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I. United States

1. Congressional Delegation to Visit DPRK

The Associated Press ("CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO RETURN TO NORTH KOREA", 2005-01-05) reported that members of Congress plan to travel to Pyongyang, DPRK, next week, more than a year after a scheduled trip to the DPRK was scuttled because of White House opposition. This time, President Bush's administration isn't standing in the way of the bipartisan delegation, Rep. Curt Weldon (R., Pa.) said Tuesday. Mr. Weldon said the visit to Pyongyang will be part of an effort to keep a dialogue open between the US and the DPRK. "This is not just some Johnny-come-lately or shoot-from-the-hip approach," he told reporters during a news conference in the House Armed Services committee room.

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2. Bush DPRK Visit

Agence France-Presse ("US OFFICIALS DENY NORTH KOREA VISIT PLANS FOR BUSH", 2005-0-05) reported that White House officials poured cold water on reports that US President George W. Bush had agreed to join ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun on a trip to the DPRK in late 2005. Noting that aides to Roh had said there was no formal agreement, one senior White House official who asked not to be named told AFP: "I don't think that there's anything informal, either." Roh told his cabinet that Bush said he was ready to take time out from Busan to travel north to visit an industrial park for ROK firms being built in the DPRK's border city of Kaesong.

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3. Inter - Korean Relations

Korea Herald ("SEOUL HAS NO INTENTION OF UNDERMINING N. KOREA", 2005-01-05) reported that Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said yesterday that the ROK harbors no hostile intention to threaten the DPRK regime, declaring that Seoul's earlier policy to compete against the DPRK has been discarded. He also ruled out possible mass defections of DPRK refugees in the future, saying the DPRK could feel threatened by any large defection.

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4. IAEA on DPRK Nuclear Issue

Reuters ("ELBARADEI SAYS N.KOREA NUKE CRISIS GETTING WORSE", 2005-01-05) reported that the crisis caused by the DPRK's refusal to abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions is deepening and needs to be resolved as soon as possible, the head of the UN nuclear watchdog said Wednesday.

"This has been a pending issue for 12 years, and frankly it is getting worse," International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Mohamed ElBaradei told Reuters in an interview. "We need to address the whole question and bring it to a resolution," he said. "I would certainly hope that by the end of the year we should be there."

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5. DPRK Warplans

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA ISSUES WARTIME GUIDELINES", None) reported that the DPRK has ordered its citizens to be ready for a protracted war against the US, issuing guidelines on evacuating to underground bunkers with weapons, food and portraits of leader Kim Jong Il. The 33-page "Detailed Wartime Guidelines," published in the ROK's Kyunghyang newspaper on Wednesday and verified by Seoul, was issued April 7, 2004, at a time when the DPRK was claiming it was Washington's next target following the Iraq war. "The United States has cooked up suspicion over our nuclear programs and is escalating an offensive of international pressure to strangle and destroy our republic," the booklet said. "If this tactic doesn't work, it plots to use this (nuclear) problem as an excuse for armed invasion."

[\(return to top\)](#) Korea Times ("NK READY FOR WAR SINCE LAST APRIL", 2005-01-05) reported that the DPRK enhanced its war readiness in April last year, putting emphasis on self-defense, according to top-secret documents signed by Kim Jong-il. Kim issued a two-page directive and a 31-page bylaw on April 7, demanding the Workers' Party, the military and all people assume wartime readiness, the Seoul government confirmed. The Dear Leader ordered people to be ready to mobilize all possible resources within 24 hours following the outbreak of war, increasing the number of available troops through recruiters in each province, city and county. "The US is trying to suffocate us by fanning nuclear suspicions," the introduction of the bylaw said. "The US will take advantage of the nuclear issue as a reason to invade us." [\(return to top\)](#) Donga Ilbo ("MOBILIZATION WITHIN 24 HOURS FOLLOWING THE OUTBREAK OF WAR", 2005-01-05) reported that it was revealed Wednesday that the DPRK distributed a directive and a wartime bylaw by National Defense Committee Chairman Kim Jong Il nationwide on April 7, 2004. According to the bylaw, wartime will progress in three phases of defense, attack, and attrition. It ordered to carry out aggressive psychological and operational warfare against "freed" local people in the phases of attack and attrition. It was said that the DPRK's police and intelligence authorities would establish command centers in underground tunnels, and commanding officials must secure the personnel, weapons, and military equipments in hiding places in the tunnels, and must make eating places, drinking water, sanitary and purification facilities ready for a protracted war. [\(return to top\)](#) Chosun Ilbo ("NORTH KOREAN WAR PLAN MAY BE PROPAGANDA", 2005-01-05) reported that the DPRK strengthened its war plans on April 7, 2004, when it published an updated set of bylaws outlining how a potential war would be conducted, it was learned Wednesday. Some intelligence officials, however, are raising suspicions about the content of the document. An intelligence official said that from the DPRK's position, it was suspicious that the bylaws focused on defensive concepts and double-checking contingency plans. He said if this were a war contingency plan, the DPRK would have also considered pre-emptive strikes, which it is capable of carrying out, but no such plans appeared in the document. He said that given the consideration that such content may have been intentionally omitted, the document may have been manufactured for propaganda purposes to demonstrate that the DPRK could withstand US-applied pressure. [\(return to top\)](#)

6. DPRK on Nuclear Program

Yonhap ("NORTH KOREA SAYS U.S. DEMAND FOR DISARMAMENT 'NONSENSE'", 2005-01-05)

reported that the DPRK said on Wednesday it will never quit nuclear activities unless the US gives up its policy of war against the DPRK. "Demanding us, who is in a state of confrontation and war for more than half century, unilaterally accept its call for disarmament is a nonsense," Rodong Sinmun, organ of the DPRK Workers' Party, said in a commentary.

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7. Japan on DPRK Abductees

Kyodo News ("KOIZUMI DOWNPLAYS PRIORITIZING ABDUCTIONS OVER NUKES WITH N. KOREA", 2005-01-05) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Wednesday downplayed the idea of prioritizing the abduction issue over the nuclear standoff in dealing with the DPRK. Japan's policy toward the DPRK is to resolve these and other issues "comprehensively," and "none should be particularly delayed," Koizumi told reporters, referring to new Vice Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi's suggestion Tuesday.

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8. ROK Ban on DPRK Web Sites

Arirang TV ("S. KOREA TO LIFT BAN ON PRO-NORTH KOREAN WEB SITES", 2005-01-05) reported that Seoul is likely to lift a ban on domestic access to pro-DPRK Web sites, according to Unification Minister Chung Dong-young. The minister said the ROK government is reviewing about 15 pro-DPRK Web sites as possible candidates for the lifting of the ban. The pro-DPRK websites include two that operate out of Japan. One is the Korea Central News Agency, which carries DPRK state media reports. The second site serves as a type of community newsletter for the pro-DPRK residents' league in Japan.

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9. DPRK on ROK Iraq Extension

Yonhap ("PYONGYANG DENOUNCES SEOUL FOR EXTENSION OF DEPLOYMENT IN IRAQ", 2005-01-05) reported that the DPRK criticized the ROK for extending its troop deployment to Iraq by one more year, saying the decision was a "people's shame" that ignored the opinion of international society, the DPRK's official broadcaster said Wednesday. In a commentary, the DPRK's Central Television Broadcasting Station said the ROK parliament passed a bill to extend the operations of its troops in Iraq until the end of this year, dubbing it as "anti-national behavior"

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10. DPRK Tsunami Aid

Reuters ("IMPOVERISHED NORTH KOREA PLEDGES \$150,000 TSUNAMI AID", 2005-01-05) reported that the DPRK, one of the world's poorest countries that depends on foreign aid to help feed about a quarter of its people, is donating \$150,000 in emergency relief to the countries devastated by the Indian Ocean tsunami. The DPRK is no stranger to natural disaster and a famine in the late 1990s is estimated to have killed more than one million people and prompted up to 300,000 people to seek refuge in neighboring PRC. "The government and people of the DPRK express condolences and sympathy to the governments and peoples of the afflicted countries and hope the aftermath of the quake and tsunami will be eradicated," the DPRK's official KCNA news

agency said on Wednesday.

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11. Sino - DPRK Relations

Reuters ("CHINESE GAMBLERS MAIN GUESTS AT NORTH KOREA CASINO", 2005-01-05) reported that PRC tourists, including Communist Party officials, are squandering hundreds of millions of yuan each year at a DPRK five-star hotel and casino, state media said on Wednesday. Every day, more than 100 Chinese travel across the Tumen River to the neighboring Rajin-Sonbong Free Trade Zone to gamble in the Hong Kong-built Emperor Hotel and Casino, the Beijing News said. Gambling in the DPRK has become a hot topic in the PRC since a PRC official was found to have fled after squandering 3.5 million yuan (\$423,000) in public and borrowed money on gambling junkets to the same casino last month.

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12. ROK Historical Revisionism

New York Times ("LETTER FROM ASIA: KOREA'S TRICKY TASK: DIGGING UP PAST TREACHERY", 2005-01-05) reported that these days, the ROK's political and intellectual class is looking back, not only at the military era that ended in the late 1980's but also at the Japanese colonial period that ended six decades ago. A bill to delve into the issue of ROK collaborators during Japan's colonial rule recently moved through the National Assembly. Members of another committee to investigate forced labor under the Japanese have just moved into their new headquarters in downtown Seoul. Yet another committee, this one focusing on abuses by the National Intelligence Service under military rule, has already begun meeting.

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13. ROK on WW II Reparations

Korea Times ("MORE WWII VICTIMS SEEK REPARATIONS", 2005-01-05) reported that former military conscripts, forced laborers and other World War II victims who suffered under Japanese rule are expected to ask for compensation from the government after documents related to the 1965 ROK-Japan treaty are made public this month. The revelation carries significance as it is likely to shed light on allegations that the government diverted a large sum of reparation money received from Japan on behalf of the victims, ignoring a Japanese proposal for individual compensation.

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14. ROK Military

Donga Ilbo ("“SAM-X PROJECT” IMMOBILE FOR THREE YEARS", 2005-01-05) reported that the chance of the Ministry of National Defense (MND) postponing or canceling the next-generation guided missile project, also known as Surface to Air Missile (SAM-X) that was set in motion in 2000, has sky-rocketed as no budget has been approved for this project. Regarding this issue, an MND official said, "The SAM-X project needs to continue by including it into the Mid-term National Defense Plan that is set to start from 2006," However, the popular opinion in and outside of the military is that it is highly likely that this project will be postponed indefinitely or even canceled.

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15. US Arms Sales to the ROK

Chosun Ilbo ("KOREA'S ANALYSIS OF U.S. WEAPON PRICES SLASHES COSTS", 2005-01-05) reported that of the 122 nations around the world that purchase advanced US weaponry, the ROK has become the first to minutely analyze the factors that determine the prices of such weapons to save on purchasing costs - a move that has enabled it to trim tens of millions of dollars in spending by cutting out unnecessary administrative costs. As of late 2003, the Defense Ministry was able to save US\$19.23 million (₩20.2 billion), and in the future, it expects to save a further \$25 million on a range of projects.

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16. Japan Tsunami Aid

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN'S MILITARY TO SEND LARGEST-EVER RELIEF CONTINGENT TO DISASTER AREAS", 2005-01-05) reported that Japan will send its largest-ever disaster relief contingent to help Asian nations hard hit by the tsunamis in a move that could improve the image of the officially pacifist country's military, officials and analysts say. Japan has put its army, air force and navy on standby for departure, with most of their work expected to be in Indonesia, the country worst hit by the giant waves that have killed nearly 150,000 people. The dispatch will help the government to "fend off criticism" over its troop missions abroad such as its controversial deployment to Iraq, said Masaru Ikei, professor emeritus of international politics at Keio University.

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17. PRC Tsunami Aid

Washington Post ("AS ASIANS OFFER MUCH AID, CHINESE ROLE IS LIMITED", 2005-01-05) reported that several Asian countries, led by Japan, have responded swiftly to the plight of their stricken neighbors, generating a major share of global relief aid and mobilizing as never before to help the region cope with a natural catastrophe. But the response has also underscored the limitations of PRC -- a fast-growing economic powerhouse that nevertheless has not been able to offer anywhere near the amount of aid provided by Japan, the US or Britain.

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18. Cross Strait Propoganda Wars

Los Angeles Times ("50-YEAR WAR OF WORDS", 2005-01-05) reported that the radio show called "Special Communications" was an unlikely hit, given that it consisted of announcers reading strings of numbers for 15 minutes. Taiwan used the mind-numbing program in the 1980s to send coded messages to its spies in mainland PRC. The glory days of "Special Communications" may be over, but Chen and her colleagues at Radio Taiwan still have plenty of work, as do members of the propaganda team at the PRC's Central People's Radio Station, which is busy beaming programming the other way. Last year marked the 50th anniversary of mainland radio propaganda broadcasts into Taiwan and the 55th for Taiwan in the opposite direction.

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19. Cross Strait Relations

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN MAYOR SAYS DENIED HONG KONG VISA, SUGGESTS BEIJING PRESSURE", 2005-01-05) reported that Taipei mayor Ma Ying-jeou says he has been denied a visa to visit Hong Kong and suggested Beijing may have intervened to block the application because of his outspoken criticism of PRC policy. While Ma said that his visa application had been turned down on Tuesday, Hong Kong officials said it was Ma who had cancelled the planned trip. Authorities said they would not comment on individual visa applications. Ma has openly criticized Beijing's proposed anti-secession law, aimed at preventing Taiwan from declaring independence from the PRC.

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20. US on Cross Strait Relations

Asia Pulse ("U.S. POLITICIAN REBUKES RESPONSE TO CHINA'S ANTI-SECESSION LAW", 2005-01-05) reported that a member of the US House of Representatives has sent a letter to a senior official of the State Department to express his concern over the department's weak reaction to mainland PRC's proposed anti-secession law that might lead to a unilateral change of the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-Colorado) , who sent the letter Dec. 23 to Paul Kelly, assistant secretary for legislative affairs, has been the first US congressman to openly voice his strong opposition to the "anti-secession law" that mainland PRC hopes to enact.

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21. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

Agence France Presse ("US AGREES TO SELL HELLFIRE MISSILES TO TAIWAN", 2005-01-05) reported that the US has agreed to sell air-to-ground Hellfire missiles worth 50 million US dollars to Taiwan, US defense giant Lockheed Martin Corporation said, a move expected to rile rival PRC. "The US Army has executed a letter of agreement with Taiwan, setting the stage for the sale of more than 400 AGM-114M blast-fragmentation Hellfire rounds under a foreign military sales contract," the company said in a statement.

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22. Hong Kong Pro-Democracy Movement

The Associated Press ("PRO-BEIJING LAWMAKERS REJECT OPPOSITION'S BID TO BLAST GOVERNMENT REPORT FOR REJECTING FULL DEMOCRACY IN HONG KONG", 2005-01-05) reported that a motion to censure the Hong Kong government for ignoring public demands for full democracy in the territory was defeated Wednesday by pro-PRC legislators. The motion, introduced by radical lawmaker Albert Cheng, demanded the government put forward a proposal for constitutional reforms in this former British colony, which remains partially democratic after returning to PRC rule in 1997. Cheng's motion also sought to urge the legislature to express "deep regret" for a recent government report that rejects demands for direct elections of Hong Kong's leader in 2007 and all lawmakers in 2008.

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23. PRC Population

Kyodo News ("CHINA'S POPULATION REACHES 1.3 BILLION: XINHUA", 2005-01-05) reported that the population of the PRC, the world's most populous country, reached the 1.3 billion mark on Thursday, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported. Xinhua said that the PRC achieved the new milestone early Thursday when a baby was born at a Beijing hospital. The PRC's population reached the 1.2 billion mark only in February 1995.

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24. PRC Domestic Unrest

The Associated Press ("REPORTS: HUNDREDS OF TENANTS STAGE ROOFTOP RIOT IN SOUTHERN CHINA", 2005-01-05) reported that hundreds of angry tenants of a soon-to-be demolished mall in southern PRC protested on its roof, hurling bricks and metal frames that struck passing vehicles, Hong Kong newspapers reported Wednesday. No one was injured in the Tuesday incident in the city of Shenzhen after officials shut the road being shelled with objects, but many cars were damaged, the Apple Daily newspaper reported. The Wen Wei Po newspaper reported authorities prompted the protest by suddenly cutting off the water and electricity supply in the mall and starting to remove facilities in the building, located near the PRC's border with Hong Kong.

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