

People's Daily, 1 January 2005

Chinese President outlines work agenda for 2005

Chinese President Hu Jintao said in Beijing on January 1, 2005 that the year of 2005 will be of crucial importance for China in its drive to "build a relatively prosperous society" in face of opportunities and challenges arising from both domestic and international fields. Hu, also general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), made the remarks at a New Year tea party held by the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Saturday morning, attended by leaders from all political parties, as well as noted figures representing people from different walks of life. After reviewing China's social and economic achievements in the past year, Hu said that "we are faced with opportunities that need to be tightly grasped and challenges to be seriously handled" under the conditions that China's social and economic development has entered a crucial stage and profound changes are undergoing in the international arena. Top on his work agenda is "fast and healthy" economic development this year.

Xinhuanet, 1 January 2005

President Hu reiterates China's stance on Taiwan

Chinese President Hu Jintao said Saturday at a New Year tea party that China will strive to resolve the Taiwan issue peacefully with the greatest sincerity and utmost efforts. "But we absolutely cannot allow anyone or any force to separate Taiwan from China by any means," Hu said at a party held here by the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). He urged the CPPCC to unify the Chinese compatriots in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, overseas Chinese and friends both at home and abroad to promote global campaigns against any attempt to separate Taiwan from the motherland. "The Chinese government and people will firmly safeguard its national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Hu said.

Asahi Shimbun, 1 January 2005

The Chinese 'power problem' in East Asia (Susumu Saito)

The "first" East Asian summit will take place in Kuala Lumpur this year among leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Japan, China and South Korea. East Asia includes the 10 nations in Southeast Asia and the three nations in Northeast Asia. The East Asian summit, unlike the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), excludes so-called Anglo-Saxon countries, such as the United States, Australia and New Zealand. The exclusion from the East Asian "community" of such countries, Russia and others on the eastern side of the Pacific Rim appears to have stirred a certain degree of anxiety, especially in the United States. At the root of such anxieties are fears of China's dominance on the western side of the Pacific Rim and a disregard of the interests of the excluded countries. Such anxieties, however, may be quite misplaced.

The Daily Yomiuri, 1 January 2005

3 China gas mines in Japan EEZ

Twelve spots at which China has established mining fields under its natural gas field exploration project in the East China Sea extend into an area claimed by Japan as its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the region, government sources said Friday. Three of the spots lie entirely in the area designated by Japan as its EEZ, according to the sources. After discovering this in autumn 2004, the government filed a protest with China against its actions. These actions will likely add fuel to the current dispute between the two countries over their respective interests in the East China Sea, according to analysts. The latest findings by the government have shown that this country cannot defend its national interests in its relations with China unless it stands firmly by its own principles in dealing with that nation. The government needs to review its current diplomatic policy toward China, which is marked by an attempt not to antagonize Beijing, observers said.

People's Daily, 2 January 2005

Mainland population to hit 1.3 bln

The population in the Chinese mainland is expected to reach 1.3 billion on Jan. 6, according to a prediction the National Statistics Bureau (NSB) released Sunday. The day has been successfully postponed for four years with the effective birth control policies in China, the NSB source said. China has made persistent efforts to slow its population growth over the past 30 years and succeeded in reducing the birthrate, said an official of the State Commission for Population and Family Planning (SCFPF).

People's Daily, 2 January 2005

Taiwan issue listed as top security concern

China's latest white paper on national defense lists "the vicious rise of the 'Taiwan independence' forces" as one of the factors having major impact on China's security, which experts said is an objective assessment of China's current security situation. The paper says, "The separatist activities of the 'Taiwan independence' forces have increasingly become the biggest immediate threat to China's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as peace and stability on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole." Referring to the above statement, Chen Zhou, a military expert involved in drafting four defense white papers, said it reflected the current "grim" situation as "'Taiwan independence' forces have gone too far on their way." The variance, slight or significant, in the statements about Taiwan issue in earlier defense white papers mirrors what the situation is like, Chen said.

Washington Times, 2 January 2005

China not considering dual nationality

Beijing, China, Jan. 2: An official from China's Ministry of Science and Technology says the media misquoted a vice minister

on the issue of dual nationality. The official said the media mistakenly reported that a vice minister of science and technology said China is planning to create a dual nationality program to attract foreign scientists, reported Xinhua, China's main government-run news agency. The current law regulates that "the People's Republic of China does not recognize dual nationality for Chinese national."

People's Daily, 3 January 2005

Premier Wen to attend ASEAN tsunami summit

Premier Wen Jiabao will attend an emergency tsunami summit in Jakarta of Indonesia on Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan announced here Sunday. Kong said Wen will confer with other participants on the international community aiding the tsunami-hit countries and on regional cooperation on disaster prevention. To attend the summit organized by the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are more than 20 heads of state or government and representatives of international organizations.

Daily Times, 3 January 2005

Taiwan's Opp offers to visit China to ease tensions

TAIPEI: The speaker of Taiwan's opposition-controlled legislature offered to make an unprecedented visit to China to help President Chen Shui-bian break a prolonged stalemate with its communist rival. Speaker Wang Jin-pyng, who is also a vice chairman of the opposition Nationalist Party, on Saturday offered to make the historic visit, saying Chen has failed to hold dialogue and ease simmering tensions with China. On Sunday, Vice Premier Yeh Chu-lan welcomed Wang's offer. "How to stabilise relations has been a key government task, and we welcome (Wang) to contribute his wisdom," Yeh told reporters. There was no immediate reaction from Beijing. Taiwanese lawmakers often visit China but senior leaders of Taiwan and China have never met since the two sides split amid civil war in 1949. Wang said he would like to visit China if, as expected, he is re-elected speaker on February 1.

Financial Times, 3 January 2005

China's role in the global balance of payments (Arthur Kroeber)

One tangles with the estimable Martin Wolf at one's peril. However it is hard to agree fully with his view of China's role in unwinding the problems in the global balance of payments. In a recent series of columns, the Financial Times' chief economic commentator lays out with his usual lucidity the extent, causes, and solution to the current global imbalances, under which an ever-expanding US current-account deficit mops up an ever-expanding savings surplus in most other countries. What is needed, writes Mr Wolf, is an "all round adjustment" of exchange rates, in which "the pivotal players will be the Asian developing countries", chiefly China. "The world will only dispense with its dependence on the accumulation of mountainous US liabilities if non-Japan Asia - above all, China - play the role to be expected of the world's fastest growing and most populous countries. Continent-sized countries should not go on playing the mercantilist game of piling up reserves indefinitely."

Times of India, 3 January 2005

India, China give IT more byte in '05

NEW DELHI: This year, the Asian IT market is likely to be driven primarily by the boom in India and China, despite prospects of slower economic growth in '05 as compared to '04. While India is likely to see IT expenditure rise by 22%, in China it will grow by 15%. This was revealed by IT research firm IDC. Both countries will account for 42% of the total IT spending in APEJ (Asia-Pacific excluding Japan) in '05. Outside Japan, regional technology spending in '05 is predicted to mirror the growth rate of '04, rising by 10% to reach \$9.7bn. China is set to be the dominant IT spender in the market with 33% share.

Xinhuanet, 4 January 2005

China makes consistent efforts in arms control

Arms control and disarmament have become key contents in the white papers on China's National Defense issued by the State Council since 1998. The 2004 white paper-issued on Dec. 27-followed the formula by highlighting the country's progress in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation as well as the country's new propositions in these fields, said an article in Tuesday's China Daily Opinion column. The Chinese Government is committed to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), a significant step that can affect the development of humankind, it said. The proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery is detrimental to world peace and security, as well as to China's own security, the paper said, adding that the international community is of one mind on this, and non-proliferation is in the common interest of all countries.

China Daily, 4 January 2005

China imposes anti-dumping duties on fibres

The Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) announced anti-dumping import duties would be imposed on certain optical fibres made in the United States, Japan and Republic of Korea (ROK) starting four days ago. It is a fresh move by the Chinese Government to better protect the nation's industries under the World Trade Organization (WTO) regime. According to a statement from the ministry, punitive tariffs ranging from 7 to 46 per cent will affect imports of dispersion unshifted single-mode optical fibres from the three countries in a five-year period starting from January 1, 2005. The fibres are largely used for long-distance communications and TV cables. China has become the world's largest victim of anti-dumping rulings. From January to September 2004, China was the target of 46 anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and protection measures as well as special safeguard investigations from 12 countries and regions. That's a 4.5 per cent increase year-on-year

China Daily, 4 January 2005

Swift moves laudable

China has become a major force in international humanitarian assistance operations, says an editorial in the Beijing News. By January 1, international donations exceeded US\$2 billion, which, according to UN Emergency Relief Co-ordinator Jan Egeland, is the first time in UN's history that such a large amount has been donated in such a short time frame. Without a doubt, China is a major player in this sweeping global humanitarian undertaking. It immediately activated its emergency rescue response mechanism after the tsunami, and substantially raised its aid by an extra 500 million yuan (US\$60.46 million) last Friday.

Taipei Times, 5 January 2005

US, China to discuss 'anti-secession' bill (Charles Snyder)

CRITICAL TIME: The US has declined to comment on Chinese legislation which might mandate military action against Taiwan, preferring to speak to envoys first. The US and China will hold their first high-level discussions on Beijing's proposed "anti-secession" law this week during a three-day visit to Washington by the director of Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office, Chen Yunlin, which comes at a critical time in US-Taiwan-China relations. The State Department confirmed on Monday that Chen was to arrive yesterday for talks with US officials on a number of cross-strait issues. He is also expected to meet members of Congress. Included will be a meeting tomorrow with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage in which the "anti-secession" law is expected to be a main topic of conversation. The law, the text of which has not been released, is believed to mandate military action against Taiwan if Taipei moves toward independence in a manner unacceptable to the Beijing leadership. Confirming the Chen-Armitage meeting, the State Department called on both sides to begin a dialogue and not "complicate" the situation."

Japan Today, 5 January 2005

China won't forgive Japan for Lee visit (Ralph Jennings)

China will not forgive Japan for allowing Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui's visit over the past week, even though Lee apparently did nothing political on his trip, because the visa approval has symbolic meaning that goes back more than 100 years, Chinese political analysts said Tuesday. They also predicted long-term fallout for already strained Sino-Japanese political relations. Japan's approval of Lee's visa despite protests from the Foreign Ministry in Beijing and Chinese diplomats in Tokyo indicates that Japan does not care what China thinks, the analysts said. Lee apparently did nothing political in Japan on the Dec 27-Jan 2 trip. He visited a Kyoto temple, called on a professor from his alma mater in Kyoto and paid tribute to a Japanese author. Whether or not Lee did anything political last week, the visit hurts China because it harkens back to 1895 when Japan took over Taiwan and built it into a sympathetic colony through World War II, the analysts said.

China Daily, 5 January 2005

Sinopec to step up efforts in western China

BEIJING, Jan. 5: Asia's largest oil refiner, Sinopec, plans to increase its efforts this year to develop oil exploitation in western China. Wang Jiming, vice-chairman and president of Sinopec, revealed the strategy in an interview with China Daily. By the end of 2004, Sinopec had discovered 1.21 billion tons of proven oil and gas equivalent reserves in the Tahe Oilfield, of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, according to company sources. The oil giant said, after 20 years of exploration, it had found 1.08 billion tons of oil and 59 billion cubic metres of natural gas in the Tahe Oilfield in Xinjiang's Tarim Basin. China boasted 3.2 billion tons of proven oil reserves - an equivalent of around 23.5 billion barrels - by the end of 2003, according to British oil giant BP's statistical review. "China is strengthening the exploitation of oil fields in its western region, aiming to retain the oil reserve balance, as the country has witnessed an annual decrease of approximately 2 per cent in oil reserves in eastern China," said Zhang Jian, an analyst with China Securities.

People's Daily, 5 January 2005

European-styled enlargement and US-styled expansion

There were two eye catchers considering the international situation of 2004. One was the EU's acceptance of 10 countries into its membership. It accomplished the fifth expansion in the EU's history. In the same year 25 EU members signed the European Constitution. The other was the US' proposition of a strategic expansion plan centered on adjusting military deployment. Apart from strengthening military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan it speeded up the adjustment of military structure and global deployment. The expansions of the EU and the US, however, are different in their manners and forms. The EU is carrying out a "soft" expansion, that is, an expansion based on economic ties and political common understanding that takes the form of voluntary membership. The US, on the other hand, pursues a "hard" expansion, which is based on military strength. It carries out military attack on, occupation or strategic containment of its potential rivals in the world and promotes its political mode and values by military means and so on. From this point of view the European-styled enlargement and US-styled expansion are of the nature of competition between different modes.

People's Daily, 5 January 2005

China's additional 500 million yuan humanitarian aid to tsunami victims shows image of a big country

At the end of last year, a piece of news was one that really tugged at the heartstrings of the Chinese people. The Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami have caused great casualties. At the same time, there was a heart-warming voice from Beijing: Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao announced on December 31 that China will add an additional 500 million yuan (60.46 million US dollars) of humanitarian aid to the Indian Ocean tsunami victims and will send out rescue teams at any time when needed by disaster-hit countries following that the Chinese leaders including President Hu Jintao sent messages of consolation to the disaster-hit countries. Wen made the announcement while meeting with diplomatic envoys from the tsunami-hit South and

Southeast Asian countries and representatives of some international organizations in Beijing. That is a powerful voice and also a responsible sound. China is one of the quickest countries in the world to take actions in paying attention to the disaster-hit countries.

People's Daily, 5 January 2005

WTO entry promotes concept of "rule by law" in China: NPC official

The most important impact of China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the nation's construction of legal system is that it has promoted and accelerated the formation of the idea of rule by law, said Qiao Xiaoyang, vice secretary-general of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) and deputy director of the NPC Law Committee in an interview with Legal Daily. Qiao said, the impacts of China's WTO membership on the nation's legislation and legal system construction can be seen mainly in four aspects. First, joining the WTO sped up the legislation of related laws. Second, WTO membership helped us pay more attention to the principles of unification of legal system, openness and transparency, and non-discrimination. Third, joining the WTO promoted the reform and perfection of China's judicial system. WTO rules raised new requirements on judicial activities. The legal applicability in judicial departments should be unified; the system of open trial should be further improved; judicial departments must keep their neutrality in judicial activities; parties from public economy and non-public economy should be treated equally and national and foreign parties should be treated equally.

People's Daily, 5 January 2005

China's success in developing FTA

Commerce Ministry officials say China has made great achievements in developing free trade agreements over the past year. The China-ASEAN free trade area is being established, and China has also started talks with southern African countries, Chile, New Zealand and the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf. Experts say a free trade region with these countries will encourage stable, sustainable and rapid development in bilateral economic and trade relations. At the same time, the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement implemented last year has helped the development of trade between the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao.

The Japan Times, 5 January 2005

Beijing counts on more high-speed growth in '05 (FRANK CHING)

HONG KONG: Barely three years after joining the World Trade Organization, China has emerged as a major trading power, with total trade last year exceeding \$1 trillion, an increase of more than 30 percent over 2003, making China the world's third-largest trading power. This is an astonishing performance for a country that a quarter of a century ago was an insignificant player. The economy as a whole was expected to have grown by 9.2 percent by the end of the year, with the projection for this year at about 8.5 percent, slightly slower but still extremely impressive. The International Monetary Fund has predicted that average growth in 2005 will drop to 4.3 percent from 5 percent in 2004, but the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has predicted that the Chinese economy will grow 8 percent in 2005, a significantly higher rate. It said China remains competitive due to its stable exchange rate, flat unit labor costs and the removal of textile quotas in 2005. The World Investment Report 2004 also said China has become one of the two engines for growth of the world economy. While aware of the need to avoid overheating the economy, China's leaders still want high-speed growth.

Hindustan Times, 6 January 2005

George Fernandes heaps praise on China

5 January: Former Defence Minister George Fernandes, known for his strong views against China, on Wednesday surprised audience, mostly Tibetans, by lavishing praise on the communist nation for its progress and saying India should take Beijing's professions of friendship "sincerely". "China is growing rapidly as a power while we are lagging behind more than we should. Its economy today is three times the size of our own, and all this is their own work," he said at a seminar on China's under-construction railway line to Lhasa. Recalling his visit to China as Defence Minister in 2003, Fernandes said he felt there had been "a lot of change in their thinking". "China is trying to be more acceptable to the world. The Chinese are making overtures to Indians in an interesting way. Fernandes said when he was Union Minister, intelligence agencies had "annoyingly" informed him that all stories about China's progress were "just humbug and there was no truth in these".

China Daily, 6 January 2005

Forging sounder Sino-US ties (Yuan Peng)

A landmark event in Sino-US relations, former US president Richard Nixon's historic visit to China set in motion the normalization of bilateral ties for the first time in history. Over the ensuing 30 years, the two countries achieved much to advance those links, but also left some thorny problems unresolved. From Nixon's China visit in 1972 until 1979 when Beijing and Washington diplomatically recognized each other, the one-time adversaries made concerted efforts and achieved key breakthroughs on how to address the former Soviet Union, solve the Taiwan question, and realize normalization of bilateral political ties. With these consensus, China and the United States advanced their scope of co-operation. In this process, political ties between the two have remained basically stable. And development of political ties does not inevitably advance military ties, neither does anti-terror co-operation inevitably result in military co-operation. No key US defence department figure has visited China. Furthermore, Washington has not only maintained its own arms embargo against Beijing, but also applied pressure on Israel and the European Union to do likewise. It has occasionally upgrading its military ties with Taiwan and strengthened its military presence in China's surrounding areas using the anti-terror fight as an excuse. Washington has never hidden its intentions to shift its strategic focus eastward, redeploy its global military forces and upgrade its alliances with Japan.

Xinhuanet, 6 January 2005

Chinese vice-premier meets Japanese minister

Chinese Vice-Premier Zeng Peiyan met in Beijing Wednesday with Aso Taro, minister of public management, home affairs, posts and telecommunications of Japan. The two sides exchanged views on strengthening cooperation in telecommunications sector. Executives of Japanese multinationals including Fujitsu Ltd. and NEC attended the meeting.

Businessweek Online, 6 January 2005

Rethinking the China Threat

Other signs indicate that China may not have what it takes to be a major-league player. Everybody knows that China is the world's next economic superpower. Each year, it gets billions and billions of dollars in foreign investment, powering its booming economy. The Middle Kingdom has more cell-phone users than anywhere else on the planet, and soon it will be tops among Net surfers, too. American consumers can't get enough of the low-cost TVs, DVD players, mobile phones, computers, and other gizmos that come out of China's factories. For believers in the China-rising story, the latest sign of ascendance was the December announcement that IBM (IBM.), one of the most venerable names in U.S. industry, was selling its PC division to Lenovo (LNVGY.), the No. 1 PC maker in China. Lenovo is owned in part by the Chinese government. But amid all the hype about China being a threat to the U.S., it's worth remembering that many of the upstart's potential global champions have a long way to go before they can achieve their lofty ambitions.

The Asahi Shimbun, 6 January 2005

Beijing postpones trip set up a year ago

China has called off a planned visit Sunday by Japanese lawmakers, ostensibly because it "is not prepared," sources said. A more likely explanation, the sources speculated, may be that China is expressing its anger at Tokyo's decision to allow former Taiwanese President Lee Tenghui to visit Japan as a private citizen. The meeting was first proposed by Beijing when Fukushima Nukaga, a former policymaker of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, visited China in January 2004. The planned visit was intended to improve Tokyo-Beijing relations, which have been stymied by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's repeated visits to Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine and other issues. So, more than 10 lawmakers from the ruling coalition camp of the LDP and New Komeito were to visit Beijing, led by Nukaga. They were also expecting to possibly meet with Chinese President Hu Jintao. Chinese sources said various topics including diplomacy, economy and environment were slated for discussion at the meeting.

Taipei Times, 6 January 2005

Beijing's envoy discusses new anti-secession law at White House (Charles Snyder)

China's top Taiwan-relations policymaker met with senior White House officials in Washington for more than a half hour on Tuesday for discussions on Beijing's proposed anti-secession legislation and other Taiwan issues at a time of serious strains in US-Taiwan relations. Chen Yunlin, the director of the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office, held a meeting with Stephen Hadley, whom US President George W. President Bush recently appointed as his national security advisor to replace Condoleezza Rice, Bush's nominee for secretary of state. Neither the White House nor the Chinese embassy would give details of the discussion, although the State Department Monday said that a main topic of discussion during Chen's Washington visit would be the planned anti-secession law, which potentially mandates a Chinese attack on Taiwan if Beijing is unhappy with Taiwan's moves toward independence.

People's Daily, 6 January 2005

China's CPC starts internal education campaign

The Communist Party of China (CPC) has started an 18 month education campaign assisting Party members to keep their integrity and noble spirit. Launching this campaign is a major decision of the CPC Central Committee to strengthen Party building and maintain the advanced nature of the Party, Zeng Qinghong, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, said in Beijing at Wednesday's mobilization meeting. "The Party's life and strength lies in its advanced nature, which concerns the stability of the Party's ruling status and the completion of its missions," said Zeng. He called on Party committees at all levels to work hard to ensure the smooth progress of the campaign. The main purpose of the campaign is to help Party members adhere to their communist ideal and belief, abide by the principles and decisions of the Party, carry forward the Party's fine traditions and solve major existing problems.

Xinhuanet, 7 January 2005

China hopes to work with Russia on energy cooperation

China hopes to make concrete progress in energy cooperation with Russia with efforts made by both, said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan at a regular press conference in Beijing on January 6. While answering questions about the proposed oil pipeline project linking the two countries, Kong said energy cooperation constituted an important part of China-Russia strategic partnership and the mutually beneficial economic cooperation between the two countries. State leaders, governments and relevant departments attach great importance to the project, and have discussed different plans and proposals, he said. There is no official information yet on the plan to lay the pipeline, Kong said.

People's Daily, 7 January 2005

Active & fruitful China's diplomacy in 2004

In the just over year, China's partnerships with various big countries of different types experienced new development, in the new round of adjustment to its relations with big countries, China continued to be in an active and advantageous position, said

Liu Huaqiu, director of the Foreign Affairs Office of the CPC Central Committee in his article published in the New Year issue of "Qiu Shi", a Party-run magazine. The Foreign Affairs Office of the CPC Central Committee is a ministerial-level work unit specialized in the foreign affairs activities of the CPC Central Committee. Speaking about the international situation in the past year, Liu Huaqiu said in this article titled "The Strong Vitality of the Independent Foreign Policy of Peace-the International Situation and China's Foreign Work in 2004": "There was chaos amid stability" in the international situation 2004, but, on the whole, "stability outweighed disorder".

Xinhuanet, 7 January 2005

China to send observers for Palestinian election

China will send a 6-member observation group, led by former Chinese Ambassador to Turkey Yao Kuangyi, for the upcoming Palestinian presidential election on Jan. 9, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said in Beijing on January 5. Making the remarks at a regular press conference, Kong said China hopes the election goes smoothly and is willing to provide assistance if necessary. "All parties of the Middle East issue are making unremitting efforts for the resumption of peace talks, and the situation has shown signs of easing," Kong said.

People's Daily, 7 January 2005

WB: China's economy faces challenges

China's growing reliance on imported oil, pollution and looming water shortages pose the major threats to its economic development, a senior World Bank official said Thursday. "The sustainability issues in China are the key issues in the next three to five years and the ones that are most likely to jeopardize its economic success," said Yukon Huang, a senior adviser to the bank who formerly headed its office in Beijing. China is now the world's second largest oil importer, and it suffers from poor efficiency in turning oil into economic output - just 1/7 that of Japan, Huang said at a seminar organized by Singapore's Institute for Southeast Asian Studies. If China "cannot improve in terms of its efficiency the cost will be unbearable," Huang said. Economic growth - now running at about 9 percent, will likely fall to a more moderate 6 to 7 percent in coming years, Huang said, adding future growth would come less from new investment and more from greater productivity. Huang called growing pressure on dwindling water supplies China's "Achilles heel"...

People's Daily, 7 January 2005

China urges US to lift sanctions

China Thursday requested the United States to "immediately end the sanctions" imposed on eight Chinese companies for alleged proliferation activities. "The Chinese side expresses strong dissatisfaction and opposition to US sanctions," said an official with the Foreign Ministry Spokesman's office in a telephone response yesterday. The United States has taken "very irresponsible" action against the Chinese companies and entities on the basis of their domestic laws, she said. "We believe such actions by the United States will not help expand Sino-US co-operation on nonproliferation," she said. China adamantly opposes and prohibits proliferation activities by any entities or individuals, as well as the export of related goods by any Chinese companies, said the official. To this end, China has adopted related anti-proliferation laws.

China Daily, 7 January 2005

Forging sounder Sino-US ties

A landmark event in Sino-US relations, former US president Richard Nixon's historic visit to China...Although they achieved a breakthrough on the issue while deciding to set up diplomatic ties, the two countries failed to solve their fundamental disputes regarding the Taiwan question. Currently, Beijing and Washington are on common ground in opposing Taiwan independence, but strategic disputes and mishandling of the issue could trigger a new crisis. To pursue a stable and healthy Sino-US relationship and achieve more substantial progress, the two countries need to reach a new consensus on some key issues. To this end they should set up a new framework on the Taiwan question, one in which Washington should re-evaluate its policy on Taiwan and draw a line under its arms sales to Taiwan. They should strengthen strategic communications and enhance mutual trust through a series of established multilateral mechanisms in an effort to peacefully co-exist in the Asia-Pacific region.

Xinhuanet, 8 January 2005

Sino-Russian trade booms in 2004

Economic cooperation between China and Russia developed rapidly in 2004, with trade hitting the record 20 billion US dollars, said a senior commerce official. Speaking at a trade cooperation conference on Friday, Vice Minister of Commerce Zhang Zhigang said China has finished market access negotiations with Russia this year, a necessary step for Russia's entry into the WTO. According to the agreement reached in the negotiations, Russia will impose less taxes on Chinese goods and will further open its market in Sino-Russian trade. Zhang said a number of famous Chinese companies have successfully entered the Russian market. "Based on mutual trust in politics, the two nations are starting high-speed economic and trade development," said Zhang, who said it was of great importance to consolidate and promote the strategic partnership between China and Russia. The bilateral trade will grow to 60 billion to 80 billion US dollars by 2010, the official said.

Xinhuanet, 8 January 2005

Chinese ambassador calls for improving Sino-Japanese ties

Chinese Ambassador to Japan Wang Yi expressed the hope on Friday that China and Japan will make joint efforts to advance their relationship in 2005. At a New Year reception held by Japanese economic bodies on Friday, Wang said that the bilateral relations were fluctuating last year, with the two sides achieving fresh development in terms of substantial cooperation in all

sectors on the one hand, and on the other hand, political relationship still encountering difficulties and obstacles. He said Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao had elaborated China's principles in dealing with the current bilateral ties at separate meetings with Japanese leaders. They had confirmed the basic line for Sino-Japanese relationship and reiterated that the current problems should be handled in the spirit of "taking history as a mirror and looking forward to the future", which will play an important role in improving and advancing the ties between the two countries.

People's Daily, 9 January 2005

Young Chinese devote efforts to promoting external ties in 2004

A record number of exchange programs between young Chinese and foreign youth were unfolded in 2004, marking youngsters' bigger role in non-governmental diplomacy. "There were more than 100 exchange programs in 2004, involving about 3,000 foreign youngsters visiting China and 1,000 young Chinese going out to countries throughout the world," according to a figure from the Central Committee of Communist Youth League of China (CYLC), one of China's major mass organization of youth. The Chinese young people's exchange with foreign youngsters is a major way for them to participate in world affairs, said China's youth leader Zhou Qiang, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the CYLC. In 2004, some youth exchange programs were conducted to celebrate the important anniversaries between China and other nations. As the year 2004 marked the 55th forging anniversary of China-Russia diplomatic relations, presidents of the two nations set the year as "Friendship Year for Chinese-Russian Youth".

People's Daily, 9 January 2005

NPC delegation leaves on Asia-Pacific forum and Vietnam visit

A delegation of the National People's Congress (NPC) of China left Guangzhou on Sunday for Vietnam to attend the 13th annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum and pay an official good-will visit to Vietnam. The delegation, headed by Gu Xiulian, vice-chairwoman of the NPC Standing Committee, is on the visit at the invitation of President of the National Assembly of Vietnam Nguyen Van An.

Hindustan Times, 10 January 2005

Pak defence minister in China for military talks

Pakistani Defence Minister Rao Sikandar Iqbal, who arrived in Beijing on Monday, will hold high-level talks with the Chinese political and military leadership to bolster military cooperation as part of their "all weather" bilateral ties. Iqbal, who is on a five-day official visit, will have talks with Chinese Defence Minister, General Cao Gangchuan, and other senior officials of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA). During his stay in China, he will also visit Chinese military installations and National Defence University in Beijing. The high-level Pakistani military visit comes after last month's successful visit to China by Chief of Staff of the Indian Army, General NC Vij, the first by a top Indian Army official in over a decade. Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz also visited Beijing in December last year and had talks with General Cao on further boosting Pak-China military ties.

Channel News Asia, 10 January 2005

US trade secretary to push piracy concerns on China visit

BEIJING : US Commerce Secretary Don Evans will hammer home US concerns over unfair trading practices in China and urge Beijing to meet market access and intellectual property rights (IPR) commitments during a visit. "Trade on a level playing field has been incomplete and unacceptable," Evans said in a statement from Washington ahead of the visit starting Tuesday. "China must forcefully do more to lift barriers to free trade and confront widespread intellectual property theft that is undercutting American workers." The outgoing trade secretary, expected to hold talks with Vice Premier Wu Yi, will also reiterate that the US commitment will "aggressively" pursue its trade policy will not change after his designated successor, Carlos Gutierrez, takes over upon Senate confirmation later this month, US officials here said.

Financial Times, 10 January 2005

Taipei warns of risk to citizens from China's anti-secession law (Kathrin Hille in Taipei)

Taiwan has warned that its citizens and those of other countries could be at risk of criminal prosecution in China under an anti-secession law being planned by Beijing. Stepping up its campaign against the proposed law amid a lack of international opposition to China's plans, the Taiwanese government yesterday said the core principles of the proposed legislation were a threat not only to Taiwan. Joseph Wu, chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council, Taipei's cabinet-level China policy body, said that the law would define Taiwan as an "inseparable part of the People's Republic of China". This would go far beyond Beijing's current position that the island is part of China but which leaves some room for talks on unification by not directly claiming sovereignty of the PRC over Taiwan. Mr Wu claimed the legislation would define any speech or action seen as contradicting this claim as treason.

Financial Times, 10 January 2005

China chases a global oil presence (Richard McGregor, Enid Tsui and Andrew Yeh)

The mooted takeover bid by China National Offshore Oil Corp, the country's third-largest oil and gas group, for Unocal shows little is off limits for ambitious Chinese companies in their search for secure resources. But as with other Chinese acquisitions overseas, the possible US\$13bn deal raises questions about the prices mainland companies are willing to pay and their ability to manage the transaction and, later, the assets themselves. State-owned CNOOC, which has a listed arm in Hong Kong and New York, has asked bankers to study a takeover of Unocal, the ninth-largest oil company in the US, to be followed by the immediate sale of its US assets. But China's strategic search for overseas resources and its own rising short-term demand is driving up prices for oil and other resources, and providing an incentive for

the present owners to hang on to their assets."Chinese companies are finding overseas acquisitions difficult because of the high oil prices, so not a lot of assets are for sale ... as it's more practical to hold on to them," said a Beijing-based energy consultant.

PTI, 10 January 2005

India-China trade set to cross 13 bn dollars in 2004:

Beijing, Jan 9 : India-China bilateral trade has zoomed to over 12 billion dollars during the first 11 months of 2004, much higher than the targeted 10 billion, according to latest Chinese customs figures released here today. The bilateral trade during the January-November period amounted to 12.16 billion dollars, up 82.7 per cent over the same period last year. Indian exports to China surged to 6.93 billion dollars, up 87.4 per cent during the first 11 months, according to the figures. At the same time, Chinese exports to India totalled 5.23 billion dollars, up 76.6 per cent over the corresponding period last year. Since bilateral trade during each month in 2004 has amounted to nearly one billion US dollars, the total trade during the year is expected to be around 13 billion dollars or more, the sources said. India was the eighth largest trading partner of China in Asia region with which the Communist giant had a total trade worth 597.12 billion dollars during January-November period.

Taipei Times, 10 January 2005

US briefs envoy on China talks

CROSS-STRAIT ISSUES: The US has informed Taiwan's representative in Washington of the contents of recent discussions with the head of China's Taiwan Affairs Office. US officials have briefed Taiwan's representative office in Washington on their recent talks with a senior Chinese official in charge of Taiwan affairs, a Ministry of Foreign Affairs official said yesterday. Chen Yunlin, director of the Taiwan Affairs Office of China's State Council, visited the US last week. His visit came amid reports that China's rubber-stamp legislature - the National People's Congress - will pass an anti-secession law in March. As the proposed legislation will create a legal pretext for Beijing to use military force to unify with Taiwan, Chen's visit was believed to be aimed at dissuading the Bush administration from opposing the so-called anti-secession law.

The New York Times, 11 January 2005

U.S. Official Faults China on Textile Trade Moves (KEITH BRADSHER)

HONG KONG, Jan. 10: China's imposition of tariffs on apparel exports two weeks ago does not address the concerns of the United States, which wants Beijing to remove barriers to American fabric exports and end local and provincial subsidies for apparel factories, a senior American trade official said here on Monday. ...system of quotas...in textiles and apparel ...expired on Dec. 31. That has prompted fears in the United States that low-cost Chinese exports may flood American and European markets and bankrupt local companies. The American official, Grant D. Aldonas, the under secretary of commerce for international trade, said at a news conference here that the tariffs were so low that they would have a negligible effect on Chinese exports of clothing to the United States. Mr. Aldonas and the departing commerce secretary, Donald L. Evans, will go to Beijing this week for trade talks. Mr. Aldonas said the team would discuss the lack of full convertibility of China's currency..."There is an obligation that goes along with the role to which China aspires in the world trading system and the world economy as a whole."

People's Daily, 11 January 2005

The prospect of a powerful trading nation

10 January: In 2004 China managed to have its foreign trade top 1 trillion USD. It is an exciting milestone which makes China a big trading nation in the world. But this does not mean China is a trade power. China's hi-tech exports accounted for 28 percent of its total exports in 2004. A remarkable progress as it is compared with 10 years ago when the figure stood at 4 percent, there is a big gap between China and developed countries or even some developing peers. Hi-techs will turn out more technically intensive products with high added value. And hi-tech industry itself has great potential to exploit. It is no easy task given uncertainties in the national economy, as well as international political and economic environment. Still it is attainable. Economic globalization and tech progress always bring new possibilities.

People's Daily, 11 January 2005

China to become second largest auto market

10 January: Satinet Claude, general manager of the French Citroen Automobile, said Saturday despite the fact that China's auto market in 2004 was not as good as it had been two years ago he still believed that China would become the second largest auto market in the long run. Satinet said while releasing the company's annual report Citroen produced 78,000 cars in 2004 in cooperation with China whilst the production in 2003 was 104,000. The reason of the reduction was that the China auto market experienced sharp demand decrease after "blowout" in recent years. Satinet said although China's auto market entered an adjustment period from the short-term point of view, in the long run, that is, in the foreseeable ten years, it would become the second largest auto market in the world.

Xinhuanet, 11 January 2005

US official: US-China economic relations have never been better

Under Secretary of the US Commerce Department Grant Aldonas said in Hong Kong Thursday that the economic and trade relations between the United States and China have never been better and that China is now a very open market. "China's exports to the United States and the United States exports to China have grown very significantly," the under secretary in charge of international trade said, adding that China and the United States are important trading partners to each other. He said a good US-China economic and trade relationship is not only in the interest of American and Chinese, but has a broader

impact. In this aspect, it is the responsibility of the two countries to better manage the relationship and solve conflicts.

China Daily, 11 January 2005

China aid critics unfair

The international community should concentrate their effort in battling the tsunami crisis, not in administering rebukes to other countries, says an on-line article on www.people.com.cn. An excerpt follows: China is no richer than those tsunami afflicted countries. Although China's economic development has been fueled with considerable momentum over recent years, its GDP per capita is still outside of the global top 100 list. We know how much this 500 million yuan (US\$60.46 million) means to us. As poor as we are, we Chinese have spared no efforts to give money to alleviate those tsunami afflicted people. However, right at the crucial time when some countries, including China, are making a contributive effort for future aid programmes, like communications with the devastated countries and evaluation of the disaster, some Western media are voicing jarring noises, denouncing China for its ponderous action in the rescue work, in the tone of a pompous commentator.

People's Daily, 12 January 2005

Coaxing and Coercion in international politics, Comment

The international community spent the 2005 New Year in condolences to the victims of the Sumatra tsunami that shook south and southeastern Asian countries. Over a dozen thousand people who have died, injured or are still missing weighed heavily in the hearts of all human beings, and roused their sympathy and kindness. All people, rich or poor, opened their wallets for support. As relief efforts going on the world will gradually return to a normal condition, and world attention will be back to those old headaches as well as new focuses. American President George W. Bush will soon kick off his second term, which is also his last four years as US President. In Europe, West-favored presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko became the new Ukrainian President... According to them, the threats caused by terrorism and WMD proliferation no longer bear any resemblance with those during the Cold War. The rising of China and India seems irreversible, and Russia seemingly would take the same road. The United States and Europe cannot afford to eject each other blindly, for "the United States is not Venue and Europe is not Mars."

People's Daily, 12 January 2005

Crude oil imports top a hundred million tons in 2004

The latest statistics from the General Administration of Customs shows China imported 120 million tons of crude oil in 2004. That is a year-on-year leap of 34.8 percent. The statistics also finds China's imports of primary products have been spiraling up in 2004. 117.29 billion USD worth of primary products was shipped to China in 2004. The 61.2 percent surge is 13.5 percent faster than the previous year. Primary products account for 20.9 percent of the total imports in 2004, 3.3 percentage higher than the previous year. The order on 210 million tons of iron ore represented a jump of 40.5 percent. Last year the delivery of industrial manufactured products to China was worth nearly 441 billion USD which was up 30.6 percent.

People's Daily, 12 January 2005

US congress urged not to encourage Taiwan independence

China hopes the congress of the United States will properly handle the "Taiwan independence" issue and not encourage any separatist activity of the island, said Chinese state councilor Tang Jiaxuan in Beijing on January 11. Tang made the remark when meeting Tom Lantos, senior Democrat on the International Relations Committee in the House of Representatives. Tang said this is a critical period for the China-US relationship. With wide common interests between each other, China is willing to work together with the US to settle differences and push the constructive cooperation partnership to go further. However, Tang said the Taiwan issue is still the biggest problem for bilateral relations. China will strive for peaceful reunification with utmost efforts and sincerity, but will never allow "Taiwan independence" and any attempt by any one to separate the island from China.

People's Daily, 12 January 2005

USD recorded for Chinese textile trade in 2004

11 January: As learned from China National Textile Industry Council China's imports and exports of textiles are expected to total 103 billion USD in 2004. The exports are estimated to reach 98 billion USD, an increase of 22 percent over the previous year. In 2003, China's textile foreign trade valued at 80.4 billion USD which accounted for 20 percent of the world's total textile trade. The share is likely to be higher in 2004. Du Yuzhou, Chairman of the Council, said that 35 percent of China's textile exports were made by foreign-funded producers in China. This, he asserted, has proved the integration of China's textile industry into the globalization on one hand and indicated that China is not the only one benefiting from its textile exports. However, China's textile exporters will face even higher than ever pressure after the removal of textile quotas around the world. But it seems that various trade barriers will be unavoidable. For Chinese textile producers and exporters, the best solution is to add more value to their products, which is right what their foreign competitors are doing.

People's Daily, 12 January 2005

China jumps to be world third largest trader

China registered a 35.7 per cent surge in foreign trade last year, accounting for US\$1.15 trillion exchanged, to become the world's third largest trading power behind the United States and Germany. According to the Ministry of Commerce, exports last year ballooned to US\$593.4 billion, reflecting a year-on-year increase of 35.4 per cent. Imports rose 36 per cent to US\$561.4 billion. The yearly surplus came to US\$32 billion, compared with US\$25.5 billion in the previous year. The nation underwent a trade deficit from January to August. "China's imports rose sharply in the first half of the year," said Fan Ying, a professor with

Beijing's Foreign Affairs University. "Blistering fixed-asset investments in certain sectors such as steel, real estate and construction have demand for raw materials soaring." "Prices for steel, rubber, plastics and cotton have also skyrocketed," she said.

People's Daily, 12 January 2005

China positive about its future military ties with US: Chinese DM

China is optimistic about further expanding Sino-US military ties and hopes for healthier and more stable progress in army-to-army relations, Chinese Minister of National Defense Cao Gangchuan said Wednesday. During his meeting with a delegation from the Armed Services Committee of House of Representatives of America, Cao said that army-to-army ties constitute an important part of the bilateral relations between the two countries. "It is in the common interest of both nations to develop bilateral military ties," Cao said, "it also serves the peace and stability of the region and the world." Only through exchange and communication can the two militaries deepen their understanding and build trust, which underlie the enhanced consensus and expanded cooperation, acknowledged Cao, who is also vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission and state councillor. "We Chinese are in firm opposition to all secessionist activities aimed at 'Taiwan independence,'" Cao said, "We will never allow anyone to separate Taiwan from China through whatever means."

People's Daily, 13 January 2005

UK sees China arms embargo lifted before July

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said on Wednesday he thought the European Union's arms embargo on China could well be lifted by July. "I think it is more likely than not that it will be decided under this (Luxembourg) presidency of the EU," he told a parliamentary committee. Luxembourg holds the rotating EU presidency until mid-year when Britain takes over. The 25-member bloc is now drawing up a code of conduct on arms exports to guarantee greater transparency. Straw argued the code of conduct would prove just as, if not more, effective in limiting the trading of weapons with China as well as with other countries. France has led moves to scrap the embargo which could open up trade with the world's fastest-growing major economy. "Our position is that, subject to satisfaction of the issues laid out by the EU, we will support a lifting of the arms embargo," said Straw. He said he would aim to provide explanations and reassurances to Washington which adamantly opposes ending it. US officials say they are not satisfied the mechanisms in the new code of conduct will provide sufficiently solid blocks on transfers. US Undersecretary of State John Bolton, a hardliner on arms control, is meeting British officials this week to press the case for keeping the embargo.

Washington Times, 13 January 2005

U.S. in touch with EU on arms for China

Washington, DC, Jan. 12: The U.S. State Department says the country is in touch with the European Union on its decision to lift arms embargo on China. "We've kept in close touch with the European Union on this matter," spokesman Richard Boucher told a briefing in Washington. But he declined to comment further on the issue. British Foreign Minister Jack Straw said earlier Wednesday he expected the European arms embargo on China to be lifted by next July.

China Daily, 13 January 2005

Tete-a-tete improves China-US military ties

Sino-US relations are today in a good period but the two militaries still need better communications and to find areas for co-operation, said former US Secretary of Defence William Cohen on Tuesday. "Progress started in my period as Secretary of Defence. Secretary (William) Perry (Cohen's predecessor) initiated better relations with China. We want to improve relations in the field of maritime affairs and I tried to do everything we could to increase our exchanges," recalled Cohen, who served from 1997 to 2001 in the Clinton administration. He made the remarks in an exclusive interview with China Daily in Beijing. "We try to find ways to reduce tensions, increase understanding, find ways to co-operate in areas such as rules of the seas and rules that should govern our respective behaviour," he said. China and the US must take actions, step by step, to reduce suspicions, said Cohen, admitting it is difficult because of relations in the past and wars. "It is important to be open, to talk, to meet, and try to find ways in which you can really work together," he added.

Washington Times, 13 January 2005

China plans massive new rail investment

Beijing, China, Jan. 12: China will invest about \$12 billion to build railways in 2005, the official Xinhua news agency reported Wednesday. The investment will be almost double that spent in 2004, said Liu Zhijun, minister of railways. During a three-day national meeting on railways, Liu said his ministry will launch 58 new projects and continue the 48 projects from 2004. The ministry will finish 434 miles of new lines, 314 miles of double track lines and 525 miles of electric rail routes. Work will also start on 483 miles of new lines and 237 miles of double track lines, the news agency said. As part of the middle and long-term program for railway network which the central government approved in 2004, the ministry launched 48 new projects in 2004, with a total investment of more than \$60.46 billion.

China Daily, 13 January 2005

Minister: Sino-US trade ties "pretty good"

Commerce Minister Bo Xilai told the outgoing US Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans that Evans' work to promote China-US trade ties was "pretty good" during his four-year tenure. But Bo said it is regretful that the United States did not grant China the market economy status in Evans' stint in his key presidential cabinet post. "I would say that 70 per cent of what Evans has done is pretty good," said Bo. To Bo, that grade is actually a high mark, given that the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping only

gave himself a grade of 70 per cent. But Bo believes it is regretful that Washington has failed to grant the market economy status to China under Evans. Bo said granting such status will prove the United States is "willing to promote its trade with China on a free and fair footing."

Xinhuanet, 13 January 2005

State Councilor Tang meets with Japanese guest

Chinese State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan met in Beijing on January 12 with visiting Chairman of Japanese National Public Safety Commission, Murata Yoshitaka. Tang said that 2005 is the 60th anniversary of the anti-fascist war and victory of Chinese people against Japanese invasion. He said he hoped that the two countries would make efforts to promote a stable and healthy development of China-Japan relations in a spirit of "taking history as a mirror and looking forward to the future." The two sides also exchanged views on issues such as cooperation on earthquake prevention and disaster relief in Asia.

The New York Times, 13 January 2005

China Goes Beyond Oil in Forging Ties to Persian Gulf (BORZOU DARAGAH)

BAGHDAD, Jan. 12: The Dragon Mart opened last month in Dubai as a showcase for Chinese goods in the United Arab Emirates. Lured by the world's largest oil reserves and some markets considered too risky by Western companies, China is quickly becoming a major economic player in the Persian Gulf, making deals in transportation and technology, showcasing its consumer goods and shoring up agreements to meet its enormous energy needs. "The current state of business ties between China and the gulf states is definitely growing, with an interest from both sides to expand ties," said Christian Koch, program director at the Gulf Research Center, an independent institute based in the United Arab Emirates. "Oil is certainly the most central aspect to the relations, but ties should not be seen exclusively through that prism." Trade volume between China and the six rich countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council - the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman - was expected to reach \$20 billion in 2004, up from \$16.9 billion in 2003, according to the National Bureau of Statistics in China. Trade between China and Iran is expected to have totaled \$7 billion in 2004, up from \$5.6 billion in 2003, according to the Iran-China Chamber of Commerce, which was established in 2000.

The Hindustan Times, 13 January 2005

'Most Americans see China as military threat to US'

Six in 10 Americans saw China as a potential economic and military threat to the United States, although China's booming economy has generally improved their perceptions of the country, according to a survey released in Hong Kong on Thursday. About 60 per cent of Americans viewed China favourably, up from 46 per cent a decade ago, and think Sino-US relations have improved, showed the poll by Zogby International for the New York-based Committee of a Chinese-American organisation. Close to half of the respondents saw China as an important ally of the US only after Britain, Japan and Israel. "This was unfathomable 15 or 30 years ago," said pollster John Zogby. But China's human rights record remained a top concern for Americans, and 70 per cent of respondents agreed that it should be linked to China's access to the US markets. About 60 per cent viewed China as a serious or potential economic threat to the US, while 66 per cent of respondents regarded China as a serious or potential military threat to America.

Xinhuanet, 14 January 2005

Chinese, Pakistani military leaders underscore bilateral ties

Chinese and Pakistani militaries said on January 13 that they are willing to deepen the relations between the two forces. In his talks with visiting Pakistani Minister of Defense Rao Sikandar Iqbal, Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan said Sino-Pakistani friendship is deeply rooted and won popular support with a broad foundation. The military ties play an important role in the bilateral relations. China would like to further enhance the relations between the two military forces in the future. Iqbal said Pakistan had always attaches great importance in the relationship with China, and its friendship with China is sincere and trustworthy. Pakistan fully supports the One-China policy and will join hands with China in fighting terrorism, separatism and extremism, he added.

People's Daily, 14 January 2005

Chinese friends always give us prompt help: Interview

13 January: Sri Lanka is one of the countries worst hit by earthquake and tsunami on the Indian Ocean. On January 12, People's Daily reporter Chen Yiming in the capital of the country had an interview respectively with Sri Lanka President Madame Chandrika Kumaratunga and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse on questions regarding disaster relief to and reconstruction of Sri Lanka, aid from China and the international community to Colombo as well as the establishment of a disaster early warning system. "Here I would like to express my sincerest thanks to the Chinese government and people through you Chinese reporter." China is among the first countries that extended their helping hands after the occurrence of tsunami on December 26... it's time to give attention to the establishment of one such mechanism in the Indian Ocean area. The Chinese government was the first to suggest helping neighboring countries to set up such a system and to decide to hold a symposium on this question in Beijing. We are deeply grateful for that.

People's Daily, 14 January 2005

59% Americans have favorable opinion of China: survey

American attitudes toward China have improved significantly over the last 10 years, according to a survey released by the Committee of 100, an organization of prominent American citizens of Chinese descent, Thursday. The survey, conducted by Zogby International recently, showed that 59 percent of the surveyed Americans have a favorable opinion of China, compared

with 46 percent over 10 years ago. Robert Lee, chairman of the Committee of 100, said the major positive change factor appears to be the shift of China toward a marketplace economy and its role as a major global economic power. Moderating American's concerns about job losses and outsourcing are the benefits they see in China's low cost products, Lee said. The survey found that China's importance as an ally of the United States is viewed higher than 10 years ago. Human rights and environment are the major concerns of Americans toward China. The survey also showed that Americans lean against greater US involvement in Taiwan affairs.

People's Daily, 14 January 2005

Straw to discuss arms ban in Beijing: FM spokesman

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw is to discuss the prospect of an end to the European Union's arms embargo on China with his Chinese counterpart during his official visit to the country next week, said a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman. Kong Quan said Thursday in a regular briefing that Straw's two-day visit, which starts on Thursday, is an important part of the negotiation mechanism between the foreign ministers of the two countries. "The two sides will talk about the lifting of the EU's arms embargo on China and China will require the EU to recognize the nation's full market economy status," Kong said. The British Foreign Secretary said on Wednesday that the EU's 15-year-old arms embargo will almost certainly be lifted within the next six months. Kong said ... the common challenges the two countries are facing require further understanding between the two sides to make efforts for world peace and stability. "The two countries will work together to promote the comprehensive strategic partner relationship between China and the EU," he said.

People's Daily, 14 January 2005

US hails trade ties with China

Though there are many problems in US-China trade, economic cooperation has maintained good momentum and the United States will continue to strive for strong and stable trade ties with China, said US Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans on January 13. Evans made the remarks at a press conference in Beijing after attending a Sino-US roundtable conference on Intellectual Property Rights in Beijing. Bush Administration is committed to further enhancing the US-China political and economic relationship and continues the dialogue between the two countries' leadership, he said. Evans, the 34th US Secretary of Commerce, said there were many problems in US-China economic and trade relationships, such as IPR protection, anti-subsidy, capital flow and exchange rates of Renminbi, or the Chinese currency. But while attending the roundtable conference on IPR, the US senior trade official spoke highly of China's efforts in that aspect, saying that China has started a campaign "to educate the Chinese people, the municipal government and all local government and individuals what an important issue the IPR is."

People's Daily, 14 January 2005

How to cope with post-transitional period of China's WTO entry

Since January 1, 2005 China has entered into the "post-WTO transitional period" from its WTO entry. So-called the "post-WTO transitional period" is the period from January 1, 2005 to the date when China opens all its sectors it promised to foreign participation. "Due to the shielding effect of the transitional period, the related Chinese sectors have gained the precious adaptive phase and debugging period; there is not enough foreign competition influence on major industries in China; there is not yet real impact on China's economy", said Professor Chu Xiangyin with the University of International Business and Economics (UIBE) in an interview with a People's Daily reporter. He also stressed that it is not to say that we will sleep more sound in our beds. In fact, there have been many challenges since China's WTO entry and there have existed risks in some domains". He said China should make full use of the last opportunities in the remaining two years of the transitional period to readjust its corresponding measures.

People's Daily, 14 January 2005

SCO achieves "impressive progress"

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has taken active steps in its external and internal activities in the past year and scored "impressive progress", SCO Secretary-General Zhang Deguang said in Beijing Thursday. Dubbed "a new model of regional cooperation", SCO is an intergovernmental international organization founded in Shanghai on June 15, 2001 by six countries of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Last year, SCO stepped up security cooperation, Zhang said at a reception marking SCO Secretariat's first inauguration anniversary and presentation of its website "www.sectsc.org". "We initiated the regional anti-terrorist structure, signed an agreement on cracking down on drug trafficking, and created a mechanism of meetings for secretaries of the national security councils of SCO member states," Zhang told an audience of more than 100 diplomats and representatives from SCO member states, some other countries and international organizations.

Indian Express, 14 January 2005

Lakshmi Mittal wins \$314 mn China deal

Shanghai, January 14: Mittal, set to become the world's top steel maker via a multi-billion dollar merger, signed a pact to buy 37.17 per cent of the listed arm of China's eighth-largest steel maker for \$314 million, the firms said on Friday. Mittal Steel Co, led by self-made billionaire Lakshmi Mittal, agreed to pick up 656.25 million institutional shares in Hunan Valin Steel Tube & Wire Co Ltd, which holds most of the production assets of parent Valin Iron & Steel Group. The deal hands Mittal a much-desired foothold in China, the world's largest producer of steel that also consumes about a quarter of global output. "It provides us with our first production platform in the world's fastest growing steel market," Lakshmi Mittal was cited as saying in a statement.

Xinhuanet, 15 January 2005

Shanghai to host 24th World Ports Conference in May

The 24th World Ports Conference will be held from May 21 to 27 in Shanghai, the first time the biennial international meeting is convened in China, the Shanghai Port Administration said Saturday. Representatives from ports and shipping companies, experts and leaders of related international organizations will focus on investment in ports, development strategy of ports, the impact of economic globalization on shipping and port development, the environment and dredging of ports and shipping innovation at the 7-day gathering, said Director Xu Peixing of the administration. The meeting is expected to attract more than 1,000 participants from more 80 countries throughout the world, he said. Ocean shipping has become increasingly important in China with the rapid growth of the country's foreign trade, and port construction and management has drawn growing attention of both the government and the business world.

Telegraph.co.uk, 15 January 2005

US fury over EU weapons for China (Anton La Guardia)

America is waging an intense behind-the-scenes battle to stop the European Union lifting its 15-year-old arms embargo against China, warning Britain that it will not tolerate the prospect of European military technology being used to threaten its soldiers in the Far East. As Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, prepares to travel to Beijing next week to discuss ending the arms ban, The Telegraph has learnt that the Bush administration is alarmed by Tony Blair's "cave-in" to French and German pressure. Japan has also expressed dismay over the EU's move dramatically to upgrade relations with Beijing. The Tories have warned the Government that it is creating a "major breach" with Washington and endangering vital exchanges of military technology between Britain and America. Mr Straw told the House of Commons this week that the arms embargo, imposed on China after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, would "more likely than not" be lifted by June. The timing seems designed to avoid provoking a public row with President George W Bush before his fence-mending visit to Europe next month - including a stop in London.

Telegraph.co.uk, 15 January 2005

Britain sells out for the sake of China's market

Lifting the EU arms embargo on China, imposed after the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, has been on the cards for a while. European leaders considered it 13 months ago and in December, at a summit with China, declared their "political will" to remove it. On Wednesday, Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, who will visit Beijing next week, said he expected that decision to be taken by the middle of the year. A sanction that China claims is a "product of the Cold War" appears in EU eyes to have outlived its usefulness. In conjunction with their declaration on the embargo, the Europeans stressed that China must respect human rights and ensure regional stability. Yet these are both areas in which Beijing has hardly moved an inch.

People's Daily, 16 January 2005

Beijing will not allow RMB to appreciate

The central government will not allow the renminbi to appreciate this year, as the market is highly speculative on the revaluation of the currency. Fan Gang, director of the National Economic Research Institute China Reform Foundation, said this yesterday. If Beijing allows the renminbi to appreciate in such a market environment, the exchange rate of the currency will see even greater fluctuation, Fan said at a seminar on economic outlook held by MasterCard International in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, Fan stressed that renminbi revaluation must choose an appropriate time because it is a very sensitive issue, which could bring unemployment shocks that are very hard to deal with on the mainland. Fan said that speculation on renminbi revaluation is very risky and dangerous and as long as the speculation money stays in the market, the central government will not consider the revaluation issue.

People's Daily, 16 January 2005

China forms a rational structure of nuclear industry

China has shaped a rational structure of nuclear industry by streamlining operation in the sector and balancing use of the technology in military and civilian fields. Kang Rixin, director with China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), said this Saturday while addressing a meeting commemorating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China's nuclear industry. China has adjusted its nuclear industry to the economic development of the country and shifted the emphasis to the civilian use of nuclear technology, Kang said. Statistics from CNNC show that in 2004 combined profits of the corporation reached 800 million yuan (96.7 million US dollars), up 226 percent over that in 2003.

China Daily, 16 January 2005

Talks bid to resolve textile disputes

15 January: China and United States had talks in Beijing on Friday on textile trade issues, a sign that the two countries are moving towards solving the sticky problem between them. "Positive and sincere" talks took place between top Chinese and US trade officials in a bid to resolve their textile trade disputes. According to a statement issued to China Daily by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, the Beijing meeting was attended by Chinese Vice-Minister of Commerce Gao Hucheng and Grant Aldonas, the US under-secretary of commerce for international trade. The statement said both sides have agreed to each appoint a liaison officer specially for the textile issue, to ensure an open communication channel and the smooth flow of information.

China Daily, 16 January 2005

Japan oil firms to drill in East China Sea

Two Japanese companies plan to drill for oil and gas in the East China Sea in a bid to catch up with Chinese exploration in the area, a Japanese daily said on Sunday. Exploration by Japan may heat up a long-running row with China over rights to resources at a time when relations between the two countries are at a low ebb over Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visits to a controversial war shrine. Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. Ltd and Teikoku Oil Co. were discussing exploration concessions with the government aimed at starting drilling by the financial year beginning in April, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said. Beijing and Tokyo disagree over the boundary between their respective economic zones. Energy-poor Japan fears that Chinese exploration near what it regards as the border could result in Beijing siphoning gas from what Japan sees as its resources. Talks aimed at resolving the issue have made little progress.

Taipei Times, 16 January 2005

China's push for nuclear reactors sparks concern

ENERGY: Beijing plans to build at least one reactor a year between now and 2020, but critics question whether the small payoff warrants exposure to the risks. In its anxiety to satisfy its seemingly bottomless demand for electricity, China plans to build nuclear reactors on a scale and pace comparable to the most ambitious nuclear energy programs the world has ever seen. Current plans - conservative ones, in the estimation of some people involved in China's nuclear energy program - call for new reactors to be commissioned at a rate of nearly two a year between now and 2020, a pace that experts say is comparable to the peak of the US' nuclear energy push in the 1970s. "We will certainly build more than one reactor per year," said Zhou Dadi, director of the central government's Energy Research Institute, which has strongly supported the country's nuclear program.

International Herald Tribune, 17 January 2005

China rushes into its nuclear age (Howard W. French)

DAYA BAY, China: The view from this point by the sea, with lines of misty mountains stretching into the distance, is worthy of a classical Chinese painting. In the foreground, though, sits a less obvious attraction: one of China's first nuclear power reactors, and just behind it, another speeding toward completion. There are countless ways to show how China is climbing the world's economic ladder, passing developed countries in its path, but few are more pronounced than the country's rush into nuclear energy, a technology that for environmental, safety and economic reasons most of the world has put on hold. To satisfy its seemingly bottomless demand for electricity, China plans to build reactors on a scale and pace comparable to the most ambitious nuclear energy programs the world has ever seen. Current plans - conservative ones, in the estimation of some people involved in China's nuclear energy program - call for new reactors to be commissioned at a rate of nearly two a year between now and 2020, a pace that experts say is comparable to the peak of the United States' nuclear energy push in the 1970s.

People's Daily, 17 January 2005

Friction reduction lies on mutual trust

US Secretary of Commerce Donald Louis Evans has paid his visit to China for four times. It is without doubt that the visit of the outgoing US Secretary of Commerce is significant for serving as a link between past and future. Some media made a summary of his visit to China saying he resorted to carrot-and-stick approach. "Soft" is his active evaluation on the Sino-US economic and trade relations while "hard" pointed to his stand on protecting intellectual property rights. From the prospect of the Sino-US economic and trade relations it is in line with the judgment of "going forward in friction" on the whole. Evans' visit to China places stress on strengthening the protection of intellectual property rights, however, behind which are the worries about the increase of US trade deficit. In US view, the key to the Sino-US trade friction is that China has bought less from the US while US has purchased more from China.

The Japan Times, 17 January 2005

Japan moves to drill in East China Sea Project sure to draw Beijing's wrath

Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. and Teikoku Oil Co. are in talks with the government on their plans to drill for natural gas in the East China Sea near areas claimed by both Japan and China, government sources said Sunday. The companies intend to merge their provisional concessions with those of two other firms they plan to take over, with test drilling slated to begin in the fiscal year that starts April 1. The government is likely to greenlight the plan, the sources said. A Chinese consortium is currently carrying out natural gas projects on the Chinese side in an area very near the exclusive economic zone line set by Japan. The government suspects the gas wells being tested may cut into Japan's EEZ, and has demanded that China provide such information as the area covered by the projected deposits. China has not given a substantive response, and Tokyo is now aiming to begin Japan's own research in the area, the sources said. Tokyo and Beijing are at odds over resource development in the East China Sea, mainly stemming from differences in defining an official demarcation for their EEZs.

Daily Times, 17 January 2005

'China source of strength for Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD: Khalilur Rehman, the acting Senate chairman, has called China's economic achievements a source of strength for Pakistan. He expressed these views in a meeting with the seven-member Chinese delegation led by Mr Zhou Keren, chairman of the foreign relations committee, at Parliament House on Sunday. The two sides discussed bilateral relations with special reference to the promotion of parliamentary cooperation. Mr Rehman said that Pakistani-Chinese relations had stood the test of time and "frequent high-level exchanges are the hallmark of our bilateral relations". Referring to Chinese assistance in building Gwadar seaport, he said that China had helped Pakistan economically. The leader of the

Chinese delegation thanked his hosts and said that Chinese considered Pakistan a close friend. "It has been the guiding line of the Chinese government to strengthen friendship between the two countries and to promote economic relations," he said.

People's Daily, 18 January 2005

Taiwan envoys not invited to Bush's inauguration: FM spokesman

The United States said clearly that it did not invite Taiwan's "envoy delegation" to President Bush's forthcoming inauguration, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said Tuesday in Beijing. According to the reports of Taiwan media, the Taiwan authorities would assign an envoy delegation to Bush's inauguration on Jan. 20. The delegation was said to be headed by Lee Yuantseh and include several political figures. Asked to comment on this, Kong said China had expressed concerns over this to the United States and was clearly told that the United States did not invite or recognize the so-called "envoy delegation" sent by the Taiwan authorities. As a representative of the Chinese government, Chinese Ambassador to the United States Yang Jiechi will by invitation attend Bush's second-term inauguration.

People's Daily, 18 January 2005

Japan cannot add Chinese territory into its military plan

The latest release of a set of Japan's detailed emergency military programmes against China on the issue of the Diaoyu Islands has put Tokyo's sincerity in doubt, having said on many occasions how much it values peace and friendship with China and having vowed not to go to war with its neighbours again. Japan's Defence Agency has mapped out a plan on how to repel possible foreign invasions against a group of its remote southern islands, which include China's Diaoyu Islands, the country's Kyodo news agency said on Saturday. The plan, which was first released in November, calls for steps such as the dispatch of navy destroyers, submarines and fighter planes as well as the deployment of a 55,000-personnel special and rapid response unit when there are signs that foreign troops are launching attacks against the remote islands off Kyushu and Okinawa. Late last year, the Japanese Defence Agency drew up three scenarios of Chinese invasions of Japan. The presumptions have turned Japan's claim that it values friendship with China pale. Tokyo's actions involving neighbours have clearly indicated what kind of policy it really holds towards them.

People's Daily, 18 January 2005

UK, China unite in hi-tech research

Energy, electronics, stem cell studies and space and aviation sciences are major fields for scientific co-operation between China and the United Kingdom. A series of conferences or workshops will be held soon to deepen co-operation in the four areas, Lord Sainsbury, minister for science and innovation at the Department of Trade and Industry of UK, said Sunday. Scientists from the two countries will have additional opportunities to conduct extensive exchanges, he told the opening session of the two-day third UK-China High Technology Forum. He noted China's rapid economic growth and excellent science development are good foundations for the bilateral collaboration. The UK and China have also started co-operation in space fields, such as air-to-surface observation for environmental-monitoring and other aspects, according to Sainsbury.

People's Daily, 18 January 2005

Beijing signs sister-city agreement with Madrid

The mayor of Beijing signed an agreement to become a sister-city with Madrid with visiting President of the Autonomous Region of Madrid in Spain Monday in Beijing. Wang Qishan and Secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Liu Qi held a meeting with Esperanza Aquirre before signing the agreement. Liu, also member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, said during the meeting that Beijing and Madrid are both well-known historical cities, which have the same task to promote economic development and urban construction. Wang said both sides have frequent exchanges and communications in recent years. The signing of the agreement will enhance and deepen the friendly relationship between Beijing and Madrid. Aquirre said Madrid hopes to strengthen cooperation with Beijing in such fields as economy and trade, tourism and cultural exchanges. The Autonomous Region of Madrid is both capital of Spain and the biggest autonomous region in Spain. It is also the political, economic and cultural center of the country.

People's Daily, 18 January 2005

FM spokesman calls on China, Japan to resolve island dispute via negotiation

China and Japan should resolve the dispute about Diaoyu Islands through negotiation and consultation, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said Tuesday. It is reported that Japanese Defense Agency drafted a proposal to prevent possible maritime attacks on China's southwestern islands, including Diaoyu Islands. When asked to comment on this, Kong said that Diaoyu Islands and neighboring islands have been China's territories since ancient time, though Japan holds a different view on this. China has always maintained that the dispute should be addressed by negotiation and consultation, Kong told a regular press conference. "No unilateral action should be taken," Kong said.

Reuters, 18 January 2005

China Says No Evidence to Back U.S. Sanctions

BEIJING: China said on Tuesday the United States' imposition of sanctions against eight Chinese companies for aiding Iran's weapons programs was not backed by evidence and added it was committed to preventing proliferation. The New York Times reported the sanctions on Monday, citing China Great Wall Industry Corp. and China North Industry Corp -- both of which have been penalized in the past - as well as China Aero-Technology Import and Export Corp. as among the companies involved. "The U.S. government has wantonly launched sanctions against Chinese companies without any evidence," Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan told a news briefing, although he added he had not seen the Times report.

Xinhuanet, 18 January 2005

Foreign trade robust between ASEAN, south China region

NANNING, Jan. 18: Foreign trade topped 1 billion US dollars between south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2004, local customs statistics show. The figure is 21 percent up from the previous year, including 640 million US dollars of exports, up 15.1 percent from the previous year, and 360 million US dollars of imports, up 32.8 percent from the previous year. Guangxi registered 4 billion US dollars of foreign trade in 2004, up 34.3 percent from the previous year. ASEAN has been Guangxi's largest trade partner for six years running. The region has maintained stable economic partnership with Japan and other traditional markets in 2004, while exploring new markets in Africa and Latin America. Exports from Guangxi mainly are non-ferrous metal, textiles, fruits and vegetables.

People's Daily, 19 January 2005

Chinese president concerned about security of eight Chinese hostages in Iraq

Chinese President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jiabao, and other leaders are concerned about security of the eight Chinese hostages in Iraq, and ordered the Foreign Ministry and Chinese Embassy to Iraq to take effective measures to rescue the hostages, according to sources from the Foreign Ministry. At present, the Chinese Foreign Ministry and embassy to Iraq are doing the rescue work through all channels, sources said. The Chinese government is seriously concerned with the kidnapping of eight Chinese nationals in Iraq and the Foreign Ministry is taking all possible measures to rescue them, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said Tuesday in Beijing. "The Chinese government hopes they could be released in safety as soon as possible. The Foreign Ministry is actively taking all possible measures to rescue them," Kong said.

People's Daily, 19 January 2005

Chinese teams sent to help tsunami reconstruction

Three Chinese investigative teams have been sent to Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Indonesia and Thailand to help with reconstruction efforts in the wake of the tsunami disaster. "One was sent to Sri Lanka and the Maldives on Monday," said the Ministry of Commerce. "The other two are expected to leave for Indonesia and Thailand respectively in recent days." The teams, composed of officials from the ministry, experts from research institutions and technical staff from large building companies, will help South Asian countries restore their transport systems, electricity supply, communications and hospitals. They will carry out investigations on the damages of the infrastructure, learn about the demands of local citizens, and help local governments work out re-construction programmes.

People's Daily, 19 January 2005

Falun Gong followers repent of Tian'anmen suicide attempt

On the eve of the fourth anniversary of the Falun Gong organized suicide at Tian'anmen Square, survivors told Chinese and foreign journalists in Zhengzhou Tuesday that they regret their actions. On January 23, 2001, also the eve of Chinese Lunar New Year, seven Falun Gong followers set themselves on fire in the Tian'anmen Square in pursuit of "heavenly glory" under the call from cult leader Li Hongzhi. As a result, two died and three badly wounded. Of the five survivors, three have been "properly accommodated to receive long-term education," and two are still imprisoned at the Zhengzhou Prison. "The words of Li Hongzhi and Falun Gong boil down to only one word 'hatred' to me," said Wang Jindong one of the chief organizers of the Tian'anmen Square suicide. He said he is still frightened by the fact that he was once so obsessed with the cult that he could commit the crime of murder. After being rehabilitated, Wang has worked to help other followers out of the psychological control of the cult.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

China opposes any country to provide place for "Taiwan independence" attempt

China opposes any country to provide a place for Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian to advocate "Taiwan independence", Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said Thursday. Taiwan authorities are using every possible chance including "transit diplomacy" to advocate "Taiwan independence." The international community, especially those which have diplomatic ties with China, must not provide a place for Chen to advocate "Taiwan independence," said Kong at a regular press conference. According to Taiwan media, Chen is planning to stop by Guam on his tour to southern Pacific nations later this month.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

China to hold seminar on tsunami early warning system, FM spokesman

China will hold a seminar on tsunami early warning systems with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) from Jan. 25-26, said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan Thursday. Approximately 30 experts and management officials from ASEAN, officials from ASEAN Secretariat and experts from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the United States, Japan and the United Nations are confirmed to participate in the seminar, Kong said. They will explore the condition and technologies of tsunami early warning in the region and discuss how to further cooperation in this field, the spokesman said. The proposal of the seminar was set forth by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in his speech at the international tsunami summit held in Jakarta of Indonesia on Jan. 6.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

China calls US sanctions of 8 Chinese companies "irresponsible"

China objected strongly Thursday to sanctions imposed by the United States this month on eight Chinese companies that the US government says were helping Iran with its missile programs, calling them "irresponsible." "The sanctions are extremely

irresponsible and unproven and must be lifted," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan at a regularly scheduled press conference. China opposes the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their transport vehicles, Kong said. The Chinese government has set up intact law systems on prevention of WMD proliferation and does not allow any Chinese organization or individual to involve in it. Any violation of laws will be brought to justice, he said.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

British foreign secretary arrives in Beijing

British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw arrived in Beijing Thursday, starting an official visit to China. Straw will conclude the visit and leave Beijing on Friday. The visit is at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

Canadian PM arrives in Beijing

Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin arrived in Beijing Thursday afternoon to pay a four-day official visit to China, at the invitation of Premier Wen Jiabao. During his visit, Chinese President Hu Jintao, China's top legislator Wu Bangguo and Premier Wen Jiabao will hold talks or meet with him. Apart from Beijing, Martin will also visit Hong Kong. Martin visited China twice as financial minister before he became prime minister in December of 2003. Last November, he met with Hu Jintao at the 12th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in Chile.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

610.8 bln new Taiwan dollars budget for arms purchase vetoed again

Taiwan's "Procedures Committee of the Legislative Yuan" vetoed Taiwan authority's special budget for arms purchase from the US and related regulations on Jan 18. This is the 16th time the budget has been rejected. Drafted in June 2004, the 610.8 bln new Taiwan dollars budget for arm purchase from the US is the one with the largest amount ever in history of Taiwan. The Taiwan authority plans to raise the funds through land sales, transfer of stock and debts borrowing. But the plan has aroused strong dissatisfaction among the Taiwan public the day it was released. The nongovernmental organizations have founded "union for opposition of the arms purchase" to protest the authority's attempt to "turning Taiwan into an arsenal". Large protests were staged in Taipei, Gaoxing in June and Sept of 2004.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

Second China-France Round Table of Mayors to be held in Chengdu

The second China-France Round Table of Mayors will be held in Chengdu, capital of southwest China Sichuan Province from Jan. 24 to 25. The two-day meeting was organized by the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs and the France-China Committee, and will be hosted by the Chengdu Municipal Government. The first meeting, held in February of last year in Lyon, France, attracted more than 100 representatives from the two countries, who discussed such issues as the flow of Chinese rural residents to cities, environmental protection and energy policy.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

CPPCC chairman advocates non-gov't exchanges with foreign countries

A Chinese leader said the China Association for International Friendly Contacts should fulfill its popular diplomatic role in improving international friendships in accordance to China's diplomatic guideline. Jia Qinglin, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, made the remarks when he met with the representatives attending the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the CAIFC. He also hoped the CAIFC would contribute to the world peace and development and create better environment for China's modernization drive. Jia pointed out during the past 20 years, the CAIFC has always pushed forward people-to-people exchanges with other countries. It has worked to promote world peace and development and has contributed to furthering friendship between the Chinese and the people of the world.

People's Daily, 20 January 2005

Innovation brings partners closer

Both Lord Sainsbury, British Science and Innovation Minister, and Sir Christopher Hum, British Ambassador to China, reiterated their anticipation in Beijing recently that their continuous efforts on showing the creativity of UK in culture, science, commerce and education would pave the way for broader and more extensive bilateral cooperation and make UK "a natural partner" of China in the 21th century. UK is apparently intensifying its endeavor for strengthening its ties with the fastest growing economy in the world. Right after his visit to China in July, 2003, British Tony Blair appointed a Task Force to look into ways to upgrade the "already very good relationship" between China and UK. The China-UK relationship is defined as a comprehensive strategic partnership in the Joint Statement announced during Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to London last May.

People's Daily, 21 January 2005

PM of Ireland expects China-Ireland cooperation in all areas

Visiting Prime Minister of Ireland Bertie Ahern finished his visit to Shanghai, the second leg of his China tour Friday, confident about the future of China-Ireland cooperation. China and Ireland share much in common, especially in terms of economic development. They will see a rosy prospect in bilateral cooperation, Ahern said in a speech Thursday toward

hundreds of students of Fudan University in Shanghai. The well-known school has signed a memorandum for long-term cooperation with the Trinity College of Ireland, which Ahern hailed as a great event in bilateral exchanges on education. During his second visit to Shanghai started on Wednesday, Ahern toured the Oriental Pearl Television Tower and Zhangjiang Hi-Tech Development Park in Pudong of Shanghai and was "deeply impressed by the drastic changes there."

People's Daily, 21 January 2005

China-Britain relations enter "mature" period, says Chinese premier

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said Friday in Beijing that the relationship between China and Britain has entered a "mature period." "The leaders of the two countries have treated bilateral ties from long-term and strategic perspectives to make the relations develop steadily and enriched with new contents," said Wen in a meeting with British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw. Wen said China and Britain, both permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations, shoulder common responsibility for safeguarding world peace and development. He said China will maintain high-level exchanges and cooperation in various fields with Britain to push forward their comprehensive and strategic partnership. Wen expressed appreciation for Britain's adherence to one-China policy.

People's Daily, 21 January 2005

Chinese Premier holds talks with Canadian PM

China and Canada should expand cooperation in all fields to push forward an all-round partnership of cooperation, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin said in a meeting in Beijing on January 20. Speaking highly of China-Canada ties, Wen said China and Canada have seen rapid progress in bilateral ties during the past 35 years since the establishment of diplomatic ties, especially after the all-round partnership of cooperation was founded in 1997. In recent years, Wen said, high-level exchange of visits was increased, trade and economic ties were deepened, and fruitful results were reached in cultural, educational, scientific and health sectors. The Chinese side was satisfactory to the good developing trend of China-Canada ties. He said China and Canada share many things in common. In political terms, the two nations shared similar views in pushing forward multilateralism, reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development. In economic terms, the two countries being complementary to each other, both have urgent wish to further cooperation.

People's Daily, 21 January 2005

China supports combating terrorism in any form

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said in Beijing Thursday that China always supports the international community to make joint efforts to crack down on terrorism in any form. Kong made the remarks in response to a reporter's question that according to an unconfirmed report, four Chinese scientists were suspected of conducting terrorism activities in the United States. Kong said China is also a victim of terrorism. The Chinese government has very clear and firm position on this issue, that is to back up the international joint efforts to crack down on terrorism in any form.

People's Daily, 22 January 2005

Chinese senior official proposes energy cooperation with Canada

Chinese Vice-Premier Zeng Peiyan proposed on Friday to enhance cooperation with Canada in broad sectors ranging from energy and natural resources to agriculture and investment. Zeng made four proposals on furthering Sino-Canadian trade and economic ties at a banquet hosted by Canada-China Business Council for visiting Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin. "Sino-Canadian economic and trade ties surged in recent years and cooperation fields expanded constantly," Zeng said. China is rich in labor force and market potential, as well as having a growing demand for agricultural products, energy, mineral products and equipment. While Canada enjoys abundant energy and natural resources and a technology advantage. Martin said that China became Canada's second largest trade partner in 2003 and the two sides can deepen cooperation in fields such as energy, financial service, environmental protection and telecommunication.

People's Daily, 22 January 2005

China publishes historical documents on Taiwan

China has published a vast collection of historical documents concerning Taiwan, giving abundant proof of Taiwan's close link with China's mainland. The collection comprises 100 volumes, including a historical record of the Chinese central government's administration of Taiwan, pedigrees of clans of the mainland's Fujian Province and Taiwan and historical events in Taiwan, according to a symposium held here on the event Friday. Taiwan residents are mostly descendants of mainland migrants, many from Fujian province. "The collection provides indisputable historical record showing the inseparable historical and cultural links between Taiwan and the mainland," Cheng Siwei, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, said at the symposium. "It profoundly reveals the 'China attributes' of Taiwan. The collection of documents, jointly published by the Jiuzhou Press and Xiamen University Press, is scheduled to be released in Taiwan in March.

People's Daily, 23 January 2005

China-Japan differences moving frictions to military field

The year 2005 has just begun and the differences between the two neighboring countries - China and Japan, instead of shrinking, are showing a dangerous sign of gradually moving frictions to the military field. According to inside information disclosed by the Japanese Kyodo News Agency Japan Defense Agency has enacted specific action plan to defend the southwest islands. The plan decided that when something happened in the southwest islands apart from sending fighter planes and destroyers the Japan Defense Agency would dispatch as many as 55,000 soldiers of the Ground Self Defense

Forces and special forces there. The so-called southwest islands mentioned in the guideline also include China's Diaoyu Island.

People's Daily, 23 January 2005

8 Vietnamese robbers shot in China sea

China hopes to make joint efforts with Vietnam to fight against maritime crimes and ensure a stable and harmonious environment for the two countries' fishermen, according to the Foreign Ministry on Sunday. Chinese maritime police shot dead eight armed robbers and captured eight others who robbed Chinese fishing boats operating on Jan. 8 at the Chinese side of the Beibu Gulf, according to the Foreign Ministry. According to Chinese border police, on the morning of Jan. 8, six Chinese fishing boats from south China's Hainan Province were operating on the Chinese side of the Beibu Gulf, and three unidentified armed vessels came and robbed them 310 fishing nets and fish products worth more than 3 million yuan (361,445 US dollars) and the robbers fired at the Chinese boats when they tried to chase after them.

People's Daily, 23 January 2005

Canadian prime minister visits HK

Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin arrived in Hong Kong Saturday for an official two-day visit to Hong Kong. Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa and other government officials met with him Saturday evening, and a banquet was followed at the Government House. During his visit, Martin will also meet with local and Canadian business people at a reception.

People's Daily, 24 January 2005

Former Cambodian king arrives in Beijing for routine physical check-up

Former Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk and his wife Norodom Monineath Sihanouk arrived here Monday from Phnom Penh for routine physical examination and health rehabilitation. They were greeted at the airport by Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Shen Guofang and Cambodian Ambassador to China Khek Lerang. Norodom Sihanouk was enthroned as the King of the Kingdom of Cambodia in 1993 and was succeeded by his son Norodom Sihamoni in 2004.

People's Daily, 24 January 2005

FM confirms kidnapped Chinese return to Chinese embassy in Iraq

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan confirmed in Beijing Sunday that the eight kidnapped Chinese citizens have returned to the Chinese embassy in Iraq at Beijing time 10:25 pm Sunday. Kidnapped Chinese return to Chinese embassy in Iraq. They are now in good physical conditions and the embassy will arrange them return to China as soon as possible, Kong added. Kong said China is gratified with the safe return of kidnapped Chinese citizens, expressing his appreciation of the friends who offered help in China's rescue mission.

People's Daily, 24 January 2005

Canadian PM leaves Beijing for Hong Kong

Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin left Beijing Saturday for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, final leg of his four-day official visit to China. Martin paid the visit at the invitation of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao.

People's Daily, 25 January 2005

China donates 1 billion yuan to tsunami-hit countries: FM spokesman

China has donated more than 1 billion yuan (about 122 million US dollars) to the tsunami-hit countries so far, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan Tuesday. Among the donation, more than 700 million yuan (85.4 million US dollars) was from the Chinese government and about 374 million yuan (45.6 million US dollars) was from the general public, said Kong at a regular news briefing. Half of the donations will reach the tsunami-affected countries by the end of this month, he added.

People's Daily, 25 January 2005

Next China-France Round Table of Mayors to be held in Strasbourg

The second China-France Round Table of Mayors concluded Monday in Chengdu, and the next will be held in Strasbourg, France, according to the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs (CPIFA). Christina Sautter, deputy mayor of Paris, said at the closing ceremony that the delegation of French mayors enjoyed warm greetings and reception in this capital city of Sichuan Province and expressed his appreciation of the well organizing of the meeting. Sautter said that this meeting laid a solid foundation for future cooperation between Chinese and French cities, noting that the Chinese and French mayors share the strong will of protecting cultural and natural heritage in cities and upgrading the people's living.

People's Daily, 25 January 2005

Chinese police seizes 11.1 tons of drugs in campaign of 2004

Chinese police seized 11.1 tons of drugs in the nationwide anti-drug campaign between May and Nov. in 2004, official said in Beijing Monday. During the period, Chinese police closed 34,851 drug-related criminal cases, toppled 2,186 gangs involved in producing, trafficking or taking drugs, and captured 34,719 suspects, said Yang Fengrui, an official with China's Ministry of Public Security at a press conference. Official statistics showed that of all the drugs seized by the police, there are 6.66 tons of heroin; 1.14 tons of "ice" drug, or methamphetamine hydrochloride; 549 kg of opium; and 1.42 tons of marijuana.

People's Daily, 26 January 2005

China plans unprecedented railroad construction in 2005

China plans unprecedented railroad construction in 2005, investing more than 100 billion yuan (12.05 billion US dollars) in 58 new projects and 48 extended projects, sources at a high-level seminar on railway network construction said. The seminar, aiming to provide advice for the country's ambitious railway blueprint, was hosted last Sunday by the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), China's top economic planning body. Experts attending the workshop agreed that railroads should play an indispensable major role in China's transportation system for its features of large capacity, good security record but small land coverage, energy consumption and pollution. China needs a big advance in railroad construction to ensure its long-term economic development, they said. In 2004, the State Council, or the Chinese central government, approved the country's long-term railway construction plan. According to the plan, China will invest more than 2 trillion yuan (241 billion US dollars) to extend its railway network from 74,000 km to 100,000 km by 2020.

People's Daily, 26 January 2005

8 kidnapped Chinese back home

A source with Chinese Foreign Ministry confirmed that the eight Chinese citizens who had been kidnapped in Iraq returned safely to Fuzhou City in southeastern China at 7:40 p.m. Wednesday

People's Daily, 26 January 2005

Hu Jintao urges CPC to maintain its advanced nature

Hu Jintao, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, Tuesday urged the CPC always to maintain their advanced nature by keeping pace with the times and meeting people's demands. Hu, also President of China, called for stepping up efforts to maintain the Party's advanced nature and increase its ruling capacity in order to "realize, safeguard and develop the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people." He urged all the CPC members always to keep people in mind, make substantial efforts to help resolve the problems people ever encounter in their work and life, and firmly oppose and correct all kinds of activities that may be harmful to the people.

People's Daily, 26 January 2005

China becomes Japan largest trade partner: ministry

China replaced the United States as Japan's largest trade partner in 2004, the Finance Ministry said Wednesday. The trade volume between China, including Hong Kong, and Japan in the past year totaled 22,200 billion yen (213.3 billion US dollars), the highest since the record began in 1947. The Japanese-US trade stood at about 20,480 billion yen (198.8 billion dollars) in 2004. The trade with China accounted for about 20 percent in Japan's total foreign trade volume, while the US share stood at about 18 percent. The exports to the European Union marked a record 9,474 billion yen (91.9 billion dollars). Imports from the region were a record 6,208 billion yen (60.2 billion dollars). Japan enjoyed a worldwide trade surplus of 12,010 billion yen (116.6 billion dollars) in 2004, growing 17.9 percent from the previous year.