

China to speed up ethnic regions development

Chinese authorities have pledged to accelerate development of ethnic regions during the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020), as the country aims to create a moderately prosperous society by 2020, according to a State Council statement.

The development of ethnic regions is important for ethnic unity, social harmony and stability, as well as the country's lasting peace and stability, according to the statement signed by Premier Li Keqiang.

The document details major targets ranging from continued rapid economic development to improved ecological environment and ethnic unity, to ensure the regions do not fall behind on the country's journey toward becoming a moderately prosperous society by 2020.

The central authorities aim to achieve annual gross regional product growth of over 8 percent in these regions, lifting 18.05 million people in rural areas out of poverty.

Other major tasks were also set, including improving livelihoods and the protection of ethnic minority villages and towns, asking authorities to support development of the regions via preferential policies.

Minorities account for 8.5 percent of China's population.