

Brief Introduction of Jinping Miao, Yao and Dai Autonomous County

1. Geography and Natural Conditions

Jinping County is located in the southern part of Honghe Prefecture, Yunnan Province. The county town is 460 km south of Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province, and 160 km south of Gejiu, the capital of Honghe Prefecture. It is a border county and neighbors the following counties of Vietnam: Basa County of Laojie Province and the Fengtu, Qinghe, Mengde Counties of Laizhou Province. The borderline is 502 km long. The total area is 3,677 square kilometers, where the transverse distance is 115 km and the longitudinal distance is 70 km. The mountainous area accounts for 99.72%. The county encompasses 12 townships and two towns, totaling 92 administrative villages.

The highest altitude is with Xi Long Mountain at 3,074m above sea level; the lowest location is the Long Buo River with 105m. The difference in altitude is 2,969m. The county town is located at 1,260m. The annual average rainfall is 2,251mm. The rainy season extends from May to October, the dry season from November to April. The highest average temperature reaches 33.1°C, the lowest -0.9°C. The geographical zones range, according to the altitude, from tropical to temperate with the related ecosystems, cropping, housing and health care pattern for the different ethnic groups. The county harbors a national level subtropical natural protection area of 4,200 ha.

2. Population, Ethnicity and Settlements

In 2004, the total population reached 319,692, among whom the ethnic minorities account for 273,286, or 85.5%. The native residents are of the eight ethnic groups - Dai, Zhuang, Hani, Yi, Han, Yao, Miao and Lahu, as well as the Mang People, who have not been determined yet to belong to which ethnic group. The communities of the Dai and Zhuang have settled in regions below 800m, followed by Yi, Hani and Han up to 1000m in the mid-mountains, followed by the Yao at 1000 – 1800m and the Mang at 1200m – 1500m. The Miao have settled at an altitude between 1000 – 2000m in a region with water scarcity; the Lahu at an altitude of 2000m.

3. Farming and Division of Labor

The total cultivated area is 410,000 mu (27.33 ha), with 1,4 mu (0.09 ha) per capita cultivated area. Paddy fields amount to 40.22% of the total cultivated area. Other main crops are: corn and other cereals, legumes, potatoes, cotton, sugarcane, tobacco, vegetables, melons, bananas and latex. Below 800m, there are two cropping seasons.

Workload and division of labor cannot be assessed precisely at present, because of the significant differences among the ethnic groups. In general, Hani, who built and maintain the impressive terrace fields in the mountains, work hardest, Dai in the lowlands have the lightest workload. Concerning gender differentiation, women in general have the heavier workload.

4. Income and Employment

In 2004, the farmer's per capita net income per year was 750 RMB (US\$ 91), and the per capita grain keeping was 314 kg. In light of the 2000 Poverty Alleviation Standard's "warm-and-full line", the farmer's per capita net income is 625 RMB and the per capita grain keeping is 300 kg. Taking this into account, 65,115 people haven't even solved their 'warm-and-full' problems yet.

The unemployment rate for the over 15-years-old people is 0.65% or 2,039 people, among which the rate for males is 41.2% or 841 people, and for women 58.8% or 1,198 people. Migrants account for 2.13% or 6,630 people. Jinping is one of the counties that receive top priority from the central government in poverty alleviation.

5. Health and Diseases

The health situation is as follows. Main diseases for farmers are diarrhea, malaria, acariasis, and tuberculosis. In 2002 the incidence of gynecologic diseases is 33.3%, among which cervicitis, cervical erosion, colpitis, mycotic infections are the most prominent.

6. Education, Literacy and Law Consciousness

The education level is as follows. In brackets is the percentage of female students. Junior college or higher: 1,962 students (33%), i.e. 0.63% of the total population; high school: 7,351 students (38%), i.e. 2.35% of the total population; junior high school: 26,458 students (32%), i.e. 8.48% of the total population; elementary school: 111,374 students (35%), i.e. 35.7% of the total population. The illiterate population over 15 year old amounts to 101,557, i.e. 32.58% of the total population. The prime age people, i.e.

people from 15 to 54 years old, amount to 190,371, of whom 14.6% are illiterate. In this age group (born after the founding of the People's Republic of China and before the end of 1987), the illiterate women of the ethnic minorities reach the number of 18,890. In this age group, the illiterate women of the ethnic minorities reach the number of 18,890. This is 9.9% and account for as high as 68% of the illiterate of this age group.

Because of the prevailing traditional concept of life and relationships in the rural areas, law consciousness in a modern sense is undeveloped, especially concerning the legal rights of women. Marriage is carried out in a traditional way of the respective ethnic groups, very often without official registration, so that the legitimate rights and benefits of women cannot be safeguarded after the marriage break up. Because of the lack of knowledge on how to settle problems based on legal rights and duties, problems occur when disputes arise for land, source of water and family properties. Because of the fact that gender issues are very sensitive and the traditional roles of women and men are interrelated, proposing changes from outside must be based on a very careful assessment of the existing situation.

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