

Aug 11 2006

Cloud over Hong Kong storm signal system

Observatory attacked over typhoon response, writes Keith Wallis- Monday August 07 2006

THE Hong Kong Observatory will review its storm signal system after a barrage of criticism following its response to winds generated by typhoon Prapiroon.

The observatory kept its storm signal at typhoon 3 last Thursday, meaning it was safe to go to work and for ferries to keep operating.

This was despite winds gusting at more than 200 kmph which causing flight chaos at Hong Kong International Airport, property damage and stormy seas.

Cathay Pacific Airways took the unprecedented step of cancelling all its flights, while Dragonair scrapped 63 flights and other airlines did the same.

Stranded

More than 10,000 passengers were stranded at Hong Kong International Airport. Flights from nearly Shenzhen, Macau and Guangzhou were also disrupted by strong winds and torrential rain caused by the typhoon.

Elsewhere in Hong Kong, more than 10 containers toppled over at the river trade terminal in Tuen Mun, bunker operations were disrupted and sea conditions affected ferry services.

Fast ferries between Hong Kong and Macau and cities in southern China were later suspended, trapping hundreds of passengers, while more than 90 seafarers on two Chinese barges were rescued by Hong Kong government helicopters.

There was also property damage with the windows blown out of several offices including those at shipbroker Simpson Spence and Young.

In the Lloyd's List office, which is in the same building as SSY, the differential air pressure caused by the winds rattled windows and doors.

Outdated

Leading the criticism against the observatory, meteorologist Clarence Fong Chi-kong said weather officials used an outdated system which only measures sustained winds speeds in Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong's inner port area.

He said the observatory had put the public at risk and added: "Very high wind speeds were recorded in some parts of the city. We wonder why the observatory still did not issue the No 8 signal."

Under the present system the observatory uses four main storm categories — typhoon signals 1, 3, 8 and 10 — based on wind speed. The storm classification was kept

signal 3 meaning sustained wind speeds of between 41 and 62 kmph in Victoria Harbour throughout Thursday.

This was despite wind speeds of 209 kmph being recorded at Ngong Ping, close to Hong Kong International Airport, and 108 kmph at Tsing Yi near Kwai Chung container port.

Responding to the complaints the observatory confirmed it would reassess the way storm signals were evaluated to improve the system.

In southern China typhoon Prapiroon, named after a Thai rain god and the fifth major storm to hit southern China this year, made landfall near Yangjiang, 190 km west of Hong Kong, at about 1920 hrs last Thursday.

Closed

The oil port of Zhanjiang, which can handle 300,000 dwt very large crude carriers, remained closed on Friday, said Zhanjiang Port Group, while scores of ships took shelter from the storm.

Huangpu and Zhuhai ports were also closed although they were expected to reopen over the weekend.

Ferry services were suspended as the typhoon, later downgraded to a severe tropical storm, hit the Guangdong coast.

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
<i>CHRESTENA II</i>	general	PAN	RS	10,104	15,767	1978	Grounded off the coast of Porbandar, in lat 21 36N, long 69 36E, Jul 28 after engine failed in bad weather. Crew rescued & taken ashore. Salvage operations commenced Jul 31. Still aground Aug 3. Bottom breached & engine-room damaged.
<i>FLOYD H. BLASKE</i>	tug	USA	—	628	—	1966	Grounded near Lock & Dam 11, Dubuque, Iowa, Jul 31 after turning & striking shore with at least 1 barge. Barge holed & required dewatering with portable pumps.
<i>GAO HE</i>	container	CHN	—	37,143	47,630	1990	Had explosion in engine-room off Aden, in lat 13 52N, long 42 47E, Jul 27. Proceeding Hodeidah for repairs.
<i>GOTLANDIA II</i>	ro-ro	SWE	LR	7,000	—	2006	Had fire on board Jul 10. Taken out of service. Inspected at Visby. Broken bolts found in injection system. Vessel expected to be operational by end of August.
<i>LEIF ERIKSON</i>	ro-ro	CAN	NV	18,523	4,598	1991	Had turbo-charger breakdown Jul 29. Entered dock to undergo repairs. Back in service Aug 2.
<i>MAERSK FAWLEY</i>	container	GBR	—	9,990	11,209	2005	Reported Aug 1 anchored off Rotterdam, in lat 51 58N, long 03 46E, following explosion in engine-room. Crew investigating damage in engine-room. Towed to Eemshaven.
<i>MAERSK RIO GRANDE</i>	container	ATG	GL	16,129	16,794	2002	Reported Aug 1 under tow of tug <i>Lobos</i> after experiencing main engine problems. Tow proceeding to Balboa, ETA Aug 1.
<i>NAMA</i>	general	PAN	BV	8,203	14,313	1988	Grounded approx 17 nautical miles from Kakinada Jul 30. Still aground Aug 3. Salvage operations in progress.
<i>OEL VISION</i>	container	IND	IR	4,802	6,189	1979	Experienced power and engine failure off Mumbai Jul 30 & began drifting. Dropped anchors to halt drift. Restored emergency power & awaiting tug. Began drifting again Jul 31 following failed towing attempt. Sank Aug 2. Crew rescued.
<i>RUMYANTSEVO</i>	fishing	RUS	RS	723	414	1985	Sustained holed in bottom off Kamchatka Peninsula Aug 2 and had water ingress in engine-room. Vessels proceeded to assist. Water ingress minimised. Diver's inspection to be carried out.
<i>THEODOROS</i>	wine tanker	PAN	RI	634	980	1967	Grounded in lat 36 06.7N, long 29 38.3E, Jul 28. Refloated by own means Jul 29 & anchored off Megisti Island. Approximately 2-metre crack in stbd forecastle. Cargo to be transhipped. Still anchored Aug 1. Undergoing temporary repairs, ETC 3-4 days.
<i>YONG AN 4</i>	bulker	PAN	CS	26,737	44,062	1996	Reported aground in lat 21 36.73N, long 112 48.95E, Aug 2. All 23 crew rescued and taken to Hong Kong

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



ACBL 3083

See *Floyd H. Blaske*.

AGHIOS MAKARIOS (Greece)

London, July 30 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS bulker *Aghios Makarios* was in lat 34 39 55N, long 58 01 17W, at 2223, July 24, speed 9.8 knots, course 109.5 degrees.

AL MANARA (St. Kitts-Nevis)

London, July 28 — General cargo *Al Manara*: Situation as at July 14: Four crew members remain on board, four have been repatriated by the ITF. The court has permitted the cargo interest to offload the cargo, leaving the vessel only under arrest. The owners have now placed an injunction on the sale of the vessel, alleging that it has been hijacked by the crew. The next hearing will be on July 27. The four remaining crew members are being provided with subsistence by the Seychelles Port Authority.

ANA B. (Panama)

London, July 28 — A SvitzerWijismuller Salvage BV report, dated July 20, states: SvitzerWijismuller Salvage BV July 19 redelivered the successfully refloated 3,545 GT product tanker (Combined chemical and oil tank *Ana B.*) that had run aground on the Amazon River, in the middle of the rainforests in Brazil, on July 4. SvitzerWijismuller Salvage was instructed on July 8 to come to the assistance of the vessel, which was loaded with some 3,600 ton of fuel destined for Peru. Salvage team members from our teams in Brazil, Argentina and The Netherlands were moved in to take control. Tugs and a barge were mobilised, and equipment, most notably oil spill response equipment, was flown in as well. The whole operation was a logistical challenge so far into the rain forest, with e.g. the teams staying in a small village two hours away from the casualty since the malaria infection-rate in the village less than an hour away was 30 times higher. A further burden was the fact that the river levels were decreasing with 6-7 centimetres per day. The casualty was refloated at about 1607, local time, July 18 by the combined forces of two tugs under control of our salvage and towing masters, with a lighterage barge as a contingency still en-route. A diving survey then was executed July 19, which showed the vessel to be still in order, based on which permission from the authorities was obtained to proceed further up-river to Tabatinga at the Peru border. At that stage, the vessel was redelivered back to the owners at about 1730, local time, same day.

ANANGEL SPLENDOUR (Greece)

London, Aug 3 — Following received from Cape Town MRCC, timed 1230, UTC, today: A report was received at 2039, UTC, yesterday that fishing (general) *Harvest Tamara*, ZR2422, (453 gt, built 1975) had been in collision with bulker *Anangel Splendour* (81120 gt, built 1993) in lat 33 04S, long 17 17E. As a result *Harvest Tamara* sank. All 24 crew of *Harvest Tamara* were rescued safely without injury. Twenty persons were rescued by *Anangel Splendour* and the other four by a fishing vessel. *Anangel Splendour* was instructed to proceed to Saldanha Bay where it is now alongside for investigation. *Anangel Splendour* did not sustain any structural damage.

ANNA (Georgia)

Riga, Aug 3 — Chemical tanker *Anna* is still at the dry dock. Expected time for completion of repairs is Aug 5. Cargo was discharged and claim for reloading presented. Claim for destroyed bridge is said to be around 2,500 Euros. P&I underwriter is Ingosstrakh. H&M underwriter is Military Insurance Co. Russia. — Lloyd's Agents.

APHINE (Russia)

See *Sormovskiy 32*.

ARABIAN SUN (Liberia)

Dubai, Aug 2 — Understand that product tanker *Arabian Sun* is still in Fujairah port under repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

ARGO 1 (Netherlands)

London, Aug 3 — Understand sand suction dredger *Argo 1* (1265 gt, built 1983) anchored with a machinery problem in the Scheldt Oostgat near buoy OG 1 yesterday. Tug *Holland* towed the ship to Flushing outer anchorage where the tug *Drado* assisted in the tow. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *Argo 1* was stationary in lat 51 26 48N, long 03 35 50E, at 0919 today.)

ATLANTIC III (Uruguay)

Buenos Aires, Aug 1 — Passenger ro/ro *Atlantic III* unberthed from Tandano at 1030, local time, Jul 27, and is now berthed at Darsena Norte terminal. Repairs were completed. — Lloyd's Agents.

ATLANTICA I (Panama)

See *Maris*.

AULAC ANGEL (Vietnam)

See *Front Leader*.

BACOLOD EXPRESS (Philippines)

London, Jul 29 — A sea mishap at the Bredco Port in Reclamation area, Bacolod, has caused about P400,000 to the management of Ocean Jet Fast Ferry, Inc. This was after their lone fast craft (ferry *Bacolod Express* (318 gt, built 1986), operating the Bacolod-Iloilo service, accidentally bumped the anchor of a cargo vessel owned by Aleson Shipping, docking about eight meters north of the Ocean Jet

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terminal. The mishap occurred at about 0920 hrs while the vessel was about to depart to Iloilo for the day's second trip, said Lecil Porol, OJFFI-Bacolod manager. Porol said that they cannot ascertain yet whether the accident was caused by a mechanical or human error. She added that vessel's master was alert and had the presence of mind when he immediately swerved the vessel, bumping it instead at the docking wall and bringing the damage to the bow to a minimum. She said that none of the 55 passengers bound for Iloilo City was hurt. The incident caused the cancellation of the vessel's three succeeding trips to and from Iloilo. Meanwhile, according to the Philippine Coast Guard, the Ocean Jet vessel will not be allowed to sail until the investigation is over.

BALTIC FJORD (Norway)

Tallinn, Aug 1 — General cargo *Baltic Fjord* has been declared a constructive total loss. The badly damaged vessel was towed to Tallinn Shipyard July 31 where it will be scrapped. — Lloyd's Agents.

BENEGAS (Panama)

London, July 28 — A SvitzerWijismuller Salvage BV report, dated July 14, states: The 6,222 GT vessel (Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Benegas*) loaded with 4,200 tons of liquid gas, was berthed in Aqaba port discharging its cargo (July 13). At about 0940, local time, an explosion occurred followed by a fierce fire. The crew abandoned ship and tug *Svitzer Duke* immediately interfered with its fire fighting systems. The fire was put out sufficiently at about 1010, local time, to allow *Svitzer Duke* to connect up the still burning vessel, that in the meantime had become unmoored and drifted around, and move the casualty out of port into the Gulf of Aqaba to fully put out the fire. At 1315, local time, the fires were completely out.

Amman, Aug 3 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Benegas* is presently at Aqaba anchorage. Vessel still has 2,000 tonnes of cargo on board. No repairs to be made in Aqaba, vessel will discharge its cargo and proceed to Dubai for repairs according owner's representative. A technician from ship builders attended on board and advised that it is impossible to make the repairs at Aqaba. A conflict between owners and Port Authority is taking place now for salvage rights claimed by Port Authorities. Vessel's starboard main deck plating from frame No. 41 up to No. 95 deformed along with damage to pipe work, electrical wiring and other deck equipment. All bridge equipment, antennas, electrical cables, radars, GMDSS, fax, phones, etc was damaged due to extinguishing water. On the jetty two hoses of 8 inches and 6 inches in diameter found burnt no other damage were noticed. — Lloyd's Agents.

BSLE ENDURANCE (Cyprus)

Balboa, July 27 — General cargo *BSLE Endurance*: No change in

situation, and seems likely vessel will eventually be taken elsewhere for repair, but this not confirmed. Understand the Balboa dry dock fully booked and therefore unable accommodate. — Lloyd's Agents.

BULOU NI CEVA (Fiji)

London, July 30 — A press report, dated today, states: The fate of passenger (cruise) *Bulou Ni Ceva* which remains stranded after running aground in Rotuma will be known on Friday (? Aug 4) after the Insurance company hands in its report.

BUMI JAYA (Indonesia)

London, Aug 3 — General cargo *Bumi Jaya* arrived Pasir Gudang Jul 3.

C.S.OCEAN (Panama)

London, Jul 31 — Information received today, states: General cargo *C.S.Ocean* (15438 gt, built 1996) grounded at approximately 1330 hrs, yesterday (Jul 30) afternoon. The 560-foot vessel grounded while anchored at the lower anchorage on the Columbia River near the Willamette junction in Vancouver, Wash. A command post was set up at Coast Guard Sector Portland, Ore, to safely resolve the situation. Coast Guard officials from Sector Portland and a vessel's representative quickly joined forces to develop plans to refloat the vessel and determine if any damage had been done. There was no pollution discharge as a result of the grounding. *C.S.Ocean* refloated itself at approximately 1630 hrs and was taken to a deeper anchorage in the area. Two tugs provided assistance and are currently standing by in the event they are needed further. There are no indications that the vessel sustained any damage as a result of the grounding. As a precaution, divers will inspect the portion of the vessel that was aground and Coast Guard inspectors are conducting preliminary damage assessments. *C.S.Ocean* will be required to undergo a full inspection by its class society to ensure its seaworthiness. This report must be reviewed by Coast Guard inspectors at Sector Portland before the vessel will be allowed to move from the anchorage. The cause of the vessel's grounding is unknown at this time. An investigation will be conducted by Sector Portland.

London, Jul 31 — Following received from Coast Guard Seattle, timed 1710, UTC: General cargo *C.S.Ocean*, which drifted, grounded and subsequently refloated yesterday near Portland, Oregon, is still under Coast Guard investigation.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: General cargo *C.S.Ocean* was grounded for about three hours yesterday in the Columbia River near its confluence with the Willamette River. According to a press release from the US Coast Guard in Portland, the vessel grounded while anchored in the river. Two tugs helped free it. The vessel did not leak pollutants after of the grounding,

officials said. An initial inspection revealed no damage to the *C.S. Ocean*, officials said, adding that divers plan to take a closer look at the vessel.

London, Aug 2 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS general cargo *C.S.Ocean* was reported anchored in lat 45 40.40.8N, long 122 46.13.2W, 6.8 nautical miles from Vancouver(USA), at 1733, UTC, today.

CANADIAN PROGRESS (Canada)

Montreal, Jul 31 — Bulker *Canadian Progress* is under repair with severe main engine damage in the port of Montreal. The vessel has been under repair since approximately Jul 1 and repairs are expected to take another few weeks. — Lloyd's Agents.

CHANG XING (Belize)

See "Greenpeace Protest at Nelson, New Zealand" under "Miscellaneous."

CHARLOTTE MAERSK (DIS)

Singapore, Aug 1 — Container carrier *Charlotte Maersk* sailed Singapore at 1720, Jul 29, for Kaohsiung. Container carrier *MSC Jessica* is currently at Singapore Tech North Pier East. — Lloyd's Agents.

CHATON DE FOI

Honolulu, Jul 29 — Yacht *Chaton de Foi* was towed to the Honokohau Small Boat Harbour, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. She is at the Gentry's Kona Marina facility where she is reportedly being repaired by the owner. — Lloyd's Agents.

CHRESTENA II (Panama)

Mumbai, July 29 — The Coast Guard rescued 25 crew members from general cargo *Chrestena II* (10104 gt, built 1978) which ran aground off the coast of Porbandar at 0500, July 28 due to rough weather. The vessel remains aground. — Lloyd's Agents.

Mumbai, July 29 — General cargo *Chrestena II* was on a ballast passage from Pipavav to Porbandar to load clinkers. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated Jul 29, states: The Indian Coastguard have rescued and evacuated 25 crewmembers of general cargo *Chrestena II* near Porbandar. The crewmembers of *Chrestena II* that had run aground off the Porbandar coast were evacuated yesterday, said an official statement released today. The vessel was has on board 180 tonnes of marine gas oil and 40 tonnes of high-speed diesel. It ran aground after main engine failure following rough weather in the Gujarat coast. The Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, Mumbai, and the Maritime Rescue Sub Centre, Porbandar, picked up distress signals from the Panamanian vessel. The Porbandar authorities were alerted and a coastguard team brought the crewmembers ashore. The crew was then handed over to the police for further investigation, said the release.

London, July 30 — A press report dated July 29, states: Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has rescued all the 25 crewmembers of general cargo

Chrestena II that ran aground off the Porbandar coast yesterday. The vessel had main engines failure in the aftermath of the extreme rough weather prevailing in the Gujarat coast. The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), Mumbai and the Maritime Rescue Sub Centre (MRSC), Porbandar picked up the distress signals from the vessel. Though the master of the vessel confirmed that there was no imminent danger to the crew but since the state of weather and sea conditions began deteriorating, the ICG team from Porbandar reached the site and evacuated all 25 crewmembers. They were later handed over to the police for further investigation. The Coast Guard authorities are keeping a close watch on the vessel and any situation arising out of it. The presence of fuel onboard has the potential to cause damage to the environment in the event of an oil spill. Meanwhile the local agent has been directed to undertake the salvage and de-fuelling arrangements of the vessel as soon as possible.

Mumbai, July 31 — General cargo *Chrestena II* remains aground. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated July 31, states: General cargo *Chrestena II* that ran aground off the Porbandar coast has sparked fears of oil spill that could prove disastrous for the marine environment and the region's fishing industry. The vessel ran aground after its main engines failed, due to rough weather. "The vessel had come to Porbandar to load cement so it was empty but its tank has 220 scales of oil which can be dangerous to environment, if it leaks," said BK Singh, ICG Commandant of Porbandar. The salvage work on the vessel, laden with 180 tonnes of marine gas oil and 40 tonnes of high-speed diesel began today. Indian Coast Guard and local authorities are trying to de-fuel the vessel at the earliest to avoid any oil spill. The ship owners, marine experts and the vessel's local agent are carrying out the de-fuelling.

Mumbai, Aug 1 — General cargo *Chrestena II* remains aground. There was a slight leakage of oil which has been stopped by coast guard personnel. Salvage operations are being hampered by very rough weather. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Aug 1 — Following navigation warning, issued 1642, UTC, Jul 31, states: General cargo *Chrestena II* is aground in lat 21 36.90N, long 69 37.43E.

Mumbai, Aug 3 — General cargo *Chrestena II* remains aground. Authorities are to take fuel oil off the vessel. It is likely the whole salvage operation will last at least a month. — Lloyd's Agents.

Mumbai, Aug 3 — General cargo *Chrestena II* remains aground. Due to heavy swell and impact with rocks vessel's bottom is breached. Oil is leaking from the vessel and engine-room of the vessel is also allegedly damaged. Owner's representative with his team arrived Porbunder Aug 1 to assess the situation. — Lloyd's Agents.

CMA CGM OTELLO (French Southern Territories)

London, July 30 — A SvitzerWijmuller Salvage BV report, dated July 28, states: SvitzerWijmuller Salvage Asia Pte. Ltd. is as from July 27 involved in preventing pollution to occur in Singapore port. An about 100,000 ton DWT container vessel (Container Carrier *CMA CGM Otello*) developed considerable bottom damage off China two weeks ago after touching an apparent uncharted shallow while underway to its next port of call. Large longitudinal cracks had developed in the ships bottom as a consequence. The vessel was then escorted into Singapore where it was allowed to berth alongside and the container discharge started. SvitzerWijmuller Salvage teams from Singapore and The Netherlands as well as special oil pumping and pollution preventing equipment in the meantime are in use to keep up with the cargo discharge. This is necessary to keep the waterlock in the breached fuel tanks intact in order to prevent pollution to occur by oil leaking out due to decreasing draughts caused by the cargo discharge. Once the cargo is completely discharged the process in which SvitzerWijmuller Salvage is engaged will change over from maintaining the waterlock underneath the oil in the breached fuel tanks into a total fuel removal from the breached tanks in order to prepare the vessel for drydocking.

Singapore, Aug 1 — Container carrier *CMA CGM Otello* is currently at Raffles Reserve Anchorage, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

COLUMBIA (U.S.A.)

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Passenger ro/ro *Columbia* (3946 gt, built 1974) was heading to Ketchikan today after one of its two diesel engines lost power. The Coast Guard was notified about the mishap at 0220 hrs. The engine gave out in Stephens Passage after the vessel departed from Juneau en route to Petersburg. The vessel's crew had originally intended to return to Juneau for safety reasons — the master did not want to take the vessel through narrower passages — but the Coast Guard later cleared it to instead go to Ketchikan, a route that allows the vessel to avoid the Wrangell Narrows. The vessel is expected to arrive in Ketchikan late tonight for repairs, then leave early tomorrow morning for Bellingham, Washington. Operators hope to be back on regular schedule on Friday (Aug 4).

COUGAR ACE (Singapore)

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* was thrown sideways when the vessel's ballast tank was adjusted in the open seas of the North Pacific, a representative of the vessel's owner said yesterday. "There clearly was imbalance in the intake of ballast water. The company investigation ultimately will tell us what caused

that imbalance," said Greg Beuerman, a spokesman for Tokyo-based Mitsui O.S.K. Lines. Two days after the crew was hoisted to safety, the disabled vessel remained floating on its side, 370 km south of Adak Island. Watertight compartments and doors in the vessel could be contributing to its buoyancy, Beuerman said.

London, Jul 28 — Rules designed to protect the marine environment could have caused vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* to roll on to its side. Ballast water was almost certainly responsible for destabilising the ship, which is now listing heavily more than 200 miles offshore. Mitsui OSK Lines, operator of the stricken vessel, confirmed yesterday that the ship had not collided with some object or grounded. After talking to the ship's master, MOL president Akimitsu Ashida said instability developed during a ballast water adjustment process. Ships are required to change ballast water before entering some ports to ensure alien species are not released into local waters. *Cougar Ace* was heading to Vancouver and then on to the US west coast ports of Tacoma and Port Hueneme, a particularly environmentally sensitive part of the world, at the time of last Sunday's accident. MOL said yesterday that the the ship, carrying nearly 5,000 vehicles, was still floating although listing. Another expert contacted by Lloyd's List, a former master mariner, concurred that the accident appeared to be a ballasting error. The ship would have started sinking by now if it had been holed. "There is very little evidence of water ingress from the outside," he said. "If you have water ingress to the hull the ship would not be far from sinking." He added that in such cases the edge of the deck was considered the tipping point. Once the deck reached the water there were many places where water could seep in and flood the ship. The ship's deck remains out of the water with the vessel listing at around a 60 degree angle. Rescue efforts have yet to begin, but salvage experts said yesterday the 13-year-old car carrier could probably be saved as long as a port of refuge could be found that would accept the crippled ship. The first step would be to correct the ballast situation, "a very difficult exercise" but one that could be done if a decision was taken to tow *Cougar Ace* into port. Only then would cranes be brought in to return the vessel to an upright position. "It is not a lost cause," one salvor said. "There is always the possibility to do something if circumstances allow." But persuading a port to let the ship to enter may be as big a challenge as the physical rescue. The US Coast Guard said that some observers had spotted fuel leaking from its tanks of the ship, which was carrying carrying 430 tonnes of fuel oil and 112 tonnes of diesel. A salvage team from Crowley Marine is not due to reach *Cougar Ace*, about 230 miles south of the Aleutian Islands, until next Wednesday. The ship was loaded with Mazda cars being exported from Japan to North

America. More than half are Mazda 3 models, the car manufacturer's best selling vehicle. Another quarter are Mazda's new 2007 CX7, a crossover utility vehicle. The shipment is fully insured against loss, spokesman Jeremy Barnes said. The company has been unable to verify the condition of the cargo with MOL since the accident.

London, July 28 — A Mitsui O.S.K. Lines press release, dated Tokyo today, states: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd. (MOL, President: Akimitsu Ashida) announced that the MOL-operated vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* is floating stably although the vessel remains listed as before. The United States Coast Guard mentions in their home page that "There have been no sign of the vessel's fuel tanks losing containment at this time" In order to secure cargo as soon as possible, MOL has arranged to dispatch a towing vessel from Seattle. In addition, a tug with a salvage engineer on board is to sail from Dutch Harbour shortly to investigate the current situation and to make a concrete plan for *Cougar Ace* to regain stability and for being towed to a safe port which is yet to be decided. Additionally, MOL continues to investigate the cause of the vessel listing by interviewing crew members. As previously reported the probable cause of the listing has been identified as instability which occurred during the ballast water adjustment process. MOL officials believe the listing was caused by discharging too much seawater from ballast tanks located in the bottom of the vessel. In the process of the adjustment work, the vessel rolled on the swell of the sea and suddenly listed.

London, Jul 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A shift in wind direction on Wednesday (Jul 26) started pushing vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* back towards the Aleutian Islands, and as of late yesterday afternoon the vessel was only 153 miles south of Atka, the Coast Guard said. "There's a chance it could end up aground," Petty Officer Sara Francis said, but it was likely winds would dissipate or change direction again as the moves gets closer to the islands and prevent that. Yesterday afternoon, winds were out of the south-west at about 22 knots, Francis said, with the vessel's hull acting as a sail, and it was moving towards shore at about 1.9 knots. The Coast Guard cutter *Rush* was on scene tracking the situation. According to the National Weather Service online forecast for the Aleutians, winds were expected to pick up to about 30 knots after midnight last night, then reduce to 20-25 knots today and tonight. The winds could shift back and blow from the west again by sometime tomorrow, according to the forecast. That could interrupt the vessel's drift toward shore. The Coast Guard and the vessel's owners "are working to find a solution and devise contingency plans if it grounds," Francis said. "With any luck, it won't." A salvage expert and a naval engineer were to fly over the

vessel yesterday and try to come up with solutions if the vessel continues its northerly drift, she said. A salvage vessel was due to depart from Dutch Harbor last night. The state Department of Environmental Conservation also is watching the situation closely, and with some concern, said Leslie Pearson, the agency's program manager for spill prevention and response. Francis said the wind shift happened around 1600 on Wednesday, after the vessel had been drifting almost due east since tipping on its side. By about the same time yesterday, it had moved from about 230 miles offshore to only 153 miles off Atka, she said. The vessel's position on the water had not changed. It was still listing about 60 degrees to port, Francis said, and trailing a very light sheen. The vessel is carrying 430 tonnes of fuel oil and 112 tonnes of diesel fuel but little is believed to have spilled. "It's still a really light, broken rainbow sheen," Francis said. "That means a relatively little amount of oil."

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated Jul 28, states: The disabled, crewless vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* loaded with nearly 5,000 cars has crossed into U.S. waters, drifting today toward Alaska's Aleutian chain. The vessel was still listing sideways as it floated in choppy seas about 150 miles south of Atka Island, the Coast Guard said. The 654-foot car carrier had zigzagged 120 miles since it tilted sharply Sunday (Jul 23) night, said Petty Officer Richard Reichenbach. The Coast Guard cutter *Rush* was tracking the vessel as it slowly moved north-east. "There's always concern, but we do have an asset on scene," Coast Guard Lt. Heather Neely said. "We're doing all we can and it's not drifting very fast." The vessel's owner, Tokyo-based Mitsui O.S.K Lines, sent out a tug this morning with a salvage engineer on board from Dutch Harbor on Unalaska Island, about 400 miles away. The goal is to secure the vessel's cargo of mostly Mazda vehicles as soon as possible, said company spokesman Greg Beuerman. The cars are stacked 14 stories high in the ship, which stretches 155 feet between its hull and antenna. A salvage tow from Seattle is expected to reach the *Cougar Ace* no earlier than Wednesday (Aug 2), while the Dutch Harbor tug is expected to arrive tomorrow morning. The engineer en route today will work on a plan to regain stability for the vessel for towing it to a yet undetermined port, Beuerman said. It is speculated that the *Cougar Ace* had discharged too much water from ballast tanks at the bottom of the vessel, causing it to suddenly list in the space of 10 minutes, according to Beuerman. He said company officials believe the vessel rolled on the swell of the sea while the crew was adjusting the ballast tank, which regulates the ship's weight and balance. The condition of the cargo is unknown.

London, July 29 — A Coast Guard Anchorage press release, dated July 28, states: The Coast Guard, Mitsui

O.S.K. Lines and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation have come together to establish a unified command to respond to the vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* situation in Anchorage. They are monitoring the situation and stationing response assets accordingly. *Cougar Ace* was at last report 130 nautical miles south of Amlia Island in the Aleutian Island chain. It has been adrift since approximately 0100 Monday (July 24). The vessel is being pushed by the wind at about two knots. Since about 1600 Wednesday the vessel was on a mostly northern route. At the time of this release the wind had shifted and has been pushing the vessel east for the last five hours. Coast Guard cutter *Rush* remains on scene monitoring *Cougar Ace* for signs of pollution and tracking its movement. Four other vessels are en route to *Cougar Ace*'s position. Some estimated times of arrival have changed since early reports today. Coast Guard cutter *Morgenthau* departed Dutch Harbor late Thursday night after taking on fuel and stores. Salvage equipment was placed on board in Dutch Harbor. They were diverted from a previous mission in Alaska waters to respond to the drifting vessel. They will relieve the cutter *Rush*. Tug *Sea Victory* is a Crowley Marine tug from Seattle. It was dispatched Wednesday and is expected to arrive on scene Monday (July 31). Tug *Emma Foss*, a Foss Maritime tug from Dutch Harbor, departed Dutch Harbor late yesterday and arrived in Adak early today. It took on salvage and towing equipment and is currently en route to *Cougar Ace*. The vessel is expected on scene tomorrow. Vessel *Makushin Bay* belonging to Magone Marine, homeported in Dutch Harbor, departed Dutch Harbor late yesterday with salvage specialists from Titan Maritime onboard. They will also arrive on scene early Sunday. Once on scene the various salvage experts will assess the condition of the vessel and report salvage options to the Unified Command for action. Additional salvage equipment is being staged in Dutch Harbor. *Cougar Ace* is continuing to emit a non-recoverable sheen as it drifts. The sheen is approximately four miles in length and is light and patchy. Weather conditions on scene are reported as 13-20 knot winds from the west. Sea state is 11-14 feet. Conditions are overcast with intermittent rain and patchy fog. Weather conditions are not expected to change significantly over the weekend.

London, July 30 — A Coast Guard Anchorage press release, dated July 29, states: The Unified Command is continuing to work the vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* incident. Plans for surveying the vessel are being made. Experts are running models to determine the best way to right the vessel and tow it to safety. Contingency plans to respond to a potential oil spill or the vessel grounding also continue to be developed. *Cougar Ace* was at last

report 126 nautical miles south of Amlia Island. The vessel is being pushed by the wind at about 1.7 knots. Since about 1600 Wednesday the vessel was on a mostly northern route. Yesterday it took an east north east course. It is still on that course. Coast Guard cutter *Morgenthau* is on scene monitoring *Cougar Ace* for signs of pollution and tracking its movement. Five other vessels are being used to respond to *Cougar Ace*. Some vessels are on scene and some are still en route. *Morgenthau* relieved cutter *Rush* at noon today. Tug *Sea Victory* is still expected to arrive on scene Monday (July 31). Tug *Emma Foss* from Seattle not Dutch Harbor (as before reported). The vessel was diverted from another mission when it was in the vicinity of Adak Wednesday. In Adak it took on salvage and towing equipment. It arrived on scene today. The crew is currently conducting a detailed survey of *Cougar Ace* to document the vessels condition and access points. Vessel *Makushin Bay* will arrive on scene early tomorrow. Coast Guard cutter *Sycamore* is en route with spill equipment on board. It is expected to arrive Wednesday. Once *Makushin Bay* is on scene the various salvage experts will assess the condition of the vessel and report salvage options to the Unified Command for action. Those reports will provide for accurate plans to right the vessel and safely tow it. Additional salvage equipment is being staged in Dutch Harbor. Weather conditions on scene are reported as 12 knot winds from the southwest. Sea state is one foot seas with three foot swells. Conditions are overcast with intermittent rain and dense fog. The amount of fuel on board has been confirmed as 113,500 gallons of Intermediate Fuel Oil 380 and 33,000 gallons of marine diesel.

London, Jul 31 — Following received from Coast Guard Juneau, timed 1700, UTC: A member of a salvage team on board vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* was killed yesterday following a fall. The man was from vessel *Makushin Bay*, out of Anchorage. (See issue of Aug 1.)

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: A member of a salvage team examining vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace*, drifting in the Aleutian Islands, slipped down the vessel's deck and suffered a fatal blow to his head, the Coast Guard said today. The four-member salvage team was preparing to leave the vessel, which is listing almost on its side, when the naval architect lost his footing yesterday and was knocked unconscious. He was flown to a nearby Coast Guard cutter equipped with a surgeon and a clinic and pronounced dead about an hour later, Coast Guard spokeswoman Sara Francis said. "They were on the covered main deck and he slid down a considerable distance, somewhere in the range of 80 feet," said Charles Nalen, vice president of environmental safety quality assurance for Crowley Maritime, owner of Titan Salvage. Members of the salvage team were

equipped with safety harnesses and clipped onto a safety line as they moved along the deck. "For some reason, he became disconnected from the safety line," Nalen said. The victim's name was being withheld until relatives could be notified. The vessel continued to drift slowly east today in relatively calm seas 140 miles south of Amlia Island in the Aleutians.

London, Aug 1 — A Coast Guard Anchorage press release, dated Jul 31, states: A four-man salvage team was able to access and survey vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* Jul 30, determining that at least some cargo remains in place and that the vessel remains stable. However, while conducting the survey, one of the team members fell and died from injuries sustained in the fall. The team attempted to board the vessel from vessel *Makushin Bay* but were unable to climb up the structure. They successfully accessed the vessel using the HH-65 Dolphin helicopter from the Coast Guard cutter *Morgenthau*. The salvage team commenced a survey of the vessel's engine-room and some of the cargo decks. After the survey was completed and the team was disembarking the *Cougar Ace* a member of the team slipped and fell. He was knocked unconscious. The other team members conducted CPR on the scene. He was immediately medevaced to the *Morgenthau*. After conducting CPR for over an hour, he was pronounced dead by the Coast Guard flight surgeon. A safety assessment is under way. The initial survey was successful. The team looked at Nos 1 and 9 decks. The team determined that the cargo on No 1 deck, the highest deck, remains in place. Cargo on the ninth deck has also remained in place. The engine-room is intact and there is no sign of water. There are a total of fourteen car cargo decks on the *Cougar Ace*. Tug *Sea Victory* is expected to arrive on scene late today from Seattle. The Coast Guard cutter *Sycamore*, a 225-foot seagoing buoy tender from Cordova, has arrived on scene. The Unified Command is continuing to develop plans to right the vessel and safely tow it. No determination has been made as to where the vessel will be towed. Weather conditions on scene are reported as seven knot winds from the south-west. Sea state is one foot seas and swells. Conditions are overcast with eight nautical miles of visibility.

London, Aug 2 — A Coast Guard Anchorage press release, dated Aug 1, states: The Unified Command is continuing to monitor the condition of vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace*, evaluate options for improving the vessel's list and plan for a movement of the vessel. Using information obtained from the initial vessel survey, which took place on Sunday evening (Jul 30), the decision was made to take advantage of a favourable weather window and rig a tow from tug *Emma Foss* to *Cougar Ace* as a test of the towing arrangement and to gain some additional control of the vessel. *Emma*

Foss is maintaining the tow at minimum speeds to ensure a safe towing configuration on a north-east heading. The tow will shift to tug *Sea Victory* when it arrives on scene later today. The Unified Command is considering three primary options for the vessel: Towing the vessel to a port of refuge and righting it in port; righting the vessel on scene and then towing it to a port for further assessment and repair; and partially righting the vessel to improve its condition for towing it to a port of refuge for righting. One of the major factors being considered is the extreme angle of the vessel and the difficulty for crews to work on board. The angle also affects what equipment might be needed to effectively right and tow the vessel. A final decision is dependent on several variables including weather, approved ports, stability, safety and expected degree of success. Port assessments continue. A scientific team including the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, NOAA, Polaris Applied Sciences, Alaska Department of Natural Resources and Alaska Department of Fish and Game is part of the incident command structure in Anchorage and is keeping the Unified Command apprised of the natural resources and environmental issues in the port areas being considered. Additional salvage and dive personnel are en route to assist as needed and conduct more survey work to determine the best options for righting and moving the vessel. An analysis of the vessel's fuel and ballast tanks has been undertaken to determine what weights would need to be shifted to right the vessel. As of 0800 hrs, weather conditions on scene consist of south-west winds at 15 knots. The seas are at four feet. The closest point of land is Seaguam Island, 115 nautical miles to the north. Seaguam Island is the next island east of Amlia Island in the Aleutians.

London, Aug 3 — A Coast Guard Anchorage press release, dated Aug 2, states: A Unified Command of federal, state and shipping company representatives continues to make efforts to right vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* and plan contingencies for towing to an appropriate port of refuge if those efforts are not effective. With the arrival of a new naval architect and an additional team of salvage professionals at the scene late tonight, a second, more extensive examination of the vessel will take place. Two pumps and other needed equipment were off-loaded from vessel *Makushin Bay* onto the *Cougar Ace* last night for an intended rigging of pumps to begin this afternoon. Another pump is still to be placed on board. The pumps will be set up in series to allow them to function more effectively. Plans call for the pumping of water from No 9 cargo deck which is at the waterline, to No 5 starboard ballast tank to help improve the ballast condition and further stabilise the vessel. Several ports in Alaska are under consideration as a destination for the vessel, which

remains stabilised approximately 106 miles south of Herbert Island. The Coast Guard cutter *Morgenthau* remains on scene as well as tug *Sea Victory*, which arrived at the site from Seattle yesterday and has replaced tug *Emma Foss* in holding a towline rigged to the *Cougar Ace*. An additional private vessel, tug *Gladiator*, has left Anacortes, Wash, and is en route to assist with transporting the vessel if needed. The vessel has similar capabilities to the *Sea Victory*. According to Incident Commander Capt Mark DeVries of the United States Coast Guard, a decision on where and how to tow the vessel could still be days away. Depending on several factors, including weather, the determined condition of the vessel, success of at-sea salvage operations and the port selected, transit time for the *Cougar Ace* to the chosen port could be five to six days or more. Weather on-site is expected to deteriorate today, with south-east winds at five knots becoming south-west at 15-30 knots by noon and shifting north to north-west late. Seas are at one foot with three-foot swells. The seas will increase slightly with higher winds. It is overcast with visibility reduced to one nautical mile currently. However, the Unified Command does not expect that these conditions will slow the project or create special concerns relative to the condition of the vessel. Weather conditions are expected to improve tomorrow.

DALIANA (Greece)

Piraeus, Jul 28 — Passenger ro/ro *Daliana*, from Brindisi with 194 passengers and 72 vehicles on board, ran aground in shallow waters near Igoumenitsa yesterday morning. All its crew members and passengers were reportedly safe and uninjured. No pollution was reported. The vessel was refloated 25 minutes after the grounding by its own power and berthed safely at Igoumenitsa port. After class inspection the local port authorities allowed vessel to depart later the same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

DAYANA (Panama)

Santo Domingo, Aug 1 — Roll On Roll Off *Dayana* sailed from Santo Domingo, Sunday (Jul 30), bound Trinidad. — Lloyd's Agents.

DOLLART GAS (Cyprus)

London, Aug 3 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Dollart Gas* sailed Kaohsiung Jul 22 and vessel subsequently arrived Shanghai Jul 30.

DONG WON NO.628 (South Korea)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy."

EASLINE TIANJIN (Singapore)

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

EDMONTON QUEEN (Canada)

London, Aug 1 — Ferry *Edmonton Queen* (750 gt, built 1993) unintentionally made contact with the

bottom without grounding, in the North Saskatchewan River, in Edmonton, Alberta, in lat 53 34N, long 113 28W, at 1955, Jul 14.

ELEVEN (Belize)

Suva, Jul 28 — According to yesterdays press release, Fiji Ports Corporation Limited (FPCL) is in the process of removing derelict vessels from the Suva Harbour. The operation will start before the end of the month. Fishing (general) *Eleven* is one of the derelict vessels and will probably be scuttled at sea. — Lloyd's Agents.

ELINAKOS (Panama)

London, July 29 — Bulker *Elinakos* arrived Hamburg 1756, July 27, from Port Cartier.

ENCHANTMENT OF THE SEAS (Bahamas)

London, Aug 2 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: A short circuit on board passenger (cruise) *Enchantment of the Seas* (82910 gt, built 1997) led to a small fire, whilst the vessel was at Cozumel, Mexico. The damage was slight, mostly restricted to the "rescue boat" on which the fire started. The vessel resumed its voyage a short time after the incident. (Note — *Enchantment of the Seas* was reported arrived at Cozumel at 1000 hrs, Jul 29 and sailing later the same day at 2000 hrs.)

ENSCO 107 (Liberia)

Singapore, Jul 31 — Drill platform *Ensko 107* left Singapore Jul 30 for Vung Tau in tow of tug/supply *Seabulk Betsy* and tug *Pacific 8*. — Lloyd's Agents.

ENTERPRISE (Antigua & Barbuda)

Melbourne, July 28 — Understand bulker *Enterprise* will sail July 29. The filters in the oil pump had become clogged with metal fragments. These have now been flushed out. — Lloyd's Agents.

EURO SEA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

See "Belgium" under "Port State Control".

EUROPEAN MARINER (Bahamas)

London, Aug 2 — Following received from Coastguard Clyde MRCC, timed 1052, UTC: Roll On Roll Off *European Mariner* (5897 gt, built 1978), 20 persons on board, in contact with perch approximately 400 yards north of Troon harbour entrance in lat 55 33.2N, long 04 40.9W. Anchored off Troon awaiting information from the owners of dry-dock availability. Awaiting clearance to proceed to Larne on one engine to discharge passenger and cargo. Decision to be made if escort required for crossing North Channel.

London, Aug 3 — Following received from Coastguard Clyde MRCC, timed 0705, UTC: Roll On Roll Off *European Mariner* which was awaiting clearance to proceed to Larne to discharge

passengers and cargo, thence to Liffy Dry Dock, Dublin, made an unescorted single engine passage across the north channel and safely berthed at Larne with tug assistance at 1806, UTC, Aug 2.

EXPRESS SANTORINI (Greece)

Piraeus, Aug 2 — Passenger ro/ro *Express Santorini* is still under repair at drapetzona, ETC not presently known. — Lloyd's Agents.

FAIRWEATHER (U.S.A.)

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: An aging on-board sewage system, a frozen valve and some confusion among crew members caused a recent spill of partially treated sewage from a NOAA survey research *Fairweather* (1591 gt, built 1968) into Womens Bay, said reports on the spill from state environmental regulators and the vessel's skipper. The NOAA survey vessel dumped approximately 1,500 gallons of partially treated sewage into Womens Bay last month while the vessel was at dock on the Kodiak Coast Guard Base. The spill that was reported to State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Jul 19 took place between Jul 13 and 19, a DEC report says. "We should have been hooked up (to the Base's sewage system)," said NOAA Corps Cmdr. Andrew Beaver, skipper of *Fairweather*. The vessel's crew thought its onboard sewage system allowed for the discharge, according to a DEC report on the spill. When it reported the discharge to the Coast Guard environmental personnel, the crew was told to hook up to the Base's sewage system. The crew first needed to unlock the frozen valve. Another part of the vessel's onboard sanitation system is broken. The system normally operates as a type 2 MSD, or marine sanitation device, meaning it would do both primary and secondary sewage treatment before putting sewage overboard at sea. A secondary treatment part called the "book cell" needs to be replaced on the *Fairweather* leaving the vessel with only primary treatment, Beaver said. The frozen valve the second factor leading to the spill prevented the *Fairweather* from hooking up to the Coast Guard's sewer system when they arrived in Kodiak. Beaver said his crew believed the discharge overboard was permitted, given the primary system was operating. The NOAA vessel is currently under way near Dutch Harbour.

FEDERAL WESER (Cyprus)

London, Aug 1 — Bulker *Federal Weser* (22654 gt, built 2002) grounded in mud just above the locks, in sight of McLean's Dock, St. Mary's River, in lat 46 29.50N, long 84 24.20W, at 0250, UTC, Jul 29. The vessel was freed with assistance from three tugs at 0400, UTC, same day. (Note — *Federal Weser* arrived Sault Ste. Marie Jul 28.)

FINNMAID (Finland)

Ancona, Aug 3 — At approximately 1750 hrs, Aug 2, passenger ro/ro

Finnmaid (42100 gt, built 2006) broke its mooring ropes, in stormy weather, while lying afloat at berth No.1, Ancona. The vessel was re-moored with assistance of port services. There were no injuries. An inspection revealed the following damages: Pier No.2 and central and bollards, gantry crane No.1 hit and damaged davit of "rescue boat" and the vessel's starboard side was scratched. Understand delivery of the vessel to the shipowners has been postponed to next week, after repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

FLOYD H.BLASKE (U.S.A.)

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: Tug *Floyd H.Blaske* (628 gt, built 1966) grounded just downstream of Lock & Dam 11 in Dubuque, Iowa, Jul 31. The vessel was on the normal approach to the lock when it suddenly turned and struck the shore with at least one barge. The barges are sitting at least a foot higher on the rocks due to the grounding. Barge *ACBL 3083* was also holed and had to be dewatered with portable pumps.

FOLEGANDROS (Greece)

London, Aug 3 — Product tanker *Folegandros* passed through Panama Canal Jul 26 and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was in lat 26 02 46N, long 114 32 05W at 1034 today, speed 12.5 knots, course 319 degrees.

FRONT LEADER (Singapore)

London, Jul 28 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 1126, UTC: Combined bulk and oil carrier *Front Leader* (89004 gt, built 1991) and product tanker *Aulac Angel* (6993 gt, built 2003) were in collision in lat 01 34.3N, long 104 37.26E, at 1430, UTC, Jul 27. Following the collision, *Aulac Angel* anchored in lat 01 35.84N, long 104 36.61E. *Front Leader* proceeded on voyage to Shanghai.

London, Aug 2 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, combined bulk and oil carrier *Front Leader* was located in lat 23 34 22.52N, long 121 56 41.98E, at 0050, UTC, today, speed 16.4 knots, course 19 deg. nearest port Hualien, distance 31.7 nautical miles.

GAO HE (China)

Aden, July 28 — Container Carrier *Gao He* (37143 gt, built 1990), which sailed Aden 1300, July 27 is reported to have had an explosion in the engine-room 180 miles off Aden near Hanish as Sughra Island (lat 13 52N, long 42 47E). Understand one crewmember seriously injured and reportedly vessel proceeding to Hodeidah port for further repair. — Lloyd's Agents.

GAZ HORIZON (Panama)

Balboa, July 27 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Gaz Horizon* reportedly completed repairs overnight and is now awaiting inspection/approval by canal authorities prior being scheduled to resume transit. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, July 29 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Gaz Horizon* was in lat 08 09 55N, long 79 34 12W, at 0335 today, speed 16.1 knots, course 195.2 degrees.

Balboa, Aug 1 — Liquid Petroleum Gas carrier *Gaz Horizon* resumed transit pm, Jul 28, and sailed Balboa at 1902 same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

GORKY (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, July 31 — According to Cartagena Port Authority general cargo *Gorky* is still at at Muelle Fertilizantes, Escombreras, under repair. (See issue of July 17.)

GOTLANDIA II (Sweden)

Gothenburg, Aug 3 — Passenger ro/ro *Gotlandia II* (7000 gt, built 2006) is temporarily out of service as a result of a fire on board on Jul 10. The cause is being investigated by the "manufacturer" MAN B&W UK. They found broken bolts to the injection system and tests are being conducted to establish why the bolts broke. Once these have been satisfactorily concluded, all other bolts and similar equipment will need to be changed. Currently, there is no specific date when the vessel will be back in service, but it is hoped to have her operational again by the end of August. — Westax Marine Services AB. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS at 1130 hrs, today, *Gotlandia II* was at Visby, in lat 57 38.11N, long 18 17.4E.)

GREEN HILL (U.K.)

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Fishing (general) *Green Hill* which sank near Ardglass in January with the loss of two lives, may be brought to the surface. The body of one fisherman Conor Bogues is still missing. An operation to try to assess the boat, which is lying in 80ft of water, took place yesterday. A decision is expected soon on whether or not the vessel can be raised.

HAO HAI (Belize)

London, Aug 2 — Following navigation warning issued at 1900, JST, today: Anchoring general cargo *Hao Hai* (1193 gt, built 1978) exists in vicinity of lat 34 40.8N, long 134 17.2E.

London, Aug 2 — Following received from Coast Guard Japan, timed 1150, UTC: *Hao Hai*, from Katagama, reported fire in engine-room generator which has now been extinguished. Crew are now carrying out repairs to the generator.

London, Aug 3 — Following navigation warning issued today: Anchoring general cargo *Hao Hai* exists in vicinity of lat 34 40.8N, long 134 17.2E.

HARVEST TAMARA (South Africa)

See *Anangel Splendour*.

HIGHSPEED 2 (Greece)

Piraeus, Aug 2 — Ferry *Highspeed 2* (2869 gt, built 2000) sustained mechanical failure at one of its four

main engines Jul 29. The vessel was performing the schedule Rafina-Tinos-Mykonos-Naxos-Paros-Piraeus and berthed safely at Piraeus the same day with two hours delay. Currently the vessel is undergoing repairs and is expected to returned to service tomorrow. — Lloyd's Agents.

HORIZON DISCOVERY (U.S.A.)

London, July 29 — Container Carrier *Horizon Discovery* sailed Jacksonville July 26 for San Juan.

IKA NO.7

Suva, Jul 28 — According to yesterday's press release Fiji Ports Corporation Limited (FPCL) is in the process of removing derelict vessels from the Suva Harbour. The operation will start before the end of the month. Unknown *Ika No.7*, which grounded outside the port in January 2004, is one of the derelict vessels and will probably be scuttled at sea. — Lloyd's Agents.

INGWENYA (South Africa)

See *Umfoloji*.

IRAN MUFATEH (Iran)

London, Aug 3 — Bulker *Iran Mufateh* arrived Bandar Abbas Jul 18.

IRIS (Netherlands)

London, Aug 3 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Passenger (cruise) *Iris* from Amsterdam, ran aground on the Maas, close to the mouth of Tholenstad. A tug of Polderman came from Hansweert, refloated the 45 metre ship vessel, which was on the way to Brugge, Belgium. It carried passengers which had joined the EuroSail in Amsterdam. Two tugs had tried in vain to salvage the hotel ship after it was pushed aground by strong winds.

JONATHAN SWIFT (Cyprus)

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Thousands of passengers have had travel plans disrupted after Roll On Roll Off *Jonathan Swift* (59889 gt, built 1999) struck a whale just off Holyhead in north Wales. Irish Ferries have confirmed its Dublin Swift service would be grounded for two days following the incident at 1300, UTC, today. The "soft impact" collision happened as the vessel approached the port of Holyhead. No one was injured. A spokesman for Irish Ferries said the 4,000 passengers booked on the sailings will be accommodated on the car ferry. The company's sales manager Declan Mescall said: "We're not too sure exactly what happened. "We certainly hit a submerged object this afternoon, about half an hour out from Holyhead port. "*Jonathan Swift* hit something big and soft and the suggestion is that it's some kind of sea mammal." He said the vessel was travelling at about 40 knots at the time of the impact. He added it was not unusual for dolphins to play alongside the firm's larger car ferries as they made the crossing. Irish

Ferries said the *Jonathan Swift* was being taken out of service as a precautionary operational measure. Over the next two days divers will inspect how much damage, if any, has been caused. A spokesman said: "Depending on the outcome of that investigation, and whether or not repair works have to be carried out, that time scale could be shorter or longer."

KAPETAN GIORGIS STRATOULIS (Greece)

London, Aug 2 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives report: During the morning of Aug 1, the self-propelled mussels barge *Kapetan Giorgis Stratoulis* (Thessaloniki Register 833) sank due to ingress of water while entering the port of Alkyon Pidnas Pierias. The five crewmembers were rescued by a fishing boat and taken to the coast. There was no pollution. The Port Authority of Skalas Katerinis is performing an investigation.

KONEMU (New Caledonia)

Noumea, Jul 27 — Product tanker *Konemu* is still berthed at fishing quay. — Lloyd's Agents.

KOSTAS (Honduras)

London, July 29 — General cargo *Kostas* which arrived Skikda 1700, Jan 25 was still in port at berth No.8 July 27.

KRIOS (Malta)

London, Aug 1 — Bulker *Krios* (8300 gt, built 1983) damaged its bulbous bow after having struck ice 40 miles west of Iceland, en route for Montreal, Quebec, in lat 61 58.00N, long 29 31.00W, at 1200, UTC, Jul 26. (Note — *Krios* sailed Murmansk Jul 21 for Windsor, Ontario, and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was reported in lat 63 49. 4.3N, long 23 44.19.97'W at 0011, Jul 30, 62.3 nautical miles from Reykjanes, speed 11.3 knots, course 234.4 deg.)

LADY MOURA (Bahamas)

London, July 29 — Information received, dated Kiel today, states: Yacht *Lady Moura* may not be coming to Blohm & Voss for repairs as the yacht was reported berthed at a repairyard in Cartagena, Spain, July 7.

LASS URANUS (Germany)

London, Aug 2 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: Repairs to general cargo *Lass Uranus* have been completed at Peterswerft, Wewelsfleth. The vessel recently passed through the Kiel Canal and proceeded via Lubeck Bay to Neustadt. On Aug 1 *Lass Uranus* was again in the Kiel Canal en route to Brunsbittel.

LEIF ERIKSON (Canada)

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Tourism operators in Newfoundland and Labrador are worried about major delays on the Marine Atlantic ferry service between Port aux Basques, N.L., and North

Sydney, N.S. The Roll On Roll Off *Leif Erikson* (18523 gt, built 1991) has been put into dock to undergo repairs after a major engine part on the vessel broke down on Saturday (Jul 29). The two remaining ferries working out of Port aux Basques are still operating according to schedule. Approximately 500 passengers a day will miss their crossings and some people may have to wait days before they can cross. Marine Atlantic president Roger Flood says the delay comes at a bad time. Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador is working with Marine Atlantic to try to reach tourists about rescheduling their trips. The vessel may be fixed later this week.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Roll on roll off *Leif Erikson* was expected to resume its run between North Sydney and Port aux Basques by today. The vessel was put into dock to undergo repairs after a turbo-charger failed on Saturday (Jul 29). A replacement part was en route from Switzerland. About 500 passengers a day had to reschedule their crossings on one of three other vessels. Some people were delayed for only a few hours, while others had to wait a day or two. Officials stressed that passengers who needed to board a ferry because of an emergency were accommodated. Marine Atlantic president Roger Flood said he was not surprised the troubles hit during the busiest time of the year, even though maintenance is performed routinely on the vessels. "When we are running in the summertime, we are running flat out," Flood said yesterday from Halifax. "We didn't anticipate any problems with any of the vessels. It happened and now we have to deal with it." The backlog of travellers is expected to be cleared within a few days.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Marine Atlantic says hundreds of people who have been waiting for a ferry ride across the Cabot Strait will leave sooner than expected. Roll on roll off *Leif Erikson* left North Sydney for Port aux Basques at around 0230 today. It was the first trip for the vessel since it had an engine problem on Saturday (Jul 29). Now that the vessel is back in service, Marine Atlantic president Roger Flood expects the backlog of passengers will be cleared up by tonight, instead of tomorrow. "What we were thinking at that point is that it would take an additional 24 hours to clean up the backlog after we had the vessel running. We think we're going to do that faster," Flood said. However, it is expected to take a little longer for commercial traffic. Flood said it took longer to repair the vessel because a part had to be shipped from Switzerland.

LIBERTY A. (Cyprus)

See "Cyprus" under "Port State Control".

LIN 1 (Panama)

See "Somalia" under "Piracy".

LINDA (Netherlands)

London, Aug 1 — Information received, dated Kiel today, states: Netherlands inland waterways non specific tanker *Linda*, home port Dordrecht, went off course July 28 while passing the Rhine upstream at kilometre 654.8 in Bonn. Another ship which was passing brought *Linda* into difficulties as it was in danger of drifting against a pile of the Kennedy Bridge. The police boat *WSP 5P* joined by the Dutch inland water craft Eemshoorn prevented *Linda* from contacting the bridge. Nevertheless the vessel sustained rudder and propeller damage.

LUCKY STAR (Bolivia)

Taipei, July 28 — According to a "Notice to Mariners" issued by the Chinese Naval Meteorologic & Oceanographic Office, dated July 21 tanker *Lucky Star* sank in lat 22 36 14.4N, long 120 15 50.4E, on June 30. All vessels are prohibited from anchoring at the position on safety basis. Source - Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau letter dated July 19. — Lloyd's Agents.

MAERSK FAWLEY (U.K.)

London, Aug 1 — Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 2235, UTC: Container Carrier *Maersk Fawley* (9990 gt, built 2005), bound Rotterdam, is currently anchored outside Rotterdam, in lat 51 58N, long 03 46E, following explosion in engine-room. Master reports everything under control, with crew investigating damage to engine-room. No assistance required at present.

London, Aug 2 — Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 0440, UTC: Container carrier *Maersk Fawley* is still at anchor, awaiting arrival of a tug which will tow it to Rotterdam. The tug is expected on scene this morning.

London, Aug 2 — Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 1200, UTC: Container Carrier *Maersk Fawley* is in tow of tug *Smit Clyde*, bound Rotterdam, ETA about two hours.

London, Aug 3 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, container carrier *Maersk Fawley* was moored in lat 51 52 52.38N, long 04 23 56.34E, at 2307, UTC, Aug 2, nearest port Schiedam, distance 1.1 nautical miles.

London, Aug 3 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: On Aug 2 container carrier *Maersk Fawley* sustained machine problems four miles west of the Maas. The vessel had to anchor and was then towed to Eemshaven by tug *Fairplay 24*.

MAERSK RIO GRANDE (Antigua & Barbuda)

Balboa, Aug 1 — Container Carrier *Maersk Rio Grande* (16129 gt, built 2002) is being towed to Balboa by tug *Lobos* after reportedly experiencing main engine problems. The vessels have an ETA at Balboa of late PM today. — Lloyd's Agents.

**MAJESTIC UNITY
(Marshall Islands)**

Dalian, Aug 1 — Crude oil tanker *Majestic Unity* reberthed at 1712, July 30 for discharging operation which was completed at 1400 yesterday. After completion of discharge the vessel shifted to anchorage again due to arrest by the court. — Lloyd's Agents.

MANISTEE (U.S.A.)

Troy, Mich, July 29 — Bulker *Manistee* (9790 gt, built 1943) was inbound the Saginaw River early yesterday morning with a split load. It stopped to lighter at the Wirt dock in Bay City, then around 0645 hrs continued upriver to finish at the Wirt dock in Saginaw. *Manistee* was unable to complete unloading in Saginaw due to a problem with the unloading equipment. The vessel backed down to the Burroughs dock early in the evening where attempts will be made overnight to make repairs. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping News.

Troy Mich, July 30 — Bulker *Manistee* was undergoing repairs at the Burroughs dock in Zilwaukee with a crane over it. Once repairs are completed *Manistee* will head back upriver to the Saginaw Wirt dock to finish unloading its cargo and will be outbound for the lake. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping News.

Troy, Mich, July 31 — Bulker *Manistee* continued to undergo repairs at the Burroughs dock, Zilwaukee, yesterday. *Manistee* told the tug *Robin Lynn* that repairs should be completed tomorrow or Wednesday, and that *Manistee* will be headed back up to Stoneport to get another load for the Saginaw River. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping News.

MARINA STAR (Bahamas)

Genoa, July 27 — General cargo *Marina Star* left Genoa July 26 for Valencia. — Lloyd's Agents.

**MARINER OF THE SEAS
(Bahamas)**

See "Outbreak Of Virus On Bahamas Flag Vessel" under "Miscellaneous".

MARIS (Honduras)

Chittagong, Aug 2 — Bulker *Maris* berthed at the CUFL jetty on Aug 1 and is currently undergoing repairs to the damage in hold No 1. The vessel is expected to depart next week. Product tanker *Atlantica I* is still lying under attachment, and the claim settlement negotiations between both shipowners are still in progress. — Lloyd's Agents.

MARRAKECH EXPRESS (Panama)

Genoa, Aug 2 — Passenger ro/ro *Marrakech Express* is still at Genoa waiting for sea trials. There is currently no information available concerning the vessel's possible ETS. — Lloyd's Agents.

MASSACHUSETTS (U.S.A.)

Suva, Jul 28 — Trawler (All types) *Massachusetts*, which grounded on a reef about 34 miles off Suva on Jul 7 2002, is in the port of Suva awaiting potential buyers. — Lloyd's Agents.

MEKHANIK KRASOTKIN (Russia)

See *Sormovskiy 32*.

MIDNIGHT RIDER (U.S.A.)

Boston, MA, Jul 31 — Understand from salvors Tucker-Roy Marine that fishing (general) *Midnight Rider* is alongside at New Bedford. The likelihood is that the vessel will be scrapped. — Lloyd's Agents.

MSC JESSICA (Panama)

See *Charlotte Maersk*.

NAMA (Panama)

Chennai, Aug 1 — At 1845 hrs, Jul 30, general cargo *Nama* (8203 gt, built 1988) ran aground approximately 17 nautical miles from Kakinada Port. The vessel is still aground. Salvage operations, which commenced this morning, are still in progress. — Lloyd's Agents.

Chennai, Aug 3 — General cargo *Nama* remains aground, with salvage operations still under way. — Lloyd's Agents.

NEW FLAMENCO (Panama)

London, Jul 28 — Passenger (cruise) *New Flamenco* arrived Valencia Jul 7 from the Balearic Islands and sailed Jul 9 for Barcelona, where arrived Jul 10.

**NIKOLAY PRZHEVALSKIY
(Russia)**

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Roll On Roll Off *Nikolay Przhivalskiy* (9489 gt, built 1984), Japan for Magadan, cargo cars, grounded off Shikotan Island at 0500, local time, today. The crew was able to refloat the ship. No victims are reported. The ship arrived at the port of Yuzhno Kurilsk for survey.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Roll On Roll Off *Nikolay Przhivalskiy*, with a cargo of cars shipped from Japan to Magadan, ran aground near the Kuril mountain ridge last night. The ship ran into the rocks near Shikotan, but the crew managed to get the ship out of a shallow place on its own. The ship, slightly holed in the incident, headed for Yuzhno Kurilsk.

NOBEL FORTUNA (Bahamas)

London, Jul 27 — At 1218, EDT, Jul 26, combined bulk and oil carrier *Nobel Fortuna* (45777 gt, built 1982) dragged anchor and made contact with the bottom at Ha Ha Bay, Saguenay, Quebec, in lat 48 19.58N, long 70 51.57W. The vessel was re-anchored, with tug assistance, two hours later.

NORDIC EXPLORER (U.S.A.)

Boston, Mass., Jul 31 — The managers of fishing (general) *Nordic Explorer* have reported that the fire was contained in a single space within the vessel, but that damages to wiring harnesses and hydraulic equipment was extensive. Repairs are estimated to take two months. However drydocking of the vessel will not be required. Repairs will take place at the Norpel dock in New Bedford. — Lloyd's Agents.

NORTH SEA (Liberia)

London, Jul 27 — Following received from Aberdeen Coastguard, timed 1358, UTC: Container Carrier *North Sea* has proceeded. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, Container Carrier *North Sea* in lat 57 21 42.6N, long 01 48 19.56W, at 1031, UTC, today, speed 18.3 knots.)

NORWAY (Bahamas)

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Passenger (cruise) *Blue Lady*, ex *Norway*, will finally be broken at Alang yard after the Supreme Court Technical Committee gave its consent to the Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) to grant beaching permission to the vessel, officials said. The Supreme Court committee has given the go-ahead to the GMB on condition that the 210-odd tonnes of hazardous wastes generated while breaking the vessel will be disposed of in a safe manner, officials said.

Ahmedabad, India, Aug 2 — Indian experts have given the go ahead for the scrapping of passenger (cruise) *Blue Lady*, ex *Norway*, which environmentalists say contains toxic material harmful to shipbreakers, officials said today. Greenpeace and other groups say the vessel, which anchored in June off the Alang ship-breaking yard in the western state of Gujarat, contains more than 900 tonnes of asbestos which would put the health of workers at risk. India's Supreme Court had allowed the vessel to enter Indian waters but put on hold its dismantling, pending a report by an expert panel on the quantum of toxic wastes on board. Two senior officials said the panel has allowed the vessel to be broken. "*Blue Lady* will enter Alang," one of them said. "It will be dismantled soon." Greenpeace confirmed the panel had given the green signal for the vessel to be broken but called the decision "illegal." "We know the expert panel has found more than 1,000 tonnes of banned pollutants on the ship," Ramapati Kumar of the group said. "How can they allow the ship to be broken?" — Reuters.

OEL VISION (India)

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A major disaster was averted yesterday, when ONGC officials alerted a company team preventing a merchant vessel from colliding with an offshore oil platform. The incident occurred when container carrier *Oel Vision* (4802 gt, built 1979) experienced a complete power and engine failure yesterday evening and gradually drifted towards platform *Rontap Mayer*, located at platform ZB in Mumbai High, company sources said. "The vessel was 4.5 nautical miles from the rig. The direction of the drift was towards this rig," an ONGC official said. The platform declared an emergency at 2030 hrs and issued a call for the evacuation of its personnel. Several vessels, including support *Samudra Sevak* were alerted to proceed to the scene to assist. The

Coast Guard were also alerted. *Oel Vision* was instructed to drop its anchor to halt the drift. Another anchor was subsequently dropped, as one was found insufficient to hold the vessel. "*Oel Vision* is now stable 3.5 nautical miles from *Rontap Mayer*. The vessel restored emergency power at 2155, Jul 30, and is in the process of ballasting. Tugs have been deployed to tow the vessel," the official said.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated July 31, states: Danger lurked around the Bombay High oil field yesterday when Container Carrier *Oel Vision*, drifted perilously towards a rig after its generators went off and the ship lost propulsion. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) officials said the ship is "now stable at 3.5 nautical miles from the Rontop Mayer rig" and will be towed to Pipavav port in Maharashtra. Coast Guard and ONGC officials said the vessel was coming from Colombo and heading towards Pipavav port. Carrying 268 containers and 28 crew, it had anchored 10 nautical miles from Rontop Mayer, a Bombay High rig. After it lost its generators, the ship started drifting in the rough sea towards Rontop Mayer. Around 1800 hrs the Coast Guard got an SOS call in a fax from Shreyas Shipping Company, the vessel's shipping agent. Five hours later, a helicopter from the Coast Guard Air Station in Daman spotted the ship "dangerously close to the rig". Emergency was declared on Rontop Mayer and the 77 personnel working there were shifted to another platform. Coast Guard ship *Sangram* and ONGC's support vessel *Samudra Sevak*, are monitoring the situation.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Container Carrier *Oel Vision* which developed a technical fault and began drifting off the west coast of India will be towed to a nearby port, its owners said today. The ship, owned by Shreyas Shipping & Logistics Ltd., developed the fault while en route to Kandla from Colombo, Anil Devli, executive director at Shreyas Shipping, said. "We are trying to identify the problem and will tow the vessel either to Mumbai or Pipavav," Devli said. Devli said the vessel was now anchored about three nautical miles from an ONGC's rig. It had 28 people on board and was carrying about 260 empty and laden containers. An ONGC spokeswoman said the company had evacuated 77 personnel from the rig on Sunday night and the installation was safe. The Coast Guard said a vessel had been deployed near *OEL Vision* to ensure smooth passage to a nearby port.

Mumbai, Aug 2 — A local press report, states: As reported container carrier *Oel Vision*, adrift since Sunday after losing all power, is edging closer to ONGC's developmental oil rig *RONTAP Mayer*. It was a mere 1,200 feet away at the time of going to press, according to Kiran Dhingra, director general, shipping. The ship had stabilized 3.5 nautical miles from the rig, but at 1800 Monday it started

drifting again after a failed attempt to tow it away. "The tug's ropes gave way and the ship started drifting due to choppy weather," said Inspector General, A. Rajashekhar, Commander, Coast Guard Region (West). However, only one of the ship's two anchors was heaved; the other is dragging along with it. The ship has not stabilized due to bad weather, which is worsening. The sea swell is about five metres and the wind is blowing at 70 kmph. ONGC has evacuated the 10 emergency officials who had stayed back on the rig. The ship's 26 crew members were evacuated by the Navy, which has activated its emergency response programme. Sources in the DG Shipping office said *OEL Vision* could have been steadied with steel ropes. Also, they said, professional salvors should have been employed. The cargo should have been jettisoned to make the ship lighter, they said, but the owners refused. This, said the sources, could raise the risk. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: Authorities are engaged in a major operation about 100 nautical miles off the Mumbai coast to prevent disabled Container Carrier *Oel Vision* from colliding with an ONGC oil production rig in the Arabian Sea. The vessel is around 400 metres from the rig and the only options available to the Navy are to either tow it away or, if that is not possible, to sink it to avert a collision, navy sources said. Personnel on board the rig have been evacuated as a precautionary measure, the sources said. The Coast Guard has also been put on alert. "So far, 27 of the 28 crew members of the merchant vessel have been rescued by Indian Navy helicopters in the choppy sea after receiving a communication from the master of the ship," said a source. The container ship apparently developed engine problems and started taking in water two days ago, the sources said adding the vessel was listing 10 degrees to starboard.

Mumbai, Aug 2 — Container Carrier *Oel Vision* sank off the country's western coast today after developing a technical fault, but all the crew members had been rescued, officials said. Navy and coast guard officials said there was no threat of an oil spill from the vessel which sank in high seas about 180 km off the coast that has some of India's most popular beaches. "There was some fuel, but it isn't much to pose any threat. We are keeping aerial vigil," said coast guard commandant K.B.L. Bhatnagar. The crew tried to anchor the vessel to prevent it from drifting close to oil rigs in the Mumbai High oil field but it began to list and then sank in the early hours of today, Bhatnagar said. Coast guard and navy vessels picked up the vessel's 28 crew members shortly before it went down. More than 180 people working on the oil rigs in the path of the drifting ship had been evacuated as a precaution, disrupting production for 2-3 hours. — Reuters.

Mumbai, Aug 2 — Container carrier *Oel Vision* sank off Mumbai High at 0350 today. There was no loss of life. — Lloyd's Agents.

ONDERNEMING IV (Netherlands)

London, Aug 3 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: At 1330 hrs, Aug 2, a fire broke out in the machine room of the Dutch inland general cargo *Onderneming IV* (4131 gt, built 2005), homeport Tholen, on the River Rhine, close to Emmerich. The crew succeeded in tackling the flames, without assistance. The fire was caused by a damaged fuel pipe.

OOCL SHENZHEN (Hong Kong)

London, Jul 28 — Orient Overseas Container Line's container carrier *OOCL Shenzhen* touched bottom in the Suez Canal in dense fog yesterday. The vessel 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 vessel 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.

ORIENTAL MIHO (Panama)

Yokohama, Aug 1 — Upon completion of temporary repairs at Kudamatsu, Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Oriental Miho* departed for Hiroshima on Jul 26, arriving there on Jul 27. It also departed from Hiroshima on Jul 27. — Lloyd's Agents.

OTTON (Panama)

Bilbao, Aug 2 — Local agents of fire fighting tug *Ottton* have advised that the vessel is still carrying out repairs in Bilbao, but it is unknown when they will be completed. — Lloyd's Agents.

PAMELA (Finland)

Turku, Aug 2 — General cargo *Pamela*, Naantali for Gdynia, grounded northwest of Uto lighthouse 0100, Jul 1. Vessel sustained hull damage but could proceed by itself to discharge cargo in Naantali prior drydocking at Turku for repairs. Vessel arrived at the dry dock in Turku Jul 3, and left dry dock Jul 17. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Pamela* sailed Turku Jul 17, arrived Tallinn Jul 19 and sailed same day.)

PANAM SERENA (Bahamas)

Piraeus, Jul 28 — Chemical tanker *Panam Serena* is still under repair at Keratsini. — Lloyd's Agents.

PENELOPE A. (Greece)

Piraeus, Jul 28 — Passenger ro/ro *Penelope A.* completed repairs and returned to service Jul 26. — Lloyd's Agents.

PXXI

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: Heavy weather conditions off Tristan da Cunha continue as forecast. A decision has been taken to postpone attempts to refloat oil platform *A Turtle* (ex PXXI) until winter weather has moderated, so tug *Zouros Hellas* has now returned to Cape Town. The salvors will await favourable conditions and the availability of suitably powerful tug(s). This is unlikely to be until September at the earliest. The Insurance Company have advised that they are not abandoning their responsibilities but are merely deferring the operation until later in the year in the difficult circumstances.

REEF ZANZIBAR (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Jul 31 — Following received from the operators of roll on roll off *Reef Zanzibar*, dated today: *Reef Zanzibar* discharged its cargo in the Seychelles and was then taken in tow for Zanzibar, where arrived Jul 24. Vessel remains there at present undergoing repairs and we currently anticipate it will be back in service in around ten days.

RM MARGAUX (France)

Bordeaux, Aug 3 — Tug *RM Margaux*: Salvage operations will take place next week and will be undertaken by Mammoet Salvage. Several shipyards were asked last week to tender for repairing the tug. — Lloyd's Agents.

ROTTERDAM (Netherlands)

See under "Miscellaneous."

RUMYANTSEVO (Russia)

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated today, states: Three Russian ships have arrived at the site where Russian fishing (general) *Rumyantsevo* (723 gt, built 1985) is in distress after getting a hole in the bottom off the eastern coast of the Kamchatka peninsula. "The lives of the crew are out of danger," the press service of the Kamchatka region's department of the Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations said. The trawler got a hole in the bottom at about noon, Kamchatka time, yesterday, and water started flowing into the engine department. The crew expected to cope with the situation themselves, but had to seek help by the evening. After divers examine the bottom of the trawler, a decision will be made what to do next. According to the emergencies ministry, the weather in the area is favourable for repair work. The sea is calm and visibility is good. The entry of water has been minimised. One more rescue vessel is on its way and is expected to arrive to the site at about 0800, Moscow time.

SAFMARINE AGULHAS (Liberia)

London, July 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* is to be removed from East London harbour. Peter Kroon, the principal officer of South

African Maritime Safety Authority, says discussions are currently under way on how best to remove the ship. "Yesterday's meeting was one between the authorities and the owners of the ship together with the insurers and its lawyers. The decision is that the wreck must be removed, how they are going to do that is still under discussion, they have gone back to the insurers to discuss ways and means of removing that wreck totally. This meeting will be continued at a later time maybe next week when the insurers and the owners have studied proposal."

London, Aug 29 — South African authorities have decided Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* is so badly damaged that it is now officially a wreck. They have effectively overruled insurers who have not yet declared the ship a constructive total loss. No further attempt will be made to refloat the vessel. "The ship is a write-off," said Capt Peter Kroon, principal officer for the maritime authority in East London. The ship is to be removed in its entirety, in order to ensure there is no risk to navigation should the vessel break up and parts start to drift in to shipping lanes. The wreck clearance contract will be put out to tender, and in the meantime salvors SMIT has been appointed caretaker to watch for and deal with any pollution from the vessel.

London, Jul 31 — Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas*, which grounded a month ago outside the port of East London, has almost broken in two and must be removed from the site, the South African Maritime Safety Authority and National Port Authority ordered at the weekend. They have effectively by-passed insurers who have not yet declared the vessel a constructive total loss. However, insurance sources said this would not be uncommon in such cases where underwriters might be reluctant to act first because of the potential liabilities attached to a decision. No further attempt will be made to refloat the vessel. The onus is now on the vessel's owner and P&I club, Gard, to act fast to minimise further liabilities during the wreck removal. It was carrying 469 loaded containers, including 21 refrigerated boxes and 112 empties, at the time of the accident. Most have been taken off, but all further salvage work and removal of the remaining 100 containers still on board has been halted because of the dangerous condition of the cargo holds and the vessel itself. The *Safmarine Agulhas* is now considered to be past saving and never able to return to service. "The vessel is a write-off," said Capt Peter Kroon, principal officer for the maritime authority in East London. It is to be removed in its entirety in order to ensure there is no risk to navigation should the hull break up and parts start to drift in to shipping lanes. That message has been conveyed to the owner and insurers, who must submit a plan to the authorities within a few weeks

explaining how the vessel is to be cleared. The wreck clearance contract will be put out to tender and in the meantime salvage company SMIT Salvage has been appointed caretaker to watch for and deal with any pollution from the vessel. The whole clearance exercise could be protracted on the basis of recent experiences.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: The marine inquiry into why and how Container Carrier *Safmarine Agulhas* ran aground at the East London harbour entrance 36 days ago has been completed. But the investigating officer has returned to Durban to compile his report, said Captain Peter Kroon, the South African Marine Safety Association principal officer in East London. All fingers point to engine failure as the cause, but whether negligence played a part would still have to be established, he said.

SALIH C. (Panama)

London, Aug 2 — Bulker *Salih C.* (10137 gt, built 1973) ran aground in Bostanci Dilek Pillars at around 1015, Jul 22. Fast rescue boat *Kiyi Emniyeti 5* and *Sonduren 6* sent to the vicinity by Istanbul VTS Services. There was no loss of life or pollution. Salvage Assistance Agreement signed at 1445, Jul 24, refloated and secured the same day at 1930 hrs. (Note — *Salih C.* passed Istanbul east Jul 28.)

SEA JAGUAR (Marshall Islands)

Singapore, Jul 31 — Crude oil tanker *Sea Jaguar* arrived Singapore 2355, Jul 30. — Lloyd's Agents.

SIRTE STAR (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

La Spezia, July 31 — Container Carrier *Sirte Star* arrived La Spezia July 30 from Banghazi. — Lloyd's Agents.

SKAGERN (Sweden)

Hull, Jul 31 — General cargo *Skagern* is still in port at Hull, undergoing underwriters' surveys. No decision has yet been taken regarding repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

SORMOVSKIY 32 (Russia)

Novorossisk, Aug 1 — Tug *Mekhanik Krasotkin* and barge *Aphine* owned by Prime Shipping of Palmali Agency proceeded from port Kertch downland (port Tol'yiatti) in ballast at 0345, Moscow time, Jul 20. While leaving first leg of Azov-Don River entrance channel it was in collision with general cargo *Sormovskiy 32* on voyage to Italy with cargo of grain onboard abt 3167 tonnes. Tug has no damages, barge has damage of external plating above waterline, port anchor blocked by mechanical damage with no water ingress. *Sormovskiy 32* has mechanical damages of fore part bulwark till frame 2. Vessels was shifted on outer road of Yeisk for investigation. Both vessels arrived into Rostov on Don repair yard "Priboy" by Jul 25. — 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.

STADT MUNCHEN (Antigua & Barbuda)

Balboa, Aug 1 — Container Carrier *Stadt Munchen* (9528 gt, built 1999) while berthed Balboa for cargo operations, reportedly took sudden list, resulting in four 20 foot containers being lost overboard to water, Jul 31. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Stadt Munchen* according to LMIU AIS in lat 8 51 37.06N, long 79 31 6.67W at 1538, Aug 1.)

SUMERIAN 2 (Indonesia)

London, July 30 — A press report, dated July 28, states: Indian helicopters have rescued nine Indonesian crew stranded in the Andaman islands after their ceangoing tug *SE Meriam 2* (? fire fighting tug *Sumerian 2*, 367 gt, built 1976) ran aground, a military spokesman said yesterday. The crew of *SE Meriam 2* arrived off the remote islands as part of a bid to assist tug *Uni Haul Mabel* (299 gt, built 2005) towing two dump barges from Singapore to Abu Dhabi, said Commander R. Srinavas. *Uni Haul Mabel* developed engine trouble and had drifted in rough seas. A tug from Singapore and another from Sri Lanka were also assisting in the operation, said Srinavas, a senior staff officer of India's joint Army, Navy and Air Force command on the Andamans. *SE Mariam 2* broke its anchor chain on Wednesday (July 26) and ran aground on Little Andaman island. The rescued sailors were flown to Port Blair to begin the journey home.

London, July 31 — A press report, dated July 26, states: Altogether, nine crew members of the Indonesian ocean going tug *SE Mariam 2* (? fire fighting tug *Sumerian 2*) were rescued by MI-8 helicopter of the Andaman and Nicobar Command today. Tug *Uni Haul Mabel* with the Indonesian crew members on board was towing two dump barges from Singapore to Abu Dhabi. During their journey, it developed engine problem and started drifting along with its two barges. On realising that the two barges had drifted on the western shores of Little Andaman, the tug released the towing line to prevent it from being dragged into shore. Subsequently, two tugs, *Ves Fair 5* and *Maha Yoha* (? tug *Maha Oya* from Singapore and Sri Lanka respectively came for assistance. However, the efforts turned to be futile and the operations were further hampered by rough seas. One additional tug, *SE Mariam 2* from Indonesia arrived to assist in the salvage operations. During early morning hours of today, the anchor chain of *SE Mariam 2* gave away and the tug ran aground. All the nine crew members managed to jump ashore and were left stranded. During all these operations, a constant vigil was being maintained by the ships and aircraft of ANC. On request by the owner of the shipping agency to rescue the stranded crew members of *SE Mariam 2*, a MI-8 helicopter of the command was launched. The helicopter reaching the site carried out the rescue

operation successfully. All the nine Indonesian crew were flown down to Port Blair and handed over to local administration for further formalities.

SYLVE (Cyprus)

London, July 29 — Following received from Danish Maritime Assistance Service, timed 0835, UTC: General cargo *Sylve* was refloated at 2350, UTC, yesterday after part cargo was removed. There was no pollution. The vessel is now mooring in the port of Ronne where vessel still detained for diver inspection and class inspection etc. Vessel will then reload lightered cargo. (See issue of July 28.)

Ronne, July 31 — General cargo *Sylve* left Ronne today for Liepaja. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Riga, Aug 3 — General cargo *Sylve*, which grounded Jul 25 near Bornholm, was subsequently refloated and is presently at the port of Liepaja discharging her cargo of soyabeanmeal pellets. Part of the cargo is water damaged. W.K. Webster acts on behalf of the cargo underwriters. — Lloyd's Agents.

THE CALYPSO (Cyprus)

London, July 29 — Passenger (cruise) *The Calypso* sailed Southampton 2156, July 27 and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was in lat 52 20 57N, long 03 36 59E, at 1014 today, speed 15 knots, course 66.1 degrees.

THEODOROS (Panama)

London, Jul 28 — Following received from Piraeus MRCC, timed 2210, UTC: At 2355 hrs, Jul 28, wine tanker *Theodoros* (634 gt, built 1967), Tartous for Genoa, loaded with olive oil, ran aground in lat 36 06.7N, long 29 38.3E. The vessel has eight crew onboard, but is in no danger. A local patrol vessel is alongside and the tanker is requesting tug assistance.

London, Jul 29 — Following received from Piraeus MRCC, timed 0435, UTC: Wine tanker *Theodoros* refloated under its own power at approximately 0150 hrs. The vessel is now anchored off Megisti Island, about 2.5 miles from the position of grounding. The vessel is damaged. It has an approximate 10 metre crack in its forecabin on the starboard side and it will be necessary to transfer it's cargo to another vessel. No pollution has been noted.

London, July 30 — Following received from Piraeus MRCC, timed 0945, UTC: Wine tanker *Theodoros* is still anchored off Megisti Island. The crack on vessel's starboard side is only two metres not 10 metres as before reported. The vessel has lost approximately half a ton of olive oil but no fuel. Vessel is awaiting a certificate to allow it to proceed, however, transfer of cargo is likely to take place tomorrow.

London, July 30 — Following received from Piraeus MRCC, timed 0945, UTC: Wine tanker *Theodoros* is in port at Megisti with tug *Alexandros* nearby. The vessel is carrying out temporary repairs which should take approximately three to four days, the

vessel will proceed to Piraeus for permanent repairs.

London, Aug 3 — Following received from Piraeus MRCC, timed 1250, UTC: Wine tanker *Theodoros* is still carrying out temporary repairs. The vessel expects to arrive in Piraeus on Monday (Aug 7).

THEOFILOS (Greece)

London, July 31 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the afternoon of July 29 passenger ro/ro *Theofilos* (19212 gt, built 1975) struck the breakwater of Mytilene Port due to strong winds while making departure manoeuvres. The port authority prohibited departure pending issuance of a class maintain certificate. The vessel finally departed at 1330 hrs for Limnos-Thessaloniki with 730 passengers on board.

Piraeus, Jul 31 — Passenger ro/ro *Theofilos* struck a breakwater when sailing from Mytilene port on July 29. There were no reported injuries to the vessels crew or passengers. The local port authorities prohibited the vessel's departure until it had been inspected by a class surveyor. It did sail, later on the same day with destinations of Lemnos and Thessaloniki. — Lloyd's Agents.

TUMA (Nigeria)

London, Aug 3 — At least five persons were feared to have been killed on Jun 20 as crude oil tanker *Tuma* (66676 gt, built 1975) carrying petroleum product burst into flames at the Beachland Estate, Ibafor, Apapa, Lagos. The explosion, which occurred at the Obat Petroleum Depot, also left some others seriously injured. Two of them are said to be in critical condition receiving treatment for what a source described as "high degree" burns at an undisclosed hospital in Apapa. The cause of the blast, which took place at about 1430 hrs, at the engine-room of the vessel, remained unclear, but electrical spark is suspected. A staff of Obat, who pleaded anonymity, told local press that the explosion may not be unconnected with leakage of petroleum product which reportedly flooded the engine-room of the vessels for days. The leakage and the resultant flooding was said to have been first discovered immediately the vessel berthed four days ago. Even though Obat Petroleum Depot is believed to possess fire-fighting equipment, including Angus fire pumps, foam tanks and hydrant line that goes round the depot with over 10 outlets, it however, required fire fighters from the neighbouring Julius Berger, ASCON Oil and NPA to prevent the fire from spreading to the depot, said to be the only privately owned in the country with a private licensed jetty which can accommodate the berth of vessels in the range of 20,000 metric tonnes.

UMFOLOZI (Cyprus)

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: The South African

National Ports Authority, which stands to lose rand 1.6 million if container carrier *Michael S.* (ex *Umfoloji*) is not located, has launched an international alert for the vessel. The vessel disappeared from Walvis Bay harbour on Jul 15 under mysterious circumstances. By yesterday, the Namibia Ports Authority (NamPort) said it still had no word about the vessel. A NamPort spokesperson said that no news had been received on the vessel and that the search was still on. Walvis Bay Port Captain, Vladimir Gusev, has been suspended in connection with the incident. The vessel was detained at Walvis Bay harbour in June after the South African Ports Authority won a High Court order against Seagate Shipping, the company which bought the vessel in January, for the damage done to trailing suction hopper dredge *Ingwenya* in a collision last September. South Africa's NPA said it had not given up on its bid to collect the Rand 1.6 million in damages it is claiming from the owners of *Michael S.* Peter Balfour, an NPA legal adviser for the port of Durban, was quoted as saying the authority would continue with its claim against the vessel despite the fact that the vessel had escaped. Balfour also said the NPA was assessing its legal options. According to NamPort, the vessel's master had requested permission from Walvis Bay Port Control to conduct engine trials. Permission was granted. However, later in the evening on the same day, the master radioed Walvis Bay Port Control to report engine problems on the vessel, which was later discovered to be untrue.

London, Aug 2 — According to a Gibraltar Port Authority report, dated Aug 1 container carrier *Michael S.* (ex *Umfoloji*) anchored off Gibraltar Jul 31 for provisions and charts etc

UNI HAUL MABEL (Singapore)
See *Sumerian 2.*

XIN FU ZHOU (China)
London, Aug 1 — Container carrier *Xin Fu Zhou* sailed Rotterdam Jul 20.

XINSHI XAI (Hong Kong)
London, July 29 — Bulker *Xinshi Hai* arrived Newcastle, NSW, July 26 and sailed July 28.

YONG AN 4 (Panama)
London, Aug 3 — Following received from Hong Kong MRCC, dated today: Bulker *Yong An 4* (26737 gt, built 1996) reported aground in lat 21 36.73N, long 112 48.95E at 2208, UTC, Aug 2. All 23 crew members were rescued by "GFS" to Hong Kong.

YUSHO OCEAN (Panama)
Yokohama, Aug 1 — According to the local agents, general cargo *Yusho Ocean* is still under permanent repairs at Naikai Shipyard, Setoda. A detailed schedule of repairs has not been fixed yet. — Lloyd's Agents.

ZAMORANO PRIMEIRO (Spain)
Ferrol, Jul 30 — Fishing (general) *Zamorano Primeiro* has been repaired and has been back in service for 12 days. — Lloyd's Agents.

ZHI QIANG (Hong Kong)
Port Moresby, Aug 1 — Bulker *Zhi Qiang* is still at anchorage and believe salvors are also onboard/undergoing some repairs. Believe vessel may have to be towed to China for major repairs at a dockyard. — Lloyd's Agents.



SOMALIA
London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Jul 30, states: All 25 crew members abducted four months ago from fishing (general) *Dong Won No.628* were released today in Somalia. The eight South Korean sailors and their 17 colleagues from Indonesia, China and Vietnam left Somalia today, the South Korean news agency Yonhap reported, citing government officials in Seoul. The boat was being brought to Kenya under the escort of a US warship. According to the report, a ransom of up to US\$800,000 was likely to have been paid for the crew's release. All crew members were unharmed. According to South Korean reports, armed men had seized the boat in international waters off the coast of Somalia at the beginning of April. (See issue of Apr 19.)

Manila, Aug 1 — Product tanker *Lin I*, which was hijacked by Somali pirates, arrived safely and under its own power at its home port of Fujairah, in the United Arab Emirates, today. The vessel's 20-man Filipino crew are in relatively good health despite their ordeal. The crew will be brought to Dubai where they will undergo a medical examination and debriefing by Philippine embassy officials. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.



BELGIUM
Zeebrugge, Aug 1 — The departure of general cargo *Euro Sea* (682 gt, built 1965) has suspended as the vessel is under a port state control detention. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Euro Sea* arrived at Antwerp at 0005, Jul 28.)

CYPRUS
Limassol, Jul 31 — General cargo *Liberty A.* is currently still at Limassol, under Port State Control detention. — Lloyd's Agents.

Seizures & Arrests



AL ESRAA (Egypt)
Zeebrugge, Aug 1 — General cargo *Al Esraa* (12233 gt, built 1996) is currently under arrest, at Antwerp. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — *Al Esraa* arrived at Antwerp at 1720 hrs, Jul 28.)

AL MANARA (St. Kitts-Nevis)
See under "Marine."

ALALAA 1 (North Korea)
Bucharest, Jun 31 — General cargo *Alalaa 1* is still under arrest at Constantza, in respect of a claim for unpaid repairs/drydocking by two Belgian Companies: Zeebrugge Drydock MV. and Soenen B.V.B.A. — Lloyd's Agents.

ANTARES (Panama)
London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated today, states: U.S. marshals yesterday seized general cargo *Antares* (4793 gt, built 1976) at Port Everglades after some crew members filed a lawsuit alleging they have not been paid their full wages. Ten crew members said in the lawsuit filed Tuesday in federal admiralty court that they are owed a combined \$33,159 in wages. U.S. District Judge Shelby Highsmith Sr. signed the order for the vessel's arrest. Ross B. Toyne, a Miami maritime lawyer filed the eight-page lawsuit on behalf of 10 of the crew members, nine Ukrainians and a Romanian. Three other crew members are not part of the suit. Toyne said he intends to file a court motion today to have the vessel sold at auction. The crew members claim in the lawsuit that they were deceived into leaving their homes to work on *Antares*. The crew says when they arrived at the vessel in Spain, they were forced to execute different employment agreements that paid less than they were promised — otherwise they faced being removed from the ship in a foreign port with no money to travel home. Toyne said one crew member was supposed to be paid \$2,100 for 25 days of work, but only received about \$917. *Antares* hired the Ukrainian crew after it lost a Spanish crew that refused to sign a new employment contract, Toyne said. *Antares* arrived Port Everglades Monday (Jul 31) with a load of cement from Europe. It had been slated to depart last night. Besides their wages, the 10 crew members want the ship's owner to pay for their return trips home.

CONTAZ TRADER (Ukraine)
Zeebrugge, Aug 1 — Container Carrier *Contaz Trader* was released from arrest on Jul 26 and the vessel sailed from Antwerp later that day, at 2246 hrs, bound for Istanbul. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

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

GLAROS (Panama)

La Spezia, July 28 — General cargo *Glaros* is currently still under arrest at La Spezia. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

K.WIND (Liberia)

London, July 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Halship Inc, a Halifax-based shipping company that operates a cargo service between Halifax, Portland and Boston, went into receivership July 21. On July 24 authorities seized part containerised general car *K.Wind* (4450 gt, built 1999) that Halship had chartered for the cargo service, amidst claims the ship's owners and operators owe more than US\$89,000 to a Dartmouth disposal company. *K.Wind* was seized at the Fairview Cove container terminal, according to the provincial sheriff's department, which detained the vessel under a Federal Court order. It is now at anchor in Halifax Harbour. Ship to Shore Disposal Services Inc, which provided waste and garbage removal services for the vessel, has filed claim in Federal Court against the ship's owners, Flores Navigation Ltd., Halship, Eimskipafelag Islands, Philippe Paturel and Eimskip Canada Inc. The claims states Ship to Shore is owed US\$89,406 for service to the vessel "including waste removal and disposal for garbage, sludge, oily mixtures and oily engine-room waste." It says the ship is under charter to Halship. Halship's shareholders include Philippe Paturel and Eimskip Canada, an Icelandic shipping line with offices in Halifax. Ernst & Young is handling the receivership. Russell Herder, managing director for Eimskip in Halifax, said Thursday he was unable to comment on the reasons for Halship's troubles. "We were in partnership with Halship, who were operators of the ship. The ship got arrested by a creditor and Halship has gone into receivership." Eimskip is not responsible for Halship's bills because it is only a minority shareholder in that company, Mr. Herder said. Ship to Shore claims it received two cheques from Halship but they were returned by the bank due to insufficient funds. It has since received two more cheques totalling almost \$22,000, which it is not certain will clear the bank. Hapag Lloyd was a major customer of the feeder cargo service. The service was started by Halship in December 2004 after SPM Container Line ended a similar service between Halifax, Portland and Boston in July 2004.

KINDRED (Bahamas)

London, July 31 — Following received from the Admiralty Marshal, dated today: General cargo *Kindred* was released from arrest today.

MADAGASCAR (Ukraine)

Durban, Aug 3 — Passenger (cruise) *Madagascar* remains under arrest. A case is apparently ongoing, however the vessel's local agents have not been

provided with any further information/instructions regarding the arrest. — Lloyd's Agents.

NORDLAND (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, July 28 — General cargo *Nordland* (1937 gt, built 1971) was reportedly abandoned at Santander June 3, 2005: It was reported on Apr 13 that no crew members are on board. At present no ship agent. When the ship arrived at Santander port, the shipping agency was "Berge Maritima" but last May 30 this agency renounced the ship. Now the ship is detained following the orders of two District Courts in Santander. It has declared a distraint procedure. The ship has no propeller machinery, communication equipment, it was removed, and is not under command. The Santander Maritime Authorities are now instructing an enquiry in order to declare the abandonment. Once concluded the competent maritime authority will require the Courts to order an auction. Update, July 14: In May the court judged in favour of the crew allowing the vessel to be auctioned. Legal claim to be lodged following notification of the judgement.

OCEAN LORD (South Korea)

London, Aug 2 — Bulker *Ocean Lord* (24508 gt, built 1984), D9LF, which arrived at Hong Kong at 0613 hrs, today, was subsequently reported at South West Lamma Anchorage, Hong Kong, under Admiralty & High Court arrest.

OTAPAN (Mexico)

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: Turkey's opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) has filed a motion against the arrival of tank barge *Otapan* in Turkey from Amsterdam. CHP Ankara deputy Mehmet Boztas today asked Environment Minister Osman Pepe whether the government had contradicted hazardous wastes regulations in giving permission to a vessel containing carcinogenic materials to enter Turkish waters. The *Otapan*, which had been docked for seven years at Amsterdam port, is expected to reach Aliaga port within three weeks. Boztas, who is also a member of the Turkish Parliament Committee for Environmental Research, requested information on why the vessel was approved for arrival at Turkish ports while no other country had accepted it over the last seven years. He also claimed that developed countries always abused developing countries when getting rid of hazardous wastes. Last week, the Turkish daily "Zaman" reported that the Turkish Environment Ministry had allowed the vessel, carrying one ton of mineral wool asbestos in its outer covering, entry into Turkish territorial waters. The ministry first denied reports saying that the vessel was not granted permission. However, it later stated that they had given the

green light to the ship provided that it did not carry toxic materials.

Maassluis, Aug 2 — Tank barge *Otapan* sailed from Amsterdam at 1700, local time, on Jul 28, bound for Turkey. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Debates continue over the dispatch of tank barge *Otapan*, due to arrive Turkey from the Netherlands for scrapping. Environmental associations and fisheries were put on alert against the carcinogenic asbestos-covered vessel and are preparing for protests. The Marmara Union of Fisheries Cooperatives and Nature Warriors environmentalist organisation moved to prevent the vessel from entering Turkish waters. Convening in Istanbul Tuesday (Aug 1), Turkish fisheries and environmental associations stated they will appeal to Turkey's highest court, the Council of State, to cancel permission granted by the Turkish Environment and Forestry Ministry. Domestic fisheries warned they will protest the vessel if it enters Turkish territorial waters.

RASA (Georgia)

Limassol, Jul 31 — General cargo *Rasa* (1465 gt, built 1971) is currently under arrest at Limassol. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Rasa* arrived at Limassol on Jul 27.)

SENTINEL (Comoros)

Genoa, Aug 3 — General cargo *Sentinel* is still reported berthed at Genoa, under arrest. Local Port Authorities are not able for the time being to disclose its future whereabouts. — Lloyd's Agents.

SOPHIE (DIS)

Balboa, Jul 31 — Container Carrier *Sophie* sailed Cristobal at 2229, local time, Jul 27, reportedly bound Miami, where ETA Aug 3. — Lloyd's Agents.

TALAVERA (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Venice, Jul 31 — There have been no changes/developments concerning the situation of general cargo *Talavera*. It is still under arrest at Chioggia. — Lloyd's Agents.

VISCAYA (NIS)

Karachi, Aug 3 — Understand that the honorable Sindh High Court (SHC) has ordered arrest of chemical tanker *Viscaya* (15259 gt, built 1982) on complaint of a local shipping agent-Pacific Maritime (Pvt) Ltd, pleading that vessel owner did not pay the bill for our service and other charges to the tune of \$ 22,000. The vessel has already left the Karachi Port for Fujairah (UAE) at 1315, Aug 2 when order was served in evening to port authority. About 7000 tones of exportable worth were loaded at Karachi port. The shipping agent is optimistic that dues would be recovered as we have agreement with number of countries to serve notice and resolve the issue. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Pipeline Accidents



BRYANSK REGION, RUSSIA

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: An oilspill has polluted a wide area in the Bryansk region of western Russia and could lead to an “environmental catastrophe”, Russian officials say. The leak happened on one of Russia’s largest export pipelines, Russia’s natural resources ministry said. The contaminated area, in the Surzh district, is reported to be about 10sq km, affecting forests, rivers and lakes. The cause of the spill on the Druzhba pipeline was not immediately known.

NEMBE CREEK, BONNY AREA, NIGERIA

London, July 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Shell has declared a “force majeure” at Bonny Offshore Terminal, effective from 1800 yesterday. This is due to a leakage/rupture pipeline from Nembe Creek which supplies crude oil to the terminal. As a result of the loss in production, the terminal is understood to be losing 180,000-200,000 bpd. New acceptance dates for cargo liftings have not been given yet.

London, July 28 — A quarter of Nigeria’s tanker export capacity has been shut down after Royal Dutch Shell called force majeure on its Bonny August loadings and kept its Forcados and EA terminals closed. A pipeline leak on the country’s second largest onshore oilfield in the eastern Delta has closed down 180,000 barrels of production a day, forcing Shell to announce that it cannot honour its export contracts from the Bonny terminal. More than 850,000 barrels a day of Nigeria’s production capacity is off line due to militant attacks and pipeline leaks on Shell and Agip facilities. The latest pipeline problem also shuts in 30,000 bpd of Chevron’s output. Italian oil major Agip has closed down the 200,000 bpd Ogbainbiri flow station after local youths entered the site and closed down the pumps. Its output is usually exported through the Brass tanker terminal. Demand for tanker loadings in Nigeria will fall by almost one suezmax a day through August until Shell and Agip can restart their production. A spokeswoman at Shell confirmed that force majeure continued at Forcados and EA in the western Delta but exports continue through the company’s Bonga deepwater project and Exxon- Mobil-operated Erha. Force majeure was called on Bonny exports after Shell found a leak from the Sanbarth-Krakrama pipeline into the Nemba creek and shut it down a week ago. “We do not know the cause of the leak but hope to have it repaired fairly soon. It usually takes a few weeks,”

said Shell chief executive Jeroen van der Veer. “For the rest of the shut-in production we expect some time this year to get some of this back, but it will not be significant. We need to do repairs and this takes time.”

NIGER DELTA REGION, NIGERIA

Abuja, Jul 28 — The Nigerian arm of Royal Dutch Shell has started work on repairing a pipeline where a leak has forced the shutdown of 210,000 barrels per day (bpd) in oil output, a spokesman said today. Shell is losing 180,000 bpd because of the leak discovered a week ago in a section of its Nembe Creek trunk line in Rivers state in the Niger Delta, while Chevron is losing 30,000 bpd that should be going through the same pipeline. “We are going ahead with repairs at this time,” a Shell spokesman said, adding that the firm could not tell how long the repairs might take. Shell on Wednesday (Jul 26) declared a force majeure, or a release from honouring contracts, on Bonny Light exports because of the leak, but the company has said loadings are continuing at the Bonny terminal. Shell has not made any official comment on what caused the leak, but a company source in the delta’s main city of Port Harcourt said the damage was accidentally caused by another company working in the area. — Reuters.

Pollution



EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

See “Israel-Lebanon” under “Pollitical & Civil Unrect.”

LEBANON

See “Israel-Lebanon” under “Political & Civil Unrest.”

PRUDHOE BAY, ALASKA, UNITED STATES

New York, Aug 1 — Oil major BP Plc has submitted plans to U.S. regulators to drain an oil pipeline that leaked in Alaska this March, but the company warned it must first get approval to proceed from the U.S. Justice Department, which has subpoenaed BP over the spill. BP was ordered last week by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, a unit of the Department of Transport, to submit plans by August 1 to remove 17,000 barrels of crude oil from the OT-21 oil transit line before the Alaskan winter set in. BP has proposed using vacuum trucks or installing a jumper pipeline to remove the crude by the August 22 deadline. The company has already identified the locations on the top of the pipeline where it would install the valves to pump the line out and it is waiting for approval from the government as well as the grand jury investigators. BP’s Alaskan operations have been under

heavy scrutiny since the March spill, which occurred after a corroded section of the transit line allowed at least 200,000 gallons of crude oil to spill onto the Arctic tundra. The company has been ordered by the PHMSA to clean the insides of the pipelines and improve corrosion monitoring. BP could also face fines of up to \$100,000 per day due to its failure to clean the lines by a mid-June deadline, the head of the PHMSA said in a letter to John Dingel, the ranking Democrat on the House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee. Most recently, PHMSA regulators began looking into allegations made by Charles Hamel, a longtime advocate for safety improvements in the Alaska oil industry, that some valves on the pipeline were inoperable. Hamel, who in the past has served as a channel for Alaskan oil industry workers to complain of safety and environmental problems, said the reports of the leaking valves were sent to him by two BP workers. BP has acknowledged that one valve on the OT-21 line does not work properly, although a company spokesman said that the valve did not affect the integrity of the seal around the section where the leak occurred as it was upstream of another valve. — Reuters.

SAVANNAH RIVER, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A Coast Guard official said Saturday (Jul 29) that an oil spill this month in the Savannah River has turned out to be much larger than originally thought after two weeks of assessment. Petty Officer Bobby Nash, a spokesman for the Coast Guard District 7, said the spill is estimated to be between 20,000 and 22,000 gallons, about 15,000 gallons more than the previous estimate. Nash said the source of the Jul 17 spill that shut down a 12-mile stretch of the river and part of the Intracoastal Waterway remains unknown. But the Coast Guard has ruled out the possibility that it came from pipelines and facilities. “We believe the source is a vessel,” he said. “We haven’t narrowed it down to a specific number of vessels.”

Weather & Navigation



AFGHANISTAN

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Flash floods caused by heavy rains have killed at least 13 people with another 19 feared dead in eastern and southeastern provinces of Afghanistan, officials said. Thirteen bodies were recovered after floods caused by torrential rains in eastern Nangarhar province on the border with Pakistan, the provincial administration director said. Five

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people had been injured and seven were still missing, Ghulam Sayed Khogiani said. The rain also washed away around 60 hectares of agricultural land, destroyed several houses and killed scores of animals, he said. Heavy rains had also damaged villages in adjoining Paktia and nearby Khost provinces and authorities today despatched teams to investigate reports that many people were dead. "We have reports that seven people have died. We've sent our teams to the areas to collect more information," Khost director of rural development Mohammad Omar said. In Paktia villagers had reported five people, including children, were dead, the provincial rural development director Mohammad Tahir said.

CHINA

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A flash flood this month killed at least 18 Chinese workers building a highway in the country's south-west, state media said. At least 17 are missing and feared dead. The torrents rushed down a mountainside and swept away the workers' temporary shelters in Mengzi county, a hilly area in the southwestern province of Yunnan, in the early hours of Jul 20. Eight were confirmed dead at the time. "The death toll has risen to 18 and 17 are still missing," the Beijing News quoted a local official as saying. "There is almost no chance for them to be found alive." But the search for the workers continued as the construction of the highway resumed, the newspaper said.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Heavy rains hit Beijing early this morning, causing a severe traffic jam from downtown Beijing to the capital's international airport and delaying all flights leaving from the airport. The municipal meteorological observatory said at 0845, today that heavy rains had swept central and southern Beijing. It also forecast heavy rains or rainstorms would continue to hit the city until Monday night. The strong rainfalls have caused many parts of the main roads inundated by water. By 1300, today, traffic was almost stopped along the expressway from the downtown to the airport because of the rains. According to a broadcast from the airport, all flights leaving Beijing were delayed because of the rainfall.

HURRICANE "WILMA"

London, Jul 27 — A press report from Tallahassee, Fla, dated Jul 26, states: The state's plan for spending \$82.9 million in federal money for long-term recovery from Hurricane "Wilma" received approval today from Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson. Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings was on hand for a formal announcement in Washington, D.C. "As grateful as we are for this, we continue to say there are some huge unmet needs as we continue to deal with the housing issues in Florida," Jennings said during a conference call with

reporters. The money will be distributed through counties and Indian tribes in areas affected by "Wilma." It is part of an \$11.5 billion federal community development block program to assist the five Gulf Coast states affected by hurricanes last year. The approved plan requires that at least 70% of the money be spent on housing including rehabilitation, relocation, demolition, replacement and the construction of new affordable housing. The remaining money can be used to repair or improve water and sewer systems, streets and other public infrastructure including buildings. Some of the money also can be used to assist businesses by repairing or improving infrastructure to attract or retain jobs.

KOREA

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated Jul 27, states: The death toll from floods and landslides in North Korea this month has risen to at least 154 people, with 127 others missing, according to the United Nations. More than 31,000 houses were destroyed and about 17,000 families left homeless, the world body said in a report. The disaster has damaged about 74,000 acres of arable land, which could lead to a loss of 100,000 tons of food or about 10% of the country's annual food shortfall, the U.N. said.

MEXICO

London, Aug 3 — Heavy rains caused a mountainside to give way in rural, southern Mexico yesterday, burying two homes and killing 11 people, four of them children, officials said. The pre-dawn mudslide in the village of Monte Orden, 200 kilometres west of Oaxaca city, completely crushed both homes, killing the families. They included four children, ages 1 to 14, and seven adults, according to Martin Vela, director of civil protection for Oaxaca state.

NORTH KOREA

Seoul, Aug 2 — North Korea has turned down aid offers to help it cope with flooding that displaced tens of thousands and could push the impoverished country to famine, officials said today. Three major storms hit North Korea in July, leaving nearly 300 people dead or missing, international agencies have said. "The U.N. World Food Program has been informed by the government of the DPRK (North Korea) that it can deal with the problem on its own," said WFP spokesman Barry Came. The storms devastated the North's potato crop and is expected to negatively impact upon rice production in the country already that battles chronic food shortages, a different WFP official said last month. The WFP has prepared 74 tons of food for 13,000 people in Songchon County, one of the hard-hit areas. As a condition for the aid, the WFP wants to conduct a full assessment of damage to find out North Korea's needs and then monitor the aid to make sure it gets to the

people who require it most, its officials have said. The WFP estimates 60,000 people were made homeless or displaced by the flooding. Separately, South Korea's Red Cross told the North in late July it was willing to provide aid, but the offer was turned down, an official said. The offer was made through the International Federation of Red Cross office in Beijing, the South Korean Red Cross official said. "But we are pulling together an aid plan in case there is a request from the North," he said. South Korea, a major supplier of aid to North Korea, suspended its food shipments to North Korea after Pyongyang defied international warnings and fired seven missiles on July 5. The North had requested 500,000 tons of rice this year from the South. Seoul said it can send regular humanitarian aid when North Korea returns to stalled six-country talks on ending its nuclear weapons programme. — Reuters.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Up to 10,000 North Koreans are believed dead or missing in what Pyongyang's official media is describing as the worst flooding in a century, a respected South Korean humanitarian group says. "About 4,000 people are now listed as missing, and we expect the final toll of dead and missing to reach 10,000," the independent aid group Good Friends said. North Korea's official media has so far admitted that hundreds of people are dead or missing after the country was battered by heavy rainfall for nearly two weeks from July 10. Seoul-based Good Friends says the media is now terming the flooding the worst to hit the impoverished country in a century and that a massive relief operation is now under way. In a statement, the group says despite the urgency of the disaster, North Korean soldiers have been ordered to stay in their barracks and not to help with relief operations because of tension with the outside world over North Korea's recent missile tests.

NORWAY

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: Two landslides in Lom and Vaga in south central Norway forced the evacuation of over 100 persons and left 21 people trapped in the Byrberg Tunnel on Route 15 on Sunday (Jul 30). Residents were returning home today after geological tests determined there was no danger of further slides in the affected area. The first landslide trapped 21 people in the Byrberg Tunnel and carried off about 40 metres of Route 15 in Lom around 1600 yesterday afternoon. The slide was about 150 metres wide and between three to five metres high, and one house was swept away. A few hours later, a new slide occurred on the other side of Lake Vagavatn, closing county road 468 for several hours and causing bumper to bumper queues that lasted through the night. "Luckily there is no sign that anyone was hurt in the slides. No one has

been reported missing either," operation leader Ann Karin Sundgarden of the Gudbrandsdal police said. The weather has calmed down significantly and there have been no new slides. The amount of rain is decreasing and the Meteorological Institute predicts just one to two millimetres of precipitation tonight," Lom mayor Simen Bjorgen said yesterday night. Extreme local downpours were blamed for the landslides.

PAKISTAN

Karachi, Aug 1 — Heavy monsoon rains killed at least 24 people, including 14 children, and injured more than 50 in southern Pakistan, officials and rescue workers said today. People have drowned, been electrocuted by falling cables and been crushed to death by house collapses over the past 48 hours, officials in the southern Sindh province told Reuters. Many parts of Karachi, Pakistan's commercial and financial hub, were without electricity for up to 40 hours as old, rusty power supply lines broke and generators tripped. "This has multiplied our problems, as we are unable to clear water off the roads," said Syed Mustafa Kamal, Karachi's Nazim, or mayor. Karachi, a city of 15 million people, was paralysed due to the combination of flooded streets and power outages which shut down factories and businesses. A spokesman for the Karachi Electric Supply Corporation said that repair work may take another 24 hours. Falling electricity cables killed two people in their cars, Kamal said, and five people, including four children drowned after being swept away by flood waters on the city's outskirts. In other parts of Sindh, at least 17 people were killed, including 10 in Sanghar city, 250 km north of Karachi. Most deaths occurred due to house collapses. In rural Sindh, high winds ripped roofs off huts built of straw, mud and wooden planks, injuring more than 50 villagers, though casualties could be much higher as many injuries go unreported, rescue workers said. — Reuters.

Karachi, Aug 1 — The life, Air, railway and business activities in Karachi southern port city of Pakistan suffered due to heavy monsoon rain for the last two days. It has virtually paralysed industrial and trading activities in the city. The industrialists say export shipments remained affected, as majority of exporters avoided shipping their consignments owing to fear of damage to goods during the rain. Supply of goods to the local markets from the industrial areas also remained halted due to closure of wholesale and retail markets. Industrialists said production activities in the industrial estates plunged by 50-80 per cent yesterday. Power remained out for most of time. All major markets in the city remained shut. Meanwhile, train traffic to and from the port city would remain suspended for another 48 hours. The bad weather also delayed

the arrival of at least five flights to Karachi airport yesterday. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Aug 2 — The upcountry movement of cargoes from Karachi ports through Pakistan Railways is suspended as freight trains from Karachi to northern area continues to remain disturbed following the damage caused by monsoon rain to Ranpathani Railway Bridge in the Thatta district of Sindh Province of Pakistan on Sunday. The railway minister Shaikh Rashid has visited the damaged bridge yesterday and ordered immediate repair of it. The Pakistan Railways has been operating a passenger train service from Hyderabad, but it has been unable to operate freight trains from Karachi. The railway link of Karachi from the rest of the country was broken after the heavy rain swept away a portion of the bridge. Officials in the railways department said the repair work on the bridge had been started and it would be made operative by Aug 4. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Islamabad, Aug 3 — Landslides and flash floods caused by torrential rains have killed at least 14 people, including four children, living in tents in earthquake devastated areas of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, police said today. Ten people were killed during early morning prayers when a mudslide hit their tents at the foot of a mountain in Dadar Kadim, around 27 km from Mansehra town, police officer Fayyaz Ahmed said. In Allai valley in Batagram district, four people were killed and six others were missing after floods washed away their shelters, according to police officer Abdul Karim. In the last two weeks, over 65 people have been killed in Pakistani Kashmir and NWFP by landslides and flashfloods caused by the monsoon rains. Officials in Muzaffarabad said although no casualties had been reported today, the Neelum valley road was blocked due to landslides and river levels were also very high. — Reuters.

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Heavy rains have claimed the lives of at least three people in the Southern Cape. Three people were washed away in their car in Conville when the road gave way yesterday evening. The body of a three-and-a-half year old girl has been found. Police were still searching for the bodies of a man and a woman who were inside the car. By 0800 this morning 230mm of rain had fallen at George Airport. This was an all time high, according to the weather bureau. The previous maximum measured over a 24-hour period was on 20 August 1962, when 116 mm had fallen. Many roads were closed due to flooding. The road between Oudtshoorn and George was closed at Waboomskraal after a farm dam had broken. The road between Knysna and Sedgfield was closed. The exact extent of the damage was not yet known. The road between

Plettenberg Bay and De Vlugt was also closed. The level of one of the tributaries to the Keurbooms River had risen to five metres above its normal level at De Vlugt, which was cut off. The Keurbooms River as well as the Bitou River, which run into the sea at Plettenberg Bay were both in flood, said Ray Farnham of the NSRI. Pupils at Wittedrif High School were sent home before both roads running to it had to be closed. At Wilderness a mudslide had caused a tree to fall on top of a house, but nobody was injured. The road in the Kaaimans Pass between George and Wilderness was flooded and the railroad used by the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe had also been damaged. At Glentana two caravans were washed away to sea. Two more were wrecked when they washed up against a house, and several people had to be evacuated from their homes. According to Craig Lambinon of the NSRI, the volunteer organisation had to send a paramedic by canoe to take medicine to a patient with chronic tuberculosis and who had been cut off by the flooded Groot-Brak River.

SWEDEN

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A busy highway and a rail bridge were washed away yesterday in west-central Sweden by torrential rains, leaving a 30-metre break some eight metres deep. A flood of muddy water was still rushing under the highway guardrails and train tracks that remained strung across the ravine hours after the accident. The flood destroyed a section of E14, the motorway connecting Åstersund to Norway near Åre, and the train tracks which run just parallel. A passenger train coming from Trondheim, Norway on its way toward Åre at 1945 hrs came off the tracks, skidding to a stop 300 meters later. Some 60 passengers were on the train. Nobody was reported seriously injured on either the tracks or the road. Just meters away from the suspended train a track left sagging across the gap was the E14 highway. Workers said it would be several weeks before the motorway could be used again.

TROPICAL STORM "CHRIS"

London, Aug 1 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, date today: Tropical storm "Chris" centre located near lat 16.6N, long 59.2W at 0900, UTC. Position accurate within 30 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-northwest or 285 degrees at eight knots. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots with gusts to 45 knots. Forecast position lat 17.3N, long 61.0W at 1800, UTC. Maximum winds 40 knots, gusts 50 knots. Forecast position lat 18.2N, long 63.2W at 0600, UTC, Aug 2. Maximum winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Tropical Storm "Chris", the third named storm of the 2006 Atlantic hurricane season, developed early today near the

Leeward Islands, forecasters at the National Hurricane Centre said. A tropical storm warning was posted for the islands of Antigua, Barbuda, Anguilla, St. Kitts, Nevis, Saba, St. Eustatius, St. Barthelemy and St. Martin. A tropical storm watch was issued for Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the British Virgin Islands. At 0500 hrs, "Chris" was centered about 175 miles east of Antigua and was moving west-northwest near nine mph, forecasters said. Its maximum sustained winds were near 40 mph. The storm was on track to pass over or near the northernmost Leeward Islands by early tomorrow, according to the hurricane centre. The area where the warning was issued was in the open Atlantic about 1,100 miles southeast of Miami.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Tropical Storm "Chris" continued to gain strength today as it approached the eastern edge of the Caribbean. The storm had top sustained winds of nearly 60 mph as it passed over the Leeward Islands, and was expected to gather strength as it approached Puerto Rico and the U.S. and British Virgin Islands, according to the U.S. National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Forecasters said it could become a minimal hurricane later in the week. Long-range forecasts put the storm anywhere from south of Cuba to Florida by late in the weekend. A tropical storm warning was posted for all the Leewards, including Antigua, Anguilla, St. Kitts and St. Maarten, Puerto Rico and the U.S. and British Virgin Islands, the Hurricane Centre said. At 2000 hrs, the storm was centered about 45 miles northeast of Barbuda, moving west-northwest at 13 mph. It was expected to pass over the northernmost Leewards during the night and skirt the northern edge of Puerto Rico tomorrow. The U.S. National Weather Service said Puerto Rico would begin to experience strong gusts of wind and heavy rain tomorrow afternoon. The Leeward Islands and Puerto Rico could receive up to eight inches of rain and could experience flash floods and mudslides, forecasters said. (See issue of Aug 3.)

London, Aug 2 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Chris" centre located near lat 18.8N, long 62.6W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-northwest or 300 degrees at nine knots. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots with gusts to 60 knots. Forecast position lat 19.4N, long 64.0W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 55 knots, gusts 65 knots. Forecast position lat 20.0N, long 65.8W at 0600, UTC, Aug 3. Maximum winds 60 knots, gusts 75 knots.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Tropical Storm "Chris" gained strength as it moved past islands in the eastern Caribbean early today, and forecasters warned that it could become the first hurricane of the 2006 Atlantic season

by evening. The storm had top sustained winds of 65 mph this morning as it skirted the northern Leeward Islands. It was expected to gather strength as it moved west-northwest toward the Virgin Islands, according to the U.S. National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Long-range forecasts put the storm anywhere from south of Cuba to Florida by late in the weekend. If its sustained winds reach 74 mph, as forecasters expect to happen late today or early tomorrow, Chris will be upgraded to hurricane status. A tropical storm warning remained in effect for Anguilla, St. Barthelemy, St. Maarten, Puerto Rico and the U.S. and British Virgin Islands. At 0700 hrs, the storm was centered about 65 miles north of St. Maarten in the Leeward Islands, moving west-northwest at 10 mph. The U.S. National Weather Service said Puerto Rico would see strong gusts of wind and heavy rain this afternoon and into tomorrow. The Leeward Islands and Puerto Rico could receive up to eight inches of rain and could experience flash floods and mudslides, forecasters said.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Tourists evacuated two small islands off the coast of Puerto Rico today as Tropical Storm "Chris" gained strength in the eastern Caribbean and was expected to become the first hurricane of the Atlantic season. The storm had top sustained winds of 65 mph as it skirted the northern Leeward Islands and moved west-northwest toward the US Virgin Islands, the British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Some 600 tourists evacuated Culebra and Vieques, islands off Puerto Rico's east coast. A hurricane watch was issued for the southeastern Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands, the National Hurricane Center said. The watch issued at 1100, EDT, meant hurricane conditions of winds of at least 74 mph were possible within 36 hours. The storm was expected to pass at least 100 miles north of Puerto Rico, but up to 8 inches of rain was likely to cause flash floods and mudslides, authorities in the US territory warned.

London, Aug 3 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Chris" centre located near lat 20.3N, long 66.4W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west or 280 degrees at 11 knots. Maximum sustained winds 40 knots with gusts to 50 knots. Forecast position lat 20.5N, long 68.0W at 1800, UTC. Maximum winds 35 knots, gusts 45 knots. Forecast position lat 20.8N, long 70.0W at 0600, UTC, Aug 4. Maximum winds 35 knots, gusts 45 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "EMILIA"

London, Jul 28 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical depression "Emilia": Depression centre located near lat 28.0N, long 119.8W, at 0300, UTC, Jul 28. Position accurate to within 25 nautical miles. Present movement

towards the west-north-west, or 295 deg, at nine knots. Maximum sustained winds 25 knots with gusts to 35 knots. Forecast for 0001, UTC, Jul 29: Dissipated.

TROPICAL STORM "FABIO"

London, Aug 1 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Fabio" centre located near lat 14.8N, long 124.6W at 0900, UTC. Position accurate within 30 nautical miles. Present movement toward the west-northwest or 285 degrees at 12 knots. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots with gusts to 45 knots. Forecast position lat 15.2N, long 126.4W at 1800, UTC. Maximum winds 40 knots, gusts 50 knots. Forecast position lat 15.7N, long 129.0W at 0600, UTC, Aug 2. Maximum winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots.

London, Aug 2 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today, states: Tropical storm "Fabio" centre located near lat 14.7N, long 129.5W at 0900, UTC, today. Position accurate within 30 nautical miles. Present movement towards the west or 275 degrees at 13 knots. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots with gusts to 55 knots. Forecast position lat 14.9N, long 131.5W at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots. Forecast position lat 15.2N, long 134.4W at 0600, UTC, Aug 3. Maximum winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots.

TYPHOON "EWINIAR"

Busan, Aug 1 — So far, only 25 out of a total of 171 containers lost from container carrier *Easline Tianjin* have been recovered by local salvors. Search and recovery operations for the remaining containers have been suspended as these are now assumed to have sunk. The *Easline Tianjin* sailed Busan about 2230, Jul 26, bound Xingang, after completion of cargo discharge. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

TYPHOON "KAEMI"

Beijing, Jul 28 — The death toll from rainstorms triggered by typhoon "Kaemi" has risen to 32 in China's south and east, state media said today. More than 60 were missing. "Kaemi" weakened to a tropical depression shortly after landing on China's southeastern coast on Tuesday (Jul 25), but the heavy rains it brought soaked five provinces, affecting six million people and forcing the evacuation of 1.3 million, state television said. The hardest hit is the eastern province of Jiangxi, where six were killed when flash floods along a mountainside swept away a military barracks in the early hours of Wednesday. Another 38 officers, soldiers and family members are still missing. A further 17 villagers died and 15 went missing in floods and landslides in Jiangxi's mountainous south, where rivers overflowed and thousands of houses collapsed, Xinhua news agency said. Power, communications and roads were also disrupted. The rain is expected to stop

in the area tomorrow, but is forecast to be followed by a three-day heatwave, prompting officials to warn against possible epidemics, Xinhua added. Five people, including two young girls, were also killed by floods and landslides in the neighbouring southern province of Guangdong, Xinhua said. Three were missing in Fujian province, where the storm made its China landfall. In the central province of Hunan, streets in the city of Chenzhou were flooded and at least three people were reported missing yesterday. By Wednesday, the rains had destroyed half a million houses, damaged 3.3 million hectares of crops and caused economic losses totalling yuan 74 billion yuan (£5 billion), Xinhua said. — Reuters.

TYPHOON "PRAPIROON"

Manila, Aug 2 — Tropical storm "Prapiroon" killed six people and forced thousands to flee their homes in northern Philippines before heading towards southern China today, disaster officials said. Prapiroon is the fourth storm to hit the Philippines in five weeks and flood waters affected half a million people, of whom 14,500 had to flee to higher ground, the National Disaster Coordinating Council said. Lightning killed two people while three drowned after heavy rains flooded rice and corn-growing regions on Luzon island. One person was killed by a falling tree and two were missing. Seven houses were swept away by flash floods and the initial damage to crops was estimated at 33 million pesos (\$641,000). The Philippine weather bureau said "Prapiroon", with maximum of 95 kph winds and gusts of up to 120 kph, left the country early today and was reported near Hong Kong on its way to China. — Reuters.

London, Aug 2 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today, states: Typhoon "Prapiroon" near lat 18.9N, long 114.7E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 315 degrees at eight knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots, gusts 80 knots. Forecast position lat 19.7N, long 113.3E at 1800, today. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots, gusts 90 knots. Forecast position lat 20.3N, long 111.8E at 0600, UTC, Aug 3. Maximum sustained winds 90 knots, gusts 110 knots.

Hong Kong, Aug 3 — Typhoon "Prapiroon," which killed six people and forced thousands to flee their homes in the northern Philippines, closed in on southern China today and thousands of people have been evacuated ahead of its arrival. At 0010, UTC, the centre of "Prapiroon" was about 280 km south of Hong Kong and is forecast to move at about 14 km an hour towards China's Guangdong Province, the Hong Kong observatory said. The central meteorological office said it was expected to make landfall somewhere between the cities of Taishan and Xuwen as early as this afternoon. Rail links between

Guangdong and the island province of Hainan were suspended and Hainan's fishing fleet was ordered to return to harbour, Xinhua news agency reported. The storm was expected to move north-west, hitting the provinces of Guangxi and Guizhou. A total of 65,000 people in the four provinces have been evacuated to safer places in preparation for the storm. Two port workers were injured in Hong Kong on Tuesday (Aug 1) when strong winds blew over a stack of 12-metre containers, police said. — Reuters.

UNITED STATES

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated Jul 28, states: California appeared to break out of its nearly two-week heat wave today, but not before it caused as many as 141 deaths and did untold damage to crops. Authorities raised their toll of possibly heat-related deaths by more than 40 today. The big increase came primarily from Los Angeles County and the Central Valley counties of Merced and Stanislaus, where coroners had struggled to keep up. Stanislaus County, which includes Modesto, has reported 29 heat-related deaths. It normally sees just one such death a year, county emergency services spokesman David Jones said. California had been experiencing triple-digit temperatures since July 16. Several cities set records for extended heat waves, including Fresno, with six consecutive 110-plus-degree days, and Sacramento, with 11 consecutive triple-digit days, said Cynthia Palmer, a National Weather Service meteorologist in Sacramento. Today, officials said the heat wave appeared to be over, with temperatures expected to return to normal over the weekend. While it's difficult to attribute any single weather event to the warming trend, experts said California's record-breaking heat was consistent with predictions that climate change would make heat waves more frequent and intense. The vast majority of deaths attributed to the heat were of elderly people who died in homes without air conditioning in the Central Valley, where temperatures hit 115 degrees for several consecutive days. Many elderly residents, whose bodies don't cope as well in the heat, probably underestimated the potential for harm, county coroners said. Central Valley farmers were assessing damage to their crops. Growers of peaches, plums, nectarines and walnuts were especially hit, said Rosanna Westmoreland, a spokeswoman for the California Farm Bureau. "This is definitely going to be one of those years we're going to remember," said Paul Wenger, a Stanislaus County farmer who said thousands of his walnut and almond trees suffered sun damage and even died in the heat. July has seen extreme heat across the United States, including in St. Louis, which sweltered all the worse after storms caused the worst blackout in city history last week. AmerenUE Corp. brought in utility workers from

around the country to help, but power was not completely restored until today, nine days later. More than a million customers lost power in California's heat wave, largely because of equipment failures, but power regulators avoided the mandatory blackouts that marked the state's power crisis of 2000 and 2001. Pacific Gas & Electric Co. said it would offer payments between \$25 and \$100 to customers who went without power for more than two days. Some energy experts said the heat wave exposed weaknesses in California's energy infrastructure. They added that although Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and state power regulators have emphasized power plant construction, they have done little to effectively manage how much electricity Californians use during heat waves and power shortages. Officials with California's Independent System Operator - the regulator of much of the state's energy supply - said their strategy of emergency declarations warning people to conserve worked.

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Fast-rising water gushed into homes early yesterday in suburban Cleveland, Ohio, chasing people to rooftops to await boat rescues as 10 inches of rain raised the Grand River 11 feet above flood level. "We think everybody got out. But we cannot be certain," said fire Capt. Ken Takacs, who estimated 600 residents were evacuated along the river, which curves around three sides of Painesville. In Eastlake, between Cleveland and Painesville along Lake Erie, the Coast Guard searched for a man reported missing while checking on his boat at a marina near the Chagrin River. A deluge hit the area Thursday (Jul 27) and early yesterday, but by midday the sun broke through and flood waters began to recede. Gov. Bob Taft declared a state of emergency in Lake County.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: Blistering heat settled over the eastern half of the United States today. The same heat wave that was blamed for as many as 164 deaths in California brought a fifth straight day of oppressive weather to Chicago and promised at least three days similar temperatures in the New York metropolitan area. Residents on Chicago's South Side were evacuated from buildings by the hundreds, one day after the power went out to 20,000 customers. Illinois officials blamed three deaths on the heat. By midafternoon, the temperature in Chicago was 100, Baltimore reached 99 and Washington hit 97, though the humidity made it feel like 107. In New York, it was 95 in Central Park and 100 at LaGuardia Airport in Queens. The National Weather Service said the temperature could reach 104 tomorrow, and Thursday (Aug 3) could be bad, too. Boston reached 93, in Philadelphia it was 97 and Atlanta it was 95. New York City adopted energy conservation measures. Thermostats in city offices were set at 78, up from the usual 72,

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and large municipal installations such as the Rikers Island jail used backup generators. The New York skyline will reflect the cutbacks, with lights turned down on the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building. The giant Pepsi-Cola sign on the Brooklyn waterfront was to be dimmed, as were the lights illuminating the George Washington Bridge, the Brooklyn Bridge and other spans. Utilities in New York and Pennsylvania set records today for peak electricity demand. Erin O'Brien, a spokeswoman for the agency that oversees electricity usage in six New England states, said demand tomorrow could surpass the one-day record set just two weeks ago. Demand was just short of the record today, she said. Ohio farmers used fans and cold showers to keep their cattle cool. Even with those efforts, the animals produced about 10 pounds less milk per day because of the heat, said farmer Clark Emmons of Fayette, Ohio. Colonial Downs, a horse track in New Kent County, Va., cancelled racing because of the 100-degree heat. In contrast, a third day of heavy rain caused widespread flooding around El Paso today, swamping mountainside homes, forcing evacuations and closing major roads. Emergency crews received an onslaught of distress calls, but there were no immediate reports of any serious injuries. Authorities said at least 60 people had been rescued, some standing on roofs, others atop cars. Fire officials said they were worried about mudslides, boulders and other debris falling from rocky cliffs around several El Paso neighbourhoods. The rain threatened to push the Rio Grande over its banks and more than doubled the normal speed of the river's current, authorities said. The river had started to recede by late today. The region had received less than an inch of rain in the first six months of the year. But as much as six inches may have fallen since Sunday (Jul 30), the National Weather Service said. Forecasters expect the rain to continue through at least tomorrow morning.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Record-breaking heat and oppressive humidity continued to affect the eastern half of the United States today. By late afternoon, the temperature at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport had risen to 99, with a heat index of 106. In New York, the temperature rose to 101 at LaGuardia Airport and 96 in Central Park. In Philadelphia and Baltimore the temperature was into the upper 90s. The National Weather Service posted heat advisories and warnings from Maine to Oklahoma. Forecasters said the heat would continue until tomorrow night, when a cool front was expected to bring temperatures down into the 80s. New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the city was fortunate that no fatalities were linked to the weather. Temperatures in the subway was as high as 111 at a Pennsylvania Station platform. The city's electric

utility, Con Edison, set its second record in two days for peak electricity demand, surpassing the level from a day earlier. The Long Island Power Authority also set a record. In Massachusetts thousands of people were without power tonight after thunderstorms downed trees and power lines. Most of the power was expected to be restored overnight. Kansas was confronted with a different problem today. Powerful storms, with winds up to 100 mph, hit the central part of the State, downing trees, snapping utility poles and sweeping several vehicles off Interstate 70, authorities said. There was however, better news in El Paso, Texas. Small patches of clean-up efforts were the only signs today of the rain-fuelled devastation from earlier in the week and residents were returning to their homes on opened roads under mostly sunny skies. Gov. Rick Perry will be in El Paso tomorrow to get an update on recovery efforts and damage reports. Kathy Walt, a Perry spokeswoman, said the governor planned to meet with city and county emergency officials at the city's emergency operations centre, which opened yesterday morning. The National Weather Service said the likelihood of further heavy rain had diminished, but that did not discount danger, because any significant rainfall could cause more flooding in a normally parched region saturated by three consecutive days of heavy showers. The official count is 7.5 inches of rain for the year, almost all of it in the last few weeks, but some parts of El Paso, particularly the west side, have been inundated by almost of one foot of rain in the last five days, officials said. Area residents and business owners began today trying to clear standing water and thick mud covering streets and the first floors of businesses and homes. Most of the damage was confined to businesses in about a quarter-mile area in the western part of the city, El Paso police spokesman Javier Sambrano said. Staff Sgt. John Collong of the National Guard said soldiers were deployed today morning to neighboring cities Socorro and Vinton to help residents get back into their homes, make sandbags and help with "whatever is necessary." The normally placid Rio Grande was moving at twice its normal speed, although it receded yesterday night, officials said. The state has declared El Paso a disaster area.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated today, states: The boat salvage business in Grand River has rarely been better in the wake of Lake County's worst-ever 24-hour rainstorm. That's small solace for scores of boaters paying salvage crews \$200 a foot or more to float their damaged vessels to the surface and tow them to nearby marinas. Many face thousands more in repairs. Nearly a dozen boats remain washed ashore near Perry Park or near the Perry nuclear power plant, said Coast Guard Master Chief Petty Officer Nick

Suvak. They're all that remain from among more than 100 that washed into the lake from the Grand River and another 20 or so that spilled out from the Chagrin. "Suvak said the Coast Guard does not salvage boats, but anchors them until companies like Huffman Contracting of Eastlake or Cleveland Marine Towing get them on behalf of the owners. Criquet Codeluppi, a boat captain and part owner of Cleveland Marine Towing, said her company has salvaged about 20 boats so far. Rich Quandt of Huffman Contracting said his company has brought in more than a dozen with a deck-mounted, 50-ton crane and sling. An Army Corps of Engineers team, meanwhile, is using depth soundings in the harbour near the Grand River west of Painesville to seek more underwater wrecks. Hundreds of battered vessels still line the Grand and Chagrin rivers, some swamped with water and others tossed ashore by the flooding. "We haven't even begun to think about getting up the rivers," Codeluppi said. One of the final Lake Erie salvage jobs drew a small crowd yesterday. A barge and tug from Eastlake salvage company Huffman Equipment towed in the circular floating bar and grill owned by Pickle Bill's restaurant. "They found it five miles out by the Perry nuclear power plant," restaurant owner Jerry Powell said.

Earthquakes



AFGHANISTAN

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: An earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale has killed at least three children and left more than 1,000 people without shelter in the south of Tajikistan. The earthquake's epicentre was in northern Afghanistan about 180 kilometres southeast of the Tajik capital Dushanbe and hit at 1557, local time, on Saturday (Jul 29). It almost completely destroyed a village in Tajikistan's Panj region near the border with Afghanistan. At least 19 people were injured.

INDONESIA

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated Aug 3, states: A 6.1-magnitude earthquake has shaken the Indonesian island of Sumbawa. A spokeswoman from the main meteorological agency in Jakarta says the quake was strong enough and shallow enough to cause a tsunami within 45 minutes. But police on the island speaking around 90 minutes after the quake say they've received no reports of a tsunami, nor of any casualties or damage.

JAPAN

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated Jul 28, states: An earthquake measuring at a preliminary magnitude

of 5.9 jolted some western islands of southern Okinawa prefecture in Japan this afternoon, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. No tsunami warnings were issued as to the 1640 hrs (0740, UTC) quake. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The quakes epicentre was 40 kilometres under seabed.

TAIWAN

London, Jul 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A 6.1-magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of Taiwan today, rocking buildings in Taipei but causing no damage or casualties, the Central Weather Bureau said. The quake's epicentre was located about 90 miles south-east of Taipei, the bureau said. Japan's Meteorological Agency said there was no threat of a tsunami. The quake was also felt in the Yonaguni islands, in south-western Japan, but there were no reports of damage or injuries there either, officials said. Taiwan's weather bureau warned against aftershocks, but said they were not expected to cause any damage because of the epicentre's distance from the island.



MOUNT KARANGETANG, INDONESIA

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Jul 29, states: Thousands of villagers were evacuated after a volcano on an island in eastern Indonesia started spewing lava and hot clouds, officials said yesterday. There were no reports of casualties. Nearly 4,000 people were evacuated from five villages, said Iskandar Gobel, a North Sulawesi provincial official, and police in the area said more would likely leave in coming days. The status of the 1,784-metre Mount Karangetang, one of the country's most active mountains, was raised to the highest level more than a week ago, said Saut Simatupang, chief researcher at the government's volcanological agency. Lava and hot ash poured 750 metres down the volcano's slopes on Thursday (Jul 27), its second eruption since Jul 17.

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A volcano in eastern Indonesia spewed hot gas and debris a mile down its slopes today, but hundreds of villagers refused to leave areas just outside the danger zone. Mount Karangetang, one of the country's most active mountains, has been at a state of high alert for two weeks. More than 1,000 people have been evacuated from villages near the peak, but 500 more living further down the mountainside were refusing to budge, saying they wanted to tend to livestock and crops, said Replein Areros, a district official. The 5,850-foot volcano shot out at least 30 bursts

of lava and hot ash today, said Saut Simatupang, chief researcher at the government's volcanology agency. The government could not force villagers to leave or prevent them from returning to check on their property, he said, adding that there were no reports of injuries or major damage.

MOUNT MAYON, PHILIPPINES

London, Aug 1 — Mayon Volcano yesterday ejected a high volume of sulfuric steam, indicating its eruption is imminent, scientists said. They said yesterday's gas emission rate of 12,548 tons a day was a record high compared with last week's 9,275 tons, and that meant the volcano was pushing new magma up to the crater in preparation for a violent explosion. Mayon continued to disgorge molten rocks cascading 100 metres down the Mabinit channel, which is 5.6 aerial km from the crater. The toe of the lava at the Mabinit channel was inching its way to the boundary of the 6-km permanent-danger zone, threatening the villages of Mabinit, Matanag, Bonga, and Buyuan, scientists said. The lava front continued to move toward a forested area at the foot of the volcano and threatening to ignite it, they said. Lava and flying rocks at the southeast slopes triggered 388 tremors.



AFGHANISTAN

Jalalabad, Jul 31 — A car bomb killed six people and wounded 16 others outside a mosque in eastern Afghanistan today, but the apparent target, a provincial governor, was unhurt. The blast took place in the city of Jalalabad where thousands of people, including the governor of Ningarhar, Gul Afgha Sherzai, were gathered in front of the mosque. Sherzai escaped unhurt. — Reuters.

Kabul, Aug 1 — At least two NATO soldiers were killed in an ambush today in southern Afghanistan, a day after the alliance took control of security in the volatile region. The soldiers were part of a patrol that was attacked by insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades in Helmand province, a statement by the International Assistance Security Force (ISAF) said. "Two ISAF soldiers were killed in this attack, one wounded and one remains unaccounted for," it said. The statement did not give identity of the victims. Residents said heavy fighting had erupted in Musa Qala district of Helmand where the soldiers were ambushed. An ISAF spokesman confirmed the fighting, saying it was "part of an ongoing operation" but gave no details. Yesterday, NATO forces took over security in the Afghan south from the U.S. led coalition to begin one of the biggest ground

operations in the alliance's history. The NATO takeover should allow the U.S. army to trim down the size of its force from 23,000 to 20,000 and the alliance is expected to expand its mission later this year into the east where the militants are active too. Today, Afghan and coalition forces detained four suspected al Qaeda operatives during a raid on a village in the southeastern province of Khost, a coalition statement said. The raid was part of an operation to stop attacks on Afghan and coalition forces in eastern Afghanistan, and smuggling of explosives. There was no resistance or casualties sustained on either side, the coalition statement said. — Reuters.

Kandahar, Aug 2 — NATO and Afghan forces killed 18 Taliban guerrillas in a raid on a village in southern Afghanistan, where violence has escalated after NATO troops took over from U.S. forces. In another province in the Taliban's southern heartland, 15 police surrendered as the rebels were about to attack their post, the Taliban said. The NATO-Afghan raid on the rebels today came after villagers told government forces guerrillas had gathered in the village of Garmser in Helmand province, the provincial police chief said. "We carried out the operation in which 18 Taliban got killed and we recovered a huge amount of ammunitions," Nabi Mullahkhail, told Reuters today. He did not give further details but said there were no casualties among the NATO and Afghan troops. In the capital, Kabul, a blast in a car killed a man and wounded two on today, police said. The cause of explosion was unclear. Separately, 15 police surrendered to the Taliban yesterday in Zabul, another province in the south, as rebels readied to storm their post just outside Qalat, the provincial capital, Taliban commander Mullah Zahir said. Zabul police chief Noor Mohammad Pakteen said he had heard the report and a government team has been sent to investigate, but a government official in Kabul confirmed the surrender. — Reuters.

COLOMBIA

Bogota, Jul 31 — Fifteen soldiers were killed in a rebel ambush in northern Colombia and three more people died in other attacks today, a week before President Alvaro Uribe starts his second term. An army patrol was ambushed with explosives near the town of Tibu in North Santander province near Venezuela, killing 15 of the 18-member unit, military officials said. Rebels grow coca in that part of the country, which is used to make the cocaine that funds their four-decade-old insurrection. Also today, a bomb blast killed two soldiers in the southwest province of Narino. A remote-controlled car bomb targeting a military convoy in Bogota injured soldiers and killed a homeless man who was collecting recyclable garbage on the street. The capital, Bogota, is on maximum alert ahead of Uribe's Aug 7 inauguration. The southern

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jungle province of Caqueta was left without electricity on today after rebels bombed power installations, authorities said. — Reuters.

Bogota, Aug 2 — Six peasants hired by the government to rip out illicit crops from a public nature reserve were killed today by land mines planted by leftist rebels, an official said. Seven other workers were injured by the blasts in La Macarena national park in the southern province of Meta, a government spokesman said. The incident follows rebel attacks that left 17 soldiers and one civilian dead on Monday (Jul 31) and is a reminder of the challenges that remain for President Alvaro Uribe. Uribe has 2,000 peasants throughout the country pulling up coca plants used by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, to make the cocaine that funds its four-decade-old insurrection. He ordered Colombian aircraft to bomb FARC positions in La Macarena in February after the guerrillas killed 13 soldiers assigned to protect the workers. Police estimate that coca fields in La Macarena help the FARC produce tonnes of cocaine every year destined for the US market. Colombia's coca fields are increasingly being planted in the country's nature reserves as growers flee a US-funded crop-dusting campaign. The government decided not to dust in the parks after environmentalists warned that spraying herbicide would damage protected ecosystems. — Reuters.

INDIA

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Six people were killed in shootings and 10 wounded in a grenade attack on a bus carrying Hindu pilgrims in Indian Kashmir, police and the army said. Indian troops shot dead four Muslim rebels during a fierce gunbattle near the de facto border dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan. "The four were killed during a gunbattle that erupted late yesterday in the (northern) Gurez sector," army spokesman Hemant Joneja told AFP today. He said the four were part of a group that had infiltrated into Indian Kashmir on Wednesday (July 26) from across the Line of Control — the ceasefire line that splits Kashmir between nuclear-armed rivals India and Pakistan. "In all a total of eight militants have been killed in Gurez since July 26 when the infiltration was detected," he said. Police said a Muslim civilian was also killed in the crossfire and suspected militants shot dead a Muslim civilian late yesterday. Meanwhile, seven Hindu pilgrims and three bystanders were wounded in a grenade attack on a bus carrying Hindu pilgrims in Srinagar today, police said.

Jammu, Aug 2 — Suspected militants threw a grenade near a bus stand in Indian Kashmir today, wounding over a dozen people, police said, the latest in a spate of similar attacks in recent weeks blamed on Islamist guerrillas. The grenade was aimed at a federal police patrol but missed and exploded

among people standing close to a crowded bus stand in Surankote town, 230 km north of Jammu, the winter capital of the restive Himalayan region. Five of the wounded were in serious condition, a police officer said. — Reuters.

IRAQ

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated Jul 29, states: Gunmen have opened fire on two Sunni mosques in western Baghdad, according to police. Armed men in two cars sprayed gunfire at the Muhammad Rassullullah mosque shattering windows and damaging walls. An hour later gunmen stormed the nearby Ashra al-Mubashara mosque, fleeing when police arrived, say officials. Elsewhere, at least three people were killed and 15 others injured by a car bomb near a petrol station in the northern city of Kirkuk, police said. Earlier, the US military confirmed three of their marines died in clashes with insurgents on Thursday in the western province of Anbar. The US military said they died in clashes in what is a known Sunni-dominated trouble spot. A statement said the three marines were attached to the Army's 1st Armoured Division, which operates in Ramadi, but gave no further details. In other incidents: Six labourers were wounded by a bomb blast in Tayaran Square, Baghdad. Three police were also wounded in a roadside bomb attack in northern Baghdad. A Sunni cleric, from a tribe opposed to al-Qaeda was killed while driving in Samarra and Iraq's national soccer coach has resigned after receiving a death threat.

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A pipeline linking the northern refineries in Baiji, the largest refining complex in Iraq, and the refinery in Doura in Baghdad was blown up late last week. The explosion caused huge fire and was reported to have led to the disruption of activities in both refineries which produce more than 80% of Iraq's refining products. The line is crucial for both refineries as it carries crude oil from the northern oilfields of Kirkuk to both Baiji and Doura. Fire fighters were called to the scene and it took them several days to extinguish the flames.

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Gunmen wearing Iraqi police uniforms have kidnapped 25 people in a commercial district in central Baghdad, interior ministry officials said. The gunmen pulled up in 15 vehicles and rounded up staff and customers of a firm on a shopping street in Arasat. There are reports that the offices belong to the Iraqi-American chamber of commerce, while others say it was a mobile phone shop. It is not known who might be behind this incident. One witness told the Reuters news agency they saw gunmen handcuff and blindfold the victims. Police say the head of the chamber of commerce and 11 of his employees are among those kidnapped, Reuters have reported. A

guard standing across the street said the kidnapers arrived in police cars without number plates. "They separated the women from the men and took only men," he told the AFP news agency.

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Iraq's interior minister faced calls for his dismissal today over the security crisis in Baghdad and surrounding towns, with the violence blamed mostly on sectarian conflict between Shiites and Sunnis. Gunmen in military uniforms kidnapped dozens of people in an upscale, mostly Shiite Baghdad neighbourhood today, and shooting and bombings across the country killed at least 19 people, including four Iraqi soldiers. The kidnapping was carried out by gunmen in military fatigues who drove to the main shopping area of Karradah in 15 vehicles and split into two groups. One went into a mobile phone shop and the other into the office next door of the Iraqi-American Chamber of Commerce, said police Lt Thair Mahmoud. They kidnapped 15 staff and customers from the shop and 11 from the chamber, he said. All were believed to be Iraqis. In another kidnapping today, gunmen in commando uniforms blocked a car carrying a millionaire businessman and his two sons and seized the three in south-eastern Baghdad, said police Lt Bilal Ali Majeed. In violence around the country, a suicide bomber detonated a pickup truck near an Iraqi observation post outside the northern city of Mosul, killing four soldiers and wounding six, said an army officer. Gunmen in a sedan shot and killed two vendors selling cooking-gas cylinders in Baghdad's western Yarmouk neighborhood, police said. Other gunmen opened fire on municipal street sweepers in the capital, killing one and injuring two. A senior intelligence official was shot dead in his car in Baghdad. Two people were killed in other shootings in the capital, where a roadside bomb killed a policeman. Police discovered the bullet-riddled bodies of three men in the Baghdad area. Two had their hands and feet tied, and the third was fished out of the Tigris river, his body showing signs of torture. Gunmen yesterday ordered four policemen and a lawyer out of their car and beheaded them near the northern town of Hawija, 150 miles north of Baghdad, said police Col Burhan Tayeb.

Baghdad, Aug 1 — A car bomb killed at least seven people in the Iraqi town of Muqdadiya, north-east of Baghdad today, police said. Police said eight people were also injured in the attack in front of the hospital in Muqdadiya, 90 km north-east of the capital. Muqdadiya is part of Diyala Province, one of the country's most violent areas. — Reuters.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: A series of bomb attacks in Iraq have killed at least 40 people - many of them soldiers. A roadside bomb killed at least 20 soldiers travelling on a bus between

Tikrit and Baiji, north of Baghdad. In central Baghdad's Karrada district, at least 14 people died in a suicide car bombing outside a bank where security forces were collecting pay. Another blast in Baghdad left one dead, while an attack on a police patrol in the north-east killed five people. The Karrada district bomb was in a car parked outside a security cordon at the al-Rafidein bank on Rushdie Street, where security personnel collect wages on the first of every month. Lt Col Abbas Mohammed Salman of the Iraqi police told the AP news agency eight civilians, three soldiers and three commandos were killed. Twenty-two other people were injured. In the north-east, one policeman and at least four civilians were killed in a bomb attack on a police patrol near the city of Muqdadiya. The blast, which the AFP news agency said was outside a police post and bus station, also wounded at least 10 people, according to reports. A fourth roadside explosion killed one person and wounded another in the Zayouna district of north-eastern Baghdad. According to AP, the explosion narrowly missed a car belonging to the minister of electricity. Yesterday, about 20 people were kidnapped from offices in Baghdad. There is still no word on what has happened to them.

Basrah, Aug 1 — A British soldier was killed today in a mortar attack on an army base in Basra, a British military spokesman said. "A U.K. soldier from the First Battalion, the Light Infantry, has died as a result of an attack on a multi-national force base in Basra city," the spokesman said. The attack occurred in the early hours of this morning, the spokesman said. The soldier suffered serious injuries from the explosion and was airlifted to an army hospital, where he died of his wounds. There were no other casualties. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Aug 1 — Iraq's northern oil pipeline to Turkey has been hit by yet another sabotage attack, delaying the restart of exports to world markets and undermining government efforts to rebuild the industry, sources said today. "It was bombed again yesterday," said a shipping agent. A second source said the pipeline carrying crude from Iraq's northern oilfields to Turkey's Ceyhan port had been sabotaged, but details were sketchy. An Iraqi oil ministry official said only that more time was needed to complete maintenance work. The pipeline was idled by sabotage on July 9, but officials were hoping for a swift restart. Just two days ago, Oil Minister Hussain al-Shahristani said one of the two northern pipelines was fixed and that exports would soon resume. Northern exports from Kirkuk have been idle most of the time since the U.S.-led war on Iraq in 2003. — Reuters.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: A roadside bomb blew up a bus today, killing 24 people as violence across Iraq left 63 people dead. Among the dead was a British

soldier killed in a mortar attack in the south, while the US military announced that an American soldier was killed by a roadside bomb yesterday. A provincial governor said that 45 people from his predominantly Shiite region had been kidnapped in a Sunni area of western Iraq while travelling by bus out of the country. Gunmen in Baghdad also kidnapped the spokesman of a political coalition including Shiite, Sunni, Kurdish and independent parties. The bus, carrying many Iraqi soldiers, was struck in the northern industrial city of Beiji, killing everyone on board, said Defence Ministry spokesman Mohammed al-Askari. Police earlier said that 20 Iraqi soldiers were killed on the bus. Al-Askari confirmed that many of the passengers were soldiers, but said he did not know how many. Following the blast, a curfew was imposed in Beiji, 155 miles north of Baghdad. In the Karradah neighbourhood of Baghdad, a car bomb exploded during morning rush hour near a bank, killing at least 14 people and injuring 37, said police Lt. Col. Abbas Mohammed Salman. The target was well chosen because Iraqi security forces draw their salaries from the bank on the first of every month. The blast set several cars on fire in the Shiite neighbourhood. Dismembered bodies were strewn on the sidewalk. Also today, a car bomb targeting a police patrol killed one policeman and six civilians in Muqdadiyah, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, said an official of a joint Iraqi-US security force centre. The US military said an American soldier assigned to the 16th Corps Support Group was killed by a roadside bomb while traveling in a convoy south of Baghdad. A second service member was wounded in the attack yesterday. A British soldier was killed in a mortar attack on a base in the southern Iraqi city of Basra, a spokeswoman of Britain's Defence Ministry said. The infantry soldier died after being airlifted to a field hospital outside Basra, said the spokeswoman.

ISRAEL-LEBANON

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A Hezbollah rocket slammed into a chemical plant in the northern Israeli town of Kiryat Shemona on Thursday, security officials said. The type of chemicals involved and the extent of the damage were not immediately known.

Beirut, July 27 — Along Lebanon's sandy beaches and rocky headlands runs a belt of black sludge, 10,000 to 30,000 tonnes of oil that spilled into the Mediterranean Sea after Israel bombed a power plant. Lebanon's Environment Ministry says the oil flooded into the sea when Israeli jets hit storage tanks at the Jiyeh plant south of Beirut on July 13 and 15, creating an ecological crisis that Lebanon's government has neither the money nor the expertise to deal with. "We have never seen a spill like this in the history of Lebanon. It is a major catastrophe," Environment Minister

Yacoub al Sarraf said. "The equipment we have is for minor spills. We use it once in a blue moon to clean a small spill of 50 tonnes or so. To clean this whole thing up we would need an armada. The cost of a full clean-up could run as high as \$40-50 million." The spill is especially threatening since fish spawn and sea turtles nest on Lebanon's coast, including the green turtle which is endangered in the Mediterranean, local ecologists say. Carried by a north-easterly wind, the spill has travelled 70-80 km up the coast of Lebanon. An Israeli warship damaged by a Hizbullah missile on July 15 may also have spilled diesel oil into the sea, according to the Environment Ministry website. At Beirut's Sporting Club, seven men in navy overalls perch on the edge of a man-made inlet skimming sludge, using buckets on the end of sticks and pouring it into plastic containers. The team is part of a pilot clean-up commissioned by the Environment Ministry. Another mop-up is under way at the San Antoine Sandy Beach Resort in northern Lebanon. "It arrived the day after they hit the Jiyeh power plant. The worst has passed now. A couple of days ago the whole coastline was black," said Walid Abu Nassar, surveying the damage to the Sporting Club, which he runs. "First they tried to pump it out but that didn't work, now this. These are crude methods but Lebanon has no other way." Lebanon has turned to Kuwait for help. A plane load of equipment is due to arrive from Kuwait via Syria by the end of the week, Sarraf said. But one of the main problems is that an Israeli air and sea blockade in place since the war began on July 12 is hampering both the clean-up and the delivery of equipment. "To really clean it up we need access to the sea, which we don't have," Sarraf said. "We need more equipment and mobilisation but for that we need the hostilities to end." The migratory season is over so birds should not be badly affected and some oil may evaporate or decompose, but spills can smother or poison sea life, the Environment Ministry says. Even if Lebanon is able to mop up, the marine ecosystem could take years to recover, local environmentalists say. Commercial fishing and tourism has been at a standstill since the war began because of the air and sea blockade. "July is hatching season for turtle eggs and baby turtles have to reach deep water as fast as possible to avoid predators. With the oil in their way, they will not survive," Wael Hmaidan, a local environmental activist said. "The oil spill, part of which has settled on the sea floor, threatens blue fin tuna, which is an important but overfished commercial fish, as well as shark species." — Reuters

Beirut, Jul 28 — Israel battered Lebanon today, killing 11 people as waves of air raids struck villages in the hills behind the southern port of Tyre and hundreds of artillery rounds crashed across the border. Security

sources said at least eight people, including a Jordanian, died in over 40 air raids in the south. Three were killed in overnight air strikes in the eastern Bekaa Valley. Despite growing world demands for an end to Israel's war with Hizbollah guerrillas, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice delayed a possible return to the region. The pounding of villages, where some civilians remain trapped, followed a decision by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's security cabinet to intensify air strikes and ground forays against Hizbollah, rather than launching a big invasion. Rice is likely to delay her departure from Malaysia until tomorrow, said a senior US State Department official, dashing prospects that she would return to the Middle East today. Her bags were packed and ready to go when the schedule was suddenly changed, suggesting that negotiations had not reached a point where her presence could produce a halt to hostilities that have killed 456 people in Lebanon and 51 Israelis. Israel has taken Washington's refusal to demand an immediate cease-fire as permission to pursue an onslaught on Lebanon aimed at crippling Hizbollah guerrillas who set off the conflict by seizing two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid on Jul 12. Hizbollah has kept up rocket strikes on northern Israel and fought Israeli ground incursions, especially near the southern town of Bint Jbeil, where sporadic fighting continued today. An Israeli military source said the army believed it had killed at least 200 Hizbollah fighters in the conflict. The Shi'ite guerrillas have acknowledged only 31 dead. Hundreds of civilians casualties and a humanitarian crisis in Lebanon have fuelled world pressure for an instant cease-fire. Washington insists on finding a durable solution first — one that eliminates Hizbollah's capacity to menace Israel and thereby reduces the influence of its allies Syria and Iran. UN Middle East envoy Terje Roed-Larsen said it would be hard to get a cease-fire agreed without involving Iran and Syria. Asked if a quick cease-fire was possible, he told France's *Le Figaro* newspaper: "Frankly, no. Neither Israel nor Hizbollah are displaying any sign of accepting one right now. On the contrary, both have remained very belligerent." Larsen said it was too early to say if Iran and Syria could join peace efforts, adding that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had spoken to the presidents of both countries. — Reuters.

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 54 civilians, at least 34 of them children, have been killed in a town in south Lebanon in the deadliest Israeli strike of the conflict so far. Displaced families had been sheltering in the basement of a house in Qana, which was crushed after a direct hit. Lebanon's prime minister denounced "Israeli war criminals" and cancelled talks with the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Israel said it

regretted the incident - but added that civilians had been warned to flee the village. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel would "continue to act with no hesitation against Hezbollah" which has been firing rockets into Israel from southern Lebanon. He is reported to have told US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that Israel needs 10-14 days to press its offensive. Israel's military has asked United Nations observers in southern Lebanon to evacuate two more villages - Ramyah and Ayta ash-Shab - before sunset, but they are unable to do so, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said. Hundreds of Lebanese protesters staged a violent demonstration, ransacking the UN headquarters in Beirut, chanting slogans against the US and Israel and in support of the Hezbollah militants. Several countries have condemned the attack and renewed their calls for an immediate ceasefire - opposed by Israel and the US. Lebanon's health minister now says about 750 people - mainly civilians - have been killed by Israeli action in Lebanon since their operations began 19 days ago. Hezbollah has vowed to retaliate after the Qana attack. Several Katyusha rockets hit the border town of Kiryat Shemona today, wounding several people, in what residents described as the worst day so far. A total of 51 Israelis, including at least 18 civilians, have been killed in the conflict.

Beirut, Jul 31 — Israel suspended air strikes on southern Lebanon today for 48 hours after a raid killed at least 54 civilians and triggered worldwide calls for a ceasefire in its war against Hizbollah. Washington pressed for the suspension and many world leaders condemned yesterday's bombing of the village of Qana, the bloodiest single attack in Israel's nearly three-week war against the guerrilla group. The attack prompted Lebanon's government to call off scheduled talks with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and tell her she was unwelcome before a ceasefire was in place. US State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said in Jerusalem Israel's decision to suspend its aerial bombardment would allow for an investigation into the Qana attack. Israel would also co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour window for residents in southern Lebanon to leave the area if they wished, Ereli said. Rescue workers called off the search in Qana for bodies or survivors after hours of digging through the rubble. Hizbollah fired more than 140 rockets at Israel yesterday, wounding six people, Israeli police said. — Reuters.

London, Jul 31 — General cargo *Moon Light* arrived Alexandria Jul 28.

London, Aug 1 — Tar from a major oil spill fouling the coast of Lebanon has reached Syria, underlining fears that the pollution could spread to a wider area as continuing hostilities frustrate clean-up operations. At least 10,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil has spilled along the Lebanese coast from power plant storage tanks at Jeih,

about 20 miles south of Beirut, that were twice hit by the Israeli air force. The country's environment minister said that an additional 15,000 tonnes was expected to follow and other agencies have mentioned a potential spill that could reach 35,000 tonnes. According to the ministry about one-third of the ravaged country's coastline has been affected. The government called for international assistance 10 days ago — especially requesting clean-up equipment such as dispersants, booms, absorbents, skimmers and specialised craft. So far, it said, Jordan is sending experts and Kuwait is ready to send three containers of material and equipment for tackling the spill. The Lebanese private sector could offer little equipment, it was noted. According to the environment ministry's website, though, other international assistance has been "minimal." Yesterday the International Maritime Organisation-administered Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean (Rempec) admitted it has not been able to send experts to the site of the spill because of the circumstances in Lebanon. It said its Mediterranean Assistance Unit is "on stand-by." Rempec claimed that "several" Mediterranean coastal states and EU countries had sent "positive replies" to a circular asking for help but the premise was that assistance could be rendered when the situation permits. Meanwhile, the Syrian government confirmed that "a small quantity of tar balls" arrived on Syria's shores but this oil has already been removed. The Lebanese environment ministry has already forecast that "a complete oil spill clean-up operation will cost in the range of tens of millions of euros and will span a long period of time."

Beirut, Aug 1 — Israeli troops fought fierce battles with Hizbollah guerrillas in southern Lebanon early today, as the Jewish state gave the green light to widen a ground offensive and push deep into Lebanese territory. An Israeli military source reported "on and off" clashes in the areas of Aita al-Shaab and Taibe inside Lebanon and Hizbollah said it was resisting another Israeli incursion near the border village of Kfar Kila. The southern village of Qana was set to bury bodies of at least 54 civilians, today, two days after they were killed in an Israeli air strike that sparked international outrage and calls for a swift end to the fighting. Israeli jets bombed a road near the north-eastern Lebanese town of al-Hermil near the Syrian border early today, a security source said. The raid came just hours after an air strike near the main border crossing from Syria which wounded four Lebanese custom officials and three truck drivers. Israel announced a partial 48-hour suspension of air strikes early yesterday and said it was giving a 24-hour window to allow aid workers to reach the worst hit areas and residents to flee. However, warplanes bombed targets in the area later in the day and the United

Nations said access had not improved. Israel said it would still use air strikes against Hizbollah leaders and rocket launchers and to back up ground forces. Hizbollah fired two shells into the northern Israeli border town of Kiryat Shmona yesterday but no one was wounded. The group also said its rockets hit an Israeli warship off Lebanon's south port city of Tyre, but an Israeli source denied the claim. — Reuters.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Oil from a Lebanese power plant struck by an Israeli bomb continued to spill into the Mediterranean Sea yesterday, as the sheer extent of the spill and its ecological toll has elevated the crisis from a national to a regional environmental threat. In the meantime, the Malta-based Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), as per its remit, has been liaising closely with the Lebanese environment ministry to ascertain the environmental damage, contain the spill and decide on future action once it is deemed safe to send clean-up experts to the region. Estimates of the spill's extent vary from 10,000 to 35,000 tonnes after the fuel tanks of the Jiyeh power station, just south of Beirut, were struck by Israeli jets between July 13 and 15. So far the spill has contaminated an 80-kilometre stretch of coastline. Since the bombing, winds have been pushing the oil further north and the spill is now threatening the Syrian coast. While the Lebanese authorities and infrastructure remain in a state of disarray due to the violence in the region, the spill continues to move unchecked as the continued bombing of Lebanon and the Israeli blockade of the Lebanese coast render it impossible to dispatch any experts from REMPEC or Barcelona Convention signatory countries, including Malta, to the area to begin containment and clean-up activities. REMPEC, which is managed jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme's Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEMAP) and the UN's International Maritime Organisation (IMO), in addition to liaising closely with the Lebanese authorities, is also organising such a team of experts to assist in the clean-up as soon as hostilities in the region cease. It has also activated its Mediterranean Assistance Unit to mobilise key pollution control centres in the region that will be able to take action once hostilities draw to an end. Yesterday, a UNEMAP spokesperson confirmed: "There is no way to have any concrete intervention due to the bombing. The clean-up must be physical as the oil sticks to the rocks and shore, but we cannot do anything until there is a guaranteed ceasefire. We have a unit on standby for action once we have security clearance to enter the region. The UN agency has also requested signatories of the Barcelona Convention to supply personnel and equipment to be ready to intervene

once the region is accessible, which many have agreed to. Malta, the official confirmed, has replied to the request but said it needs to know a bit more about the situation and what it can offer. The spokesperson also confirmed that some of the oil slick has reached the Syrian coast and has been cleaned up by Syrian authorities. A new fire breaking out at the power plant has also threatened an undamaged tank holding another 15,000 tonnes of oil. Thick, black smoke from the fire has been polluting the air over Beirut and its suburbs and officials in Beirut have warned residents near the sea to keep their windows closed and stay as far away from the oil as possible, since fumes from the oil can cause skin and respiratory problems.

Gaza, Aug 1 — Egyptian mediators have resumed efforts to strike a deal to free an Israeli soldier captured by Palestinian militants from Gaza but any breakthrough looks some way off, a senior Palestinian official said today. Israel launched an offensive in Gaza following the abduction of Corporal Gilad Shalit on June 25 by militants including gunmen from the ruling Hamas faction. It opened a second front in Lebanon after Hizbollah seized two soldiers on July 12. Israel said it was not aware of any fresh Egyptian mediation and Hamas denied it was involved in such talks. "After negotiations stopped for a period of time, they have been resumed in order to get a result," Nabil Shaath, a close aide to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, told Reuters. Mediation, mainly driven by Egypt, had largely been frozen for weeks. Shaath said mediators were pushing a deal that sought to end Israel's Gaza assault and also militant rocket fire by including the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in return for Shalit. "But so far we have no final agreement. We do not have a final agreement on numbers (of prisoners), dates or any handover mechanism. All that awaits approval from the two sides ... Hamas and Israel," Shaath said. Shaath said that prisoners proposed for release would include the sick, the elderly, woman and minors. As part of the mechanism, Shalit might be handed over to Egypt first, he said. "It is better that a handover be done through a third party," he said. Israel has ruled out negotiations to free Shalit and demanded his unconditional release. "I cannot confirm that, I don't know that to be true at all," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev, when asked about Shaath's comments on fresh mediation. Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri denied mediators had resumed talks with the Islamist militant movement. "There are no negotiations going on with us. The issue will not be resolved before the conditions are met," Abu Zuhri said. Palestinian officials and other mediators have said Israel had promised to free prisoners at a later stage once

militants released Shalit. Hamas has insisted on immediate reciprocity. — Reuters.

London, Aug 2 — Lebanon has asked for help from the European Union's civil protection mechanism to contain environmental damage caused by a major oil spill involving an estimated 10,000 to 35,000 tons of heavy fuel. According to the Lebanese authorities, the spill was caused by the destruction of a storage tank at the power plant at Jieh, which was hit by the Israelis on Jul 13 and Jul 15. The fuel has been burning and some has leaked out to sea. The spill has so far contaminated at least 70-80 km of the coastline north of Jieh, affecting public beaches, ports and marinas. The Lebanese government asked the European Commission's monitoring and information centre for "significant amounts" of dispersants, booms, absorbents, skimmers and specialist vessels. The European Maritime Safety Agency said yesterday it is unlikely to get involved in the spill response because it is mainly the coastline that has been affected and the response was therefore a civil protection issue. The Lisbon-based agency, which has a stand-by pollution response vessel stationed in Malta, could in theory be called into action by an EU member state, although a source said yesterday the Lebanon spill was localised and therefore unlikely to threaten Cyprus, the closest member state.

Baalbek, Lebanon, Aug 2 — Israeli airborne commandos battled guerrillas near a Hizbollah-run hospital in eastern Lebanon today and officials in the Jewish state said the 23-day-old war could run for at least another week. Lebanese security sources said Israeli soldiers had landed by helicopter near the Hizbollah stronghold of Baalbek in the eastern Bekaa Valley as aircraft launched dozens of strikes in the region. Three weeks after the war erupted when Hizbollah seized two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid, Israel's security cabinet agreed to step up its offensive, and carry out a ground sweep 6-7 km into Lebanon, a political source said. Despite growing international calls for an end to fighting that has killed at least 624 people in Lebanon and 54 Israelis, Israel was set to resume full air strikes in Lebanon early today at the end of a partial, 48-hour suspension. Security sources said the target of the Israeli troops dropped near Baalbek was the vacated al-Hikmah hospital. One source said senior Hizbollah official Mohammad Yazbik could have been the target of the attack. There was fierce fighting with assault rifles, grenade-launchers and machine-guns around the hospital, witnesses said. Israeli helicopters fired rockets and heavy machine-gun fire at targets near the hospital and other targets in the city. A Hizbollah source said several Israeli soldiers were trapped in the hospital. There was no independent confirmation. Fighting raged for more than four hours. Another unit dropped

in the outskirts of the ancient city but its target was not immediately clear, the security sources said. Air strikes hit civilian neighbourhoods in the city and several civilians were feared killed or wounded. Hizbollah fighters killed three Israeli soldiers and wounded 30 in fierce fighting on several fronts in south Lebanon yesterday. "We have so far now about six efforts running inside Lebanon ... brigade-size or even bigger than brigade-size efforts in each one of them," Israeli Brigadier General Shuki Shahur said. An Israeli brigade usually has at least 1,000 soldiers. Israel's justice minister said about 300 of an estimated 2,000 Hizbollah fighters had been killed so far, and the tourism minister later said 400 had been killed. Hizbollah, which says it does not hide its dead and that it has many thousands more fighters, has announced 43 deaths in that period and said the Israeli statements were false. — Reuters.

Beirut, Aug 2 — Hizbollah guerrillas have fired at least 182 rockets into Israel and fought 6,000 Israeli troops in south Lebanon today after helicopter-borne Israeli commandos attacked Hizbollah targets in the ancient city of Baalbek. Air strikes in support of the helicopter raid on Baalbek in northeastern Lebanon killed 19 people, including four children. In Jerusalem, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told Reuters Israel would carry on fighting until an international force reaches south Lebanon — even though no country has volunteered to send troops ahead of a truce and a durable ceasefire agreement. Olmert called for an international combat force to implement a U.N. resolution calling for Hizbollah to be disarmed, saying Israel had already destroyed much of the group's military power. Soon after he spoke, one of more than 180 rockets launched by Hizbollah today landed just inside the West Bank after flying further than any fired at Israel in the past three weeks. Hizbollah said it had hit the Israeli town of Beit Shean, almost 70 km from the border, with "Khaibar 1" rockets to avenge Israeli attacks on civilians in Lebanon. The Hizbollah salvo, which killed one person in the northern city of Nahariya, followed a two-day lull in such attacks. Battles raged on five fronts in south Lebanon, security sources said. Israeli planes and artillery pounded villages as tank-led forces pushed in and Hizbollah guerrillas fought back. At least 750,000 Lebanese, almost a quarter of the population, have been driven from their homes. At least 643 people in Lebanon and 55 Israelis have been killed in the conflict, now in its fourth week. Lebanon's health minister puts the toll at 762, including unrecovered bodies. "The infrastructure of Hizbollah has been entirely destroyed. More than 700 ... command positions of Hizbollah were entirely wiped out by the Israeli army," Olmert said. Israeli bombing has devastated many southern villages and inflicted \$2

billion of physical damage across the country, the transport and public works minister said. Several U.N. and Red Cross convoys bearing food and medical aid headed to hard-hit areas, but at least one was called off after failing to get Israeli clearance, aid officials said. The U.N. World Food Programme said Israel had given the go-ahead for two tanker ships to deliver desperately needed fuel oil and diesel to Beirut and the northern port of Tripoli. The U.N. Security Council has yet to agree on a mandate for an international peacekeeping force and France said it would not attend a meeting of potential troop contributors tomorrow. France has been touted to lead the force, but it wants a truce and an agreement on a framework for a permanent ceasefire before any troops deploy. That is at odds with the U.S.-Israeli view that a ceasefire can wait until the force moves in. Israeli troops in helicopters landed near a Hizbollah-run hospital near Baalbek overnight and seized five suspected Hizbollah militants before returning safely to base, the army said. Hizbollah denied any of its militants were taken. Security sources said two Hizbollah fighters were killed in Baalbek, which is 60 miles northeast of Beirut. It was the first helicopter-borne assault deep inside Lebanon in the conflict that flared after Hizbollah guerrillas captured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid on July 12. At least 13 civilians were killed when Israeli warplanes hit Jammaliyeh, a village near Baalbek, and six died in air strikes elsewhere in the Bekaa Valley, security sources said. A Lebanese army soldier was killed and two were wounded in an Israeli air strike on their post in the south, the army said. The Baalbek attack followed the expiry of a 48-hour bombing pause agreed by Israel under U.S. pressure after a raid killed 54 civilians, mostly children, in the southern village of Qana. Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos met Lebanese leaders in Beirut. He also plans to go to Damascus as part of an apparent European bid to engage Hizbollah allies Syria and Iran — both shunned by Washington — in a solution for Lebanon. — Reuters.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: The Lebanese Government says three weeks of Israeli bombardment has inflicted \$US2 billion of damage on Lebanon's infrastructure. The bombardment has cut off many roads, bridges and flyovers in the south and east of the country as well as putting the country's only international airport and ports out of action. Transport Minister Mohammed al-Safadi says it will take at least three months to bring the airport back up to full capacity. Two runways can be temporarily patched up in days but a third will take three months to fix, hampering the speed of recovery once hostilities end. A bridge on the main international highway between Beirut and Damascus, the highest in the Middle East, will take around four

years to rebuild. "Between preparations, planning and so on it will take three or four years, easily," he said. "That is the problem, so as a ministry, we are now focusing on securing alternative crossings." Direct income to the government treasury from the airport alone is \$US15 million a month, Mr Safadi said, but the biggest cost to the Lebanese economy is from lost business. Trade and tourism are now both at standstill amid an Israeli air and sea blockade. Land routes, heavily used by trucks carrying goods from Beirut port to Syria and beyond, are hit. Israel has struck the radars and fuel tanks at the ports, with port buildings in Tripoli and Tyre badly damaged. Beirut port has been spared the worst though it is now idle except for incoming humanitarian aid convoys and outgoing foreign evacuees.

London, Aug 3 — French shipping group CMA CGM is to provide a vessel to take urgently needed supplies into war-torn Lebanon. The company is working with France's ministry of foreign affairs, currently co-ordinating the national humanitarian aid effort. The Saade family, which owns CMA CGM, comes from Lebanon and has close relatives trapped in central Beirut. No decision has been taken yet as to whether to supply a container or ro-ro vessel. The vessel will be placed at the disposal of the French government at no cost, said corporate communications senior vice president Tanya Saade Zeenny. CMA CGM hopes the vessel will be able to leave Marseilles for Beirut in the next few days. Whether the shipment will be allowed through the Israeli military blockade, however, remains unclear. According to Ammar Kanaan, chief executive of Beirut Container Terminal, foreign vessels are coming in; however, these are mainly military vessels evacuating the foreigners. "The port is not under fire, but it is still under siege," he said. Access to Lebanese ports was temporarily granted by the Israeli military late Tuesday evening (Aug 1) to allow two unidentified tankers to deliver fuel and diesel oil into Beirut port. The shipments, which were the result of intense diplomatic negotiations between the Israeli forces and United Nations diplomats from the World Food Programme, have raised hopes that further urgent deliveries of humanitarian aid will now be allowed through the blockade. According to WFP sources the two vessels, carrying 50,000 tonnes of fuel oil and 37,000 tonnes of diesel oil, were finally granted safe passage and allowed to dock in Beirut early yesterday morning. The move followed an urgent appeal from the UN agency earlier this week asking Israel to allow humanitarian aid through. As co-ordinator of the massive UN logistics operation bringing humanitarian relief to Lebanon, WFP is becoming increasingly concerned over the fuel availability for the UN truck convoys. "We desperately need commercial fuel tankers to be allowed to dock in Beirut

and Tripoli,” warned Amer Daoudi, WFP emergency co-ordinator on Monday, noting that the operation of power stations and other key installations are under severe threat. While it is not clear which vessels were used, or where the fuel was supplied from, reports earlier this week quoting the head of a joint Lebanon-Syria council suggested that Syria had agreed to supply Lebanon with petrol from its strategic reserves to compensate for the shortages. Despite a declared two-day pause in major Israeli bombings this week, the UN and International Red Cross have held back aid because they had not received guarantees of safety. The UN said problems persisted yesterday. It sent two convoys, including one to Tyre, but a third to the southern border village of Rmaish had been blocked. A WFP spokesman said yesterday, however, that the two oil shipments marked a positive step forward. “The fact that there are vessels now coming in is good and gives us hope that others will be allowed to follow,” he said. The Chamber of Shipping has meanwhile agreed to extend the Warlike Operations Area in respect of the sea area off the coast of Lebanon for a further two weeks. The extension will come into effect immediately on expiration of the current WOA and continue until 2359 on Wednesday, Aug 16, whereupon it will be subject to further review.

Gaza, Aug 3 — Israeli forces killed two Palestinian militants and one civilian in the southern Gaza Strip, Palestinian witnesses said early today. An airstrike killed one militant and wounded two others as gunmen confronted more than 50 Israeli tanks and armoured personnel carriers advancing near Rafah airport. Islamic Jihad said the dead and wounded men were its members. One of the wounded men was in a critical condition, witnesses said. The Israeli army confirmed its forces were operating in southern Gaza and said the airstrike came after its troops were targeted with a rocket-propelled grenade. A second airstrike east of Rafah killed a member of the Hamas militant group and wounded another. As the tanks pushed deeper into the eastern part of Rafah, Israeli gunfire killed a Palestinian civilian man and wounded two others, witnesses said. — Reuters.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated today, states: The Australian embassy in Beirut has organised a charter ferry to rescue several hundred Australians trapped in Lebanon. The Australian Government announced an end to the rescue operation last week but since then the numbers of Australian registered with the embassy and wanting to get out of the country has grown to several hundred. The embassy is calling on Australians wanting to leave to contact the embassy urgently so they can be allocated a place on the ferry, which will leave Beirut for Larnaca at 1500, local time, today. Thirty Australians who escaped from town

and villages along the border with Israel on Tuesday (Aug 1) will be leaving on the ferry.

NIGERIA

Port Harcourt, Jul 31 — Attackers have vacated an Agip oil flow station in Bayelsa state in southern Nigeria and freed all hostages they were holding there, authorities in Bayelsa said today. A spokesman for Agip declined to comment and there was no word on when operations at the Ogbainbiri flow station might resume. Agip’s parent, Italy’s Eni, said the attack last Tuesday (Jul 25) had caused a “significant decrease” in output. Agip normally exports 200,000 barrels per day (bpd) through its Brass tanker terminal in Bayelsa, located in the Niger Delta. “They have vacated the facility and released the soldiers and the civilians. The soldiers have reposted more men there to take control of the facility,” police commissioner Hafiz Ringim told Reuters from the Bayelsa state capital Yenagoa. Asked what had prompted the attackers, irate youths from the local community, to leave the flow station, he said: “They have collected money from government.” Eni originally said about 40 sub-contractors, security and catering staff were present at the flow station at the time of the attack but gave no information on what had happened to them. The official who headed a Bayelsa state government delegation that negotiated with the attackers, Victor Akenge, said he had seen at least eight Nigerian security forces and 16 civilian staff being held at the flow station. “The facility was vacated late yesterday and all the hostages were accounted for,” Akenge said this morning. Local activists in the Niger Delta say hostage takers are usually paid off to release their captives and the practice fuels the cycle of violence. Authorities rarely admit that any money has changed hands. The attack intensified concerns about Nigerian oil output, which has been down by about a quarter since February, mostly because of militant attacks on Royal Dutch Shell facilities. News of the Agip incident and of a Shell pipeline leak that shut down a further 210,000 bpd pushed world oil prices up last week. The invasion of the flow station stemmed from local anger over a perceived failure by Agip to implement a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with the community. Disputes between oil firms and local residents demanding jobs and investments for their communities are frequent in the Niger Delta, an impoverished wetlands region that is home to Africa’s biggest oil industry. Companies often sign MOUs with what they call “host communities” and disputes tend to arise when the residents feel promises have not been kept. — Reuters.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Aug 1 — Hundreds of Philippine troops clashed with dozens of suspected Muslim rebels today after

bombing their mountainous hideout in the south of the country, a senior military general said. Major-General Gabriel Habacon said helicopter gunships and ground assault planes fired rockets and dropped bombs on the base of suspected members of Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent group of Muslim militants with links to al Qaeda. “We’ve been tracking these terrorists for months,” Habacon told reporters in Zamboanga City, the political and business hub in southwestern Philippines. “The time is now. We’ve located them and we’re going to finish them off.” Heavy fighting broke out after soldiers caught up with militants fleeing air strikes on the remote island of Jolo. Two army troopers were wounded in the clashes, Habacon said, adding that 500 soldiers were taking part in the assault. — Reuters.

Manila, Aug 2 — Philippine troops killed five suspected members of Abu Sayyaf, a home-grown Muslim terrorist group with links to al Qaeda, in fierce fighting on a southern island, a senior military official said today. Five soldiers were wounded in the clashes, which started after dozens of militants fled air strikes on their camp on Jolo island yesterday, said Colonel Antonio Supnet, chief of staff of the military’s southern command. A civilian guide was also killed. Other military officials said the number of Abu Sayyaf casualties was still to be determined. Manila, backed by U.S. intelligence, is trying to stop Abu Sayyaf and members of al Qaeda’s regional franchise, Jemaah Islamiah (JI), from using its remote southern islands as bases to train and plot bomb attacks. The Philippine military has said it is confident it will flush out JI’s Dulmatin and Umar Patek, suspects in the 2002 Bali bombings, and Sayyaf’s chief Khaddafy Janjalani from Jolo because they no longer enjoy the support of local Muslim separatists. The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) is supporting the army’s current assault on the Abu Sayyaf after a truce between it and the military was agreed at a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference in May. Last year, MNLF forces loyal to jailed leader Nur Misuari fought alongside Abu Sayyaf, the smallest of four Muslim rebel groups in the Philippines with around 400 members. — Reuters.

SOMALIA

Baidoa, Jul 28 — Gunmen shot dead a Somali minister outside a mosque today, triggering riots by pro-government protesters who threw rocks and burned tyres at the interim administration’s provincial base of Baidoa. Witnesses said assailants opened fire on Constitution and Federalism Minister Abdallah Deerow Isaq as he left prayers. “It looks like an organised assassination. ... We are very sorry and are condemning this terrorist action,” Information Minister Mohamed Abdi Hayr told Reuters from Baidoa. After the attack, the

government blocked roads out of the town, and about 1,000 protesters furious at the killing took to the streets with sticks, knives and stones, witnesses said. Scores of shops were looted in several hours of chaos. Officials would not give details of the two men arrested on suspicion of involvement in the shooting. Other sources in Baidoa, however, said one was a young Muslim fundamentalist based at the same mosque. Islamist rulers in Mogadishu denied involvement, saying Ethiopia was behind the killing to destabilise its neighbor. "Its trained militia killed the minister," Islamist leader Sheikh Sharif Ahmed said. Ethiopia did not immediately respond to the accusation but charged Eritrea actively supported radical Islamists in Somalia. Shocked diplomats and analysts said the shooting could have been by an Islamist militant or linked to internal divisions within the government. A no confidence motion on Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi is due to be debated in parliament tomorrow. Amid the tensions, a curfew was imposed in Baidoa overnight. In what government sources said was an effort to draw the Islamists into peace talks, 18 ministers and other top officials quit the government yesterday. Analysts said power-sharing with the Islamists may be the only way to secure peace. In Mogadishu, meanwhile, another mysterious plane landed today, fuelling suspicions the Islamists were receiving weapon deliveries. Their militia blocked roads near the airport as unidentified cargo was unloaded on to waiting trucks. On Wednesday (Jul 26), a cargo plane delivered goods an Islamist aide said were sewing machines. But the government pointed the finger at Eritrea, which it said was secretly arming the Islamists. — Reuters. (See issue of Jul 26.)

Mogadishu, Jul 30 — A conventional passenger plane flew in and out of Mogadishu's recently re-opened international airport for the first time in 11 years today in a sign of stability Islamists have brought to the capital. "From now on, our airplanes will fly and land into Mogadishu's international airport," Jabril Hussein, an administration officer of local Jubba Airways, told Reuters. The airport re-opened earlier this month, as Islamists who took the city from warlords in June gradually have been restoring some long-closed installations in Mogadishu. As well as today's passenger flight, various cargo planes have been flying in and out of Mogadishu this week. The flights have fuelled accusations from Somalia's interim government — based in the provincial town of Baidoa — that the Islamists are receiving weapons from Eritrea in preparation for a possible military push against them. The Islamists and Eritrea both deny that. — Reuters.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Four more ministers have resigned from Somalia's embattled interim government, following a larger walk-

out last week. This comes as East African diplomats prepare to meet in Nairobi for talks aimed at solving the crisis in Somalia. The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development is expected to look into easing an arms embargo so that a peacekeeping force could be deployed, but the Islamic courts that control the capital, Mogadishu, reject proposals for foreign troops in Somalia. "Because of ... the lack of a clear policy, we have decided to resign and join the other former ministers who have already stepped down," a statement released today by four parliamentarians said. On Saturday (Jul 29), Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Ghedi narrowly survived a parliamentary vote of no confidence, prompted by his perceived failure to reach a deal with the Union of Islamic Courts, whose militia have taken control of Mogadishu and much of the south. Tensions have been growing recently between the government, which controls only the town of Baidoa where it is based, and the UIC. Diplomats say no solution can be found without the neighbouring states that make up the Inter Governmental Authority on Development - hence the Nairobi talks. But two of the IGAD states - Ethiopia and Eritrea - are the ones accused of meddling in Somalia. Ethiopia has acknowledged sending troops to support the embattled government in Baidoa and reports say Eritrea has been sending arms shipments to the Islamists in Mogadishu. The UIC has refused to attend talks to resolve the crisis as long as Ethiopian troops remain in Somalia.

SRI LANKA

Colombo, Jul 28 — Tamil Tigers traded mortar fire with the military in Sri Lanka's east today while a bomb on a rickshaw exploded at a rebel checkpoint which the military said was a possible suicide attack. The violence followed two days of air strikes on Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam territory in the north-east that killed six rebel fighters and injured seven civilians, further straining a battered 2002 cease-fire. The government accuses the Tigers of choking the flow of water to thousands of majority ethnic Sinhalese farmers in government-held territory in the district of Trincomalee, where the government and rebels both control land. Mortars fell near an army camp and a school near the site of a disputed water tank, but no-one was injured, Defence Spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said. The military said it responded in kind and the rebels said three civilians were hurt. "The LTTE are firing mortars," Rambukwella said, warning the military might move in. "There is a designed plan to go in and gain access to the water tank sluice. Ground troops are part of that plan." The Tigers say Tamil civilians closed the reservoir sluice to demand that the government build water towers in Tamil areas. The Nordic-staffed Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission said more

than 800 people had been killed so far this year and some diplomats fear the spiralling violence might restart a two-decade war that has killed more than 65,000 people. Both the government and the Tigers claim control over the site of the reservoir, which lies in an area where the border between the foes is ill-defined. However the ground reality is that the Tigers control the area, military sources said. Further south, cease-fire monitors said a three-wheeled rickshaw blew up with two people still inside just outside a rebel checkpoint in the eastern Batticaloa district. A military source said he suspected a suicide attack on the rebels. Local Tiger political leader Daya Mohan said there were no rebel casualties. He blamed the army and said it did not appear to be a suicide blast, although the SLMM said the vehicle had two occupants. — Reuters.

Colombo, Jul 29 — Sri Lankan air force jets killed seven Tamil Tiger fighters and injured many more in a fourth day of aerial bombings today in a bid to wrest control of a reservoir in the restive east, the rebels said. Kfir fighter planes raided the eastern districts of Batticaloa and Trincomalee in an operation to clear access to a sluice gate, which the government accuses the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of blocking to choke water supplies to farmers on government land. Military officials said the air force had destroyed a rebel base in Batticaloa and believed the death toll was far higher, but the Tigers said their fighters were killed on their forward defense line with government territory. The rebels vowed to hit back. "We can't continue to maintain our patience," said S. Elilan, head of the Tigers' political wing in Trincomalee. "We will definitely retaliate... This is causing a war-like situation." Hardline Buddhist monks in saffron robes who hate the Tigers and are allied to President Mahinda Rajapakse are trying to reach the sluice gate themselves. Around 1,000 local farmers from government territory joined them in protest. "This is our life. We have pawned all our valuable items including gold to get money for cultivation," said farmer I.T. Karunaratne. "If we don't get water within two days, everything will go waste. All this because of the war. There should be peace. If the government can't open the sluice, how can they fight a war?" The Tigers demanded monitors from European Union states Sweden, Finland and Denmark quit the 5-nation Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) by September 1 after the EU listed them as terrorists. The Finns and Danes said yesterday they had been left with no choice but to remove 22 monitors between them in the absence of security guarantees. Sweden has not yet decided. Their exit will badly hamper the mission at a time when it is monitoring the bloodiest period since the cease-fire. "With these countries out, it reduces the mission

by more than a third and is a serious task to solve," said SLMM spokesman Thorfinnur Omarsson. "We will wait to get a final decision from Sweden. Then it is in the hands of Norway and Iceland. "It's a question of how we can have the manpower to keep the operation functioning," he added. "One option is to get additional countries involved." The Tigers have pulled out of peace talks indefinitely, Rajapakse has rejected their demand for a separate Tamil homeland outright, and analysts and diplomats widely fear it could take years to seal a final peace deal. — Reuters.

Colombo, Jul 31 — Sri Lanka's four-year ceasefire is now void and the island's two-decade civil war is back on, a top Tamil Tiger rebel said today as the guerrillas and the military entered a sixth straight day of fighting. S. Elilan, head of the Tigers' political wing in the restive eastern district of Trincomalee, said army troops had resumed a bid to advance towards land they control in the east and had fired artillery and mortars at their territory in the north. "The ceasefire agreement has become null and void at the moment," Elilan said by telephone from Trincomalee, adding that government troops were continuing an advance towards their forward defence line in the east in a water supply dispute. Elilan is not the Tigers' main spokesman, but he is one of the their top officials and their political head in Trincomalee. He has repeatedly warned of a return to war. Sri Lanka's air force has killed 15 rebels in five days of aerial bombing raids in the east and injured several others. The army says it has sustained no casualties, despite becoming bogged down in a minefield yesterday as they tried to reach a sluice they accuse the Tigers of blocking to choke water supplies to Sinhalese farmers in government territory. It is the first open advance on rebel-held areas since the 2002 ceasefire. — Reuters.

Colombo, Jul 31 — Eighteen soldiers were killed tonight when a fragmentation mine blew up their army bus in restive east Sri Lanka, hours after a top Tamil Tiger accused the government of restarting the country's two-decade civil war. The military blamed the ambush — the deadliest such attack since a 2002 truce — on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Seven soldiers and three rebels were killed earlier in the day in the first army advance on rebel-held territory since the ceasefire, taking the day's death toll to 28. — Reuters.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Tamil Tiger rebels have attacked a vessel carrying hundreds of Sri Lankan troops as it tried to enter the eastern port of Trincomalee. The attack comes as the Sri Lankan army is engaged in a full-scale ground battle with the Tigers over a disputed waterway some 70 kms away. Meanwhile Sweden said today it would pull out its staff from the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM). It said the withdrawal was

being made because of security concerns. Military officials say that the vessel, carrying more than 850 soldiers, came under attack from mortar and artillery fire as it was sailing from the northern Jaffna peninsula to the port of Trincomalee. They say that the soldiers were unarmed and were going on leave. Navy spokesman DKP Dassanayake told the Associated Press news agency that it sailed to safety, but the battle between the navy and rebels was still continuing. A military spokesman in Colombo said four navy personnel had been killed in rebel mortar and artillery attacks following the attack on the vessel. Reports also say that there were 12 vessels carrying members of the rebels' suicide squads in the area and that one navy boat has been sunk. The latest violence comes on the third day of a military ground offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels. At least 23 soldiers and three rebels have been killed since the army launched the offensive to the south of Trincomalee port. Up to 3,000 troops are involved in the efforts to gain control of the Maavilaru waterway that is in Tiger controlled territory, reports say. The government says Tamil Tiger rebels have closed sluice gates on the waterway, denying thousands of farmers irrigation water for their paddy fields.

Colombo, Aug 2 — Sri Lanka's army and Tamil Tigers battled with mortars and artillery today after rebels attacked three eastern military camps, a day after suicide bombers tried to sink a troop transport ship with 850 people on board. Officials said the army had sustained an unspecified number of casualties in fighting around the strategic eastern port of Trincomalee, which comes as a battle widened for control over a water sluice in the district. Two Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) mortars fell near a civilian hospital in nearby Mutur but it was not clear if anyone was hurt. "Detachments in Trincomalee came under a Tiger ground attack this morning," military spokesman Maj Upali Rajapakse said. "The Tigers used heavy weapons. There are casualties. Our troops have retaliated with mortars and artillery and successfully repelled the attacks." Four sailors and several Tigers were killed when the rebels fired artillery and mortars at Trincomalee harbour yesterday as gunboats attacked the transporter vessel. The navy said three small Sea Tiger craft were sunk and three others were damaged. Air force jets have bombed rebel positions in the east for seven straight days. — Reuters.

Trincomalee, Aug 3 — Artillery pounded Tamil Tiger positions in north-east Sri Lanka while rebels fought firefights with troops early today as the island slipped back towards civil war. More than 800 people have died this year and ambushes, air strikes and naval clashes had become commonplace but it was a dispute over a rebel-held water supply that led to the first

major ground fighting since a 2002 ceasefire. Outgoing multi-barrel rocket fire and the distant flash of impacts in rebel areas lit up the night sky over the port of Trincomalee. The military said clashes continued in the nearby town of Mutur. "There are fireights and mortar and artillery fire still going on," said a military spokesman. "Some Tigers are still in the town and are firing at our troops with small arms. They are surrounded and trying to move east back to their own territory." The main military advance to reopen a single Tiger-held sluice gate south of Mutur and restore water to 50,000 people seems to have all but halted amid minefields and mortar fire. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) attacked three army camps before dawn yesterday and the military fear for more attacks. Assessing casualties is almost impossible. The army says it killed dozens of rebels yesterday for the loss of six servicemen. Diplomats say the government is likely talking up rebel losses and may also talk down its own casualties. On Tuesday (Aug 1), the rebels were able to shell the Trincomalee naval base with howitzers. The fire did not resume yesterday, indicating possibly that Tiger artillery had either been destroyed or moved out of range. The big question mark, aid workers say, is over what is happening in the mainly Muslim, army-held town of Mutur, close to the border with rebel territory. The town overlooks the entrance to Trincomalee port. Some aid workers say Mutur seems to have fallen, with civilians sheltering in churches, mosques and education centres. So far, it is too risky for aid staff to head in. Mutur is bordered to the north by water and to the east and west by rebel territory. If, as some reports suggest, clashes block the road to the south, then the town is cut off. — Reuters.

Colombo, Aug 3 — A Tamil Tiger artillery shell hit an Arabic college during a battle in eastern Sri Lanka today, killing 10 civilians, the island's military said. "The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fired the shell. Ten adults were killed and there are also 20 others injured," a military spokesman said. The rebels and army battled with artillery, mortar bombs and small arms fire today in and around the town of Mutur in the eastern district of Trincomalee. — Reuters.

SUDAN

Khartoum, Jul 29 — Sudanese government forces and allied militias attacked bases of a new rebel alliance in Darfur despite a ceasefire in the violent west, officials and rebels said today. An unpopular African Union-mediated peace deal was signed in May by only one of three rebel negotiating factions. Many leaders who did not sign formed a new group called the National Redemption Front (NRF), which began military operations earlier this month in the Kordofan area neighbouring Darfur.

“Yesterday (Friday) all day and until the evening the government of Sudan with the Janjaweed attacked Jabel Moun and Kukul, north of el-Fasher,” Abu Bakr Hamid al-Nur, a rebel NRF commander, told Reuters from Darfur today. Jabel Moun is a mountainous area on the Sudan-Chad border. Kukul is 35 km north of Darfur’s main town el-Fasher. Nur said the government used Antonov planes and three attack helicopters to bombard the areas, forcing hundreds of civilians to flee their homes and seek refuge in el-Fasher. The Sudanese armed forces confirmed clashes in both areas, but denied using any planes or Janjaweed militias. “We moved an administrative force from el-Fasher which was ambushed by the NRF near Kukul,” said an army spokesman, adding one soldier was killed and another injured. “In Jabel Moun we have security forces at the entry and exit points to stop rebel forces who are looting from civilians and these clashes are happening daily,” he added. The African Union and United Nations issued a joint statement late yesterday condemning the violence in Jabel Moun and blaming the government and Janjaweed for the attack on NRF. “(We) are particularly concerned about the fate of the civilian population in the area,” the statement said. “(We) call on the parties involved in the fighting to abide by what has been agreed and to guarantee the safety of the civilians.” All the main rebel groups signed a ceasefire in 2004. While some NRF commanders say this truce is now dead, Nur said it only applied in Darfur but the NRF were free to attack the government in other areas of Sudan where they have troops. The cash-strapped African Union force backs a U.N. takeover of its struggling Darfur peace monitoring mission and has become increasingly ineffective since the peace deal, as fighting escalated between rebels many of whom disavow the deal. An international aid group was attacked in Deleig camp in West Darfur on July 27 by the displaced who said they were poisoning them with vaccinations, a U.N. report said. One Sudanese driver was killed and three national staff of the aid groups, which was not named, were injured in the attack. In South Darfur’s vast Kalma camp, 17 women were raped by armed militiamen as they went out to collect firewood last Monday (Jul 24), the Sudanese Organization Against Torture said. “During the attack, the militias beat the women with the butt of their guns and flogged them before raping 17 of the women,” the rights group said. — Reuters.

THAILAND

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Three police officers were killed and another injured when a bomb exploded along rail tracks in the restive southern provinces of Thailand this morning, hours after insurgents launched more than 70 attacks of co-ordinated attacks last night. Police said the

bomb was triggered off in Songkhla Province’s Chana about 0715 hrs when security personnel were inspecting rail tracks. “This was a routine patrol before trains depart every morning,” the police official said. Last night, a soldier who was on patrol was injured when a bomb hidden near a tree exploded in Narathiwat while at least two karaoke outlets were also targeted. Police said more than 70 violent attacks took place last night when insurgents started their attacks from 2000 hrs in the four southern provinces of Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat and Songkhla. Insurgents also targeted government officials’ residence, government buildings, burning tyres and throwing spikes on the road to slow down movement of security forces and set a rubber factory on fire. Officials said security forces were put on alert after they received information that there would be big scale attacks tonight. Bangkok has despatched more than 20,000 troops to the restive region but facing difficulties in tracing down the insurgents who deploy guerilla style movements.

UGANDA

Nabanga, Aug 2 — Peace talks between the Ugandan government and the rebel Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) will resume next Monday (Aug 7) in Juba, Riek Machar, the chief mediator and southern Sudanese Vice-President, said. “The talks will start on Monday,” Machar told reporters yesterday near the border between Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), after meeting Joseph Kony, the LRA leader. “I am optimistic that this time they will come up with a positive result because I have seen the commitment of the Ugandan people.” However, Kony demanded a cessation of hostilities before talks. “We wish to categorically state that no meaningful negotiations can take place without a cessation of hostilities,” he said. Kony denied abducting children, despite the children among the 80 fighters guarding him. “I cannot fight with children,” he told reporters at his first news conference in 21 years. Kony also met leaders from East, West and Central Equatoria in Sudan and asked for forgiveness. He blamed the Ugandan army for some of the atrocities committed during the 20-year conflict in northern Uganda and southern Sudan. On Monday (Jul 31), Kony had told a delegation of Ugandan religious, community and political leaders that he would like to discuss with the Ugandan government how to end the northern war peacefully, but continuing attacks on his forces could jeopardise such talks. “The first thing that should have been taken place should have been the signing of a protocol or a memorandum of understanding on the cessation of hostilities or an agreement on a ceasefire between the LRA and the Ugandan government,” he said. The meetings followed a break in talks between the Ugandan

government and the LRA, to allow for consultations. The talks started on July 14. — Reuters.



Labour Disputes

CANADA

London, Jul 31 — Nickel prices rose by five percent on Friday (Jul 28) as Inco Ltd. said it was starting an “orderly shutdown” of its Voisey’s Bay nickel mine in Canada after workers walked out. Some 120 employees of a total workforce of 420 walked out at midnight at Voisey’s Bay, one of the world’s largest nickel mines, after talks with management broke down, a union representative said. “They are on strike,” said Wayne Fraser, an official at the United Steelworkers union, which represents about 120 workers at the mine and mill. Three-month nickel contracts on the London Metal Exchange (LME) jumped 5.3 percent to \$25,000 a tonne from \$23,750 at Thursday’s (Jul 27) close. Earlier in July it hit a record \$26,850. Inco said it was shutting down the mine in Labrador. “We are obviously disappointed with this outcome. We are now in the process of beginning an orderly shutdown of our production facilities,” said Bob Carter, an Inco spokesman at the operation. Fraser told Reuters on Thursday that monetary issues were the stumbling blocks in the negotiations for a first labor contract at the operation. The shutdown comes as stocks of nickel in LME-monitored warehouses fell 402 tonnes to 4,272, of which just 1,404 tonnes are available to the market. Global nickel consumption runs at around 3,500 tonnes per day. “This won’t affect availability of metal at all, unless the strike is very drawn out,” a physical nickel dealer said. “They have a minimum of two months supply of concentrate stockpiled at the smelter and also in Labrador,” he added. — Reuters.

COLOMBIA

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Some 3,000 Colombian oil workers will hold a one-day strike to protest government plans to sell off 20 percent of state-run oil company Ecopetrol SA, union officials said today. “All our workers are going to stop working to defend the business from privatization,” oil workers union president Jorge Gamboa said, adding that the stoppage would be on Thursday (Aug 3). Ecopetrol has employed nonunion workers during past work stoppages, resulting in little difference in the operations of Colombia’s largest company. Gamboa said Ecopetrol had prevented union members from entering the company’s installations Wednesday (Aug 2). In past strikes, Ecopetrol has accused the union of sabotaging machinery and

equipment, a charge denied by the union. An Ecopetrol spokesman said the company had no immediate reaction and would not comment until a strike was under way. President Alvaro Uribe is set to meet with the union Wednesday to explain the government's plans for Ecopetrol, one of the government's largest sources of revenue. While proven reserves are declining, oil is still Colombia's largest legal export, accounting for about 25 percent of overseas income. In an effort to balance the central government's finances, Uribe has privatized a number of state entities, including banks, electricity companies and hospitals.

CYPRUS

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated today, states: About 280 workers from the National Bank of Greece working in a total of 20 branches on the island of Cyprus are going on a termless strike as of today. The strike was organized after the expired contracts of two employees of the National Bank from Greek origin were renewed.

SOUTH AFRICA

Johannesburg, Jul 31 — A strike over wages by workers at Kumba Resources, Africa's top iron ore producer, widened today as the Solidarity union joined after its members rejected the latest wage offer. With Solidarity joining, the unions said some 6,000 workers were now taking part in the strike, which started yesterday. About 4,000 workers of South Africa's biggest miners' union, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and 500 from a smaller union went on strike as planned from 1600, UTC, yesterday. Solidarity has about 1,500 members at Kumba. "It's on. We started yesterday (Sunday) with the evening shift," Eddie Majadibodu, NUM chief negotiator with Kumba, said. "Workers are expected to gather at various work stations to discuss the new offer by the company, but we will remain on strike until we reach a settlement." Kumba's officials could not immediately be reached to comment on whether the strike had had any impact on its operations as they were said to be in meetings. Kumba, which says it has about 9,000 workers, has said that although the country's biggest Sishen iron ore mine could be affected by strike action, the company has contingency plans to mitigate the loss of output. The NUM workers were joined yesterday by those represented by the Building Allied Mining Construction Workers Union (Bamcwu). The unions say they will meet with Kumba to resolve the wage issue, but will be on strike until a solution is found. Reint Dyekama, spokesman for Solidarity, which represents mainly white supervisory workers, said its members had rejected Kumba's latest wage offer and opted to strike. The workers had met on this morning. Solidarity was the first of the three unions to call a

strike, which was due to start at midnight, yesterday, but had held off action to consider Kumba's new wage offer. Kumba said on Saturday (Jul 29) it had given the unions a seven percent across-the-board wage increase, from 6.5 percent previously, and an eight percent wage rise for lower grade miners. Kumba also offered to raise the housing allowance for all employees in the bargaining units by 10 percent. The company said in a statement on Saturday that Solidarity had accepted the new offer, and would not join the strike. "Kumba prematurely said we had accepted the wage offer; it was a good offer but our members rejected it," Dyekama said. The three unions have demanded that Kumba increase wages by nine percent at higher grades and 10.5% at lower levels. — Reuters.

Johannesburg, Aug 1 — Kumba Resources, Africa's top iron ore producer, said today a strike over wages by about 6,000 workers at its iron ore and coal mines had disrupted production, and it was relying on strategic supplies. The strike was in its third day, and talks with all three South African unions taking part were scheduled for tomorrow, to try to reach a solution. The company has said that although the Sishen iron ore mine could be affected by strike action, the company has contingency plans to mitigate the loss of output. Kumba, majority owned by mining giant Anglo American Plc, says it has about 9,000 workers. Solidarity said the strike had halted mining at three mines owned by Kumba, including Sishen, the country's biggest iron ore mine, and Grootegeluk, Kumba's flagship coal mine. — Reuters.

SPAIN

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated Jul 29, states: Thousands of desperate travellers packed Barcelona airport today because of lingering chaos from a wildcat strike by ground crew employees that forced the cancellation of nearly 600 flights on one of the busiest days of the vacation season. Spain's industry and development ministers condemned yesterday's 11-hour walkout by 2,500 Iberia employees - 200 of them swarmed over runways, halting all air traffic for most of the day - and said legal action against unions behind the strike was pending. The Spanish flagship carrier's airport employees in Barcelona were protesting the airline's loss of the license to operate handling operations at the airport, the second-busiest in Spain. The government drew angry criticism for allowing the unannounced strike to go on as long as it did and not calling in police to clear the runways. Iberia, which had cancelled all its flights to and from Barcelona, said they resumed today but were suffering unspecified delays. Other carriers were also operating again. Television footage showed scenes of chaos. Terminals at the airport were jammed to capacity, with many travellers saying they were getting little to no information from

airlines and had no idea when they would continue with their disrupted travel plans. Carriers struggled to deal with travellers whose flights were cancelled yesterday and others arriving for flights scheduled for today. Iberia and unions representing the disgruntled ground staff staffers were meeting today, Iberia said. Thousands of people spent the night at the jam-packed airport. Red Cross crews handed out food and water. Frustrated travellers blocked roads leading into the airport yesterday night. Close to 100,000 passengers were affected by the airport disruption, Iberia said. A trickle of flights resumed yesterday night. The Iberia employees were angry because the Spanish national airport authority, known as AENA, this week granted a new handling license at Barcelona's El Prat Airport to Spanish construction and services company Fomento de Construcciones y Contratas SA and to affiliates of Iberia's rivals Air Europa and Spanair, which is a unit of Scandinavian airline operator SAS AB.

SRI LANKA

Karachi, July 29 — M.S.M Niyaz, Chairman of the Sri Lank Association of Clearing and Forwarding Agents, has estimated that the damage caused due to "go slow work" by Sri Lanka Ports Authority trade unions recently to press their demands could be as high as Rs. one billion. He told local media that the disruption to movement of cargo due to the trade union action could as well have long term negative effects on the export and import sectors. He urged unions and authorities should make every effort to avoid such unfortunate incidents in future. He said at the moment the level of congestion at the port is too high due to the backlog created at the port. "It will take some time to reduce this congestion. It will even take as long as another one month," Niyaz said. He said that most of the containers shipped to Colombo during the period when the port workers were engaged in a go-slow campaign have been dislocated in several other ports in the region. "These containers which are now in ports such as Singapore, Malaysia, Mumbai and Dubai have to be shipped again to Colombo," Niyaz said. In order to reduce congestion at the Port he proposed that all the LCL (Less Container Load) cargo to be sent to the off-port container freight station at Peliyagoda. That would reduce the pressure on the Port to a great extent," Niyaz said. — Lloyd's List Correspondent

Awards & Settlements



ASBESTOS-RELATED ILLNESS, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 28 — A press report, dated Jul 27, states: A jury awarded

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\$10.4 million to the widow of a former shipyard worker who died of lung cancer after four years of working with materials that contained asbestos. The Newport News Circuit Court verdict in Wanda Jones' wrongful death lawsuit against three companies that manufactured the materials was handed down yesterday, the first anniversary of the death of 60-year-old Buddy Jones. Her attorney, Robert Hatten, called the verdict a landmark because one-third of the judgment will come from John Crane Inc, which has refused to settle other asbestos cases. "A lot of these companies now accept responsibility and settle these cases regularly," said Hatten, who has represented thousands of shipyard workers exposed to asbestos. "I hope this verdict will make companies like John Crane change their corporate attitude." The judgment is split with two other companies: Denver's Johns Manville Corp, a unit of Berkshire Hathaway Inc that makes roofing, insulation and other industrial materials; and Garlock Sealing Technologies, a Palmyra, NY, unit of EnPro Industries Inc in Charlotte, North Carolina. Buddy Jones was diagnosed with mesothelioma, a cancer caused almost exclusively by asbestos. Because the cancer can lie dormant for 20-50 years, some older shipyard workers are just realizing the effects of their asbestos exposure. Dr. John C. Maddox testified at the three-week trial that he had seen about 500 mesothelioma patients in his practice at Riverside Regional Medical Center. Jones spent four years sealing pumps and making gaskets at Newport News Shipbuilding - now Northrop Grumman Newport News - in the 1960s before returning to college and becoming a computer programmer in Richmond. When he suddenly became ill in late 2004, his doctor thought it was pneumonia, then he found the tumors in Jones' lungs. Jones died within a year. The shipyard stopped using products containing asbestos the mid 1980s.

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London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Jul 28, states: The music industry hailed a victory in the battle against illegal downloading yesterday after forcing one of the world's most prominent file-sharing sites to pay \$100 million in damages and become a legal business. Kazaa, a longstanding source of illicit music and film downloads, enjoyed 4.2 million simultaneous users worldwide. The peer-to-peer network acted as a free jukebox, making files accessible to any computer user. In 2003 Kazaa became the most downloaded software with 239 million. Sharman Networks, which is based in Australia and is the owner of Kazaa, agreed yesterday to pay the world's four leading music companies — Universal, SonyBMG, EMI and Warner Music — more than \$100 million (£54 million) in compensation for lost sales. Kazaa had been under mounting pressure after a

series of landmark court rulings, instigated by the music and film industries. Australia's Federal Court found Sharman Networks guilty of encouraging its users to swap songs illegally, breaching copyright law. In June last year the US Supreme Court ruled that file-sharing companies could be held accountable for promoting copyright theft by users of their services. Mark Mulligan, an analyst with Jupiter Research, said that the amount of damages demonstrates the size of Kazaa's service. \$100 million is half of the legitimate music downloads market in Europe. Despite the settlement, and the popularity of legal alternatives such as the iTunes store, figures show that illegal music downloading is still on the increase. An estimated 20 billion songs were swapped illegally or downloaded last year, according to the annual piracy report of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI). This is in addition to the £2.4 billion lost last year in pirated CD sales. Although the industry has now shut two of the biggest file-sharing networks in Kazaa and Grokster, millions still use similar free services, such as eDonkey, LimeWire and BitTorrent, which can download feature films at high speed. The next target in the industry's sights is the Russia-based allofmp3.com, the second most popular download site in Britain, which sells chart albums for less than £1. Along with Russia and South Korea, the IFPI named Canada as one of the worst offenders. Outdated copyright laws have helped digital piracy flourish, the report said. John Kennedy, chairman of the IFPI, said: "The Kazaa ruling is a major step forward because the industry can now put their powerful distribution software to a legitimate use. But the increasing take-up of broadband means more opportunity for illegal downloading. We are surprised that a sophisticated nation like Canada takes so little care over its intellectual property." The IFPI said that legal action against individuals who were found to be prolific file sharers would continue. About 20,000 cases have been brought, with offenders in Britain paying up to £6,500.

MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: A Black Country woman left brain damaged after a operation that went wrong has been awarded £3.6m damages. Elaine Silvester, 49 from Kingswinford, suffered a brain haemorrhage during the botched surgery at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital in March 1999. She was left paralysed down her left side, partially blind and needed 11 further operations. The hospital trust admitted liability in December and said it regretted that her care had fallen below standard. The former care worker was diagnosed with a cyst on the brain after complaining of headaches. Surgeon Jonathan

Wasserberg indicated that the operation would take two hours but he encountered difficulties and Mrs Silvester was in theatre for six. During the operation, he was said to have tugged at the cyst with tweezers resulting in the brain haemorrhage which caused massive brain damage. In addition to being left paralysed on her left side, Mrs Silvester has memory loss, has lost her sense of smell and now needs constant care. The payout, awarded by the High Court in Birmingham on Monday, followed an admission of liability by the University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust. The payment consists of a £1.2m pound lump sum and an income of £120,000 guaranteed for life.

MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A jury has awarded almost four million dollars to a Largo woman who suffered a brain injury when an intravenous tube was removed at a hospital three years ago. The lawsuit said Kathleen Leer suffered a stroke and brain damage when removal of a central line at Largo Medical Center caused an air embolism. Her lawyer says Leer now suffers from left-side paralysis and cognition problems that require 24-hour care from her husband. Attorneys for the hospital argued that the line's removal did not cause Leer's injury and that "some or all of these damages" were based on pre-existing conditions. Leer, a chronic pain patient, was admitted to the hospital with a dislodged catheter in her lower back. Hospital officials say they are considering an appeal.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: A Jefferson County jury has awarded more than \$9 million to the family of a Kentucky woman who died after surgery at the University of Louisville Hospital in 2003. The husband of 40-year-old Jennifer Beglin sued the hospital and two doctors that performed the operation. The family claimed there was a delay in getting blood when Mrs. Beglin started having problems on the operating table. Beglin nearly died during the operation. She was left in comatose state and was taken off of life support three months later. Today, the jury placed all the blame on University Hospital and none on the two doctors involved. A statement released by University Hospital this afternoon says they disagree with the jury's decision and plans to make an appeal.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated Jul 29, states: The family of a pregnant woman killed in a car crash last year received a \$2.7 million settlement from a convicted drunk driver who was acquitted of causing the accident. Rishor Simone, a law firm representing 52-year-old Bruce Stanko of Hampton, says the

settlement was made about five months after the January 2005 accident, when it was believed that Stanko had caused the accident. Stanko was convicted Wednesday (Jul 26) of drunken driving, but acquitted of charges of homicide by vehicle while intoxicated and reckless endangerment. State police say Stanko was driving with a blood alcohol level twice the legal limit when his car crossed the centre line and hit the vehicle driven by 28-year-old Linda Jenkins of Butler (Pennsylvania), who was four months pregnant. She died the next day.

Railway Accidents



ARE AREA, SWEDEN

See "Sweden" under "Weather & Navigation".

BARRAPORT AREA, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: A goods train carrying grain has derailed in Victoria's northwest. Police said the train, made up of two engines and 40 cars, was travelling from Manangatang to Geelong about 2000, AEST, yesterday when it derailed near Barraport. "Eight carriages of a goods train were derailed," Senior Constable Wayne Wilson said. "There were no injuries as a result of the accident." Constable Wilson said it was unknown how long the clean-up effort would continue.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Recovery crews have begun cleaning up debris from an overnight train derailment at Barraport, north-west of Bendigo in central Victoria. Eight grain wagons came off the rails north of Boort about 200 metres west of the Barraport South Road just before 2000 hrs. The train was on its way from Manangatang to the port of Geelong. Pacific National says 25 wagons not affected by the derailment have arrived at their destination. A spokeswoman says it is expected to take a couple of days to clear the freight line. She says an investigation is under way, but the results are unlikely for a couple of weeks.

BEAUMONT, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: An Amtrak train carrying more than 100 passengers derailed about five minutes after leaving the Beaumont station yesterday. There were no injuries. The train was traveling from California to New Orleans when the accident occurred at 1515 hrs. Passengers told Beaumont TV station KFDM that they could feel a bump when the train

derailed at about 20 miles-per-hour. The train stayed upright when it left the tracks. The passengers were transported to their final destinations by buses. Union Pacific, which manages the tracks in Beaumont, was investigating the accident, the station reported.

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 80 people were injured when a passenger train derailed in Durban this morning. Netcare 911 spokesperson Chris Botha said one coach left the tracks near the Duffs Road Railway Station in KwaMashu. He said it appeared that most of the injuries occurred when passengers attempted to jump off the derailed coach. There were no major injuries.

London, Jul 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Railway Safety Regulator inspectors will conduct an in-loco inspection to determine the cause of yesterday's train derailment in Durban, in which 86 passengers were injured. The regulator said in a statement yesterday that it was concerned at the increasing number of passenger train accidents. Metrorail said the front motor coach of the Durban-bound 9202 train from KwaMashu had derailed at Duff's Road railway station at 0645 hrs. Most of the injured passengers had tried to jump from the coach, said Netcare 911 paramedic Chris Botha. Metrorail spokeswoman Thandi Mkhize said train services had been "severely affected" by the derailment, with delays of 45 minutes to an hour. She said Metrorail was investigating the incident. The cause of the derailment was not known. The Railway Safety Regulator said it would continue to engage with Metrorail and the South African Rail Commuter Corporation to ensure both adhered to safety standards.

KLAMATH FALLS AREA, OREGON, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated Jul 28, states: A freight train carrying lumber derailed north of Klamath Falls, blocking a main line and delaying rail traffic, officials said. There were no injuries or hazardous spills, and crews were trying to get the 38 derailed cars back on track, said James Barnes, a Union Pacific spokesman. The 105-car train was taking lumber from Roseville, Calif., to an area 40 miles north of Klamath Falls, Barnes said. The cause of the derailment late yesterday afternoon has not been determined. Barnes said some of the cars had been travelling with no load, and he didn't know if any lumber spilled along the tracks that run next to Upper Klamath Lake.

ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 2 — A coal train derailed in Florida's Orange County yesterday afternoon, sending 17 cars

crashing on the tracks. It happened near Boggy Creek Road. The train was heading to the Stanton Power Plant, operated by the Orlando Utilities Commission. The train was on a feeder line leading to the plant, and not on a main rail line so normal rail service is not being delayed.

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A train partially derailed in Savannah yesterday. The train "jumped the tracks" at Bay Street and Augusta Avenue. Police say three of 26-boxcars derailed around 0530 hrs yesterday morning. The woodchip cargo was not affected and no one was hurt. The train was headed to Faulkville from Savannah International Paper. CSX and Georgia Central Railway officials are investigating.

TAMPA, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A major Tampa road was blocked after two locomotives and two freight cars of a CSX train derailed and one locomotive turned on its side, yesterday. Crews were working to clean up damaged cars. According to CSX railroad company, the train was headed to a freight yard in Tampa when it suddenly derailed. About 150 gallons of diesel fuel spilled onto the ground. Rescuer Ray Yeakley says a crane will be used to clear the train. The derailment blocked off traffic on Busch Blvd between Himes and Twin Lakes Blvd. Crews are waiting for equipment to come in from Georgia to clear the train. It was expected that the area would be closed throughout the morning and possibly into the afternoon.

THOMPSON RIVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

London, Aug 3 — A report from LaSalle, PQ, states: A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Twelve CP Rail cars carrying coal tumbled from a trestle into the Thompson River, BC, late Monday (Jul 31). The westbound train was en route to Vancouver on tracks jointly used by CN and CP Rail when the derailment occurred. Of the 124 cars, 20 derailed and 12 plummeted down a steep embankment into the river, CP Rail spokesman Ed Greenberg said yesterday. There were no injuries. CN spokesman Jim Feeny said the busy section of track would remain closed for the foreseeable future. "There are coal cars in the river right now and we'll be removing the coal when it is practically possible," Feeny said. Transport Canada spokesman Rod Nelson said tests would be conducted to see if there are any risks to the river's habitat. Bernie Fandrigh, owner of Lytton-based Kumsheen Rafting Resort, said Monday's derailment had forced his company to "shut down on that section of river."

Robberies & Thefts



THEFTS FROM MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Russia's famed State Hermitage Museum yesterday reported the theft of more than 220 works, including jewellery and enamelled objects, worth around \$5.6 million, an incident that highlighted the poor security at Russian cultural institutions. The Hermitage, housed in the ornate Winter Palace of the Russian czars in St. Petersburg, said museum employees were likely involved in the thefts. The museum said staff members learned of the missing items during a routine inventory. When the check started, the curator in charge of most of the collection where the theft occurred died suddenly at his workplace, the statement said. The museum did not identify the curator or say when or how he died. It also did not identify specific items that were stolen. "There are many strange aspects of this affair, but unfortunately, there is no doubt that it did not happen without the participation of museum staff," the statement said. The museum also said it was trying to modernise its system for monitoring visitors and employees, and acknowledged that most of the premises were not fully secured. Many of the building's more than 1,000 rooms have inadequate ventilation and security systems and museum employees, for example, often have to open windows for fresh air. The Hermitage was started by Catherine the Great in 1764. Today, its vast holdings of antiquities, decorative art and Western art include world-renowned collections of Italian Renaissance, 17th and 18th century Dutch and Flemish, and Impressionist paintings. Rosonkhrankultura will send investigators to the Hermitage tomorrow to review its security measures, news agencies reported.

Computer Systems



A311 DEATH

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated today, states: A trojan known as A311 Death is estimated to have infected 10,000 computers in Australia. The Australian Computer Emergency Response Team is investigating the program, which is believed to have come from Russia. Chris Horsley, a AusCERT security analyst, says thousands of Australian PCs are infected, and the trojan is spreading fast. "Our current estimate

is around 10,000 but there's more infections world-wide," he said. "They seem to be constantly feeding new runs of this particular trojan by a lot of different vectors." The Australian Tax Office says the A311 Death trojan has been used to detect the tax file numbers of 200 people who have lodged their tax returns online. Those people have all been offered new tax file numbers, and a spokeswoman says lodging a tax return online is still considered safe if users have the latest virus detection software. But Mr Horsley says most anti-virus programs will not detect the trojan. "Sometimes not. One of the methods that the trojan uses is disabling antivirus and also changing the operating system to hide its presence from the programs running on it," he said. "So that's made detection in this particular case quite difficult." But Peter Cassidy, from the US based Anti-Phishing Working Group, says virus protection is still a good idea.

Miscellaneous



BUNKER SHORTAGE, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Aug 3 — There has been increased reports of vessels forced to divert away from South Africa to find bunker supplies as the oil refineries run low on supplies. Yesterday for example it was being claimed there were no spot fuel fixtures available at any South African port. The situation has arisen partly as a result of the annual shutdown at the Shell/BP refinery in Durban leaving the Engen refinery battling to keep up with demand. Adding to the problem is that Cape Town's Caltex Refinery is reported to have also run out of stock. Ports and Ships was told that shipping lines and agents holding contracts were the only ones obtaining bunkers at present. The Shell/BP Refinery (Sapref) is expected to return to production Aug 14 following its shutdown for maintenance, after which the situation with bunkers can be expected to return to normal. After disastrous shortages of fuel last year when four of the refineries were shut at the same time it was understood that arrangements would be made in future to import fuel requirements when necessary. While there are no shortages of petrol or diesel being reported at present it is apparent that bunker fuel, which is mainly a waste product from production is not included in this arrangement.

GREENPEACE PROTEST AT NELSON, NEW ZEALAND

Wellington, Jul 31 — Following Greenpeace press release issued at 0843, Jul 30: Early today, Greenpeace activists locked themselves to fishing (general) *Chang Xing* (1314 gt, built 1975) to prevent it from leaving

Nelson. Four activists boarded the *Chang Xing*, locking themselves to the mast and other parts of the vessel. In blocking the vessel's departure, Greenpeace also locked metal braces and a large sculpture of a deep-sea coral to the vessel's stern as a reminder of the deep sea life being destroyed daily by high seas bottom trawlers. "We've done what the Government should be doing — taking strong action against bottom trawlers who are destroying unique deep-sea life out in international waters," said Greenpeace oceans campaigner Mike Hagler. Greenpeace exposed the damage caused by dragging heavy bottom trawl nets across the sea floor by filming and photographing the crew of the *Chang Xing* dumping large quantities of unwanted species including lantern sharks, squid, deep-sea kina and endangered black coral. — Lloyd's Agents.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, Jul 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Five new patients in Phitsanulok and Phichit, the provinces declared bird flu red zones, are suspected to have caught the H5N1 virus, doctors said yesterday. The Public Health Ministry said the new cases pushed the number of suspected cases to 44 nationwide, all awaiting bird flu laboratory test results. Bunchai Theerakan, acting chief of Phitsanulok Public Health Office, said three new patients in the province were admitted on Wednesday at Noen Maprang, Wang Thong and Ruam Phaet hospitals. They showed symptoms similar to influenza, and all had had direct contact with chicken in areas where mass chicken deaths were reported. The hospitals were waiting for blood test results. Dr Bunchai said doctors had found seven suspected bird flu cases in Phitsanulok since the start of the year, but tests for all came back negative. In Phichit, two patients, a 42-year-old woman from Sak Lek sub-district and a four-year-old girl from Thap Khlo district, fell sick after they touched dead chicken carcasses at their homes, according to Dr Sunee Theerakarunwong, director of Phichit Hospital. Mysterious mass chicken deaths have also occurred in Phichit. Five other provinces listed among the bird flu alert zones are Sukhothai, Uttaradit, Suphan Buri, Kanchanaburi and Nakhon Pathom. Tawatch Suntracharn, director-general of the Disease Control Department, said Phichit has the highest number of suspected cases, with 15, followed by Sukhothai, 10, and Suphan Buri, seven. Meanwhile, caretaker Agriculture and Cooperatives Minister Sudarat Keyuraphan told officials in bird flu zones to follow the ministry's avian flu control procedures to help control the disease spread. (See issue of Jul 28.)

Amsterdam, Aug 1 — Dutch authorities have detected a low-pathogenic H7 bird flu strain at a poultry farm and stepped up measures to prevent a major outbreak in one of the world's top poultry exporter, the

farm ministry said on Tuesday. The Netherlands, Europe's second biggest poultry producer after France, was hit by an H7N7 avian flu strain in 2003, which led to the culling of some 30 million birds, about a third of its poultry flock. The new cases of low-pathogenic H7 bird flu were found at a farm with some 25,000 birds in the central region of the Gelderse Vallei, the ministry said. "This strain is much less dangerous than the strain that hit the Netherlands in 2003," it said in a statement. "But because it might mutate to a more aggressive form...we have closed the farm. "It's an H7 virus but we cannot say yet which strain exactly," a ministry spokeswoman said. The outbreak had been detected as a result of regular monitoring carried out after the 2003 debacle. Birds at the infected farm would most probably have to be culled and the authorities had begun an investigation into the causes of the outbreak and stepped up monitoring, the ministry said. Tests made at five commercial farms surrounding the infected one had proved negative, it said. H7 bird flu in its highly pathogenic form can kill large numbers of birds and can occasionally infect people, although it is rarely fatal in humans. — Reuters.

Bangkok, Aug 2 — Thailand, among the countries hardest hit by bird flu, appeared to turn a corner this year in its fight against the virus. The disease had not shown up in humans or chickens for nearly eight months, fuelling hopes that a widely praised government and industry campaign had finally brought the H5N1 virus to heel. But a new human death and fresh outbreaks in poultry in late July have exposed serious gaps in Thailand's defences and forced officials to rethink their battle plan. "It's not entirely a surprise," said Laurence Gleeson, a bird flu expert with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) who will meet Thai officials next week to review the country's surveillance and containment campaign. "This is a disease that is difficult to eliminate completely," he said of H5N1, which has killed 134 people worldwide, including a 15th Thai on July 24. An outbreak in the northern province of Pichit, where the 17-year-old youth died, revealed shortcomings officials are now scrambling to fix. Despite the threat of fines and public awareness campaigns, the youth's family did not report their sick chickens, fearing authorities would cull the rest of the flock. Critics say the compensation paid to farmers, worth 75 percent of the market price, should be increased. Instead, the government says fines for failing to report bird deaths, rarely imposed in the past year, will now be enforced strictly in all 76 provinces. — Reuters.

Amsterdam, Aug 2 — Dutch authorities today culled 25,000 chickens at a farm infected with a low-pathogenic H7 bird flu strain and sealed off another 130 farms to prevent a major outbreak in one of the world's top poultry exporter. The virus

was reported yesterday in the central region of Gelderse Vallei. "All 25,000 birds at the farm were culled last night," a spokeswoman for the Dutch Agriculture Ministry said. "We are now taking samples of all farms around the infected one for testing and the first results are expected on Friday (Aug 4)". Authorities in the Netherlands, Europe's second biggest poultry producer after France, set up a three-km safety zone around the infected farm and temporarily sealed off all the 130 poultry farms in the zone, ordering their chickens to be kept inside. Trade and transport of live birds, meat and eggs as well as other live animals in and out the safety zone were banned. All exhibitions and fares involving live birds have also been prohibited, the ministry said. Authorities said strict measures were needed because the detected H7 strain might mutate into a more aggressive form. Dutch scientists and vets are making more tests and investigations to establish the exact strain, the ministry said. H7 bird flu in its highly pathogenic form can kill large numbers of birds and can occasionally infect people, although it is rarely fatal in humans. The main Dutch poultry farmers' union said they were confident that authorities would not allow the virus to spread and did not expect a negative impact of exports. "Of course we are worried but we are very satisfied with the measures taken so far," the union's chairman Jan Wolleswinkel said. "We don't expect any import bans because it's not an outbreak, it's just one isolated case of a very low-pathogenic avian influenza," he said. — Reuters.

OUTBREAK OF VIRUS ON BAHAMAS FLAG VESSEL

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated Jul 29, states: Nearly 230 people aboard passenger (cruise) *Mariner of the Seas* (138279 gt, built 2003) fell ill with a gastrointestinal illness during a weeklong Caribbean voyage, the owners said today. The illness, believed to be a norovirus brought onto the vessel by a passenger, struck 221 of the ship's 3,660 passengers and six of its 1,202 crew members, said Royal Caribbean spokesman Michael Sheehan. Sick passengers started complaining of vomiting and diarrhea Wednesday (Jul 26) and were treated with over-the-counter medication, he said. Most are expected to have recovered by the time the ship docked tomorrow morning in Port Canaveral as scheduled, Sheehan said. The cruise included ports of call in the Bahamas, Virgin Islands and St. Maarten.

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Jul 30, states: Passenger (cruise) *Mariner of the Seas* has docked in Port Canaveral with dozens of sick passengers. The vessel, carrying more than 3,000 passengers, arrived early this morning after a week in ports including the Bahamas, Virgin Islands and St. Maarten. The Brevard County Health Department

says more than 200 passengers and between six to 10 employees on the *Mariner of the Seas* have the Norwalk Virus. Cruise line officials say sick passengers started complaining of vomiting and diarrhea on Wednesday (Jul 26). Health officials are at Port Canaveral today to inspect and clean the vessel to make it safe for its next voyage.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: Passenger (cruise) *Mariner of the Seas* is in the Caribbean today, one day after some heavy cleaning while in Port Canaveral after more than 300 people on board the previous voyage came down with Norovirus. The Brevard County Health Department and the Centre for Disease Control has tracked the disease back to a passenger who brought it on board with them. That virus spread quickly to 328 passengers and about a dozen crew members. The cruise line tried to prevent the spread of the virus by handing out hand sanitiser and urging passengers to wash their hands. Workers from the cruise line and the Centres for Disease Control spent several hours yesterday scrubbing down almost every surface of the vessel.

ROTTERDAM (Netherlands)

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: Poland has ordered passenger (cruise) *Rotterdam* (39674 gt, built 1959), carrying a large cargo of asbestos, to leave the country following months of protests from environmental groups. The vessel arrived at Gdansk in February, where the owners planned to turn it into a conference centre and hotel after removing the toxic material. "We have taken a decision and the vessel must leave the port of Gdansk ... possibly within two weeks," Poland's Maritime Economy Minister Rafal Wiechecki said. Wiechecki said port authorities allowed the vessel's owners to carry out some renovations, not realising at first that the vessel was carrying the material, which environmentalists said posed a serious health risk. Officials in Poland representing the owners, Rederij de Rotterdam BV, said the company declined to comment on the decision but insisted that the process of removing the asbestos did not pose any risks. A company spokeswoman said the *Rotterdam* was carrying 500 cubic meters of asbestos. (Note — *Rotterdam* arrived Gdansk Feb 27 from Cadiz.)

Fires & Explosions



BUSINESSES, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: Costs are mounting after a series of explosions

at two propane dealers Friday (Jul 28) night. Damage estimates are predicted to be in the millions of dollars. Ashley Furniture lost about \$750,000 in inventory Friday night. The explosion blew out a back door causing the overhead sprinklers to come on. The water hit the Ashley warehouse as well as the one next door. Ashley regional manager Bill Bedore says overhead sprinklers at the warehouse stayed on for about 30 hours, ruining everything in stock. He estimates it will take "a few months" to repair the damage. The water from Ashley ended up next door at Goodman/Amana. A lot of businesses that were affected are meeting with insurance agents. But what happens with those claims could depend a lot on what fire investigators find. Fire investigators have their work cut out. It all started at ProFlame. On Friday night there was talk that lighting may have sparked the explosions and resulting fires, but that was quickly ruled out. It has been established that an employee was filling up a tank when the explosion happened, but investigators say it doesn't look like it was intentionally set. North Las Vegas fire investigators are back at the scene gathering evidence but still don't have a cause. "There were tanks being filled, we're just not sure from that point how the flames started and how it got going from there," explained one investigator. While the investigation continues, so does the clean up, both at Proflame where the fire started and at AmeriGas next door. Amerigas' district manager, David Vance, is already focusing on rebuilding, but guarantees his employees and customers have nothing to worry about; it's business as usual. "No, there will be no layoff, they're out there delivering gas right now." Despite all the damage, local fire officials say it's amazing no one was killed or severely injured. Chunks of the exploded propane tanks were found 300 yards away. Each weighed about 300 pounds. On Sunday (Jul 30), investigators estimated the damage to be between \$1.5 million and \$2 million, but now they say that estimate could go a lot higher, but they won't know until their investigation is complete.

CHEMICAL PLANT, LINHAI, JIANGSU PROVINCE, CHINA

London, Jul 28 — A press report, dated today, states: An explosion at a chemical plant in eastern China killed at least 12 people today and prompted the evacuation of 7,000 others, state media and officials said. The fatal explosion at the Fudu Chemical Plant, in Jiangsu province's Linhai township, shattered the facility and left rescuers combing through the rubble. The area is about 190 miles north of Shanghai. By mid-afternoon, 12 bodies had been recovered, a spokesman for the surrounding Sheyang county government said. About a dozen more were injured, he said. The cause of the blast is still under investigation. Though no dangerous levels of

pollution have been detected, authorities evacuated 7,000 people from within a 1.2 mile radius of the blast site as a precaution, he said. Fudu is a major producer of fluorochemicals for industry. No details were given on the cause of the accident or the specific chemicals involved.

London, July 29 — A press report, dated today, states: The death toll from a chemical plant blast in east China's Jiangsu Province had risen to 22, with 28 others injured, according to local authorities today. The blast, which took place at 0845 yesterday at the Fuyuan Chemical Plant, a Sino-German joint venture in Linhai Township of Sheyang County, toppled the workshop. The plant produces Dichloro Fluoro Benzene for industry. The 28 people who were injured in the blast has been hurried to hospital. More than 7,000 local residents who were evacuated from the blast site have returned to their homes as local environmental protection authorities said by last night, the toxic gas, chlorine, from the blast had dispersed and had little influence in the air. Preliminary investigation showed improper operation by workers was mainly to blame for the accident. Government of the Sheyang County has ordered all chemical industries suspend production for check-up.

COAL MINE, FUYUAN, CHINA

London, Aug 1 — Eleven miners were killed in a sudden surge of coal and gas at a coal mine in Fuyuan, a county in eastern Yunnan Province, local sources said. The No. 1 team for comprehensive digging tasks of Bailongshan Coal Mine, with 11 miners on the team, were underground when the mishap occurred about 1840, Saturday (Jul 29).

ELECTRICITY SUB-STATION, SALTLEY, BIRMINGHAM, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Up to 17,000 homes and businesses in the Birmingham area have been left without power after a fire at an electricity sub-station. Central Networks engineers were notified just before 2245, UTC, yesterday of a fire at the sub-station in Watson Road East, Saltley. Company spokeswoman Rebecca Middleton said they were switching customers onto other parts of the network. Heartlands Hospital was forced to use back-up generators as customers in areas as far apart as Ward End, Bordesley Green East and Erdington reported loss of supply. Parts of the motorway lighting network were also plunged into darkness. Ms Middleton said she was unable to say when power would be restored. "We are trying to switch customers onto different parts of the network," she said. Jim Sinnott, from West Midlands Fire Service, said eight crews managed to bring the blaze under control. "Crews arriving at the scene could see large amounts of black

smoke in the sky." Mr Sinnott said there was no reason to think the cause of the blaze was suspicious but a fire investigation team would be checking the site.

FILM STUDIO, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated today, states: The large James Bond stage at Pinewood Studios in Buckinghamshire has been destroyed by fire. At least eight fire engines tackled the blaze at the set, where filming for the new movie Casino Royale has finished. Eyewitness Jen McVean, who owns a firm at the studios in Iver Heath, said the stage was "completely on fire". The large sound stage had been transformed into a replica Venice where the film, with a reported budget of £39m, is partly based. Mrs McVean said earlier the stage looked completely on fire. "Nothing is salvageable and there are many, many fire engines there," she added. She saw the black smoke billowing above the studios from her garden which is around a mile away. She went to the studios to make sure her special effects firm was not affected. The roof covering the stage appeared to have caved in due to fire damage and firefighters used special equipment to reach it. A spokeswoman for the Buckinghamshire Fire Brigade said they were alerted at 1118 hrs. Film crew members said filming had finished and the set was being de-rigged. Pinewood - which began life in 1935 - has a long association with the Bond films, starting with the first movie Dr No in 1962. It took more than a year for a sound stage to be rebuilt following a fire at the studios in 1984. It reopened in January 1985.

FOREST, BRAZIL

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated Jul 26, states: A fire raged today through a rain forest along Brazil's eastern coastline, burning up to 25,000 acres of trees, firefighters said. The fire in Brazil's Atlantic Forest remained out of control late today, said firefighters from the municipality of Mage, 50 miles north-east of Rio de Janeiro. The forest has been threatened by a month-long dry spell, the firefighters said. Environmentalists say the Atlantic Forest, a diverse and fragile ecosystem, is home to hundreds of bird species, many of which are unique to the region.

FOREST, INDONESIA

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters today battled more than 170 raging ground and forest fires on the Indonesian part of Borneo island to prevent haze spreading to neighbouring countries, officials said. More than 200 firefighters worked to contain forest fires and blazes set to clear land at 171 hotspots in four provinces on the island, said forestry ministry spokesman Masyud. He said another

24 blazes were being fought in South Sumatra province on Sumatra island while about six affected Riau province.

GARAGE, HUDSON, MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: The estimated damage caused by a fire at Hudson Auto Sales has risen from \$1 million to \$1.5 million, but the cause of the fire has not yet been determined. The July 22nd fire destroyed the auto repair shop and at least 18 of its vehicles. Business owner Edison Santana of Leominster said he has no insurance on the business. The state fire marshal's office ruled the fire accidental, but it will take more time to determine exactly what happened. Witnesses reported a series of explosions within the garage of Hudson Auto Sales while fire tore through the roof and walls of the building. Workers inside the six-bay garage of Hudson Auto Sales saw sparks falling from the ceiling before an explosion rocked the building.

OIL REFINERY, BOJONEGORO REGENCY, INDONESIA

London, July 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Nearly 150 people were injured and around 7,000 fled their homes after an explosion at an oil refinery in East Java province early today, police said. The blast took place at a joint Pertamina-PetroChina oil refinery in Bojonegoro regency just after midnight, as workers tried to contain a gas leak by setting it alight, said local police chief Rumhadi. There were no deaths reported, but nearly 150 people were hospitalized suffering from respiratory problems after inhaling gas, said Rumhadi. "Police are still investigating the cause of the accident," he said. Although the fire has been put out, around 7,000 residents from 10 villages in the district will not be allowed to return to their homes and must stay in government offices until the area is safe, Rumhadi said. Indonesia's Pertamina and PetroChina of China, both state-owned energy companies, did not immediately comment on today's blast.

OIL RIG EXPLOSION GUYMON AREA, OKLAHOMA, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Two oil rig maintenance workers remain hospitalised today, after being injured when a natural gas rig near Guymon, Oklahoma, exploded. Guymon Fire Chief Clark Purdy said the men are in a Lubbock, Texas, hospital, but their injuries do not appear to be life-threatening. Their names have not been released. The two were part of a crew from Eagle Well Service of Liberal, Kansas, working on the rig, about five miles north-east of Guymon, when it caught fire Tuesday afternoon (Jul 25.) The rig is owned by E-O-G Resources of Houston and was destroyed by the fire.

PREMISES, MANAMA, BAHRAIN

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: Bahrain yesterday continued the task of dealing with the causes and aftermath of the worst tragedy to hit labourers in the kingdom. A fire yesterday killed 16 Indians mostly from the state of Tamil Nadu, who were sleeping in overcrowded accommodation. An ad-hoc joint committee of Civil Defence and labour ministry representatives is still investigating the cause of the fire but an official has urged all people in charge of labour accommodation to adhere to safety measures to ensure the tragedy is not repeated. "One possible cause is the large number of labourers who were living in cramped accommodation," Civil Defence director Khalid Al Absi yesterday said in a press statement.

WAREHOUSE, REDMOND, OREGON, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: A fire yesterday night caused an estimated \$1.5 million damage to a southeast Redmond plant that packages wood shavings for animal bedding. Power to about 200 customers in the area had to be shut off for close to two hours, officials said. Firefighters were called shortly before 2200 hrs to J.T. Shavings at 2162 SE 1st Street. The arriving crews found the fire burning on the east end of the building and spreading throughout the warehouse. Crews stopped the fire at an interior wall and protected an office area from fire damage, she said. Investigators were on scene today looking for the cause of the fire.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 900 residents evacuated Chadron, Nebraska, after wildfires reached the town's border and caught several houses on fire today, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency spokesman Jim Bunstock said. Firefighters worked early today to control six wildfires burning since late Wednesday (Jul 26) after multiple lightning strikes hit dry grasslands in the north-western area of the state, Bunstock said. The wildfires span across a 25-mile area, he said. Personnel from the state and federal National Guard, federal firefighters and other agencies are assisting in quelling the fire, which may grow or shift given today's "hot, windy and dry" forecasted weather conditions, Bunstock said. Further evacuations depend on the damage produced by the two fires that were burning parts of Chadron late yesterday into today. So far no death or injuries have been reported.

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated today, states: A lightning-caused wildfire near the Oregon border was 85% contained yesterday as strong winds that firefighters feared would blow the blaze into a series of major power lines never materialised. "We just need to make sure we do a very thorough job of mopping up and

getting rid of hot spots near the line, and just making sure that it's out before any change in weather can pick it up and make it run," said Deb Schweizer, a spokeswoman for a team of federal, state and local firefighters battling the blaze. The blaze, dubbed the Lakin fire, was burning a half mile east of California-Oregon Transmission Project power lines and three-quarters of a mile south of lines used by the Western Area Power Administration and Pacific Gas & Electric Co. The California Independent System Operator, which manages most of the state's power grid, said Friday (Jul 28) that it had contingency plans to reroute electricity around the transmission lines if they failed or had to be shut down because of the fire. The lines together carry about 4,200 megawatts between Washington's Bonneville Power Administration and California. More than 300 firefighters were battling the blaze, which had charred 507 acres in mountainous terrain about 200 miles north of Sacramento. Firefighters hoped the blaze, about 70 miles north-west of Redding in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, would be fully contained by 1800 hrs tomorrow. Meanwhile, a 1,500-acre wildfire that broke out yesterday near the Trinity County city of Weaverville prompted authorities to ask hundreds of residents to voluntarily evacuate their homes on the city's west side, authorities said. The blaze was approaching dozens of homes but had not damaged any structures by late yesterday, according to the Weaverville Fire District. Nearly 300 firefighters were battling the blaze. In Southern California, the size of a wildfire burning in Los Padres National Forest was reduced from about 4,500 acres to 2,026 acres after a flyover allowed a more accurate estimate, authorities said yesterday. The three-square-mile blaze was 85% contained and crews expected to fully surround it by this evening. The fire was one of at least two dozen caused by lightning in the forest during the past week. Near the town of Frazier Park, north of Los Angeles, the fire charred 736 acres. It was fully contained yesterday but a U.S. Forest Service statement said there still were trees within the burned zone that were "smoldering and occasionally flaring up." About 375 square miles of public land around the forest fires remained closed. At the south end of the state, a wildfire in the Cleveland National Forest was 90% surrounded. The fire about 50 miles east of San Diego was at 16,665 acres, or about 26 square miles. Another wildfire caused by lightning in Death Valley National Park was contained after burning 9,280 acres of desert land.

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Jul 30, states: Emergency crews are shifting their focus on two fires that are burning near the town of Harrison in Nebraska's panhandle. The Thayer fire, just north-east of Harrison, is estimated to have burned 30,000 acres. The Rudloff fire, just

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south-east of Harrison, has reached US Highway 20. Officials estimate it to be 20,000 acres. In addition, three more wildfires continue to burn outside of Chadron, Neb. The Nebraska governor's office said that, out of the six fires that started in north-western Nebraska, only one is contained and a second one is almost contained. However, windy conditions are keeping the other fires burning strong. More than 65,000 acres of north-western Nebraska are charred after lightning strikes sparked several wildfires across the panhandle late last week. Aid workers, hand crews, helicopters and about 700 firefighters continue to battle the flames.

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters are battling two enormous wildfires and they've managed to keep the flames out of the northwest Nebraska town of Harrison. On Sunday night (Jul 30), fire officials came up with an evacuation plan in case the winds shifted. They did move as forecasters predicted, but no evacuation was ordered. One home north of town, a bed and breakfast, was destroyed. Emergency crews said that 80,000 to 90,000 acres have burned in Sioux and Dawes County near Harrison and Chadron. Gov. Dave Heineman visited the region twice over the weekend. Heineman is expected to send 50 more National Guard soldiers from Lincoln today to fight the fires. He said that eventually 1,200 firefighters and 300 other state employees will be working on the fire. Firefighters said they are worried that Monday's 100-degree temperatures could bring the fires out of control again. (See issue of Aug 1.)

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: An evacuation order was lifted today for about 40 residents west of Weaverville, Calif, after mild overnight winds helped calm a wildfire that had destroyed one home. The fire in Trinity County was burning on both sides of Highway 299 west of Weaverville, located in a mountainous area west of Redding in far Northern California. The California Highway Patrol had opened one lane of the highway and was escorting traffic through the fire zone. Three firefighters suffered minor injuries while battling the blaze, which began Saturday (Jul 29) and moved to within about a mile of the town. The fire was 50% contained at more than 3,000 acres today. Firefighters expected to fully surround the fire tomorrow. "The weather conditions were pretty favorable overnight. The winds died down, and so did the fire," said Jason Martin, a fire information officer with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in Redding. The calmer winds also helped firefighters with several other Northern California fires that began last week, many triggered by lightning. A wildfire near the California-Oregon border that threatened major power lines was 95% surrounded today at more than 500 acres, with full containment expected tomorrow. The fire in the Shasta-

Trinity National Forest had threatened power lines used by the California-Oregon Transmission Project, the Western Area Power Administration and Pacific Gas & Electric Co. Together, the lines carry about 4,200 megawatts between Washington's Bonneville Power Administration and California. In Southern California, two fires burning in Los Padres National Forest were contained yesterday but dozens of square miles of land around them remained closed. The Bald fire burned 2,026 acres, while the Scott fire scorched 751 acres. At the south end of the state, a wildfire in the Cleveland National Forest also was surrounded yesterday. That fire, about 50 miles east of San Diego, burned 16,665 acres, or about 26 square miles.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: Firefighters continued to make progress in containing wildfires burning around Texas today but windy conditions have been slowing their efforts. The Texas Forest Service says as many as ten fires are still burning but most are 80 to 90% contained. About ten thousand acres have been scorched since Thursday (Jul 27). Fires broke out in north, central and western areas of the state, including in Comanche, Palo Pinto, Clay, Menard, Kendall, Throckmorton and Young counties. Officials say some parts of Texas are 30 inches behind normal precipitation over the last 16 months — and fire conditions could worsen unless more rain comes. Fires this weekend were caused by a welding torch, tractor equipment, a downed power line, lightning and other sources of heat.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated Aug 1, states: Officials leading the battle against wildfires near Chadron, Nebraska, estimate the damage at more than \$1 million. They said it will take quite a few more days to fully extinguish the flames. Right now, crews are trying to let the fires burn out of heavily wooded areas because it is not safe for firefighters to work in those areas. Meanwhile, in Washington State, firefighters have gained some ground on a wildfire burning on the eastern shore of Lake Chelan. The Flick Creek fire was 10% contained today as two heavy helicopters continued to drop water on hot spots near the fire line. Firefighters used explosives to build an additional 2,200 feet of fire line yesterday and expected to continue that work today, according to a statement released by Terry Knupp, spokeswoman for the Chelan Ranger District of the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests. About 130 firefighters were assigned to the blaze, which has burned nearly 4,000 acres, or an estimated 6 square miles. Half of the fire was burning in the National Park Service's Lake Chelan National Recreation Area and half in the Wenatchee National Forest. Fire officials said yesterday that the fire had calmed down and was no longer a danger to the small community of Stehekin. Residents, however,

remained on notice that they may have to evacuate, the release said. Farther north, about 810 firefighters today continued to battle the Tripod and Spur Peak fires, which together have burned nearly 58 square miles north-east of Winthrop in far north-central Washington. About 40 miles north-east of Entiat, the Tinpan fire had burned more than five square miles of sub-alpine trees since it was started Jul 7 by lightning. Meanwhile, the 250-acre Bear Gulch fire between Lake Cushman and the south-west face of Mount Rose in the Olympic National Forest was 30% contained.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Firefighters continued to gain ground today on several wildfires burning in north-central Washington State but state officials issued an air quality advisory for eight counties due to the possibility of smoke settling in the region's valleys. Very light winds in the Columbia River basin during the next 48 hours could keep the smoke from dissipating. As a result, the state Department of Ecology advised residents in Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan and Stevens counties to take precautions to protect themselves from poor air quality. Those precautions could include staying inside and keeping windows and doors closed, avoiding physical activity, and using recycle or recirculate mode on air conditioners. The agency also recommended that people limit their motor vehicle trips to reduce emissions. Firefighters nevertheless continued to make progress against the region's wildfires. The Flick Creek fire on the eastern shore of Lake Chelan was 15% contained. The fire has burned more than 4,000 acres, or about six square miles, south-east of the rural community of Stehekin, but an estimated 165 firefighters continued to battle the blaze. Half of the fire was burning in the National Park Service's Lake Chelan National Recreation Area and half in the Wenatchee National Forest. Stehekin residents remained on notice they should be prepared to evacuate but transportation and visitor recreation services remained open in the Lake Chelan and Stehekin areas. About 875 firefighters continued to battle the Tripod and Spur Peak fires. Together, the two fires have burned more than 58 square miles north-east of Winthrop but were 5% contained today. The fire was believed to have been started by lightning. Firefighters also were continuing to monitor the Tinpan fire, about 40 miles north-east of Entiat, but were not directly attacking the blaze. The fire had burned more than five square miles of sub-alpine trees. The 250-acre Bear Gulch fire between Lake Cushman and the south-west face of Mount Rose in the Olympic National Forest remained 30% contained today.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Jul 2, states: Firefighters battled hot and windy conditions today as they worked to control wildfires

throughout Texas. A fire in north-west Comanche County had burned 100 acres and threatened 15 homes, including at least six that were temporarily evacuated, said Traci Weaver, spokeswoman for the Texas Forest Service. The fire was 90% contained. Firefighters had yet to get control of a "very active" fire in south-west Texas. A group of three fires had burned 2,500 acres on the Pecos-Brewster county line and the Pecos-Terrell county line, the forest service reported. Firefighters used bulldozers, brush trucks and helicopters to battle the blaze, which was started by lightning. There were no reports of injuries or property damage.

London, Aug 3 — A press report, dated Aug 2, states: Firefighters reported progress today in subduing Oregon's three major wildfires. In the Cascade Range, the last of the residents whose homes were threatened by the Black Crater fire near Sisters were allowed to return yesterday, as firefighters focused on the nearby Three Sisters Wilderness. The fire was burning over an area of 9,000 acres, or about 14 square miles. At the eastern boundary of the state, authorities opened all but one Forest Service road that had been closed because of the Foster Gulch fire, which was burning on more than 53,000 acres, or about 83 square miles. In the center of the state in Wheeler County, firefighters said they expected to contain the Maxwell fire by Saturday (Aug 5). The fire was burning over about 5,200 acres, or eight square miles, including the Bridge Creek Wilderness. It has forced the closure of some local roads and campgrounds. Roger Peterson, a spokesman for the North-west Interagency Co-ordination Centre, said the wind and weather were expected to remain mild for the rest of the week and help the firefighting effort. Meanwhile, in Nevada, firefighters today reported huge gains against three wildland fires, thanks to cooler temperatures, higher humidity and calmer winds. The Winters fire north-east of Winnemucca, which has scorched about 370 square miles since it was sparked by lightning Jul 25, was about 80% contained. Full containment was expected late tomorrow. Officials with the Elko Interagency Dispatch Centre said crews took advantage of the favourable conditions overnight to construct fire line and set back fires. Two other fires burning in Elko County were 95% contained today, with full containment targeted tomorrow, officials said. The Basco fire north-west of Elko has burned more than 47,000 acres, or 73 square miles. The Taylor fire was about 4,500 acres, or seven square miles. Crews on those fires are being released, with some being assigned to higher priority fires in Idaho and Oregon, officials said. In Nebraska, yesterday's rain and higher humidity helped the fire-fighting situation. The three fires burning near Chadron were 60% contained by yesterday afternoon. There's also

progress in containing two fires near Harrison. So far, 80 square miles have burned and four homes have been lost to the fires.



AIRCRAFT MISSING ALASKA, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Search crews continued looking for an aircraft that went missing Friday (Jul 28) with three people on board, and they planned to keep looking today. Four aircraft from the Civil Air Patrol and Alaska State Troopers were scouring water and land for signs of the multiengine, turboprop Sunday, said Maj. Mike Haller, a spokesman for the Rescue Coordination Center in Anchorage. With a low tide, efforts were aimed at coastlines late Sunday, he said. The search was scheduled to continue until dark and resume early today. Haller said he remained hopeful that the three were still alive. "We've had people find their way out of circumstances or find a way back," he said. "We're going to keep searching." The aircraft had been flying back and forth between Kenai and Anchorage on Friday. The aircraft departed Kenai airport at 2010, Friday, and last checked in with Commander Northwest, a Washington-based company that owns the aircraft, 20 minutes later. The three people on board were all pilots, according to the brother of one. Haller did not release their names.

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated today, states: Searchers continue to look for an aircraft with three people aboard that vanished on a flight Friday (Jul 28) between Kenai and Anchorage. The Civil Air Patrol sent out five aircraft from Kenai and Seward and expanded the search area to include the north shore of Cook Inlet, said Sgt. Ken Denny, a spokesman for Alaska Army National Guard. The Alaska Army Guard also planned to send up pilots today to join in the search, Denny said. Meanwhile, family members of one of the missing men from the Lower 48 have arrived in Alaska to organize their own ground and shoreline searches near the last known coordinates of the aircraft, above the waters of Cook Inlet. "We are assuming they are alive," said Capt. John Morse, of the Rescue Coordination Centre, which is leading the effort to find the men. The aircraft is owned by Commander Northwest, based in East Wenatchee, Wash. Commander Northwest provides pilots and planes on contract, director of operations Dave Weintraub said. The three people in the missing aircraft, all pilots, were identified by a company spokesman as Ralph Aiken, of East Wenatchee; Rick Posusta, of

Boise, Idaho; and Ian Beer, of Port Orchard, Wash. All were experienced pilots but two were new to the company and were engaged in a training flight in a multiengine Aero Commander when their aircraft disappeared. The last known coordinates of the aircraft were at a point about three miles offshore between Moose Point and Point Possession, over Gompertz Channel, searchers said. Radar from air-traffic control at the Anchorage airport and a signal from a satellite-tracking device aboard the aircraft point to that spot. But the aircraft could have dipped below the radar or the tracking device could have suffered a glitch; either could mean the aircraft might have flown miles in any direction, said Capt. Russ Edwards of the rescue centre. No signs of debris or oil sheen have been spotted in the air searches of the water. The pilots did not file a flight plan.

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: The search for a missing aircraft with three experienced pilots from the Pacific Northwest intensified today after people aboard a fishing vessel near Anchorage reported seeing the aircraft near where it was last heard from Friday night (Jul 28). The last-known coordinates of the Aero Commander plane were at a point about 10 to 15 miles southwest of Anchorage. The last contact with the four-seat, propeller-driven plane was at about 2030 Friday. The people on the fishing boat reported seeing the blue-and-white aircraft Friday night because it was not the type of aircraft normally seen flying close to the water, Pierre said.

C-FKHC

London, Aug 1 — A 68-year-old Toronto man died after crashing his small aircraft in the front yard of a house near Lake Simcoe yesterday. Kwang Choi, of North York, was heading south toward Baldwin Airport, which is just south of Lake Simcoe on Highway 48, when he clipped some wires and struck a roof. He crashed in the front yard at about 1030 hrs, said York Region police Const. Doug Searle. Choi, the only occupant of the white single-engine Cessna, was transported by air ambulance to Sunnybrook hospital, where he was later pronounced dead, Searle said. The four-seater plane was snapped in three places in the accident, and Choi was ejected from the cockpit. Transport Canada is investigating the cause of the crash.

C-GCMK

London, Aug 1 — Cessna U206F aircraft, registration C-GCMK, operated by Bathurst Inlet Developments, was en route Roche Bay, NU, to Rankin Inlet during the evening of Jul 24. After take-off, the pilot requested that FSS cancel the flight plan for the flight to Roche Bay and open a new one for the flight to Rankin Inlet. The aircraft struck the

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rocky terrain and came to a rest in an upright position. The pilot exited the aircraft with minor injuries, but the aircraft was destroyed by a post-impact fire. On Jul 26, when it was determined that C-GCMK had not reached its destination, search and rescue was immediately dispatched. The wreckage and pilot were found on Jul 28, 76 nautical miles south southwest of Repulse Bay. ATC records indicated that the flight plan for the flight to Roche Bay had been closed, but the one for the flight to Rankin Inlet had been inadvertently taken out of MIDS. Nav Canada has launched an operations safety investigation.

CRASH, CARSON AREA, WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Jul 30, states: U.S. Forest Service employees found human remains and the wreckage of a twin-engine plane that disappeared in January on a flight from Arizona to Tacoma. Cold weather and snow made a search for the plane impossible at the time, said Skamania County Undersheriff Dave Cox. The Cessna 421 was piloted by 42-year-old Martin Ayers of Scottsdale, who made a distress call on January 26 in heavy weather near Soda Peaks Lake, north of Carson. The plane soon disappeared off the radar screen. Two Forest Service workers stumbled across the crash site Friday (Jul 28) just south of where it was believed to have gone down, the sheriff's office said. The plane apparently exploded. Searchers found what appears to be paperwork with the plane's tail number. Officials plan to attend the site tomorrow to investigate.

CRASH, PIETERMARITZBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated today, states: Two men died when a light aircraft crashed outside Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal this morning, said an ambulance service. Netcare 911's Chris Botha said the Cessna aircraft crashed at about noon on a farm in Baynesfield. Both occupants, the pilot and his passenger died. "It (the aircraft) seems to belong to a farmer. The people who were on board were the farmer and his teenage nephew," said Botha. "It seems that they actually took off from the farm and were just circling the area." Botha said paramedics were on the scene. He said the aircraft had broken up. The manager of Pietermaritzburg Airport, Hennie Erasmus, said the aircraft was based at the airport. He said it had taken off from the airport earlier today and was believed to have been on a local flight. Erasmus said he was on his way to the scene, which was "approximately 10km to 12km" from the airport. A Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) official, Hannelie Oosthuizen, said that the CAA was aware of the accident and would investigate.

CRASH, TILlicOUNTRY AREA, CLACKMANNANSHIRE, SCOTLAND

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: A pilot walked away unhurt yesterday after his light aircraft crash-landed at around 60mph on a hillside, flipped over, and broke in two. Aviation experts said the fact that the plane took the bulk of the impact in the Ochil Hills near Tillicoultry had saved his life and that he was lucky to be alive. The man, who has not been named, had left Cumbernauld Airport on a solo flight just before 0900 hrs on his way to Perth when his plane crashed. A Department of Transport spokesman said it would be launching an immediate investigation into the incident and this would take several weeks to complete.

CRASH, TORONTO AREA, ONTARIO, CANADA

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft has crashed on the front yard of a home north of Toronto. The single engine Cessna went down just blocks from the airstrip in Baldwin, near Lake Simcoe, at about 1030. The 60-year-old pilot has been airlifted to hospital with serious injuries. The four-seater aircraft was heavily damaged in the accident. Authorities have not yet determined a cause and Transport Canada will be on the scene to investigate the crash.

CRASH, WIELKOPOLSKIE PROVINCE, POLAND

London, Jul 31 — A small aircraft crashed in the Wielkopolskie Province in western Poland yesterday afternoon, killing the two men on board. The accident took place at the forest near the Bednar airport, about 30 km to Poznan, Ewa Olkiewicz, Wielkopolskie police spokeswoman, told the PAP news agency. The aircraft was probably trying to land when the tragedy happened. The pilot and a trainee were killed. The spokeswoman said that the cause of the accident was under examination by the Flight Accidents Investigation Commission of Poland.

EMERGENCY LANDING, BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: A Swedish aircraft has made an emergency landing in Romania, leaving 70 Swedish tourists stuck in Bucharest. The aircraft, operated by Fly Me, was on a charter flight from Gothenburg to the Greek island of Rhodes. It made the emergency landing last night after an indicator light flashed up showing low oil pressure. Fly Me says it will send one of its own aircrafts down when scheduled services end on tonight.

EMERGENCY LANDING, KANSAS CITY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, UNITED STATES

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: United

Airlines 757 jet made an emergency landing at Kansas City International Airport shortly before 1100, today after smoke was reported in the cockpit. No injuries were reported. The flight was traveling to San Francisco from New York and had 119 passengers and crew aboard, said KCI spokesman Joe McBride. The smoke was unidentified, which means it could have been attributed to electrical problems. Fire crews were alerted but the aircraft landed safely, McBride said.

EMERGENCY LANDING, KARACHI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Aug 2 — An aircraft of the private airline of Pakistan has made an emergency landing at Karachi International Airport this evening. Local media reported that an aircraft of Aero Asia Airline flight No E4-102 bound for Islamabad, with 126 passengers on board, left this afternoon but soon after the pilot informed the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) about problem in one engine and requested for return and landing permission. The CAA immediately responded and made the requisite arrangements at airport. The flight later landed safely. No one of injured. The aircraft is being checked while passengers would be transferred to another aircraft. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

EMERGENCY LANDING, ORLY AIRPORT, PARIS, FRANCE

Valletta, Jul 27 — An Air Malta flight from Heathrow to Malta was forced to make an emergency landing at Orly Airport, Paris, last night after the aircraft developed problems regarding pressure. The aircraft, with 144 passengers on board, landed safely at Orly airport. The passengers were given accommodation in different hotels until a replacement aircraft is sent. — Lloyd's Agents.

F-GLZQ

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Investigators have concluded a report into the crash landing of an Air France Airbus A340-300 (F-GLZQ) in which all 309 people on board survived, and would present it to Canada's Transportation Safety Board, officials said yesterday. Flight 358 from Paris skidded off a runway at Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport a year ago, landing in a ravine and bursting into flames. Many of the 297 passengers have blamed the pilots for landing nearly halfway down the runway in bad weather and are suing the airline for negligence. The investigators examined whether human error, mechanical failure or bad weather were to blame. The preliminary report must now go to top officials with the Transportation Board for review and will not be made public until all of them have signed off. Christian Plouffe, a spokesman for the agency based in Gatineau, Quebec, said that process could take months. Initial

investigations indicated that all systems on the aircraft appeared to have functioned normally. Officials said the digital flight data recorders revealed no system troubles or malfunctions. The initial findings released earlier indicated that the aircraft "landed long" or about 4,000 feet down the 9,000-foot runway.

INCIDENT AT LOUISVILLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 28 — A press report, dated today, states: A FedEx Boeing 727 aircraft skidded off a runway at Louisville International Airport yesterday morning during an aborted takeoff. The three crew members weren't injured, and there was no apparent damage to the aircraft, according to airport spokeswoman Rande Swann. By yesterday afternoon, the aircraft had been moved to a hangar, said FedEx spokesman Jim McCluskey, speaking from the company's Memphis, Tenn., headquarters. He could not say why the pilot aborted takeoff, and said the incident was under investigation. Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Les Dorr said that agency also was investigating the incident. "The preliminary information is that they either had an engine shut down on them or had to shut the engine down for some reason," he said. The aborted takeoff occurred at 0917 hrs on the airport's east runway as the aircraft was departing for Memphis. Swann said the airport's other two runways remained open and there were no disruptions to other flights. The east runway reopened at 1420 hrs.

INCIDENT AT TOKUNOSHIMA AIRPORT, JAPAN

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated Jul 29, states: Small cracks that were overlooked by mechanics during inspections caused the main landing gear of a Japan Air System (JAS) MD-81 to break when it landed at Tokunoshima Airport (TKN) on January 1, 2004, according to the investigation report released by the ARAIC. Three cracks were found, believed to be the starting points of the break. Inspectors suspect that the cracks, measuring between three and 5.2 millimeters long, developed as a result of metal fatigue. The committee concluded that cracks probably developed as a result of stresses generated during a gear walk (serious fore and aft oscillations of the gear) before restrictor plates were installed.

N1981V

London, Jul 31 — Cessna 120, N1981V, operated by NJC120 LLC, on takeoff, lost control and crashed into a field at Ashland, Kentucky, at 1730, local time, today. The aircraft was destroyed.

N203E

Chicago, Jul 29 — A small plane chartered by a skydiving school crashed shortly after take-off today in

a rural area west of St. Louis, Missouri, killing four people on board and injuring four others, a local sheriff said. Deputy Doug Thomas of the Franklin County Sheriffs Department said witnesses reported hearing the plane's engines "either stall or fail" around 0215 hrs, then saw the plane hit a utility pole and slam into the ground near a home. Thomas said the plane, which was carrying eight people, was chartered by Quantum Leap Skydiving Centre. Four people in the plane died in the crash, Thomas said. The other four passengers were taken to area hospitals. No-one on the ground was hurt. The identities of the dead and injured were not being released. Thomas said the plane was a DeHavilland Twin Otter (DHC-6), a twin-engine passenger plane. The accident is being investigated by the National Transportation Safety Board and the Franklin County Medical Examiner. — Reuters.

London, Jul 31 — De Havilland Canada DHC-6 Twin Otter, N203E, departed Sullivan Regional carrying seven skydivers. Immediately after takeoff from runway 6 witnesses heard a popping sound. The Twin Otter lost height, contacted a utility pole, a tree and crashed just northwest of the airport at about 1400, Jul 29.

N30652

Honolulu, Jul 30 — Reported that Cessna 177B N30652, owned by Anderson Aviation, plunged into the ocean off the north-east side of the Island of Molokai at 2054, July 27. The instructor and student pilot are missing. It was reported that the aircraft was on a flight from Honolulu, Hawaii, to Kahului, Maui, at an altitude of approximately 5,000 feet, approximately a mile offshore when it turned south towards the cliffs of Molokai and plunged into the ocean. U.S. Coast Guard has suspended its search for the missing instructor and student, who have yet to be identified. — Lloyd's Agents.

N391FE

London, Jul 29 — A press report, dated Jul 28, states: A FedEx Corp. plane caught fire today after landing at Memphis International Airport. None of the crew members was hurt in the incident. Larry Cox, spokesman for the Memphis-Shelby County Airport Authority, said the plane's left landing gear appeared to have collapsed as it was landing. A spokeswoman for Memphis-based FedEx Corp. confirmed that the FedEx Express MD-10 airplane, which was arriving from Seattle, had an "emergency situation" upon landing and the three people aboard safely evacuated. The plane's left wing and engine were damaged, and initial reports indicate the freight on the board was not damaged, spokeswoman Denise Lauer said. The National Transportation Safety Board has taken over the investigation, Lauer said.

London, July 31 — McDonnell Douglas MD-10-10F, N391FE, operator: FedEx, flight 630, departed Seattle at 0558, PDT, July 28 for a cargo flight to Memphis. The aircraft landed on runway 18R, Memphis International Airport, at 1130 hrs and had a port main gear collapse. A fire erupted on the port side, causing extensive damage to the No.1 engine.

N415GA

London, Aug 1 — Cessna 208 Caravan, N415GA, operated by Hampton Island Aviation, six persons on board, crashed on Harvest Lake during departure Jul 29.

N5232X

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated Jul 30, states: A single-engine plane crashed today in mountains east of Winter Park, killing two people, officials said. The victims were the only people on board, Federal Aviation Administration duty officer Andee Curran said. The plane had taken off from Kremling and was on its way to Boulder. The Citabria 7KCAB, was listed as being registered to a Coe Hargraves, who recently sold it. He said the plane was in good condition at the time of sale. "Both pilots were well-qualified and certified. The plane was in good and legal mechanical condition," Hargraves said. "There was nothing wrong with the plane. There was nothing wrong with the pilots." He said investigators will have to determine why the plane crashed. He declined to identify the two victims but said they were from Boulder. Boulder County sheriff's officials said the plane went down about 0700 hrs, today in the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area near the Skyscraper Reservoir, near the line between Boulder and Grand counties.

London, Jul 31 — Champion 7KCAB, N5232X, privately operated, crashed under unknown circumstances at Rollins Pass, Rollinsville, Colorado at 1005, local time, Jul 30. The two persons on board were killed. The aircraft was destroyed.

N577RS

London, Jul 28 — Mooney M-20J N577RS crashed near Monroe, Louisiana, Jul 27. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N736VM

London, Jul 31 — Cessna R172K, N736VM, operated by Maverick Aviation LLC, on landing, flipped over in the lake at Grand Rapids, Minnesota, at 0001, Jul 9. The aircraft was destroyed.

N848LC

London, Jul 31 — A press report, dated today, states: Rescuers searched until dark yesterday for the pilot of a single-engine plane that crashed into Lake Michigan about four miles from Chicago shores, authorities said. The American Legend Cub's pilot and passenger were returning to Cleveland from Oshkosh, Wis. The U.S. Coast

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Guard rescued the Cub's passenger, a 49-year-old Texas man, who was floating on an aircraft cushion in the lake off Chicago's South Side. Mike Fox of the Chicago Fire Department said the passenger, who was taken to a hospital in good condition, "said the engine stopped, the plane floated for a few seconds and they were able to get out." The search for the pilot was to resume today.

London, Aug 2 — American Legend AL-11 N848LC crashed into Lake Michigan near Chicago, Illinois, at 1650, Jul 30, while on a flight from Oshkosh, Wisconsin. One of the two persons on board was injured and the other is missing, presumed dead.

N8707U

London, Jul 31 — Cessna 172F, N8707U, privately operated, lost power, veered to the left and crashed into a field at American Falls, Idaho, at 1421, local time, Jul 29. The aircraft was destroyed.

N93356

London, Aug 1 — A press report, dated Jul 31, states: A flight seeing floatplane crashed today near Juneau with seven people on board. The large, single-engine floatplane was operated by Ward Air. According to officials, it crashed just before noon into Berners Bay. Fortunately, all seven passengers survived the crash, though three of the passengers were taken to the hospital with minor injuries. The cause of the wreck is still under investigation.

London, Aug 2 — De Havilland DHC-3 (Otter) N93356 crashed near Juneau, Alaska, at 2010, Jul 31, while on a flight from Juneau to Berners Bay, AK. The aircraft sustained substantial damage. Three of the seven persons on board suffered minor injuries.

OB-1809P

London, Jul 30 — A press report, dated Jul 28, states: According to the Peruvian accident investigators, the August 2005 accident involving a TANS Boeing 737 near Pucallpa was caused by a loss of situational awareness in a severe hailstorm on approach to Pucallpa. The flight crew failed to abort the unstabilized approach and continued their fast descent despite the GPWS warnings and the severe storm that they were penetrating. It also appeared that a co-pilot under instruction was in the right hand seat while the regular co-pilot was in the passenger cabin at the time of the accident.

Product Recalls

CHOCOLATE BARS, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Aug 2 — A press report, dated today, states: Confectionary giant Cadbury Schweppes has said the salmonella contamination at one of its production plants will cost it about £20m this year. Half of the sum relates to the cost of recalling one million chocolate bars, while the rest comes from advertising costs and "manufacturing improvements". Cadbury said the cost included £6m it hoped to recover through its insurance. The news came as the firm announced a 20% rise in pre-tax profit for the first half of 2006. The world's largest confectionary firm said pre-tax profits in the six months to June 30 hit £402m. Cadbury performed well in the Americas and Asia, but said it had a "challenging" start to the year in Europe - particularly the UK - where the market was weak. The company withdrew a million bars in June after a pipe at its plant in Marlbrook, Herefordshire, caused salmonella contamination.

COFFEEMAKERS, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 26 — A press release, issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, dated Jul 25, states: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with Bunn-O-Matic Corp., of Springfield, Ill., today announced an extension of a voluntary recall of approximately 561,000, BunnÆ home coffeemakers, initially commenced in June 2005 (when some 1.75 units were recalled), to include additional date codes. The coffeemaker's plastic pour-in bowl and lid can melt or ignite due to an electrical failure, posing burn and fire hazards to consumers. Bunn-O-Matic has received 16 additional incident reports involving the bowl or lid melting or igniting in these units, including seven reports of minor property damage. No injuries have been reported. The recall involves BunnÆ home coffeemakers with model numbers GR-10B, GR-10W, B-10B, B-10W, and BT-10B (including any of those same model numbers ending in the additional letter D) with six-digit date codes (1) ending in 040 with the two middle digits between 0210 and 0520 or (two) ending in 050 with the two middle digits between 0010 and 0400. (If the date code has a seventh digit, consumers should ignore the last

digit and use the first six digits.) The model number and date code are stamped on a small white or silver sticker on the bottom of the coffeemaker. The 10-cup BunnÆ coffeemakers have either a black or white plastic base and top, and measure 14²-inches high by seven-inches wide by 13⁸-inches deep. The word 0BUNNÆ0 is printed on the front of the machine in chrome. Manufactured in the United States, the coffeemakers were sold at Department and hardware stores nationwide between May 2004 and January 2006 for about \$100.

TRACTORS, UNITED STATES

London, Jul 27 — A press release, issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, dated Jul 25, states: A voluntary recall of approximately 2,800 John Deere 3000 Twenty Series and 4000 Twenty Series Open Station Compact Utility Tractors has been conducted by Deere & Co., of Moline, Ill., in co-operation with the CPSC. The seat bracket to which the seat belt is attached could have been positioned incorrectly during the manufacturing process resulting in a poor weld. In a tractor roll over, the weight of the operator could cause the bracket to break off of the seat's pivot plate. No incidents/injuries have been reported. These vehicles are small agricultural tractors that are green with yellow seats and wheels. The recall involves models: 3120, 3320, 3520, 3720, 4120, 4320, 4520 and 4720. Manufactured in the United States, the tractors were sold at authorized John Deere dealers nationwide from October 2005 through to March 2006 for between \$17,000 and \$28,300.

Port Conditions



ITALY

Genoa, Jul 31 — Port situation/berthing delays: Genoa: No vessels are waiting for berths. Savona: No vessels are waiting for normal berths. One vessel is waiting for a special berth. La Spezia: No vessels are waiting for berths. — Lloyd's Agents.

SRI LANKA

See under "Labour Disputes."

SYRIA

Aleppo, July 29 — Waiting time is presently two days at both at Lattakia and at Tartous. — Lloyd's Agents.

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	09-Aug-2006	Coal: 1 vessel waiting; 6 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	09-Aug-2006	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 5 vessels due by 27/8.
Dalrymple Bay	09-Aug-2006	Coal: DBCT berth 1: 2 vessels waiting; DBCT berth 2: 4 vessels waiting; DBCT berth 3: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; other vessels not scheduled: 9 vessels waiting; 23 vessels due by 24/8.
Esperance	09-Aug-2006	Aug 7: Iron ore: 4 vessels due by 17/8. Aug 9: Grain: 5 vessels due by 19/8, 2 to load wheat, 3 grain pool; up to 6 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Geraldton	09-Aug-2006	Aug 7: Iron ore: 1 vessel berthed and loading. Aug 9: Grain: 1 vessel anchored to load wheat; 4 vessels due by 20/8, 3 to load wheat, 1 grain pool; up to 9 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability.
Gladstone	07-Aug-2006	Aug 7: Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: 1 vessel loading, 2 berthed, 10 waiting; 30 vessels due by 10/9; Barney Point: 1 vessel berthed, 1 waiting; 12 vessels due by 4/10. Aug 9: Grain: 1 vessel due 17/8 to load wheat; no delays expected.
Hay Point	09-Aug-2006	Coal: Berth 1: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 waiting; 5 vessels due by 15/8; Berth 2: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 waiting; 4 vessels due by 15/8; 4 vessels due by 19/8, not yet scheduled for berthing.
Port Hedland	09-Aug-2006	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel berthed, 3 waiting; 3 vessels due by 12/8; "B" berth: 1 vessel berthed, 2 waiting; 2 vessels due by 11/8; 11 other vessels due by 24/8, no e.t.a. received; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "C" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 1 vessel due 12/8; "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 4 vessels due by 12/8; Cockatoo Island: 1 vessel due 19/8.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	07-Aug-2006	Ten vessels in port operating, of which 4 loading (2 coils, 1 wheat, 1 containers), 6 discharging (1 scrap, 1 billets, 1 lead concentrate, 1 jet fuel, 1 containers, 1 iron ore); no vessels in roads; 10 vessels due, of which 4 to load (1 coils, 1 gasoil, 1 containers, 1 wheat), 6 to discharge (1 reinforced concrete, 1 containers, 1 clinker, 1 coals, 1 iron ore, 1 copper concentrate).
Varna	07-Aug-2006	Varna East, Varna West, Electrical Power Station, Balchik: Conditions 31 July - 6 August: Thirty-seven vessels in port operating of which 21 loading (5 bulk wheat, 2 scrap, 1 liquid urea, 2 bulk sulphuric acid, 2 bulk clinker, 1 chamotte/soda, 5 soda, 1 containers/equipment in packing cases, 1 bulk silica sand, 1 bulk kaolin), 9 discharging (2 containers, 1 metals in packages, 6 bulk coal), 7 discharging/loading (6 containers, 1 equipment in packing cases); no vessels waiting in roads.
Cyprus		
Laranaca	08-Aug-2006	Two conventional vessels discharging at berth; 5 conventional vessels due 9/8; no delays expected.
Limassol	08-Aug-2006	Five container vessels discharging/loading at berth, 3 conventional vessels discharging at berth; 4 container vessels, 2 Ro/Ros due 9/8; no delays expected.
Egypt		
Adabiya	07-Aug-2006	Six vessels berthed (loading/discharging), all general cargo.
Alexandria	07-Aug-2006	Thirty-seven vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 23 general cargo, 9 bulk carriers, 3 tankers, 2 containers; 16 vessels at inner anchorage, none at outer anchorage.
Damietta	07-Aug-2006	Twenty-four vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 15 general cargo, 4 bulk carriers, 1 tanker, 4 container vessels; 21 vessel at outer anchorage, 1 at inner anchorage.
Dekheila	07-Aug-2006	Twelve vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 3 general cargo, 5 bulk carriers, 1 tanker, 3 container vessels; 2 vessels at outer anchorage.
Port Said	07-Aug-2006	Five vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 1 general cargo, 4 container vessels.
Suez	07-Aug-2006	Seven vessels berthed (loading/discharging), of which 4 general cargo, 3 passenger vessels; 4 tugs, 2 vessels dry-docked.
Suez Canal	07-Aug-2006	Twenty-two vessels transiting Northbound, 30 Southbound.

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Port Conditions

Estonia

Tallinn	07-Aug-2006	Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): No vessels berthed, none waiting at anchorage; no vessels due, with 4 days berthing delay expected.
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Pakistan

Karachi	07-Aug-2006	Three vessels loading at berth (1 naphtha, 1 rice, 1 steel plates), 10 discharging at berth (1 crude oil, 1 HSD, 1 chemicals, 2 urea, 2 sugar, 2 general cargo, 1 phosphate), 1 container vessel loading/discharging at berth; 5 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 general cargo, 1 SBM, 1 crude oil, 1 chemicals); 4 vessels due (2 containers, 1 general cargo, 1 bunkering), with no berthing delays expected.
Port Qasim	07-Aug-2006	One cement vessel loading at berth, 3 vessels discharging at berth (2 sugar, 1 palm oil), 1 container vessel loading/discharging at QICT berth; 1 cement vessel waiting at anchorage to load, 4 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 fuel oil, 1 LPG, 1 phosphoric acid).

Poland

Gdansk	07-Aug-2006	Two vessels loading at berth (1 bulkers, 1 coal), 3 discharging at berth (1 bulker, 2 tankers); 12 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 22 vessels due.
Gdynia	07-Aug-2006	Six vessels loading at berth (2 coal, 2 general cargo, 1 bulker, 1 grain), 2 discharging at berth (1 grain, 1 bulker); 23 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 48 vessels due.

Russia

Novorossiysk	07-Aug-2006	Nine vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (1 scrap, 1 steel sheets/tin plate, 1 WRIC/steel billets, 1 slabs, 1 steel billets, 1 wheat, 1 barley, 1 diesel oil), 1 discharging equipment; 3 vessels waiting in roads, all to load, of which 1 slabs, 1 diesel oil, 1 wheat; 65 vessels due, of which 60 to load (4 DRI, 2 bulk ammonium nitrate, 6 aluminium, 6 wheat, 6 copper, 3 slabs, 5 steel billets, 2 steel sheets, 1 cellulose, 1 pipes, 2 coils/steel sheets, 1 tin plates/coils, 1 soda ash, 2 vegetable oil, 2 HBI, 1 H-beams/coils, 1 bulk NPK, 1 pig-iron/steel billets, 1 cement, 5 coils, 3 bulk urea, 1 steel sheets/WRIC, 1 containers, 1 scrap, 1 steel billets/WRIC), 2 to discharge (1 maize, 1 vegetable oil), 3 to discharge/load containers; Oil terminal: 2 tankers berthed, both loading, of which 1 crude oil, 1 fuel oil; 1 tanker in roads to load crude oil; 8 tankers due, all to load, of which 5 crude oil, 2 fuel oil, 1 diesel oil.
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Slovenia

Koper	07-Aug-2006	Port working normally. Ten vessels berthed of which 2 discharging/loading containers, 2 discharging bulk cargo, 2 loading bulk cargo, 3 loading sawn timber/general cargo, 1 discharging general cargo; 22 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 5 to discharge/load containers, 1 car carrier to discharge/load vehicles, 1 car carrier to discharge vehicles, 1 tanker to discharge liquid cargo, 3 vessels to load sawn timber/general cargo, 5 to load bulk cargo, 5 to discharge bulk cargo, 1 passenger vessel.
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Spain

Bilbao	07-Aug-2006	Thirty-one vessels operating (4 tankers, 27 other vessels), of which 5 loading, 11 discharging, 15 loading/discharging.
Sagunto	07-Aug-2006	Eighteen vessels in port operating, of which 3 loading (1 machinery, 2 bulk fertiliser), 13 discharging (9 steel products, 1 gas, 1 fruit, 1 anhydrous ammonia, 1 vehicles), 2 loading/discharging steel products; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present.

Sri Lanka

Colombo	07-Aug-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 container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 12 vessels discharging at berth (8 containers/feeders, 3 bulk cement, 1 bulk fertiliser); 3 container/feeder vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge; 4 vessels dry-docked; 5 container/feeder vessels due, with no delays expected.
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Ukraine

Illichevsk	07-Aug-2006	Eight vessels in port operating, of which 6 loading (1 containers, 2 ore, 2 sunflower oil, 1 ferro nickel), 1 discharging ore, 1 loading/discharging containers; 2 vessel in roads, both to load/discharge containers; 18 vessels due, of which 14 to load (9 steel products, 3 coal, 1 barley, 1 sulphur), 4 to load/discharge containers.
Mariupol	07-Aug-2006	Sixteen vessels in port operating, all to load, of which 8 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 coke, 2 coal, 1 kaolin, 1 bran, 1 barley; 16 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 13 steel, 1 equipment, 1 fire-clay; 53 vessels due, of which 50 to load (26 steel, 13 coal, 5 fire-clay, 1 bran, 2 wheat, 2 ammonium saltpetre, 1 sunflower beans), 2 to discharge (1 containers, 1 equipment), 1 to discharge/load containers..
Odessa	07-Aug-2006	Eighteen vessels in port operating, of which 8 loading (4 metal, 1 scrap, 1 wheat, 1 oil, 1 barley), 7 discharging (3 luggage, 1 meat, 1 general cargo, 1 wheat, 1 bananas), 2 discharging/loading containers, 1 passenger vessel; 6 vessels in roads, of which 3 to load (1 metal, 1 ore, 1 coal), 2 to discharge (1 metal, 1 bananas), 1 to load/discharge containers; 98 vessels due, of which 52 to load (36 metal, 4 pig-iron, 2 scrap, 1 ore, 2 ferro alloy, 3 wheat, 1 timber, 1 barley, 1 peas, 1 coal), 5 to discharge (2 metal, 1 ore, 1 bananas, 1 oil), 41 to discharge/load containers

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