

# Shenzhen wants to be clean, just like S'pore

**It hired firm from Republic to advise on tackling environment and sanitation issues**

**Hong Kong** – The Chinese city of Shenzhen has chosen Singapore to be its guiding light in environmental improvements, particularly public sanitation, Chinese and Hong Kong newspapers have reported.

A Singapore consultancy company had earlier spent two years working with the southern boom-town's environment and sanitation bureau and compiled a report on the challenges it faced and how they should be tackled, Hong Kong's South China Morning Post revealed in its latest article in a series on the Pearl River Delta.

Shenzhen has also sent officials to Singapore on study trips in its ambitious aim to turn itself into a garden city like the Republic, the paper added.

Last month, the city announced it would continue hiring a Singapore consultancy to help it in its public sanitation quest.

As Shenzhen will be celebrating next year its 30th anniversary as a special economic zone – a designation that helped it become a modern investment hub, it is now keener than ever to move closer to Singapore's environmental standards hoping to achieve a drastic change in image by then, reported the Guangzhou Daily.

The speeding-up in Shenzhen's make-over began this month, said the newspaper based in Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province, whose government supervises that of Shenzhen.

Most of the changes being carried out are refurbishment and



PHOTO: REUTERS

The Stock Exchange in Shenzhen is undertaking Singapore-style upgrading works of its buildings to celebrate its 30th anniversary as a special economic zone next year.

upgrading works, such as re-painting the facades of buildings along the thoroughfares and re-fashioning rooftops of high-rises, like what is often done in Singapore's housing estates, said the newspaper.

Other changes include putting up lamp posts on all the unlit public roads, improvements to public lighting and floral decorations, as well as setting stringent rules for billboard displays.

But where Shenzhen falls far short of the standards in Singapore is public sanitation.

Public toilets in Shenzhen, discounting those in hotels and restaurants, number about 1,500, a far cry from that of Singapore,

which has 10 times as many public toilets with a population half as large, said the Post.

Hence, it is in areas such as trash collection, sewage treatment and public toilets as well as deterrent measures against littering that Shenzhen is most eager to take a leaf out of Singapore's book.

Shenzhen also wants to learn from Singapore's experience in involving the private sector in sanitation and garbage management, and how it put up and runs a mechanised public sanitation system.

Although Guangdong Party Secretary Wang Yang was the one to task Shenzhen with becoming a world-class metropolis, it is the city's acting mayor, Mr Wang

Rong, who decided that it should learn from Singapore, said the Post.

Mr Wang, who took up his current job in June this year, was previously the party boss of Suzhou, where he was very much exposed to Singapore's ways of management in the Suzhou Industrial Park, in which the Republic holds sizeable stakes.

Explaining why Shenzhen did not choose neighbouring Hong Kong as its model, Mr Hu Zhenhua, a spokesman for the city's urban management bureau, said: "Hong Kong is the efficiency expert, but Singapore is a unique garden city, and nobody would be better than Singapore for environmental improvement."