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Premiers advocates single-window service to speed return of overseas businesses

With a number of Taiwanese businesses in China set to return to invest in Taiwan in the face of trade conflict between the U.S. and China, Premier Lai Ching-te on Thursday convened the 25th interministerial meeting on accelerating investment in Taiwan, where he was briefed by the National Development Council on a draft action plan to welcome such businesses home.

Following the briefing, the premier said that the planning must begin with requirements. He advised the establishment of single-window service to speed investment by helping the businesses acquire needed land and hire sufficient manpower.

The single-window service, said Premier Lai, should be administered by InvesTaiwan to provide end-to-end assistance, including simplifying approvals and shortening administrative processes.

With respect to land, the premier instructed the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) and related ministries and agencies to draw up short-, medium- and long-term plans for supplying required plots. In addition to carrying out existing measures to meet the demands of returning businesses, the ministries should also make a detailed survey of land that will be available three years down the road, and even five to 10 years in the future.

As for manpower, Premier Lai directed the Ministry of Labor (MOL) to research opening up the supply of foreign laborers to a reasonable degree, with an eye toward ensuring employment opportunities for domestic workers first. Considerations concerning the labor supply should also take into account the total needs of domestic and returning businesses together. The premier also ordered the MOEA to determine the labor requirements of returning firms in order to aid the MOL and the Ministry of Education in matching supply to demand and providing training to meet future requirements.

Governments throughout the world are eagerly seeking the return of manufacturing firms, as manufacturers can create excellent opportunities and drive the development of all industry, including the service sector, Premier Lai said. Now with Taiwanese businesses in China being compelled to return to Taiwan by the trade conflict between the U.S. and China, all ministries and agencies should switch from a passive to an active approach in providing for their needs. Efforts should also be devoted to enticing outstanding companies home and pushing the upgrade and transformation of industry in Taiwan. As businesses return, they will help spur the development of domestic firms and make complete the supply chain, thereby driving overall economic growth.