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Inflation major concern of lawmakers, advisors

(Xinhua)

Updated: 2008-03-02 18:46

More non-Communist Officials

More eligible non-Communists are expected to become high-ranking officials in China following last year's appointments of two non-Communist ministers, Wu Jianmin said.

"Across China, more than 31,000 non-Communists are working as officials at or above county level, of whom at least 6,000 work at government organizations and judicial bodies at various levels," said Wu.

Twenty non-Communist officials are working at the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and central government departments, Wu said at a press conference on the eve of the annual political advisory session.

Meanwhile, China's 31 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions have in total 30 non-Communist vice governors, and 15 big and medium-sized cities have non-Communist vice mayors, he said.

"Many non-Communist officials have shouldered important jobs and played vital roles," he added.

Wan Gang, of the China Zhi Gong Dang (Party for Public Interest), was appointed Minister of Science and Technology last April as the first non-Communist party cabinet minister since the late 1970s.

In two months, Chen Zhu, a Paris-trained scientist with no political party affiliation, became Minister of Health.

Their appointments represented "major moves" of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in enhancing socialist democracy and pushing forward multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC, said Wu.

"The cooperation between the CPC and non-Communist parties have recorded new progress thanks to the care and attention of the CPC Central Committee and CPC committees at various levels," Wu said.

China's eight non-Communist parties represent specific interest groups, reflect complaints and suggestions from all walks of life and serve as a mode of supervision of the CPC.

Their combined membership is more than 700,000, about one percent of the CPC's 73 million. The CPPCC session is slated to open on Monday afternoon at the Great Hall of the People in central Beijing, and will last 11 days.

Jia Qinglin, chairman of the 10th CPPCC National Committee, will deliver a report on the work of the CPPCC National Committee's Standing Committee over the past year, while Zhang Meiyong, vice chairperson of the 10th CPPCC National Committee, will report to the gathering how the suggestions and proposals from CPPCC members have been handled since the last session.

By Sunday afternoon, 2,075 of the total 2,237 CPPCC members had arrived for the annual session, said Wu.

China's Olympic champion hurdler Liu Xiang, a new member to the political advisory body, will be absent from the session, sources confirmed on Saturday.

Liu will compete in the 60 meters hurdles at the world indoor championships in Valencia, Spain, from March 7 to 9.

Most CPPCC members have voiced interest in issues concerning China's reform and development, macroeconomic regulation, government reshuffles, financial structural reforms, climate change and environment protection, said Wu.

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They have also expressed concern over issues concerning the people's livelihood, such as how to stabilize prices and offer more jobs, housing and better social security schemes," he said.

How to ensure the success of the Beijing Olympic Games is also a topic of common interest among the members, he said.

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