

深圳日报 Shenzhen Daily

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Expatriates call Shenzhen home

Li Hao

ALL the foreigners in the city make Shenzhen their home, said Jeffrey S. Lehman, at Saturday's meeting with Shenzhen Party Chief Wang Rong.

Wang met with Lehman, who is chancellor and founding dean of Beijing University School of Transnational Law, and some other foreign professionals in the city, before the New Year Concert at Shenzhen Concert Hall on Saturday.

"Shenzhen is one of the most exciting cities in the world and it is a symbol of progress and a spirit of the future of China in the

global society," said Lehman.

"What is more remarkable is the warmth and friendship the city shows to us. We feel a sense of gratitude and loyalty to the city," said Lehman, who pledged to make contributions to Shenzhen's development in response to Shenzhen's New Year greetings to expats.

"2011 was an important year for Shenzhen, in which the city's GDP exceeded 1 trillion yuan (US\$158 billion) and successfully held the 2011 Summer Universiade," said Wang.

"In the New Year Shenzhen will continue to work toward becoming an international city I hope more foreigners

will come to work and live in Shenzhen," said Wang.

Shenzhen will push forward its international economic and cultural exchanges in the New Year, according to Wang.

Foreign professionals at the winter's meeting also included Richard Jackson, president of Shenzhen Development Bank.

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Minimum wage hiked

Min Ding

THE city government will raise the minimum wage to 1,200 yuan (US\$180) per month, or 13 yuan per hour, in 2012, the municipal human resources and social security bureau announced Friday.

The new standard will be introduced Feb. 1, making Shenzhen's minimum wage the highest in the nation.

Shenzhen is the second city in China to have announced a plan to hike the minimum wage for 2012, after Beijing.

Beijing has raised the minimum wage from 1,100 yuan to 1,200 yuan for the year 2012, starting from January 1.

Shenzhen would hike its minimum wage after April. A spokesman of the human resources and social security bureau said the hike would happen two months earlier 2012 to "give a signal to the workers and help enterprises make better budget plans."

The spokesman said the minimum wage hike aimed to attract labor and drive enterprises to carry out innovation and increase competitiveness.

In 2011, 24 Chinese provinces raised their minimum wage, with an average hike of 22 percent. Shenzhen raised its minimum wage by 20 percent to 1,200 yuan. The city's minimum wage increase marks the 2012 in 10th year.

"It's reasonable for Shenzhen to lower its rate of minimum wage increase," said Prof. Guo Jingzhi of the China Special Economic Research Center, Shenzhen University.

"Increasing the minimum wage can help enterprises fight inflation. However, raising the minimum wage could be a dual strike to businesses' labor's constant adjustment. So the hike should be moderate," he said.



Shuitian and Matian tollgates scrapped

Lin Fan

AN STRIPPED amount 50,000 drivers a day will benefit from the cancellation of the charges.

The closure of Matian tollgate on Shiqian Road and Shuitian's tollgate on Songhai Road marked the success of the city's three-year plan to end toll roads and tollgates on ordinary roads.

Shenzhen Transport Commission said.

The tollgates were criticized after Wuyue Mountain Tunnel Tollgate and eight others bordering Hualian and Dongguan were scrapped in March. The city initiated cooperation with the two tollgate operators in 2011 to a move to relieve traffic, improve the road network and promote the completion of special economic zones.

The city has closed 18 tollgates on ordinary roads since it launched a reform in 2002.



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At a Glance

Public finance
SHENZHEN'S public finance income exceeded 135 billion yuan (US\$20 billion) last year, a 21 percent increase over the year's financial budget.

The city's public budget expenditure reached 155.4 billion yuan last year, up 20 percent over the previous year.

Flower fair
THE annual Spring Festival flower fair is due to open between Jan. 28 and 29 at Aiguo Road in Luohu District.

The road section between Shui Road and Yiling Road will be closed off from 10 a.m. on Thursday in preparation for the fair.

Tax rebate
THE city's support tax rebate exceeded 80 billion yuan last year, a 20 percent increase over 2011, according to the bureau.

It is the first time for the city's support tax rebate to exceed 80 billion yuan since 1998.

Seals canceled
CHIEF SENIORS in Shenzhen have stopped parking on ordinary streets, who held a military permit to Hong Kong, only now they cross the border.

The measure is aimed at honoring the internationalization to travelers, who have to renew their permit when full of visa.

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Foreign professionals at Saturday's meeting also included Richard Jackson, president of Shenzhen Development Bank.

Last month, Lehman and Jackson were accredited high-end professionals under the Peacock Plan of the Shenzhen government, which seeks to attract high-quality individuals and teams from home and abroad.

Saturday's New Year Concert included performance by Lang Lang, a world-renowned Chinese pianist.

Lang was appointed Shenzhen's international ambassador Saturday and will help promote the city's international exchanges and cooperation.

There are 630 companies and institutions in Shenzhen which employ foreign experts, a 24 percent increase over 2009, according to Shenzhen Administration of Foreign Experts' Affairs.

There has been an increase in the demand for foreign experts by the city's electronics, telecommunication, aviation and freight transport industries.

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