

Province has big plans for key industrial projects

By LIU MINGTAI AND ZHANG ZHAO

The Jilin provincial government is drawing up a 12th Five-Year Plan, for the 2011-2015 period, and is considering spending around 1 trillion yuan (\$152 billion) on major projects during that time.

These include a high-speed-railway network, a nuclear power plant, and a water channel.

"Jilin will develop a series of major industries and industrial

bases with an international reputation to give it a competitive edge," Li Fuchun, head of the provincial development and reform commission, told a press conference on Feb 13.

Around 400 billion yuan will be used to improve transportation infrastructure. The government wants to use highways and railways to link every county.

"We'll also build new airports and some old ones will get expanded to provide a more modern, comprehensive, multilevel traffic system," Li added.

An additional 400 billion yuan or more will be spent on developing new energy, such as nuclear power, wind power and biofuels.

The government also plans to improve the electric grid in the countryside by developing one based on digital technology to save energy, cut costs and increase reliability.

Upgrading the information infrastructure will cost an additional 30 billion yuan or more, for broadband and fiber optic access, and for a digital public information service system.



Conference representatives listen attentively at the fourth session of the 11th Jilin People's Congress on Feb 12.

Work on the plan's guidelines began more than a year ago as a joint effort involving everyone from the provincial government to brainstorming local leaders.

Jilin was one of China's earliest industrial centers, but it needs a people-oriented development model for the coming years, one that can balance urbanization, industrialization,

and modern agriculture. There will also have to be an effort to improve the standard of living both in urban areas and the countryside.

According to the plan, provincial GDP annually should exceed 1.5 trillion yuan by the end of 2015, an increase of 640 billion yuan over last year's figure. Service industries are expected to contribute 40

percent of the GDP.

Per capita GDP is expected to reach 53,820 yuan by that time, or 72 percent more than the year of 2010.

The province also has some ambitious ideas about becoming one of the world's major passenger train manufacturers, and to be able to cover more than half of the domestic market.

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Jilin erasing the blind spots in its vision of future prosperity

By ZHANG ZHAO

Another move by the Jilin government in its 12th Five-Year Plan guidelines is to see that incomes grow at least 75 percent over the next five years, based on last year's figures.

According to Luo Dechun, head of the provincial human resources and social security department, this is a result of the fact that, in spite of their rapid economic growth, wages in Jilin have been stagnant.

"We see the wage increase as an important part of the whole program," Luo commented.

The government says it will increase wages of low-income earners so that the lowest salary figure will be "no less than 40 percent of the average" by the end of 2015. The figure now is around 30 percent.

The lowest wage in the provincial capital, Changchun, is expected to reach 980 yuan (\$148.9) a month, this year, a 20-percent increase over last year.

Pensioner's average payments this year rose to 1,278 yuan a month, a 13.5 percent increase over last year, and this is expected to exceed 2,000 yuan by the end of 2015.

Unemployment compensation on average increased 124 yuan a month this year, and medical insurance for urban



Luo Dechun, head of the Jilin Human Resources and Social Security Department

residents has gone from 120 yuan to 200 yuan a year.

The government also plans to add 500,000 new jobs every year and to put 600 million yuan, over the next five years, into free occupational training programs for 800,000 people, every year.

Jilin has been encouraging its people to start their own business and it plans to hold training programs and small loans to back this. In a related move, it is looking at 50 business zones where college grads can start their own company.

In five years, social security insurance is expected to cover everyone in the province.

"There are still some blind spots (in this plan), such as retired workers without health care and people with work-related injuries," Luo offered, but, "over the next five years, we'll erase these blind spots."

Warmer, lower-cost housing for poor people is the solution

By LIU MINGTAI

Yet another focus of the Jilin government in its 12th Five-Year Plan is improved housing conditions for its lower-income citizens.

It intends to refurbish its 4,000 kilometers heating pipes during this period. And it will use newer technology in its piping network to preserve energy over a 60-million-square-meter area.

The province wants to inject

130 billion yuan (\$19.7 billion) into the property business this year, a 16.8 percent increase from last year's spending.

Investment in the property market has been relatively small, with slow growth, explained Qin Fuyi, director-general of the provincial housing and urban-rural development department.

"We're lagging behind the national average," Qin explained. The government will stimulate the market by providing smaller, low-cost housing



Qin Fuyi, director-general of the provincial housing and urban-rural development department

units and by renovating some decrepit areas.

In one dilapidated area it began a large-scale renovation project in 2005, and has managed to solve the problem for nearly 50 million people living in poor housing.

Refurbishment projects in mining, forest farming, and reclamation areas will be the key to the whole thing, Qin added.

And, with the cooperation of other government departments and marketing people,

the province thinks it can build a guaranteed system based on low-cost housing.

Rents in Jilin are still lower than in other more developed parts of the country, according to Qin, with a price of 12 yuan per sq-m in the capital and generally no more than 10 yuan per sq-m in other cities.

The government plans to build low-cost apartments for 12,000 people this year, and about 10,000 more every year until 2015.