in the basement and piles of hot debris complicated efforts by local and federal investigators to pinpoint a cause for yesterday's blaze. "We have to get everything out first before we can determine how this fire started," Everett Fire Marshal Warren Burns said. "We've got a lot of work ahead of us." Figuring out how the fire started could take as long as a week, he said. Crews remained at the site overnight to watch for flare-ups. Firefighters suspect the blaze started in the basement. They hope to start examining the area today, after crews clear out the collapsed roof. The fire destroyed the building along with 2,250 one-litre units of plasma valued at \$1 million, said Debbie Cornell, a facility manager trainee for Grifols USA's Everett site. The flames also consumed more than \$1 million worth of equipment at the donation centre, including 35 machines used to collect plasma. Those are valued at \$30,000 each, she said. Firefighters from seven departments battled the blaze for more than eight hours Sunday. No one was injured in the fire.

PREMISES, OYSTER BAY, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A fire that started in the

basement of a turn-of-the-century hardware store in Oyster Bay also destroyed the office of singer Billy Joel. It took 150 firefighters from 15 departments nearly two hours to put out the 1218 hrs, fire yesterday that gutted Nobman's Hardware, established in 1910. Oyster Bay Fire Chief Frank Ozol said the blaze began in the basement of the family-owned store at 95 South St. and spread quickly to its roof. "With all the solvents and flammable things in there, my guys had a tough time getting into the basement," he said, adding, "We have no idea what caused it." Fearing that the roof would collapse, Ozol said he was forced to pull all his firefighters from inside and atop the two-story wooden building. The store's second floor was rented by the Oyster Bay Civic Association and Joel's management office, Maritime Music. "Everything in those offices was destroyed," Ozol said. But he said adjacent businesses, such as an antique store, deli and ice cream parlor, were saved, though they suffered some smoke damage. Billy Joel's spokeswoman, Claire Mercuri, said she did not know if any of the Grammy Award winner's rock 'n' roll memorabilia was inside his office.

PREMISES, STRABANE, COUNTY TYRONE, NORTHERN IRELAND, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Police have yet to establish the cause of a major fire which destroyed an agricultural and hardware business in Strabane, County Tyrone. A number of surrounding outhouses were also damaged. Fifty firefighters tackled the blaze which broke out at the store just after 0200, GMT, today. The building was well alight when fire crews arrived at the scene. It is not yet known how the fire started. Dock Street will remain closed for some time. It is understood about 80% of the building has been destroyed. Divisional officer Aidan McGuinness from the Fire Service said tackling the blaze was particularly hazardous because of materials inside the building. These included bottles of gas. "As a result of this we had to withdraw firefighters," he said. "We continued to fight the fire from outside the building. We had to do this because the safety of firefighters was paramount and we couldn't put anyone at risk." Firefighters are also concerned about the stability of the walls of the building.

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: An area of Strabane which was closed following a fire is due to reopen later today. Police have yet to establish the cause of the major fire which destroyed an agricultural and hardware business in the County Tyrone. A number of surrounding outhouses were also damaged. Fifty firefighters tackled the blaze which broke out at the store in the early hours of Saturday (Jan 22). The building was well alight when crews arrived. It is understood about 80% of the building was destroyed.

PREMISES, YOUNGTOWN, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A deliberately lit fire in the Launceston suburb of Youngtown has caused almost \$2 million damage. Fire investigators believe the blaze was started

at the front of the City Mission Shop. Crews were called to the blaze on Hobart Road Youngtown about midnight. Fire investigators say the fire started outside the front of the shop in some furnishings, the building and stock were completely destroyed. The Acting District Officer for Launceston, Jeff Harper, says crews are still mopping up the area. "We are unable to gain access to a lot of the internal areas so far, so there are some quite large pockets burning still in the middle," Mr Harper said. Police are speaking to a number of witnesses in relation to the fire.

RECYCLING FACTORY, PAROW INDUSTRIA, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters, wearing special breathing apparatuses to protect themselves from toxic fumes, battled for two hours yesterday to put out a fire that extensively damaged a plastic recycling factory in Parow Industria. By 1600 hrs, fire officials at the scene reported that the blaze had been extinguished. According to the station officer at the fire control centre, Michael Lightly, about 50 personnel, using eight pumps, two water tankers, two response vehicles, two command buses, one hydraulic platform and one medical response vehicle, battled to put out the fire. No injuries or deaths had been reported, Lightly said. Traffic in the immediate vicinity was disrupted for the duration of the fire as firefighters battled flames on three sides of the building. Lightly said the light wind that was blowing at the time did not fuel the fire, although it blew the dense smoke across the Bellville area.

REFINERY, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire crews are on the scene of a two-alarm fire at the Sunoco refinery in South Philadelphia. It took firefighters nearly two hours to control the blaze as black smoke filled the air throughout the area. According to fire officials, the fire broke out in the refinery's exchanger unit that is used in the process of making gasoline. About 75 firefighters arrived to battle the fire that began shortly after 2000 hrs, yesterday. An explosion was reportedly heard just moments before the fire broke out. No injuries were reported.

STATELY HOME, GRANTHAM AREA, LINCOLNSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated Jan 25, states: Fire crews were damping down today after a major fire ripped through a Victorian stately home in Lincolnshire. More than 120 firefighters battled the fire in the north wing of Stoke Rochford Hall near Grantham. Teams, including some sent from Leicestershire, had to withdraw from the building as the fire spread over three floors. The building, used as a residential conference and training centre by the National Union of Teachers, was evacuated but no-one was injured. The fire started just before 0900, GMT, today. Neil Cheyne of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue said: "This is a significant fire and we expect there to be extensive damage." Water from the lake in the

grounds is being used to try and contain the flames. Designed by the Scottish architect William Burn, the hall was built in the early 1840s and many of the original features had been retained. The hall is set in more than 1,000 acres of grounds.

STATELY HOME, KNARESBOROUGH AREA, NORTH YORKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: A blaze that tore through one of England's finest neo-gothic stately homes yesterday is thought to have caused damage worth millions of pounds. More than 80 firefighters were called to deal with the flames, which are believed to have gutted as much as three-quarters of Allerton Castle, a grade I-listed building in North Yorkshire. A fire crew had initially been called to put out a chimney fire at the house, but left after believing it had been extinguished. About two hours later, at 0200, teams returned after a serious fire broke out in the roof. Although it was feared the blaze had destroyed the building's 80ft-high great hall, its best-known feature, it appeared later as if the hall's panelling survived, despite the room being burnt out. An expert from English Heritage was due to assess the damage. The house, between York and Harrogate, has been owned by Gerald Rolph, an American businessman, since 1982. Rolph has renovated the 80-bedroomed mansion "in the interests of the community". He is reported to have said the fire was a "massive blow" and to have pledged to restore the building. A salvage operation is trying to save the most important works, including an antique carpet from the main hall. Jez Rushworth, the fire service group manager, said an investigation would be carried out into whether the two blazes were linked. He said: "There has been quite extensive damage to the roof of the main building and the first floor following the collapse of the roof. But fire crews have managed to save the wings, chapel and annexe."

STATELY HOME, KNARESBOROUGH AREA, NORTH YORKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated today, states: The owners of Allerton Castle, the historic stately home near Knaresborough, have pledged to restore it to all its former glory following a devastating blaze at the weekend. The fire broke out in the early hours of Saturday (Jan 22) morning and was tackled by 80 firefighters who drew water from two lakes. About half of the building was destroyed and investigations are continuing as to what started it. However, North Yorkshire Police said they were not treating it as suspicious. A massive clear-up operation is underway.

SUBWAY STATION, LOWER MANHATTAN, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: One of the city's busiest subway lines has been suspended and another severely limited, possibly for years, after a fire destroyed an equipment room at a station in lower Manhattan. The C line - which runs through Manhattan,

Brooklyn and Queens - was suspended yesterday following the fire at the Chambers Street station and will be out of service indefinitely, the Metropolitan Transport Authority said today. The MTA said it also was severely limiting the A line, which runs parallel to the C line for much of its route and extends to John F. Kennedy International Airport, causing "significant delays." The fire was set in a shopping cart on the platform, igniting cables above the platform and causing millions of dollars in damage to equipment, officials said. The fire is believed to have been set intentionally and is under investigation, officials said. The MTA said service may be gradually restored, but it could take a few years to completely repair the damaged equipment and return the lines to full service.

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Tasmania's Parks and Wildlife Service say a fire near Waterhouse, in the state's north-east is out of control and threatening shacks. It is believed two fires were deliberately lit on Old Homestead Road last night and early this morning. Senior fire manager with Parks and Wildlife, Tony Blanks, says 5,000 hectares of scrub have been burnt. He says a helicopter is water bombing the fire and crews on the ground are working to protect shacks in the area. "Basically the fire has blown from Old Homestead Road to the sea at Ranson's Beach," he said. "Fire crews are working on the protection of shacks at the present time. The northern flank of the fire is not a great concern, we are concentrating resources on the southern edge of the fire and that, at the moment, is the side we are most concerned about."

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighting resources in Perth are being stretched to limit with crews battling a second bushfire on the outskirts of the West Australian capital. Hundreds of personnel are attempting to keep a large blaze that has burnt through 27,000 hectares of bush to the east of Perth contained within breaks. The fire covered Perth in a blanket of smoke for several days during the past week. Firefighters now have a second bushfire to contend with near the northern suburb of Carramar. About 30 firefighters and water bombers are trying to contain the blaze, which is threatening to enter a pine plantation.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Tasmania's Parks and Wildlife Service hopes to contain a fire burning near the Waterhouse Reserve in the state's north-east today. Fire crews have continued fighting the blaze overnight. The fire burning towards the small community of Tomahawk, north-east of Scottsdale, has burned more than 1,500 hectares. Senior fire manager with Parks and Wildlife Tony Blanks says 30 firefighters will today concentrate their efforts on the northern side of the blaze. Mr Blanks says the southern side of the fire is contained. He says if winds remain light during the day the fire should be contained by tonight. It is believed the blaze started after two fires were deliberately lit on Old Homestead Road yesterday.

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: Firefighting resources in

Perth are being stretched to limit with crews battling a second bushfire on the outskirts of the West Australian capital. Hundreds of personnel are attempting to keep a large blaze that has burnt through 27,000 hectares of bush to the east of Perth contained within breaks. The fire covered Perth in a blanket of smoke for several days during the past week. Firefighters now have a second bushfire to contend with near the northern suburb of Carramar. About 30 firefighters and water bombers are trying to contain the blaze, which is threatening to enter a pine plantation.

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Bushfire victims on the Eyre Peninsula had been paid more than \$2 million by the South Australian Government since a devastating blaze two weeks ago, Premier Mike Rann said today. "I asked government agencies to provide a speedy, compassionate response to those affected, and I am pleased to see that the assistance has been flowing swiftly," Mr Rann said. "More than 850 bushfire affected people have registered with the recovery centres and a new registration card is helping them have access to special grants quickly. "The range of grants available is designed to help affected families, students returning to school, farmers, small business, local government, those transporting donated fodder and people dealing with bereavement." Mr Rann said so far money had been paid to 173 farmers, with 350 individuals and families also getting assistance. More grants were expected to be processed in the coming days, he said. Nine people died in the blaze, the worst in SA since the devastating Ash Wednesday fires of 1983. The blaze also caused an estimated \$50 million in property damage.

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: The Department of Conservation and Land Management estimates last week's fire in the hills east of Perth cost \$10 million to contain, but believes the final cost will be much higher. CALM says an estimate of the damage has been difficult to assess while some internal roads remain impassable. A large amount of the pine plantation has been destroyed and a salvage operation is under way to clear the debris. CALM spokesman Rick Sneeuwjagt says the total cost could be well in excess of \$10 million. "Well it could do if you add up all the pine plantation losses...they'll be the most valuable losses from a dollar point of view, but of course there are other losses that we can't put a dollar amount on easily...you know the environmental losses," he said. "There may be damage impact on our water catchments, water quality and we're working with the Water Corporation to ensure that rehabilitation goes on before the major rains come."

London, Jan 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters are battling three fires in Victoria. The largest is at Corndale, near Casterton in the state's south-west, where fire has burnt through 300 hectares. Country Fire Authority fire controller Tim Lancaster says the crews are working hard to contain the fires before the temperature soars. "There's two fires down in the south-west of Victoria in the Casterton area and one fire near Seymour at Tullarook, about 12.5 kilometres from Seymour," he said.

WILDFIRES, PHILIPPINES

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire spread rapidly today on the central Philippine tourist island of Boracay, threatening beach resorts accommodating thousands of visitors diverted there by the Indian Ocean tsunami, police and residents said. Up to 5,000 square metres of property was on fire about an hour after the blaze started in a makeshift market area, radio station Bombo Radyo reported. There were no immediate reports of injuries. Firefighters were having difficulty containing the blaze because the island has only one fire truck. Strong winds were fanning the flames, and residents, tourists and hotel staff were helping put it out by dumping buckets of water hauled from the beach, the report said. Boracay is about 310 kilometres southeast of Manila.



ACCIDENT AT BRISBANE AIRPORT, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of passengers were delayed after a cargo plane mishap closed the main runway at Brisbane domestic airport today. The Boeing 727, on a flight from Cairns, ran off the main runway shortly after 1600 hrs, said Brisbane Aircraft Corporation (BAC) spokesman Jim Carden. The plane with a crew of three on board, was operated by HeavyLift Cargo Airlines and was empty when it landed. It was believed the aircraft had been due to take a load of cargo to the Solomon Islands tomorrow. "We understand, but it is not confirmed, they had a problem with the front nose wheel at relatively low speed, which caused them to go off to the side of the runway," Mr Carden said. Planes smaller than a Boeing 737 were being allowed to land on the shorter cross-runway but larger aircraft were being diverted to Coolangatta on the Gold Coast or to Sydney. Several hundred passengers waited at the airport as the plane was manoeuvred from the runway and taxied to another area early this evening. The backlog of passengers was expected to be cleared tonight. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is investigating.

ACCIDENT AT KENNER, LOUISIANA, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A single-engine aircraft lost power on takeoff and made a belly landing yesterday at Louis Armstrong International Airport, but the pilot escaped injury, the Federal Aviation Administration said. The accident closed the airport's east-west runway for several hours but caused no flight delays. Incoming planes were diverted to the airport's north-south runway, spokeswoman Michelle Duffour said. The 1970 Mooney M20J lifted off the east-west runway about 1540 hrs, but its engine quit shortly after the pilot retracted the landing gear, FAA spokesman Roland

Herwig said today. The plane made a belly landing on the west end of the runway, damaging some approach lights. The identity of the pilot, the plane's sole occupant, was unavailable today. The plane is registered to William R. Roberts of Cypress, Texas, according to FAA records.

ACCIDENT, DUSSELDORF AIRPORT, GERMANY

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A cargo aircraft that belongs to the Airlines company Emirat Sky Cargos caught fire at Dusseldorf airport this morning. The Boeing-747 caught fire when landing. It failed to break within the assigned time and overshot the runway. Two out of four aircraft engines caught fire. Fire brigades managed to put out the flames quickly and prevented the spread of the flames to the rest of the aircraft. The crew on board was not hurt and was evacuated. The authorities have been investigating the causes of the accident and financial damages caused. According to preliminary reports, the accident might have been caused by ice formation on the runway.

ACCIDENT, PESHAWAR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Jan 22 — Pakistan's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said an aircraft of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) during landing, skidded off the runway at Peshawar International Airport in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan yesterday. As a result, the airport is closed until the Airbus is removed from the runway. Director of Operations of CAA Jhangir Khan said that a team of PIA's engineers from Karachi was scheduled to reach Peshawar airport this afternoon to inspect the aircraft and find out the reason for the mishap. Initial findings say the aircraft slid for about 300-feet from the stop point on the runway, apparently due to rain. No casualties were reported. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Jan 23 — Pakistan's Civil Aviation Authority said today that operations at Peshawar International Airport had resumed. The airport had remained closed for the last 48 hours after a Pakistan International Airlines aircraft skidded off the runway on landing Jan 21. A team of PIA engineers from Karachi arrived at the scene yesterday and assisted the CAA in recovering the aircraft. An enquiry has been ordered. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

CRASH, ABERNATHY, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

See N399RH.

CRASH, CORFE AREA, SOMERSET, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Four people including a father and his 15-year-old son have been killed in a helicopter crash in Somerset. The wreckage of a privately-owned Jetranger 206B was found in woods in the Blackdown Hills, south of Wellington at 0900, GMT, today. The alarm was raised at 1300, GMT, yesterday after the helicopter, which had taken off from Gloucestershire Airport, failed to arrive in Devon. An

inquiry is being carried out by the Air Accidents Investigation Branch. There were unconfirmed reports of a loud bang after a helicopter flew over the Taunton area yesterday afternoon. Police, search and rescue teams, a police helicopter and a Sea King helicopter from RAF Kinloss in Cornwall searched throughout the day and night. Bad weather hampered their efforts and meant the search had to be called off at 0430, GMT, today, before resuming at first light. At 0900, GMT, a member of the public reported that a strong smell of aviation fuel had led him to the crash site in woods near the village of Corfe. None of the victims has been formally identified, but they are believed to be from Gloucestershire. The victims' bodies were removed from the crash site today. Gloucestershire Airport said the helicopter belonged to the company Heli-flight, based at Staverton, and was on a private flight at the time of the crash. A police spokeswoman said it was heading to Torbay and had been due to return to Staverton at 1830, GMT, yesterday.

CRASH, CORNELIA AREA, FREE STATE, SOUTH AFRICA

See N7478S.

CRASH, NGONG HILLS, KENYA

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 23, states: Two people, whose nationality is unknown, died yesterday when their light aircraft crashed and burst into flames in a mountainous region near the Kenyan capital, police said. A flight instructor and his student died when the aircraft crashed after apparently being swayed by the wind in the air at Ngong Hills, about 30km southwest of Nairobi, a police officer said. The officer said a probe had been launched to establish the cause of the crash.

CRASH, QUEBEC PROVINCE, CANADA

London, Jan 25 — Following received from LaSalle, Quebec, dated today: Two people died and four were injured yesterday when their helicopter crashed during a guided caribou hunting trip in northwestern Quebec. The helicopter, belonging to a hunting outfitter, went down around 1530 hrs, about 1,300 kilometres north of Rouyn-Noranda east of James Bay. One of the injured passengers called for help on his satellite phone, and by 1630 hrs, two private helicopters from the same outfitter with police investigators on board were dispatched to rescue the group, police said. They were transported to a health centre at a hydroelectric plant, where the pilot and the guide leading the tour were pronounced dead, and the four passengers were treated for minor injuries. The Transportation Safety Board will be investigating.

CRASH, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

See VH-BQN.

CRASH, SOUTHERN BOLIVIA

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated Jan 21, states: A private Cessna Caravan aircraft crashed while preparing to land in southern Bolivia, injuring 11 people, the Bolivian Information Agency said today. Among those injured were Carlos Melo, an

official of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and cement-industry businessman Samuel Doria. The aircraft crashed some 180 km south of La Paz. The Civil Aeronautics Director, Hans Beckmann, said the victims were evacuated to hospitals, adding that "none of the passengers or crew suffered serious injuries."

EMERGENCY LANDING, NORTH BEND AIRPORT, OREGON, UNITED STATES

London, Jan 25 — A press report, dated Jan 24, states: A twin-engine Ameriflight aircraft made an emergency landing at the North Bend Municipal Airport this morning. The aircraft is resting on its belly, with the landing gear partially exposed and the propellers bent from the landing. North Bend firefighters were dispatched to the scene at 0819 hrs, following a report the landing gear buckled upon landing, said North Bend Police Dispatcher Jamie Antis. In all, 15 firefighters, two crash trucks and two engines responded. Antis said she did not know how many people were aboard the Beechcraft C-99, but that no injuries were reported.

EMERGENCY LANDING, SYKTYVKAR, RUSSIA

London, Jan 24 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: A passenger aircraft of Russia's flagship carrier Aeroflot, Russian Airlines, flying from Moscow to Nizhnevartovsk, last night made an emergency landing in Syktyvkar for technical reasons, a spokeswoman for Aeroflot told Itar-Tass today. "There were 100 passengers on board," Irina Dannenberg said. All of them received hot meals and were accommodated at a local hotel. Another Aeroflot aircraft arrived in Syktyvkar at 1100, Moscow time, today. It took the passengers on board and flew them to Nizhnevartovsk. A commission has been set up at Aeroflot to look into the incident.

INCIDENT AT CALGARY AIRPORT, ALBERTA, CANADA

London, Jan 25 — Following received from LaSalle, Quebec, dated today: Federal investigators are trying to determine why a Jetsgo flight with 78 passengers aboard suddenly veered off the runway at Calgary airport last week, trundled along the grass verge, then took off again from the turf. As it tore 1,600 feet along the frozen ground, the McDonnell Douglas MD83 ran over a sign, apparently damaging flaps, landing gear doors and hydraulics, according to an official report on the incident. The crew lifted off from the grass after reporting a "fuel emergency," but circled around and landed again safely. About 30 other aircraft were left in holding patterns and emergency vehicles dispatched as the drama unfolded. Investigators are not saying what caused the mishap, but the most likely culprit would appear to be the weather, said Tom MacMillan, a Jetsgo spokesman. "The combination of ice fog, low ceiling, low visibility and no centre lights on the runway would have come together to make the landing that much more problematic or challenging," he said. Mr. MacMillan stressed that the fuel

emergency only meant that if the plane had been forced to wait in queue behind other flights for its second landing, it would not have had enough fuel to be diverted to another airport, should Calgary be closed. The Transportation Safety Board is investigating the incident and plans to analyse both the cockpit voice recorder and flight data recorder at its Ottawa office, said John Cottreau, a spokesman for the agency. He could not say when a report would be issued. The incident began just before 2000 hrs, last Thursday (Jan 20), as Flight 191 from Toronto touched down on Runway 34, according to a report on Transport Canada's Civil Aviation Daily Occurrence Reporting System (CADORS) obtained by the National Post. Crew members reported they felt the aircraft start to slide off the runway, so elected to do a missed approach, meaning they would lift off and try another landing, said the report. The crew told the control tower they had to get back to ground as soon as possible because of what they called a "fuel emergency." The plane landed safely again at 2010 hrs, with no injuries reported. "It was later reported by TSB that the entire aircraft departed the runway during the landing sequences and the go-around was initiated from the grass beside the runway surface," said the CADORS report. "There is damage to the flaps, gear doors and possibly some hydraulic lines."

MID-AIR COLLISION, FREDERICK AREA, OKLAHOMA, UNITED STATES

See N8526M.

N136LN

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated Jan 21, states: A preliminary report from the National Transportation Safety Board today offered a new clue in the crash of a Eurocopter EC 135 (N136LN) into the Potomac River. The NTSB said wake turbulence from another aircraft may have been a factor in the crash near the Woodrow Wilson Bridge on Jan 10. When planes fly, streams come off the wing tips, leaving a wake of disturbed air. "It's like two tornadoes coming off the wing tips of aircraft, and it increases in size as it leaves those wing tips, and it remains in an area, essentially falling in altitude for some period of time," said aviation expert George Novak. One minute before the helicopter crashed, a jet flew over the Wilson Bridge, and the helicopter may have travelled in the flight path of that jet, possibly being influenced by the wake turbulence.

N1750A

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: Two Dallas men died this morning when their single-engine aircraft clipped a power line and crashed near Brownwood. They were flying from Dallas and approaching Brownwood Regional Airport when the aircraft crashed. That's according to the Department of Public Safety in Brownwood. A D-P-S spokeswoman says the men were in a Beech 36 model, single-engine aircraft when the landing gear clipped a power line. The aircraft hit a group of standing trees, the left wing broke off and the aircraft burst into flames. The aircraft was

registered to Mathai. The National Transportation Safety Board and the FAA in Fort Worth are investigating the crash.

London, Jan 25 — Beechcraft Bonanza 36, N1750A, crashed near Brownwood, Texas, at 1330, Jan 22, while on a flight from Dallas, TX, to Brownwood. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N2144C

London, Jan 25 — Piper PA-32RT-300 (Lance II), N2144C, crashed near Guerrero, Mexico, at 1951, Jan 20, while on a flight from Fredericksburg, Texas. The two persons on board were killed.

N2467X

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: A preliminary report of the private plane crash last week near Huntsville International Airport shows that the impact separated both wings of the Cessna T206H from the fuselage, and the left wing tip was crushed and found separated at the base of broken trees at the site. The report did not address the cause of the crash. A final report of the crash may not be completed for another six months to a year, according to the National Transportation Safety Board, which is investigating the Jan 11 accident. The single-engine plane went down less than a mile east of the airport in a swampy wooded area. Killed in the crash were brothers Steven Patrick Hogan, 40, of Huntsville, and David Craig Hogan, 42, of Madison. The NTSB report doesn't say which brother was the pilot. The plane's fuselage was found on its right side at the base of broken trees, the report stated. The propeller hub of the plane was fractured and attached to the crankshaft, and the propeller blades weren't found, according to the report. Members of a local metal-detecting club who searched the site late last week for the propeller blades for the NTSB weren't able to find them. Debris and freshly broken trees were scattered 150 feet at the crash site, the report stated. According to air traffic control records, the pilot received an instrument flight rules clearance to Fulton County Airport-Brown Field in Atlanta before leaving the airport. The pilot radioed the ground controller at 1814 hrs, and said the flight was ready to taxi for takeoff. The controller asked the pilot to confirm that he had received the current automated weather briefing, and also told the pilot about a thunderstorm three miles south of the airport moving toward the northeast. The automated weather briefing provides a continuous broadcast of information like weather, visibility, wind direction and velocity and runways in use. The pilot acknowledged the weather information and said the flight was ready for an immediate takeoff on the airport's east runway. The flight was cleared for takeoff and, after the airplane left, no further radio contact was received.

N373DL

London, Jan 25 — Boeing 737-247, N373DL, operated by Delta Airlines, was damaged when it was struck by a catering truck, while parked at the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport, Covington, Kentucky, at approximately 1240, EST, Jan 17. The two crewmembers,

two flight attendants, and 10 passengers were not injured. The aircraft was in the process of boarding passengers, when it was struck on its starboard side by a catering truck. Damage to the fuselage included a 6-inch, by 14-inch puncture, and several small dents. In addition, two formers and one stringer were damaged.

N399RH

London, Jan 21 — A press report, dated today, states: A father and daughter from Shallowater died in a plane crash near Abernathy last night. Department of Public Safety Troopers say the small plane crashed about seven miles north-east of Abernathy just after 1800 hrs. Corporal John Gonzalez said the Hale County Sheriff's Office was first to be notified. DPS troopers will set a perimeter around the crash site, however the FAA will be in charge of the investigation. "We don't know what could have happened prior to plane crash, why it went down all of a sudden," Corporal Gonzalez said. The small plane was a Beechcraft.

London, Jan 21 — Beechcraft Bonanza J35, N399RH, crashed near Abernathy, Texas, at 0020, Jan 21. The two persons on board were killed.

N6057M

London, Jan 23 — A press report, dated Jan 22, states: A missing single-engine aircraft with three people on board crashed into a hilltop near Hood River, Oregon, authorities reported yesterday. Searchers had little hope of survivors, Hood River County sheriff's officers said. Rescuers in aircraft reported that the aircraft appeared to have been destroyed on impact. The Cirrus SR22 was discovered about 1700 hrs after an all-day air search, said Georges Kleinbaum, Oregon search and rescue co-ordinator. The crash site was located in a forested area about five miles west of Hood River. The aircraft was bound from Salem to Hood River and left Salem Airport shortly before 2000 on Thursday (Jan 20). The aircraft was registered to Son-Rise Development Inc in Hood River, a residential real estate development company. The aircraft was tracked by radar to Stevenson, about 15 miles from Hood River, said Mike Ferguson, a regional Federal Aviation Administration spokesman. Family members reported the aircraft overdue. Two aircraft from the Hood River County sheriff's office and two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters from the Oregon Army National Guard in Salem looked for the crashed aircraft. The Civil Air Patrol also helped in the search. Rescuers received no emergency locator signal from the aircraft, the National Guard reported.

London, Jan 25 — Cirrus SR22, N6057M, crashed near Hood River, Oregon, at 0400, Jan 21, while on a flight from Salem, OR, to Hood River. The aircraft was destroyed. The three persons on board were killed.

N7478S

London, Jan 25 — Aerostar 600, N7478S, on a flight from Pretoria to Harrismith, crashed near Cornelia, South Africa, at approximately 1450, UTC, Jan 19. The pilot and the four passengers were fatally injured. The aircraft was destroyed.

N844JK

London, Jan 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A Cessna 421C (Golden Eagle) was destroyed when it crashed into a home in a Kansas City suburb, killing all five people on board and leaving a fiery trail of destruction in the neighbourhood. The aircraft, which went down shortly after take-off yesterday, clipped a street lamp and several trees as it broke up, slamming into two vehicles and coming to rest at the foundation of a home. No one on the ground was hurt. The crash spread aviation fuel and wreckage across several blocks. The back porch of the home was extensively damaged, and a truck and a sport utility vehicle were destroyed. Aside from its small windows and some numerical markings, the aircraft “was very hard to identify to be an airplane,” said Overland Park Fire Chief Dennis Meyers. “It was totally destroyed,” Meyers said. “It was just all bits and pieces.” Two of the victims had been on their way to the Bahamas for a vacation given by members of their congregation at

Parkway Baptist Church, WDAF-TV reported yesterday. The crash came after the aircraft left Johnson County Executive Airport. The airport’s control tower had handed the aircraft over to regional air traffic controllers, who never heard from the pilot, said Bob Perry, the county airport commission’s director of aviation. “That’s when they knew there was something wrong,” Perry said. The National Transportation Safety Board was investigating.

London, Jan 25 — Cessna 421C (Golden Eagle), N844JK, crashed near Overland Park, Kansas, at 1543, Jan 21, while on a flight from Olathe, KS, to Zephyrhills, Florida. The aircraft was destroyed. The five persons on board were killed.

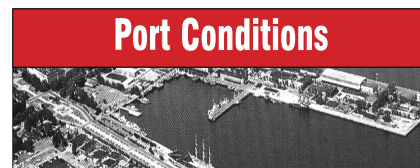
N8526M

London, Jan 20 — Air Tractor 502B, N8526M, was involved in a mid-air collision with a United States Air Force T37 over Hollister, Oklahoma, at 1650, Jan 18, while on a flight from Olney, Texas, to Huron, South Dakota. N8526M was destroyed. The one person on board was

killed. The two persons on board the T37 parachuted to safety.

VH-BQN

London, Jan 21 — Air Tractor AT802A, VH-BQN, operated by Aussie Aerial Services, was destroyed while manoeuvring near Wynella Station, Queensland, at 2300, AEST, Jan 6. The pilot, sole occupant of the aircraft, was killed.



ITALY

Genoa, Jan 17 — Port situation Jan 17: Genoa: No vessels awaiting berths. La Spezia: No vessels awaiting berths. Savona: No vessels waiting for normal berth. One vessel waiting for special berth. — Lloyd’s Agents.

Port Delays

Country/Port	Date of report	No.of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbott Point	24-Jan-2005	Coal: 1 vessel berthed, 1 anchored; 8 vessels due by 7/2; 1-2 days berthing delay expected subject to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Brisbane	24-Jan-2005	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 6 vessels due by 9/2; no delays expected.
Dalrymple Bay	24-Jan-2005	Coal: 38 vessels anchored; 45 vessels due by 8/3. Due to a tropical depression, Dalrymple Bay coal terminal is affected by strong winds and heavy swell. Berths no. 1 and 2 - vessels due to move to anchorage part loaded and berth will remain vacant until weather improves; berth no. 3 - vacant; vessel scheduled to berth 24/1 p.m. has been cancelled. Up to 20 days berthing delay subject to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Dampier	24-Jan-2005	Iron ore: Parker Point: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored; 9 vessels due by 2/2; 1-7 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; a planned 3 day maintenance shutdown will commence ca. 26/1; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 12 vessels due by 5/2; up to 10 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.
Esperance	24-Jan-2005	Iron ore: 3 vessels due by 4/2; up to 1 day’s delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Geraldton	24-Jan-2005	Iron ore: 2 vessels due by 28/1; no delays expected..
Gladstone	24-Jan-2005	Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 3 vessels berthed, 45 anchored; 33 vessels due by 26/2; up to 6 days berthing delay expected subject to port congestion and cargo availability. Barney Point: 1 vessel berthed, 1 anchored; 8 vessels due by 21/2; up to 2 days delay expected due to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Hay Point	24-Jan-2005	Coal: 7 vessels anchored; 5 vessels due by 30/1. Due to a tropical depression, Hay Point is affected by strong winds and heavy swell. Berth no. part loaded vessel due to move to anchorage; will re-berth at berth no. 2 when weather improves; berth no. 2 - vacant until weather improves. Up to 4 days berthing delay expected subject to cargo availability and berth congestion.
Newcastle	24-Jan-2005	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 3 vessels berthed, 8 anchored; 30 vessels due by 8/2; Dykes 4+5: 2 vessels berthed, 4 anchored; 16 vessels due by 6/2; no unallocated vessels; 4-9 days delay expected prior to berthing due to planned maintenance at Kooragang terminal and cargo receipt.
Port Hedland	24-Jan-2005	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), “A” berth: 1 vessel anchored; 6 vessels due by 30/1; 1-4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; “B” berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 anchored; 7 vessels due by 3/2; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) “C” berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading; no delays expected; Westyard “D”

Port Conditions

		berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 anchored; 6 vessels due by 3/2; up to 2 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; there will be a 24 hour maintenance shutdown starting ca. 25/1.
Port Kembla	24-Jan-2005	Coal: 15 vessels due by 26/2; CB-1: 1 vessel due 2/2; up to 1 day's delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Walcott	24-Jan-2005	Iron ore: 2 vessels berthed and loading, 4 anchored; 8 vessels anchored; 15 vessels due by 25/2; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability. On or about 21/2, shippers intend to replace approx. 6 km of conveyor belting. The berth is expected to be out of service for approx. 7 days. 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.
Brazil		
Paranagua	25-Jan-2005	Thirteen vessels berthed of which 1 sugar loader, 3 fertiliser dischargers, 1 reefer loader, 1 pellets loader, 1 bulk soya loader, 6 other loaders; 21 vessels waiting in roads, of which 16 to load (4 pellets, 1 sugar, 11 others), 5 to discharge (2 fertiliser, 2 containers, 1 others); 45 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Rio Grande	25-Jan-2005	Two vessels berthed of which 1 potassium chloride loader/discharger, 1 soya meal loader; 2 vessels waiting in roads; 30 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Santos	25-Jan-2005	Sixteen vessels berthed of which 1 bulk corn discharger, 3 chemical products loaders/dischargers, 5 sugar loaders, 1 bulk wheat discharger, 1 bulk citrus juice loader, 1 sulphur loader/discharger, 1 full container loader/discharger, 1 bulk pellets loader, 2 bulk fertiliser dischargers; 12 vessels waiting in roads; 100 vessels due over the next 7 days; Private terminals: Terminal 37: 1 full container loader/discharger; Tecondi: no vessels; Termares: 1 full container loader; Rodrimar: no vessels; Cosipa: no vessels; Ultrafertil: 1 bulk fertiliser discharger; Cargill: 1 bulk sugar loader, 1 bulk soya loader; Santos Brasil: 2 full container loaders/dischargers; Cutrale: 1 bulk pellets loader; Dow: no vessels.
Sao Sebastiao	25-Jan-2005	Five vessels berthed, 6 waiting in roads; 2 vessels due over the next 10 days.
Vitorea	25-Jan-2005	Two vessels berthed of which 1 cellulose loader, 1 rails loader; Terminal Vila Velha: 1 general cargo discharger, 1 pig-iron loader; Tubarao: 3 iron ore loaders, 1 fertiliser discharger; Praia Mole: 2 coal dischargers, 2 steel products loaders; Portocel: 1 cellulose loader; Ubu: 1 iron ore loader; 14 vessels waiting in roads; 14 vessels due over the next 7 days.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	24-Jan-2005	Six vessels in port operating, of which 5 loading (2 barley, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 1 baryte concentrate, 1 concrete/iron), 1 vessel discharging wheat; 7 vessels waiting in roads, of which 5 to load (1 cigarettes, 1 coils, 1 containers, 2 empty), 2 to discharge (1 containers, 1 coal); 8 vessels due, of which 5 to load (1 sunflower seeds, 2 scrap, 1 coils, 1 sulphur), 3 to discharge (2 iron ore, 1 coal).
Chile		
Valparaiso	24-Jan-2005	Three vessels berthed, 5 berths vacant; 3 vessels anchored; 14 vessels due this week.
Egypt		
Alexandria	24-Jan-2005	Twenty-seven vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 23 general cargo, 1 bulk carrier, 2 tankers, 1 passenger vessel; 10 vessels dry-docked; 20 vessels at inner anchorage, 9 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	24-Jan-2005	Twenty-one vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 14 general cargo, 1 tanker, 3 bulk carriers, 3 containers; 10 vessels at outer anchorage, 1 at inner anchorage.
Suez Canal	24-Jan-2005	Twenty-two vessels transiting Northbound, 19 Southbound.
Israel		
Ashdod	24-Jan-2005	No labour problems. Two vessels loading at berth (1 general cargo, 1 bulker), 9 vessels discharging at berth (5 general cargo, 4 bulkers), 2 container vessels loading/discharging at berth; 2 general cargo vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 6 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (5 general cargo, 1 bulker), 2 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load/discharge; 1 vessel awaiting orders; 26 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.
Haifa	24-Jan-2005	No labour problems. One general cargo vessel loading at berth, 5 vessels discharging at berth (4 general cargo, 1 bulker), 2 container vessels loading/ discharging at berth; 2 bulkers waiting at anchorage to discharge, 10 vessels waiting at anchorage to load/discharge (4 containers, 6 tankers); 3 vessels under repairs/dry-docked, 1 awaiting orders; 16 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected.

Port Conditions

Pakistan

Karachi	25-Jan-2005	Two vessels loading at berth (1 rice, 1 MOL), 5 vessels discharging at berth (1 crude oil, 1 SB oil, 1 chemicals, 1 coal, 1 urea), 1 container vessel loading/discharging at berth; 1 container vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 containers, 1 crude oil); no vessels bunkering; none under repairs/dry-docked, none awaiting orders; 4 vessels due (2 containers, 1 steel, 1 general cargo), with no berthing delays expected.
Port Qasim	25-Jan-2005	Two vessels discharging at berth (1 fuel oil, 1 VCM), 2 container vessels loading/discharging at berth; 1 container vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 6 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 containers, 2 HSD, 1 palm oil, 1 MEG, 1 machinery).

Poland

Gdansk	24-Jan-2005	Six vessels loading at berth (1 coal, 3 general cargo, 1 bulker, 1 tanker), 4 discharging at berth (2 bulkers, 1 coal, 1 grain); 8 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage; 26 vessels due.
Gdynia	24-Jan-2005	One coal vessel loading at berth, 6 vessels discharging at berth (3 general cargo, 2 grain, 1 tanker); 12 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 32 vessels due.

Russia

Novorossiysk	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: Three vessels loading at berth (2 crude oil, 1 fuel oil); 1 crude oil vessel in roads; 12 vessels due by 1/2 (10 crude oil, 1 fuel oil, 1 gasoil).
Tuapse	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: Four vessels loading at berth (3 gasoil, 1 naphtha); 4 vessels in roads (1 crude oil, 2 gasoil, 1 fuel oil); 10 vessels due by 31/1 (2 gasoil, 2 fuel oil, 2 naphtha, 2 crude oil, 2 other).

Spain

Cadiz	24-Jan-2005	Sixteen vessels in port of which 5 operating (3 Ro/Ros, 2 semolina), 11 vessels under repair; no delays.
Sagunto	24-Jan-2005	Nineteen vessels in port operating of which 11 discharging (10 steel products, 1 logs), 5 loading (1 steel products, 2 bulk fertiliser, 1 cement, 1 baled scrap), 3 Ro/Ros discharging/loading general cargo; no vessels outside commercial wharf; 4 days berthing delay at present.

Turkmenistan

Aladja	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: One vessel in roads to load crude oil.
Okarem	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: Two vessels loading crude oil at berth; 2 vessels in roads, both to load crude oil.
Turkmenbashi	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: One vessel loading gasoil at berth; 4 vessels in roads, all to load (1 gasoline, 1 crude oil, 2 other).

Ukraine

Illichevsk	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: One vessel in roads to load fuel oil.
Mariupol	24-Jan-2005	Nine vessels in port operating, of which 6 loading (2 fire-clay, 2 coal, 1 wheat, 1 sunflower seeds), 1 discharging chrome ore, 2 discharging/loading (1 containers, 1 containers/fire-clay); 6 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 2 steel, 1 ferrous metals, 1 fire-clay/kaolin, 1 fire-clay, 1 barley; 50 vessels due, of which 48 to load (23 steel, 9 coal, 5 fire-clay, 6 sulphur, 2 barley, 1 ammonium saltpetre, 1 ammonium nitrate), 1 to discharge magnetite, 1 to discharge/load containers.
Odessa	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: Two vessels loading at berth (1 crude oil, 1 fuel oil); 9 vessels due by 27/1, all to load (4 fuel oil, 3 crude oil, 1 LPG, 1 gasoline).
Reni	24-Jan-2005	Oil products: Two vessels due by 25/1, both to load (1 coal tar, 1 VCM).

United States

Columbia River	24-Jan-2005	Columbia River draft advisory: Maximum permissible deep draft is 40 ft. 0 ins. (12.19 metres).
Galveston	24-Jan-2005	No new restriction in draft (normal 39 ft. 6 ins. b.w. max. deep draft enforced - 40 ft. with ideal conditions). Channel open under normal traffic; ADM-Farmland terminal: 4-5 days delays.
Houston	24-Jan-2005	Channel reopened to all traffic at 12.40 hrs. 4/1; now under normal traffic. Pilots report normal 40 ft. 0 ins. max. draft in Houston ship channel; Cargill terminal: no delays; LDC Dreyfus terminal: no delays.
Kalama, WA	24-Jan-2005	Kalama export terminal: 6 days delay; United Harvest terminal: no delays.
New Orleans	24-Jan-2005	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: 2 days delay expected; Cargill-Westwego: 3 days delay expected; ADM/Ama: 11-13 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: 5 days delay expected; ADM/Destrehan: 11-13 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 11-13 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 3 days delay expected; Peavey/Paulina: 1 day's delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: 2 days delay expected;

Port Conditions

		Cargill/Baton Rouge: 1 day's delay expected; Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: 2 days delay expected; Mile 158.0 Cargill (K2) - Convent: 3 days delay expected; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: no delays. Fifteen-day forecast for Carrolton Gauge/New Orleans: expected to increase to 15.8 ft. by 1/2. Mississippi River recommended draft restrictions: SW Pass to New Orleans (Mile 090.0) - 47 ft. for all vessels; New Orleans (Mile 090) to Baton Rouge (Mile 233.5) - 45 ft. for all vessels; 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; Mississippi River Gulf outlet: 31 ft. bw.
Portland, OR	24-Jan-2005	Grain terminal: no delays; CLD Irving terminal: 2 days delay; CLD, O Dock terminals: 1 day's delay.
Seattle	24-Jan-2005	Louis Dreyfus (Pier 86) terminal: 2 days delay.
Tacoma, WA	24-Jan-2005	Temco terminal: 2 days delay.
Vancouver, WA	24-Jan-2005	United Harvest terminal: 4 days delay.

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