

People's Daily, 1 January 2007

China advanced diplomacy with world powers in 2006, says FM

Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said Sunday that China had promoted exchanges and communication with major world powers in 2006. Li said Sino-U.S. ties maintained their stable development, citing meetings between leaders and a new consensus confirming the two powers were "stakeholders" and "constructive cooperators". A landmark strategic economic dialogue between China and the United States begun in early December, reflecting greater interaction, boosted economic and trade, military, law enforcement, anti-terrorism, anti-proliferation, education, culture and health cooperation. The China-Russia strategic partnership grew deeply and comprehensively, Li said. China launched the "Year of Russia" in March, with more than 250 trade, investment, cultural and other events, highlighting closer ties between the neighbors, closer coordination on the economy and trade, science and technology and energy...

People's Daily, 1 January 2007

Chinese president stresses social harmony in New Year Address

Chinese President Hu Jintao called for peaceful development and social harmony in his New Year Address broadcast on Sunday to domestic and overseas audience via state TV and radio stations. "Here, I'm very glad to extend my New Year wishes to Chinese of all ethnic groups, to compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, to overseas Chinese and to people all over the world," Hu said. In the address, broadcast by China Radio International, China National Radio and China Central Television, Hu talked about domestic economic and social development in 2007 and policies toward Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. "2007 is an important year in building a socialist harmonious society under the guidance of the scientific development concept," Hu said, adding the government will strive to give impetus to the shift in economic restructuring and in the mode of economic growth. He said the government will exert more efforts in addressing social problems concerning people's life and stick to energy efficiency and environmental protection...

China Daily, 2 January 2007

Abe: Japan, China toward strategic relationship

TOKYO - Japan and China are moving toward a strategic relationship based on trust, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said in his New Year's statement Monday, promising to mend strained ties and reduce bitterness between the Asian giants. But Abe also called for changes to Japan's constitution, and hailed the impending upgrade of the country's Defense Agency to a full ministry - moves that have been criticized as shifting the country away from its postwar pacifism. "I have agreed with China to bolster already cordial ties into a mutually beneficial, strategic relationship," Abe said in a statement released January 1. "I plan to build forward-looking relations based on trust" with China, as well as with neighboring South Korea, he said, without elaborating...

The Hindu, 2 January 2007

Hu calls for harmony among nations

BEIJING: Chinese President Hu Jintao called for peaceful development and social harmony in his New Year address broadcast on Sunday to domestic and overseas

audiences via state TV and radio. "Here, I'm very glad to extend my New Year wishes to Chinese of all ethnic groups, to compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, to overseas Chinese and to people all over the world," Mr. Hu said. In the address, broadcast by China Radio International, China National Radio and China Central Television, Mr. Hu talked about economic and social development in 2007 and policies toward Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan...

People's Daily, 2 January 2007

Chinese President calls for fighting against Taiwan secessionists

Chinese President Hu Jintao said in a New Year message on Monday that the Chinese mainland will actively promote exchanges and cooperation across the Taiwan Strait, safeguard peace and stability, and push ahead with peaceful reunification. He called on Chinese people around the world to join hands to oppose "Taiwan independence" and work for the ultimate reunification of the Chinese nation. Hu made the speech at a New Year tea party held by the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, a top political advisory body composed of various political parties and people from all walks of life. The tea party was also attended by top leaders of Wu Bangguo, Wen Jiabao, Zeng Qinghong, Wu Guanzheng, Li Changchun, Luo Gan, and presided over by Jia Qinglin, chairman of the CPPCC National Committee...

China Daily, 3 January 2007

US urged to honor one-China policy

China hopes the United States would strictly abide by its promise and not send any wrong signals to secessionists trying for "Taiwan's independence", China's top legislature said yesterday. The message emanated from a meeting between the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) and a nine-member delegation of the Armed Services Committee of the US House of Representatives. During their stay, the members of the delegation met a series of high-ranking officials, including Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan and Vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee Sheng Huaren...

People's Daily, 3 January 2007

Outlook for China's major events in 2007

A rundown of the major events in China shows 2007 will be extremely busy, productive and crucial for the country's reforms and development. The year will feature the continued evolution of the government and the turning of a new page for the Communist Party of China. The agenda is full of great challenges as the country's scientists reach for the moon, its farmers expect greater prosperity and Beijing begins to take center stage in the run-up to the world's largest sporting event...The Communist Party of China (CPC) will convene its 17th national congress in the second half of this year in Beijing...

China Daily, 4 January 2007

Yuan looks likely to overtake HK dollar (Zhang Jin and Lillian Liu)

HONG KONG: People in this most affluent of Chinese cities may be in for a psychological blow. If economists are to be believed, the Hong Kong dollar is likely to be overtaken by the once humble yuan "within days", bringing to an end more than 15 years

of its superior existence. But the irony is that an appreciated yuan will do more good than harm to the people of Hong Kong. Though 100 yuan (\$12.5) fetched HK\$99.6 at the end of 2006, experts say the order could be reversed in a few weeks. After all, 100 yuan fetched only HK\$94 before its latest appreciation in July 2005...

People's Daily, 4 January 2007

Opinion: Century-old misinterpretation of China still apparent in Western world

From utopia to the most hideous - On July morning in 1753, A Swedish queen joyously took over a golden dazzling key, symbolic of a priceless birth day gift presented to her - an imposing China palace hidden in the forest, which masons had modeled on a China-style castle owned by her brother, the King of Prussia. This is the Europeans' early true image of China. During three to four centuries prior to the mid 18th century, Europeans tried very hard to know China through exquisite porcelain ware, and books written by missionaries sent to China, such as "the travel of Marco Polo (1254-1324)", which were treasured as classics. Some European scholars of the time even pared the discovery of China with the discovery of the American Continent. From the very beginning, China was alive with pragmatism in the eyes of Westerners and, for the sake of these "pragmatic colors", their presentation of China was plunged into the "permanent misinterpretation, " swaying between the two extremes of either being good or bad, and either with an affection or a hatred...

People's Daily, 8 January 2007

China protests to U.S. about Taiwan leader's possible transit

China on Monday lodged stern representations with the United States about the reported stopover there of the Taiwan leader. "We made stern representations to the United States," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said on Monday. Liu's statement came in response to reports about the U.S. decision to allow Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian to stop off in the United States on his way to Nicaragua to attend the inauguration ceremony of the new president. "We are seriously concerned about the reports," Liu said. "The Chinese government is firmly opposed to any official exchange between the United States and the Taiwan authorities," Liu said, stressing that China's stance is "clear and consistent." "The real intention behind Chen's stopover in the United States is to pursue activities that will separate China and destroy China-U.S. relations," the spokesman said.

China Daily, 8 January 2007

Xinjiang Party head says Kadeer 'a separatist'

A senior Party official in Xinjiang has denounced Rebiya Kadeer, now living the United States, as a separatist, saying she has no qualifications to be nominated for the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize. "To call Rebiya (Kadeer) the 'mother of all Uygurs' is absolutely preposterous and ... amounts to defaming an ethnic minority," the China News Service quoted Nuer Baikeli, vice secretary of the Communist Party committee of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, as telling a meeting on Sunday in Urumqi. As a mother who could not educate her own children well, Baikeli said, "it is beyond imagination that she could become the 'mother' of the Uygurs with a population of about 10 million." "The statements of Rebiya clearly show that she wants to destroy the peace and stability of

Chinese society, this does not conform with the requirements of the Nobel Peace Prize," Nuer Baikeli said at the meeting of publicity chiefs...

People's Daily, 8 January 2007

China finalizes designs of new weapon equipment

A batch of advanced new weapons will be delivered to the armed forces on schedule, Zhang Yunchuan, Minister of the State Commission of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense, told a work conference here on Monday. He said that last year China completed a series of tests to finalize the designs of new weapons. Citing the example of the Jian 10 fighter plane, Zhang said China's national defense sector had made significant progress in technical innovation and weapon development in 2006. Xiaolong fighters and advanced Lieying- and Shanying-series trainer aircraft are in everyday use. Multi-model advanced missile systems were displayed at the 2006 Airshow China in Zhuhai, he noted at the annual meeting summarizing the previous year's work and making plans for 2007...

China Daily, 8 January 2007

Opinion: Looking at the negative side of China's progress (Lin Yifu)

While most people know the stunning success story of China's economic growth, there is far less familiarity with the data on the growing gap between city and rural dwellers and the shocking lack of financial services for small businesses, both urban and rural. Along with the negative data, there are positive solutions. Since its opening-up, China has led the world with average annual growth of 9.6 percent from 1979 to 2005. With foreign trade increasing by 17 percent every year, China is now the third largest trader worldwide. More than 200 million people have been brought out of poverty. The central government has just designed guidelines to facilitate sustainable development and promote social harmony, but the plan is held back by harsh facts...

China Daily, 9 January 2007

Chinese police destroy terrorist camp in Xinjiang

URUMQI - Police have destroyed a terrorist camp in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and killed 18 terrorists, a spokeswoman said on Monday. One policeman was killed and another wounded in the gun battle on Friday in the mountains of Pamirs plateau in south Xinjiang, said spokeswoman Ba Yan. The police captured 17 terrorists and are pursuing a number of others, the spokeswoman said. They also seized 22 hand grenades and more than 1,500 others the terrorists had not finished making. The training camp was run by the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a group that the United Nations in 2002 labeled a terrorist organization, according to Ba. It is believed that more than 1,000 ETIM members have been trained by al-Qaeda...

The Washington Post, 9 January 2007

Raid by Chinese Kills 18 at Alleged Terror Camp (Maureen Fan)

BEIJING, Jan. 9 - Chinese police said they raided an alleged terrorist camp in western Xinjiang province, killing 18 suspects and arresting 17, the official New China News Agency reported Monday. The raid took place Friday at a training camp run by the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, according to Song Hongli, director of the general office of

the Xinjiang Public Security Bureau. One police officer was killed and another was injured in a shootout, Song said. The camp, located in the Pamir Plateau in south Xinjiang, near the borders of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan, bolstered Chinese claims that militants among the Uighur natives of Xinjiang have been leading a violent separatist movement. The banned Islamic group has been fighting for an independent state and is classified as a terrorist organization by the United States and China...

People's Daily, 10 January 2007

Opinion: In search of US strategic frontline

The question here is where is the United States' strategic "frontline". And by "frontline" I mean the focus of its foreign affairs. Looking at the 2006 US military and diplomatic focuses separately, there were far more problems as well as interesting developments in the Bush administration's diplomatic undertakings than in its military affairs. Concerning its military actions, the "frontline" is, of course, still in Iraq, where more than 100,000 US troops are fighting the "war on terror" under the watchful eye of American television networks and other media. In foreign affairs, the focus has been on the nuclear crises in Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). But the first three "battles" were fought without a clear road map, making it hard to predict who will win, despite strong showings by the parties involved...

Japan Today, 10 January 2007

China hopes Japan will keep to pacifist path with advent of Defense Ministry

BEIJING - China hopes Japan will keep to a path of peaceful development regardless of structural changes in the government, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said Tuesday after Japan upgraded its Defense Agency to a ministry. "We believe that firmly maintaining the direction of peaceful development serves the fundamental interests of Japan itself," Liu Jianchao told a press conference. The state-run Xinhua News Agency, meanwhile, expressed wariness toward the change, calling it "an important step" toward Japan's becoming a military power. "This will certainly have a significant impact on Japan's future military development," the report said.

International Herald Tribune, 10 January 2007

Hu is urged to cede his position to the vice president

The Chinese leader Hu Jintao has been urged to cede the presidency to a rival-turned-ally, sources said, a step that would sweep aside two decades of established practice and let him focus on extending Communist Party power. Political allies of Vice President Zeng Qinghong have urged that he be promoted to state president at Parliament's annual session in 2008, the sources with close ties to the top leadership said, requesting anonymity to avoid repercussions for speaking to foreign media. It was not certain whether the proposal would be adopted, but the debate is a sign that jockeying among leaders has begun in earnest before the 17th Communist Party Congress, due sometime between September and November of this year...

People's Daily, 11 January 2007

Japan-China friendship is in favor of world peace: official

The development of Japanese-Chinese friendship and the promotion of the bilateral trade relations are conducive to peace and prosperity of the region and even the world, Japanese House of Representatives Speaker Yohei Kono said in Tokyo Wednesday. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to China in October marked a sign of improvement and a restart of the Japanese-Chinese ties, and the development of the bilateral relationship needs further efforts from the two sides, said Kono, who is also chairman of Japan's Association for the Promotion of International Trade. Kono said on the association's new year party that he apprehended Chinese leaders' sincerity on mending ties with Japan during his visit to China late last year. He pledged to make efforts to further promote the friendship between the two countries and the development of bilateral economic and trade cooperation.

People's Daily, 12 January 2007

China slams U.S.-based human rights report

The Chinese government and a scholar on Thursday refuted Human Rights Watch's criticism on China's human rights conditions as biased and untrue. "China's human rights conditions are making progress, and the Human Rights Watch should view the progress with an unbiased and just attitude," said Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Liu Jianchao. He said the organization has always stuck to a biased view about China and its report has always been harboring political purposes and not reflecting the true conditions. Human Rights Watch, a U.S.-based group, released its annual report on Thursday which criticized a handful of countries -- including China -- for poor rights records...

People's Daily, 12 January 2007

Japan's arms claim is 'groundless'

Beijing yesterday rejected Japan's assertion that lifting of the arms embargo by the European Union (EU) against China would threaten peace in East Asia, describing it as "groundless". Speaking at a regular news briefing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said: "The idea behind China's demand that the EU remove the embargo is to eradicate political discrimination." Liu was referring to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday, when Abe said the EU's lifting of arms exports to China would affect East Asian security...

International Herald Tribune, 14 January 2007

Trade deal will link Beijing and Asean (Carlos H. Conde)

CEBU, Philippines: China took center stage at the summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations here on Sunday, signing a new trade-in-services agreement with the 10 Southeast Asian countries and winning support for its initiative to reconvene negotiations with North Korea over its nuclear weapons program. The trade and services deal, which emphasizes high-tech services, energy and construction, was billed by conference delegates as a major step forward in establishing a comprehensive free trade pact between Asean and China. Asean leaders and China's prime minister, Wen Jiabao, also reiterated a 2002 agreement pledging to resolve the dispute over claims by China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan to the Spratly Islands in the

South China Sea...

The Hindu, 15 January 2007

India, China for 'vigorous' talks (K. Venugopal)

Cebu: The Prime Ministers of India and China on Sunday urged their special representatives to carry out their discussions on the border issue with "greater vigour and greater innovativeness." Meeting on the sidelines of ASEAN summit, Manmohan Singh and Wen Jiabao affirmed the view that the border issue was one that the two sides could solve and were willing to solve. Briefing the media on the interaction, National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan said, "The general ambience of the talks reflected a maturity in the relationship, and a common understanding of the fact that the simultaneous rise of India and China is something the rest of the world should take note of from an economic, political and strategic perspective."...

People's Daily, 15 January 2007

Premier Wen meets with Japanese PM

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao will visit Japan this spring, sources said Sunday in Cebu from the Chinese delegation attending meetings involving the ASEAN, China, Japan and South Korea. Wen met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Cebu, the second largest city of the Philippines. During the meeting, Abe invited again Premier Wen to pay an official visit in Spring this year. Wen accepted the invitation. The two leaders exchanged views on bilateral ties as well as international and regional issues of common concern...

People's Daily, 15 January 2007

Chinese premier makes three-point proposal on direction of East Asia cooperation

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Monday put forward a three-point proposal on the direction of East Asia cooperation at the 2nd East Asia Summit in Cebu, the second largest city of the Philippines. In a speech, Wen said East Asia cooperation should enhance common development and prosperity of the region. "We should start such cooperation in areas in which the parties have extensive common interests and consensus. Priority should be given to sharing development practice and advanced information and other technologies to enable the participating countries to benefit from cooperation and thus build up confidence in and momentum of cooperation," he said...

China Daily, 16 January 2007

Opinion: Overcoming obstacles to East Asia community

As the 10-member Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) pledged last Saturday to build an ASEAN community by 2015 and approved a blueprint for a landmark charter to upgrade the 40-year-old group, there have also been talks about a broader based "East Asia community". The concept of an East Asia community remains a beautiful ideal. In 1990, the second year after the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum was established, the then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad proposed the "East Asia Essential Caucus". It did not become a reality due to the US' objections and Japan's recoil. The past 16 years have witnessed great changes and new developments in East Asia...

People's Daily, 16 January 2007

Interview: EU says new EU-China pact to encompass full scope of bilateral ties

European Union (EU) external relations commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who left for China on Monday to officially launch the talks with China on the new generation framework agreement, said the new pact will encompass the full scope of bilateral relations between the EU and China. Waldner will be in China from Jan. 16-18, and she is expected to meet some senior Chinese officials. The top objective of her Chinese tour is to officially launch the talks on the new generation agreement, or Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in the EU's jargon, together with Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing. "The new PCA will encompass the full scope of bilateral relations between the EU and China, including enhanced cooperation in political matters, and will update the existing 1985 Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement," Waldner said during an exclusive interview with Xinhua on Monday before she boarded the plane to China...

People's Daily, 16 January 2007

Nepal appreciates China's support for peace process: PM

Nepali Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala Monday expressed appreciation for China's support of Nepal's peace process. Prime Minister Koirala made the remarks while meeting here with a visiting Chinese delegation led by Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) Li Tieying. Koirala spoke highly of the friendly ties between Nepal and China, saying China has long been providing aid to Nepal's development and positively contributing to Nepal's peace progress. Koirala said Nepal was glad to see China's achievement in economy development, and wished China to be prosperous. He said he hoped Nepal might benefit from China's development...

People's Daily, 16 January 2007

Indian PM plans to visit China later this year

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Monday said he would visit China in the later half of this year, Indo-Asian News Service reported Monday. "I was invited to visit China both when Premier Wen Jiabao visited India (in 2005) and also when President Hu Jintao visited India (in November 2006). The invitation is there," Singh told the press on board of Air India One Monday on the way back home from the Philippines. Singh met with Wen on the sidelines of the India-ASEAN and East Asia Summits held in the Philippines...

The Hindustan Times, 16 January 2007

China, India to drive tough border bargain (Manoj Joshi)

The Indian and Chinese special representatives will begin the ninth round of talks to resolve the Sino-Indian border dispute on Wednesday. The negotiations between India's national security adviser MK Narayanan and China's Deputy Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo, who arrived in New Delhi on Tuesday morning, will hinge on the "directive" they received from their respective prime ministers in Cebu, Philippines, asking them to carry out their job with "greater vigour and innovativeness"...

People's Daily, 17 January 2007

China to impose stricter penalties for IPR violations

China's Supreme People's Court has issued a notice ordering stricter penalties on violators of intellectual property rights (IPR). All illegal gains and manufacturing tools of IPR violators should be confiscated and their pirated products shall be destroyed, according to the notice. Courts should also impose fines large enough to strip pirates of their ability to resume production of illegal copies, said the notice, without giving details about the value of the fines. Victims of piracy in China have long been complaining that punishments are not severe enough. But experts point out that it is a problem of enforcement rather than of the law...

China Daily, 17 January 2007

Opinion: A new Iraq strategy but old problems remain

The first batch of an American combat brigade, around 3,500 to 4,000 troops, arrived in Baghdad on Monday, following US President George W. Bush's televised speech laying out his "new strategy in Iraq" on January 10. If there is anything new in his statement, it is the fact that Bush wants to send more forces to Iraq rather than gradually pulling out of the country as the American people and the rest of the world hope for. At the very beginning of his speech, Bush said neither the American people nor he could accept the current situation in Iraq. And "where mistakes have been made, I'm responsible for them". However, he has insisted on two points and reiterated them in his January 10 speech that the war in Iraq is necessary and part of the global war on terror; and America did not and must not fail in Iraq because, if America fails, it would be a disaster for Iraq, the rest of the Middle East, the United States and the global war on terror...

People's Daily, 18 January 2007

Trade between mainland, Taiwan hits US\$100 bln mark

Trade between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan hit a record 107.8 billion U.S. dollars in 2006, Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council spokesman Yang Yi said Wednesday. It was the first time trade had exceeded 100 billion U.S. dollars, Yang said, adding it had risen 18.2 percent on the previous year. Mainland exports to Taiwan reached 20.74 billion U.S. dollars, up 25.3 percent year-on-year, and imports totaled 87.11 billion U.S. dollars, up 16.6 percent, said Yang. According to Ministry of Commerce statistics, the mainland approved 3,752 Taiwan-funded projects in 2006 worth 11.34 billion U.S. dollars. The funds actually used reached 2.14 billion U.S. dollars...

China Daily, 18 January 2007

China, EU start talks on new pact (Chen Jialu)

China and the EU yesterday announced the start of negotiations on a new agreement on expanding their strategic partnership. Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and visiting EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner announced the initiative at a press briefing in Beijing. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) will include 22 sectors in which the EU and China are already holding a dialogue. They include energy, the environment, agriculture, transport, education, and science and technology. It will also cover such key issues as sustainable development, anti-terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Ferrero-Waldner told the briefing...

The Washington Post, 19 January 2007

China Criticized for Anti-Satellite Missile Test (Marc Kaufman and Dafna Linzer)

The Chinese military used a ground-based missile to hit and destroy one of its aging satellites orbiting more than 500 miles in space last week -- a high-stakes test demonstrating China's ability to target regions of space that are home to U.S. spy satellites and space-based missile defense systems. The test of anti-satellite technology is believed to be the first of its kind in two decades by any nation and raised concerns about the vulnerability of U.S. satellites and a possible arms race in space...

China Daily, 19 January 2007

President Hu Jintao plans another Africa visit (Qin Jize)

President Hu Jintao will visit Sudan and South Africa in the near future as part of an eight-nation trip to Africa to broaden the nation's reach and strengthen ties with the continent. Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said Thursday that dates and detailed arrangements for the trip were still being negotiated, but would be announced soon. The tour will possibly start at the end of the month. The South African Foreign Ministry has said the country will receive the president in early February. It will be Hu's third trip to the continent, following trips to three African countries in 2004 and another three in April last year...

People's Daily, 19 January 2007

Shanghai to protect pension fund

A committee will soon be formed to oversee and manage the city's pension fund, sources at the Shanghai Municipal Labour and Social Security Bureau said yesterday. The committee will look into major social security fund supervision issues, and issue public reports regularly. The need for such a committee arose after the Ministry of Labour and Social Security ordered its local branches last month to set up a rapid reporting system to ensure the safety of social security funds. A report in Shanghai-based China Business News had earlier said a plan to set up such a committee had been submitted to the Shanghai municipal government at the end of last year, and the committee was likely to be formed this month...

People's Daily, 20 January 2007

People's Daily advocates democracy in national congress elections

The flagship newspaper of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the People's Daily, is calling on Party organizations to enhance Party democracy in the election of delegates to the 17th CPC national congress. Party organizations at various levels are urged to respect and safeguard the democratic rights of more than 70 million Party members in the election process, which has already begun and will end by June next year, said a commentary to be carried by Saturday's People's Daily. The article said only a democratic process can ensure that the right individuals are elected to represent the public's wishes and interests at the Party's 17th National Congress, which will be held in Beijing in the second half of 2007...

People's Daily, 21 January 2007

China, Vietnam hold 13th government-level border negotiations

The 13th round of border negotiations between China and Vietnam was held in Nanning, capital city of China's southern Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, from Thursday to Saturday. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and his Vietnamese counterpart Vu Dung co-chaired the border negotiations. The two sides reviewed the progress achieved since the last round and made further arrangements for the next phase of work. The two sides agreed to speed up the process on the demarcation and erection of border markers along their land boundaries in order to complete the task before 2008. The two sides will carefully investigate joint exploitation of the South China Sea. They also agreed to push forward negotiations on the demarcation and joint exploitation of the maritime space at the entrance to the Beibu Gulf.

Taipei Times, 22 January 2007

China deploys advanced fighters (Rich Chang)

China's air force has deployed 12 advanced Jian-10 fighter jets to Zhejiang Province, a news report said yesterday. "The military is studying why the Chinese military has [recently] been unveiling its development of new weapons in such a high-key fashion, such as the production of J-10 fighter jets and the launching of a ballistic missile to shoot down an orbiting satellite," Ministry of National Defense spokesman Rear Admiral Wu Chi-fang told the Taipei Times yesterday...

China Daily, 22 January 2007

Financial policies set at major meet (Xu Binglan)

China unveiled a package of policies to tackle the pressing challenges faced by the financial sector at a top-level conference held over the weekend. Among the key initiatives announced by Premier Wen Jiabao at the two-day National Financial Work Conference which is held every five years were: Agricultural Bank of China (ABC) will be restructured. ABC is the only one of the "Big-Four" State-owned banks not listed. "ABC will strengthen its role as a financial service provider for farmers and county-level businesses," Wen said, adding that the restructure would be across the board and the bank's businesses would not be split. The government will push for innovation in providing financial services for rural areas and build a multi-tier rural financial structure...

China Daily, 22 January 2007

Hill to work on date for N.Korea talks

U.S. envoy Christopher Hill arrived in China on Sunday to work on a date for resuming six-country talks on North Korea's nuclear arms programmes, amid signs of optimism about the long-running negotiations. Hill said he would brief China's chief negotiator, Wu Dawei, about talks he held last week in Berlin with North Korea's top six-party envoy. "We're going to talk about my discussions in Berlin and I will ask him about his thoughts on when they could schedule the next round of six-party talks," Hill told reporters on arrival at Beijing airport...

People's Daily, 23 January 2007

Opinion: Defending or threatening?

A shocking story has emerged from South Korea of United States Forces Korea (USFK) soldiers beating and raping a 67-year-old local woman. In fact, the USFK has long been associated with words like "rape", "rifling" and "pain", and there have been several anti-America demonstrations in Korea. According to statistics, between 1967 and 1991, the USFK was involved in an average of 1,000 criminal cases annually. Since 1992, the figures have declined by almost a quarter, but still average 770 per year. The United States currently has approximately 32,000 soldiers stationed in South Korea. On the basis of the "US-South Korea Mutual Defense Treaty" signed in 1953, the USFK is an army in charge of "defense" and protection in the area. However, it threatens and scares the local people. In fact, harassment cases have been reported in countries other than South Korea. In Japan, soldiers stationed in Okinawa recently robbed a woman; as early as 1995, three US soldiers raped a female Japanese student, which seriously affected Japanese-US relations; in the Philippines, six US soldiers participating in a US-Philippine joint military exercises raped a local female university student two years ago, triggering nationwide protests; in Iraq, a report on American soldiers raping a girl and killing her family shocked the whole world...

People's Daily, 24 January 2007

African Development Bank to hold annual meeting in China

The annual board meeting of the African Development Bank will be held in Shanghai on May 16 and 17, said a spokesman of the bank in Beijing on Wednesday. Eric Chinje, director of communications, said the event would send a powerful message that Africa and China were strengthening their partnership of mutual benefit and cooperation. "There is a renewed determination by the leaders of both sides to reinforce relations at all levels, economic, cultural and trade relations, and what we are seeing now is different, in the sense that it is based on the new principle of mutual advantage and a win-win formula," said Chinje...

People's Daily, 24 January 2007

Chinese military delegation leaves for visit to ROK, U.S.

A high-powered Chinese military delegation left Beijing on Wednesday for a visit to the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the United States, said sources with the Ministry of National Defense. The delegation is headed by Ge Zhenfeng, deputy chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). They are invited by the armed forces of the two countries. The delegation also includes PLA generals from the Shenyang Military Area Command, the Navy's North Sea Fleet and the academy of military sciences.

People's Daily, 24 January 2007

China, Sudan to ink series of deals on Hu's visit

China and Sudan will sign a series of deals during President Hu Jintao's visit to the African country, a Foreign Ministry official Wednesday said. President Hu will pay a state visit to eight African nations, including Sudan, from Jan. 30 to Feb. 10. The other nations are Cameroon, Liberia, Zambia, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique and Seychelles. "During the visit, Hu and Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir are to exchange

views on the Darfur issue," said Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun at a news briefing on Hu's visit. "The visit will not only help boost China-Sudan relations, but also benefit peace and stability in the Darfur region," said Zhai.

People's Daily, 25 January 2007

Rise of China, India positive for region: forum

The rapid growth of China and India is positive for regional trade and investment in Asia despite earlier concerns that they would suck foreign investment from other Asian countries and push up commodity prices, panelists of the World Economic Forum said Wednesday. Other Asian countries have enjoyed spillover benefits of the rise of China and India in terms of exports and a shift in productive capacity, Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Ashwani Kumar told a panel. Panelists agreed that regional integration is successful in Asia. Fifty-five percent of total Asian trade has been within the region, higher than the North American Free Trade Area, said Jusuf Wanandi, a researcher with Indonesia's Center for Strategic and International Studies...

People's Daily, 25 January 2007

Chinese president's African tour to implement eight measures of cooperation

Eight African countries will be the first destinations for Chinese President Hu Jintao to visit in 2007, following up the China-Africa Beijing summit in November last year. Hu would aim to implement the agreements reached during the Beijing summit, including eight measures to benefit African countries, said Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun on Wednesday. During his tour, Hu will attend exchange activities mainly in the cultural, economic, trade and public health fields, Zhai said...

China Daily, 25 January 2007

Hu: Nurture a healthy online culture

Chinese President Hu Jintao on Tuesday called on government officials to promote and better regulate rapidly developing Internet services in China. Hu made the call at a study session of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of Communist Party of China (CPC), saying officials should "actively and creatively nurture a healthy online culture" that meets public demand. The rapid development of the Internet in China has played an important role in spreading information, knowledge, and CPC's policies, and it has also raised new issues for the country's cultural development, Hu said...

People's Daily, 26 January 2007

Chinese Premier meets ROK FM, IMF managing director

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao met with the visiting Republic of Korea (ROK) Foreign Minister Song Min-soon on Friday afternoon in Beijing. "Our relationship is of strategic significance, therefore your visit to China is very important", Wen told Song. The two sides also exchanged views on China-ROK relations and the situation on the Korean Peninsula, according to information provided by the Chinese Foreign Ministry. During the trip, which also coincided with the 15th anniversary of the establishment of China-ROK diplomatic relationship, Song also met with Chinese State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan, and held talks with his Chinese counterpart Li Zhaoxing on Thursday...

People's Daily, 26 January 2007

Gov't vows social security net

The central government will establish a nationwide basic social security system by June that will for the first time cover historically neglected rural areas, an official of the Ministry of Civil Affairs said yesterday. At present, provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions operate their own systems. The central government has in the past provided funds only to urban areas. Sun Yang, an official of the ministry's department of subsistence security, said a subsidy scheme and nationwide regulation on basic social security coverage would be unveiled after the annual session of the National People's Congress in March...

People's Daily, 27 January 2007

China, Japan discuss building "strategic mutual-beneficial" relations

China and Japan had frank discussions on the second day of the three-day seventh round of strategic dialogue on Friday in Beijing, China's Foreign Ministry has announced. The two sides discussed building "strategic, mutually beneficial" bilateral ties, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo and Japanese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Yachi Shotaro are heading the two delegations at the meeting, which ends on Saturday. The two sides had "frank" and "in-depth" exchanges of views on how to cement the sound momentum of improving and developing bilateral ties, said a statement released by the Foreign Ministry...

People's Daily, 27 January 2007

Pakistan welcomes strong, successful China: PM

Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said here on Friday that his country is "delighted" to see China, its close neighbor, become a major economic power in the world. China is getting more and more active on the international economic stage, and it is becoming "increasingly attractive," Aziz told a press conference on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum annual meeting. Pakistan is "more than comfortable" to see China's economic rising, including its accumulation of foreign reserves, he said. "That's a source of strength of the whole world." "We always celebrate successes of our friends, and a success of our friends is our success, so we are very delighted," Aziz said. He added that China's rising "is good for the world because it can create new centers of power which can provide a good balance to the world." On bilateral relations between Pakistan and China, Aziz said interaction between the two countries "is continuous and very intense."...

People's Daily, 28 January 2007

China, Japan conclude strategic dialogue with pledge of closer ties

China and Japan on Saturday concluded a strategic dialogue, with the two sides vowing to build "strategic, mutually beneficial" ties. The three-day dialogue, which began in Beijing on Thursday and concluded in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province, on Friday, was the latest move to improve ties. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo and Japanese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Yachi Shotaro headed the two delegations at the meeting, officially known as the seventh round of China-Japan strategic dialogue. The two vice foreign ministers smiled and traded jokes prior to the

start on Thursday. "As participants in the dialogue, both of us are happy about the improvements in bilateral ties," Dai told Shotaro before their closed door meetings began...

People's Daily, 28 January 2007

ROK FM wraps up first China visit

Republic of Korea (ROK) Foreign Minister Song Min-soon on Saturday left Beijing, concluding his first official visit to China since taking office last December. In a meeting with Song on Friday, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said Song's visit to China was "very important as our relationship is of strategic significance". Song's three-day trip coincided with the 15th anniversary of the establishment of China-ROK diplomatic ties. State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan also met with Song, discussing the six-party talks on the Korean Peninsular nuclear issue among other topics. Song's visit, together with a flurry of shuttle diplomacy among the parties, marked renewed efforts to restart the six-party talks, involving China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the United States, the ROK, Japan and Russia. Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and Song held official talks at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in downtown Beijing...

People's Daily, 29 January 2007

China to fulfill its Sino-African Forum pledges

China will sign debt relief agreements with 33 African countries by the end of 2007 to honor the pledges it made at the Sino-African Forum, the Ministry of Commerce said in Beijing Monday. The move came a day before President Hu Jintao sets off on an African tour which will take him to Cameroon, Liberia, Sudan, Zambia, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique and the Seychelles. The ministry did not reveal the total value of the loans, which matured at the end of 2005, to be written off. The nations concerned are heavily-indebted countries or are among the world's least developed nations, it said. China plans to double free aid and interest-free loans to African countries to help with social, cultural and public welfare projects over the next three years. Preferential loans worth 3 billion U.S. dollars will be provided to help African countries develop infrastructure, purchase technological equipment and establish production enterprises...

People's Daily, 29 January 2007

Senior Chinese legislator says China is addressing wealth gap

A senior Chinese legislator said Sunday that the Chinese government is exerting efforts to tackle the wealth disparity that emerges with its rapid economic development. Cheng Siwei, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress, told an international economic forum held here that China is experiencing a steady transition from the planned economy to the socialist market economy, with an average economic growth of 9 percent per year. China's gross domestic product amounted to 2.5 trillion U.S. dollars in 2006 and its people's income also enjoyed a speedy increase. However, Cheng said that as a nation with expansive territory, the development in different areas, such as in the coastal and inland, and the urban and rural areas, is imbalanced. The wealth gap still exists in China...

People's Daily, 30 January 2007

China says treaty best channel to prevent arms races in space

China on Tuesday said the signing of an international treaty is the best channel to prevent arms race in space. "To sign a relevant international legal document is the best channel to prevent the weaponization of space and any arms race in space," said Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu in response to questions concerning China's recent space experiment. China and Russia have submitted many working documents to Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and won support from many countries, said Jiang. China has always supported the peaceful use of space and opposed the weaponization of space and any arms race in space, she said.

China Daily, 31 January 2007

Farmers' protests decline 20 percent last year (Zhao Huanxin)

The number of rural protests involving mass participation declined "markedly" last year, and will continue to drop if government officials work in real earnest to redress farmers' complaints. That was the message delivered yesterday by Chen Xiwen, the top advisor to the government on rural policy. "Overall, the volume of rural mass incidents in 2006 clearly fell from the previous year," Chen, director of the Office of Central Rural Work Leading Group, told a press conference held by the State Council Information Office in Beijing. Chen revealed after the briefing that he estimated the decline in protests was close to 20 percent, and there had been 23,000 such incidents on the mainland last year, with less than half in the countryside...

People's Daily, 31 January 2007

Six-party talks on Korean nuclear issue to resume from Feb. 8

The six-party talks on the Korean peninsular nuclear issue will be resumed in Beijing on Feb. 8, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman announced on Tuesday. "As a result of the consultations of the parties concerned, the third phase of the fifth round of the six-party talks on the Korean peninsular nuclear issue will be resumed in Beijing on Feb. 8," Jiang Yu told a regular news conference. The previous phase of talks recessed in December last year after five days of negotiations which produced no breakthrough. Launched in 2003, the talks involve China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the United States, the Republic of Korea, Japan and Russia...