

Australia worried about flow of Afghani refugees

By Associated Press
CHRISTMAS ISLAND, Australia — Worried about a flow of asylum seekers, Australia sent troops aboard a cargo ship carrying 438 rescued refugees that defied orders and entered territorial waters Wednesday.

Prime Minister John Howard said the soldiers had secured the Norwegian ship the Tampa with no reports of violence.

Three nations continued to wrangle over who should take responsibility for the refugees — most of them Afghani — who were rescued Monday when the ferry illegally carrying them from Indonesia to Australia without visas began sinking.

Squeezed onto the Norwegian cargo ship under a harsh tropical sun off the coast of this remote Indian Ocean island, many of the refugees have refused to eat and were threatening to jump overboard unless Australia granted them entry.

A spokesman for the ship's owner, the Wallenius Wilhelmsen shipping line, said captain Arne Rinnan issued a mayday distress call fearing for the health of some of the refugees, who included dozens of children and some pregnant women.

Three boats ferried up to 30 soldiers — some wearing body armor — to the cargo ship Tampa as it neared the shore of Christmas Island.

ap news capsules

JERUSALEM — Despite Israel's open-ended takeover of parts of a West Bank town, Palestinians fired mortars, machine guns and assault rifles from there at a nearby Jewish neighborhood overnight, drawing heavy Israeli return fire.

Elsewhere, three Palestinians and an Israeli were killed in separate shooting incidents early Wednesday. Among the dead were a Palestinian gunman, a Palestinian motorist police reported to have been shot by Jewish extremists, and an Israeli truck driver who was killed in a Palestinian shooting ambush.

The United States has demanded that Israel withdraw from the town of Beit Jalla and that the Palestinians hold their fire.

Israeli Education Minister Limor Livnat said Wednesday that troops could not pull out just yet, in light of renewed Palestinian shooting.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat spoke by phone several times overnight, with Peres reportedly appealing to Arafat to order Beit Jalla gunmen to cease fire.

NATIONAL
SAN DIEGO (AP) — Gateway Corp. has pulled the plug on operations in Asia and slashed a quarter of its

worldwide work force as part of a new strategy that moves the computer retailer further from its roots as a maker of low-cost personal computers.

Gateway's chairman and chief executive, Ted Waitt, said Tuesday the layoffs of 4,700 employees were part of a restructuring that would take the company "beyond the box."

Sales of the "box," or the personal computer, fell worldwide for the first time this year since Waitt started making affordable computers in an Iowa farmhouse 16 years ago. Analysts say consumers don't see a reason to make the upgrades in the new millennium that kept shipments in double-digit growth year after year.

Gateway, the No. 4 computer maker, has been hit especially hard, due, in part, to its focus on the shrinking U.S. industry.

The company lost more than \$500 million the first six months of the year and has seen its stock price slump nearly 88 percent off its 52-week high. Shares closed Tuesday at \$8.60.

Outlining his plan Tuesday for the "transformation of Gateway," Waitt said the company would move aggressively to tap high-margin, high-growth U.S. technology markets in five new areas: networking, software applications, training, financing and support services.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — One day after Gov. Gray Davis publicly criticized Rep. Gary Condit, the children of the California congressman resigned from the governor's office.

Chad, 33, and Cadee Condit, 26, submitted a sharply worded joint resignation letter Tuesday saying the Condit "are a proud and loyal family, not only in the good times but also during the darkest hours ... Continued employment with the governor's office would undercut that standard."

Chad Condit worked as a Central Valley liaison for Davis and his sister was Davis' special assistant. Davis and the Democratic congressman from California have been longtime friends and political allies.

"I regret their decision to leave ... I wish them all the best in their future endeavors," Davis said in a statement.

Davis spoke publicly about the case for the first time Monday, saying he was "disheartened that Congressman Condit did not speak out more quickly or more fully" about the disappearance of former intern Chandra Levy.

NEW YORK (AP) — On the eve of the Labor Day weekend, U.S. gasoline supplies are shrinking, a possible harbinger of higher prices at the pump in the coming months.

Nationwide, gas prices are up less than a penny from a year ago. But industry data released late Tuesday showed U.S. inventories of gasoline dwindling significantly ahead of the Labor Day holiday.

The American Petroleum Institute reported that U.S. gasoline supplies shrank by 6.7 million barrels in the past week to 196.2 million barrels, or 3 million barrels below levels a year ago.

Also on Tuesday, the Environmental Protection Agency temporarily relaxed air-quality standards on gasoline produced and sold by Citgo Petroleum Corp. in the Midwest in an attempt to alleviate a recent price spike in the region.

Citgo will be allowed to sell retailers in Chicago and Milwaukee a blend of gasoline that meets the less stringent requirements for the remainder of the summer driving season.

In exchange, the EPA said Citgo will have to pay the Treasury Department about 14 cents for every gallon it sells of the lower grade gasoline, which is cheaper to manufacture.

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — Interior Secretary Gale Norton has stripped this city's former dump — 79 million cubic yards of rotting garbage so foul it's a Superfund site — of its fleeting designation as a national historic land-

mark. The landfill had earned the distinction Monday, joining such notable places as Monticello, Ernest Hemingway's house in Key West, Fla., and Walden Pond.

But before the day was out, Interior Department officials began having second thoughts after learning the 145-acre dump was given the ignoble Superfund designation by the Environmental Protection Agency in 1989.

"It seems to me that somebody didn't do their homework and didn't do any thinking," said Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club. "What can I say, it's just weird."

Norton made the decision to drop the designation after reviewing a recommendation from the National Park Service, said spokeswoman Stephanie Hanna.

WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. and British attacks on Iraq's air defenses have intensified in recent days, indicat-

ing the Pentagon's growing concern about the risk to pilots enforcing "no fly" zones in the north and south.

On Tuesday, U.S. and British fighter jets attacked two military targets in southern Iraq, one day after an unmanned Air Force reconnaissance aircraft was lost near the southern city of Basra.

The Pentagon has acknowledged losing the Predator drone but is not sure whether Iraq shot it down.

Tuesday's targets were facilities that provide command, control and communications support for Iraqi air defense fighter aircraft, one U.S. official said. More than a half-dozen U.S. and British strike aircraft carried out the attacks, accompanied by more than a dozen jammer and other support planes.

The officials discussed the attacks on condition they not be identified.

They described the attacks as part of a continuing effort to counteract Iraq's improvements to its air defenses.

Human remains found at Fort Riley home

FORT RILEY (AP) — Officials at Fort Riley have sent a set of unidentified human remains to the state medical examiner's office.

A contractor discovered the remains Monday while cleaning up a family quarters that had been destroyed by a fire at the base in February.

The discovery was still being inves-

tigated Tuesday by Fort Riley's Criminal Investigation Division.

The home of Sgt. Dennis Cortez was destroyed after a fire started in her garage on Feb. 5. Cortez escaped with her son and dog, but everything else was destroyed.

No one was injured in the blaze, which Fort Riley said was accidental.

Jacob, Madison popular names for babies in 2000

TOPEKA (AP) — Jacob and Madison were the most popular names for babies born in 2000, the state Department of Health and Environment says. The agency compiles an annual list of the top 25 names for boys and girls, based on birth certificates.

Here are the most popular boys' names, with the number of newborns: < Jacob, 435; Zachary, 285; Michael, 273; Tyler, 247; Joshua, 245; Andrew, 239; Nicholas, 234; Dylan, 231; Ethan, 225; Matthew, 225; Austin, 222; Caleb, 215; Joseph, 200; Christopher, 191; William, 184; Cameron, 180; Hunter,

177; Christian, 175; Ryan, 174; John, 165; Alexander, 163; Nathan, 159; Brandon, 158; David, 155; Noah, 152.

Here are the most popular girls' names: <

Madison, 309; Kaitlyn, 300; Hannah, 283; Emily, 279; Haley, 210; Makayla, 199; Alexis, 197; Taylor, 196; Kaylee, 194; Sydney, 194; Lauren, 186; Abigail, 185; Ashley, 182; Sarah, 181; Elizabeth, 181; Katherine, 179; Brianna, 177; Alyssa, 175; Emma, 160; Grace, 154; Bailey, 151; Megan, 150; Mackenzie, 147; Anna, 147; Samantha, 141.

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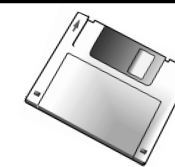
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