

[Govt to investigate stolen children claims](#) .The Federal Attorney-General's Department has been asked to investigate claims that **Indian children have been stolen from their parents and sold for adoption in Australia**. A report in Time Magazine says that around 30 children were **stolen by gangs in India and sold on to adoption agencies before being adopted by families in wealthy countries like Australia**. One child was allegedly kidnapped seven years ago and later adopted by a family in Queensland. **The report claims the small children are being given false identities and sold to Indian orphanages for as little as \$280. He says the Government is no longer working with the adoption agencies in question and he is not sure if there are any more cases. Federal Attorney-General Robert McClelland says he is aware child trafficking may have involved in two cases. "At some stage there was child trafficking involved prior to them coming into contact with the agency involved in India. "Two children have been adopted in Australia," he said. Earlier a spokesman for Mr McClelland's department said any matters arising from the investigation would be acted upon and, were relevant, they would be passed on to state and territory authorities." Mr McClelland says he only knows where one of the children is now, but has refused to disclose the location. Queensland Child Safety Minister Margaret Keech says Adoption Services Queensland became aware of the allegations last year. - Queensland reaction - The Queensland Government admits some children in the state may have been the victims of the alleged racket. She says one child was adopted outside the timeframe of the alleged racket but two others may have been involved. Ms Keech says the cases of three children adopted in Queensland through Indian and Malaysian adoption agencies have been looked at. She says the allegations are concerning and highlight the difficulties with international adoption and the problem of child trafficking. Ms Keech [says](#) it is a terrible predicament for parents who love their adopted children.**

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[Biggest ecstasy haul in history made by police](#) . Police [said](#) the size of the seizure was **more than four times as large as the world's previous biggest ecstasy haul EPA Fifteen million pills with a street value of £200m were taken, police said, resulting in arrests around the world in pre-dawn raids against an international drugs syndicate with links to the mafia. Sixteen people were arrested in Australia while simultaneous raids were underway in Belgium, Holland and Italy, according to police. The arrests were the result of the largest police operation in Australian history, sparked after customs officers, who had received a tip-off, discovered the 4. German officers were also involved in the special European police taskforce, which had seized 500m Euros and were expected to make arrests imminently, they added. After discreetly replacing the pills with fake substitutes, they tracked the shipment and were guided through the criminal network involved with its distribution, police said.4-tonne drug haul stuffed inside more than 3,000 tins of tomatoes being shipped to Melbourne from Italy in June 2007. Mick Keelty, the Australian Federal Police Commissioner, said the year-long investigation, which involved 400 officers, 10,000 hours of surveillance and 185,000 phone intercepts, had shattered a cartel believed to be behind 60 percent of all drugs imported into southern Australia. A related container, comprising 150kg of cocaine hidden in coffee beans, was discovered the previous month leading to further arrests across Australia, they**

added. It is classic organised crime," Commissioner Keelty said. "This is part of a global, international syndicate." Commissioner Keelty said that those whose homes had been raided included Italian-Australians linked to the mafia in the New South Wales region and an outlaw motorcycle gang. Michael Carmody, the chief of [Australian](#) Customs, said: "This is what makes getting up in the morning and coming to work worthwhile." Commissioner Keelty named Pasquale "Pat" Barbaro, 46, as one of those arrested. He said the operation had also identified a money laundering operation worth more than £4m which had been used to pay for the drugs, and that its success represented "a major disruption to transnational organised crime, both in this country and abroad. Police said the size of the seizure was more than four times as large as the world's previous biggest ecstasy haul - one tonne, also in Australia, in 2005. Barbaro's family was named in a judicial inquiry into the disappearance in 1977 of Donald Mackay, a prominent Australian anti-drugs campaigner.

[Rates on hold as RBA sits tight](#) .The Reserve Bank (RBA) has announced that [Australia's](#) official interest rates will remain at 7.25 per cent for another month. In a statement, the Reserve Bank (RBA) has highlighted the double-edged sword of spiralling oil prices. The move had been widely anticipated by economists. On the other, they will further boost CPI inflation in coming quarters. On the one hand, it [says](#) they are working to restrain demand in the economy. Domestically, its assessment remains that tighter financial conditions are helping keep demand in check, while there have also been tentative signs of an easing in the employment [market](#). The RBA has also noted credit concerns resurfacing in international financial markets. But it also says the rising price of fuel is restraining demand in the economy. Oil futures rose to \$US144 a barrel overnight and the RBA's statement notes that rising oil prices will boost inflation. ANZ economist Sally Auld says the central bank seems more comfortable with the pace of the economy. The bank says recent information supports its view that growth in economic demand will moderate this year. The Australian dollar has slipped in value in response to the announcement. "Those sort of comments seem to suggest that the RBA's a little bit more confident that the economy's slowing as they expected," she said.

[Territory Govt urged to get behind Indigenous development](#) .Researchers are disappointed with what they say is the underdevelopment of remote Indigenous communities under the Northern Territory Labor Government. Indigenous people make up 32 per cent of the Territory's population and the [Australian](#) National University (ANU) predicts that figure will reach 40 per cent by 2028. He says with 50 per cent of land and 80 per cent of the coastline in the Territory now Indigenous-owned, the potential for development and employment is huge - and the Territory Government needs to capitalise on it. The ANU's Professor Jon Altman [says](#) that could pose a significant risk to the Territory's economy if Indigenous [education, health and employment issues are not addressed](#). "[I am] very disappointed in the development pathways taken by the Northern Territory. "Rather than this narrative and this development approach that just focuses on on mainstream options, we need to recognise the possibility for innovation and diversity, working with Indigenous communities in relation to their aspirations," he said. "What is needed is equitable needs-based funding of remote Indigenous communities," he said." He says that if the Territory Government does not address Indigenous issues now there could be huge problems in the future." Professor Altman is hopeful that in the wake of the Blue Mud Bay decision, the Territory Government will develop these services. "We need to see the delivery of health care, educational services, housing and infrastructure. "It still needs to do that in my opinion, but clearly it will be looking for aid from the Commonwealth to meet the particularly the capital legacy. "There's no doubt that significant investment is required in Indigenous Territorians and remote communities and probably if the Northern Territory was a nation it would be looking for foreign aid," he said."

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[Local market lifts on Wall St results](#) .There was been a burst of positive sentiment in the Australian banking sector today, after some good [news](#) out of the United States overnight. One of America's biggest banks and mortgage lenders, Wells Fargo, announced better than expected profit results. The All Ordinaries index rose 30 points to 4,977 and the ASX 200 added 0. That, combined with a sharp drop in the price of oil, seemed to overshadow the [news](#) that inflation has reached a 17-year high in the US of 5 per cent for the year to June. Financial stocks soared on Wall Street and Australian banks followed, with Westpac up 4.6 per cent to 4,901.39.9 per cent to \$20. By the end of trade, the local financial index gained 3. It has announced plans of a business overhaul to make it more customer friendly as it prepares to takeover St George. But the miners were been hit by weaker metals prices.9 per cent.4 per cent to \$37. BHP Billiton slumped 4. Woodside Petroleum delivered its latest production results with output in the second quarter up 14 per cent on the same time last year.55.8 per cent to \$58. But Woodside shares fell 1. Qantas shares rose 4.50 as investors worried whether it will meet its annual production target.30 and the airline says it could make an announcement as early as this week on the results of its review of business operations, after reports that it is planning to slash as many as 3,000 jobs.1 per cent to \$3.1 per cent to \$6. Toll Holdings surged 10. About 5:00pm AEST the Australian dollar was buying 97. About 5:00pm AEST the [Australian](#) dollar was buying 97.65 US cents, 48.85 UK pence, 102.72 Japanese Yen and 61.6 euro cents West Texas crude oil was worth \$US134.63 a barrel and spot gold was fetching \$US963.20 an ounce.

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[Hundreds attend 'improper' Brisbane church meeting](#) .More than 500 people attended a meeting last night about the future of St Mary's Church in South [Brisbane](#). Brisbane's Catholic Archbishop John Bathersby has asked the community of St Mary's to decide whether it wants to break away from the Roman Catholic Church. However St Mary's priest Father

Peter Kennedy said the statue in question was a young monk praying, not a Buddha. Archbishop Bathersby said yesterday the wording of prayers and the placement of what he believes is a Buddhist statue in the church are unorthodox. "At the present time they're not in communion with the church and they have to make that significant decision about it," Archbishop Bathersby said. Archbishop Bathersby outlined his concerns in a three-page letter to the parish. Long-time parishioner Brian O'Halloran said yesterday St Mary's practices were not improper. At last night's meeting, the parish decided to set up groups to examine issues raised by the Archbishop. "We are Catholics and the people that are coming to St Mary's are committed to this church. "The feeling of the Church of St Mary's is very much that it is of the Church of Rome and of the Diocese," he said.

[CD BOOK and Audio Egyptian Travel NEW - Phrase Talk](#) Travel Talk Egyptian Arabic Includes Lonely Planet Egyptian Phrase Book and 1 Audio CDs Get Other Arabic language learning Audio click here Travel Talk Egyptian Arabic - Phrase Book and Audio CD Brand New : Includes 250+ page phrasebook and 1 60 minute Audio CDs TravelTalk presents a simplified language survival system for travelers. Includes a 60 minute audio CD in both English target language and a fold out audio guide transcript of the 300 essential words and phrases most frequently needed while traveling developed by Penton's foreign language specialists. Also included is Lonely Planet's comprehensive phrasebook 2-way dictionary with thousands of additional words and phrases; this combination will help ensure that travellers will arrive and survive ...and enjoy communicating with native speakers. About Egyptian Arabic Egyptian Arabic is part of the Arabic macrolanguage of the Semitic Family 'devastated' by Beaconsfield's withdrawal from inquest .The family of miner Larry Knight, who was killed in the rockfall at the Beaconsfield goldmine in northern Tasmania, says it is devastated by the mine's decision to withdraw from much of the inquest. The coroner investigating the death of Mr Knight in 2006 heard opening submissions in Launceston earlier today and will visit the mine tomorrow. Mr Knight's brother says family members have waited two years for the inquest and now feel the company has turned its back on them. In a statement, the brother of the late miner, Shane Knight, says he is deeply disappointed representatives for Beaconsfield Gold walked out of the hearing before the family's lawyers had made a statement to the court. The mine's legal team said it will only return when senior mine managers are called to give evidence. Earlier, the family had also expressed its disappointment that the mine's legal team would miss much of the inquest into the death. "In an inquest like this, I think the position really is that the inquest will or would have benefited, would benefit from the full participation of all the interested parties, that being the family and the mine," he said. The lawyer representing Mr Knight's family, Kamal Farouque, was surprised by the move. "The family are represented and they, along with the coroner and counsel assisting the coroner, will be free to ask whatever questions they feel are appropriate of the witnesses who have been called," he said. Beaconsfield Gold chief executive officer Bill Colvin has defended the move." - Fatal rockfall - On Anzac day 2006, Larry Knight was operating a machine called a telehandler when a rockfall killed him instantly and trapped his colleagues, Todd Russell and Brant Webb, for a fortnight. "We believe that the evidence that will come out has already been presented and that there's nothing further that we could add to that position. On Thursday he will hear evidence from Mr Russell and Mr Webb. Tomorrow the coroner will visit the mine and the site where the rockfall occurred, 900 metres below ground. . Larry Knight's widow, Jacquie, has attended the inquest with his brother Shane, but did not wish to comment

[Aust scientists develop new test for Crohn's disease](#) .For children suspected of having inflammatory bowel disease, it can mean months of tests and painful symptoms while waiting for a diagnosis. But Australian scientists may have found a better way after developing a test which can detect inflammation in the gut. Melanie Ajaka had severe stomach cramps for a year. It means those children who test positive can get a diagnosis much quicker, while others are spared unnecessary procedures. She had to have a number of invasive tests. "The stomach pains would be so bad that you would get pains and you would have to hunch over," she said. "An earlier diagnosis would have been much less stressful on

Melanie," said her father, Michael. "Finally after a colonoscopy, endoscopy and a barium meal we were finally confirmed that it was Crohn's," her mother Sylvia Ajaka said. It picks up a protein which measures inflammation in the gut. Doctors at Sydney Children's Hospital and the University of New South Wales are working on a new test for Crohn's disease. A new study found the test can pick up signs of Crohn's much earlier. "If the protein is there, it puts a red flag it indicates that there is some sort of disease," Dr Steven Leach from the University of New South Wales said. Using this test means children can get a diagnosis sooner. "Those children who went on to have Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis had very high levels of the protein in the stool, whereas those who didn't had other problems such as irritable bowel or something like that," Sydney Children's Hospital spokesman Dr Andrew Day said. The child's symptoms can be got under control sooner without that period of ongoing symptoms," Dr Day said. "The difference is that treatment can be started earlier. "Now I know what I have and I know how to tolerate it," she said. Melanie says she is glad to know what was making her sick. . More children and young teenagers are being diagnosed with crohn's disease, however the reasons behind the increase remain a mystery

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[Labor ministers back Henderson despite shock poll results](#) .The Labor Party's most senior Northern Territory politicians say there will be no leadership changes despite last night's shock election results that could see the ALP lose power. Labor ministers Chris Burns, Delia Lawrie and Marion Scrymgour have all backed Paul Henderson to remain as leader. "I think the lesson lies to some degree elsewhere, it lies in the method of the campaigning, the style of the campaigning and the appeal to the electorate and I think we certainly need to look at the early election. Dr Burns says the result is not Mr Henderson's fault. Labor has won 12 seats, the Country Liberals have 11, one is independent and one seat, Fannie Bay, is undecided. That was certainly a disturbing factor," he said. Labor's Michael Gunner is 57 votes ahead in the counting so far. The CLP candidate in Fannie Bay [says](#) he is hopeful postal votes will swing his way. Fannie Bay CLP candidate Garry Lambert says he was expecting it to be a close vote. If the seat is won by the Country Liberals it would mean the major parties would hold 12 seats each and could only form government with the support of the Independent Member for Nelson, Gerry Wood. "We're obviously down to the wire, I'm not conceding and I'm certainly not giving up the fact that I could win so we'll just have to wait and see. "At this stage it's very much too close to call," he said. The swing against the Labor Party is about 9 per cent." Meanwhile Federal Assistant Treasurer Chris Bowen [says](#) a strong swing against the Labor Party in the Northern Territory election is not a reflection of the Federal Government's performance. "The conservatives in the Northern Territory were coming off a very low base, I think they had four seats, so in many respects the only way was up as far as conservatives in the Northern Territory are concerned," he said. Mr Bowen has told Channel 10 the election has been fought on local issues." . "And I didn't detect many federal issues running through the Northern Territory campaign

[Qantas engineers to suspend strikes for WYD](#) .Qantas engineers will suspend their industrial campaign to prevent disruption over the school holidays and World Youth Day. Qantas management and the engineers union resumed negotiations today over a [new](#) pay deal but the union says it is no closer to getting the 5 per cent increase its members want. "The association will not be holding any further work stoppages until at least after World Youth Day," he said. Union spokesman Wayne Vasta says the workers do not want to take further action while negotiations are underway." . "That includes obviously the school holiday period and we believe that's a fairly [significant](#) step in regard to getting resolution

[Tariff reduction to hurt local industry: union](#) .The Australian Manufacturing Workers Union [says](#) pressing ahead with a tariff reduction on imported cars will hurt the local industry. The Bracks review into the automotive industry supports the planned 2010 cut to tariffs from 10 to 5 per cent. "We seem to be the only country in the world that wants to speedily reduce the tariff to zero, now we've seen the [effects](#) on tariffs over the last few years," he [said](#). But Union secretary John Camillo says that could see a drop in the number of locally produced cars." Holden managing director Mark Reuss says any halving of tariffs has implications for the company's future investment in Australia. "At present over a million vehicles are sold, out of those million vehicles sold only 15 per cent are locally produced, with a reduction of tariffs by a further 50 per cent we could see that local car makers might not survive and we might even see one or two more closing down, just like Mitsubishi. South Australian Premier Mike Rann says he is disappointed that the car industry review recommends halving tariffs. "There's other countries out there that value their auto industries greatly, their tariffs reflect that," he said. "I'm disappointed that the Howard government's decision to lower tariffs in 2010 has been basically endorsed by this review. "In a time of world economic instability it makes sense to retain the tariff to give certainty to the industry until 2015," he said."

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[War games prepare Navy for emergencies](#) .The Royal [Australian](#) Navy says a simulated disaster response exercise off the coast of Darwin over the next few weeks will help create an emergency response system with Australia's neighbouring countries. Exercise Kakadu will run for the next two weeks in the Timor Sea. Exercise director Captain Phillip Spedding says the drill will foster the forces' ability to band together in times of crisis. Ships from nine countries are docked in Darwin while more than 2,000 Australian and overseas navy personnel will take part. "So the regional engagement part is an important outcome we seek. "This really is one of our [biggest](#) engagement exercises or activities in the region for the year," he said." Captain Spedding says Exercise Kakadu allows naval personnel from countries including Australia, Singapore and Japan the chance to work together and set up emergency response procedures. "And then we try to, within that engagement activity, conduct maritime operations to try and improve our ability to work together. . "We'll work through such things like how would we go about a collective response to a humanitarian assistance or some form of disaster relief," he said

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[Stolen Generations reps to discuss Senate's healing fund](#) .Members of the Stolen Generations will discuss a Senate Committee proposal for an Indigenous healing fund at a meeting in Alice Springs today. The Federal Government is yet to respond to the Senate inquiry's report on compensation. The head of the Central Australian Stolen Generations and Families Aboriginal Corporation, Zita Wallace, says it is the board's first chance to examine the report, which was handed to the Federal Government last month. A Senate Committee has recommended the fund be an extension of the closing the gap initiative, providing funds for health, housing and family support services. But she wants the Government to set up the Indigenous healing fund as a priority because many of the people it is intended to help may not live long enough to benefit from it. Senate Committee chair Trish Crossin [says](#) the compensation bill is effectively dead with the departure of Democrats Senator Andrew Bartlett. However, the spokeswoman says there is a particular need for healing services. A spokeswoman for Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin [says](#) the Government is still considering its response. She says a meeting is scheduled next month with Stolen Generations members, professionals, support services and government departments to map out a way forward

[Aust. Fiji agree to improve relations](#) .The Federal Government has reached agreement with Fiji on high-level diplomatic appointments in Australia, in a bid to improve relations between the two countries. Foreign Affairs Minister Stephen Smith says Australia will allow an Acting High Commissioner in Canberra and a Fiji Consul-General in Sydney. Mr Smith says he has agreed to the appointments based on promises by Fiji to carry out fair elections next year. But he warns he remains sceptical about Fiji's interim military government. I remain very sceptical," he [said](#). "Does that cause me to in any way move away from the scepticism that I have about the intentions of the government - the interim government? No, it doesn't.

['Annoying' protesters hold spoof fashion show](#) .The Catholic World Youth Day protest group NoToPope Coalition has held what is calls an 'annoying fashion show' outside New South Wales Parliament to challenge the regulations surrounding next week's event. Under the special regulations brought in for World Youth Day events, police have the power to arrest and fine people who annoy or inconvenience pilgrims. About 20 people gathered outside NSW Parliament House and were met by a significant police presence. In defiance of this, NoToPope coalition members have held a spoof catwalk fashion show, parading the T-shirt slogans and messages they plan to protest in. Contraception was a common theme on most shirts with many people wearing condoms pinned to their clothes. T-shirts ranged from things like 'Pope is wrong, use a condom' to just 'Pope go homo' written in large letters. "We're saying here today, these T-shirts are not annoying, or offensive, they actually say important things about condom use," she [said](#). Rachael Evans from the NoToPope Coalition says that today's fashion show is in defiance of the new laws and in opposition to many of the Catholic Church's teachings." "So we're here to show people, to say grab a T-shirt, don't be intimidated, stand up against this and come to our rally and do it there as well

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[CD NEW Novel CLIVE AudioBook A Black CUSSLER](#) **Black Wind - Clive Cussler [with Dirk Cussler] Read by Scott Brick A Dirk Pitt Novel - Unabridged Brand New: Unabridged Still shrink wrapped 10 CDs 11 Hours Black Wind - Clive Cussler [with Dirk Cussler] In the waning days of World War II the Japanese tried a last desperate measure - a different kind of kamikaze mission this one carried out by two submarines bound for the west coast of the United States their cargo a revolutionary new strain of deadly virus. Neither sub made it to the designated target. But that does not mean they were lost. Someone knows about the subs and what they carried knows too where they might be and has an extraordinary plan in store for the prize inside - a plan that could reshape the world as we know it. All that stands in the way are three people: a marine biologist named Summer a marine engineer named Dirk and their father Dirk Pitt the new head of NUMA. P**

[Adelaide Games bid dream may fade fast](#) .The South Australian Opposition Leader's dream of Adelaide hosting the 2018 Commonwealth Games may be prove to be just that. **Martin Hamilton-Smith has promised to bid for the Games if he wins the next state election in March 2010, but any potential Australian host city would be chosen well before then. "It would be helped if Mr Rann [SA Premier] came along with us in a bipartisan way. "Look I'll be doing everything I can to make this dream come true for South [Australians.](#)" Mr Hamilton-Smith said. The Commonwealth Games Association rules on any Australian bid for the Games." But the Liberal leader's sporting dream has already struck a major hurdle. "We haven't set an exact closing date but it would probably be around the April, May or June time frame and they would have to have a proposal to us at that stage that would be their final proposal," he said. Executive Perry Crosswhite says it will make a decision on a possible host city next year, which is well before the Liberals get a chance to win government in SA. - Bid from opposition - The Association may rule out an Australian bid altogether, given the Federal Government's support for a 2018 soccer World Cup bid. Perth and the Gold Coast already have a head start in the race, preparing their comprehensive submissions on venues, infrastructure, accommodation, transport and broadcasting. "It can still be made - we will actually be putting proposals to the Commonwealth Games Association from opposition. But Mr Hamilton-Smith retains his optimism. "A bid from an opposition group would be very difficult because they couldn't guarantee they'd be in power at that time," he [said.](#)" Mr Crosswhite has his doubts. Tony Keynes of Athletics SA says it would boost investment in sport. SA sporting organisations have been quick to support the Opposition Leader's proposal. Athletes have vision and goals. "I think you've got to have vision. The SA Government says the Opposition is grossly irresponsible for not costing its proposal. If you don't have goals, and this is a big one, but I really see this as an investment," he [said.](#) . But the**

Government has not ruled out an Adelaide bid

[Nationals in danger of losing Vaile's seat](#) .The [Nationals](#) are in [serious](#) danger of losing the federal seat of former deputy prime minister Mark Vaile, with popular independent New South Wales MP Rob Oakeshott today expected to announce his decision to contest next month's by-election. The seat of Lyne, on the New South Wales mid north coast, has been held by Mr Vaile since 1993. Popular state MP Rob Oakeshott had been approached by the Liberal Party, but he will instead run as an independent. A by-election is being held on September 6 to fill his vacated seat. The Liberal Party is yet to announce whether it will field a candidate. The Nationals and the Greens are standing candidates, but the Labor Party is not running in the seat. "Oakeshott has polled two-thirds of the vote and won with a clear majority at the last two state elections as an independent and he'd take that lead into the Federal by-election," he said. The ABC's election analyst, Antony Green, [says](#) the Nationals will struggle to retain the seat. "His record as a state member stands and he's been able to achieve very little," he said. But Myall Lakes MP John Turner says Mr Oakeshott has a poor record as a local member." Mr Oakeshott's decision to stand for federal politics will trigger a by-election in his state seat of Port Macquarie. "If you analyse the figures of capital expenditure on the north coast, he is the lowest electorate to receive capital expenditure and quite frankly his contributions in Parliament are very quiet, we rarely see him.

[Alcopops tax forcing inflation up: Turnbull](#) .The Opposition has blamed the Government's alcopop tax for pushing up inflation. Figures released today show that inflation surged ahead in the June quarter to stand at 4. Mr Turnbull [says](#) the tax increase on pre-mixed drinks, is adding to the rising cost of living because CPI figures show the price of spirits rose by 6.5 per cent for the year, well ahead of economists' forecasts. "One thing the Government could have done was choose to not put up the price of alcohol but it did and it has flowed into the inflation numbers," he [said](#).1 per cent in the June quarter. Mr Turnbull says planned [increases](#) in the cost of luxury cars and changes to the Medicare levy will also push up inflation. The Government imposed the tax in what it said was an effort to curb binge drinking. Mr Turnbull says while he does not expect the figures to push up interest rates, he says they are proof the Federal Government's Budget has not achieved what it promised. "How can you be fighting inflation when you're putting up the price of alcohol, putting up the price of health insurance, putting up the price of motor cars?" he said. Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan says global pressures including oil prices and the credit crunch are making the problem worse. The Federal Government has described inflation as a very substantial problem. "There's no point in trying to sugar coat it at all its a very substantial problem," he said. Mr Swan says the Government is doing what it can." Mr Swan says today's figures confirm people's fears about the prices of goods and services. "What we have to concentrate on is those things that we can control and that's what the government has been doing through its budget and through its overall policy settings. "Anybody who does the shopping or fills up the car knows that inflation has been building for years and of course it has now been made worse by global pressures. "That is that sky high global oil prices are making our inflation problem even worse," he [said](#).5 per cent, sending the annual rise in the cost of living to 4." The June quarter consumer price index (CPI) is up 1. The Australian Bureau of Statistics says the quarterly rise is the highest for 17 years.5 per cent. The increase is well outside the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) target band of 2 to 3 per cent. The rise in the cost of living shows prices are increasing despite a slowdown in consumer spending.3 per cent.3 per cent. But RBC Capital Market's Senior Economist Su-Lin Ong says retail activity and consumer confidence remain subdued which should convince the central bank to keep rates on hold. "The RBA will be prepared to look through this near-term increase in inflation provided the activity numbers remain quite soft," she said.

[Truck shutdown pressures retailers, consumers](#) .The Australian Retailers Association says it is likely consumers will feel the impact of industrial action being taken by independent truck drivers over the next two weeks. Truck drivers across the country are taking part in stop work meetings today as part of a nationwide shutdown over the next fortnight. The

Long Distance Owners and Drivers Association and other groups are calling for an increase in the base wage, better safety measures and the removal of the fuel excise. The two-week stoppage began at midnight AEST last night over state and federal government transport changes, which include [increased](#) registration fees, new fatigue laws and changes to the fuel excise. Meetings have been held in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth and some [Brisbane](#) suppliers are already stocking up on extra fruit and vegetable produce so they do not run out during the shutdown. The action is not being supported by the Transport Workers Union. "Retailers have been suffering for the last six months in terms of fuel and in terms of the entire supply chain," he [said](#). Richard Evans from the Australian Retailers Association says the action will have an impact on retailers and consumers." Mr Evans says it is inevitable that costs associated with the transport stoppages will be passed on to consumers. "With goods being in short supply during this difficult period of transport, ultimately retailers will suffer and some will be I guess forced to close in some instances because they are really struggling at the moment. - Calls for action - The organiser of the national truck driver shutdown says he expects Australia's transport industry to be crippled in a matter of days. "Many retailers rely on the just-in-time principle, which means that shelves are constantly being stocked - if transport stops so will stock and therefore consumers will suffer," he said. He says state and federal governments must abandon new transport changes to get trucks back on the road. Organiser Mick Pattell of the National Road Transport Forum says he hopes the public will back drivers' concerns. "We've really got to do this to highlight the plight of this industry. "Hopefully the government will come to the table fairly quickly and not allow this to happen to the public," he said. ." Mr Pattell says the only concessions during the shutdown will be the delivery of food for animals in feedlots

[US markets fall despite bank bailouts](#) .There has been another volatile night of trade on Wall Street with US stocks falling amid growing investor unease with the banking sector, following the failure of IndyMac bank on Friday. Fears about the sector's exposure to mortgage losses were exacerbated, following sharp falls in the share prices of mortgage-financing giants Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae. Under the measures the two companies - which own or guarantee half the country's entire mortgage debt - will get access to extra funding from the Treasury and the Federal Reserve. But the US Government's plan to shore up the ailing companies did go some way towards helping calm the markets. The high-tech Nasdaq composite index also sustained losses, shedding 26 points to 2,213. But despite the rescue package the Dow Jones industrial average fell 45 points to 11,056. News that Spain's Santander had reached a deal to buy Alliance and Leicester also help boost financial stocks. Earlier, prices on Britain's top share index closed higher in response to the Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae rescue plan. Yesterday, the banking sector weighed heavily on the Australian market. London's FT-100 index gained 39 points to 5,300, an [increase](#) of three-quarters of a per cent. The ASX 200 closed down 1. The All Ordinaries Index lost 60 points to 5,008. [National](#) Australia Bank fared the worst of the banks, losing 3.2 per cent to 4,921.47, after last Friday's revelation that it may have to increase its provisions for bad loans.6 per cent to \$26.15 per cent. It became the third of the big four banks to announce it is lifting interest rates from today - by 0. Toll Holdings shares gained 3 per cent to \$6. Westpac is expected to follow suit some time this week. Looking at the overnight session on the Sydney Futures Exchange and the Share Price Index 200 contract is down 52 points at 4,885.57 after announcing it would distribute most of its 63 per cent stake in low-cost airline Virgin Blue to its shareholders.67, with the implied yield at 6. The 10-year bond contract is up one point at 93. On foreign exchange markets, the [Australian](#) dollar has charged to a fresh 25-year high. On foreign exchange markets, the Australian dollar has charged to a fresh 25-year high. About 6:53am AEST it was being quoted at 97.19 US cents, 0.6109 euros, 103.17 Japanese yen, 48.72 pence Sterling and \$NZ1.272. The gold price was being quoted at \$US972.60 an ounce. The spot price of West Texas crude had increased slightly to \$US145.16 a barrel. [Sydney bombers 'intended serious harm'](#) .Police say whoever planted two pipe bombs under a car in a housing estate in [Sydney's](#) north shore earlier today wanted to seriously hurt people. At least

eight shots were fired outside a unit on Walkers Drive in the Lane Cove North development before an explosion about 4:00am today. Detective Inspector Peter Yeomans says one pipe bomb under the car blew up, while the second was removed by police. Residents say they heard a loud blast and saw smoke coming from a car. "A device in relation to a homemade pipe bomb and a number of shots, which we believe were fired from a possible automatic weapon - that was to harm people," he [said](#). He [says](#) he doubts whoever is responsible did it just for a scare. He says there are several witnesses police are yet to talk to. Detective Inspector Yeomans says no-one was in the car at the time of the explosion but people were inside the unit. Forensic officers are examining the scene and police are interviewing people who live on the street. "We're interviewing a number of persons from the residence and we're trying to contact a number of persons who'd vacated their premises prior to police arriving," he said. Residents of the housing estate, which was built seven years ago, say there has never been any trouble there before earlier today. Walkers Drive has been blocked off and dozens of residents have been told they cannot drive their cars out of the area.

[in Piper - 90 AudioBook Minutes Don New CD](#) 90 Minutes in Heaven - by Don Piper - Audio Book CD Read by the Author Unabridged 90 Minutes in Heaven - by Don Piper - Audio Book CD Brand New 5 CDs 6.1 Hours - Unabridged After colliding with a semi-truck Don Piper died and went to heaven. Ninety minutes later he returned to life on earth. After years of silence he is now sharing his life-changing story. As he is driving home from a ministers conference Baptist minister Don Piper collides with a semi-truck that crosses into his lane. He is pronounced dead at the scene. For the next 90 minutes Piper experiences heaven where he is greeted by those who had influenced him spiritually. He hears beautiful music and feels true peace. Back on earth a passing minister who had also been at the conference is led to pray for Don even though he knows the man is dead. Piper miraculously comes back to life and the bliss of heaven is replaced by a lon

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[Public servant wage rise a 'one-off'](#) .The Federal Government [says](#) a pay rise of almost 19 per cent for senior Commonwealth public servants is a one-off increase to replace an unfair system of bonuses, despite calls that it should be showing wage restraint. Departmental secretaries will receive a 4. The Government says the [increase](#) was recommended by the remunerations tribunal.3 per cent pay rise, but also another 14 per cent boost to their base salary. But Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard says the Government has made a commitment to get rid of the performance pay bonus system. However, the ACT Chamber of Commerce says the wage rise sends the wrong signal about wage restraint. The Federal Opposition says the pay rise for most senior Commonwealth public servants sends the wrong message. "We think if you're going to have quality public servants, who feel [free](#) to say to Government what they genuinely think, then you need to have a system that doesn't make part of their pay dependent on pleasing the government of the day," she said. "People at that senior executive level are accustomed to being judged on their performance," she said. Deputy Opposition leader Julie Bishop says the bonus system should have remained in place. "But Kevin Rudd is sending a very poor message to the public service, he doesn't value performance."

[Suspected Manly gunman found in CBD](#) .A man has been arrested over a shooting on Sydney's northern beaches after the Royal North Shore Hospital went into lockdown over a threat believed to be related earlier today. Plain-clothes detectives arrested the 27-year-old man in Martin Place in Sydney's CBD just after midday . The man was being treated at the Royal North Shore Hospital but was moved earlier today after saying he had received a threat and he feared for his life. The victim of the shooting, also aged 27, was found in a unit on the Manly Corso with a gunshot wound to his right arm about 5:15am on Saturday. . Police closed the hospital to all but staff and legitimate patients

[Labours CHRISTIE of Book AGATHA Hercules The CD Audio](#) The Labours of Hercules by Agatha Christie - Read by Hugh Fraser 12 Hercule Poirot Mysteries More Agatha Chrisite Audio Books click here The Labours of Hercules - Agatha Christie - Read by Hugh Fraser- Audio Book CD Brand New : (still shrink wrapped) Unabridged 8.7 hours 7 CDs First published in book form in 1947 The Labours of Hercules comprises an even dozen mysteries starring Christie's most popular sleuth the ever-dignified Hercule Poirot. The introductory chapter of the collection sets up the rest of the book. At a dinner party another guest compares the labors of Poirot to those of Hercules and the little Belgian is not amused. He has already decided to retire but makes up his mind to take on 12 great cases — each somehow reflecting the labors accomplished by Hercules — as a farewell to crime solving. All of the cases are quite different from each other from searching f

[Anthony Live - with NEW Passion CD AudioBook Robbins](#) Live with Passion - by Anthony Robbins Audio Book CD Other Anthony Robbins (Tony) Audio Books - click here Live with Passion - Anthony Robbins (Read by the Author) - Audio Book CD Brand New (still shrink wrapped): 6 CDs Are you tired of settling for less than you can be less than you can achieve less than you deserve? Would you like to learn to live with passion so that you can turn your everyday experiences into extraordinary life-changing events? Well stop wishing and start living because you are about to acquire the vital life tools that will help you tap the power of your own passion. Anthony Robbins' revolutionary new program LIVE WITH PASSION will help you secure the life you've always wanted; the life you've watched others attain but were too scared and disillusioned to seek for yourself. Let's face it you want certain things out of life--financial rewards personal fulfillment and

[Narnia\) Audio NEW](#) Prince Caspian by C. S. Lewis performed by Lynn Redgrave - Audio Book Unabridged (many copies being sold elsewhere are Abridged) Get Other Chronicles of Narnia Audio Books click here Prince Caspian by C. S. Lewis performed by Lynn Redgrave -Audio Book New Unabridged 4 CDs 4 Hours Narnia...the land between the lamp-post and the Castle of Cair Paravel where animals talk where magical things happen...and where the adventure begins. Peter Susan Edmund and Lucy are returning to boarding school when they are summoned from the dreary train station (by Susan's own magic horn) to return to the land of Narnia -- the land where they had ruled as kings and queens and where their help is desperately needed. About the Author C S Lewis (From Wikipedia) Clive Staples Lewis (29 November 1898-22 November 1963) commonly referred to as C. S. Lewis was an Irish author and scholar of mixed Irish English

[Market ends higher on banking surge](#) .A fall in the price of oil drove the [Australian](#) share [market](#) to its highest level in three weeks today. The All Ordinaries index rose 86 points to 5,162 and the ASX 200 climbed 2 per cent to 5,105.95 a barrel, helping buoy investor sentiment. Oil dropped \$US3 to its lowest level since June at \$US127. Of the major banks, National [Australia](#) Bank's climbed 7. The financial sector has led the gains.60.1 percent to \$29.6 per cent to \$52. Westpac was up 7 per cent to \$22 and Macquarie Bank rose 11.8 billion will be hard to repeat this financial year. Macquarie's rise came despite the bank telling its annual general meeting that last year's record profit of \$1. Elsewhere in the banking sector Commonwealth Bank is now in talks to buy ABN Amro's Australian and New Zealand operations, after NAB dropped out of negotiations last night. But it says it had a strong start to the fiscal year and says each of its listed funds is reviewing how it can bring its asset value and the market price of its securities back in line.7 per cent to \$44. Commonwealth shares were up 3. The airlines rose strongly - Qantas and Virgin Blue both gained more than 6 per cent.60.8 per cent to \$38. But the miners fell on the

weaker oil and commodities prices - BHP Billiton was down 0. The consumer price index rose by a surprisingly strong 1.68.2 to 4.5 per cent over the June quarter to take the annual result from 4. The higher borrowing rates banks were charging as well as rising petrol costs have driven the rise. The higher borrowing rates banks were charging as well as rising petrol costs have driven the rise. The Australian dollar remained soft against the greenback since the release of the results. About 5:00pm AEST, it was buying 96.69 US cents, 48.55 UK pence, 104.27 Japanese yen and 61.4 Euro cents. A barrel of West Texas crude oil was worth \$US127.75 a barrel and spot gold was fetching \$US937.65 an ounce.

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