

China Daily, 1 December 2005

### **US, China urged to cooperate in energy**

The United States and China should have a joint energy research and development program, a senior US Senator said, warning that the two powers could go to war in their insatiable quest for depleting foreign energy supplies. "We are heading towards two thirds by each country on dependence on foreign oil. Let's recognize this problem before it becomes an intense competition which can actually lead to military conflict," said Joseph Lieberman, the Democratic Senator from Connecticut. "Let's do it by each trying to diversify to clean fuels, alternative fuels, hybrids, electric plug ins," he told reporters after speaking at a forum "China-US energy policies: A choice of cooperation or collision?." Lieberman, a member of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee, cited the formal US-China dialogue process and said, "We ought to add joint energy research and development projects to that dialogue and then begin to see if we can work together." He noted that President George W. Bush's administration had begun talking to the Chinese authorities on the energy issue but added however that more serious attention should be given to the pressing problem.

People's Daily, 1 December 2005

### **China rules out talks between Premier Wen and Koizumi**

China Wednesday ruled out a meeting between Premier Wen Jiabao and his Japanese counterpart Junichiro Koizumi this month because of frosty ties between the two countries. The two leaders are scheduled to attend the ninth summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK); and the first East Asia Summit in Malaysia in mid-December. "Sino-Japanese relations are facing difficulties, and it is impossible to expect bilateral ties to develop as usual," said Cui Tiankai, director of the Asian Affairs Department of the Foreign Ministry. He was asked during a news briefing whether the Chinese and Japanese leaders would meet on the sidelines of the ASEAN-plus-three summit as they did in the past. "It is self-deceiving for the Japanese side to wish everything proceeds normally as if nothing has happened," he said.

The Hindu, 1 December 2005

### **China develops AIDS drug**

NANCHANG: China has developed its first AIDS drug with independent intellectual property right, the producers announced here on Wednesday. The drug, Dicaffeoyquonic Acid Tablets, marks a major breakthrough and has outperformed cocktail therapy in experiments on monkeys, said He Fuchu, vice-president of Academy of Military Medical Science, developer of the medicine. The drug has been approved by the State Food and Drug Administration for clinical tests on humans after passing tests on animals, said Mr. He, who is also an academician of the Chinese Academy of Science. "The safety of the new drug is reliable," he said. The medicine features remarkable performance in curbing the duplication of the HIV virus and its effectiveness lasts longer than the commonly-used cocktail therapy, said Mr. He.

China Daily, 2 November 2005

### **Sino-US textile agreement reconciles concerns of both sides**

The textile agreement recently signed by the US and China has settled concerns of both sides, which has created a stable and predictable trade environment for businesses of both countries, said an official with China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC) Thursday. He said the agreement has provided some space for the US and other developing countries to adjust their textile trade structures, and gave Chinese textile enterprises bigger chances to explore markets. The MOC official said the agreement covered altogether 21 products, involving 3.5 billion US dollars worth of textile products, or 20 percent of the US import of the China-made textile products in 2004. The official said the agreement has greatly reduced the number of the export textile products, and will in turn benefit most Chinese export textile products with free trade treatment.

People's Daily, 2 December 2005

### **China targets "fast, stable," more efficient growth**

Chinese President Hu Jintao addresses at the annual central conference on economic work held in Beijing from Nov. 29 to Dec. 1, 2005. The Chinese authorities said Thursday economic policies will be continued, aiming to maintain fast, stable growth in the new year. Work should be done to make economic expansion more efficient, and help the rural poor left behind by a two-decade boom. The nation's leadership put forward major tasks for economic work next year at a key, closed-door meeting beginning Tuesday, addressed by President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. Fast growth is imperative for increasing national strength and effectively relieving contradictions in economic and social development, said a statement issued after the meeting. The statement emphasized it is a "long-term, strategic principle" to increase domestic demand. It said efforts should be made to adjust the relationship between investment and consumption, adding the centerpiece job is to increase spending, especially the farmers' expenditure.

People's Daily, 2 December 2005

### **China, Russia calmly deal with cross-border river pollution**

Maintaining frequent contact and information reporting, China and Russia, the neighbors along the Heilongjiang River, have kept calm in dealing with the recent water pollution. China declared Thursday it would provide tools testing the water quality and activated carbon for the Russian border city of Khabarovsk and the Jewish autonomous province, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang at a regular press conference. Before this, China had already offered the Russian Embassy to China with a list of pollutants in the Songhua River and equipment to monitor benzene concentration. Working groups including Chinese and Russian experts got down to work on the pollution as early as on Nov. 22.

People's Daily, 2 December 2005

#### **China adopts open attitude toward proposals on six-party talks**

China adopts an open attitude toward any proposals conducive to promoting the six-party talks process and to finding a peaceful solution to the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang on Thursday. Qin told a regular press conference here that the Republic of Korea (ROK) has offered some suggestions concerning the form and site of the six-party talks. It is in the interest of all concerned parties to achieve the goal of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and to safeguard the peninsula's peace and stability through dialogue and peaceful negotiations, Qin said, adding that China wants to keep in close touch with other parties concerned and hear their opinions, so as to push forward the six-party talks process.

People's Daily, 3 December 2005

#### **Experts: Three Gorges Project didn't trigger earthquake in east China's Jiangxi province**

Chinese experts lashed out Friday at a report claiming that the Three Gorges Project triggered last weekend's earthquake in east China's Jiangxi Province, calling it "sheer speculation without any scientific foundation." "Scientific studies show that the Three Gorges Project didn't trigger the earthquake in Jiujiang City of Jiangxi Province," Dr. Qin Xiaojun, a seismologist and spokesman for the Hubei Provincial Seismological Bureau currently in Jiujiang for disaster appraisal, told Xinhua. An earthquake measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale hit the area between Jiujiang and Ruichang in Jiangxi at around 8:49 a.m. last Saturday, killing 13 people and destroying many houses in Jiujiang as well as in the eastern parts of adjacent Hubei Province. After the quake, rumors spread both at home and abroad that the quake was triggered by the Three Gorges Project.

People's Daily, 3 December 2005

#### **Chief of China's environmental watchdog resigns**

Xie Zhenhua, director of China's State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), has resigned, according to an announcement issued by the State Council, or cabinet, on Friday. Xie was replaced by Zhou Shengxian, former director of State Forestry Administration. Xie, born in 1949, is a native of Tianjin. He became chief of SEPA in 1993. Zhou, also born in 1949, is a native of Wuzhong, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in northwest China. The State Council announcement also says that Jia Zhibang, former vice-minister of civil affairs, has been appointed director of the State Forestry Administration.

International Herald Tribune, 3 December 2005

#### **UN assails China for wide use of torture** (Joseph Kahn)

BEIJING A high-level UN investigator condemned what he found to be "widespread" use of torture in Chinese law enforcement and said Beijing must overhaul its criminal laws, grant more power to judges and abolish labor camps before it can end such abuses, according to the summary of an official report released Friday. The investigation, conducted by Manfred Nowak, a special investigator for the UN Commission on Human Rights who focuses on torture, noted some progress by Chinese officials in reducing violence against prisoners since 1988, when the country signed an international covenant banning torture. But Nowak said "obtaining confessions" and fighting "deviant behavior" continued to be central goals of the Chinese criminal justice system. The police and prison guards are pushed to extract admissions of guilt and are rarely punished for using electric shocks, sleep deprivation and submersion in water or sewage, among other techniques, to obtain them, he said. "The use of torture, though on the decline, particularly in urban areas, nevertheless remains widespread in China," Nowak said at a press briefing. "There is a need for much more structural reform to address the problem."

People's Daily, 4 December 2005

#### **CPC delegation leaves for visits to India, Philippines**

A Communist Party of China (CPC) delegation led by Wang Yunkun, a member of the CPC Central Committee and secretary of CPC Jilin Provincial Committee, left Beijing Sunday for friendly, goodwill visits to India and the Philippines. The delegation was invited by the Nationalist Congress Party of India and Jose De Venecia, speaker of the house of representatives of the Philippines and chairman of Philippine Christian-Muslim Democrats.

The New York Times, 4 December 2005

#### **Big democracy march in Hong Kong** (Keith Bradsher)

HONG KONG A huge throng of pro-democracy protesters poured through the skyscraper canyons of Hong Kong

on Sunday afternoon, defying warnings from senior Chinese officials who have refused to set a timetable for general elections here. So large was the crowd that the march continued well past sunset, as more and more men, women and children of all ages emerged from side streets and subway stations to join the protest. Organizers estimated the peaceful crowd at 250,000 while police officials put it at 63,000. The turnout, much larger than expected by either measure, was especially surprising because Hong Kong's economy is booming, unemployment is falling and the city now has a popular and charismatic leader, Donald Tsang. The scale of the march Sunday and the emphasis on full democracy pose an acute problem for China's leaders. They have declared it "unlawful" even to ask for a timetable for popular elections in Hong Kong, which Britain returned to China in 1997. At a news conference late Sunday evening, Tsang, the chief executive of Hong Kong, said that he wanted full democracy here in his lifetime and that he shared the aspirations of many of the protesters. But he also insisted that the legislature vote on Dec. 21 on a plan he has drafted that would permit only limited political changes in the near future.

People's Daily, 4 December 2005

#### **KMT wins more than half seats in local election in Taiwan**

The Chinese Kuomintang Party (KMT) won more than half seats of the county-level mayors in a local election in China's Taiwan Province on Saturday. According to the results announced by the authorities late Saturday, among the 23 seats of county-level mayors, the KMT won 14 seats, compared with the former eight seats, the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won six, down from 10, and the People First Party (PFP) one seat, the New Party (NP) one and personages with no party affiliations one. Among the 901 seats of county councilors, the KMT won 408, the DPP 192, the PFP 31, the "Taiwan Solidarity Union" 11, the NP two, and personages with no party affiliation 256. Another seat will be decided by drawing lots due to two people getting the same votes, according to the authorities. Among the 319 positions of town level mayors, the KMT won 173, the DPP 35, the PFP three, the "Taiwan Solidarity Union" one and personages with no party affiliations 107.

People's Daily, 5 December 2005

#### **Chinese premier vows to boost Sino-French strategic partnership**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, upon his arrival in Toulouse Sunday on the start of a four-day official visit to France, said that he hopes to further promote continued development of an all-round strategic partnership between China and France. In a written speech delivered at the airport, Wen said China and France have conducted intensive cooperation in the fields of economy, science and technology, culture and education. "The China-France Culture Year activities held in both countries have succeeded in contributing to mutual promoting understanding and friendship between the Chinese and French as well as the Chinese and European peoples," the Chinese premier said. Wen said that during the visit, he would have in-depth exchange of views with French leaders on issues of common concern so as to push forward the all-round Sino-French strategic partnership.

People's Daily, 5 December 2005

#### **Citizens' demand for democracy not contradictory with govt's reform, CE**

Hong Kong Chief Executive Donald Tsang said Sunday evening that the citizens' demands for democracy are not in contradiction with the contents of the Fifth Report of the Constitutional Development Task Force. Speaking at a press conference at the Guest House, Tsang said that it is observed that the central government and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government are actively leading the Hong Kong community toward universal suffrage in an orderly and gradual manner. "We would not change our commitments to the universal suffrage," he stressed. He said the Package Proposals for the Methods for Selecting the Chief Executive in 2007 and for Forming the Legislative Council in 2008 offer a leaping forward point for Hong Kong's democratic development.

People's Daily, 5 December 2005

#### **China, Japan, ROK leaders' meeting postponed**

The annual meeting of leaders of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea will be postponed to an appropriate time due to "the current atmosphere and conditions," the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Sunday. The ministry gave no further information about "the current atmosphere and conditions," but said China would continue to fulfil its obligations as one of the three cooperating and coordinating nations. It is China's hope that the three countries could work together to "remove obstacles for stable development," the ministry said in a brief press release. The meeting was originally scheduled to be held in mid-December in Kuala Lumpur, capital of Malaysia.

People's Daily, 6 December 2005

#### **China, Japan to start new round of negotiations on sea dispute**

On the China-Japan dispute on the oil and gas resources in the East China Sea, Japan, on the one hand, urges China to start a new round of negotiations, while on the other rushes to strengthen its patrol across the coast, and unilaterally puts forward relevant bill in an attempt to "legitimize" its experimental exploitation in the East China Sea, International Finance News reports. There are foreign reports saying that China and Japan will resume late

this month their negotiations on the exploitation of the oil and gas in the East China Sea. According to Japanese official, currently, China and Japan are making preparations for a new round of negotiations, in which they will discuss Japan's proposal earlier on joint exploitation of the natural gas in East China Sea. On September 30 and October 1 this year, the two countries held the third round of meeting on the exploitation of the gas and oil fields in East China Sea. Japan proposed joint exploitation on both sides of the Japan-claimed "median line", a proposal China said it needed to examine.

People's Daily, 7 December 2005

#### **China against US intervention in HK affairs, FM spokesman**

China resolutely opposes the United States' intervention in Hong Kong affairs, Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said in Beijing Tuesday. "The Hong Kong affairs are China's domestic affairs, and do not allow for any foreign intervention," Qin said at a routine news conference when asked about the US comment on Hong Kong's political system. US deputy State Department spokesman Adam Ereli reportedly made a comment Monday on the development of Hong Kong's political system, urging China to set up a timetable for universal suffrage and full democracy in Hong Kong. Moreover, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met with Martin Lee, a lawmaker from Hong Kong's Legislative Council, on Nov. 29 in Washington. And an US State Department spokesman said after the meeting that the United States supports Hong Kong's democracy and universal suffrage.

People's Daily, 7 December 2005

#### **Chinese premier visits ITER in southern France**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Tuesday visited the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) in southern France.

During the visit, Wen highlighted the work of ITER, expressing his hope for an abundance of clean and cheap energy resources in the 21 century to facilitate the sustainable development of economy. The goal of the ITER project is to show that energy production using atomic fission is scientifically and technologically possible. At a time when fossil fuel shortages are just 50 years away, exploring the potential of alternative energy sources is all the more important. According to scientists at the ITER, which is situated in Cadarache, some 70 kilometers northeast of France's second largest city Marseille, just 300 liters of sea water provide one gram of deuterium, and this means that the water in our oceans alone could meet world energy needs for around a billion years. Wen, who attaches great importance to high-tech enterprises, toured the ITER soon after he visited the Eurocopter Group in Marseille.

People's Daily, 7 December 2005

#### **Malaysian minister apologizes for crimes**

Malaysia's home minister said yesterday that Malaysia was sorry for recent crimes against Chinese citizens in Malaysia, expressing the "shock and dismay" of the government and people of his country. "The thing is, for the things that have happened, especially there was a case of murder and there was a case of rape. These are outside our control, actually, but we apologize, because we don't like to see these things happen," said Azmi Khalid at a press conference in Beijing. "Results of the investigation will be made public and everything will be transparent," Azmi said. According to a separate press statement from his delegation, Azmi told his Chinese counterparts that "Malaysia does not treat Chinese tourists any differently from other tourists."

People's Daily, 7 December 2005

#### **New human case of bird flu confirmed in south China**

The Ministry of Health (MOH) on Tuesday night confirmed a new case of human infection of bird flu in Ziyuan County of south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The patient is a 10-year-old girl student surnamed Tang, who has been ill with fever and pneumonia since November 23, said an MOH press release. The girl has been tested positive with the H5N1 virus by the China Disease Prevention and Control Center, and she has been under emergency treatment in hospital. Tang has been confirmed to be infected with bird flu in accordance with the standards of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Chinese government. People who have close contacts with the patient have been brought under medical observation by local health departments. So far, no abnormalities have been found among these people. The regional health department and MOH have sent expert teams to direct and coordinate disease prevention and control in the area. Currently, experts are making further investigation in the source of the bird flu virus, since no bird flu cases have been reported in the county before.

People's Daily, 8 December 2005

#### **China calls for joint efforts with Japan to bring bilateral ties to normal**

China on Wednesday urged politicians and insightful people from China and Japan to join efforts to bring bilateral ties back to normal. The politicians and people with insight of the two countries should work together to conquer difficulties so as to promote the normal development of bilateral ties and ensure that the two countries will be friendly from generation to generation," Chinese Vice President Zeng Qinghong said when meeting with a delegation of the Japanese Social Democratic Party led by the party leader Fukushima Mizuho. "The China-Japan

relationship is currently faced with serious difficulties and China is not the one who should shoulder the responsibility," Zeng said. The vice president said the visits of Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine, which honors convicted class-A World War II criminals along with other war-dead, have seriously hurt Chinese people's feelings and impaired the political foundation of Sino-Japanese ties.

People's Daily, 8 December 2005

#### **China, US continue high-level dialogue**

China and the United States started the second round of high-level strategic dialogue in Washington yesterday, in an effort to maintain the momentum of improved bilateral relations. The two-day talks, co-chaired by Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo and US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, were held four months after the first round in Beijing. The topics during the closed-door meeting would be "broader" in scope compared with previous talks, insiders said. Yin Chengde, a researcher with the China Institute of International Studies on Sino-US relations, said the ongoing dialogue is expected to focus on issues of "strategic, overall and long-standing importance" to the two countries, such as trade, security and energy. "It is also expected to pave the way for President Hu Jintao's visit to the US early next year," Yin told China Daily. Yin said Sino-US relations have gained a sound momentum this year thanks to frequent high-level visits and expanding communication channels.

People's Daily, 8 December 2005

#### **China coal mine blast kills 54, traps 22**

SHIJIAZHUANG: A gas explosion in a colliery in Tangshan, North China's Hebei Province, has killed 54 miners and left 22 missing. At least 186 miners were working underground when the blast occurred at 3:30 pm in Liuguantun Mine in Tangshan's Kaiping District. By press time, 110 miners had escaped, but 22 others were still trapped in the coal pit. Rescuers are on the scene. Upon receiving reports of the tragedy, Vice-Governor Fu Shuangjian and leading officials with the provincial industrial safety watchdog rushed to the mine to direct rescue operations and conduct an investigation into the accident. This is the third incident in two weeks involving hundreds of miners. On Tuesday, rescuers recovered the body of the last miner missing in a November 27 explosion in Northeast China, bringing the final death toll in that mishap to 171. The blast at Dongfeng Coal Mine in Heilongjiang Province was sparked when airborne coal dust caught fire. Also yesterday, rescuers at Sigou Coal Mine in Central China's Henan Province were trying to save 42 miners trapped underground after the shaft flooded, a Xinhua report said.

People's Daily, 8 December 2005

#### **ASEAN-China Senior Official's Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur**

Senior officials from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China held a meeting in Kuala Lumpur Wednesday and both sides expressed satisfaction over the positive development of ASEAN-China relations, a high-ranking Chinese official said. Cui Tiankai, director-general of the Asian affairs department under the Chinese Foreign Ministry, told Xinhua that the ASEAN-China Senior Official's Meeting focused on the preparation of the 9th ASEAN-China summit scheduled to be held here on Dec. 12. With the joint efforts, Cui said, both sides believe the forthcoming summit will achieve fruitful results and further enhance ASEAN-China strategic partnership for peace and prosperity.

China Daily, 9 December 2005

#### **US, China eye cooperation on Iraq, Iran**

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States and China are eyeing possible cooperation on such diverse issues as Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and North Korea, US State Department said after talks among senior officials. "Without always pursuing the same policies, we can still pursue the same policy goals with complementary approaches," Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick said after the second round of the so-called US-China Senior Dialogue. Zoellick, who led the US side, said they discussed over two days "how China could work with the United States and others on challenges such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and North Korea." They dwelt on "overlapping interests" in fighting terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, building energy security, and reducing the risks of pandemic disease, he said. "We noted that by anticipating challenges and discussing problems openly, including in those areas where we may not agree, we are more likely to advance our mutual interests and manage our differences," he said in a statement.

People's Daily, 9 December 2005

#### **KMT, PFP hold talks on merger, for 1st time**

Kuomintang (KMT) and People First Party in Taiwan held their first ever talks on the issue of merger between the two political parties Thursday in Taipei. A possible merger between the two parties has, once again, become a hot topic immediately after the local elections in Taiwan on Dec. 3, which ended up with a victory for KMT candidates who reaped 14 of the 23 mayoral positions.

A five-member PFP team had a close-door meeting with KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou and other senior KMT officials. The talks is merely a preparative meeting for the upcoming summit of the two parties, said a KMT

spokesperson, adding that the two parties will push forward the cooperation and merger after the summit. There are still many problems hindering the merger of the two parties, such as the future position of PFP Chairman James Soong, according to local media.

People's Daily, 9 December 2005

#### **Nepali high-ranking government officials meet China's Tibet delegation**

Nepali Vice Chairmen of the Council of Ministers Tulsi Giri and Kirti Nidhi Bista Thursday met with a China's Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) delegation who are visiting Kathmandu to expand the ties between Nepal and China. During the meeting, Giri expressed his happiness over the long history of very warm, cordial and cooperative relations between China and Nepal. Nepal and China enjoy traditional friendship marked by warmth of friendship, cordiality, mutual trust, understanding and cooperation, Giri said. Being a neighbor, Nepal can benefit from the development of TAR, Bista noted. The railway linkage between TAR and other places in China helps Nepal's development, and the prosperity and stability of TAR contribute not only to peace and development of China and Nepal but also the whole of South Asia, Bista said.

People's Daily, 9 December 2005

#### **China, US conclude second round of strategic talks**

China and the United States concluded the second round of strategic talks Thursday in Washington, acknowledging their increasing common interests and vowing to further cooperation. During the two-day meeting, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo and US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick focused their discussions on international situation, bilateral relations as well as major world and regional issues of common concern, according to sources from the Chinese Embassy in Washington. The talks were conducted in a strategic context with candid, thorough and constructive exchange of views and were believed to have further forwarded mutual understanding and consensus building. The Chinese side explained China's peaceful development strategy and clarified the position that China develops in a way responsible for both the Chinese people and the world and the development will benefit the Chinese people and the world. The US side agreed with the Chinese position. Both sides believed that in the new international environment, it is important for both countries to regard and understand each other in a constructive way.

People's Daily, 10 December 2005

#### **Mine bosses arrested for gas explosion killing 166 in NW China province**

Two bosses of a coal mine involved in a gas explosion that killed 166 miners last year in northwest China's Shaanxi Province were arrested Friday, local police said. The tragedy happened on Nov. 28, 2004 at the Chenjiashan Coal Mine under the Tongchuan Mining Administration in Tongchuan City of Shaanxi Province. Altogether 293 miners were working underground when the deadly blast occurred. Only 127 miners who were working near the entrance were rescued. Dozens of miners were injured in the blast. The accident caused a direct economic loss of nearly 42 million yuan (5.2 million US dollars).

People's Daily, 10 December 2005

#### **China, Vietnam hold 12th government-level border negotiations**

The 12th round of border negotiations between the governments of China and Vietnam was held in Hanoi from Thursday to Saturday. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and his Vietnamese counterpart Vu Dung attended the negotiations. The two sides reviewed the progress made in previous negotiations, and made further arrangement for the next phase of work. They agreed to speed up the process on the demarcation and erection of border markers along their land boundaries. They also agreed to ensure that they can finish the process before 2008 and sign new document on the system of border management, continue to promote bilateral cooperation to fulfill the Beibu Gulf fishery cooperation agreement, jointly maintain the natural order of Beibu Gulf fishery production, and start Sino-Vietnamese naval joint patrol as soon as possible. They agreed to build up a Sino-Vietnamese joint work-group on the maritime space outside Beibu Gulf entrance to negotiate the demarcation on the space and the issues on joint exploitation through consultations. Besides, the two sides will carefully investigate joint exploitation of the South China Sea and will promote the cooperation on small-extent sensitive items on sea. Wu Dawei also met with Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung on Saturday.

People's Daily, 11 December 2005

#### **China strongly opposes to US government's assault on pretext of human rights issue, FM spokesman**

China strongly opposes to the assault of the US government on the pretext of human rights issue, Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said in Beijing Sunday. Qin made the remarks in response to the US State Department spokesman's statement on Saturday's International Human Rights Day, in which the US side criticized China's human rights situation. Qin said China has scored remarkable achievements in the field of human rights protection. The Chinese people fully enjoy human rights and freedom according to law. "The Chinese government and people expressed their strong opposition and firmly opposed to the US government's practice in the name of the so-called human rights issue that wantonly assaulted China," said the spokesman.

The United States itself has severe problems of violating human rights, and it is being strictly criticized by the international society as it refused the investigation of a special rapporteur of the UN Human Rights Commission, said Qin.

The China Daily, 12 December 2005

#### **Singh: India, China not rivals**

Setting at rest the misconception that India and China are emerging as rivals in the economic and political area, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Sunday said the bilateral relationship is progressing in the right direction. "There is a misconception that India and China are competitors and this is not true," Singh told journalists accompanying him on the four-day visit to Kuala Lumpur. "India's relations with China is emerging including on border issue on the basis of agreed principles. Our relationship is emerging in the right direction. We are making progress on trade as well as border," Press Trust of India quoted Singh as saying. He made it clear there was no rivalry between India and China and the two were partners in pushing up growth and prosperity in the region. Singh expressed the hope that the first East Asia summit would articulate a collective long-term vision for shaping the regional economy.

People's Daily, 12 December 2005

#### **Chinese premier outlines plans for China's economic, social development**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Monday in Kuala Lumpur briefed East Asian leaders about China's current economic and social status as well as the problems it is facing while giving a speech at the East Asia Summit Leaders Dialogue. He also elaborated on plans for China's economic and social development in the future. In his speech -- "China's Peaceful Development: An Opportunity for East Asia," Wen said China's economy has been growing rapidly at an average annual rate of 9.4 percent in the past 27 years since China embarked on the reform and opening-up program. In 2004, China's gross domestic products (GDP) reached 2 trillion US dollars. Its economy accounted for 4 percent of the world economy, which was only 1 percent in 1978. The number of poor rural population had dropped to 26 million from 250 million, he said. However, the premier also mentioned the difficulties and challenges China currently faces, such as low per capita GDP, uneven development between urban and rural areas and among different regions, huge pressure on employment, lack of innovation, low level of industrial technology, outdated and inefficient mode of production, an increasingly adverse impact on environment by economic and social development.

People's Daily, 12 December 2005

#### **China signs documents on preferential tariff treatment with three ASEAN countries**

China signed exchanges of letters on special and preferential tariff treatment with Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar on Sunday. According to the documents, starting from Jan. 1, 2006, some categories of goods exported to China from the three countries will enjoy zero-tariff treatment. The preferential policy will apply to 83 categories of goods from Cambodia, 91 categories of goods from Laos and 87 categories of goods from Myanmar. Chinese Vice-Minister of Commerce Yu Guangzhou signed the exchanges of letters respectively with representatives of these countries, namely, Cambodian Minister of Commerce Cham Prasidh, Laotian Minister of Commerce Soulivong Daravong and Myanmar Vice-Minister of National Planning and Economic Development Thuyain Zaw.

People's Daily, 13 December 2005

#### **Beijing against exclusive bloc in East Asia**

Premier Wen Jiabao yesterday made it clear that China is opposed to building any self-enclosed or exclusive bloc in the East Asia region. He also reassured leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that Beijing does not seek a leadership role in regional co-operation. The premier arrived in the Malaysian capital on Sunday to attend the ninth Summit of ASEAN Plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (10+3) and the ninth summit between ASEAN and China (10+1). China supports 10+3 in enhancing communication and dialogue with the United States, the European Union and other countries or organizations outside the region to expand common interests and achieve common development, Wen said during his speech at the 10+3 summit.

People's Daily, 13 December 2005

#### **Wen puts forward 5 proposals for China-ASEAN cooperation**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Monday in Kuala Lumpur put forward five initiatives to ensure more vigorous and fruitful growth of relations between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The five initiatives include: to forge stronger bond of friendship, to put in place a planned framework for relations, to endeavor to build China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, to identify new priority areas of cooperation, and to vigorously promote personnel exchanges. Wen made the proposals in his speech -- "Deepen Comprehensive Cooperation and Enhance China-ASEAN Strategic Partnership" -- at the 9th China-ASEAN summit. "In the next 15 years, China will build itself into a country of moderate prosperity, ASEAN will accelerate the formation of the ASEAN Community, and China-ASEAN relations are expected to register major progress," the Chinese premier told the summit.

People's Daily, 13 December 2005

### **Japanese opposition party chief calls for improving Japan-China relations**

A Japanese opposition party chief on Monday urged Japan to thaw chilling relations with China and other Asian nations in pursuit of peace and stability in the region. Japan should improve relations with China and other Asian nations. It is conducive not only to Japan itself but also to peace, stability and prosperity in Asia, said Seiji Maehara, leader of the Democratic Party, Japan's largest opposition party. Maehara, who is visiting Beijing as guest of the Communist Party of China, made a speech titled "Sino-Japanese relations are the basis for peace and stability of Asia" at a forum of the China Foreign Affairs University. China and Japan, the two giant Asian neighbors, are largely responsible for peace and stability in East Asia, said Maehara, adding the deterioration of Japan-China relations should not lead to regional instability.

People's Daily, 13 December 2005

### **Hong Kong meeting marks new bid to move WTO trade talks forward**

Ministers from 149 members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) gathered in Hong Kong Tuesday for the Sixth Ministerial Conference, which is seen as a new bid to move the stalled Doha Round negotiations forward. In recent weeks, WTO members have lowered their expectations of the long-awaited meeting in the face of a bitter dispute between rich and poor nations over farm subsidies and tariffs. "Expectations of Hong Kong will not be, with the availability of time, what they were two months ago," Indian Trade Minister Kamal Nath said late last month. A framework agreement was originally expected to be reached at the Dec. 13-18 meeting so that the four-year-old Doha Round trade talks can be successfully concluded by the end of 2006. Launched in the Qatari capital in 2001, the Doha Round aims to lower barriers to trade across the world and reduce poverty in the developing countries. But it bogged down in a deadlock after the fifth ministerial meeting collapsed in Cancun, Mexico, in 2003 over agriculture.

People's Daily, 14 December 2005

### **China to play bigger role in talks**

Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai said yesterday that he expects the sixth WTO ministerial meeting to achieve progress in bringing more benefits to developing countries, adding that China was ready to make a mark in framing global trade rules. Development is the theme of the Doha round of talks, and all members have reached a consensus on that, Bo told China Daily after a bilateral meeting with Celso Amorim, Brazilian Minister of State for External Relations. As the biggest developing country, China's major aim is to protect the interests of developing countries while pushing for progress, said Bo, adding the country was well prepared for tough negotiations. "We are aware of the importance of making world trade rules and we will cherish this historic opportunity," Bo said. Failure of the Hong Kong meeting could mean an impasse in global free trade and result in revival of protectionism, which could be disastrous to China's export-oriented economy, said the minister.

People's Daily, 14 December 2005

### **Russia to provide China with 240 jet engines in next 5 years**

In the coming few years the total demand from southeast countries for Il-76 combat-support cargo aircraft and Il-78 air refueling tanker will surpass 50, a spokesman of Russian air company Ilyushin said at the 8th Pulau Langkawi air show held in Malaysia. Russia is talking with several southeast Asian countries over the selling of Il-76. Experts estimate demand of 12 sets from Malaysia and Indonesia respectively. Besides, Vietnam and Thailand showed strong interest in Il-76MF, a heavy cargo aircraft equipped with PS-90A engine. Persian Gulf countries including Saudi Arabia and the UAE also expressed their intention to purchase Il-76. Ilyushin leaders also expect an order from Jordan. Russia inked a deal with China in last September to provide 38 Il-76MD military cargo aircraft and Il-78MK air refueling tanker (equipped with D-30KP-2 engine). According to the contract, Russia will also provide China will 240 sets of engines from 2006 to 2010, their total value exceeding 300 million US dollars. The whole contract is worth about 1 billion dollars. All these planes will be assembled by Tashkent Aircraft Production Corporation, Uzbekistan.

People's Daily, 14 December 2005

### **Chinese premier outlines proposals to overcome difficulties in East Asia**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao outlined his proposals to overcome difficulties and challenges in the region while addressing the first East Asia Summit Wednesday. In his speech -- "Be Open and Inclusive, and Achieve Mutual Benefit and Common Progress," Wen said the world is experiencing complex and profound changes, which have presented East Asian countries with both rare opportunities and numerous challenges. East Asia, with abundant resources, a huge market and rich experience gained over the years, has a solid foundation for developing and revitalizing itself, he said. However, the Chinese premier noted that in East Asia, there are both problems left over from the Cold War and long-standing territorial, ethnic and religious issues, as well as increasingly acute new problems such as terrorism, transnational crimes, natural disasters and the spread of communicable diseases. The region also faces problems such as unbalanced development and widening gap in wealth, sharp increase in

energy and resource consumption and deterioration of the ecological environment, he added. Wen believes that East Asian countries should strengthen coordination and take up the challenges together.

People's Daily, 15 December 2005

#### **Common interests of China, India greater than differences: Premier**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said in Kuala Lumpur Wednesday that the common interests of China and India are greater than their differences, and the cooperation between the two is greater than their competition. Wen made the remarks while meeting with his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the First East Asia Summit. China and India are not only mutually important neighbors, but also big developing countries, Wen said. The strengthening of cooperation between China and India is not only beneficial to the 23 billion people of the two countries, but also conducive to promoting peace, stability and development of Asia and the world at large. Currently, relations between the two countries are developing well, with the two sides declaring the establishment of a comprehensive and cooperative partnership, the Chinese premier said. This has demonstrated to the world that China and India are cooperation partners, not rivals, he added.

People's Daily, 15 December 2005

#### **China's basic old-age pension payment to reach 400 billion yuan**

China's basic old-age pension payment will reach 400 billion yuan (50 billion U.S. dollars) in 2005, said Liu Yongfu, vice minister of Ministry of Labor and Social Security, in Beijing Thursday. The amount of basic old-age pension was only 151.2 billion yuan in 1998, Liu said at a press conference hosted by the Information Office of the State Council. Since 1998, the labor and social security administrative departments at various levels have redoubled efforts to ensure the timely and full payment of old-age pension to retirees," Liu added. The pension arrears decreased from 600 million yuan a month in 1998 to 300 million yuan in 1999, and 100 million yuan in 2000. There were 132-million-yuan arrears occurred in some localities in 2003, he said. In recent years, there was no more new pension arrears, he stressed. At the same time, localities were active in finding solutions to pay out the arrears occurred in the past, he said. Liu said the coverage of social insurance has been extended to enterprises of diversified ownership while the number of the insured has been on rise, up from 112 million in 1998 to 173 million in 2005.

People's Daily, 15 December 2005

#### **11th Panchen Lama vows to serve motherland**

The 11th Panchen Lama paid homage to the stupas of his predecessors Thursday at the Zhaxi Lhunbo Lamasery in Xigaze, the second largest city in Tibet. The leader of Tibetan Buddhism, dressed in a purple cassock and a golden crown, paid his respect to the pagoda-like structures inaugurated to the souls of the fourth to the 10th Panchen Lamas, at the ceremony that started at 9:20 a.m. and lasted for more than three hours. He also presented a "hada", a white scarf symbolizing the Tibetan's best wishes, and chanted sutras, to the Stupa "Sisum Namgyal", which was built in memory of the late 10th Panchen Lama who died in 1989. "All during his life, the 10th Panchen Lama loved our motherland and carried forward the glorious traditions of his predecessors," he said in front of the 11.55-meter-high gold-adorned shrine, whose name means "immortal of the universe". "He was a patriot who upheld the reunification of the motherland and solidarity of all Chinese nationals."

People's Daily, 16 December 2005

#### **India, China to speed up border dispute talks**

India and China have agreed to speed up the process of resolving their long-standing border dispute, a report quoted Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as saying. "I had very good discussions with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao," Singh told reporters travelling with him from an East Asia summit in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur. "We feel the negotiations should be expedited... We are dealing with difficult issues. Without setting any deadline, I do think it is possible to move forward at a faster pace..." he said according to the Hindu newspaper on Thursday. In another development, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang told a regular news conference in Beijing that the two countries will hold friendly discussions so as to find an appropriate solution to the border issue. China and India account for more than 1/3 of the world's total population, Qin pointed out, saying that Sino-Indian friendship not only conforms to the interests of the two neighbours, but also benefits the peace and stability of Asia and the world.

People's Daily, 16 December 2005

#### **US official says difficult challenges ahead in China-US trade**

China and the United States will face difficult challenges in bilateral trade in 2006 and the two governments have to do "big jobs" in solving many of their trade problems. Assistant US Trade Representative Timothy P. Stratford made the remarks in Hong Kong Thursday in an exclusive interview with Xinhua on the sidelines of the ongoing 6th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which opened Tuesday. Stratford, who took the helm as chief of the US Trade Representative Office of China Affairs in September, said, "There will not be big change to the trade deficits (on the US side) during the next year." However, "It is important on the United States

side for its people to understand that there're lots of causes for the trading imbalance. And the largest causes of trading imbalance are not matters of trade policies. They have to do with macro-economic factors," said the US trade official. The large and rapidly-growing trade gap, which "is not sustainable for the long-term health of the US economy," has caused concerns at the United State, Stratford said. "It will take a longer period of time to solve the trade gap."

People's Daily, 16 December 2005

#### **China ready to enhance energy resource cooperation with other nations: FM spokesman**

China is ready to enhance cooperation on energy resources with other countries, including Russia and Kazakhstan, based on equality and mutual benefits, said Qin Gang, spokesman of Chinese Foreign Ministry in Beijing Thursday. "China's stance on energy cooperation is clear," Qin said, noting China hopes to promote cooperation not only on oil and natural gas, but also on using renewable and clean energy. The first period of the 1000-km oil pipeline project between China and Kazakhstan launched Thursday. This is China's first transnational oil project.

People's Daily, 16 December 2005

#### **New Zealand PM optimistic about China FTA talks**

New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark has said she was "optimistic" that Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks with China " would make good progress" in the coming year. She said this Thursday night at a closed meeting to the Asia Pacific Business Network and her speech was released on Friday morning. Clark told attendees that the Joint Study New Zealand did before beginning negotiations estimated that the removal of barriers faced by exporters in the Chinese market could boost New Zealand exports by up to 400 million NZ dollars (280 million US dollars) per year, a 25 percent increase on current levels. "Our economic relationship with China is of course about much more than trade in goods. Our services exports are already significant in excess of half a billion dollars. And New Zealanders have an increasing direct stake in the Chinese economy, " said Clark.

People's Daily, 17 December 2005

#### **China to make SCO 2006 summit "fruitful"**

China is determined to make the next Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, to be held in Shanghai in 2006, a "fruitful" one with Chinese characteristics, said Chinese State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan. In his inspection tour in Shanghai from Dec. 14 to 16, Tang said the year 2006 marks the fifth anniversary of the founding of the SCO, and also the tenth anniversary of the Shanghai Five mechanism, predecessor of the SCO. Member states have agreed to hold the meeting of SCO leaders in Shanghai next year. "It is an important summit in the SCO development process and also an important diplomatic mission of China which draws broad attention from SCO member states and the international community," Tang said. Tang said the Chinese government attaches great importance to the summit and requires relevant departments to make good preparation for it.

People's Daily, 17 December 2005

#### **China, US cooperate to improve care of Chinese seniors**

The U.S. Washington Hospital Management and the China aging Development Foundation will invest 20 billion US dollars to upgrade China's healthcare for seniors, according to an agreement signed Friday. The initial investment of 200 million US dollars will be used to set up a service center for the aging population in Shanghai. The service chain will be extended to Beijing, Hainan, Qingdao and other places. "We will bring advanced technologies and doctors to cooperate with Chinese partners, to help Chinese old citizens grow with dignity and health," said Carl. N. Johnson III, president of the Washington Hospital Management. The China Aging Development Foundation is a non-profit organization under the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

People's Daily, 18 December 2005

#### **Anti-WTO demonstrators clash with Police in HK**

Anti-WTO demonstrations in Hong Kong escalated with the protesters clashing violently with Police Saturday, the fifth day of the ongoing Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization. The demonstrators, mainly farmers from the Republic of Korea (ROK), have stepped up their protesting activities by ramming through police cordon lines and tried to enter the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, venue of the conference. Riot police have reinforced their forces at the Center and used tear gas and water cannons to prevent the demonstrators from entering the conference venue. It is reported that five persons, including protesters and police, were injured during the clash. The demonstration has caused traffic jam in downtown Wanchai District, and the police have urged Hong Kong residents not to go to the district.

People's Daily, 19 December 2005

#### **Violence not tolerable in Hong Kong: chief executive**

Hong Kong could not tolerate people to use violence for anti-WTO demands, Donald Tsang, chief executive of the

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, said Sunday afternoon. He made the remarks after visiting the Police Catering and Support Center at the Harbor Road Sports Center in Wan Chai district. Donald Tsang said Hong Kong police had used the minimum force in response to protesters' violent action and even to their physical attacks on policemen in every respect. Anti-WTO protesters tried to break through police cordon lines and clashed with police Saturday night. During the clash, 114 persons were injured, including 44 policemen. Around 900 protesters were detained. Donald Tsang warned the anti-WTO demonstrators not to resort to violence again, otherwise they would be dwelt with in a decisive manner.

People's Daily, 19 December 2005

#### **GCC chief expects free trade talks with China to conclude soon**

Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Abdul Rahman al-Attiya said in Abu Dhabi on Sunday that he hoped talks between the GCC and China on a free trade agreement will be concluded soon. "I hope the talks (between the two sides) will be concluded soon," Attiya told Xinhua ahead of a GCC annual year-end summit due to kick off here later in the day. The GCC chief said the ongoing free trade negotiations are smooth, expressing the alliance's satisfaction. In addition, on the relations between GCC countries and China, Attiya lauded the ties as "excellent and friendly", adding that relations between the two sides have developed steadily with cooperation enhanced in all fields.

People's Daily, 19 December 2005

#### **China to end welfare heating in 2007**

Urban residents in northern China will have to pay for their cozy winter living by the end of 2007. A notice issued on Saturday by the Ministry of Construction and seven other ministries urged a commercialized heating system within two years. Regarded as a public welfare service, heating has been free for urban residents who work in State-owned enterprises or governmental organizations in northern China since the 1950s. But the notice said no work units should help pay the heating fees for their employees, and householders should pay the fee directly to heating companies. "The reform will help solve accumulated problems under the old system, such as energy waste, outdated equipment and delay of fee payment," said Chen Wenzhan, head of the Beijing Municipal Administration Commission. "But it will be difficult as well. A large sum of money will be needed to install measurement equipment in homes as heating will be measured individually."

China Daily, 20 December 2005

#### **New rule grants people right to question legislations**

In addition to central and provincial-level government bodies and legislatures, all Chinese organizations and individuals have been granted the right to question any law or regulation that they believe may contradict the Constitution and state laws. This provision is contained in a newly-amended procedural law on the examination and approval of administrative, local and provincial-level laws and regulations. The law was approved here Monday, at the 40th meeting of the chairperson and vice chairpersons of the chairperson and vice chairpersons of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC). The aim of the new procedural regulation is to preserve the integrity of the country's legal system, by further improving mechanisms for checking and approving laws, regulations and legal opinions.

People's Daily, 20 December 2005

#### **New York Times gets full access to China court proceedings**

A local court will grant journalists from The New York Times unrestricted access for four days later this month to study China's legal procedures. They will be allowed to enter any courtroom and hear any case as well as interview litigants and lawyers a move considered unprecedented in a Chinese court. A notice from the Shanghai High People's Court to the designated court, Pudong New Area District People's Court, however, did not mention how many journalists would attend or which cases they are likely to hear. "Even though Japan's NHK and some other foreign TV networks have been here, their coverage was limited to certain cases or a specific category like a juvenile trial," said an employee of the Shanghai High People's Court, who preferred not to be named. The visit is believed to have been approved by the Foreign Affairs Office of the Shanghai municipal government and the reporters are said to be from New York Times' Beijing office.

People's Daily, 20 December 2005

#### **China to scrap agricultural tax, says finance minister**

Chinese Finance Minister Jin Renqing said Monday that China will scrap all agricultural taxes, putting an end to a levy that has burdened China's farmers for 2,600 years in China. An expert with the State Administration of Taxation said the tax cuts come four years ahead of schedule. Just last year Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao made the commitment to eliminate agricultural taxes within five years. The upcoming phase-out of the tax represents another significant step taken by China to relieve the financial burden on the country's 800 million farmers and an attempt to narrow the widening income gap between urban and rural households.

The Hindustan Times, 21 December 2005

### **India, China win joint bid for Syrian oil field**

India and China, often fierce rivals in the race for global energy supplies, have won a joint bid to buy Petro-Canada's 37 per cent stake in Syrian oil fields for \$573 million, reports said on Wednesday. India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), both state-owned, will have equal stakes in the Al Furat oil and gas fields. This is the first time the two Asian giants have bid together for overseas reserves to feed their oil-hungry economies. In all, 8 firms were in the race for Petro-Canada's stake in the Syrian venture, the news agency said. The acquisition followed the countries' announcement in April they would team up to bid for some energy projects as they seek to keep their economies booming although they said they would still compete for others. "The Syrian acquisition is a major breakthrough for us," ONGC Chairman Subir Raha told a newspaper. "We're very excited because this is the first time an Indian company has acquired an oil property along with a Chinese company."

People's Daily, 21 December 2005

### **Over 775,000 HK people sign to support govt's constitutional reform plan**

More than 775,000 Hong Kong citizens have signed in a campaign to support the government's constitutional development package of proposals, according to an announcement of the Grand Coalition Concerning Political Reform on Tuesday. The signatures were sent to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government Tuesday afternoon, expressing the citizen's support to the package of proposals, according to the coalition, which consists of 11 civilian groups and parties. The campaign, launched between Dec. 11 and 18, was aimed to express Hong Kong people's will to deal separately with adoption of the constitutional reform package and a timetable for universal suffrage. Two Hong Kong-based Chinese language newspapers also launched website signing activities to support the package of proposals. Hong Kong Chief Secretary for Administration Rafael Hui told the press after receiving the signatures that he felt excited to see so many Hong Kong citizens support the constitutional development package of proposals and he appreciated their efforts.

People's Daily, 21 December 2005

### **China hopes to further enhance non-government exchanges with Japan, FM spokesman**

China is willing to enhance non-governmental exchanges with Japan in various fields, including culture, foreign ministry spokesman Qin Gang said in Beijing Tuesday. Qin made the remarks at a routine press conference in response to a question about romantic epic film "Memoirs of a Geisha" directed by Rob Marshall. Chinese actress Zhang Ziyi stars in the film. Cultural exchange constitutes an important component part of Sino-Japanese relations, Qin acknowledged, and China has always stood for stepping up communication in every field between the people of the two nations to promote mutual understanding and friendship. Qin noted that China has repeatedly reiterated its interest in making joint efforts with the Japanese side to push forward exchanges and cooperation in various fields.

People's Daily, 22 December 2005

### **China seeks mutual benefit, common development with other countries: white paper**

China seeks mutual benefit and common development with other countries while developing its economic and trade relations with them on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and reciprocity, said a white paper released in Beijing on Thursday. Since its accession to the WTO in December 2001, China has strictly kept its commitments to create more favorable conditions for international economic and technological cooperation, said the white paper, titled "China's Peaceful Development Road" and published by the Information Office of the State Council. China has continuously stepped up participation in regional economic cooperation, with the building of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area going full steam ahead, the paper said.

People's Daily, 22 December 2005

### **Making Nepal China-India "Transit Point" appreciated: FM**

The Foreign Ministers of Bay of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries highly appreciated the initiative to make Nepal a "Transit Point" between India and China, Nepali Minister for Foreign Affairs Ramesh Nath Pandey has said. In a press statement issued here Wednesday upon his return after leading the Nepalese delegation to the Eighth Ministerial Meeting held in Bangladeshi capital Dhaka, Pandey said the foreign ministers of BIMSTEC countries also expressed their views on how to take benefit of the "Transit Point" in the interest of other member countries. The BIMSTEC has the objective of basically fostering rapid socio-economic progress by promoting cooperation among the member countries in certain priority areas, he said. Stating that Nepal as a landlocked Less Developed Country has its own socio-economic peculiarities, Pandey noted that "how to maximize the benefits in our national interest was the main concern of the Nepalese delegation in the Meeting."

China Daily, 22 December 2005

### **New vocabulary ushers China-US relations**

A series of new words have emerged to depict the important but complex relations between China, the world biggest developing nation, and the United States, the biggest developed nation, as 2005 ends. Among the new terms, "stakeholder" has received the most of attention. The word was first used for Sino-U.S. relations by U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, who repeated it seven times in remarks delivered at a dinner of the National Committee on US-China Relations this September. "We now need to inspire China to become a responsible stakeholder in the international system," Zoellick said. According to David M Lampton, a leading US scholar on Sino-U.S. relations who is very close to Zoellick, "stakeholder" bears similar meaning to "partner", but more strongly implies that the United States thinks of China as an equal and important member in the current international system that should share an interest in maintaining that system. "I know there is no equivalent for stakeholder in Chinese, and in the United States the word carries a strong indication of equal rights and responsibility and equal interests and obligations", the Johns Hopkins University professor said in an interview with Xinhua.

China Daily, 22 December 2005

**South China river polluted with cadmium spill** (Liang Qiwen)

GUANGZHOU: A tributary of the Pearl River in South China's Guangdong Province is heavily polluted with a toxic chemical, the authorities revealed yesterday. According to a government news release, the cadmium content was 10 times above the safety level in the Gaoqiao section of the Beijiang River in Shaoguan on Tuesday. The government said that Shaoguan Smelting Plant had spilt an unspecified amount of cadmium into the river during production. The smelting plant was ordered to shut its drainage pipe on Sunday after the pollution. But the government did not say how fast the contaminated slick was flowing and how long the water would be polluted. Cadmium is an extremely toxic metal, said Zhang Gan, a professor at Guangzhou Institute of Geochemistry under the Chinese Academy of Sciences. As the cadmium dissolves in the large amount of clean water discharged from the upstream area, the water quality in Beijing can be expected to return to normal soon, he said.

China Daily, 22 December 2005

**HK opposition 'should be held liable' for reform failure** (Joseph Li)

Local political figures in Hong Kong expressed regret Wednesday over the failure to pass the 2007-08 electoral reform proposals of Legislative Council (LegCo). The officials said those who voted against the package should be held responsible for not advancing democratic development in Hong Kong. Chan Wing-kee, a standing committee member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, said he was disappointed that the reform package was voted down. The impasse will slow the pace of democratization and weaken the mutual trust between the central government and the opposition camp, he said. He added that Chief Executive Donald Tsang did all he could to come up with a suitable proposals, however. Tsang should not be held responsible for the failure, Chan said, but those who opposed the package should be.

People's Daily, 23 December 2005

**China, EU hold first round of strategic dialogue**

China and the European Union (EU) held their first round of strategic dialogue in London on Tuesday, with both sides seeing the talks as fruitful and agreeing to further the Sino-EU partnership. Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui on Tuesday met with British Foreign Office Trade Minister Ian Pearson, whose country holds the current presidency of the EU troika -- Britain, France and Germany. In their in-depth discussions, the two sides exchanged views on each other's role in the current international system, China's peaceful development, the EU's integration process and other issues of common concern. The two sides hailed the success of the recent China-EU summit, agreeing to ensure follow-up work is done to push forward their all-round strategic partnership.

China Daily, 23 December 2005

**SOEs urged to float overseas IPOs first**

**Related: Reforms of SOEs will push ahead next year**

China's state-asset regulator yesterday urged large government-owned companies to first float initial public offerings overseas and then list on the domestic markets. The two-step approach is aimed at fostering better corporate governance and increased transparency and boosting the mainland's ailing equity markets. The agency also plans to cut the number of state enterprises through consolidation and is encouraging firms to introduce outside directors as part of the key steps for future reforms. "Overseas markets are better regulated, which can help Chinese companies optimize their corporate structures," said Li Rongrong, chairman of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission.

China Daily, 23 December 2005

**42 dead, 11 injured in Sichuan gas explosion**

The death toll has risen to 42 in a gas explosion at a road construction site in Dujiangyan City, Southwest China's Sichuan Province.

The accident occurred Thursday afternoon in a tunnel from which the highway between Dujiangyan and

Wenchuan City in central Sichuan runs through, Xinhua News Agency reported. The initial toll was put at 11, but after a night of search, rescuers found 31 more bodies, Xinhua said. The report did not reveal the number of workers working in the tunnel at the time of the blast. Eleven injured workers are receiving treatment at a local hospital and are all out of danger, Xinhua added. Several rescue teams in the province have been sent to the site and the search for victims and survivors is ongoing. The cause of the blast is still under investigation.

People's Daily, 23 December 2005

#### **China refutes Japanese FM remarks as "extremely irresponsible"**

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman refuted Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso's recent remarks on China's military development as "extremely irresponsible". "As a foreign minister, to incite such groundless rhetoric about China is extremely irresponsible, what is the real purpose?" Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said at a press conference in Beijing Thursday. Qin said that it is generally acknowledged that China insists on a path of peaceful development, stressing that China's development has made contributions to the world peace and stability, bringing East Asian countries, including Japan, great development opportunities. Qin was responding to the remarks made by Japan's Foreign Minister Taro Aso as he called China a considerable threat due to the country's military development.

China Daily, 22 December 2005

#### **North Korean vice premier to visit China Dec. 24-27**

A North Korean government delegation led by Vice Premier Ro Tu Chol will visit China on Saturday through Tuesday to discuss issues of mutual concern, the two countries said Thursday. Ro's visit is part of regular exchange of visits by senior officials of China and North Korea, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said at a press briefing. "China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are friendly neighbors," Qin said. "Delegations of all ranks and levels from the two sides often exchange visits." North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency also confirmed Ro's trip. China gives food, fuel and economic aid to North Korea. It also nudges North Korea to cooperate with the United States, South Korea, Japan, and Russia in the six-party talks on curbing the North's nuclear ambitions. Chinese President Hu Jintao visited North Korea in October.

People's Daily, 24 December 2005

#### **FM spokesman: China allows no foreign interference in HK affairs**

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Qin Gang said Friday that China will never allow any foreign interference in Hong Kong affairs. Responding to the comments on the development of Hong Kong's political system made by the U.S. State Department spokesman on Dec. 22, Qin said that Hong Kong is "China's Hong Kong" and affairs concerning Hong Kong Special Administration Region (HKSAR) are China's internal affairs leaving no room for foreign interference. The U.S. side has once and again made rash comments on Hong Kong affairs for quite a period of time, violating the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, Qin said. Qin noted that the non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries constitutes the basic norm in dealing with international relations. Qin expressed strong dissatisfaction at and firm opposition against such comments made by the United States.

People's Daily, 24 December 2005

#### **Tunnel blast kills 42, injures 11 in SW China**

DUJIANGYAN, Sichuan Province: A gas explosion in a tunnel construction site near this city in Southwest China's Sichuan Province killed 42 and wounded 11, as of 9 pm on Friday. The accident occurred around 2 pm on Thursday when workers were digging the Dongjiashan Tunnel on an expressway. Eleven bodies were found immediately after the explosion, and another 31 were found after rescue workers cleared away the debris, according to the Sichuan Provincial Safety Production Supervision Administration. Most of the dead were 20-40 years old, with the youngest being 18. Many of the bodies were torn apart, eyewitnesses said. Most of the workers were from Guangyuan and Luzhou cities in Sichuan and Zunyi in the neighbouring Guizhou Province.

People's Daily, 24 December 2005

#### **China severely rebukes Japanese FM's remarks on "China threat"**

Chinese scholars and diplomats are denouncing the 'absurd rhetoric' of Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso, who said China was "beginning to pose a considerable threat". The newly appointed Japanese foreign minister told a news conference on Thursday that China "has an atomic bomb. Its military spending has been rising for 17 consecutive years. There is no transparency and I view that as a concern, a threat." Liu Jianguo, a professor with Beijing-based Qinghua University, said Japanese Foreign Minister made the remarks to go along with the wishes of Japanese right-wing in the hope of raising his political popularity. Aso is expected to be a leading candidate to succeed Prime Minister Koizumi next September. Since the minister took office in late October he has been scolded by Japanese media and people abroad for making derogatory remarks about relations with China and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

People's Daily, 24 December 2005

### **DPRK vice premier starts China visit**

Ro Tu Chol, vice premier of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), arrived in Beijing Saturday morning for a four-day visit to China. During the visit, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan are expected to meet with him.

People's Daily, 25 December 2005

### **China, DPRK sign agreement on offshore oil development**

China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) signed an agreement here Saturday on the joint development of offshore oil. The document was signed after Chinese Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan met with a DPRK government delegation led by Vice Premier Ro Tu Chol. During the meeting, Zeng said the China-DPRK relations have achieved new progress this year thanks to the joint efforts, the solicitude from the top leaders of both countries in particular.

People's Daily, 26 December 2005

### **China develops first live vaccine**

Chinese scientists have produced the world's first live vaccine against bird flu and Newcastle disease two killer infections for poultry, the Ministry of Agriculture has announced. The recombinant bivalent vaccine, developed by the Harbin Veterinary Research Institute, will be a great boost to prevention and control of the two epidemics in China as well as in the world, Chief Veterinary Officer Jia Youling told a press conference in Beijing on Saturday. In addition to injection, the vaccine can be administered orally, nasally or by spraying, said Jia, also chief of the ministry's Veterinary Bureau. The mass-application techniques can not only significantly reduce labour costs, but also increase immunity among fowls, Jia said. The shot will also be very inexpensive, as its production cost is only one-fifth of the inactivated vaccines available on the market, he said.

People's Daily, 26 December 2005

### **Six-Party Talks set to resume next month**

The Six-Party Talks on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula are expected to resume next month, a senior Chinese official has said. "We hope all the parties concerned make joint efforts to help start the second phase of the fifth round of the nuclear talks in January," Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Dawei told China Central Television (CCTV) over the weekend. Wu is also the chief Chinese negotiator in the talks; and the parties involved are China, the United States, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Republic of Korea (ROK), Russia and Japan. The first session of the fifth round talks ended in Beijing on November 11 with a chairman's statement. According to the document, all the parties agreed to formulate concrete plans, measures and steps to fulfil the pledges made in the fourth round of the talks in line with the principle of "commitment for commitment, action for action" to achieve verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula at an early date. "Currently, there are some difficulties in the talks," Wu said. "We hope both the US and the DPRK make positive efforts to push for the opening of the talks."

People's Daily, 26 December 2005

### **NPC moves to abolish agricultural tax**

China's top legislature plans to abolish agricultural tax, which will help unify the tax system between rural and urban areas. The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) discussed a motion over the issue yesterday and is expected to vote on it on Thursday. Ahead of the legislative move, the State Council has decided to exempt the whole country from agricultural tax next year. According to Chinese laws, only the NPC and its Standing Committee are granted the power to establish or abolish a category of taxes. "Abolition of agricultural tax does not necessarily mean that farmers will pay no tax. Rural residents will gradually be moved to other tax categories similar to their urban counterparts," Yang Jingyu, chairman of NPC Law Committee said yesterday at a panel discussion. Meanwhile, Liu Jibin, vice-chairman of NPC Financial and Economic Committee pointed out that to root out agricultural tax would increase incomes of farmers and ease their financial burdens. "Currently, the income gap between urban and rural residents is widening," he said in a report at the 19th session of the Standing Committee of the 10th NPC on Saturday.

China Daily, 27 December 2005

### **China and Japan discuss UN reform (Le Tian)**

Vice-Foreign Minister Qiao Zonghuai Monday reiterated China's position in the reform of the United Nations (UN), saying "priority (of the reform) should be given to increasing the representation of developing countries especially African countries." Qiao made the remarks when meeting with Japan's Deputy Minister for Foreign Policy Masaharu Kono in Beijing. "Top of the agenda for the UN reform should be to promote the progress of the regions that have arrived at a consensus among member states, with a particular emphasis on the issue of development," Qiao said.

China Daily, 27 December 2005

**China to build two new nuclear plants** (Wang Ying)

Following the operational start-ups of 11 nuclear reactors in the south and east, China next year will begin building two nuclear plants which contain two reactors each, in Northeast China's Liaoning Province and East China's Shandong Province. The Liaoning plant, consisting of two 1,080-MW (megawatt) reactors, will cost US\$2.8 billion. It will be the first nuclear base in Northeast China, located at Hongyanhe, the coastal city of Dalian, a senior official from China Guangdong Nuclear Power Group (CGNPG) said. "We expect to get the final go-ahead (to build the Dalian nuclear plant) from the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) by the end of this year," said the official, who did not want to be identified. CGNPG sources last week said that they plan to start the Dalian project as soon as possible. The Dalian nuclear plant is scheduled to generate electricity in 2011, the company official said.

People's Daily, 27 December 2005

**Natural gas prices to be market-driven**

The government has decided to phase out its current practice of pricing natural gas, with an aim to form a market-oriented price mechanism in the sector. Pressured by top oil and gas producers PetroChina and Sinopec, the National Development and Reform Commission yesterday also decided to increase natural gas prices by an average of 5-15 per cent the biggest price adjustment since 1997 to make up for their production costs. Starting next year, natural gas prices will be modified once every year, a spokesman said. He admitted that the reform of the natural gas price has lagged behind price reforms for oil, liquefied natural gas, coal and electricity, which are more market-oriented with government supervision.

People's Daily, 28 December 2005

**Japanese PM rejects "China threat"**

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said he regards a rising China not as a threat but an opportunity, the Asahi Shimbun daily reported Wednesday. "China's development is an opportunity. As for China's growing military capability, I've never said it is a threat," the prime minister was quoted as saying at a dinner on Monday at a Tokyo restaurant with ruling bloc heavyweights. His remarks came few days after Foreign Minister Taro Aso described China as a threat citing its huge population and increasing military spending. The Chinese government refuted Aso's remarks as "extremely irresponsible," and stressed that China's development has made contributions to the world peace and stability, bringing East Asian countries, including Japan, great development opportunities.

People's Daily, 28 December 2005

**President Hu pledges support for HK democracy**

President Hu Jintao yesterday pledged consistent support for Hong Kong's democratic development "in a step-by-step, substantial and orderly way" one week after lawmakers in the special administrative region (SAR) blocked a government-endorsed constitutional reform package. In his meeting with Hong Kong SAR Chief Executive Donald Tsang, the president called for an extensive consensus among local people on advancing democracy. Hu stressed that the central government has constantly supported Hong Kong's development of democracy in accordance with the Basic Law, the territory's "mini-constitution," and ground realities. He added that implementing the principles of "one country, two systems," "Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong," and a "high degree of autonomy" aims to make Hong Kong compatriots masters of their own destiny who can exercise their democratic rights.

People's Daily, 28 December 2005

**Top legislature debates contract bill protecting workers' rights**

China's top legislature, the Standing Committee of the 10th National People's Congress (NPC), debated in Beijing on Tuesday a draft designed to protect the rights and interests of the country's workers through making labor contracts obligatory. Mandatory articles should be included to make it an obligation for employers to sign labor contracts with their employees, said some lawmakers attending the ongoing NPC Standing Committee session. Fines should also be introduced to help guide the employers into signing contracts with their employees, they said. According to an earlier survey, the rate of the signing of labor contracts in small or medium-sized private companies and among migrant workers is under 20 percent.

People's Daily, 29 December 2005

**80% of private firms violate employee rights**

Four in five private enterprises in China have not signed job contracts with their employees that's the startling result of a survey by the country's top legislators. "The legal rights of employees were frequently violated in more than 80 per cent of private companies, specially in real estate, light industry, clothing and catering," He Luli, vice-chairwoman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), said yesterday at the ongoing

session. According to the Labour Law that came into effect in 1995, a contract between employer and employee is mandatory. Administrative labour departments are authorized to force dithering employers to sign contracts with employees if the delay is intentional. The lack of contracts leaves workers in a legal limbo: they cannot seek termination benefits should they be asked to leave; they have no right to medical treatment even in case of a workplace accident; and employers do not contribute their share to the pension fund. But the tight employment market has forced job seekers to take up whatever work is available; and requirements in the Labour Law for written contracts, timely payment and compensation are often ignored in practice.

People's Daily, 29 December 2005

#### **China firmly opposes U.S. sanctions on Chinese companies**

China has expressed strong dissatisfaction with and firm opposition to the U.S. government's sanctions on Chinese companies, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang in Beijing Wednesday. The United States announced on Tuesday it was imposing sanctions on six Chinese companies which were accused of supplying Iran with military equipment and technology. Asked to make comments on this issue, Qin said that the U.S. government imposed the sanctions in line with its so-called domestic law. "We are strongly dissatisfied with and firmly opposed to the U.S. move," he told the press. The Chinese government has always held a serious and responsible attitude toward the non-proliferation issue and has adopted a series of effective measures to strengthen export management and control, the spokesman said.

People's Daily, 29 December 2005

#### **Specialists boost military capabilities**

The country has recruited a large group of specialized personnel into its reserve forces in an attempt to upgrade its military capabilities. New personnel include electronic and web engineers that hold advanced degree certificates. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) Daily reported yesterday that the military has increased the proportion of new- and high-tech units, to include specialized information protection and prevention detachments, satellite communications, and electronic interference systems. China's armed forces are divided into the active and reserve service. Active forces are servicemen in active service in the PLA, which now stands at 2.3 million. Members of the Chinese People's Armed Police Forces are also considered members of the active forces. The reserve forces include individuals in reserve that hold other civilian jobs and are called upon by the military when required.

People's Daily, 30 December 2005

#### **China's military diplomacy helps to build secure environment for country's peaceful development**

China's military diplomacy, as part of the country's overall diplomacy, has contributed to building a favorable international security environment for the country's peaceful development, an article said Thursday. The article on the Liberation Army Daily, the newspaper of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), summarized the characteristic of China's military diplomacy in 2005, saying it is more "active" and "pragmatic". Over the year, the Chinese armed forces have made remarkable achievements in its bilateral and multilateral cooperation in defense and security fields. The mutual trust and friendship between PLA and foreign armed forces have been strengthened, it says. China not only enhanced military exchanges with big countries such as the United States and Russia, but also cemented cooperation with its neighboring countries and vast developing countries, the article said. Confronting frequent natural disasters in 2005, relevant departments of PLA offered timely assistance for disaster countries after the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the earthquake in Pakistan, as well as Hurricane Katrina in the United States.

China Daily, 30 December 2005

#### **China confirms 3rd human bird flu death**

China confirmed its seventh human infection -- and third human death -- from bird flu on Thursday, after officials revealed a 41-year old factory worker died from the disease over a week ago. The victim, a woman surnamed Zhou, died on December 21 and lived in Sanming City in eastern China's Fujian province, the Xinhua News Agency reported, citing China's Ministry of Health. Like previous human victims of the H5N1 virus in China, she apparently contracted the disease in an area that has not officially reported previous outbreaks among birds. The health ministry said "no H5N1 bird flu outbreak in animals was detected in the area where the new case was reported," Xinhua reported.

People's Daily, 30 December 2005

#### **China keeps its policy to Japan despite of Japanese gov't shift: FM**

China is to insist on its position and foreign policy to Japan no matter which party or person rules Japan, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Qin Gang said in Beijing Thursday. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will leave office when his term as president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party expires next September. The Chinese government always adheres to developing long-term friendly cooperative relations with Japan based on the principle of "taking history as a mirror and looking forward to the future", Qin told a regular press conference. It

is believed that Junichiro Koizumi repeated pilgrimage to the Yasukuni Shrine, which honors 2.5 million Japanese war dead, including a dozen major World War II criminals, is the main reason for the deterioration of China-Japan ties.

People's Daily, 30 December 2005

#### **China pledges to boost rural development**

China will adopt more favorable policies and invest more heavily in the rural areas next year, according to a central work meeting on rural development which concluded on Thursday in Beijing. Rural construction will claim a higher share in national debts and financial budgets in 2006, with more money to be spent on the improvement of living conditions in the countryside, the meeting has decided. "This is the first time for the central authorities to invest so heavily in rural development," said Han Jun, an expert of rural research with the Development Research Center under the State Council, China's cabinet. "It means the focus of infrastructure construction would shift from the urban areas to the rural areas," said Han. China has greatly increased its spending on farmers, agriculture and the countryside in recent years. It was estimated that in 2005, the central finance allocated over 300 billion yuan (37.5 billion U.S. dollars) to support rural development, a 50 percent rise over the figure of 2002.

People's Daily, 31 December 2005

#### **China will peacefully develop: FM**

Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said Friday in Beijing that China will peacefully develop and adhere to an independent foreign policy of peace in the coming year. Li made the remarks at a new year reception hosted by the Foreign Ministry in the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, at which State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan and nearly 400 foreign diplomats and Chinese officials were present. This year, China, in a bid to safeguard the fundamental interest of the Chinese and world people, carried out many exchanges and cooperation with foreign partners, played constructive role in major international and regional issues and made contributions to world peace and common development, Li said. China will "hold high the banner of peace, development and cooperation", adhere to an independent foreign policy of peace, stick to a road of peaceful development, seek domestic development and harmony and promote world peace and cooperation in 2006, he said.

People's Daily, 31 December 2005

#### **China strongly indignant at Japanese smearing of its image**

China on Friday expressed strong indignation at the Japanese government's association of the suicide of a staff member at the Japanese Consulate General in Shanghai with the so-called "actions of Chinese agents." Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said it was a vicious act by Japan to intentionally smear China's image. Japan said on Wednesday that local Chinese security authorities were believed to have taken regrettable actions behind the scene of the suicide in May last year. The Japanese Foreign Ministry press secretary alleged the Chinese agents' actions were in violation of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, and claimed that since the incident occurred, the Japanese government had lodged protests and sought the "truth" of the case. "It is a suicide case, and China and Japan had clearly defined the nature of the case one year and a half before," Qin told the press when asked to comment on Japan's recent allegations.

People's Daily, 31 December 2005

#### **China launches association to promote outbound religious exchanges**

China announced Friday that the establishment of the country's first ever national association to help promote and disseminate information about the country's religious cultures overseas. As a non-profit social organization, the China Religious Culture Communication Association (CRCCA) will mainly work as a new platform for the country's religions to carry out outbound religious cultural exchanges with various organizations overseas in an extensive and in-depth way. Ye Xiaowen, director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs of China, was elected the president of the association, with three paramount Chinese religious celebrities as honor presidents.

People's Daily, 31 December 2005

#### **Foot-and-mouth outbreak confirmed in E. China province**

An outbreak of Asia Type One foot-and-mouth disease has occurred in Changqing District of Jinan City, capital of east China's Shandong Province, China's Ministry of Agriculture announced on Friday. Altogether 91 cattle in the farm which reported the outbreak have been culled by the provincial veterinary bureau, the Ministry said. Some cattle on a farm in Changqing District developed symptoms of bad appetite and fever on Dec. 6, and 48 cattle had fallen ill by Dec. 25. The provincial veterinary bureau reported the case as a suspected outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease after initial tests on Dec. 26. It was confirmed by the state laboratory for foot-and-mouth disease control on Dec. 29.