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I. United States

1. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Associated Press ("'AXIS OF EVIL' TOPS BUSH'S SECOND-TERM AGENDA", 2005-01-03) reported that the three countries President Bush called an "axis of evil" in his first term are at the top of his foreign policy to-do list in the second. Iran and the DPRK, the other two countries in Bush's famous axis, loom nearly as large as Iraq. Bush must decide how much to push Iran and the DPRK diplomatically; how much to cooperate with European efforts to contain the nuclear threats; and how much to listen to hawks in his own government who may press for a limited airstrike against Iranian nuclear facilities.

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2. DPRK on US-DPRK Relations

Kyodo ("N. KOREA URGES U.S. TO DROP 'HOSTILE POLICY' IN NEW YEAR EDITORIAL", 2005-0-01) reported that the DPRK called on the US Saturday to give up what it called the country's "hostile policy" toward Pyongyang, accusing Washington of escalating steps against the country "as never before," in a joint editorial of the country's official press on New Year's Day. But the annual editorial softened its wording against the US compared with a year earlier, refraining from saying as it did last year that it may take "extremely strong responses" against the country.

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3. DPRK on US Human Rights Bill

Yonhap News ("N. KOREA RAPS U.S. FOR HUMAN RIGHTS BILL", 2005-01-02) reported that the DPRK lashed out at a controversial US human rights bill Sunday, saying the bill is aimed at toppling its regime. In October last year, Washington adopted the "North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004," which allows the US to spend US\$24 million a year over the next four years to help improve human rights conditions in the DPRK and support DPRK defectors.

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4. DPRK on Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA BLAMES S. KOREA FOR STALLED TALKS", 2004-12-28) reported that the DPRK blamed the ROK on Tuesday for a stall in the dialogue between the two countries and demanded an apology. In a lengthy report, the DPRK's Secretariat of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland cited a mass defection of DPRK citizens to the ROK earlier this year - and a joint military exercise the ROK held with the US - as "anti-reunification acts."

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5. DPRK on Inter - Korean Relations

The Associated Press ("REPORT: N. KOREA WON'T INVADE S. KOREA", 2004-12-25) reported that the DPRK's leader Kim Jong Il has said the DPRK has no intention of invading the ROK, an official DPRK news report said Saturday. The DPRK's media have often said a second Korean war would not be triggered by DPRK provocation but by an attack from the ROK. Nonetheless, it's highly unusual for them to attribute such a statement to Kim, said the ROK's official news agency, Yonhap, which monitors the DPRK's media.

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6. DPRK on Japanese Abductees

Japan Times ("NORTH INTIMATES IT MAY BREAK OFF TALKS WITH JAPAN", 2005-01-01) reported that the DPRK has said talks with Japan over the fate of Japanese abducted to the DPRK are no longer meaningful, according to an official media report Friday. "The conclusion drawn by us through previous contacts with Japan is that Japan has exploited the DPRK's sincere attitude," the spokesman said in the DPRK's first official response since Japan lodged a protest over the reinvestigation and handed over the report on Dec. 25.

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7. Japan on DPRK Abductees

Kyodo News ("JAPAN RESPONSE LOW-KEY TO N. KOREA'S SUGGESTION TO CUT OFF TALKS", 2004-12-31) reported that Japan responded calmly on Friday to the DPRK's suggestion that it may end talks with Tokyo over the cases of 10 Japanese who Tokyo recognizes as victims of abductions by the DPRK. "It's within our expectations that a North Korean spokesman has made harsh criticism externally" over Japan's report recently given to the DPRK on its reinvestigation into the 10 cases, a Japanese government official said.

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8. DPRK Stability

Boston Globe ("SPECULATION ABOUT N. KOREA RESURFACES; RUMORS ABOUND ABOUT POSSIBLE REGIME COLLAPSE", 2005-01-03) reported that a decade ago, it was taken as a matter of faith that the DPRK would soon be relegated to the same historical dustbin as the Soviet Union. But Kim Jong Il defied predictions of his political demise, and embarrassed pundits stopped even broaching the topic of the regime's life expectancy. "The idea that North Korea is about to collapse is back in fashion," said Jeung Young-Tai, a member of the team at the Seoul-based Korea Institute for National Unification studying the likelihood of collapse.

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9. DPRK Reforms / Stability

Donga Ilbo ("SUSPICIOUS CONNECTION BETWEEN N. KOREA'S POWER STRUGGLE AND REFORMS", 2005-01-03) reported that the Independent, a British newspaper, reported in its article on December 29 that the DPRK's internal power struggle could be connected to its scope and pace of economic reforms. The paper quoted some anonymous diplomats as saying that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il may have purged Vice Director of the ruling Korean Workers Party's Organization and Guidance Department Chang Song Taek, his brother-in-law, and 80 close associates for that reason. The daily also wrote that Kim Jong Il may announce new policies on politics and the economy before his birthday in February.

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10. DPRK Policy for 2005

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA SUGGESTS THREE GOALS IN NEW YEAR'S EDITORIAL", 2005-01-02) reported that on January 1, the DPRK, in a common editorial run in three state-run newspapers –the party, army, and youth league papers–urged its citizens “to advance altogether with the military-first revolution.” In the editorial, under the slogan of “Military-first Revolution,” the DPRK presented its goals “to improve agricultural productivity”; “to strengthen the unity of society”; and “to strengthen Inter-Korean cooperation” as the three goals of this year.

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11. DPRK Economic Reform

The Associated Press ("CAUTIOUS DEVELOPMENT LOOMS IN NORTH KOREA", 2005-01-02) reported that streets in the DPRK capital Pyongyang are lined with sidewalk stalls selling snacks and beer, the restaurant scene is growing and semi-liberalized markets are becoming centers of trade in imported food and clothes. This is the new face of the DPRK, say recent visitors, and the most visible result of changes to the DPRK's economy that are starting to bear fruit -- and potentially dim the prospects for an economic meltdown disrupting leader Kim Jong Il's hold on power. A stroll through Pyongyang provides proof of the positive economic trend, visitors say.

[\(return to top\)](#) Joongang Ilbo ("REPORT: MARKET IDEAS TAKING HOLD IN NORTH", 2004-12-30) reported that the DPRK is undertaking small experiments with free market economy principles that would have been unthinkable a couple of years ago, the Unification Ministry said in a new report

released yesterday. The report said that there are now 24-hour stores operating in Pyeongyang and six to seven places providing computer access as well. One of the stores has 100 personal computers, the report said. Some stores are selling hamburgers. The report said that hamburgers first started to appear at colleges inside the DPRK where foreign culture is spreading faster than other places. [\(return to top\)](#) Yonhap ("PYONGYANG TO HOST WORLD TRADE FAIR IN MAY: REPORT", 2004-12-28) reported that the DPRK will hold an international trade fair in May in an ambitious step toward an open economy and has already invited American and European firms as possible trade partners, a PRC report said Friday, quoting a DPRK official. The fair will take place from May 16-19 and up to 300 companies from the US and European countries have been invited by Pyongyang, said the International Herald Leader, a newspaper published by the PRC's state-run Xinhua News Agency, quoting a DPRK embassy official in Beijing. [\(return to top\)](#)

12. DPRK Land Reform

Donga Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA LIKELY TO START HOUSEHOLD-BASED ARABLE SYSTEM IN MARCH", 2005-01-03) reported that the DPRK, in an effort to enhance the productivity of collective farms, has decided to implement agricultural reform policies in March or April that would divide the current group unit into a group of two or three households. If this policy is to approve de-facto family farming in the DPRK, the first phase of the socialistic agriculture reform that the PRC had implemented in 1978 will start again in the hermit kingdom, experts said.

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13. Inter - Korean Economic Cooperation

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA EYES DEVELOPING NORTH KOREAN PORT", 2005-01-03) reported that the state-run Korea Container Terminal Authority said Monday it plans to make inroads into the development of Nampo port in the DPRK. "We concluded a memorandum of understanding to make a joint venture for such a purpose with Kookyang Shipping Co. and Dongnam Shipping Co.," the Authority said.

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14. Inter - Korean IT Cooperation

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA TO EXPAND IT COOPERATION WITH N. KOREA, MINISTER SAYS", 2005-01-03) reported that the ROK's telecommunications ministry plans to increase exchanges between the two Koreas in the information and communications technology sector, Chin Dae-je, minister of information and communication, said Monday. "We have an aim to develop inter-Korean relations through economic cooperation," Chin told Yonhap News Agency in an interview.

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15. Inter - Korean Investment

Yonhap News ("S. KOREA TO SUPPORT PRIVATE INVESTMENTS IN NORTH KOREA ", 2005-01-02) reported that the ROK will finance part of investments by its private companies in the DPRK infrastructure in an effort to help lay the foundation for greater bilateral economic cooperation, officials said Sunday. To that end, the Ministry of Unification said, it will revise rules on the Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund and implement them within this month.

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16. Inter - Korean Communications

Yonhap News ("KOREAS AGREE TO CROSS-BORDER PHONE CALLS FOR 50 CENTS PER MINUTE", 2004-12-30) reported that the ROK and DPRK signed a deal on providing telecommunications to southern firms at a pilot industrial park in the DPRK, Unification Ministry officials said Thursday. The deal, among other things, allows ROK companies in the DPRK's border town of Kaesong to use phone and faxes for less than US50 cents per minute, clearing one of the biggest obstacles in developing the industrial park.

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17. Inter - Korean Trade

Chosun Ilbo ("KIM JONG-IL'S FAVORITE H2O STARTS TRICKLING INTO THE SOUTH", 2005-01-03) reported that the DPRK mineral water allegedly favored by Dear Leader Kim Jong-il will soon be available in shops south of the border for local consumers to buy, after reports Monday that the first shipment has arrived in Incheon Port and was being inspected by customs officials. The importer of the DPRK's Mount Myohyang Mineral Water, which is virtually run by the DPRK Red Cross Society and favored by high ranking DPRK party officials, disclosed that the water was in the commercial pipeline and would be hitting stores here soon.

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18. Inter - Korean Aid

Joongang Ilbo ("NORTH KOREA WANTS MORE SOUTHERN AID", 2005-01-03) reported that the DPRK has asked the ROK to continue sending aid packages this year, a Unification Ministry official said yesterday. DPRK Red Cross Chief Jang Jae-on sent a message on Christmas Eve to his ROK counterpart, Han Wan-sang, through the truce village of Panmunjeom. Expressing his appreciation for the ROK aid of 100,000 tons of fertilizer sent this fall, Mr. Jang asked Mr. Han to send aid packages similar to those sent in previous years. Since the 2000 inter-Korean summit, the ROK has been sending 400,000 tons of rice and 300,000 tons of fertilizer to the DPRK annually.

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19. DPRK Aid

Korea Times ("UN RAISES \$127 MIL. FOR NK IN 2004", 2005-01-03) reported that the UN raised \$127.6 million to assist impoverished DPRK citizens through a joint aid program in 2004, 39 percent below the targeted \$191.9 million, according to a report released Sunday. However, the DPRK will not receive CAP aid in 2005 as it withdrew from the appeal in September, stating that it was unable to meet U.N. distribution monitoring requirements due to "security concerns."

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20. DPRK Energy Supply

Yonhap News ("NORTH KOREA'S POWER STATIONS BEGIN NEW YEAR OPERATIONS: REPORT", 2005-01-03) reported that the DPRK said Sunday its hydroelectric and coal-fired power plants have

started New Year operations, pushing up electricity output drastically. "Power plants nationwide have begun their New Year output," Pyongyang Broadcasting said. "On the first day of operation, electricity output was 110 percent higher than last month's daily production." In particular, the Heocheongang Power Station in the DPRK's South Hamgyeong Province generated several million kilowatt-hours of electricity, the broadcasting station claimed.

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21. DPRK Identification

Yonhap ("N. KOREA ISSUES NEW ID CARDS, REPORT SAYS", 2005-01-03) reported that the DPRK has issued new ID cards to its people for the first time in five years, an Internet news outlet claimed Monday. The Seoul-based Daily NK, which specializes in DPRK affairs, said the new ID card has been issued to people in major cities since September but delivery has been delayed to those in the countryside.

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22. DPRK Agricultural Production

United Press International ("N.KOREA PRIORITIZES FOOD PRODUCTION", 2005-01-03) reported that DPRK leader Kim Jong Il has placed top priority for this year on increasing agricultural production, Pyongyang's media said Monday. "Great General (Kim) said the whole nation should exert all of its efforts for agriculture in 2005, which marks the Party's 60th anniversary," said Rodong Sinmun, the organ of the ruling Workers' Party. "Rice is our gun and our national power," the paper said. "If armed with rice in addition to the strong military and defense industry, we are not afraid of any future attacks from enemies," it said.

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23. DPRK Arms Sales

Korea Times ("NK SOLD FIREARMS TO PHILIPPINES MILITIA: YOMIURI", 2005-01-03) reported that the DPRK reportedly sold 10,000 automatic rifles to the Muslim separatist group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the Philippines' largest armed militia, which is allegedly linked to the international terrorist group al-Qaida, Japan's Yomiuri Shimbun reported Monday. The ROK's National Intelligence Service (NIS), however, told The Korea Times it was not aware of the secret deal being struck between the DPRK and the terrorist group in the Philippines.

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24. US - DPRK Relations

Los Angeles Times ("AMERICANS FIND A DOOR TO N. KOREA", 2005-01-03) reported that from a riverfront park where vendors hawk popcorn and cotton candy, Peter Han gazes across the Tumen River at the landscape that is the DPRK and shakes his head in despair. After retirement, he wanted to do something to help the DPRK, but because it would be practically impossible to move to the hermetic and impoverished country, he set himself up in Tumen instead. Han's projects, which get funding from charity groups and employ about 140 DPRK citizens, are part humanitarian and part business. Not that they actually make a profit, but they are structured to give the DPRK a crash course in the basics of business.

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25. ROK Defector to the DPRK

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREAN WITH U.S. ARMY DEFECTS TO NORTH -- KCNA", 2004-12-29) reported that a ROK citizen who had served with the US military on the divided peninsula has defected to the DPRK, Pyongyang's official KCNA news agency said on Wednesday. Kim Ki-ho had been head of inspection at the US 8th Army's 6th Ordnance Battalion, the state agency said. The report said Kim, 59, had defected recently, but did not say when or how he crossed over into the DPRK.

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26. DPRK Defectors

Yonhap ("KOREAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS RUN SHELTER FOR N.K. DEFECTORS IN CHINA", 2005-01-03) reported that a Korean-American students' group said Monday it opened a shelter in a major PRC city last month for orphaned DPRK children. LiNK, established last year by ethnic Korean students in the US, said four DPRK children under seven years old, in constant danger of repatriation to the DPRK, are currently under its care. LiNK stands for Liberation in North Korea.

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27. Russia on DPRK Defectors

New York Times ("RUSSIA TURNS SOUR ON NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES", 2005-01-03) reported that the Russian woman in the cafe was in tears, her tea cooling, her potato salad untouched. She had just endured an hourlong interrogation by a ROK investigator about her role in sheltering a DPRK defector. In a new twist, diplomats from the ROK now work to discourage defectors from the DPRK. "The situation in South Korea itself has changed," said an ethnic Korean-Russian travel agent here who used to help North Koreans get to Seoul. "Now it seems that North Koreans are not welcomed there anymore."

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28. Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN LEADER TAKES AIM AT CHINA'S ANTI-SECESSION LAW IN NEW YEAR MESSAGE", 2005-01-01) reported that Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian described rival the PRC's plans for an anti-secession law as a threat to regional security in his New Year message Saturday. In his speech to senior government leaders, Chen accused Beijing of drawing up the law to find a pretext for military moves against Taiwan. "(The law) not only unilaterally changes the currently peaceful cross-strait status quo, but also forms the biggest threat to regional stability and world peace," Chen said.

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29. PRC on Cross Strait Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA'S HU: TAIWAN WON'T BE INDEPENDENT", 2004-12-31) reported that PRC President Hu Jintao touted his country's booming economy in a televised year-end speech Friday, while calling for a larger role for Beijing in world affairs in 2005 and vowing never to allow

Taiwan to become independent. On Taiwan, "we will try to achieve peaceful unification but we will not allow anyone in any form to split Taiwan from China," he said, appealing to the Taiwanese people to curb efforts to make the island independent.

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30. PRC on Weapons Deal

The Associated Press ("CHINA OFFICIAL SLAMS U.S. ON WEAPONS DEAL", 2005-01-03) reported that a senior PRC official criticized the US for pressuring Israel to confiscate PRC-owned drone aircraft, calling the American action "groundless and unreasonable." The comments Wednesday by State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan, the PRC's senior foreign policy official, were the strongest indication to date of PRC displeasure over American efforts to prevent the PRC from regaining possession of "Harpy" unmanned drone aircraft.

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31. PRC Freedom of Speech Case

The New York Times ("CHINESE TV DIRECTOR SUED BY FALUN GONG CLAIMS FREE SPEECH PROTECTION IN THE U.S.", 2005-01-03) reported that Zhao Zhizhen, the director of a local television station in Wuhan, PRC, was in New Haven last summer, spending time with his daughter after seeing her graduate from Yale. Followers of Falun Gong, a spiritual practice banned in the PRC, found him there and served him with a federal lawsuit. The case against Mr. Zhao also pits a growing international hostility to statements disparaging ethnic and religious groups against the American singular tolerance for such speech.

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32. PRC Judicial Reform

Washington Post ("IN CHINA, TURNING THE LAW INTO THE PEOPLE'S PROTECTOR", 2004-12-28) reported that more than a quarter-century after launching economic reforms while continuing to restrict political freedom, the PRC Communist Party remains in firm control of the courts. But the government's claims of support for legal reform and human rights, and an influx of information about Western legal concepts, have fueled public demands for a more independent judiciary. The party appears torn by this rising legal consciousness. It recognizes the value of an impartial judicial system to resolve disputes in a country with growing social tensions and an emerging capitalist economy, and it sees the potential of citizen lawsuits to curb corruption and improve governance. But it is also afraid that rule of law and independent courts might threaten its monopoly on power.

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33. PRC on Yukos Auction

Reuters ("CHINA MAY GET PIECE OF YUKOS SPOILS", 2004-12-30) reported that the PRC emerged on Thursday as a dark horse contender for the assets of stricken Russian oil major Yukos as the company's state-driven break-up took yet another abrupt twist. Amid intense speculation over who will become the ultimate owner of Yukos's million-barrel-a-day oil unit, Yuganskneftegaz, Russian Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko said top PRC oil company CNPC may end up with a one-fifth stake.

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34. PRC Population

Agence France Presse ("CHINA'S POPULATION TO OFFICIALLY HIT 1.3 BILLION THIS WEEK: GOVERNMENT", 2005-01-03) reported that the population in the PRC, the world's most populous nation, will officially hit 1.3 billion this week. The country's population has been close to 1.3 billion of the world's more than six billion people and has been rounded up to that figure in recent years. But it will only officially reach that exact number by Thursday, according to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) calculations, Xinhua said.

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35. PRC Environment

New York Times ("CHINESE PROJECT PITTS ENVIRONMENTALISTS AGAINST DEVELOPMENT PLANS", 2005-01-02) reported that a major dam project suspended last year by Prime Minister Wen Jiabao is now the focus of a bureaucratic fight between pro-development advocates pushing to restart the project and environmentalists who want public hearings and further research. The conflict highlights the growing tension between the need for environmental protection here in one of the world's most polluted countries and the PRC's insatiable hunger for new energy sources to fuel its booming economy.

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II. CanKor

36. DPRK Defectors

CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("CanKor # 190", None) Just in time for Christmas, the 44 North Korean refugee-defectors who have camped in the Canadian Embassy in Beijing since the end of September are allowed to leave for a "third country". The compromise worked out with Chinese authorities includes agreement for China to add a perimeter fence around the embassy, a move previously resisted by Canada's Ambassador Joseph Caron because of symbolic reasons. Canada does not wish to convey the sense that it is a country behind barriers, he says, but changing circumstances call for adjustments.

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37. ROK on US-DPRK Relations

CANADA-KOREA ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICE ("CanKor # 190", None) In a speech in Beijing, the ROK Minister of Unification urges the USA and the DPRK to make a "historic choice" to solve differences over the nuclear issue. Meanwhile, the South Korean opposition Grand National Party unveils its new unification policy, surprising some with its moderate and engaging tone.

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org