

Salvors blast IMO over casualty system

International Salvage Union calls for convention to reorganise multiple elements of casualty management, writes Denzil Stuart — Thursday October 19 2006

THE International Maritime Organization has been rapped over the knuckles by a leading salvor for failure to adopt a convention harmonising the casualty management process.

"This should be a top priority, given the recent catastrophic spills in northwest European waters and the ever-present potential for pollution disasters in all areas of the world," said Joop Timmermans, the immediate past president and executive committee member of the International Salvage Union.

In a presentation to the third International Marine Claims conference in Dublin, Mr Timmermans said it was in late 2003 that the IMO introduced International Guidelines on Places of Refuge in the aftermath of the Prestige disaster.

Initiative

But the ISU argued that the IMO initiative does not go far enough. Ready access to a safe haven can be of crucial importance, but refuge is only one of many factors contributing to success.

Mr Timmermans told delegates in Dublin that the IMO guidelines are narrowly focused. The Comité Maritime International now has a project to draft an International Convention on Refuge.

Yet, he said, these measures will not provide what is needed — a fully comprehensive best practice model for the entire casualty management process.

There was strong support for international guidelines at the Interreg conference in Brussels earlier this year and, as a result, the Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation is to partner the ISU in drafting new guidelines for the IMO's consideration and adoption.

Foundation

In time, it is hoped, these best practice guidelines will provide a foundation for a new, fully comprehensive international convention, and Mr Timmermans hopes that implementation in due course can be achieved by using, once again, the fast-track procedures applied so successfully when adopting the existing refuge guidelines.

Meanwhile, new guidelines will promote timely, well organised and fully integrated responses from salvors, shipowners and coastal state agencies. Clean-up will be excluded as this is already covered extensively by existing IMO instruments.

Speaking about the continued successful application of Lloyd's Open Form, Mr Timmermans said ISU statistics record 5,118 casualty salvage operations since 1978.

Over half (2,698) were performed under LOF, a contract requiring the salvor to use his best endeavours to salve the property (ship, cargo, containers, bunkers and freight) and, while engaged in salvage operations, to prevent pollution.

However, the shipowner also has obligations, and he urged closer co-operation between salvor and owner.

Provision

"Speed is everything," he said. "The timely provision of key information from the owner's shore organisation can make all the difference. This is likely to include the ship's main details, its condition and data on cargo, including advice on the location and properties of any hazardous chemicals."

The ISU recently established an LOF sub-committee, which has already proposed doubling the LOF security figure following completion of the salvage services from \$1m to \$2m.

The recently introduced short form is a documents-only procedure, aiming to reduce costs. The ISU's view is that the \$1m threshold was set too low.

Mr Timmermans, head of ITC in the Netherlands, added: "This has been confirmed by experience, as the current arrangements are little utilised."

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

| Vessel | Type | Flag | Class | GT | DWT | Bit | Casualty |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|------------|------------|--|
| <i>CITYCAT</i> | ferry | AUS | — | — | — | — | Lost power and crashed into a pontoon on the Brisbane river Oct 11. Seven persons slightly injured. Investigation under way |
| <i>DIAMOND STAR</i> | chem/oil tanker | CAN | GL | 6,262 | 10,511 | 1992 | Drifted ashore and grounded in lat 46 46.55N, long 71 12.37W, while departing St. Romuald, Quebec, Oct 7. Refloated same day. Sustained scratches and scuffing. |
| <i>GIANT STEP</i> | bulk ore | PAN | NK | 98,587 | 197,060 | 1985 | Grounded in lat 35 52N, long 140 45E, Oct 6 after fire in cabin. Listing to port. Damaged by heavy winds and rain. 16 of the 26 crew rescued. Some oil leakage. |
| <i>GOLDEN BAY</i> | tanker | MLT | — | 231 | 320 | 1959 | Grounded on rocks off Marsacala, Malta Oct 10. Refloated by tugs same day. Listing. Towed to Cassar shipyard. |
| <i>HELENUS</i> | fishing | GBR | — | 235 | — | 1987 | Towed to Lerwick Oct 6 after fishing gear became caught in propeller in lat 59 32.9N, long 01 29.4E, Oct 6. Sailed Lerwick Oct 7 to commence fishing. |
| <i>JACK BRUSCO</i> | tug | USA | — | 190 | — | 1966 | Grounded, while towing barge <i>Paul Bunyan</i> , in the Greenville channel, near Pitt Point, BC, in lat 53 53.7N, long 130 04.3W, Oct 4. Both refloated on flood tide. Sustained minor hull damage due contact with barge. |
| <i>NAPARIMA</i> | chem/oil tanker | PAN | NK | 20,573 | 30,947 | 1996 | Had engine breakdown on approach to Halifax Oct 8. Towed into port there. |
| <i>ORION I</i> | barge | PAK | — | — | — | — | Capsized 5 nautical miles off Karachi Oct 6. All crew rescued. Tenders invited for removal of vessel. |
| <i>PARAT</i> | tug | DEU | GL | 233 | 46 | 1983 | Caught the safety wire in one of its propellers while entering the Kiel-Holtenau-Locks Oct 8. Reported Oct 11 on the lift at Lurssen Yard, Rendsburg. |
| <i>PAUL BUNYAN</i> | barge | USA | — | 5,051 | — | 1970 | Grounded, while in tow of tug <i>Jack Brusco</i> , in the Greenville Channel, near Pitt Point, in lat 53 53.7N, long 130 04.3W. Both floated free on flood tide. Sustained hull damage and water ingress due contact with tug. |
| <i>SHAH BADAR-I</i> | — | — | — | — | — | — | Sank in the Chittagong channel Oct 11. All 13 crew rescued. Four tugs on the scene. |
| <i>TORVILL</i> | refrig | MLT | GL | 11,312 | 10,598 | 1980 | Had fire in No 1 auxiliary engine while anchored at Guayaquil Oct 1. No 2 auxiliary engine also affected. Fire extinguished same day. Transferred some cargo to mv <i>Dean</i> . |
| <i>XINHE</i> | general | PAN | — | 4,976 | — | 1983 | Had steering gear malfunction off Sanya, Thailand, Sep 22. Major rudder blade and yaw problems. Taken in tow Sep 27 and arrived at the mouth of the Pearl River Oct 8. |

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The following reports are reprinted from Lloyd's List



ANDES I (Ecuador)

See *Atlantic Mermaid*.

ANNA PC (Liberia)

Ismailia, Oct 5 — Crude oil tanker *Anna PC* impounded in Egypt for spilling oil in the Suez Canal is facing more than (Egyptian) pounds 50 million (\$8.7 million) in compensation demands, a Canal Authority official said today. The official said that the authority would ask the owners of the vessel to pay around pounds 30 million in damages and for clean up costs. Egypt's environmental agency has already asked for pounds 10 million in compensations, and local fisherman and tourist resort owners are demanding a further pounds 15 million in damages, bringing total claims against the tanker to pounds 55 million. The tanker hit the canal bank while trying to moor after a tanker ran aground ahead of it, breaching its hull and causing it to spill about 600 tonnes of crude oil. The oil spill covered an area three km by 400 metres, and is still being cleaned up. — Reuters.

ANNTORO (Norway)

London, Oct 9 — General cargo *Anntoro* arrived Bremen Oct 4 and sailed Oct 5 for Tartous.

Trondheim, Oct 10 — Kvernhusvik Shipyard inform general cargo *Anntoro*, now renamed *Mariam*, left yard 1800, Sep 30, bound for Lebanon via Bremen. — Lloyd's Agents.

APL DUBAI (Panama)

Singapore, Oct 5 — Container Carrier *APL Dubai* is still at Raffles Reserve Anchorage, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

APL ITALY (Liberia)

Freeport, Bahamas, Oct 8 — In-water repairs have started to Container Carrier *APL Italy*. — Lloyd's Agents.

ATLANTIC MERMAID (Liberia)

Guayaquil, Oct 10 — Refrigerated general cargo *Atlantic Mermaid* (9829 gt, built 1992), in Guayaquil port, was struck, on Oct 6, by bunkering tanker *Andes I* (695 gt, built 1978) and, in turn, contacted Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Virgen del Carmen III* (4765 gt, built 1982). — Lloyd's Agents. (Note: According to Informa's AIS System, *Atlantic Mermaid* was reported at 0407, UTC, Oct 10, in lat 09 01 33.6' N, long 79 37.33 W, nearest port Balboa, Panama, distance 5.8 nautical miles, speed (SOG) 6.8 knots, course (COG) 296 degs. *Virgen del Carmen III* was reported at 1633, UTC, Oct 9, in lat 02 16.36 S, lat 79 54.45 W, nearest port Guayaquil, distance one nautical mile, speed (SOG) one knot, course (COG) 26 degs.)

Guayaquil, Oct 10 — Refrigerated general cargo *Atlantic Mermaid* sailed Puerto Bolivar Oct 6 for Guayaquil. The vessel anchored at Data pilot station later the same day and subsequently proceeded into Guayaquil with a pilot on board. As the vessel was approaching Guayaquil inner anchorage, the pilot was advised that bunkering tanker *Andes I* was outbound, heading for La Libertad Oil Terminal. As the vessels reached Guayaquil Channel, near the quarantine area of Guayaquil Port Terminal, *Atlantic Mermaid* altered course to pass port side to port side but the vessels came into contact. Following the collision, *Atlantic Mermaid's* master ordered full astern to avoid contact with the vessel anchored on the starboard side, but the vessel lost control and came into contact with liquid petroleum gas carrier *Virgen del Carmen III*. As a result of the incident, all three vessels sustained indents to their hulls. There were no injuries, and no pollution was observed. *Atlantic Mermaid* completed loading/discharging at Guayaquil and was permitted to sail Oct 7 by the Harbour-master, after presenting a letter of undertaking. — Lloyd's Agents.

ATLANTIC TRADER I (Panama)

See "New Zealand" under "Port State Control."

AUTOSUN (Madeira)

London, Oct 7 — Vehicle carrier *Autosun* arrived Bremerhaven Oct 5 and sailed Oct 6 for Hanko.

BALTIC TRADER (NIS)

London, Oct 9 — Information received from Sandnes, dated today, states: General cargo *Baltic Trader* (1739 gt, built 1975), bound for Bryggja to load cargo for Gdansk, grounded under the Maaloy Bridge at 0800, local time, today. The vessel refloated shortly afterwards, with the assistance of fishing *Gerda Marie*. There was no damage to the vessel and no pollution. The vessel subsequently proceeded to Bryggja.

BANGLAR SHIKHA (Bangladesh)

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: General cargo *Banglar Shikha* (9927 gt, built 1991) caught fire yesterday morning, at Chittagong Port jetty. Port sources said the damage was insignificant. Prompt efforts of the vessel's firefighting unit, aided by the Fire Brigade, Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard, brought the fire, which broke out at about 0900 hrs, under control within an hour. (Note — *Banglar Shikha* arrived Chittagong on Aug 12.)

BOREAL (Liberia)

See "Pay Dispute On Liberian Flagged Vessel" under "Labour Disputes".

BRIGHT ARTEMIS (Singapore)

Singapore, Oct 11 — Crude oil tanker *Bright Artemis* is currently at Hitachi

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

Shipyard Quay 3, Singapore. — Lloyd's Agents.

BRITISH TRANQUILLITY (Isle of Man)

London, Oct 7 — Combined chemical and oil tank *British Tranquillity* arrived Amsterdam Oct 6.

BUNGA MELATI 3 (Malaysia)

Buenos Aires, Oct 6 — We have been informed by our Sub-agents in San Nicolas that combined chemical and oil tank *Bunga Melati 3* was freed at 1610, local time, Oct 4, with the assistance of tugs *Alianza Rosario* and *Buni*. Vessel is heading towards Bahia Blanca and its final destination is India. — Lloyd's Agents.

CANIS J. (Antigua & Barbuda)

See "Drugs Found On Antigua & Barbuda Flagged Vessel Off Point Lisas, Trinidad And Tobago" under "Miscellaneous".

CAPTAIN A.B. (U.S.A.)

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

CEC LEADER (Isle of Man)

See "Drugs Found On Antigua & Barbuda Flagged Vessel Off Point Lisas, Trinidad And Tobago" under "Miscellaneous."

CEDARGLEN (Canada)

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Coast Guard Cleveland, timed 1300, UTC: Bulker *Cedarglen* (18531 gt, built 1959), cargo 26,313 tonnes wheat, had steering shaft problems yesterday afternoon and is being towed to Thunder Bay. (Note — *Cedarglen* Arrived Thunder Bay Oct 3 and sailed Oct 5 for Comeau Bay.)

Troy, Michigan, Oct 7 — Bulker *Cedarglen* reported main engine failure at about 1130, Oct 5 and went to anchor about five miles west of Passage Island. She was heading downbound with a load of Wheat from Thunder Bay, Ontario. Initially, repairs were expected to take three to four hours but the problem turned out to be more severe and tugs were called to assist. The tugs were seen departing for the vessel around 0530, yesterday morning. The tow of the vessel and the two tugs arrived back in the port around 1500, yesterday and the vessel was put at anchor. Repairs to the damaged part, which was an overheated bearing on the tail shaft, are expected to take at least 24 hours. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

Troy, Mich., Oct 8 — Bulker *Cedarglen* put back into port (Thunder Bay) under tow of the tugs *Point Valour* and *Glenada* on Oct 6, and put out to anchor. She suffered an overheated tail shaft bearing. Repairs were completed and the vessel departed on Oct 8, bound for Port Cartier, Quebec. — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

CFS PALAMEDES (Antigua & Barbuda)

See "Drugs Found On Antigua & Barbuda Flagged Vessel, Bridgetown, Barbados" under "Miscellaneous."

CHIYO MARU NO.7 (Japan)

London, Oct 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Rough seas are hampering efforts to search for and rescue the 16 missing crew members of a fishing (general) *Chiyo Maru No.7*, 198 gt, that ran aground at Onagawa last night, the local coast guard office said today. At about 2140 hrs, Tsuneji Chiba, 57, captain of the 198 ton vessel, contacted the company that owns the vessel saying that it was dead in the water after its engine had stopped off Onagawa, and requested help, coast guard officials said. Another crew member subsequently told the company that 13 of the crew members had taken to the rafts, with the three others remaining on board the vessel. The company in turn alerted the 2nd Regional Coast Guard Headquarters, which dispatched patrol boats to the scene. Both the fishing vessel and the rafts are missing. The 16 crew members are aged between 36 and 70. Coast guard officials said the vessel ran aground when its engine stopped after being hit by a high wave. The sea was rough at the time of the accident because of a growing low pressure system. There were winds up to 30 metres per second and about 5 to 7-metre-high waves.

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: All 16 crew members were missing after fishing (general) *Chiyo Maru No.7* stranded just off Onagawa, Miyagi Prefecture, at around 2245, Oct 7, the Japan Coast Guard said. The coast guard received a communication that 13 of the 16 had boarded a life raft but then lost contact. A Miyagi police helicopter searching the area spotted the fishing vessel floating upside down at 1400 hrs, yesterday, some 650 metres north-east of Izushima Island, in Onagawa. There was no sign of the missing crew members, the police said. Continuing stormy weather in the area was hampering rescue efforts, the coast guard said.

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: The body of Kazuo Abe, 70, fishing chief of fishing (general) *Chiyo Maru No.7*, was found yesterday morning in waters off Onagawa, Miyagi Prefecture. Abe's body was the only one found of the 16 passengers onboard the vessel who went missing Friday night. There was no life jacket on Abe's body, officials said. Yamashiro Suisan, the fishery company that owns *Chiyo Maru No.7* received a phone call from the vessel at around 2140 Friday. A panic-stricken crew member said the ship was about to strike something, and they could not avoid a collision. The boat was found the next afternoon, aground near Izushima island off Onagawa port. Thirteen crew members apparently got into a lifeboat, but as of yesterday remained missing.

CITYCAT (Australia)

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Seven people have been injured after a ferry lost power and crashed into a pontoon on the

Brisbane River. The Queensland Ambulance Service says the accident happened around 1030, AEST, when the catamaran ferry *Citycat* hit a ferry pontoon in Toowong, in the city's inner west. A number of people were standing on the pontoon when it was hit. Five people have been taken to Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital with minor injuries. Another two people who were not seriously injured have been taken to the Princess Alexandra Hospital. The Brisbane City Council is investigating.

CLIPPER DEVON (Philippines)

See "Philippines-Flagged Vessel Blockaded At Kokkola, Finland" under "Miscellaneous".

CMA CGM OTELLO (French Southern Territories)

London, Oct 10 — Container Carrier *CMA CGM Otello* arrived and sailed Xiamen Sep 21.

COUGAR ACE (Singapore)

Portland, Oreg, Oct 6 — Vehicle carrier *Cougar Ace* had completed discharge of automobiles by Oct 5. Vessel is expected to move to Swan Island Shipyard for some repairs, which should be completed in and around five days. — Lloyd's Agents.

DB-112 (U.S.A.)

See *Freedom*.

DIAMOND STAR (Canada)

London, Oct 10 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Diamond Star* (6262 gt, built 1992) drifted ashore and grounded in lat 46 46 55N, long 71 12 37W, at 2340, EDST, Oct 7, while departing from Section 86, St. Romuald, Quebec, after tug *Ocean Charlie* (448 gt, built 1973), which was assisting the vessel, experienced engine problems. *Diamond Star* sustained scratches and scuffing.

Montreal, Oct 10 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Diamond Star* grounded at Ultramar terminals, Quebec City, at 2342, Oct 7. The vessel refloated at approximately 0425, Oct 8, and sustained no damage as a result of the grounding. Tug *Ocean Charlie* experienced a port engine problem while assisting *Diamond Star* during the unberthing operation on Oct 7. The engine has been repaired. — Lloyd's Agents.

DOGUCAN (Cambodia)

London, Oct 11 — Following received from Ankara MSRCC, timed 0915, UTC: General cargo *Dogucan* remains aground. (See issue of Oct 5.)

DOLE HONDURAS (Bahamas)

Balboa, Oct 9 — Container carrier *Dole Honduras* has reportedly sustained a cracked main engine bedplate. The vessel is presently drydocked at Astilleros Braswell SA, Balboa, where understand repairs are in progress. — Lloyd's Agents.

EGASCO FORTUNE (Egypt)

Alexandria, Oct 8 — Bulker *Egasco Fortune* is still under arrest at Alexandria. — Lloyd's Agents.

ELISE

Portsmouth, UK, Oct 8 — Non specific tanker *Elise*, 105m X 9.48 X 1.40, ran aground off buoy 14, on the way from Kuurne to Sloehaven, at about 0655, today. The tugs *Ghent* and *Multratug 10* were quickly on scene. At 1300, today, as the water rises, another attempt will take place. — Correspondent.

London, Oct 9 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Non specific tanker *Elise*, 105 metres long, enroute from Kuurne to Flushing (Sloe harbour), ran aground near buoy 14 on the Westerscheldt River at 0644, Oct 8. The tugs *Gent* and *Multratug 10* arrived on the scene a short time later, but due to the falling tide they were not able to assist the vessel. At 1100 hrs the tug *Leendert Muller* connected up a 220-metre towing line and the *Elise* was refloated at 1410 hrs.

Zeebrugge, Oct 11 — Non specific tanker *Elise*, an inland vessel, refloated with three tugs and continued to Flushing Total for loading. Vessel then left Flushing Oct 9 after completion of loading. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

ERIK SPIRIT (Bahamas)

See *Sunlight*.

EUGENIA (Honduras)

Mumbai, Oct 10 — As of Oct 4, general cargo *Eugenia* was still at Mumbai port, under High Court arrest. — Lloyd's Agents.

FEDERAL OSHIMA (Hong Kong)

London, Oct 11 — Bulker *Federal Oshima* arrived Hamilton(CAN) Oct 9.

FRASER TITAN (Canada)

See *Haida Chieftain*.

FREEDOM (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1240, UTC: Fire fighting tug *Freedom* (235 gt, built 2003) lost its tow, barge *DB-112*, which it was towing from New York to Boston, in Long Island Sound at 1418, local time, yesterday. Barge has not been sighted.

London, Oct 8 — Following received from Coast Guard Boston, timed 1705, UTC: Fire fighting tug *Freedom*, lost barge *DB-112* in Long Island Sound Oct 5: Understand the *DB-112* was recovered Oct 7 and safely taken in tow.

GENT (Belgium)

Portsmouth, UK, Oct 9 — On Oct 5, it was reported that tug *Gent* (323 gt, built 1985) was drydocked at Shipyard De Schroef (Terneuzen) due to damage to the starboard side propeller. — Correspondent.

Zeebrugge, Oct 11 — Tug *Gent* drydocked Oct 5. Vessel sailed from the drydock with a new propeller Oct 6. At the moment the vessel is working in the Terneuzen/Gent area. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

GIANT STEP (Panama)

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Thirteen crew

members are missing from a freighter that caught fire and ran aground off Japan's eastern Pacific coast, news reports said today. The Japan Coast Guard had said earlier the Panamanian-registered bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* (98587 gt, built 1985) was listing to its port side in shallow waters but none of its crew were injured. However, the vessel had been further damaged in heavy wind and rain in the area, and now 13 of the boat's 23 Indian and Sri Lankan crew were missing, according to reports.

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Japan Coast Guard, timed 1325, UTC: Bulk ore carrier *Giant Step*, carrying iron ore, ran aground at approximately 1720 hrs, (0820, UTC) in lat 35 52N, long 140 45E. Helicopters rescued 10 of the vessel's crew about two-three hours later, but 13 crew are still missing. Rescue/search operations are continuing.

London, Oct 6 — One crew member of bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* has died and eight others have gone missing after the vessel ran aground off the coast of Japan, a local Marine Safety Station said. The accident happened today in waters about two kilometres off Kamisu, Ibaraki Prefecture. *Giant Step* is carrying 190,000 tons of iron ore and was on its way to Kashima port in Ibaraki from Australia. Of the 26 crew members, 25 Indians and one Pakistani, 13 were swept out to sea from the bow of the vessel. Five of them were rescued after managing to reach the shore, but one Indian man died later at a hospital, according to the safety station. Prior to running aground, a fire had broken out in a cabin on the vessel, the safety station said.

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: An Indian sailor, washed overboard after bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* ran aground off Japan's Ibaraki Prefecture, was found dead today, taking the toll to two while rescue teams were searching for eight others missing in the mishap. The body of Thomas William, an Indian crew member of the vessel, which caught fire and ran aground after being caught in stormy weather on Friday (Oct 6), was found on a beach in Kamisu, Kyodo news agency reported. The vessel had 25 Indians and a Pakistani in its crew, out of which 17 were rescued. However, a 34-year-old Indian man succumbed to injuries in the hospital yesterday. Japan Coast guard aircraft and patrol vessels resumed searching for the eight missing crew members today. Before running aground, the *Giant Step*, which was heading to Kashima port from Australia with 190,000 tons of iron ore, reported a fire in the cabin. The vessel was stranded about two kilometers off Kashima port, 95 kilometers east of Tokyo.

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated Oct 8, states: Nine of 26 crew members were missing from bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* after the ship reported a fire in the cabin Friday afternoon, and later ran aground and

broke apart off Ibaraki Prefecture, the coast guard said. The 17 others were rescued, but one of them, identified as a 34-year-old Indian man, died later in a hospital. The *Giant Step* crew was made up of 25 Indians and one Sri Lankan, the coast guard said. The ship was anchored after the fire in the cabin was put out but stormy weather pushed it aground on a shallow sandy seabed around 2 km off Kasumi, according to the coast guard. The coast guard said the ship broke in two about two-thirds of the way from the bow. The bow portion was resting on the seabed on its port side while the stern portion was listing around 30 degrees, it said.

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Iron ore and oil that has leaked from bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* that ran aground off Kashima, Ibaraki Prefecture, is reportedly floating along the coast toward Choshi, Chiba Prefecture.

London, Oct 9 — The Japanese coast guard continued to search today for eight Indian seafarers missing from bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* which caught fire and grounded in eastern Japan on Friday. Two seafarers, among the 26-strong crew, have been confirmed dead in the incident, while another 16 seafarers, including the master and the sole Sri Lankan on board, were rescued. Coast guard officials, who used vessels and aircraft in the search for survivors, said a fire broke out in the accommodation block during a fierce storm on Friday afternoon local time. The blaze was subsequently extinguished, but the vessel dragged its anchor and grounded about 2km from Kashima. MOL spokesman Kenji Shikano said the vessel broke into two after the ship grounded on Friday, with the bow section falling onto its port side while the stern section took on a 30 degree list. Mr Shikano said that it was confirmed yesterday that the ship had later split into three sections. Explaining the conditions at the time of the incident, he said the sea was running at between 20 to 30 metres per second with waves of up to eight metres in height. Bad weather over the weekend hampered rescue efforts, although conditions were fine yesterday. Mr Shikano said there was about 400 tonnes of fuel oil and diesel on board, although it was not known how much had leaked into the ocean. He was unaware what had caused the initial fire onboard the ship which was carrying about a cargo of iron ore from Port Walcott to Kashima.

London, Oct 9 — Following navigation warning issued today: Vessel (bulk ore carrier *Giant Step*) stranded in lat 35 52.4N, long 140 45.7E, south-southeast of Kashima, oil adrift about three nautical miles long and 100 metres to 150 metres wide.

London, Oct 10 — The following press release, dated today, was issued by Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd., Tokyo: Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd., today reported that the MOL-operated bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* went aground off Kashima Port in Ibaragi Prefecture

at approximately 1720 hrs, Oct 6, 2006. Of the 26 crewmembers, two lost their lives and eight are missing and the company is now working to confirm their status; thirteen were rescued by Japan Coast Guard helicopters, and three, including two who are now in a hospital, "drifted ashore". *Giant Step* sailed from Port Walcott, Australia, with 190,000 tons of iron ore on Sep 11. The ship arrived off Kashima Port on Sep 25, and anchored, while "standing by for an open pier". The ship weighed anchor and started to move offshore to avoid a rapidly growing atmospheric depression. However, the ship was unable to complete the manoeuvre because of a faulty anchor windlass. Subsequently, winds in excess of 20-30 mps blew the ship aground two kms offshore, in 16 metres of water. *Giant Step* grounded on a sand area and experienced excessive force to particular parts of the ship's hull. Affected by storm and waves, the hull cracked and broke into three segments and oil spills from the stern segment have been observed. Drifting iron ore powder has also been observed. MOL will start extracting bunker oil from the hull as soon as the wave action eases sufficiently to enable the work to proceed. MOL expresses its deepest condolences to the crew members who lost their lives and heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: The body of an Indian national missing from a shipwreck off Japan's northeastern coast last week was found today, bringing the number of crew members confirmed dead to three, the Japan Coast Guard said. Seven crew members of all of them Indians of from the Panamanian-registered bulk ore carrier *Giant Step* were still missing after the freighter ran aground in stormy weather after catching fire in seas off Kashima on Friday (Oct 6), said Coast Guard official Osamu Sasaki. The vessel later broke into three. Rescuers found the floating body early today near a shore about 30 kilometres, south of where the mishap occurred, Sasaki said. Authorities later confirmed the body was Nair Rajeev, 29, one of the missing crew members, Sasaki said. Two other bodies of both of Indian nationals have already been found. A team of divers entered the ship's bow section Wednesday after rescuers opened a hole, but found none of the missing inside, Sasaki said.

GINGA FALCON (Panama)

Manila, Oct 12 — The Philippine Coast Guard's Marine Environmental Protection Unit reported that it had fined Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. Pesos10,000 (US\$200 dollars) for spilling caustic soda into Batangas Bay. Mabuhay Vinyl, the largest producer of chlorine-alkali products in the Philippines admitted liability and paid the fine, the Coast Guard said. The accident occurred on Sep 23 during the offloading of caustic soda from the combined chemical and oil

tank *Ginga Falcon* onto the storage tanks of Mabuhay Vinyl Corporation at its storage facilities at the Batangas Bay Terminal in Bauan town in Batangas province. Mabuhay Vinyl employees inadvertently pumped the caustic soda into a wrong storage tank causing an overflow and spillage of some 400 litres of caustic soda into the waters of Batangas Bay. Earlier, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) had issued a Notice of Violation against the company for the same offence. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

GOLDEN BAY (Malta)

Valletta, Oct 10 — Reported that (bunkering) non specific tanker *Golden Bay* (231 gt, built 1959) ran aground today off Marsascala, Malta. However, understood that it has now been refloated. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Salvage experts have removed a vessel containing 30 tonnes of oil from the rocks it ran aground on today. Civil Protection director Peter Cordina said that non specific tanker *Golden Bay*, which was stranded off Marsascala, was freed by a large tug at around noon. The 200ft Maltese-registered vessel grounded just after 0600 hrs, today. The crew were unhurt. Mr.Cordina said that at high tide, the salvage tug began the job gently easing the ship off the rocks before towing her on to Cassar shipyards. He ended that there have been no spillage of fuel oil from the vessel.

Valletta, Oct 10 — Non specific tanker *Golden Bay*, that ran aground early today in Marsascala, has been pulled out and is on its way to Cassar Shipping. The vessel, carrying 15 tonnes of diesel, ran aground a few metres away from the Jerma Palace Hotel.. Two tug boats and a barge were involved in the rescue operations. A man was slightly hurt when a rope snapped and recoiled during the operation. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Oct 11 — Non specific tanker *Golden Bay* grounded, yesterday, while manoeuvring south-east of Malta in rough seas, reportedly due to a technical failure. Tug Malta's new tugs *Pawlina* and *Wensina* were on the scene to assist, together with the floating crane *Sea Wolf*, from Cassar Shipyards. The first tow broke and, because of deteriorating weather conditions, it was being considered whether to abandon the operation and airlift the five crew members, by helicopter, to where ambulances were standing by. A second attempt was made and *Pawlina* managed to tow the tanker off the rocks. One of the crew is reported to have suffered slight injuries. *Golden Bay*, which had a list to starboard, is being towed to Cassar Shiprepair Yard, in Valletta Grand Harbour.

GRETA (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Oct 6 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, general cargo *Greta* remains at Southampton as of 0951, UTC, today.

Maassluis, Oct 10 — General cargo *Greta* arrived Moerdijk 1040, local time, Oct 9, from Newport. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.

Haida Chieftain (Canada)

London, Oct 11 — The last of three barges under tow of tug *Haida Chieftain* (561 gt, built 1944) struck hopper dredger *Fraser Titan* (2976 gt, built 1969) near Buoy S16, Fraser River, in lat 49 07N, long 123 12W, at 2330, PST, Oct 6.

HELENUS (U.K.)

London, Oct 6 — Following received from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency, dated today: Shetland Coastguard have been active today when fishing (general) *Helenu*s (235 gt, built 1987) with five people on board called at 1000 today to alert the Coastguard to the fact that they had become wound-up in their own fishing gear and required a tow to Lerwick. Broadcast action was then taken to find a suitable vessel for the tow back to the mainland. The weather conditions on scene were presently favourable but as gales were imminent the Coastguard considered it imperative to get the fishing vessel into a safe port. Broadcast action was set up to cover VHF medium frequency 2182 Khz and Navtex with EGC satellite enhanced group calling. However, the *Ocean Prospect*, a oil rig being towed north past the east side of Shetland, was the only respoondee to that broadcast action and the Tow Master released anchor handling tug/supply *Olympic Hercules*. The rig tow has now ceased until the *Olympic Hercules* returns. The tow to Lerwick will take approximately nine hours and the return voyage will take approximately six hours.

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Coastguard Shetland MRSC, timed 1610, UTC: Fishing (general) *Helenu*s reported fishing gear in propeller in lat 59 32.9N, long 01 29.4E, at 1000, UTC, today. Vessel is currently being towed to Lerwick, where ETA 2200, local time, tonight.

Sullom Voe, Oct 10 — Fishing (general) *Helenu*s sailed from Lerwick on Oct 7, back fishing. — Lloyd's Agents.

HENRIC (Dominica)

London, Oct 9 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Fire fighting tug *Henric* (347 gt, built 1969) struck the new Southern lock of the Brunsbuttel locks of the Kiel Canal while entering it with the pontoon *Dock I* attached at 0340 hrs. It caused some damage to the locks. The collision was caused by strong wind. (Note — *Henric* sailed Rotterdam Oct 3 for Tallinn and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was in lat 54 35 18.96N, long 11 8 52.32E, 7.4 nautical miles from Puttgarden, speed 5.4 knots, at 0720, UTC, today.)

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Fire fighting tug *Henric* and tug *Parat* (233 gt, built 1983) were towing pontoon *Dock I* through the Kiel Canal Oct 8 when

Parat caught the safety wire of the dock in one of its propellers while entering the Kiel-Holtenu-Locks. *Parat* is now on the lift at Lurssen Yard in Rendsburg. *Dock I* passed the Island of Bornholm yesterday.

HOBURGEN (Bahamas)

London, Oct 8 — Following received from Coast Guard Gothenburg MRCC, timed 0215, UTC: Roll On Roll Off *Hoburgen* (9080 gt, built 1986, voyage Halmstad for Rauma) touched Troskel lighthouse, Finland, at 2100, local time, Oct 7, and continued its voyage. Vessel is proceeding to Oskarshamn shipyard for inspection.

HUMBER WAY (Malta)

London, Oct 5 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, roll on roll off *Humber Way* was at Immingham, in lat 53 37 51.04N, long 00 11 15.68W, at 1323, UTC, today.

London, Oct 10 — Roll On Roll Off *Humber Way* sailed Immingham 2306, Oct 5, for Ostend, where arrived 1623, Oct 6 and sailed 2306, same day, for Immingham.

IRBIS (Poland)

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Den Helder RCC, timed 0835, UTC: Tug *Irbis* (134 gt, built 1960) was towing barge with a length of 135 metres from Ymuiden to Eemshaven when the tow was lost in lat 53 04.6N, long 04 36E, at 0330, UTC, today. Barge, which was empty of cargo and bunkers, began drifting towards Texel. Tug *Waker* proceeded to the scene and Lloyd's Standard Form salvage contract was signed with SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage BV. Tugs *Winter* and *Tempest* were engaged and latest reports indicate that the barge has been recovered by the *Winter* and is in a position two miles off the coast. At present, permission is being sought from the authorities at Harlingen to have the barge towed into port there.

London, Oct 9 — A SvitzerWijsmuller salvage report, dated Oct 7, states: Dutch Coast Guard tug *Waker*, SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage and partners Rederij Noordgat from Terschelling were able to prevent a grounding of a broken-loose tow off the Dutch coast off Texel. The saga started when a Polish tug (*Irbis*) towing a newbuild hull from Poland to The Netherlands lost the towage connection in bad weather off the island of Texel early yesterday morning. The emergency connection could not be used since it also had become entangled. The Dutch CG were advised and *Waker* was tasked. SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage, this year operationally engaged in case of salvage situations with the CG tug, immediately took charge and additional resources were marshalled in since the 135 metre long, slightly over 14 metre wide hull quickly drifted close to the shallows and banks off the island caused by the WSW-ly storm. Tug *Hunter* from partners Rederij Noordgat immediately departed the port of West Terschelling with the fast rescue craft *Tempest*

quickly following suit. *Waker* arrived on site first and a salvage contract was agreed whereafter *Tempest* was able to come close enough and put personnel on board of the drifting vessel. An intermediate towage connection with *Tempest* was established, which unfortunately broke quickly thereafter. *Hunter* then arrived on scene and just in time was able to tie up to the drifting vessel some 0.8 miles off the beach, in shallow waters, off the Slufter. The casualty then was towed stern-first off the coast to deeper water. *Waker* and *Tempest* then escorted the convoy towards the Stortemelk (in between the islands Terschelling and Vlieland) where further SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage staff boarded the casualty. It was then towed through the Wadden Sea to the port of Harlingen, where the convoy arrived at about 1930 same day. The COD was signed at 2000, local time, marking the redelivery of the casualty back to its owners and caretakers.

JACK BRUSCO (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 5 — Tug *Jack Brusco* (190 gt, built 1966) towing barge *Paul Bunyan* (5051 gt, built 1970) went aground in the Greenville Channel, near Pitt Point, BC, in lat 53 53 07N, long 130 04 03W, at 0346, PDST, Oct 4. The vessels floated free with the flood tide and continued the voyage.

London, Oct 5 — Following received from Victoria, BC, RCC, timed 1900, UTC: After the grounding of tug *Jack Brusco* it was contacted by the barge *Paul Bunyan* as a result *Jack Brusco* sustained minor hull damage above the waterline. *Paul Bunyan* also sustained hull damage with minor water ingress.

JET RAIDER (Singapore)

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Another of Fuller's larger vessels (ferry *Jet Raider* (255 gt, built 1991)) was taken out of service from Auckland due to a clutch failure last week.

London, Oct 9 — Fullers Group Limited website, states: *Jet Raider* has sustained a clutch failure on one gearbox, for which parts are being sourced from overseas.

JOHN B.AIRD (Canada)

London, Oct 7 — Bulker *John B.Aird* arrived Nanticoke Oct 4 and sailed Oct 5

KAPADOKIA (Liberia)

London, Oct 8 — Combined chemical and oil tank *Kapadokia* arrived Hong Kong at 1525, Oct 6 and sailed at 0226, Oct 7.

KEW BRIDGE (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Oct 6 — A Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, press release, dated today, 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. Seven hundred tonnes of butane was transhipped to Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Relgas Nayantara* and this operation went smoothly. Dredging operation has continued through out the period around the vessel in order to improve its heading into the swell and sea away from the shore line. It is envisaged that both lightering operations and continued dredging will remain in place for the next few days.

Rotterdam, Oct 10 — Joint salvors SvitzerWijsmuller Salvage and SMIT Salvage have succeeded late yesterday evening (Oct 9) in refloating the grounded Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* off Ratnagiri, south of Mumbai. The 160 metre long vessel ran aground over three weeks ago during SW monsoon conditions. About a week later SMIT and SvitzerWijsmuller were engaged by owners to take charge of the refloating operations in full, which had now come under scrutiny of the Indian authorities who invoked a 1958 law allowing them certain levels of control over the operations. Several tugs have been engaged and salvage personnel from SMIT and SvitzerWijsmuller from both The Netherlands and Singapore were mobilised in, as was a wide array of necessary salvage equipment. The operations to refloat the heavily grounded vessel, which had moved itself some 200 metres from navigable waters and had settled two-three metres into the sandbank, included dredging and lighterage activities, combined with constant control that was exercised over the casualty using the necessary tug power. The tug power prevented a worsening of the situation and allowed a step-by-step improvement by slowly turning the vessel seawards. The dredging in combination with in total three separate cargo lighterage operations that had been executed to transfer some 30% of the 8,000 tons of liquefied butane resulted in the successful conclusion yesterday evening of the refloating of the *Kew Bridge*. — SMIT Salvage B.V.

London, Oct 11 — A Hanseatic Shipping Co Ltd, Limassol, press release, dated today, states: We are pleased to advise that Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Kew Bridge* was successfully refloated at 2327, local time, Oct 9. The vessel has been towed to an outer anchorage where a complete underwater survey is now taking place, conducted under the current contractual agreement remaining in place with the salvors. Hanseatic Emergency Response Team would like to thank the vessel's crew, Indian Government Officials and all directly associated parties for their professional efforts in enabling the vessel to be safely refloated without any pollution, threat to the environment or injury to any party.

KOSTAS (Honduras)

London, Oct 10 — General cargo *Kostas* is still in port at Skikda as of Oct 7.

KRAFT (Finland)

Helsinki, Oct 6 — According to Alfons Hakans, tug/icebreaker *Kraft* sailed under its own power from the Naantali repair yard to Turku for some fine adjustments and was said to return to service on Oct 4. — Lloyd's Agents.

KWUNA (Canada)

Portsmouth, UK, Oct 9 — Service between Skidegate and Alliford Bay, British Columbia, has been temporarily suspended due to a line caught in the propeller of Roll On Roll Off *Kwuna* (347 gt, built 1975). Divers are enroute to assess the situation. — Correspondent.

Vancouver, Oct 10 — A one-inch cable became tangled in the propeller of roll on roll off *Kwuna* on Oct 8, while the vessel was docking at Alliford Bay. Divers were dispatched to remove the cable, after which the vessel was declared seaworthy and resumed operations within four hours. — Lloyd's Agents.

LADY MOURA (Bahamas)

London, Oct 10 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: Yacht *Lady Moura* is due to enter Blohm & Voss Dock 6, in Hamburg, at 0800, Oct 12. — Correspondent.

London, Oct 12 — Following received from Kiel, dated today: Yacht *Lady Moura* entered Blohm & Voss dock in Hamburg yesterday evening.

LEDA MAERSK (DIS)

Santos, Oct 10 — Container Carrier *Leda Maersk* arrived Santos Oct 8 and sailed Oct 9 for Pecem. — Lloyd's Agents.

LOTUS BLOSSOM (Panama)

London, Oct 7 — Bulker *Lotus Blossom* sailed New Orleans at 2220, Oct 5 and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS in lat 29 42 21.24N, long 89 58 46.26W, speed 14.4 knots at 2233, Oct 5.

MAERSK DOHA (U.K.)

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Coast Guard Portsmouth, Va, timed 1320, UTC: Container Carrier *Maersk Doha* is still anchored in the same position. An investigating officer from the Marine Accident Bureau is due onboard today.

London, Oct 8 — Following received from Coast Guard Portsmouth, Va, timed 1715, UTC: Container Carrier *Maersk Doha* remains at Norfolk anchorage, with investigations still under way.

London, Oct 11 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, container carrier *Maersk Doha* was stationary in lat 36 57 42.3N, long 76 01 24.18W, at 0912, UTC, today, nearest port Virginia Beach at a distance of eight nautical miles.

MAERSK RIO GRANDE (Antigua & Barbuda)

Balboa, Oct 9 — Container carrier *Maersk Rio Grande* (16129 gt, built 2002) arrived Balboa pm, Oct 5, reportedly with main engine trouble. The vessel berthed at Balboa at about 1645, Oct 6, with tug assistance and is presently still alongside. — Lloyd's Agents.

Balboa, Oct 10 — Container carrier *Maersk Rio Grande* sailed Balboa at 1958, Oct 9. — Lloyd's Agents.

MARIELLE BOLTEN (Liberia)

Freeport, Oct 10 — General cargo *Marielle Bolten* is still under repair at Grand Bahama Shipyard. The vessel will be at the yard for several more weeks, and is not scheduled to depart until some time in December. — Lloyd's Agents.

MELVILLE (U.S.A.)

Seattle, Oct 9 — Wooden fishing *Melville*, length 52 feet, sank off the coast of Ketchikan Oct 1. The vessel grounded near Moira Sound, about 25 miles south-west of Ketchikan. The Coast Guard reported that the two crew on board went into the water and were reported hypothermic upon rescue by a fishing vessel in area. A Coast Guard helicopter and motor launch arrived shortly afterwards and took the crew to hospital in Ketchikan. No serious injuries reported. The situation of the vessel is not presently known. — Lloyd's Agents.

MINALAND (U.K.)

Falmouth, Oct 9 — General cargo *Minaland* completed repairs and sailed from Falmouth at 1745, Oct 8, bound for Garrucha, where ETA 1700, Oct 12. — Lloyd's Agents.

MIRAMAR (Gibraltar)

Poznan, Oct 10 — General cargo *Miramar* is now docked at the Naval Shipyard Gdynia SA. The vessel is damaged and is being repaired. Repairs should take approximately one-three weeks. — Lloyd's Agents.

MSC DYMPHNA (Panama)

London, Oct 9 — Following received from Rome MRCC, timed 0935, UTC: Container Carrier *MSC Dymphna*, 3FJS8, (36420 gt, built 1988) reported fire in engine-room and engine failure in lat 36 05 N, long 15 38E, at 2200, UTC, Oct 7. On Oct 8 vessel repairs completed and no assistance was required and vessel proceeded to Malta where it arrived safely. (Note — *MSC Dymphna* sailed Jawaharlal Nehru Sept 22, passed Port Said Oct 5 for Masaxlokk, Antwerp and Felixstowe, and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was at Masaxlokk this morning.)

London, Oct 9 — Following received from Malta RCC, timed 0955, UTC: Container Carrier *MSC Dymphna* was escorted to Masaxlokk by Container Carrier *MSC Caitlin*.

NAPARIMA (Panama)

London, Oct 10 — Following received from Halifax RCC, timed 1010, UTC:

Combined chemical and oil tank *Naparima* (20573 gt, built 1996) had an engine breakdown on approach to Halifax port last weekend (Oct 7-8). A local tug towed vessel into port where it remains.

NEW VENTURE (Panama)

London, Oct 8 — Following received from Coast Guard New Orleans, timed 1655, UTC: Bulker *New Venture* (15925 gt, built 1973) was in contact with a mobile offshore drilling platform at Pier 16, Galveston, at 1515, UTC, Oct 6, while docking. The *New Venture* is currently restricted to port awaiting investigations and class inspection.

London, Oct 11 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS, bulker *New Venture* was located in lat 28 24 15.6N, long 94 24 56.4W, at 0348, UTC, today, course 181 deg, speed 11.6 knots, nearest port Galveston at a distance of 58.5 nautical miles.

NORDIC JUPITER (Marshall Islands)

London, Oct 7 — Crude oil tanker *Nordic Jupiter* arrived Rio de Janeiro Sep 30 and sailed Oct 3.

OCEAN CHARLIE (Canada)

See *Diamond Star*.

OMSKIY 134 (Russia)

Maassluis, Oct 5 — General cargo *Omskiy 134* (2544 gt, built 1988) while entering the Boudewijn Lock it struck the corner of the lock at approximately 1630 today. The vessel is damaged above the waterline, a crack of about one metre, and the master has refused to leave the lock. The vessel will not continue its voyage to St.Petersburg (from Antwerp) and will return to berth 166. — Lloyd's Sub-agents. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *Omskiy 134* was in lat 51 16 41N, long 04 19 57E, at 1627, UTC, today.)

London, Oct 6 — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS general cargo *Omskiy 134* was stationary in lat 51 15 32N, long 04 22 15E, at 1644, UTC, today.

ORION I (Pakistan)

Karachi, Oct 7 — Understand from Karachi Port Trust (KPT) that a commercial barge *Orion I*, owned by Faisal Oil Company, built in 2006, laden with 65 tonnes of bunker fuel oil, capsized at about 2100, last night, three nautical miles south of Fairway Buoy from Manora Light House and five nautical miles from Karachi Port. It was heading towards the Karachi Harbour from Port Qasim. All crew members were rescued. Meanwhile, Marine Pollution Control Department of the KPT has started inspecting casualty site and put standby all pollution control equipment to control the situation from any possible oil spill. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Oct 7 — Karachi Port Trust (KPT) plans to invite international consultant from United Arab Emirates (UAE) to prepare any contingency plan due to possible oil spill from barge *Orion I*, grounded off Karachi

port yesterday. A small quantity of oil spill is visible, according to local media reports. Meanwhile, a Karachi Port Trust tug is trying to disperse oil before it reaches the shore at Karachi. The Sindh government is also monitoring the situation. The federal ministry has ordered an inquiry into the accident. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Oct 9 — Understand that Karachi Port Trust (KPT) has sought proposals from international and local salvage companies for removal of sinking oil barge *Orion I* off Karachi Port. Initial findings suggest that local privately owned barge laden with 65 tonnes of fuel oil run a grounded last Friday (Oct 6) after its engine failed and later heavy water intruded in engine-room. Wijsmuller Salvage B.V and local marine specialist Indus Divers are competing to get contract. Their offers/proposals are being vetted by KPT and a decision is expected soon. No oil spill was reported. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, Oct 10 — Karachi Port Trust was, yesterday, on standby to launch emergency pollution controls after the privately owned barge *Orion I* capsized in bad weather on its way to port. Salvage assistance has been arranged by the owners and initial reports suggested that the vessel was being towed towards port after its engine-room was flooded 3.1 nautical miles outside Karachi. The vessel's movement is being monitored by the port authority. The owners are confident that the salvage operation to right the vessel will be completed in three to four days. It is expected that the bulk of the 65 tonnes of oil is still contained in the tanks, with only a thin oil sheen visible around the barge. KPT has oil spill response equipment on standby and has assured the barge owner of all the required assistance, said the port authority.

Karachi, Oct 10 — Karachi Port Trust (KPT) said it has appointed Wijsmuller of Holland as a consultant for salvage operation of capsized oil barge *Orion I*, off Karachi Port. Mr. Arshad Yahya Usmani, Manager, Pollution Control Department of KPT briefed the media today after journalists visited casualty site in Arabian Sea-off port limits and found no oil spill around overturned barge. Two-member team of Wijsmuller- Mr. Eric Vilyn, Diving Supervisor and Mr. Wytse Hgismans, Salvage Master, has already arrived in Pakistan and inspected casualty site and made first hand information report about sunken barge. Addressing media, both experts said they will do their best to ensure no oil spill is to be incurred during salvage operation. In their opinion, the barge is in good condition and oil is safed in tanks. They emphasised let the barge turn into a good position and salvage operation would go smooth if first we off load 65 tonnes fuel oil from it. The operation would require special equipment and an empty barge for lighterage operation.

However, to monitor salvage operation they are waiting divers report and plan. Mr Usmani said accident should not be compared with *Tasman Spirit* casualty of 2003 as the size of barge is very small and quantity of oil too meager. He disclosed at provisional and federal levels, committee are formed to coordinate with port authority and prepare reports. He said so far small quality of chemicals disperses were used to clear clouds of oil leaked from engine. He said: "The salvage operation is responsibility of owner of barge and port authority would monitor and facilitate whole operation" and pointed out it was too early to point the reason for its capsized. It was said the salvage operation may takes two week or so depended on weather condition and availability of equipment. The barge capsized at about 2100, Friday (Oct 6), three nautical miles south of Fairway Buoy from Manora Light House and five nautical miles from Karachi Port. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

Karachi, Oct 10 — The owner of barge *Orion I*, Mr. Malik Qutub, has advised that he has appointed a local marine specialist: Indus Divers, to carry out an underwater survey and then advise of the best possible salvage operation plan. The divers are performing the underwater survey today and will submit a plan after consultation with Messrs Smit Singapore Pte. The salvage operation will be undertaken in conjunction with port authority and is to be supervised so that no oil spill will occur. He said: "Round the clock monitoring is also going on to meet any eventuality". The barge 84 feet in length, 70 grt, and has a storage capacity of 200 tones. It was built in March 2006 and has insurance coverage of Rs seven million with Adamjee Insurance. The vessel is in good condition and all tanks are intact and no oil spill is reported, he added. The barge was going to deliver fuel oil to a vessel at Port Qasim last Friday (Oct 6) but developed a fault and later capsized. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: The plan to salvage barge *Orion I* is being given final approval, after an examination by divers, and recovery work is expected to start tomorrow. Sources said that a teleconference between KPT officials and Holland salvage experts would be held and the plan is expected to be finalised by this evening. Sources further said that all necessary equipment and staff were ready to start the operation of extracting the oil from the barge and then salvaging the vessel. Work would commence tomorrow morning and was expected to be completed within 10 days, subject to favourable weather conditions.

Karachi, Oct 11 — As per the press news the Sindh Minister for Environment and Alternate Energy, Dr Sagheer Ahmed, yesterday said that there was no danger to the

marine life in the wake of sinking of barge *Orion I*, carrying 70 metric tonnes of oil near the Karachi Port on Friday night (Oct 6). Speaking at a press conference at his office here yesterday, the minister dispelled the impression of any danger in the consumption of seafood. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Oct 12 — Karachi Port Trust has called in Dutch salvor SvitzerWijsmuller as a consultant for the salvage operation of the capsized m barge *Orion I*. A two-member team from the company has arrived in Pakistan and inspected the casualty site, just off Karachi Port. Diving supervisor Eric Vilyn and salvage master Wytse Hgismans are on hand to ensure there are no oil spills during the salvage operation. According to their initial reports, the barge is in good condition and the oil remains in its tanks. The current plan is to let the barge turn into a good position and to offload 65 tonnes of fuel oil. However, the plan will require special equipment and an empty barge for the lighterage operation. The team is also waiting for a divers' report and plan. Arshad Yahya Usmani, manager of KPT's Pollution Control Department, said yesterday that there was no oil spill around overturned barge. He said that, so far, a small quantity of chemical dispersants were used to clear oil leaks from the engine. The owner of *Orion-I* said he had appointed local marine specialist Indus Divers to conduct an underwater survey and frame the best salvage operation plan. The divers will submit a plan after consulting with M/s Smit of Singapore and the operation will be done with the advice and supervision of the port authority.

Karachi, Oct 12 — Messrs Smit Salvage Singapore Pte and its local marine specialist partner, Indus Divers, in joint venture have finally got approval from Karachi Port Trust to start the salvage operation of capsized barge *Orion I*, three nautical miles south of Fairway Buoy from Manora Light House and five nautical miles from Karachi. The salvage master of Smit has presented the plan which was also vetted by Wijsmuller of Holland and given the go ahead, an official of KPT said this afternoon. A plan of Smit says first 65 tones of fuel oil will be pumped out, which will take approximately 48 hours. The recovered oils will be transferred to an oil barge and redelivered to owners in port. During the oil recovery phase, assessments will be made to upright and refloat the vessel. Preliminary assessments indicate that the refloating works will commence in conjunction with oil removal and the actual refloating operations will be completed within a five-day time frame, subject to weather conditions. — Lloyd's List Correspondent. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

PARAT (Germany)
See *Henric*.

PAUL BUNYAN (U.S.A.)

See *Jack Brusco*.

PEACH MOUNTAIN (Hong Kong)

Jakarta, Oct 9 — Bulker *Peach Mountain* and Container Carrier *Uni-Premier* are both still at same position in Tanjung Perak. The cargo of *Peach Mountain* is being discharged. — Lloyd's Agents.

QUEEN OF NEW WESTMINSTER (Canada)

London, Oct 11 — Roll on roll off *Queen of New Westminster* (8786 gt, built 1964) experienced an engine black-out in lat 49 03N, long 123 19W, at 1548, PST, Oct 2, while under way in the Strait of Georgia. (Note — According to LMIU AIS, *Queen of New Westminster* was in lat 49 08 32.16N, long 123 31 52.26W, at 1819, UTC, Oct 11, proceeding on course 290 deg at 18.6 knots.)

REEF ZANZIBAR (St. Vincent & Grenadines)

London, Oct 11 — Roll On Roll Off *Reef Zanzibar* remains at Zanzibar anchorage for repairs.

RMS KIEL (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Oct 8 — Launch of twin-hull part containerised general car *RMS Kiel* (3000 gt, built 2006) at the former Lührings-Yard, Weserm at 1300, Oct 5, was close to disaster as the vessel refused to slip into the water in time. Tugs *Greif & Taucher 3* waiting for the vessel to be launched were attached and tried to pull the vessel down into the water. But *RMS Kiel* then started to list to port on the slipway, but it still did not move towards the water. As the tide was falling, the vessel was in danger of breaking in two. The large tug *Blumenthal* was called and succeeded after some attempts to pull *RMS Kiel* into the Weser. From here it was towed to Wilhelmshaven for fitting out. Vessel arrived at 0200, Oct 6. The building of the vessel started in Aug 2005 and was already to be completed in spring but this was seriously delayed due to troubles of the yard.

London, Oct 9 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Part containerised general car *RMS Kiel* was not towed to Wilhelmshaven as planned for fitting out. It was taken to the fishing harbour of Bremerhaven for investigations of the hull. A frame on starboard side is damaged and the hull obviously too. The problems while launching were caused by old fat on the slip, which lasted from April when the launch originally was scheduled.

London, Oct 9 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Following completion of investigation, part containerised general cargo *RMS Kiel* departed Bremerhaven at 1600, Oct 9, in tow of tug *Taucher O.Wulf 3*, bound for Wilhelmshaven, ETA 0001, Oct 10.

SAN ENTERPRISE (New Zealand)

London, Oct 6 — Fish factory *San Enterprise* (1899 gt, built 1990) was at anchor off Timaru Sept 18. At 0425

hrs, the main engine was started up and it shut down at 0435 hrs. Bridge alarms set off and at 0437 hrs, fire alarm loop for the engine-room set off. The switchboard was found to be on fire. At approximately 0440 hrs, the fire had been contained by the 2nd engineer, 2nd mate and the deck boss. Carbon dioxide extinguishers were used. Timaru Port Control were notified that a tug was required. *San Enterprise* was alongside the wharf at approximately 1030 hrs and repairs were started. (Note — *San Enterprise* arrived Timaru Sept 18 and sailed Sept 23.)

SAUNIÈRE (Canada)

London, Oct 7 — Bulker *Sauniere* sailed Magdalen Is. Oct 2.

SEA DREAM (Malta)

London, Oct 11 — Bulker *Sea Dream* arrived Tuzla Sep 30 from Ravenna.

SEA ENERGY (DIS)

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Vital maintenance work on Scroby Sands windfarm, off the Norfolk coast, has been interrupted after an accident involving the giant jack-up work ship *Sea Energy* (3332 gt, built 1990). While manoeuvring off the Yarmouth coast on Friday (Sep 29), one of the vessel's huge legs, which provides a stable working platform by anchoring itself to the seabed, clipped a blade on one of the 30 turbines. Windfarm owner E.ON UK and the Health and Safety Executive immediately launched a full investigation into the incident that has put the turbine out of action. Company spokesman Jamee Majid said: "It was only a light touch but about 20cm was broken off the tip of the 40m blade. We are looking at whether it can be repaired or will have to be replaced. If that is the case it will have to be ordered and may take some time." Mr Majid stressed that no one had been injured in the accident. Since the collision, *Sea Energy*, hired from Holland at a massive daily rate, has remained moored in Yarmouth's port. Mr Majid said: "Further maintenance work has had to be stopped because of the sea conditions. *Sea Energy* can only work at a maximum wave height of 1.3m and it is currently at 1.8m. We are hoping to restart on Saturday but most likely on Sunday." (Note — *Sea Energy* arrived Great Yarmouth Sep 30 and according to Lloyd's MIU AIS was still in port at 0818, UTC, today.)

SEREZ (Turkey)

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Piraeus RCC, timed 1020, UTC: General cargo *Serez* arrived safely in tow at Piraeus anchorage at 0730, local time, today.

SHAH BADAR-1

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A lighter vessel, Unknown *Shah Badar-1*, carrying huge quantity of imported wheat, sank in the Chittagong Port channel last evening. Sources said the *Shah Badar-*

1, loaded with 1,400 tonnes of wheat, sank near jetty No.15, while entering the port from the Red Buoy, in the outer bar area of the port, around 2100 hrs. Another passing vessel was able to rescue all the 13 crew. A rescue team, led by a high official of Chittagong Port Marine Department, immediately rushed to the spot. The team, along with four tugs *Dishari-8*, *Kandari 6*, *Kandari 7* and *Kandari 10*, of the Chittagong Port Authority, started the rescue operation, which is presently continuing, at 0015 hrs, this morning. The capsizing posed a threat to the movement of vessels to and from Chittagong.

SICHEM DALI (Singapore)

London, Oct 11 — Following received from the managers of combined chemical and oil tank *Sichem Dali* (6506 gt, built 1988), dated today: *Sichem Dali* came into contact with the dock wall on its arrival at Mumbai on Oct 3, causing two bricks to fall off the wall. The matter was resolved with the port authorities and vessel has since sailed, loading cargo at Jubail.

SIGAS MASTER (Malta)

London, Oct 7 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Sigas Master* (callsign 9HRP8) at anchor Brofjorden, waiting to come to berth for loading at Preemraff, but the increase of wind, still rough Saturday night, made the ship drag anchor and drifted up towards (and grounded on) the island at Bohus-Malmoen. It is rather deep just beside the vessel, but master decided not to start engines to try to get off the ground by her own means, with risk of damaging the propellers. Waiting for tug assistance to berth. The Coast Guard divers could establish only relatively minor damage to hull "in surface".

Gothenburg, Oct 12 — Liquid Petroleum Gas Carrier *Sigas Master*: According to vessel's agents, owners and divers plus "independent" attended there at the time of the incident and confirmed no hole, only denting and paint scratching. Docking was not required and vessel sailed Brofjorden Oct 8 for Gothenburg. — Westax Marine Services AB.

SOLAR 1 (Philippines)

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Uncertainty still hounds the planned siphoning off of the remaining bunker fuel from the sunken non specific tanker *Solar 1*, two months after the tanker went down in rough seas off Guimaras Island. National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) spokesperson Anthony Roland Golez Jr. said in a press conference in Iloilo City yesterday that the decision on the proposal to retrieve the remaining oil would be known only after the meeting of the executive committee of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPCF) on October 23-27 in London. While the IOPCF initially informed the NDCC that the operations could be implemented in December, Golez said

the date was still not definite. But he said the NDCC expects the IOPCF to approve the recommendation to siphon off an estimated 1.7 million litres of bunker fuel from the sunken vessel 640 metres under water by employing a remote off-loading system. The actual operation could last from 20 to 40 days, Golez said. So far, oil that has leaked out of the vessel has affected 65 villages, 8,401 families or 41,299 persons in seven towns in the provinces of Guimaras and Iloilo. Fifty-three families or 240 persons from five villages in Guimaras remain in evacuation centers because of the oil sludge. Golez said the remaining typhoons that are expected to hit the country this year could hamper the siphoning off of the bunker fuel. Commodore Harold Jarde, Coast Guard station chief in Iloilo and on-scene commander for the containment of the oil spill, said the leak coming out from the tanker was "minimal and very much containable." He said the number of vessels deployed around the area of the leak has been reduced to one Coast Guard ship and a contracted tugboat. The NDCC also reported that the level of hydrogen sulfide in Guimaras is safe based on the tests conducted by the Department of Health. Golez said the DoH reported the test results during the NDCC meeting on September 26. None of the seven sites tested exceeded the standards set by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, an NDCC statement said. But the evacuees cannot yet return to their homes until a clean bill of health has been issued by the DoH and DENR, after a government team conducts a "post-clearing" test for toxicity.

Manila, Oct 12 — International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund deputy director Joe Nichols reported today that the cost of emptying the remaining bunker fuel cargo from non specific tanker *Solar 1* could run from US\$8.0 million to 12.0 million dollars. He noted that the actual cost will be known once the tenders from six salvage companies bidding to offload the vessels cargo have been submitted. The London-based IOPC may fund the recovery operations for the cargo. Nichols said that he has made a "strong" recommendation that the remaining oil be removed and the cost covered by the IOPCF. Once the IOPCF Executive Committee has approved the recommendation, actual offloading operations will take place early next year at the earliest as the specific equipment for the operation needs to be fabricated or modified to do the job. Nichols said that sophisticated technology was needed for the operation because the tanker had sunk to a depth of 640 meters. He said remote-operated vehicles would perform much of the underwater work. Nichols is in the Philippines with two other IOPCF officials to determine the oil pollution claims and compensation requirements of Guimaras island residents who were badly hit by the oil spill. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

STER II (Panama)

See "Drugs Found On Panamanian Vessel Off West Africa" under "Miscellaneous".

SUNLIGHT (U.S.A.)

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: The 108-foot fishing (general) *Sunlight* collided late Wednesday night with crude oil tanker *Erik Spirit* (62929 gt, built 2005) about 20 nautical miles south-east of Portland Head Light in the northern outbound shipping lane, the U.S. Coast Guard reported yesterday. Lt. Connie Braesch of the Coast Guard in Portland said one person on the *Sunlight* suffered minor injuries. She could not provide information on how many people were on board either of the vessels or the masters' names. The badly damaged O'Hara Corp. fishing vessel made it back to its Tillson Avenue dock Thursday under its own power, after being escorted home by a Coast Guard Station Boothbay Harbor vessel. A man on board *Sunlight* on Thursday appeared to be assessing the extensive damage to the steel bow of the herring trawler. The collision damage extended to the port beam, which had smaller dents and scratches. The Coast Guard could offer few details about the collision because the case is under investigation, Braesch said, and there were no witnesses. The Coast Guard could not say which vessel hit which, she said, adding, "The navigation rules will help define that." The Coast Guard received a call shortly before 2300 hrs, Wednesday, reporting that there had been a collision, she said. Braesch said that *Erik Spirit* had been moored in Portland off-loading crude oil. The extent of damage, if any, to the oil tanker was unknown.

London, Oct 6 — Following received from Coast Guard Boston, timed 1225, UTC: Fishing (general) *Sunlight* and crude oil tanker *Erik Spirit* were in collision in lat 43 23N, long 69 35W, at 2300, local time, Oct 4. *Sunlight* sustained port bow damage above waterline but safely made it into Rockland, Maine. The *Erik Spirit* was reportedly undamaged.

London, Oct 6 — Teekay Shipping regrets to report that crude oil tanker *Erik Spirit* had a minor collision with a fishing vessel (fishing (general) *Sunlight*) while leaving Portland, Maine, at approximately 2256, Oct 4. The vessel participated in a brief United States Coast Guard investigation and has now been released to continue on its voyage.

London, Oct 9 — Information received from Kiel, dated today, states: Fishing *Sunlight* was hoisted up to drydock at Promet Marine Services in Providence, on Oct 8. The foreship was damaged on port side.

SUPERFLYTE (New Zealand)

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: There is more disruption for ferry passengers in Auckland this morning. Another of Fuller's larger vessels (Ferry *Superflyte* (578 gt, built 1996)) is

broken down due to an engine failure. The Half Moon Bay to Auckland service has been cancelled and taxi services are being offered as a substitute. Fuller's says a bus service is being organised to minimise disruptions over the next few days.

London, Oct 9 — Fullers Group Limited website, states: Ferry *Superflyte* has sustained major engine failure and is out of service.

TCCA1 (Canada)

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: The ferry *TCCA1* (219 gt, built 2005), the new double-decked ferry that will take cars and passengers to the Island Airport 120 metres south, crashed near the Bathurst St. dock, Toronto, this morning and then drifted in the channel, seemingly misdirected, before finally reaching its destination 30 minutes later. Dirt and stone scrapings hung off a front corner of the vessel, which cost just under \$5 million to build. The damage appeared to be superficial. The vessel finally docked as was originally planned.

TINIAN EXPRESS (Panama)

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Exactly a year after ferry *Tinian Express* rammed into a cliffline on Tinian, two passengers from the trip are suing the company for the injuries they sustained in the accident. Young Sik Lee and his wife, Yang I Jeong, filed a lawsuit in federal court today, suing the vessel and its owners, Tinian Shipping And Transportation Inc, and Hongkong Entertainment (Overseas Investment) Ltd. The couple sued the defendants for negligence, creation of an unsafe working environment, outrageous conduct/reckless indifference, loss of consortium, breach of contract of carriage, and breach of contract. The plaintiffs, through counsel Joshua Berger and Wesley M. Bogdan, asked the US District Court to order the defendants to pay them damages. They also demanded a jury trial. Berger and Bogdan stated in the complaint that Lee and Jeong were among the passengers on board *Tinian Express*, which departed Saipan for Tinian at 0001, Oct 10, 2005. The lawyers said Lee and Jeong were seated in the front row of the economy section fronting the cafeteria of the vessel. The lawyers said that, at that time, Fermin Bautista was the master of the ferry, Tito Tamayo was the co-pilot, and Liao Chao Fu served as the chief engineer. The complaint alleged that Bautista was not on the bridge of the ferry and was not steering the vessel when the accident happened at 0045 hrs. The vessel, which was travelling at 22 knots, ran aground on the ocean cliff line on the west side at Puntan Diablo Point. The lawyers said their clients were violently thrown from their seats, causing them injuries. Several other passengers were also injured and taken to the Tinian Health Centre. Due to the seriousness of their injuries, Hong Kong

Entertainment transported Jeong from Tinian to Saipan to receive medical services at the Commonwealth Health Centre. The complaint said Tamayo was the only helmsman in the pilothouse or on the bridge at the time and failed to maintain control of the steering and “fell asleep or otherwise became incapacitated while steering the ferry when it ran aground.” Fu was on the vessel’s bridge, the complaint said. The lawyers said that when Bautista was interviewed by police officers as to why the vessel hit the cliff, he responded “over-fatigue.” They alleged that Bautista and Tamayo had been working from 1800-0600 hrs seven days a week for over a month without days off.

TORVILL (Malta)

Guayaquil, Oct 6 — Refrigerated general cargo *Torvill* (11312 gt, built 1980) “went out to anchor” in the port of Guayaquil Oct 1. At 1100 hrs, the auxiliary engine No.1 caught fire due to a break in the fuel hose which caused the fire (to spread) all over the port side of the engine-room. Auxiliary engine No.2 was also affected by the fire. Auxiliary engines No.3 and 4 were not affected by the fire. The fire was extinguished at 2000 hrs by the intervention of the Guayaquil Fire Department. After the fire was extinguished, the vessel was still anchored in the quarantine roads and then docked at the pier No.4 APG, at 1600, Oct 3. After it docked it transferred the cargo, 132,000 cartons of bananas, to refrigerated general cargo *Dean*. This operation was completed at 0400, Oct 5. Auxiliary engine No.1 and all the cable connections from the engine-room are being repaired. No injuries were reported. — Lloyd’s Agents. (Note — According to Lloyd’s MIU AIS *Torvill* was stationary in lat 02 21 04S, long 79 58 23W, at 1925, UTC, today and *Dean* was stationary in lat 02 16 52S, long 79 54 29W, at 1946, UTC, today.)

UNI-PREMIER (Panama)

See *Peach Mountain*.

VAAGEN (NIS)

London, Oct 9 — Chemical tanker *Vaagen* under escort of salvage tug *Simoon*, from Lisbon to Rotterdam, is expected at 0900 hrs. (Note — According to Lloyd’s MIU AIS *Vaagen* and *Simoon* were stationary were in lat 51 25 N, 02 38E, at 0808, UTC, today.

London, Oct 10 — According to Lloyd’s MIU AIS, chemical tanker *Vaagen* was located stationary in lat 51 25 19.83N, long 02 38 34.17E, at 1500, UTC, today. The nearest port to the vessel is Nieuweport, Belgium, at a distance of 16.9 nautical miles.

London, Oct 12 — Chemical tanker *Vaagen* arrived Antwerp Oct 11.

VELOS (Cyprus)

Gothenburg, Oct 6 — Cityvarvet Gothenburg dockmaster confirms bulker *Velos* still in dock today, but will commence to fill up dock and

ballast water. Vessel scheduled to sail at 0600, tomorrow (Oct 7), for Denmark to reload. All work carried out according to schedule and can see no problems in final stage. — Westax Marine Services AB.

London, Oct 10 — According to Lloyd’s MIU AIS bulker *Velos* was reported at Aabenraa at 0906, UTC, today.

VIRGEN DEL CARMEN III (Panama)

See *Atlantic Mermaid*.

WESTWOOD ANETTE (Bahamas)

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated Oct 7, states: High levels of toxins have been detected in the Squamish estuary. In early August, a cargo vessel (bulker with container capacity *Westwood Anette*) punctured a fuel tank while leaving a dock in Howe Sound and leaked 29,000 litres of bunker fuel into the waterway. Tests on five samples from the spill site show levels of toxic chemicals nearly 1,000 times over provincial safety standards. Provincial NDP environment critic Shane Simpson said the government needs to step in and help with the clean-up. He said the toxins would eventually contaminate the area’s salmon and waterfowl. The shipping company responsible for the spill is paying for the cost of the clean-up.

XINHE (Panama)

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: After 18 days of drifting in the sea, the malfunctioned general cargo *Xinhe* (4976 gt, built 1983) safely arrived at the mouth of the Pearl River at 1330, Oct 8, with the help of Nanhai Rescue Bureau. On Sep 22, the 125-metre long cargo vessel was loaded with tapioca and left Thailand and headed to Guangdong. At about 300 miles off the south coast of Sanya, the steering gear malfunctioned and the crew. The next day, Nanhai Rescue Bureau received the distress call and immediately sent out rescue ships. On Sep 27, amidst terrible weather conditions, a rescue boat finally reached the vessel. While being towed, the rescue vessel found that *Xinhe* sustained major rudder blade and yaw problems. The rescue boat had to tow *Xinhe* at the speed of four sea miles per hour. All 21 crew members have been reported safe.

ZIM ISRAEL (Malta)

Balboa, Oct 9 — Container Carrier *Zim Israel* (37209 gt, built 1992) arrived Cristobal at 0406, Oct 7, for southbound transit which was scheduled for Oct 8. At approximately 0515, Oct 8, while entering Cristobal inner anchorage, the vessel reportedly came into contact with the breakwater, sustaining some hull damage. The vessel is presently berthed at Cristobal, and understand temporary repairs are in progress. — Lloyd’s Agents.

ZIM MEXICO III (Antigua & Barbuda)

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: The bar pilot who guided container carrier *Zim Mexico III* in and out of Mobile’s port before its collision with a dockside crane testified yesterday that the ship’s captain revealed nothing about past problems with the vessel. Andrew Johnson, whose job is to help ship captains navigate Alabama’s shipping channel and harbour, used a picture of the waterway to tell federal jurors in Mobile the sequence of events that led to the Mar 2 crash that killed an electrician, who was working on the crane. The ship’s captain, Wolfgang Schroder, stands accused of misconduct. Johnson testified that he was a little surprised when Schroder told him he had not ordered a tug on the morning of Mar 1. “He said the bow thruster was working fine, and we shouldn’t have any problem. ... If there was any doubt as to the effectiveness of the bow thruster, we would have gotten a tugboat,” Johnson said. The bow thruster, however, shut off when the shaft generator that powered it disengaged. According to earlier testimony, the shaft generator was designed to disengage whenever the engine deviated by 10 percent or more from 115 RPM. Johnson testified that he called for assistance from a nearby tugboat when he realised the ship was headed for the dock. “In retrospect, it was too late,” he said. Under cross-examination from defence attorney Irwin Schwartz, Johnson acknowledged that ship crews must always be prepared for the failure of all kinds of equipment. Robert Stewart, a professor at the California Maritime Academy, testified that the ship’s logs indicate at least two prior occasions — in November and December — when the bow thruster stopped working because the shaft generator that powered it had shut off. Stewart read a passage from the International Safety Manual stating that the diesel generator should power the bow thruster to avoid that very occurrence. Schwartz attempted to refute that point, directing Stewart to a passage in an operating manual stating that the engine system was designed to keep RPM constant “in all conditions.” But Stewart said that was impossible in the real world. “There can be no realistic expectations of that happening,” he said. As a result, Stewart said, the captain should not have relied on the thruster to turn the ship around on the Mobile River. “I believe that the tugs should have been used to assist the vessel in turning on that day,” he said. Stewart testified that the minutes from a safety meeting of the ship’s officers noted the problem with the bow thruster and also raised questions about the captain’s performance. “It appears that the engineers did have a concern about the captain’s manoeuvring of the ship,” he said. Schwartz challenged Stewart on cross-examination, and Stewart acknowledged that he was not present

during the accident or previous voyages of the cargo ship and has no experience with the kind of equipment used on *Zim Mexico III*. Stewart also said that the minutes from subsequent safety meetings in January and February contain no indication that the ship's engineers raised similar concerns. In addition, Stewart said under questioning from Schwartz that he cannot determine from the logs if Schroder personally was aware that the bow thruster stopped working on the previous occasions or even if the captain was on the bridge at the time. But, he said, the captain bears the ultimate responsibility for anything involving a vessel under his command. George Quick, vice president of the International Organisation of Masters, Mates and Pilots, said his review of Mobile's port facilities and waterways convinces him that turning the ship without tugs was "doable but very tight." He said the captain should have told the bar pilot about the previous instances when power to the bow thruster had been cut off. "That would be important information for a pilot to have," he testified.

ZWERVER (Belgium)

Zeebrugge, Oct 11 — Fishing (general) *Zwerver* is still berthed and lying in the port of Ostend for repairs, which are still ongoing. The repairs are expected to be finished in November. — Lloyd's Sub-agents.



NEW ZEALAND

Wellington, Oct 6 — The rusting hulk of 2000-tonne Roll On Roll Off *Atlantic Trader I* once intended to become a Cook Strait ferry is now an expensive headache for an Auckland marine engineering company. The \$10 million investment, which turned into \$1 for millionaire Waikato farmer John Ramsey, was diverted to Auckland during its delivery voyage from Miami to Wellington in 2001 after it began taking on water and was nearly abandoned. It has been tied up ever since, clocking up berthage fees of \$200 a day because it is too unsafe to take to sea. When the vessel arrived in Auckland Mr Ramsey was horrified at the state of the hull and learned the marine survey that came with the vessel was bogus. Maritime New Zealand was just as horrified at the state of the vessel, now 37 years old, and immediately banned it from going to sea. The hull was so rusty and structurally unsound, it was feared the vessel would sink. Since then the Ports of Auckland has ordered all fuel, lubricants and other contaminants be removed in case it sinks at its berth where it still sat with a list to port and obvious signs of rust and decay over much of the hull and deck. Mr

Ramsey intended to use the 73-metre vessel on a new Cook Strait ferry service but sold it late last year for \$1. He paid five years of berthage owed on it, thought to be more than \$300,000, after it was tied up at Titan Marine Engineering's wharf in Freeman's Bay. However, the new Australian owner sold it again for a lot more than he paid without paying any fees. The latest mystery owner has also not paid fees, which were now thought to be nearly \$70,000. Titan Marine owner Mike Frewin refused to discuss the vessel "Legal proceedings are underway and it is probably better that I don't say anything," he said. However, Mr Ramsey said it had been an expensive disaster. He said he sold it for \$1 to get rid of it but would not say how much he paid for it, although an industry source suggested he paid \$10 million. Taking legal action against the previous owners was investigated but was not an option, he said. "We bought a bit of a dud," said Mr Ramsey, who owns Crusader Meats in south Waikato and Pakatoa Island in the Hauraki Gulf. "That's why I sold it for \$1, to let someone else have the headache." He said at \$200 a day to berth, the vessel was too expensive to keep when it was not earning an income. Five years ago Maritime New Zealand director Russell Kilvington said the hull was so rusted and corroded it broke away in the hands. He expected it would be sold for scrap. "It is certainly one of the worst vessels we have ever seen in terms of its total unseaworthiness," Mr Kilvington said in 2001. Marine inspectors were astonished it had even reached New Zealand, he said. He was concerned that it had been allowed to sail by other authorities overseas. Maritime New Zealand general manager, maritime operations, John Mansell said today no maintenance had been done since 2001 and it had deteriorated significantly since then. "The ship is in such a serious condition now we believe the only valid option is for it to be scrapped or dumped," Mr Mansell said. He said Maritime New Zealand would only allow it to be towed to a scrap yard and then only after extensive work to make it safe and watertight. — Lloyd's Agents.

UNITED STATES

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated Oct 11, states: The Coast Guard terminated the voyage of fishing (general) *Captain A.B.* (138 gt, built 1996) two-miles north-east of Ponce de Le Inlet, Fla., at 1115 hrs after discovering several safety violations on board. A joint boarding was conducted from an FWC boat, which included officers from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Coast Guard, of *Captain A.B.* from Fernandina Beach, Fla. A Coast Guard boarding team found numerous safety violations, which included inadequate number of fire extinguishers, life rafts past their service date, expired flares, expired

signaling lights on lifejackets and the vessels marine sanitation valve was open within three-miles. Coast Guard boarding team members also found a small amount of marijuana in the state-room. An officer of FWC cited the captain of the fishing vessel for possession of marijuana less than 20 grams and gave him a notice to appear in court. The NMFS officer cited the vessel for discrepancies with the turtle exclusionary devices on two of the fishing vessel's nets. Turtle exclusionary devices prevent sea turtles from becoming trapped in fishing nets.



ANGARA (Sierra Leone)

Odessa, Oct 10 — Refrigerated general cargo *Angara* (1361 gt, built 1971), which arrived Belgorod-Dnestrovskiy Sep 16, with cargo clothes, has been under arrest for two weeks. Vessel has some problems with Customs. — Lloyd's Agents.

BAI LONG QUAN (China)

London, Oct 9 — General cargo *Bai Long Quan* is currently still at Western Anchorage No.1, Hong Kong, under Admiralty and High Court arrest.

GEO ENDEAVOUR (India)

Mumbai, Oct 10 — As at Oct 4, support *Geo Endeavour* (456 gt, built 1985), which arrived at Mumbai on Sep 25, was reported alongside at No.7 Victoria Dock, Mumbai, under Mercantile Marine Department detention. — Lloyd's Agents.

GREGORIO I (Panama)

Limassol, Oct 6 — The 21 lorries landed at Limassol from general cargo *Gregorio I* will be loaded within the next few days to Lattakia by vessel booked by the Syrian Government. Vessel still at Limassol anchorage with the 1500 tons pipes onboard. No information available as to the future movement, regarding sailing of the vessel and the delivery of cargo onboard. — Lloyd's Agents.

Limassol, Oct 6 — The shipment of the 21 lorries from general cargo *Gregorio I* will take place this evening on Syrian general cargo *Nawal*. — Lloyd's Agents.

MERCAN A. (Turkey)

Bahrain, Oct 12 — Bulker *Mercan A.* is still under the care of the Coast Guard and is currently at a lay-up berth at ASRY, Bahrain. — Lloyd's Agents.

NYZDAN (North Korea)

Karachi, Oct 9 — Understand from "M" International Services (Pvt) Ltd., the shipping agent of North Korean general cargo *Nyzdan* that the owner

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

of vessel has arrived in Pakistan and asked the Chief Engineer to submit proof of their claim. It was pointed out that the previous owner/management of the vessel might owe this amount which the new owner is declined to accept. The vessel still in Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works for repair. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

PACIFIC ACE (Hong Kong)

Karachi, Oct 10 — The local Sindh High Court (SHC) has issued an arrest order of product tanker *Pacific Ace* (24248 gt, built 1990) on the request of a local shipping agent. The vessel took berth No 1/2 at Karachi Port on 1615, yesterday and is discharging imported palm oil. Understand from the Karachi based Pacific Maritime (Pvt) Ltd, that the owner of vessel has not cooperated fairly with the agent for ongoing cases in local court for short delivery of cargo-palm oil by another chemical tanker of same owner- Asia Power Victoria Cob. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

SEA SERENADE (Cyprus)

Koper, Oct 6 — Roll On Roll Off *Sea Serenade*, now renamed *Marinos D.*, left dry dock and has been shifted back to shipyard berth. Agents inform that 18 crew members are presently signed-on the vessel. Vessel appears registered in Panama, Panamanian flag appears stern pole while Greek flag is hoisted on bridge mast. — Lloyd's Agents.

SKY (Cambodia)

London, Oct 11 — Offers for the purchase of general cargo *Sky* (2455 gt, built 1972) are invited by the co-receivers appointed by the Admiralty Court in Haifa. The vessel is in Ashdod port. Offers should be submitted by 1000, Nov 1. An auction will take place at 1530, Nov 1

TRADER (Georgia)

Portsmouth, UK, Oct 6 — General cargo *Trader* (5420 gt, built 1977), with a Russian, Ukrainian crew, has been arrested in Ukraine, reports the East Media. Chairman of the Far East regional organization of the Russian trade union of seamen Nikolay Sukhanov informed on it. He said, *Trader* under the Georgian flag has been arrested in the port of Nikolaev in Ukraine for default of conditions of the collective agreement signed with the Russian trade union of seamen. — Correspondent.

Odessa, Oct 12 — General cargo *Trader* is under arrest at Nikolayev due non-payment of salary to the crew. — Lloyd's Agents.

Pipeline Accidents



ALBERTA, CANADA

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 1,200

barrels of oil spewed yesterday from a ruptured pipeline in northern Alberta. Darin Barter of the Alberta Energy Utilities Board said some of the spilled oil has flowed into a river and nearby ponds. He said the spill of light sweet crude near Slave Lake is considered serious and there will be some impact on the environment. Barter said the Rainbow Pipe Line Company Ltd. pipeline ruptured early yesterday morning. The flow of oil has since been turned off. A containment crew was at the spill site about 200 km north of Edmonton and cleanup of the leaked oil is underway. "There was no public safety risk when this incident occurred. There was no fire, no evacuation." Barter said the energy board will launch a full investigation to determine how and why the spill occurred and how well the company responded to it.

Pollution



RIVER DANUBE

London, Oct 7 — A press report, dated today, states: Damages from the oil slick that has plagued the River Danube for several days now are about 1.5-2 million Bulgarian leva (1-1.3 million US\$), Environment Minister Dzhevdet Chakarov has said. Preliminary reports placed the amount of fuel gathered from the river at close to 1,200 cubic metres, the minister added. Once Bulgaria finishes calculating the scope of the damages, the country would turn to the polluters and ask for compensation, Chakarov explained. Luckily it seems that the oil spill that reportedly came from Serbia's Prahovo port has not affected the flora and fauna of the region. The debris would be collected by three companies that have been licensed for the job and problems were not anticipated, the minister pointed out. Still, in order to avoid any incidents, the minister has urged officials at the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant to leave the barrages they have placed along the river until the coast is clear.

Sofia, Oct 8 — Serbia should pay compensation for ecological damage caused by a large oil spill along the River Danube in Bulgaria and Romania this week, Bulgaria's environment minister said today. Bulgaria and Romania have blamed Serbia for the spill, which flowed downstream to where the Danube runs between them, creating a series of slicks that, at its worst point, was 140 km long and 100-150 metres wide. "Serbia will have to pay Bulgaria compensation for polluting the River Danube in accordance with the Danube convention," Bulgaria's Environment Minister Dzhevdet Chakarov told Bulgarian national radio. Earlier this week, Belgrade said

a small spill was controlled from a plant of Serbian oil company NIS in Prahovo, near its border with Bulgaria, but that the leak was not big enough to cause the huge slick. Romania also complained in a letter from its environment minister, Sulfina Barbu, to Serbia's Farm Ministry, complaining that Serbian authorities failed to warn it about the spill. Both Bulgaria and Romania took measures this week to prevent the oil from reaching their shores, but said the oil could hurt wildlife in the fragile Danube delta and hurt farmers who depend on the river for irrigation. Bulgaria's Chakarov called for a tripartite commission to be formed with representatives from Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia, to estimate the damage. "Bulgaria has the right to demand compensation according to international ecological law," said Chakarov. "It won't be correct for our taxpayers to be burdened with something which they didn't cause." — Reuters.

Weather & Navigation



GREECE

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated yesterday, states The government declared a state of emergency in parts of northern and central Greece today, as floods damaged hundreds of homes, destroyed crops and forced the fire service to evacuate stranded villages. Late today, emergency measures were extended to a region that includes the central city of Volos, as authorities warned powerful rain storms were headed south toward Athens. In the southern Peloponnese region, a 25-year-old driver was missing for a second day after his car was swept away by swollen stream waters during the torrential weekend rain. Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis toured flood-stricken regions outside the northern city of Thessaloniki. "There will be immediate compensation to all households," he said after surveying the damage with the ministers of agriculture, the interior and northern Greece. "All the damaged areas have already been declared in a state of emergency so that victims of the flooding can receive the full support of the law." Thessaloniki received more rain in a 24-hour period over the entire month of October, state-run NET television reported. Officials said the effect of the flooding had not yet been assessed but that the rain storms had caused millions of euros (dollars) in damage. More than 200 homes were flooded in three villages, about 80 kilometres east of Thessaloniki, where an emergency was first declared. Some 230 firefighters, using 70 fire trucks, boats and other rescue vehicles,

assisted in the effort and received 145 calls to pump out flooded homes. A bridge collapsed on a secondary highway between Thessaloniki and the northeastern city of Kavala, while other roads were blocked by mud and loose rock.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Emergency crews battled to restore road and rail services for a second day today, as damage wrought by storms severed key connections between the north and south of the country, a senior Civil Protection Authority official said. A landslide temporarily shut down the national highway connecting Athens with northern Greece, and the sole railway link between the north and south was disrupted for a second straight day because of a collapsed bridge, Civil Protection Authority operations centre chief Adrianos Gourbatsis said. "Earth-moving machinery is on the spot at the Athens-Salonika highway right now, I don't think the disruption will last long," Gourbatsis said. The Hellenic Railways Organisation (OSE) said that the train connection between Athens and Salonika had been cut near the central Greek city of Volos because an overflowing torrent had damaged the rail bridge. Buses have been enlisted to bypass the damaged section, which will take around 20 days to repair, OSE said. In the broader central Greek prefecture of Magnesia, fire crews have been called in to drain water out of around 500 homes in the last few days, Gourbatsis said. Around 100 homes in the greater Athens area have faced similar problems, he said. Greece has been experiencing a bout of stormy weather since the weekend, with the northern prefectures of Salonika and Halkidiki in addition to Magnesia bearing the brunt of the damage to homes and crops.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: At least 1.7 million euros of emergency financial assistance was pledged by the Greek government to the prefectures of Thessaloniki, Halkidiki and Magnesia and 12 municipalities where hundreds of homes and vast tracts of farmland have been flooded by heavy rainfall. The three prefectures have already received an emergency aid packet of 700,000 euros each, Interior Minister Prokopis Pavlopoulos said. Emergency aid is also due to be given to 12 municipalities, including Volos, which suffered its heaviest rainfall in 50 years after water levels reached two metres and 27 centimetres. Residents whose household goods were damaged in flooding are to receive 600 euros each, the Interior Ministry said. State officials assessing the damage to farmland in northern and central Greece said at least 100,000 hectares of cotton, beets, corn and grapes have been seriously damaged. An exact estimate will be possible when all water has been drained. Repairs to roads and infrastructure are expected to cost millions of euros. It will cost 4.5 million euros and take about seven

months to the Thessaloniki-Kavala national road, which was literally cut in two due to the collapse of a bridge. In the meantime, a temporary bridge is to be set up. According to the general secretary of Central Macedonia, Georgios Tsiotras, severe shortfalls in necessary infrastructure are to blame for the extent of the damage. "For 20 years now, there has been no funding for projects that would have averted such a disaster," he said. National Technical University of Athens professor Manolis Aftias added, "Anti-flood planning should henceforth foresee sudden, intense rainfall and provide adequate protection."

HURRICANE "KATRINA"

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated Oct 10, states: A federal judge yesterday approved a preliminary settlement worth at least \$330 million to a class-action lawsuit against Murphy Oil Corp. for an oil spill that flooded hundreds of homes near its suburban New Orleans refinery during Hurricane "Katrina" in 2005. Murphy will pay about \$40 per square foot to buy affected residents out of their homes, attorneys said yesterday. The company would avoid a lengthy trial and further lawsuits from homeowners if the agreement wins final approval. Under the proposed deal, Murphy will pay residents of Chalmette and Meraux, Louisiana, where 25,100 barrels of crude oil flooded homes after "Katrina"'s floodwaters floated a crude storage tank off its base. U.S. Judge Eldon Fallon consolidated 19 class-action lawsuits arising from the oil spill, the worst environmental accident caused by "Katrina." Plaintiffs' attorney Val Patrick Exnicios said he was pleased with the proposed settlement. A Murphy Corp. spokeswoman said the company would have no comment about the preliminary settlement. Plaintiffs with objections will raise them in a hearing that Fallon set for January. Once all objections are considered, a final settlement will be approved by the court. Plaintiffs can choose to not accept the deal and sue Murphy individually.

PHILIPPINES

London, Oct 8 — Two persons drowned while another remains missing as heavy rains since Oct 4 triggered floods in the city. Atilano Ade, regional director of the Office of Civil Defense and coordinator for the city's Disaster Coordinating Council (DCC), identified one of the drowning victims only as Usman, a teenager. His younger brother remains missing since the brothers were carried away by a rampaging river in the village of San Jose Gusu on Oct 4. Francisco Barredo, the city social welfare officer, said a total of 850 houses in eight villages here have been submerged in floods "as high as above person, some in neck-deep or chest deep." Barredo said affected by the floods were the districts of Pasonanca, Tugbungan, Tumaga, Putik, Guiwan, Baliwasan,

San Jose Gusu and Tetuan, which have been under waters since Friday (Oct 6) morning. He said the hardest hit was Barangay Tugbungan where almost 400 families had to be evacuated to the Tugbungan Elementary School. Ade said an Inter-tropical Convergence Zone caused the heavy rain and strong winds. City agriculturist Diosdado Palacat said initial estimate to damaged to agricultural crops and fisheries has reached P20 million.

THAILAND & MYANMAR

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Floods have paralysed many parts of Thailand as relief teams are racing against rising water levels to reach people stranded or displaced. Four people, one each in Loei and Prachin Buri and two in Chanthaburi, have drowned. Peerapong Suwannamontri, the deputy chief of the Royal Irrigation Department, said the country's largest dam, Bhumibol dam in Tak, and the Pasak Cholasit dam in Lop Buri are running almost at full capacity. More water must be released to prevent damage to the dams' structures, threatening to increase floods in the Central provinces downstream. The Chao Phraya dam may hold water for a while longer, but not too long. It is forced to discharge as little water as possible, especially around Tuesday, when the high tide is expected to peak in the Chao Phraya river, which has overflowed its banks in many provinces including Bangkok. Supreme Commander Gen Boonsang Niampradit, assigned by the Council for National Security to oversee flood relief, said the military will work with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration to collect flood relief donations. The two agencies are preparing measures to counter the effects of flood in the lower Central provinces, expected to be critical in the coming days when water run-off from the North is compounded by the high tide. The deluge in Sing Buri and Ayutthaya shows no sign of improving. In the east, residents in many parts of Rayong and Chanthaburi fled their homes, some of which are totally submerged, while in the north-east, a vast amount of crops have been lost to water. All districts in Chanthaburi recorded rainfall in excess of 200mm yesterday. The water level in downtown Muang district continued to climb, reaching two metres in a number of areas. Inmates at the provincial prison were evacuated. Three emergency centres were set up, with volunteers out in force to hand out relief supplies. Provincial governor Panas Kaewlai denied the main Khiritharn dam was close to collapsing. In Prachin Buri, riverside residents camped out on higher ground. A landslide in Tak blocked the Mae Sot-Tak road for three hours while torrential forest run-offs in Ban Tak district devastated 100 houses in a village. In Sing Buri, many flood victims have gone without food as they were inaccessible even to boats. In

Phrae, forest run-off ravaged the Mae Yae dyke in tambon Pongpawai in Den Chai district and deluged Huay Rai, Mae Yun and Suan Luang villages. The road linking Mae Yae and Suan Luang villages were destroyed. In Loei, Manee Pinyorak, 69, of Ban Huay Hin Cha village in tambon That in Chiang Khan district was found drowned after being swept away by floods while fishing in the Loei river. In Ayutthaya, Nittaya Aumpittaya, director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Region 6 office, said floods in the central provinces have ruined local tourism. A lot of famous temples, ancient sites, markets and communities in these provinces are under water. In Ubon Ratchathani, the Moon river yesterday flooded 14 communities along its river banks. More than 100 families were made homeless. In the province's municipality, eight communities were inundated. Anti-flood centres are providing food and necessary items to residents. The weather bureau's north-eastern office predicts the lower north-eastern provinces, including Chaiyaphum, Nakhon Ratchasima, Buri Ram, Surin, Si Sa Ket and Ubon Ratchathani, will experience heavy rainfall covering 60% of the area. Flash flood warnings have been issued.

Bangkok, Oct 11 — The worst monsoon floods in more than a decade are sweeping through Myanmar and Thailand, leaving a trail of death and destruction in their wake, officials said today. At least 13 people have been killed over the last few days in Myanmar, where the 690 km main rail line between Yangon and Mandalay was among many severed connections, they said. In Thailand, where 39 people have died in flash floods and landslides since August, the Chao Phraya river spilled into low-lying parts of Bangkok. In a desperate bid to prevent widespread flooding, authorities have been building sandbag and concrete defences along city centre river banks and diverting the flow upstream into rice fields near the ancient city of Ayutthaya. High tides have also contributed to the danger, although officials said sea levels peaked yesterday, so the Thai capital should be spared unless there are huge amounts of rain up-country in the coming week. "Bangkok is not likely to face floods in the next few days," said Sunsern Ruengrit of the Flood Control Centre in Bangkok, even though tourists to the capital's Grand Palace had to wade through knee-deep water. High tides are due to return on October 25 and 26, suggesting the threat is far from gone and the Meteorological office is forecasting more downpours in the next few days. The floods — the worst since 1995 — in Thailand's rural and mountainous north have already left their mark, sweeping away roads, bridges, and schools and ruining crops. Around two million people in 46 of the country's 76 provinces have been affected, officials estimate. The Health Ministry says 230,000 people have been hit by flood-related diseases and

urged those in affected areas not to urinate or excrete into the water to prevent the spread of infection. The floods have also taken their toll on farmers in the world's largest rice exporter, with officials estimating more than three billion baht (\$80 million) in crop damage. There are still concerns for the safety of the ancient temple complex of Ayutthaya, a World Heritage site 75 km north of Bangkok, where the Chao Phraya is dangerously close to bursting its banks. — Reuters.

TROPICAL DEPRESSION "OLIVIA"

London, Oct 11 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical depression "Olivia" located near lat 16.9N, long 124.7W at 0900, UTC, today, position accurate within 40 nautical miles. Present movement toward the northeast or 45 deg at nine knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 1005 mb. Maximum sustained winds 30 knots with gusts to 40 knots. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Oct 12: Position near lat 18.0N, long 121.7W with maximum sustained winds of 25 knots and gusts to 35 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "NORMAN"

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated Oct 9, states: Tropical storm "Norman" formed far off Mexico's Baja California coast today, but was expected to lose strength as it headed toward land. "Norman", located about 650 miles southwest of the southern tip of the Baja peninsula, had winds of about 44 mph and was moving roughly north at about seven mph, according to the National Hurricane Centre in Miami, Florida. The storm was expected to take an eastward turn and weaken to tropical depression status or lower during the next few days.

London, Oct 10 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Norman" located near lat 16.5N, long 117.8W at 0900, UTC, Oct 10. Position accurate within 30 nautical miles, present movement toward the north or 360 deg at two knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 1000 mb. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots with gusts to 55 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds: 40 nautical miles north east quadrant, 28 nautical miles south east quadrant, and 30 nautical miles north west quadrant. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Oct 11. Position near lat 18.4N, long 116.8W with maximum sustained winds of 45 knots and gusts to 55 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds: 40 nautical miles north east and south east quadrants, and 30 nautical miles north west quadrant.

London, Oct 11 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical depression "Norman" located near lat 16.8N, long 117.1W at 0300, UTC, today. Position accurate within 20 nautical miles, present movement toward the east north east or 75 deg at six knots. Estimated minimum central pressure 1008 mb. Maximum sustained winds 25 knots with gusts to 35 knots. Forecast for 0001, UTC, Oct 12. Position near lat 17.3N, long 115.1W with maximum sustained

winds of 25 knots and gusts to 35 knots.

TROPICAL STORM "SOULIK"

London, 10 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm 21w "Soulik" located near lat 18.5N, long 152.3E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement past six hours 300 deg at 11 knots, position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, position based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 45 knots with gusts to 55 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds: 60 nautical miles. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Oct 11: Position near lat 20.7N, long 147.0E with maximum sustained winds of 55 knots and gusts to 70 knots. Radius of 34-knot winds: 85 nautical miles north semicircle and 80 nautical miles south semicircle. Maximum significant wave height at 0600, UTC, today, is 14 feet.

London, Oct 11 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm 21w "Soulik" located near lat 20.5N, long 144.9E at 0600, UTC, today. Movement past six hours 280 deg at 16 knots, position accurate to within 60 nautical miles, position based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds: 40 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 90 nautical miles south west quadrant, 105 nautical miles elsewhere. Forecast for 0600, UTC, Oct 12: Position near lat 22.1N, long 140.3E with maximum sustained winds of 75 knots and gusts to 90 knots. Radius of 64-knot winds: 25 nautical miles. Radius of 50-knot winds: 55 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds: 120 nautical miles south west quadrant, 125 nautical miles elsewhere. Maximum significant wave height at 0600, UTC, today, is 20 feet.

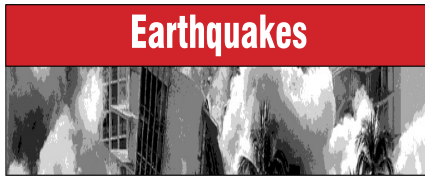
London, Oct 12 — Following received from the Meteorological Office: Tropical storm "Soulik" located near lat 21.8N, long 141.7E, at 0001, UTC, today. Movement past six hours 305 deg at nine knots. Position accurate to within 40 nautical miles, position based on centre located by satellite. Maximum sustained winds 60 knots with gusts to 75 knots. Radius of 50-knot winds 45 nautical miles. Radius of 34-knot winds 110 nautical miles. Forecast for 0001, UTC, Oct 13: Position lat 22.9N, long 139.8E, maximum sustained winds 70 knots and gusts to 85 knots.

UNITED STATES

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated Oct 10, states: Oil production at Prudhoe Bay was cut to 10 percent of normal output after a power outage, and more weather related problems forced the trans-Alaska oil pipeline to temporarily go offline. The pipeline was down for about 10 hours today after flooding in Valdez knocked out fiber-optic communications at five valves on the pipeline. Crews were dispatched by helicopter to manually operate the valves, allowing operator Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. to restart production. About 800 miles to the north, BP PLC crews worked to

restore power to the nation's largest oil field after high winds knocked down power lines early today. Layers of dust and dirt blown by high winds built up on high-voltage insulators on power lines and the field, causing a short and bringing the entire field down. Production fell to about 35,000 barrels today, a tenth of the 350,000 barrels that were produced yesterday in the oil field already hampered by problems. BP crews worked today to wash insulators, restore power and ramp up production, but spokesman Daren Beaudou couldn't say how long the work would take. Near Valdez, Alyeska early today lost communication with the five remote gate valves on the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, which carries nearly 17 percent of the nation's domestic oil supply daily. The remote valves are important when there is a pipeline leak. They are closed to limit the amount that might be spilled in the affected section, Alyeska spokesman Mike Heatwole said. Heatwole said company protocol calls for the pipeline shutdown when valves cannot be closed from long distance. The valves must be staffed by crews that can manually operate the valves, he said. The pipeline was brought back online early this afternoon after those crews arrived by helicopter, Heatwole said. Flooding and mudslides along the Richardson Highway, which parallels the pipeline and is the only roadway out of Valdez, disrupted vehicle traffic. The Alaska Department of Transportation closed a 65-mile stretch of the highway, starting near Valdez. The highway is expected to be closed for several days. The Weather Service said 6.5 inches of rain fell Sunday (Oct 8) and yesterday at Valdez. Flooding in Keystone Canyon near Valdez hit three bridges hard and moved one five feet, said DOT spokeswoman Shannon McCarthy. High water along other roads in Valdez was hampering Alyeska's ability to staff the Valdez Marine Terminal, where oil is loaded onto tankers. The terminal is across Port Valdez from the city and a road leading to it was affected by flooding, but Heatwole said there was no disruption in Valdez operations. Essential employees reported to work at the Valdez harbour and were transported across Port Valdez by boat. One tanker was loaded today with oil from one of the facility's 14 500,000-gallon tanks. Another tanker was en route to Valdez, he said. The entire Prudhoe Bay oil field had produced more than 400,000 barrels a day - or eight percent of total U.S. output - until leaks and the discovery of pipe corrosion led the company to begin shutting down the eastern half of the field Aug. 6. The eastern side of the field was restarted late last month as the company began to clean out the transit pipeline there. Before the power outage, BP workers this week were continuing to scrape and clean Prudhoe's east side transit line with devices called maintenance "pigs." The work follows intensive ultrasonic

inspections and other sound wave tests. Next, workers will put a "smart pig" through the line to check for thin spots using ultrasound. BP officials declined to say exactly when that would occur, only that they were working on a two-week maintenance effort that began September 30. BP has said it ultimately will replace 16 of 22 miles of transit lines. It expects to get replacement pipe by the end of the year, with construction beginning early next year.



MYANMAR

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated Oct 8, states: A moderate earthquake shook central Myanmar and could be felt in neighbouring Thailand today, the Thai meteorological department said. No damage or injuries were reported. The magnitude 5.6 quake, which occurred early today, was centered in the Tanintharyi region of Myanmar. The tremor could be felt about 40 miles away in the southern Thai province of Prachuap Khiri Khan, the meteorological department said in a statement.

TAIWAN

Beijing Oct 9 — An earthquake measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale struck off the southern coast of Taiwan today, the Hong Kong Observatory said. The tremor was recorded at 1003, UTC. There were no immediate reports of casualties, China's Xinhua news agency reported. — Reuters.

TONGA

Washington, Oct 8 - A strong 6.2-magnitude quake struck about six miles beneath the ocean south of Tonga, the US Geological Survey said today, but no threat of a tsunami was seen. The quake, which occurred about 0150, Tonga time, Oct 9, was about 170 miles south of Nuku'Alofa, the capital of the South Pacific island nation. The Hawaii-based Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre did not issue a tsunami warning, saying the quake was "small and deep." — Reuters.



MOUNT TAVURVUR, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

London, Oct 7 — An erupting volcano on the Papua New Guinea island of New Britain is forcing people to evacuate their homes, as large volumes of ash fall on the town of Rabaul. Disaster officials are meeting

to coordinate a response to this morning's eruption of Mt Tavorvur, on Rabaul's outskirts. A UN official in Port Moresby said he was concerned at the reported level of volcanic activity and how many people might be displaced. PNG's mining department today reported doors slamming, windows rattling and ash falling as far away as Kokopo across the harbour from Rabaul. "People are spontaneously evacuating from areas of heavy ash fall and those exposed to the worst of the air blasts. These are quite alarming," the report said. It said the ash column was around 5000m high with thunder and lightning within it. In 1994, large eruptions of Tavorvur and nearby Vulcan destroyed much of Rabaul. An officer at the Rabaul Volcanological Observatory said this afternoon the eruption appeared to have reached its peak and levelled off. Some residents had left town voluntarily to avoid the ash falls and air blasts from the volcano, the officer said. Thick ash clouds surrounding Tavorvur meant staff could not tell if there were any lava flows from the crater, he said.

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A volcano in Papua New Guinea has erupted for a second day today but the rumbling peak is calming down and thousands of residents who fled are expected to return, an official says. Ash, steam and lava were still pouring from the Mount Tavorvur volcano after an "awe-inspiring" eruption yesterday, said volcanologist Steve Sanders of PNG's Volcano Observatory in Rabaul on the island of New Britain. "There were one or two explosions early this morning," he told AFP in a telephone interview. "There are lava flows coming out to west and northeast, steaming where they are entering the sea." But the flow of ash was much reduced, with "gentle emissions of steam and ash billowing out", he said. "The gas-rich material erupted yesterday and today gas-poor lava is coming out quietly." Sanders said shockwaves from the explosions during yesterday's eruption blew out windows at the observatory about 12km away. The shockwaves also rattled and broke windows in the town as a plume of ash rose some 18km into the air, sending 2,000 residents fleeing 12 years after Rabaul was largely destroyed by a previous eruption. Sanders said there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage, and he expected people to move back home quite soon.



AFGHANISTAN

Khost, Oct 12 — Two suicide bombers, one targeting a U.S.-led coalition convoy and another Afghan soldiers, blew themselves up in the

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southeastern province of Khost today, wounding 16 people. A coalition spokesman said no-one in the convoy was hurt, but 14 civilians and two Afghan soldiers were wounded in the attacks, officials and witnesses said. Ariana private television station cited its reporter in Khost saying 16 people were wounded, but did not give details. One attacker hurled himself on a car carrying Afghan troops a few hundred metres from the provincial governor's office in Khost city and the second used a car against the U.S.-led troops on a road south of the city. — Reuters.

ALGERIA

Algiers, Oct 8 — Suspected Algerian Islamic rebels shot dead four people, including two government soldiers, in the latest attack by militants who have rejected an amnesty aimed at ending years of strife, a newspaper reported today. A third soldier was wounded when the rebels, dressed in military uniforms, staged a fake roadblock on Saturday in Boumerdes province, 50 km east of the capital Algiers, the influential independent daily "El Watan" said. Armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, the assailants, believed to belong to the al Qaeda-aligned Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), fled to a neighbouring village after carrying out the attack. — Reuters.

BOLIVIA

La Paz, Oct 5 — At least nine people died and 60 were wounded today as miners fighting for control of tin mines, including one of the world's biggest, battled each other with dynamite in western Bolivia. Presidential spokesman Alex Contreras said eight deaths came during violent clashes between independent and state-employed miners in Huanuni, in the mineral-rich Oruro region. Media reports said a ninth miner died later in a hospital and that 60 were wounded. The violence was ignited when independent miners tried to seize complete control of several state-owned tin mines, including Huanuni, one of the world's largest. The independent workers had been sharing work at the mine with state workers. The army arrived in the late afternoon and cordoned off the mining town of Huanuni, in the high Andean plateau 175 miles south-east of La Paz, in an effort to quell the violence. — Reuters.

INDIA

Guwahati, India, Oct 6 — Tribal militants in north-eastern India killed 11 people, including seven railway police officers, in an ambush today, police said. The heavily-armed rebels fired at two vehicles carrying railway employees to a site where new tracks were being laid in Assam state's North Cachar Hills district, about 240 km south of the state's main city of Guwahati. The dead also included three drivers and a railway official. "All the 11 people died on the spot and we suspect the Dima Halim Daogah

(DHD) is behind the attack," a senior police official said. "The group was demanding huge amounts of extortion money from the railways for quite some time." The DHD is fighting for more political autonomy for tribals in the area, one of more than two dozen militant outfits active in India's troubled north-east. — Reuters.

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated Oct 8, states: Maoists today removed sections of rail tracks in two places near Kirandul station in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh causing derailment of an empty goods train and disruption of traffic along the route, a top police officer said. The naxalites removed the tracks after the landmines they planted on the Visakhapatnam-Kirandul railway route failed to go off, Dantewada District Superintendent of Police Om Prakash Pal said. The railway route, between the state and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, is mainly used for transporting rich quality of iron ore. After having failed to blow up the track, the naxalites removed the sections of railway tracks, about three km from Kirandul railway station and 550 km from here. Engines and six wagons of the goods train derailed disrupting train services completely between Visakhapatnam and Kirandul, Pal said. After the derailment, some two dozen Maoists also attempted on the life of the driver and guard of the train, the SP said adding police was combing the area to nab the naxalites. The Maoists had recently attacked the National Mineral Development Corporation-run iron ore mines of Bailadila and Kirandul areas and damaged several properties besides blowing up Bhansi railway station and a railway engine.

IRAQ

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A Kurdish lawmaker was kidnapped in Baghdad and later found dead, a spokesman for the Kurdish bloc in parliament said today. Mohammed Rihda Mahmoud was kidnapped with his driver yesterday afternoon in the northeastern Baghdad neighbourhood of Seleikh, said Firyad Rawndouzi, spokesman for the Kurdish bloc. Hours later, both bodies were found shot in the head and chest, Rawndouzi said. In a separate incident, a soldier from Denmark was killed during a gunfight with alleged insurgents who had been firing rockets and grenades against the Danish and British camps in southern Iraq, the military said today. He was the sixth Danish soldier to die in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion. The soldier was seriously wounded late yesterday and was transferred by helicopter to a British military hospital where he later died, Defense Command Denmark said in a statement.

Diwaniya, Iraq, Oct 8 — US and Iraqi troops killed 30 Shi'ite militiamen in fierce street battles in the southern city of Diwaniya today, the US military said. People were ordered to

stay indoors during the day after explosions and the rattle of machine-gun fire shook the city's central districts for more than five hours overnight. The military said an M1A2 Abrams tank was severely damaged in the clashes that erupted after militants opened fire with machine-guns and rocket-propelled grenades on US and Iraqi forces trying to arrest a "high-value" target. Police reported 28 deaths elsewhere in Iraq, including the discovery in Baghdad of the bullet-riddled body of Colonel Thamer Selman, a senior Interior Ministry official. The US military said two soldiers were killed yesterday, bringing to 26 the number killed in the past eight days. The military said Iraqi troops had arrested the "high-value" target over the deaths of 20 Iraqi soldiers in a battle with militiamen in Diwaniya on Aug 28. At least 13 were reported at the time to have been executed after they ran out of ammunition. The fighting in Diwaniya, 180 km south of Baghdad, came a day after Iraqi forces arrested 184 people and seized hundreds of weapons in a security crackdown in the restive oil city of Kirkuk, which has experienced an explosion of violence in recent weeks. The curfew was lifted this morning. — Reuters.

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Up to 20 Iraqis were wounded today, including four policemen, in a double explosion that took place simultaneously in central Baghdad, an Iraqi police source said. The source said that the first explosion took place in Victory Square, followed by a second in the same area. Moreover, the source said the body of Interior Ministry Colonel Thamer Salman was found shot dead in an Iraqi patrol vehicle in Al-Fadhil district in Baghdad. He also said that an explosion near the Mustansiriya University wounded six people. Another source told reporters that the bodies of 15 Iraqis were found in different areas of the capital, all of whom had been shot dead. Meanwhile, the US Army said in a statement that a soldier had been killed in northern Iraq yesterday when an explosive device blew up. And in Kirkuk, Lieutenant Colonel Khalil Al-Zoba'i of the Iraqi Army said 184 suspects had been arrested in search operations in the city, as well as a woman and five men of Syrian and Palestinian nationalities.

Baghdad, Oct 9 — Gunmen in police uniforms killed the brother of Iraq's Sunni Vice President Tareq al-Hashemi in northern Baghdad late yesterday, police and members of the Sunni Islamic Party said today. Amer al-Hashemi, a major general in the Iraqi army, was at home in Sulaiikh when gunmen stormed into the house and killed him. "Gunmen in police uniforms and in 10 police cars arrested his bodyguards and then entered his house and killed him," a police source said. Elsewhere, at least seven policemen died and hundreds of others fell ill after suffering food poisoning yesterday evening in the town of

Numaniya, south of Baghdad, police sources at the base said today. — Reuters.

Baghdad, Oct 10 — Iraqi police said today they found 60 bodies across Baghdad in the last 24 hours, all with gunshot wounds with some showing signs of torture. Police could not identify most of the victims. Twelve were found near the Shi'ite Sadr city district of the capital. — Reuters.

Washington, Oct 10 — The war in Iraq has killed at least 647 civilian contractors to date, according to official figures that provide a stark reminder of the huge role of civilians in supporting the U.S. military. The contractor death toll is tracked by the U.S. Department of Labour on the basis of claims under an insurance policy, the Defense Base Act, that all U.S. government contractors and subcontractors working outside the United States must take out for their civilian employees. In response to questions from Reuters, a Labour Department spokesman said there had been 647 claims for death benefits between March 1, 2003, and Sept. 30, 2006. The Defense Base Act covers both Americans and foreigners, and there is no breakdown of the nationalities of those killed. The death toll of civilians working alongside U.S. forces in Iraq compares with more than 2,700 military dead and, experts say, underscores the risks of outsourcing war to private military contractors. Their number in Iraq is estimated at up to 100,000, from highly-trained former special forces soldiers to drivers, cooks, mechanics, plumbers, translators, electricians and laundry workers and other support personnel. Two court cases slowly making their way through the U.S. legal system have opened a window on the legal "fog" hanging over civilians who work alongside the military and have become an everyday presence in conflict zones. The legal cases involve Blackwater Security and Halliburton which field hundreds of civilians in Iraq. The two companies are part of a global industry estimated to bring in up to \$100 billion annually. The suit against Blackwater, the first of its kind in the United States, was brought 19 months ago by the families of four civilian contractors who were shot in March 2004 by insurgents who burned their bodies and hung the charred remains of two from the girders of a bridge in the city of Falluja. The suit, for fraud and wrongful death, alleges that Blackwater broke explicit terms of its contract with the men — Stephen (Scott) Helveston, Mike Teague, Jerko Zovko and Wesley Batalona — by sending them to escort a food convoy in unarmoured cars, without heavy machine guns and in teams that lacked even a map. The suit against Halliburton stems from the April 2004 ambush of a convoy of fuel trucks near Abu Ghraib in which six drivers working for a company subsidiary Kellogg, Brown and Root were killed and 11 injured. In September, a federal judge in Houston threw out the

suit, saying his court had no jurisdiction because the decision to send the convoy had been "interwoven with Army decisions." "The effect of this ruling is ... a legal gray zone in which Halliburton and KBR can act in any manner they chose," said T. Scott Allen, attorney for the families. "We will appeal." A few days after the Houston decision, a U.S. appeals court in Raleigh, North Carolina, rejected a Blackwater petition for a rehearing of an appeal to have the case moved from a state court in Moyock where the company is based, and have it adjudicated by the Department of Labor, which decides Defense Base Act claims in the first place. "The decision was clear: jurisdiction of this case rests with the state court," said Dan Callahan, one of the attorneys for the families of the four killed in Falluja. "This paves the way for holding Blackwater liable and establish guidelines and accountability for contracting firms operating abroad." Where the case comes to be heard has enormous monetary implications: There is no cap on punitive damages in a state court and past judgments have reached staggering heights. Callahan, for example, won a \$934 million jury verdict in a 2003 corporate litigation in California. The Base Defense Act provides for maximum death benefits of \$4,123.12 a month. — Reuters.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Violence around Iraq claimed at least five lives today, including a bomb in a parked car that exploded next to a police patrol in southeastern Baghdad, killing two passers-by. The car bomb attack just before 1000 in the Ghadeer neighbourhood wounded 10 other people, including four policemen, Lt. Bilal Ali Majid said. A second car bomb attack a half-hour later on a police patrol in the capital's eastern Mustansiriya Square killed another two passers-by and wounded 16, including three policemen, Majid said. Elsewhere, gunmen shot and killed a policeman in the northern city of Kirkuk as he was heading to work, police Col. Anwar Hassan said.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A controversial new study contends nearly 655,000 Iraqis have died because of the war, suggesting a far higher death toll than other estimates. The timing of the survey's release, just a few weeks before the U.S. congressional elections, led one expert to call it "politics." In the new study, researchers attempt to calculate how many more Iraqis have died since March 2003 than one would expect without the war. Their conclusion, based on interviews of households and not a body count, is that about 600,000 died from violence, mostly gunfire. They also found a small increase in deaths from other causes like heart disease and cancer. "Deaths are occurring in Iraq now at a rate more than three times that from before the invasion of March 2003," Dr. Gilbert Burnham, lead author of

the study, said in a statement. An accurate count of Iraqi deaths has been difficult to obtain, but one respected group puts its rough estimate at closer to 50,000. Speaking of the new study, Burnham said the estimate was much higher than others because it was derived from a house-to-house survey rather than approaches that depend on body counts or media reports. A private group called Iraqi Body Count, for example, says it has recorded about 44,000 to 49,000 civilian Iraqi deaths, but it notes that those totals are based on media reports, which it says probably overlook "many if not most civilian casualties." For Burnham's study, researchers gathered data from a sample of 1,849 Iraqi households with a total of 12,801 residents from late May to early July. That sample was used to extrapolate the total figure. The estimate deals with deaths up to July. The survey participants attributed about 31 percent of violent deaths to coalition forces. The Health Ministry, which tallies civilian deaths, relies on reports from government hospitals and morgues. Accurate death tolls have been difficult to obtain ever since the Iraq conflict began in March 2003. When top Iraqi political officials cite death numbers, they often refuse to say where the numbers came from. The Interior Ministry compiles its figures from police stations, while the Defense Ministry reports deaths only among army soldiers and insurgents killed in combat. The United Nations keeps its own count, based largely on reports from the Baghdad morgue and the Health Ministry.

Baghdad, Oct 12 — Gunmen raided the offices of a new Iraqi satellite channel in Baghdad today and killed seven guards and employees in one of the biggest single attacks on Iraqi journalists, who are frequent targets of insurgents. Hassan Kamil, executive manager of Shaabiya satellite channel, said masked gunmen had stormed the station's office in eastern Zayouna district at 0700 hrs (0400, UTC), killing two guards and five other staff, including the office manager. Kamil, who was not there at the time of the attack, said the gunmen had arrived at the station in five or six vehicles. "Some of them were wearing police uniforms and other civilian clothing. All were masked," he said. One employee survived the attack but was severely wounded and in hospital, he added. The killings come as sectarian and insurgent violence continues to rage largely unchecked in the city, despite a major security crackdown by U.S. and Iraqi troops aimed at curbing suicide car bombings, shootings and death squad killings. A roadside bomb exploded in central Baghdad's Bab al-Sharji district this morning, police said. When police and rescue services arrived on the scene a car bomb exploded. Police said the blasts killed five people and wounded 10. Iraq is the most dangerous place in the world for journalists, according to

international media watchdogs. Reporters Without Borders says 109 local and foreign journalists and media assistants have been killed in Iraq since the U.S. invasion to topple Saddam Hussein in 2003. The Committee to Protect Journalists says 20 journalists have been killed this year alone. Many of Iraq's newspapers and television stations are funded by political and religious groups. Their political affiliations make their staff targets for attack by militants from rival groups as well as Sunni insurgents. The state-funded Iraqi Media Network, which runs Iraqiya state television and al-Sabah newspaper, has suffered the greatest number of casualties since 2003, with 11 reported deaths. — Reuters.

ISRAEL

Nablus, West Bank, Oct 8 — Israeli troops today killed a Palestinian militant and a Palestinian civilian near the West Bank city of Nablus, witnesses said. Palestinian witnesses said the gunman, from al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, was shot in Balata, a refugee camp near Nablus. Two other members of al-Aqsa, an armed wing of President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction, were wounded. The army said there were no Israeli casualties. Al-Aqsa is among factions spearheading a six-year-old Palestinian revolt. Israeli soldiers later shot dead a Palestinian civilian who tried to bypass a military checkpoint west of Nablus, Palestinian witnesses said. A Palestinian medical official in a hospital in the city confirmed the man's death. The Israeli army had no immediate comment. — Reuters. (See issue of Oct 3.)

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Israeli forces have killed three Palestinian gunmen and two bystanders during a raid in the Gaza Strip, pressing an almost 4-month offensive launched after a soldier was abducted, witnesses and medics have said. They have said troops backed by helicopter gunships entered the central village of Abassan under dark, touching off clashes. There was no immediate word on the affiliations of the dead gunmen. The slain bystanders were a man and his teenaged son, medics have said. The Israeli army confirmed its forces were operating in the area, saying they were looking for facilities used by militants. Troops fired on gunmen who tried to attack them, an army spokesman has said. "This is an area believed to conceal tunnels and other forms of infrastructure used by terrorist groups," he has said.

ISRAEL-LEBANON

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MEXICO

Mexico City, Oct 10 — Thousands of protesters trying to bring down a state governor marched from Mexico's conflict-torn tourist city of Oaxaca into the capital yesterday as the interior minister tried to stave off violent clashes. Leftist activists and striking teachers have shut down the colonial center of Oaxaca for months, hoping to force the resignation of Ulises Ruiz, who they accuse of corruption, heavy-handed tactics and ignoring poverty. After walking for days, thousands marched through Mexico City's tattered outskirts waving banners and shouting slogans to bolster their leaders' position in deadlocked talks with President Vicente Fox's government. Fox has vowed to resolve the conflict before handing power to his ruling party successor Felipe Calderon on Dec. 1. Fox's conservative government says it will restore order to the city of famed monasteries and leafy squares but is trying to negotiate a peaceful solution. The Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca, the left-wing alliance behind the protests, says only Ruiz's resignation will end its protests. After hours of negotiations, Interior Minister Carlos Abascal said he made a preliminary deal that could eventually see the protesters turn over control of downtown Oaxaca to local police, as long as they are supervised by federal authorities. Little progress was made on the protesters' main demand that Ruiz step down, Abascal said. They had lifted some barricades over the weekend as a sign of good will in the negotiations. Ambushes and paramilitary-style drive-by shootings, which protesters say were ordered by Ruiz, have killed at least five activists since the conflict began. A prominent teacher who had opposed the strike was murdered last week, his throat cut. Both sides denied responsibility for the attack. The protests, which started four months ago, have strewn Oaxaca's streets with burnt out cars and graffiti, scaring away tourists who provide the city's main income. Ruiz belongs to a traditional wing of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, which ruled the country for 71 years until Fox's 2000 victory and still wields almost feudal power in some of rural Mexico's poorest outposts. — Reuters.

NEPAL

Kathmandu, Oct 10 — Nepal's multi-party government and Maoist rebels resumed talks today, with the question of disarming the leftist insurgents the main stumbling block to a lasting peace. The dialogue, led by

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and Maoist chief Prachanda, is the second attempt in three days to negotiate the rebels' entry into an interim administration. The two sides held long-delayed talks on Sunday (Oct 8) after serious differences over arms and the future of the monarchy had dogged the peace process. "The arms management has become the main issue for the government," defense analyst Bishnu Raj Upreti told Reuters. "They have to find a solution, but it is not easy. Therefore, the meeting may continue for a few days more." The government has conceded to a key Maoist demand to hold elections for an assembly to map the country's future and decide the future of the monarchy. It has also promised to bring the rebels into an interim administration. Both sides have agreed to confine their armies to camps or barracks under U.N. supervision during the constituent assembly elections, which they say will be held by June 2007, but some members of the ruling coalition say the rebels should disarm before joining the interim cabinet that will supervise the planned elections. The Maoists, who see the constituent assembly elections as a tool to abolish the monarchy, say they would rather stay out of the administration than lay down their weapons. The rebels, wary of joining any government which pays lip service to the king, have also called for the monarchy to be suspended or abolished immediately. "If there is a solution to the question of arms management, agreements on other issues including the monarchy will not be a problem," said Ram Chandra Poudel, a top leader of the Nepali Congress party, the largest group in the ruling alliance, but Maoist negotiator Krishna Bahadur Mahara said Poudel's party was unprepared for sweeping changes. "Everything about today's meeting depends on how the Congress presents itself at the talks," he said. "The Congress does not appear ready to snap ties with the king and army which was the spirit of the popular movement," Mahara said. As the meeting began, hundreds of people carrying placards demonstrated outside the venue to press for the successful conclusion of the peace process. It was not clear who had organized the protests but in the past the Maoists have used carefully orchestrated demonstrations to press their demands. — Reuters.

Kathmandu, Oct 10 — Maoist rebels and Nepal's interim government have agreed to hold elections for a constituent assembly by June 2007, negotiators from both sides said yesterday at the end of three days of high-level peace talks. In May, a new interim government was formed by the country's seven leading political parties after a successful national campaign to put an end to the absolute rule of the Nepalese monarch, King Gyanendra. Since then, a mutual ceasefire has been in place and a series of talks have been held to try and restore peace in the

Himalayan kingdom. "We feel that we will eventually resolve all our problems by reaching a final decision in time," said senior Maoist leader and negotiator Krishna Mahara, adding that thorny issues like arms management, forming an interim government and the future of the monarchy had not been thrashed out. — Reuters.

NIGERIA

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: The Nigerian army has carried out a series of raids on oil militants after the reported deaths of 17 soldiers in the Niger Delta, several sources say. The militants say a village in the oil producing area was razed to the ground but this was denied by the army. The militants claim to have killed the troops in two attacks but this has not been independently confirmed. They are now threatening further attacks. The military have used gun boats and helicopter gunships in the Delta's creeks, sources say, but there are no details of arrests or casualties. But local army spokesman Sagir Musa said: "There is no truth in the story that the military have attacked any community in the creeks." The raids came as army commanders were summoned to the capital, Abuja, however the military refuses to say whether the talks concern the recent escalation in violence in the Niger Delta. Nine soldiers were killed when Mend fighters battled nine military patrol boats backed up by a helicopter gunship for one-and-a-half hours around Shell's Ekulama oil flow station, 40 kilometres west of Port Harcourt, the militants said. Mend also say they seized two military gunboats. In a separate incident, Mend said they killed two soldiers and six sailors. "After a brief shoot-out in which they were all killed, we boarded the houseboat and collected all the weapons aboard," the group said. Five foreign oil workers - including four Britons - seized during a raid on a residential compound operated by ExxonMobil in Akwa Ibom state on Tuesday (Oct 3) remain missing.

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: About 11 persons died in two different incidents in Ogoni and Eleme both in Rivers State during pipeline vandalism incident and inter-cult clashes. In Ogale Eleme, Eleme Local Government area of the state, six persons were confirmed dead while the whereabouts of one was still unknown when residents of the area went to scoop petroleum products from burst pipelines. It was gathered that a pregnant woman, two boys and two girls lost their lives while scooping fuel. At the Ogoni scene which has acquired a high level notoriety, two cult groups which have been fighting for control of the area, the Dewell and Degbam clashed again yesterday, leaving four persons dead.

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Nigerians with assault rifles overran a navy base early today, taking several troops

hostage, and occupied a nearby oil facility belonging to a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell PLC, a police official said. Hafiz Ringim, police commissioner for Nigeria's southern Bayelsa state, did not how many troops were taken hostage or how many attackers were involved. "The government is attempting to negotiate with the attackers. We have officers on their way down there now," Ringim said. "There is quite a number of them. There have been no injuries yet." Shell officials did not immediately comment. A series of attacks and kidnappings in Africa's largest oil producer have cut Nigeria's production by more than a quarter so far this year. Despite the Niger delta's massive energy resources, most people in the region are mired in extreme poverty. Some have resorted to kidnappings and attacks that grab international attention in order to get a share of the wealth. More than two dozen foreign oil workers have been kidnapped this year. Hostage takings generally end peacefully, with the targets returned unharmed. Groups have also sabotaged pipelines and oil installations in the West African country.

Lagos, Oct 12 — Nigerian villagers who overran a Royal Dutch Shell facility in the delta have freed all the 60 oil workers and troops they held hostage, a government official said today. Armed youths from the Oporoma community in Bayelsa state had invaded the facility on Tuesday (Oct 10), forcing Shell to shut the Nun River flow station, which produces 12,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil, further cutting output from the world's eighth biggest exporter after a week-long resurgence of violence. "All of them have now been released by the villagers," a government official told Reuters by telephone from the capital Yenagoa. The first batch of captives was freed on Tuesday, while the second batch of eight was released late yesterday following the intervention of the regional authorities. Shell officials were not immediately available to say if oil production had resumed at the platform or not. The company said on Tuesday that the feud was over community benefits. — Reuters.

PAKISTAN

London, Oct 7 — A press report, dated yesterday, states: Gas supply to many areas of the city was disrupted today after a pipeline was blown up near the Gahi Khan chowk in the Shalkot area. Police sources said a home-made explosive device had been planted with a timer under the pipeline supplying gas to western parts of the city. The pipeline caught fire after the explosion. The fire was controlled after gas supply was stopped.

PHILIPPINES

Manila, Oct 10 — At least a dozen people were killed and more than 40 were wounded when a home-made bomb exploded during a town festival in the southern Philippines, army and

police officials said today. Federico Dulay, police chief of North Cotabato province, said a bomb, fashioned from a mortar round, exploded at around 2000 hrs (1200, UTC) near a packed gymnasium in Makilala town, which was celebrating its 52nd anniversary. "We are still investigating the incident," Dulay said. "We are not ruling out anything, including a terrorist attack." The Philippines, a largely Catholic state, is fighting Muslim and communist insurgencies on its southern islands, home to some of the country's poorest communities and a significant Muslim minority. A spokesman for the country's largest Muslim rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which is currently holding peace talks with Manila, denied any involvement in the attack. Earlier today, a powerful blast ripped through a public market in Tacurong city, around 50 km from Makilala, wounding four people. The local army commander said the Tacurong attack could have been the handiwork of Muslim militants with links to Jemaah Islamiah, a South-east Asian terror network that seeks an Islamic superstate in parts of South-east Asia and Australia. Local Muslim rebel group, Abu Sayyaf, has been sheltering members of JI in the southern Philippines and around 6,000 troops have been trying since Aug 1 to flush them out from the island of Jolo. — Reuters.

Manila, Oct 11 — Philippine officials blamed a group of Muslim rebels for two explosions that killed six people on the southern island of Mindanao yesterday, as another bomb went off today without causing any casualties. Late yesterday, six people were killed and about 30 wounded in Makilala town, with four wounded earlier in the day by an explosion at a public market in Tacurong city. Police said a bomb went off today around midday near a bank and a shopping mall in central Cotabato city, while the army found a second device in Makilala that failed to explode. Emmanuel Pinol, governor of North Cotabato province, put the blame on members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the largest Muslim rebel group in the mainly Roman Catholic country that is in protracted peace talks with the government. He said the bomb used in Makilala "had all the signatures of the MILF", citing similarities to past attacks in the south. All four bombs were made from 81-mm mortar shells detonated by mobile phones, security forces said. Army bomb experts said the unexploded device in Makilala was attached to a mobile 'phone that showed 20 missed calls when it was found in a bag near a bar where the bomb went off yesterday during a crowded festival to mark the town's founding. Eid Kabalu, a spokesman for the MILF, denied his group had any role in the Makilala and Tacurong attacks. "The accusations hurled by the governor were unfair," Kabalu said. "It was a sweeping statement even before any investigation could pinpoint the people behind the

bombings. The MILF is fully committed to the peace talks and the ceasefire is holding." Some police and army commanders in the south have suggested the bombings could be in retaliation for the arrest of the wife of an Indonesian militant hiding with the Abu Sayyaf on the remote southwestern island of Jolo. Abu Sayyaf, the smallest and most violent of four Muslim rebel groups in the Philippines, has been sheltering members of Jemaah Islamiyah, a Southeast Asian group that seeks an Islamic superstate in the region. Dulmatin and Umar Patek, a fellow suspect in the October 2002 Bali bombings, fled to Mindanao from Indonesia three years ago, helping to train local militants in making more sophisticated bombs from mortar rounds. Last month, security officials warned of bombings in key centres in the south in retaliation for a fresh offensive on Jolo, where 6,000 troops are hunting hundreds of Abu Sayyaf rebels. — Reuters.

SOMALIA

Mogadishu, Oct 9 — Somali interim government forces backed by Ethiopian troops captured a town held by pro-Islamist fighters today in the first military setback to months of Islamist expansion, an Islamist source said. "Buur Hakaba has been taken by government troops, backed by Ethiopian forces," a source close to the Islamist leadership told Reuters. If confirmed, the attack would be the first military counter-strike by President Abdullahi Yusuf's government since the Islamists took Mogadishu in June and went on to seize a swathe of southern territory in the Horn of Africa country. "This is the start of war between us and the government," the Islamist source added. Troops from Ethiopia, which says the Islamists are led by terrorists, have crossed the border to support the government in recent weeks, witnesses say. Addis Ababa denies that, although it says it has sent military advisers into Somalia. With Ethiopia's neighbour and foe Eritrea believed by many to be backing the Islamists, diplomats fear the Somali crisis could spark a regional war. Long seen as a potential flashpoint, Buur Hakaba lies on the road between the Islamists' base Mogadishu and the provincial town of Baidoa, which is the government's temporary seat. The Islamist source said there had been some fighting, but he did not know if there were casualties or deaths. Since the rise of the Islamists, Buur Hakaba's previously independent militia had allied themselves with the Islamists, allowing the latter's fighters into the town several times. "The local pro-Islamist militias who were in control have left the town, I understand sporadic fighting broke out," the source said. A senior Somali journalist said, however, that government and Ethiopian forces had taken the town without fighting, and that pro-Islamist fighters were retreating to Mogadishu.

Buur Hakaba's capture will add to emerging problems for the Islamists' after their relatively unchallenged expansion since June. In the recently captured southern port of Kismayo, they have faced residents' protests and threats of a counter-attack by the warlord alliance who previously controlled it. — Reuters.

SRI LANKA

Colombo, Oct 6 — Sri Lanka's military fought mortar and artillery duels with Tamil Tigers in the island's north and east today as the rebels warned of low expectations at peace talks due later this month. The military said the Tigers had attacked army positions in the restive eastern district of Batticaloa and along the frontline that separates the besieged army-held northern Jaffna peninsula from rebel territory. Police Special Task Force troopers said they had overheard Tiger radio communications saying that 20 of their fighters had been killed by members of breakaway rebel faction that truce monitors suspect elements of the military are helping to mount attacks, but there was no way to confirm the clash. The political wing leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), S.P. Thamilselvan, said the rebels expected little to come out of talks planned in late October, and warned violence would spread across the island if attacks by the military continued. "Although we do not hold high hopes, we are ready to respect the call (for talks) and give it a chance," Thamilselvan told Reuters in an email interview, but he warned: "As far as we are concerned, when our homeland is crushed, and our people's habitats are destroyed, this war will definitely spread throughout the island." The rebels have threatened to withdraw from the truce completely if attacks by the military continue, while the government says it reserves the right to retaliate if the Tigers attack security forces. — Reuters.

Colombo, Oct 11 — Sri Lanka's army and air force pounded Tamil Tiger territory in the island's far north today as the foes accused each other of offensives that some fear could derail talks aimed at halting a new chapter of civil war. The Tigers said the army had advanced past their own forward defence lines in the besieged Jaffna peninsula towards rebel lines, and were firing heavy artillery and multi-barrelled rockets. The military said the Tigers fired first and were trying to infiltrate government areas, and sent fighter jets to bomb rebel positions. The fighting comes just a day after the Tigers warned any further incursions by the military could prompt a full-blown return to a war that has killed more than 65,000 people since 1983. "The military is staging a full-scale offensive along our northern border," Tiger military spokesman Rasiyah Ilanthiraiyan told Reuters from the northern rebel stronghold of Kilinochchi. "They have come as far as our positions, but they haven't breached them," he added.

"They are firing the biggest of their guns." The Colombo stock market was down around 0.8 percent at today's mid-session as some investors fretted crunch talks planned on Oct 28-29 in Geneva might now not happen. Residents in Jaffna, many hungry and weary due to food shortages and near-daily pre-dawn shelling, could hear heavy artillery fire in the distance. Details on casualties were not immediately available. The Tigers warned President Mahinda Rajapakse's government yesterday they were giving it a final opportunity to show good faith ahead of talks, and said prospects of avoiding all-out war would fade if talks fail. Some analysts and diplomats suspect the Tigers have only agreed to talks to buy time to regroup after a series of military defeats, while senior members of the security forces say they are keen to kill as many Tigers as possible before any talks start. — Reuters.

Colombo, Oct 12 — At least 43 Sri Lankan troops were killed and over 220 wounded in a fierce battle with Tamil Tiger rebels in the country's far north, the military said today. Another 25 to 30 were missing after yesterday's fighting, the military said. Artillery duels continued to rage today around the army-held northern Jaffna peninsula, cut off from the rest of the island by rebel lines. Residents heard fighter jets fly toward Tiger territory and explosions in the distance. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said they had laid out the corpses of 61 troops on a playground in their northern stronghold of Kilinochchi, and invited the Red Cross to go and remove them. The Tigers said 10 of their fighters were killed but the military estimates they killed more than 200 rebels. The Tigers say they have recovered the corpses of 75 troops from inside their territory after what they say was a military offensive. The security forces deny crossing into rebel territory, but have blocked truce monitors from inspecting the area. "The battle happened in no-man's land, between our forward defense lines and theirs," said military spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe. "They don't have 75 bodies. "Some people are missing — about 25-30 troops. They must be having those bodies." He said the foes continued to exchange artillery and mortar fire this morning, but said there was no close-quarter fighting. The Tigers and the military each accuse the other of provoking the fighting, which political analysts and the international community fear could derail peace talks due in Geneva on October 28-29. Mediator Norway said its special peace envoy Jon Hanssen-Bauer would visit the island next week, his second visit in a month, while the island's chief financial donor Japan was due to send its own envoy, Yasushi Akashi. — Reuters.

SUDAN

Khartoum, Oct 8 — Sudanese rebels opposed to a recent peace deal in Darfur clashed with government

troops near Sudan's border with Chad, officials on both sides said today, and rebels said they had captured a Sudanese officer. The violence sent scores of injured fighters from both sides streaming across the border for treatment, and 77 combatants were at a civilian hospital in Chad this morning, a humanitarian source in Chad's eastern city of Abeche said. Both sides blamed each other for initiating hostilities yesterday in Sudan's war-ravaged west, and rebels reported heavy fighting. There were no confirmed reports on the overall number of casualties. "The government attacked our positions at Kari Yari dam on the Sudan-Chad border," Khalil Ibrahim, head of the rebel Justice and Equality Movement said. "We completely defeated them and captured their commander Brigadier Abdel Rahman Mohamed Abdel Rahman," he added. A Sudanese army spokesman blamed the rebel group for the attack, saying: "This is a government camp and the rebels attacked the camp. We have not got complete information to be able to confirm if Brigadier Abdel Rahman Mohamed Abdel Rahman was captured or not." Rebel commander Jar el-Naby in north Darfur said the rebels had captured around 70 vehicles and more than 100 prisoners in yesterday's fighting. — Reuters.

THAILAND

Bangkok, Oct 10 — Former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad has held a series of talks with rebel leaders from Muslim-majority southern Thailand under a peace drive backed by Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej, his son said today. The discussions with more than 50 senior members of various guerrilla groups behind the unrest, in which more than 1,700 people have been killed, stretched from the middle of last year to August this year, Mukhriz Mahathir told Reuters. "This was a series of interviews to try to understand what really are their grievances and grouses and what they want from the Thai government," he said. "We discovered that it was not secession they wanted, but really more attention by the Thai government for the south, in particular economic development and education." The groups represented were all separatist guerrilla groups active in the 1970s and 1980s in the three southernmost provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat, an independent sultanate until annexed by overwhelmingly Buddhist Thailand a century ago. To this day, 80 percent of the population in the jungle-clad region are Muslim and speak Malay as a first language. Mukhriz listed them as Bersatu, an umbrella grouping, the Pattani United Liberation Organisation, the Barasi Revolusi Nasional (BRN), or National Revolutionary Front in Malay, and the Gerakan Mujahideen Islam Pattani, or Pattani Islamic Mujahideen Movement. He said he was confident Mahathir's non-governmental Perdana Global Peace Organisation, which

initiated the talks, was talking to "presidents and vice presidents" of the groups and had the tacit backing of Kuala Lumpur. The talks were held on Malaysia's northwestern island of Langkawi, as well as in the nation's administrative capital, Putrajaya, he said. Perdana had passed its findings to General Vaipot Srinual, now head of Thailand's National Intelligence Agency following a September 19 coup against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Vaipot had subsequently made contact with the same people, he said. Mukhriz said Thaksin's overthrow could make a real difference to a simmering decades-old problem. — Reuters.

Bangkok, Oct 11 — Thailand will remain under martial law for about another month as the post-coup government lets political turbulence settle, Defense Minister Boonrawd Somtas said today. "We can't do it now although the situation looks settled. There are still underwater waves," he told reporters. "I think it may take about a month. We need to wait for the situation to be really resolved." Boonrawd gave no details of what political undercurrents might be at play with Thaksin Shinawatra, ousted in the September 19 coup, having quit as leader of the Thai Rak Thai party from London, virtually ensuring its break up. Little opposition to the coup has been evident on the streets of Bangkok. No-one has been arrested yet under martial law, which bans political gatherings of more than five people. Today, only 12 people turned up at Bangkok's Democracy Monument for a demonstration against martial law and to lay wreaths at its foot on the 9th anniversary of the "People's Constitution" which the military revoked. The new government of Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont, a retired army chief, said it wanted martial law lifted as soon as possible, but is clearly deferring on the issue to the military, which has retained control of security. General Winai Phattiyakul, one the coup leaders, told reporters security agencies were weighing the pros and cons of lifting martial law before making a recommendation to the government. — Reuters.



ITALY

Genoa, Oct 5 — Antonella Miccio, 35 years old, housewife, mother of two children and pregnant, was kidnapped at 1600, local time, Oct 4, at home at Sant'Angelo, in Formis, near Caserta (southern Italy) by three armed masked unknown people. No ransom demanded for the time being. — Lloyd's Agents.

Labour Disputes



BANGLADESH

Dhaka, Oct 11 — Train services across Bangladesh came to a halt today after railway operators and employees went on a day-long strike to protest against the government's plan to privatise the state entity, officials said. "The operations have been suspended after staff boycotted duties from this morning," said a senior traffic official of state-owned Bangladesh Railways. The striking employees also forced most officials out of their offices, crippling the country's second-biggest transportation sector after road transport, he said. Different trade unions of the railways called for the strike to protest against a recent government decision to privatise the railways in phases to reduce annual losses of around \$15 million. "We will go for bigger action if the government does not change its mind," Siraj Bhuiyan, a leader of railway workers' union, said. He said the losses were incurred mainly due to corruption in management levels. Bangladesh Railway operates 230 passenger trains and 50 freight trains carrying some 42 million passengers and 3.0 million tonnes of cargo annually. — Reuters.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Angry passengers ransacked train stations and roughed up a station master today, after a railway workers' strike left them stranded in eastern Bangladesh, an official and police said. The Bangladesh Railway workers' union called the strike to protest government plans to make the state-run service a state-funded independently managed corporation. The workers are angry because they think they will lose privileges that government employees currently receive. Striking workers barricaded rail tracks with logs and stones, forcing at least six express trains heading either to or from Chittagong to halt before they completed their journeys, said Bangladesh Railway spokesman Shafiqul Alam Khan. Angry passengers climbed off the overnight express from Dhaka at Kumira station near Chittagong and beat up station master Abdus Salam who had stopped the train to prevent it from crashing into barricades further along the track, Khan said. Salam was being treated at a railway hospital, he said. Passengers also vandalized stations and trains at Fauzdarghat and Bhatiari after their trains had to stop before they reached their destinations, officers at the Railway Police control room said on condition of anonymity according to official policy. Police arrested at least two people for vandalism in Bhatiari. Khan said authorities were negotiating with the

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union. The strike disrupted railway traffic on another 21 routes in the eastern zone, which is headquartered in Chittagong. Railway police have been deployed at stations to prevent any more trouble, Khan said. Hundreds of passengers in Chittagong, some carrying children and luggage, were seen walking to nearby highways to look for alternative transport.

BOREAL (Liberia)

See "Pay Dispute On Liberian Flagged Vessel" under "Labour Disputes".

BRAZIL

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Nearly half of Brazil's 400,000 bank workers participated in a strike today to press their demands for higher salaries. According to an account by the Confederation of Financial Sector Workers (Contraf), 24 of the 27 federations in Brazil are involved in the work stoppage, which was everywhere except the states of Goias, Amazonas and Tocantins. In Sao Paulo, Brazil's financial centre, an assembly of workers unanimously approved the strike yesterday night. They rejected a proposal by banks to raise wages by 2.85 per cent, the rate of inflation since the last pay increase a year ago. 'If there is no real increase there will be a strike with no time limit,' said local union President Luiz Claudio Marcolino, speaking on behalf of his 106,000 federation members. Workers are demanding a pay rise - after inflation - of 7.05 per cent and improvements in the workers' share of the earnings of the financial system. Last year, a similar protest was held before banks and the unions reached settlement in which workers received a real pay raise of one per cent and other benefits.

COSTA RICA

Guatemala, Oct 11 — The port workers had the impression either correctly or not, that part of or the entire pension fund would be used in financing an expansion of the port in building a new container terminal. However, there also appears to be another motive behind this which is said to be the unions wish to have the general manager replaced. The strikes began on Sep 22 stopping two hours a day from 1400 to 1600 and increasing one hour a day. Since yesterday a contingent of 300 Police has been stationed at the port to avoid the strike from continuing, but no riots of similar events have occurred. With this exception the port is working normally and the strike has been cancelled. — Lloyd's Agents.

FRANCE

London, Oct 10 — The national towage strike scheduled to start yesterday morning has been suspended. Operations at the ports are now back to normal.

GREECE

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Greece's civil

servants walked off the job yesterday for 24 hours, shutting down ministry services, state banks and causing major disruption to public transport to protest against the government's tight 2007 budget. The government was already in a stand-off with the country's teachers who have been striking for a month. The stoppages come ahead of municipal elections on Sunday (Oct 15) that are the ruling conservatives' first real test since coming to power in 2004. About 5,000 marched through central Athens, with teachers and students joined by public servants and construction workers calling for higher wages and blasting government plans to cut public spending. The protesters blocked the Greek capital for several hours. Government and ministry offices closed, while state controlled telecoms OTE, power utility Public Power Corp. and water utility Athens Water Supply stopped work for a few hours during the day, public sector umbrella union ADEDY said. Athens bus and train staff joined the walkout, forcing commuters to use cars and taxis, worsening traffic in the already congested capital.

GUATEMALA

Guatemala City, Oct 6 — The Puerto Quetzal port union have decided to implement strikes from 1200 to 1600 hrs every day in protest of the possibility of using the pension funds in building a container terminal within the port. These interruptions in the operations will be done every day this week, and there are possibilities of the strikes increasing in time if no agreements are reached. — Lloyd's Agents.

London, Oct 12 — Guatemalan police have occupied Puerto Quetzal, one of the country's two main ports, in order to force striking dockers back to work. According to local Lloyd's agent, the port was today working almost normally, following Monday's police takeover. The move has infuriated the London-based International Transport Workers' Federation, to which the Puerto Quetzal dockers' union is affiliated. It claims that seven trade unionists have been arrested for participation in an illegal strike. The ITF has written a letter of protest to the president of Guatemala, arguing that the situation constitutes "an impending crisis". Employees are in dispute with the management over plans to pay for the expansion of a container terminal, using pension fund money. The dockers' union is also seeking the resignation of managing director Eduardo Garrido. Industrial action for an hour a day commenced on Sep 11, with a further hour stoppage each week, so that last week only four hours were being worked daily. According to local newspaper reports, the tactic succeeded in paralysing the port. The website of the daily Prensa Libre quotes Mr Garrido as stressing that plans to use the pension pot are only tentative. "They [the workers] have

nothing to fear, as at the moment nothing has been decided. Everything is at the stage of analysis."

ITALY

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Italy faced a virtual news blackout today as broadcast journalists joined a strike staged by print reporters. Domestic news agencies have been shut down since yesterday. TV and radio news was limited to a few short bulletins a day, while only a few minor newspapers were available at newsstands. The workers are protesting a stalemate in contract renewal talks with media publishers. The print journalists were set to return to work at 0700 hrs, (0500, UTC) tomorrow, after a two-day strike. The walkout by broadcast journalists, also lasting 48 hours, was scheduled to end a day later.

London, Oct 7 — Italy's major cities were paralysed by a public transport strike yesterday called by the three major unions to back their demands for a new collective bargaining agreement. This is the fifth such strike this year as the previous agreement expired in December. In Rome, buses, metros and trams were staying off the streets from 0630, GMT to 1500, GMT and then again from 1800, GMT, with minimal service outside these hours. In Milan, the Italian economic capital, buses and metros were striking from 0645, GMT to 1300, GMT and then from 1600, GMT until about midnight. Other major Italian cities - Florence, Naples, Venice, Turin, Bologna or Palermo - were also affected. Meanwhile, print journalists continued a strike they started on Thursday demanding renewal of their collective bargaining charter, so there were no newspapers. They were joined yesterday by colleagues from private and public radio and television stations, putting Italy under an almost complete news blackout. Television channels were yesterday and will be on today only broadcast three five-minute news bulletins with no video footage, to provide the guaranteed minimum service.

PAY DISPUTE ON LIBERIAN FLAGGED VESSEL

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: Bulker *Boreal*, loaded with 72,000 tonnes of AWB wheat bound for Sudan remains idle in Port Lincoln in South Australia. Following negotiations overnight, eight crew members who went on strike over pay and conditions will now be sent back to the Philippines, leaving the vessel anchored in the port. Dean Summers from the International Transport Workers Federation says the vessel's owners are looking for more crew but it might be hard to attract them. AWB says its Sudanese customer has been informed of the delay and told there is little cause for concern at this stage.

PAY DISPUTE ON LIBERIAN FLAGGED VESSEL, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Polish and Filipino seamen are refusing to sail bulker *Boreal* (38938 gt, built 2002) from South Australia because of a dispute over wages, a union said today. The International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) said some of the 21 seamen aboard refused to sail the Liberian-flagged vessel. The vessel was loaded with 72,000 tonnes of wheat for export to Sudan under AWB chartering arrangement, ITF Australia co-ordinator Dean Summers said. The vessel was due to sail from Port Lincoln on SA's Eyre Peninsula last night, he said. But the seafarers complain of poor wages and conditions and want the German owners of the *Boreal* to sign an agreement under ITF auspices, Mr Summers said. "Crew are paid whatever the German owners think is fair on pay day and are kept on board as long as the bosses want," Mr Summers said. "These guys have just said that they're not going to sail until they get an ITF minimum wages and conditions agreement. "While it is against the law in our country to actively support these brave workers, we agree with the action from a human rights perspective. ITF officials were travelling to Port Lincoln and would attempt to board the vessel later today, he said.

UNITED STATES & CANADA

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated Oct 5, states: About 15,000 workers have gone out on strike at 16 Goodyear Tyre & Rubber factories across the US and Canada in a dispute over factory closures. The walkout comes after four months of failed contract talks between the tyre-maker and its main union, the United Steelworkers (USW). USW boss said his members were left with no choice as the company wishes to close two of its North American plants. Goodyear said it offered a "substantial commitment" to the factories. The talk of more factory closures comes three years after the USW union agreed to one plant closure and concessions on wages, pensions and healthcare provision. "We cannot allow additional plant closures after the sacrifices we made three years ago to help this company survive," said USW executive vice-president Ron Hoover. He added that closing additional factories would devastate communities and threaten Goodyear's long-term viability. Goodyear said it had to make changes to better compete against cheap foreign imports. "We simply cannot accept a contract that knowingly creates a competitive disadvantage versus our foreign-owned competition and increases our cost disadvantage versus imports," Goodyear chief negotiator Jim Allen said. He added that Goodyear, which is continuing with a three-year cost-cutting programme, remained willing to bargain with the union.

Awards & Settlements



CLASS-ACTION LAWSUIT,

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated Oct 9, states: Wells Fargo & Co., the fifth-largest U.S. bank, agreed to pay \$12.8 million to settle a class-action lawsuit that claimed some workers were improperly exempted from overtime pay. The settlement won preliminary approval on Friday (Oct 6) from U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken in Oakland, Calif. The suit claimed Wells Fargo unlawfully characterised business-systems employees who performed routine tasks as "analysts" or "consultants," making them ineligible for overtime. As many as 4,500 people are covered by the settlement. "Wells Fargo maintains that it has compensated all of its team members fully and fairly, and in accordance with the law," spokeswoman Melissa Morey said in an e-mailed statement today. "However, to avoid any further costs to the business and interference with our operations, the company has decided to settle the lawsuit." The settlement covers business systems employees who worked at the bank between 2001 and 2006 in California and other states, producing automated versions of paper forms and performing other "routine production" duties, according to the complaint. Under terms of the agreement, Wells Fargo denied any liability. Eligible workers will recover money from a \$12.8 million settlement fund based on their length of employment, salary and other factors. California employees will be entitled to higher payouts than other plaintiffs.

DEFAMATION, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 12 — A press report, date-lined Florida, USA, Oct 11, states: A children's services referral provider was awarded \$11.3 million in damages from a mother who posted critical Internet messages after seeking her advice. The defendant, Carey Bock, called Sue Scheff a "con artist," "crook" and "fraud" in messages posted on a site used by parents with troubled children at boarding schools. The award for Scheff, founder of Parents Universal Resource Experts Inc., is among the largest for a lawsuit claiming Internet defamation, according to legal analysts and an attorney involved in the case. A judge ruled in Scheff's favour after Bock did not show up for the trial. The jury then decided the damage amount. The September 19 judgment was first reported Friday (Oct 6). The dispute arose after Bock sought help withdrawing her sons from a school in Costa Rica. Scheff said she referred Bock to a consultant, and the two disagreed over access to information. Later Bock posted the negative

messages about Scheff on an Internet site used by parents with troubled children at boarding schools. The lawsuit was filed in 2003. Scheff won the \$11.3 million judgment, which includes \$5 million in punitive damages, from a Broward County jury. However, it's unclear if Scheff, who lives in Fort Lauderdale, will collect any money. Bock, of Mandeville, La., told USA Today she didn't have the money to pay the award or appeal it. She relocated temporarily after Hurricane "Katrina" flooded her home last year, and she said she wasn't aware of the trial date after returning home over the summer.

FALSE PRICING, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Oracle will pay the U.S. government US\$98.5 million to compensate for allegations that PeopleSoft, the software company Oracle acquired last year, overcharged government customers for years. The U.S. Department of Justice accused PeopleSoft of failing to disclose accurately the discounts it offered large customers. PeopleSoft didn't offer government agencies its multiple product discount or additional nonstandard discounts that it gave other customers, the DoJ said. As a result, government agencies paid more for PeopleSoft products and services between March 17, 1997, and Sept. 20, 2005, than their corporate counterparts, the DoJ said. The PeopleSoft contracts were made as part of the General Service Administration's (GSA) Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) program, under which vendors agree to disclose their commercial pricing policies in exchange for the chance to sell to hundreds of government customers under one contract. Overall, the GSA MAS program had sales of more than \$30 billion last year. The overcharging came to light when a PeopleSoft employee, James Hicks, filed a case in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland. As a whistle-blower who sued on behalf of the government, Hicks is entitled to a portion of the award. He'll receive more than \$17 million of the Oracle payment. Oracle said it was not aware of the suit at the time it acquired PeopleSoft. The suit was solely focused on PeopleSoft, and Oracle co-operated with the government in the investigation, Oracle said. The settlement follows an investigation by the Civil Division of the DoJ, the U.S. attorney's office for the District of Maryland and the GSA's office of inspector general. It's the largest payment ever to the United States in a civil settlement under the False Claims Act involving the GSA's MAS program.

MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated Oct 10, states: A woman who suffered brain damage after an operation at Northampton General Hospital has won a compensation deal worth millions of pounds. Sally

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Gardner, 36, gave birth to her third child in 1999, but had to undergo surgery to remove part of her placenta. She suffered an anaphylactic reaction to a drug she was given and was left brain damaged, the High Court heard. Mrs Gardner will receive an immediate lump sum of £600,000 and £82,000 a year for the next nine years. Thereafter, her annual payments will drop to £71,500 for the rest of her life. The judge, Mr Justice Eady, approved a final settlement of her case on the basis of 80% liability. The court heard that after the operation, Mrs Gardner turned blue and started to fit, stopped breathing and went into cardiac arrest. A surgeon was at her bedside within a minute or two, but by the time her heart was re-started, she had suffered irreversible brain damage. Through her mother, Patricia Churchill, Mrs Gardner sued the hospital's managers, Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust.

PRICE-FIXING OF MEDICINES, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Omnicare agreed to pay Michigan \$52.5 million to resolve Medicaid billing issues. The company will pay about \$49 million over a three-year period, with the majority of payments occurring in 2006. The company has also stuck a deal against certain hospice claims for about \$3.5 million. The Covington, Ky.-based company said that it agreed to settle the matter in order to avoid expensive and time-consuming litigation. The total settlement amount has been fully kept aside as reserves, Omnicare added.



Railway Accidents

ATTOCK AREA, PAKISTAN

Karachi, Oct 12 — Pakistan Railway said a number of bogies of a goods train, loaded with sugar, fell in a deep ravine at about 1800 hrs, Tuesday (Oct 10), in a derailment some 25-kms from Attock city Railway station, in northern Pakistan. As result, all rail traffic on the Attock-Kundian section was suspended for about 22 hours. Railway authorities told the media that a Peshawar-bound goods train, coming from Kundian, derailed at Jhallar Railway Bridge. The rail track and the bridge were damaged and a large quantity of sugar was lost, but no loss of life was reported in the incident. Railway authorities sent a relief train, carrying engineering staff to the site. The Chief Engineer of Pakistan Railways and other high railway officials also attended to supervise the recovery operation. Express trains to and from Attock station, including the Khushhal Khan

Khattak express, the Mari Indus Railcar and the Mehr express, were diverted to Golra Railway junction to connect to the Rawalpindi-Kundian railway section. Rail traffic was restored after at 1600 hrs, yesterday, after a 22-hour-long recovery operation and completion of repairs to the damaged track. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

DRESDEN, GERMANY

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A commuter train derailed today after it collided with a car at a crossing in the eastern German city of Dresden, killing the driver of the vehicle and injuring several other people, police said. The cause of the collision, which caused several carriages of the Dresden-Leipzig regional train to jump the track, was not immediately clear, said Jana Ulbricht, a spokeswoman for police in Dresden. Firefighters and rescue crews were at the scene.

TIRUCHIRAPALLI, INDIA

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated Oct 10, states: Three wagons of a goods train derailed when the train was just entering the Tiruchirapalli junction at 1945 hrs, railway sources said. The actual reason for the derailment is not known but is being investigated, they said. It may be recalled that the railways had announced an alteration in the signalling system at the junction. Due to gauge conversion work between Tiruchirapalli-Pudukottai, the authorities had already stated that both the arrival and departure timings of trains in Tiruchirapalli junction would be affected and that timings would be delayed for one week. Because of this accident South bound trains via Dindigul and Madurai are likely to be delayed till the wagons are removed, the sources said.

TRARALGON, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 12 — A passenger train has derailed near Traralgon in Victoria's south-east, but there have been no reports of injuries. The Melbourne-bound train carrying 70 passengers derailed about 1400, AEST, just east of Traralgon, V/Line spokesman Trevor Rowe has said. There are no reports of injuries and passengers are being transferred to coaches, he has said. "We don't have any reports of injuries to either customers or staff ... the cause is being investigated at this stage," Mr Rowe has said. "Any derailment is serious but fortunately it sounds like there are no injuries." Pacific National, the authority responsible for maintaining the track, is investigating the cause of the derailment.

ZOUFFTGEN, FRANCE

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: About 12 people have been killed and about 20 injured

in a head-on train collision in north-east France, rail firm SNCF has said. A passenger train collided with a goods train in Zoufftgen, near the border with Luxembourg. The crash happened at about 1145 hrs (0945, UTC) in the Moselle region. An SNCF spokesman said the two trains had been sent onto the same section of track after engineering works had restricted traffic to a single track. The company said two train drivers had died, as well as "about 10" passengers. The passenger train, a double-decker regional express, had been travelling from Luxembourg to the city of Nancy. More than 100 rescue workers were at or heading to the crash site to set up a mobile hospital and treat victims, a local fire chief, Samuel Gesret, told French television. Some of the wounded were trapped in the wreckage and will have to be cut out.

Zoufftgen, Oct 11 — A double-decker passenger train from Luxembourg collided head-on with a goods train in north eastern France today, killing as many as 13 people, state SNCF railways said. Rail officials said the trains were travelling on the same stretch of track because of maintenance work on an adjoining line, and slammed into each other in a wooded area. More than four hours after the crash, some bodies were still trapped in the mangled wreck and emergency services did not rule out finding more victims. "It is terrible," said Patrick Hatzig, a vice-president of the Lorraine regional council. "There was a head-on collision. Some people were seriously injured and have been moved to hospital. Others are still trapped in there," he said from the site of the crash. The passenger train consisted of just three carriages and was heading from Luxembourg to the French city of Nancy. Seconds after crossing into France, at around 1145 hrs (0945, UTC), it slammed into the goods train, which had 22 wagons and was making its way to Luxembourg. "We imagine that the trains were travelling at a high speed," said SNCF spokesman Guillaume Pepy. The SNCF said "about 10 passengers" died as well as the two drivers of the trains. A workman was killed by the trackside. The official death toll was put at just five, but police said this figure did not take into account bodies still to be recovered. More than 100 French and Luxembourg emergency service staff were dispatched to the scene near the station at Zoufftgen in the French department of Moselle. Some of the injured were airlifted to hospital by helicopter. SNCF immediately opened an inquiry into the collision. "The only thing we are certain about is that the driver of the freight train got on to the track after receiving a green signal to pass," said SNCF's Pepy. "We don't know under what conditions the Luxembourg train gained access to the track." French judicial authorities have opened their own investigation into the crash. — Reuters.

Robberies & Thefts



CASH & ANTIQUES, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Fourteen members of a gang accused of stealing about £30m through violent robberies on country homes and cash machines have been arrested. The arrests were made in Worcestershire, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. West Mercia, Thames Valley, Warwickshire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire forces were involved. Police said it was one of the highest profile and highest value series of burglaries in England. All of those arrested are being questioned over conspiracy to commit a total of 23 offences throughout the five force areas including thefts from cash machines and burglaries of a number of country houses, shops and hotels. The operation began in 2005 in response to the activities of an organised crime network operating throughout the south of England. It was intended to share intelligence to disrupt and prevent the gang's criminal activity and prosecute offenders and seize their assets. Det Supt Mark Warwick, of Thames Valley Police, said some of the offences involved "extreme violence". The crimes include break-ins at Ramsbury Manor in Wiltshire, Woody Park House in Berkshire, Stanton Harcourt Manor in Oxfordshire, Rencombe Manor in Cirencester, in November and Ombersley Court in Worcestershire between November and April. He said £30m worth of crime had been investigated in 21 months and about a third of the stolen property had now been recovered, including a cash machine and half of the antiques stolen in one raid.

Miscellaneous



CFS PALAMEDES (Antigua & Barbuda)

See "Drugs Found On Antigua & Barbuda Flagged Vessel, Bridgetown, Barbados" under "Miscellaneous".

DRUGS FOUND ON ANTIGUA & BARBUDA FLAGGED VESSEL OFF POINT LISAS, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Members of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard have made a \$2.5 million marijuana haul off the coast of Point Lisas. Coast Guard officers got a tip-off from the

Customs and Excise Division that a cargo vessel in the Point Lisas area was suspected of having a device attached to its hull, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force said yesterday in a statement. A dive team was sent to the area and located a vessel, container carrier *Canis J.* (6406 gt, built 1998) and conducted a search of the vessel's hull at approximately 1448, local time. The divers reportedly found a large metal box measuring 13 inches by 11 inches by 30 inches attached to the hull. The box was taken to Coast Guard headquarters at Staubles Bay, Chaguaramas, where it was opened in the presence of the master of the vessel, Coast Guard and Customs officials and members of the Organised Crime Narcotics and Firearms Bureau. The box allegedly contained 108 lbs of compressed plant-like material, which was confirmed as marijuana when tested. The drug has an estimated street value of \$2.5 million. The box and its contents were then handed over to Customs officials. The captain of that vessel denied any knowledge of the existence of the container on the boat's underside and said it was not part of the vessel.

Port of Spain, Oct 6 — Container Carrier *Canis J.*: According to our information, a quantity of Marijuana was found in a metal container attached to the hull of general cargo *CEC Leader* while vessel was at No 3 Berth, Point Lisas. Coast Guard divers retrieved the container and took it away to their headquarters at Chaguaramas. A thorough search was expected to be carried out on board the vessel while it was alongside. However, at the time of a Customs raid, the officers boarded the wrong vessel at an adjacent berth while the *CEC Leader* was cleared and already leaving the berth. As far as we are aware, the vessel has since sailed without being detained. — Lloyd's Agents.

DRUGS FOUND ON ANTIGUA & BARBUDA FLAGGED VESSEL, BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated Oct 9, states: A ship's captain is tonight assisting police with investigations into the discovery of more than a million dollars in illegal drugs on a vessel at the Bridgetown port. The captain, whose name has not been disclosed, is being held in connection with three hundred and nineteen pounds of cannabis found onboard the Antiguan registered vessel *CFS Parameras* (?Container Carrier *CFS Palamedes* (7578 gt, built 2005)). The drugs were found bolted to the vessel's hull in metal containers, during a joint operation by law enforcement officials. Police public relations officer Inspector Barry Hunte says this is the second drugs seizure on this vessel for the year. According to him, on June 22 just over two hundred pounds of cannabis were discovered on the vessel. The drugs had a street value of about eight hundred thousand dollars. (Note — According to Lloyd's MIU AIS *CFS*

Palamedes was stationary in lat 13 6 17.82N, long 59 37 57.06W, 2 nautical miles from Barbados, at 1717, UTC, Oct 9.)

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: Police are questioning the master of an Antiguan-registered container cargo vessel on which marijuana worth over \$1.2 million was found last Saturday (Oct 7). "The captain is in custody, assisting with the investigation," public relations officer Inspector Barry Hunte said yesterday. The ganja was discovered Saturday night during a search of Container Carrier *CFS Palamedes* at the Bridgetown Port involving police, Coast Guard and customs officers. Officers found 319 pounds of herb in three metal containers bolted to the vessel's hull, Hunte reported. The vessel, which is 127 metres long, had arrived from Trinidad earlier in the day. It was the second drug find on the vessel. Last Jun 22, an operation involving the police, Coast Guard and customs also found 202 pounds of marijuana in two metal containers bolted to the vessel's hull. The drugs had a street value of \$800 000.

DRUGS FOUND ON PANAMANIAN VESSEL OFF WEST AFRICA

London, Oct 7 — A press report, dated today, states: The Royal Navy has helped seize a haul of cocaine, with an estimated value of £60m on Britain's streets, from general cargo *Ster II* (233 gt, built 1951) off the coast of West Africa. Nearly two tonnes of the drug was found stashed below deck on the 100-foot long Panamanian-registered freighter. Acting on British intelligence, the Royal Navy frigate *HMS Argyll* was diverted from exercises to take Spanish customs officials to stop *Ster II*. The six West African crew members put up no resistance, the Royal Navy said. The Spanish customs team were flown out to join *HMS Argyll* in Navy helicopters before boarding the target freighter in the Atlantic, 1,600 miles south of the Canary Islands. Among its crew were five Senegalese and one person from Guinea Bissau. British officers had worked with the Serious Organised Crime Agency (Soca) and law enforcement authorities from Spain, France and the US to trace the cocaine. Yesterday, the *HMS Argyll* and the captured freighter were heading for Las Palmas in the Canary Islands where they are expected to arrive next weekend.

LOW WATER LEVELS, LAKE SUPERIOR

Troy, Michigan, Oct 6 — The water level in Lake Superior is nearing its lowest point in the past century, according to the latest government data. The water level in the world's second-largest lake dropped in September to within 2.5 inches of the record low for September, which was recorded in 1926, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "We're getting pretty close" to the record low in Lake Superior, said Carl Woodruff,

a hydraulic engineer at the Corps of Engineers office in Detroit. Water levels in lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron are expected to continue to drop in the coming months, which is typical in the fall, according to the Corps. Lake levels are largely determined by the weather: below-average precipitation and above-average temperatures in recent years have caused levels in the three lakes to plummet, according to federal data. "This past month, the water supplies to the Lake Superior basin and the lakes Michigan-Huron basin were well below their long-term averages for September," according to the latest Corps of Engineers lake levels report. Lake Superior water levels are significant locally because Superior is a major source of water in Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Lower lake levels can make shipping more hazardous. "It's affecting shoreline property owners and shippers are having to carry lighter loads because channel depths will be less than what they used to be," Woodruff said. The Lake Michigan water level is 19 inches below average for this time of year, but is still one foot above the record low recorded in 1964, according to Corps data. The lake water level dropped 3 inches in September, an inch more than normal for this time of year, according to federal data. The Lake Superior water dropped 2 inches last month, which is double the normal decline for September, according to the corps report. Woodruff said a drought that parched the western portion of the Lake Superior basin this past summer contributed to the lower lake levels. A new government study will attempt to sort out whether a 1962 dredging project in the St. Clair River caused Great Lakes water levels to plummet. The Corps of Engineers 44 years ago dredged the river bottom to a depth of 30 feet to accommodate shipping traffic. But the Corps neglected to place a structure on the river bottom to prevent future erosion. Today, parts of the St. Clair River channel are 60 feet deep, which allows more water to flow out of lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron. A privately funded study released last year concluded that the 1962 dredging project "opened a bigger drain hole in the Great Lakes." — Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping.

OUTBREAK OF "BIRD FLU"

Jakarta, Oct 9 — The H5N1 bird flu virus has infected pigs on the Indonesian resort island of Bali, a senior agriculture ministry official said today. "There were two pigs that were infected by bird flu in Bali. These were old cases that happened last July," Musni Suatmodjo, agriculture ministry director of animal health, told Reuters. Koran Tempo newspaper had reported on the weekend that a team from the veterinary faculty at Udayana University had discovered avian influenza infected two pigs in the regencies of Gianyar and Tabanan in Bali. It was not clear if the pigs died. Pigs are a concern because they

are susceptible to many of the viruses that infect humans. Swines can act as mixing vessels in which genetic material from avian flu viruses can mix with human influenza viruses, potentially producing new and deadly strains for which humans have no immunity. I Gusti Putu Suwandi, head of the Tabanan agriculture office, said there have not been new cases of avian influenza in the area since July. The agriculture ministry's Suatmodjo said bird flu had been detected in 30 out of 33 provinces in the country, with the latest cases in North Sulawesi province. He said that although that was an increase from 29 provinces last year, the percentage of deaths in poultry was lower thanks to better vaccination and other control measures. "The number of death cases in poultry due to bird flu were relatively small as commercial farms have done proper vaccination and biosecurity, but the main problems remain on the backyard farms," Suatmodjo said, referring to the many Indonesians who keep a handful of chickens at their homes. — Reuters.

PHILIPPINES-FLAGGED VESSEL BLOCKADED AT KOKKOLA, FINLAND

Helsinki, Oct 6 — According to the information received today from agent of bulker *Clipper Devon*, M. Rauanheimo Oy, the negotiations are standing still. — Lloyd's Agents.

Helsinki, Oct 12 — The blockade of Philippine bulker *Clipper Devon* was lifted on Oct 10, after the Finnish Seaman's Union and the Shipping Company negotiated a new collective agreement for the 21 person crew. The Finnish Seaman's Union blockaded the vessel on Oct 5. The vessel was surveyed and it was found that it did not have an acceptable collective agreement and that the crew were owed \$436,289 in unpaid salaries. The outstanding wages have now been paid. According to the union, half of the crew had been working non-stop for 13 months. In the new agreement the working period has been limited to six months. This was the vessel's first voyage to Finland. The owners are registered in the Philippines, but the vessel was chartered by Danish Clipper Bulk. The vessel loaded iron pellets at Kokkola. — Lloyd's Agents.

PROBO KOALA (Panama)

Tallinn, Oct 10 — Estonia is to release the impounded combined bulk and oil carrier *Probo Koala* which the government of Ivory Coast says discharged toxic waste that killed eight people in Africa, according to port sources in the Baltic state. The sources said the tanker, impounded and made the subject of a criminal investigation on suspicion that similar slops were discharged into the Baltic, could leave tomorrow. The Estonian prosecutor's office would not say when its probe was due to end, nor when the ship was free to leave. "The ship will lose its value as evidence this week and then we will not have any reason

to hold it," a spokeswoman for the office said. "When this will happen exactly we do not know." The vessel was seized on Sep 27 in the Estonian port of Paldiski. Estonia had been asked by Ivory Coast to detain the vessel after its government said an eighth person in the West African country died from exposure to the waste. Trafigura, the Dutch-based oil trading firm which chartered the ship, said the vessel in Africa followed correct offloading procedures. "The *Probo Koala* followed all correct procedures when it offloaded slops at Abidjan," the company said in a statement. "The *Probo Koala* left Abidjan with all normal clearances from the port authorities on Aug 22, two days after the slops were discharged under supervision of the port authorities into the road tankers of a certified ... disposal agent," it said. "The first reports linking the vessel with the tragic incidents in Abidjan were made several days after that." The Estonian prosecutor's office said a delegation from the Ivory Coast, which landed in Estonia last week to pursue their investigation into the dumping incident, was due to leave later today. The prosecutor's office said Tallinn was asked to hold the vessel while a damages claim was being prepared. "The investigation delegation from the Ivory Coast suggested that international law may be used to hold the ship as a way to enforce the Ivory Coast government's claim for 200 million euros in damages from the shipping company," the spokeswoman said. An Ivory Coast government committee has said that 11 of the 17 polluted sites in the country's main port city Abidjan have now been decontaminated. The waste is being stored in sealed containers to be shipped to Europe for treatment and disposal. — Reuters.

Fires & Explosions



AIRPORT HANGAR, SANDOWN, ISLE OF WIGHT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Sixty firefighters, some in protective chemical suits, tackled a large fire in a hangar at Sandown Airport yesterday. No-one was hurt in the blaze, which produced a plume of smoke that could be seen for miles around. Eight fire appliances were called to the scene at around 1330 hrs, and fire crews spent more than two hours putting out the flames. The mezzanine floor of the 40m x 60m building was said to be well alight and it is understood there was glass fibre and a chemical called Butanox stored in the hangar. Nearby residents were advised to stay indoors and keep their windows closed. A spokesman for

Aviation and Marine Composites, which operates from the hangar making components for the marine and aviation industries, said today it expected to be back to full production by Wednesday (Oct 11).

BUSHFIRE, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: A large bushfire is burning out of control on Sydney's northern beaches. More than 100 firefighters and water bombing aircraft are battling the blaze, which began as a private burn-off at Cromer, a Rural Fire Service spokeswoman said. Twenty fire crews were trying to contain the fire, which was being pushed towards the Wakehurst Parkway by strong south to south-easterly winds. Water bombing aircraft were expected to join the firefighting effort. The Sydney Academy of Sport was in the fire's path, but it was unlikely to be threatened by flames as it lay in low country and was surrounded by lots of green grass. No property was under threat. Police could not confirm reports a group of bushwalkers were missing in the area.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: The Tasmania Fire Service has the upper hand on a fire burning in the Hobart suburb of Mt Nelson but is vowing to maintain maximum presence there. But the extreme weather conditions are still causing concern. About 10 hectares of bush have been burnt in the University reserve on Mt Nelson, causing alarm for residents with properties backing on it.

COAL MINE, SICHUAN PROVINCE, CHINA

Beijing, Oct 6 — A gas explosion at a Chinese coal mine killed 13 people today, Xinhua news agency said. Thirteen people had been confirmed dead and seven were injured at the mine in the southwestern province of Sichuan, the agency said. — Reuters.

FACTORIES, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters battled for more than two hours to put out a raging fire which engulfed two factories in Johannesburg. One of the factories in the northern suburb of Kew was burnt to the ground only an hour after it caught fire on Sunday afternoon (Oct 8). City of Johannesburg emergency services spokesperson Malcolm Midgley said the fire started at about 1400 at a factory that processes asphalt. It was suspected that a drum containing asphalt or other highly inflammable chemicals exploded, causing the fire. "The extensive radiating heat caused it to spread to the next factory. That factory was producing polycarbonate and it burnt to the ground," Midgley said.

FOREST, INDONESIA

Singapore, Oct 7 — Visibility plunged to 50 metres in parts of Borneo island today and Singapore recorded its highest pollution reading in nearly a decade as fires in Indonesia sent acrid smoke across Southeast Asia. Singapore issued its first haze-related health warning this year. The daily air pollution index hit 128, the National Environment Agency said on its website. A reading above 100 is rated unhealthy. In Central Kalimantan, on the Indonesian side of Borneo, visibility in some places had plunged to 50 metres governor Agustin Teras Narang told Elshinta radio. Hundreds sought medical help for respiratory problems, with more than 500 fires counted from satellite images. Malaysia also reported unhealthy levels of smoke in many areas. Purwasto, head of forest fire control of Indonesia's environment ministry, said experts would go to Central Kalimantan tomorrow to assess the situation. "The worst situation is in Central Kalimantan now. Most areas in the province contain peat", he told Reuters. Peat can burn for years and produces thick smoke. "We cannot estimate the extent of the fires now." This year's worsening haze has rekindled memories of a choking cloud of smoke that covered large areas of Southeast Asia in 1997-98, sickening large numbers of people and costing local economies billions of dollars. The smoky haze occurs every year during the dry season on the Indonesian island of Sumatra as well across large parts of Indonesia's portion of Borneo, prompting protests from neighbouring Malaysia and Singapore. Air pollution in Malaysia's worst-hit area of Sri Aman in Sarawak improved to 131 from a very unhealthy level of 221 on yesterday. Kuala Lumpur recorded a reading of 108 at 1100 hrs but the Meteorological Services Department said there could be relief with a change in wind direction tomorrow. Sarawak Deputy Chief Minister George Chan said hospitals and clinics in the state were treating about 200 cases of respiratory illness daily, up from the normal 40 to 50 cases. A spokeswoman for Singapore's National Environment Agency said Saturday's air pollution reading at 1600 hrs was the worst for a 24-hour period since 1997, when the index reached 138. "It appears that the wind direction for the next few days will be headed this way," the spokeswoman told Reuters. The agency said satellite pictures showed 506 hotspots and thick smoke haze in Sumatra, mainly in Riau, Jambi and South Sumatra. — Reuters.

Kuala Lumpur, Oct 9 — Malaysia today warned ships sailing through Asia's busiest waterway to guard against accidents as a choking smog smothering the region cut visibility. Visibility along the narrow Malacca Strait has been sharply reduced to less than one mile from a usual 12 miles, as smoke from raging Indonesian forest fires showed no signs of abating. "We have alerted ships using the strait to take extra care due to the poor

visibility," an official of the Malaysian marine department said. "This is dangerous for small vessels, but so far there has been no incident." Forest fires are burning mainly in Indonesian Borneo and on Sumatra island, also in Indonesia. Most are deliberately lit. Each dry season, forest is illegally torched to clear land for agriculture, blanketing Southeast Asia in smog. Thick haze covered much of peninsular Malaysia today, with the capital's iconic Twin Towers barely visible from a distance of 3 km. The Subang airport just outside Kuala Lumpur was closed to small planes as visibility fell to just 1.5 km, an airport official said, but the main Kuala Lumpur international airport was operating normally. "So far, there are no delays in landing or taking offs," another airport official said. Malaysia fears the haze could hit tourism and small businesses if Indonesia does not take swift action to stamp out the fires, Health Minister Chua Soi Lek told reporters. In Sumatra, thick haze from forest fires forced the main airport in Riau province on the island to close yesterday, the Koran Tempo newspaper reported. Passenger ferries in the province also were delayed when haze shrouded the main seaport. Lily Sadiyah Aryanto, the head of the health office in Pontianak, the capital of West Kalimantan in Borneo, said the number of acute respiratory infections had risen this year. The haze situation in Singapore improved today, after the Indonesian fires sent air pollution in the city-state over the weekend to its worst levels in nearly a decade. The air pollution index fell back to a healthy range to stand at 45 based on a three-hour average reading on late this morning from a high of 109 yesterday, a three-hour average reading by the National Environment Agency showed. — Reuters.

Jakarta, Oct 12 — Indonesia will ratify a Southeast Asian agreement that calls for regional co-operation to deal with forest fires blanketing the region with choking smog, a presidential spokesman said today. The pledge came a day before environment ministers from five Southeast Asian nations are due to meet in Pekanbaru on Indonesia's Sumatra island to discuss ways to tackle the problem. Jakarta has been criticised by its neighbours for failing to tackle the annual dry season blazes, which in past weeks have caused serious air pollution across the region, particularly Malaysia and Singapore. The Association of South East Asian Nations approved the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution in 2002, but Indonesia's parliament has yet to ratify it, angering countries affected by the smoke, known as haze in the region. "Indonesia will ratify it and at the same time adopt a comprehensive solution to the haze problem," said Dino Patti Djalal, a spokesman for President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Fires caused by farmers and big businesses such as plantations have

been burning for weeks in parts of Indonesia, creating a choking haze that has made many people ill, shut some airports and threatened wildlife in protected forests. The meeting in Pekanbaru, itself regularly affected by the haze, is expected to be attended by ministers from Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore. Most of the blazes are in southern Sumatra, just across the Malacca Strait from Malaysia and Singapore, as well as in Indonesia's part of Borneo island. Yudhoyono said Indonesia would use all resources available to put out the fires, including enlisting soldiers and police and leasing two Russian cargo aircraft that could each carry 40 tonnes of water to douse fires. — Reuters.

HAZARDOUS WASTE PLANT, RALEIGH AREA, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 7 — Following received from Reuters, dated today: Thousands of people in Apex, North Carolina, were ordered out of their homes, yesterday, after a late-night fire at a hazardous waste plant sent a toxic cloud over the Raleigh suburb, emergency officials said. A series of explosions at the Environmental Quality Company plant, 10 miles south-west of Raleigh, sent a cloud of dangerous chlorine gas into the air and around 16,000 people, about half the town's population, were told to evacuate their homes, officials at Apex Emergency Management Services said. No injuries or deaths were reported, but officials said more than a dozen people, including firefighters and police officers, were being treated at area hospitals for respiratory problems. "It is the worst potential hazardous materials fire that you can expect," Apex town manager Bruce Radford said. Firemen had refrained from entering the plant overnight, to battle the blaze, because of the chemicals stored at the facility, Radford said. Witnesses said the fire appeared to have spread to a nearby petroleum storage facility.

LIBRARY, WILLIAMSPORT, INDIANA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A fire destroyed the Williamsport's public library, state Fire Marshal Roger Johnson said today. The fire broke out at the Williamsport Public Library and Learning Centre about 2130 hrs, yesterday, police said. The initial damage estimate was \$5 million, Johnson said. "We expect the damage estimates to go higher," he said. "Computers, books and videos were all inside the library." Investigators were at the scene this morning, attempting to determine the cause of the fire, Johnson said. Neighbours said the fire appeared to have begun in a corner of the building and spread quickly until the library was engulfed in flames, WLFI-TV reported. No injuries were reported. The 6,000 square foot library opened in July 2002.

PREMISES, COLERAINE, NORTHERN IRELAND

London, Oct 8 — Police have appealed for keyholders to check premises at a Coleraine retail park after a blaze in a DIY store. The fire in the B&Q store at Riverside Retail Park was probably started by an incendiary device, police have said. The blaze, which severely damaged the store, was discovered in a carpet section at about 2230, BST yesterday. Police have appealed for anyone with information about the attack or who noticed anything suspicious to contact them. Charlie McAuley from the Fire and Rescue Service says the sprinkler system contained the fire. "There was extensive damage caused by the smoke and by the water from the sprinkler system that had been activated, so there is quite a considerable amount of damage to the store and the stock," he said.

PREMISES, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: Up to 17,000 residents were asked to evacuate their homes after a hazardous materials fire shot flames some 150 feet into the sky. Hospital officials said 18 people were sent to emergency rooms after the blaze that began late yesterday in Apex, a suburb of Raleigh. Town manager Bruce Radford said he didn't know what sparked the fire at EQ Industrial Services Inc., a hazardous waste business that housed a variety of volatile chemicals, including chlorine. When he arrived at the scene, Radford said, a chlorine cloud rose 50 feet in the air and flames shot three times as high. He estimated there were 20 to 30 explosions at the plant. The fire jumped the plant site and appeared to have burned four petroleum tanks belonging to another company, said Mayor Keith Weatherly. Hours after asking almost half the town's resident to evacuate, officials ordered additional evacuations for several hundred more homes when a plume of smoke and chemicals moved. Residents as far as two miles away could see the plume or smell the chemicals, officials said. Authorities said firefighters had to wait for daybreak to examine the blaze. "You can't put foam or water on it," Apex Mayor Keith Weatherly said. "That just exacerbates it." A yellow haze lingered over downtown and there was a faint smell of chlorine in the air. Police lined up along the main street that runs through the town's business district, blocking both ends of the road. Officials said downtown and schools would be closed today. Of the 18 people hospitalized, eight were law enforcement officers and one was a firefighter who complained of nausea and respiratory problems. Nine other residents were being treated for "respiratory distress," said WakeMed spokeswoman Heather Monackey. Robert Doyle, an EQ spokesman at the company's headquarters outside Detroit, said an emergency response team was being mobilized to help with

the clean up. He said about 25 employees work at the Apex plant and all had left the building by 1900 hrs. Doyle said the facility handles a wide array of industrial waste - ranging from paints to solvents. "Because of the many different types of waste that we bring in, it's very difficult to determine the cause of the fire," he said. Radford said Apex and Wake County had declared a state of emergency, starting the process of asking for federal assistance.

REFINERY, NEW MEXICO, UNITED STATES

New York, Oct 6 — Oil refiner Giant Industries Inc. said today a fire occurred at its Ciniza refinery yesterday evening. The company said the fire was the result of a pump failure in its alkylation unit at the Ciniza refinery and caused a temporary shutdown of all of the operating units. Giant said that currently all other units are being restarted and the refinery, which is near Gallup, New Mexico, should be operating at normal levels in a few days. — Reuters.

SCHOOL, GORSEINON, WALES

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated today, states: A 17-year-old youth has been found guilty of an arson attack that caused £8m damage to a Swansea school, but a jury at Swansea Crown Court has cleared his 18-year-old co-defendant James Green of the charge. The trial heard the fire on March 17, this year, destroyed 40 classrooms at Penyrheol Comprehensive in Gorseinon. The court heard the blaze was thought to have started in the staffroom in a bag of paper meant for recycling.

WAREHOUSE, WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated Oct 4, states: A fire at a Winchester warehouse damaged three businesses and wiped out most of the winter stock for a nationally known hat manufacturer. The Mad Bomber company sustained the brunt of the fires damage on Monday (Oct 2). Margie Pingley, Mad Bombers warehouse distribution manager, said yesterday that the facility was filled with more than 50,000 hats destined for L-L Bean, Gander Mountain, Cabelas and other national retailers. Damage is estimated at \$1 million to the building and £2 million in Mad Bomber's inventory. Frederick County fire officials say the fire was started by a heating unit. It took crews from six local fire companies four hours to put out the blaze. Pingley says that besides the fur-lined hats, Mad Bomber also lost fabric that would have been sent to China to make more hats. Two other companies that lease adjoining warehouses also sustained damage from the fire.

WILDFIRES, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 8 — A press report, dated today, states: Firefighters will work through the night to contain a

large bushfire burning out of control on Sydney's northern beaches. The fire, stretching over 250ha at Cromer, started about 1330, AEST, when an illegal backyard burn flared out of control. Strong 60 kph winds and temperatures in the 30s pushed the blaze towards the Wakehurst Parkway, with crews performing a backburn in an attempt to head off flames at the road's northern edge. The road remains closed in both directions between Warringah Road and Narrabeen, as more than 150 firefighters are working to contain the flames and keep them from jumping the road, a Rural Fire Service spokeswoman said. No homes were under threat, but crews were keeping close watch on the Sydney Academy of Sport at Narrabeen, which lay in the path of the fire, the spokeswoman said.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Bushfires are threatening Hobart and Port Lincoln on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula, a region where blazes killed nine people last year. The Port Lincoln fire is burning out of control in the Rustler's Gully area, about 2km north of Port Lincoln, the Country Fire Service (CFS) said. It is one of about 10 blazes reported today in South Australia on a day of extreme fire danger. Hobart residents are on high alert as a bushfire rages out of control just 2km from the city centre. Several hundred homes are threatened by fire, which broke out in Mount Nelson, south of the city, about 1340, AEDT, today. Tasmania Fire Service senior station officer Danny Reid said the fire started at the top of a disused quarry and hot, dry winds were pushing it rapidly downhill through bushland at Proctors Road and a University of Tasmania reserve. He said houses backing onto the bushland were under threat and residents had been advised to stay or return home to put out any sparks or embers. "There's four or five streets that back onto the reserve. It's got the potential to threaten about 1000 homes," he said. The CFS has warned Port Lincoln residents to immediately take shelter in their homes or in a solid structure. "Residents should not attempt to enter or return to the area at this time, as access is restricted and the roads may not be safe," a CFS spokesman said. About 20 firefighting vehicles and two water bomber aircraft were trying to contain the fire, the CFS said. Today's other nine blazes are mainly small grass fires which the CFS said were under control. Fire bans have been imposed in five districts across the state. Temperatures were predicted to top 40 degrees celsius in some areas of the state today, with an expected maximum of 34 degrees in Adelaide. The Country Fire Service described the high temperatures and accompanying northerly winds as extremely hazardous. (See issue of Oct 10.)

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: More than 100 wildfires raged across Australia today,

sending firefighters scrambling to protect homes and farmland. Strong, dry winds were fanning the blazes in Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania states. More than 20 fire crews and two water-bombing helicopters were struggling to contain a wildfire that was threatening dozens of homes in the Hunter Valley, a popular wine district northeast of Sydney, according to the New South Wales Rural Fire Service. Meanwhile firefighters battled against extreme conditions in southern Victoria state, with many firefighters struggling to stand upright against the raging winds, officials said. "We've had over 100 fires this morning, which indicates the extreme conditions and the extreme fire danger across the state," Victoria state official Graham Fountain told Southern Cross Radio. On the southern island state of Tasmania, a blaze was threatening to engulf a number of homes on the outskirts of the state capital, Hobart, according to state chief fire officer John Gledhill. (See issue of Oct 12.)

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated today, states: A bushfire on South Australia's Kangaroo Island remains out of control with firefighters pinning hopes of relief on a cool change sweeping the state. Additional firefighters have been deployed today to Kangaroo Island to battle three blazes on the island. Of most concern is a bushfire which has damaged about 600 hectares of scrubland and threatened the Flinders Chase National Park, Country Fire Service (CFS) chief officer Euan Ferguson has said. The other blazes on the island were smaller and contained by CFS crews, he has said. Separate fires have been reported on the state's mainland, including one in the Onkaparinga National Park in Adelaide's south. Another blaze at Currency Creek, east of Adelaide, had threatened townships before being contained this afternoon. A further bushfire at Beachport is also yet to be contained, with the CFS warning it could also pose a threat to public safety.



5B-DBY

Athens, Oct 10 — A series of human errors on the ground and in the air caused Cyprus's worst airline disaster, when an aircraft crashed near Athens last year killing all 121 people on board, the report of a Greek investigation said today. "The report was submitted just now to the Greek Ministry of Transport and will also be delivered to the Cypriot side today," chief investigator Akrivos Tsolakis told Reuters. — Reuters.

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: A series of human

errors caused Cyprus's worst airline disaster, a Greek inquiry report has concluded. The Cypriot Helios Airways Boeing 737-300 crashed near Athens in August 2005, killing all 121 people on board. The flight from Larnaca to Prague flew on autopilot for nearly two hours before running out of fuel and slamming into a hillside. The report said the pilots misread instruments regulating cabin pressure and misinterpreted a warning signal. Maintenance officials on the ground were also blamed for leaving pressure controls on an incorrect setting. In addition, the plane's manufacturers Boeing took "ineffective" measures in response to previous pressurisation incidents in the particular type of aircraft, the report said. The plane was starved of oxygen as it gained altitude, which rendered the pilots and passengers unconscious. Two Greek air force fighter jets were scrambled when the aircraft lost radio contact. Their flight crew saw the Boeing's pilots slumped over the controls and a flight attendant struggling to control the aircraft before it crashed. Helios Airways - which is now known as Ajet Airways - also came in for criticism, with the report finding "deficiencies" in its organisation, while the Cypriot regulatory authority was accused of "inadequate execution of its safety oversight responsibilities".

ACCIDENT AT JUWATA AIRPORT, EAST KALIMANTAN, INDONESIA

See PK-RIE.

C-GHBY

London, Oct 6 — Bell 206L helicopter, C-GHBY, operator Great Slave Helicopters Ltd, was on approach to a remote landing site when the engine flamed out. A hard landing ensued and the tail boom was severed by the main rotor. One passenger sustained a minor injury. The pilot and three other passengers were uninjured. The helicopter was substantially damaged. The engine will be examined after the wreckage is recovered.

CRASH, KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A light aircraft that went missing after it took off from Pietermaritzburg was found this morning with no survivors on board, rescue services said. The aircraft, with the bodies of three occupants, was found at Rhino's Peak in the southern Drakensberg, near Underberg in KwaZulu-Natal, said Santjie White, a spokesperson for the South Africa Search and Rescue Organisation. The aircraft took off from Cato Ridge, near Pietermaritzburg, yesterday afternoon but never arrived at its intended destination, Tempe in Bloemfontein. A ground search in the Drakensberg near Himeville yesterday evening turned up no results. By this morning, poor weather in the area lifted, allowing police and a team from the SA National Defence Force to conduct

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an aerial search, said police spokeswoman Superintendent Zandra Hechter. Rescuers had to travel by helicopter and then hike for four hours to reach the crash site, she said. Search parties from the police force, SANDF, the Mountain Club of South Africa, and several KwaZulu-Natal organisations were involved in attempts to find the missing aircraft.

CRASH, SOUSA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

London, Oct 12 — A press report, dated Oct 11, states: Resort tycoon Howard "Butch" Kerzner was killed along with three others when the helicopter in which they were traveling crashed into a building on the Dominican Republic's north coast, an aviation official said. The helicopter carrying Kerzner, chief executive officer of Kerzner International Ltd., a Bahamas-based casino and resort operator, went down at 1415 hrs, (1815, UTC) today in the tourist resort of Sosua, said Yolanda Manan, a spokeswoman for the Dominican airport authority. Kerzner, 42, was surveying potential development sites in the Dominican Republic when the helicopter crashed on the roof of a business that grows ornamental plants. Two officers in the Dominican armed forces, David Rosario Pimentel and Kevelier Matos, also died in the crash, said civil aviation spokesman Angel de la Rosa. The fourth victim was Delio Luis Gonzalez, Manan said. The online Dominican newspaper Clave Digital identified him as the son of a U.S.-based real estate investor who had worked with Kerzner International. A commission was investigating what caused the Robinson 44 helicopter to crash.

CRASH, STOCKBRIDGE, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

See N2320Y.

CRASH, VERONA AREA, ITALY

London, Oct 8 — A small aircraft crashed in a wooded area near the northern Italian city of Verona, killing two Germans on board, police said yesterday. The cause of the accident Friday (Oct 6) afternoon was not immediately known, and Italy's ENAC civil aviation agency is investigating, said Mauro Villotti of the Carabinieri paramilitary police in Verona. The two-seater aircraft, registered at the airport in Straubing in Bavaria, Germany, had taken off from Ferrara shortly before it crashed Friday, Villotti said. He did not know where the plane was headed. He identified the two men as Leo Adolf Gaschler, 62, the pilot, who lived near Straubing, and Emil Reinhard Waldherr, 54, of Straubing.

CRASH, WINBURNDALE AREA, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Two people have been killed in an aircraft crash near Bathurst in the New South Wales central west. The Careflight helicopter

was called in by Australian Search and Rescue to help search for an ex-military Strikemaster jet reported overdue from Bathurst Airport. It has now been confirmed the jet, which was on a joy flight, crashed into bushland 16 kilometres north of Bathurst. Helicopter crews spotted the crash site after it started a bushfire. Rescue workers have managed to make their way through rugged bushland and have found the bodies of the male pilot and his male passenger. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau is now in charge of investigating the crash. A team of four investigators will head to Bathurst from Canberra and examine the crash site tomorrow.

EMERGENCY LANDING, BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A passenger aircraft with 45 people on board has made an emergency landing at Birmingham International Airport. Pilots in the British Airways Avro RJ 100 aircraft from Edinburgh reported a problem with the plane's landing gear about 1000, BST today. An airport spokesman said that, as a precaution, the airport declared a full emergency but the aircraft landed safely. It is not known if anyone was injured in the incident. Engineers are checking the aircraft.

FIRE ON AIRCRAFT AT STORD AIRPORT, NORWAY

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Four people died, yesterday, when a charter plane skidded off a runway and burst into flames at an airport built out into a Norwegian fjord, police said. Rescue officials said 12 other people aboard were rescued without serious injury and one was missing. Thor Buberg, of the district police, said four victims had been found in or near the wreckage. The British Aerospace BAe 146-200 jet, with a capacity of 83 passengers and six crew, was operated by Atlantic Airways of the Faeroe Islands. It had taken off from the south-western Norwegian Sola Airport, near Stavanger, and skidded and caught fire upon landing at the Stord Airport, further north, said Anders Bang-Andersen, of the Norwegian Rescue Center. The cause of the accident had not been determined. The national crash investigation board was sending a six-member team to the accident site. In a statement, Atlantic Airways said its aircraft apparently was damaged and caught fire after it overshot the runway, with 13 passengers and three crew aboard. Rescuers called in fire crews, ambulances, helicopters and even ships and boats, in case any victims had ended up in the water. Victims and survivors were found on land. Police said the names of the three passengers and one crew member who died, were being withheld pending notification of their families. The landing and weather conditions were fine. The fire was

brought under control after about an hour, but that the heat from the wreckage had slowed efforts to search the aircraft. The aircraft was severely damaged, but there were no reports of serious injuries to those rescued.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: Four people died after an aircraft with 16 people on board burst into flames, after landing on the island of Stord, in western Norway, police said today. Four persons have been found dead in the aircraft, police said. They have not been identified yet. Police said the aircraft had problems during landing and caught fire after sliding off the runway. Six of 12 passengers who were rescued were flown to a severe burns centre in Bergen, about 60km away. The others were treated for lighter injuries in local hospitals. The aircraft was chartered by oil services firm Aker Stord, part of offshore engineering group Aker Kvaerner. The Atlantic Airways aircraft from Faroe Islands, was making a stopover between Stavanger and the town of Molde. Witnesses spoke of a loud boom, a fireball and billowing smoke.

G-YKYK

London, Oct 5 — A press report, dated today, states: Pilot and his passenger had a miraculous escape after the engine of the two-seater aircraft (G-YKYK) they were flying in failed over Essex. The Yak 52's motor cut out as it was flying near Maldon, necessitating emergency procedures and a crash landing in farmland. But when paramedics reached the site of the incident, they were surprised to find both occupants out of the aircraft and uninjured. The emergency began at around 1120, yesterday morning when the pilot of the aircraft, which is registered to Kevin Pilling, from Chesham in Buckinghamshire, issued a mayday call. A close-up of the damage caused to the aircraft. This was relayed to the ambulance service, who rushed to the scene and scrambled their helicopter support unit. The air ambulance reached the field near Hatfield Road, Langford, seven minutes after the incident was reported. A paramedic manager quickly arrived as back-up. Aircrew Paramedic Rachel Edwards said: "The occupants of the Yak52 two-seater said its engine had cut out, so they activated emergency drill procedures and made an emergency landing in a crop field. They had made a distress call to North Weald Airfield, which in turn alerted the ambulance service." A spokesman for the Air Accident Information Branch said it would wait for the pilot to report the accident and then decide whether it warranted full investigation.

GROUNDING OF AIRCRAFT BY PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

Karachi, Oct 12 — In a statement, Pakistan state owned airlines-Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), said it has temporarily grounded its newly acquired new ATR, due to

component failure. A replacement component is to be acquired from abroad and the aircraft will be able to fly again once PIA has replaced the component, but the statement provided no other information regarding the cost of the component, its type and how long the plane would remain grounded. PIA has placed orders for seven new ATRs. The first was delivered earlier this year. The other aircraft will arrive: one in November, one in December, one in January and the rest in May. The 48-seater ATRs will replace PIA's aging F-27s aircraft fleet, to meet its domestic schedule requirements. — Lloyd's List Correspondent.

INCIDENT AT LAMBERT-ST. LOUIS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, MISSOURI, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated today, states: A commuter flight made a safe emergency landing at Lambert Field on Thursday morning (Oct 5) after reporting a cracked windshield, officials said. The American Eagle flight to Chicago with 66 people on board, including four crew members, originated in Little Rock, Ark., and landed without incident just after 0700, Lambert spokeswoman Shirley Walls said. The pilot first noticed the crack while in flight, said American Eagle spokesman Dave Jackson. The decision was made to land early after the pilot reported that the crack was increasing. No problems with cabin pressure were reported, Jackson said. Officials said it was not clear what caused the crack.

INCIDENT AT SAO PAULO AIRPORT, BRAZIL

Sao Paulo, Oct 6 — Brazilian low-cost carrier Gol said today one of its airplanes slid off the runway at Sao Paulo's Congonhas domestic airport but no passengers were hurt. Gol's flight 1941 from Cuiaba in Mato Grosso state landed at the Sao Paulo airport at 0605 hrs (1005, UTC), sliding up to a grassy area, where it stopped. A Gol spokesman said the airplane skidded off the runway because of light rain. "There were no problems for passengers, who were all taken from the plane later," the Gol spokesman said. Sao Paulo's domestic airport, the busiest in Brazil, halted all landing and takeoffs briefly while Gol's airplane was removed from the runway. — Reuters.

INCIDENT AT STORD AIRFIELD, NORWAY

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated today, states: An airliner belonging to the Faroe airline Atlantic Airways, with 16 persons onboard veered off the runway and caught fire at the Stord Airfield near Bergen early this morning. First reports say 13 persons have been brought out of the aircraft and that three are missing. Several people have been sent to hospital. Several people have been treated on the spot, and three have been sent to hospital, one of them

critically injured, according to Nettavisen. Air/Sea rescue helicopters and ambulances have also been sent to the scene of the accident. The aircraft was on its way from Sola, Stavanger to Molde, NRK reports.

Gothenburg, Oct 10 — Three persons found dead after the crash in western Norway early this morning. A chartered aircraft with 16 persons onboard slid off the runway and caught fire. Thirteen out of the 16 persons managed to escape from the crashed aircraft and none of them to be seriously injured - although one crew member and two passengers missing and later at around 1130 hrs found dead inside the aircraft. The British Aerospace 400 slid off the runway and downhill towards sea at the island of Stord, approximately 30 km south of Bergen. A number of serious explosions and flames and black thick smoke came out. — Westax Marine Services AB.

N134GW

London, Oct 6 — A press report, dated Oct 5, states: Emergency dispatchers confirm that an aircraft has "spun out" on the runway at Spokane International Airport. The aircraft crashed about midfield and ended up in the grass at 1438 hrs. Airport spokesman Todd Woodard said the aircraft had a single engine, and that only one person was on board. The pilot was not injured in the accident. Woodard said airport managers were planning to open up the alternate runway at the airport. He did not know whether the crash would affect incoming or outgoing traffic.

London, Oct 7 — Cessna 182T (Turbo-Skylane), N134GW, operated by Wadsworth Aviation Inc, while on a flight from Seattle, Washington, to Spokane, Washington, with one person on board, on landing at Spokane International Airport, at 2135, UTC, Oct 5, brakes locked and aircraft rolled into airfield infield, tearing off port landing gear and causing damage to port wing. The pilot was uninjured.

N2320Y

London, Oct 9 — A press report, dated Oct 6, states: A small plane crashed near a residential street this morning in Stockbridge, killing three of the four people aboard after it apparently clipped a power line during takeoff, authorities said. The single-engine Cessna went down shortly before 1000 hrs, Henry County sheriff's Lt. Randy Moore said. Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Kathleen Bergen said the plane appeared to have hit power lines as it took off. The wreckage lay near a residential street a few steps from a home's driveway and just beyond the runway of Berry Hill Airport. The plane was registered to Durwood C. Smith of McDonough, Ga., Bergen said. Smith's mother-in-law, Elsie Crocker, told The Associated Press that Smith, 63, and his wife, Patricia, 61, and two friends left to take the plane to St. Simons Island,

between Brunswick and Savannah, for the day. Police said the Smiths and Linda Byrne, 60, were killed, while Bruce Byrne, 65, was taken to a hospital where he was listed in critical condition. The FAA and National Transportation Safety Board will investigate, Bergen said.

London, Oct 10 — Cessna 177 N2320Y crashed near Stockbridge, Georgia, at 1345, Oct 6, following take-off from Stockbridge. The aircraft was destroyed. The four persons on board were killed.

N3447N

London, Oct 10 — A press report, dated Oct 9, states: A small passenger aircraft crashed this afternoon in a densely wooded area of Fayette County, killing two people, state police and the Federal Aviation Administration said. The propeller-driven Mooney 20, was registered to Dennis P. Bucci and Charles Schreiber, both from Pittsburgh. The FAA and the National Traffic Safety Board are investigating the crash, which occurred at 1524 hours. The aircraft crashed about three miles from Brownsville, state police said. It was not immediately known where the aircraft was headed or what caused it to crash. The identity of the victims was not immediately released. Police used bulldozers and all-terrain vehicle to reach the crash site. Witnesses reported the crash to authorities after seeing the aircraft go down.

London, Oct 10 — Mooney M-20F (Executive 21) N3447N crashed near Brownsville, Pennsylvania, at 1924, Oct 9. The aircraft was destroyed. The two persons on board were killed.

N600XL

See *PR-GTD*.

N769RT

London, Oct 10 — Robinson R44 Astro N769RT crashed into Lake Tapps, Washington, at 2300, Oct 8. One of the two persons on board was killed.

N929CD

London, Oct 12 — Cirrus SR-20, N929CD, crashed into the 20th floor of a 50 story residential building in Manhattan. The aircraft had just left Teterborough Airport in New Jersey. There was a distress call before the aircraft crashed. Baseball New York Yankee pitcher Corey Lidle and his flight instructor were killed in the crash.

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: A small aircraft, registered to a New York Yankees pitcher, crashed into a high-rise residential building on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, this afternoon, killing at least two people and setting several apartments on fire. Yankees reliever Cory Lidle, the single-engine aircraft's owner, was killed in the crash, according to media reports. U.S. stock markets dipped on the news, but recovered as it became clear that terrorism apparently was not involved. Federal officials said that

there was no indication of terrorism, but military authorities immediately scrambled fighter jets over American cities. Witnesses said that an aircraft hit the apartment building, on East 72nd Street in Manhattan, and that they saw spewing flames and debris. Fuel spilled out in the aftermath of the crash and television images showed heavy smoke billowing from the structure. It was reported that two people were killed in the crash. New York Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, said that the aircraft took off from Teterboro, N.J., shortly after 1430, Eastern time, circled the Statue of Liberty and headed north along the island of Manhattan. Radar data showed an aircraft climbing sharply as it flew over Manhattan and then rapidly losing altitude and turning sharply before slamming into the 50-story apartment building.

OO-CRG

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated Oct 10, states: The Atlantic Airways Flight RC670 was chartered by the Norwegian industrial concern Aker Kværner to fly personnel from Stavanger to Molde via Stord. The airplane departed Stavanger at 0717 hrs and positioned for an approach to runway 33 at Stord around 0730 hrs. On landing, the airplane failed to stop on the 1200 m long runway. It overran, continued down a slope close to the sea and caught fire.

PK-RIE

London, Oct 8 — A Mandala Airlines Boeing 737-200, PK-RIE, flying from Balikpapan, attempted to land at the Tarakan-Juwata Airport which was engulfed in a thick, choking haze caused by ground and forest fires. Visibility was reported to be about 400m as flight RI 394 landed on runway 06/24 at 1120, Oct 3. The aircraft skidded off the runway, causing part of the landing gear and one engine to be sheared off. It ended up in a swampy area. Damage is substantial. No fatalities.

PR-GTD

Rio de Janeiro, Oct 5 — An executive jet piloted by two U.S. citizens was at the wrong altitude when it crossed paths with a passenger plane that crashed in the Amazon rainforest last week, killing 154 people, the chief Brazilian air traffic controller said today. Brig. Lt. Paulo Roberto Vilarinho said his Airspace Control Department, which is investigating Brazil's worst airplane disaster, could not yet blame anyone for the crash. He did not rule out an equipment malfunction, but said it was unlikely to be on the air traffic control side. "There is no way to deny that (contact between the planes). The Legacy should not have been flying at 37,000 feet (11,280 metres), now why it was flying there we will discover via an investigation," he told reporters. "But we still don't know what happened." The ExcelAire Embraer Legacy business jet, which lost a winglet in the accident and landed safely, was

piloted by two U.S. citizens who are being questioned in Brazil. Police have confiscated their passports for the duration of the probe. Salvage crews were still recovering human remains at the crash site in a dense, remote area in the rainforest. The low-cost Brazilian carrier Gol Linhas Aereas Inteligentes reduced the death toll by one person from 155 as one name had been registered twice. Vilarinho denied that there were gaps in the air traffic control service's radar coverage and said inspection flights after the crash showed that all the equipment along the route is working properly, although more checks were needed. He denied the contention by U.S. journalist Joe Sharkey, who was on board the Legacy, that air traffic control in the Amazon was inadequate. "There are no black holes or blind zones ... our system is comparable to those in the most developed countries, it's no worse," Vilarinho said. The business jet was flying north toward Manaus, the capital of Amazonas state, when it crashed. The Gol plane was heading south from Manaus. The business jet was new and had been purchased by ExcelAire Service, a charter company based in Ronkonkoma, New York, from Brazilian manufacturer Embraer. Vilarinho said Legacy's transponder was apparently not working, which rendered anti-collision systems installed on both planes useless and prevented radars from reading Legacy's altitude. He did not rule out a technical glitch. He also said air traffic controllers had tried to contact Legacy seven times but failed. — Reuters.

Rio de Janeiro, Oct 8 — The Brazilian government today sent an extra 80 troops to join a search in the Amazon rain forest for victims of Brazil's worst airplane disaster, which killed 154 people. The troops reinforced 37 soldiers who have been combing the remote area in the north of Mato Grosso state where a Boeing 737-800 of low-cost airline Gol crashed on September 29. Soldiers have recovered 129 bodies, of which 87 have been sent to the capital, Brasilia, for legal identification, the Brazilian air force said in a statement today. A total of 61 bodies have been identified, including three of the five children who died in the crash. Several victims, including the Boeing's pilot, 44-year-old Decio Naves, were buried today. Relatives of the victims have complained the corpses may soon become too decomposed to be identified and that body parts could be devoured by wild animals. "We will do everything possible to find, identify and deliver all the bodies to their families for burial," Defense Minister Waldir Pires said when he visited the crash site yesterday. Brazil's air traffic control has said the accident occurred after an executive jet piloted by two U.S. citizens crossed paths with the passenger plane. The jet, which lost a winglet, made a safe emergency landing. Yesterday, a Brazilian court ordered that the new ExcelAire

Embraer Legacy business jet be kept in Brazil while an investigation into the crash continued. Preliminary results of the crash probe are expected in coming days. — Reuters.

Product Recalls



BLOWER/VACUUMS, UNITED STATES

London, Oct 11 — The following press release was issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, on Oct 10: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with Black & Decker (U.S.) Inc., of Towson, Md., today announced a voluntary recall of approximately 272,000 Black & Decker BV4000 Type 1 Blower/Vacs. A loose connection between the blower/vac and an extension cord can cause overheating, posing a fire hazard. Black & Decker has received 187 reports of smoking, melting and/or fire near the blower/vac's plug, including one report of a fire extending beyond the unit. Black & Decker has received seven reports of minor burns, none of which required medical treatment. This recall involves Black & Decker model BV4000 Type 1 blower/vacs. The model and type number are printed on a name plate on the right side of the unit. The blower/vacs have an orange housing and a black blower assembly. The recalled products were sold at Home centre, hardware and discount stores nationwide from April 2004 through to July 2005 for about \$70 each.

FIAT MOTOR VEHICLES, UNITED KINGDOM

London, Oct 5 — Fiat has recalled 15,000 Grande Puntos after finding that the British right-hand drive version had not been fitted with a metal plate designed to minimize leg injuries in a collision. — "The Daily Telegraph".

HONDA MOTOR VEHICLES, CHINA

London, Oct 11 — Honda Motor Co will recall some 30,000 units of its Odyssey minivan for free repairs as defective rear-window wiper systems could cause a fire, officials said yesterday. The vehicles were manufactured by Guangzhou Honda Automobile Co between March 2002 and October 2003, they said.

HONDA MOTOR VEHICLES, JAPAN

London, Oct 7 — Honda Motor Co said Thursday (Oct 5) it will recall a total of 240,000 vehicles in the Life, Odyssey and Civic models due to possible defects. In a report filed with the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Honda said about 153,000 of Life minivehicles produced between August 2003 and September

2004 have defects in their air conditioning systems that could cause the engine to halt or overheat.

**SNOW THROWERS,
UNITED STATES**

Washington, DC, Oct 5 — The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in co-operation with MTD Products Inc, of Cleveland, Ohio, today announced a voluntary recall of about 130,000 Two-Stage Compact Snow Throwers. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. If the snow thrower's tyres are over-inflated, the plastic wheel rims can burst, posing a risk of lacerations and fractures. MTD has received reports of 16 injuries, including fractured fingers, a broken toe, and facial lacerations. The recalled two-stage compact snow thrower is used for snow removal. The snow thrower has two wheels and comes in red, green, gray or black. Troy-Bilt, Yard Machines or Craftsman is printed on the snow thrower's housing. The model number is located on the snow thrower's rear frame. The model numbers included in this recall are listed below. Snow Thrower Troy-Bilt: 31AS3BB2766 5.5 HP 24-inch Two Stage. Yard Machines: 31A-3AAD700 5 HP 22-inch Two Stage, 31A-3BAD700 5.5 HP 22-inch Two Stage, 31A-3BAD729 5.5 HP 22-inch Two Stage, 31A-3BAD752 5.5 HP 22-inch Two Stage, 31A-3BAD762 5.5 HP 22-inch Two Stage and 31AS3DDE729 7 HP 24-inch Two Stage. Craftsman: 247.88255 5.5 HP 24-inch Two Stage and 247.88700 5 HP 22-inch Two Stage. Sold at the Troy-Bilt and Yard Machines snow throwers were sold at independent dealers, home improvement and hardware stores. The Craftsman brand snow throwers were sold at Sears and Kmart stores. Affected snow throwers were sold from July 2004 through March 2006 for between

\$500 and \$800. Manufactured in Canada. Consumers should contact MTD for a free service kit with pressure relief valves, labels and instructions. Consumers with Craftsman brand snow throwers will be mailed a service kit directly by Sears. — U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.



ITALY

Genoa, Oct 9 — Genoa: Two vessels waiting for berth, average delay in berthing 12-24 hours. La Spezia: No vessels waiting for berth. Savona: No vessels waiting for normal berth, no vessels waiting for special berth. — Lloyd's Agents.

QATAR

London, Oct 11 — A press report, dated today, states: In light of difficulties in movement, loading and unloading at Doha due to increased movement of goods and limited spaces at the port, the following has been decided: Cars: Imported cars may not be unloaded from the ship if the importing company still has cars in the port yard from previous consignments. For direct delivery of timber and plywood, pipes, steel (beams or sheets) and bulk goods importers must complete all the relevant documentation prior to the arrival of the vessel.

SOUTH AFRICA

London, Oct 10 — The port of Cape Town has reported that Tanker Basin No.2 (the white oil line) will be taken out of service for a few days between Nov 13 to 17. Following this Tanker Basin 1 (the black oil line) will undergo the same treatment, being

rendered out of service from Nov 18 to 22. During these periods no vessels will be accepted into the basin.

Johannesburg, Oct 10 — South Africa's Transnet expects to commence loading iron ore for exports on Oct 19, after damage to a ship loader disrupted exports by Africa's biggest iron ore producer Kumba Resources. State logistics group Transnet said in a statement today that one of two ship loaders at the Saldanha export terminal would resume operations, while a second one that broke down in late Sep was still being repaired. The ship loader that is set to restart operations was on scheduled maintenance when its sister ship loader broke down. The damage affected a conveyor belt used by the ship loaders, which is set to be fixed to enable the loading to re-start. A project team consisting of engineers from ThyssenKrupp, Transnet Capital Projects and the Hatch Mott McDonald Gobo joint venture has made good progress to re-commission ship loader No.1, whose feed conveyor was damaged in the incident. "Ship loading operations are expected to resume on Oct 19," Transnet said. Transnet said ship loading involves the operation of one ship loader at a time, but having two loaders in working order offered greater flexibility in planning maintenance schedules. Kumba and other iron ore exporters have been unable to load iron ore at the Saldanha export terminal, but Kumba has said it is stockpiling ore at the terminal's storage facilities from its mines. The company operates a round-the-clock loading operation. Kumba has said it could not immediately quantify how much iron ore would be affected by the disruption. — Reuters.

SYRIA

Aleppo, Oct 7 — Waiting period in Syrian ports: Lattakia 24 hours and Tartous three days.— Lloyd's Agents.

Port Delays

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

| Country/Port | Date of report | No. of vessels waiting and/or days delay |
|-------------------|----------------|---|
| Australia | | |
| Abbott Point | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: One vessel loading; 1 vessel arrived; 6 vessels due by 30/10. |
| Brisbane | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: Fisherman Island coal berth; Two vessels due by 29/10. |
| Dalrymple Bay | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: Three vessels loading at berth; 6 vessels arrived; 32 vessels due by 1/11. |
| Dampier | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: Parker Point: Two vessels loading at berth; 5 vessels arrived; 10 vessels due by 25/10; East Intercourse Island: 1 vessel loading at berth; 3 vessels arrived; 7 vessels due by 25/10. |
| Esperance | 16-Oct-2006 | Iron ore: Two vessels due by 25/10. |
| Geraldton | 16-Oct-2006 | Iron ore: Maintenance shutdown 14-16/10; One vessel at anchor; 1 vessel due 1/11. |
| Gladstone | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: R.G. Tanna coal terminal: Two vessels loading at berth, 1 vessel arrived; 36 vessels due by 2/12; Barney Point: 1 vessel loading at berth; 14 vessels due by 15/12; plant closed for maintenance 18:00 8/10 – 18:00 11/10. |
| Hay Point | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: Berth 1 closed for maintenance until 27/10. One vessel loading at berth; 2 vessels arrived; 10 vessels due by 27/10. |
| Newcastle | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: Kooragang 4, 5 and 6: Two vessels loading at berth, 1 at berth; 27 vessels arrived; 28 vessels due by 2/11; 10-19 days delay expected; Dykes 4+5: 1 vessel loading at berth; 8 vessels arrived; 16 vessels due by 28/10; 11-19 days delay expected. |
| Port Hedland | 16-Oct-2006 | Iron ore: BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Mt. Newman (Nelson Point), "A" berth: One vessel loading at berth; 4 vessels arrived; 7 vessels due by 27/10; "B" berth: 1 vessel loading at berth; 3 vessels arrived; 6 vessels due by 25/10; 4 other vessels due by 10/11 at A or B berth 2/4; BHP Iron Ore Pty. Ltd., Goldsworthy (Finucane Island "C" berth): berth closed for refurbishment; (Finucane Island "D" berth): 1 vessel loading at berth; 3 vessels arrived; 6 vessels due by 25/10; Cockatoo Island: 1 vessel due 25/10. |
| Port Kembla | 16-Oct-2006 | Coal: One vessel loading at berth; 1 vessel at anchor; 16 vessels due by 22/11. |
| Port Walcott | 16-Oct-2006 | Iron ore: Two vessels loading at berth; 8 vessels arrived; 13 vessels due by 30/11. |
| Whyalla | 16-Oct-2006 | Iron ore: Four vessels due by 26/10. |
| Azerbaijan | | |
| Apsheron | 13-Oct-2006 | Oil products: Two vessels discharging at berth |
| Baku | 13-Oct-2006 | Oil products: Azertrans terminal: Nobel Avenue: Two empty vessels at berth; Sangachal District: port open; no vessels. |
| Bulgaria | | |
| Bourgas | 16-Oct-2006 | Six vessels in port of which 3 loading (2 coils, 1 copper concentrate), 3 discharging (1 metal, 1 steel billets, 1 sugar); 2 vessel in roads of which 1 to load benzene, 1 to discharge coal; 9 vessels due of which 4 to load (1 copper cathodes, 1 coils, 1 steel sheets, 1 lead), 5 to discharge (1 coal, 1 lead concentrate, 1 manganese ore, 2 iron ore). |
| Varna | 16-Oct-2006 | Varna East, Varna West, Balchik: Twenty-five vessels in port operating of which 13 loading (4 sunflower seed, 1 bulk clinker, 4 soda, 1 scrap, 1 bulk sulphuric acid, 1 kaolin, 1 dicalcium phosphate), 4 discharging (1 bulk coal, 1 scrap, 1 bulk feldspar, 1 container), 8 discharging/loading (7 containers, 1 equipment); no vessels waiting in roads. |
| Cyprus | | |
| Larnaca | 17-Oct-2006 | No vessels discharging at berth, none due 18/10; no delays expected. |
| Limassol | 17-Oct-2006 | Three container vessels discharging/loading at berth, 1 conventional vessel discharging at berth; 4 container vessels, 3 passenger vessels due 18/10; no delays expected. |
| Egypt | | |
| Adabiya | 17-Oct-2006 | Five vessels at berth (loading/discharging), all general cargo. |
| Alexandria | 17-Oct-2006 | Thirty-three vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 22 general cargo, 4 bulk carriers, 3 tankers, 3 container vessels, 1 passenger vessel; 8 vessels at inner anchorage, 9 at outer anchorage. |
| Damietta | 17-Oct-2006 | Sixteen vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 9 general cargo, 4 bulk carriers, 3 container vessels; no vessels at inner anchorage, 9 at outer anchorage. |
| Dekheila | 17-Oct-2006 | Ten vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 2 general cargo, 8 bulk carriers; 2 vessels at outer anchorage. |
| Port Said | 17-Oct-2006 | Five vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 2 general cargo, 3 container vessels. |
| Suez | 17-Oct-2006 | Six vessels at berth (loading/discharging) of which 3 general cargo, 3 passenger vessels; 2 tug boats; 2 vessels dry-docked. |
| Suez Canal | 17-Oct-2006 | Nineteen vessels transiting Northbound, 22 Southbound. |

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

Port Conditions

Estonia

| | | |
|---------|-------------|--|
| Tallinn | 09-Oct-2006 | No labour problems. City port: No vessels at berth, none at anchorage; no vessels due, with no delays expected; Paljassaare (formerly Kopli): 2 vessels discharging at berth (1 spelt, 1 fertiliser); 2 vessels due, with 8 days delay expected; Muuga: no vessels at berth, none at anchorage; no vessels due, with no delays expected. |
|---------|-------------|--|

Georgia

| | | |
|--------|-------------|---|
| Batumi | 16-Oct-2006 | Oil products: Two vessels at berth of which 1 loading naphtha, 1 discharging crude oil; 3 vessels in roads, all to load (2 fuel oil, 1 crude oil); 3 vessels due by 20/10, all to load crude oil. |
| Poti | 16-Oct-2006 | Oil products: One vessel in roads to load gasoil; 2 vessels due by 17/10 to load (1 gasoil, 1 other). |
| Supsa | 16-Oct-2006 | Oil products: One vessel in roads to load crude oil. |

India

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| Kolkata | 16-Oct-2006 | 4 vessels operating at berth of which 1 vessel loading Containers, 1 vessel discharging Rock Phosphate, 1 vessel waiting to load, 1 vessel waiting to discharge; 2 vessels working at midstream discharging Pules; 5 vessels under repair; 2 vessels under arrest; 3 vessels due (Containers, General Cargo-2). |
| Haldia | 16-Oct-2006 | 12 vessels operating at berth of which 5 vessels loading Iron Ore, 6 vessels discharging (Crude, CTPH, Soybean, Met Coke, Machinery), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 7 vessels awaiting berth at anchorage (4 to load, 3 to discharge), 5 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge; 7 vessels due (Prx1, Crude, POL, Thermal Coal, Coke, Palm, Met Coke). |
| Paradip | 16-Oct-2006 | 9 vessels operating at berth of which 6 vessels loading (Iron Ore-5, Thermal Coal), 3 vessels discharging Coking Coal; 3 vessels (*) awaiting berth at anchorage to load; 1 vessel waiting at anchorage to load; 19 vessels due. |
| Visakhapatnam | 16-Oct-2006 | 17 vessels operating at berth of which 7 vessels loading (Iron Ore-4, Steel Cargo, Thermal Coal), 9 vessels discharging (Coking Coal-3, Wheat-2, A. Nitrate, Liquid Ammonia, Containers); 12 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (8 to discharge, 2 to load, 2 to load and discharge); 29 vessels due (Iron Ore-11, C. P. Coke, Product Tankers, MOP, Phosphoric Acid, A. Nitrate, Sulphur, Coking Coal, Pet Coke, Containers, Timber, Caustic Soda, Project Cargo, Gypsum, Lime Stone, Steam Coal, Crude & Product Tankers-2). |
| Chennai | 16-Oct-2006 | 14 vessels operating at berth of which 4 vessels loading (Lubricant Oil, Granite Blocks-2, Iron Ore), 9 vessels discharging (General/Steel Pipe, Wheat, Palm Oil, DAP, Urea, Met Coke, Steel Coal, Furance Oil, C. Oil), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 4 vessels not ready to work and waiting at anchorage (2 to load, 1 to discharge, 1 to load and discharge); 8 vessels due (Granite Blocks, Supply, Containers, Research, IOL-2, Containers, Containers/General Cargo). |
| Tuticorin | 16-Oct-2006 | 12 vessels operating at berth of which 3 vessels loading (Cement, General Cargo-2), 6 vessels discharging (Sulphur, Logs, Thermal Coal, MOP, Project Cargo, R. Cashew), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers, 1 vessel for repair works (bunkering); 2 vessels awaiting berth at anchorage (2 to discharge, 1 to load), 1 vessel waiting at anchorage (bunkering). |
| Cochin | 16-Oct-2006 | 6 vessels operating at berth discharging (Crude, Timber, MOP, POL-2, Palm Oil); 1 vessel not ready to work and waiting at anchorage to load and discharge. 3 vessels under repair. |
| New Mangalore | 16-Oct-2006 | 10 vessels operating at berth of which 2 vessels loading (Iron Ore Fines, POL Product), 8 vessels discharging (Fertiliser-2, Rock Phosphate, Phosphate Acid, Cr. Palm Oil, Wheat, LPG, POL Crude); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage (1 to load, 1 to discharge); 15 vessels due (POL Crude-6, Fertilizer, Coal, Cr. Palm Oil-2, Methenol, Phosphoric Acid, Granite Stone, Containers). |
| Mormugao | 16-Oct-2006 | 4 vessels operating at berth of which 3 vessel loading Iron Ore, 1 vessel discharging Naptha; 4 vessels working at midstream loading Iron Ore; 2 vessels awaiting berth at anchorage (1 to load, 1 to discharge), 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to load; 10 vessels under dry docked; 7 vessels due (Coking Coal-2, MOP, Iron Ore-4). |
| Mumbai | 16-Oct-2006 | 14 vessels operating at berth of which 3 vessels loading (Steel/General/Mach/Veh, SBM, POL), 11 vessels discharging (Palm Oil Product, Salt, Sulphur, Wheat/Pulses/Logs, Steel/General/Mach, POL-2); 3 vessels working at midstream and discharging (Peas, POL-2); 4 vessels awaiting order at anchorage to discharge, 3 vessels waiting at anchorage (1 to discharge, 2 to load and discharge); 12 vessels under repairs/dry docked; 5 vessels under arrest; 5 vessels under laid up (Berths not required for cargo operations); 41 vessels due (Containers-14, Oil, General Cargo-26). |
| J.N.P.T. | 16-Oct-2006 | 10 vessels operating at berth of which 2 vessels discharging (MEG, Cement), 8 vessels loading and discharging Containers; 2 vessels awaiting berth at anchorage load and discharge; 2 vessels due Containers. |
| Kandla | 16-Oct-2006 | 13 vessels operating at berth of which 7 vessels loading (Agriculture Product-2, Rice, Crude Fatty Acid), 5 vessels discharging (Timber Logs, Steel Pipes, Wheat, MAP, S B Oil), 1 vessel loading and discharging Containers; 2 vessels working at midstream and loading (Blocks), discharging (Timber Logs); 11 vessels awaiting berth at anchorage (10 to load, 1 to discharge), 8 vessels not ready to work at anchorage (3 to load, 5 to discharge). |
| Ennore | 16-Oct-2006 | 3 vessels due (MV Algeorgis (Iron Ore), MV Apj Sri Devi (Coal), MT Eagle Aries (POL Product)). |

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Port Conditions

Israel

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| Ashdod | 17-Oct-2006 | No labour problems; One vessel loading general cargo at berth, 12 discharging at berth (6 general cargo, 6 bulk cargo), 3 loading/discharging at berth (2 containers, 1 car carrier); 6 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (4 general cargo, 2 bulk cargo), 8 waiting at anchorage to load/discharge (7 containers, 1 tanker); 14 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected. |
| Eilat | 17-Oct-2006 | No labour problems; One vessel loading/discharging containers at berth; 1 vessel waiting at anchorage to load general cargo, 2 waiting at anchorage to discharge general cargo; 1 vessel due, with no delays expected. |
| Haifa | 17-Oct-2006 | No labour problems; Four vessels discharging at berth (3 general cargo, 1 bulk cargo), 9 loading/discharging at berth (4 containers, 1 car carrier, 4 tankers); 3 vessels waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 general cargo, 1 bulk cargo), 2 waiting at anchorage to load/discharge (1 container, 1 car carrier); 7 vessels under repairs/dry-docked; 21 vessels due, with 2-3 days delay expected. |

Kazakhstan

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| Aktau | 16-Oct-2006 | Oil products: Four vessels loading crude oil at berth; 5 vessels in roads, all to load; 2 vessels due by 17/10, both to load. |
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Pakistan

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| Karachi | 16-Oct-2006 | Seven vessels discharging at berth (1 crude oil, 1 base oil, 1 chemicals, 2 coal, 1 general cargo, 1 sugar), 2 loading/discharging containers at berth; 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to load containers, 3 waiting at anchorage to discharge (1 coal, 2 containers); 2 vessels awaiting orders; 9 vessels due (3 containers, 1 fertiliser, 1 vehicles, 1 rice, 1 chemicals, 1 crude oil, 1 palm oil), with no delays expected. |
| Port Qasim | 16-Oct-2006 | One vessel loading rice at berth, 5 discharging at berth (1 palm oil, 1 wheat, 1 sugar, 1 iron ore, 1 HSD oil); 2 vessels waiting at anchorage to load containers, 7 waiting at anchorage to discharge (2 containers, 1 sugar, 1 coal, 1 LPG, 1 ACN); QICT berth: 2 vessels loading/discharging containers at QICT berth. |

Russia

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| Novorossiysk | 16-Oct-2006 | Nineteen vessels in port operating of which 14 loading (1 bulk cement, 1 wire rods/pipes, 1 scrap, 1 slabs, 1 slabs/steel billets, 1 coils/H-beams, 2 wheat, 1 soda ash, 1 steel billets, 2 aluminium, 1 D/O, 1 UANS, 4 discharging (1 debars, 1 coils, 1 scrap, 1 vegetable oil), 1 discharging/loading containers; 3 vessels in roads of which 2 to load (1 steel billets, 1 wheat), 1 to discharge debars/wric; 57 vessels due of which 50 to load, 7 to discharge (1 meal products, 2 equipment, 1 debars, 2 debars/wric, 1 vegetable oil); Oil terminal: 2 tankers loading crude at berth; 1 tanker in roads to load crude; 6 tankers due, all to load (5 crude oil, 1 diesel oil). |
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Slovenia

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| Koper | 16-Oct-2006 | Port working normally; Five vessels at berth of which 1 loading steel products, 1 tanker discharging mineral oils, 3 bulk carriers discharging coal/ore/minerals; 26 vessels due over the next 2 days of which 9 to load (3 bulk carriers to load coal, 5 sawn timber/steel products/general cargo, 1 barge to load coal), 8 to discharge (6 bulk carriers to discharge minerals/grain/fertiliser/cement, 1 vessel to discharge general cargo, 1 tanker to discharge mineral oils), 9 to discharge/load (6 containers, 3 car carriers to discharge/load vehicles). |
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Spain

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| Bilbao | 16-Oct-2006 | Twenty-seven vessels in port operating (3 tankers, 24 others), of which 8 loading, 11 discharging, 8 loading/discharging. |
| Sagunto | 16-Oct-2006 | Twenty vessels in port operating, of which 3 loading (1 steel products, 1 machinery, 1 cement), 16 discharging (9 steel products, 1 gas, 2 fruit, 2 vehicles, 1 timber, 1 anhydrous ammonia), 1 loading/discharging steel products; no vessels outside commercial wharf; no berthing delays at present. |

Sri Lanka

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| Colombo | 16-Oct-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 berthing at break bulk berths if there is container congestion; conventional cargo vessels at BQ 1 & 2 are facing delays in navigation after commissioning of SAGT 1 & 2 berths (former QEQ 1 & 2); conventional cargo vessels at PVQ 2 (inner berth) are facing berthing and unberthing delays after commissioning of new north pier (formerly known as "oil pier"). Six container/feeder vessels loading at berth, 18 vessels discharging at berth (12 container/feeders, 2 bulk cement, 1 bagged fertiliser, 1 steel, 1 bagged maize/wheat, 1 bulk palm oil); 5 vessels dry-docked; 6 vessels due (5 container/feeders, 1 bulk fertiliser), with no delays for general cargo/bagged cargo/containers/feeders expected. |
| Trincomalee | 16-Oct-2006 | One vessel loading at berth, none discharging at berth; no vessels awaiting berth. |

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Port Conditions

Turkmenistan

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| Aladja | 16-Oct-2006 | Oil products: Port open; one vessel loading crude oil at berth. |
| Turkmenbashi | 16-Oct-2006 | Oil products: Port open; Three vessel at berth, all loading (1 heating oil, 1 gasoline, 1 fuel oil); 11 vessels in roads, all to load; 2 vessels due by 16/10, both to load. |

Ukraine

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| Illichevsk | 16-Oct-2006 | Five vessels in port operating of which 2 loading (1 steel products, 1 iron ore concentrate), 2 discharging (1 nickel ore, 1 construction materials), 1 discharging/loading containers; 5 vessels in roads of which 1 to load wheat, 4 to discharge/load containers; 19 vessels due of which 12 to load (8 steel products, 2 sulphur, 1 project, 1 iron ore concentrate), 7 to discharge/load containers. |
| Mariupol | 16-Oct-2006 | Eleven vessels in port operating of which 10 loading (7 steel, 2 fire-clay, 1 coal), 1 discharging/loading containers/fire-clay; 5 vessels in roads, all to load steel; 62 vessels due of which 59 to load (37 steel, 8 coal, 2 barley, 6 fire-clay, 1 slag/coal, 1 kaolin, 2 sunflower beans, 1 pitch, 1 equipment), 2 to discharge (1 borax, 1 equipment/containers), 1 to discharge/load containers. |
| Odessa | 16-Oct-2006 | Sixteen vessels in port operating of which 7 loading (4 metal, 1 scrap, 2 wheat), 8 discharging (2 passenger vessels, 2 baggage, 2 bananas, 1 citrus, 1 general cargo), 1 discharging/loading containers; 6 vessels in roads of which 4 to load (2 wheat, 1 scrap, 1 barley), 2 to discharge/load containers; 83 vessels due of which 33 to load (26 metal, 3 grain, 2 ferroalloy, 1 timber, 1 iron ore pellets), 8 to discharge (2 metal, 2 general cargo, 1 citrus, 1 bananas, 1 meat, 1 equipment), 42 to load/discharge containers. |

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