

The Japan Times, 1 February 2006

It's official: China not a threat (REIJI YOSHIDA)

Japan does not classify China as a military threat because there is no indication of an intention to attack, the government said Tuesday in reversing remarks by Foreign Minister Taro Aso in December. According to a written statement, Tokyo will deem a country a "threat" when it has both the intention and capability to attack Japan. The government does not believe Beijing has any intention of attacking Japan, given the 1972 Japan-China Joint Communique and the 1978 Japan-China Peace and Friendship Treaty, the statement said, without touching on China's military capabilities. "We consider that a 'threat' would be actualized when capability and intension to invade are combined," the paper states. Aso drew strong criticism both at home and abroad when he said in December that China is becoming a "considerable threat," pointing to the might of its forces and apparent lack of transparency in its military budget. During the Cold War, Tokyo called the Soviet Union a "potential threat," saying it had the military capability to attack Japan but no clear intent to do so.

The Indian Express, 1 February 2006

Russia, China too want Iran reported, UPA tells Left we need to go with all

NEW DELHI, Jan 31: With Russia and China last night joining the other permanent members of the UN Security Council-the United States, Britain and France-to report Iran to the Security Council over its nuclear programme, the UPA government today told the Left parties that India would have to go along with this majority view when the IAEA board meets in Vienna on Thursday. CPM's Prakash Karat and CPI's D Raja were briefed by Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran in Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's presence this evening. The meeting was called at short notice after National Security Advisor M K Narayanan, India's Ambassador to US Ronnen Sen and Saran discussed the joint statement of the permanent members, Germany and EU on Iran this morning. The statement stopped short of any punitive measures and agreed to wait for IAEA chief Mohammed El Baradei's report in March before taking any action. The major powers agreed that the IAEA Board "should report to the Security Council its decision on the steps required of Iran". While demanding specific steps from Iran, such as suspending enrichment activity, it also gives Tehran one more chance to comply with its legal obligations. The fact that China and Russia are now part of a growing consensus that Iran must be reported to the UNSC will make it extremely difficult for the Left to tie down the diplomatic establishment on the vote issue. For now, Karat only said: "There will be no immediate need for a vote on February 2. The issue can be referred to Security Council without the need for a vote." But PM's media advisor Sanjaya Baru said that the Left parties had been asked to reconsider their position on Iran. "The new scenario certainly has an influence on India's position... which will depend on the text of the resolution. Last time (September 24, 2005) on the EU resolution, China and Russia abstained. Now all are together. Vote will happen if there is no consensus. There India will decide on the basis of its national interest," Baru said.

China Daily, 1 February 2006

4,000 PLA officers set for audit by end of 2010

China will audit more than 4,000 military officers during the 11th Five-Year Programme (2006-10) to ensure the efficient use of military expenses, a senior military officer said. Among these officers, more than 100 will be army commanders or above, said Liao Xilong, a member of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China. "We will make it our priority to audit those taking charge of military expenses, officers whom people complain about, those likely to be promoted and those set to retire," said Liao, who is also the director of the General Logistics Department of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). "We will apply the audit results to the evaluation of the military officers." China will strengthen its auditing of projects relating to armaments and military expenditures to improve its management of the army and the anti-corruption and Party building drives, Liao said. Two Chinese navy ships take part in a joint maritime exercise between China and India in the northern area of the Indian Ocean December 1, 2005.

Dawn, 1 February 2006

China ready to build Jinnah power project

BEIJING, Jan 31: China is prepared to take part in construction of 96-megawatt Jinnah Hydropower project in Pakistan this year, said Pan Jishen, Vice President of Dongfang Electric Corporation (DEC). In an interview with APP, he said the project worth \$128 million would be completed in four years. DEC's total investment in Pakistan had reached around \$1.9 billion in about 14 projects, Mr Jishen said, adding: "We consider Pakistan our closest and most sincere friend and wish to continue active participation in its socio-economic development." The company has also shown willingness to undertake civil work at Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project in the NWFP that will cost over \$36 million. The company's share in the Jinnah Hyrdo Power project comprises designing and civil, electrical and mechanical work. The project will be constructed on the right side of existing Jinnah Barrage on the Indus river, five kilometres downstream of Kalabagh in Mianwali district. The low head hydro-power project will utilize a gross head of 4.88 Sq-meters to move 8 power units and generate 96 megawatt. According initial plan, the cost of electricity to be produced by this project was estimated at 3.30 cents per unit. As per the

contract, its construction is required to be completed in 48 months from the date of commencement of work.

The Statesman, 2 February 2006

Bush wary of India, China strides

WASHINGTON, Feb. 1: In an address to the nation, President George W Bush today warned that the "pre-eminent" US economy could not afford to be "complacent" in face of new competition from India and China. "The American economy is pre-eminent but we cannot afford to be complacent... in a dynamic world economy, we are seeing new competitors like China and India. This creates uncertainty...", Mr Bush said in his annual televised State of the Union address before members of the US Congress. The President, who is looking to restore people's confidence in his leadership in the wake of the war in Iraq, announced no foreign policy initiatives but vowed to continue the fight against terrorism, ruled out withdrawal of troops from Iraq and encourage economic progress abroad and avoid calls for isolationism and protectionism at home.

Hindustan Times, 2 February 2006

US denies economic 'threat' from India, China

Washington: Top US officials on Wednesday painted a bleak picture of Europe's job growth and put a premium on competing with India and China, but denied that either posed a "threat" to US economic interests. The officials briefed reporters a day after US President George W. Bush called in his annual State of the Union speech for enhancing the teaching of math and science in US schools and for sharply increasing scientific research. In his speech, Bush warned that the United States "cannot be complacent" and warned that "we are seeing new competitors, like China and India, and this creates uncertainty, which makes it easier to feed people's fears." But "this is not about going up against China and India," said John Marburger, the director of the White House's office of science and technology policy. "This is about leading the world."

Reuters, 2 February 2006

U.S. Seeks to Curb China's Might: Pentagon Official

WASHINGTON: The Pentagon is seeking to dissuade China from building its military forces to a level not warranted by its security needs, and the issue is addressed in a new long-term Pentagon plan, a senior U.S. official said on Wednesday. Ryan Henry, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy, said Washington wanted to make sure the Chinese "have the forces necessary to provide for their genuine security needs and not to go beyond that." He gave no further details. He said the matter was addressed in the Quadrennial Defense Review, a blueprint for changes to U.S. strategy and forces due to be sent to Congress on Monday with President Bush's fiscal 2007 budget. The Bush administration frequently has voiced concern about China's growing military spending. After as many as 17 years of double-digit defense spending increases, China is currently spending two to three times more than the \$30 billion publicly announced as its defense budget, U.S. officials estimate. According to a draft of the review made available by InsideDefense.com, a trade publication, the Pentagon is calling for a range of new weapons and capabilities "to help shape the choices of countries at strategic crossroads."

The Hindu, 3 February 2006

Wound caused by 1962 conflict with China has healed: Kalam (Amit Baruah)

SINGAPORE: President Abdul Kalam said here on Thursday that the wound caused by the 1962 conflict between China and India had healed and the two countries were now working together in trade and business. "Our national aim is the coming together of the two Asian powers," the President stressed during a discussion with a group of intellectuals at the Shangri La Hotel. Pointing out that there was a "spiritual connectivity" between India, China and the South-East Asian countries, Mr. Kalam said the challenge was to "trigger" this connectivity. While China had the vision of becoming a "powerful nation," India had a vision of becoming a "developed nation." (Earlier, in an address to schoolchildren, the President ruled out the prospect of India and Pakistan's re-unification but said a "federation" between the two countries was possible.) Asked about the prospect of an Asian union, Mr. Kalam said this was a "definite possibility." However, the President favoured taking a step-by-step approach towards such a union. First, the President said, India, China and South-East Asia could create a single economic zone and then "slowly you can go to the Middle East [West Asia]."

China Daily, 3 February 2006

China, Switzerland agree to enhance cooperation in various fields

China and Switzerland on Thursday expressed satisfaction with their bilateral relations and agreed to further enhance exchanges and cooperation in various fields. "Great achievements have been made in political, economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries," said Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in a meeting with Swiss President Moritz Leuenberger. Li, who is on a one-day visit to the Alpine country, said China attaches importance to its relations with Switzerland. To keep the momentum of their cooperative relationship, the two countries should continue exchanges at various levels and in various fields, he said, adding that the two

countries should also increase coordination and communication in international affairs. Li also called for Swiss companies to involve more actively in China's economic development. Leuenberger, for his part, hailed the close ties between the two countries. Many Swiss cabinet ministers have visited China, and the two peoples have come closer through their exchanges in various fields, the president said. He expressed hope that the two governments will make a comprehensive strategy about their future relationship so as to uplift their cooperation to a new level.

China Daily, 3 February 2006

China's oil consumption, imports decreased in 2005 (Fu Jing)

China's oil consumption and dependence on imports decreased last year as a result of the government's energy-saving efforts. The National Development and Reform Commission said recently that China's dependence on oil imports was 42.9 per cent in 2005, 2.2 percentage points lower than in 2004. It also said China consumed 318 million tons of oil last year, 1.08 million tons less than in 2004. "The government's effort at building a resource- and energy-saving society has paid off," a commission spokesman said. Lin Yueqin, a researcher with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, attributed the decreased oil consumption and imports to soaring prices. "High oil prices forced users to consider saving measures, causing less imported oil." Prices soared to a high of more than US\$70 a barrel last year. The State Council Development Research Centre, the highest think tank of the central government, forecast that domestic oil output would reach 184 million tons this year, which means that 44 per cent of China's oil demand will come from importation. Pan Derun, deputy president of China Oil and Chemical Industry Association, said China would try to double its oil supply to meet its goal of quadrupling its economy by 2020.

People's Daily, 4 February 2006

Chinese, Iranian FMs discuss nuclear issues

Visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and his Iranian counterpart Manouchehr Mottaki had a telephone talk over Iran's nuclear issues on Friday.

China Daily, 4 February 2006

FM maps out blueprint for EU-China ties

Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, who met in Vienna Friday with the foreign policy troika of the European Union (EU), unveiled a blueprint for boosting relations between the EU and China for 2006. Li told the EU troika, which consists of Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik, Finland's Minister for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana and EU commissioner for external relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner, that both sides should make good preparations for the ninth China-EU summit, to be held in the second half of this year. Since 2004, the EU has become the biggest trading partner of China and China is the second biggest trading partner of the EU. While extending appreciation for bilateral cooperation on science last year, the Galileo Project in particular, Li proposed to deepen the cooperation and to start preparations for launching the EU-China Science Year. He also said China and the EU should continue to enhance communication and cooperation on a number of international outstanding issues like the Iran nuclear issue, the UN reform, and the Middle East situation. The minister also reminded his EU colleagues of tackling China's concerns on various issues.

China Daily, 5 February 2006

US reiterates one-China policy

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said here on Sunday that China noticed the United States repeated its stance to stick to the one-China policy and opposed the so-called "Taiwan Independence." On Jan. 29, Taiwan authority leader Chen Shui-bian proposed the abolishment of the "National Unification Council (NUC) and the National Unification Guidelines" and talked of "applying for United Nations membership under the name of Taiwan." A U.S. Department spokesperson on Jan. 30 repeated the one-China policy, saying the United States opposes unilateral changes to the status quo across the Taiwan Straits. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said that Chen's remarks again proved his unchanged "Taiwan Independence" separatist stance and "exposed the dangerous direction" of the Taiwan authority to stimulate "Taiwan Independence" separatist activities and to undermine cross-Straits relations. "We hope the U.S. side and the international community will keep alert to the danger and severe damage caused by the so-called 'Taiwan Independence'," Kong said when asked for comments.

China Daily, 5 February 2006

China to allocate more money to rural areas

China will adopt more favorable policies and invest more money in the rural areas this year, said sources with the Chinese Ministry of Finance recently. An official with the ministry said rural construction will claim a higher share of China's financial budgets in 2006, with more money to be spent on the improvement of living conditions in the countryside. According to the ministry, the Chinese government will provide an additional grain fund of 1 billion yuan (124 million US dollars) for the country's 13 major agricultural provinces in 2006. The government will shift

the focus of infrastructure construction from the urban areas to the rural areas this year, with a number of key agricultural projects set to be established. China has greatly increased its investment in 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 from the 2002 figure. In addition to direct financial support, China has announced the abolition of agricultural tax as of January 1, 2006, which totals 22 billion yuan (2.75 billion dollars) every year. Though government investment is on the up, farmers are still in an inferior position in terms of education and social security compared with urban residents.

China Daily, 6 February 2006

China lashes back at Japan comments

China on Sunday condemned remarks by Japanese foreign minister Taro Aso that credited Taiwan's high educational standards to Japan's 50-year colonial occupation of the island, as wartime memories again threatened relations. Aso's remarks, reported earlier by the Kyodo news agency, distorted history, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan was quoted by the Xinhua News Agency as saying. "We are shocked by and express our strong indignation over the Japanese foreign minister's remark of overtly glorifying invasion history," Kong said. Aso, speaking in Fukuoka on the southern island of Kyushu on Saturday, said improvements in schooling and literacy during Japan's colonisation of Taiwan had helped the island today achieve a high level of education, Kyodo reported. Kong said Aso's comments were morally offensive and "will ultimately cause disbenefit to Japan itself", Xinhua said. Japan's occupation "made Taiwan people suffer enslavement and brought grave disaster to the Chinese nation. It is a fact that everyone in the world knows," Kong said.

China Daily, 6 February 2006

Three Gorges Dam Project to finish earlier (Liu Chang)

Construction of the Three Gorges Dam Project is expected to be completed in May this year, nine months earlier than scheduled, the Xinhua News Agency has reported. Cao Guangjing, vice-manager of China Three Gorges Project Corporation, said the main dam on the right bank of the Three Gorges will have concrete poured to 185 metres above sea level in three months' time. It will mark the completion of the scheme, which began 12 years ago. With a length of 2,309 metres, the dam aims to prevent flooding, generate power and benefit shipping, Xinhua reported. It is one of the biggest hydropower structures in the world and ranks as a key part of the improvement and development of the Yangtze River. The main dam, due to be completed in May, is located in the area of Xiling Gorge, one of the three gorges of the river, which will control a drainage area of 1 million square kilometres. With the expected completion of the scheme in May, the water storage level will be heightened to 156 metres above sea level from the current 135 metres.

People's Daily, 7 February 2006

China prefers diplomatic solution to Iranian nuclear issue

Chinese Ambassador to the United Nations Wang Guangya reiterated on Monday that China prefers diplomatic efforts to solve the Iranian nuclear issue. "The members of the Security Council are going to be informed either by oral presentation or by written documents to get to know what the decisions are in the IAEA on this issue," Wang told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York. "Even with the adoption of the IAEA resolution, it is believed by most member states that diplomatic solution is a way out with the frame of the IAEA," he observed. The Chinese ambassador also stressed that there is still time for the Council to consider what action is the best to achieve the results, which has proper solution towards Iranian nuclear issue by diplomatic means.

People's Daily, 7 February 2006

Mainland resolutely opposes "Taiwan's de jure independence" activities

The Law and Regulation Bureau (LRB) under the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council will continuously cooperate with the departments concerned to resolutely oppose activities of "Taiwan's de jure independence" through "constitutional" changes and will further promote the cross-Straits exchanges on laws. Zhou Ning, LRB deputy director, made the remarks in an exclusive interview with Xinhua on Monday. The Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council established the bureau in August 2005 in a bid to deal more effectively with the legislative work relating to Taiwan issues.

China Daily, 8 February 2006

Police authorities to increase grassroots police force

The Ministry of Public Security on Tuesday announced that an increasing number of policemen will be dispatched from offices to frontline or grassroots posts to enhance the combat readiness of grassroots police organs. Wu Heping, spokesperson of the Ministry of Public Security, said at a press conference that currently 50 percent of the country's policemen worked at the grassroots level, such as local police stations, detention houses and traffic administrative bureaus, while another 50 percent of policemen worked in leadership offices. He disclosed that in the coming several years, the Ministry of Public Security would arrange 85 percent of the country's policemen to

work in grassroots police organs in order to better serve citizens and cope with criminal cases more efficiently.

China Daily, 8 February 2006

Beijing: Chen Shui-bian is a troublemaker

Beijing Wednesday called Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian a troublemaker and saboteur of cross-Straits ties and Asia-Pacific peace and stability. Chen's "Three Proposals" in the Lunar New Year speech fully indicated that he stuck to his Taiwan Independence stance and attempted to realize the Law Independence of the island through "constitutional" changes, said Li Weiwei, spokesman of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council at a press conference. Chen Shui-bian proposed on Jan. 29 the termination of the "National Unification Council" (NUC) and the "National Unification Guidelines", the application for United Nations membership under the name of Taiwan and finalization of the island's new "constitution" in 2006 and a referendum on it in 2007. The proposals are in open violation of his former promises, noted Li, adding that this once again showed that Chen "is the troublemaker and saboteur of cross-Straits ties and Asia-Pacific peace and stability."

People's Daily, 8 February 2006

New bird flu outbreak confirmed in Shanxi Province

The Ministry of Agriculture confirmed Tuesday new bird flu outbreak in poultry in north China's province of Shanxi. The ministry said 15,000 fowls at a fowl-run in Yijing Township, Yangquan City, died in two days from February 2 to 3. After a preliminary analysis, the state avian flu lab confirmed on February 7 that the H5N1 strain of highly pathogenic bird flu was the killer, the ministry said. After the break, the ministry has sent a group of experts to the spot, guiding the quarantining job. Vet departments in Shanxi has so far culled 187,745 poultry within three km from the affected areas after the province activated its emergency reaction program on the outbreak of the disease, it said.

People's Daily, 9 February 2006

Sino-Japanese dialogue "expects no breakthrough"

A new round of sub-cabinet-level talks between China and Japan is expected to open in Tokyo tomorrow, but Chinese analysts expect no "breakthroughs" for the frosty ties. Heading a Chinese delegation, Vice-Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo is expected to fly to Tokyo today to hold two-day talks with his Japanese counterpart, Shotaro Yachi. No specific topics have been officially unveiled, but Japan's Kyodo News Agency reported the upcoming Dai-Yachi talks are likely to touch on the Japanese leader's repeated visits to the Yasukuni Shrine honouring 14 convicted Class A war criminals and the bilateral dispute over China's natural gas project in the East China Sea.

People's Daily, 9 February 2006

Bangladesh insists on One China Policy

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said here Wednesday that Bangladesh will always insist on One China Policy. While meeting with visiting Communist Party of China (CPC) delegation led by Wang Jiarui, head of International Department of the CPC Central Committee, Zia, who is also the chairperson of ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), said Bangladesh and China have long time friendship. Bangladesh greatly cherishes the development of the friendly relationship with China. Zia said Bangladesh admires very much the achievements China has achieved in the economic development. She hoped China can play an important role in maintaining regional stability and enhancing regional development.

People's Daily, 10 February 2006

China, ASEAN agree on joint safeguard of peace of South China Sea

China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) agreed on joint safeguarding the peace and stability of South China Sea, a two-day meeting which concluded in Sanya, Hainan Province Thursday was told. The China-ASEAN joint working group held its second meeting on implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in South China Sea (DOC) at Sanya, a city of China's southernmost province of Hainan. Officials from China, ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Secretariat attended the meeting. They reiterated that they all attached importance to implementing the DOC, which was signed in 2002 as a guideline for conducts of all parties involved in the South China Sea issue. Participants to the meeting all agreed that promoting the pragmatic cooperation in South China Sea is of great significance to pushing forward the development of the China-ASEAN strategic partnership.

People's Daily, 10 February 2006

Pakistani president to visit China

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Thursday that Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf will pay a state visit to China. "At the invitation of Chinese President Hu Jintao, Pakistani President Musharraf will pay a state visit to China from Feb. 19 to 23," Kong Quan told a regular news briefing. Musharraf's visit will unveil a series of events marking the 55th anniversary of establishment of China-Pakistan diplomatic ties, Kong said. During his

stay in China, Musharraf will meet with his Chinese counterpart and other Chinese leaders, Kong said. The two sides will discuss how to further promote the friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation between China and Pakistan, Kong said, adding they will also exchange views on international and regional issues of common concern. The related departments from the two sides will also sign some documents of cooperation, Kong said.

People's Daily, 10 February 2006

China speeds up anti-corruption efforts in military forces

A regulation on the prevention of job-related crimes among military officers was issued recently to speed up China's fight against corruption in the military forces, Liberation Army Daily reported in Beijing Wednesday. "It is an important move to guarantee the stability of China's military forces," the paper stressed. Despite the achievements made in punishing military officers who break laws and in preventing job-related crimes in recent years, no similar systematic regulation has been issued before, the paper said. The regulation stipulates the guidelines and measures of preventing job-related corruption, the paper said. It urged all military units to institutionalize the prevention of job-related corruption and encourage both the officers and soldiers to participate in the anti-corruption drive.

People's Daily, 10 February 2006

China calls for early resumption of six-party talks

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman on Thursday called on the participating countries of the six-party talks on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue to make further efforts and reopen the negotiations at an early date. Spokesman Kong Quan told a regular press conference that all concerned parties, namely China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the United States, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Russia and Japan, have kept "conducive" and "positive" contacts in recent months. "We hope that all sides will further their efforts and properly deal with the difficulties and obstacles in the progress in a bid to realize an early resumption of the talks," Kong said.

People's Daily, 10 February 2006

China deems next UN Secretary-General be Asian: FM spokesman

China deems the next UN Secretary-General will be chosen from an Asian country, said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan in Beijing Thursday. Kong told a news conference that the next UN Secretary-General should come from an Asian country since an Asian has not held the post for 34 years. At present, some Asian countries have offered candidates, Kong said, expressing his hope the countries would hold friendly consultations so as to reach consensus. The UN secretary-general Kofi Annan winds up his second term this December. Under the UN Charter, a new secretary-general is nominated by 15 member states of the UN Security Council and is confirmed by the 191-nation General Assembly.

People's Daily, 11 February 2006

Chinese government not to promulgate IPO regulation soon

The China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) said it was untrue for the government to promulgate regulations on initial public offering (IPO) soon, the Shanghai Securities News reported on Friday. The rumor that the Chinese stock market would soon restart IPO process and relevant regulations would soon be promulgated has caused Thursday's Shanghai and Shenzhen composite index to drop 1.6 percent and 2.19 percent, according to the newspaper. The CSRC has not solicited opinions from the public on the IPO regulation draft, and it will start such process when the stock market becomes more mature, it reported. So as to rescue the longlasting bearish stock market in China, the CSRC has stopped the IPO process for a long time to make the number of listing companies stabilized.

People's Daily, 11 February 2006

China to promote community health service

China is going to establish a new urban health service system on the bases of communities in order to make medical service easier and cheaper for local residents to access, said a health official Friday. Community health service ensures basic medical service to the residents, especially the elderly, disabled people and patients with chronic diseases, the Health Ministry spokesman Mao Qun'an told a press conference. So far, China has set up community medical service centers in 95 percent of its prefecture-level cities and 86 percent of districts under municipalities and county-level cities. More than 3,400 community medical service centers and nearly 12,000 community clinics have been established, said Mao. However, the current community health service is still insufficient to meet people's demand, the spokesman noted. The State Council on Wednesday decided to ensure comprehensive community health service in all major Chinese cities by 2010. A work team will be set up by the State Council to lead the reform of the community health system.

The People's Daily, 12 February 2006

Defense Minister calls for army building with scientific concept

Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan urged the Chinese army to speed up the pace of army building with a concept of scientific development. During a recent inspection to the Guangzhou Military Area Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Cao, also vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, said scientific development is an important guideline for enhancing national defense and army building. "Efforts must be made to solve key problems in army units to make all their work follow the concept of scientific development," he said. The army units should always give priority to political and ideological education and list the study and implementation of the concept of scientific development as a major task, he said.

The People's Daily, 12 February 2006

Senior CPC official demands to improve cadre evaluation system

A senior official of Communist Party of China (CPC) required local party committees to improve cadre evaluation system in a more systematic, fair and scientific way. He Guoqiang, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and head of the Organization Department, said the evaluation system should be reformed in line with the guidelines of scientific concept of development. Addressing local organization department heads gathered in Beijing Friday, He said "we should allow more public participation in cadre evaluation and selection. And the public's rights of knowledge, participation, choice, and supervision should be guaranteed," he added. According to the official, pilot reforms have been carried out in the provinces and regions including Zhejiang, Sichuan and Inner Mongolia, where democratic means of recommendation, opinion soliciting, and evaluation have been applied. He said the pilot projects has played "a positive role" in cadre-reviewing system reform. He demanded a more scientific and democratic evaluation system in the coming round of local party committee elections, with focus on cadre's moral integrity, working ability, self-discipline, hardworking and many other fine qualities.

The People's Daily, 13 February 2006

Fourth round of China-Japan strategic talks held in Tokyo

The fourth round of China-Japan strategic talks were held in Japan from Friday to Saturday between Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo and his Japanese counterpart Shotaro Yachi. The talks covered a variety of issues, and the two sides exchanged ideas in frank manners on how to deal with the remarkable problems blocking the development of bilateral relations. Chinese Ambassador to Japan Wang Yi, Chinese Foreign Ministry Department of Asian Affairs chief Hu Zhengyue, and Kenichiro Sasae, chief of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asia-Oceania bureau took part in the talks.

The People's Daily, 13 February 2006

"Year of Russia" launched in N. China's Inner Mongolia

A grand ceremony was held to launch "Year of Russia" Sunday on the occasion of China's Lantern Festival in Manzhouli City, China's leading inland port on the China-Russia border, in North China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. More than 2000 Russian tourists joined the local people in celebrating the Chinese traditional festival while attending the opening ceremony in the city decorated with lanterns. Yu Dehui, vice chairman of the regional government, said Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region enjoys broad contacts with Russia, expressing his hope that "Year of Russia" will bring closer trade and economic ties between the two countries. Mart Vïeva, vice-chairman of Republic of Tuva, said that the launching of "Year of Russia" also means the beginning of a new stage of closer links in trade, economy, technology and culture between the eastern Siberian region of the Russian Federation and China. Manzhouli, equipped with highly-developed railway and highway systems, handles 60 percent of the freight between China and Russia.

China Daily, 14 February 2006

Top China official tells US not to politicise trade

China wants to work with the United States to reduce its bilateral trade surplus, but Washington will not help if it tries to make political capital out of the issue, an influential law-maker and economist said on Tuesday. Cheng Siwei, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, or parliament, said China and the United States should ease frictions in their trade ties through consultations as equal partners. "We concede that China is running a relatively big trade surplus with the United States, but they shouldn't politicise the issue," Cheng told a China-US business forum. He was speaking a day after the administration of President George W. Bush, facing rising political pressure over the record US trade deficit, urged China to further free up its currency to steer growth away from exports and towards home-grown demand. Cheng said the two countries should start by redoubling efforts to agree on the size of the problem.

China Daily, 14 February 2006

Japanese FM: Relations with China will improve

A Japanese foreign ministry official says he believes relations with China will improve, despite a recent rise in animosity between the countries. Akira Chiba, an assistant press secretary for the ministry, told an audience at

the American Enterprise Institute on Monday that the Asian neighbors have long misunderstood each other. Chiba said polls show many Chinese often express strong dislike for Japan without realizing that Japan provides billions of dollars of direct investment and financial help to China. As communication and trade continue to improve, he said, so will relations between the governments.

China Daily, 14 February 2006

China intends to push for GM crop studies (Jia Hepeng)

A national regulation was unveiled in October 2004 to require labels on edible oil that is made of genetically modified resources. China will work towards finding wider applications of agricultural biotechnology in the next five years because the sector's growth is important to the country's overall development. The country has already worked out its biotech development strategy for the 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-10), according to Qi Chengyuan, director of the High and New Technology Department under the National Development and Reform Committee. Within the strategy are efforts to develop the biotechnological seeding of major crops, also called genetically modified (GM) crops. China will also increase its investment in safety monitoring. A more comprehensive and accurate safety evaluation is required for the further commercialization of GM crops.

People's Daily, 15 February 2006

Regulation of Internet in line with world norms

Regulation of China's Internet is fully in line with international practice, and the country welcomes foreign Web businesses to provide lawful services, a top cyberspace regulator said yesterday in Beijing. Liu Zhengrong, deputy chief of the Internet Affairs Bureau of the State Council Information Office, also said Chinese people can access the Web freely, except when are blocked from "a very few" foreign websites whose contents mostly involve pornography or terrorism. "Regulating the Internet according to law is international practice," Liu told reporters. "After studying Internet legislation in the West, I've found we basically have identical legislative objectives and principles." The Chinese Government has been very "positive" in supporting the Internet and has enacted only necessary legislation to support its development, he said.

People's Daily, 15 February 2006

US unveils review of US-China trade policy

U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman unveiled on Tuesday the results of a review of U.S.-China trade policy, announcing that the United States would step up enforcement of trade laws with China. "The time has come to readjust our trade policy with respect to China," Portman said at a news conference. A 29-page report, the outcome of a six-month review of the U.S. economic policy toward China, was released at the press conference. Portman also announced the creation of a special task force charged with stepping up enforcement of domestic and international trade rules toward China. The task force will be led by a new head lawyer for China trade enforcement within the Office of U.S. Trade Representative.

Crisscross News, 15 February 2006

Chinese police say U.N. torture investigator got it wrong

BEIJING - The United Nations special rapporteur for torture, who visited China late last year, obtained incorrect information on how Chinese police treat criminal suspects, a Ministry of Public Security official said Tuesday. Rapporteur Manfred Nowak's "awareness" of how the ministry's police officers treat suspects to make them confess to crimes is "incorrect," said Zheng Baigang, vice director of the ministry's Police Work Supervision Department. China does not allow "inappropriate" means to make suspects talk, Zheng said at a press conference in Beijing. Nowak visited China for two weeks in late November and early December and met with 30 prisoners, families of victims and non-governmental groups.

China Daily, 16 February 2006

Three Chinese engineers killed in Pakistan

Three Chinese engineers were killed by gunmen in Southern Pakistan, the Ministry of Commerce confirmed Thursday morning. The victims, Long Hongbao, Wei Jianpin and Zhao Bin, were shot along with other three colleagues when their car were attacked by gunmen on a road in the town of Hub, some 700 km southeast of Quetta, the Balochistan provincial capital. The engineers were working for a Chinese company to prepare equipments and offer technical service for the construction of a local cement factory which will be accomplished in the first half of this year. Chinese diplomats in Karachi then led the other 11 Chinese engineers in the project into the Chinese consulate and helped take the victims' bodies back to Karachi, according to the Ministry of Commerce. The Ministry has triggered off emergency mechanism and forged task forces to cope with the issue and required the related Chinese companies to dispatch working groups to deal with the aftermath.

The Indian Express, 16 February 2006

Dalai Lama envoys arrive in Beijing for secretive talks on autonomy of Tibet (Lindsay Beck)

BEIJING, FEBRUARY 15 : Envoys of Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, arrived in China on Wednesday for

secretive talks on greater autonomy for the Buddhist region, Tibet's government-in-exile said. It was the fifth round of talks since contacts between China and the Dalai Lama's representatives resumed in 2002, but there have so far been no concrete results of a process the Chinese government does not even openly acknowledge exists. "Our ultimate hope is to resolve the issue of Tibet on the basis of negotiated settlement with the Chinese leadership so that Tibet people will have the freedom to preserve what is important to us, which is our cultural identity," Thubten Samphel, spokesman for the government-in-exile, said.

People's Daily, 16 February 2006

First Sino-Japanese project on rural old age insurance launched

A Sino-Japanese project on rural old age insurance was launched in Beijing Wednesday in a bid to introduce more expertise and vision into China's rural social security reform. Jiang Mohui, Deputy Director General with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MOLSS)'s international cooperation department, said that Japan has encountered problems in its urbanization similar to those haunting China now, and that both countries are populous with scarce land resources. "Thus Japan can offer more credible experience and lessons for China than Western developed countries," Jiang said. With approval from both governments, the project has undergone intense negotiation and preparation by MOLSS and the Japan International Cooperation Agency. In the next three years, team members including experts from both sides will conduct field surveys and policy research, propose and test feasible models in eight selected cities, counties or districts in seven provinces and municipalities in China, including Beijing, Shandong and Anhui Province.

People's Daily, 16 February 2006

IPR protection 'to encourage innovation'

China will step up protection of intellectual property to promote innovation as it is the key to improving competitiveness, a senior official promised yesterday. In the 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-10), "we will continue to help enterprises to develop and implement innovative technologies," Tian Lipu, commissioner of the State Intellectual Property Office, said during an online interview. Tian said his office received 476,264 domestic and foreign patent applications last year, up 34.6 per cent from 2004. Most of the domestic applicants were enterprises, especially private businesses. The country's intellectual property legal regime, a law enforcement framework and an effective protection mechanism reflect the government's unremitting efforts in IPR protection, Tian said.

China Daily, 17 February 2006

Civilians to join PLA non-combat functions (Xiao Ma)

The country's armed forces the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) are to start selecting some civilians this year for non-combat duties to free up more soldiers for combat missions. The PLA Daily reported yesterday that these civilians include cooks, typists, telephone operators, projectionists, announcers, drivers, repairmen and paramedics. The daily added the move is aimed at reducing the number of non-combat personnel of these departments and non-combat troops, in a bid to solve long-standing structural problems. Previously, all the non-combat posts were shouldered by warrant officers and compulsory servicemen. Departments and non-combat troops of army-level units or above can start recruiting civilians, who can apply on their own or by being recommended by military job centres and servicemen.

China Daily, 17 February 2006

Strategic vision vital for relations (Qin Jize)

The United States should view and handle its relations with China from a "long-term and strategic vision" so that bilateral ties can develop "in the correct direction." Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang made the remark at a regular press briefing yesterday in response to rising criticism of China in Washington on issues such as the trade balance and the value of the renminbi. On Tuesday, US Trade Representative Rob Portman released a review of Washington's trade relations with China, urging the Bush administration to take a tougher stance against China by rigorously enforcing trade laws. China's Ministry of Commerce has yet to respond to the report. Qin said it is normal to have some frictions during the rapid development and expansion of bilateral trade "but they should be solved properly through consultation between the two sides working as equal partners." He noted that Sino-US trade is mutually beneficial. "It is not unilateral, nor is it a favour granted by one side to the other."

People's Daily, 17 February 2006

AmCham: US firms thriving in China

American companies in China are prospering as they gain more access to domestic markets despite the ongoing trade frictions between the two countries, according to an American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) survey released yesterday. China's increasing market growth and improved regulatory environment have contributed to more AmCham-member companies producing for the domestic market and trying to become wholly foreign-owned enterprises (WFOEs), said the report, which is based on seven years of annual AmCham polls in China. About 38 per cent of respondents in 2000 cited market access restrictions as a top-three barrier to profitability,

while 66 per cent reported negative effects from business scope restrictions. However, from 2002 to 2005, two-thirds of the respondents were successful in expanding products and services offered in China.

The Washington Post, 17 February 2006

China Rushes to Complete \$100B Deal With Iran (Peter S. Goodman)

SHANGHAI, Feb. 17 -- China is hastening to complete a deal worth as much as \$100 billion that would allow a Chinese state-owned energy firm to take a leading role in developing a vast oil field in Iran, complicating the Bush administration's efforts to isolate the Middle Eastern nation and roll back its nuclear development plans, according to published reports. The completion of the agreement would advance China's global quest for new stocks of energy. It could also undermine U.S. and European initiatives to halt Tehran's nuclear plans, possibly generating friction in Beijing's relations with outside powers. *Caijing*, a respected financial magazine based in Beijing, reported on its Web site on Thursday that a Chinese delegation comprised of officials from the National Development and Reform Commission -- a top economic policy body -- intends to visit Iran as early as next month to conclude an agreement. The deal would clear China Petrochemical Corp., also known as Sinopec, to develop the Yadavaran oil field in southern Iran. Beijing and Tehran are attempting to swiftly conclude a deal in the next few weeks, ahead of the possible imposition of international sanctions against Iran, according to a report published in Friday's editions of *The Wall Street Journal*. The report relied upon unnamed Iranian government officials. Sanctions could hinder Chinese investments in Iran.

Taipei Times, 18 February 2006

Rice scolds Taiwan in House hearing

DISSATISFIED: The US' top diplomat said that Taiwan's response on defense issues wasn't 'satisfactory,' and defended the US government's treatment of Taiwan. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on Thursday that the US hasn't always received a "satisfactory" response from Taiwan with regard to US efforts to help modernize the Taiwanese military. Rice made the remarks while attending a hearing of the House International Relations Committee on the fiscal year 2007 international affairs budget request. She said the US has also been clear that it has obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) to help Taiwan defend itself. Rice said the US has "proposed that there are things that could be done for the modernization of Taiwanese forces with the help of the United States." However, the US hasn't always received "a particularly satisfactory response on the Taiwanese side to issues about defense modernization, but we have been prepared to discharge our duties in that regard."

BBC News, 19 February 2006

Fresh US trade warning to China

A senior US trade official has warned that China could face punitive "trade measures" if it does not adequately open up its market to American firms. Deputy US Trade Representative Karan Bhatia told the BBC that China was failing to treat US companies fairly. The growing US trade gap with China has fuelled calls for the US to toughen its stance over Beijing's trade practices. China has responded by warning that trade sanctions imposed by the US against it would damage both countries. Mr Bhatia told the BBC's *The World This Weekend* programme that China had "benefited enormously" from gaining access to US markets. But Beijing was not doing enough to ensure an open and level playing field for US companies in China, Mr Bhatia said. The US, he said, was "perfectly prepared" to use trade measures to force the Chinese government to grant US firms greater access to China's domestic market.

The Hindu, 19 February 2006

Nuclear energy tops Musharraf agenda (Pallavi Aiyar)

BEIJING: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf arrives in Beijing on Sunday for a five-day visit to China, with nuclear energy on top of his agenda. Following unsuccessful efforts at securing cooperation from the United States and European countries in developing Pakistan's nuclear energy capabilities, Gen. Musharraf will be seeking assistance from Beijing, according to reports in the Pakistani press. Pakistan's current nuclear capacity stands at 437 MW but its stated intention is to increase this to 8500 MW by 2030. China assisted its traditional ally in the installation of the 300 MW Chashma Nuclear Power Plant. Now, Islamabad reportedly wants Chinese cooperation in installing two more nuclear power plants.

People's Daily, 20 February 2006

Pakistani President arrives in Beijing for state visit

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf arrived in Beijing Sunday, starting a five-day state visit to China. Musharraf came to China at the invitation of Chinese President Hu Jintao. His current visit is expected to unveil a series of events celebrating the 55th anniversary of the establishment of China-Pakistan diplomatic relations. During his stay in Beijing, Musharraf will meet his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao and other senior Chinese leaders. The two sides will discuss how to further promote the friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation, exchange views on

international and regional issues of common concern, and sign some cooperative agreements. The Pakistani president will attend a ceremony to mark the publication of his biography in the Chinese capital.

People's Daily, 20 February 2006

China faces uphill task on job front

Imagine 25 million men and women about the combined population of Australia and New Zealand pressing for new jobs. That is the daunting reality that the Chinese economy faces this year, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) has reported. This is the country's worst employment crisis ever, as the children of baby boomers flood the job market seeking their first jobs. Their parents were born in the early 1960s, and they themselves in the late 1980s. China can generate only an estimated 11 million new jobs this year, according to the NDRC. And at no time this decade did they exceed 10 million a year. This means that despite a record number of employment openings about 11 million jobs have to be found for about 14 million people more.

People's Daily, 21 February 2006

Presidents of China and Pakistan vow to develop stronger ties

Chinese President Hu Jintao and visiting Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf vowed to build stronger ties between the two countries in their talks on Monday in Beijing. "China-Pakistan relations have stood the test of time and international ups-and-downs since the two countries forged diplomatic ties 55 years ago," Hu said. As close neighbors, China and Pakistan enjoy "an all-weather friendship," Hu said, adding that the friendship serves as a paradigm of peaceful coexistence and sincere cooperation between countries of different social systems and cultures. "We appreciate the support Pakistan has given China on Taiwan and other issues," Hu said. "We will, as always, back the efforts Pakistan has made to safeguard state independence and sovereignty."

China Daily, 21 February 2006

Sino-EU energy ties strengthened (Hu Yan)

SHANGHAI: China and the European Union will strengthen co-operation and exchanges in the energy sector, including clean coal technology, renewable energy and nuclear power, top officials said at a high-level conference. China's Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) and the European Commission yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on near-zero emission power generation technology in an effort to jointly fight against global climate change. Under the MoU, the Chinese Government and the EU will jointly conduct research and promote the technology of near-zero emission power generation. It includes capturing carbon dioxide emitted from coal power stations and then storing them underground, instead of being emitted directly into the environment.

People's Daily, 21 February 2006

Chinese, Japanese ruling parties meet to discuss bilateral relations

Senior ruling party officials of both China and Japan met in Beijing Monday afternoon, hoping to repair bilateral relations damaged by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine, which honors war criminals. The meeting came on the eve of the inauguration of an exchange mechanism between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Komei Party. China hopes that Japan will take concrete measures to eliminate the obstacles in the development of bilateral links, said Li Changchun, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee.

People's Daily, 21 February 2006

Pakistan president keen to further ties with SCO

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and the Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Zhang Deguang, met in Beijing on Monday to discuss increasing cooperation between the two sides. According to sources with the SCO, President Musharraf said in the meeting that Pakistan attaches great importance to the SCO and hopes to become a full member of the organization as soon as possible. Pakistan is ready to play a bigger role in cooperating within the SCO framework, Musharraf was quoted as saying. Regarding Pakistan's wish to become a full SCO member, Zhang told the press after the meeting that relevant documents need to be signed for the SCO to enlist new membership. Such a document has not been produced yet, Zhang said.

People's Daily, 22 February 2006

China, Pakistan vow to expand economic, trade, energy coop

China and Pakistan vowed in a joint statement issued in Beijing Tuesday to enhance their cooperation in such fields as economy, trade and energy. Both sides expressed their firm resolve to strengthen cooperation in all spheres and agreed to explore new ways to expand economic cooperation and trade to promote common development for the two countries and peoples. The two sides are satisfied with the implementation of the Early Harvest Program, and agreed to expedite negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement. They emphasized that overland trade through the Karakoram Highway should be promoted and were ready to adopt measures to

facilitate such trade.

People's Daily, 22 February 2006

Document spells out plans for rural revival

The central government yesterday released its first major document on the building of a new socialist countryside the primary task in the 11th Five-Year Plan period (2006-10). It embraces ideas set forth by the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, and reflects the government's determination to solve problems related to farmers, agriculture and rural areas. The next five years will be key to laying a solid foundation for building the new socialist countryside. Its aim is to boost modern agriculture; develop new relationships between industry and agriculture, cities and the countryside; and increase rural affluence, it said.

BBC News, 21 February 2006

China to discuss Japan tensions

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao is to meet Japan's trade minister this week, for the highest level talks between the two sides since a row broke out last year. The meeting, confirmed hours before Trade Minister Toshihiro Nikai headed for Beijing, suggested the two sides wanted to tackle their differences. The row centres on Japanese politicians visiting a controversial war shrine in Tokyo, and on disputed gas fields. Allegations about a Japanese diplomat's suicide have also soured relations. Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi triggered the row by visiting the Yasukuni war shrine in October, his fifth visit since taking office.

China Daily, 23 February 2006

Iran nuclear crisis can be resolved: China

BEIJING (Reuters) - There is still scope to defuse a deepening international crisis over Iran's nuclear ambitions within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing was quoted as saying. Li appealed to the international community to be calm, restrained and patient and to show flexibility for a resumption of nuclear negotiations between Europe and Iran, the official Xinhua news agency said in an overnight report. "The days before the March 6 meeting of the IAEA are crucial," Xinhua quoted Li as saying after meeting visiting German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Iran recently announced it was restarting enrichment work but insists it is interested only in civilian nuclear power. The United States and the European Union suspect Iran's program is aimed at eventually making atomic weapons.

People's Daily, 23 February 2006

China, Japan vow to continue dialogue through ruling party mechanism

Senior party officials from China and Japan called their first regular dialogue "frank" and "insightful" as they concluded a one-and-a-half-day meeting in Beijing Wednesday morning. Wang Jiarui, head of the International Department of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) Central Committee, said that both sides showed sincerity and motivation in carrying out the dialogue in an "extensive and practical" way. Hidenao Nakagawa, the No. 3 leader of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), said exchanges between the ruling parties of Japan and China are an important channel of communication between the two countries. He said although there are differences of opinion between the two sides, he sincerely hopes that the dialogue will continue.

People's Daily, 23 February 2006

China's Sichuan, Pakistan's Punjab forge friendly ties

Southwest China's Sichuan Province and Pakistan's Punjab Province established friendly relations in Chengdu Wednesday. The two provinces are both known for large rivers and universities in their respective countries. Sichuan and Punjab signed a memorandum of understanding to unveil the new close relationship. Visiting Pakistani President Musharraf attended the signing ceremony. He said before the ceremony that Pakistan hopes to further develop economic and trade cooperation with Sichuan which is an important gate to China's vast western region.

BBC News, 22 February 2006

Chen repeats China council threat

Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian has repeated his suggestion that guidelines on unification with China be scrapped, despite Washington's reservations. Mr Chen told a visiting US Congressman that the National Unification Council and its National Unification Guidelines were anachronistic. When the Taiwanese leader first made such remarks, Beijing called him a "troublemaker and saboteur". China suspects the move confirms Mr Chen is pushing for independence. The guidelines were "absurd products of an absurd era", Mr Chen told Connecticut Republican Robert Simmons on Wednesday. "It deprives Taiwan people's rights to freely decide on cross-strait relations and the future direction of our country," he said. China sees Taiwan as its territory, threatening to use force if the island moves towards formal independence. The US, Taiwan's closest ally in the face of this threat, has said it supports the status quo.

China Daily, 24 February 2006

US plans more WTO cases against China

The United States plans to bring more complaints against China and other countries to the World Trade Organization in 2006 than it has in recent years, a top U.S. trade official said on Thursday. "I think it's fair to say there will be a significant uptick in the coming year in the number of cases" the United States files, said Jim Mendenhall, general counsel in the U.S. Trade Representative's office, in a speech to attorneys who specialize in trade. He said the United States was "seriously" considering a case against China's barriers to foreign auto parts. Other cases against China are possible in 2006, he added. The plan to step up legal action at the WTO comes as the huge U.S. trade deficit with China and the rest of the world has fueled demands in Congress that the Bush administration more vigorously enforce trade agreements.

People's Daily, 24 February 2006

China-Japan relations fail to improve despite politicians' visits

The strained relations between China and its neighbor Japan due mainly to the Yasukuni Shrine row see little sign of improvement despite a wave of recent visits by Japanese politicians. Japanese Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Toshihiro Nikai, a heavyweight in the Japanese cabinet, ended his China visit on Thursday, seeking to ease the current situation by maintaining prosperous trade ties. Yet Chinese Commerce Minister Bo Xilai underlined the Yasukuni Shrine issue, which he said was closely linked with trade cooperation. "The bilateral political relations will certainly affect economic ones, which have already seen a slower growth in 2005," said Bo in a meeting with Nikai.

China Daily, 25 February 2006

US to discuss trade disputes with China

The Bush administration is sending a trade negotiating team to China next week to try to resolve disputes involving US auto parts and copyright piracy of American products, officials announced Friday. Jim Mendenhall, general counsel for US Trade Representative Rob Portman (news, bio, voting record), will lead the USTR team that is scheduled to meet in Beijing with Chinese officials on Wednesday. Mendenhall said the visit was part of the crackdown on unfair Chinese trade practices that the administration announced a week ago. The administration is hoping success in resolving long-running trade issues with China will head off tougher protectionist actions in Congress to deal with a trade gap with China that hit an all-time high of \$202 billion last year.

China Daily, 25 February 2006

China frets at pensions for aging population

BEIJING (Reuters) - China's rapidly growing elderly population could surge as high as 430 million by 2051, when almost one in three citizens will be 60 or over, posing a grave challenge for already strained state social welfare and pension systems, Xinhua news agency said on Friday. The aging population was now growing by 3 million a year from the current 143 million, it said. "China is facing surging demand from the elderly population in terms of social welfare and medical services," Li Bengong, an official with the China National Committee on Aging, was quoted as saying. "Welfare services can not match the rise in demand." People retiring in China today do not enjoy the cradle-to-grave welfare provided to previous generations which has been replaced with a mash-mash of government and corporate pension plans experts say are riddled with problems.

People's Daily, 25 February 2006

EU advised to reconsider dumping claim

China has urged the European Union (EU) to re-investigate its dumping claim against Chinese leather shoes in the interest of fairness. Europe lacks evidence to support its claim that Chinese shoe exporters are dumping goods, Chong Quan, a spokesman for the Ministry of Commerce, said on Friday. Chong was responding to EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson's latest proposal that called for duties on Chinese leather shoes to increase in phases but quickly. Mandelson said in a press release that they had found "compelling evidence of state intervention, dumping and injury." If Mandelson's proposal is approved, the EU will impose a 4.8 per cent penalty duty on leather shoes from China beginning on April 1. The figure will increase to 19.4 per cent by October. This proposal is scheduled to be discussed earlier next month.

People's Daily, 26 February 2006

Two new human cases of bird flu detected in China

A nine-year-old girl in east China's Zhejiang Province and a 26-year-old woman farmer in east China's Anhui Province were confirmed to be infected with H5N1 bird flu, reported the Ministry of Health on Saturday. The Zhejiang girl, surnamed You, lives in Anji County. She showed symptoms of fever and pneumonia on Feb. 10 and has been hospitalized. She is now in critical condition, said a report released by the ministry. According to investigation, You visited relatives twice in Guangde County of Anhui Province before she fell ill. During her visits, chickens raised at her relatives' homes got sick and some died. The exact source of You's infection is under further investigation, said the ministry. The other new case in Anhui is from Yingshang County, and the patient is

identified by the surname Wang. She developed fever and pneumonia symptoms on Feb. 11. The report says she is also in critical condition. Wang had contact with sick and dead poultry, according to investigation. The local agricultural department has isolated H5N1 virus strain from samples of dead chickens in Yingshang County, said the ministry.

People's Daily, 26 February 2006

Annual national session of China's top advisory body to be held on March 3

The fourth session of the 10th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) will be held in Beijing on March 3, the CPPCC national committee standing committee decided on Sunday. According to the 12th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th CPPCC National Committee held here Sunday, the chief agendas of the session will include hearing a report on the work of the National Committee's Standing Committee over the past year and how their suggestions and proposals were handled throughout the year 2005, attending the fourth session of the 10th National People's Congress, hearing and discussing government work report and other reports, and discussing the draft 11th Five-Year Program.

China Daily, 27 February 2006

Nation to ratify convention on terrorism

The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, aiming to restrict terrorists' funding, was submitted to China's legislature for approval on Saturday. The approval of the convention accords with China's needs in the fight against the financing of terrorism, Wu Dawei, vice-minister of Foreign Affairs, said at the 20th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th National People's Congress (NPC), which will finish tomorrow. "The core of the convention is about undermining the terrorist organization's economic support through stemming its funding sources," said Wu, adding that, "the approval of the convention is conducive to stemming funds supplied by overseas anti-Chinese forces to China's domestic terrorists, and helping safeguard national security and social stability." He said the Chinese Government had endorsed all the nine treaties listed in the appendix of the convention and the final approval of the convention by the top legislature will demonstrate China's resolution to fight terrorism and showcase the country's responsibility in the international community. The content of the convention is consistent with China's domestic laws and the international conventions the Chinese Government has already signed, he said.

People's Daily, 27 February 2006

Chinese mainland criticizes Taiwan secession activities

The Chinese mainland on Sunday criticized the secession activities of Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian that attempts to abolish the "National Unification Council (NUC)" and the "National Unification Guidelines." The Director of both the Taiwan Work Office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council released an article, commenting on Chen's recent remarks on abolishing the NUC and the "National Unification Guidelines". The director said Chen had breached the promises he made himself in 2000 and 2004 that he will not do so during his office terms. "The remarks are a dangerous sign of escalation of Chen's secession activities," the director pointed out.

People's Daily, 27 February 2006

Legislature reviews education disparity

China is revising the 20-year-old Law on Compulsory Education to narrow the educational disparity between rural and urban areas, a step hailed by the public as an important requirement for developing social equality. The revised law, which was submitted for deliberation on Saturday to the full meeting of the Standing Committee of the 10th National People's Congress (NPC), focuses on establishing a mechanism for guaranteeing government investment in compulsory education. The fees for compulsory education, which are provided by both central and local governments, must be included in the government's yearly budget and be increased gradually every year, according to Minister of Education Zhou Ji.

The Hindu, 27 February 2006

Chinese firm to open service centre (M. Soundariya Preetha)

COIMBATORE: China Texmatech Co. Ltd (CTMTC), the overseas marketing division of the China Hengtian Group Company, will open its office and an after-sales service centre here on March 1. Following a meeting on Chinese textile machinery held here last July, the CTMTC has concluded sales contract worth \$ 40 million (about Rs. 180 crores) only for spinning (from across the country). This included spinning frames and at least 15 complete spinning projects. "Some machines have already been supplied," said Richard Y.H. Qu, D.G. Manager of CTMTC. The orders came from about 40 customers. The CTMTC would also supply machines to the mills of the National Textile Corporation (NTC). In the first phase, it would be 67 ring frames and about 25 speed frames.

People's Daily, 28 February 2006

Wrap-up: China urges US to stick to commitments on Taiwan issue

China on Tuesday urged the United States to stick to the commitments on Taiwan issue and be aware of the seriousness and harm of secessionist activities in Taiwan. The United States should take substantial efforts to oppose "Taiwan independence" and not send any wrong signal to Taiwan secessionists, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said at a press conference. "We have noticed that the spokesman for U.S. government reaffirmed that the United States adheres to the one-China policy and opposes 'Taiwan independence'," Liu said. "I hope the United States can make joint efforts with us in safeguarding China-U.S. relations and the peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits," Liu said.

People's Daily, 28 February 2006

Army urged to be prepared for carrying out military missions

A senior Chinese military official has urged the armed forces to be better prepared for missions in the new century. Xu Caihou, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), made the remark during his recent inspection of the Nanjing Area Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). During his study tour, the official visited a number of PLA units and military academies, and had talks with officers and soldiers. He urged the officers and soldiers to seriously study and implement the instructions of the CMC on military issues. PLA units of different levels should give priority to military training, he said.