

State Council safeguards migrant workers' rights

China's State Council on Friday pledged to press ahead with addressing wage arrears for migrant workers to safeguard their legitimate rights and interests.

The pledge was made at a meeting presided over by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.

Attendees of the meeting said that addressing the issue of wage arrears for migrant workers was an important step to increase their income and strengthen social justice, embodying the people-centered development concept.

The State Council will carry out special campaigns and inspection tours to crack down on such offenses, while making some cases public.

Provincial, municipal and county-level officials will be held accountable for wage arrears for migrant workers within their jurisdictions, according to the meeting.

Human resources and social security departments must maintain clear and open channels for people to report crimes, and a blacklist system should be created to punish enterprises which are in arrears with migrant workers' salaries.

Attendees also agreed to handle lawmakers' suggestions and political advisors' proposals to promote scientific decision making. They said handling lawmakers' suggestions and political advisors' proposals are important for addressing people's concerns and advancing administration according to law.

In 2016, departments of the State Council handled 7,873 national lawmakers' suggestions and 3,862 proposals by national political advisors, and more than 3,000 opinions and suggestions were taken into consideration when drafting relevant policies and regulations.

Attendees vowed to further address suggestions and proposals this year, strengthening communication with lawmakers and political advisors, and making public all responses to suggestions and proposals.

The 13th Five-Year Plans on food and drug safety were both approved at the meeting. According to the plans, local governments, particularly county-level governments, must be responsible for ensuring food safety. Firm crackdowns will be launched against illegal additives to prevent risks.

The authenticity of clinical test data on drugs will be put under closer watch, and production and sales of counterfeit drugs will be severely punished.

Sample tests and early warning will be boosted, and such tests must cover food, blood products, vaccines and essential medicines.

Moreover, technology such as big data must be harnessed to ensure food and drug safety, and national standards for medicines, medical equipments as well as cosmetics must be heightened.

China issues yellow alert for fog

China's national observatory on Friday issued a yellow alert for fog in the country's northern and central regions.

From Friday to Saturday, there will be thick fog in parts of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region as well as provinces of Henan, Hubei, Sichuan and Hunan. In parts of Hebei, Hunan and Hubei, the fog will reduce visibility to less than 500 meters, the National Meteorological Center said.

In extreme cases visibility may fall below 200 meters in those regions, it added.

The center said drivers in affected regions should slow down to safe speeds.

China has a four-tier color-coded warning system for severe weather, with red being the most serious, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

China develops homegrown explosive atmosphere test chambers

China has developed its own explosive atmosphere test chambers, ending its reliance on foreign technology and products, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation announced on Friday.

The equipment tests products operating in various explosive environments, such as rockets, planes, vehicles, mines and gas pipelines in kitchens.

A set of standards for such tests would be unveiled later, said Deng Rongwu, a scientist working on the project.

[First H7N9 case reported in SW China province](#)

Southwest China's Sichuan Province on Friday reported two human H7N9 avian flu cases.

It is the first time that such cases have been reported in the province.

The two patients are currently stable but still in critical condition.

Local authorities have taken disease control measures.

At least ten people have died from the virus since the start of the year, according to disease control centers in Henan, Guangdong and Hunan provinces.

H7N9 is a bird flu strain first reported to have infected humans in March 2013 in China. It is most likely to strike in winter and spring.

[2 rescued, 7 dead in China home collapse](#)



Rescuers pull out a survivor at the accident site in Wencheng County, Wenzhou of east China's Zhejiang Province, Feb. 3, 2017. Two survivors were rescued and seven found dead after a residential building collapsed in Wenzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province, local authorities said Friday. (Xinhua)

Two survivors were rescued and seven found dead after a residential building collapsed in Wenzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province, local authorities said Friday.

Part of a five-story residential building in Dahui village of Wencheng County collapsed at about 8 a.m. Thursday, burying nine people from two families.

A 63-year-old woman was pulled out from the debris at about 10:40 p.m. Thursday and another female survivor was rescued at about 7 a.m. Friday. Both have been rushed to hospital for medical treatment. The ninth victim buried was found dead at around 10:00 a.m. Friday.

With the help of eight cranes and excavators, more than 400 paramilitary officers, fire fighters, township officials and medical workers have carried out rescue operation.

"The scene is quite chaotic, as if the place was leveled by an earthquake," a rescuer told Xinhua. "We have to work very carefully because the wreckage of the ruined building are joined to homes still standing."

One of the adjacent homes, he said, was already damaged with a big hole in its outer wall.

A total of 58 people living nearby were evacuated to safe places.

Local authorities have launched an investigation into the cause of the building collapse.