

# Taiwan: COST OF LIVING/With strike looming, HSR president pushes for record year-end bonus

Wednesday 10 January 2024, by [HSIAO-HAN Yu](#), [SHU-FEN Wang](#), [YANG Evelyn](#) (Date first published: 5 January 2024).

**Taipei, Jan. 5 (CNA) The president of Taiwan High Speed Rail Corp. (THSRC) is pushing the company's board to hand out a record year-end bonus after the THSRC union declared it would launch a strike to demand better treatment, he said Thursday.**

In a letter sent to all employees Thursday night, James Jeng (詹宏志) said he was sorry that his comments in a meeting earlier Thursday with the union were misinterpreted and that he was grateful for the contributions and hard work of all employees.

Responding to year-end bonus and pay raise issues brought up at the meeting by the union, Jeng said he was "actively asking the board to hand out the highest ever overall bonus" in company history.

The high-speed rail union announced Thursday after a monthly meeting with the company that it would launch a strike because management failed to meet the union's requests for a better year-end bonus and pay raise.

The THSRC's board of directors resolved on Dec. 13, 2023 to give employees an average raise of 4.9 percent in 2024, with more than half the workforce getting a raise of more than 5 percent.

The board also approved a year-end bonus of 2.3 months of salary plus an additional bonus of NT\$12,000 (US\$386.6).

That package, however, did not prove acceptable to the union, which said the year-end bonus only rose 0.3 months from a year earlier and that the total bonus should reach 25 percent of the company's annual surplus.

The union argued that each employee should get at least four months of salary as a year-end bonus.

In the past three years, THSRC's profits have risen dramatically, going from NT\$3.3 billion in 2021 to NT\$9.85 billion in 2022 and NT\$18.72 billion in 2023, but the union has not felt its bonuses have matched those increases.

At the meeting Thursday, the union said it reiterated that it will not change its stance on the issue, to which management responded that "management levels are more productive than junior staff" and that "we could not find any reason to increase year-end bonuses."

The union argued that increasing the year-end bonus was the fairest way to treat all employees, and it urged the company to come up with a better solution that meets the expectations of the workers while warning that it was ready to go on strike.

In response, Jeng said the company found the outcome of the meeting “deeply regrettable” and hoped to reach a consensus with the union as soon as possible.

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