

Aug 4 2006

Indian seafarers strike likely to go ahead this month

Pay deadlock as owners' counter-offer of 12% is rejected by unions that demand a 27% rise, writes Shirish Nadkarni in Mumbai — Wednesday August 02 2006

A one-day strike planned by two Indian seafarer unions is set to take place on August 29, with little sign of a pay settlement in sight.

The National Union of Seafarers of India and Forward Seamen's Union of India are seeking a 27% pay increase, a demand which has seen Indian shipowners table a counter-offer of a 12%. The owners' offer has been rejected and the unions want Indian vessels worldwide to be disabled for 24 hours on August 29.

"The wage negotiations are deadlocked and neither side appears willing to concede ground," said NUSI general secretary Abdulgani Y Serang.

"The ratings and petty officers working on offshore, home trade and foreign-going Indian flag ships have been suffering for more than six years without a proper agreement. Indian shipowners have, in the interim, been making huge profits, while refusing to accede to our demands which are merely a pittance."

FSUI secretary Naresh Birwadkar is to visit South Africa to solicit the support of the International Transport Workers' Federation.

The Indian National Shipowners' Association has offered to move into the

global wage scale prescribed by the International Labour Organisation and to give ex-gratia payment which is not prescribed by the ITO rules.

"Sadly, the unions have rejected this offer," said INSA secretary-general Shashank Kulkarni. "All these years, we have followed a standard norm of 9%-10% annual pay hike for seafarers. This time, we have exceeded that by offering a 12% hike. But the unions are unwilling to agree."

According to Mr Kulkarni, seafarers want an extra slice of the pie in good times, which would be acceptable to shipowners if they were willing to consider pay cuts when times were bad for shipping.

"But in bad times for shipping, they will still want their pay hikes," he said. "As it is, our manning expenses are very high.

"If they go on a strike and stop Indian ships, wherever they may be around the globe, it would prove disastrous to the entire Indian shipping industry and bring it into disrepute."

Shipping industry circles point out that Indian shipping companies are hampered by the country's tax policies. Even though they pay a tonnage tax in lieu of corporate tax, they have been hit by a 12.24% service tax

with retrospective effect from April 1, 2005.

"If the seafarers go ahead with the strike, we will be forced to take the matter to the courts, since we have on record an undertaking by the unions that they will not go on strike," said Mr Kulkarni. "Matters of this nature should be resolved at the negotiating table and not by agitating in a manner that would hurt all the stakeholders."

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>AFRICAN MOON</i>	general	NGA	—	499	—	—	Had water ingress into forward part of vessel's cargo hold in lat 04 07N, long 05 20E, Jul 4. Assisted to Brass Terminal by supply vessel and safely anchored. Detained over safety issues.
<i>B.F.C. II</i>	product tanker	PAN	—	4,093	7,069	1972	Struck wreck of dredger Palestine at Khor al Zubair channel, in lat 30 49N, long 47 57E, Jul 23. Sustained large crack in hull and subsequently sank in channel. Crew rescued.
<i>CHARLOTTE MAERSK</i>	container	DIS	ABS	91,560	109,400	2002	In collision with container carrier <i>MSC Jessica</i> in Singapore waters Jul 27. Damage to vessel and to empty containers on board. Returned to Singapore Eastern Anchorage.
<i>CMA CGM OTELLO</i>	container	ATF	BV	91,410	101,530	2005	Struck submerged rock in lat 24 21N, long 118 29E, Jul 14. Arrived Singapore Jul 27 for repairs.
<i>COUGAR ACE</i>	vehicle carrier	SGP	NK	55,328	18,922	1993	Listing 85 deg to port with water ingress in lat 48 12.7N, long 174 12.5W, Jul 24. Crew rescued by Coast Guard. Small sheen observed. To be towed to safe port for recovery in the future. List down to 60 deg Jul 26. Tug due Aug 2.
<i>GALEMAR</i>	fishing	ARG	—	455	—	—	Reported in tow of fishing <i>Altalena</i> in lat 45 25S, long 63 52W, Jul 22, bound Comodoro Rivadavia. Back in service as of Jul 26.
<i>HALTEN</i>	general	VCT	BV	1,999	3,250	1992	Grounded outside Alabodarna between Landskrona & Helsingborg Jul 25. Refloated by own means & anchored outside Raa for diver's inspection. Indents in bottom; no leakage. Proceed Norway to discharge & inspection.
<i>MSC JESSICA</i>	container	PAN	GL	23,291	23,991	1980	In collision with container carrier <i>Charlotte Maersk</i> in Singapore waters Jul 27.
<i>NORDIC EXPLORER</i>	fishing	USA	—	152	—	1985	Had fire on board at New Bedford Jul 20 caused by welding work. Firefighters on scene.
<i>PALESTINE</i>	dredger	IRQ	—	3,606	4,649	1976	Wreck of vessel struck by tanker <i>B.F.C. II</i> in Khor al Zubair channel Jul 23.
<i>RM MARGAUX</i>	tug	FRA	BV	242	132	1983	Contacted No.501 jetty, Bordeaux, Jul 14. Water ingress. Towed from jetty & sank on port side. Salvage awarded.
<i>SYLVE</i>	general	CYP	RS	1,999	3,056	1990	Grounded in lat 55 09.3N, long 14 41.9E, Jul 25. Bottom holed, leak in ballast tank. Bottom to be surveyed by divers Jul 27.
<i>WAPPEN VON NORDERNEY</i>	passenger	DEU	—	154	—	1967	Had engine failure in North Sea Jul 19. Towed to Norderney same day. Passengers disembarked.
<i>WILD MARY</i>	trawler	USA	—	129	—	—	Sank 70 miles W of Depoe Bay, Oreg, Jul 25. Crew rescued.

CONTENTS

Reports appear in alphabetical order under the following headings and relevant page number:

Marine, including Overdue & Missing Vessels	1
Port State Control	15
Seizures & Arrests	15
Pipeline Accidents	16
Pollution	16
Weather & Navigation	17
Political & Civil Unrest	22
Labour Disputes	28
Awards & Settlements	29
Miscellaneous	30
Fires & Explosions	31
Aviation	33
Space Vehicles	34
Product Recalls	34
Port Conditions	35
Port Conditions charts	35

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



AFRICAN MOON (Nigeria)

London, July 25 — A press report, dated July 23, states: The woes of general cargo *African Moon*, 499 gt, rescued in Nigerian territorial waters were lengthened with the National Maritime Authority (NMA) ordering its detention for not meeting stipulated safety standards. NMA had rescued and assisted the vessel to berth at Brass Terminal when it ran into trouble during its voyage from the Port of Cotonou on July 4. The operation was in response to a distress call by *African Moon* crew which sent a SOS signal to NMA Search and Rescue Unit from the Maritime Superintendent of Italian oil giant, Nigerian Agip Oil Company Limited (NAOC) in Twon Brass. The vessel which was flying Nigerian flag with official number 377623 GT 499 MT bound Bata, Equatorial Guinea, was in lat 04 07N, long 05 20E, off Pennington oil platform in Brass Local Government Area of Bayelsa State when it developed problems. The Director General of NMA, Engr. Festus Ugwu in a three page statement, said though the initial response came from Pennington oil platform, the combined efforts of NMA Search and Rescue Team aided with the use of a supply *Lamnalco Kite* helped the distressed ship to Brass Terminal where it safely anchored. According to the statement, after a general assessment of the cause of the distress by NMA Flag State Surveyors, it was discovered that water had entered the forward part of the cargo hold of the ship, which was laden with 687 tonnes of general cargo. Giving further insight into why the vessel was detained by the authority, NMA said investigations revealed that *African Moon* has no safety radio, manning and tonnage certificates, deck passenger certificate and no crew arrangement amongst other reasons. "The absence of these items put the lives of the 11 crew members and six passengers on board in great risk and danger. NMA maintains that the vessel will be held until it complies with the safety standards. "At the moment, officials of the Nigerian Immigration Service, Customs, Port Health Officials and Naval personnel are providing tight security for the vessel. The owner has since been contacted and advised to apply for applicable Nigerian Trading Certificates. Temporary repairs should also be carried out after which the vessel would be allowed to sail again," the statement added.

AKCAKOCA (Turkey)

See "Israel-Lebanon" under "Political & Civil Unrest".

ALEXA

(St. Vincent & Grenadines)

See "Crew of St. Vincent & Grenadines Vessel at Copenhagen, Denmark" under "Labour Disputes."

ALGOVILLE (Canada)

Troy, Mich, Jul 26 — Bulker *Algoville* remains laid-up at Hamilton(CAN). — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

ALYSSA M.II (U.K.)

Auckland, Jul 24 — Yacht *Alyssa M.II* is still laid up at Nelson. — Lloyd's Agents.

AMBASSADOR (Vanuatu)

London, Jul 24 — Bulker *Ambassador* was reported in lat 43 02 39.54N, long 70 01 07.97W, at 1158, UTC, today, speed 13.1 knots, course 267 deg.

ANA B. (Panama)

Ymuiden, Jul 21 — SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage successfully refloated combined chemical and oil tank *Ana B.* around 1200, Jul 18, and, following inspections, it was cleared to continue its passage up the River Amazon. — SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage BV.

ANNA (Georgia)

Riga, Jul 25 — Chemical tanker *Anna* discharged Jul 24. Entered dry dock today. — Lloyd's Agents.

ANTONELLO DA MESSINA (Italy)

London, July 26 — A press report, dated July 24, states: A sudden breakdown in the external door of the Siremar passenger ro/ro *Antonello da Messina* (1555 gt, built 1988) has prevented hundreds of cars, lorries and motorbikes from disembarking at Vulcano in the Aeolian islands. The fault was discovered as the ferry was about to dock and the crew realised that the mechanism was not working properly. The one hundred passengers were able to disembark on foot but vehicles had to remain on the boat that has suspended its service until the breakdown is repaired. Travellers on their way to other Aeolian islands boarded Siremar hovercrafts.

APHINE (Russia)

See *Sormovskiy 32*.

APL PANAMA (Antigua & Barbuda)

Manila, Jul 27 — Container Carrier *APL Panama* is still undergoing repairs at Subic Shipyard & Engineering Inc, Zambales Province, Philippines. Subic Shipyard officials said that repairs are expected to be completed towards the end of September. The vessel is drydocked and undergoing repairs to its bottom hull, propellers and rudder. — Lloyd's Agents.

ARGENTA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

St. Petersburg, Jul 24 — Refrigerated general cargo *Argenta*: According to information provided by St.

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

Petersburg Port Authority, vessel sailed for Guayaquil Jul 22. — Lloyd's Agents.

ARIELLE (Bahamas)

London, Jul 24 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: On Jul 21, passenger (cruise) *Arielle* (23149 gt, built 1971) suffered some rudder damage in Stockholm. As a result, it was not able to reach the next destination Lubeck-Travemuende as scheduled, but proceeded with a reduced speed of 13 knots towards the Trave. Due to this delay the next cruise will start one day late, with passengers on the present cruise having one more day on board, before departing from the *Arielle* today. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, at 1205 hrs, today, *Arielle* was in lat 53 57.26N, long 10 52.16E, 1.8 nautical miles off Travemuende, speed 0.1 knots, course 15.3 degs.)

ARKLOW REBEL (Republic of Ireland)

London, Jul 20 — General cargo *Arklow Rebel* sailed from Lerwick on Jul 16.

ASL SANDERING (Canada)

See "Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada" under "Pollution."

ASL SANDERLING (Canada)

See "Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada" under "Pollution".

ATACAMA (Malta)

London, July 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Outgoing bulker *Atacama* (24960 gt, built 2004), carrying forest products, struck moored Roll On Roll Off *Cape Domingo* (13212 gt, built 1973), used to carry military equipment, early Saturday (July 22) on the Cooper River near the old Navy base, damaging both ships above the waterline, U.S. Coast Guard Lt. J.G. Beining said. The outbound *Atacama* lost steering at about 0300 hrs. and struck *Cape Domingo* at Pier Uniform, Beining said. *Cape Domingo* is a Ready Reserve Force roll-on, roll-off vessel that transports equipment for the war effort in Iraq. It did not have military equipment on it at the time, Beining said. *Atacama's* bow struck the forward mid-section of *Cape Domingo*, he said. "There was a bit of structural damage on both vessels high above the waterline," Beining said. "There was no pollution, and no one was hurt." Both ships remain in port, he said. Beining said the Coast Guard is investigating the incident. (Note — *Atacama* arrived Charleston July 19, and *Cape Domingo* was last reported to have arrived Charleston Aug 19, 2005.)

ATLANTIC III (Uruguay)

London, July 24 — A press report, dated July 22, states: Passenger ro/ro *Atlantic III* (4994 gt, built 1993), of Ferrylineas, struck the wharf when arriving at Colonia this morning. A navy spokesman explained that four passengers were slightly injured and

were transferred to a local hospital. The spokesman said that a technical commission would investigate the reason for the accident. The vessel returned to Buenos Aires later in the day for repairs

Buenos Aires, July 26 — According to port authorities, a request for berthing at Tanda Nor was submitted today for passenger ro/ro *Atlantic III*. Repairs will be carried out there. — Lloyd's Agents.

ATLANTICA I (Panama)

See *Maris*.

AUTOROUTE (Madeira)

Bremen, July 24 — At 1500 today vehicle carrier *Autoroute* (7114 gt, built 1979) entered one of the two locks at Bremerhaven and struck one of the gates. Divers have been called in. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Auto Route* sailed Bremerhaven 1430, July 24 for Oslo, and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was in lat 55 54 25N, long 07 30 22E, at 0528 today, speed 11.4 knots, course 1.6 degrees.)

London, July 26 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Vehicle carrier *Autoroute* struck the Kaiserschleuse, in Bremerhaven, at approximately 1500 July 24. The roadway of the western side of the inner lock was damaged, metal parts in a length of several metres torn off and thrown into the water. *Autoroute* was slightly damaged. After inspections it was allowed to resume its voyage to Oslo. The lock was closed for car traffic due to the damage.

B.F.C. II (Panama)

Umm Qasr, Jul 24 — Product tanker *B.F.C. II* (4093 gt, built 1972), loaded with about 7,000 tonnes of fuel oil from Berth 9, Khor al Zubair port, struck wreck of trailing suction hopper dredge *Palestine* (3606 gt, built 1976) in lat 30 49N, long 47 57E, at 2210, local time, Jul 23. The *B.F.C. II* sustained a large crack in its engine-room and subsequently sank in the channel. The cargo is owned by Iraqi Tankers Company. Navigation to Khor al Zubair port is now available. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Palestine* sank in Khor al Zubair area during the Iraq-Kuwait conflict in February 1991.)

London, Jul 24 — Understand all crew from product tanker *B.F.C. II* were safely rescued when it sank at Khor al Zubair.

BANGLAR SHOURABH (Bangladesh)

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Bangladesh Shipping Corporation's (BSC) crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh*, that was damaged by a fire on Jun 24, will be repaired at the state-run dry-dock at Patenga to keep the cost 'to a minimum'. State Minister for Shipping Quamrul Islam announced the decision to make the state-run oil tanker operational again yesterday afternoon. At a press briefing, he said they decided to repair the damaged BSC oil tanker at the state-run

Patenga dry-dock while the work order for repair would be given after floating short tender that would help minimise the cost. The minister, however, did not clearly say whether the repair would be possible within the earmarked cost of Tk 25 crore. BSC Managing Director (MD) Zulfiqar Haider Chowdhury said surveyors brought from Singapore by the concerned insurance company of BSC estimated the cost for the repair at US\$ 5.1 million (around Tk 35 crore) but repairing the tanker locally would cost less than that. Meanwhile, theft of valuable equipment was reported to have taken place on the damaged ship during its stay in the outer anchorage and after its beaching near Parky Beach. Both the minister and the BSC MD, however, said the price of the stolen equipment would not be 'so much'. Besides, all the equipment that appear as missing were not stolen, the BSC MD said, adding, "We bought some of the equipment to our store fearing further theft." Departmental action is being taken against the people held responsible for the accident at Banglar Shourabh, the state minister for shipping said. All the probe committees formed in this connection blamed violation of international maritime regulations, operation by ineligible officers and consequent operational faults as the cause of fire on *Banglar Shourabh* that also left three people dead. The probe reports blamed the BSC officials concerned including General Manager (ship repair), DPA, General Manager SPD for negligence and failure to discharge duties as per the international shipping manual that led to the accident. The reports further revealed that the personnel department gave contractual appointment to a second officer and a third engineer in the tanker without having approval from the higher authorities. The personnel department also gave contractual appointment to a retired officer of Bangladesh Navy as an electrical engineer for it. None of the three persons had any experience of working at a tanker vessel neither did any of them have any certificate required for their respective job, said sources quoting the report.

Chittagong, Jul 25 — Crude oil tanker *Banglar Shourabh* is presently lying at Parkichar, Anowara, a bit off side from Chittagong outer anchorage awaiting for salvage. — Lloyd's Agents.

BELICIA (Panama)

See *Tirta Niaga I*.

BILLY STAR (Philippines)

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

BINA (Indonesia)

Chittagong, Jul 25 — Local agents of product tanker *Bina* report that the vessel is still lying in Maynmar Port, but it is expected to arrive at Chittagong during the first week of August. — Lloyd's Agents.

BOCAUE (Philippines)

Manila, Jul 26 — Product tanker *Bocaue* will remain dry-docked at Herma Shipyard in Bataan province longer than expected, after class surveyors from the American Bureau of Shipping recommended reinforcing the hull with additional steel plating. *Bocaue* entered Herma Shipyard on Jul 18 to have a hole in its bottom hull repaired. Repairs were expected to take only a week, but with the additional repairs, *Bocaue* will remain at the shipyard until the first week of August, officials of Herma Shipping and Transport Co. said. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

BRILLIANCE (Hong Kong)

London, July 24 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0855, UTC: It has been reported bulker *Brilliance* (75801 gt, built 1990) is proceeding to St. Francis Bay to carry out repairs to an engine problem. ETA not known. (Note — *Brilliance* sailed Shanghai June 28, arrived Singapore July 5 and sailed July 6 for Tubarao.)

London, July 25 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 0635, UTC: Bulker *Brilliance* reported at 1947, UTC, yesterday that vessel's main engine was started and vessel proceeding en route Brazil.

London, July 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Bulker *Brilliance*, which reported engine problems while off the south eastern Cape coast on Monday night, is continuing its interrupted journey to Brazil and is expected to pass Cape Town sometime later today or tomorrow. The vessel caused a minor stir among residents of the area between Krom River and Cape St Francis when the ship approached close inshore, although according to the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) in Port Elizabeth at no time was it closer than six miles. The ship's master reported having engine problems and asked to go to anchor but this was refused and he was told to instead proceed back to Algoa Bay, where a tug (*Smit Amandla*) would be placed on standby while *Brilliance* completed its repairs. The ship's master responded that he was awaiting instructions from the vessel's owners in Hong Kong. Later he advised that the ship was continuing its journey, the crew having presumably completed repairs.

BSLE ENDURANCE (Cyprus)

Balboa, July 18 — General cargo *BSLE Endurance* remains anchored Cristobal. — Lloyd's Agents.

Balboa, July 20 — General cargo *BSLE Endurance* is still anchored but it appears nothing in progress and owners exploring all options. — Lloyd's Agents.

BULO NI CEVA (Fiji)

Suva, Jul 25 — According to the local newspaper the "Fiji Sun" on Jul 22, residents of Rotuma have been assured that there will not be any fuel spillage from the stranded passenger

(cruise) *Bulou Ni Ceva*. The owners of the vessel said yesterday that there was no cause for concern as the fuel had been removed from the fuel tank to the upper deck. As far as the salvage operation is concerned, the insurance brokers have assured that a decision will be forthcoming by next week. — Lloyd's Agents.

CAPE DOMINGO (U.S.A.)

See *Atacama*.

CHARLOTTE MAERSK (DIS)

London, Jul 27 — Following received from the managers of Container Carrier *Charlotte Maersk* (91560 gt, built 2002), dated today: *Charlotte Maersk*, Singapore for Kaohsiung, was in collision with Container Carrier *MSC Jessica* (23291 gt, built 1980) inside Singapore waters at 0805, local time, today. There was some damage to the *Charlotte Maersk* and to some empty containers on board. The *Charlotte Maersk* returned to Singapore Eastern Anchorage and has been declared fit to proceed to berth. There were no injuries and no pollution. Once the damaged containers are taken off, a damage assessment will be carried out to the vessel to ascertain necessary repairs.

Singapore, Jul 27 — Container Carrier *MSC Jessica* arrived Pasir Panjang Holding Anchorage today. — Lloyd's Agents.

CMA CGM OTELLO (French Southern Territories)

London, July 21 — Following received from the owners of container carrier *CMA CGM Otello* (91410 gt, built 2005), dated today: *CMA CGM Otello* struck a submerged rock off China July 14. The vessel is now en route from Xiamen to Singapore where repairs will be carried out. (Note — Understand *CMA CGM Otello* sustained bottom damage when it struck an uncharted rock in lat 24 21.97N, long 118 29 13E, on July 14. According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *CMA CGM Otello* was in lat 23 18 22N, long 117 40 10E, at 1846, July 20, speed 11.7 knots, course 209.4 degrees.)

Singapore, Jul 27 — Container Carrier *CMA CGM Otello* arrived Singapore at 1250, local time, today and is currently berthed at Jurong Port Berth 19. — Lloyd's Agents.

COUGAR ACE (Singapore)

London, Jul 24 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1535, UTC: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* (55328 gt, built 1993), Japan for Vancouver, cargo vehicles, is listing 85 deg to port with water ingress in lat 48 12.7N, long 174 12.5W, as of 1452, UTC, today. Crew of 23 persons are currently on starboard bridge wing. Two vessels are proceeding and a Coast Guard C-130 aircraft is flying overhead and will be able to drop liferafts if the crew needs to abandon.

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace*, with 23 people on board, was listing severely, today, and taking on water south of the Aleutian Islands,

Coast Guard officials said. A Coast Guard plane was circling over *Cougar Ace*, which sent out an SOS late Sunday night (local time), Petty Officer Stephen Harrison said. It was not immediately clear why the ship was listing. Harrison said one crew member had a broken leg, but there were no other reported injuries. A Coast Guard cutter was on its way to the area, 230 miles south of the island of Adak, in the western Aleutians, but it would take several hours to reach the vessel. A merchant vessel was closer and headed to the site this morning, Harrison said. He said the Coast Guard C-130 aircraft had a pallet packed with survival rafts and suits ready if the vessel began sinking before other help arrived.

London, Jul 24 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1805, UTC: At 1755, UTC, vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* in position lat 48 12N, long 174 03W, with a list between 80 and 90 deg. Twentytwo crew on board, all on the bridge. Two vessels presently standing off, container carrier *Bauhinia Bridge* and bulker *Ikan Juara*. Attempts to get a line on board to remove crew have failed. Weather in area not favourable, with 30 knot winds and seas of eight to 10 feet. Incident started at 0709, UTC, this morning, when master reported ballast shifted. Vessels standing off report that the condition of *Cougar Ace* appears to be stable.

London, Jul 24 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 2100, UTC: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* is drifting at about three knots. The crew are still awaiting rescue from the side of the bridge. Helicopters from Kodiak and Anchorage are en route for the rescue. A two-mile sheen of oil has been reported trailing from the vessel.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated Jul 24, states: The US Coast Guard and the Alaska National Guard dispatched helicopters today to a car-carrier crippled and stalled in the Bering Sea. Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace*, a 654-foot-long vessel owned by Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, began taking on water Sunday about 230 miles from the Aleutian Islands and by Monday was listing 90 degrees, Alaska Report said. The vessel was en route from Japan to Vancouver, Canada, carrying more than 6,000 cars. The ship's home port is Singapore. The ship has a crew of 22. One has a broken leg, the report said. Aircraft being sent to the stricken ship included a Coast Guard helicopter, two Black Hawk helicopters from Elmendorf Air Force Base accompanied by two HC-130 airplanes carrying rescue teams from Elmendorf. The Coast Guard has also dispatched a vessel from Hawaii. Another cargo vessel remained in the vicinity. Earlier Monday, a Coast Guard plane dropped a pallet of life rafts. The ship is carrying more than 500 tons of fuel. The Coast Guard said that an oil slick was visible on the water's surface spreading more than two miles from the vessel, the report said.

London Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: The crew of a

cargo vessel listing virtually "on its side" off the coast of Alaska are preparing to abandon ship, Coast Guard officials have said. Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* is listing at an 80-degree angle. The US Coast Guard is sending helicopters to pick up the 22 crew. The vessel is carrying 4,813 cars from Japan to Vancouver, Canada. A merchant ship has been trying to rig a line to the vessel. The cause of the ship's listing is not yet clear. "For their safety, it's best for them to come off the ship," said Coast Guard Lt. Mara Booth-Miller. Three helicopters are expected to pluck the crew from the vessel's superstructure, where they have gathered since it began listing. All 22 members of the crew are wearing survival suits, officials said. Ocean conditions are choppy, with 8-to-10ft seas. A Coast Guard aircraft had dropped three life rafts for the crew, but these had been pushed beneath the listing vessel by the rough seas. One crew member has suffered a broken leg, the Coast Guard said. The ship is now some 240 miles south of the Aleutian Islands. "It's sitting on its side, basically," US Coast Guard Petty Officer Stephen Harrison said. The ship is reported to be carrying between 400 and 500 metric tons of fuel oil and 112 tons of diesel fuel. Coast Guard officials said they had seen a two-mile oil slick near the ship. Petty Officer Harrison said the ship had made an SOS call on Sunday night but the crew did not know from where the ship was taking on water.

London, July 25 — A Coast Guard Juneau press release, dated July 24, states: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* reported they were taking on water and listing 80 degrees at 2309 yesterday. *Cougar Ace* left Japan July 22 with 22 people on board. One crewmember has a broken leg, but there are no other reported injuries at this time. All crewmembers are wearing survival suits at this time. A Coast Guard C-130 aircraft out of Kodiak is on scene and has radio contact with *Cougar Ace*. The C-130 has dropped a liferaft as a safety measure for the possibility of the vessel capsizing. The cause of the damage and the source of incoming water are unknown at this time. There are two merchant vessels standing by on scene to assist. *Cougar Ace* is carrying 430 tonnes of fuel oil and 112 tonnes of diesel. There is a sheen extending two miles from the vessel. *Cougar Ace* is carrying 4,813 vehicles, en-route to Vancouver B.C. The Coast Guard cutter *Rush*, based out of Hawaii, is en route to assist and is expected to arrive on scene in approximately 20 hours.

London, July 25 — A Coast Guard Kodiak press release, dated July 24, states: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* remains disabled and listing at 90 degrees 230 miles south of the Aleutian Islands. A Coast Guard C-130 aircraft from Air Station Kodiak Alaska deployed several life rafts to *Cougar Ace* and returned to Kodiak for fuel. A Coast Guard rescue helicopter from Air Station Kodiak has been

deployed to the vessel. The Alaska Air National Guard have deployed two Pavehawk helicopters accompanied by a C-130, and two HC-130 aircraft with in-flight refuelling capabilities, all carrying parachute deployable rescue teams, from Kulis Air Force Base to assist in the rescue operation. Bulker *Ikan Juara* remains on scene. The cause of the vessel damage is unknown at this time.

London, July 25 — A Mitsui O.S.K. Lines press release, dated Tokyo today, states: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL, President: Akimitsu Ashida) reports that the MOL-operated vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* was heavily listing south of the Aleutian Islands July 24, as follows: At about 1700, JST, July 24 (JST), MOL received a report from *Cougar Ace* laden with completed cars, which was on the voyage from Japan to the west coast of North America. According to the report, the vessel was listing heavily to port and became not under command. The position was approximately lat 48 14N, long 174 26W. All 23 crewmembers are confirmed safe, and they have put on immersion suits and are waiting at a safe location onboard for rescue by the US Coast Guard (USCG). Apart from one crewmember who injured a leg, all are in good condition. According to the USCG, the vessel is stable though listed, and besides a small quantity of sheen, no loss of cargo or other items have been observed. The vessel immediately requested USCG to rescue its crew. USCG helicopter is on its way to the scene, and is scheduled to arrive afternoon, July 25 (JST) to rescue those seafarers. At 1830, July 24, MOL formed a task force headed by President Ashida for an emergency response. The cause of the incident is currently under investigation. Of the 23 crew, two are Singaporeans, eight Myanmar, 13 Filipinos.

London, July 25 — A Coast Guard Juneau press release, dated July 24, states: A Coast Guard HH-60 Jayhawk rescue helicopter and crew from Air Station Kodiak, working with two Air National Guard Pavehawk helicopters with rescue crews from Kulis Air National Guard Base, have successfully hoisted the 23 crewmembers of vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* to safety. The operation began at 2105 hrs. By 2130 hrs, the first seven crewmembers had been hoisted from the vessel by a Pavehawk helicopter. At 2143 hrs, the Coast Guard helicopter and crew had hoisted the next eight, departing for Adak at 2151 hrs. After completing a mid-air refuelling from a nearby Air National Guard C-130 tanker, the second Pavehawk helicopter hoisted the remaining crewmembers at 2209 hrs. Weather conditions during the operation were overcast skies with 8 knot winds. Aside from one crewmember with a broken leg who will be taken to Anchorage for medical attention, there were no reported injuries. The remaining crewmembers will be taken to Adak and then transported to Kodiak, where they will spend the night. Tomorrow they will be taken to a location as yet to be determined.

London, Jul 25 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1950, UTC: Coast Guard high endurance cutter *Rush* is standing by vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* and will continue to do so until a salvage plan is formulated by her owners. No further reports of any oil pollution.

London, Jul 26 — Another huge bill is looming for insurers if the 4,813 vehicles on board vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* are lost or badly damaged. The casualty hit the market as it is still coming to terms with the scale of cargo claims emerging from the fire on container carrier *Hyundai Fortune* in March. Claims from the boxship blaze could reach \$100m and there are fears that the *Cougar Ace* figure could be at least \$75m if the vehicles on the Japanese-controlled ship are of high value. In insurance terms, the incident recalled the sinking of the car carrier *Tricolor* in the English Channel in December 2002 after a collision. Its cargo of 2,870 luxury cars worth a total of around £80m (\$100.5m) had to be scrapped to avoid the possibility of their re-use by criminals, while the cost of wreck removal exceeded the then \$30m pooling limit of the International Group of P&I Clubs. *Cougar Ace* is reportedly entered in Japan P&I Club, which could have a moderate exposure only unless there is any pollution. It is thought likely that the hull insurance is placed wholly or in great majority in the Japanese market. Many insurers are cautious of covering car carriers due to an enhanced total loss risk. They say the hull design and nature of the cargo make it hard to compartmentalise problems or control a list.

London, July 26 — A Mitsui O.S.K. Lines press release, dated Tokyo today, states: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL, President: Akimitsu Ashida) announced that all the crew of the MOL-operated vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* has been safely evacuated from the ship. At 1400, JST, yesterday helicopters from the U.S. Coastal Guard (USCG) and U.S. Air Force (USAF) began lifting the crew to safety. An hour later, all officers and crew had been removed from the ship. The 23 seafarers on board were taken to Adak Island in the Aleutians. The hull of *Cougar Ace* is floating stably although the vessel is listing. The vessel will be towed to a safe port for recovery in the future, and at the same time, the company will start full-fledged cause-unfolding at the same time.

London, July 26 — A Coast Guard Juneau press release, dated July 25, states: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* maintains its position 240 miles south of Adak. As of 1200 yesterday, the ship is listing 60 degrees to port. The keel and the propeller are out of the water. It is stable, and does not appear to be sinking. After accomplishing the primary mission of safely evacuating the stranded crewmembers, the Coast Guard continues to monitor the vessel for possible environmental threats and hazards to navigation. For this purpose, the Coast Guard cutter *Rush*

is on scene with *Cougar Ace*. A small boat crew, deployed from *Rush* to more effectively observe *Cougar Ace*, described the oil sheen around the vessel as "very light". No one will be permitted to board *Cougar Ace* at this time. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation is monitoring the situation, and has offered their help if it becomes necessary. Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, the vessel's owners, have contracted a commercial salvage company. The salvage company is expected to arrive on scene within a week. Mitsui O.S.K. will also be responsible for further transportation of the rescued crew members. The Coast Guard is actively engaged with state, local and tribal officials in making preparations in case the salvage company requests to tow the vessel into Alaskan waters.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated today, states: The crew of vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* was scrambling to adjust the ballast water, but something went wrong. *Cougar Ace* flipped onto its side. "Everything went to hell in a hand basket in 10 minutes," said Michael Terry, a nurse practitioner at the health clinic in Adak who talked to the vessel's master and crew about what happened when their vessel and its cargo suddenly rolled late Sunday night. The master, identified by Terry as Nyi Nyi Tun, had just enough time to get off an SOS before the vessel went sideways in choppy seas. Most of the crew was from the Philippines and Myanmar, with a few from Singapore. They tumbled and slid in those chaotic first minutes, suffering bruises, bumps and cuts, straining muscles as they grabbed to hold on or pulled themselves onto the open deck, Terry said. One man was in the shower when the vessel tilted and broke his lower leg, said one of the paramedics. As of last night, *Cougar Ace* appeared stable, on its side in the sea, its engines, keel and rudder all out of the water. The crew of Coast Guard cutter *Rush* measured the list at 60 degrees. The Coast Guard plans no investigation of the incident, because it was in international waters. The master said the crew was changing out the ballast; a crewman on board said it occurred as the vessel was leaving international waters, to meet U.S. requirements, according to Terry. Before the rescue, the master relayed to the Coast Guard that a ballast change was involved, Harrison said. A salvage crew is expected to reach the vessel in about a week, and *Rush* will stay until then, the Coast Guard said. While there's an oil sheen around *Cougar Ace*, it appears to be very light, according to observations from the cutter. The salvors will assess what activities can be taken to right the vessel and maybe take it to port.

London, Jul 26 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1630, UTC: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace*: Situation unchanged, with list still about 60 deg. Coast Guard cutter remains on site and commercial salvors are due to arrive Jul 31.

Seattle, Jul 26 — The 23 crew members rescued from vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* are being treated in Anchorage. They are suffering from cuts, bruises, thirst and hunger, with muscles deeply strained from hours of clinging to the severely listing vessel. Less than 10 minutes passed between the initial listing of the vessel and its nearly laying on its side in the water, a crew member stated. Very little time was available to send out distress signals. The crew members also noted the rough sea conditions. The master stated that the vessel began to list as the ballast was being adjusted to conform to US codes as the vessel was leaving International waters. At the same time it was hit by a large wave. With the crew safe, salvage attempts are under consideration, said a Coast Guard spokesman. A salvage agreement was being finalised with commercial salvors at this time. It is believed/hoped that the vehicles (4,813) are still secured below decks with chains, fears being that they have broken loose. A two-mile oil sheen described as "light" was reported around the vessel late Monday (Jul 24) by a Coast Guard cutter.

London, Jul 27 — Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* remained adrift 240 miles south of Adak in the North Pacific yesterday with only a small US Coast Guard cutter crew on hand to monitor its fate. Petty Officer Thomas McKenzie of the Coast Guard said there was a "slight drift" in the area with the stricken car carrier moving east by south-east "very slowly" but the situation was not considered dramatic just yet. Mitsui OSK Lines, the vessel's part owner, is said to have hired a salvor, expected to reach the site "within a week". However, the company has not informed the USCG of this salvor's identity or of the estimated date of arrival of the salvage vessel, Petty Officer McKenzie said. Late on Tuesday night (Jul 25) the vessel was reported listing at 60 deg with the keel and propeller out of the water. It was "stable and did not appear to be sinking", the Coast Guard said. A small boat crew deployed from the USCG cutter *Rush*, the only craft at present on site, described the oil sheen round the vessel as "very slight." There was very little the *Rush* could do other than "wait and watch," Petty Officer McKenzie said. There is no one on board *Cougar Ace* to help in efforts to secure the vessel and the USCG has enforced a blanket ban on anyone boarding the ship at this time. "The ship is far enough out that we feel confident it would not be near land for another week," Petty Officer McKenzie said, stressing that any such estimates must necessarily be taken as speculation.

London, July 27 — A Mitsui O.S.K. Lines press release, dated Tokyo today, states: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL, President: Akimitsu Ashida) reported that the MOL-operated vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* is floating stably though the vessel remains

listed. The company's investigation into the incident has just started. Yesterday evening the company had its first contact with the master, who was rescued on July 25. He confirmed that the vessel started listing during work to adjust the ballast water. MOL consider that possible cause of the listing is instability developed during the ballast water adjustment process.

London, July 27 — A press report, dated July 26, states: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* foundered in rough seas off Alaska's Aleutian Islands and the crew was evacuated, leaving 4,700 Mazda Motor Corp vehicles onboard the listing vessel. Mazda said the cars were being shipped from its home country for sale in the U.S. and Canada. "A salvage ship is on the way, but we won't know the status of the vehicles for about a week," Jay Amestoy, Mazda's vice president for U.S. government affairs, said today. About 60% of the vehicles are Mazda3 small cars and 25% are CX-7 sport-utility wagons, said Amestoy, who didn't know the shipment's value or Mazda's insurer for the cargo. The ship was scheduled for stops in Vancouver; Tacoma, Washington; and Port Hueneme, north of Los Angeles, Mazda said.

London, July 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, said yesterday it had hired Crowley Maritime Corp, and Crowley is enlisting its salvage subsidiary Titan Maritime LLC to right vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* and tow it to a port. Crowley tug *Sea Victory* left Seattle on Tuesday night and was expected to reach *Cougar Ace* on Aug 2, Greg Beuerman, a spokesman for Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, said.

CP VALOUR (Bermuda)

Ponta Delgada, July 27 — Container Carrier *CP Valour*: The removal operation of the cargo, containers, is continuing and expected to be completed beginning next week. In the meantime preparations to refloat the vessel are underway. The work on the vessel are being made with the help of tug *Battle Axe* and barge *MEB-JB1*. It was reported that a small fire broke out during the welding works being carried out on board *CP Valour* was promptly extinguished by *Battle Axe*. — Lloyd's Agents.

CROWN PRINCESS (Bermuda)

London, Jul 21 — A team from the US National Transportation Safety Board is to examine the data recorder of Princess Cruises' passenger (cruise) *Crown Princess* to establish the cause of Tuesday's (Jul 18) steering incident. A spokesman for the NTSB said it would concentrate on both the automechanical and operational aspects of the vessel. He said it was too soon to comment on reports that a malfunction of the auto-pilot system caused the ship to list suddenly to starboard, 11 miles south-east of Port Canaveral. Princess Cruises said it expected the vessel to leave Canaveral yesterday although this was

dependent on whether the NTSB had completed its investigation. The cause of the accident has yet to be determined and a spokeswoman for the vessel could not confirm reports of a 15 degree list. The NTSB is conducting its investigation in conjunction with the US Coast Guard.

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger (cruise) *Crown Princess* that tilted suddenly at sea, injuring 240, left Port Canaveral yesterday for New York, where this weekend it will attempt a new passenger voyage despite continued mystery over what caused the earlier incident. Investigators from the Coast Guard and National Transportation Safety Board were on board to monitor the trip, officials said. The federal review might not be concluded for some time, Coast Guard Petty Officer Jennifer Johnson said. "An investigation's an extremely long process. It doesn't mean the cruise ship can't continue to operate," Johnson said. *Crown Princess* was scheduled to arrive in Brooklyn tomorrow morning, pick up approximately 3,000 passengers and depart later that afternoon. The trip to New York will determine whether the ship could depart again with passengers. Although the ship doesn't need additional Coast Guard clearance for another voyage, the port could hold the ship if the investigators on board determine it was unsafe, Coast Guard Petty Officer James Judge said.

London, Jul 22 — A press report, dated today, states: New reports say human error, not mechanical failure, caused passenger (cruise) *Crown Princess* to dangerously tilt to one side Tuesday (Jul 18). A high-level source said a mistake by a junior officer on the vessel caused the incident. The source said the officer turned off the automatic pilot system when he thought a gauge was pointing too far to the left but instead of turning the vessel back to the right, he kept it in an even sharper left-hand turn.

London, Jul 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger (cruise) *Crown Princess*, which unexpectedly heeled to one side during a trip through calm Atlantic waters, picked up a new load of passengers en route to the Caribbean yesterday for its first voyage since the incident. The vessel arrived in Brooklyn from Florida for a quick stop before sailing later in the evening for the Turks and Caicos Islands. Investigators yesterday had still not finished investigating why it suddenly listed 15 deg Tuesday (Jul 18) while travelling about 11.5 miles off Port Canaveral. The unexpected lurch threw passengers and unfastened objects against the deck and walls before the vessel corrected the list in about 40 seconds, according to passenger estimates. Inspectors, however, found that the *Crown Princess* was mechanically safe and cleared it to return to service, according to a Coast Guard spokesman. Only a few vacationers appeared to be deterred by the incident. After some cancellations, the

vessel is sailing at about 15% below its capacity of 3,000 passengers, a Princess Cruises spokeswoman said. The vessel is due to be at sea for a week, stopping at Grand Turk and Bermuda before returning to New York. The cruise was initially scheduled to start Thursday but was delayed two days to allow time for it to be inspected before returning to New York. Passengers sailing on the shortened trip would get a 50% refund of their fare, the cruise line said. Investigators from the Coast Guard and National Transportation Safety Board travelled on board the passenger vessel to monitor it while it cruised without passengers from Florida. Before the accident, the crew had reported a steering problem on board. The vessel was sailing through calm seas and there was no indication that a rogue wave or foul play contributed to the roll, officials said. At the time of the accident, the *Crown Princess* was on autopilot and its master was away from the bridge. The Coast Guard has now ordered the crew to manually steer the vessel while it is in water less than 50 metres deep.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated Jul 24, states: Passenger (cruise) *Crown Princess* arrived in Brooklyn from Florida Saturday (Jul 22) for a quick stop before sailing for the Turks and Caicos Islands, with a new set of passengers. Investigators still haven't finished investigating why the vessel suddenly listed 15 degrees on Tuesday (Jul 18) while travelling about 11 miles off Port Canaveral. The Coast Guard said inspectors have found that the vessel is mechanically safe and cleared to return to service. Meanwhile, on Jul 21, attorneys at law, Parker & Waichman, LLP, announced that it has been retained by five passengers on the *Crown Princess* who were injured after the vessel listed. The firm intends to file suit against Carnival Corp. and the relevant component manufacturers, including the manufacturers of the ship's autopilot and steering systems, by the end of the current month.

London, July 26 — A Crown Princess letter to the passengers regarding passenger (cruise) *Crown Princess*, dated July 24, states: We at Princess Cruises would like to take the opportunity to comment about the incident of last week, when *Crown Princess* experienced a strong list following its departure from Port Canaveral. We express our sincerest apologies for this regrettable event, and fully understand that this was a distressing experience for all who were on board. We especially extend our apologies to those passengers and crew who were injured. We are grateful that the injuries were not life-threatening, and also that those transferred to hospitals for evaluation and treatment have now been released with the exception of one passenger, for whom we wish a speedy and full recovery. Following the incident, we immediately cooperated with representatives from the U.S. Coast

Guard, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), and the Bermuda flag authorities. Following an extensive assessment, *Crown Princess* departed New York July 22 on a seven-day voyage, having received clearance to sail by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Bermuda flag authorities. We can appreciate there may be concern as to the cause of this incident, and questions about whether it could happen again. As you may be aware, there is an investigation into the incident being carried out by the U.S. authorities which has not yet been fully completed. It would therefore be inappropriate for us to comment in any detail before that investigation is complete and the results published. However, we can confirm that the incident was due to human error and the appropriate personnel changes have been made.

DA LI (Georgia)

See "South Korea" under "Port State Control".

DA YUAN YU 309 (China)

Maputo, Jul 27 — Fishing (general) *Da Yuan Yu 309* sailed from Maputo on Jul 11. — Lloyd's Agents.

DALIANA (Greece)

London, Jul 27 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Passenger ro/ro *Daliana* (5815 gt, built 1970), Brindisi for Igoumenitsa with 194 passengers and 72 vehicles on board, grounded on sand in shallow waters off Igoumenitsa this morning. There were no injuries to passengers or crew, and no pollution occurred. The vessel refloated under its own power and berthed safely at Igoumenitsa port. The port authority prohibited the vessel from departing, pending issuance of a Class maintain certificate. The passengers and their vehicles were forwarded to their destinations on board passenger ro/ro *Ouranos*.

DOLLART GAS (Cyprus)

Piraeus, Jul 21 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Dollart Gas* has now completed repairs at Kaohsiung. Vessel carried out bunkering yesterday was reportedly due to sail. — Tsavlis Salvage (International) Ltd. (Note — According to LMIU AIS, *Dollart Gas* was off Kaohsiung, in lat 22 36 12.9N, long 120 17 45.36E, at 1228, UTC, today, course 129 deg, speed 1.2 knots.)

DS MONTROSE (Bahamas)

London, Jul 25 — Bulker *DS Montrose* sailed from Piraeus on Jul 22, bound for Eleusis.

EASLINE TIANJIN (Singapore)

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

ECE (Marshall Islands)

London, July 27 — French environmental organisation Robin des Bois has attacked plans to release the 10,000 tonne phosphoric acid cargo of sunken acid tanker *Ece* into the

English Channel as “deliberate pollution.” Following discussions with *Ece*’s Turkish owner, Aksay Denizcilik, and the owner of its cargo, the Moroccan Office Cherifien des Phosphates, the French and British authorities have adopted an action plan that involves removing an estimated 40 tonnes of heavy fuel from the wreck of *Ece* by pumping and releasing its cargo of phosphoric acid into the sea. The French maritime prefecture in Cherbourg said an unmanned submarine would be used to open the vessel’s six cargo tanks to allow a controlled release of the acid. It added that French and British experts had agreed the impact of such a release would be limited initially to an area of a few hundred metres around the wreck and that, after a few days, there would be no measurable trace of the acid. The authorities’ claim that the environmental impact of the release of the phosphoric acid would be minimal has been challenged, however, by Robin des Bois, which claims the acid contains numerous toxic heavy metals that would remain in the sea, poisoning marine life and contributing to the proliferation of toxic green seaweed and plankton on the French coast. It said Moroccan data on the composition of the acid indicated the cargo of *Ece* contained 5 kg of mercury, 20 kg of lead, 130 kg of arsenic, 400 kg of cadmium, 800 kg of chrome and 1,000 kg of vanadium, as well as 800 kg of uranium “The organised dumping of the phosphoric acid remaining in the wreck of the *Ece* is viewed by Robin des Bois as deliberate pollution,” said the environmental organisation in a communiqué. The release of the acid ran counter to the objectives of the 1992 Ospar Convention, which sought to prevent pollution in the North East Atlantic and had been signed by the UK and France, it said.

EILTANK 31 (Germany)

London, July 27 — Information received, dated Kiel today, states: After part cargo of the Inland waterways tanker *Eiltank 31*, which was destined for Ludwigshafen, was pumped into Dutch tanker *Ellen* the ship was towed to a temporary berth between Bingen and Ruedesheim. Here it was completely unloaded and towed to a yard in Duisburg for inspection for possible damage. After completion of investigations the ship which had sustained no further damage was soon put back into service.

EL MORRO (U.S.A.)

Santo Domingo, Jul 20 — Repairs to tug *El Morro* were initiated on Jul 18, but due to the extension of the damages, it cannot yet be anticipated when the repairs will be completed. — Lloyd’s Agents.

Santo Domingo, July 21 — Understand repairs to tug *El Morro* are estimated to be completed within some 10 days as from today. — Lloyd’s Agents.

ENSCO 107 (Liberia)

Singapore, Jul 24 — Drill platform *Ensko 107* is currently at Keppel FELS Quay 3, Singapore. — Lloyd’s Agents.

FOLEGANDROS (Greece)

London, Jul 20 — A report from Athens, dated today, states: Eletson Corporation, owners and managers of product tanker *Folegandros*, report that the vessel departed the inner anchorage of the Port of Maracaibo, at 1045 today. The tanker was cleared to sail by Port Authority afternoon of Jul 19, but waited for the daylight high tide of today, to ensure safe transit through the Maracaibo Channel as per port regulations. Refloating of the tanker was achieved at 0645, Jul 15 and she arrived in the inner anchorage at 0940 same day. Underwater inspection completed at 1200, Jul 15, and class inspections completed later same day, when the relevant certificate/clearance received. Reloading commenced at noon, Jul 15, and was completed at 1500, Jul 17. Owners and managers confirm that following two divers’ inspections reports and class inspection, the tanker has suffered no damage as a result of this grounding and no pollution or injuries has been reported. Owners and managers would like to thank all those who have been instrumental in the successful resolution of this grounding incident.

FRISIAN SPRING (Netherlands)

London, Jul 20 — General cargo *Frisian Spring* was reported arriving at Montreal on/about Jul 18 and sailing on/about Jul 19.

GALEMAR (Argentina)

London, Jul 23 — Following Argentinian Navigation Warning issued Jul 22: Fishing (general) *Galemar* (455 gt), in tow of fishing *Altalena*, reported in lat 45 25S, long 63 52W, course 255 deg, speed 5.5 knots, length of tow 500 metres. Vessels are bound for Comodoro Rivadavia.

Buenos Aires, July 27 — Understand fishing (general) *Galemar* was seen by the Argentine Coast Guard fishing yesterday and does not seem to have any problems. — Lloyd’s Agents.

GAZ HORIZON (Panama)

London, Jul 25 — Following received from the managers of Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Gaz Horizon* (39932 gt, built 1982), dated today: *Gaz Horizon*, bound Mexico with LPG on board, had auxiliary engine blackout after cooling water was lost due to damage to a pipe in the auxiliary engine while transitting Panama Canal Jul 23. Vessel anchored at Gamboa, near Balboa, and has now successfully carried out all necessary repairs. (Note — According to Lloyd’s MIU AIS, *Gaz Horizon* was anchored in lat 09 06 44.88N, long 79 42 08.4W, at 1106, UTC, today.)

Balboa, Jul 25 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Gaz Horizon* arrived Cristobal at 0835, local time, Jul 18 in laden condition (cargo propane) for

southbound transit and commenced transit at 0717 Jul 22. During transit the vessel reportedly sustained complete blackout due failure four (?) generators and was moved to Gamboa Moorings with assistance of canal tugs. Due generator outage, refrigeration machinery inoperable and cargo temperature started to increase. Local work-shop placed portable generator on board to provide some power to refrigeration equipment/maintain temperature of cargo. Understand repairs in hand by ships personnel with local assistance and at least one generator back in operation. Repairs may be completed tomorrow. Vessel remains at Gamboa moorings and reportedly Canal Authorities will not permit her to resume transit until all generators are back in service and found to be operating in a satisfactory manner. Even though the incident apparently resulted in no damage to the canal installations or the vessel (other than the actual generator damage, an official investigation was held by the Board of Local Inspectors, to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the blackout. Reports also indicate that five ships scheduled for transit that day had to be rescheduled, resulting in significant delays. — Lloyd’s Agents.

London, July 27 — According to Lloyd’s MIU AIS Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Gaz Horizon* was still in lat 09 06 44N, long 79 42 08W, at 0803 today.

GLORY MOON (Panama)

London, Jul 26 — Bulk cement carrier *Glory Moon* sailed from off Singapore, in tow of tug *De Da* on Jul 20, arriving at Bataan on Jul 21.

HALTEN (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Malmo, Jul 26 — General cargo *Halten* (1999 gt, built 1992), Liepaja for Bergnaset with 2,359 tonnes wheat and 500 tonnes soya meal, grounded outside Alabodarna in The Sound, between Landskrona and Helsingborg, at 0658, local time, Jul 25. The Swedish Coast Guard, the police and the Swedish maritime authorities boarded the vessel and carried out an alcohol test on the master. The test was found to be positive, and the master was arrested and taken ashore. The vessel refloated by its own means and anchored outside Raa for a diver’s inspection. Indents were found in the bottom plating but no leakage was found. A Class surveyor boarded the vessel, and a joint decision was taken with the Swedish maritime authorities to allow the vessel to proceed to Norway in order to discharge and carry out a further bottom inspection. — Lloyd’s Agents.

HOHEBANK (U.K.)

Liverpool, Jul 25 — General cargo *Hohebank* is still in Cammell Lairds, undergoing repairs. — Lloyd’s Agents.

HORIZON DISCOVERY (U.S.A.)

London, July 26 — Coast Guard Jacksonville press releases, dated July

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

25, state: Coast Guard assessment teams are assessing the damage caused by Container Carrier *Horizon Discovery* (18888 gt, built 1968) that has ran aground in the St. John's River near Little Jetties Park in Mayport, Fla. *Horizon Discovery* contacted with the jetties at Little Jetties Park while transiting the St. John's River at approximately 1930 hrs. There were no reported injuries.

(Later): *Horizon Discovery* that ran aground in the St. John's River near the Little Jetties Park today was freed at 2315 hrs. by tugs and is on its way to Blount Island, Fla. *Horizon Discovery* was refloated by tugs from Moran Towing. Coast Guard assessment teams did not observe any oil or fuel leaking from the vessel after their initial assessment. The St. Johns River from Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville in Mayport, to Blount Island, is now open to all commercial traffic. Coast Guard inspectors from Sector Jacksonville are investigating the incident. The Coast Guard will continue to monitor the vessel to ensure that it is not leaking any oil or fuel.

London, July 27 — According Lloyd's MIU AIS Container Carrier *Horizon Discovery* was in lat 30 03 33N, lat 80 46 58W, at 2249, July 26, speed 20 knots, course 121 degrees.

INFINITY (Bahamas)

See "Outbreak of Virus on Bahamas Vessel" under "Miscellaneous."

KOZIOROZEC (Poland)

London, Jul 27 — Following received from Kiel, dated: On Jul 20 the Polish "train barge" *Koziorozec*, homeport Opole, owned by Odratrans in Wroclaw, with a crew of three, ran aground on the river Oder close to Lebus. It was carrying a cargo of 320 tons steel products for a power station in H.rth, close to Cologne. The water depth at the grounding site is only 0.7 m. The vessel, however, has a draught of 1,15 m. At the beginning of the week the ship succeeded in getting free, under its own power, only to run aground again on the next sand bar. The *Koziorozec* has now been disconnected from the barge which is stuck fast in the middle of the river. Without a rise in the river levels, through rain, it is impossible to reach the nearest port of Kostrzyn (Kuestrin), which is only 15 km away. It is therefore possible that the "train barge" will remain "in situ" for some weeks.

KURT R.LUEDTKE (U.S.A.)

Troy, Mich, Jul 22 — Tug *Kurt R.Luedtke* (95 gt, built 1956) was back in the water and rafted to No 16 derrick barge at the Cargill Elevator Pier, Ontario, yesterday morning. They were taking on fuel from a Noco tanker truck and seemed to be making preparations to get under way around noon. Reportedly the tug had propeller damage repaired there this week. — "Great Lakes and Seaway Shipping News."

LASS URANUS (Germany)

London, Jul 25 — General cargo *Lass Uranus* arrived at Tees at 1950 hrs, Jul 24.

LAVADARA (Greece)

London, Jul 22 — Bulker *Lavadara* left San Lorenzo on Jul 5.

LUCKY STAR (Bolivia)

Taipei, July 24 — According to the Notice to Mariners issued by the Chinese Naval Meteorologic & Oceanographic Office, tanker *Lucky Star* grounded again on June 30 in lat 22 36 14.4N, long 120 15 50.4E. — Lloyd's Agents.

Taipei, Jul 25 — Understand tanker *Lucky Star* is still grounded in lat: 22 36.14.4N, long. 120 15.50.4E. Operations to prepare the vessel for towage and repairs are underway. — Lloyd's Agents.

MAGDALENA GREEN (Netherlands)

Montreal, Jul 25 — Understand a small fire broke out in the hold of general cargo *Magdalena Green* (11894 gt, built 2001) while it was loading in Grande Anse, Qc. There appears to be no damage to the vessel and only limited damage to the cargo. — Lloyd's Agents.

Montreal, Jul 26 — There was no damage to general cargo *Magdalena Green* and only limited damage to the cargo, the fire was extinguished within 10 minutes by the crew. Vessel departed Grande Anse at approximately 1800, Jul 24, bound for Iceland. — Lloyd's Agents.

MAJESTIC UNITY (Marshall Islands)

Dalian, Jul 27 — Crude oil tanker *Majestic Unity* reberthed at Pier No.0 at Dalian Port Oil Terminal at 2218 hrs, Jul 23. The tanker ceased cargo operations and shifted from jetty to the anchorage at 0025 hrs, today, after the sea conditions deteriorated. There is currently no news on when the vessel will re-berth. — Lloyd's Agents.

MARIS (Honduras)

Chittagong, Jul 25 — The discharge of the water affected cargo from hold No.1 of bulker *Maris* was completed on Jul 23. Discharge of the unaffected cargo from other holds is expected to completed on Jul 26 or 27. Product tanker *Atlantica I* is still lying under attachment. The claim settlement negotiation between both ship owners is still in progress. — Lloyd's Agents.

MARRAKECH EXPRESS (Panama)

Genoa, Jul 24 — Passenger ro/ro *Marrakech Express* (14015 gt, built 1972) reported engine damage in port, at Genoa, Jul 22, and is presently undergoing turbo-blower repairs at San Giorgio shipyard. No ETS is presently available. — Lloyd's Agents.

MAUNAKEA (Liberia)

Port Klang, Jul 27 — Refrigerated general cargo *Maunakea* departed from off Port Klang, under tow, on Jul 16. — Lloyd's Agents.

MB 54 (U.S.A.)

Miami, Jul 20 — Barge *MB 54* did not sustain any damage in incident with the Howard Franklin Bridge. Only the construction equipment on the barge which came into contact with the bridge was damaged. — Lloyd's Agents.

MED TAIPEI (Liberia)

London, July 26 — A press release, dated Washington July 25, states: The owners and operators of Container Carrier *Med Taipei* (40436 gt, built 1988, since renamed *YM Prosperity*) have agreed to pay \$3.25 million to the United States to resolve allegations that the 15 containers lost overboard in 2004 resulted in long-term damage to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS), the Department of Justice and the Department of Commerce announced today. The settlement between MBNMS, located off the coast of California, and the owners of the vessel - All Oceans Transportation Inc, Italia Marritema SpA and Yang Ming Transport Corporation - represents the largest damages awarded to date regarding a national marine sanctuary. In February 2004, 15 containers fell overboard from *Med Taipei* when the vessel was travelling on rough seas from San Francisco to Los Angeles. The 40 ft containers contained a variety of cargo - furniture, thousands of tyres, several hundred thousand plastic items, miles of cyclone fencing, hospital beds, wheel chairs, recycled cardboard and clothing items. A U.S. Coast Guard report revealed the containers were inappropriately loaded on board the vessel - there were faulty welds on anchor points for the containers, as well as missing d-rings from the deck of the vessel. "The funds provided as a result of today's settlement will be used to restore habitats within the national marine sanctuary, an area of high biological productivity and diversity," said Sue Ellen Wooldridge, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division. "These alternative restoration projects will help mitigate some of the anticipated resource injuries." In June 2004, the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI) recovered one container carrying car tyres during a research project. The container was discovered by a remotely operated vehicle in 4,000 feet of water, approximately 17 miles northwest of Pinos Point in outer Monterey Bay, Calif. MBARI took photographs of the container it discovered, and the serial number was easily identified and traced back to the ship. MBNMS has elected to use the settlement monies to undertake restoration projects in identified areas rather than to remove the remaining containers, whose locations are not known. The proposed consent decree outlining the settlement was lodged in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California today. It is subject to a 30-day public comment period and final court approval.

MEKHANIK KRASOTNIK (Russia)

See *Sormovskiy 32*.

MELBOURNE HIGHWAY (Panama)

See "Delaware Bay, United States" under "Pollution".

MERWEGAS**(Netherlands Antilles)**

Belfast, July 24 - Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Merwegas* sailed from anchorage outside Londonderry at 0845, July 22 after completing repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

MIDNIGHT RIDER (U.S.A.)

London, July 21 — A press report, dated July 20, states: After several failed attempts early this week fishing (general) *Midnight Rider* was successfully towed offshore Tuesday (July 18) afternoon. Near the 1500 hrs high tide, a tug finally eased *Midnight Rider* from its spot on the barrier beach that connects Chappaquiddick Island with Katama. Conrad Roy of Tucker-Roy Marine Towing and Salvage, the Mattapoisett company that managed the tow job, explained that an excavator also helped in the refloating process. On Tuesday, before the actual towing began, an excavator furnished by Watercourse Construction removed piles of sand that had built up around and under the boat, allowing water beneath the vessel. "The boat was high and dry on the beach," he said. "So we had to put water underneath it. Once we had water, it was easy to tug." According to Mr. Roy, *Midnight Rider* was safely towed to New Bedford.

MIRABELLE (Malta)

London, Jul 25 — General cargo *Mirabelle* sailed from Piraeus on Jul 24, bound for Sardinia.

MONTE STELLO (New Zealand)

Auckland, Jul 24 — Passenger ro/ro *Monte Stello* sailed from Auckland on the morning of Jun 10 and arrived in Wellington early in the morning of Jun 12. She made a trial sailing empty of cargo from Wellington to Picton on the evening of Jun 14 and arrived back next morning. She made her first commercial sailing with freight only from Wellington on the evening of Jun 17 and returned from Picton on the early morning of Jun 18. However, by that time she had sustained some problems with engines and on return to Wellington she laid up at Glasgow Wharf for engine inspection. Repair work was likely to take some time, so on Jun 21 she was moved from Glasgow Wharf to Inter Island Wharf, where she was berthed stern-in so that her stern-ramp could be lowered for ease of access. Understand that engine repairs are planned to be completed by mid-September. — Lloyd's Agents.

MSC JESSICA (Panama)

See *Charlotte Maersk*.

NAN HAI 6 (China)

London, July 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Two workers have

been taken to Royal Darwin Hospital suffering serious burns after a fire on drill platform *Nan Hai 6* (10424 gt, built 1982) in the Timor Sea. Employed by the Maersk company, the two men were working on the drilling rig when the fire broke out in a storeroom about 0130, CST, yesterday. The rig was doing exploratory drilling for Woodside Petroleum in the East Timor Joint Petroleum Development Area, about 575km north-west of Darwin. A hospital spokeswoman said a 54-year-old from Scotland was in a serious but stable condition in the intensive care unit with burns to his head and neck. A 30-year-old Australian has been admitted to a surgical ward and is in a stable condition with burns to his hands. A Woodside Petroleum spokesman said a joint Maersk-Woodside investigation team was on its way to the rig to investigate the incident.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Two oil rig workers are in a stable condition in Royal Darwin Hospital after suffering serious burns at sea. A fire broke out in a store-room of drill platform *Nan Hai 6*, stationed in the Timor Sea, about 0130, ACST, Sunday (Jul 23). The Maersk employees were treated by a medic on the rig before being flown to Darwin by helicopter. Woodside Australia business unit corporate affairs manager Tony Johnson said the cause of the fire was not known. "At the time of the incident the drill rig had not yet started its drilling operation," he said. "We can't say what caused the fire, not at this stage."

NANTI (Greece)

London, Jul 24 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the morning of Jul 21, passenger ro/ro *Nanti* (997 gt, built 1973) contacted the breakwater at the entrance to Mantoukiou port, with her port side. The vessel sustained some damage but there were no injuries or damages to the vehicles on board. Neither was there any pollution. At the time of the incident vessel was arriving from Igoumenitsa with 66 passengers and 31 vehicles onboard. The Kerkyra port authority prohibited departure pending repair of the damage and issuance of a class maintain certificate.

NAPOCOR POWER BARGE 105 (Philippines)

Manila, Jul 27 — Barge *Napocor Power Barge 105* is now drydocked at Keppel Batangas Shipyard in Bauan town, Batangas Province. The vessel entered the shipyard on Jul 17 and is undergoing bottom hull repairs. Keppel Batangas Shipyard officials said repairs are expected to be completed in the first week of August. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

NICOBAR (India)

Kolkata, Jul 24 — Passenger (cruise) *Nicobar* sailed for Andaman on Jul 22, on completion of repair work. — Lloyd's Agents.

NOBLE VENTURE (Canada)

London, Jul 26 — Fishing (general) *Noble Venture* (70 gt, built 2000), three persons on board, was disabled due fire in engine-room 21 nautical miles south-east of Gull Island, NF, in lat 49 43N, long 55 01W, at 1312, UTC, today. Vessel presently tied alongside the CCGS *Cape Roger*.

NORDEUROPA (DIS)

London, Jul 21 — Following received from Coast Guard Boston, timed 1215, UTC: Combined chemical and oil tank *Nordeuropa*: Investigations are still under way to ensure the fire at Motiva Terminal is completely out and that the dock is safe for normal operations. In addition to this, the vessel is being inspected to check for possible damage which may necessitate repairs.

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated Jul 23, states: Motiva Enterprises today continued to pump fuel out of damaged transmission lines at its petroleum plant in Providence. Gasoline offloaded from Combined chemical and oil tank *Nordeuropa* on Tuesday night during a massive thunderstorm ignited an inferno that torched Motiva's pier and damaged four fuel pipelines. As the pier continues to smolder, Motiva has been working to remove the fuel from the four pipelines that run down the 1,000-foot pier. The company had hoped to have the four transmission lines cleared of residual fuel today, but fuel was still being removed from the third and largest pipeline, said Brian Delaney, a spokesman for Motiva. "We were only able to put in a small suction (device)," said Delaney, adding that several thousand gallons of fuel remain in the third pipeline. The company hopes to empty and flush the fourth pipeline tomorrow. As the fuel is being removed, the Providence Fire Department is working to keep the smoldering under control by spraying the end of the pier with water, Delaney said. The pier is built of wood pilings covered with concrete. Some of the pilings, which can be 16 inches by 16 inches thick, are harboring fires that safety workers can't see, he said. The Fire Department is using thermal imaging equipment to determine if hotspots are smoldering, Delaney said. Once the fuel is removed from the pipelines and the hot spots extinguished, Motiva will be able to assess the damage to the pier, the pipelines and the plant. A barge with a crane was expected to take up residence near the pier today and become a base of operations for the salvage work, said Delaney. It can't be moved into place, however, until the fuel lines are purged, said Delaney. He expects the barge to be brought in today. As the work at the damaged pier continues, Delaney said there has been no disruption of fuel deliveries to the region. Motiva supplies gas to 102 Shell stations in the state. The company has been using alternative distribution networks and storage facilities, said Delaney.

London, Jul 24 — Following received from the managers of combined

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

chemical and oil tank *Nordeuropa*, dated today: DS Norden AS, as managers and operators of the *Nordeuropa*, report that the vessel completed inspections by its Classification Society, Det Norske Veritas, and the US Coast Guard and received full approvals to sail. The vessel departed for New Haven Jul 23 having sustained only minor damage, which was largely cosmetic to external coatings on the starboard side. Any small repairs and paintwork will be completed over the next month. The final detail prior to sailing was receipt on board the vessel of fire-fighting foam to replenish the vessel's stock. The managers again express their appreciation for the actions of the local fire-fighting departments, community response personnel, US Coast Guard, terminal staff and officers and crew of the *Nordeuropa*.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: The pier that was heavily damaged by a fire possibly ignited by lightning will be sufficiently repaired to receive deliveries of petroleum by barge in six to eight weeks, the pier owner announced yesterday. Motiva Enterprises LLC, owner of one of Rhode Island's major fuel depots, said it will be able to bring in as much petroleum at the pier as it did before the fire. The fire last week prompted Motiva to close its fuel terminal on the Providence River for safety's sake, interrupting truck deliveries to Shell and independent gasoline service stations in Rhode Island and South-eastern Massachusetts. That interruption initially caused some gasoline stations to briefly run out of gasoline or to run out of certain grades of gasoline. Governor Carcieri, who met with Motiva officials for about 25 minutes yesterday afternoon, said Motiva is meeting all delivery needs, generally speaking. Motiva spokesman Brian Delaney said the company is delivering fuel from its terminals in Connecticut and from other sources and that supply is not a problem. Yesterday morning, Delaney said, the company received calls from only three stations saying that they were out of one or two grades of gasoline. Motiva also stores home heating oil in one of its 19 tanks at the 85-acre terminal, and Carcieri said he has been assured that that tank will be full at the beginning of the oil heating season. The crisis at the pier began late Jul 18 as Combined chemical and oil tank *Nordeuropa* was offloading 3.15 million gallons of gasoline just before or during a severe thunderstorm. One of the transfer hoses parted, gasoline leaked and the fuel erupted in a fireball and a large blaze. The cause of the fire is being investigated by the federal, state and city governments, but officials have suggested two possibilities: A lightning strike or static electricity. Until three years ago, when the south side of the pier was dredged to accommodate tankers, all the shipments were by barge. The pier consists of three parts: A 25-foot-wide center span covered by a steel-

reinforced concrete deck and supported by thick wooden cross-beams and creosote-soaked pilings, and two outboard structures on each side separated from the center span by water. The outboard structures, 8 to 10 feet wide, carry the fuel pipes. They have a metal support framework and rest on wooden pilings. According to Delaney, this was the damage on the south side of the pier: The fire caused the collapse of a 60-foot-tall metal gantry that was used to support fuel-transfer lines from tankers and destroyed or damaged nine 3-foot-high transfer manifolds that serve as the transfer point for the fuel to run from a tanker into the pipes at the pier. When the gantry collapsed, it cracked or bent parts of five major fuel pipes that run the length of the south side. A wooden control shack on the center span was destroyed, the pier supports for the center span and the south outboard structure were damaged by fire and heat, and the concrete deck was buckled. On the north, or barge side, however, there was much less damage, according to Delaney: The wooden support structures were charred, and the three major fuel pipes on that side appear to be only lightly damaged. He said he is not sure of the condition of the four transfer manifolds on the north side. Part of the north side likely will have to be rebuilt, he said, but repairs have not begun. Because the overall damage has not been closely assessed, there is no estimate of the financial loss, he said. Motiva announced that its storage tanks, associated off-pier piping and truck-loading facilities have been inspected and found to be unaffected by the fire. But the company has not decided when it will reopen the terminal to allow the loading of delivery trucks. There is at least five days' supply of gasoline for the Motiva customer network still bottled up there. When operations are resumed on the north side of the pier, double-hulled barges with cargo capacities of 1.3 million to 1.5 million gallons will be able to offload. Most will be brought in from the Port of New York, according to Delaney. Barge shipments are expected to fully compensate for the loss of the larger tanker shipments.

NORDIC EXPLORER (U.S.A.)

London, July 21 — A press report, dated July 20, states: A fire below deck created a frantic scramble onboard fishing (general) *Nordic Explorer* (152 gt, built 1985) in New Bedford today. It was reported that a spark from a welding job on the deck of *Nordic Explorer* apparently made its way below and ignited some hydraulic fluid. Crewmembers saw smoke, followed it to the fire and tried to put it out, but they could not. Fire trucks scrambled to Fish Island, located between New Bedford and Fairhaven. Firefighters had a hard time getting to the fire. The heat caused problems, too. Firefighters in their heavy gear and masks could only work below deck a few minutes at a

time before others relieved them. New Bedford Deputy Fire Chief Brian Faria reported no serious injuries, but emergency medical technicians worked on a couple of firefighters who were overcome by the heat. Estepa reported that firefighters had to work quickly to keep the small fire from spreading forward to an area of the fishing boat full of foam insulation, which would have set off a more dangerous fire.

NORTH SEA (Liberia)

London, July 25 — Following received from Coastguard Aberdeen MRCC, timed 1055, UTC: Container Carrier *North Sea* (37071 gt, built 1992) has been at anchor off Aberdeen with engine problems since July 22. Understand from Aberdeen VTS that there are four technicians on board the vessel. (Note — *North Sea* sailed Hamburg 1950, July 20 for New York and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was in lat 57 10 08N, long 02 01 45W, at 1147 today.)

London, Jul 26 — Following received from Coastguard Aberdeen MRCC, timed 0936, UTC: Container Carrier *North Sea* is still lying at anchor. Understand the vessel is due to sail Jul 27.

NYK KAI (Panama)

Balboa, Jul 18 — Container Carrier *NYK Kai* (50606 gt, built 1993) arrived Cristobal 0733, Jul 16. While on voyage to Cristobal, from Savannah, vessel reportedly experienced engine-room fire, which extinguished by crew, and vessel was able continue passage to Cristobal without assistance. Understand local repair shop attending for repairs. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *NYK Kai* was in lat 08 12 48N, long 79 40W, at 0359, Jul 20, speed 21.8 knots, course 199 degrees.)

Balboa, Jul 20 — Container Carrier *NYK Kai* proceeded southbound through the Panama Canal yesterday and sailed Balboa 1959, today reportedly bound for Far East. It is not known if any repairs effected prior transit. — Lloyd's Agents.

OCEAN D. (Malta)

Colombo, July 24 — Bulker *Ocean D.* arrived Colombo July 14, from Dubai, and sailed July 15. — Lloyd's Agents.

OLUJA (Croatia)

Bremen, Jul 23 — Bulker *Oluja* (24610 gt, built 1996): River pilot on board vessel, which was proceeding downriver from Brake, reported machinery problems at 2120, Jul 22. At that time the vessel was in the area of Nordenham. The river pilot requested the attendance of two tugs and berthed the vessel at Columbuskaje, Bremerhaven, at 2315 same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jul 24 — Bulker *Oluja* sailed Bremerhaven at 1105, Jul 23, for Casablanca.

OOCL SHENZHEN (Hong Kong)

London, July 27 — Understand Container Carrier *OOCL Shenzhen* (89097 gt, built 2003) grounded on a

sand bank at Km 83, Suez Canal, at approximately 0630, local time, today. Vessel was refloated by Suez Canal Authority tugs an hour later. Also understand vessel sustained no apparent damage. (Note — *OOCL Shenzhen* sailed Rotterdam July 20 for Port Klang and passed Gibraltar July 23.)

London, July 27 — Container Carrier *OOCL Shenzhen* touched bottom in the Suez Canal in dense fog at 0620, local time. *OOCL Shenzhen* sustained minor scratching, according to the company after it touched a sandbank between marker 83 and 84. The incident occurred at 0620, local time, Inchape Shipping Services operations manager Abdel Aziz Nabil said. He said the vessel was freed by Suez Canal Authority tugs at 0730, local time. *OOCL* investor relations manager Stanley Shen said the ship touched bottom rather than grounded. He said there was no damage and no leaks. He added that the vessel was at anchorage awaiting a southbound convoy and was due to sail about 15 hours after the incident. The vessel, which operates a Grand Alliance Asia-Europe service, was transiting the canal after calling at Port Said. The next port call after Port Said is Port Klang.

PACIFIC ADVENTURER (Hong Kong)

London, July 25 — General cargo *Pacific Adventurer* sailed Hong Kong 1257, July 18 and arrived Singapore 1825, July 21.

London, Jul 26 — China Navigation's general cargo *Pacific Adventurer* is sailing to Australia to enter service with New Guinea Pacific Line after being released by the Chinese authorities following a collision with a fast attack missile vessel on Jun 22. The details of how the accident occurred, however, are still not clear. The 1991-built, 25,561 dwt multi-purpose ship and 26 crew were released on Jul 15, more than three weeks after the collision with the Chinese naval vessel. Up to 17 navy personnel are believed to have been killed in the incident although no-one on board *Pacific Adventurer* was reported hurt. *Pacific Adventurer* was released after a Chinese insurance company, backed by China Navigation's P&I club, Standard Club, issued a guarantee. The Chinese insurance company was stipulated by the Chinese authorities. Swire Pacific, an associate of China Navigation's London-based parent John Swire & Sons, could not comment on the size of the guarantee because of a court order. But the firm denied industry speculation that it topped US\$1bn. Swire Pacific spokeswoman Maisie Shun Wah said: "Afraid [we] cannot disclose the exact amount but let's say it is definitely not as much as US\$1bn." Details of the collision are still sketchy because of the military sensitivity of the accident. But Hong Kong's Marine Department said the forward section of the missile attack craft sheared off and sank following

the collision, which occurred near Zhuhai in southern China's Pearl River estuary, at 0351 hrs local time. A Chinese salvage team recently recovered the bow and forward section of the naval craft. Swire Pacific said the release of *Pacific Adventurer* was not linked to the recovery operation. Ms Shun also denied industry speculation that an ex-gratia payment had been made. "We haven't paid any compensation," she told Lloyd's List. Industry insiders identified the naval ship as a Houjian-class fast attack craft built by the Huangpu Shipyard in Guangzhou, southern China. The armed forces newspaper, the People's Liberation Army Daily, said Houjian-class vessels have a hull incorporating a radar reducing design and a sophisticated, computerised combat system. Other sources said the vessel was testing new stealth-like radar cloaking technology at the time of the collision. At least five of the naval vessels, which have a crew of 75 and a maximum speed of 33.5 knots, have been built, with several deployed to the navy's Hong Kong garrison. At 65.4 m long, the naval vessel, with a displacement of 520 tonnes, is less than half the length of the 184 m long *Pacific Adventurer*. After release the ship sailed to Hong Kong where the crew, comprising an Australian master, British chief engineer, a Tuvaluan second engineer and 23 Chinese seafarers, was changed. The vessel then "went to Singapore for very minor repairs", arriving on Jul 21. The ship is due to arrive in Townsville, Australia on Aug 3 to enter service on New Guinea Pacific Line's service linking Australia and Southeast Asia. The Hong Kong-flagged vessel is classed by Lloyd's Register. Hong Kong's Marine Department and the Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration are carrying out separate investigations into the accident. Department marine accident investigation chief Leung Hou-kin said it was "too early to give any probable cause" for the collision. He added that there had been an exchange of information between the department and the safety administration. But getting precise details, including the number of military personnel killed, injured or missing, of the incident was hampered by the military's reluctance to assist. Mr Leung believed an accident report would be completed in two months. He said the investigator's report would have to be approved by Marine Department director Roger Tupper and the government's economic development and labour bureau before it was published.

PALESTINE (Iraq) See *B.F.C. II*.

PANCHITO (U.S.A.)

London, Jul 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Coast Guard crews and sport fishers rescued three fishermen from fishing (general) *Panchito* (69 gt, built 1957) caught fire early Friday (Jul 21) about 20 miles

north-east of Port Aransas. Corpus Christi Coast Guard officials received a report about 0910 hrs that the fishing vessel was engulfed in flames. A helicopter, jet and two boats responded to the distress call. A passing recreational boat picked up the crew of the *Panchito* and the men were later transferred to a Coast Guard vessel. Another nearby fishing vessel worked to contain the fire until the Coast Guard crew were able to extinguish the flames. There were no injuries.

PENELOPE A. (Greece)

London, Jul 24 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: Passenger ro/ro *Penelope A.* (5590 gt, built 1972), Mykonos and Tinos for Andros and Rafina, struck the quay at the port of Gavriou, Andros, during the afternoon of Jul 22 during berthing manoeuvres. There were no injuries to the passengers or damages to their vehicles. Winds at the time were force 7 (near gale). The port authority prohibited departure pending inspection of the repairs and the 681 passengers and their vehicles were forwarded to their destinations on other vessels.

PETER II (Germany)

London, Jul 26 — Information received from Kiel, dated Jul 25, states: Passenger (cruise) *Peter II* was back in service after repair of the rather slight damage. It was a small cause which was followed by a great mishap. The technical investigations showed that it was only a broken screw which caused the ship to be unable to stop as the handle could not be pushed in the necessary position. The long term conclusions are still to be taken. Also the lock was back in service after some testings. The captain of *Peter II* was found to be not guilty in any reason. He had no alcohol and no chance to react after the incident as he was hurt himself.

PIONEER BAY (Panama)

Sydney, Jul 21 — Vessel problems and stringent Indian quality assurance requirements have held up some Australian primary produce exports over the past two weeks. In Adelaide, engine problems aboard Seatrade's refrigerated general cargo *Pioneer Bay* (7748 gt, built 1982) caused exporter Riversun's citrus exports to be delayed by two weeks. The vessel stopped in Port Adelaide for 12 days after three head bolts on the engine broke on the voyage to South Australia and had to be replaced in port. Vessel is now sailing to San Diego. There is now a looming shortage of Australian citrus in US supermarkets. Riversun spokesman Steve Allen told the ABC it would be the first time demand could not be met. "Unfortunately, we will run out of fruit for probably a week or less, which means that some supermarkets may go to South Africa but, look, there is a shortage of fruit in the United States," he said. "The South Africans are down on volume and, naturally,

we're down on volume with frost so we don't see it as being crucial but we're not happy about it." Meanwhile, monopoly wheat exporter AWB's latest shipment to India, where stringent import requirements were last month relaxed for future international imports, has fallen temporary victim to contractual requirements. Quarantine concerns have held up two previous shipments to India this year. — Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News. (Note — *Pioneer Bay* arrived Adelaide Jul 11 and sailed Jul 18 for San Diego.)

POLARIS S. (Panama)

London, Jul 22 — Bulker with container capacity *Polaris S.* arrived Koper Jul 21.

PONTONOSTOS (Cyprus)

Singapore, July 22 — Bulker *Pontonostos* arrived Singapore 2020, July 21 and subsequently departed. — Lloyd's Agents.

PROBO ELK (Marshall Islands)

London, Jul 22 — Combined bulk and oil carrier *Probo Elk* left Long Beach at 1030, Jul 20.

RM MARGAUX (France)

Bordeaux, Jul 25 — Tug *RM Margaux* (242 gt, built 1983) contacted No.501 jetty, Bordeaux, about 0815, Jul 14. She had an important water ingress and the crew left the tug through the jetty. *RM Margaux* immediately towed from the jetty by the tug *Pauillac* and sank on port side in the north, about 100 m and at 60 m from the riverside. After a call for tenders, the offer of the firm Mammoet Salvage has been awarded for the refloating of the *RM Margaux*. Another call for tenders has been made for the repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

SAFMARINE AGULHAS (Liberia)

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated Jul 20, states: Only 150 containers remained on board the stranded container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* the national ports authority (NPA) said today. NPA spokesperson Terry Taylor said: "There are only 150 containers left in holds two and three." Those already removed from the ship were being kept at a separate holding facility at East London harbour. They were not being emptied "because it's a custom-controlled issue", said Taylor. "Arrangements with various representatives will have to be made before any cargo is moved." He said the steady deterioration of the vessel's structural integrity remained a cause for concern and was being assessed and monitored by the onboard salvage team.

London, July 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Salvors suspended operations to remove more containers from Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* on Saturday (July 22), when rough seas hindered the process, said the National Ports Authority (NPA). "We stopped removing containers on Saturday, due to rough seas, but

continued on Sunday," said Terry Taylor, the NPA spokesperson, today. He said there were "about 100 containers" left on board the vessel and the removal progress was steady.

London, July 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A wreck removal meeting will be held on Thursday (July 27) by the Joint Operations Committee which is overseeing salvage operations at the site of the firmly grounded Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas*. Confirmation of the wreck removal meeting came yesterday from South African Maritime Safety Association (Samsa) principal officer Captain Peter Kroon, leaving little doubt the ship was likely to be declared a write-off". In another development yesterday morning the salvage tug *Smit Amandla*, left East London harbour for the Cape St Francis area to assist *Brilliance* (which see). It is understood that *Brilliance* intends calling in Port Elizabeth for repairs and that Samsa had as a precautionary measure called for the salvage tug to standby as it approached Algoa Bay. According to Smit Salvage spokesperson, Clare Gomes, *Smit Amandla* would most likely return to East London as soon as possible to resume its standby position close to *Safmarine Agulhas*.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25 states: A decision on the fate of container carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* will be taken later this week, the salvage company said today. Cargo removal operations came to a 48-hour standstill yesterday and today, when bad weather endangered salvors. "A decision will be made at the end of this week as to the future of the vessel," said Smit Salvage spokesperson Clare Gomes. She said the cargo removal operations had been temporarily halted because of adverse weather. "The cargo removal was suspended because the vessel became lively, or moved a lot, which made it unstable for salvors to continue," she said. Salvors are removing the vessel's cargo containers. The containers were covered in oil and water when holds two and three were flooded. The vessel began to spill diesel oil last Monday (Jul 17). The spillage was quickly contained with the use of vessel *Kuswag 4*. Salvors were steam-cleaning containers to wash off oil before storing them at the harbour. Salvors attempted to re-float the vessel two weeks ago, but no more attempts have been made. Spokesperson for the Department of Environmental Affairs, Carol Moses, said: "In terms of the report we received, there is no official decision on whether it will be taken out to sea and stripped." She said the bulk of the oil on board the vessel had been removed and there were only about 20 ton left on board. "At this point there is no spill threat. We have officials on site and will act if any environmental threat does arise," said Moses.

London, July 27 — A SMIT Salvage report, timed Cape Town 1400, July 26, states: Adverse weather and swell conditions since Monday have resulted

in a temporary suspension of the Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* cargo removal operation. With the lightened vessel becoming lively in the high swell, it was deemed unsafe for salvage divers to enter the flooded cargo holds where the last of the containerised cargo is still to be removed. As and when conditions allow, the final phase of the cargo removal operation will resume. It is estimated that 100 containers are still to be removed from the grounded ship. Despite the high swell conditions of the past few days, the salvage team have been able to continue skimming oil in the engine-room and cargo holds and the last of the heavy fuel oil is in the process of being located, skimmed and removed from the vessel. Seven hundred and forty-seven tonnes of heavy fuel oil was onboard the vessel when it ran aground and the last few tonnes are in the process of being removed. A decision will be made by the end of the week as to the future plans for the vessel. No pollution has been reported to be emanating from the grounded vessel and the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism (DEAT) patrol aircraft *Kuswag VIII* remains stationed in East London and continues to overfly the casualty daily to monitor the situation in this regard.

London, July 27 — A press report, dated July 27, states: Further indication that the grounded Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* is nothing less than an undeclared constructive total loss comes with photographic evidence of a crack extending all the way around the ship, practically breaking the ship in two. A picture taken on July 25 shows a crack in the port side hull which runs right around the ship. On the deck plates a hand can be placed within the gap left by this crack. Expert opinion suggests that were it not for the strong hatch coamings the ship would have surely split in two by now.

SAINT RAPHAEL IV (Greece)

London, Jul 24 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Pireaus report: Water tanker *Saint Raphael IV* (249 gt, built 1977) had fire break out in accommodation while anchored outside Perama during the morning of Jul 23. At the time of the incident the vessel was inactive and there was no crew on board. The fire was extinguished by the fire brigade and there was no pollution or damage to other vessels.

London, Jul 26 — Fire broke out at the accommodation of water tanker *Saint Raphael IV* on Jul 23. The vessel was laid up at Perama port, Pireaus. Fire was extinguished by the local fire brigade. No injuries were reported. Preliminary investigation is effected by Perama port authorities.

SASS

See "Belgium" under "Port State Control".

SEA TAXI (Cambodia)

Miami, Jul 20 — General cargo *Sea Taxi* was sitting out in front of the US Coast Guards office for a few days after the incident, until it sailed on and the Coast Guard have not seen it since. — Lloyd's Agents.

SIEGFRIED LEHMANN (Myanmar)

London, Jul 21 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: During the evening of Jul 19, general cargo *Siegfried Lehmann* (2225 gt, built 1980) was observed steering a strange and dangerous course on the River Elbe. Ships which were lying on the Meedem Anchorage, close to Cuxhaven and taking bunker oil, had to raise anchor to avoid being struck. The police requested the rescue boat *Hermann Helms* from Cuxhaven for assistance to board the vessel. Then *Siegfried Lehmann* collided with a buoy and for some time became entangled with it off Cuxhaven, but finally managed to get free again. When the police boarded the vessel, they found the captain, from Estonia, clearly drunk. He violently attempted to resist the police and was finally arrested. His blood tested positive for alcohol. (Note — *Siegfried Lehmann* was reported arriving Hamburg at 2020 hrs, Jul 20.)

SORMOVSKIY 32 (Russia)

London, Jul 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Russian tug *Mekhanik Krasotkin*, with barge *Aphine*, Kerch for Togliatti, River Volga, in ballast, was in collision with general cargo *Sormovskiy 32* (2478 gt, built 1974), Rostov for Italy, cargo grain, on Jul 20. Barge's bow was damaged and port anchor jammed, no leakage reported. All vessels have anchored in Azov Roads awaiting investigation.

SPEEDRUNNER I (U.K.)

Piraeus, Jul 26 — Passenger ro/ro *Speedrunner I* is expected to return to service in the beginning of August. — Lloyd's Agents.

STEN MOSTER (Gibraltar)

London, Jul 22 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Sten Moster* arrived Bremerhaven at 0845, Jul 20.

STRAND (Norway)

London, Jul 22 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: When arriving Tau at 2220, local time, Jul 22, roll on roll off *Strand* (1479 gt, built 1982) experienced blackout, made hard contact to quay and then hit some rocks in the area. No injuries to the 136 passengers or crew. The ferry is now underway to Stavanger by own means for inspections. Ferry *Frafjord* replaced the vessel.

London, Jul 23 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Roll On Roll Off *Strand* is now back in normally service between Stavanger and Tau.

SUPERSEACAT TWO (U.K.)

London, July 25 — A Steam Packet Company press release, dated July 24,

states: The Steam Packet Company passenger ro/ro *Superseacat Two* (4662 gt, built 1997) has experienced a technical malfunction to one of its four main engine gearboxes. To facilitate the commencement of repairs as soon as possible it has been necessary to cancel the crafts schedules as detailed follows: Liverpool/IOM The 1830, July 25, IOM/Belfast at 2145, July 25, Belfast/IOM at 0115, July 26 and IOM/Liverpool at 0730, July 26. On resumption of services the craft will operate on a reduced speed until repairs have been fully completed. Company engineers and specialist contractors are working as expediently as possible to restore the craft to full power. Twice daily schedules of *Ben My Chree* to Heysham continue on which passengers booked on the cancelled Liverpool sailings will be accommodated while Belfast booked passengers will be transferred to the scheduled Dublin sailings on July 26. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *Superseacat Two* was in lat 54 06 15N, long 04 22 06W, at 0728 today, speed 27.1 knots, course 130 degrees.)

SUSAN DIANE (U.S.A.)

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Fishing (general) *Susan Diane* (71 gt, built 1978) sank today in Morro Bay, after it had been taking on water for several weeks, spilling a few hundred gallons of fuel into the bay. State and local officials stood beside a mass of tangled rigging a few feet from the south pier, attempting to secure and separate the sunken 75-foot fishing vessel from another boat that was captured in its rigging. A bright yellow floating tube, or boom, encircled the tangled boats to contain about 300 gallons of diesel leaking from the sunken troller, said First Class Petty Officer Dustin Widman of the U.S. Coast Guard in Santa Barbara. Environmental Specialist Melissa Boggs with the state Department of Fish and Game said officials are watching wildlife in the area for signs of exposure to the fuel, but had not yet seen any and might not for several days. "Obviously Morro Bay is an extremely sensitive site because of endangered animals such as sea otters and the California Brown Pelican," Boggs said, noting that Snowy Plovers are also a concern because they are considered threatened birds. The cause of the sunken vessel is unknown, but the shrimp vessel had been taking on water for about three weeks, according to Chief Harbor Patrol Officer Eric Endersby. Officials were pumping water from the wood boat that is old and has not been used to fish for about four months, Endersby said. The owner, James Wylie, is in Texas and was notified of the problem, Endersby said.

SYLVE (Cyprus)

London, July 26 — Following received from Danish Maritime Assistance Service, timed 1015, UTC: At 0445, UTC, yesterday general cargo *Sylve* (1999 gt, built 1990), Rotterdam

for Liepaja, cargo 2,500 tons soya, was reported aground in lat 55 09.3N, long 14 41.9E. Understand vessel had grounded at approximately 0215, UTC, that day. Vessel is still aground and holed in bottom one metre from a fuel tank. At the moment Danish authorities are awaiting a salvage plan from the vessel's operator. A bottom survey by divers is planned for later today. (Note — *Sylve* sailed Rotterdam 0320, July 23 and passed Brunsbuttel 0407, July 24.)

London, July 27 — Following received from Danish Maritime Assistance Service, timed 0800, UTC: General cargo *Sylve* is still aground over its entire length on a rocky bottom. Vessel has a leak in a ballast tank. A salvage plan has been drawn up and transfer of part cargo is expected to begin this evening and it is hoped to have the vessel afloat by tomorrow evening.

TAI HUA HAI (China)

London, Jul 24 — Bulker *Tai Hua Hai*, now renamed *Heng Chao 8*, has left the port of Rizhao. According to LMIU AIS, vessel was located in Hong Kong waters, in lat 22 17 38.69N, long 114 11 21.68E, at 0727, UTC, Jul 23, course 70.5 deg, speed 7.5 knots.

THE CALYPSO (Cyprus)

London, Jul 24 — Passenger (cruise) *The Calypso* remains at Southampton, not yet back in service.

TINIAN EXPRESS (Panama)

Honolulu, Jul 21 — Ferry *Tinian Express* is anticipated to be drydocked Jul 25, at the South Sea Plane Ramp, Saipan for repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

Honolulu, Jul 26 — There has been a delay of a few days for the drydocking of ferry *Tinian Express*. Once she is docked, it is expected that repairs will take approximately two months to complete. — Lloyd's Agents.

TIRTA NIAGA I (Indonesia)

Kolkata, Jul 24 — Product tanker *Tirta Niaga I* is still under arrest and the matter will be taken up for hearing in the High Court of Kolkata Aug 4. Meanwhile, product tanker *Belicia* (2362 gt, built 1980), which carried cargo from the *Tirta Niaga I* from Paradip, is also detained at Kolkata since Jun 26 due to the cargo being contaminated with seawater and the consignees are refusing to accept the cargo. The *Tirta Niaga I* declared General Average and the High Court of Kolkata appointed a receiver for the cargo. The matter is now pending before the High Court for the purpose of discharge of cargo from the *Belicia*. Unless the High Court passes an order to discharge the cargo, the *Belicia* will be detained in Kolkata port. — Lloyd's Agents.

TUGEN (Luxembourg)

Durban, July 27 — According to local agents, product tanker *Tugen* is still undergoing repairs. Understand repairs should be complete by the end of August and is due to sail shortly after. — Lloyd's Agents.

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

TWOFOLD BAY (New Zealand)

Auckland, Jul 24 — Trawler (All types) *Twofold Bay* was stranded for a period on sand at Mahia. The vessel was able to refloat with tug assistance and understand sustained only minor damage below the deductible. — Lloyd's Agents.

UAL TEXAS (Netherlands)

Hull, Jul 27 — General cargo *UAL Texas* is still at the port of Tyne and is presently berthed at the Factory Quay Tyne Dock. The Harbour Master advises that the vessels' current ETD is Aug 31. — Lloyd's Agents.

UMFOLOZI (Cyprus)

London, July 21 — A press report, dated July 20, states: The Port Captain at Walvis Bay, Vladimir Gusev, has been suspended in the wake of Container Carrier *Umfolozi* vanishing from the harbour. Both Gusev himself and a Namibian Ports Authority (NamPort) official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed yesterday that the suspension was linked to the container ship being stolen from the harbour on Saturday (July 15). The ship, which was being detained on the basis of a High Court order, has not been seen since. Indications late yesterday were that the retired captain Mike van der Meer, a former General Manager of the Namibian Ports Authority, would serve as Acting Port Captain in the meantime. Meanwhile a reliable source said that the search for *Umfolozi* had not yielded any results. The vessel is presumed to have sailed in a northern direction towards Angola. Members of NamPol and the Namibian Defence Force, who have been conducting an aerial search since Monday, have returned home without spotting the ship. According to Acting Deputy Sheriff Andre Visser it is being assumed that the vessel had already reached Angolan waters by Monday. However, no success has been reported either by the Angolan authorities or Interpol, which have joined in the search.

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated Jul 19, states: Container carrier *Umfolozi*, which made headlines in September last year when it sank in the Walvis Bay harbour, disappeared from the port on Saturday afternoon, allegedly spirited away by its new owner, Alexander Saleh. The ship, which was being detained on the basis of a High Court order, has not been seen since then. Two security guards on board the vessel were apparently locked up for hours before they were thrown overboard. *Umfolozi* was rechristened *Michael S* after it was refloated, repaired and sold to Saleh, a Greek ship owner. The ship was detained at the Walvis Bay harbour in June by Deputy Sheriff Attie Barnard after the South African Ports Authority won a High Court order against its new agents, Seagate Shipping, for the damage done to the South African dredger *Ingwenya* during the collision last year. On Saturday (Jul 15) afternoon, the crew

boarded the ship, lying just outside port borders, under the pretence of having to offload some equipment. It was reported in local media that Saleh boarded a plane at Hosea Kutako Airport outside Windhoek and left the country on Saturday. According to Acting Deputy Sheriff Andre Visser, the Namibian Defence Force and their Angolan counterparts are co-operating in the search for the stolen vessel. By yesterday afternoon no sighting had been reported. "This is now a criminal case," said Visser, "which we are taking very seriously. The operation was clearly planned. We suspect that the vessel has already entered Angolan waters on Monday. The Angolan Army and Navy are on full alert and if they should spot the ship, they will force it to turn back to Namibia. The Namibian patrol boat *Oryx* is currently in that area and can take over from there." Both NamPort's managing director and official spokesperson were in meetings yesterday and could not be reached for comment.

London, July 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Namibian security forces have abandoned the search for Container Carrier *Umfolozi*, which was reported stolen a week ago. It is believed that the ship is headed northwards, possibly to Russia.

VERDI (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Jul 24 — During the evening of Jul 21, policemen observed a fire on board the combined chemical and oil tank *Verdi* (2195 gt, built 1999) in the port of Bremerhaven and immediately alerted the fire brigade. However, before the fire brigade could arrive on scene, the quick response of the vessel's Polish and Philippine crew and the Belgian captain, who obviously were well trained, succeeded in extinguishing the fire. It appears an old oil pipe on the main deck, which was out of use, had caught fire. The fire spread rapidly over the deck installations. However, it the quick actions of the crew prevented the fire from spreading over the ship. The *Verdi* has been berthed in the Labrador-Harbour of Bremerhaven since Jul 16, without cargo, for repairs. The police investigators suspect that welding works on the ship caused the fire. The extent/amount of damage has not yet been assessed and investigations continue.

WAN HAI 213 (Singapore)

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

WAPPEN VON NORDERNEY (Germany)

London, Jul 21 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: Passenger (cruise) *Wappen von Norderney* (154 gt, built 1967) experienced engine failure during an evening cruise in the North Sea during the evening of Jul 19. The 31 metre long vessel, with 28 persons onboard, drifted off the island of Norderney and was in danger of running aground in the shallow water.

It radioed for help and was taken in tow by the Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Rettung Schiffbruechiger (DGzRS) rescue vessel *Bernhard Gruben* at 2110 hrs. The *Bernhard Gruben* towed the ship into Norderney harbour, where the passengers safely disembarked at 2300 hrs.

WILD MARY (U.S.A.)

London, July 27 — A Coast Guard Seattle press release, dated July 26, states: The Coast Guard saved three men after their 68-foot rawler (All types) *Wild Mary* (129 gt, built 1978) sank 70 miles west of Depoe Bay, Ore, last night. The Coast Guard received a call on VHF channel 16 from the operator of *Wild Mary* at 2318 yesterday, reporting his vessel was taking on water. An HH-65 helicopter from Coast Guard Air Station North Bend, Ore, an HH-65 helicopter from Coast Guard Air Facility Newport, Ore, and a lifeboat from Coast Guard Station Depoe Bay, Ore., were launched minutes later to assist. Coast Guard crews located the men in a liferaft and hoisted them to a helicopter at 0025 today. The men were then safely transported to shore. The cause of the sinking is under investigation.

YU BAO NO.1 (Taiwan)

Suva, Jul 25 — According to a press release today, police are yet to investigate fishing (general) *Yu Bao No.1*, which grounded at the entrance to Suva harbour on Jun 15 2004. — Lloyd's Agents.

ZENOVIA (Malta)

London, Jul 20 — Bulker *Zenovia* sailed from Houston at 1730 hrs, Jul 16.

ZHI QIANG (Hong Kong)

London, July 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Tonnes of Queensland sugar had to be pumped overboard after bulker *Zhi Qiang* ran aground on a coral reef in Papua New Guinea, but authorities are unsure what damage it might do to marine life. Salvors dumped the spoiled sugar into the ocean in order to refloat the vessel on July 13 after it hit Long Reef, between Samarai and Misima Islands, 12 days earlier. The listing ship was towed to Port Moresby for repairs. Virgil Poanchina, a safety manager with PNG's Maritime Safety Authority, said today no fuel had spilled from the ship when it was holed but seawater had spoiled sugar in two holds and it was pumped off to gain buoyancy. "It was necessary to do this to save the vessel, to save bigger impacts to the reef." The authority was investigating whether the sugar might damage marine life, he said. The authority would reserve its rights to penalise the ship's operators if it was found the sugar caused significant environmental damage, Mr Poanchina said. The ship, managed by Cosco Hong Kong Shipping, was bound for South Korea. It was refloated with the aid of two tugs, one sent from Brisbane by Australian salvage

company Adsteam Marine and one from the PNG firm Pacific Towing. An Adsteam Marine spokeswoman said temporary repairs were being made to the ship and arrangements made to secure the remaining cargo of sugar before the vessel was handed back to its owners, perhaps next week.

ZIM JAPAN (Malta)

See “Typhoon “Ewinar” under “Weather & Navigation”.



BELGIUM

Zeebrugge, Jul 25 — General cargo *Sass* is not longer under Port State Control detention, as the vessel is “seaworthy again”. — Lloyd’s Sub-agents.

SOUTH KOREA

London, Jul 25 — A Port State Control inspection of general cargo *Da Li* (841 gt, built 1982), after its arrival at Pyeongtaek on Jul 1, revealed a high number of serious port state control violations. In an attempt to conceal it’s true identity the vessel presented a fraudulent IMO Number and name to inspectors and as a result, it was recommended to the maritime affairs ministry that the vessel be banned from entering all South Korean ports, in the future. The vessel was however, granted permission to proceed, once the repairs to correct the deficiencies had been completed/approved. The vessel sailed from Pyeongtaek on Jul 18, reportedly bound for Dalian, China.



ALTAIR SS (Panama)

See “COSCO Vessels Arrested at Chittagong, Bangladesh.”

BRIGHT QUEEN (South Korea)

Port Klang, Jul 24 — Bulker *Bright Queen* is still under arrest of a (South Korean) Bank and is now waiting to be sold at public auction. — Lloyd’s Agents.

CONTAZ TRADER (Ukraine)

Zeebrugge, Jul 25 — Container carrier *Contaz Trader* (9548 gt, built 1983) is currently under arrest (at Antwerp). — Lloyd’s Sub-agents. (Note — *Contaz Trader* arrived at Antwerp at 2027 hrs, Jul 19.)

COSCO VESSELS ARRESTED AT CHITTAGONG, BANGLADESH

London, July 26 — A press report, dated July 24, states: General cargo *Xuan Cheng* (10150 gt, built 1977) and general cargo *Altair SS* (10020 gt,

built 1978), operated by China Ocean Shipping Co (COSCO), have been arrested at Chittagong at the order of the local admiralty court. The vessels had discharged fertilizer and were preparing to depart on Friday last week when the arrest orders were delivered. The Chittagong Port Authority said legal action had been taken by the importer, Akhter Group, on the grounds that the products were damaged. *Altair SS* had carried 10,672 tons of gypsum and anchored at Chittagong outer anchorage on June 19, berthing July 6. *Xuan Cheng*, with 14,055 tons of TSP fertilizer and gypsum, had arrived at the outer anchorage on June 17 and berthed June 28. The importer has requested compensation of about US\$500,000, claiming that 3,000 tons of TSP and gypsum were found damaged. The vessels Bangladesh agent said the importers had delayed the discharge of the cargo for undisclosed reasons, which may be related to the complaint. COSCO officials said the ships has already incurred serious losses for delayed discharge. (Note — According to Lloyd’s MIU reports *Xuan Cheng* arrived Chittagong June 28 and sailed July 15 for China, and *Altair SS* arrived Chittagong July 6.)

EDCO (Egypt)

London, July 27 — A press report, dated July 26, states: Bulker *Edco* docked yesterday for a brief stay at the Charleston waterfront to take on food and water as it marked one month of detention in Charleston harbour. The ship was expected to be tied up at the State Ports Authority’s Union Pier for about 24 hours. Some of the 29 crewmen had sick call. They also removed 30 days of accumulated trash. None of the crew was allowed off. The vessel was ordered to stay in the harbour by a federal court while a lawsuit plays out. The legal case could take weeks to resolve.

JOANA (Togo)

London, Jul 24 — Fish factory *Joana* (1379 gt, built 1966, ex *Kabou*) is now back in the Barents sea Loophole, where they were arrested for environmental crime Jul 1. On board, the crew had not updated the fishing journal, and mesh size was not according to regulations. The trawler was brought up to Vadso by Norwegian coastguard and was given a 350.000 NOK fine. Catch in the value of three million NOK was confiscated. Representing the shipping company, Cear Vieira said to NRK that ‘Kabou’ is now looking for new places to fish, but the Barents sea Loophole is still on their route for futher fisheries. “We will continue fishing in the loophole, Vieira said, before the trawler left Vadso Thursday (Jul 20). He confirmed that the sale of the catch will happen by loading on a cargo vessel in international waters. This is because the trawler has no legal rights to contribute fishing within controlled waters. Norwegian coastguard confirms that the trawler is back fishing in the Loophole. Commander in

charge, Oystein Smaberg, said the coastguard does not have any legal right to bring the trawler back to shore again. However, they will keep an eye on the trawler in the nearest future.

KINDRED (Bahamas)

London, Jul 24 — Following received from the Admiralty Marshal, dated today: General cargo *Kindred* (2206 gt, built 1976) was arrested at Sharpness on Jul 19, in respect of unpaid bunkers. (Note — *Kindred* arrived at Sharpness on Jul 19.)

ORIENT ALLIANCE (Hong Kong)

London, Jul 24 — Following received from the Admiralty Marshal, dated today: bulker *Orient Alliance* (77655 gt, built 1990) was arrested at Port Talbot on Jul 18, in respect of a breach of an agreement, but was released on Jul 19. (Note — *Orient Alliance* arrived at Port talbot on Jul 13 and sailed on Jul 21, bound for Sepetiba.)

OTAPAN (Mexico)

London, Jul 24 — Tank barge *Otapan*, berthed in the port of Amsterdam since 1999, is to begin its final journey tomorrow for scrapping in Turkey. *Otapan* found itself in the spotlight when its crew started ripping bagloads of lethal brown asbestos out of the ship in 2001. The outside of the vessel was cleaned up, with the government footing the bill. Since that time *Otapan* has been sealed off. She was berthed in the heart of the city at the former Amsterdam Ship Repair yard, which later went bankrupt. Amsterdam has always been keen to see the vessel’s departure. After her owners, Navimin, ran into financial difficulties, the Dutch state found itself the owner of the vessel. Last year investigations showed that the vessel was incapable of sailing under its own steam and therefore it was decided to scrap it. The government stated that given the exorbitant cost of scrapping the vessel in the Netherlands an alternative solution had been found. *Otapan* is due to start its journey to Turkey, under tow, tomorrow, and will be scrapped at the Simsekler yard in Aliaga. The Dutch government has had to foot the bill for the clean-up of the vessel.

Maassluis, Jul 26 — Understood that tank barge *Otapan* is expected to sail (from Amsterdam) to Turkey later today or tomorrow, Jul 27. The vessel will be demolished there. — Lloyd’s Sub-agents.

POLANA (Georgia)

London, Jul 25 — A report, dated today, states: Fishing *Polana*, registered in the Black Sea port of Batumi, under Georgian flag, has been detained for illegal crab fishing in the Sea of Okhotsk. She was discovered yesterday by the crew of a KA- 27 helicopter, which is based on the border service patrol vessel *Orel*, the press service of the north-eastern border directorate of the Federal Security Service, FSB, coastguard department told Interfax today. A

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check of the fishing boat revealed that the 14-member Russian crew had caught around 4.3 tonnes of crab (around 3,000 specimens) without any authorization. The whole catch was stored in a hold that was specially equipped for transporting live crab. After the total catch was checked, the crabs were released into the sea. The technical control system on board the ship was switched off, the press service said. The boat was detained for breaching fishing regulations and was escorted back to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy to face further proceedings.

ROSITA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Jul 24 — Following received from the Admiralty Marshal, dated today: General cargo *Rosita* (2316 gt, built 1977) was arrested at Sharpness on Jul 23, in respect of “loss or damage and salvage costs incurred in respect of equipment carried onboard the vessel”. (Note — *Rosita* arrived at Sharpness on Jul 22 from Ravenna.)

London, Jul 25 — General cargo *Rosita* was released Jul 25.

SEA PRINCE (North Korea)

Limassol, Jul 21 — General cargo *Sea Prince* (2426 gt, built 1969), which arrived Limassol Jul 19 from Lattakia, is currently under arrest. — Lloyd’s Agents.

Limassol, Jul 24 — General cargo *Sea Prince*, which under arrest, has been released and sailed on Jul 22 for Tekirdag. — Lloyd’s Agents.

SEA STAR II (Panama)

Freeport, Jul 24 — General cargo *Sea Star II* was sold to a local dive company and was deliberately sunk to make a dive site in about 100 feet of water off Freeport/Lucaya, Grand Bahama. — Lloyd’s Agents.

SKY 75 (South Korea)

Wellington, Jul 26 — Trawler (All types) *Sky 75* is laid up at Bluff awaiting drydocking at Lyttelton. It was detained by MNZ at Timaru prior to coming to Bluff but assume deficiencies were corrected prior to vessel being allowed to leave Timaru. — Lloyd’s Agents.

SOPHIE (DIS)

Balboa, July 18 — Container Carrier *Sophie* (1551 gt, built 1992), anchored off Manzanillo, was reportedly arrested July 16 behalf local interests. — Lloyd’s Agents.

SUN RAYS (Georgia)

Limassol, Jul 25 — General cargo *Sun Rays* (1811 gt, built 1978), which arrived Limassol Jul 23, is under arrest. — Lloyd’s Agents.

Limassol, Jul 27 — General cargo *Sun Rays* released and sailed Jul 27 for Thessaloniki. — Lloyd’s Agents. (See issue of Jul 27.)

SZAP 5 (Cook Islands)

Wellington, Jul 24 — Trawler (All types) *Szap 5* is still lying laid up at Nelson. No changes in situation. — Lloyd’s Agents.

XUAN CHENG (China)

See “COSCO vessels arrested at Chittagong, Bangladesh.”



NIGER DELTA REGION, NIGERIA

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: Royal Dutch Shell said today that a leak in an oil pipeline in southern Nigeria on Friday (Jul 21) has cut its output there by 180 000 barrels a day. A Shell spokesperson said: “A total of 180 000 barrels a day has been temporarily shut in and we don’t know when it will be back.” Shell had so far failed to uncover the cause of the leak to the Sambarth-Karkrama pipeline in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. News of the leak came as Nigeria was already experiencing a cut of about 20% in its oil exports owing to militant unrest in the Niger Delta.



DELAWARE BAY, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Up to 2,500 gallons of oily “bilge” waste escaped from vehicle carrier *Melbourne Highway* (43259 gt, built 1983) in the Delaware Bay late yesterday, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control officials reported. State environmental enforcement officers already have boarded the vessel, owned by Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd, to investigate, DNREC Deputy Secretary David Small said. The vessel was departing the Delaware River port complex at the time. “With the surface of the water being stirred up as it is because of the winds we’re getting out of the north and the tropical storm that is passing us, there may not be a whole lot that can be done,” Small said. Bilge liquids often contain a mixture that may include fuel oil, water, hydraulic fluids and other petroleum products. The spill was traced to a broken valve on the vessel. Small said that investigators hope to survey the area by helicopter later today, although winds and waves were expected to quickly disperse the wastes.

London, Jul 21 — Vehicle carrier *Melbourne Highway* sailed Delaware Bay 2216, Jul 20, for Davisville.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

London, July 24 — A press report, dated today, states: It could take another four or five days to clean up what a Canadian Coast Guard official

termed “a relatively minor” spill of bunker C oil into Halifax Harbour on Saturday (July 22). Joe LeClair, superintendent of environmental response for the Maritimes, said about half a tonne of the oil leaked from a settling tank on Roll On Roll Off *ASL Sanderling* (21849 gt, built 1977) while the vessel was at anchor in the harbour, riding out the remnants of tropical storm “Beryl”. Mr. LeClair said crew members were able to contain the leak shortly after it was noticed at about 0530 hrs. He said all vessels entering the harbour are required to have an arrangement with a certified response organization to clean up any spills. Mr. LeClair said the coast guard was advised of the spill and the vessel activated its oil-spill emergency plan by contacting Eastern Canada Response Corp to begin cleanup operations. *ASL Sanderling* was moved to Pier 36 on the Halifax side of the harbour, where it had attempted to tie up the night before but was stopped by high winds. Cleanup crews have put a boom around the ship as a precaution against further seepage. The crews spent much of Saturday cleaning up an oily slick on the Dartmouth side, extending from just north of the ferry terminal to the Nova Scotia Hospital and stretching about halfway into the harbour. “It’s a fluid thing. It’s moving with the tide,” said Mr. LeClair, who is monitoring the cleanup. Mr. LeClair said high temperatures will help with evaporation, but because of low winds and sea conditions there is a lingering smell of oil in the area of the ferry terminal. “Right now the harbour is fairly calm,” he added. Harbour and ferry operations were not affected by the spill and are continuing as normal, he said. But he said there’s an exclusion zone for harbour traffic between the ferry track on the harbour and the Nova Scotia Hospital on the Dartmouth side “to permit us to carry on cleanup operations without having other boats in the area.” Mr. LeClair said contractors for the vessel have more than 1,200 metres of protective boom in place and more than 20 people in four boats working on the spill. More boats and workers are expected to take part in the operation, which is likely to continue into next week. Mr. LeClair said Transport Canada officials spent much of Saturday onboard *ASL Sanderling* to investigate whether there had been any violations of Canadian regulations. Environment Canada will determine whether there was any environmental harm to the harbour and to make recommendations on the best method of cleaning the spill.

London, July 24 — A press report, dated today, states: A final sweep of the Halifax Harbour area affected by the spill of an estimated half-tonne of oil will be made today, the Canadian Coast Guard said. But the cleanup of the bunker C oil spilled by Roll On Roll Off *ASL Sanderling* was completed yesterday, said Joe LeClair, the coast guard’s superintendent of environmental response for the

Maritimes. The oil stretched from the Dartmouth ferry terminal to near the coast guard headquarters, LeClair said. *ASL Sanderling* berthed in Dartmouth on Friday night to ride out the remnants of tropical storm "Beryl". That's where the spill happened, which was caused by corrosion, LeClair said. The oil leaked onto the ship's deck and then into the harbour, which actually helped lessen the impact of the spill, he said. *ASL Sanderling* moved to Pier 36 at the Halterm Ltd. container terminal on the Halifax side, where it cleaned up its deck. Officials from Environment Canada and Transport Canada were also on scene to investigate the cause and the impact, LeClair said. That investigation will be key, said Butler.

Halifax, Jul 25 — Tank repairs to Roll On Roll Off *ASL Sanderling* were effected during the weekend (Jul 22-23). Harbour cleanup as necessary was undertaken by the Canadian Coast Guard. Vessel departed Halifax am yesterday to resume trade. — Lloyd's Agents.



HURRICANE "DANIEL"

London, Jul 21 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Daniel" was located near lat 13.2N, long 125.3W. The position is accurate to within 10 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the west-northwest, or 285 degs, at nine knots. The estimated minimum central pressure is 948 mb. The maximum sustained winds are 115 knots with gusts to 140 knots. The radius of 64 knot winds: 45 nautical miles in the north-east and north-west quadrants and 35 nautical miles in the south-east and south-west quadrants. The radius of 34 knot winds: 120 nautical miles in the north-east and north-west quadrants and 100 nautical miles in the south-east and south-west quadrants. At 0600, UTC, Jul 22, the centre is predicted to be near lat 14.5N, long 130.3W, with maximum winds of 90 knots and gusts to 110 knots.

London, Jul 22 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Daniel" was located near lat 13.8N, long 129.7W. The position is accurate to within 10 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the west-northwest, or 285 degs, at 10 knots. The estimated minimum central pressure is 933 mb. The maximum sustained winds are 130 knots with gusts to 160 knots. The radius of 64 knot winds: 50 nautical miles in north semi-circle and 40 nautical miles elsewhere. The radius of 50 knot winds: 80 nautical miles north semi-circle and 70 nautical miles elsewhere. The radius of 34 knot

winds: 120 nautical miles north semi-circle and 100 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Jul 23: The centre is predicted to be near lat 14.5N, long 133.2W, with maximum winds of 120 knots, gusting to 160 knots. The radius of 64 knot winds: 50 nautical miles in north semi-circle and 40 nautical miles elsewhere. The radius of 50 knot winds: 80 nautical miles north semi-circle and 70 nautical miles elsewhere. The radius of 34 knot winds: 120 nautical miles north semi-circle and 100 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Jul 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Daniel" was located near lat 16.1N, long 139.8W. The position is accurate to within 20 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the west-northwest, or 285 degs, at 13 knots. The maximum sustained winds are 85 knots with gusts to 105 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Jul 25: The centre is predicted to be near lat 16.9N, long 142.8W, with maximum winds of 75 knots, gusting to 90 knots.

London, Jul 25 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Daniel" was located near lat 16.2N, long 142.7W. The position is accurate to within 45 nautical miles. The movement past six hours 270 degs, at six knots. The maximum sustained winds are 55 knots with gusts to 65 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Jul 26: The centre is predicted to be near lat 16.6N, long 145.3W, with maximum winds of 45 knots, gusting to 55 knots.

JAPAN

Tokyo, Jul 23 — At least four people died and one is missing after torrential rain triggered floods and landslides on Japan's southern main island of Kyushu, local officials said today. The rain was heaviest in Kagoshima on the southern tip of Kyushu, 1,000 km south-west of Tokyo, where more than 120 cm of rain had fallen since last Tuesday (Jul 18). Weathermen warned that more rain of up to 25 cm was expected over the same area in the next 24 hours. An 86-year-old woman died after being washed away by a flooded river and a 45-year-old man died after being swept up by a mudslide, officials said. They said about 60,000 local residents were urged to evacuate. Local governments called on the military to help with rescue operations. Last week, at least 18 people died and several were left missing across Japan after several days of heavy rain touched off floods and landslides. — Reuters.

NEW ZEALAND

London, Jul 21 — Storms continued to lash the lower North Island today, while an icy blast moved up the South Island bringing heavy snow and ice. Widespread flooding again hit the Wairarapa and landslips caused evacuations in Wellington. While the

rain was forecast to ease later in the day, the cold southerly was expected to bring gale force winds in exposed coastal areas south of Hawkes Bay and snow down to sea-level in the South Island and to 300m in the lower North Island. In the South Island, the Wakatipu Basin received about 10cm of snow by mid-morning, Queenstown Lakes District Council communications manager Meaghan Miller said. "It's the heaviest snowfall this winter — all the schools are closed, and we've had to close access to some of the steeper roads," she said. Queenstown airport was also closed. Snow was falling on some areas of Port Hills and Banks Peninsula in Christchurch and forced some road closures. The Automobile Association was advising extreme caution, with Otago-Southland roads among the hardest hit by snow and ice. Hutt City Council emergency management controller Paul Nickalls said around 30 people were evacuated in the hilly Wellington seaside suburb of Eastbourne around 2100, yesterday after a landslip. The house was reported to have moved up to 3m from its foundations and would have to be demolished. Several minor roads were closed in Wellington, and surface flooding disrupted parts of State Highway 2. River levels However, river levels in the area had dropped and did not pose any further threat. State Highway 4 between Raetihi and Wanganui is closed due to landslips and flooding, with alternate routes via State Highway 3 still open. The bad weather has also closed State Highway 56 at Tokomaru at its intersection with the Manawatu River Bridge. Transit New Zealand issued a swathe of road warnings for black ice, snow and sleet. Light snow was falling in Dunedin and chains were required in many parts of Otago and Southland, particularly between Alexandra and Roxburgh. State Highway 85 between Palmerston and Kyebrun was closed due to snow and ice. Christchurch City Council communications adviser Terry Sefton said Summit Road from Gebbies Pass to Dyers Pass Road has been closed, and was open only to four-wheel-drives from Mt Pleasant to Evans Pass. A slip on Reynolds Valley Road in Banks Peninsula temporarily blocked the road about 1km from the bottom, isolating a couple of farm properties. State Highway 87 between Outram and Middlemarch was closed due to heavy snow, while a low avalanche hazard warning is in effect for State Highway 94 between Te Anau and Milford. Chains were also required on SH94 between Lumsden and Te Anau. The extreme weather affected interisland ferry sailings across the Cook Strait. Toll New Zealand communications manager Sue Foley said overnight delays between two and three hours were experienced, but no sailings had been cancelled.

NORTH KOREA

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated Jul 26, states: The Red Cross in

Beijing says floods and landslides from recent heavy rains have killed at least 121 people in North Korea and left another 127 missing. "The death toll in five counties, three of which are in Pyongyang, is 121 people," said Hope Weiner, an official with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies based in Beijing. "The number of people missing in those counties is 127. That is as of today. Those are the latest figures." The information is based on government statistics provided by North Korea's Red Cross to the International Red Cross, Ms Weiner said. The casualties occurred after a typhoon struck North Korea in mid-July, causing extensive flooding and landslides in four provinces, the International Red Cross said later in a statement. Nearly 17,000 families have been left homeless in the provinces of South Pyongan, North Hwanghae, Kangwon and South Hamgyong, it said. The rain totally or partially destroyed 23,400 houses and caused extensive damage to crops and infrastructure.

TROPICAL STORM "BERYL"

Miami, Jul 20 — Tropical Storm "Beryl" weakened today as it headed toward Cape Cod and other popular northeastern U.S. vacation areas. "Beryl's" sustained winds dropped to 50 mph as it moved across the Atlantic on a path expected to take it near or over Nantucket Island and southeastern Cape Cod later today or early on tomorrow. The storm's most likely path, according to the U.S. National Hurricane Centre in Miami, would take it over the Canadian province of Nova Scotia tomorrow, but it was expected to weaken further and lose its tropical characteristics. At 2300 hrs (0300, UTC, Jul 21), "Beryl's" centre was about 100 miles south-west of Nantucket, Massachusetts, and the system was moving northeast at about 13 mph, the hurricane centre said. A tropical storm warning, meaning residents could see storm conditions within 24 hours, was in effect from Plymouth to Woods Hole, Massachusetts, including the summer vacation destinations of Cape Cod, Nantucket Island and Martha's Vineyard. A tropical storm watch, meaning storm conditions were possible within 36 hours, was also imposed from west of Woods Hole to New Haven, Connecticut, and eastern Long Island. Rainfall from "Beryl" was already affecting Long Island and the New England coast, the hurricane centre said. — Reuters.

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Tropical Storm "Beryl" made landfall on Nantucket early today, bringing a steady, driving rain to coastal Massachusetts. The storm's centre hit around 0300 hrs, said Jack Beven, hurricane specialist with the National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Officials said the region was faring well. The Coast Guard said they hadn't heard of problems, and no power outages were reported. Forecasters extended a tropical storm

warning extended from Plymouth south and west to Woods Hole, including Cape Cod, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, according to the National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Forecasters said the storm may bring in tides of one to three feet above normal. At 0200 hrs, the storm had maximum sustained winds of about 50 mph. The storm was expected to weaken over the next 24 hours and lose tropical characteristics by tomorrow morning. The Coast Guard was monitoring about 50 commercial fishing vessels still on the New England waters near the storm's path late yesterday night, but had no reports of vessels in trouble, said Chief Petty Officer Scott Carr. Seas were expected to build to 15 feet southeast of Cape Cod and Nantucket overnight. Blake said forecasters expect heavy rainfall of about two inches on the south-east Massachusetts coast and islands through midday today, with tropical storm force winds over 40 mph. A tropical storm watch was issued for eastern Long Island and parts of Connecticut, but was discontinued early today as the storm moved north-east.

London, Jul 21 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Beryl": The tropical storm warning is discontinued for the coast of Massachusetts, including Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. At 0900, UTC, today, the centre was located near lat 41.7N, long 69.7W. The position is accurate to within 20 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the north-east or 40 degs at 18 knots. The estimated minimum central pressure is 1001 mb. The maximum sustained winds are: 45 knots with gusts to 55 knots. The radius of 34 knot winds: 75 nautical miles in the north-east, south-east and south-west quadrants and zero nautical miles in the north-west quadrant. At 0600, UTC, Jul 22, the centre is predicted to be near lat 46.7N, long 61.5W, with maximum winds of 35 knots and gusts to 45 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "BILIS"

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The Beijing-Guangzhou railway has to be closed again due to the sinking of ground sill. All trains heading south have been forced to stop. Those heading north are ordered to slow down. The railway reopened only the day before yesterday after being closed for three days due to the damage done by Typhoon "Bilis", but the flood continues to erode the ground wood, leading to the sinking of the ground sill. A spokesman from Guangzhou Rail says only trains heading south are effected, those heading north can still travel at lower speeds.

TROPICAL STORM "DANIEL"

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: A tropical storm

that formed in the Pacific Ocean last week could pass through Hawaii by the weekend, but forecasters say it is losing speed and strength. Tropical Storm "Daniel" is on course to cross the Big Island and then pass just south of the rest of the state. It had sustained winds today of 50 mph with gusts to 65 mph. By the time it reaches Hawaii as the state's first storm of the season, it likely will have winds of about 40 mph, gusting to 50 mph, forecasters said. As much as 10 inches of rain could fall in some parts of the state starting early Friday (Jul 28), said National Weather Service forecaster Norman Hiu. If a rain band crosses Oahu, Honolulu could get between four and six inches.

London, Jul 26 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Daniel" was located near lat 16.3N, long 142.9W. The position is accurate to within 30 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the west, or 270 degs, at two knots. The maximum sustained winds are 30 knots with gusts to 40 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Jul 27: The centre is predicted to be near lat 16.7N, long 145.3W, dissipating with maximum winds of 25 knots, gusting to 35 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "EMILIA"

London, July 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Emilia" was located near lat 18.4N, long 109.7W. The position is accurate to within 25 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the west-northwest, or 285 degs, at eight knots. The maximum sustained winds are 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, July 25: The centre is predicted to be near lat 19.8N, long 112.3W, with maximum winds of 80 knots, gusting to 100 knots.

London, July 25 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Emilia" was located near lat 20.2N, long 111W. The position is accurate to within 25 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the northwest, or 320 degs, at six knots. The maximum sustained winds are 45 knots with gusts to 55 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, July 26: The centre is predicted to be near lat 22.9N, long 113.3W, with maximum winds of 45 knots, gusting to 55 knots.

London, Jul 26 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: The National Hurricane Center, Miami, Florida, reported today: At 0900, UTC, the Government of Mexico has extended the tropical storm warning along the west coast of Baja California to Punta Eugenia and has discontinued the tropical storm warning east of Cabo San Lucas. At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical storm "Emilia" was located near lat 24.0N, long 112.5W. The position is accurate to within 20 nautical miles. The present movement

is toward the north-west or 325 degs, at 10 knots. The maximum sustained winds are 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Jul 27: The centre is predicted to be near lat 26.3N, long 115.0W, with maximum winds of 40 knots, gusting to 50 knots.

London, Jul 27 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0900, UTC, today, the centre of tropical depression "Emilia" was located near lat 26.4N, long 116.7W. The position is accurate to within 25 nautical miles. The present movement is toward the west-northwest or 300 degs, at 11 knots. The estimated central pressure is 1003 mb. The maximum sustained winds are 30 knots with gusts to 40 knots. At 0600, UTC, Jul 28, the centre is predicted to be near lat 27.5N, long 120.5W, with maximum winds of 20 knots, gusting to 25 knots.

TYPHOON "CHANCHU"

Manila, Jul 21 — Test results of acidity levels inside the storage tanks of the sunken tank barge *Billy Star* revealed that the sulphuric acid cargo has been diluted to the extent that it is no longer a threat to the environment. Salvage divers inspecting the wreck discovered that the four stainless steel storage tanks containing the sulphuric acid were filled with seawater. Acidity tests conducted on the seawater inside the storage tanks revealed a near normal reading of 5.6 ph. Normal acidity level is between six and nine ph. Acidity tests in the surrounding waters also revealed the same results. There was likewise no sign of fish kill and discolouration of surrounding waters allaying fears that waters around Keppel Batangas yard had been contaminated. Experts theorised that seawater seeped into the seams of the storage tanks. Over time, the increasing seawater volume displaced the sulphuric acid and had a neutralising effect on the remaining acid. The sulphuric acid escaping into the surrounding waters was likewise neutralised by seawater. "Nature, in effect, did the job for us," said Hideya Waste Management vice-president Danny David. Hideya was originally contracted to perform the on-site treatment of the sulphuric acid. Salvors will now try to refloat the *Billy Star* once a 200 ton capacity sheerleg crane is contracted. — Lloyd'sList Correspondent.

Manila, Jul 26 — Harbor Star Shipping Services reported that it has found a local floating crane with the capacity to lift the sunken tank barge *Billy Star*. "We are currently negotiating lease rates for the crane," Harbor Star president Rodrigo Bella said. The salvage company needs a crane with a lifting capacity of between 170 and 200 tons to raise *Billy Star*. Refloating of *Billy Star* cannot be undertaken until the arrival of the crane. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

TYPHOON "EWINIAR"

Busan, Jul 21 — A total of 28 containers stowed on deck of container

carrier *Zim Japan* fell overboard. Thirteen containers have been recovered by local salvors todate and efforts to locate/recover the remaining 15 containers are ongoing. *Zim Japan* sailed from Busan on Jul 12, bound for Vancouver, after completion of cargo operations. A total of 171 containers stowed on deck of container carrier *Easline Tianjin* fell overboard. Twenty containers have been recovered by local salvors todate and efforts to locate/recover the remaining 151 containers are ongoing. *Easline Tianjin* is still at Busan, with no departure schedule fixed. A total of 11 containers stowed on deck of container carrier *Wan Hai 213* fell overboard. None have been recovered todate and efforts to locate/recover them are ongoing. *Wan Hai 213* sailed from Kwangyang on Jul 11, bound for Busan, after completion of cargo operations. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

TYPHOON "KAEMI"

London, Jul 21 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Kaemi" has been upgraded to a typhoon. At 0600, UTC, today, the centre as located near lat 15.8N, long 132.8E and is moving west-northwest at 13 knots. The maximum sustained winds are 70 knots near the centre. At 0600, UTC, Jul 22, the centre is predicted to be near lat 18.1N, long 129.2E, with maximum sustained winds of 75 knots near the centre.

London, Jul 22 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Kaemi" was located near Lat 16.8N, long 128.9E. Movement over past six hour 290 deg, at eight knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on location by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 90 knots, gusting to 110 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 40 nautical miles north semi-circle, 30 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 60 nautical miles north semi-circle, 50 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 130 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 110 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 100 nautical miles south-west quadrant and 120 nautical miles north-west quadrant. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Jul 23: Position Lat 18.8N, long 125.7E. Maximum sustained winds 90 knots, gusting to 110 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 40 nautical miles north semi-circle, 30 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 60 nautical miles north semi-circle, 55 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 130 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 110 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 100 nautical miles south-west quadrant and 120 nautical miles north-west quadrant.

Taipei, Jul 24 — Intermittent downpours soaked Taiwan's capital today as typhoon "Kaemi" headed towards the island after the storm shut down financial markets, offices and schools in the Philippines. As of 0700, UTC, the centre of the storm

was about 190 km southeast of Taiwan and moving northwest at 16 kph, with sustained winds of up to 137 kph and maximum gusts of 173 kph, Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau said. The typhoon is expected to hit China's southeastern coastal province of Fujian on Wednesday (Jul 26), Xinhua news agency said, adding that "Kaemi" could cause more problems in already flood-affected areas of the country. In Taiwan's capital Taipei, the government urged people to move cars from parking areas along the main rivers running through the city in case of flooding and television footage showed people stocking up on food. Central and southeastern coastal areas were likely to see intensifying rain and wind from this afternoon, said the bureau, with the typhoon expected to make landfall tomorrow. Key ports of Kaohsiung in the south and Keelung in the north were still operating normally, but airlines had begun cancelling domestic flights. The storm closed Philippine financial markets in Manila today as it moved across waters off the northern Batanes province, bringing heavy rain. Schools in five provinces on the main island of Luzon and in the capital were also forced to shut. In China, authorities ordered ships to return to port and warned people to be on alert for flooding. — Reuters.

Taipei, Jul 25 — A typhoon triggered floods and knocked out power in some areas of Taiwan today, forcing schools and offices to close, and then moved towards China, where hundreds of thousands were evacuated. As of 0700, UTC, the centre of typhoon "Kaemi" was just off China's eastern coast moving northwest at 17 kph towards the city of Xiamen, officials said. The storm had sustained winds as high as 108 kph and maximum gusts of 137 kph, according to Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau. About 435,000 people were evacuated in China as rain and winds built up along the coast, China's official Xinhua news agency said. It said 3,000 armed police were ready to begin rescue and relief work. Authorities have prepared 130 vans, 80 rescue speedboats, 3,500 life vests and 2,000 life buoys, Xinhua reported. In Taiwan, six people, including a seven-year-old girl, were injured, mostly on roads in the eastern part of the island, while about 475 people had been evacuated, government officials said. "Kaemi" closed schools and offices in five cities and counties in southeastern Taiwan and the outlying island of Penghu. Some schools were also closed in central Taiwan. More than 40 domestic flights were cancelled in southeastern Taiwan and in Kaohsiung, some international flights were suspended, airport officials said. Transport officials said Kaohsiung harbour, Taiwan's largest, was closed, although the Keelung port in the north remained open. The typhoon also knocked out power to about 30,000 customers, mostly in the east coast county of Hualien, said Taiwan Power Co. spokesman Clint Chou. In China, authorities in coastal

Fujian and Guangdong provinces ordered ships to return to port and warned local officials to monitor major rivers, reservoirs and dams already swollen from heavy rains in the wake of tropical storm "Bilis". Xinhua said "Kaemi" could cause more problems in already flood-affected areas of the country. Chinese authorities expect the storm to reach Fujian and Zhejiang provinces tomorrow, and an emergency alert took effect there this morning, Xinhua reported. — Reuters.

London, July 25 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Kaemi" was located near lat 24.1N, long 118.7E. Movement over past six hour 305 deg, at 10 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, based on location by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots, gusting to 65 knots, dissipating as a significant tropical cyclone over water. Forecast for 0600, UTC, July 26: Position lat 26.7N, long 115.5E. Maximum sustained winds 30 knots, gusting to 40 knots, dissipated as a significant tropical cyclone over land.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Kaemi" has reached China's south-eastern coast, bringing with it heavy rain and high winds. It made landfall at Jinjiang in Fujian province, and is set to cross a region still recovering from the effects of an earlier storm. The Chinese authorities have evacuated people ahead of the new typhoon. More than 430,000 people have been moved from their homes in Fujian, while another 80,000 have been evacuated in Zhejiang province. Around 44,000 fishing boats were ordered to seek shelter and 3,000 police were on hand to assist with rescue operations, Xinhua news agency reported.

Beijing, Jul 26 — Typhoon "Kaemi" weakened into a tropical depression today as it lashed south China with heavy rains and strong winds and forced the evacuation of over half a million people. Two people were killed in the southern Guangdong province, the state television said. More than 600,000 residents in the southeastern province of Fujian were evacuated as "Kaemi" made landfall at typhoon strength yesterday, after injuring six people, causing floods and cutting off power in parts of Taiwan. In Fujian and neighbouring Guangdong, boats were moored in ports as fishermen sought shelter from the storm, Xinhua news agency said. Dozens of flights in Fujian's capital Fuzhou and main port city Xiamen were cancelled yesterday. Today, downpours brought by "Kaemi" soaked large parts of Fujian, Guangdong and another four provinces in China's south and east, which would continue to see rainfall in the next three days, the country's Central Meteorological Office said. Authorities have warned of possible landslides and are closely watching already swollen dams and overflowing rivers in the wake of tropical storm "Bilis", urging the relocation of those living near rocky mountain slopes and in valleys,

Xinhua said. "Kaemi" had been expected to move northwest to hit the provinces of Zhejiang, Anhui and financial hub Shanghai, which has ordered the reinforcing of billboards, electricity poles and scaffolding. Shanghai was overcast today and rain and wind is expected in the evening, but "Kaemi"'s brunt seemed to be moving westward to bring heavy rain to Jiangxi province, northern Guangdong and the southern part of Hunan province, the Meteorological Office said. In the Philippines, where "Kaemi" originated on the Pacific, nearly 31,000 people were still unable to return to their homes in Manila and northern areas of the country due to flooding from "Kaemi". — Reuters.

London, July 26 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Kaemi" was located near lat 24.6N, long 117.5E. Movement over past six hours 295 deg, at 12 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, based on location by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots, gusting to 55 knots, dissipating as a significant tropical cyclone over land. Forecast for 0001, UTC, July 27: Position lat 25.8N, long 115.7E. Maximum sustained winds 30 knots, gusting to 40 knots, dissipated as a significant tropical cyclone over land.

Beijing, Jul 27 — Floods and landslides triggered by Typhoon "Kaemi" have killed at least 18 people and left more than 60 missing in southern China, state media said today. "Kaemi" weakened into a tropical depression after sweeping across China's southeastern coast on Tuesday (Jul 25), but the downpours it brought soaked at least four provinces, all of which were damaged by tropical storm "Bilis". Six people were killed when flash floods along a mountainside hit a military barracks in the eastern province of Jiangxi, Xinhua news agency said. President Hu Jintao has ordered that "the utmost effort" be made to search for 38 officers, soldiers and family members who are still missing, it added. Two girls — aged nine and six — died in southern Guangdong province after their house collapsed under a landslide. Both incidents occurred in the early hours of yesterday when the victims were probably sleeping, Xinhua said. Ten people were killed, mostly by flood waters, in Jiangxi's mountainous south, Xinhua said. About 20 were missing and roads and communications have been disrupted in some areas. "The deaths were mainly reported in Shangyou county, which has also suffered many house collapses. Rivers and dams there are overflowing at alarming levels," an official at the provincial flood control office told Reuters. Relief workers have been distributing blankets, clothing and instant noodles to the tens of thousands of villagers affected in the county, Xinhua said. In neighbouring Hunan province, hundreds of thousands of people were relocated as streets in the city of

Chenzhou, where "Bilis" killed almost 200 this month, were flooded and at least three were missing, Xinhua said. A section of the Beijing-Zhuhai highway in southern Hunan, cut for days by "Bilis", was submerged by water again. In Fujian province, where "Kaemi" made landfall after sweeping through Taiwan, a levee collapsed, threatening the lives of more than 20,000 people in six villages, Xinhua said, adding that emergency repair work was under way. Rain was likely to continue in the provinces until Friday, China's Central Meteorological Office said on its Web site. The Meteorological Office said "Kaemi" carried less rain and would move away faster than "Bilis", which killed 612 people and left 208 missing in southern China since it struck the country on July 14, mostly in the provinces of Hunan, Guangdong and Fujian. — Reuters.

TYPHOON "KAEMI"

London, July 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: At 0600, UTC, today, the centre of typhoon "Kaemi" was located near lat 21.8N, long 122.9E. Movement over past six hour 300 deg, at 10 knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on location by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots, gusting to 90 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, July 25: Position lat 23.6N, long 119.3E. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots, gusting to 80 knots.

UNITED STATES

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of thousands of people in different parts of America continue to be affected by power outages as temperatures soar to record highs. In California, where temperatures reached 50C (122F) in places, the heat was blamed for at least four deaths. The power grid was unable to cope with the increased demand for electricity, leading to widespread cuts. In Missouri and New York, thousands are still without power after high temperatures and storms last week. Yesterday, power was restored to thousands of homes in the borough of Queens, but more than 5,000 customers (an estimated 20,000 people) remained without electricity for a seventh day. It is not clear when power will be fully restored there. Meanwhile, utility workers in St Louis, Missouri, struggled to resume services to hundreds of thousands of homes left without electricity after violent storms last week. Ameren, the owner of the local power company, said 250,000 homes and businesses were still without electricity yesterday. More than 20 heat-related deaths were reported last week across the United States. While temperatures have since cooled in some parts of the country, California is bracing itself for more hot weather this week. The "LA Times" reports that the Los Angeles area is experiencing one of its worst heatwaves on record. Forecasters say high temperatures will continue until

at least mid-week, prompting fears that there may be more power outages as people return to work after the weekend. Yesterday evening, more than 100,000 homes remained without electricity in the state.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated Jul 24, states: Scorching heat pushed California's electricity supply to the brink today as authorities investigated at least 29 possible heat-related deaths, most in the Central Valley, where temperatures reached 115 degrees over the weekend. An eighth day of intense heat pushed electricity usage to a peak of 50,270 megawatts - a record for California but still short of the 52,000 megawatts experts had predicted for the day. Meanwhile, utilities in the St. Louis area and New York City laboured to restore power to hundreds of thousands whose electricity was knocked out by storms and equipment failures. Hoping to avoid involuntary rolling blackouts in California, the California Independent System Operator (ISO) declared a "Stage 2" emergency, which calls for businesses to reduce their power usage in exchange for lower rates. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger also directed state agencies to reduce electricity use by 25 percent by turning off unnecessary equipment; he urged local and municipal governments and universities to do the same. The reductions appeared to work. By 1700 hrs, ISO officials said the threat of rolling blackouts had passed. Tens of thousands of homes and businesses lost power in California yesterday because of heavy electricity use and high temperatures that caused transformers and other equipment to overheat. Some 50,000 customers in northern California still were without electricity, including 35,000 in San Jose and the East Bay, according to Pacific Gas & Electric. About 20,000 Los Angeles customers also remained without electricity. In Arizona, authorities said heat may have contributed to the deaths of as many as four other men in the Phoenix area over the weekend. The deaths came during a three-day streak of record-breaking temperatures in Phoenix. The temperature soared to 114 degrees yesterday, breaking the record of 112 set in 1906. The temperature hit 114 again today. Meanwhile, in St. Louis, more than 200,000 homes and businesses were still without electricity today, down from the more than a half-million that were left "in the dark" last week after strong storms knocked down power lines. Four deaths in the region were attributed to the storms or the heat. Ameren Corp. Vice President Richard Mark said today that 90 percent of those without power could have the lights back on by tomorrow, with the rest expected to be back up by Wednesday (Jul 26). The power company has been running TV commercials asking people to be patient. Some 4,000 utility workers from as far away as Arizona are restoring power around the clock, but

many customers expressed frustration. In New York, thousands of residents in the borough of Queens were facing their second week without power because of a blackout that at one point affected 25,000 customers. By this evening, electricity had been restored to all but about 2,000, Consolidated Edison said. The blackout has devastated the inventories of ice cream parlors, bodegas, groceries, butcher shops, fish mongers and restaurants. City officials estimated that at least 750 businesses were affected and said the losses could reach into the millions of dollars.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated today, states: California experienced a 10th straight day of 100-degree heat today, with the number of suspected heat-related deaths climbing to at least 56. Some communities faced their third day without electricity as the record-breaking temperatures strained transmission equipment. "We're asking people for one more day of conservation," said Gregg Fishman, the California Independent System Operator, which manages the state's power grid. In the Central Valley, where most of the deaths have occurred, temperatures hovered between 100 and 105 degrees today, down from 110 to 115 in previous days. Cooler weather was not expected until tomorrow, when the system was forecast to move east into Nevada and Utah. Coroners in 14 counties were investigating deaths that appeared heat-related. Most of the victims were elderly. The heat has been hard on livestock as well, causing thousands of deaths and a dip in milk production in California, the country's No.1 dairy state, according to agriculture officials. In the San Joaquin Valley, a combination of the searing heat, bigger dairies and fewer plants to properly dispose of dead animals created a backlog of rotting carcasses. Tens of thousands of customers in Northern and Southern California had no electricity. About 1,700 San Jose customers faced their third day without power. Pacific Gas & Electric spokesman Brian Swanson said most outages were caused by equipment failures and not a shortage of electricity. In Los Angeles, about 26,000 people were in the dark this evening as crews worked to fix hundreds of blown transformers, said a spokeswoman for the city Department of Water and Power. The state's power consumption peaked this afternoon at 49,762 megawatts, short of the record 50,270 megawatts set yesterday. In St. Louis, about 145,000 homes and businesses still without power after two storms last week knocked out electricity to nearly 600,000 customers. A utility worker was electrocuted today and another was injured while trying to restore power. Many grew frustrated with Ameren Corp.'s handling of the crisis. The Rev. Al Sharpton led a protest Tuesday in front of Ameren headquarters, saying the company was not doing enough to help poor and

working-class people. The civil rights activist also called for a 10 percent rate cut to help the community recover. In New York City, a blackout that left about 100,000 people without electricity during some of the hottest days of the year all but ended today, allowing residents who endured nine days of rotting food and sweltering homes to begin getting back to normal. Consolidated Edison said fewer than 500 people remained without electricity in the borough of Queens as of this evening. Meanwhile, the first lawsuit against the utility over the blackout emerged today, and the City Council said it would hold its first hearing on the outages Thursday (Jul 27). Utility spokesman Chris Olert declined to comment on the suit. In the suit, Sandra Boyle said her two-year-old child became ill and she couldn't get in touch with a doctor for hours because she had no power. She is seeking unspecified damages for emotional and physical distress.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated Jul 26, states: Temperatures made a barely noticeable dip on the 11th day of 100-degree heat today, but the stress on California's electric grid eased slightly, as did the possibility of rolling blackouts. The number of deaths believed to be caused by the heat rose sharply, reaching 83. The heat and the increased power use blew out thousands of transformers, and farmers reported animals dying in the fields, and fruit and nuts scorched on the vine. Hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses lost power at the peak, but just a few thousand remained without power today. However, the widespread failures have left little opportunity for routine maintenance. The coroner's office in Fresno County, which has reported 20 deaths as likely heat-caused, had bodies stacked two to a gurney because there were so many. Coroner Lorelee Cervantes said that her staff was doing autopsies non-stop and that decomposition of some bodies made the cause of death difficult to determine. Nineteen deaths were reported in neighbouring Stanislaus County, and seven in Sacramento County. In all, 18 counties reported heat-related deaths. Other states also attributed deaths to heat - Oklahoma said two people whose homes lacked air conditioners were the latest victims there, bringing to 10 the number of heat-related deaths since July 13. An aching slow cooling trend will cause highs to drop a few degrees by the weekend in California, according to National Weather Service forecaster Jim Dudley. "We're seeing some relief coming, if you can call 105 relief," he said. Power grid managers are waiting for the cooler weather to begin assessing the damage and do maintenance, said Gregg Fishman, a spokesman for the grid manager, Independent System Operator. "We have some balancing to do to allow as much maintenance as we can while we're in a cooling spell," he said. The company is now focusing on restoring power to those still without it. More

than 1,100 Pacific Gas and Electric Co. transformers were damaged by the heat, leading to about 6,000 outages affecting over 1.2 million customers since Friday (Jul 21), company spokesman Brian Swanson said. The St. Louis area and the New York City borough of Queens slowly were returning to normal more than a week after weather-related power blackouts. About 51,000 customers around St. Louis still were without electricity, according to Ameren Corp. Two storms, on July 19 and July 21, had knocked out power to more than a half-million customers. A sixth death was blamed on the storms and blackout; the man died yesterday in a fire that started while he was working on a power generator in East St. Louis, Ill. In Queens, the last of the 100,000 people affected by a 10-day outage had their power restored, but the Consolidated Edison utility still warned of lower voltage and occasional outages. California's inland valleys have registered some of the highest temperatures during the heat wave, with highs of around 115 and lows of about 90 degrees. Experts estimate as much as two percent of California's dairy herd may die. The surviving cattle are producing less milk, farmers said. Dairy production in the state - No. 1 in the nation - was down as much as 15 percent in the past few days, according to the California Farm Bureau. Though this is peak harvest time for fruits like peaches and nectarines, the heat stops the ripening process. Tomatoes being grown for salsa, ketchup and pasta sauces were found split in the fields, which will make them hard to sell. However, farmers say it is too early to say what percentage of crops may be lost. The heat might mean a slightly smaller harvest of wine grapes, said Karen Ross, president of the California Association of Winegrape Growers. When temperatures rise, vines stop growing to conserve water.

VIETNAM

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Twelve people were killed or missing feared dead after heavy rains triggered flash floods and mudslides that destroyed 400 houses in mountainous northern Vietnam. Four people died in Bac Kan province and five had been missing since early Tuesday and were feared drowned, said provincial flood control official Ha Kim Oanh, who warned more floods were expected in the coming weeks. Two more people were killed in Vinh Phuc province, and one in Lang Son province bordering China, said an official of the National Flood and Storm Control Committee in the capital Hanoi. Hundreds of villagers had been evacuated in remote Bac Kan where heavy rains have swollen rivers and cut roads, said an official in Bac Kan town, 125km north of Hanoi. The national government has warned 16 northern provinces to prepare for more severe storms ahead after weather services predicted higher than usual rainfall in coming months.

Political & Civil Unrest



AFGHANISTAN

Kandahar, Afghanistan, Jul 23 — Eight people were killed, including two Canadian soldiers, and dozens wounded in a double suicide attack in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar yesterday, authorities said. The attacks came just over a week before a NATO-led mission takes over security in the south at a time of the bloodiest phase of an insurgency since coalition forces overthrew the Taliban in 2001. Maj. Scott Lundy, a spokesman for the US-led force, said a suicide car bomber rammed a coalition convoy in the city, a Taliban stronghold, just before sunset. Canada said two of its soldiers were killed and eight others wounded as their convoy made its way back to Kandahar Airfield. "Five of the wounded soldiers have already been released from the hospital while the other three are in good condition with non life-threatening injuries," the department said in a release. As Afghan authorities tried to push back onlookers and deal with casualties from the blast, police said a second suicide bomber blew himself up, killing five Afghans. Police said at least one civilian was also killed in the first attack. Kandahar's governor, Assadullah Khalid, said the bodies of two Afghans and at least 30 wounded locals were taken to the city's main hospital. Both suicide bombers were also killed in the attacks. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the first attack. — Reuters.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated today, states: US-led forces in Afghanistan say they have killed seven suspected insurgents in southern Helmand province. The seven insurgents were killed in two separate incidents in Garmser district yesterday after attacking coalition soldiers, the US-led force said. Its statement added that there had been no coalition casualties.

Kandahar, Afghanistan, Jul 26 — Twenty-five militants were killed by US-led forces in Afghanistan, officials said today, as the US military prepares to hand over security responsibilities in the violent south. Fifteen Taliban insurgents were killed during heavy bombing in three villages in Musa Qala of southern Helmand province last night, Helmand's police chief Nabi Mullahkhalid said. "The bombing lasted for several hours," he said. "As a result 15 Taliban were killed and 20 others wounded." Several people who said they were from Musa Qala said that most of those killed in the attack were civilians. A Taliban spokesman, Qari Mohammad Yousuf, said only one militant was killed in the raid and the rest were civilians. In Zabul province, police said a civilian construction

worker was killed and three others wounded today in a Taliban ambush. — Reuters.

COLOMBIA

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: The Colombian army today searched for 13 doctors kidnapped by rebels as they conducted a medical mission in a southern province near the Ecuador border, authorities said. The doctors had been on a 10-day mission to remote communities and Indian tribes in Putumayo province when they were abducted yesterday by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, authorities said. "This group is breaking the protocol of the Geneva Convention which forbids ... targeting doctors and paramedics," the Ministry of Social Protection said in a statement. The doctors had been scheduled to return to their hospital in the Putumayo capital of Mocoa today.

Bogota, Jul 26 — Marxist rebels today killed two Colombian soldiers and two workers trying to repair the country's second-biggest pipeline, which was shut down earlier this week after guerrilla attacks, army sources told Reuters. The 780 km Cano Limon-Covenas pipeline stopped pumping oil on Sunday (Jul 23) after a series of attacks by leftist rebels, army sources said. The pipeline pumps oil extracted from the Cano Limon field that is operated by U.S.-based Occidental Petroleum. The oilfield's output, which is around 60,000 barrels of oil per day, is also shared with Colombia's state oil company Ecopetrol and Spain's Repsol YPF. An Ecopetrol official said oil production and exports were not affected by the shutdown and the pipeline will be fully repaired in a couple of days. — Reuters.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: One of the last obstacles to peaceful elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo on Sunday (Jul 30) has been removed. The three main militia groups in the troubled eastern province of Ituri have agreed to lay down arms. In return for an amnesty from prosecution for crimes against the state, the coalition of three rebel groups known as the MRC, has agreed to facilitate the free movement of people on polling day and eventually become part of the Congolese army. The deal between rebels and the government, it is hoped, will allow tens of thousands of people to vote. However, European Union observers are warning of logistical problems ahead of the first fully democratic polls for 40 years. In a statement yesterday, the EU observer mission urged the Electoral Commission to publish the full list of 50,000 polling stations. Some of the locations are not on a clear list and if voters and observers do not know where they are it makes fraud much easier, the EU mission says. The mission is also worried about the deployment at polling stations of other

security forces in addition to police, and has expressed concerns about how the vote count will work. In addition, it is not yet known exactly how routes will be secured to enable people to vote. Many of the main presidential candidates are due back in the capital, Kinshasa, today as their campaigns draw to a close. Incumbent President Joseph Kabila is the favourite to win the presidential vote in elections described by EU envoy Aldo Ajello as crucial for the continent. "Congo is not (just) a country, it's almost a continent - it has borders with nine African countries. And peace in Congo means peace in all central Africa. So I think the importance of these elections is evident to everybody," he said.

EGYPT

Cairo, Jul 26 — Egyptian leftists clashed in Cairo today with plainclothes security men who thwarted attempts to hold a big anti-Israeli demonstration in solidarity with Lebanese and Palestinians. A few hundred people were able to reach central Tahrir Square with Lebanese and Palestinian flags and posters supporting Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah of the guerrilla group Hizbollah, which is fighting Israeli troops in south Lebanon. However, a mass deployment of thousands of riot police prevented many others from attending, witnesses said. On the front lines protesters skirmished with security men armed with short truncheons and several people were injured. — Reuters.

GEORGIA

Tbilisi, Jul 26 — Georgian forces captured most of a strategic gorge today, despite Russian fears the assault on the rebellious stronghold could re-ignite conflict in the neighbouring breakaway region of Abkhazia. The clashes in Kodori gorge — a gateway to the Black Sea province of Abkhazia which has enjoyed de facto independence since 1993 — alarmed Abkhaz separatists, suspicious of any government military build-up in the area. At least two servicemen were slightly wounded, said President Mikhail Saakashvili's chief of staff. Russia, its peacekeepers in the area on high alert, warned its ex-Soviet neighbour against violating the ceasefire that ended the conflict in which Abkhazia broke away. Part of the gorge is controlled by Abkhaz separatists, while the northern part had been under government control through the local Monadire (Hunter) militia leader Emzar Kvitsiani. However, on Sunday (Jul 23), Kvitsiani declared he would no longer obey Tbilisi. Troops now face up to 70 heavily armed Kvitsiani supporters, Chief of Staff Georgy Arveladze said. "The anti-criminal operation is going on with great success," said Arveladze, adding that almost all villages in the gorge had been taken. "Kvitsiani has gone into hiding, but police units have blocked all roads and are trying not to let him escape into Abkhazia." The Kodori fighting comes days after Russia and Georgia traded accusations

over a second rebel region of South Ossetia, where a number of bombing incidents prompted Moscow to warn Tbilisi against any attempt to regain control. — Reuters.

HAITI

London, Jun 21 — A press report, dated Jun 20, states: Fierce clashes have broken out between UN troops and gunmen in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, reports say. According to witnesses, between two and six people were killed in the clashes in the north of the city. UN officials were unable to confirm the deaths. Reports describe gangs going on the rampage and kidnappings taking place. An election in February brought some stability to Haiti but correspondents say there are signs the security situation could be deteriorating again. UN spokesman David Wilmhurst said peacekeepers had come under attack and returned fire. The unrest follows a gang massacre in the Martissant neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince earlier this month, in which about 20 people died.

INDIA

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Indian police say they have killed eight Maoist rebels, including a top leader, during a clash in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. Police said senior leader Burra Chinnaiah, also known as Madhav, was among those killed in the shootout. The clash broke out after police raided a rebel meeting in Prakasham district. Maoist rebels are active in about a third of India's states. In some parts of the country, they run a virtual parallel administration. Andhra Pradesh police chief Swaranjit Sen said the incident happened in Yerragantapalem area when the police raided a meeting of some 80 rebels that was being held in a forested area. Five women were among those killed. Chinnaiah had taken over as state secretary of the CPI Maoist rebel group in Andhra Pradesh last October. The police said the rebel leader was a key planner in the murder of former state interior minister A Madhav Reddy in 2000. They say he was also responsible for an attempt on the life of former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu in 2003. The police recovered some arms from the scene of the incident.

IRAQ

Baghdad, Jul 21 — Iraqi authorities extended a daytime curfew on Baghdad today in an apparent effort to prevent violence after one of the bloodiest weeks this year. State television announced that a four-hour 1100-1500 hrs traffic ban currently in force every Friday to curb car bomb attacks on mosques during weekly prayers would be extended to 1900 hrs. An overnight curfew operates daily from 2100 to 0600 hrs. U.S. data showed attacks on security forces in Baghdad has averaged 34 a day over several days, compared to an average of 24 in recent months. Baghdad

morgue alone has taken in 1,000 bodies this month. — Reuters.

Basra, Jul 21 — British forces in the Iraqi city of Basra seized two "significant" suspects wanted for killings, kidnappings and guerrilla attacks in separate overnight raids, a military spokesman said today. No shots were fired in the operations that were part of a campaign of arrests that would continue in the mainly Shi'ite southern city, Major Charlie Burbridge said. He declined to identify those arrested but described them as less senior than a militant seized on Sunday (Jul 16) in a raid in which a British soldier was killed. That man was identified by Shi'ite militant sources as Sajad Abu Aya, the commander of the Mehdi Army Shi'ite militia in Basra province, where much of Iraq's oil wealth is concentrated. British commanders say they are targeting elements of the Mehdi Army that they believe are out of the control of their nominal leader, radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, whose movement is a significant part of the national unity government. Sadr has made no protest over the arrest of several senior figures described by comrades as Mehdi Army commanders, lending credence to the view that some are not following his orders. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Jul 23 — A car bomb killed 36 civilians and wounded 72 in a Shi'ite district of east Baghdad today, a day after an inaugural meeting to start reconciling Iraq's rival factions produced little tangible result. Another car bomb exploded in the northern city of Kirkuk, killing at least 15 people near a court house, police and witnesses said. The Baghdad bomb, near a police station and open-air market, was in the Sadr City neighbourhood, a poor area that is a stronghold of Shi'ite militias. Three weeks ago, a car bomb at a market in the same area killed about 60 people, one of a number of very bloody incidents this month that have raised fears of civil war. Some witnesses spoke of a suicide bomber driving a minivan but police said the cause was unclear. There were also heavy clashes in the district overnight between the Mehdi Army of radical Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and US-led forces, residents and police said. The US military said in a statement that Iraqi troops raided a site in mainly Shi'ite eastern Baghdad targeting two people believed to be involved in "death squads" — a term usually applied to Shi'ite militia activity. It said eight people were detained after a battle involving machine-guns and grenades and that two Iraqi hostages were freed. Two other people were arrested in a similar raid in north-western Baghdad, the military said. The US military said its troops, backed by Iraqi troops and police, killed 15 fighters in a three-hour gunbattle near a Shi'ite mosque at Mussayab, south of Baghdad. Two US soldiers were also killed around Baghdad yesterday. — Reuters.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: U.S. and Iraqi

soldiers captured six members of an alleged "death squad" in Baghdad today. Attacks elsewhere in Iraq left at least 34 people dead - including an American soldier. U.S. troops killed a local al-Qaida in Iraq leader and captured three of his followers during a raid near Beiji in northern Iraq, the U.S. military said. In Washington, President Bush met Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki at the White House to discuss the deteriorating security situation. Representatives of Iraq's ethnic and sectarian groups met in Cairo, Egypt, to discuss ways to reconcile. Some 30 delegates representing Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds and other smaller minorities participated in discussions sponsored by the Cairo-based Arab League. The talks are intended to prepare for a national reconciliation conference in Baghdad next month. In Baghdad, the U.S. command said a soldier assigned to the 43rd Military Police Brigade was killed in action today north of Baghdad - the 34th death this month among U.S. service members in Iraq. A U.S. military statement said six suspected members of an alleged "death squad," including a cell leader, were detained during a pre-dawn raid on four buildings in Baghdad. It was not clear whether they are Sunnis or Shiites. In the raid near Beiji in northern Iraq, a U.S. statement said the al-Qaida in Iraq suspect fled when he saw the U.S. soldiers coming but the troops fired and killed him. The three other suspects were detained without incident and weapons and ammunition were found, the statement said. In the town of Dujail, about 50 miles north of Baghdad, gunmen attacked a police checkpoint. In north Baghdad, a sport utility vehicle belonging to a private security company was ambushed, killing eight people. In other violence, the head of Saddam Hussein's "tribe" was killed yesterday when gunmen attacked a meeting in the office of a prominent sheik in Tikrit. Mahmoud Ali Hussein al-Nida, head of the Baijat "tribe", died following the attack at about 1930 hrs, yesterday. The gunmen also killed a lawyer and wounded sheik Mizahim al-Mustafa, police Lt. Ahmed Asaad said. Two other civilians caught in the crossfire also were killed, Asaad said. In northeastern Baghdad, a suicide car bomber attacked a joint Iraqi-U.S. checkpoint, killing three. At least 11 bullet-riddled bodies were found dumped in two Baghdad neighborhoods, police said. A police lieutenant colonel and a police major were slain in separate drive-by shootings in the northern city of Mosul, police there reported. Gunmen also shot dead an employee of the Iraqi customs service in Mosul. Five bodies were found in the streets of Muqdadiah, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, in Diyala province.

Baghdad, Jul 27 — A car bomb and several mortars ripped through central Baghdad today, killing at least 25 people and wounding 45 others, police sources said. The car bomb, in the shopping district of Karrada,

heavily damaged a building, raising fears the death toll could rise, said Ministry of Interior sources. The mortars landed nearby. The U.S. military may boost its force in Iraq by delaying the scheduled departure of some troops involved in routine rotations, officials said in Washington yesterday. As has been done periodically during the three-year-old war, the military would temporarily increase the size of the force by extending the overlap between arriving units and those leaving. One defence official said the idea would be to create "a momentary overlap of at least a brigade" — meaning roughly 3,500 troops. Another official said the increase might be "from the low 3,000s to the high 4,000s." — Reuters.

ISRAEL-LEBANON

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Israel is continuing its Lebanon military offensive, with war planes bombing more than 40 targets, mainly in southern parts of Beirut, today. Troops are also fighting Hezbollah inside southern Lebanon, and Israel has told people to leave the area, warning of a possible large-scale incursion. Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said the number of Lebanese killed in the 10 days of violence is now more than 330. In an interview with CNN he said that more than 55 bridges had been destroyed, and that Israeli forces had also targeted ambulances and medical convoys. Bombed-out roads and bridges are hampering aid efforts and yesterday the UN warned that the humanitarian crisis was worsening by the hour. About 500,000 people are believed to have been internally displaced by the conflict. Thirty-four Israelis have been killed in the fighting, including 15 civilians killed by rockets fired by Hezbollah into Israel. At least three rockets hit Israel's third largest city, Haifa, today, the first in nearly 24-hours. On the ground Israeli forces are pushing further into Lebanon in an attempt apparently to flush out well-camouflaged Hezbollah positions. The Israeli army continues to describe these operations as "pin-point", involving fewer than a thousand troops. However, Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz has warned that Israel is prepared to launch a full-scale ground operation if necessary, saying "we have no intention of conquering Lebanon but... we will do it without thinking twice." And today the Israeli military ordered several battalions - each comprising up 1,000 troops - of reservists to report for duty. In an interview with Arabic TV network al-Jazeera, Hezbollah's Sheikh Nasrallah said his group would give up the captured Israeli soldiers only in a prisoner exchange. "Even the whole universe would not be able to secure the release of the two Israeli soldiers unless there are indirect negotiations and an exchange of prisoners," he said. Sheikh Nasrallah also said that the Israeli attacks had not dented Hezbollah's capabilities,

saying: "Hezbollah has so far remained steadfast." Israel says it has bombed a bunker used by Mr Nasrallah and has destroyed much of the militia's missile stocks. Meanwhile, the evacuation of foreign nationals from Lebanon continues, with thousands more expected to arrive in Cyprus today. About 1,300 British nationals have arrived in Cyprus after being evacuated on a Royal Navy ship, *HMS Bulwark*. And about 1,000 US citizens have also disembarked there from the USS Nashville after being rescued by US marines yesterday.

Beirut, Jul 23 — Israel unleashed more air strikes on Lebanon and Hizbollah fired rockets at Haifa today as a senior UN official demanded a halt to the violence to allow aid to reach civilians. Israeli warplanes bombed targets in Beirut and east and south Lebanon, killing at least three civilians. Half a dozen blasts echoed across the Lebanese capital as jets roared over the Shi'ite southern suburbs in the early hours. Air strikes also destroyed a Shi'ite religious centre in the southern port city of Sidon, wounding four people. A dozen Israeli air strikes in the eastern Bekaa Valley destroyed three factories, a house and several bridges, killing at least one civilian and wounding seven. Two other civilians died in a raid on a southern village, security sources said. Two people were killed and 14 wounded when Hizbollah rockets slammed into apartments and vehicles in Haifa, Israel's third largest city, which lies 35 km south of the border. Jan Egeland, the UN emergency relief co-ordinator, appealed for a halt to the bloodshed. "We are setting up a major relief operation but the violence has to stop and the enormous bombardment that we have seen here with one block after another being levelled has to stop," he said as he toured Beirut's shattered Haret Hreik district. UN and other relief agencies have been asking for humanitarian aid corridors to be opened up. "We need safe access. So far Israel is not giving us access," Egeland said. Israel's 12-day-old onslaught against Hizbollah in Lebanon has claimed 359 lives, mostly civilians, and forced half a million people to flee their homes. Others are trapped by fighting, especially in southern border villages. More than 1,000 Hizbollah rockets have killed 17 Israeli civilians, prompting between a third to a half of all residents in northern Israel to move to escape the bombardment, officials said. Twenty Israeli soldiers have also been killed in the conflict, launched when Hizbollah guerrillas seized two soldiers and killed eight in a cross-border raid on Jul 12. An Israeli general said soldiers yesterday took control of Maroun al-Ras, a hilltop border village, where six Israeli commandos were killed in heavy fighting last week. Israel's Army Radio said more troops were expected to move into southern Lebanon today to widen the army's ground operations

against Hizbollah close to the frontier. Cyprus was braced to take in nearly 10,000 more foreign evacuees from Lebanon and the United Nations urged donors to send aid swiftly to the far greater numbers of people left behind. About 14 crowded vessels were expected at the Cypriot ports of Larnaca and Limassol over the next day or so, part of an evacuation involving dozens of countries.— Reuters.

Ashdod, Jul 18 — Israeli navy blockade on Lebanon: The Israeli Navy is conducting Naval blockade on Lebanon. The area between lat 34 38N to lat 33 06N and between long 34 00E and the Lebanese coast was declared "Closed Area" as of 0400, UTC, Jul 13. Israeli Navy vessels are not permitting entry or exit from this area. As a result of the damage caused by a missile that was fired from the Lebanese coast towards general cargo *Moon Light* near the coast of Lebanon, all vessels sailing in the east Mediterranean Sea are warned not to go within the range of 50 miles from the coast of Lebanon. This message is valid from 0500, UTC, Jul 15. Due to a rocket barrage that hit the city of Haifa and the port of Haifa, the Home Front Command ordered the Haifa port authority on Sunday (Jul 16) to evacuate all cargo vessels from the port until further notice. Due to the situation and the fear that Hezbollah will continue targeting Haifa, the Home Front Command ordered Israelis in the Haifa region to stay in bomb shelters and secured areas. Customs offices were ordered to close, along with other government offices. Local customs brokers as well as freight forwarders are unable to operate due to staff shortage. Following the evacuation of Haifa, vessels have been routed to the port of Ashdod. Ashdod port has started preparing for large-scale absorption of cargo and passenger vessels. The management has made sure to reinforce manpower and recruit additional employees in order to enable continuous work on the docks. The Israeli National Federation of International Freight Forwarders & Customs Clearing Agents declared yesterday that for the time being, the customs brokerage industry, as well as the freight forwarding sector in Haifa, will be unable to provide its regular daily service. The federation management said that together with the Israeli Customs Authority, they doing their best to find ways to ease the situation and release as many shipments as possible. South of Haifa, normal life is not substantially affected. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated today, states: US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has arrived in the Lebanese capital, Beirut, at the start of a Middle East tour to discuss the regional crisis. She is expected to meet Lebanese leaders, including PM Fouad Siniora. Ms Rice will later head to Israel to meet Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. Heavy fighting is reported in southern Lebanon, amid further

Israeli air strikes and Hezbollah rocket attacks into northern Israel. At least 372 Lebanese, the great majority civilians, have been killed during the conflict, which is now into its 13th day. Thirty-seven Israelis have been killed, about half of them civilians. In a policy shift, Mr Olmert has said Israel will be prepared to accept a European peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon providing it is robust and has a strong mandate. In Brussels, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana said several European countries were willing to contribute to such a force, which he said could be deployed under the umbrella of the UN Security Council. Overnight, there were some 40 Israeli air strikes on targets in Lebanon, while about 90 Hezbollah rockets have landed in Israel over the past 24 hours, according to the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF). An estimated 600,000 Lebanese have now been forced out of their homes. Fighting between Israeli soldiers and Lebanese fighters continues on the ground. Having captured the village of Maroun al-Ras in the very south of Lebanon, Israeli forces appear to be pushing northwards, and fierce clashes are reported around the nearby town of Bint Jbeil. An Israeli helicopter crashed in northern Israel today. An army spokeswoman blamed technical problems, but Hezbollah reportedly claimed it had been shot down. Arabic news channel al-Jazeera has reported that an Israeli soldier has been killed in fighting, but there is no confirmation by the Israelis. Despite the diplomatic moves, Israeli Brig Gen Alon Friedman told Israel Army Radio the ground operation would probably go on for another 10 days. Correspondents say the US is unlikely to push for an immediate end to the Israeli assault, and one aim of Ms Rice's trip is to assess how much time is needed for Israel to make a significant impact on Hezbollah capability.

Beirut, Jul 25 — Vessels are not allowed to enter the territorial waters without the special permission from the Israeli Navy. Beirut port is empty except for the laid-up vessels. One vessel, container carrier *Kormoran*, Panama flag, is in the territorial waters waiting for instructions and permission to sail. Naval vessels and helicopters are allowed to evacuate foreigners holding American, Australian, French and British passports. Passenger vessels *Orient Queen*, *Princesa Mariza* and *Serenade* are plying between Larnaca and Beirut under the American Embassy cover evacuating their own people. All the ports radars from South to North have been hit by Israel. They are now totally dead. Only one vessel, roll on, roll off *Ierapetra I* is plying between Larnaca and Beirut bringing Red Cross donations for refugees. The situation is the same in the other Lebanese ports. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: Israeli warships fired shots across the bows of ferry *AkcaKoca* (517 gt, built 1994), which

was being used to evacuate Australian nationals from Lebanon and delayed the vessel for several hours, it was revealed by Turkish Transport Minister Binali Yildirim today. There were no passengers on board the vessel when the shots were fired late last night, Yildirim said. "The vessel was stopped by Israeli gunboats last night while en route from Beirut to Famagusta," he said. "It was held until morning. The problem was resolved through diplomatic channels by the Australian embassy and the Turkish foreign and transport ministries." According to Turkish diplomatic sources, the incident may have resulted from a lack of co-ordination between Israeli, Turkish and Australian authorities over the routes to be used for the evacuation of foreigners from Lebanon.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated today, states: At least nine people have been killed in Israeli air raids in the east of Gaza City, including a three-year old girl, according to medical sources. Several members of the governing Hamas organisation were also amongst those killed, said a Hamas spokesman. The raids come amid Israeli efforts to release a soldier captured by Palestinian militants last month. More than 120 Palestinians and one Israeli soldier have been killed since Israel began rescue efforts. The attacks on Gaza have been overshadowed by fierce clashes between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon. In one strike, offices used by Hamas in Gaza City were also targeted. About 30 Israeli tanks moved back into northern Gaza early today, backed by the air strikes. Local sources reported that the tanks stopped short of Gaza City and the refugee camp of Jabalya. Palestinian witnesses said one person was killed and 10 wounded after a tank shell exploded near a group of people. Thirty-seven people were hurt in the air raids, including 16 in critical condition, AP news agency quoted Dr Joma Saka, a spokesman for Gaza City's Shifa Hospital, as saying.

Gaza, Jul 26 — Israeli forces killed 23 Palestinians in fighting across the Gaza Strip today, including at least 11 militants, medics and witnesses said. Today's death toll in Gaza was the highest in two weeks. Among those killed were eight loyalists of the governing Hamas militant group and one gunman from the kindred Islamic Jihad faction, which is also dedicated to destroying Israel. Another two gunmen were killed later, one from the militant group Popular Resistance Committees. The other gunman's affiliation was not clear. Medics said two girls, one an infant, died when a tank shell struck a house near Jabalya, a Hamas stronghold. A three-year-old girl was killed earlier in the day. Nearly 75 people were wounded. Six were in a critical condition. One person was hurt in a rocket strike against an Israeli border village, the army said. At least 30 Israeli tanks and other armoured vehicles pushed

more than 2 km into the northern Gaza Strip overnight. The troops clashed with militants on the edge of the northern Gaza town of Jabalya through the day. Buzzing overhead, unmanned drone aircraft fired missiles at militants on the streets, witnesses said. Israeli sniper fire accounted for at least one of the dead militants. Israel also bombed offices used by a Hamas-led force in Gaza City. — Reuters.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Israel has shown no signs of easing its military campaign against Lebanon with air strikes on a Lebanese army base and a radio relay station, north of Beirut. Fighting is continuing around the town of Bint Jbail, in south Lebanon, where nine Israel soldiers died yesterday. Reports from Tyre say more bombing of nearby areas, combined with last night's raid on apartments right inside the city, has sparked an exodus. An Israeli military official has warned he expects "several weeks" of fighting. The Israeli Cabinet is due to meet today to decide whether to expand the military operation further. "I assume it will continue for several more weeks, and in a number of weeks we will be able to [declare] a victory," Maj Gen Udi Adam, the chief of Israel's northern command, said. The progress of Israeli ground troops has not been as fast as expected as they battle through the difficult terrain of southern Lebanon. They still have not managed to capture the Hezbollah stronghold of Bint Jbeil, where they have suffered their worst losses and Hezbollah's ability to inflict damage appears undiminished - yesterday they fired some 150 rockets into Israel, more than on any other day of the conflict. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's plan is to push Hezbollah back from border areas, in order to prevent them continuing to fire rockets into Israeli territory, and establishing a "security zone" in the south will take many weeks. Meanwhile, Australia has said it will withdraw a contingent of 12 UN peacekeepers, following the death of four UN observers in an Israeli air strike, whom the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, says were "apparently deliberately targeted". Australia's Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, speaking at the Asean conference in Malaysia, said sending an international peacekeeping force into southern Lebanon while the conflict continues would amount to a "suicide mission". Foreign ministers attending crisis talks on the violence in Rome yesterday agreed on the need for an international peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, but not on when and how such a force should be deployed. The talks also failed to produce the immediate call for a ceasefire that many had hoped for. Israel's Justice Minister Haim said the failure to call for a ceasefire has in effect given Israel the green light to continue its campaign: "Yesterday in Rome we have in effect obtained the authorisation to continue our operations until Hezbollah is no longer

present in southern Lebanon," Mr Ramon told Israeli army radio. The meeting was overshadowed by outcry over the deaths of the UN observers, whom UN officials say had asked Israel repeatedly to stop attacking them before they were killed by an Israeli war plane. At least 405 Lebanese and 51 Israelis have died in violence since Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid on July 12. Despite the escalating death toll public opinion in Israel remains solidly behind the government. A poll published by Israel's Maariv daily newspaper today, has 82% saying they back the continuing offensive and the number saying "Israel's reaction to Hezbollah attacks is justified" remained unchanged at 95%. The poll was conducted before the death of nine Israeli soldiers in southern Lebanon yesterday - the biggest loss of Israeli life in a single incident so far during the conflict.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Israel pounded suspected Hezbollah positions across Lebanon today, extending its air campaign a day after suffering its highest one-day casualty toll since its military offensive began. An Israeli Cabinet minister said lack of agreement on a cease-fire gave Israel permission to press deeper to wipe out the Islamic militant group. The airstrikes also hit a Lebanese army base and a radio relay station and destroyed several roads. The series of raids in northern, eastern and southern Lebanon, which killed at least one person and wounded others, came as the Israeli government was to meet today to decide whether to broaden the offensive, now in its third week, against Hezbollah guerrillas. A high-level Mideast conference in Rome yesterday ended in disagreement, with most European leaders urging an immediate cease-fire, but the US willing to give Israel more time to punish the guerrilla group. Justice Minister Haim Ramon, who is close to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, said Israel interprets this as a green light to continue its offensive. "We received yesterday at the Rome conference permission from the world to continue the operation, this war, until Hezbollah won't be located in Lebanon and until it is disarmed," he told Israel Army Radio. "Everyone understands that a victory for Hezbollah is a victory for world terror." The call for greater firepower came after Israel suffered its heaviest casualty toll in a single battle in the 16-day campaign, with nine soldiers killed and 25 wounded in house-to-house fighting in Hezbollah strongholds in Lebanon yesterday. Israeli army commanders have said troops would seize additional towns and villages in south Lebanon to force out Hezbollah gunmen. In the first apparent ramification of the killing of four UN observers by an Israeli airstrike earlier this week, Australia decided to withdraw 12 unarmed logistics specialists who had been sent

to southern Lebanon to help with evacuation efforts. It also said it would not support a new international force in southern Lebanon unless it had the strength and will to disarm Hezbollah, Prime Minister John Howard said today. Meanwhile, Israeli warplanes struck a road in Rayak, a few miles from the Lebanese-Syrian border early today, wounding two soldiers and a civilian, Lebanese officials said. Israeli fighter jets also carried out more than 30 bombing runs in Iqlim al Tuffah, a highland region where Hezbollah is believed to have offices and bases, the officials and witnesses said. The airstrikes, which targeted mostly deserted houses allegedly belonging to Hezbollah activists and roads linking villages in the region, caused a number of casualties, the officials said. Ambulances and civil defence crews were unable to reach the targeted areas because of intense bombardment, witnesses said. A Lebanese policeman was killed when an Israeli missile struck his car as he drove in the eastern city of Zahle, security officials said. At least 423 other people have been killed in Lebanon since the offensive began, including 376 civilians reported by the Health Ministry and security officials. The deaths of the soldiers yesterday brought to 51 the number of Israelis killed in the campaign, according to the military. Israeli aircraft also attacked targets near the southern market town of Nabatiyeh, wounding at least three people. A missile hit a four-story building belonging to the Shiite Muslim Amal Movement in the southern port city of Tyre, a day after a strike in the city devastated an empty seven-story building where Hezbollah's top commander in the south has offices. That strike wounded 13 people, including six children, nearby. However, a Hezbollah official in Tyre denied Israeli reports that the group's commander in south Lebanon, Sheik Nabil Kaouk, was killed. The privately owned Lebanese Broadcasting Corp. TV station said Israeli jets struck the army base at Aamchit, 30 miles north of the Lebanese capital near the coast, and knocked down a relay tower in an adjacent field of antennas belonging to Radio Liban. Israeli military officials said the target of the airstrike was a radar station used by Hezbollah for attacks like the one on an Israeli missile boat on Jul 14 that killed four Israeli soldiers. Israel said yesterday that it intended to damage Hezbollah and establish a "security zone" that would be free of the guerrillas and extend more than a mile into Lebanon from the Israeli border. Such a zone would prevent Hezbollah from carrying out more cross-border raids. Israel said it would maintain such a zone, with firepower or other means, until the arrival of an international force with muscle to be deployed in a wider swath of southern Lebanon — as opposed to the UN force already there that has failed to prevent the violence.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Tourism industries in the north of Israel have lost NIS 65 million (approximately US\$14.7 million), according to the Galilee Tourism Forum. Hotels, guesthouses and tourist attractions in the north emptied almost entirely of visitors with the onset of the current confrontation on the Lebanese border. According to forum statistics, the tourism industry in the north lost NIS 36 million (US\$8.14 million) in the first week of the crisis, and another NIS 27 million (US\$6.11 million) in week two, as a result of cancellations. The slight drop in losses derives from the fact that, in the first week of the crisis, hotels and guesthouses had already invested in the expected arrival of guests. In the second week, most anticipated the cancellations and limited their preparations, with many of them even stopping operations entirely. The forum estimates that, in this third week, the industry will lose an additional NIS 26 million (US\$5.87 million), and, if the fighting continues, will lose the same sum in week four. In total, tourist businesses are expecting a monthly loss of NIS 123 million (US\$27.8 million) for the month of July. "The Ministry of Finance is waging a war of attrition against residents of the north," said Meir Levy, chairman of the Galilee Tourism Forum, in reference to political foot-dragging on the decision to compensate northern businessmen for damages accrued as a result of the conflict. "The government is avoiding a declaration of an emergency situation in order to avoid its responsibility to pay salaries, cover damages and provide advance payments to businesses. Government clerks are executing an exhausting negotiation process in order to prevent decent compensation to businesses harmed by the explosions in the north. It is not possible for the north to absorb the cost of the entire war," he said. The ministry of finance is conducting dialogues with various trade unions regarding compensation of business hurt by the conflict because, currently, the government has not declared an emergency situation in the north and, as such, is not required to cover damages. Up to now, clerks from the ministry have promised that workers will receive full salaries, but it is still unclear if the government will subsidise this completely or will pass on the burden to businesses and workers (through reduced holidays, for example). Likewise, it has not yet been decided whether business owners will receive compensation on other expenses, such as a rent and property tax. The government torpedoed, yesterday, a bill drafted by MK Ami Ayalon that would obligate the government to compensate businesses. Concurrently, the Knesset postponed by a week the approval of a bill drafted by Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor Eli Yishai, which would forbid firing workers in the north for as long as the conflict continues.

IVORY COAST

Abidjan, Jul 26 — Militiamen in war-divided Ivory Coast gave up their guns today, starting a long-delayed disarmament process and marking a rare advance in a faltering peace process aimed at holding elections by the end of October. The first 150 of 2,000 armed fighters who fought alongside government troops in a brief 2002-03 civil war against rebels who seized the West African state's northern half turned over machine-guns and cannons to UN troops who enforce a ceasefire. It was the first formal mass disarmament since the war. "It has started. They brought arms in a pick-up truck and gave them to the UN," said an official from the reconciliation government's disarmament programme who watched the handover in Guiglo, a militia stronghold town near the Liberian border. — Reuters.

NEPAL

Kathmandu, Jul 27 — Nepal's Maoist rebels say they will extend a three-month-old ceasefire with the government that is due to end this week, but accused the ruling coalition of failing to push the pace of peace talks. "The extension of the ceasefire will be announced before it expires," said Krishna Bahadur Mahara, who has led the rebels in talks with the multi-party government which came to power after King Gyanendra gave up his absolute rule in April. The truce is due to end at midnight (1815, UTC) tomorrow. The comments by Mahara came as a United Nations mission was due to arrive in the Nepali capital later today to assess ways of helping the peace process. The Maoists, who backed violent street protests that forced the monarch to cede power, are demanding an immediate dissolution of the reinstated parliament and the formation of an interim government that would include them. The interim government would then supervise elections next year for a special assembly to decide the future political set up of the Himalayan nation — including the fate of the monarchy. But Mahara said the government was dragging its feet on implementing the political roadmap agreed in November last year between the rebels and the seven-party alliance. "Political parties in the government are divided between those who want progressive changes in the country and those who want the status quo," Mahara said. "Real democracy has not come to Nepal yet as political parties made a compromise with the king," he added, referring to government leaders who favour a ceremonial role for the king. The government wants the rebels to give up arms first before an interim government is formed and has asked the United Nations to "decommission" the 36,000-strong rebel fighters. "We can't accept this," Mahara said, adding the rebels would not disarm unless the state army did so. "Our army and the government army must be dissolved and a new national army created drawing forces from both sides

according to a decision by the (planned) constituent assembly." Until then, the rebels have said they are prepared to keep their arms and fighters in camps under U.N. supervision. — Reuters.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Jul 23 — Maoist rebels attacked the Philippine Coast Guard station at the Matnog ferry port in Sorsogon province in the southern portion of Luzon island yesterday morning, killing the station commander and wounding a petty officer. The assault on the Coast Guard station was part of a simultaneous attack by 200 rebels on the coastal town located on the tip of Bicol peninsula. At around 0400 hrs, one group of rebels on board two motorboats attacked the Coast Guard station. Another group, riding commandeered buses, struck the Matnog Police Station located beside the Coast Guard office. Petty Officer 1 Armando Pinolio, Coast Guard commander in Matnog, and Petty Officer 3 Nelson Diazo were the only ones manning the station when attacked. The rest of the detachment was doing a safety inspection of vessels moored at the pier. Despite being outnumbered, the two officers repulsed the first assault. "They fought back bravely," Philippine Coast Guard spokesperson Lt Cdr Coyne said, referring to Petty Officer 1 Pinolio, who was killed, and Petty Officer 3 Diazo, who was wounded. The station was close to being overrun when a platoon of Army soldiers waiting for a ride at the ferry terminal reinforced the two officers. The fierce firefight continued until 0700 hrs when the rebels withdrew. Three rebels were killed in the encounter. Normal operations at the ferry terminal resumed at noon, the Coast Guard said. Matnog is a key domestic passenger ferry port being the southernmost harbour in the main island of Luzon. Military officials said that the rebels did not intend to occupy Matnog but to inflict heavy casualties on the military and to show that it still had the ability to attack major towns and facilities. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Manila, Jul 25 — Six Muslim rebels were killed and five others, including an eight-year-old boy, were wounded when two rival factions fought a series of skirmishes in the southern Philippines, a senior police official said today. Superintendent Lumala Gunting, police chief of Maguindanao province on the southern island of Mindanao, said fierce fighting between two rival groups of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) broke out during the weekend. "The military and local police forces were not involved in the violence," Gunting told reporters, adding the fighting was caused by a long-standing grudge between leaders of two local groups of MILF rebels. "Based on our investigation, the fighting began on July 19 when the group of Commander Talio Macalpan ambushed the forces of Commander

Kayob Pual. The clashes ended late yesterday after a boy was hit by a stray bullet.” Eid Kabalu, a spokesman of the MILF, said the two sides had agreed to a truce late yesterday after Malaysia-led peace monitors promised to act as a go-between to end their differences. The MILF, with the help of Malaysia, has been negotiating with Manila since 1997 to halt a conflict that has killed more than 120,000 and held back development of the south. Hopes of a peace deal by the end of the year have faded after talks between the rebels and the government of the mainly Catholic Philippines stalled in May over the size of a proposed homeland for Muslims in the south. The rebels’ chief peace negotiator told Reuters on Saturday (Jul 22) the MILF was awaiting a new proposal from Manila to widen the area designated as Muslim ancestral lands and did not expect to resume talks in the next three months. — Reuters.

SOMALIA

Baidoa, Jul 25 — Somalia’s interim government has agreed to new talks with the country’s powerful Islamists, a senior official said today, reviving some hope of a negotiated end to the crisis in country. “We will go to Khartoum without any preconditions,” said Abdurizak Adam, interim President Abdullahi Yusuf’s chief of staff. He was speaking after U.N. special envoy Francois Lonseny Fall met Yusuf in his base in the provincial town of Baidoa and asked the government to attend talks in the Sudanese capital on August 1-2. It was not immediately known if the Islamists would also agree to attend. Talks to prevent a standoff between the two sides from spiralling into war broke down on July 22, when the Islamists pulled out because of a reported incursion into Somalia by Ethiopian troops to defend the fragile interim government. Fall’s visit came a day after the African Union (AU) urged the U.N. Security Council to speed up plans to ease an arms embargo on Somalia to allow foreign peacekeepers to deploy. The appeal followed an agreement by the AU and the east African regional body IGAD to send troops to help secure peace in Somalia. The plan has been repeatedly rejected by the Islamists, who control Mogadishu and a large swathe of southern Somalia after defeating U.S.-backed secular warlords early in June. — Reuters.

SRI LANKA

Colombo, Jul 27 — Sri Lanka’s air force bombed Tamil Tiger rebel territory in the island’s east for a second day today amid a “spat” over water supplies, a military source said, but there were no details on casualties. The government accuses the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of blocking water supplies to farmland in Trincomalee, where the government and rebels both control territory. The LTTE blames the military. The government said it had

launched the air strikes in an effort to help irrigation engineers reach the area. “The military is attacking select targets to clear access to a water tank (reservoir),” a military source told Reuters. The aerial bombardment comes as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres is visiting the island to assess the plight of hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankans displaced by a two-decade civil war. The UNHCR estimates there are about 315,000 long-term internally displaced people in Sri Lanka due to the protracted conflict, 67,000 of whom live in camps and around 247,000 of whom live with relatives and friends. There are another 125,000 Sri Lankan refugees abroad, 68,000 of them in neighbouring India. — Reuters.



CANADA

London, Jul 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Striking track workers on a portion of Canadian National Railway Co.’s U.S. network returned to work today after agreeing with the company to resume contract talks. The about 250 workers on the former Grand Trunk Western, Detroit Toledo & Ironton, and Detroit Toledo & Shore Lines walked off the job yesterday to protest what they said was CN’s refusal to bargain in good faith. The two sides said today they have also agreed to end legal actions filed this week against each other, and have invited a federal mediator to join the negotiations. The company and the workers, who are represented by a unit of the Teamsters union, are at odds over issues such as employee seniority rights, health care payments and the railroad’s contracting out of work. A Teamsters spokesman said the picket lines, which were being honored by other unions, were withdrawn early this morning. CN had been trying to maintain freight service using management crews. The affected tracks were in Michigan, northern Indiana and northwest Ohio. The strike did not involve Canadian National’s other operations in the United States or in Canada.

CREW OF ST. VINCENT & GRENADINES VESSEL AT COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Copenhagen, Jul 21 — Refrigerated general cargo *Alexa* is still in Copenhagen Roads. Vessel has now got a crew but has not yet found an electrician so it will not be sailing until either the weekend or next week. — Lloyd’s Agents.

NORWAY

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A more than one-month-long strike in the Norwegian

oilfield service sector ended when a wage deal was reached late yesterday with the help of a state labour mediator. The Norwegian Oil Industry Association (OLF), which represented the employers, said in a statement that the two-year wage deal covering about 2,650 workers was costly, but that it was glad the strike ended. The strike, by 87 members of the NOPEF oil workers’ union, began on Jun 21 after wage talks failed. It halted two offshore drilling rigs and included oilfield service workers at Baker Hughes unit Baker Oil Tools, Schlumberger, Weatherford, Halliburton, Oceaneering and M-I Swaco. At the end of June, the OLF estimated that the strike was costing it 37,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day in delayed or lost production. NOPEF called the pay deal, which gave workers a raise of about NOK 60,000 including seniority and other extras for the 2006-2007 contract period, the best wage deal on the Norwegian continental shelf. The union had also sought work-time arrangements involving two weeks of work followed by four weeks off, as many other offshore oil workers off Norway already have, but the settlement stipulated that such work-time arrangements should be concluded locally between companies and their employees, the union and OLF said separately on their web sites.

SOUTH KOREA

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Unionised workers at POSCO, the world’s fifth-largest steelmaker, voluntarily ended their strike today. Police said the strike disintegrated after the union leadership lost sway over the striking workers. Some 1,500 construction workers hired by POSCO’s subcontractors had been occupying the company’s headquarters since last Thursday (Jul 13), demanding higher wages and better working conditions. The nine-day sit-in came to an end after the government warned of stern measures against organisers of the demonstration. Yesterday, riot police raided the building and arrested more than 120 union workers, suspected of staging the illegal strike. POSCO said there has been no disruptions to steel production or shipments to customers but had estimated the sit-in cost the company US\$10.5 million each day due to delays in construction projects. The overall damage is expected to reach \$200 million. POSCO held an emergency board meeting today to assess the scope of damage done by the strike and to draw up measures to cope with the situation.

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Hyundai Motor is close to settling a 19-day strike that has crippled its operations in Ulsan. Labour Minister Lee Sang-soo at a meeting of economy-related ministers at Cheong Wa Dae today said he expects industrial action to end by tomorrow morning. The carmaker and

labour resumed negotiations today and are close to a compromise on wages and incentives. Unionists are demanding a 9.1% basic salary raise and incentives amounting to 30% of net profits, while management is offering a 4.4% salary hike and performance-based incentives ranging from 50 to 150%. Hyundai Motor said the union became more willing to participate in negotiations after growing public criticism of the strike last night and the end to the occupation of POSCO headquarters by striking construction workers.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated Jul 24, states: Hyundai Motor Co. of South Korea and its union failed today to reach a strike-ending agreement over a pay raise. That means that the month-old, part-time strike, which has already cost the automaker more than \$1 billion, will most likely extend into August, MarketWatch reported.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Hyundai Motor Co. reached a tentative agreement with its workers to end the second-worst strike in the company's history, which cost it about 1.3 trillion won (\$1.3 billion) in lost production. The company offered a raise of 5.1% in base pay and workers will vote tomorrow on the proposal, the automaker said in a statement. They returned to work today after going on strike for several hours a day since Jun 26. Hyundai Motor's Chairman Chung Mong Koo has been on trial for bribery and embezzlement since Jun 1, delaying labour talks, product development and overseas investment. The partial strike caused the automaker to lose production of 93,882 of its Sonata sedans, Santa Fe sport-utility vehicles and other models. Hyundai Motor shares rose as much as 1.6 percent to 75,400 won, the highest intraday price in two weeks. They traded at 74,400 won as of 1044 hrs in Seoul.

SRI LANKA

London, Jul 20 — A press report, dated today, states: Trade union action at Colombo harbour entered its 10th day today, despite a court ruling to restrain striking workers. The government urged striking union workers belonging to Sri Lanka Ports Authority to resume work despite union allegations that the Colombo District court order issued yesterday is yet to reach them. Officials also dismissed union demands for higher salaries, saying port workers are some of the better paid employees in the public sector. "It is unfair for the workers to ask for bigger salaries when a driver at the port earned around 100,000 rupees last month," cabinet spokesman Anura Priyadarshana Yapa told reporters. "We urge the workers to resume work at the Colombo port and continue the dialogue with relevant government officials for a salary increment," Yapa

said. Sri Lanka Shippers Council President Dayanath Perera says import and export trade have come to a standstill while around 30 ships berthed outside the harbour pose a security risk to the Colombo port. There is also a complete stoppage of work on extended shifts, together with a go-slow that is affecting both exports and imports, with some vessels bypassing the port. "Around ten ships have already bypassed the port," says Perera said, estimating the loss of revenue to be in the region of 20 million rupees each day. Port delays are also not covered by insurance policies, the vessel operators lamented. Tea stocks are piling up in Colombo and exporters are facing severe cashflow problems, which has had an adverse impact on tea auction prices since Jul 18, the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce said.

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Ships using Colombo port have raised cargo tariffs to compensate for losses incurred by an 11-day go-slow by dockers which has held up over 30 vessels, officials said. A "recovery charge" of \$40 will be levied on every 20-foot container (TEU) that goes through Colombo from tomorrow, a statement by shipping line operators said. "Feeder operators in Colombo have experienced severe berth delays and low productivity, with prolonged port stays of around 4-5 days," the shipping line operators said in announcing the surcharge, which will remain effective until the port returns to normal.

Karachi, Jul 22 — Sri Lanka's Colombo Port workers called off their go-slow, on Jul 21, following an assurance by Mangala Samaraweera, Minister for Ports and Aviation, that the salary issue of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) workers would be solved within three months. The Minister informed the unions that employees from 7 to 23 pay scale will be given an allowance of Rs.1, 500 and a Rs. 750 allowance will be given to those in scales 1 to 6 from July, until the recommendations of the National Council for Administration on SLPA workers' salaries are implemented in three months. He will also request the Council to increase the basic salaries of port workers by Rs. 1,500, minister added. Under the present salary structure the minimum salary increase of an SLPA employee will be Rs.3, 250 and the maximum increase, Rs. 9,000. Chandrasiri Mahagama, the General Secretary of Samasta Lanka Podu Sevaka Sangamaya, affiliated to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, told local media the Joint Trade Union Front of the SLPA is satisfied with the agreement they came to with the authorities, but they will resort to trade union action again if the matter is not settled within three months. The go-slow campaign began on July 13 and caused heavy losses to Colombo Port. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Awards & Settlements



ANTI-TRUST SETTLEMENT, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 27 — A press release, dated today, states: Visa International Inc., MasterCard Inc. and banks including Citigroup Inc. have agreed to pay \$336 million to their customers to settle antitrust lawsuits over currency conversion fees charged on foreign transactions. MasterCard will pay \$72.5 million as its share of the settlement, it said in a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Bank of America Corp., JPMorgan Chase & Co's Bank One Corp. and Chase Manhattan Bank, and Washington Mutual Inc. are also defendants in the case. "Settlement was reached following years of litigation, after extensive negotiations and with the assistance of a mediator," the consumers' lawyers, Philadelphia's Berger & Montague and San Diego-based Lerach Coughlin Stoia Geller Rudman & Robbins, said in a statement. The suits involved claims that the credit card companies failed to disclose fees of up to three percent on purchases made in foreign currencies, said Merrill Davidoff, a lawyer for the consumers. The accord is subject to approval by a federal judge in New York. Visa and MasterCard face separate probes by Congress and European antitrust regulators. The defendants deny wrongdoing, MasterCard said.

FRAUDULENT USE OF FUNDS, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: A judge has approved a settlement that requires a church-affiliated investment group to pay at least \$4 million to investors who lost money in risky real estate deals. The financial arm of the Anderson-based Church of God (in Indiana) lost millions of dollars from investors who thought the cash would be used to build churches. The Integrity Advisors Group says they'll first repay investors hit hardest by the loss. The settlement approved by a federal judge follows four years during which the Anderson-based Board of Church Extension was under court supervision. A federal jury in 2004 found that two top officials at the Board of Church Extension defrauded investors of \$85 million. They were both ordered to pay fines.

INFECTION BY BLOOD SUPPLIES, CANADA

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: Canada's government today announced an expanded \$875 million compensation package for thousands of people infected with hepatitis C by tainted blood in the 1980s and 1990s. Canada

has paid about \$1 billion in compensation to people infected with the disease between 1986 and 1990, outraging the estimated 5,500 people who were infected through tainted blood supplies outside those dates. Prime Minister Stephen Harper said the expanded package was for the people not compensated in Canada's initial response to the blood scandal. Up to 20,000 people were infected during the 1980s and 1990s when blood-screening techniques used in the United States could have been employed but were not. Another 1,000 Canadians became infected with HIV and were awarded a compensation package of \$150 million. "Finally, a federal government stood up and said we are going to do something," said David Plater of the Canadian Haemophilia Society. "It was about reaching out to people that had been injured by a system that let them down." Harper said the amount of money each person will get will depend on the severity of their illness. He hoped the money would begin to be paid in early 2007.

PATENT LITIGATION, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated Jul 26, states: Biosite Inc. today said it reached a deal with Roche Holding AG to resolve patent litigation in which Biosite will pay Roche a one-time payment of \$8.5 million. Biosite, which also reported second-quarter results, said under the settlement both companies will request dismissal of complaints in federal courts in Indianapolis and San Diego. Biosite reported a drop in profit to \$8 million or 43 cents per share, compared with \$14 million or 76 cents per share in the prior quarter. Results include \$2.9 million or 10 cents per share related to the Roche licensing payment.

PATENT RIGHTS, JAPAN

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Fujio Masuoka, the inventor of flash memory, a type of memory used in cell phones, digital cameras and other devices, reached a settlement with Toshiba Corp. in the Tokyo District Court today, agreeing to receive 87 million yen in exchange for handing the company patent rights. Masuoka, a professor in Tohoku University's Research Institute of Electrical Communication, had filed three lawsuits demanding 1.1 billion yen in compensation for his inventions. According to the suits, Masuoka invented two types of flash memory semiconductors while he was working for Toshiba in 1980 and 1987: the NOR memory type used in computers and the NAND memory type used in portable memory storage devices such as Compact Flash. Toshiba, which received the patent rights for the inventions, acquired 41 patents based on the inventions in Japan alone. Masuoka claimed that Toshiba had made profits of at least 20 billion yen through sales of patent usage rights to other firms and other related business activities, and

claimed that the value of the invention was 8 billion yen. He had been seeking part of that amount. Toshiba had fought the claims, arguing that Masuoka's invention was merely an "improvement invention," adding that no profits had been made from the patents in question. Flash memory retains the memory it stores even when the power is turned off. It features a semiconductor integrated circuit allowing writing and deletion of data in a single transistor. In addition to being used in personal computers, digital cameras and cell phones, it has a wide range of uses in cars, air conditioners, washing machines and other equipment.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 21 — A state appeals court approved \$82 million in damages today for the family of a woman who was paralyzed when her Ford Explorer rolled over and the roof caved in. The court cut a previous award nearly in half but said large damages were justified by Ford Motor Co.'s reckless conduct in marketing an unsafe product. Benita Buell-Wilson, 46, was injured in January 2002 when she swerved to avoid an obstacle on a freeway near Alpine (San Diego County) and her 1997 sport utility vehicle went out of control and rolled over. The pillars holding up the Explorer's roof crumpled, crushing Buell-Wilson as she hung upside down from her seat belt. An athletic woman who was then completing a master's degree in education, she was left a paraplegic and remains in constant pain, cared for by her husband and children, the Court of Appeal in San Diego said. The court said there was evidence that Ford had known that the Explorer was unstable and prone to rollovers, but that the company had decided not to make changes because that would have cut into profits. There was also evidence that the roof of the vehicle was weak and that Ford could have strengthened the Explorer for about \$20 per vehicle, the court said. A jury awarded Buell-Wilson and her husband \$122 million in compensation and \$246 million in punitive damages. The trial judge found the amounts excessive and reduced the total award to \$150 million. In today's ruling, the appeals court said the reduced award for Buell-Wilson's pain and suffering and lost quality of life was still too large and reflected the original jury's "passion and prejudice." The court reduced the damages to \$18 million, an amount that Buell-Wilson's lawyer had described as fair and reasonable during the trial. Other damages awarded to the couple left their total compensation at \$27.6 million. The court said punitive damages of about twice that amount, \$55 million, were appropriate in light of the "catastrophic nature" of Buell-Wilson's injuries and Ford's "reckless disregard for the safety of others" in its design of the vehicle.

WRONGFUL DEATH, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: The family of an unarmed African art trader who was fatally shot in a chance run-in with police during a warehouse raid will receive \$3 million to settle a wrongful death lawsuit, attorneys said today. The family's federal lawsuit claimed that a police officer violated Ousmane Zongo's civil rights by shooting and killing him in 2003. Police had targeted the Manhattan storage facility, where Zongo repaired art and musical instruments, after determining that it was being used in a CD and DVD pirating operation. Zongo was never linked to the pirating scheme. The lawsuit had sought \$150 million in damages for pain, suffering and loss of income for the 43-year-old immigrant's wife and two small children in the west African nation of Burkina Faso. The shooter, former officer Bryan Conroy, was convicted last year of criminally negligent homicide and sentenced to five years' probation. Conroy testified in 2003 that he was guarding a bin of knockoff CDs when Zongo appeared in a corridor to turn on a light. Conroy, disguised in a postal worker's uniform, pointed his 9mm semiautomatic pistol at Zongo and ordered him to freeze. The officer testified he opened fire only after Zongo charged him and tried to wrestle away his weapon. The victim was hit four times, twice in the back.

Miscellaneous



OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

Bangkok, Jul 25 — Thailand has been struck by its first outbreak of the H5N1 avian influenza virus in eight months, the government said today. "Laboratory test results have confirmed that 31 chicken samples collected from Pichit province had the H5N1 virus," government spokesman Surapon Suebwonglee told a news conference. The northern province is one of seven "red zone" provinces where surveillance was stepped up this month. All chickens in the affected area had been culled and there were no reports of humans infected by the virus, which has killed at least 132 people since late 2003, 14 of them in Thailand. — Reuters.

Bangkok, Jul 26 — A 17-year-old Thai has died of the H5N1 bird flu virus, the country's first death this year as it battles fresh outbreaks of the disease, a senior health official said today. The young man died on Monday (Jul 24) in the northern province of Pichit, where authorities have slaughtered hundreds of birds and restricted poultry movement in a bid to stamp out Thailand's first outbreak in eight months. "The final lab test confirmed that he died of bird

flu," Kamnuan Ungchusak, head of the Health Ministry's epidemiology bureau, said from the hospital where the youth died. He is believed to have caught the virus while helping his father bury dead chickens last week. Including this latest death, bird flu has killed 134 people worldwide since the virus re-emerged in Asia in 2003, the World Health Organisation says. — Reuters.

OUTBREAK OF VIRUS ON BAHAMAS VESSEL

London, Jul 22 — Passenger (cruise) *Infinity* arrived Juneau on Jul 20, has since left and, at 0841, UTC, Jul 22, was in lat 55 0 9.48N, long 131 7 48.9W, course 171.4 deg, speed 20.1 knots.

Fires & Explosions



CHEMICAL FACTORY, LAVRIO, GREECE

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A major fire that broke out yesterday morning at Chyma SA, a solvents and chemicals factory in Lavrio, has been contained. Fire Service personnel remain at the scene, preventing the fire re-igniting. Around 180 firefighters, using 51 vehicles and two special Emergency Task Force Unit (EMAK) vehicles, fought the blaze. Fire Service Chief Andreas Kois advised that from readings taken there was no health risk from air pollution. To date, the cause of the fire, which broke out in one of the factory's tanks, is unknown and investigations are in progress. The factory was completely destroyed, and the majority of its tanks were burned down.

CHURCH, ODESSA, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: The Ector County Sheriff's Office is awaiting reports from various state and federal agencies before ruling what caused a devastating church fire last week in Odessa. The Odessa Fire Department, federal bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, as well as the state fire marshal's office, have reports pending on the Friday (Jul 21) fire at the Highway Temple Assembly of Odessa, 3414 Santa Rosa Drive. Estimated damage for youth hall, parsonage and apartment of the church is currently at about \$1 million, according to a news release from the sheriff's office. The fire happened about 0415 hrs, Friday. No injuries were reported.

FOREST, CANADA

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: While fire crews continue to battle a forest fire threatening homes on Galiano Island, BC, it looks as if Mother Nature will

decide when the fire will be brought under control. About 120 people have been evacuated from their homes on the south end of the island. There are 40 firefighters, three water bombers and four helicopters working on the blaze. In addition, three area fire departments have contributed resources. There are fears the 61-hectare fire could move north up the island, "and obviously there's some intense efforts to make sure that doesn't happen," said CTV's Todd Battis told Newsnet yesterday. Battis said the island is home to about 1,000 permanent residents. The island's ferry service has been restricted to emergency use only. Some of the homes at risk from the flames are worth \$1 million, although none have been lost yet. Radha Fisher, a provincial fire information officer, told The Canadian Press that the Galiano fire is the highest-priority blaze in the province. Eighty new fires began in B.C. on the weekend, a time that saw temperatures reach the 40 degree Celsius range in the southern interior. About 60 of those fires were started by lightning. Most have been restricted to about 4 hectares in size.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A handful of families displaced by a forest fire raging across a large swath of BC's Galiano Island were allowed back into their homes yesterday evening after fire crews were able to contain most of the blaze. "There is going to be a partial lifting of the evacuation order area," Bob Lapham, general manager of planning and protective services for the Capital Region, said to about 100 members of the Gulf Island community yesterday evening. Lapham said the order had been lifted for about 20 of the 75 properties evacuated Sunday (Jul 23) evening, and that the rest of the residents would have to remain away from their homes at least until this afternoon. BC Forest Service incident commander Tim Ewart said some people were allowed back to their homes because crews were able to build a fire break around about 70% of the 61-hectare blaze.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated Jul 26, states: The remaining homeowners forced to evacuate due to a forest fire on BC's Galiano Island can now return home. While 30 people were allowed back yesterday, officials removed the evacuation order this afternoon, permitting the final 100 people to return. The 61-hectare fire hasn't yet been extinguished, and the residents remain on alert in case it flares up again. The fire is burning in the southern end of the 30-km long Galiano Island. Four helicopters, three air tankers and 46 BC Forest Service firefighters are fighting the blaze, along with firefighters from three nearby fire departments that have been sent in to help.

FOREST, INDONESIA

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated Jul 19, states: More than 1,500 firefighters are battling scores of

forest fires raging on Indonesian Borneo and Sumatra island as a haze envelops neighboring Malaysia and Thailand, forestry officials said today. Satellite images showed some 567 "hot spots" from fires and underground heat centres in Riau province on Sumatra as well as Kalimantan in Borneo, a spokesman from Indonesia's forestry ministry Masyud said. He said not all the spots were necessarily still burning as many would have been extinguished already. Riau province on Sumatra island had the highest number of hot spots with 359, he told AFP. As many as 1,560 local firefighters were battling the fires armed with backpack water pumps, shovels and rakes, said Haryanto Wahyu Sukotyo, another forestry minister official. He said most appeared to have been started to clear land in commercial timber or palm oil plantations. Five provinces in Thailand, including the holiday isle of Phuket, have been hit by haze from the fires as has neighbouring Malaysia.

OIL REFINERY, VENEZUELA

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: Fire-damage repairs at Venezuela's largest oil refinery would not affect its oil exports, an official from the state-owned oil company Petroleos de Venezuela SA (PDVSA) announced today. Alejandro Granado, the head of refining at PDVSA, said in a statement that repairs to a crude distillation unit at the Amuay refinery, which could produce 635,000 barrels per day, were in progress and were expected to be finished within 60 days. He noted that most parts of the crude unit were still functioning and the refinery would continue producing fuel for all of its domestic and international clients during the repair period. The damage to the distillation unit was caused by a fire on July, 17.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 22 — A press report, dated today, states: The wildfire that struck near Valentine earlier this week caused almost \$1.3 million in damage to homes and property, preliminary estimates show. Ten homes, valued at nearly \$1.1 million, were destroyed in the fire that started late Sunday afternoon (Jul 16) in a canyon about half-mile north of the city in northern Nebraska. There was another \$80,300 damage to ten homes that were affected by the fire but not destroyed. A total of 21 outbuildings sustained \$84,565 in damages, according to Jim Bunstock of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. The figures were drawn from county assessor's records and are based on the assessed valuation of properties. Damage estimates to public infrastructure or government property is still being collected. Over the following 24 hours, the wildfire raged through the canyon and a city park, igniting houses on the north edge of Valentine before being contained. The temperature at the

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time was a record 113 degrees with only 9% relative humidity. On Thursday (Jul 20) firefighters determined that the fire, which burned about four square miles, was contained, Bunstock said. There are still potential hotspots, so officials probably will not determine that the fire is controlled until next week, he said yesterday afternoon. National guard, called to help with the fire, went home on Thursday along with the two helicopters used to pour water on the fire from the air.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated Jul 24, states: A 6,600-acre wildfire forced the evacuation of more than a hundred homes in rural San Diego County, California, and authorities warned today that two other communities with a total of 1,350 homes could be next. The fire, burning across more than 10 square miles in Cleveland National Forest, was the latest in a series of blazes around California that have put fire crews to work in temperatures of 100 degrees or more. It prompted deputies to order 125 homes evacuated in the town of Alpine starting yesterday. Residents throughout parts of Pine Valley and Lake Morena, where there are about 1,350 homes combined, were told to remain on standby, said sheriff's spokeswoman Susan Plese. Today's high in the Cleveland forest had been expected to be 105 degrees, officials said. This fire season is on course to be the worst year for wildfires this decade, the National Interagency Fire Centre reported today. As of today, wildfires had blackened more than 4.9 million acres, over 7,700 square miles, since the first of this year, the centre reported. That surpassed the 4.8 million acres charred in 2004 and the 10-year average of 2.7 million acres. Off the California coast, a blaze charred 700 acres of brush on Santa Catalina Island, the 76-square-mile recreation spot southwest of Los Angeles with several hotels and homes. It was 40 percent contained, officials said. In the mountains of central Idaho, high temperatures combined with wind to drive three forest fires. Managers worried that one of the fires could threaten federally protected chinook salmon. Crews in central Arizona kept a 3,900-acre wildfire in the Tonto National Forest from reaching two power lines that carry electricity to Phoenix. Unlike California, calmer wind and higher humidity helped crews battling a three-square-mile blaze in western Nevada that had briefly threatened homes east of Carson City and the historic mining town of Virginia City during the weekend. It was 60 percent contained today, and full containment was expected by the end of the day, said fire information officer Dave Olson.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Four firefighters have been injured in the 993-acre Whispering Pines fire. The blaze is now 87% contained, said Dennis Cross, an information officer with the incident management team. And full

containment is expected tomorrow. About 367 firefighters are fighting the blaze, believed to have started about 1900 Saturday (Jul 22) just outside the Joshua Tree National Park entrance and the Black Rock Canyon camping area.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire officials today pleaded for additional manpower to battle a 7,000-acre wildfire near the California-Mexico border as stifling heat continued to bake the state in triple-digit temperatures. The blaze had burned nearly 11 square miles of brush and chaparral in the Cleveland National Forest in southern San Diego County. About 500 firefighters on the scene had contained only about 5% of the fire late yesterday in its third day of burning in the largely unpopulated area. Several lightning-sparked wildfires have scorched the state in recent weeks, straining firefighting resources. Firefighters trying to contain the forest wildfire were awaiting relief from firefighters and equipment tied up elsewhere. "We're really strapped right now," said US Forest Service spokesman Jake Rodriguez. "We're putting in orders for more men and more air support, and we're just waiting for them to be released." The blaze prompted sheriff's deputies to order 125 homes evacuated in the town of Alpine starting on Sunday (Jul 23). Residents throughout parts of Pine Valley and Lake Morena, where there are about 1,350 homes combined, were told to remain on standby, said sheriff's spokeswoman Susan Plese. More than 1,500 homes and 100 commercial properties could be threatened by the fire, but the threat was not immediate, officials said. Fire crews have had to work through 10 straight days of a heat wave that has sent temperatures soaring above 100 degrees through much of the state. At least five firefighters around the state have suffered heat-related illnesses in recent days, officials said. In Joshua Tree National Park, where another blaze had consumed about 1.5 square miles of dense, desert vegetation, temperatures reached 103 deg Fahrenheit yesterday. Farther north, more than 800 firefighters worked to cut lines around an 8,200-acre blaze on ranch land east of San Ardo in south-eastern Monterey County. A lightning strike late Saturday sparked the fire and erratic winds generated by thunderstorms caused it to spread, officials said. Off the coast, a lightning-sparked fire on Santa Catalina Island was 75% contained at 1,094 acres late yesterday, fire Inspector Edward Osorio said. Osorio said firefighters were kept on the line in case the smoulders flare up and burn out of control. "We'd like to release some of the crews to San Diego to help them out, but if we let them go, it won't be easy to get them back to the island," Osorio said. Fire crews in neighbouring Arizona virtually contained a wildfire that had threatened to reach two power lines that feed electricity to the Phoenix

area. By yesterday afternoon, officials declared the fire 95% contained, with full containment expected this morning. Milder temperatures and increasing humidity were helping fire crews beat back three blazes burning in timber stands along the rugged slopes of the central Idaho mountains.

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters today tried to make progress against a 25-square-mile wildfire creeping toward rural communities east of San Diego, while a blaze threatening expensive canyon homes in Los Angeles was contained. Firefighters hoped cooler weather today would help them combat the blaze, which has burned 16,400 acres over four days through Cleveland National Forest east of San Diego. The blaze was about 15% contained, officials said. The fire triggered an evacuation of the small community of Carveacre, and half a dozen other little clusters of homes were on notice they might be next. Officials said homes in and around Lake Morena Dam, Pine Valley, Potrero and Guatay remain threatened. The National Weather Service predicted high temperatures in southern California would dip below triple digits today for the first time in 10 days. Highs were forecast to be in the low 90s Fahrenheit near the San Diego County fire lines. "We're not out of the woods yet, but some of these communities are in a lot better shape than yesterday," US Forest Service spokesman Stanton Florea said. In Los Angeles, a small blaze caused tense moments at midday Tuesday as it raced among expensive homes in Benedict Canyon above Bel Air Estates and Beverly Hills. One home was damaged. Firefighters on pool decks and patios hosed down smoking slopes as helicopters made water drops. With little to no wind to fan it, the blaze was fully contained after scorching about 15 acres. At least five firefighters around the state have suffered heat-related illnesses during the 10-day heat wave, officials said. Elsewhere in California, a blaze ignited by lightning on ranch land east of San Ardo in south-eastern Monterey County grew to 13,000 acres and was 66% contained. In counties northwest of Los Angeles, firefighters were battling two major lightning wildfire clusters in Los Padres National Forest. The 2,200-acre San Rafael complex was burning in rugged terrain near Cuyama. On the southern end of the forest, the 2,203-acre Mount Pinos complex was 52% contained. In Montana, a fire that flared yesterday near Florence threatened a cluster of homes and destroyed one. Residents were asked to evacuate as the blaze grew to 250 acres, officials said.

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated Jul 26, states: California firefighters aided by cooler weather today reported steady progress on a fire that has burned for nearly four days through the Cleveland National Forest east of San Diego. The blaze had burned 16,455 acres, or more than 25 square miles. It triggered

evacuation of the small community of Carveacre, and a half-dozen other little clusters of homes were on notice they might be next. In remote north-central Nevada, a wildfire swept over six firefighters, burning two of them over 50 percent of their bodies, fire officials said today. The six were members of the Eldorado National Forest Hotshot crew based near Placerville, Calif. Preliminary indications blamed wind - possibly a dust devil - for yesterday's incident. In northeastern Oregon, firefighters said 20 buildings were at risk today from a rangeland fire that had covered about 10,000 acres, or 15 square miles, on the southern edge of the Wallowa Mountains. In Oregon's largest blaze, 60,000 acres, or 94 square miles, of rangeland had burned east of Steens Mountain in the southeastern part of the state. Firefighters said they were trying to protect features in a wilderness study area and six threatened structures, and they didn't expect containment until the end of the week. In western Montana, a 500-acre blaze east of Florence had destroyed one mobile home and led to the evacuation of about a dozen other homes, fire officials said Wednesday. Residents of a dozen other homes were warned that they, too, might need to evacuate.



AP-BAL

Karachi, Jul 23 — Pakistan's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is expected to complete an inquiry into the crash of PIA Fokker aircraft F-27 (AP-BAL) within two-and-a-half months. CAA Deputy Director General Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Safdar Khan at a press briefing yesterday disclosed that the cause of the destruction of the aircraft is yet to be determined. All 41 passengers and four crew members were killed in the crash. The Inquiry Board, headed by CAA's Air Commodore Javed Amin, includes a Pakistan Army expert, a PIA representative, two representatives from Rolls Royce and one from the Fokker company. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

C-FSHE

London, Jul 20 — Luscombe 8F C-FSHE was about 150 ft short of the runway on final for landing at Butler-Howroyd field, BC, when the engine lost power at 1532, PDT, Jul 18. Aircraft landed short, struck an embankment and flipped over. Aircraft sustained substantial damage.

C-GHCX

London, Jul 20 — Beech 35 C-GHCS departed Victoria International, BC, for Springbank, Calgary, and shortly after take off GPS stopped working. Ten minutes later other electrical

components stopped working. Returned to Victoria but on landing nose gear began to collapse and pilot elected to go to ground. Nose gear collapsed, damaging propeller and engine cowl at 1122, PDT, Jul 17.

CRASH INTO CARIBBEAN SEA, U.S VIRGIN ISLANDS

See N782T.

CRASH INTO NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

See EC-FJJ.

CRASH INTO SEA OFF SAVONA, ITALY

Genoa, Jul 21 — At approximately 1540 hrs, Jul 21, "AS 355 F1 Equireuil French helicopter", on a flight from Rapallo to Nice, crashed into the sea about two miles off Savona. The three occupants were rescued by the Savona Coast Guard and the local fire brigade helicopter. The wreck of the helicopter was recovered and towed ashore to Savona Sparano shipyard's sheltered warehouse, where it will undergo an inspection by the Authorities. — Lloyd's Agents.

CRASH, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated Jul 22, states: Two people were killed when a light aircraft crashed at an airfield, police have said. The plane crashed close to the runway at Bournemouth Airport at about 1930 BST, today. A Dorset Police spokesman said no buildings or any other people were involved in the incident.

CRASH, CRESPO, IOWA, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Two men remained in critical condition this morning, one day after their Cessna 560 Citation Encore overran a runway and crashed into a north-east Iowa cornfield. The aircraft was en route from Oxford, Miss., to Rochester, Minn. The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating the cause of the crash.

CRASH, GRONBERG MOUNTAIN, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated today, states: The pilot of a single-seater light aircraft that crashed into the Groenberg mountain range near Grabouw, in the Western Cape late yesterday has been found dead in the wreckage of the plane. A rescue team has reached the crash site on foot and has found the pilot's body. A police spokesperson says the front of the plane appears to have caught fire after the crash. Metro emergency service's Dr Wayne Smith said the wreckage was found about 300m from the summit of Groenberg. The light aircraft went missing yesterday on a flight from Worcester to Grabouw. The wreck was spotted from a search aircraft this morning on a mountain. The pilot had apparently been heading for one of two airstrips on neighbouring farms in the area.

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: The cause of an aircraft crash in Grabouw outside Cape Town will be investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority. Martin Kruger, a businessman, was killed when his microlite smashed into the Groenland mountains late on Sunday (Jul 23). No one can explain why the experienced pilot decided to fly from Worcester to Grabouw in such bad weather conditions. The microlite was discovered in the mountains yesterday.

CRASH, KARATAS DISTRICT, ADANA, TURKEY

London, Jul 24 — A press report, dated today, states: A plane used for spraying agricultural insecticides has crashed in the southern Turkish province of Adana. A non-commercial plane crashed in a field in the Karatas district of Adana. Ruhi Nadir, the pilot, was seriously injured in the accident. The pilot was taken to Cukurova University Hospital for treatment. On May 26, the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs had banned the use of planes for spraying insecticides on all products except olives. An investigation is underway to determine if the plane was working illegally at the time of the crash.

CRASH, KHOST AREA, AFGHANISTAN

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A helicopter crashed in bad weather in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan, killing all 16 people on board, including at least two American civilians, officials said today. Afghan army and US-led coalition troops have recovered 12 bodies and were searching for four more in the difficult, mountainous terrain where the civilian Mil Mi-8 helicopter crashed yesterday, Col Tom Collins, a coalition spokesman, said. Collins said there were Afghans and foreigners on board, including at least two Americans. The Dutch military has said two of its personnel were also on board, the first fatalities among Dutch forces in Afghanistan. "There are no survivors," Collins said. "The terrain in this area is extremely difficult and we are now working hard to recover the remaining crew and passengers." The Russian-made civilian helicopter crashed about 25 miles north-east of Khost city. Collins said there was no indication yet of what caused the crash. The helicopter was operated by a logistics firm, Tryco. A Tryco official in Kabul said the helicopter was rented by Fluor, a US-based company doing construction work in Khost province, about 90 miles south of the capital, Kabul. The 16 people on board reportedly included at least three crew. The Dutch military said two of its personnel, a lieutenant colonel from the air force and an army sergeant, were on board the helicopter. Maj Luke Knittig, a spokesman for a NATO-led security force in Afghanistan, said the helicopter had been flying to a so-called provincial reconstruction team base in Khost.

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EC-FJJ

London, July 26 — Sikorsky S-61N helicopter, EC-FJJ, operated by Helicpa, crashed into the sea in the vicinity of Tenerife, Canary Islands, at approximately 0800, UTC, July 8. The helicopter was on a VFR positioning flight from Santa Cruz de la Palma, to Gran Canaria. The three crew and three passengers were fatally injured. The cockpit voice recorder has been recovered, but the majority of the wreckage is under water at approximately the 2,300 foot level.

EMERGENCY LANDING, LAHORE, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Jul 25 — A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) airbus A-310, bound for Karachi from Lahore, made an emergency landing at Lahore international airport yesterday morning, after a bird hit its engine. Twenty minutes into Flight No: PK 315, which had 95 passengers on board, the captain requested the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to be allowed to return to Lahore reporting that a bird had hit its one of engines and it could not continue the flight. Permission was granted and the plane returned safely to Lahore. A PIA official said the aircraft was repaired and returned to Karachi in evening. The passengers, however, were flown to Karachi on another aircraft. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

EMERGENCY LANDING, NEW DEHLI, INDIA

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: An Air Deccan flight from Delhi to Hyderabad with 100 passengers on board developed a major engine problem soon after take off and returned to the Delhi airport under full emergency conditions tonight. The pilot of the aircraft informed the air traffic control about the "serious engine trouble" and sought permission to return to Delhi airport, the airport sources said. The aircraft had to dispose off fuel in the air before landing, they said. The aircraft landed safely at about 2200 hrs, the sources said.

EMERGENCY LANDING, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated Jul 26, states: A Los Angeles to London flight was interrupted and forced to make an emergency landing at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York this morning when the plane experienced engine failure. The flight was American Airlines Flight 134. American Airlines spokesman Billy Sanz says the Boeing 777 plane landed at Kennedy Airport less than a half hour after one of its two engines failed. Sanz said "It's not a common incident, but the pilots are trained to deal with these situations." The aircraft, en route from Los Angeles to London's Heathrow Airport, was carrying 239 passengers and 14 crew members. All passengers were put on another plane.

EMERGENCY LANDING, SHANNON AIRPORT, EIRE

London, Jul 21 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A corporate jet has made an emergency landing at Shannon Airport. The twin-engine jet was carrying six people. It had left Shannon for Bangor in the United States when a flashing light in the cockpit indicated there was a fire in one engine. The pilot shut it down and returned safely to Shannon. No fire was discovered on board - engineers are inspecting the aircraft before allowing it to continue its journey.

F-GOHC

London, Jul 21 — While taxiing a Thai Airways Boeing 747-400, HS-TGY, struck Embraer 135, F-GHOC, operated by REgional Compagnie AErienne Europeenne, with the right hand wing tip, at Madrid-Barajas Airport, Jul 15. The wing cut through the tail of the Embraer, ripping off the entire tail section.

HS-TGY

See F-GOHC.

INCIDENT AT MADRID INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SPAIN

See F-GOHC.

N241JL

London, Jul 24 — Raytheon G36, N241JL, operated by Apartments O C Inc, with three persons on board, crashed on take-off at Eagle Airpark, Bullhead City, Arizona, at 2309, UTC, Jul 23. The aircraft was destroyed, two passengers were killed and the pilot was seriously injured.

N720CS

London, Jul 20 — Cessna 180H N720CS took off from Cordingley Lake, Ont, but during climb out the floats struck trees at the end of the lake and aircraft nosed over and struck the ground in an inverted position at 1305, UTC, Jun 19. Aircraft sustained substantial damage.

N782T

London, Jul 21 — Douglas DC-3, N782T, operated by Tol-Air, ditched into the sea shortly after departure for a flight to Puerto Rico, Jul 19. One engine had failed on departure. All four persons on board were rescued.

N8829U

London, Jul 26 — A press report, dated Jul 25, states: A single-engine aircraft (Cessna 172F, N8829U) crashed in the woods near Brookville Lake, in eastern Indiana, killing the pilot, police said. The pilot, whose name was not released, radioed for help around 1730 hrs, Monday evening (Jul 24), complaining of engine problems. Pilots flying near Kokomo and near Cincinnati, which is about 35 miles south-east, heard the mayday. Authorities found the wreckage of the private aircraft, traveling north from Milan, this afternoon, and said they did not know its destination.

Authorities said they were waiting to notify family members before releasing the pilot's name.

London, Jul 29 — Cessna 172F, N8829U, operated by Gabe C.Hensley, with one person on board, crashed near Brokeville Lake, Indiana, at 2130, UTC, Jul 24. The aircraft was destroyed and the pilot was killed.

Space Vehicles**CRASH OF ROCKET AFTER LIFT-OFF, KAZAKHSTAN**

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A Russian rocket that was to put 18 satellites in orbit crashed shortly after liftoff early today, the Interfax news agency reported. The Dnepr rocket crashed about 15 miles south of the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan but caused no injuries or damage on the ground, Interfax quoted Russian space agency deputy chief Yuri Nosenko as saying. The rocket was carrying a Russian satellite and 17 from other countries, including the United States and Italy, Russian news agencies reported. Interfax, citing an unidentified Mission Control official, reported preliminary information indicated a problem occurred when the rocket's third stage detached. RIA-Novosti and ITAR-Tass, also citing unnamed officials, said the engine shut off 86 seconds into the flight.

Product Recalls**ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES, UNITED STATES**

London, Jul 25 — A press release, issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, dated Jul 24, states: Approximately 300 Suzuki 2006 Model Year Eiger all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are being voluntarily recalled by American Suzuki Motor Corp., of Brea, Calif., in co-operation with the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The mounting brackets used to secure the left-front suspension arm to the ATV frame may not have been welded completely and could break off during riding. If this occurs the rider could lose control of the ATV and crash, posing a risk of serious injury or death. No incidents/injuries have been reported. Only Suzuki 2006 model year LT-A400K6, LT-A400FK6 and LT-F400FK6 model ATVs with certain vehicle identification numbers are included in this recall. The vehicle identification number is located on the left rear side of the ATV frame. Eiger, printed in white letters, and

QuadRunner and Suzuki are written on the side of the ATV. These ATVs were sold in red, black and green. Manufactured in the United States, the ATVs were sold at Suzuki ATV dealers nationwide from May 2006 through to July 2006 for about \$4,500 for the LT-A400K6, \$5,300 for the LT-A400FK6 and \$5,200 for the LT-F400FK6.



BANGLADESH

Sydney, Jul 21 — Evergreen Marine Australia has advised that severe port congestion was still being experienced at Chittagong, and that was affecting all lines. As a result, all Evergreen's Chittagong import and export shipments were incurring a port congestion surcharge of US\$130 per teu, for loadings from Jul 17. — Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News.

ITALY

Genoa, Jul 25 — Port situation/berthing delays: Genoa: One

general cargo vessel and one container vessel are waiting for berths. Average delay in berthing 0.5-one day. Savona: No vessels awaiting normal or special berths. La Spezia: No vessels awaiting berths. — Lloyd's Agents.

PANAMA CANAL

London, Jul 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Panamax vessels wishing to transit the Panama Canal currently face delays of three-four days in both directions, while regulars/unrestricted vessels can expect to wait one to three days. Even though full traffic capacity was resumed after the completion of the Miraflores Locks lane outage, fewer than 40 ships are being scheduled.

SYRIA

Aleppo, Jul 22 — Waiting time presently 24 hours at Lattakia and two days at Tartous. — Lloyd's Agents.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jul 26 — After 14 grounding and contact incidents involving the ferry *Dieppe* in the Sussex port of Newhaven since 2001, a Marine Accident Investigation Branch inquiry into the latest grounding off the port last December has pinpointed a number of deficiencies in the port

safety regime. The channel port, which has a history of silting after bad weather, was the subject of another MAIB report after the grounding of the Transmanche Ferries *Sardinia Vera* in January last year. In the earlier report a range of recommendations were made focusing on the port's safety management and the system for closing the port to large ships when keel clearance was reduced. The latest report, into the grounding last December of the ferry *Dieppe* when the master elected to attempt an entrance with less than the specified 1m clearance, took the opportunity to revisit the recommendations made to discover whether the port had implemented them. While the report criticised the master of the ferry for attempting to enter the port when there was less water than was safe, the harbourmaster and VTS operator took no action to require the master to delay his entrance. The report also noted that the Newhaven harbourmaster was unqualified and the VTS operator was untrained. The port, owned by a French company which had purchased it from Sea Containers, had also undertaken insufficient dredging to maintain the channel for the larger ships using it.

Port Delays

(Information received from BIMCO, Denmark and Indian Ports Association, New Delhi)

Country/Port	Date of report	No. of vessels waiting and/or days delay
Australia		
Abbot Point	31-Jul-2006	Coal: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 11 vessels due by 22/8; there will be a maintenance shutdown from 07.00 15/8 to 07.00 21/8; no vessels will be loaded during this period.
Brisbane	02-Aug-2006	Grain: 1 vessel due 28/7 to load wheat; up to 5 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Dalrymple Bay	02-Aug-2006	Coal: DBCT berth 1: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 4 waiting; DBCT berth 2: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 waiting; DBCT berth 3: 3 vessels waiting; other vessels not scheduled: 7 vessels waiting; 23 vessels due by 11/8.
Dampier	02-Aug-2006	Iron ore: Parker Point A berth: 1 vessel due by 4/8; maintenance shutdown from 29/7 to 12/8; Parker Point berth 2: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 3 waiting; 5 vessels due by 28/8; Parker Point berth 3: 1 vessel waiting; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 4 waiting; 6 vessels due by 13/8.
Esperance	02-Aug-2006	Grain: 4 vessels due by 18/8, 1 to load wheat, 3 grain pool; 1-5 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Geraldton	02-Aug-2006	Grain: 1 vessel anchored to load wheat; 1 vessel due 8/8 to load wheat; 7-8 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Gladstone	02-Aug-2006	Jul 31: Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 3 vessels berthed, 11 waiting; 33 vessels due by 1/9; Barney Point: 11 vessels due by 4/10. Aug 2: Grain: 1 vessel due 15/8 to load wheat; no delays expected.
Hay Point	02-Aug-2006	Coal: Berth 1: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 6 vessels due by 9/8; Berth 2: 5 vessels due by 8/8; a maintenance shutdown is underway from 24/7 to 2/8: 2 vessels due by 14/8, not yet scheduled for berthing.
Newcastle	02-Aug-2006	Five vessels due by 12/8, of which 4 to load wheat, 1 sorghum; up to 4 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Port Hedland	02-Aug-2006	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel berthed and completed loading, 4 waiting; 5 vessels due by 7/8; "B" berth: 2 vessels waiting; 6 vessels due by 9/8; 7 other vessels due by 23/8, no e.t.a. received; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "C" berth: 1 vessel waiting; 1 vessel due 4/8; "D" berth: 3 vessels waiting; 4 vessels due by 7/8; Cockatoo Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading.

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

Port Conditions

Port Walcott	02-Aug-2006	Iron ore: 1 vessel berthed and completed loading, 7 waiting; 13 vessels due by 11/8; shippers currently experiencing shortage of product, which will affect berthing schedules.
Azerbaijan		
Apsheron	31-Jul-2006	Oil products: Dubendi terminal: 2 vessels due by 1/8, both to discharge, of which 1 crude oil, 1 kerosene.
Baku	31-Jul-2006	Oil products: Bay of Baku: no vessels; Azerneftiyag terminal: no vessels; Azer Trans terminal - Nobel avenue: 2 vessels due by 1/8, both to discharge crude oil; Sangachal district: no vessels.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	31-Jul-2006	Sixteen vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (1 profiled iron, 1 sulphur, 4 coils, 1 copper anodes, 1 wheat), 8 discharging (1 scrap, 1 reinforced concrete, 2 billets, 2 zinc concentrate, 1 containers, 1 copper concentrate); 1 vessel in roads to discharge copper concentrate; 8 vessels due, of which 2 to load (1 coils, 1 wheat), 6 to discharge (1 metals, 1 lead concentrate, 1 clinker, 1 coal, 2 iron ore).
Varna	31-Jul-2006	Varna East, Varna West, Electrical Power Station, Balchik: Conditions 24-30 July: Forty-five vessels in port operating of which 25 loading (7 bulk wheat, 1 packed hardboard, 2 scrap, 1 equipment in packing cases, 1 bulk sulphuric acid, 1 bulk clinker, 7 soda, 1 bulk cement, 1 calcium carbonate/dolomite/ soda/silica sand, 1 chamotte/kaolin, 1 technical salt, 1 kaolin/soda), 11 discharging (1 metal in packets, 1 cement on pallets, 1 bulk slag, 4 bulk coal, 1 raw phosphate, 1 clay, 1 feldspar, 1 containers), 9 discharging/loading (84 containers, 1 equipment in packing cases); no vessels waiting in roads.
Cyprus		
Laranaca	01-Aug-2006	Three conventional vessels discharging at berth; 1 conventional vessel due 2/8; no delays expected.
Limassol	01-Aug-2006	Five container vessels discharging/loading at berth, 3 conventional vessels discharging at berth; 4 container vessels, 2 container vessels, 2 passenger vessels due 2/8; no delays expected
Egypt Jul 31		
Adabiya	31-Jul-2006	Four vessels berthed (loading/discharging), all general cargo.
Alexandria	31-Jul-2006	Thirty-three vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 24 general cargo, 4 bulk carriers, 2 tankers, 3 containers; 5 vessels at inner anchorage, 7 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	31-Jul-2006	Twenty-two vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 14 general cargo, 3 bulk carriers, 1 tanker, 4 container vessels; 22 vessel at outer anchorage, none at inner anchorage.
Dekheila	31-Jul-2006	Four vessels berthed (loading/discharging), all general cargo.
Port Said	31-Jul-2006	Four vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 1 general cargo, 3 container vessels.
Suez	31-Jul-2006	Six vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 3 general cargo, 3 passenger vessels; 3 tugs, 1 vessel dry-docked.
Suez Canal	31-Jul-2006	Twenty-one vessels transiting Northbound, 29 Southbound.
Estonia		
Tallinn	31-Jul-2006	Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): One coal vessel loading at berth, 1 fertiliser vessel discharging at berth; no vessels waiting at anchorage; 2 vessels due, with no berthing delays expected.
Georgia Jul 31		
Batumi	31-Jul-2006	Oil products: 1 vessel berthed at CBM loading crude oil; 1 vessel in roads loading crude oil; 3 vessels due by 2/8, all to load, of which 2 crude oil, 1 gasoil.
Poti	31-Jul-2006	Oil products: 1 vessel due 1/8 to load gasoil.
Kazakhstan		
Aktau	31-Jul-2006	Oil products: 2 vessels berthed, both loading unknown cargoes; 3 vessels in roads, all to load unknown cargoes; 6 vessels due by 1/8, all to load unknown cargo.
Pakistan		
Karachi	31-Jul-2006	Three vessels loading at berth (1 MOL, 1 ethanol, 1 cement), 10 discharging at berth (1 HSD, 1 crude oil, 2 urea, 3 general cargo, 2 sugar, 1 phosphate); 1 ethanol vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 1 SMB vessel waiting at anchorage to discharge; 1 vessel under repairs/dry-docked; 6 vessels due (2 containers, 1 general cargo, 1 chemicals, 1 crude oil, 1 base oil), with no berthing delays expected.
Port Qasim	31-Jul-2006	One cement vessel loading at berth, 2 sugar vessels discharging at berth, 2 container vessels loading/discharging at QICT berth; 2 container vessels waiting at anchorage to load, 4 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 containers, 2 sugar).
Poland		
Gdansk	31-Jul-2006	Five vessels loading at berth (2 bulkers, 3 tankers), 2 discharging at berth (1 general cargo, 1 tanker); 13 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 19 vessels due.

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Port Conditions

Gdynia	31-Jul-2006	Three vessels loading at berth (2 coal, 1 general cargo), 5 discharging at berth (1 grain, 2 general cargo, 1 bulker, 1 tanker); 23 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 43 vessels due.
Russia		
Novorossiysk	31-Jul-2006	Eighteen vessels in port operating, of which 15 loading (1 bulk cement, 1 bulk NPK, 1 scrap, 2 steel billets, 2 wheat, 1 steel billets/steel sheets, 1 soda ash, 1 H-beams/tin plate/steel sheets/pipes/vehicles, 1 slabs, 1 coils/slabs, 1 aluminium, 1 UAN solution, 1 diesel oil), 1 discharging bulk sugar, 2 loading/discharging containers; 6 vessels waiting in roads, all to load, of which 3 steel billets, 1 steel blooms/vehicles, 1 steel sheets, 1 bulk cement; 67 vessels due, of which 65 to load (4 slabs, 2 barley, 2 HBI, 6 DRI, 8 wheat, 3 bulk ammonium nitrate, 6 steel billets, 1 steel billets/lead/pipes, 7 aluminium, 1 WRIC/steel billets, 8 copper, 2 steel sheets, 1 cellulose, 1 cars, 1 pipes, 1 bulk cement, 2 coils/steel sheets, 1 tin plates/coils, 1 soda ash, 1 bulk urea, 2 vegetable oil, 1 steel sheets/tin plate, 1 H-beams, 2 diesel oil), 2 to discharge (1 maize, 1 vegetable oil); Oil terminal: 2 tankers berthed, both loading, of which 1 crude oil, 1 diesel oil; 3 tankers in roads, all to load crude oil; 6 tankers due, all to load, of which 3 crude oil, 3 fuel oil.
Slovenia		
Koper	01-Aug-2006	Port working normally. Nine vessels berthed of which 1 car carrier discharging/loading vehicles, 1 car carrier discharging vehicles, 2 vessels discharging/loading containers, 3 discharging bulk cargo, 2 loading sawn timber/general cargo; 24 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 5 to discharge/load containers, 5 car carriers to discharge/load vehicles, 1 car carrier to discharge vehicles, 2 tankers to discharge liquid cargo, 3 vessels to load sawn timber/general cargo, 3 to load bulk cargo, 4 to discharge bulk cargo, 1 Ro/Ro to load general cargo.
Spain		
Bilbao	01-Aug-2006	Thirty-four vessels operating (9 tankers, 25 other vessels), of which 5 loading, 18 discharging, 11 loading/discharging.
Sagunto	01-Aug-2006	Fourteen vessels in port operating, of which 3 loading (1 steel products, 2 cement), 10 discharging (7 steel products, 2 gas, 1 machinery), 1 loading/discharging containers; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present.
Sri Lanka		
Colombo	31-Jul-2006	Cargo operations at Sri Lanka Ports Authority operated berths are at present experiencing a "work to rule" by port workers which started 13/7. Delays are affecting all port users. Berthing/unberthing (pilotage) delays being experienced on breakbulk/conventional vessels. Delays to conventional vessels are due to the fact that container/feeder vessels are given priority at breakbulk berths if there is container congestion. Conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 and 2 are facing navigation delays. Seven vessels loading at berth (6 containers/feeders, 1 bulk naphtha), 16 discharging at berth (9 containers/feeders, 1 general cargo, 1 steel cargo, 1 bulk palm oil, 1 bagged fertiliser, 1 bulk fertiliser, 1 Ro/Ro, 1 bulk cement); 3 container/feeder vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge; 4 vessels dry-docked; 7 container/feeder vessels due, with no delays expected.
Turkmenistan		
Aladja	31-Jul-2006	Oil products: 1 vessel berthed loading crude oil.
Turkmenbashi	31-Jul-2006	Oil products: 4 vessels berthed, all completed loading, of which 1 fuel oil, 1 jet fuel, 1 kerosene, 1 gasoil; 1 vessel in roads to load gasoline; 1 vessel due 31/7 to load fuel oil.
Ukraine		
Illichevsk	31-Jul-2006	Nine vessels in port operating, of which 5 loading (1 ore, 1 sunflower oil, 2 sulphur, 1 steel products), 2 discharging containers, 2 loading/discharging containers; 1 vessel in roads to load/discharge containers; 15 vessels due, of which 6 to load (4 steel products, 1 sunflower oil, 1 ore), 1 to discharge tropical oil, 8 to load/discharge containers.
Mariupol	31-Jul-2006	Nine vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (5 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 coke), 1 discharging/loading containers; 13 vessels in roads, of which 11 to load (9 steel, equipment, 1 fire-clay), 2 to discharge (1 heavy lift cargo, 1 equipment); 53 vessels due, of which 50 to load (31 steel, 7 coal, 7 fire-clay, 1 kaolin, 1 barley, 1 pitch, 1 bran, 1 wheat), 1 to discharge heavy lift cargo, 2 to discharge/load (1 containers/steel/fire-clay/containers, 1 ferrous metals/equipment).
Odessa	31-Jul-2006	Eighteen vessels in port operating, of which 11 loading (1 ore, 8 metal, 1 scrap, 1 wheat), 4 discharging (3 luggage, 1 meat), 1 discharging/loading containers, 2 passenger vessels; 5 vessels in roads, of which 4 to load (2 metal, 1 pig-iron, 1 oil), 1 to load/discharge containers; 72 vessels due, of which 35 to load (27 metal, 4 pig-iron, 2 scrap, 1 ore, 1 coal), 6 to discharge (1 metal, 1 citrus, 1 bananas, 1 fertiliser, 1 oil, 1 ore), 31 to discharge/load containers.

Port Conditions

United States

Beaumont	01-Aug-2006	No new restrictions in draft (normal 40 ft. 0 ins. f.w. max. deep draft enforced). Louis Dreyfus terminal: no delays.
Columbia River	01-Aug-2006	Columbia River draft advisory: Maximum permissible deep draft is 40 ft. 0 ins.
Corpus Christi	01-Aug-2006	New restrictions in draft (max. 42 ft. 0 ins. b.w. draft enforced). Channel open under normal traffic; Interstate grain terminal: no delays; ADM terminal: 2-3 days delay..
Galveston	01-Aug-2006	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: 2-3 days delay.
Houston	01-Aug-2006	Shoaling to 42 ft. confirmed in inner bar channel. Vessels drawing over 42 ft. are advised to give due regard to the state of the tide. Vessels drawing over 40 ft. are advised to avoid meeting like vessels between lighted buoys 9/10 and 11/12. Pilots report normal 45 ft. 0 ins. max. draft up to Shell terminal, 40 ft. 0 ins. max. draft above Shell terminal to 610 bridge area; Cargill terminal: 2-3 days delay; LDC Dreyfus terminal: no delays.
New Orleans	01-Aug-2006	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: no delays; Cargill-Westwego: 2 days delay expected; ADM/Ama: 3-4 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: 4 days delay expected; ADM/Destrehan: 3-4 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 3-4 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 2 days delay expected; ADM/Paulina: 3-4 days delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: undergoing maintenance until 12/8; Cargill/Baton Rouge: no delays; Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: relocated for several weeks; Mile 158.0 Myrtle Grove midstream terminal: 7 days delay; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: 3 days delay. Nine-day forecast for Carrollton Gauge/New Orleans: expected to decrease to 1.9 ft. by 10/8. Mississippi River recommended draft restrictions: SW Pass to Pilottown - 47 ft. for all vessels (24 hours); Pilottown to Nola - 47 ft. for all vessels (24 hours); New Orleans to Mile 180 - 45 ft. (24 hours) and up to 47 feet on a case-by-case basis; Mile 180 to Baton Rouge - 45 ft. for all vessels (24 hours); Mississippi River Gulf outlet: 23 ft. as per last report of the Bar Pilots.
Portland, Oreg	01-Aug-2006	Columbia Grain terminal: 3 days delay; CLD Irving terminal: 2 days delay; CLD, O Dock terminals: no delays..
Seattle	01-Aug-2006	Louis Dreyfus (Pier 86) terminal: 3 days delay.
Tacoma	01-Aug-2006	Temco terminal: no delays.
Vancouver, Wash	01-Aug-2006	United Harvest terminal: no delays.

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