

Japan's prime minster moves up visit to debated war shrine

By The Associated Press
INTERNATIONAL

TOKYO — Bowing to anger from Asian neighbors, Japan's prime minister moved up a visit to a controversial war shrine today instead of on the anniversary of Japan's World War II surrender.

Koizumi, who was led to the shrine's altar by a silk-clad priest, had repeatedly said since taking office in April that he would like to visit Tokyo's Yasukuni shrine on Wednesday's anniversary of the 1945 surrender.

But he said today he had decided to speed up the visit because of outrage expressed from Japan's neighbors and concern among members of his own ruling coalition. Many Asians see the shrine as a monument to militarism — and expressed as much again today.

To soothe fears among some Japanese that official visits violate the separation of religion and state, Koizumi also did not undergo traditional Shinto purification rituals at the altar.

"I want to express my deepest condolences to all the people who sacrificed their lives in the war," he said in a statement just before the visit. "Our country should never again walk the path to war."

NATIONAL
SAN FRANCISCO — In a deal that could cost Ford Motor Co. as much as \$1 billion and affect millions of vehicles, the automaker has agreed to settle a lawsuit that alleges its cars and trucks stall.

The agreement ends years of litigation in which a California judge said the Detroit automaker was living in an "Alice and Wonderland" dreamland for denying ignition switches were defective.

The proposed settlement, announced late Sunday, comes four months after Alameda County Superior Court Judge Michael E. Ballachey ordered as many as 2 million vehicles in California recalled as part of a state-wide class-action suit in which the judge found that Ford concealed the shabby parts from government inspectors.

Although the case was in California, attorneys said the settlement, if approved by Ballachey, would cover 5 million vehicles nationwide.

Under the announced agreement, Ford said it would replace the ignition devices to all Ford vehicles nationwide that have stalled and have no more than 100,000 miles, which is an estimated

ap news capsules

500,000 to 650,000 vehicles in California and an estimated 5 million nationwide.

The Detroit automaker denies the ignition devices are defective and stall, but already has settled hundreds of wrongful death, injury and other suits in connection to allegations of Ford vehicles stalling.

SPACE CENTER, Houston — It was moving-in day for the new crew of the international space station.

After arriving at space station Alpha over the weekend, the incoming three member crew was to swap places with the outgoing one today.

The replacement crew of U.S. astronaut Frank Culbertson and Russian cosmonauts Vladimir Dezhurov and Mikhail Tyurin was ferried to Alpha aboard space shuttle Discovery, which arrived at the orbiting outpost Sunday afternoon.

The shuttle will be the ride back to Earth for the current station crew, which has been on Alpha since March. The new crew will stay in Alpha until December.

The linkup between Discovery and Alpha had a slight problem as the docking ring that draws them together was misaligned because of a stuck shock absorber. But shuttle astronauts quickly solved the problem.

After hatches between the two spacecraft were opened two hours later, the seven astronauts and cosmonauts aboard Discovery floated into Alpha's Destiny laboratory and greeted the station's crew with hugs and smiles.

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Jessie Arbogast, the 8-year-old mauled by a shark last month, has returned home — but only time will tell how extensive his brain injury has become.

Children laughed and cried with joy Sunday in Ocean Springs, Miss., as an ambulance containing the boy — still in a light coma — arrived at the family home after a two-hour drive from Sacred Heart Children's Hospital in Pensacola.

"Although he's not fully recovered, I feel that it's nothing short of a miracle that he has come this far and been able to actually survive," said Dr. Tim Livingston, a pediatric neurologist at Sacred Heart.

The boy's right arm was ripped off by a bull shark in the waters off

Langdon Beach in the Gulf Islands National Seashore July 6. The shark also tore a large chunk of muscle from his right thigh.

"It appears he has suffered some brain injury because of the massive blood loss incurred during the shark attack," Livingston said. "There is certainly potential for further recovery, but we just don't know how long that may take or how far he can progress. It may be a year before we know."

Jessie has made dramatic recovery and no longer needs medication, including for pain, although he still must be fed through a tube, said Dr. Rob Patterson, a pediatric intensive care specialist.

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The recipient of the first self-contained artificial heart has suffered a setback, requiring a ventilator once more to assist his breathing, one of his surgeons said.

The patient, who has not been identified, had a buildup of secretions in his lungs and was put back on the breathing machine Thursday because he remained too weak to expel mucus secretions on his own.

The man also had developed a pulmonary infection and was running a fever, Dr. Laman Gray, one of the University of Louisville heart surgeons who implanted the AbioCor artificial heart in the patient's chest, said Sunday night.

"This is nothing catastrophic, and it has nothing to do with the heart," Gray said. The problems are not life-threatening, he added.

The patient, a diabetic in his 50s, had been recovering enough since his July 2 surgery at Jewish Hospital that his doctors said he had been able to walk "effortlessly" on his own.

Doctors had held out some hope that if his steady progress continued, the man might be willing and able to talk publicly about himself and the implant. Gray said it seems unlikely now that that could occur this month.

WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON — A Republican senator says he and a Democratic colleague will try to ease President Bush's limit on federal funding for embryonic stem cell research when Congress considers spending bills next month.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson and White House chief of staff Andrew Card, said Bush will stand by his decision.

The comments on Sunday television news shows followed the president's announcement Thursday that he will limit federal funding for embryonic stem cell research to stem cell lines now in existence.

Appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," Thompson said the more than 60 embryonic stem cell lines identified by the National Institutes of Health are enough to achieve the basic research needed to continue pursuing cures for juvenile diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and other diseases.

But Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., said he is skeptical those stem cell lines will be enough to find cures. He said he and Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, are spon-

soring legislation to broaden the federal funding of stem cell research to include discarded embryos from in-vitro fertilization. It will be an issue when Congress considers federal spending legislation next month, Specter said.

WASHINGTON — The population of state prisons dropped for the first time in nearly three decades during the second half of 2000, and criminologists say it may foretell a new trend.

The downturn, reported Sunday by the Justice Department, came even though over the course of the entire year, the number of state inmates grew, to 1,236,476 from 1,228,455, and the combined population of state and federal prisons edged up 1.3 percent from 1999.

That contrasted, however, with the average annual growth rate of 6 percent since 1990 and was the lowest percentage gain since 1972. The absolute increase of inmates — 8,021 in state prisons and 10,170 in federal prisons — also was the smallest since 1980.

Criminologists said the slowing growth of prison populations, coupled with the decline of 6,243 in the last six months of the year in state prisons, could signal the end of America's prison boom.

"Until now, the full-time business of prisons has been the growth of the prison population," said Franklin E. Zimring, a criminal law professor at the University of California at Berkeley. "Finally, this looks like real stabilization. If it continues, it is a new era in law enforcement."

Geological survey now has rich rock core

LAWRENCE (AP) — In a good rain year, Rebecca Bounds's dryland wheat field produces up to 50 bushels an acre. But in 1988, that same land produced something much different.

That was the year, her father, Bill Bounds, watched one of the strangest operations he had ever seen on the land he had given to Rebecca: Amoco drillers, who had leased the land from Bounds for a drilling operation, descended on the property, bringing electric generators, closed-circuit television cameras, a satellite dish and a 70-foot drilling rig.

They drilled 24 hours a day for 38 days, spending \$591,000 of Amoco's exploration budget. They told Bill they were doing something seldom tried before.

They drilled straight down, through more than a mile of western Kansas rock.

"If their intent was to strike oil, they failed," Bill Bounds said. "They didn't find a drop."

They packed up and left, and Bill Bounds says he never saw them again.

But he found out later what they dug up.

It was a rock core sample, 24,000 pounds of cold grayish stone in a four-inch cylinder.

The Amoco people, following company policy, named the core after the landowner: "Amoco Rebecca K. Bounds 1, Greeley County, Kansas."

Scientists today refer to the core sample as a golden spike — a rock more valuable than oil.

As one of the few continuous mile-long core samples ever drilled, it is no less than a geologic tape recorder going back more than 500 million years - back to when life on Earth consisted of smallish suckers of mud.

Lynn Watney, a geologist with the Kansas Geological Survey, heard about the core in 1989 when he got a call from Bob Scott, a supervisor in the exploration section of Amoco Oil's research station in Tulsa. Bob had earned his Ph.D. from Kansas in 1966.

Watney went down to Tulsa to look at Amoco's mile-long Rebecca Bounds core.

And it was everything he and other scientists could possibly hope for: a pristine record of the world's history, everything from the composition of her seas to the progression of her life forms.

In tiny rock-frozen bubbles, there were even microscopic samples of the world's waters going back 500 million years.

Watney took a good long look on his first visit. Amoco told him there would be more visits, that they would need him again to advise them as they continued to explore for oil, using the clues the Rebecca Bounds core provided them.

Then the business climate shifted, and eventually British Petroleum bought Amoco. And suddenly, the re-

search and exploration division disappeared.

He and other scientists at the University of Kansas decided to try and get the sample.

Watney told Amoco that if Rebecca Bounds ever became available for donation, the Kansas Geological Survey wanted it.

On Scott's urging, the oil company gave the Rebecca Bounds core to the Kansas Geological Survey.

It took years to negotiate the move, and many trailer truckloads of hundreds of boxes to bring the core sample segments from Tulsa to the survey's "core barn" in Lawrence late last year.

Scientists have begun to study parts of the core to find clues about oil and natural gas deposits in Kansas.

When they talk about it, they call the core Rebecca Bounds, or Rebecca.

Paleontologists, Martin said, could study her for a century and not come close to gleaning all the story of life written in the rock.

In Edmonds, Wash., where she lives with her husband, Sal, and her sons Drew, 7, and Ryan, 5, Rebecca Bounds-Petriello took a phone call last month and learned for the first time that a rare record of the world's geology is named after her.

She was delighted. "All those hard-working scientists," she said. "You'd think they'd name it after one of them."

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