

sex couples of foreign children. The measure was passed by the House of Representatives but has been delayed in the Senate via the maneuver of sending it to a committee "inquiry."

Reports of homosexual harassment in the Australian Defense Forces jumped from 12 cases in 2002 to 51 in 2003, *The Australian* reported last month.

The paper obtained an internal report under freedom-of-information laws. A total of 51,791 people are serving in the Australian military.

UNITED KINGDOM

Britain's highest court, the Law Lords, ruled June 21 that gay partners can take over a housing lease that is in the name of a live-in partner who passes away. The 4-1 decision upheld a 2002 Court of Appeal ruling.

Announcing the ruling, Baroness Hale said equal treatment is "essential to democracy." Straight partners do not have to be married to inherit a lease.



Baroness Hale

One of Jamaica's top reggae and dance hall music stars, Beenie Man, was met by police when he arrived June 23 at London's Heathrow Airport to start a tour of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Acting on a complaint by the gay group OutRage!, Metropolitan Police questioned Beenie Man about his lyrics, which promote violence against homosexuals. A few hours later, London's Ocean nightclub canceled his June 24 concert "due to concerns for public safety and following discussions with the Metropolitan Police."

"This cancellation is a triumph over homophobia," said Peter Tatchell of OutRage! "Our aim is to make Britain a no-go area for entertainers who incite violence against gay people."

Among Beenie Man's lyrics are these from the song "Bad Man Chi Chi Man": "Some bwoy will go a jail fi kill man tun bad man chi chi man! [Some men are willing to go to jail for killing a man who is queer!] ...Yuh see em to run off a stage like a clown, kill dem DJ! [If you see the queer run off the stage like a clown, kill that DJ!]"

A former royal servant said June 13 that he lied when he claimed he saw Britain's Prince Charles having sex with a male employee, *The Sunday Telegraph* reported. George Smith sold the story to a newspaper last year for about \$109,000 but now says it was a fabrication.

"I didn't see him in a compromising position," Smith said. "The reason I said that was because I was angry with another royal servant."



London cops questioned Jamaican reggae star Beenie Man about his anti-gay lyrics

AIDS CONFERENCE OPENS TO A FLURRY OF REPORTS

"Access for All" to drug treatment for those who need it was the theme of the XV International AIDS Conference held July 11 to 16 in Bangkok, Thailand. A trio of reports released on the eve of the gathering made it clear just how gargantuan a task that remains.

During the opening ceremonies hundreds of activists demonstrated outside against the pharmaceutical industry for its pricing policies, the Bush administration and the Thai government for not doing more to provide access to care.

Inside, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan said: "Here in Asia, HIV/AIDS is at a turning point. How you will address this challenge will impact on the very future of the region." He called for political leadership and the emancipation and empowerment of women throughout the developing world to be able to protect themselves from becoming infected with HIV.

Even Thailand—long held to be a shining example of what a concerted effort can do to control the spread of the virus—came in for some lumps in a U.N. report. A combination of budget cuts and complacency has resulted in rising rates of new infections among the most sexually active populations.

The World Health Organization has set the goal of having 3 million people in the developing world on therapy by 2005, which means starting 5,000 patients a day on combination therapy. And that means testing a half million people a day to first learn their HIV status and then determine if those who are HIV-positive

have disease so advanced as to recommend beginning therapy.

"Solving the AIDS crisis will take more than just inexpensive drugs. Success now hinges more on having adequate infrastructures to distribute therapies and sufficient numbers of trained health care workers in developing countries," said Haile Debas of the Institute of Medicine, which released the report *Scaling Up Treatment for the Global AIDS Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities*. Among its major recommendations is creation of a Peace Corps-like "HIV/AIDS corps of technical specialists" to assist in the short-term delivery of that care.

A report by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria warned that about 20 percent of its initial projects have failed to meet their performance targets and are unlikely to receive additional funding.

Joep Lange, outgoing chairman of the International AIDS Society, which runs conference, said: "There are countries in Africa that have grants to put people on treatment and not a single person has been put on treatment. If you have a public sector that is not functioning, you are not going to solve the problem by shoving money at the public sector."

AIDS advocates expressed concern that the reports might undercut advances toward greater access to treatment in developing countries and provide an excuse for already reluctant donors in the wealthy nations not to fund increased access to care.

—Bob Roehr

Another report from last year said Princess Diana's "secret video diary" from the early 1990s revealed she believed Charles had an "unhealthy relationship" with former top aide Michael Fawcett.

"He is too close to Fawcett," the princess said. "What can one do when your husband is in an unhealthy relationship?"

Diana also said Charles and Fawcett appeared "uncomfortable" and "uneasy" when disturbed while together in one of Charles' private rooms. Fawcett was forced to resign last year for bending palace rules forbidding staff from accepting perks, hospitality and gifts.

The videos, which Diana made by herself, had been hidden in the loft of her former butler, Paul Burrell, until three years ago when police took them as evidence in a theft trial against him. Burrell was cleared mid-trial when Queen Elizabeth II said she had known he was guarding some of Diana's belongings.

PANAMA

The gay rights group Association of New Men and Women of Panama is collecting signatures to place a same-sex partnership bill before the nation's Legislative Assembly. The organization plans to collect four times the required 500 signatures and will submit the proposal Sept. 1, as the newly elected president and legislators come into office.

SWEDEN

As Sweden's gay registered partnership law celebrates its 10th anniversary, organizers of



Princess Diana believed Prince Charles had an "unhealthy relationship" with a former top aide

Stockholm Pride will focus on pushing for access to full marriage.

The annual celebration will be held from July 28 to Aug. 1. Like laws in some other European nations, the Swedish partnership law grants more than 99 percent of the rights and obligations of marriage—but under a different name and a separate-but-almost-equal framework.

"There is an intense debate in mass media and in the government about gender-neutral marriage," Pride president Håkan Steenberg said. "Stockholm Pride wants this year's festival to proclaim [the] gay right to express love through marriage."

THE VATICAN

Pope John Paul II called gays self-centered during a June meeting with U.S. bishops at the Vatican.

"Rights are at times reduced to self-centered demands: the growth of prostitution and pornography in the name of adult choice, the acceptance of abortion in the name of women's rights, the approval of same-sex unions in the name of homosexual rights," he said. "In the face of such erroneous yet pervasive thinking you must do everything possible to encourage the laity in their special responsibility for evangelizing culture and promoting Christian values in society and public life."

Catholic teaching forbids all sex that is not between a man and a woman who are married to each other and prohibits any ejaculation, even within a marriage, that could not lead to pregnancy.

Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.

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