



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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OFFICIAL SIZE OF CHINA'S GDP MAY SOAR

December 15, 2005 The Associated Press reported: "Walk into a bustling Beijing mall or pricey Shanghai restaurant, and official figures that say China's annual economic output is just \$1000 per person seem much too low.

When Beijing releases a new survey of its economy next week, outsiders expect it to make a greater effort to measure such thriving service businesses, possibly revealing that China has been even more successful than reported over the past decade.

Economists say China's already stunning figures that show growth at more than 9 percent this year understate output by up to 20 percent—a hidden \$330 billion out of the reported \$1.65 trillion in goods and services produced last year.

It isn't clear by how much the government might raise its estimate of China's economic output. But the results could have a far-reaching impact on economic and social policy, debates with Washington over the value of China's currency, and investment decisions.

"You could say China is actually 20 percent richer than anybody initially thought," Qu Hong-bin, an economist for financial services, firm HSBC Corp. in Hong Kong, said Wednesday."...

America's trade deficit with China surged to a monthly record of \$20.5 billion in October, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday. Through October, the deficit with China is running at an annual rate of \$200 billion. That surpasses last year's imbalance of \$162 billion, which had been the biggest U.S. deficit recorded with a single country."..."

U.S. URGES TURKEY TO HELP IN IRANIAN STRIKE

December 15, 2005 The Middle East Newslines reported: "The United States has launched another effort to persuade Turkey to help stop Iran's nuclear weapons program.

Turkish government sources said the Bush administration has sent a series of high-level U.S. officials to Ankara to discuss the Iranian threat. The sources said the administration has urged Turkey to help in intelligence and other operations that would target Iran's nuclear weapons program.

"The United States wants Iran's neighbors to be more active in helping stop its nuclear program," a government source said. "As we are the only NATO ally that neighbors Iran, we are the focus of the U.S. effort."

Over the last two months, a series of senior administration officials discussed the Iranian threat with Ankara. Over the last week, Turkey has hosted FBI director Robert Mueller and CIA director Porter Goss..."

U.S. CALLS IRANIAN PRESIDENT'S REMARKS 'ASTOUNDING'



December 14, 2005 Haaretz.com reported: "Lashing out again at Iran's hard-line president, the Bush administration dubbed as "just astonishing" Mahmoud Ahmadinejad description of the Holocaust as a myth, and said he was digging a diplomatic hole for himself. The assertion by Ahmadinejad "can only be characterized as outrageous," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said Wednesday. "These comments are certainly reprehensible."

The Holocaust, carried out by Germany and its allies during World War II, was designed to destroy European Jewry. An estimated 6 million people were killed. Ahmadinejad, in his latest salvo against Israel, said the Holocaust was "a myth" and a pretext for establishing a Jewish state in the heart of the Muslim world.

"It is just astounding to see the kind of comments coming from the president of Iran that we see," McCormack said. As another example of the Iranian government's bad behavior, the U.S. official cited the Tehran's refusal to stop its nuclear programs in now-sidelined negotiations with the European Union. "This is one more indication that Iran is headed off 180 degrees from the rest of the world," McCormack said.

Careful to exclude the Iranian people from U.S. rhetoric, McCormack said "this isn't the Iranian people who are headed off in a different direction from the rest of the world. This is a specific government and regime headed by President Ahmadinejad."..."

U.S. REPORT: ISRAEL COULD BE KEY TO IRAN'S NUKES

December 14, 2005 The Middle East Newslines reported: "The United States should press Israel to dismantle its nuclear weapons in an effort to prevent Iran from accumulating a similar arsenal, a report said.

A report published by the U.S. Army War College ruled out a U.S. military or diplomatic option to stop Iran's nuclear weapons

program. Instead, the report, entitled "Getting Ready for a Nuclear-Ready Iran," asserted that the dismantling of Israel's purported nuclear weapons program could be the only way to prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East.

In a report financed by the Defense Department, the report recommended that the United States encourage "Israel to set the pace of nuclear restraint in the region by freezing its large reactor at Dimona and calling on all other states that have large nuclear reactors to follow suit."

The report also called on Israel to agree to International Atomic Energy Agency inspections of the Dimona nuclear reactor, said to house the nuclear weapons program of the Jewish state. Israel has never confirmed or denied reports that it possesses nuclear weapons. But the Jewish state has pledged not to be the first to use nuclear weapons in the Middle East..”

AIRBORNE LASER COMPLETES LASER GROUND TESTS



December 12, 2005 SpaceWar.com reported: “The Boeing-led Airborne Laser team announced Monday the successful completion of a series of tests involving its high energy laser at the Systems Integration Lab at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. During this test series, lasing duration and power were demonstrated at levels suitable for the destruction of multiple classes of ballistic missiles. This is the second of two program significant knowledge points planned for 2005.

Airborne Laser's (ABL) megawatt-class Chemical Oxygen Iodine Laser (COIL) is designed and built by Northrop Grumman. Lasing tests included more than 70 separate lasing events. The laser has been operated at simulated altitude, and achieved steady state operations under full optical control.

In July 2005, the ABL team completed the year's first knowledge point, which was flight testing of the system's passive mission payload at Edwards Air Force Base. During those tests, the team demonstrated the stability and alignment of the two Beam Control and Fire Control optical benches with the turret. That test also demonstrated the system's pointing and vibration control functions, as well as its ability to acquire targets as directed by the battle management segment.

With the completion of the above milestones for 2005, the program now proceeds to integrated systems testing... During active testing, the kilowatt-class illuminator lasers will be integrated and tested to demonstrate target acquisition, fine tracking, pointing and atmospheric compensation...”

ISRAEL DENIES BRITISH REPORT IT PLANS IRAN ATTACK

December 12, 2005 Voice of America News reported: “Israel is denying a report in a British newspaper that it plans to attack Iran. But Israel has not ruled out a military strike. Israel reacted swiftly to a report in London's Sunday Times that it plans a combined air and ground attack on Iran in March, if Teheran does not halt its nuclear program.

"This is ridiculous. I do not know of any decision. I think it is entirely baseless," said Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. But Mr. Olmert told reporters that there is cause for concern.

"It is true that Israel is entirely, entirely unhappy about the developments with Iran," he said. He said the first step is diplomacy, and the U.S. and Europe should take the lead.

"We believe that this is the ultimate responsibility of the international community," he added. "There are contacts, negotiations and initiatives to move it forward to the United Nations Security Council, and I hope that it will come there soon.

There is a precedent for a preemptive strike. The Israeli air force destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981. Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom said Israel cannot allow Iran to obtain atomic weapons...”

IDF UNCOVERS GAZA TERROR TUNNEL

December 10, 2005 Jerusalem Post reported: “Soldiers uncovered a Palestinian tunnel Saturday morning while working on a concrete, anti-sniper barrier near the Erez Checkpoint, north of the Gaza Strip. The tunnel began only few dozen meters back, but its entrance was hidden from view by a garbage dump.

This was the first time since the unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in August 2005 that Palestinian terrorists have tried to burrow underneath the border fence surrounding the Strip. On December 7, 2004, an IDF unit killed four terrorists and lost a soldier of its own after uncovering a tunnel, starting in a chicken coup in northern Gaza and heading towards Israel.

In most other cases, however, tunnels have been used to smuggle arms from Egypt or have been employed in sapping operations - such as the December 2004 attack on an army post in Rafah, which left five Bedouin soldiers dead.

An IDF spokesman said that the Palestinian Authority had been warned twice about the recent tunneling efforts of terrorists but has done nothing about it...”