

People's Daily, 1 March 2007

### **New law to abolish laojiao system**

China is taking a fresh look at abolishing the long-disputed re-education-through-labor system, or laojiao, by proposing a new law which is more lenient and protective of the legal rights of minor offenders. According to the annual legislative plan released on Tuesday by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), the top legislature, the proposed law on correction of illegal acts is among the 20 draft laws or amendments to be discussed this year. Listed in NPC's annual legislative plan since 2005, the draft law was put aside for two years because of disagreements, and the standing committee said there are still "lots of disagreements" this year. Law experts have described the law as "a concrete step to protect human rights as endowed by the Constitution". Laojiao, an administrative measure adopted in 1957, empowers the police to sentence a person guilty of such minor offenses as petty theft and prostitution, to a maximum of four years' incarceration...

People's Daily, 1 March 2007

### **China, Sri Lanka celebrate 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties**

A grand reception was held in Beijing on Wednesday to celebrate the 50th anniversary of China-Sri Lanka diplomatic relations. Jia Qinglin, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and visiting Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse attended the occasion. Regarding the two countries as good friends with a profound history of exchanges, Jia said the two governments and peoples always respect and help each other. "Our friendship is nurtured by leaders of generations and cultivated by personages from different circles of the two countries," Jia said, calling for the two sides to cherish the friendship. Rajapakse said that bilateral friendship remains steadfast despite changes and conflicts in the world...

People's Daily, 2 March 2007

### **Pentagon plans new arms sale to Taiwan**

The Pentagon has notified the U. S. Congress that it plans a new arms sale to Taiwan which includes over 400 missiles with the total value of 421 million U.S. dollars. According to a press release issued by the Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) on Thursday, the arms sale package will include 218 AIM-120C-7 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAMs), 235 Maverick missiles, as well as related support, maintenance, training and logistics service. The agency said the planned sale will "augment and complement the recipient's F-16 fleet."...

People's Daily, 2 March 2007

### **'One-child' policy violators to be put on shame list**

The rich and famous who have ignored the country's family planning policy by having more than one child will have to pay a heavy price, according to a senior official with the National Population and Family Planning Commission. In addition to hefty fines, they will have their names recorded in an official "bad credit" file and be disqualified for any awards and honours from society, said Yu Xuejun, director of the commission's Department of Policies and Laws. Yu said the commission is drafting a regulation with "concrete measures" to punish the rich and famous for having more than one child, but he

did not give details. While the family planning policy is popularly referred to as the "one child policy", it in fact limits only 35.9 percent of the population to having one child, according to the commission...

People's Daily, 2 March 2007

### **Deal inked on nuke plants**

The State Nuclear Power Technology Corporation yesterday signed an agreement with the US-based Westinghouse Electric Co to build four civilian nuclear reactors in East China. According to the deal, China will use the AP1000 technology of Westinghouse for third-generation nuclear reactors, two in Sanmen, Zhejiang Province; and two in Haiyang, Shandong Province. "This is a milestone in the development of third-generation nuclear power technology in the world," said Zhang Guobao, vice-minister of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the country's top economic planner...

People's Daily, 3 March 2007

### **China urges U.S. to cancel arms sales plan to Taiwan**

China Friday voiced its strong dissatisfaction and resolute opposition to the US arms sales plan which it regarded as wanton interference in its internal affairs. Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said China firmly opposes the US arms sales to this island of China and urged the United States to cancel the sales plan. Qin said. "Our position is consistent and clear." The U.S. Department of Defense has announced that it plans to sell Taiwan more than 400 missiles worth 421 million U.S. dollars, which would include Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air missiles, Maverick missiles, as well as spare parts and maintenance equipment...

People's Daily, 3 March 2007

### **U.S. Deputy Secretary of State kicks off China visit**

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte arrived in Beijing at noon Saturday, starting his three-day visit to China. During Negroponte's stay here, State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, as well as vice foreign ministers Dai Bingguo and Yang Jiechi will meet or hold talks with Negroponte, respectively. The two sides are expected to exchange views on bilateral ties and on important international and regional issues of common concern. Negroponte's March 1-6 Asian tour also includes Japan and the Republic of Korea...

People's Daily, 5 March 2007

### **China's defense budget to rise 17.8 percent in 2007**

China's defense budget for 2007 is expected to hit 350.92 billion yuan (44.94 billion U.S. dollars), 17.8 percent higher than that last year, a spokesman for China's top legislature's annual session said Sunday. The figure marks an increase of 52.99 billion yuan (6.79 billion dollars) over that last year. This year's defense budget accounts for 7.5 percent of the nation's budgeted fiscal expenditure, compared with 7.7 percent in 2004, 7.3 percent in 2005 and 7.4 percent in 2006, said Jiang Enzhu, spokesman for the Fifth Session of the Tenth National People's Congress, the top legislature of the country. The State Council, or the cabinet, is to submit the budget for approval at the annual session of the legislature,

which is scheduled to open here Monday...

People's Daily, 6 March 2007

**Harmony, stability prerequisite for Tibet development: Chinese President**

Chinese President Hu Jintao said Monday that to maintain a harmonious and stable society is a prerequisite for the development of Tibet and the well-being of all ethnic groups living there. Emphasis should be laid on improving the living and working conditions of farmers and herdsmen, so that they can share the achievements of China's reform and development, said Hu while joining a panel discussion of Tibetan legislators at the ongoing annual session of the Tenth National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature. The work concerning ethnic groups and religions must be done well, said Hu, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission...

The Hindu, 7 March 2007

**Border row not insurmountable: Li (Pallavi Aiyar)**

Beijing: The boundary dispute between India and China was a problem imposed on the people of both countries by "western colonialists" at a time when the nations were not "masters of their own homes," Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said here on Tuesday. Mr. Li was speaking at a press conference, held on the sidelines of the ongoing session of the National People's Congress, China's parliament. To a question raised by The Hindu, Mr. Li said he believed China and India had the "wisdom and capability" to find a solution to the border issue, "a problem that was left over from history."...

People's Daily, 7 March 2007

**Face up to sex slavery, Japan told**

Japan must face up to history and "earnestly and properly" handle the issue of "comfort women", Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing told a news conference in Beijing yesterday. Li was speaking on the sidelines of the annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC), the top legislature. "The forced use of so-called 'comfort women' was one of the most serious crimes committed by the Japanese militarists during World War II," Li said. "This is a historical fact." "Comfort women" is a euphemism for wartime sex slaves. It is estimated that during World War II, some 200,000 women from Asian countries including China were forcibly drafted into the Japanese Imperial Army to serve as sex slaves...

People's Daily, 9 March 2007

**China's top political advisor reiterates resolute opposition to**

China's top political advisor Jia Qinglin reiterated that the mainland will resolutely oppose "Taiwan independence" secessionist activities at a parliament panel discussion with the country's lawmakers on Thursday. The 1.3 billion Chinese people have the confidence and capability to maintain national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and will never allow any person to split Taiwan from China in any form, said Jia, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)...

People's Daily, 9 March 2007

**DPRK nuclear envoy in Beijing**

Pyongyang's envoy to the six-nation nuclear talks Kim Kye-gwan arrived in Beijing last night and is scheduled to meet his Chinese counterpart Wu Dawei today. Sources with the Foreign Ministry said Kim is stopping over in Beijing on his way home after a significant US trip, in which he and US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill held a two-day discussion in New York. Kim is expected to brief Wu, the top Chinese nuclear negotiator, on the details of his meeting with Hill, which followed the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) February 13 pledge to dismantle its nuclear program...

People's Daily, 14 March 2007

**Two JF-17 Thunder fighter jets arrive in Pakistan for test**

Two JF-17 Thunder military aircraft have arrived in Pakistan for further flight tests and evaluation by the Pakistan Air Force, China National Aero-Technology Import and Export Corporation (CATIC) said on Wednesday. The JF-17 Thunder aircraft, an advanced multi-role Light Combat Aircraft, has been jointly developed by China and Pakistan. The arrival ceremony of the aircraft was held at Pakistan Aeronautical Complex Kamra on March 12, CATIC said. The aircraft will make its debut in Islamabad on March 23, it said. Last May, the fourth prototype of JF-17 Thunder aircraft, equipped with exclusive avionics and weapons qualification systems, completed its first test flight in Chengdu, southwest China's Sichuan Province. The first prototype made its first test flight in 2003.

The Hindu, 14 March 2007

**China to overhaul legal system (Pallavi Aiyar)**

Beijing: Recent reforms of China's capital punishment laws should lead to a discernable reduction in the numbers of those executed, the country's Chief Justice, Xiao Yang, said on Tuesday. The Chief Justice was presenting a report at the ongoing session of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's Parliament. "Resolutely carry out the policy of strict and solemn control to ensure the death penalty is applied only for an extremely small number of crimes and execute criminals according to the law only where the damage to society has been very severe and the evidence is sufficient," Justice Xiao said in his report...

China Daily, 15 March 2007

**What's behind increase in the military budget (Xu Guangyu)**

At the Fifth Session of the 10th National People's Congress, it was announced that the country's military budget for 2007 is 350.92 billion yuan, or roughly US\$44.94 billion. This marks a 17.8 per cent increase over the previous year, or \$6.8 billion. The increase has drawn wide attention from the international community. Many express misgivings out of sheer misunderstanding. But some look at the increase through stained lenses or stretch the matter to suit their own ends. Others try to use the growth in China's military spending to create a propaganda splash...

People's Daily, 15 March 2007

### **No turning back on death rule**

The country's chief justice yesterday said the highest court will "never again" grant the final say on pronouncing the death penalty to provincial courts. "We will never go back to the situation 26 years ago and regress," Xiao Yang, president of the Supreme People's Court, said on the sidelines of the annual session of the country's top legislature. He was referring to 1981 when the apex court began to grant provincial courts the authority to hand down death sentences amid rising crimes following the "cultural revolution" (1966-76). The practice, which had drawn criticism especially after reports of miscarriage of justice, came to an end on January 1, when the Supreme People's Court was given the sole power to review and ratify all death sentences to ensure they are processed with "extreme caution"...

International Herald Tribune, 16 March 2007

### **Chinese premier says visit to Japan next month meant to further trend in warming relations**

BEIJING: China's premier said Friday his visit next month to Japan would be an "ice-thawing" journey building on recent improvements in ties between the neighbors and sometimes antagonists. Premier Wen Jiabao said Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's "icebreaking" trip to China last October showed that formerly frosty relations were warming after the two reached consensus on removing political obstacles. "And I hope that my visit to Japan in April this year will be an ice-thawing journey," Wen said at an annual news conference on the final day of the legislative session. Wen's visit would be the first by a Chinese premier in seven years, underscoring the long chill in relations under former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who enraged China with his repeated visits to Tokyo's Yasakuni shrine honoring war dead, including executed war criminals...

China Daily, 16 March 2007

### **Wen calls for adoption of convention on outer space**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Friday urged relevant countries in the world to adopt and sign an international convention on peaceful utilization of outer space at the earliest date possible. Wen made this call at a press conference in the Great Hall of the People after the conclusion of the National People's Congress while answering a question raised by the Associated Press concerning China's January experiment to knock down an aging Chinese weather satellite with a missile. Wen said the test is not targeted at any country, nor will it threaten any country, nor does it violate any international treaties. He pledged China will continue to pursue a peaceful development road. "China always advocates for the peaceful utilization of outer space and we are always opposed to an arms race in outer space," Wen said, adding Beijing was repeating its calls for an international convention banning weapons in outer space...

China Daily, 23 March 2007

### **China, US militaries step up exchanges (Sun Shangwu)**

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is keeping a close watch on Taiwan secessionists' actions and attempts to seek "independence", the Chief of the General Staff Liang Guanglie said Thursday, March 22 in Beijing. The question of Taiwan concerns the core

interests of China and the national feeling of 1.3 billion Chinese people, according to Liang. "We will make our utmost efforts to safeguard the stability of the Taiwan Straits and push for a peaceful reunification of the motherland," he said in a meeting with Marine General Peter Pace, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff...

China Daily, 23 March 2007

### **China's richest oil strike near Dalian (Wang Yu)**

China's biggest oil discovery in the past decade is a field near Dalian in the northern part of Bohai Bay, run independently by the country's top oil company PetroChina, an industry insider revealed Thursday. "I know they have taken six drilling vessels there ... What kind of a field needs six vessels to drill at the same time?" said the source - who did not want to be named - implying that it's a gigantic project. PetroChina, China's top oil and gas producer, recently announced that it discovered a "very rich" oilfield at Bohai Bay. With an initial daily output of 500 tons, the field is "the largest finding in China in the past 10 years", according to Jiang Jiemin, vice-chairman and president of PetroChina. He did not reveal the total reserves, saying only that a detailed announcement would be made in the first half of this year...

China Daily, 26 March 2007

### **Intel announces \$2.5b chip project in China**

Intel Corp announced Monday it will build a \$2.5 billion chip factory in China, giving the U.S. company a bigger presence in the booming Chinese market and boosting Beijing's effort to attract high-tech investment. The factory will produce chipsets, a key component in personal computers, mobile phones and other products, Intel President and CEO Paul Otellini said at a news conference in Beijing. The facility in the northeastern city of Dalian will be Intel's first wafer fabrication factory in Asia and its first built from scratch since 1992, reflecting China's growing importance as a market for high-tech goods. It will boost the Santa Clara, California-based, company's investments in China to \$4 billion. "This project confirms and further enhances the strategic importance of China in our global strategy and in the IT industry around the world," Otellini said. "Our goal in China is to support a transition from 'manufactured in China' to 'innovated in China,'" he said...

People's Daily, 26 March 2007

### **Landslide win for Tsang in HK poll**

HONG KONG: Incumbent chief executive (CE) Donald Tsang won a landslide victory yesterday to continue serving as Hong Kong' top leader. Tsang was elected with 649 votes of the 772 valid votes cast by Election Committee (EC) members. His only challenger, Civic Party legislator Alan Leong, got 123 votes. With a turnout of more than 99 percent, 789 members of the 795-strong EC cast their secret ballots. According to the Basic Law, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) CE is elected by the broadly-representative EC and then appointed by the central government. After the appointment, Tsang will become the third-term CE of the SAR, with his term starting on July 1, 2007 and ending on June 30, 2012. An emotional Tsang held back tears when the election result was announced; and said he was deeply moved by the support he had received...

People's Daily, 28 March 2007

**Date set for Wen's 'ice-thawing' trip**

Premier Wen Jiabao will begin his "ice-thawing" trip to Japan on April 11, advancing efforts to establish strategic and mutually beneficial bilateral ties. The three-day tour will be the first by the Chinese premier in seven years, as the two countries work hard to improve relations, which were chilled by former Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi's repeated visits to a war shrine. Wen will fly to Tokyo from Seoul, where he is expected to stay for two days to attend the opening ceremony of the Year of Exchange, a yearlong exchange program celebrating the 15th anniversary of diplomatic ties between China and South Korea...

The Hindu, 28 March 2007

**Putin, Hu for greater ties with India (Vladimir Radyuhin)**

MOSCOW: Russia and China have called for expanding trilateral cooperation with India. Triangular interaction ``enhances mutually beneficial economic cooperation among the three nations, strengthens their coordination in facing new challenges and threats, especially that of international terrorism, [and] contributes to the cause of promoting peace and stability in Asia and throughout the world," Russian President Vladimir Putin and President Hu Jintao said in a Joint Declaration signed after their talks in the Kremlin...

People's Daily, 29 March 2007

**China stresses five key points for development of western region**

The Office of the Leading Group for the Development of the Western Region under the State Council recently announced that based on the 11th Five Year Plan for the Development of the Western Region, China has established five key points which will guide the direction of development and promote the scientific planning of key industries in the region. Wang Jinxiang, vice chairman of the NDRC and deputy director of the Office of the Leading Group for the Development of the Western Region, said that the Office has initiated the drafting of a development program for the western region, which includes five main goals...

People's Daily, 29 March 2007

**Pact signed on water management**

China and the United States will push forward co-operation on management of water resources and hazardous materials, according to an agreement reached in Beijing during a visit by two senior US environmental officials. Benjamin Grumbles, assistant administrator for the Office of Water of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), told a news conference in Beijing yesterday that the "agreement will advance our collaboration on integrated water basin and watershed management." Stressing "sustainability" in water resource management, he said there were four key aspects: sustainable management of utilities, full pricing mechanism to reflect the true value of water, efficient water use and a watershed approach to protection...

The Hindu, 30 March 2007

**World's highest airport planned**

Beijing: China plans to build the world's highest airport as part of a 100-billion yuan surge of investment in Tibet in the next four years, the state media reported on Tuesday. The funds - almost 40 per cent more than what was spent on Tibet's infrastructure in the past decade - were hailed as a sign of the Central Government's commitment to raising the living standards of poor communities. The investment will be spent on 180 projects, including the construction of an airport at Ngari, at an altitude of 4,334 metres...

People's Daily, 30 March 2007

**Viable oil, gas reserves 'need to be discovered'**

China needs to strengthen oil exploration efforts to ensure energy safety, said a statement by the Ministry of Land and Resources. A ministry survey indicated that China had 2.043 billion tons of oil and 2.449 trillion cubic meters of gas in economically recoverable reserves at the end of last year. Economically recoverable reserves mean oil and gas that can be extracted profitably under current economic and market conditions and extraction technology which usually account for a small part of the total reserves. The remaining are an important index of profit potential in the future. The statement said that the ministry arrived at the figures after factoring in data from oil fields owned by domestic giants such as PetroChina, Sinopec and China National Offshore Oil Corp and other local oil and gas companies...

People's Daily, 30 March 2007

**Japan, China hold seventh round of discussion on disputed gas field**

The seventh round of discussion over gas exploitation in a disputed field in the East China Sea between Japan and China was held on Thursday in Tokyo. China was represented by a delegation led by Hu Zhengyue, head of the Chinese Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Department, and Japan was represented by a delegation led by Kenichiro Sasae, head of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau. The two sides made a constructive exchange of ideas on joint exploitation in the field...