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Premier reviews action plan to improve air quality

Premier Lai Ching-te on Tuesday hosted the 19th interministerial meeting on accelerating investment in Taiwan, where he reviewed progress on the government's air pollution control action plan following a briefing by the Environmental Protection Administration (EPA).

As air pollution is an issue of critical importance, intimately affecting the lives and health of the public, the government has an unshakable responsibility to pursue solutions to the fullest extent, said the premier. He directed all ministries and agencies to coordinate policy and resources in ongoing efforts to control air pollution and improve air quality in Taiwan.

The EPA launched the action plan on December 21, 2017 with the concrete goals of reducing by half the frequency of air quality health advisories by 2019, and replacing all government vehicles and public buses with electric models by 2030. The plan also calls for all new scooters and motorcycles sold from 2035 to be electric, with the same requirement for automobiles beginning in 2040.

Amendments to the Air Pollution Control Act took effect on August 1 of this year. The revised statute enhances air quality management and maintenance, increases the effectiveness of controls on stationary sources of air pollution, adds measures to control mobile sources of air pollution, raises fines, and allows the claw-back of illegal profits. New whistle-blowing inducements

are also included to more effectively limit air pollution and guarantee public health.

Premier Lai emphasized that even with the passage of amendments to the Air Pollution Control Act, revisions to various secondary legislation must still be made before new measures can be promoted effectively. The premier instructed the EPA to accelerate work on the necessary changes and strengthen management of progress. He also directed EPA officials to enhance communications with businesses and local supervising authorities in order to improve compliance and implementation.