

Zim Asia fatal collision: officer in charge receives community service

Plea bargain accepted after collision killed seven fishermen, writes Keith Wallis
— Friday October 06 2006

PILASTRO Zdrako, the Croatian second officer in command of the 3,834 teu boxship Zim Asia when it collided with a Japanese fishing vessel on September 28 last year killing seven fishermen, has been sentenced to 12 months' community service.

Mr Zdrako, who was navigating the vessel at the time of the early morning collision, initially pleaded not guilty to the charge of negligence causing death.

He was found guilty and sentenced to six months in prison by a magistrate's court in Haifa, Israel. But this was changed to community service in a plea bargain which was accepted by the prosecution because Japanese witnesses were either unable or unwilling to travel to Israel to give evidence.

Zim Integrated Shipping Services refused to comment on the case saying it was an issue between Israeli police and Mr Zdrako's lawyer.

Speaking from Haifa, a Zim spokesman said: "Zim has nothing to say."

He also refused to comment on whether Zim had paid compensation to the victims' families, saying that it was still subject to court proceedings in Japan.

The 45,850 dwt Zim Asia collided with the 19 tonne Shinsei Maru 3 about 40 km off

the coast of Hokkaido, northern Japan, at 0230 hrs local time on September 28.

The fishing vessel capsized and sank trapping seven crew, while an eighth crewmember survived.

Japanese media initially claimed the fishing vessel was the victim of a "hit-and-run" incident but Israeli police said there was no evidence the crew of the Zim Asia were aware the ship had hit the Shinsei Maru 3.

According to police the first the crew knew about the accident was two days later when the ship docked at Pusan in South Korea and paint marks were found on the ship's hull.

An investigation by Israel's National Fraud Office and the shipping and ports administration showed the incident occurred during a change in watch.

The fraud squad found that the collision occurred during "a non-routine manoeuvre made by the Zim Asia, according to orders given by the second officer, who was in the command bridge at the time of the collision".

The master of the Zim Asia, Moshe Ben David, was asleep at the time of the accident. While police raised doubts about the captain's performance they said the

decision whether to prosecute should be made by the district attorney in Haifa.

The police investigation also found that the Japanese fishing boat failed to take proper measures to avoid the accident.

Insiders with knowledge of the area said Japanese fishing vessels were notorious for failing to give way to larger vessels.

Mr Zdrako had been detained in Israel since last October when the Zim Asia arrived in Haifa after a transpacific voyage.

Would you like casualty information as it happens ?

Lloyd's Casualty

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

Vessel	Type	Flag	Class	GT	DWT	Bit	Casualty
APL ALMANDINE	container	SGP	LR	49,716	59,560	1993	In collision with container carrier APL Dubai Sep 22 while entering Singapore waters. Damaged and towed back to pier at Harbour Front. At Jurong Shipyard Sep 23.
APL DUBAI	container	PAN	NK	60,133	62,905	1995	In collision with container carrier APL Almandine Sep 22 while entering Singapore waters. Damaged and towed back to pier at Harbour Front. At Brani berth 8 Sep 23.
CLIPPER KRISTIN	chem/oil tanker	BHS	ABS	7,687	11,316	2006	Lost power and grounded near Camerons Island, St. Lawrence Seaway, in lat 45 04.12N, long 74 30.59W, 22 Sep 2006. No water ingress or cargo leakage. Tugs on scene. Refloated Sep 24. Inspected same day. Minor buckling found, no repairs necessary.
COLUMBIA	ro-ro	USA	ABS	3,946	1,400	1974	Generator failed Sep 25 while sailing from Haines. Passengers remained on vessel overnight & transferred to another vessel next day. To proceed to Ketchikan for repairs. Expected to be back in service early Oct.
DAP MARES	ro-ro	CHL	—	770	1,040	1970	Sank in Catalina Bay, Punta Arenas, Sep 20. Crew rescued.
DOGUCAN	general	KHM	—	1,948	2,121	1966	Grounded between Kilyos and Rumelifeneri, Black Sea, Sep 17. Crew rescued. Removal of fuel and bunkers commenced Sep 22. Still aground Sep 27, fuel being removed.
IOANNIS	product tanker	GRC	—	999	1,469	1961	Reported Sep 23 to have capsized & sunk after striking submerged object 0.7 miles NE of Eleusis. All crew rescued. Oil slick of 100 square metres.
KLENODEN	general	FIN	GL	3,828	4,455	1991	In collision with container carrier <i>Hanjin Cargo</i> at Hamburg Sep 9. Damage to bow. Towed to Norderwerft same day for repairs. Sailed Sep 20.
MARVEL K.	general	VCT	LR	1,895	3,033	1981	Grounded on stony sandbar near Seskar Island Sep 22. Holed in front ballast tank. Still aground Sep 26. Two ballast tanks suspected to be leaking.
NORDIC JUPITER	crude oil tanker	MHL	NV	81,565	157,411	1998	In contact with with tanker <i>Piquete</i> while entering Sao Sebastiao inner anchorage Sep 25. Damage sustained. Breach in No 3 port ballast tank, water ingress. Damage reported substantial. Detained by Port Captaincy.
PIQUETE	product tanker	BRA	ABS	39,716	66,876	1989	Contacted by tanker <i>Nordic Jupiter</i> while anchored at Sao Sebastiao inner anchorage Sep 25. Damage in way of forward tanks. Detained by Port Captaincy.
WEST	general	VCT	—	494	1,150	1961	Had fire on board at Antwerp Sep 22. Fire brought under control Sep 23. Vessel reported burnt out.

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Lloyd's
Marine Intelligence Unit



The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



A.A.A.UFULI

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

ADINESIA (Panama)

Yokohama, Sep 28 — General cargo *Adinesia*, 9587 gt, (built 2005) while leaving Nagoya contacted bulker *Blue Leo* (14446 gt, built 1998), which was moored at pier F7 at 0915 Sep 25. Both vessels sustained scratching damage. No injuries or pollution observed. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Adinesia* sailed Nagoya Sep 25 for Siam Seaport and *Blue Leo* arrived Nagoya Sep 24 and sailed Sep 25 for Fukuyama.)

ANGLIAN SOVEREIGN (U.K.)

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A drunken skipper who caused more than £3 million of damage when his Coastguard tug ran aground off Shetland was returned to prison yesterday to complete an eight-month sentence, after failing in an appeal. Peter Leask, 43, was more than three times the legal alcohol limit when his vessel, anchor handling tug/supply *Anglian Sovereign*, rammed rocks at Scalloway harbour last September. (See issue of Jul 3.) After the 13 crew had been airlifted off, he reversed the tug off the rocks and sailed into the harbour, leaking 84 tonnes of fuel. In April, Leask, of Mossbank, Shetland, pleaded guilty to three charges and was jailed for a total of eight months at Lerwick Sheriff Court. He served two months before his release pending yesterday's hearing at the Court of Criminal Appeal in Edinburgh. Lords Kingarth and Dawson refused the appeal.

ANNA PC (Liberia)

Port Said, Sept 25 — Crude oil tanker *Anna PC* is still detained by Suez Canal Authority on account of the oil pollution. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 26 — Egypt is asking a reported \$1.7m from the owner of a tanker that spilled 5,000 tonnes of oil in the Suez Canal last week. But ironically, crude oil tanker *Anna PC* seems to have been taking evasive action to avert a collision that might have resulted in a full-scale disaster. The incident involving the Liberian-registered and Greek-owned vessel occurred on Wednesday. Following a breach of the ship's hull, the eventual spill covered an area of about three km by 500 m, media outlets stated. Shipping contacts in Egypt confirmed that a spill had taken place. "It was potentially a serious incident," said one ex-pat agent. "I understand another tanker was crossing the path of *Anna PC*. Both vessels would have collided if *Anna PC* had not taken evasive action and grounded." Another

vessel was yesterday en route to tranship its cargo, the agent added. *Anna PC's* manager, Piraeus-based Marine Management Services, has issued a statement. "Having been astern of the crude oil tanker *Front Vanguard* in a convoy of ships passing through the Suez Canal, the master on the *Anna PC* managed to successfully avoid a collision ... when the *Front Vanguard* stopped suddenly after suffering an apparent technical failure on board. Unfortunately during such avoidance measures some of *Anna PC's* cargo escaped as the ship touched bottom and one cargo tank containing light crude oil was breached." Pollution response measures were put in place, and MMS worked with the Egyptian authorities to extract oil from the damaged tank. International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation operative were also sent to the site. MMS added that as far as it was aware, the Egyptian authorities have not yet quantified their demands. The \$1.7m is based on a local press report, cited by the Reuters news agency. Lloyd's List understands that an unspecified P&I club is dealing with the compensation issue. Judging by past precedent, *Anna PC* may face an extended period in detention will the matter is dealt with.

London, Sep 28 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS crude oil tanker *Anna PC* was stationary in lat 30 21 38.72N, long 32 22 56.72E, at 0349, UTC, today.

APL ALMANDINE (Singapore)

See *APL Dubai*.

APL DUBAI (Panama)

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Two cargo vessels collided while entering Singapore waters yesterday. No one was hurt in the incident involving a Singapore-registered vessel and a Panama-registered one. One of the vessels is believed to have rammed into the other as it was about to make a U-turn. Both vessels were damaged and have been towed back to the pier at HarbourFront. A Maritime and Port Authority spokesman said the incident did not lead to any pollution in the surrounding waters.

London, Sep 23 — Following received from Singapore Port Operations, timed 0045, UTC: Container Carrier *APL Dubai* (60133 gt, built 1995) and Container Carrier *APL Almandine* (49716 gt, built 1993) were in collision yesterday morning. Damage unknown. *APL Dubai* is berthed in Singapore, *APL Almandine* is in a shipyard. (Note — *APL Dubai* arrived Singapore 0530, local time, Sep 21, *APL Almandine* sailed Hong Kong Sep 18 and arrived Singapore 0740, local time, Sep 21.)

Singapore, Sept 23 — Container Carrier *APL Dubai* is at Brani berth 8 and Container Carrier *APL Almandine* is at Jurong Shipyard South Quay. — Lloyd's Agents.

APL ITALY (Liberia)

Freeport, Sep 21 — Container Carrier *APL Italy* has been launched

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temporarily, while awaiting parts and decisions. She will have to be re-drydocked for completion of repairs. — Lloyd's Agents.

APOLLO (Singapore)

See *Provider*.

ARINA (Lithuania)

London, Sep 22 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 0925, UTC: General cargo *Arina* (3826 gt, built 1989), cargo steel products, grounded at Understen, Sweden, in lat 60 16.36N, long 18 54.7E, at 0310, local time, today. No leakage or pollution. A Finnish law enforcement craft and Swedish Coast Guard vessels are on scene. (Note — *Arina*, Rotterdam for Raahe, was reported by Lloyd's MIU AIS in 60 16 22.58N, long 18 54 41.7E, course 194.8 deg, stationary, at 0935, UTC, Sep 22.)

Gothenburg, Sep 22 — General cargo *Arina* ran aground at 0310 hrs, today, at Understen light at Roslagen, north of Stockholm. The vessel has a crew of 10. No injuries have been reported. The vessel has 16 tons of diesel oil and 50 tons of fuel oil on board. It's cargo is "dangerous plus inflammable onboard in containers". A small oil leakage has been confirmed but it is not spreading and is under control. A Coast Guard vessel is on scene and awaiting environmental ships. The Coast Guard are arranging for a diver survey to take place later today, in order to check the bottom and decide how to proceed. The probable cause of the of the grounding is the officer on the bridge falling asleep. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Sep 22 — General cargo *Arina*: Divers have been down to check and surveyors and insurance on board to evaluate information, and divers information, for best way to handle the salvage. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Sep 22 — A local press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Arina* came from the north, southbound, destination not known. Passing the island on wrong side at 14 knots speed. Confirm the draught where vessel aground checked to 3.2 metres, vessel have a draught of 5.9 metres. Coast Guard received the alarm via Finnish contacts. Between 10 and 20 litres hydraulic oil leaked out. Hole in bottom in a double-bottom tank containing eight tons, but this could be emptied without major spillage. Coast Guard have two vessels on site ready to come in to fight any leakage or spillage. The containers contain dangerous cargo and other stuff are not at risk. — Westax Marine Services AB.

London, Sep 23 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1015, UTC: General cargo *Arina* is still aground.

London, Sep 24 — Following received from Gothenburg MRCC, timed 1000, UTC: General cargo *Arina* remains aground and an inspector is on scene. Estonian tugs *H.Kanter* and *Mars* are due alongside in around 30 minutes.

Gothenburg, Sep 24 — General cargo *Arina* was pulled off the ground at 1945 today with assistance of tugs *H.Kanter* and *Mars*. No oil outlet from the vessel or any other particles were found in the water but water in an emptied tank and a hole in the vessel's bottom have been discovered. Before the pulling commenced, all oil in the forward tanks were pumped into the aft tanks in order to minimise the risk of leakage. The vessel will anchor and be towed away to a safe place. Tomorrow the Coast Guard and surveyor/divers are to inspect the bottom and the damages in general caused by the grounding. After that a decision will be made on where and when/how vessel will proceed to a repair yard. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Sept 25 — According to divers general cargo *Arina* made hard impact in front/bulb underneath surface from 12/14 knots to full stop in five metres. — Westax Marine Services AB.

Gothenburg, Sep 27 — After divers inspection Sep 25, general cargo *Arina* agreed to proceed to Gavle for discharging of some cargo/containers before proceed to repairyard - presumably at Klaipeda, but not yet confirmed. Vessel arrived yesterday afternoon to berth but at noon today, no discharging commenced. Board of Shipping inspectors have agreed to allow Gavle and repair within The Baltic Sea ports. — Westax Marine Services AB.

ATHOS I (Cyprus)

London, Sep 28 — A Tsakos tanker that polluted the Delaware River nearly two years ago has been found entitled to limit its liability and the lion's share of a huge \$124m claim for reimbursement has been paid. Granting the crude oil tanker *Athos I* entitlement to limit, the US Coast Guard's National Pollution Funds Centre has paid out about \$77.2m — deemed by lawyers close to the case to be "virtually all" the accident response and removal costs met by the owners and liability insurers in excess of the limitation amount. The 61,000 dwt tanker, which spilled an estimated 263,000 gallons of crude into the river, affecting shoreline in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, was entitled to a liability limit of just under \$45.5m, under a statutory Oil Pollution Act formula, the NPFC said. Most, if not all, the recouped funds seem certain to go to liability insurers headed by the vessel's P&I insurer, the UK Club. Tsakos Shipping & Trading executives yesterday declined to acknowledge that a determination or any payment had been made before they had seen any official announcement from the US. But general manager Harry Hajimichael said on a general note that in the company's view the US authorities had "properly and professionally" handled the case. The NPFC's favourable determination comes 14 months after the claimants' lawyers submitted more than 50,000 pages of invoices and

other evidence to document the massive pollution removal costs being claimed. In January this year, the USCG effectively cleared the ship of blame for the accident, concluding that an abandoned nine tonne anchor left in the federal anchorage was the cause of the hull puncture. "There was no evidence that any violation of applicable international rules, federal law or regulations contributed to this incident," said a coast guard spokesman. Official surveys revealed numerous submerged objects in the area, a coast guard release stated. The 1983-built tanker had also struck a large concrete block and a pump casing although analysis revealed the anchor as the source of the rupture in its No.7 port ballast tank and No.7 centre cargo tank. The claimants seem certain to pursue the \$45m limitation amount component. According to a prominent US maritime lawyer, this would require a separate decision to exonerate the ship. The source claimed that so far this has never happened in a major spill case in the US, unless doubts existed as to the identity of the source vessel for the pollution.

ATLANTICA I (Panama)

London, Sep 21 — Reported product tanker *Atlantica I* has been sold to Bangladesh breakers and is to be broken-up at Chittagong.

Chittagong, Sep 26 — Product tanker *Atlantica I* was been beached Aug 28 for demolition, as informed by vessels local agents. — Lloyd's Agents.

ATLANTIS (Germany)

Portsmouth, UK, Sep 27 — Ferry *Atlantis* (1525 gt, built 1972) is reported to be alongside in Bremerhaven with engine problems. — Correspondent.

London, Sep 28 — According to LMIU AIS, ferry *Atlantis* was in lat 53 50 9.66N, long 08 07 14.28E, at 0811, UTC, Sep 28, proceeding at 16.1 knots, course 356 deg.

AUTOTRANSPORTER (Madeira)

Bremen, Sep 28 — Vehicle carrier *Autotransporter* (7069 gt, built 1983) struck a quay wall at the entrance to the Nordschleuse (north locks) at Bremerhaven, at 0910, today. There were visible no damages to the vessel apart from some scratches. The vessel proceeded the way into the locks. — Lloyd's Agents.

AYBALA 2 (St. Kitts-Nevis)

London, Sept 22 — General cargo *Aybala 2* refloated by "herself" at 0255, Sept 21. After the instruction of VTS it anchored in front of Gallipoli Lighthouse 0400 same day for the formalities etc.

BARGE ADRIFT OFF ALASKA, UNITED STATES

London, Sept 23 — A Coast Guard Juneau press release, dated Sept 22, states: The abandoned coal barge, which had been drifting in the waters southeast of the Kenai Peninsula, has been safely moored at a fuel dock in Kodiak. The barge was taken in tow by

the Coast Guard cutter *Roanoke Island*, and transported part of the way to Kodiak where it was met by the tug *Muzon*. A Coast Guard marine science technician boarded and inspected the barge before it was permitted to enter Kodiak waters. Ownership of the barge has yet to be determined.

BARKALD (Marshall Islands)

London, Sept 22 — A press report, dated today, states: The five crew members who were on the bridge of bulk carrier *Barkald* when it was in collision with yacht *Essence* in Long Island Sound yesterday did not have alcohol in their systems, the Coast Guard said today. Gina Bortolotti, a chef on the *Essence*, was killed in the accident. Two men on the sailboat were rescued. First mate Nardus Bothma was treated for mild hypothermia and Ian Robberts, the boat's master, was reported in good condition. The cause of the collision was still under investigation. Both vessels were equipped with radar, Coast Guard officials said. The Coast Guard had ordered the freighter anchored near New Haven, but the ship was cleared to leave last night after the five crew members passed alcohol tests, said Dawn Kallen, the Coast Guard's lead investigator on the incident. The results of drug tests on urine samples were still pending, she said. Robberts and Bothma were also tested for alcohol and drugs, but results were not yet available, Kallen said. *Barkald*, which had 29 crew members, was still off the coast of New Haven today. *Essence* sank in about 90 feet under water in Long Island Sound, Kallen said. It was not immediately clear if the wreckage would be raised. Ben Addoms, a founder of Quintess, said the yacht was headed to Greenwich for a series of dinner parties and day sails. He said he had not talked with the two surviving crew members and was waiting to hear from the Coast Guard on what caused the accident. Quintess was in the process of buying the yacht from private owners who live in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the vessel's insurer will decide whether to retrieve the wreckage, Addoms said.

BBC CHINA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Sept 26 — A press report, dated today, states: The owners and operators of general cargo *BBC China* are being sued by a Tanzanian company on account of alleged damage to a gas turbine generator, after delays in installation as a result of the grounding of the ship off South Africa's coast on Oct 16, 2004. The ship carrying equipment for the power station ran aground while en route to Durban and then to Dar es Salaam. After salvors failed to refloat the vessel it was declared a total wreck. The suit being brought by Songes, the Tanzanian power company asks for damages of US\$ 12.3 million plus a further \$435,000 caused by delays to the installation of the unit at one of

Tanzania's power stations. The case comes before the Tanzanian High Court on Oct 13.

BINA (Indonesia)

Chittagong, Sep 27 — Product tanker *Bina* is still lying at Myanmar and awaiting instruction from their principal, vessel arrive to Chittagong has not yet fixed. — Lloyd's Agents.

BLUE LEO (Panama)

See *Adinesia*.

BRIGHT ARTEMIS (Singapore)

Singapore, Sep 24 — Crude oil tanker *Bright Artemis* is still at Hitachi Shipyard Quay 4, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

BRITISH TRANQUILLITY (Isle of Man)

London, Sep 25 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1514, UTC: Combined chemical and oil tank *British Tranquillity* (29214 gt, built 2006), inbound to Texas City with 85,000 barrels of ultra-low-sulphur diesel and 230,000 barrels of kerosene, touched bottom briefly in Galveston Bay at 2000, UTC, Sep 19. A diver's inspection revealed no damage, and the vessel was permitted to sail for Amsterdam.

BULOU NI CEVA (Fiji)

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated today, states: The owners of inter-island passenger *Bulou Ni Ceva* have declared they are unable to pay for the cost of salvaging the ship and towing it back to Suva. The vessel has been tied up at Oinafa Jetty in Rotuma after salvage contractors Workboats Fiji Ltd pumped oil out of it and towed it there. Director of Government Shipping Services, Captain Seci Waqa, said Workboats Fiji set the cost of towing the vessel to Suva at \$275,000. Captain Waqa said the Kadavu Shipping Company had sent a notice of declaration to the Director of the Fiji Island Maritime Safety Authority (FIMSA) stating they would not be able to foot the vessel's salvage and towing costs. He confirmed that the ship was refloated on Sep 8 and that 20 tonnes of oil had been pumped out of it, three months after it ran aground near Rotuma. "Unfortunately nothing has been settled as of yet but we are hoping to come to some sort of an agreement soon," he said. Captain Waqa said over \$54,500 had already been spent salvaging the vessel and removing oil from a joint ministerial operational budget. Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase mooted the action in light of the environmental risk from the ship's oil leak. Captain Waqa said if the contractors failed to come to an agreement soon, a government tug would be used to bring the ship to Suva. But he said he was hopeful that a deal would be struck soon between the contractors and the owners. "We have tug No 7 which can handle a seven ton bollard pull which is more than capable of towing the vessel from Rotuma," he said.

C.COLUMBUS (Bahamas)

Troy, Michigan, Sep 27 — A local marine contractor conducted a survey of the waters off the Bondar Marina dock face Tuesday (Sep 26) following reports of passenger (cruise) *C.Columbus* (15067 gt, built 1997) "scraping bottom" Monday morning as it attempted to dock. City council learned Monday that the master of the *C.Columbus* reported touching bottom on his maiden voyage into the port of Sault Ste. Marie for the 2006 cruising season. No damage had been reported to the vessel but two future stops in the Sault, scheduled for Oct 5 and Oct 16, could be jeopardized unless the situation is rectified, according to a report to council from Joe Fratesi, the city's chief administrative officer. Council approved single-sourcing of dredging the marina approach to the appropriate depth to Purvis Marine at a cost not to exceed \$50,000. "We dredged the approach to a depth of 21 feet a few years back but have been advised (by Lock Tours Canada-Boat Cruises, which operates out of the marina) that several high spots have since formed in front of the dock at the 16-and-a-half-foot level," said the city's CAO. Cruise ships, including the 144-metre long *C.Columbus*, require a minimum 17 feet of clearance to safely moor along the dock facing. "It could be the result of anything from low water levels to sedimentation and wave action in the river. Regardless, it must be addressed," said Fratesi. Purvis Marine has advised local authorities they are available to do the necessary work, and if committed immediately, should be completed prior to the return of the *C.Columbus* in nine days. Preliminary estimates on the dredging were in the range of \$25,000 to \$50,000, depending on bottom survey results, said the CAO, and Purvis staff were expected to survey 200 feet out into the St. Mary's River on Tuesday. City staff were scrambling to "expedite regulatory approvals" from Natural Resources Canada and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, essentially pertaining to fish habitat, as well as the Conservation Authority, for fill removal. Funding for the emergency dredging will come from the 2006 Unforeseen Account. The *C.Columbus* is a 210-cabin vessel with a mainly European clientele whose passengers spend their half-day layovers in the Sault on day excursions to area attractions. The five-star luxury vessel, with capacity for 420 passengers, as well as a 170-member crew, has docked at the Sault nine of the past 10 years. It was the first passenger liner to moor along the waterfront in 14 years when it arrived on its maiden voyage in 1997. — Great Lakes and Seaway Shipping News.

London, Sep 28 — Passenger (cruise) *C.Columbus* arrived at Thunder Bay on Sep 26, departing later the same day for Duluth. It arrived at Duluth on Sep 27 and sailed later the same day.

CAMILLA DESGAGNES (Barbados)

London, Sep 22 — Following received from Canadian Alert Network, dated Sep 20: Roll On Roll Off *Camilla Desgagnes* will be towed by tug *Ocean Foxtrot*, destination either Quebec City or Halifax. Tug will leave tomorrow for the high north.

London, Sep 25 — Following received from Canadian Alert Network, dated today: Tug *Ocean Foxtrot* is expected to arrive at the location of Roll On Roll Off *Camilla Desgagnes* around Sep 30 before taking it in tow to Quebec or Halifax.

Troy, Mich., Sep 25 — Tug *Ocean Foxtrot* left Comeau Bay on Saturday (Sep 23) to head north to recover Roll On Roll Off *Camilla Desgagnes* for an eventual tow back to the St-Lawrence for permanent repairs to her main engine. Repairs on site were unsuccessful and the vessel has to be towed back. As a temporary replacement, the soon to be sold, general cargo *Mathilda Desgagnes* was reactivated yet again for another northern run. She left her lay-up berth in Quebec City yesterday for Montreal and CÙte Ste. Catharine to load. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping News.

CLIPPER KRISTIN (Bahamas)

Troy, Michigan, Sep 23 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* (7687 gt, built 2006), upbound for Mississauga, Ontario, went aground at Camerons Crab near Camerons Island in the St. Lawrence Seaway at 1535 yesterday. The vessel reported they lost power and that the vessel is out of the channel. *Clipper Kristin* is not taking on water and no leakage from the liquid cargo was visible. The vessel was told not to try to move as a team from Tansport Safety Board will assess the damage. Traffic continues to pass the grounded vessel at a reduced speed and one way traffic is permitted only. — Great lakes and Seaway News. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *Clipper Kristin* was in lat 45 19N long 73 55 06W, at 1514, UTC, Sep 22. Vessel sailed Port de Bouc Sep 9 and passed Gibraltar 1422, Sep 11.)

London, Sept 23 — Following received from Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Systems Vessel Inspections, timed 0620, UTC: Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin*, bound Mississauga, cargo hydrocracker bottom, is still aground. A pilot is still on board. Two tugs are proceeding from Montreal and an inspector will attend the vessel later this morning to oversee the refloating operation. No pollution reported.

London, Sep 23 — Following received from Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Systems Vessel Inspections, timed 1820, UTC: Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* is still aground. No pollution reported. A tug is due on scene in approximately 30 minutes and another is due in approximately two hours. A diving survey will be carried out at 1800,

local time, however, no refloating attempts will be made until after 0700, local time, tomorrow.

Troy, Michigan, Sep 24 — The Groupe Ocean tugs *Ocean Jupiter* (4000 HP) and *Duga* (4620 HP) are upbound to pull Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* off the bank as of 1330, yesterday. The *Clipper Kristin* is aground on Camerons Crab, near Camerons Island, parallel to Summerstown, Ontario, 60 miles West of Montreal in the St Lawrence Seaway. Little is known at this time what caused the grounding, or how much damage was inflicted to the vessel, although it was reported that the vessel is not taking on water, nor is there any visible leakage. Waterborne traffic continues to pass one vessel at a time and at a reduced speed.

London, Sep 24 — Following received from Great Lakes St Lawrence Seaway Systems Vessel Inspections, timed 1350, UTC: Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* remains aground, with tugs *Ocean Jupiter* and *Duga* now on scene conducting refloating operations. A ship inspector is on scene, together with Transport Canada personnel. Various tests have been conducted, to the steering mechanism, propeller, etc, and all has been found to be in good working order. One of the difficulties in carrying out the refloating process is that the vessel is believed to be sitting on its port side anchor, so care will have to be taken during the operation to ensure no damage is sustained. It is hoped that vessel will be afloat late this afternoon and, after being refloated, the vessel is expected to proceed to St Zotique anchorage, which is around 90 minutes to two hours' journey away.

Troy, Mich, Sep 24 — At 0945, local time, today, Group Ocean tugs *Duga* and *Ocean Jupiter* pulled combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* off Camerons Crab, in the St Lawrence Seaway near Summerstown, Ont. The vessel will reportedly proceed to the Lac St Francois Anchorage at St. Zotique for assessment. — "Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping News."

London, Sep 25 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* ran aground as a result of a power failure off Camerons Island in the St.Lawrence Seaway, in lat 45 04.12N, long 74 30.59W, at 1630, Sep 22.

Troy, Mich., Sep 25 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* is upbound at Iroquois Lock today, bound for Lake Ontario. The tugs *Duga* and *Ocean Jupiter* have returned to their base in the lower St. Lawrence River. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping News.

Montreal, Sep 27 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Clipper Kristin* was refloated Sep 24. A diver's survey was carried out the same day, and only minor buckling was found. No repairs are necessary at this time. Any repairs will be carried out at the next drydocking in about two years' time. Understand the vessel is in the Mississauga area, unloading a cargo of HCB. — Lloyd's Agents.

CLIPPER LASCO (Bahamas)

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Scientists say a cargo ship that spent nearly a week grounded in shallow waters off Fort Lauderdale has left a large hole in a coral reef. According to Broward County's Environmental Protection Department, bulker *Clipper Lasco* left a 20-foot-wide, 100-foot-long swath into living coral. State and county divers investigated the reef today. They say the bow of the cargo ship was resting directly on the limestone reef. *Clipper Lasco* ran aground on Sep 14 and remained on the reef until yesterday, when part of its 30,000 tons of bauxite was removed and the 645-foot freighter was light enough to be refloated and towed into Port Everglades, its original destination. It was the 12th large ship to hit one of three reefs that run parallel to Fort Lauderdale since 1994, and the second one this year. Officials say the insurance company for the ship's owner will pay for restoration of the scarred reef.

London, Sep 26 — Resolve Towing and Salvage, Inc., a division of Resolve Marine Group Inc. (Resolve) along with their teaming partners SvitzerWijmsmuller Salvage, mobilized on Sep 14, to assist the 170 metre bulker *Clipper Lasco*, which grounded on a protected coral reef off the coast of Fort Lauderdale. The salvage team immediately conducted an assessment of both the vessel and its cargo. This entailed Resolve's Divers and Marine Biologist conducting dive surveys of the vessel and the coral reef to ensure that the vessel could be removed with minimal environmental impact. The development of proper engineering and environmental protection plans was a major part of this project with input from the US Coast Guard, the State of Florida, and Broward County personnel as well as representatives from the vessel's owners. The final Salvage Plan called for lightening 2,000 metric tons of cargo to a barge with ballast concurrently added to keep the *Clipper Lasco* firmly aground until it was time to refloat the vessel. Upon completion of the lightening operations, Resolve/SvitzerWijmsmuller personnel discharged the ballast water as the high tide approached. On Sep 20, utilizing three tugs, the vessel was safely refloated and towed to anchorage to conduct a dive survey to ensure that the underwater hull of the vessel was completely intact. Upon completion of the survey the vessel was safely towed into Port Everglades to complete the discharge of cargo.

CMA CGM AEGEAN (Liberia)

London, Sep 26 — Container Carrier *CMA CGM Aegean*, detained in Odessa after having an oil outflow in the port Aug 21 due damage to its starboard side shell plating, was freed by the Odessa Primorskiy District Court after the court received a US\$24.5 million security guarantee from the vessel's owners. The guarantee will cover fines and the costs of spill liquidation.

COLUMBIA (U.S.A.)

Portsmouth, UK, Sep 27 — Passenger ro/ro *Columbia* (3946 gt, built 1974) was disabled after a generator on board failed while it was in Haines, said a spokesman for the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. The Alaska Marine Highway System vessel lost power Monday (Sep 25) around 2200 hrs as it was pulling out of Haines with about 115 passengers. One of the four generators on the vessel then malfunctioned, said Mike Chambers, the department's spokesman. The passengers remained on the vessel overnight, he said. The FVF *Fairweather* picked up the *Columbia's* passengers Tuesday and was scheduled to continue the *Columbia's* route to Juneau. The vessel may make the run a second time to accommodate all the passengers, Chambers said. The department hopes to have it back in service next week. — Correspondent.

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated Sep 27, states: Passenger ro/ro *Columbia* experienced a generator failure last night while preparing to leave Haines to Juneau with about 117 passengers on board. The passengers were not evacuated, and the Alaska Marine Highway System accommodated the passengers aboard the ship overnight. The passengers are now off the ferry, which started for Juneau yesterday — using only two of its four generators. A tug also is escorting the *Columbia*. When it arrives in Juneau, technicians and the U.S. Coast Guard will assess damage. The Alaska Marine Highway System plans to send the *Columbia* to Ketchikan to make repairs necessary to return it to revenue service, possibly as early as next week.

COSCO ROTTERDAM (Bahamas)

Piraeus, Sep 22 — Container Carrier *COSCO Rotterdam* left Piraeus Sep 20 for Port Said. — Lloyd's Agents.

COUGAR ACE (Singapore)

Portland, Oreg, Sep 21 — Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* has vacated the berth, under tow, to allow for discharge of automobiles ex vehicle carriers *Rainbow Wing* and *Colorado Highway*. She is expected back Sunday, Sep 24. — Lloyd's Agents.

Portland, Oreg, Sep 25 — Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* has moved back to berth No.607 as of Sep 23. — Lloyd's Agents.

CP VALOUR (Bermuda)

London, Sep 23 — A SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage press release, dated Sep 21, states: A SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage team yesterday refloated Container Carrier *CP Valour*. The salvage team succeeded in towing *CP Valour* away from the grounding site but a violent storm overwhelmed the wreck, which went down in very deep water some 20 miles northwest off Faial. There were no casualties. The wreck had been emptied of pollutants and, therefore,

presents no environmental hazard. The refloating preparations required extensive patching of holds 1 and 2, together with the engine-room. Hold 3 was too badly damaged to patch. The refloating was achieved by a combination of dewatering and buoyancy recreation, with twin pullers connected to the bow and exerting forces of up to 400 tonnes in addition to tugs. The stern was kept in position seaward by means of an anchoring system. At the last stage the 265 tons bollardpull of tug *Maersk Achiever* were used for the final and successful refloating attempt.

Ponta Delgada, Sep 27 — At the time of sinking, at a reported depth of 1600 metres, container Carrier *CP Valour* had no containers or other cargo on board which have been unloaded through barges while the vessel was aground. Several heavy pieces of machinery and material had also been removed from the vessel during that time. There is no local intention to refloat the vessel which has been considered as lost. — Lloyd's Agents.

DAP MARES (Chile)

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Roll On Roll Off *Dap Mares* (770 gt, built 1970), belonging to the Pivcevic family, unexpectedly sank Wednesday (Sep 20) in Catalina Bay, Punta Arenas harbour area, where it had been anchored for several days. The former *Chinook* apparently began listing and in less than six minutes was on its side in 18 metre deep water, 500 metres offshore. Fortunately the five crew members on board were rescued by a passing ferry and a Zodiac and quickly taken to hospital for medical checkups. Punta Arenas port authorities and the Coast Guard have taken the necessary measures to prevent fuel contamination from the vessel with support naval units and special operational groups. "Fortunately there were no human losses but we do not have an idea what happened. We can't understand how a vessel that had been anchored for five days suddenly lists and sinks", said Alejandro Pivcevic manager of Aerovías DAP and head of the group to which *DAP Mares* belongs. The vessel was acquired in early 2005 at a cost of US\$ 3.5 million and specifically refurbished for Antarctic operations and cruises. "We have charter contracts for the coming Antarctic season including the Chilean Antarctic Institute and similar organizations from Bulgaria and Russia; it has really messed up all our summer's program, it's a disaster", admitted Mr.Pivcevic. As to the possibility of recovering the vessel Mr. Pivcevic said it was possible since it was not that far from the coast and in relatively shallow waters, "but we don't know its condition". Punta Arenas port authority Captain Ivan Valenzuela said the vessel was carrying diesel fuel which commonly evaporates quite rapidly so "the contamination problem we can say is contained". However the owners of the

vessel said they would be sealing all the tanks as soon as they can board it again. Captain Valenzuela added *DAP Mares* had all documents and certificates in order and all proceedings are now in hands of the Maritime authorities which are undertaking the investigation.

Santiago, Sep 22 — At 1140, Sep 20 Roll On Roll Off *Dap Mares* while anchored in Tres Puentes just north of Punta Arenas suddenly and unexpectedly a list was noticed to starboard which increased rapidly and within five minutes the vessel completely turned over and sank very quickly. Five members of the crew were saved, three from the hull of the overturned vessel and two were picked up from the sea. The vessel was being prepared to commence tourism trips to the Antarctic from November to February. There was a spillage of diesel petroleum, that evaporates very quickly, and absorbent nets used. No reason has been given as to the cause of the sinking. — Lloyd's Agents.

DOGUCAN (Cambodia)

London, Sep 22 — General cargo *Dogucan* (1948 gt, built 1966), cargo industrial wood, ran aground in the vicinity of Black Sea between Kilyos and Rumelifeneri Sep 17. Patrol vessel *Kiyi Emniyeti 6* and tug *Kurtarma 3* were sent to area immediately by VTS. There was no loss of life or pollution. As the vessel was about 30 metres from the coast and because of the heavy sea and strong wind, the sea response was impossible in order rescue the vessel's crew, therefore breeches buoy system was installed. At 2400 hrs all crew members were taken to the coast by a shore salvage team. Transferring of the oil and cargo on board is ongoing. (Note — *Dogucan* sailed Varna Sep 17 for Istanbul and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was last reported in lat 42 31 27N, long 28 24 29E, at 0404, UTC, Sep 17, speed 8.3 knots, course 161 degrees.)

London, Sep 23 — General cargo *Dogucan*: Transferring of the oil and bunkers on board is continuing and local authorities are requiring to remove the wrecked ship and cargo immediately.

London, Sep 23 — Following received from Ankara MRCC, timed 0905, UTC: General cargo *Dogucan* is still aground. Removal of oil and bunkers started yesterday and when completed the salvage operation will continue.

London, Sep 24 — Following received from Ankara MSRCC, timed 1030, UTC: General cargo *Dogucan* remains aground at present.

London, Sep 26 — Following received from Ankara MSRCC, timed 1015, UTC: General cargo *Dogucan* remains aground and at present operations are under way to remove the fuel on board.

London, Sep 27 — Following received from Ankara MSRCC, timed 1431, UTC: General cargo *Dogucan* is still aground, and fuel removal operations are continuing.

DUK YOUNG 101 (South Korea)

Antwerp, Sep 28 — Tug *Duk Young 101* (440 gt, built 1982), towing barge *Duk Young Ho* from Japan, in collision with general cargo *Wan Wu Wei Huo 3368* in Nantong waters, in lat 32 00.33N, long 120 44.69E, Aug 2. No human casualty occurred. After an inspection, the MSA decided that *Wan Wu Wei Huo 3368* was no longer seaworthy, so it had to discharge all its cargo (about 2,800 tonnes of sand) and be escorted to a nearby shipyard for repairs. — “DPS Teamhead Surveyors”.

EL MORRO (U.S.A.)

Santo Domingo, Sep 27 — Tug *El Morro* is still under repair at Las Calderas. — Lloyd's Agents.

ESSENCE (Cayman Islands)

See bulker *Barkald*.

FAIRPLAY-22 (Antigua & Barbuda)

Hamburg, Sep 27 — Understand from the port authorities that following the breakdown of her electronics, tug *Fairplay-22* was subject to a slight collision with tug berth “Neumuhlen”. The vessel proceeded to the connection berth between pontoons 1 and 2. According to further verbal information, the tug sustained only minor damage, whereas the tug berth was heavily damaged. — Lloyd's Agents.

FAIRWEATHER (U.S.A.)

London, Sep 26 — Passenger ro/ro *Fairweather* sailed Juneau Sep 20 for Sitka.

FORTH CONSTRUCTOR (U.K.)

London, Sept 25 — A Maritime & Coastguard Agency report, timed 2118, UTC, Sept 23, states: At 1840 this evening Shetland Coastguard received a routine radio call on VHF channel 16, from tug *Forth Constructor* (265 gt, built 1967) after the crew had detected a fire in the engine-room. Shetland Coastguard requested the launch of the RNLi Stromness lifeboat to the work-boat, which was in Hoy Sound. Shetland Coastguard kept in radio contact with the five crewmen on board. None of the crew had suffered any burns or inhaled any smoke. A local ferry the *Graemsey* was able to assist the workboat under tow until tug *Forth Drummer* arrived on scene and took over and bought the workboat back to Stromness. The Stromness lifeboat accompanied the tug. On arrival at Stromness *Forth Constructor* was met by the Stromness Coastguard Rescue Team, two fire fighting units and the police. The fire fighters are using thermal image cameras to ascertain when the engine-room will be safe enough to open and enter. Shetland Coastguard Watch Officer, Errol Smith, said, We were in constant contact with the *Forth Constructor* crewmen. They were very professional throughout and knew exactly how to react to the situation by shutting off the engine-room. The crew members

are now all safely back ashore. We will continue to monitor the vessel until we are satisfied that the fire is extinguished.

FRONT SUNDA (Marshall Islands)

Singapore, Sep 24 — Crude oil tanker *Front Sunda* is currently at Hitachi Shipyard Quay 2, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Sep 18.)

FRONT VANGUARD (Marshall Islands)

Port Said, Sept 25 — Crude oil tanker *Front Vanguard* was released and resumed its passage with the northbound convoy on Sept 24 and cleared the Canal from Port Said at 2010 same day. — Lloyd's Agents. (See issue of Sep 25.)

GINGA FALCON (Panama)

Manila, Sep 25 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Ginga Falcon* (13292 gt, built 1996) was involved in a chemical spill accident Sep 23 at the Batangas Bay Terminal wharf in Bauan town, Batangas province in southern Luzon island, Philippines. According to the Philippine Coast Guard some 400 litres of caustic soda spilled into the waters of Batangas Bay Terminal while the vessel was offloading its cargo of 4,000 metric tons of caustic soda onto another tanker owned by Mabuhay Vinyl Corporation. Initial reports indicated that the local vessel's cargo tank had overflowed during the offloading operations, spilling caustic soda into the Bay. There were no injuries to the crew of either vessel. The Coast Guard said that it was fining Mabuhay Vinyl and *Ginga Falcon* for the chemical spill. — Correspondent.

Manila, Sep 26 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Ginga Falcon* was allowed to leave Batangas Bay over the weekend by the Philippine Coast Guard after it was determined that it was not at fault in a chemical oil spill accident. Some 400 litres of caustic soda spilled into the waters of Batangas Bay Terminal while it was offloading its cargo of 4,000 metric tons of caustic soda. The Coast Guard earlier reported that the cargo was being offloaded into another vessel. Later reports corrected this, however, as the caustic soda was actually offloaded directly into the storage tanks of Mabuhay Vinyl Corporation at Batangas Bay Terminal in Bauan town in Batangas province. Mabuhay Vinyl is a local manufacturer of industrial chemicals and resin. The Coast Guard said that an error by Mabuhay Vinyl employees resulted in the caustic soda being pumped into a wrong storage tank which subsequently overflowed. Coast Guard officials said that the vessel had not been detained but Mabuhay Vinyl would be fined for marine pollution. In the meantime, Mabuhay Vinyl said that only a fraction of the caustic soda cargo had spilled and this had been neutralized and cleaned-up by Monday. Mabuhay Vinyl corporate

planning manager Michael Yu said that the company was now reviewing chemical unloading and containment procedures to prevent such an accident from recurring. Notwithstanding the assurance, the town of Bauan said that it was planning to file a multimillion peso civil suit against Mabuhay Vinyl for the chemical spill. — Correspondent.

London, Sep 27 — Following received from the managers of combined chemical and oil tank *Ginga Falcon*, dated today: In the early hours of Sep 23, the *Ginga Falcon* was involved in discharge operations involving a cargo of 5,239 tonnes of caustic soda being discharged directly into the storage tanks of Mabuhay Vinyl Corporation at the Batangas Bay Terminal at Bauan, Batangas Province. The discharge operations were attended by a local cargo surveyor, Mr Mabilin of Intertek (who was monitoring operations on board), and the terminal staff (who were in attendance in the manifold vicinity), who were in communications with the crew at all times. At no stage was there any mention of any problem related to spillage and our cargo discharging operations were completed at 0415, Sep 23, with the full knowledge and approval of the authorities. The owners, managers and operators of the *Ginga Falcon* were unaware of any problems and issues until media reports surfaced Monday (Sep 25). Factual reports received from the Philippine Coast Guard and the receiver of the cargo, Mabuhay Vinyl Corporation, revealed that the spillage of caustic soda was either from shore tanks or a different tanker loading the product from the same terminal, long after the *Ginga Falcon* had sailed from Batangas port.

GOLDEN OCEAN (Belize)

London, Sept 27 — Following notice to mariners issued at 1800, JST, today: Engine troubled general cargo *Golden Ocean*, 1997 gt, (built 2003) exists in the vicinity of lat 33 42.4N, long 131 57.5E.

London, Sept 28 — Following notice to mariners issued at 2330, JST, Sept 27: Engine troubled general cargo *Golden Ocean* has weighed anchor, cancel earlier notice.

GRIGOROUSSA I (Liberia)

Port Said, Sept 25 — Crude oil tanker *Vemaocean* arrived Suez Pilot Station Sept 20 to start transferring cargo from crude oil tanker *Grigoroussa I*. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 26 — Egypt has this week reportedly released a vessel it has held since last February, for being involved in an oil spill. According to Reuters, quoting an anonymous official of the Suez Canal Authority, the owners of crude oil tanker *Grigoroussa I* agreed to pay \$3.4m in compensation after the 3,000 tonne spill. The sum comprises \$2m to the canal, \$1m to the government's environmental agency, and \$400,000 to affected businesses along the banks of the canal. A further \$1.39m will be

paid for maritime services provided to the vessel, which was damaged when it ran aground. Representatives of the ship's owners were yesterday unavailable for comment.

GULIZAR ANA (Turkey)

Bucharest, Sept 21 — Salvors succeeded in returning general cargo *Gulizar Ana* to even keel at approximately 1610, local time, today. *Gulizar Ana* will reportedly be shifted to a different berth for assessment of its condition. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sept 23 — Salvors Multraship have successfully righted general cargo *Gulizar Ana*, which capsized on Sept 10 in the port of Galati while loading cargo, and has redelivered the vessel to its owners. It is thought that the capsizing of the vessel was due to shifting of its cargo of steel coils and forklifts, although investigations are still under way. Having been awarded the LOF contract to salvage the vessel on Sep 13, Multraship mobilised its floating sheerlegs vessel *Cormorant*, the only sheerlegs in the area with sufficient capacity to undertake the task, and tug *Fonda* from its base in Bourgas. It also mobilised a salvage team, sludge barge, skimmer vessel, pumps and other equipment, all of which were on site by Sept 17. The Romanian authorities gave permission to start salvage operations the following day. *Gulizar Ana* was listing at an angle of about 60 degrees, and was prevented from listing further by a floating crane moored between the vessel and the quay. Following complex diving inspections and preparations by the Multraship team, the lifting operation got under way on Sept 20. The vessel's engine-room and accommodation were pumped out into a sludge barge, and the list was brought back to about 28 degrees. Removing one of the vessel's two forklifts further corrected the list to roughly 12 degrees, at which point the Romanian authorities carried out an inspection and authorised the Multraship team to remove the remaining forklift and one steel coil, which task was completed on the morning of Sept 21. The vessel was then ballasted and returned to an even keel, ready for redelivery to its owners.

Bucharest, Sept 25 — General cargo *Gulizar Ana* was shifted from the berth No 50, where the incident occurred, to berth No 51 between 1630 and 1800, Sept 23, in order to effect repairs. The vessel was attended by an electrical engineer commissioned by the shipowners, and another two electricians are reportedly expected. According to the vessel's agents and master, repairs are expected to be completed in a maximum of one week. — Lloyd's Agents.

HANG LIM QUEEN (South Korea)

Yokohama, Sept 28 — During sheltering from typhoon, general cargo *Hang Lim Queen* (1313 gt, built 1988), with 10 crew, anchored 1,130 metres, 202 degrees, from Hesaki Lighthouse,

Fukuoka Prefecture, and ran aground in shallows due to strong wind at 1950, Sept 17. Vessel was refloated by salvage vessel at 0708 Sept 19. No injuries or oil spill observed. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Hang Lim Queen* sailed Busan Sept 15, arrived Moji Sept 19, sailed Sept 22 and arrived Busan Sept 23. According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *Hang Lim Queen* was stationary in the Busan area at 0537, UTC, Sept 27.)

HANJIN CAIRO (Germany)

See *Klenoden*.

HOHEBANK (U.K.)

Liverpool, Sep 25 — General cargo *Hohebank* is still under repair at Cammell Laird. — Lloyd's Agents.

HUMBER WAY (Malta)

Portsmouth, UK, Sep 28 — Roll On Roll Off *Humber Way* (9963 gt, built 1976) arrived Ostend Sep 27 with damage on both port and starboard sides of the vessel. The hull on starboard side of the roro-ferry sustained a gash above the bow thrusters. — Correspondent.

London, Sep 28 — Following received from the managers of roll on roll off *Humber Way*, dated today: *Humber Way* came into contact with a mooring dolphin at Ostend. Damage to the vessel is not major, and is currently under repair.

HYUNDAI FORTUNE (Panama)

Dubai, Sept 23 — Repairs to Container Carrier *Hyundai Fortune* are expected to be completed by tomorrow. — Lloyd's Agents.

ICE FLAKE (Cayman Islands)

London, Sep 22 — Refrigerated general cargo *Ice Flake* is still at Dormac, Durban, undergoing repairs.

INFINITY (Bahamas)

London, Sept 23 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS passenger (cruise) *Infinity* was in lat 44 51 11N, long 125 04 20W, st 2349, UTC, Sept 22, speed 22.6 knots, course 176.5 degrees.

INZHENER LUPICHEV (Cyprus)

London, Sep 24 — Following received from Corsen MRCC, timed 0945, UTC: Product tanker *Inzhener Lupichev* (2954 gt, built 1997), Rotterdam for Bordeaux, cargo palm oil, stopped last night with engine problems in lat 48 39N, long 05 51.2W. Vessel has recently got under way after 11 hours and is proceeding into Brest to effect repairs.

London, Sep 25 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, at 0526, BST, today, product tanker *Inzhener Lupichev* was reported in lat 48 22.58N, long 04 28.38W, 0.4 nautical miles from Brest, speed one knot.

Brest, Sep 27 — Product tanker *Inzhener Lupichev* was on a loaded passage between Rotterdam and Bordeaux with vegetable oil in her holds when she experienced turbo-blower problems off Ushant Island. A provisional repair was performed by the crew and the decision was taken to

divert towards Brest, where the vessel arrived by her own means in the late evening of Sep 24. Following further inspection the vessel is now waiting delivery of spare parts for permanent repairs which will take two or three days. — Lloyd's Agents.

IOANNIS (Greece)

London, Sept 25 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0645, UTC: Product tanker *Ioannis*, SX2577 (999 gt, built 1961), Eleusis for Preveza, was reported at 1400, Sept 23 to have capsized and sank after striking an unknown wreck 0.7 nautical miles north-east of Eleusis. All crew were rescued.

Piraeus, Sep 25 — Product tanker *Ioannis*, Eleusis for Preveza with asphalt, struck a shipwreck near Eleusis and capsized at 1420, Sep 23. All nine crew members were taken to Eleusis port and were reportedly safe and well. An oil slick of 100 square metres was reported. Tug *Alexander* and vessel *Slop 3* proceeded to the scene to assist. A preliminary investigation will be carried out by the local port authorities. — Lloyd's Agents.

JET I (Greece)

London, Sept 25 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 0645, UTC: Chemical tanker *Jet I*, SY6597, (992 gt, built 1987) struck Kea Island at slow speed Sept 22 and as a result sustained minor forepeak damage. Vessel refloated by own means and is now anchored at Laurio (? Laurium).

Piraeus, Sep 25 — Chemical tanker *Jet I*, Aspropyrgos for Naxos Island with 860 tonnes of various fuels, struck the rocky coast of Kea Island Sep 22. The vessel sustained a crack of approximately 0.5 metres on its forepart, below the waterline. No pollution was reported. The vessel's master was injured and was taken to Piraeus hospital. Preliminary investigation is being undertaken by Laurium Port Authority, who have prohibited the vessel from departing pending an inspection by a Class surveyor. — Lloyd's Agents.

JOHN B.AIRD (Canada)

London, Sep 21 — At 0948, EDST, Sep 17, the fully loaded bulker *John B.Aird* (22881 gt, built 1983) struck bottom while downbound in the St.Marys River, near Rock Cut, just below West Neebish Channel in lat 46 15N, long 84 10.30W. No apparent damage.

KAPADOKIA (Liberia)

Antwerp, Sep 27 — An oil spill was found from combined chemical and oil tank *Kapadokia* (26999 gt, built 1984) Sep 19 while the vessel was alongside at Lixin Shipyard for repairs. The quantity of spilled oil is still unknown. Officials of the Marine Safety Administration Shanghai soon attended on board for investigation and action. MSA Shanghai issued a notice to the vessel's owner on Sep 25. The notice requires RMB900,000

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

(about US\$112,500) in cash as a fine and the cost of cleaning up the spilled oil. Until the vessel's owner pays the money, it cannot leave Shanghai. — "DPS Teamhead Surveyors".

KEW BRIDGE (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Mumbai, Sep 22 — A local press report states: Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge*, with 8,000 tonnes of liquified petroleum gas (LPG) on board is reported to be stuck at Ratnagiri port. The middle of the vessel has been stuck in the soft mud at the harbour since Sep 14 and efforts are in progress to salvage the vessel. Two tugs that left Mumbai to salvage the Norwegian vessel were to reach the spot by Sunday (Sep 17) evening, Coast Guard western region commander a Rajashekhar said. The gas on the vessel is for Finolex Industries Limited plant near Ratnagairi. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 22 — Following press release issued by Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, dated Sep 21: The situation with Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* remains stable. The vessel's hull remains intact and cargo condition is stable. All cargo parameters of temperature and pressure were maintained within their limits. Sounding and stability calculations are determined frequently and passed on to relevant authorities. Once again meetings have been held with government and local representatives to confirm the vessel's condition. Two 65 tons Bollard Pull tugs are now confirmed on site, in addition to the other tugs already engaged. An attempt was made to make fast the tug *Svitzer Surat* with her tow rope and try to pull the vessel's bow first, assisted by the tug *Akash* which is already fast. The *Svitzer Surat* started the operations slowly and increased Bollard Pull to 40 tons, the tug *Akash* increasing engine power to 90% gradually. The entire attempt ensured that the *Kew Bridge* lifted herself off the bottom, where she was aground and yawed up to six degrees. However, this culminated in the tow rope on the tug *Svitzer Surat* parting at the Panama lead forward and thus the attempt to pivot her around was aborted. It is planned that all available tugs will be connected to the vessel before high water tomorrow morning. An attempt will then be made to turn the vessel to align her with the sea.

London, Sep 22 — Following press release issued by Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, dated today: Preparations for today's lift-off of Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* continued overnight with the two 65T Bollard tugs *Svitzer Damka* and *Svitzer Surat* fast forward and 32T Bollard tug *Akash* fast amidships. In addition, the forward section of the vessel has been deballasted to lighten the vessel (Note: the vessel was ballasted initially to ensure she remained stable on the sea bed). At 1020 hrs, pull-off operations commenced to swing the *Kew Bridge* to

starboard to head into wind and swell. The vessel's integrity remains sound with no pollution or casualties despite the high level of activity associated with the refloating of the vessel.

London, Sep 22 — Following press release issued by Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, dated today: Liquid petroleum gas carrier *Kew Bridge*: At 1102, local time, during the pull off operation a sheen of oil was observed in the vicinity approaching the vessel. The ITOFF representative on the scene, brought on site as a precaution, has been advised with the samples drawn now being delivered for finger printing due to the large number of craft currently present at the scene.

Mumbai, Sep 23 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* remains aground and efforts are being made to refloat the vessel. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 23 — A Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, press release, dated Sept 22, states: The situation with Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* remains stable, the vessel's hull remains intact and cargo condition is stable. All cargo parameters of temperature and pressure are maintained within their limits. Sounding and stability calculations are determined frequently and passed on to relevant authorities. Previously reported oil sheen has dispersed, it is assumed that this was a result of disturbances to the seabed caused by tugs while pulling the vessel. Salvors SMIT and SvitzerWijsmuller continue to make all efforts to arrange for the refloating of the vessel. This morning's attempt to turn the vessel into the swell and wind was deemed as partially successful. The vessel moved its heading roughly 200 during this period. A further attempt will be made at high water to turn the vessel to align it with the sea. We are working with local contractors for additional on site support.

London, Sep 23 — A Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, press release, dated today, states: Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge*: No significant change overnight. The situation with *Kew Bridge* remains stable, the vessel's hull remains intact and cargo condition is stable. All cargo parameters of temperature and pressure are maintained within their limits. Sounding and stability calculations are determined frequently and passed on to relevant authorities. Salvors SMIT and SvitzerWijsmuller continue to make all efforts to arrange for the refloating of the vessel. We are working with local contractors for additional on site support.

Ymuiden, Sep 23 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge*: SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage, together with fellow ISU member SMIT Salvage, were jointly instructed yesterday to take full control over refloating operations started by the vessel's owners/managers a week earlier. The *Kew Bridge* is aground on shallows in the exposed area of Ratnagiri, some 150 miles south of Mumbai. Two SvitzerWijsmuller tugs

are already engaged in the operations, together with towmasters, a salvage master and SvitzerWijsmuller's Indian salvage officer. Further staff, equipment and personnel from both SvitzerWijsmuller and SMIT is being brought in from India, Singapore and the Netherlands. At present refloating attempts are executed at high waters to prevent worsening of the situation with the casualty slowly turning with its bow into the sea and swell. Lighterage operations of (part of) the cargo and the bunkers are being prepared. — SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage BV.

London, Sep 24 — A Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, press release, dated today, states: Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge*: Situation remains stable, with hull intact and cargo condition stable. An attempt was made to lighten the vessel this afternoon with Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Relgas Nayantara*. The securing operations for each vessel went smoothly; however, because of the current weather conditions, it was decided by both parties not to commence cargo lightening operations. A further attempt to lighten the vessel will be made tomorrow.

London, Sep 26 — A Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, press release, dated Sep 25, states: The situation with Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* remains stable. The vessel's hull remains intact and cargo condition is stable. All cargo parameters of temperature and pressure are maintained within their limits. Sounding and stability calculations are determined frequently and passed on to relevant authorities. No further attempt was made to lighten the vessel today due to adverse weather conditions. Salvors have had a series of meetings with operators of the vessel *Relgas Nayantara* and Governmental representatives to formulate a further plan for the next lightening attempt. We continue working with local contractors for additional on site support.

London, Sep 28 — A Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, press release, dated today, states: Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* remains stable, the vessel's hull remains intact and cargo condition is stable. All cargo parameters of temperature and pressure are maintained within their limits. Sounding and stability calculations are determined frequently and passed on to relevant authorities. In the continued efforts to refloat the vessel a dredge barge contractor is expected to visit the casualty site today to study the feasibility of the dredging of the sea bed along the starboard side of the vessel. Thus, the salvors are considering three main options for refloating the vessel: 1. To lighten the vessel and refloat it. 2. To dredge the sea bed along the starboard side of the vessel and pull it out. 3. And the combined option of refloating and dredging the seabed to move it out of its current grounded position. We

continue working with local contractors for additional on site support.

KHAIRPUR (Pakistan)

Freetown, Sep 26 — General cargo *Khairpur* left Freetown Sep 18 for Brazil. Barge *Marie Flood* sailed Sep 14 for Monrovia. No repairs carried out at Freetown. — Lloyd's Agents.

KITY

Portsmouth, UK, Sep 27 — General cargo *Kity* was on passage to Colombo when it sustained "a glancing blow" from a guided-missile frigate of the Navy, the 2,800-tonne *INS Dunagiri*, around 30 nautical miles off Mumbai port on Monday night (Sep 25). "The warship was manoeuvring to avoid some fishing vessels when the mishap took place. Fortunately, no significant damage or injury was sustained by either vessel. A collision could have led to loss of human lives, apart from a huge ecological disaster in terms of an oil spill," said a source. While *Kity* has since proceeded towards its destination, the Navy has ordered a Board of Inquiry (BoI) to ascertain the exact reason behind the incident. — Correspondent.

KLENODEN (Finland)

London, Sep 25 — General cargo *Klenoden* (3828 gt, built 1991) was in collision with container carrier *Hanjin Cairo* (65131 gt, built 2001) in Hamburg, Sep 9. *Klenoden* sustained damage to its bow. The repair at Norderwerft, where it was towed at 2300 hrs was due to last until Sep 15, then the vessel headed for Helsinki. The *Hanjin Cairo* berthed at UCT 3 and was slightly damaged at bow starboard side. (Note — *Klenoden* sailed Hamburg Sep 20. *Hanjin Cairo* sailed Hamburg Sep 13.)

KONPIRA NO.2 (Japan)

Yokohama, Sept 28 — Roll On Roll Off *Konpira No.2*, 3639 gt (built 1989), Talamatsu for Kobe, had engine trouble in lat 34 26.74N, long 134 33.02E, at 1815, Sept 23. Vessel was towed to Kobe by two tugs at 0212, Sept 24. No injuries or pollution. — Lloyd's Agents.

KRAFT (Finland)

Helsinki, Sep 26 — Tug/icebreaker *Kraft*: According to the shipping company, Alfons Håkans, the repairs are expected to be completed Sep 28. — Lloyd's Agents.

KRATEROS (Malta)

Portsmouth, UK, Sep 26 — A press report states: A freighter (bulker *Krateros*, 25905 gt, built 1992) has ran into some trouble east of the Lions Gate Bridge, Vancouver. It struck some rocks and two coast guard vessels responded to the accident. No one was hurt. The vessel, which is registered in Malta, was finally righted. An investigation will be launched to make sure safety and nearby water quality was not compromised. — Correspondent.

London, Sep 26 — Following received from Victoria RCC, BC, timed 0800, UTC: Bulker *Krateros*, 9HQ18, outbound, cargo grain, ran aground near the Lions Gate Bridge at 2354, UTC, Sep 25 and was refloated at 0152, UTC. There were approximately 12 tugs in attendance. At 0208, UTC, vessel proceeded at under own power at to Vancouver B anchorage. No pollution or damage reported. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *Krateros* was stationary in lat 49 18 06.91N, long 123 05 02.42W, at 0741, UTC, today.)

London, Sep 26 — Following received from Victoria, BC, RCC, timed 1630, UTC: Bulker *Krateros* ran aground in lat 49 18.73N, long 123 08.33W and is now in Vancouver harbour for inspection.

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Bulker *Krateros*, loaded with grain, ran aground yesterday just off Vancouver's Stanley Park, blocking shipping traffic and snarling vehicle traffic as drivers gawked from the Lions Gate Bridge high above. The Malta-registered *Krateros* hit bottom at about 1645. "It suffered a major malfunction, causing it to go aground," said Vancouver Port Authority spokeswoman Grace Battiston. "We don't know if it's mechanical, or if it was the rudder that caused it to go aground." Three members of the Vancouver branch of the World Ship Society happened to be on the Lions Gate Bridge photographing vessels leaving Vancouver's Burrard Inlet. "She was coming down the channel here, and just off Vancouver wharves, she lost her steering," said amateur photographer Robert Etchell. "When a ship is turning in mid-channel, you can tell something's wrong. She started to go off course and she drifted toward the shore." As the *Krateros* headed nose-first toward the Stanley Park seawall, it dropped its anchors. "You could hear her anchors dragging," said photographer Frank Bolla. "There was a splash when she hit." The port authority contacted local tugboat operators to assist with the situation. A Coast Guard patrol boat and hovercraft attended the scene until it was determined there were no injuries and the environment wasn't damaged. Five tugboats spent more than two hours pushing and pulling the 186-metre-long vessel, which was built in 1992 in Japan. A rising tide, which was to peak at 1938, aided the tugboat crews, who finally freed the ship at about 1900. The *Krateros'* hull did not appear to have been penetrated, said port authority vice-president of operations Chris Badger, adding it was not known yesterday night what the vessel hit. The federal Transportation Safety Board has started an investigation to determine the cause of the accident.

Vancouver, Sep 26 — Mason Agencies, agents of bulker *Krateros*, advised the vessel was loaded with 42,000 tons of yellow peas. It ran aground at 1645 and after intervention by tugs, was afloat at

1850. Vessel alleges that eight tugs were engaged however it would appear that there may have been up to 14 tugs. Vessel is now at anchorage "B" in Vancouver harbour and was inspected by divers who have noted damage to forepeak and double bottom by No.1 Hold. Arrangements are now being made through government authorities to provide a course of action to unload the vessel, take it to drydock for repairs and re-load after this has been carried out. Vessel's agents advise that there is no bulk unloading facility in Vancouver, this operation could take upwards of one month. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 27 — Bulker *Krateros*, leaving Vancouver Harbour, lost steering, dropped both anchors and ran aground at Prospect Point, Vancouver Harbour, in lat 49 19N, long 123 08W at 1645, Sep 25. Sustaining bottom damage. No report on any pollution. Vessel was freed and towed into Vancouver Harbour.

KUM GANG 1 (North Korea)

See under "Miscellaneous."

KYUIKO MARU (Russia)

London, Sept 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Russian fishing (general) *Kyuiko Maru* that was detained for poaching in the area of the South Kuriles on Sept 25 sank today in the Aniva Bay, Sakhalin Island. The vessel was bound for the Korsakov port escorted by a border guard ship. According to Vladivostok rescue coordination centre, the vessel sank at a bout 0100 hrs eight miles from Korsakov. Eight crewmembers of the *Kyuiko Maru* have been rescued by border guards and taken to Korsakov port. The causes of the shipwreck are unknown. During the detention of *Kyuiko Maru* border guards found on board the ship 39 tonnes of expensive marine delicacies — shrimp, crab, sea scallop and sea urchin. The public relations group of the Sakhalin coast guard department of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) reported that the vessel's homeport is Yuzhno Kurilsk and two crewmembers had no identification documents. The border guards said the vessel's master violated the border, nature protection and customs legislation and therefore decided to escort *Kyuiko Maru* to Korsakov port for an investigation.

London, Sept 27 — A press report, dated today, states: The island of Sakhalin was at the centre of an environmental scare today after a trawler went down off the coast spewing oil into the sea, emergency services reported. *Kyuko Maru* (also reported at *Kyuiko Maru*) was detained in Russian territorial waters Monday for alleged border, environmental and customs violations. It was registered in the port of Kholmok and owned by a local company, but went down after a fire apparently broke out on board as it was being towed toward southern Sakhalin for further investigation. "Judging by the size of the slick eight miles from the shore, at least 900

kilograms of fuel spilt into the sea from the ship that sank last night," a source said, adding that measures to localize the spot were under way and the trawler's eight-man crew had been evacuated unhurt.

LIN HAI SHAN (Panama)

Antwerp, Sep 27 — General cargo *Lin Hai Shan* (2998 gt, built 2005) Busan to Hong Kong, with about 4000 tonnes of steel cargo, in collision with a wooden fishing vessel in lat 30 39.6N, long 122 50.5E, near Zhoushan, Sep 23. The wooden fishing vessel was holed on the starboard and sank slowly. Before sinking, all crew onboard were rescued by the larger vessel with some sea catches and personal belongings. No human casualties. The *Lin Hai Shan* was then requested to stay in the anchorage for MSA's investigation and settlement. — "DPS Teamhead Surveyors."

LOTUS BLOSSOM (Panama)

London, Sep 25 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1514, UTC: Bulker *Lotus Blossom* received a satisfactory Class report Sep 20. The vessel is expected to sail at 1200, local time, today.

MAERSK RIO GRANDE (Antigua & Barbuda)

Balboa, Sep 27 — Understand repairs to container Carrier *Maersk Rio Grande* were completed and followed by successful sea trial yesterday. Vessel is now berthed Balboa for cargo operations and expected depart later today. — Lloyd's Agents.

MARIAM IV (Panama)

London, Sep 28 — A crew member of the general cargo *Mariam IV*, which sank on July 1, has finally been rescued from a desert island off the Yemeni coast. Burmese chief officer Lin Zaw Soe was left stranded on Abdal-Kuri island when the *Mariam IV* sank, having been separated from the rest of the vessel's crew when a life raft overturned. During his 10 weeks on the island Lin Zaw Soe was sheltered by fishermen, according to Aden-based Mission to Seafarers chaplain Rev Peter Crooks. Most of the crew were rescued from the island by a helicopter from a German naval frigate. However the chief officer "was too weak and too far away to attract the pilot's attention", Rev Crooks said. Bad weather meant he was stranded on the island until a fishing boat was able to take him to Socotra, and he was then airlifted to Aden. Rev Crooks has been assisting the survivors about pay, and on compensation for the families of the men who died.

MARIE FLOOD (U.S.A.)

See *Khairpur*.

MARVEL K. (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Portsmouth, UK, Sep 25 — The rescue operations to remove general cargo *Marvel K.* (1895 gt, built 1981)

from a sandbank in the Gulf of Finland is continuing after the first attempt failed when a tow rope broke. The vessel left the port St Petersburg to England with the load 2,853 tonnes of steel products on the evening on Sep 22. At 0350 hrs near the Is. of Seskar, the vessel grounded on a stony sand bar and was holed in the front ballast tank. Eight crew are on the vessel. None of them were hurt. Also 37,5 tonnes of diesel fuel remain on the vessel. — Correspondent.

London, Sep 25 — Following received from the Baltic Salvage Corporation, timed 1155, UTC: *Marvel K.* is still aground. Salvage attempts have been unsuccessful thus far and two ballast tanks are suspected of leaking.

London, Sep 26 — Understand general cargo *Marvel K.* is still aground.

MICHELLE (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Sep 25 — General cargo *Michelle*: The foreship of the wreck of the vessel reached the Waalhaven, river Maas, on deck of the pontoon *Gerald*. Also the *Smit Barracuda* came back from the wrecksite towing the *Taklift 7* which had raised the wreck.

MIDAS (Panama)

Karachi, Sep 22 — The local agents of bulker *Midas* have advised that the vessel sailed at 1700 hrs, yesterday. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

MINALAND (U.K.)

Limerick, Sep 24 — General cargo *Minaland* shifted to Red Gap anchorage under local Shannon-based tug escort under port's instructions at 1430, Sep 23, as lay-by berth was required for working tonnage for this coming week. Understand tug from Rotterdam is due on scene in the middle of this week to take vessel in tow for repair port, Falmouth. — Lloyd's Agents.

Limerick, Sep 25 — Understand ocean-going tug to tow general cargo *Minaland* is Italian salvage tug *Tore*. — Lloyd's Agents. (Note — *Tore* sailed Rotterdam 1145, Sep 23, for Foynes.)

Limerick, Sep 28 — General cargo *Minaland* has not yet sailed. Salvage tug *Tore* is now in port, and understand the tow may sail in the next few days. — Lloyd's Agents.

MOL INITIATIVE (Panama)

Yokohama, Sept 22 — Container Carrier *MOL Initiative* sailed Yokohama Sept 21 for Zhoushan. — Lloyd's Agents.

MSC LORETTA (Panama)

Los Angeles, Sep 21 — Container Carrier *MSC Loretta* was not detained but sailed on Sep 13, for Pusan, Korea. — Lloyd's Agents.

NAJIB M. (Comoros)

See "Cyprus" under "Port State Control".

NAMA (Panama)

London, Sept 28 — General cargo *Nama* arrived Durban Sept 26, from India, and sailed Sept 27.

NCC RIYAD (NIS)

London, Sept 25 — Combined chemical and oil tank *NCC Riyad* arrived Jebel Ali Sept 21 and sailed Sept 22 for Karachi.

NORDIC JUPITER (Marshall Islands)

Santos, Sep 25 — Our sub-agents at Sao Sebastio report: Crude oil tanker *Nordic Jupiter* (81565 gt, built 1998), loaded, and product tanker *Piquete* (39716 gt, built 1989), anchored at Sao Sebastio inner anchorage in loaded condition, came into contact at approximately 1010 today while *Nordic Jupiter* was entering the inner anchorage for a sanitary inspection. Both vessels were damaged. *Piquete* sustained damage in way of forward tanks. Divers and support vessels — anti oil spill vessels, tugs, etc — are now proceeding to both vessels to carry out preliminary inspections. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sep 25 — Following received from OMI Marine Services LLC, the managers of crude oil tanker *Nordic Jupiter*, dated today: *Nordic Jupiter* was involved in a collision with anchored product tanker *Piquete* while under pilotage at Sao Sabastio anchorage today. There were no injuries or pollution on either vessel. *Nordic Jupiter*, which is in loaded condition, anchored at Sao Sabastio anchorage after the incident. The vessel has reported breach in No 3 Port ballast tank, with water ingress. OMI's emergency response has been activated, and a technical superintendent is currently en route. An investigation will be carried out into the incident.

Santos, Sep 26 — Our sub-agents at Sao Sebastio report: Crude oil tanker *Nordic Jupiter* and product tanker *Piquete*: Divers, class societies, P&I's are attending accordingly. Both vessels retained in order Port Captaincy inquiries take place. Managers of *Nordic Jupiter* want vessel to deliver the oil cargo but this depends on port captaincy authorization. After complete discharge *Nordic Jupiter* will proceed to inner anchorage for repairs. The cargo comprises of Brass River and Okono crude oils, total 167,000.00 m3. No oil spillage but damages quite substantial. — Lloyd's Agents.

NORWAY (Bahamas)

Kandla, Sep 22 — Understand from Alang Shipbreaking Yard that the demolition of passenger (cruise) *Blue Lady*, ex *Norway*, commenced Aug 14 and was completed Aug 16. — Lloyd's Agents.

OCEAN JEWEL OF ST. PETERSBURG (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

Santo Domingo, Sep 27 — Passenger (cruise) *Ocean Jewel of St. Petersburg* is still at Las Calderas. Repairs have not yet commenced, as no payment has been made. — Lloyd's Agents.

PAKU (Argentina)

London, Sep 22 — Following notice to mariners issued Sep 21: Fishing

Arrufo towing trawler *Paku* in lat 41 06S, long 60 51W, line length 400 metres, speed 5.3 knots, course 041, bound for Mar del Plata port.

PIQUETE (Brazil)

See *Nordic Jupiter*.

POTOMAC (U.S.A.)

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Decatur industries' headaches from the damage to Wilson Lock near Florence are not over. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to close the main lock Oct 3-30, and will shut it down again for a week in late November or December, lockmaster Gary Bowling said yesterday. "This is hurting production," said Jeremy Nails, executive director of the Decatur-Morgan County Port Authority. "Lots of industries in Decatur depend on barge traffic for receiving materials." A pair of barges (being pushed by tug *Potomac*) bound for BP Decatur struck the lock Aug 3. Since then, the lock has been down for repairs. Bowling said a floating caisson, a flooded barge set sideways to serve as a temporary dam, is being used to replace the upper gate one or two days a week to relieve the backlog of barges. An auxiliary lock is also open, but it can lock only about one barge per hour. During the October closure, the corps will not use the caisson, so only the auxiliary lock will be available. Bowling said the Tennessee Valley Authority will perform repairs, including painting the gates below the water level, while the main lock is closed. "They hope to have it finished so we can put it back in the slot about the week after Thanksgiving," Bowling said. The corps is repairing the machinery and the lock. During the installation, which will take about a week, Bowling said, the corps will again have to close the main lock. He said he would use the caisson to clear the backlog shortly before and shortly after the October repairs. The caisson will then be used one or two days a week again until the gate installation. The corps is using the caisson sparingly. "When we're using the caisson, we're taking a crew away from doing the repairs to the upper gate," Bowling said. "In the area where we are using it, we need it to get dry for the repairs." The caisson can lock about nine barges in two hours, slightly slower than the main lock normally handles.

PREVELIS (Greece)

Piraeus, Sep 27 — Passenger ro/ro *Prevelis* (15354 gt, built 1980) ran aground in shallow waters at Rethimnon port at 2005 hrs, Sep 26. The vessel had just sailed from Rethimnon with 526 passengers and 125 vehicles on board. All crew members and passengers were reportedly healthy and secure. No pollution was reported. The vessel refloated by own power and berthed safely in port. After class inspection the local port authorities allowed her

departure and finally the vessel sailed for Piraeus, at 2355 hrs, the same day. — Lloyd's Agents.

PRIDE OF BILBAO (U.K.)

London, Sep 22 — Hampshire Police have arrested a 61-year old man who worked on board passenger ro/ro *Pride of Bilbao* in connection with the deaths of three sailors and the disappearance of their yacht in the English Channel. P&O Ferries confirmed yesterday that the man, employed through an agency, was arrested and questioned under suspicion of causing manslaughter through gross negligence before being released on bail pending further inquiries. On Aug 22, the bodies of Jason Downer, Rupert Saunders and James Meaby, all in their 30s, were found in English Channel, after an incident in which coastguards believe their yacht collided with a larger vessel. During an investigation, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch examined the hull of *Pride of Bilbao*, along with the ship's black box data recorder. Until the beginning of this year, the arrested man is understood to have been a P&O Ferries employee of 20-years standing, ranked as second officer, at which point he came under the employ of third party agents.

PROBO KOALA (Panama)

See under "Miscellaneous."

PROSPERO (Sweden)

Helsinki, Sep 22 — According to VTS Helsinki Combined chemical and oil tank *Prospero* was anchored off Hanko and sailed under its own power towards St. Petersburg yesterday afternoon/evening. — Lloyd's Agents.

PROVIDER (Liberia)

London, Sep 22 — Following received from Australia RCC, timed 2245, UTC: Container Carrier *Provider* (30575 gt, built 1978), Singapore for Tauranga, called Australia RCC in position lat 08 00S, long 127 00 E at 2202, UTC, yesterday, stating they were involved in a collision with an unknown fishing vessel in Indonesian waters. The vessel sustained damage to lower forepeak tank, starboard shell plate forward of collision bulkhead above the waterline and was proceeding to Darwin, where ETA 2230, UTC, today. (Note — *Provider* sailed Singapore 2240, UTC, Sep 18, for Tauranga and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was in lat 12 20 45.54S, long 130 43 10.38E, 10.7 nautical miles from Darwin, speed 9 knots, at 2256, UTC, today.)

London, Sep 23 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS Container Carrier *Provider* was at Darwin, in lat 12 29.18S, long 130 52.41E, stationary, at 0323, UTC, today.

London, Sep 25 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS Container Carrier *Provider* was in lat 12 19.55S, long 130 42.28E at 0415, UTC, today, 11.7 nautical miles from Darwin, speed 11 knots, course 314.5 deg.

London, Sep 27 — Following received from NYK Shipmanagement, dated Singapore Sept 26: NYK

Shipmanagement as technical managers for Container Carrier *Provider* wish to state that contrary to recent reports, the vessel was not involved in any collision with a fishing boat in Indonesian waters. The facts of the case are as follows: At 1515, Sept 22 in lat 05 16.9S, long 114 15.3E, *Provider*, Singapore for Tauranga, made contact with barge *Synergy I* (1851 gt, built 2001) under tow by Singapore tug *Apollo* (125 gt, built 1998). There were no fatalities, injuries or harm to the environment as a result of this incident. The starboard bow of *Provider* sustained damage by way of the forepeak tank and, reportedly, *Synergy IP* sustained some contact damage, the extent of which is unknown to us at this moment. After ensuring that the barge and tug were safely afloat, that there were no injuries and no pollution; and with the consent of the local Indonesian RCC, *Provider* was diverted to Darwin for repairs. The vessel arrived Darwin Sept 23 and departed Sept 25 after carrying out repairs, under the supervision of the classification society, Class NK. The vessel has since continued on its way to New Zealand as scheduled. The hull and machinery underwriters of *Provider* are in contact with their counterparts re the opponent vessel, in order to reach a closure to this incident.

PXXI

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated today, states: Oil platform *A Turtle* (ex *PXXI*): Since the tug *Zouros Hellas* departed Tristan Jul 29 without being able to remove the rig, the Tristanians have been waiting anxiously to see what was to become of it. Arriving on the South African research ship *SA Agulhas* were Marine Biologist/ Photographer Sue Scott from Scotland and Geoff Fridjhon from South Africa (SS & GF) to do an Environmental Assessment. However due to bad weather conditions they have not been able to do much surveying at the rig because of heavy swells breaking in the harbour and around the island. Conditions have been marginal for diving at the rig, with a swell and poor visibility. Since the tug departed the island the rig has tilted slightly to seaward, which wasn't obvious, when they departed. Two dives have taken place on Sep 21 and Sep 22, on the first dive SS & GF dived, without underwater cameras as it was considered likely that they would be damaged, due to the heavy swell and poor visibility. Although the dive ended after only ten minutes, it was useful as considerable marine growth was seen on the legs of the rig. The next day the weather had moderated and SS & GF dive again, Conditions were better than the previous day with fewer swells although occasionally a large one would sweep the dives off the rig. The dive lasted approximately an hour, which included a collecting of specimens and taking photos. The outcome was, there appeared to be more growing on the

legs than originally thought, the legs were coated with large quantities of dead coral, barnacle and oyster shells, while the horizontal sections had less coral but more oyster and other bivalve shells, a few small hard corals, a few large mussels, large dark red anemones etc, some which at depth were alive, and are non-native to Tristan. A collection of specimens was made and will be processed in the coming days.

RANA R. (Panama)

Bahrain, Sept 21 — Product tanker *Rana R.* is still at Asry dry dock and has not yet commenced repair. — Lloyd's Agents.

ROGER BLOUGH (U.S.A.)

London, Sept 27 — Bulker *Roger Blough* arrived two harbours Sept 24 and sailed Sept 25.

RUNNER 4 (Dominica)

London, Sept 28 — A press report states: The Estonian government has earmarked EEK 25.7 million (Euro 1.64 million) to finance emptying the oil tanks in the sunken general cargo *Runner 4*. The Estonian border guard service's bidding round was won by Dutch Mammoet Salvage B.V. Norwegian Framo also submitted a bid. According to the news agency BNS, the ship's owner, Fertis International Ltd Corp, wants to prevent oil from leaking out into the sea at any cost and has promised that the costs will be covered by insurance. The Estonian environmental inspection authority says that oil is no longer leaking out of the wreck and that it estimates that about 50 tons of oil had leaked out into the sea earlier. The ship's tanks contained an estimated 155 tons of fuel and lubricating oil.

RYOEI MARU NO.78 (Japan)

Beira, Sep 28 — Fishing (general) *Ryoei Maru No.78* (409 gt, built 1989) was in collision with trawler (all types) *Tengon* in lat 16 16S, long 40 53E, near Angoche, located in the northern region of Mozambique, on Sep 27. As a result of the collision, the Japanese fishing boat will soon sink. Her crewmembers of 22, consisting of seven Japanese and 15 Indonesians have been rescued by the Taiwanese fishing boat. *Ryoei Maru No.78* is entered with Miyagi-ken Fishing Vessel Insurance Association. The reinsurer is the Central Society of Fishing Vessel Association in Japan who are sponsored by the Japanese Government. — Lloyd's Agents.

Beira, Sep 28 — Understand that trawler (all types) *Tengon* is proceeding to Mombasa in order to disembark the rescued crew from fishing (general) *Ryoei Maru No.78*. — Lloyd's Agents.

SAFMARINE AGULHAS (Liberia)

London, Sept 26 — A press report, dated today, states: According to the South African Maritime Safety Authority the tender for removing the wreck of Container Carrier *Safmarine*

Agulhas is likely to be awarded at the end of September. Responding to queries about the delay, a spokesman for SAMSA said that tenders had been placed and adjudicated but it was now up to the ship's owners to decide. Four salvage companies submitted tenders to remove the ship. The four companies in the running are SMIT Salvage, SvitzerWijsmuller, Mammoet Salvage and Titan Marine.

SAOS II (Greece)

London, Sep 27 — Lloyd's Casualty representatives in Piraeus report: During the evening of Sep 27, passenger ro/ro *Saos II* (2149 gt, built 2001) collided with the starboard side against a bollard of Mytilene port while making departure manoeuvres. The collision caused an indentation 40cm long, but there were no injuries or ingress of water. At the time of the incident there were 35 passengers, two trucks and seven cars on board. The Port Authority permitted departure after inspection by the Marine Inspectorate and issuance of a class maintenance certificate.

SAUNIÈRE (Canada)

London, Sep 22 — At 1200, ADST, Sep 21, bulker *Sauniere* (16522 gt, built 1970), while approaching the Mines Seleine dock, in vicinity of Grande Entree, Iles de la Madeleine, Quebec, in lat 47 36.24N, long 61 13.12W, it lost its starboard anchor and eight shackles.

SEA DREAM (Malta)

Istanbul, Sep 27 — Bulker *Sea Dream* (16490 gt, built 1981), Ravenna for Sevastopol, experienced engine breakdown at 1420, local time, Sep 27, while transiting the Dardanelles, and anchored at Gelibolu. — Lloyd's Agents.

SEA EXPRESS 1 (U.K.)

Liverpool, Sep 25 — Passenger ro/ro *Sea Express 1* (3003 gt, built 1991) reported minor engine problems Sep 25. The vessel is currently under repair and is expected to resume service Sep 26. — Lloyd's Agents.

SEA PRINCE (Cyprus)

Buenos Aires, Sep 21 — Our agents in San Lorenzo report wood-chip carrier *Sea Prince* left San Lorenzo at 1840, local time, Sept 17 towed by tugs *Rui I* and *Rui II* bound for Buenos Aires in order to carry out repairs to rudder damage sustained Sept 1. The vessel is now at Buenos Aires, where repairs are being carried out. Between Sept 14 and 16 lightening operations that would facilitate repair operations took place. About 3,000 tonnes of cargo were lightened at San Lorenzo Roads and discharged into three barges and 1,000 tonnes of cargo was shifted from No.6 hold to No.1 hold, which was empty at the time. To date, the three barges remain at Km 456, River Parana, under custom custody. Once repairs are completed at Buenos Aires *Sea Prince* will return to San Lorenzo in order to reload the cargo lightened and complete cargo at VicentIn Berth,

San Lorenzo. — Lloyd's Agents.

SEA TRADER

London, Sep 25 — Roll On Roll Off *Sea Trader*: Wreck of the half scrapped vessel was raised Sep 17 by the sheerleg *Amsterdam* and the *Matador* in Gent. The *Matador* was towed to Antwerp by the *Broedertrouw XV* after the work was done.

SEALARK

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: An investigation into a fire on board passenger (cruise) *Sealark* in April has placed the blame on the vessel owners, Bismarck Shipping Ltd. The investigation, conducted by (the Papua New Guinea) National Maritime Safety Authority, said the cause of the fire was because "safety systems (were) not being implemented and enforced by the vessel owners". It also blamed the owner of failing to properly man his vessel with qualified personnel with recognised qualifications. Other findings stated that: Most of the *Sealark's* crew documentation was found to be out of date or not recognised by PNG; the owner failed to promote safety training on board the vessel and the crew was poorly trained to meet the perils of shipboard fire; the investigation uncovered forged vessel certification and seafarer documents and the owner failed to maintain his vessel to a standard commensurate with the ISM Code standards. In addition, the inquiry had instructed the owner to remove the wreckage from where it had sunk, in 25m of water off Lae Harbour directly in the path of shipping traffic and to prevent pollution of the waters. The investigation recommended that all other vessels operated by Bismarck Shipping be surveyed and that if similar defects were discovered, those ships be prevented from sailing until remedial action was taken to the satisfaction of the NMSA.

SHINEI MARU (Japan)

Yokohama, Sept 22 — Industrial waste carrier *Shinei Maru*, JK4408, 1654 gt, (built 1982), ran aground in Naruto Straits, 108 degrees, 1,000 metres from Magosaki lighthouse at 1054, Sept 9. Vessel refloated under own power at 1057 same day. Vessel sustained tank damage but no oil spill involved. — Lloyd's Agents.

SKAGERN (Sweden)

London, Sep 26 — General cargo *Skagern* arrived Swinoujscie Sep 22 from Hull.

Poznan, Sep 28 — Repairs to general cargo *Skagern* commenced on Sep 23. They are expected to be completed in the middle of December. — Lloyd's Agents.

SKY DUKE (South Korea)

Busan, Sep 26 — After completion of permanent repairs at Dongil Shipyard & Engineering Co., Ltd., Busan, container carrier *Sky Duke* shifted to Pier No.3, Busan, to load cargo, on Sep 23. After completion of loading, *Sky*

Duke sailed from Busan at about 0530 hrs, Sep 24, bound for Kobe, Japan. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

SOLAR 1 (Philippines)

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 23, states: The Philippine government is finalising negotiations with the insurers of sunken non specific tanker *Solar 1* for the siphoning off of the remaining bunker fuel from the vessel's cargo containers. Defence Secretary and National Disaster Co-ordinating Council chair Avelino Cruz is consulting with officials of the vessel's P&I Club to determine the company that will siphon off the bunker fuel, said Presidential Assistant for Western Visayas Rafael Coscolluela, head of the regional Task Force *Solar 1* Oil Spill. Coscolluela, who attended the NDCC meeting on Thursday (Sep 21), said Cruz discussed the details of the removal of the bunker fuel in a teleconference with officials of the P&I Club and Petron. The P&I Club will shoulder the cost of the operation. "They are choosing from four companies which have the capacity and track record to do the operation. Three of these companies are based in Norway," Coscolluela said. Once an agreement is reached, it will take at least three-and-a-half months to completely siphon off the remaining fuel, including 45 days for preparation and for the equipment to reach the site of the sinking and another two months for the operation to be completed. "The operation will be complicated and will require special precautionary measures," Coscolluela said. Guimaras officials, scientists and environmentalists have been urging the immediate removal of the vessel and its contents because of the persistent threat that the remaining cargo will leak out. The Coast Guard believes that an estimated 200,000-250,000 litres of the total two million litres has leaked out from the vessel, which sank in 640 metres of water, around 13.5 nautical miles from the coast of Nueva Valencia town in Guimaras. The NDCC has opted for an underwater siphoning off of the remaining bunker fuel through a remote off-loading system based on the recommendation of surveyors of the Japanese survey vessel *Shensei Maru* last month. The Coast Guard said the vessel continues to leak although much more slowly than in previous weeks. Cmdr Harold Jarder, Coast Guard station chief in Iloilo and on-scene commander of the containment and clean-up operations, said there was "minimal leaking" that was "containable." He said the degree of fuel leakage was much slower and smaller compared to the first two to three weeks after the vessel sank on Aug 11. The leak created an oil slick that stretched to most of the western and eastern coastline of Guimaras. Because of the reduced leakage, the Coast Guard has deployed only one vessel near the source of the leak, along with three tugs, said Jarder. However, the number of residents

experiencing illnesses attributed to the oil sludge continues to increase, reaching 1,706 in Guimaras as of yesterday, according to a report of the Task Force. The Department of Health reported that 57.09% of the 921 residents they examined in 15 barangays from Aug 28 to Sep 19 were suffering from respiratory illnesses. The number of families that were evacuated from affected areas reached 235, or around 700 persons, as of Sep 21. Seventy-one of these families are staying in evacuation centres while the rest are with their relatives.

ST.LUC EXPRESS (Honduras)

Miami, Sep 26 — Fish and Wildlife and Coast Guard are working together to see what costs will be involved in sinking general cargo *St.Luc Express* offshore of St Lucie County, Florida, in order to make an artificial reef. Up until this date, no one has been able to contact the vessel's owner. — Lloyd's Agents.

SYNERGY I (Singapore)

See *Provider*.

TERNEY (Russia)

Antwerp, Sep 27 — General cargo *Terney* (2463 gt, built 1982) Changshu to Shanghai, in collision with barge *Xuan Cheng 1652* (1500 dwt), Shanghai to Anhui, while navigating along the Yangtze River at Taicang area, at 0116, Sep 25. Both vessels were empty, and no personal injury. *Terney* was widely holed on bow stem plating. *Xuan Cheng 1652* was torn on its starboard shell plating. Both vessels shall be repaired before resuming sailing. — "DPS Teamhead Surveyors".

TINNES (Antigua & Barbuda)

Kristiansand, Sep 22 — Bulker *Tinnes* is currently at Pier 13, Kristiansand. A surveyor has been appointed. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Sept 25 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: Bulker *Tinnes* completed repairs at Kristiansand during the weekend, and sailed for Jelsa for loading stone. Vessel sailed Jelsa early this morning, bound Cuxhaven.

TORO (Greece)

Troy, Michigan, Sep 21 — Bulker *Toro* was docked at Montreal, Quebec, with the assistance of the tug *Ocean Jupiter* at shed No.4, King Edward pier, after arriving under her own power yesterday morning, from her grounding point in the St Lawrence Seaway, parallel to Cornwall Island, Akwesasne Territorial Lands. A complete assessment will be done to determine how much damage was caused to the hull of *Toro*, due to the grounding. — "Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping."

Montreal, Sep 21 — Understand the owners of bulker *Toro* have not yet decided if permanent or temporary repairs will be carried out while the vessel is in Montreal. — Lloyd's Agents.

Troy, Mich., Sep 25 — Bulker *Toro* still in Montreal at Shed 3 in the upper harbour. Delays are usually caused by litigation, insurance, deciding if they have to offload and repair the vessel. The only dry docking facilities are at Les Mechins, Quebec, Verreault Ship Yard, as all other shipyards are now closed. — Great Lakes and Seaway Shipping.

TRADER (Georgia)

Piraeus, Sep 26 — General cargo *Trader* sailed Piraeus Sep 23 for Ukraine. — Lloyd's Agents.

TUAN CHAU (Vietnam)

London, Sept 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Quang Ngai border guards on Saturday (Sept 23) rescued product tanker *Tuan Chau* (341 gt, built 1979), Ho Chi Minh City for "Sa Ky", cargo 650 tons diesel oil, which ran into difficulty in waters off Quang Ngai. The ship, owned by Yet Kieu Sea Transport Co. in Ho Chi Minh City, was piloted to "Sa Ky" port in Quang Ngai with nine sailors on board.

VAAGEN (NIS)

London, Sept 23 — Following received from Lisbon MRCC, timed 0955, UTC: Chemical tanker *Vaagen* was in lat 37 20N, long 19 28W, at 1641, UTC, yesterday proceeding to Lisbon at five knots with shaft bearing problems. Two tugs are en route from Lisbon to escort *Vaagen* to Lisbon and are expected to rendezvous with *Vaagen* tomorrow.

Ymuiden, Sep 23 — Chemical tanker *Vaagen*: SvitserWijsmuller Salvage, in close co-operation with SvitserWijsmuller Lisbon, is engaged by the owners of the above vessel, which has propulsion problems and needs an escort/tow into Lisbon. Tug *Svitser Leixoes* departed Lisbon yesterday afternoon to proceed towards the location of the *Vaagen*, between the Azores and Portugal. — SvitserWijsmuller Salvage BV.

London, Sep 24 — Following received from Lisbon MRCC, timed 1010, UTC: Tug arrived on scene with chemical tanker *Vaagen* at 0400, UTC, today and has taken vessel in tow for Lisbon.

London, Sep 26 — Following received from Lisbon MRCC, timed 0935, UTC: Chemical tanker *Vaagen*, under tug escort, is currently entering Lisbon harbour.

VELOS (Cyprus)

Gothenburg, Sep 27 — Bulker *Velos* is still at Cityvarvet shipyard. Repairs are in progress and she will stay at least this week before departure. Upon completion the vessel will sail for an unknown Norwegian port. — Lloyd's Agents.

VOLGO-DON 5105 (Russia)

London, Sept 27 — General cargo *Volgo-Don 5105* arrived Yuzhnyy Sept 15 and sailed Sept 18.

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

WAN WU WEI HUO 3368 (China)

See *Duk Young 101*.

WEST**(St. Vincent & Grenadines)**

London, Sep 25 — General cargo *West* (494 gt, built 1961), burnt out in Antwerp in the evening of Sep 22 at quay 207. It was brought under control in the afternoon of Sep 23. The vessel was loaded with wood, roofing and other goods. One person that was on board when the fire started was able to leave the vessel safely. The vessel is floating for the moment.

WHITE SWAN (Cyprus)

London, Sep 28 — Following received from Coastguard Dover, timed 1114, UTC: Container Carrier *White Swan* (30824 gt, built 1989), Hamburg for Limassol, with general cargo in containers, is currently drifting in lat 50 30.55N, long 00 0.12E, with a defective engine. Tug *Anglian Monarch* tasked. It is the intention of *White Swan* to drift, not under command, in the south-west lane.

WORADA NAREE (Thailand)

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

XING LONG ZHOU 369 (China)

Antwerp, Sep 27 — Non specific tanker *Xing Long Zhou 369* (2316 gt, built 2006), with about 3,800 tonnes diesel oil, grounded when it was sailing in Huangpu River, morning Sep 23. Under the condition that all tanks were confirmed in normal condition, the vessel refloated about one hour later. The vessel was later on confirmed in order condition except that its propeller was deformed. — "DPS Teamhead Surveyors".

XUAN CHENG 1652 (China)

See *Terney*.

ZARA (Netherlands Antilles)

London, Sept 28 — General cargo *Zara*, Dunkirk for Ceuta, passed Gibraltar 1224, Sept 26.

Port State Control**CYPRUS**

Limassol, Sep 27 — General cargo *Najib M.* (1875 gt, built 1976) was reported to have sailed from Limassol Sep 26 for Beirut. Finally the vessel remained at Limassol anchorage after being detained by the Dept. of Merchant Shipping for Port State Control. — Lloyd's Agents.

UNITED KINGDOM

London, Sep 25 — Following received from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, dated today: Bulker *Worada Naree* was released Sep 22.

Seizures & Arrests**BAI LONG QUAN (China)**

London, Sep 25 — General cargo *Bai Long Quan* is currently still at Western Anchorage No.1, Hong Kong, under Admiralty and High Court arrest.

EVVA (North Korea)

Piraeus, Sep 26 — General cargo *Evva* was arrested for cigarette smuggling at sea six nautical miles off Katakolon Sep 25. After inspection of its holds, Coast Guard vessels took vessel to Katakolon port. The vessel's seven crew members were arrested and brought to justice. Preliminary investigation is being held by local port authorities. — Lloyd's Agents.

GREGORIO I (Panama)

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated Sep 21, states: General cargo *Gregorio I*, that was detained in Cyprus has been released, but the fate of its impounded cargo of air defence systems is unknown, a source at the ship's management firm said today. Acting on an Interpol alert, Cypriot authorities stopped and detained the vessel in early September after officials thought the vessel was involved in smuggling arms. Cyprus said it had found a batch of truck-mounted radar systems loaded in North Korea which they later identified as air defence systems, and a separate cargo of steel pipes. The source said the cargo identified as air defence systems and taken off the ship was still being held by customs, while the other cargo was free to proceed. The managers of the vessel told Reuters the pipes were loaded in China. They also said the ship's charterer was state-owned China Ocean Shipping Co. (COSCO). "She has been free to go since last Saturday (Sep 16)...We just don't know where it will go yet," a source with the ship's managers, Piraeus-based Transatlantic Maritime, told Reuters by telephone. "It could proceed to Syria eventually, but we need assurances it will not be harmed, stopped in any way. The P&I Club is deciding with Cosco ... and its owner what to do next." "A court decision has still not been reached on what will happen to it, whether its free to go or not. It's up to the Cypriot authorities," he said of the air defence equipment. Syria has since sought its release. The defence-related cargo was seized because it was billed as meteorological equipment on the ship's manifest. In addition to the apparent discrepancy in paperwork, Cyprus says it should have been informed about any military hardware passing through its territorial waters.

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Cypriot

authorities have released suspected air defence radars seized three weeks ago on Syria-bound general cargo *Gregorio I* officials said Wednesday. The Panamanian-flagged vessel was stopped on Sep 5 at the port of Limassol, after authorities said the freighter was carrying 18 trucks fitted with radars that appeared to be air defence systems. "The shipment is free to go," a Trade Ministry official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. "We have granted an export licence for the trucks and related items." Three other trucks on the freighter, which had sailed from North Korea, appeared to be command and control vehicles. There is no arms embargo on Syria but Cyprus had refused to release the cargo after the vessel's manifest said the shipment consisted of irrigation pipes and meteorological equipment. Syria requested the re-exportation of the shipment and presented an end user certificate, the official said. The issue was discussed by an advisory committee, which included representatives from the island's attorney-general's office, the foreign and defence ministries and the police, and it was decided to release the equipment.

MARSHALLS 201 (Marshall Islands)

Honolulu, Sep 28 — Fishing (general) *Marshalls 201* remains under seizure. According to a representative of NOAA, at this point in time, it is unknown when the vessel may be released, as the investigation is still ongoing. — Lloyd's Agents.

MEDIA V (Cyprus)

Durres, Sep 25 — Passenger ro/ro *Media V* left Durres port Sep 8. Possible settlements or agreements have been reached with the local creditors and the vessel was allowed to sail. The declared destination was the port of Igoumenitsa in Greece. — Lloyd's Agents.

NYZDAN (North Korea)

Karachi, Sep 27 — The honourable Sindh High Court has ordered arrest of general cargo *Nyzdan* (3534 gt, built 1971), for recovery of Rs. 313,813/- (US\$ 5,230) claimed by Chief Engineer due since year 2003. The court asked if the vessel's owner pay the amount to chief engineer, it would be allowed to leave the port. Meanwhile, understand from vessel agent in Karachi - "M" International Services (Pvt) Ltd., the vessel arrived on Sep 8 for the dry-docking at Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

OTAPAN (Mexico)

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated Sep 22, states: Tank barge *Otapan*, currently roaming the Mediterranean in search of a port, has been refused harbour by the Maltese government. The Malta Environment and Planning Authority has advised the Dutch government, which had made a request on the vessel's behalf,

that Malta will not provide harbour to the *Otapan*, a Mepa spokesman said. A few weeks ago the vessel got embroiled in a diplomatic wrangle in Turkey, where it was denied access. It had been expected to dock in Izmir to be broken up and have the asbestos covering removed, shortly after it left Amsterdam. Before the vessel got to Turkey, however, environmental NGOs raised the alarm about the “illegal levels” of asbestos in the vessel’s hull. They claimed it was laden with some 60 tons of asbestos and not one ton as was declared on the *Otapan*’s papers. Following a request by the Turkish authorities, the Dutch Environment Ministry confirmed that the ship was carrying 54 tons of asbestos, upon which the Turkish government said the ship would not be granted harbour. “I will not sacrifice the environment for the sake of a scrap iron dealer,” an angry Turkish Environment Minister Osman Pepe was reported saying, apparently in reference to his Dutch counterpart. Since then, government sources have told *The Times*, officials from the Dutch Environment Ministry have made persistent requests to the Maltese authorities but these have been turned down. It was not immediately clear whether the Dutch wanted to have the ship broken up here or use Malta as a temporary port. The vessel is now anchored off the Lesbos islands in Greece. The NGO Platform on Shipbreaking, the coalition of NGOs which coordinated the campaign on the *Otapan*, fears the Dutch government may attempt to convince other countries to take the vessel. Derk Byvanck, the coalition’s international coordinator, said warning letters have been sent to the authorities of all Mediterranean countries. “The ship can be broken up in Holland but it’s expensive, which is why the Turkish option was sought,” he said. The issue, in fact, has taken a political twist in The Netherlands, where the matter has been raised in Parliament. Local activist Caroline Muscat has written to the Environment Ministry requesting confirmation that Malta will not be accepting the vessel in its port, pointing out that besides asbestos the vessel carries other hazardous waste including toxic chemicals such as PCBs and TBT. PCBs can affect humans through inhalation (respiration), digestion, or through the skin (dermal absorption). TBT compounds leave negative effects on humans and the environment.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 24, states: Tank barge *Otapan*, rejected last month by Turkey where it was due to be dismantled, is returning to the Netherlands, the Dutch environment ministry said yesterday. It was decided last night that the vessel will return to the Netherlands, Joyce Feekman, spokesperson for the ministry said. We cannot give more details until Monday, she said. Turkish authorities refused to allow the *Otapan* to be dismantled in Turkey on grounds that it was lined with 54 tonnes of

undeclared asbestos. Since then it has been anchored off the Greek island of Lesbos waiting for the Dutch government and its owner to find a shipyard willing to dismantle it. Pieter van Geel, the Dutch secretary of state for the environment, travelled to Ankara to try to convince his Turkish counterpart to allow the ship to be dismantled in Turkey, but Osman Pepe remained steadfast in his refusal to let it enter Turkish waters. Van Geel said blame lay with the ship’s owners, a debt-recovery firm called Basilisk, which passed on inaccurate information to the ministry. Basilisk however apparently recently sold the ship to the Turkish Simsekler shipyard. Van Geel suggested that a large part of the asbestos from the broken-up ship could be taken to the Netherlands and treated there. He added the Dutch government did not consider it owned the ship, although a court decision last year made it a co-owner with Basilisk.

PROBO KOALA (Panama)

Tallinn, Sep 27 — Estonian police on Wednesday (Sep 27) impounded combined bulk and oil carrier *Probo Koala*, which discharged toxic waste in Africa that has killed at least eight people, on suspicions it was flushing similar waste into the Baltic sea. The prosecutor’s office said the Panamanian-registered vessel had been seized in the Estonian port of Paldiski. “We have impounded the ship as it is under criminal investigation,” State Prosecutor Piret Seeman told Reuters. Thousands of people in Ivory Coast have suffered vomiting, stomach pains and other symptoms caused by toxic fumes from waste from the vessel discharged in late August. The incident has stretched the country’s health services and forced its cabinet to resign. Estonia’s Environment Ministry said tests of the Baltic waters around the vessel had shown disturbing results. “Preliminary analysis shows that it contains similar substances as those in the Ivory Coast,” a spokesman said. Estonia has been asked by Ivory Coast to detain the vessel, after an eighth person in the West African country died from exposure to the waste. On Tuesday night environmental protesters hooked themselves up to the vessel’s mooring lines to stop it leaving. They were later arrested by border guards and fined. Greenpeace said the activists had moved in when they heard the vessel, which they have tried to blockade by anchoring a protest vessel nearby, was about to sail. The group welcomed the Estonian government’s action against the *Probo Koala*, and said that as a result it had called off its blockade of the vessel. “Greenpeace believes this will now spark a full international inquiry into all of the companies and regulatory agencies which failed to stop the dumping of deadly toxic waste in the Ivory Coast,” the group said in a statement. “The *Probo Koala* is an international toxic crime scene and needs to be fully investigated,” the statement added.

French embassy officials on Tuesday said toxic matter recovered from 13 sites in Ivory Coast’s main city Abidjan would be shipped to France for disposal. In the Ivory Coast medical personnel had carried out 80,000 consultations linked to the dumping by Monday, an official said. Trafigura, the Dutch-based oil trading firm which chartered the vessel, described the waste as “chemical slops”, a mixture of gasoline, spent caustic soda and water. It said it was a normal by-product of cleaning tanks used to transport fuel. — Reuters.

SEA SERENADE (Cyprus)

Koper, Sep 25 — Roll on roll off *Sea Serenade* is still at dry dock at Izola yesterday. Agent advised that vessel has not yet completed all the inspections. It is however also relevant that vessel’s agent is not in possession of reliable fresh information on completion of all class inspections, as owners arranging the same directly without Agent’s involvement. — Lloyd’s Agents.

XUAN VIET HAI PHONG (Vietnam)

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 26, states: The Bureau of Customs issued a hold order against Vietnamese general cargo *Xuan Viet Hai Phong* (2742 gt, built 1967) after its crew allegedly pilfered and sold rice imported by the National Food Authority from Vietnam. Customs Officer Josefa Villaseñor said the vessel’s crewmembers were discovered selling sacks of rice consigned to the National Food Authority (NFA) when it anchored at Punta Diwata Point near the shoreline of Barangay Vinapor, Carmen, Agusan del Norte last Thursday (Sep 21). *Xuan Viet Hai Phong* is docked at the International Port of Nasipit, Agusan del Norte pending investigation on charges of pilferage. Around 26 sacks of rice were confiscated by combined team of PNP Maritime, Regional Police Intelligence Office, Coast Guard, Bureau of Customs, and the Navy, said Senior Police Officer 4 Proculo Amora, division head of the Regional PNP Maritime office. Amora said the 26 sacks of rice they confiscated could be possibly be part of the NFA rice imported from Vietnam, that has been sold to the residents in the area without the knowledge of the consignee. He added that according to witnesses the vessel’s crewmembers sometimes accept raw native chickens and other domesticated animals in exchange of the rice. According to Amora, the vessel arrived from Vietnam last week and unloaded some 66,300 sacks of imported Vietnam rice at the Surigao City port. According to the vessel’s manifest, the vessel was carrying 70,000 sacks of imported rice from Vietnam but it only unloaded 66,300 sacks in Surigao, which was received and certified by NFA officials, Amora said. The foreign vessel was heading towards Medina in Misamis Oriental to load copra before proceeds to Vietnam when authorities intercepted the ship at the Punta

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

Diwata Point in Vinapor, Carmen, Agusan del Norte. Residents in the area reported the sale of alleged pilfered NFA rice to authorities. A police report said crewmembers were selling a sack of rice at P750.00 at first but on the following day it was already sold at P850.00. A check at nearby areas such as in Nasipit town some enterprising ambulant vendors were selling a sack of rice believed to be part of the pilfered NFA rice at P1,000 to P 1,200 per sack. Amora said they are still awaiting order from the Bureau of Customs for a joint inspection of the vessel.

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated Sep 28, states: Official investigation results conducted by a composite team on the intercepted Vietnam general cargo *Xuan Viet Hai Phong* showed that 663 sacks of imported Vietnam rice went missing. The vessel was off Punta Diwata Point, Vinapor, Carmen, Agusan del Norte when intercepted last Sep 19. The team said instead of 68,000 sacks of Vietnam rice for the National Food Authority (NFA) only 67,337 sacks were unloaded at the city's port by the Vietnamese vessel. The vessel arrived from Vietnam in Surigao City Sep 14. The composite team is comprised of the local personnel of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Philippine National Police Maritime Group, Coast Guard, the Philippine Navy, Bureau of Immigration and Bureau of Customs. But, the team created by the Bureau of Customs sub port office in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte in their official recommendation ordered the cargo vessel to pay obligations it owes to the National Government before it is allowed to leave. In their investigation, the Vietnamese cargo vessel was found selling and bartering rice in exchange for goats, chicken, etc. with local residents in Vinapor, Carmen, Agusan del Norte while anchoring off shore Punta Diwata point "however in small quantities", the report said. The team also disclosed in their report that the vessel failed to send SOS to proper authorities, which created doubts as to the real motive in anchoring at Punta Diwata. But again the team claimed, "the offenses were minor and that it can be compensated by paying fines." The ship personnel claimed they sought refuge at the Punta Diwata Point near Vinapor village for safety last Sep 18 after allegedly experiencing engine trouble while heading towards Misamis Oriental in Lunao, Gingoog City from Surigao City. Custom Collector William Reyes of the Bureau of Customs Port of Surigao said they discovered the rice cargoes are lacking after Surigao del Norte NFA office informed them the original order by the National Government facilitated through Manila based agent Lionship Philippines Inc. from Vietnam were 68,000 sacks. Based on official inventory by the Bureau of Customs office here and signed by the ship personnel, the NFA Provincial Office and the PPA, the official number of

sacks unloaded numbered 67,337 sacks. But 43-year-old Master, Vietnamese Pham Quang Vinh and 34-year-old Chief Officer Hoang Phong Son said the discrepancies might have originated from the Port of Saigon where the cargoes came from. Reyes admitted the local Customs Office in Butuan City have not yet filed any single charges against the vessel after the regional NBI claimed a rice smuggling case they contemplate to file is too weak. Earlier, Officer in Charge Josefa Villaseñor of the Bureau of Customs sub port office of Nasipit said they are still in a quandary on what charges to file against the cargo vessel. The Vietnamese ship owner, Xuan Viet Co. in Saigon, Vietnam through its Manila based agent is now asking what cases are filed against the cargo vessel after the local Custom Office issued a hold order against the cargo vessel now docked at the Nasipit International Seaport.



BAIJI AREA, IRAQ

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

PRUDHOE BAY, ALASKA

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 24, states: US regulators today approved a request by BP to restart and test for corrosion a pipeline it shut in August resulting in the closure of half the UK company's Alaskan oilfield. The move is the first step in getting the field back to full production. Prudhoe Bay is North America's largest oilfield, and closing half of it took 200,000 barrels of oil a day out of the tight marketplace, provoking a backlash against the company that resulted in Congressional hearings on why BP let the field deteriorate to such a state. The US Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), which regulates oil pipelines, said today it had approved BP pumping oil back into the line if it deployed incident response personnel and cleaning equipment to respond to any sign of trouble. "Any problems identified during testing will result in an immediate shutdown of the line," said Thomas Barrett, PHMSA administrator. "The only way to test these lines to make sure they are safe is to restart them in a controlled, monitored way," Mr Barrett said. The testing will involve bringing the line up to operating pressure, and running an internal cleaning device, known as a "pig", to dislodge built-up solids.

VOLGOGRAD REGION, RUSSIA

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated today, states: An explosion hit a

gas pipeline in the Volgograd region of southern Russia early today, sparking a fire but causing no deaths or injuries, the Emergency Situations Ministry said. A spokesman for OAO Gazprom, the state monopoly that controls Russia's gas pipelines, confirmed the explosion in one of three trunk pipelines carrying natural gas from Central Asia to Russia, but said it would not affect supplies. "This will have no effect on the supply of gas to consumers. There is no problem, we will redirect gas from elsewhere," Sergei Kuprianov said. The blast occurred 30 kilometres from the nearest town, Mikhailovka. Repair workers were waiting for the spilled gas to burn before approaching the site.



BATANGAS BAY, PHILIPPINES

See *Ginga Falcon* under "Marine".

SONGHUA RIVER, CHINA

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: An oil spill in the Songhua River has been brought under control and will not threaten drinking water in Harbin, capital of north-east China's Heilongjiang Province, state authorities said today. A visible greasy slick in the river near the Songhua Jiang Bridge was discovered Friday afternoon (Sep 22), the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) said in a press release. The administration sent out a working team to the spot for pollution control after it received report of oil leak early yesterday morning. The provincial government took immediate measures such as using activated carbon to absorb the pollutants and building a blocking belt in the downstream to protect the water in the river and surrounding ecological environment, the administration said. By 1600 yesterday, the oil substance had been completely decomposed in the downstream area and the water quality recovered. Primary investigation showed that the oil leak could have been caused by the diesel oil discharged from passing vessels, the SEPA said. Three suspected vessels are now under detention for investigation. Environmental departments would keep monitoring the Songhua River to make sure it was not polluted, the SEPA said.



BAY OF BENGAL

London, Sept 22 — A press report, dated today, states: The death toll

from a tropical storm in the Bay of Bengal rose to 54 today as the government declared a state of emergency in the coastal districts of Bangladesh, officials said. The overnight toll of 39 rose as coast guard rescuers recovered 15 more bodies of fishermen. Thousands of other fishermen were unaccounted for as more than 600 fishing trawlers and sailing boats went missing in the storm. Under the state of emergency, the search and rescue operations were intensified in frantic efforts to locate survivors and bodies. The ports and shipping ministry also suspended all ferry services to islands and ordered harbours and river stations to hoist danger signals to incoming vessels.

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Eighty-four bodies of Bangladeshi fishermen who were drowned in Tuesday evening's (Sep 19) violent storm have been recovered and more bodies are seen floating in the Bay of Bengal, with bad weather preventing rescue operations, media reports on Saturday said. Around 500 fishing boats with about 5,000 fishermen sank in the Bay of Bengal in the storm. Private television Ntv reported that 84 bodies of fishermen were recovered from the different coastal areas stretching from south-eastern Cox's Bazar to south-western Sundarbans. The bodies have drifted to different canals and rivers along the coastal belt of Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Navy, which is searching for the missing commander of a navy ship, rescued at least 200 fishermen from the sea on Friday. Life across the country was severely disrupted for the fourth consecutive day due to rains with gusty winds. The weather office in Dhaka yesterday said that there would be no improvement in the rough weather conditions in the next few days. Thousands of relatives of the missing people were still waiting on the beaches with the hope they will find their near and dear ones alive, reports said. Many of the bodies have drifted to the islands of the world's largest mangrove forest Sundarbans. The Bengali daily Ittefaq said hundreds of bodies were still floating in the Bay near Sundarbans.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Bangladesh said 1,788 fishermen and hundreds of trawlers were still missing Sunday (Sep 24), six days after a storm in the Bay of Bengal that has killed scores of people in coastal regions including in India. The government raised the death toll in Bangladesh to 36 from 31, still far short of the figure of 85 dead reported by Bangladesh's official news agency BSS. "Six days after the storm 391 trawlers remained unaccounted for," said Shahjahan Shiraji, spokesman for the Food and Disaster Management Ministry. "Eight hundred and twenty three fishermen were rescued by the coast guard and other fishermen. Still, 1,788 fishermen remained unaccounted for."

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 24, states: Altogether 43 people, including eight in landslide in

North Bengal, were killed and more than five million affected in the flood in ten districts of West Bengal. State Finance Minister Asim Dasgupta here today said the state government had sanctioned another Rs 17 crore in addition to earlier Rs 17 crore for flood relief, adding 2,150 ton relief materials had been disbursed on a war-footing. The worst-affected district was Murshidabad, where Bharatpur, Nabagram and Baraoa had been submerged and thousands rendered homeless due to overflowing of the Mayurakshi river. However, the flood situation had not further worsened in Birbhum. District Magistrate Khalil Ahmed said more than 500 people had been evacuated to safer places. However, more than 100 villages were submerged due to breach in embankment of rivers Ajay and Mayurakshi. With a low pressure over the Bay of Bengal triggering the calamity, the state government had sounded a red alert in the worst-affected South and North 24 Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly, East Midnapore. The other affected districts are Murshidabad, Bankura, Purulia, Bardhaman and Birbhum. With very heavy rains in North Bengal, red alert had been sounded in Jalpaiguri district. At least 400 birds were killed in Kulik bird sanctuary in North Bengal. Landslides had blocked roads in Thanagao in Darjeeling following incessant rains in the hills for the last 72 hours. Eight people were killed and six injured in the landslide. Darjeeling Superintendent of Police Rajesh Subarno said here in the day that more than thirty landslides had been reported in the district. Official sources said the Damodar river had crossed the danger mark and a red alert had been issued for Hooghly and Howrah districts. Already Udaynarayanpur and Amta block had been submerged and thousands of people evacuated. Flood-like situation has been created in several low-lying areas in North 24 Parganas. Nearly 40,000 people of Bongaon sub-division were marooned in Bagdah, Bongaon and Gaighata areas. Vast agricultural land had been submerged incurring a loss of at least Rs 70 crore. In Purulia, officials sources said thousands of villagers of various blocks became shelterless as their houses were badly damaged. Several villages of Bardhaman were inundated following breach in the embankments of Ajay river. Yellow alert has been issued in Katwa. Release of water from Mython and Tilpara barrages had created a flood-like situation in the surrounding areas. Patashpur area in East Midnapur was also under water. Release of water from the Durgapur barrage had also created flood-like situation in Bankura.

ETHIOPIA

Nairobi, Sep 26 — The flash floods that hit parts of Ethiopia in August have started receding in the north, one of the most heavily affected areas, the United Nations Office for the

Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said. "In South Gondar zone of Amhara Region, 16 out of the 21 flooded kebeles zones in Fogera, Libokemkem and Dembia woredas districts have completely dried up," said OCHA. "The displaced people from these areas have been advised to return to their villages by the local authorities," OCHA said in its weekly bulletin on humanitarian issues on Monday. Ethiopia experienced the worst floods in its history in August, affecting all five regions of the country. In Dire Dawa city in the east, thousands were made homeless after the Dechatu river burst its banks on 6 August. Across the country, at least 357,000 people have been affected by the floods, which made 136,528 homeless, according to the UN. In total more than 600 people died. As the excess water has receded farmers have started preparing their land for new planting but many depend on the provision of seeds by humanitarian agencies after most were washed away, the agency warned. Meanwhile, in other parts of the country floods are still affecting thousands of people, according to OCHA. A district in the eastern Somali region was flooded in the last week of August, seriously affecting two administrative units. In Gambella, 600 km southwest of Addis Ababa, up to 31,000 people are still seriously affected by the floods in eight districts, according to a regional report. — Reuters.

HURRICANE "HELENE"

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated Sep 21, states: Hurricane "Helene" was downgraded to a Category 1 storm today as it churned in the open Atlantic well east of Bermuda, forecasters said. At 2300 hrs, "Helene" was centered about 500 miles east of Bermuda and was moving toward the north-northeast near 14 mph, according to the National Hurricane Centre in Miami. Maximum sustained winds were near 85 mph, up from 80 mph earlier in the day. Hurricane force winds extended outward up to 40 miles. "Although Helene will be passing several hundred miles to the east of Bermuda tonight, large ocean swells producing hazardous surf conditions could affect the area during the next couple of days," said Dan Brown, a National Hurricane Centre forecaster.

London, Sep 22 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Hurricane "Helene": Hurricane centre located near lat 32.9N, long 55.2W, at 0900, UTC, Sep 22. Position accurate to within 30 nautical miles. Present movement towards the north-east, or 040 deg, at 13 knots. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots with gusts to 90 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 35 nautical miles east semicircle, 30 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 90 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 70 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 60 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 175 nautical miles north-west quadrant, 180 nautical miles north-

east quadrant, 200 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 12-foot seas 400 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 300 nautical miles south-east quadrant, 350 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 23: Position lat 37.6N, long 48.5W. Maximum sustained winds 70 knots with gusts to 85 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 40 nautical miles east semicircle, 30 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 80 nautical miles east semicircle, 60 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 200 nautical miles east semicircle, 175 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: "Helene" became a hurricane again today as it moved quickly over the open Atlantic, and the storm will likely create hazardous surf conditions for Bermuda, forecasters said. "Helene's" top sustained winds strengthened to 90 mph, above the 74 mph threshold to be classified as a hurricane, the National Hurricane Centre in Miami said in a special advisory. "Helene" had been downgraded to a tropical storm with winds of 70 mph Friday night. However, "Helene" was expected to weaken as it gradually loses tropical characteristics, the hurricane centre said. Tropical storm force winds of at least 39 mph extend up to 345 miles from "Helene's" centre. Although the hurricane was not expected to make landfall, Bermuda was expected to have hazardous surf conditions until tonight, said Stacy Stewart, a senior hurricane specialist. At 1700, EDT, "Helene" was centred about 945 miles west of the Azores. It was moving east-northeast near 22 mph.

London, Sep 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Hurricane "Helene": Hurricane centre located near lat 39.9N, long 39.9W, at 0900, UTC, Sep 24. Position accurate to within 30 nautical miles. Present movement towards the east-northeast, or 065 deg, at 20 knots. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots with gusts to 90 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 80 nautical miles south-west and north-west. Radius of 50-knot winds 150 nautical miles north-east, 130 nautical miles south-east and south-west and 200 nautical miles north-west. Radius of 34-knot winds 325 nautical miles north-east and north-west, 230 nautical miles south-east and 250 nautical miles south-west. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 25: Position lat 43.2N, long 33.1W. Extratropical. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 24, states: "Helene" weakened and was no longer a hurricane today as it moved through the open Atlantic, forecasters said. "Helene's" top sustained winds were near 70 mph, below the 74 mph threshold for hurricane force winds but above the 39 mph winds needed to be classified as a tropical storm, according to the National Hurricane Centre in Miami. "Helene" had 85 mph winds earlier today. "Helene" could

spread gale-force winds over the sparsely populated Azores today, though it was expected to pass well to the north of the islands, forecasters said. Tropical storm-force winds extended up to 430 miles from Helene's centre as it becomes a large area of low pressure. At 1100 hrs, "Helene" was centered about 595 miles west-northwest of the Azores. It was moving northeast near 21 mph.

HURRICANE "KATRINA"

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated Sep 25, states: An oil company and plaintiffs affected by the worst environmental disaster during Hurricane "Katrina" said today they had agreed to a \$330 million settlement. Murphy Oil, based in El Dorado, Ark., said in a statement it had reached an agreement with the plaintiff attorneys over the spill from an oil storage tank at its Meraux refinery in St. Bernard Parish near New Orleans. One million gallons of oil coursed into canals and thousands of homes after storm surge moved the tank off its base. Obviously, the community is eager to move forward, and so are we, said Murphy spokeswoman Mindy West. The proposed agreement is subject to approval from the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, which has scheduled a hearing for the matter on October 10. The proposed settlement includes \$80 million paid so far to settle roughly 2,700 household and business claims, said Sidney Torres, the court-appointed liaison for the committee. The class consists of a total of about 6,200 claims, he said. Another \$160 million would go toward property buyouts and paying property owners in the area, while the remaining \$90 million would be for clean-up, he said. The latter figure could rise, however, if more clean-up work is needed, Torres said. Terms of the proposed agreement and benefits would be paid by Murphy and its insurers, according to a news release from the plaintiff attorneys. Torres said attorneys' fees would be above and beyond the settlement amount, and set by the judge. Torres said the judge urged all parties to work toward a resolution.

HURRICANE "RITA"

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated Sep 25, states: The Louisiana Department of Insurance on Friday (Sep 22) said just over \$2.4 billion had been paid out by insurers as of August 31 for damage caused by Hurricane "Rita" a year ago. The amount was paid out on 200,582 claims in Louisiana, according to the insurance department. The estimate does not include losses paid by the National Flood Insurance Programme. More than half the total claims paid were in Calcasieu Parish in the southwestern part of the state, which had almost 70,000 claims costing \$1.4 billion. Nearly all the payments were to homeowners. The largest homeowners insurers in Louisiana are State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Co.,

Allstate Corp. and the Louisiana Citizens Property Insurance Corp., a state-run insurer. Last month, The Louisiana Supreme Court approved Louisiana's order that insurers allow an extra year for residents to file lawsuits over claim disputes resulting from the 2005 hurricane season. The original one-year deadline was extended to two years, giving residents until 2007 to file lawsuits. Hurricane "Rita", which hit the state on September 24, 2005, caused more than \$5 billion in damages overall. According to figures released by the Insurance Information Institute, "Rita" was the 7th most expensive hurricane in U.S history. Nearly 60 percent of the insured losses from "Rita" were in Louisiana, with most of the rest coming from Texas, as of February, according to the institute.

ITALY

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Pouring rains have caused many problems in Italy, including the derailment of a train in the north of the country. No one has been wounded in the accident, reports say. Several subway stations have been flooded in Rome and Venice's famous San Marco Square is completely flooded due to the high water levels in the canals.

NEW ZEALAND

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Passengers on a flight to Wellington were this morning forced to wait patiently as their aircraft circled the airport, which was blanketed in fog. An airport company spokesman said at around 0700 that the fog rolled in an hour earlier and no flights had been able to take off or land since then. However, Air New Zealand's website suggested flights were now landing. A spokesman said later that while some flights had been able to take off and land, others had not. "There's quite a long delay and a lot of cancellations." When there were gaps in the fog, flights could land or take-off, but there was no indication when it would lift completely. Five flights had been affected by 0715 and although no aircraft had been diverted, one was circling in hope the fog would clear enough to land.

THAILAND

London, Sep 27 — Flooding in Phitsanulok worsened yesterday, with 70 villages inundated in Bang Rakam district and 23 schools closed. The Disaster Prevention Mitigation Department (DPMD) said that 23 provinces - a third of the country - have been affected by the latest floods. Some 12 people have been killed and 477,391 others affected. Floodwater from Sukhothai has flowed into the Yom River, but it failed to drain quickly. The Nan River was reported to be 9.36 metres deep and the flooded area extended to 70 villages. DPMD director-general Anucha Mokawet said the floods had affected 3,569 villages in 23 provinces, with 887,631 rai of farmland damaged. Two people were

killed in Lampang, three in Sukhothai, five in Phitsanulok, and one each in Phetchabun and Chaiyaphum. Nine provinces were flooded yesterday morning after the main rivers passing through each flowed over their banks. They were Lampang, Tak, Phitsanulok, Sukhothai, Phichit, Nakhon Sawan, Angthong, Ayutthaya and Chaiyaphum, Anucha said. Although the tropical depression has been downgraded to a low-pressure cell now over Burma, the Meteorological Department said the North, West and upper South would continue to have heavy rain. Residents in lowland areas in Tak, Chiang Mai, Sukhothai, Kamphaeng Phet, Nakhon Sawan, Uthai Thani, Kanchanaburi, Suphan Buri, Ratchaburi, Phetchaburi, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Chumphon, Ranong and Phang Nga were warned of flash floods. People living in riverside areas in the lower North, Central and eastern regions were also told to brace for flooding. The Public Health Ministry said there had been 100,000 cases of conjunctivitis over the past nine months, with 29,000 cases last month alone. A southbound train was derailed yesterday morning after heavy rain eroded the track. No injuries were reported but train operations in the southernmost provinces were paralysed before resuming last night.

TROPICAL CYCLONE "MUKDA"

London, Sep 22 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone "Mukda" near lat 20.1N, long 66.3E, at 0600, UTC, Sep 22. Movement past six hours 060 deg at two knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots with gusts to 65 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds 40 nautical miles. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 23: Position lat 19.8N, long 66.6E. Maximum sustained winds 65 knots with gusts to 80 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 25 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 55 nautical miles north semicircle, 50 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical cyclone "Mukda" near lat 20.4N, long 66.6E, at 0600, UTC, Sep 24. Movement past six hours 225 deg at one knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots with gusts to 45 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 25: Position lat 20.2N, long 66.1E. Maximum sustained winds 35 knots with gusts to 45 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "XANGSANE"

London, Sep 26 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today: Tropical storm "Xangsane" near lat 12.1N, long 127.3E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 300 degrees at six knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots, gusts 55 knots. Forecast position lat

12.7N, long 126.6E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 50 knots, gusts 65 knots. Forecast position lat 13.5N, long 125.6E at 0600, UTC, Sep 27. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots, gusts 70 knots.

TYPHOON "SHANSHAN"

Yokohama, Sep 27 — Ferry A.A.A. *Ufuli* is still lying in the same position, in a depth of 60 metres. There are no plans to save the hull at present. — Lloyd's Agents.

TYPHOON "XANGSANE"

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Xangsane" is forecast to strike the Philippines at about 1800, UTC, Sep 26. Data supplied by the US Navy and Air Force Joint Typhoon Warning Centre suggest that the point of landfall will be near lat 12.2N, long 126.2 E. "Xangsane" is expected to bring 1-minute maximum sustained winds to the region of around 120 km/h (74 mph). Wind gusts in the area may be considerably higher. According to the Saffir-Simpson damage scale the potential property damage and flooding from a storm of "Xangsane's" strength (category 1) at landfall includes: Storm surge generally 1.2-1.5 metres (4-5 feet) above normal. No real damage to building structures. Damage primarily to unanchored mobile homes, shrubbery, and trees. Some damage to poorly constructed signs. Some coastal road flooding and minor pier damage. There is also the potential for flooding further inland due to heavy rain.

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A tropical storm approaching the eastern Philippines intensified into a typhoon today as it pounded the coast with high winds and heavy rains, stranding hundreds of ferry passengers, forecasters said. "Xangsane" became the 10th typhoon this year, packing maximum winds of 120 kilometres per hour and gusts of up to 150 kph. Forecasters said it will still intensify before making landfall over Camarines Sur province in the Bicol region, about 280 kilometers southeast of Manila, early tomorrow. The typhoon will cross Central Luzon Friday (Sep 29) before moving into the South China Sea, heading for Vietnam on Sunday (Oct 1). Radio reports said hundreds of ferry passengers were stranded after the coast guard barred vessels from leaving ports, including in the country's second largest city of Cebu. A storm alert was in effect over the central Philippines and officials warned that tidal waves will be 1.5 metres above normal. Residents also were alerted to the risk of flash floods and landslides.

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Typhoon "Xangsane" slammed into the Philippines today, leaving thousands of ferry and airline passengers stranded as services were suspended, civil defence officials said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage from the typhoon, which

packed winds of 120 kph, with gusts of up to 150 kph, as it struck the island of Samar. Weather bureau PAGASA said the typhoon would hit the Bicol peninsula late today and other areas of Luzon over the next three days. Ferry services between Luzon and Samar, Leyte and Masbate island were shut down by the Coast Guard yesterday. Aviation authorities also suspended a number of domestic flights to those areas. The civil defence office in Manila said some 3,400 people were stranded at the ferry crossings along with 255 vehicles. Nineteen seagoing vessels were also ordered not to leave the ports of Tabaco, Matnog and Pilar in Bicol, and Bapor in Masbate, it said in a statement. PAGASA warned coastal residents in Samar to seek higher ground to avoid possible storm surges. Flashfloods and landslides were also expected in the area.

London, Sep 27 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today, states: Typhoon "Xangsane" near lat 12.9N, long 124.6E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 295 degrees at 10 knots. Position accurate to within 20 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 115 knots, gusts 140 knots. Forecast position lat 13.5N, long 123.2E at 1800, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 100 knots, gusts 125 knots. Forecast position lat 14.2N, long 121.7E at 0600, UTC, Sep 28. Maximum sustained winds 90 knots, gusts 110 knots.

TYPHOON "YAGI"

London, Sep 22 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Super typhoon "Yagi" near lat 25.0N, long 142.5E, at 0600, UTC, Sep 22. Movement past six hours 325 deg at 16 knots. Position accurate to within 25 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 140 knots with gusts to 170 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 40 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 45 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 75 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 85 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 70 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 125 nautical miles south-west quadrant, 135 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Sep 23: Position lat 30.2N, long 141.8E. Maximum sustained winds 125 knots with gusts to 150 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds 40 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds 75 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 70 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 34-knot winds 130 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 125 nautical miles elsewhere.

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: A powerful typhoon was moving northward early today in the Pacific Ocean south of the Ogasawara Islands and is expected to approach eastern Japan on Sunday (Sep 24), the Japan Meteorological Agency reported. Typhoon "Yagi" was travelling north-northeast at a speed of 20 kilometres per hour in waters 80

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km north of Chichijima Island in the island chain, some 1,000 km south of Tokyo, the agency said. Stormy weather is expected to prevail across a wide area on the Pacific sides of eastern and northeastern Japan, the agency warned.

London, Sep 24 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Typhoon “Yagi” near lat 33.8N, long 147E, at 0001, UTC, Sep 24. Movement past six hours 045 deg at 24 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots with gusts to 90 knots. Becoming extratropical. Radius of 64-knot winds 30 nautical miles north-east quadrant, 25 nautical miles elsewhere. Radius of 50-knot winds 65 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 125 nautical miles. Forecast for 0001, UTC, Sep 25: Position lat 41N, long 159.2E. Maximum sustained winds 40 knots with gusts to 50 knots. Extratropical.

Tokyo, Sep 24 — A mild typhoon brushed past Japan’s eastern coast today and forecasters said the storm would weaken as it veered further northeast into the Pacific. There were no reports of injuries. Typhoon “Yagi” weakened to a Category 2 typhoon by early today from a Category 3, according to British-based Web site Tropical Storm Risk, and was expected fade into a tropical storm later in day. Japanese forecasters said the storm had winds of up to 126 kph, and at 0950 hrs (0050, UTC), the centre of the storm was about 600 km east-southeast of Choshi. “Yagi” was moving northeast at 35 kph pounding high waves onto Choshi’s coastline, but the storm was nearing its end, an official at the Japanese Meteorological Agency said. — Reuters.

London, Sep 25 — Following received from the Meteorological Office, dated today, states: Typhoon “Yagi” near lat 33.8N, long 147.0E at 0000, UTC, today. Movement for the past six hours 45 degrees at 24 knots. Position accurate to within 60 nautical miles. Maximum sustained winds 75 knots, gusts 90 knots. Forecast position lat 37.3N, long 152.4E at 1200, UTC, today. Maximum sustained winds 55 knots, gusts 70 knots. Forecast position lat 41.0N, long 159.2E at 0000, UTC, Sep 26. Maximum sustained winds 40 knots, gusts 50 knots.

UNITED STATES

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: High winds, heavy rain and tornadoes pounded parts of the Midwest and the South, leaving seven people dead and stranding others in trees and shelters while forecasters warned today of more stormy weather to come. Stormy weather buffeted the region yesterday. Areas in northeast Arkansas and southeast Missouri received more than 10 inches of rain in 24 hours, said David Blanchard, a National Weather Service forecaster in Paducah, Ky. More storms and possibly tornadoes were forecast for today. Two tornadoes swept through south-central Missouri

yesterday afternoon, damaging more than 100 homes and tearing off part of a roof at a middle school moments after a tornado drill. Six people were killed in Kentucky, including a father and his 1-year-old daughter who died when their truck slid off an interstate into flood waters near Elizabethtown. The man was pronounced dead at the scene, Kentucky state police said. His daughter was flown to Kosair Children’s Hospital in Louisville, where she died later today, Jefferson County Deputy Coroner Gayle Norris said. Two women died trying to cross a flooded roadway early today. Witnesses told rescue officials the women were swept away in a flooded creek, Fire Battalion Chief Mat Ragland said. Others killed included a Jessamine County woman who ran her pickup truck into high water and a woman in the southwestern part of the state whose car struck a guard rail. In northwest Arkansas, a woman died when her boat was struck by lightning as tried to make it to shore, Washington County Sheriff Tim Helder said. Another person in the boat was injured and treated at a hospital. In Kentucky, flooding forced more than 100 people out of a Louisville apartment complex, Mayor Jerry Abramson said. Portions of Interstate 64 just east of Louisville were closed in both directions due to standing water. Dozens of cars were stranded, Abramson said. Thousands across the region were without power Saturday, including more than 5,000 Louisville Gas & Electric customers.

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: At least nine people have been killed during the past two days as a result of severe storms spawning tornadoes, high winds and heavy rains throughout parts of the US Midwest and South. Eight people were killed in Kentucky and an Arkansas woman died Sep 22 when her boat was struck by lightning on a lake. The National Weather Service said parts of Kentucky received at least five inches of rain and parts of north-east Arkansas and south-east Missouri had more than 10 inches of rain during a 24-hour period. The storms spawned about 10 tornadoes in Missouri, damaging or destroying 400 structures, and another twister touched down in western Michigan. Tennessee and Indiana also had heavy flooding in the past two days.

London, Sep 25 — As the death toll from weekend flooding in the Midwest and South rose to at least 14 today, residents were busy sweeping out mud from homes and businesses that were inundated with water. At least 10 deaths were reported in Kentucky after flooding triggered by 5 to 10 inches of rain sent rivers and creeks over their banks. Fifteen counties and four cities declared states of emergency, said Buddy Rogers of the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management. The storms that hit parts of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee on Friday (Sep 22) and Saturday

stranded people in cars, forced others from their homes and left thousands without power. The death toll in Kentucky reached 10, including a father and his 1-year-old daughter in a truck that skidded in floodwaters. Two deaths were reported in Arkansas, and in Illinois, authorities say lightning was the apparent cause of a house fire that killed elderly two women. In northern Arkansas, the search for a man who was swept away when the Spring River overflowed its banks was to resume today. Flood warnings remained in effect today for six counties in northeastern Arkansas for high water along the Black, Cache and White rivers. The National Weather Service reported that areas of Kentucky received at least 5 inches of rain, with isolated regions getting close to 10 inches. Over 24 hours, parts of northeast Arkansas and southeast Missouri received more than 10 inches of rain, the weather service reported. In central and eastern Missouri, nearly 400 structures were damaged or destroyed and at least 10 people were injured by about 10 tornadoes, officials said.

VIETNAM

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Four people have died in Vietnam’s central provinces after a tropical depression dumped heavy rain on the area, triggering floods, officials said today. Rescue teams, military and coastguard personnel had been mobilised yesterday to reinforce dikes and help local residents. Two people were reported dead in Quang Nam province, one in Ha Tinh and one in Nghe An. Although the rains have stopped, officials warned the death toll could still rise. “A 13-year-old teenager drowned in our province. We are still gathering information to get the precise toll,” said Le Van Chat, vice chairman of the people’s committee in Ha Tinh province. In Quang Binh province, the storm and flood committee’s deputy director, Nguyen Duc Tien, said thousands of homes had been flooded.

Earthquakes



ARGENTINA

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 24, states: A strong earthquake shook northwestern Argentina this evening but there were no immediate reports of injuries. The magnitude-5.7 quake was centered 140 miles northeast of the city of Mendoza in the Gualaguay mountains of the San Juan province, according to the U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colorado.

INDONESIA

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: A moderate

earthquake hit just off the southern coast of Java island early Friday (Sep 22), but there were no reports of damage or a tsunami, the local meteorological and geophysics agency said. The quake struck at 0154, local time, but caused no known damage and did not trigger a tsunami, Hardiyanto, an official at the agency, said. The epicentre of the 5.9-magnitude quake was 140 kilometres south of Yogyakarta, according to the US Geological Survey.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: A 5.7-magnitude earthquake shook parts of Indonesia's Sulawesi and islands further east today but there were no reports of damage or casualties, the meteorology and geophysics agency said. The quake hit at 1143 hrs (0243, UTC) and was centered 56 kilometres under the floor of the Maluku Sea, some 205 kilometres southeast of the city of Manado on the northern tip of Sulawesi Island. It was moderately felt in Manado, the town of Gorontalo, some 240 kilometres to the southwest, and in Ternate island to the east, but no damage or casualties were reported, an official from the agency said.

SAMOA ISLANDS

Sydney, Sep 28 — A strong earthquake with a magnitude of up to 7.0 near the remote Samoa islands group in the South Pacific had generated a tsunami, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said today. "Sea level readings indicate a tsunami was generated. It may have been destructive along coasts near the earthquake epicenter," the Hawaii-based warning center said. — Reuters.



AFGHANISTAN

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Nato-led and Afghan security forces killed 40 Taleban rebels in a raid in southern Afghanistan yesterday, the Afghan Defence Ministry said. An enemy base was "totally" destroyed in the fighting in Helmand Province's Girishk district, the ministry said. Earlier, Nato said 23 militants were killed in two clashes in other parts of the province over recent days. Afghan and foreign troops sustained no casualties in the raid, according to the Afghan Ministry report. In a separate battle, Nato said eight insurgents were killed by helicopter cannon fire in Sangin district. Nato also says it has wound down a three-day operation in Farah Province in western Afghanistan. Local officials had feared that militants who fled fighting in the south were regrouping in the west of the country.

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A suicide bomber

struck outside the home of a southern Afghan provincial governor today, killing or wounding more than a dozen people, officials said. Included among the casualties were Afghan pilgrims seeking to go to Mecca and security personnel, said Haji Ghalum Muhiddin, spokesman for the Helmand provincial governor. It not immediately clear if the governor, Mohammed Daoud Safi, was among the casualties.

Lashkar Gah, Afghanistan, Sep 26 — A suicide bomber killed 18 people outside the governor's office in a southern Afghan town today while an Italian soldier died in a blast near Kabul, officials said. The suicide blast went off as foreign troops were passing through Lashkar Gah, capital of Helmand Province, an official said. Near Kabul, a roadside bomb killed an Italian NATO soldier and seriously wounded two compatriots. The Taliban claimed both blasts. Among the dead in the Helmand blast were six policemen and soldiers. The rest were civilians, many queuing to do paperwork for a pilgrimage to Mecca, officials said. "It was a suicide attack on a road in front of the governor's office," police official Mohammad Ayoub said in Lashkar Gah. Taliban spokesman Qari Mohammad Yousuf claimed responsibility, saying the bomber was from Helmand. Another Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for the blast just south of Kabul that targetted an armoured personnel carrier. NATO said five soldiers were wounded. Twenty Taliban were killed in a clash in the southern province of Uruzgan yesterday, NATO said. In Paktika Province on the Pakistani border, a suicide bomber's explosives went off accidentally, killing him and six accomplices, an official said. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the killing yesterday of the director of the women's affairs office in the southern province of Kandahar. Gunmen shot Safia Ama Jan as she was on her way to work. — Reuters.

INDIA

Guwahati, India, Sep 24 — India has ended a truce with rebels in the country's north-east and resumed a counter-insurgency operation after militants killed two people, including a policeman, an army official said today. Military operations against the separatist United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) were suspended on Aug 13 by New Delhi after the rebels offered to engage in peace talks to end the nearly three-decade-old conflict in the state of Assam. "Army operations have resumed and soldiers have moved out of their barracks in upper (eastern) Assam," a senior military commander said. The truce was initially for a few days but was subsequently extended after talks between government officials and representatives of ULFA. However, both sides had said it was not a formal ceasefire. The federal government called off the truce after suspected militants shot dead a policeman and a

tea estate manager in two separate incidents on Friday (Sep 22) and yesterday where they were trying to extort money. — Reuters.

IRAQ

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: A bomb claimed by a Sunni Arab extremist group killed at least 37 Shiites in Baghdad today as they stocked up on fuel for Ramadan, just days after the US military warned that sectarian bloodshed could worsen during the Islamic holy month. The group said it carried out the bombing to avenge a Friday (Sep 22) attack by a suspected Shiite death squad on Sunni Arab homes and mosques that killed four people in a mixed Baghdad neighbourhood. Iraq's armed forces said they struck a blow against groups affiliated with al-Qaida in Iraq, announcing the arrest of a senior leader of Ansar al-Sunnah, a radical Sunni group responsible for attacks on US forces, kidnappings and beheadings. A US soldier was killed by a roadside bomb in northern Baghdad, and two other American soldiers were killed and three injured when a bomb exploded near their patrol outside Hawija, 150 miles north of the capital, the US command said. A Danish soldier was also reported killed and eight wounded in a roadside bombing in southern Iraq. He was the fourth Danish soldier to die in Iraq since the US-led invasion ousted Saddam Hussein's regime more than three years ago. The Sunni extremist group Jamaat Jund al-Sahaba, Soldiers of the Prophet's Companions, claimed responsibility for the bomb attack on Shiites in Sadr City. Police said the bomb went off as people crowded behind a kerosene truck to buy fuel for Ramadan, during which people gather just after sunset for a communal meal to break a daylong abstention from food and water. In Kut, a city 100 miles southeast of Baghdad, eight apparent victims of sectarian death squads were turned in at the morgue. Their bodies had been dumped in the Tigris River. One person was killed and six civilians injured this evening in a northern Baghdad district when a motorcycle rigged with a bomb exploded, police said.

Baghdad, Sep 25 — British troops in Iraq said today they had killed one of al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden's top global lieutenants, who escaped from a U.S. prison in Afghanistan last year. Omar Faruq was shot dead while resisting arrest today during a pre-dawn raid by about 200 British troops in Iraq's second biggest city, Basra, British military spokesman Major Charlie Burbridge said. U.S. leaders have described Faruq as the top al Qaeda operative in southeast Asia. He was caught in Indonesia in 2002 and held at a high-security detention centre at Bagram airbase north of the Afghan capital Kabul until his escape last year. "The individual had been tracked across Iraq and was in hiding in Basra," Burbridge said, calling him a "very, very significant man". "Two companies (about 200 troops) launched

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the operation in the early hours of this morning. The troops returned to base without any multinational force casualties." U.S. officials said they would await results of forensic tests before confirming the death of Faruq, whom they described as an Iraqi citizen. — Reuters.

London, Sep 26 — Saboteurs struck a gas pipeline late yesterday on the road between Baiji and Kirkuk, north of Baghdad, police said. Oil officials could not be reached for further details on the attack. The Baiji refinery is Iraq's largest and newest refinery, built in the 1980s. The refinery's oil mainly comes in from the northern oil fields around Kirkuk. — Reuters.

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Gunmen assaulted two Sunni mosques and sprayed bullets into Sunni homes in a mixed neighbourhood today in sectarian violence that killed three people and wounded 15, many of them attackers suspected of being followers of a radical Shiite cleric. Police in Baghdad also found the bodies of 23 men apparently slain by the sectarian death squads terrorizing the capital. The attacks on Sunni targets began when the al-Ashra al-Mushara mosque in al-Amel district was stormed about 1630 by gunmen in black uniforms, which are often associated with the Mahdi Army militia loyal to anti-US Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. Two passers-by were wounded. About 15 minutes later, black-clad gunmen attacked Sunni homes in the same western neighbourhood. Residents fought back, wounding five of the militants, while three civilians and a police officer were also injured, police Lt. Maithem Abdul Razzaq said. The wounded attackers were captured and identified as Mahdi Army members, Razzaq said. Three gunmen died in an attack on the Sunnis' al-Kheyr mosque in Khadra, another western neighbourhood, police said. No other details were released. On the eastern side of the city, meanwhile, the bodies of 23 men were found dumped in streets, all with bullet wounds and most showing signs of torture, hallmarks of sectarian killings that have raged since a Shiite shrine was bombed in Samarra last February. In other violence, explosions killed at least 21 people and wounded dozens in and around the capital, police said. In the deadliest incident, at least seven civilians died and 11 were injured when a series of explosions rocked a predominantly Shiite apartment building in Mahmoudiya, about 20 miles south of Baghdad, police said. The explosions gutted a series of apartments.

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated Sep 27, states: Iraqi security forces have arrested another leader of the 1920 Revolution Brigades, a group accused of numerous attacks on U.S. forces, the General Command of the Armed Forces said today. The man was arrested yesterday night in the village of al-Jazira, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, said Brig. Qassim

al-Mussawi. The operation follows the arrest of another leader of the group and seven aides early Saturday (Sep 23) in the same area. Authorities have not released the insurgents' names, citing security.

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated Sep 27, states: At least 10 people have been killed in the Iraqi capital Baghdad at a shoot-out near a Sunni mosque, police say. The incident happened at the al-Mashahada mosque in the Hurriya district, when gunmen opened fire on worshippers attending evening prayers. Eleven people were wounded in the attack, police said. The incident came as a US military spokesman in Baghdad, Maj Gen William Caldwell, said that suicide attacks were at the highest level ever. Gen Caldwell said there had been an increase in violence coinciding with the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which began on Monday (Sep 25). "In terms of attacks, this week's suicide attacks were at the highest level of any given week, with half of them targeting security forces," he said. He said also that Iraqi security forces were "making a concerted effort" to end sectarian violence by targeting death squads in Baghdad. The violence came as British and Iraqi forces launched a major drive in Basra city aimed at purging the police of the militias that have infiltrated their ranks. Shia militias have effectively seized control of the police in some areas. About 1,000 British troops and 2,300 Iraqis have begun to deploy as part of what the army labels Operation Sinbad. The operation will see small "transition teams" of Royal Military Police being inserted into police stations throughout the southern Iraqi city for 30 days at a time. The UK military said the operation, to last until February 2007, was intended to prepare for the expected handover of power to Iraqi officials next year.

ISRAEL-LEBANON

Beirut, Sep 22 — A press report, dated Sep 21, states: Shovel-wielding volunteers sifted through oil-stained sand on a beach where tourists once swam, now emptied by a massive spill caused by Israeli bombardment. Two months later, only 3% of the oil has been recovered. "It's going to take a year before it's back to normal," said Commander Christian Nedelec, the head of an eight-person French team that has been helping the Lebanese government clean up the slick. Lebanon's tourist and fishing industries remain battered by what has been described as the country's worst-ever environmental catastrophe, which erupted when Israeli warplanes struck the Jiyeh power plant in mid-July, spilling up to 110,000 barrels of fuel oil into the clear Mediterranean waters. Less than 3,500 barrels have been cleaned up. Lebanon could not start any offshore operation for weeks, waiting for Israel to lift its naval and air blockade on Sep 8. Around two-thirds of Lebanon's Mediterranean

coast has been fouled by the oil slick, which extends about 95 miles and has reached Syria's shoreline to the north. "The timing is quite essential with an oil spill. The more you wait, the more it spreads," said Luisa Colasimone of the United Nations Environmental Program. On Sunday (Sep 17), 20 volunteers were cleaning up the black gunk that tarred the 1.1-mile-long beach, Ramlat el-Baida. The airstrike at Jiyeh destroyed six fuel tanks at the plant. Israel said it hit the site, 12 miles south of Beirut, as part of a broader campaign against infrastructure used by Hezbollah guerrillas. Many Lebanese accuse it of hitting the station and other sites with few ties to Hezbollah simply to punish the country and force the government to take action against the guerrillas. Israel insists the circumstances of the spill are unclear and it has not accepted responsibility. "It's not clear that Israel was directly responsible for the oil slick. We certainly did not intentionally attack the oil containers," said Israeli Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mark Regev. Along the length of Lebanon's coast, usually visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists every year, more than 30 sandy beaches and rocky coves are covered with oil. Lebanon's archaeological heritage also has suffered. Some 25 miles north of Beirut in the ancient Phoenician port city of Byblos, whose history stretches back 7,000 years, famous ruins were blackened by the slick. The oil seeped into the foundation of the medieval harbour wall, staining the stones of the two ancient towers at the port's entrance. UN experts warned that the site would take 10 weeks to clean with hand brushes — before winter to prevent permanent devastation. It is marine life that could suffer the worst consequences, because in the Mediterranean, currents do not come in from the ocean often enough to sweep away pollutants. Lebanese waters are known as a passage for migrating schools of fish, particularly tuna. The oil, which sank to the bottom of the sea, where it threatens plants and fish that live on the sea floor, could resurface unless treated, and contaminate the coast for years to come. It could take up to 10 years for the ecosystem of the eastern Mediterranean to recover fully, according to the country's environment minister, Yaacoub Sarraf. Several Mediterranean countries including France, Spain and Italy have sent teams to help the Lebanese navy in coping with the oil spill, whose clean-up could cost \$100 million. Lebanon, meanwhile, plans to sue Israel for damages, though it has not said how much it will claim. Rick Steiner, an American oil spill expert who worked on the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* disaster and has been advising the Lebanese government, says Israel should pay \$1 billion, including lost revenues from fishing and tourism. — Lloyd's Agents.

Gaza, Sep 27 — An Israeli warplane bombed and destroyed a home in the Gaza Strip today, killing a teenage girl

in a neighbouring building and wounding 10 other people, Palestinian medics said. The Israeli army confirmed it had fired at a house camouflaging a weapons-smuggling tunnel in the southern Gaza town of Rafah, on the Egyptian border, and that its occupants had been warned beforehand to leave. Dr. Ali Mousa, the director of Rafah's hospital, told Reuters a girl, 14, died when a block from the house that Israel bombed twice ricocheted into a neighboring building causing it to collapse. He said 10 other people were wounded by the blast, most of them women and children who suffered broken bones, bruises and shrapnel wounds. The Israeli strike came hours after a rocket fired from Gaza wounded an off-duty Israeli soldier in the southern Israeli town of Sderot. — Reuters.

NEPAL

Kathmandu, Sep 24 — The leader of a splinter faction of Nepal's Maoist rebels said today his group had shot and killed a member of the Himalayan nation's parliament. Three gunmen on motorcycles shot Krishna Charan Shrestha yesterday in Belaha village, about 150 km east of the capital, Kathmandu. Jay Krishna Goit, leader of leader of breakaway faction Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha said that his men had killed the legislator. Authorities said one of Shrestha's aides was also killed and two of three assailants were later caught and killed by villagers. Shrestha's pro-monarchy Rastriya Prajatantra party is the fourth largest group in parliament but it is not a member of the ruling seven-party alliance. — Reuters.

NIGERIA

London, Sep 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Nigerian authorities have imposed a night curfew on the northern town of Dutse after Muslim mobs burned 11 churches over what they said was blasphemy against the Prophet Mohammad by a Christian woman, police said on Thursday. Scores of houses and shops owned by Christians were also torched in the capital of remote Jigawa state during a riot on Wednesday sparked by a disagreement between a Muslim man and a Christian woman, police spokesman Haz Iwendi said. No one was killed in the riot but up to seven people were injured, Iwendi said. "Eleven churches and so many houses and shops were burned. The house of the Anglican bishop was also ransacked," he said, adding that hundreds of Christians fled their homes to military and police barracks fearing further attacks. "There is now a night curfew in the town and police units from (neighbouring) Kano and Katsina states have been sent there to beef up security," Iwendi said. Religious violence has plagued Nigeria, whose 140 million people are thought to be evenly split between Muslims in the north and Christians in the south, for many years. There are sizeable religious minorities in all

areas of the country. There is often more to the violence, however, than religious differences. Sometimes politicians instigate it for their own ends, and in some cases a small dispute quickly escalates as thugs seize the opportunity to go on a looting spree. Any deaths in religious fighting usually spark tit-for-tat killings in different parts of the country. Nigerians are due to elect their president, state governors and lawmakers in landmark polls next April and many fear an increase in religious fighting as tensions rise before the elections. Joseph Hayab, secretary of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) for the northwest, said an argument over Jesus and the Prophet Mohammad sparked the Dutse riot. "Her comment was in retaliation to uncomplimentary remarks made by her colleague about Jesus," Hayab told Reuters. He said the rioters were angry about the release of the woman, who was briefly detained by police. Thousands of people have died in religious violence since the restoration of democracy in the world's eighth largest oil exporter in 1999. At least 50 Christians were killed in the northwestern town of Maiduguri in February, according to CAN. News of the killings sparked reprisals in the southeastern market city of Onitsha, where Christian mobs killed about 100 Muslims.

PAKISTAN

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated Sep 23, states: Two people were killed and more than 20 sustained injuries in a bomb explosion in the small Pakistani city of Dera Ghazi Khan today, police said. A homemade bomb, attached to a bicycle, went off in the animal market near a busy bus stand, a senior local police officer said. He said the explosion killed a 14-year old boy and a man, adding that more than 20 people were wounded. Hospital sources said about six of the wounded were said to be in critical condition.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 24, states: Insurgents blew up a natural gas pipeline in the restive Southwestern Pakistani province of Baluchistan, cutting supply to thousand of homes, police said today. There were no casualties when the pipeline, which supplied gas to suburban areas of Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan, was hit by explosives late yesterday, police official Mohammad Arif Shah told. The blast started a huge blaze, he said, adding that repairs to the pipeline were underway. The unrest in Baluchistan continues over the August 26 killing of rebel chieftain Nawab Akbar Bugti.

SOMALIA

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Hundreds of Islamic militiamen in heavily armed trucks headed today to the strategic town of Kismayo in what appeared to be an imminent takeover attempt of one of the last seaports outside their

control in Somalia, witnesses said. Key leaders of the Islamic militia, which controls the capital, Mogadishu, along with much of southern Somalia, have been in Kismayo for several days in direct challenge to the warlords who are in control there. Fearful residents of the town, some 260 miles southwest of Mogadishu, have been fleeing across the border to Kenya in case fighting breaks out.

Kismayo, Sep 24 — Islamist forces were poised to take over Somalia's strategic southern port city of Kismayo after the warlord in charge of the region fled, witnesses and officials said today. Colonel Abdikadir Adan Shire, also known as Barre Hiraale, is defence minister in Somalia's weak interim government and led the Juba Valley Alliance, an independent authority that has controlled the region around Somalia's third largest city. His deputy, Yusuf Mire Mahmud, confirmed Barre Hiraale's hasty exit today following a split within the Alliance on how to respond to the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which seized Mogadishu and other parts of southern Somalia earlier this year. "I wanted to talk to the ICU, and he did not. He sent a delegation to Ethiopia and that was the final straw for me," Mahmud told Reuters. "Tomorrow the people of Kismayo will welcome the courts," he said, adding that Islamist forces were some 100 km away. An Islamist source in the capital Mogadishu said troops were ready to enter the city "at the invitation of the people". "We'll go in either late tonight or tomorrow morning," the source told Reuters. Witnesses reported the city was calm and there was no sign it had been seized by the Islamists, whose advances since June have challenged the authority of the militarily weak interim government, backed by the West and regional power Ethiopia. The Islamists have in the last month been urging Barre Hiraale to hand over the town, since many of the militias protecting it have clan alignments close to the Islamists. Government spokesman Abdirahman Dinari quoted deputy prime minister Hussein Mohamed Farah Aideed as saying any attack on Kismayo would breach a ceasefire deal between the administration and the Islamists agreed during recent talks in Khartoum. "We're requesting that the international community pressurise the ICU to stop attacking," Dinari told Reuters from the government's temporary base in Baidoa. Rumours of an impending flare-up in Kismayo have sent thousands of refugees fleeing to Kenya in recent days, with 300-600 arriving daily in the Dadaab camps just over the border, according to the United Nations. — Reuters.

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated Sep 25, states: Somalia's interim prime minister has asked for international help against the "al-Qaeda" and "terrorist" expansion in the country. Ali Mohamed Ghedi appealed for aid soon, before it was too late. He was speaking after his Islamist rivals seized the key port of

Kismayo, where they fired at demonstrators, reportedly killing three people. The Union of Islamic Courts deny having any links to al-Qaeda and say they are bringing security to a lawless country. "I would appeal to the governments of the region to join our efforts and protect the region from the expansion of this al-Qaeda network, these terrorists," Mr Ghedi said in neighbouring Kenya. He also said the takeover of Kismayo was a "violation" of the ceasefire agreed between the UIC and the government in Sudan. Meanwhile, eyewitnesses report that hundreds of Ethiopian troops have crossed the border, heading for Baidoa - the only town controlled by the internationally recognised government. Ethiopia supports the administration of President Abdullahi Yusuf but has denied that its troops are in Baidoa. The foreign secretary of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), Ibrahim Hassan Adow, said there was "no question" that Ethiopian forces were deep inside Somalia. He said the UIC would defend Somali territory against Ethiopian troops. Mr Ghedi's government only controls a small part of Somalia, around the town of Baidoa, while the UIC has expanded across most of the south. They seized Kismayo yesterday without a fight, after gunmen loyal to Mr Ghedi's Defence Minister Barre Hiraale fled the town. After the takeover, pro- and anti-UIC rallies were held. Islamist guards opened fire after some residents burnt tyres, chanted anti-Islamist slogans and threw stones. An MP said that three people had died. Some of the protesters had been seen burning Islamic head-dresses. UIC officials say the protests were organised by those who opposed their ban on the popular stimulant khat during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Earlier this month, the African Union agreed to a request by Somalia's transitional government, to send in a regional peacekeeping force. Kismayo had been seen as a possible landing point for the peacekeepers. Witnesses told AFP news agency they had seen more than 600 Islamist gunmen on about 50 "battlewagons" - machine-gun mounted pick-ups also known as "technicals" - heading toward Kismayo yesterday. Thousands of people are reported to have fled the city in recent days. The UIC has steadily increased its hold on Somalia since its fighters took control of the capital, Mogadishu, in June, taking control of hundreds of square kilometres of territory while hardly firing a shot.

SRI LANKA

Colombo, Sep 24 — Thousands of Muslims are fleeing their homes in embattled north-east Sri Lanka for the second time in as many months but thousands more are stranded, aid workers said today, after a suspected rebel front vowed to recapture the newly resettled area. Families who had fled the north-eastern town of Mutur as it was ravaged by fighting

between the military and Tamil Tigers in August only returned from tent cities and refugee camps a fortnight ago after the army drove the Tamil Tigers out. Now the military is blocking many resettled civilians from leaving again. Around 1,500 families left Mutur for nearby Kinniya yesterday and more than 1,000 families were stranded at a jetty today after the government suspended ferry service to the north-eastern port of Trincomalee, one local aid worker said. "The military and the government are not allowing them to move," he added. "They have stopped the ferry and also by the land route they are stopping them and don't allow them to go on." The attempted exodus comes after a previously unknown suspected rebel front called Tamileela Thayaga Meedpu Padai distributed leaflets in the town warning residents to leave immediately. "The final preparations have begun to recapture ... Mutur," the leaflet said. "Do not remain in Mutur ... you will only face destruction." Fighting flared in the eastern district of Batticaloa early today, when the army and Tigers exchanged artillery and mortar fire. The military said it badly damaged two rebel camps but there were no immediate reports of casualties. — Reuters.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: The Sri Lankan navy said today it had sunk eight Tamil Tiger rebel ships loaded with troops and weapons during a five-hour sea battle, killing around 70 separatists. The fighting began late yesterday night when the navy spotted 25 rebel ships sailing south. Navy Cmdr. D. K. P. Dassanayake told The Associated Press "more than 70 cadres are dead" and two other ships, believed to have been transporting arms and ammunition, were burning at sea. The remaining 14 rebel boats retreated after the hostilities just off the coast of the eastern town of Pulmoddai, he said. One navy vessel was damaged, injuring five sailors, he said, but it had made it back to port.

THAILAND

Bangkok, Sep 22 — Thailand's military coup leaders today began forming a panel to probe alleged corruption under ousted billionaire leader Thaksin Shinawatra. They were working on forming a nine-person panel to probe Thaksin, his relatives and political colleagues, judges invited onto the panel said today. The coup leaders also announced they had sacked the national police board which Thaksin, himself a former police colonel, used to chair, and appointed a new board to be headed by the national police chief, who took part in the coup. In the meantime, the search for a new prime minister was narrowing, Colonel Acra Tiprote, of the Council of Democratic Reform under the Constitutional Monarchy, told Reuters. "They are very close to getting the name of the new prime minister and it is likely to be forwarded to His Majesty for an approval in the next one or two days,"

he said. The military chiefs, formally installed as the interim government today, maintained from the first that they did not want to stay in power. They pledged to select a prime minister within two weeks with a mandate to form a government and start drawing up a new constitution to allow elections in a year. The new anti-corruption panel, modeled on a commission under Thaksin that was fired after giving itself illegal pay rises and never replaced, would not target Thaksin alone, the judges said. The auditor-general has already speeded up existing probes, including an investigation into whether Thaksin's family legitimately avoided paying tax on its \$1.9 billion sale of the firm he founded. Thaksin, whose Shin Corp. grew into Thailand's biggest telecommunications group, has denied charges of corruption since street campaigners began throwing them at him late last year. However, his family's tax-free sale of its controlling stake in the company to Singapore state investment firm Temasek Holdings in January infuriated Bangkok's middle classes and breathed life into the anti-Thaksin movement. The military said it had been forced into Tuesday's coup because there was no other way out of the ensuing crisis that pitted Thaksin, the winner of two landslide elections, against the old guard and street campaigners who said he had undermined democratic institutions and become a dictator. Hopes that the coup makers were right prompted foreign investors to record their biggest net buying in the Thai stock market this year yesterday. A day later, however, the stock index was down nearly two percent at the midday break. Two more cabinet ministers turned themselves in to the army, joining two Thaksin aides in indefinite custody. The Nation newspaper said they were likely to be detained until a new civilian government was installed. Human rights organizations and governments around the world have condemned the coup leaders' curbs on civil liberties. The military has banned political gatherings of more than five people and the distribution of information critical of the coup on Web sites or on television, apparently to avoid the spread of rumors about or the instigation of a counter-coup. As the Information Ministry explained it to news editors, that meant no broadcasting of SMS messages on television programs or calls to radio shows, even traffic stations. Web masters were told to shut political Web boards for 12 days or risk permanent closure. However, foreign news broadcasts, such as CNN and the BBC, which were blocked in the hours after the coup, were uncensored today. Rumours of a counter-coup by Thaksin supporters have been simmering quietly in the background since the coup and the army warned the public against taking them seriously. However, a limited military presence was still obvious in Bangkok,

especially around Government House and army headquarters. There were also signs of reinforcements on roads leading into the city, including a handful of tanks on the highway from the north and northeast where many army units are based. The United States said it was dismayed by the ban and was reviewing its budgeted \$14 million in aid to Thailand this year. — Reuters.

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Four policemen were injured when a home-made bomb exploded in Pattani's Muang district yesterday. A bomb disposal squad rushed to the roadside shelter near Yarang road where the bomb went off and combed the area, located around 500 metres from a mosque, for evidence. The officers were taking shelter from the sun when the bomb exploded. Police believe the bomb, weighing 2-3kg, was planted there in an attempt to incite more violence

TURKEY

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated Sep 23, states: A freight train was derailed late yesterday after a mine was detonated in the eastern Turkish province of Elazig. A landmine thought to be planted by the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) on the railway tracks near Gokdere village in the Palu district of Elazig was detonated by remote control while the train was passing through. Seven empty carriages of the train, which was heading from far eastern city of Tatvan, Van to Elazig, were derailed after the explosion while eight others were overthrown. No casualties have been reported in the blast. The Tatvan-Elazig railway, which was seriously damaged in the attack, has been temporarily closed to traffic. No group has claimed responsibility for the blast yet however the PKK has carried out similar attacks across Turkey in the past.

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Suspected Kurdish guerrillas set off an explosive-laden minibus near a police guesthouse in eastern Turkey, injuring 17 people, the governor's office has said. The Ford minibus parked across from the police guesthouse, went off yesterday in the eastern city of Igridir on the Armenian border, the governor's office announced. Two of the injured were in serious condition, he said. The injured included five police officers and some officials of a small soccer club who travelled from Ankara to Igridir for a match, private Dogan news agency said. The blast shattered the windows of the police guesthouse and other buildings in the area. The explosion coincided with complaints by imprisoned rebel chief Abdullah Ocalan about his prison conditions, which were relayed by his lawyers, the pro-Kurdish news agency Firat reported on its website yesterday. The attack also comes after recent declaration of co-operation between Turkey, the United States and Iraq in

fighting the guerrillas, who are based in northern Iraq. Gen Yasar Buyukanit, chief of the Turkish military, recently ruled out any compromise and said negotiations with "terrorists" were out of question. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and other US officials have repeatedly warned Turkey against entering northern Iraq, one of the few stable areas in that country, fearing that an incursion would alienate Iraqi Kurds, the most pro-American group in the region

UGANDA

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated Sep 27, states: Lord's Resistance Army rebels have broken the terms of a cessation of hostilities agreement signed last month, the Ugandan army says. The government and LRA representatives are currently holding peace talks in southern Sudan to end 20 years of conflict in northern Uganda. Under the terms of the truce the LRA had agreed to assemble at two points in southern Sudan by last week. But the UPDF says LRA fighters have begun moving away from a camp. The LRA had been given three weeks to assemble at two points in southern Sudan in return for an amnesty from the Ugandan government. According to the Ugandan army, 600 LRA fighters had gathered close to one of these designated reception places, at Owiny Ki-bul last week. But Ugandan army spokesman, Major Felix Kulaigje said there were indications that the fighters had now begun to move west towards the River Nile and were eight kilometres from the reception camp. Uganda has been in touch with the mediator of this peace process, the government of southern Sudan, to ask them to intervene. Major Kulaigje said if the LRA continued heading west then the Ugandan army would have no choice but to deal with them. The deadline for the LRA fighters to gather at Owiny Ki-bul and a second reception centre in southern Sudan expired last Tuesday (Sep 19) but it was not clear if all the rebels had complied with this. There were reports that the LRA leader, Joseph Kony, had arrived at one assembly point but this was never independently verified. The whereabouts of the LRA rebels has always been key to this conflict.



ITALY

Genoa, Sep 21 — It has been reported in the local press that Giovanni Battista Pinna, a 37 year old, stock breeder, was kidnapped near Sassari on Sep 19. The requested ransom is reported to be around Euros 300,000. — Lloyd's Agents.



CANADA

Denver, Colorado, Sep 26 — Unionised workers at Inco Ltd.'s Voisey's Bay nickel mine on Canada's Atlantic Coast have ratified a contract agreement with the company, ending a two-month strike, the union said today. The three-year deal will increase wages 15.5 percent and includes a C\$6,000 (\$5,400) retention bonus that puts the 120 miners and heavy equipment operators' pay on par with that at Inco's other Canadian operations, the United Steelworkers union said. It is the first collective agreement at Voisey's Bay. "They are going back to work tomorrow," said Ken Dawson, a union representative. Inco has said it will take about two weeks to get the Labrador mine back into production. Before the strike, which started on July 28, the mine had been expected to produce 120 million pounds of nickel concentrate in 2006. Inco said last week that it did not expect the strike to affect its production of finished nickel or cobalt in the third quarter because it had sufficient concentrate stocks at its smelters and refineries. However, the company had a cautioned in that report that work stoppage had cut into its stocks of copper concentrate that is sold to European customers. The sides reached the deal on Saturday (Sep 23) after being coaxed back to the bargaining table by provincial government officials. Tensions at the mine had escalated recently when the company attempted to load concentrates on to a ship, according to local news reports. — Reuters.

KAZAKHSTAN

Shakhtinsk, Sep 27 — Thousands of coal miners at four Mittal Steel mines in Kazakhstan are on strike over pay and conditions following a methane explosion in a shaft last week that killed 41 people. The mines employ 8,000 people and account for half of Mittal's coal output in the Karaganda basin used to produce steel at its enormous plant. A company official said steel production would not be affected as Mittal had significant coal reserves. The strike started yesterday at the Lenin Mine where the explosion last Wednesday (Sep 20) ripped through a mineshaft deep underground in what was the Central Asian state's worst mining accident on record. "This strike will not affect steel production," Grigory Prezent, deputy coal department director of Mittal Steel Temirtau, Mittal's local operation, told reporters. "We have coal reserves that are sufficiently big." Mittal Steel Temirtau had declined to comment on the strike yesterday. The striking miners are demanding new equipment and want wages raised to

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\$15 an hour or to about \$2,500 a month due to dangerous working conditions. They are paid \$430 compared to the average wage in Kazakhstan of \$320 a month. Some 500 miners gathered today in Shakhtinsk, the run-down town built near the Lenin mine, to press their demands. Officials say it is thought the explosion was caused by a build-up of methane gas after a ventilator was turned off for repairs. Then the electricity was turned on or there was a spark. Kazakhstan's Emergencies Ministry said yesterday its initial findings pointed toward "human error and a failure to comply with safety regulations." Mittal's Present said the company was hoping to persuade the miners to resume work in return for a pay review within 10 days. — Reuters.

Astana, Sep 28 — A further two coal mines belonging to Mittal Steel in Kazakhstan joined a strike today following a methane explosion in a shaft last week that killed 41 people, a trades union official said. Six of Mittal's eight coal mines in the Karaganda basin are now on strike, demanding better pay and conditions. The mines produce coal for Mittal's huge steel plant in the region in central Kazakhstan but the company has said it has plenty of reserves to avoid production problems. "Another two mines from the Karaganda basin have joined the four that were already on strike," coal trades union leader Vyacheslav Sidorov told Reuters by telephone. "The only people going into the mine shafts are those who need to keep the life support systems running. No coal is being mined," he said, adding the union was in talks with the firm. Sidorov could not give an exact number of strikers. The eight mines employ 24,500 people. — Reuters.

NEW CALEDONIA

London, Sep 27 — Negotiations between the New Caledonian government and the CSTNC union to end a general strike have failed. The strike began on Monday (Sep 25) and has disrupted many areas of public life. Most petrol stations have run out of fuel as access to the main fuel depots have been blocked, which could hit public transport, including air travel soon. Industrial bakeries reopened today after Noumea's shops had no more bread. Union members are blocking the Goro Nickel headquarters in Noumea and the ferry transporting Goro workers to the construction site. The government had a meeting with the union earlier today, but the minister of economic development, Didier Leroux, says the demands were unacceptable and inapplicable.

NIGERIA

London, Sep 21 — Berthing and sailing of vessels in the Lagos area is being effected by a strike of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) pilots, since Tuesday, Sep 19. The action was called after a pilot fell overboard while sailing a vessel out of Lagos on Monday evening, Sep 18. He has yet to

be found. Discussions are underway between the stakeholders, NPA executives and the pilots.

London, Sep 22 — The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) pilots' strike, affecting the Lagos area since Tuesday this week, Sep 19, has been suspended. Pilots have now resumed their duties for the sailing and berthing of vessels.

PERU

Lima, Sept 22 — Callao Port Stevedores are starting their third day of an illegal strike over more money etc. Hardest hit are the agro exporters, who are being punished by their clients for not complying with the contracts on time etc. So far there are no reports of cargo going bad because it has not been loaded. There is a chance that an agreement will be made today, allowing port services to continue. — Lloyd's Agents.

Lima, Sep 26 — Callao port strike was called off at 2330, yesterday. It is thought that it will take a few days for traffic to become normal again. — Lloyd's Agents.

SWITZERLAND

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Swiss International Air Lines Ltd., which is being taken over by Deutsche Lufthansa AG, cancelled dozens of flights as pilots at its European unit staged a strike over working conditions. Swiss International canceled 41 European flights as of 0800, Zurich time. The Swiss Pilots Association, a union representing employees of the former carrier Crossair, voted to strike to protest "discrimination" against members, the group said on its Web site. The pilots have been fighting for equality with their counterparts at the former, bankrupt Swissair Group ever since the airline was combined with Crossair to create Swiss International in 2002, the union said.

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated Sep 26, states: A one-day pilots strike at Swiss European Air Lines, which affected thousands of travellers to and from Switzerland, was called off late today after the company made substantial offers, the pilots union said. Swiss Pilots Association president Thomas Isler told Schweizer Fernsehen television that the strike ended as planned. He said the management of the airline, which in the course of the day threatened to fire and sue the pilots, had understood the message the strike was intended to send. The airline's European operations chief Manfred Brennwald confirmed this evening to reporters at Zurich's Kloten airport that the airline still intends to sue the union for damages. The strike affected over 8,000 passengers booked on Swiss flights operated with short-haul Jumbolino aircraft. Swiss said that at least 128 flights between Switzerland's main cities Geneva, Basel and Zurich, and dozens of European and Mediterranean destinations had been cancelled. A

further six flights to Zurich tomorrow morning will also be cancelled, Swiss said, because aircraft could not reach Brussels, Hanover, Duesseldorf, Milan, Geneva and Basel by tonight.

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated today, states: The effects of yesterday's strike by Swiss pilots, which led to 128 cancelled European flights, have run over into today with 14 further flights being dropped. Swiss International Air Lines said it intends to claim damages from the Swiss Pilots Association (SPA) for the work stoppage which analysts say damaged the airline's image. "The strike has led to some reorganisation that was not foreseeable yesterday," airline spokesman, Jean Claude Donzel, said about today's additional cancellations. Donzel said he expected the situation to "normalise" over the course of the day. The SPA, one of two pilots' unions at Swiss, voted to go on strike after the airline failed to meet its demands for improved salaries and benefits. The 78 pilots who took part in the action want their pay package to match those of pilots flying long haul routes.



TOBACCO-RELATED ILLNESS, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: In a blow to the tobacco industry, a federal judge ruled yesterday that a jury should decide whether tobacco companies must pay tens of millions of smokers as much as \$200 billion for allegedly duping them into buying "light" cigarettes over the last three decades. The cigarette makers said they would appeal but their shares sank on Wall Street as the ruling granting class-action status to the case clouded what had appeared to be an improving legal environment for the industry. Altria Group Inc., parent of the nation's largest cigarette maker, Philip Morris USA Inc., said the ruling would delay its long-awaited restructuring plan, which includes a divestiture of its controlling stake in Kraft Foods Inc. Altria attorney William S. Ohlemeyer said that a prerequisite to pursuing the company's restructuring plan was clarity in the overall litigation environment. "Today's decision is not a step toward clarity. It is a step back of sorts," he said. His comments came after U.S. District Judge Jack Weinstein granted class-action status to a lawsuit against Marlboro maker Philip Morris USA, its biggest U.S. rival R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. and other cigarette manufacturers.

WRONGFUL DEATH, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Jurors ordered a private prison operator and its warden

to pay \$47.5 million to the family of a man beaten to death by fellow inmates four days before finishing his drug sentence. "The evidence was disturbing. It showed a failure to properly search, inadequate staffing and improper response," said Ron Rodriguez, an attorney for Gregorio De La Rosa's family. De La Rosa was serving a six-month sentence in 2001 when two inmates struck him with padlocks stuffed into socks in the prison yard. His family claimed in a lawsuit that the death was avoidable. Inmates had used padlocks as weapons before, so it was foreseeable that they would again, the suit claimed. It was unclear if The Geo Group Inc, a spin-off of the Florida-based Wackenhut Corrections Corp that runs the facility, planned to appeal today's verdict. The inmates accused in DeLa Rosa's death, Daniel Sanchez and Pedro de Jesus Equia, were charged with murder and pleaded guilty to lesser charges. They received 20-year sentences.



BAN PIN STATION AREA, THAILAND

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Services on the Chiang Mai-Bangkok rail line were suspended in the early hours of yesterday after a flash flood in Phrae's Long district derailed a sprinter train. Run-off from a nearby mountain washed away the supporting soil of the tracks, causing one of the three carriages to derail. No casualties were reported. Twenty-two passengers were on board. Some panic-stricken passengers jumped off the carriage fearing it might plunge into a nearby creek. The derailment took place around 0230, about five kilometres from Ban Pin station. Chief of the northern rail centre Anon Wongsuwan went to the scene to inspect the damage and oversee rescue operations. A large crane was brought in to remove the wreckage and passengers were moved to Ban Pin station. They later boarded another train at Den Chai station to Bangkok. Den Chai station is as far as outbound passengers from Bangkok can go in Phrae. They must then take another mode of transport to the North. An initial examination found that some loosened knots on the cement sleeper were to blame for disconnection of the rail tracks. A train officer said that even without any structural support, a rail track could still bear up to four tonnes of weight and prevent derailment if the track was still firmly connected. All northern rail services have been suspended temporarily for repairs. No timeframe was given

HOMWOOD, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated Sep 25, states: Two derailed tanker cars carrying hazardous materials in a Homewood rail yard did not leak their contents Sunday (Sep 24), officials said. In total, four freight cars, three tankers and a flatbed car, derailed in a Canadian National rail yard in the area of Cedar Road and Harwood Avenue about 1820, authorities said. Two of the tanker cars contained hazardous materials, one was carrying anhydrous ammonia and the other denatured alcohol ethyl, CN spokesman Jim Kvedaras said. It was not immediately known what the third tanker car contained, but none of the tankers were found to have had any ruptures or leaks, Kvedaras said. No injuries were reported. The train carrying the line of cars was travelling north on the tracks when the derailment occurred, Homewood Deputy Police Chief James Gannon said. At least one of the cars overturned, while two others were turned on their sides, according to Gannon and CN officials. Machinery will be brought in to put the cars back on the track, Gannon said. The rail yard rests about 100 feet east of tracks used by Amtrak and Metra. Morning commutes on the nearby tracks were not expected to be affected, Gannon and Kvedaras said.

LATHEN, GERMANY

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated today, states: A high-speed magnetic train ran off the track during a test in western Germany today, killing one person and injuring several more. The accident left the Transrapid magnetic train "hanging halfway off" the track and passengers were still inside, said Helge Nestler, a police spokesman in Osnabruck. The accident happened in the nearby town of Lathen. Nestler gave the number of injured as 25, while another regional police department said 21 people were hurt. Magnetic-levitation trains use electrically charged magnets to cause the trains to hover just above the tracks, allowing them to glide along without friction. Trains can reach 270 mph on the 20-mile test track.

Berlin, Sept 22 — A high tech train carrying 29 people crashed on a test run in northern Germany today, killing at least one passenger and injuring others, police said. The elevated Transrapid train, dubbed the "mag-lev", struck a maintenance vehicle on a test track in the Emsland district near to the Dutch border while travelling at a speed of at least 200 km/h, local officials said. "There was one fatality," said police spokesman Hans Kley by telephone from the site of the crash, which happened at about 0800, UTC. He said he could not rule out other deaths and estimated that at least 10 people had been injured. Earlier media reports pointed to more than one death from the crash which happened near the small town of Lathen. Kley added the accident did

not derail the train, but left piles of wreckage strewn over a 300 metre stretch of track, which is suspended on stilts some five metres above the ground. Using magnetic levitation, the Transrapid is capable of speeds above 400 km/h. A spokeswoman for the IABG operating authority said 23 of the 29 people on board were visitors to the facility. The train was developed by Transrapid International, a joint venture between German industrial firms Siemens AG and ThyssenKrupp. There is no fuel source on board the train. It is powered by the electromagnets that lift the train and propel it forward, without friction. Its makers have said it cannot derail. The online version of German magazine Focus said that Transport Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee had broken off a visit to China to return to Germany following news of the crash. The magazine said he had learned of the crash during talks with the Chinese railways minister. — Reuters.

London, Sept 23 — A press report, dated today, states: An inquiry has been launched into a collision involving a high-speed magnetic train on a monorail that killed 23 people in Germany. Officials say human error, rather than a technical fault, probably caused the crash near the northern town of Lathen. The train collided with a maintenance vehicle left on the track yesterday, scattering debris across a large area. Prosecutors in Germany are examining records of the train's radio communications to explain the cause of the crash. A communication failure is being seen as the disaster's likeliest cause. The train, which floats on a monorail via a magnetic levitation system called maglev, was going at nearly 200km/h when it crashed near Lathen. The impact is thought to have flung the maintenance vehicle along the front and roof of the train. Two workers were in the maintenance vehicle when it crashed. The train is said to have been carrying 30 passengers, of which 10 survived. The track's operators say initial checks have not shown any sign of a technical fault. Rudolf Schwarz, a spokesman for IABG, the Munich-based firm that operates the track, said: "At this time, the accident was not caused by a technical failure. "It is the result of human error," he said.

Berlin, Sep 24 — Germany's transport minister met representatives of train manufacturer Transrapid today to discuss the crash two days earlier of a high-speed train that killed 23 people and injured 10. The Transrapid magnetic elevation train collided with a maintenance truck on Friday (Sep 22) on a test track in the Emsland district of Germany. Transport Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee was discussing the crash at a meeting with representatives of the consortium at his ministry headquarters in Berlin. Speaking before the meeting, Tiefensee said that, once investigators had determined the cause of the

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accident, he would have to consider its implications. Alexander Retemeyer, spokesman for the local state prosecutors' office, hinted the investigation was focusing on whether human error could have caused the crash. He said the control station should have known that the maintenance truck was on the track when the train began its run as this had been noted in a handwritten log. Furthermore, the truck was visible on a control station monitor, he said. "It must now be explained why the workers in the control station allowed the Transrapid to depart at 0953 hrs even though the obstacle was on the track," said the spokesman. The workers in the control booth would be questioned next week, Retemeyer said. — Reuters.

PUNJAB PROVINCE, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Sep 24 — About 17 oil bogies of a goods train of Pakistan Railway derailed near Kot Lahu railway station in Punjab Province of Pakistan yesterday morning. As a result railway traffic on up and down tracks was suspended for quite some time. The engine and nine bogies of the train going to the Punjab from Karachi were badly damaged in the accident. Oil from nine of the 17 bogies spread over three acres of railway land and reached nearby houses. Railway authorities have estimated that the amount of oil lost was worth millions of rupees while the damage to the engine and bogies would also run to millions of rupees. The engine driver said that the train was moving at a speed of 35 kilometres per hour and he applied breaks near Darya Khan Mari but these failed. Later, a team of engineers reached the spot from Sukkur and opened the tracks after five hours. An inquiry is being ordered. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Robberies & Thefts



CASH FROM SECURITY VAN, ATHENS AREA, GREECE

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated Sep 25, states: A gang of robbers wielding machine guns and sledgehammers stole an estimated \$1.9 million from a casino's security van after ramming the vehicle with a stolen truck, police said. The robbery occurred at the foot of Mount Parnitha, near a casino north of Athens. Police said a stolen truck had been used to ram the van, adding that robbers escaped in a car, also believed to be stolen. The robbers smashed the van's bulletproof windshield and trained automatic weapons on the driver and security guard, who did not resist the attack, police said.

Miscellaneous



EVVA (North Korea)

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: The coast guard detected yesterday general cargo *Evva* off Katakolo, south-west Greece, that was attempting to smuggle into the country 1.5 million packets of cigarettes. The seven crew members on the North Korean-flagged vessel were arrested. The Merchant Marine Ministry said that the cigarettes were destined for Greece and that unpaid taxes and dues from the shipment reached 3.5 million euros. Authorities said that they found the vessel about six nautical miles off the port of Katakolo after receiving a tip-off about a suspicious vessel.

KUM GANG 1 (North Korea)

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Police and customs authorities raided general cargo *Kum Gang 1* (298 gt, built 1973) at Sakai port in Sakaiminato, Tottori Prefecture, on suspicion it brought two fake US\$100 bills into Japan. A customs official found the two allegedly counterfeit bills in a bag that contained a stack of US currency. The bag had been handed from a crew member of the *Kum Gang 1* to an export company employee at the port, police and customs officials said. The bag contained 300 \$100 bills, the police said, adding the company employee from Maizuru, Kyoto Prefecture, did not follow the required steps to receive that amount of money. The crew member has said he received the currency from a third party, according to the police. According to port officials, the vessel entered Sakai on Tuesday (Sep 19) from Wonsan port in North Korea carrying marine products, including frozen sea urchin and fresh water clams. The vessel, with 19 crew members, was originally scheduled to depart from Sakai this coming week, the officials said. The United States alleges that the North Korean government sponsors counterfeiting and Washington has imposed restrictions on a Macau-based bank and several North Korean companies for alleged counterfeiting, money laundering and other illicit activities.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A 59-year-old Thai man has died of bird flu, the country's 17th victim of the H5N1 virus since it swept through much of Asia in late 2003, a senior Health Ministry official said. The man died on Aug 10 in a northeastern province near the Lao border after chickens at his house fell sick and died, Kamnuan Ungchusak said. He said the final laboratory tests

were completed last week. The man was Thailand's third victim this year. Its previous death from H5N1 was confirmed on August 5. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 146 of the 249 people confirmed as infected with H5N1 bird flu have died since 2003.

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated today, states: An Indonesian man who had been suffering from bird flu for days has died, a hospital official said, taking Indonesia's death toll from the disease to 52. "He died because of breathing problems which he had suffered since he was admitted to the hospital," said Hadi Yusuf, who heads the bird flu ward at Hasan Sadikin hospital in Bandung, West Java's provincial capital. The government had acknowledged the 20-year-old victim as a bird flu case earlier this week.

OUTBREAK OF BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY, WORLD-WIDE

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated Sep 26, states: A cow in northern Japan is suspected of having the country's 29th case of mad cow disease, an official said today. Preliminary tests on the animal at the Ishikari Livestock Hygiene Service Centre in Hokkaido prefecture on Japan's northernmost main island were positive, said Hokkaido official Hiroyuki Takeuchi. Final test results could be known by the end of this week, he said. The cow died at a ranch and was brought to the hygiene centre for initial testing. To date, Japan has confirmed 28 animals infected with the fatal illness - known formally as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE - since the first case in Japan was detected in 2001. Since then, Tokyo has begun taking steps to check every cow that is slaughtered or dies at ranches before it enters the food supply. Japan banned imports of American beef in December 2003 after the first case of mad cow disease in the United States. That ban was eased in December 2005, but was re-imposed after prohibited spinal bones were found in a shipment of veal in January. In July, Japan eased the ban, with U.S. beef hitting some retailers' shelves the following month. Earlier this month, Yoshinoya D&C Co., a major Japanese fast-food chain, returned a popular rice dish topped with U.S. beef that was off the menu for more than two years due to mad cow scares.

POWER OUTAGE, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Sep 25 — Pakistan major cities plunged into darkness yesterday following country unprecedented breakdown in power system. The port city Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Islamabad, Rawalpindi and other cities remain out of electricity from 1340, yesterday to early today. The state owned power production and distribution company-Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has said it incurred a loss of Rs 200 million due to this day a long

outage and formed a three members committee to ascertain the cause and actual losses. It claimed that power has been restored to major cities and other follows. Wapda spokesman Shafqat Jalil told media that the worst ever breakdown which started at 1340 hrs due to technical fault in the newly constructed Ghazi Barotha power station putting load on other power generating units at Tarbela, Mangla, and Jamshoro that caused tripping of these powers houses and left the entire country without electricity. He ruled out any act of sabotage or terrorism in this connection. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz told newsmen that he had directed Wapda officials to submit a complete inquiry report of the sudden breakdown. He said that electricity had been restored in many cities, whereas officials had been directed to take repair work in the rest of the areas on war footing. No big industrial production loss was reported due to closure of factories yesterday in country. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

PROBO KOALA (Panama)

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated Sep 21, states: The head of the Amsterdam environmental inspection agency is under investigation for illegally allowing the ship at the heart of a toxic waste dumping scandal in Ivory Coast to leave the Netherlands, a Dutch press report said yesterday. The official's close ties with a Dutch waste treatment company led him to allow the waste that was initially offloaded in Amsterdam two months ago to be pumped back into to combined bulk and oil carrier *Probo Koala*, the daily newspaper *De Volkskrant* said. This in turn meant that the ship could leave while an investigation into the cargo was still ongoing. In mid-August some 500 tonnes of highly toxic waste from the hold of *Probo Koala* was dumped on 14 open-air rubbish tips around Abidjan, Ivory Coast's economic capital. Seven people have since died and thousands of others been poisoned. Doctors have received more than 37,000 calls for medical help. *Probo Koala*, hired by Dutch-based company Trafigura, had originally tried to dispose of the waste in Amsterdam two months ago. Amsterdam Port Service (APS) carried out the operation but the authorities stopped it halfway after local residents complained about the smell. The police started an investigation and samples of the waste were sent off for analysis. When analyses were done on the slops, APS said it contained more acid than was originally thought and it would therefore cost more to treat. Trafigura refused to pay and said it would dispose off the slop elsewhere. The waste treatment company then pumped the toxic waste back into the ship and *Probo Koala* left the port. According to *De Volkskrant*, the public prosecutor's office is now saying that the environmental inspection should have not allowed the waste to be pumped back while the police investigation

was ongoing. The paper said APS was anxious to get rid of the poisonous load, afraid that the company would be stuck with the bill for treating the toxic waste.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Greenpeace activists in Estonia today blocked the departure of combined bulk and oil carrier *Probo Koala* that had unloaded chemical waste blamed for the deaths of seven people in Ivory Coast, the organization and news reports said. A Greenpeace statement said its vessel *Arctic Sunrise* dropped anchor in front of the *Probo Koala* at the Estonian port of Paldiski, preventing it from leaving. The activists demanded that Estonian authorities impound the vessel pending a criminal investigation. Police were dispatched to the scene, the Baltic News Service reported. Estonian authorities could not immediately be reached late today to confirm the reports. Dutch authorities are investigating the vessel's owner, Trafigura Beheer BV, over the disposal of toxic waste in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. The company says the waste contained only residue of a gas-oil blend and the caustic soda commonly used for cleaning petrochemical tankers. But a U.N. analysis of the waste material found dumped in residential neighborhoods in Abidjan found it contained toxic levels of hydrogen sulfide. Ivory Coast hospitals have provided free treatment to 44,000 people in the past few weeks, many of them complaining of nausea, headaches, and breathing difficulties caused by the foul-smelling substance, according to the country's Health Ministry. Trafigura's director Claude Dauphin and another executive were jailed in Ivory Coast last week on suspicion of poisoning and breaking toxic waste laws after they went to the country to assist authorities with the cleanup effort. Mounting public anger over the dumping resulted in the resignation of the entire Ivory Coast government earlier this month. But most of the 36 members were later reappointed. In the Netherlands, there are three investigations into the matter by Amsterdam prosecutors, the City of Amsterdam, and the Transport Ministry.

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: Estonian maritime authorities today rejected a demand by the environmental activist group, Greenpeace, to impound the Panamanian-registered combined bulk and oil carrier *Probo Koala*, suspected of dumping toxic waste in waters off Ivory Coast. Tarmo Ots, head of the Maritime Administration's foreign and media relations, said: "The *Probo Koala* that was blocked yesterday evening in the Estonian port of Paldiski by a Greenpeace vessel has no toxic waste on board. "The ship was checked by Estonian authorities on Sep 15 and was found to be clean of any toxic waste. It has not yet left the port and we do not see the need for any new checks. "We do treat Greenpeace demands with respect, but there is just no substance behind the

Greenpeace claim." A Greenpeace statement issued on Monday (Sep 25) said the *Probo Koala* had "dumped toxic waste in Abidjan, in Ivory Coast, killing seven people and causing mass panic, with 44 000 people seeking medical assistance". Greenpeace activists blocked the vessel in Paldiski harbour briefly on yesterday evening, calling the Baltic port "a European Union toxic crime scene". Ots said Estonian officials planned to go on board the Greenpeace vessel *Arctic Sunrise* later today to point out that "Greenpeace activists entered Paldiski port without permission and violated maritime rules". Greenpeace asked Estonia, which joined the European Union in 2004, to impound the vessel, and called on the European Commission in Brussels to "ensure that it is held until a full criminal investigation is carried out and those responsible for the illegal waste export, and ensuing deaths, are brought to justice". The Dutch company, which chartered the *Probo Koala* said yesterday that tests conducted on the vessel's cargo that was dumped at the end of August on refuse sites in Abidjan, Ivory Coast's largest city, showed it contained "little or no toxicity" and was in line with international laws. In Abidjan's toxic waste scandal, toxic dumping was blamed last month for seven deaths, 66 hospitalisations and more than 60,000 medical consultations.

Fires & Explosions



BRUSH, MAUI, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: State, federal and county firefighters were battling blazes yesterday that had burned an estimated 4,000 to 6,000 acres of brush land in the Kahikinui area in South Maui. Most of the Hawaiian homesteaders who live in Kahikinui have voluntarily evacuated the area. Firefighters have focused on preventing the fire from spreading toward homestead properties and forest reserve areas where there are endangered species. The fire is burning in a remnant koa forest but has not spread mauka into endangered-species areas, said John Cumming, Maui branch manager for the state Forestry and Wildlife Division.

FACTORY, COWRA, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Five days after a fire that gutted Sarajane Furniture, the factory is once again showing signs of life, as the massive task of cleaning up, assessing the damage and building continues. Fire ripped through the William St site of one of Australia's biggest furniture manufacturers on Friday (Sep 22). Work on the site's

new sheds, underway before the major fire that sent the main shed crashing down in flames, continued on Monday (Sep 25) and yesterday. Cowra Shire Mayor Bruce Miller reiterated Council's previous offer of assistance, saying it will invoke its emergency powers to issue a demolition order to help speed up any rebuilding process in the future, once that step is reached. "My understanding also is that if Glen wants to build exactly as it was before, he does not need a Development Application consent, which will hasten the process," Cr Miller said. He and Sarajane owner Glen Scott had not held further discussions since Friday's initial offer of help, as the factory owner awaited for the assessor to arrive on site. "What we have said is 'let us know when you are ready and need us. Until he gets the go ahead from the assessor, which I understand will not be visiting until Thursday, there is not much more we can do.'"

FACTORY, KANPUR, INDIA

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated Sep 23, states: A blaze, probably cause by an electrical fault, swept through a godown of the Rupani Chappal factory in the Vijay Nagar area in the early hours of this morning destroying goods worth almost crores and injuring two fire-fighters. It took almost six hours for the fire, supposed to be caused by a short-circuit, to be doused. Luckily there were no casualties as the accident happened at around 0800. Surprisingly, there was no watchman at the godown either. According to reports, fumes were seen billowing out of the factory's second-storey godown, after which shopkeepers in the neighbourhood called the fire station. It took an hour for the fire-fighters to arrive at the scene by when the flames had engulfed the entire factory premises and were threatening to spill over to the adjacent factories. Owner of the factory, Laxman Rupani, said he was yet to know what had caused the fire. Goods worth Rs 2.5 crore had been consumed by the flames, he claimed. Over 3,500 cartons were stored in the godown, which has now become a mess of rubble and ashes.

FOREST, INDONESIA

London, Sep 27 — Thick, acrid haze from ground and forest fires smothered the Indonesian portion of Borneo today, as respiratory difficulties among residents appeared to be on the rise, officials said. "It was really bad this morning at around 0500 to 0600 hrs, when visibility was 100 to 200 metres," Hidayat from the meteorology office in Palangkaraya, the capital of Central Kalimantan province, told AFP. He said the haze later cleared to allow visibility of around one kilometre. In neighbouring South Kalimantan, visibility was as low as 500 metres early today, but it later cleared to five kilometres, said Agus, who heads the meteorology office in the provincial capital Banjarmasin.

OIL WELL, OGOINI, NIGERIA

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated Sep 26, states: Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC) yesterday stated that it was still battling to put out a fire ravaging at its oil well in southern Rivers State, more than one month after it broke out. The fire on Yorla Well -13, located in Ogoni communities, which was first reported on August 14, had further heightened the disagreement between the communities and Shell. The company stated: "The Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria wishes to reassure the neighbouring Ogoni communities, the Rivers State Government and the general public that it is doing everything possible to put out the fire on Yorla Well -13 in Rivers State. "Initial difficulties in accessing the site caused delays and complications in the well control exercise...The operations to disable the well and extinguish the fire started last week after detailed preparations and technical planning." The immediate cause of the fire is yet to be determined, while the company says preliminary observations suggest tampering by unknown persons. "When the fire was reported to us on August 14, SPDC was denied access to the site by community youths, and officials of the Rivers State Government had to lead protracted discussions before we were allowed in. Working through a community contractor and, in agreement with the Ogoni Youth Council, we repaired access roads, prepared the location, and mobilised fire fighting and well services teams to Yorla to repair any damage and fight the fire. An official of the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) was reported last week as saying that the Nigerian government planed to withdraw Shell's operating license in the Ogoni area. The head of the department, Mr. Tony Chukwueke, however, denied such plans on Sunday (Sep 24). Shell, which withdrew from Ogoni in 1993 and has not operated there since then, said it had since, over the years, sought unfettered access to secure and make its facilities in the area safe.

POULTRY PROCESSING PLANT, HEFLIN, ALABAMA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 24, states: A fire destroyed the Tyson Foods poultry processing plant at Heflin, forcing a halt to production. Tyson spokesman Gary Mickelson said today the plant, which processes about one million birds per week, was not operating when the blaze broke out yesterday. No one was injured. Dan Hopkins, assistant chief of the Hollis Crossroads Fire Department in Cleburne County, said firefighters saved the office complex, but the processing plant was destroyed. He said 16 different fire departments battled the blaze from 1630 hrs, yesterday until about 0330 hrs, today. Some nearby homes were evacuated because of hazardous fumes, but residents were allowed to

return about 0230 hrs, today. Only maintenance employees work at the plant on weekends. The plant, which opened in 1986, employs 267 workers. An employee, Matthew Curlee, said he was at the plant until 1615 hrs, yesterday. He said roofers were working on the plant. "It must've caught on fire about an hour after we left," he told The Anniston Star. Hopkins said the fire was first reported by the roofing contractor. Mickelson said insulation may have caught fire during the roof repairs. He had no immediate estimate of the damages.

PREMISES, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A raging third-alarm fire ripped through a row of stores in the Corona section of Queens, halting subway service. Eyewitness News has learned the blaze tore through the stores on Roosevelt Avenue, near 104th Street, just before 0230. Heavy flames shot out of the businesses, described as a restaurant, a coffee shop, well-known "Ysa" bakery, travel agency, barbershop and a gift shop. As many as eight stores were heavily damaged. Smoke poured up to the elevated No. 7 line, temporarily halting service between the Woodside-61st Street and Flushing-Main Street stations. Three firefighters were being treated for minor injuries. At noontime state fire marshals were still on the scene investigating the cause of the fire but they say it definitely was not suspicious.

WAREHOUSE, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated Sep 27, states: An early morning fire today swept through a Sacramento warehouse, destroying much of the local operations of electronic player-piano manufacturer PianoDisc and damaging several other businesses. The fire at 4111 N. Freeway Blvd., a 48,000-square-foot warehouse near Northgate Boulevard, took more than an hour to douse, said Captain Jim Doucette of the Sacramento Fire Department. He said about four or five businesses were located in the warehouse, but PianoDisc sustained the brunt of the fire. "That was where most of the damage was," Doucette said. "They lost almost everything." Published reports estimated the damage in the millions of dollars. Sacramento-based PianoDisc builds and installs electronic control units into pianos, and has become a leading force in the automated-piano industry since it was founded in 1988. The fire was reported at 0106 hrs. The 30-year-old building had no sprinkler system, Doucette said. It will be hard to pinpoint the exact cause of the fire, he said, and it will probably be listed as "undetermined."

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

Melbourne, Sep 24 — Three homes have been destroyed by a fire fanned

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by winds of up to 100 kph near Sydney, fire services said today, as the bushfire season started early in eastern Australia. Several fires burned in New South Wales state as temperatures soared above 30 degrees Celsius. The outbreaks followed the driest August since records began in 1900, sparking an early start to the blazes that scorch the country every summer. A spokesman for the Rural Fire Service said that three homes had been razed in Thirlmere, 85 km southwest of Sydney. "We do have a fire that's moving very fast through that area being fanned by these winds, in some cases up to 90, 100 kph," a spokesman said. "Fire crews in the area are working extremely hard under very difficult circumstances. These wind conditions make it near impossible to stop a fire that's burning through some of the vegetation that's there." Fires also burned north-west of Sydney in the Hawkesbury region, further north near Newcastle and in the southern part of the state around Ulladulla. Relief was expected with a southerly change in the winds later today, the spokesman said. — Reuters.

WILDFIRES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 21 — A press report, dated today, states: Cooler temperatures, higher humidity and calm winds helped firefighters begin containment of 958-acre wildfire burning in the Sierra, California. The size of the Bassetts fire, in the Tahoe National Forest, 15 miles east of Downieville and one mile north of California 49, was cut nearly in half, yesterday, as smoke cleared, allowing more accurate mapping. The fire was burning in heavy timber and steep terrain and was threatening several cabins. Some 200 people had managed to contain 20% of the blaze. In central Nevada, the Paiute Canyon fire, 15 miles north of Winnemucca, was contained at 2,300 acres, after temporarily closing U.S. 95. In southern Nevada, the 600-acre Pass fire, four miles west of Good Springs, was in mop up today.

London, Sep 22 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire crews yesterday made an all-out effort to surround a two-week-old wildfire before hot, dry Santa Ana winds arrived to renew its ferocity. At the same time, they made progress against two smaller blazes also burning in national forests. The National Weather Service issued a "red flag" warning for critical fire conditions from this afternoon through Sunday (Sep 24) for Southern California mountains and valleys. Officials said there could be 45 mph winds, gusting to 65 mph at times tomorrow. The biggest fire, in Los Padres National Forest, had burned 107,685 acres of brush and timber, or about 168 square miles. It was 39% contained. Smoke made a dark curtain in the direction of Ojai, about 10 miles away. The fire did not immediately threaten any homes but authorities continued to recommend that people in Lockwood Valley, about seven miles

from the fire, be prepared to leave. The fire, which has cost \$24.1 million to fight, nearly doubled in size the last time the winds appeared. The blaze, sparked on Labour Day (Sep 4) by someone burning debris, burned in an area 75 miles north-west of Los Angeles. It was sluggish yesterday, thanks to cool weather and light winds. "It's burning slow. There's no rapid rate of spread," said Larry Comerford of the US Forest Service. Elsewhere, the 2,370-acre Pinnacles Fire in San Bernardino National Forest was burning north-east of Lake Arrowhead, about 80 miles east of Los Angeles. It was 80% contained and crews hoped to fully surround it by tomorrow evening. Another fire was burning 10 miles north of La Canada Flintridge in Angeles National Forest north of Los Angeles. It was 75% contained after burning 113 acres and prompting authorities to close a portion of Angeles Crest Highway. Crews hoped to fully contain it by this evening.

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: Hot, dry Santa Ana winds gusting to more than 50 mph yesterday stoked the flames of a three-week-old wildfire in Los Padres National Forest and ignited at least two new fires. The winds also briefly grounded water-dropping helicopters, but they were back in the air by the afternoon. One scorched about 40 acres, and helicopters worked to prevent it from moving farther west toward Highway 33. Another ignited about 700 acres in the canyons above Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula along Highway 150. The campus was not in any immediate danger, authorities said. To the west, 10 homes in the Rose Valley area were evacuated as a precaution, and hundreds of people in communities about 10 miles from the fire's edge were urged to be ready to leave if the winds sent flames their way. The fire along the border of Ventura and Los Angeles counties doubled in size when Santa Ana winds kicked up a week ago. The fire began on Labor Day and has burned more than 117,000 acres, or nearly 183 square miles. It was nearly 40 percent contained. More than 3,000 firefighters were battling the blaze, which has cost \$31.7 million to fight. Elsewhere, crews mopped up two smaller fires in forests to the south. A 2,730-acre fire in San Bernardino National Forest was fully contained yesterday. A fire in Angeles National Forest north of Los Angeles was fully contained Friday (Sep 22) after burning 113 acres. In northern California, calmer weather helped firefighters control and extinguish a series of fires that destroyed three homes, 15 barns and dozens of cattle. Officials lifted an evacuation order for more than 100 residents near Zamora, said Mike Chandler, acting fire coordinator in Yolo County.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters expected cooler temperatures, dying winds and a McDonnell Douglas DC-10 aircraft to help them today as they

battle a wildfire that has burned nearly 210 square miles in the Los Padres National Forest. Fading winds yesterday allowed crews to bring in more than 40 helicopters and planes, including the DC-10, to drop fire retardant on the blaze. Officials credited the DC-10 with knocking back the edge of the fire that crept toward Ojai, an artists' enclave popular with tourists. Winds were expected to be considerably calmer today, down from 40 mph to less than 10 mph, said Dan Bastion of the US Forest Service. "It will be a good day to get a lot of work done," Bastion said. Despite the fire's size — it has burned about 134,000 acres since breaking out on Labor Day (Sep 4) — no homes have been destroyed. No injuries were reported yesterday, and the blaze was about 40% contained. "We are slowly getting a line around the fire," Bastion said. "It's a lot of nibbling, but eventually we'll get the upper hand." Late Sunday, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency for Ventura County, clearing the way for assistance from the governor's emergency services office and state funds for rebuilding and recovery. As winds that had reached 50 mph on Saturday (Sep 23) subsided, local residents appeared less anxious as more than 3,000 firefighters and emergency workers blanketed the area. Burning along the border of Ventura and Los Angeles counties, the blaze doubled in size when Santa Ana winds kicked up a week ago. A light, moist wind from the south had calmed the fire for several days earlier this week. The blaze has cost \$33 million to fight. Elsewhere, a fire in the Angeles National Forest in northern Los Angeles County was 80% contained after consuming about 100 acres of brush. The blaze was near a nature centre and forced the closure of Placerita Canyon Road, but no evacuations were ordered, authorities said.

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated today, states: Officials urged residents in rural mountain communities to evacuate as they battled one of California's largest and longest-lasting wildfires. Thick smoke turned the sky gray and purplish yesterday as flames rolled through pines and juniper trees on slopes of Los Padres National Forest, where more than 3,800 firefighters have battled the blaze since it started on Labour Day (Sep 4). "The problem is we've had extremely dry fuels," fire spokesman Dan Bastion said today. "Brush and trees will be ignited by the heat of the fire, so there's a domino effect going on." Fire trucks, bulldozers and water tankers guarded homes within sight of the massive fire yesterday. No occupied homes had been lost to the fire, which burned some 70 miles north-west of Los Angeles. Overall, containment was 42%. Six unoccupied buildings were destroyed, including a modular home, a cabin, barns and camp trailers, said fire spokesman Dan Bastion. Authorities recommended evacuation

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of several remote Ventura County communities arrayed along roads west of Interstate 5. Wind-whipped flames jumped a road, said US Forest Service fire spokesman Larry Comerford. Water and retardant-dropping helicopters and aircraft attacked the flames from the sky. On the ground, crews staged equipment at the widely spaced homes for structure protection. At almost every house there was at least one engine and a few firefighters clearing brush, hosing down roofs and decks. A bulldozer ploughed a firebreak around one home. The new fire activity was a surprise setback for firefighters. The blaze had been moving relatively slowly with the dying of weekend Santa Ana winds that had the potential to greatly spread flames but did not. The blaze has burned more than 144,880 acres of wilderness. It was ignited by someone burning debris. Firefighting costs have topped \$45.5 million. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has declared a state of emergency for Ventura County.



9N-AHJ

Kathmandu, Sep 27 — Rescue teams in the mountainous terrain of eastern Nepal today recovered the remains of 24 people killed in the crash of a helicopter chartered by conservation group WWF, officials said. The wreckage of the Russian-built aircraft was found on Monday (Sep 25) near a remote village in the Taplejung district — about 300 km east of the Himalayan nation’s capital, Kathmandu — following a two-day, rain-hampered search. Officials said they suspected the helicopter, which was carrying 20 passengers and four crew members, may have slammed into the hills, broken into pieces and burst into flames. There were no survivors. “Rescuers have collected pieces of bodies in bags from the steep slopes and are carrying them down,” police inspector Mahendra Shrestha said from the town of Taplejung. “It will take a couple of hours for the rescuers to carry the remains of bodies to the place where helicopters can land,” he said. “They will then be taken to Kathmandu.” The aircraft was carrying 17 Nepalis, two Russians, a Finnish diplomat, two Americans, a Canadian and a Swiss-Australian. Nepal’s junior forest minister, Gopal Rai, his wife, Finnish Charge d’Affaires Pauli Mustonen and the deputy director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Nepal, Margaret Alexander, were among those on board. — Reuters.

London, Sep 27 — MI-172, 9N-AHJ, went missing on a 20 minute flight from Ghunsha Village to Suketar Village. The crash site was 2 km from the takeoff location. The World Life

Fund said 20 passengers were returning from a conservation site in Ghunsha.

AIRCRAFT PUT BACK TO ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

London, Sep 28 — A Qantas jet bound for Melbourne has been forced to return to Adelaide because of a bird strike early today. A Qantas spokesman said flight 672, a Boeing 737-400, with 132 passengers on board encountered the problem soon after take-off. “The pilot elected to return to Adelaide in line with standard operating procedure,” he said. “He requested priority clearance and landed without incident just after 0700, CST. The spokesman said the jet was being inspected by Qantas engineers. A replacement aircraft left Adelaide for Melbourne at 0810 hrs with all passengers on board.

C-GSHK

London, Sep 25 — The Heli-Lift International Bell 204B helicopter, C-GSHK, was on contract to support drilling operations in the vicinity of Stoney Rapids, Saskatchewan at 0930, EDT, Sep 16. The pilot was transporting drill equipment to a new drill site by long line. Shortly after take-off, there was a reported problem with a door on the helicopter and the pilot released the external load. Approximately one minute later, a loud crash was heard and black smoke was evident from a site approximately 4 km to the west of the drill site that was being dismantled. The pilot suffered fatal injuries. The helicopter incurred damage from impact forces and the effects of a post-crash fire.

CRASH, CROOKED ISLAND, BAHAMAS

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: A twin engine Piper Chieftain aircraft veered off a private landing strip in Pitt’s Town, Crooked Island yesterday afternoon in an emergency landing that caused police to spring into action, authorities reported yesterday. Pilot Donald Moss, 49, a resident of California, was unharmed, according to police press liaison officer Inspector Walter Evans. He was the only person on board. Officers in Crooked Island had been alerted to the arriving aircraft around 1400 hrs. However, moments later, after a further investigation, they found it embedded in bushes. The nine-seat aircraft had taken off from the Lynden Pindling International Airport earlier in the afternoon, Inspector Evans confirmed. “The aircraft as it landed reportedly it received some damage to the wings, propellers and landing gear,” he said. “This matter is under investigation.”

CRASH, ELEVEN MILES AREA, BULL BAY, JAMAICA

London, Sep 23 — A press report, dated today, states: Four persons on board a single-engine aircraft, three from the Dominican Republic and an American, miraculously escaped serious injuries after the aircraft, en

route from the Norman Manley International Airport, Kingston, to the Dominican Republic, crashed in the hills near Eleven Miles, Bull Bay, after it developed mechanical problems 20 minutes into the flight. What could have been a disaster, however, was averted when the parachute from the new US\$35,000 aircraft was activated, cushioning the effects of the crash. Freddy Oscar, 54, pilot; Omar Valdez, 32, co-pilot; Nelson Meyes, 28, all from the Dominican Republic, were taken from the aircraft unscathed while an American, 79-year-old Ellison Gauding, received minor injuries. Valdez said that the aircraft took off at 1100 and got into difficulty, leaving the crew in a state of shock at little more than 1,000 metres. Up to late yesterday evening, the four men were being questioned by the police. A source said a team from the Jamaica Civil Aviation authority which went to the scene of the crash had raised concerns about the location of the flight in relation to its intended destination.

CRASH, ELKWATER AREA, ALBERTA, CANADA

London, Sep 27 — A press report, dated today, states: A Medicine Hat woman was killed and a man seriously injured when their Cessna 172 crashed near Elkwater, Alberta last night. Recliff RCMP were called to reports of a downed aircraft at 2330. The 21-year-old woman was found dead at the scene, while a 53-year-old man was taken to Medicine Hat Hospital with serious injuries. The Transportation Safety Board is investigating.

CRASH, FLINDERS ISLAND, AUSTRALIA

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated today, states: Police and State Emergency Service personnel are still at the scene of a fatal light aircraft crash on Flinders Island in Bass Strait. The cause of today’s crash on Mount Killiecrankie is being investigated. Police believe the pilot was the only person on board the four-seater Beach Bonanza when it crashed into the southern side of the mountain, about 100 metres from the summit. It crashed shortly after take-off at 0600, AEST.

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 26, states: An experienced pilot who was believed to be locked in a messy divorce died after his light aircraft slammed into a mountain on Flinders Island yesterday. Peter Waterhouse, 57, took off alone in his aircraft from a private airstrip on Flinders Island bound for Melbourne to settle divorce proceedings. His Beech 35 Bonanza aircraft crashed into Mt Killiecrankie in the island’s north shortly after take-off about 0600. Witnesses say the crash unfolded like a scene straight out of a movie, with a huge fireball erupting on impact, while local police described the scene on the 319m peak as “total destruction”. Debris was strewn across

the rocky slope, the aircraft left unrecognisable except for the remains of one wing. Two paramedics were winched to the smouldering site by helicopter, and battled rain and rough terrain throughout the day as they investigated the crash about 100m from the summit. Other paramedics and police set up a base camp at the bottom of the mountain. A forensic team arrived by air from Launceston at 1300 to prepare a coronial report and take the body to Hobart. While police have not released the pilot's name, locals confirmed it was Mr Waterhouse.

CRASH, LAKE CITY AREA, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 28 — A press report, dated Sep 27, states: An 81-year-old pilot died when his small plane caught fire on a grass landing strip south of Lake City this afternoon. The incident occurred about 1620 hrs, at the Lake City airpark located on U.S. Route 441 about 10 miles south of Lake City. The Bonanza Beachcraft plane was being piloted by Donald Schempf, a retired Pan Am commercial pilot who lived in Mason City. "(He) was kind of testing the engines up and down the grass strip, and for some unknown reason the plane lifted several feet up in the air and then nose-dived into the ground and burst into flames," said Columbia County Sheriff Bill Gootee. When Columbia County Fire and Rescue arrived, the plane was engulfed in flames. Gootee said the Federal Aviation Administration had been contacted and would be in Columbia County tomorrow morning. Schempf's wife told investigators that he had not flown the plane in years, but was preparing to put it up for sale.

CRASH, TOLUCA, MEXICO

See XB-JVH.

EMERGENCY LANDING, KIEV, UKRAINE

London, Sep 26 — A press report, dated today, states: An aircraft carrying Ukrainian Defence Minister Anatoly Hrytsenko to Albania returned to Kiev and made an emergency landing after the pilot noticed cracks in a cockpit window, a ministry spokesman said. "There was serious damage in the outside pane of a double-paned cockpit window," Andriy Lysenko said. "The pilot noticed it in good time and decided to return to Kiev." Mr Lysenko said no one was hurt in the incident aboard a government Tu-134, a Soviet-designed plane frequently used on medium-haul civil flights.

EMERGENCY LANDING ARLANDA AIRPORT, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

Gothenburg, Sept 22 — A FlyMe aircraft, with 90 passengers on board, made an emergency landing at Arlanda Airport (Stockholm) today after the pilot got an indication of engine problems. The aircraft had taken off for Gothenburg when the pilot got an indication that something wrong and after only a few minutes in the air, he

decided to return to Arlanda where it landed at 1113 hrs without any problems. Investigations in hand. — Westax Marine Services AB.

EMERGENCY LANDING, CRETE, GREECE

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated Sep 23, states: An Airbus of the low-fare airline Hellas Jet made an emergency landing today on Crete, after the crew experienced problems with the aircraft's guidance systems. Greek state television NET said there were no injuries among the 63 passengers on board as the aircraft landed safely at Heraklion airport. The Airbus 320 was on a flight from Brussels to the Greek vacation island of Rhodes when the pilots reported having trouble with the guidance systems and made plans for an emergency landing. With the weather being better on Crete and on Rhodes, Greek civil aviation authorities re-directed the aircraft to Heraklion and alerted rescue teams there. Hellas Jet is a subsidiary of the state Cypriot airline Cyprus Airways.

EMERGENCY LANDING, HALIFAX INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, CANADA

London, Sept 23 — A press report, dated today, states: An American Airlines Boeing 767 en route from Chicago to Manchester, England, made an unexpected visit to Halifax International Airport late Thursday evening. The Boeing 767, with 209 passengers, was forced to make an emergency landing when it developed engine problems. Airport spokeswoman Karen Sinclair said yesterday the aircraft landed about 2300 hrs without incident. The passengers spent the night in the airport terminal and left around 1000 yesterday when American sent a second aircraft to pick them up and continue on to England. An airline spokesman said yesterday that airline agents tried to find hotel rooms for the passengers in Halifax but because of the Rolling Stones concert today and a number of other events this weekend, there were not rooms available. The spokesman said the plane's crew had to stay in Halifax and weren't able to find hotel space until late yesterday morning.

G-JURE

London, Sep 26 — A pilot has suffered burns after his light aircraft (SOCATA Rallye TB.10, Tobago, G-JURE) caught fire when it crashed in a forest in Cheshire. Emergency crews were called last night after being alerted that the aircraft, flying from Liverpool John Lennon airport, was in difficulty. The 52-year-old pilot, from Merseyside, had been flying alone and suffered second-degree burns. The aircraft crashed into woodland near Delamere Forest. Fire crews said that the dense forest lessened the impact. Air accident investigators are due to visit the scene to help establish the cause of the crash. The aircraft wreckage is stuck between the trees

The wreckage landed in trees and is expected to be moved down to be examined. A fire spokeswoman said the crash happened at about 2100 BST.

HELICOPTER CRASH, NEPAL

See 9N-AHJ.

HELICOPTER MISSING, NEPAL

London, Sep 24 — A press report, dated today, states: A helicopter carrying 24 people, including 7 foreigners, went missing on Saturday (Sep 23) in a remote area of Eastern Nepal. The fate of the passengers and crew is unknown. Chartered by conservationist group WWF, the helicopter was en route to Suketar village from Ghunsa village, in Taplejung district. The group, which included officials, diplomats and conservation workers, was returning from the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area. The Russian-made MI-172 helicopter, owned by a local company, took off from Ghunsa late Saturday morning for what was to be a 20-minute flight. It went missing five minutes later. Locals said they heard a loud noise in the jungle not long after the helicopter took off from Ghunsa. The region is very remote. A local of Lelep said over the telephone that the helicopter vanished from the sky suddenly and nobody could see what happened next.

Kathmandu, Sep 23 — A private helicopter carrying 24 people including a junior minister and at least seven foreigners went missing in a remote region of eastern Nepal Saturday (Sep 23), a conservation group and authorities said. The flight was taking officials, diplomats and conservation workers to attend the handover of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area to the local community by the global environmental group WWF, which organised the trip. Among the 20 passengers were junior forest minister Gopal Rai, his wife and three senior government officials, WWF said. Also on board were a Finnish diplomat, two Americans including one employee of the US government aid agency USAID, a Canadian and an Australian, as well as two Russians in the crew of four. The helicopter left the village of Ghunsa at 1200, local time, (0615 GMT), but failed to reach Taplejung, 300 km from the capital Kathmandu. Airport officials coordinating the rescue operation called off aerial and ground search operations at nightfall, but said they would begin again on Sunday morning. The Russian-made helicopter is owned by a local company, Sri Airlines. — Reuters.

Kathmandu, Sep 25 — Authorities in Nepal appealed to villagers today for help in finding a helicopter chartered by conservation group WWF, nearly two days after it disappeared in bad weather with 24 people on board. More than 100 soldiers, police personnel and rescue experts were battling monsoon rains in remote and mountainous Taplejung district, 300 km east of the

capital, Kathmandu, where the Russian-built MI-17 helicopter disappeared on Saturday (Sep 23). "At least seven helicopters are also in ready position in Taplejung (town) and nearby areas, including in Kathmandu, to resume the search as soon as the weather clears," Mahesh Shrestha, a rescue coordinator at Kathmandu airport, told Reuters. But the district administrator of Taplejung, Hem Nath Dawadi, said the weather remained a problem. "It is continuously raining and very thick fog is covering the area with no sign of any let-up," he said. Yesterday, the government offered a reward of \$2,700 for information that could help locate the helicopter, but Tourism Minister Pradip Gyanwali said officials had heard nothing. The area, located above 3,500 metres, is very remote and with few villages, in an area dominated by ravines and gorges, officials said. Of the 20 passengers and four crew, 17 were Nepalis. Others included a Finnish diplomat, two Americans, a Canadian and an Australian, as well as two Russians. Nepal's junior forest minister, Gopal Rai, his wife, Finnish Charge d'Affaires Pauli Mustonnen, and the deputy director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Nepal, Margaret Alexander, were among them. Other passengers were conservationists working for the WWF and two Nepali television journalists. The passengers had attended the handover of a WWF project to the local community and were on the way back. Officials said yesterday that villagers had reported hearing a loud noise in a gorge soon after the helicopter left Ghunsa, a region that is home to the world's third-highest peak, Mount Kanchenjunga. — Reuters.

Karachi, Sep 25 — Sri Lanka Officials say search and rescue team have located the crash site of the missing Shree Airlines helicopter in Southern Ghunsa in Taplejung district today. An official at the Rescue Coordination Unit at the Tribhuvan International Airport told local media that a team of rescue workers spotted the crash site some two kms south-west of Ghunsa. The number of dead is yet to be confirmed. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

INCIDENT AT BISHKEK AIRPORT, KYRGYZSTAN

Bishkek, Sep 26 — A Kyrgyz passenger plane hit a U.S. military cargo plane and smashed off part of its wing before taking off at Bishkek airport yesterday night, a Kyrgyz government source told Reuters. No one was injured. The Kyrgyzstan Airlines Russian-made TU-154 aircraft, with 52 passengers and 9 crew on board, ripped off about 2.5 metres of its wing when it collided with a U.S. C-130 Hercules cargo plane during take-off at about 2200 local time (1600 UTC). The Kyrgyz plane reached an altitude of about 200 metres and circled once before returning to land at Manas airport, northwest of Bishkek, said the official

who is taking part in an investigation into the incident. The U.S. cargo plane had been trying to turn off the runway when the collision took place. Its wing caught fire but firefighters extinguished the blaze. — Reuters.

N4459M

London, Sep 25 — Piper PA-12, N4459M, privately operated, crashed under unknown circumstances on Half Moon Island, East Grand Lake, Orient, Maine, at 1730, local time, Sep 22. The aircraft was destroyed. Minor injuries to the two persons on board.

N468SH

London, Sep 25 — Robinson R22, N468SH, operated by Silver State Helicopters LLC, lost control during hover and rolled over, at Skiatook Airport, Skiatook, Oklahoma, at 1915, local time, Sep 24. The aircraft was substantially damaged.

N4JV

London, Sep 25 — Beech 95-B55 (T42A), N4JV, operated by Midwest Garments Inc., crashed under unknown circumstances at North Sioux City, South Dakota, at 1458, local time, Sep 22. The one person on board was fatally injured, the aircraft was destroyed.

N74475

London, Sep 26 — Bellanca 14-13-2, N74475, privately operated, crashed onto a residential driveway at Ellijay, Georgia, at 2229, local time, Sep 25.

N8148R

London, Sep 25 — A press report, dated Sep 23, states: A small plane crashed into an airport fence today during an air show, killing two men and an 11-year-old boy on board. The single-engine Beech Bonanza was giving tours during the show and crashed during takeoff, Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said. The plane had apparently just barely got airborne and went down off the end of the runway, said Connie Smith, publicity chairman for the Birmingham Aero Club. The victims were pilot Clayton Reues and two passengers, John Smitherman and his son Landon Smitherman, said Shelby County Coroner Doug Ballard Jr. Pilots affiliated with the club donate their time to give airplane rides to raise money for the Southern Museum of Flight in Birmingham, Smith said. The Wings & Wheels air show draws as many as 5,000 to the Shelby County Airport off Interstate 65 south of Birmingham. FAA and emergency officials were already on the field for the air show, which was delayed about 30 minutes after the crash. Federal officials began an investigation, but the cause of the crash was not immediately known.

London, Sep 26 — Beech F33A, N8148R, operated by CJ Aviation LLC, on take-off, lost power and crashed into the airport property fence at Shelby County Airport, Alabaster, Alabama, at 1800, local time, Sep 23.

The three persons on board were fatally injured. The aircraft sustained substantial damage.

N97435

London, Sep 25 — Cessna 182Q, N97435, privately operated, on attempted landing on Staples Lake, Cumberland, Wisconsin, crashed and sank, at 1930, local time, Sep 24. Damage unknown.

TF-LLA

London, Sept 23 — Electrical odour and smoke began emanating from the mode control panel on Icelandair Boeing 767-300 TF-LLA operating at flight level 320 at approximately 1630, Sept 17. The flight crew declared an emergency after losing auto-pilot, auto-throttles, and the flight directors. The aircraft diverted to Pointe a Pitre Airport, Guadeloupe.

XB-JVH

London, Sept 27 — Piper PA-46-310P, XB-JVH, owned and operated by a private individual, was destroyed during a forced landing following a loss of engine power near Toluca, Estado de Mexico, at 1220, CDT, Sept 15. The pilot and five passengers were seriously injured, and one passenger was fatally injured.

Space Vehicles



ATLANTIS (Space Shuttle)

London Sep 19 — A press report, dated today, states: The US space agency's Atlantis shuttle has had its Wednesday landing postponed after an unidentified object was seen floating near the vehicle. The delay will give engineers an opportunity to investigate the incident - and time for poor weather at the Florida landing strip to pass. "The mission management team has decided to keep Atlantis 24 more hours in orbit," a Nasa spokesman said. Atlantis is returning from the space station where it attached solar wings. The first opportunity for a touchdown at the Kennedy Space Center is now 0615 EDT (1015 GMT) on Thursday. The mystery object appears on video taken by a shuttle camera. It has been described as small and dark, and coming possibly from the ship's payload bay. It was noticed as astronauts were testing the vehicle's jets in preparation for the return to Earth. Mission Control has told the astronauts on Atlantis to hold off packing away the shuttle's robot arm and television antenna in case further inspections are required. "The question is: what is it? Is it something benign, or is it something more critical we should pay attention to?" said Wayne Hale, the space shuttle programme manager. "We want to make sure we're safe before committing to that critical journey

through the atmosphere." Even before the unexplained object came to the attention of engineers, Nasa was considering a change to the scheduled landing time because of unfavourable weather forecasts at Kennedy. Atlantis is making its way home from a construction visit to the International Space Station. The orbiter undocked on Sunday to make way for a Soyuz craft that is heading to the platform with a new crew and the first female space tourist, Anousheh Ansari. The US businesswoman is expected at the station with the new commander Michael Lopez-Alegria and flight engineer Mikhail Tyurin at 0524 GMT on Wednesday.

London, Sep 21 — A press report, dated today, states: The space shuttle Atlantis has touched down safely in Florida, ending a 12-day mission to re-start construction of the International Space Station (ISS). The shuttle made a perfect landing on runway 33 at Nasa's Kennedy Space Centre just after 0621 hrs (1021, UTC). A planned return yesterday was postponed after astronauts spotted several mysterious objects floating in space outside the orbiter, but inspections found no damage to the spacecraft from the nearby debris and the US space agency was happy that none of the items posed a further risk to the vehicle.

Product Recalls



KAWASAKI MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 28 — The following press release, dated Sep 27, was issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A., of Irvine, Calif., in co-operation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, have voluntarily recalled approximately 400 Kawasaki MULE utility vehicles. These vehicles could have been assembled with improperly manufactured steering knuckles that could break while the vehicle is in operation. This can cause a loss of steering control and cause a crash resulting in injury or death. Kawasaki has received no reports of incidents or injuries. The recall involves Kawasaki MULE 3000 (KAF620-G), MULE 3010 4x4 (KAF620-E/H), MULE 3010 Trans4x4 (KAF620-J/K) and MULE 3010 Diesel Trans4x4 (KAF950-C) models. These are four-wheel off-highway vehicles featuring side-by-side seating for two or four people, and automotive-style controls. Manufactured in the United States, the vehicles were sold by Kawasaki dealers sold these MULE utility vehicles from August 2006 through to September 2006 for between \$8,800 and \$10,800.

TOY TOOL BENCHES, UNITED STATES

London, Sep 25 — The following press release was issued on Sep 22 by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: In co-operation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Playskool, of Pawtucket, R.I., is voluntarily recalling about 255,000 Team Talking Tool Bench toys following the deaths of two young children. Playskool received reports that a 19-month-old boy from Martinsburg, W.V., and a two-year-old boy from League City, Texas, suffocated when oversized, plastic toy nails sold with the tool bench toys became forcefully lodged in their throats. Though the toy nails are not considered a small-part, and the toys are intended for children age three and older, Playskool is voluntarily conducting a recall as a precaution to prevent additional incidents. The Team Talking Tool Bench is a 20-inch tall plastic toy tool bench with an animated red toy saw, a yellow toy drill and a blue toy vice. The toy talks and makes various sound effects, including tool sounds. The product also includes a toy hammer, screwdriver, two 2nd-inch plastic screws, two three-inch plastic nails and pieces to build a small toy plane. The red Playskool logo is on the front of the brown surface of the tool bench. The toy was sold at Toys R Us, Wal-Mart, Target, KB Toys stores and various other stores nationwide from October 2005 through to September 2006 for about \$35.

Port Conditions



AUSTRALIA

Sydney, Sep 25 — The ship queue off the coast of Newcastle(NSW) is expected to push out to 41 vessels early next week as the Hunter Valley coal network continues working to clear a backlog caused by several factors, including severe weather earlier this month. Hunter Valley Coal Chain Logistics Team (HVCCLT) general manager Anthony Pitt said the network would lose between 500,000 and 600,000 tonnes in output this month due in part to unplanned outages and a high ship arrival rate. They're turning up at a rate well in excess of system capacity and the production rate in the valley, Mr Pitt said. It's been complicated by the weather and some slightly worse than predicted reliability issues. There are now 34 vessels waiting off the coast of Newcastle, but the HVCCLT expects the queue to blow out to more than 40, before falling to about 30 by the middle of October. Port Waratah Coal Services (PWCS) projected figures indicate that the port could export just 5.3m tonnes this month, down from 6.8m tonnes in August. But Mr Pitt said the network was still on track to export about 6m tonnes this month. Scheduled network

shutdowns due to maintenance last week would not affect declared capacity because they were factored in months ago, he said. Several upgrades should push the port's coal capacity to 102m tonnes by the middle of next year, up from about 86m tonnes this year. HVCCLT chairman Graham Davidson told Informa Coal's Gunnedah Basin Coal Conference last week that he did not expect all of this additional capacity to be needed next year. — Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News.

Sydney, Sep 28 — About 37 coal ships are currently waiting off the coast of Newcastle(NSW), the highest number in more than two years, with the queue expected to reach 41 by Monday (Oct 2). The delays have been attributed to a high vessel arrival rate, severe weather earlier this month and several unplanned outages along the network in the last two weeks. — Lloyd's List Daily Commercial News.

BANGLADESH

Karachi, Sep 22 — The build-up of containers at Chittagong Port still persists due to lack of storage space for containers. According to local media, following the opposition enforced blockade and strike for the last two days and slow clearance rate of containers, a record 18,373 Twenty Equivalent Unit (TEU) containers remain piled up at the port, which only has the space for 13,000 TEU containers. In addition, imported goods at the general cargo berths are also causing the situation to take a turn for worse. The containers piled at the port included 3,863 empty TEU containers, 10,438 full container load (FCL) containers, 181 less container load (LCL) containers, 2,211 TEU containers carrying export cargo and 1,680 TEU containers bound for Internal Container Depot (ICD). In addition, 12 vessels were berthing at different jetties at the port yesterday to offload another 2,502 TEU containers while three vessels carrying 1,721 TEU containers were anchored in the outer anchorage waiting to berth. The port Authority is considering imposing a higher penalty rent on any container remaining undelivered after the free-time of four days, from next week. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

ITALY

Genoa, Sep 25 — Port situation Sep 25: No vessels waiting for berth at Genoa or La Spezia. One vessel waiting for normal berth. Average number of days delay in berthing one day. No vessels waiting for special berth. — Lloyd's Agents.

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Sep 27 — Due to appliance breakdown at Saldanha Bay ore jetty last night the tanker terminal will be suffering berthing delays, at this stage not sure as to how long the repairs / assesment will be.

SYRIA

Aleppo, Sept 23 — Waiting period in Syrian ports: Lattakia 24 hours and Tartous two days.— Lloyd's Agents.

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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		
Abbott Point	03-10-2006	Coal: 12 vessels due by 20/10.
Brisbane	03-10-2006	Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth: 3 vessels due by 19/10.
Dalymple Bay	03-10-2006	Coal: DBCT berth 1: berth closed for maintenance until 5/10; 2 vessels waiting; 1 vessel due 2/10; DBCT berth 2: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 3 waiting; DBCT berth 3: 4 vessels waiting; other vessels not scheduled: 27 vessels due by 21/10.
Dampier	03-10-2006	Iron ore: Parker Point berth 1: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 13 vessels due by 12/10; Parker Point berth 2: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 11 vessels due by 13/10; Parker Point berth 3: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 11 vessels due by 11/10.
Esperance	03-10-2006	Iron ore: 1 vessel berthed; 2 vessels due by 11/10.
Geraldton	03-10-2006	Iron ore: 2 vessels anchored; 2 vessels due by 10/10; maintenance shutdown at berth No. 4 from 14-16/10. There is some congestion at present for the load berth. Another 2-3 day maintenance shutdown is possible in late October.
Gladstone	03-10-2006	Coal: R.G. Tanna (Clinton) coal terminal: 3 vessels berthed; 41 vessels due by 2/12; shiploader 2: plant shut down for maintenance for 4 days from 6-10/11; Barney Point: 11 vessels due by 15/12; plant shut down for maintenance from 18.00 hrs. 8/10 to 18.00 hrs. 11/10.
Hay Point	03-10-2006	Coal: Berth 1: berth No. 1 will be closed until the end of October; Berth 2: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 6 vessels due by 8/10; 6 other vessels due by 23/10, not yet scheduled.
Newcastle	03-10-2006	Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: 3 vessels berthed and loading, 31 waiting; 31 vessels due by 21/10; 11-19 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; 30 vessels off port awaiting berths; Dykes 4+5: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 9 waiting; 10 vessels due by 31/10; 12-16 days delay expected due to berth congestion and cargo availability; 10 vessels off port awaiting coal.
Port Hedland	03-10-2006	Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 7 vessels due by 10/10; "B" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 1 waiting; 7 vessels due by 12/10; 11 other vessels due by 23/10, no e.t.a. received; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "C" berth: berth undergoing refurbishment and closed until further notice; Goldsworthy (Finucane Island) "D" berth: 1 vessel berthed and loading, 2 waiting; 5 vessels due by 11/10. Cockatoo Island: 1 vessel due 10/10
Port Kembla	03-10-2006	Coal: 1 vessel berthed and loading; 18 vessels due by 20/11.
Port Walcott	03-10-2006	Iron ore: 1 vessel berthed and loaded, 3 waiting; 14 vessels due by 18/10; berth 3 will be closed for maintenance from 12.00 hrs. 3/10 to p.m. 4/10.
Whyalla	03-10-2006	Iron ore: 6 vessels due by 26/10; ore jetty closed for maintenance from 24/9 - 7/10.
Bulgaria		
Bourgas	02-10-2006	Ten vessels in port operating, of which 5 loading (3 coils, 1 profiles, 1 containers), 5 discharging (1 salt, 1 zinc ash, 1 metals, 1 containers, 1 copper concentrate); 3 vessels in roads, all to load, of which 1 sun flower seeds, 1 coils, 1 soya; 11 vessels due, of which 6 to load (4 coils, 1 containers, 1 profiles), 5 to discharge (1 lead concentrate, 1 containers, 1 gasoil, 1 benzene, 1 white metal).
Varna	02-10-2006	Varna East, Varna West, Electrical Power Station, Balchik: Conditions 25 September - 1 October: Thirty-five vessels in port operating of which 23 loading (2 scrap, 3 sunflower seeds, 2 equipment in packing cases, 1 bulk clinker, 2 bulk sulphuric acid, 11 soda, 1 silica sand, 1 chamotte/kaolin), 5 discharging (1 equipment in packing cases, 1 bulk slag, 1 raw phosphate, 1 bulk coal, 1 containers), 7 discharging/loading (6 containers, 1 calcium carbonate/silica sand); no vessels waiting in roads.
Colombia		
Barranquilla	03-10-2006	Max. permissible draft: 9 m fw. Shore cranes operational; Five vessels berthed (2 general cargo, 2 bulkers, 1 coal), none anchored; 7 vessels due (3 containers, 1 general cargo, 2 bulkers, 1 tanker), with no delays expected.
Buenaventura	03-10-2006	Shore cranes operational. Seven vessels berthed (4 containers, 1 general cargo, 2 bulkers), 2 vessels anchored (1 general cargo, 1 bulker); 34 vessels due (19 containers, 3 general cargo, 4 bulkers, 4 tankers, 4 PCC), with 1 day's delay expected for general cargo/PCC vessels, 2 days for bulkers/tankers.
Cartagena	03-10-2006	PRCTG: shore cranes operational; 2 vessels berthed (1 containers, 1 general cargo), none anchored; 29 vessels due (26 containers, 2 general cargo, 1 bulker), with no delays expected; MEB: shore crane operational; no vessels berthed, 3 anchored (2 containers, 1 general cargo); 5 vessels due (2 containers, 2 general cargo, 1 bulker), with no delays expected; CONTECAR: shore crane operational; 2 vessels berthed (1 containers, 1 general cargo), none anchored; 5 vessels due (2 containers, 2 general cargo, 1 bulker), with no delays expected.

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Port Conditions

Santa Marta	03-10-2006	Shore cranes operational. Two vessels berthed (1 containers, 1 tanker), none anchored; 8 vessels due (3 containers, 1 bananas, 2 bulkers, 1 tanker, 1 PCC), with no delays expected.
Cyprus		
Larnaca	03-10-2006	Two conventional vessels discharging at berth; 1 conventional vessel due 4/10; no delays expected.
Limassol	03-10-2006	Six container vessels discharging/loading at berth, 4 conventional vessels discharging at berth; 6 container vessels, 1 Ro/Ro, 5 passenger vessels due 4/10; no delays expected.
Egypt		
Adabiya	02-10-2006	Four vessels at berth (loading/discharging), all general cargo.
Alexandria	02-10-2006	Thirty-two vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 22 general cargo, 3 bulk carriers, 3 tankers, 2 container vessels, 2 passenger vessels; 6 vessels at inner anchorage, 18 at outer anchorage.
Damietta	02-10-2006	Nineteen vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 11 general cargo, 3 bulk carriers, 5 container vessels; no vessels at inner anchorage, 12 at outer anchorage.
Dekheila	02-10-2006	Eleven vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 1 general cargo, 8 bulk carriers, 2 container vessels; 3 vessels at outer anchorage.
Port Said	02-10-2006	Six vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 2 general cargo, 4 container vessels.
Suez	02-10-2006	Five vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 3 general cargo, 2 passenger vessels; 2 tug boats; 1 vessel dry-docked.
Suez Canal	02-10-2006	Twenty-two vessels transiting Northbound, 25 Southbound.
Kazakhstan		
Aktau	02-10-2006	Oil products: Two vessels loading crude oil at berth; 7 vessels in roads, all to load; 5 vessels due by 3/10, all to load.
Poland		
Gdansk	02-10-2006	Eight vessels loading at berth (1 coal, 5 general cargo, 2 bulkers), 3 discharging at berth (2 bulkers, 1 general cargo); 11 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 23 vessels due.
Gdynia	02-10-2006	Five vessels loading at berth (4 general cargo, 1 grain), 2 tankers discharging at berth; 20 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; no vessels waiting at anchorage, none waiting in roads; 46 vessels due.
Russia		
Novorossiysk	03-10-2006	Fifteen vessels in port operating, all loading, of which 1 bulk cement, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate/bulk urea, 1 WRIC, 1 coils/steel sheets, 1 slabs, 1 pig-iron, 3 wheat, 1 soda ash, 1 aluminium, 1 cellulose, 2 vegetable oil, 1 diesel oil; 7 vessels waiting in roads, of which 6 to load (1 bulk urea, 1 scrap, 1 paper, 2 aluminium, 1 lead), 1 to discharge debars; 53 vessels due, of which 43 to load (2 DRI, 1 soda ash, 1 bulk ammonium nitrate, 2 h-beams, 1 bulk NPK, 3 cellulose, 7 copper, 4 wheat, 1 steel billets, 3 coils, 1 beetroot, 1 scrap, 1 bulk cement, 1 steel sheets, 1 bulk cement, 2 pig-iron, 1 pipes/slabs, 1 steel billets, 1 aluminium, 1 steel billets/steel sheets, 1 coils/slabs, 3 diesel oil, 2 pipes, 1 vegetable oil), 7 to discharge (1 zinc concentrate, 2 vegetable oil, 2 coils, 2 debars), 3 to discharge/load containers; Oil terminal: 3 tankers berthed, all loading, of which 2 crude oil, 1 diesel oil; 3 tankers in roads, all to load crude oil; 4 tankers due, all to load crude oil.
Slovenia		
Koper	02-10-2006	Port working normally. Twelve vessels berthed of which 1 discharging/loading containers, 2 tankers discharging liquid cargo, 3 vessels loading general cargo/sawn timber, 4 discharging bulk cargo, 2 loading bulk cargo; 4 vessels waiting at anchorage of which 2 to discharge bulk cargo, 2 to load sawn timber; 17 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 6 to discharge/load containers, 3 car carriers to load/discharge, 1 car carrier to discharge vehicles, 3 vessels to load general cargo/sawn timber, 3 to discharge bulk cargo, 1 to load bulk cargo.
Spain		
Bilbao	03-10-2006	Thirty-one vessels operating (8 tankers, 23 other vessels), of which 11 loading, 15 discharging, 5 loading/discharging.
Sagunto	03-10-2006	Eighteen vessels in port operating, of which 3 loading (1 steel products, 1 general cargo, 1 cement), 15 discharging (9 steel products, 2 gas, 2 fruit, 1 vehicles, 1 machinery); no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present.
Sri Lanka		
Colombo	02-10-2006	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. Nine container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 15 vessels discharging at berth (12 containers/feeders, 1 steel cargo, 1 bulk cement clinker, 1 bulk cement); 5 container/feeder vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge; 5 vessels dry-docked; 8 vessels due (7 containers/feeders, 1 bulk cement), with no delays expected.
Trincomalee	02-10-2006	Two vessels discharging at berth, none waiting.

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Port Conditions

Turkmenistan

Turkmenbashi	02-10-2006	Oil products: Port open; Two vessels discharging crude oil at berth; 8 vessels in roads, of which 7 to load (5 gasoil, 1 HPGO, 1 fuel oil), 1 to discharge crude oil.
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Ukraine

Illichevsk	02-10-2006	Eight vessels in port operating, of which 7 loading (4 steel products, 1 wheat, 1 barley, 1 coal), 1 loading/discharging containers; 4 vessel in roads, of which 3 to load (1 barley, 1 trucks, 1 project cargo), 1 to load/discharge containers; 15 vessels due, of which 8 to load (4 steel products, 2 grain, 2 sulphur), 7 to load/discharge containers.
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Mariupol	02-10-2006	Seventeen vessels in port operating, of which 13 loading (6 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 barley, 2 coal, 1 coke, 1 sunflower beans/husks), 2 to discharge (1 foodstuffs, 1 equipment), 2 to discharge/load (1 equipment, 1 equipment/steel/containers); 15 vessels in roads, of which 14 to load (12 steel, 1 coal, 1 ammonium salt petre), 1 to load/discharge containers/fire-clay; 49 vessels due, of which 48 to load (28 steel, 6 coal, 7 fire-clay, 1 bran, 1 ammonium saltpetre, 1 coke, 1 kaolin, 1 sunflower beans, 1 equipment, 1 sulphur, 1 equipment/fire-clay), 1 to discharge equipment.
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Odessa	02-10-2006	Nineteen vessels in port operating, of which 9 loading (2 metal, 1 scrap, 1 pellets, 1 wheat, 1 peas, 1 barley, 1 coal, 1 pig-iron), 6 discharging (2 luggage, 2 bananas, 2 wheat), 1 discharging/loading containers, 3 passenger vessels; 7 vessels in roads, of which 3 to load (2 wheat, 1 pig-iron), 1 to discharge citrus, 3 to load/discharge containers; 77 vessels due, of which 31 to load (22 metal, 2 pig-iron, 1 ferro alloy, 1 grain, 1 wheat, 3 coal, 1 timber), 9 to discharge (3 metal, 2 general cargo, 1 citrus, 1 ore, 1 bananas, 1 equipment), 37 to discharge/load containers.
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United States

Beaumont, TX	03-Oct-2006	No new restrictions in draft (normal 40 ft. 0 ins. f.w. max. deep draft enforced). Louis Dreyfus terminal: no delays.
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Galveston, TX	03-Oct-2006	No new restriction in draft (normal 39 ft. 6 ins. b.w. max. deep draft enforced - 40 ft. with ideal conditions). Channel open under normal traffic; ADM-Farmland terminal: 2-3 days delay.
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Kalama, WA	03-Oct-2006	Kalama export terminal: 2 days delay; United Harvest terminal: no delays.
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New Orleans, LA	03-Oct-2006	Mississippi River terminal berthing delays: Cenex-Harstates/Myrtle Grove: 2-3 days delay expected; Cargill-Westwego: 2 days delay expected; ADM/Ama: 1-2 days delay expected; Bunge/Destrehan: 5 days delay; ADM/Destrehan: 1-2 days delay expected; ADM/Reserve: 1-2 days delay expected; Cargill/Reserve: 2 days delay expected; ADM/Paulina: 1-2 days delay expected; Zen-Noh/Convent: 1-2 days delay expected; Cargill/Baton Rouge: no delays; Mississippi River mid-stream buoys - estimated berthing delays based on new vessel presented as load-ready and weather permitting: Mile 121.5 ADM (Gemini) - Destrehan: no delays; Mile 158.0 Myrtle Grove midstream terminal: 8 days delay; Mile 180.0 Cooper (America) - Darrow: no delays.
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Portland, OR	03-Oct-2006	Columbia Grain terminal: 2 days delay; CLD Irving terminal: no delays; CLD, O Dock terminals: no delays.
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Seattle, WA	03-Oct-2006	Louis Dreyfus (Pier 86) terminal: 2 days delay.
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Vancouver, WA	03-Oct-2006	United Harvest terminal: 1 day's delay.
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