

Respecting and Protecting the Rights of All Ethnic Groups in Xinjiang (July 2021)

Original document link: [Click Here \(http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-07/14/c_1310059892.htm\)](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-07/14/c_1310059892.htm)

Overview

This Chinese government “white paper” offers the official view of the state’s efforts to protect the rights of ethnic groups in Xinjiang. It offers a picture of the historical relationship between the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the peoples of Xinjiang and presents the various social and political rights promised by the PRC to all citizens of China, including those in Xinjiang. The goals of each right are laid out, as well as the PRC’s commitment to elevating poverty, promoting well-being and protecting human rights in the region.

This paper offers a government view of how “Civil Rights” are applied in Xinjiang, particularly on how government efforts to curb terrorism, religious extremism, and “East Turkistan” separatism guarantee its commitment to the right to life of all Chinese citizens. Two local regulations for implementing this goal include “Measures on Implementing the Counter-Terrorism Law” and “Regulations on Deradicalization.” The white paper posits that in Islam, women are often forced into wearing burqas, and men must grow long beards which are characterized as violating personal liberty. This language mirrors that found in other Chinese articles, such as the “[Learning and Identifying 75 Religious Extreme Activities in Parts of Xinjiang](https://xinjiangdocumentation.sites.olt.ubc.ca/?p=24288)” in which beards are listed as evidence of religious extremism. Also, the right to a fair trial is also discussed as the paper mentions government-led efforts to elevate public access to litigation in Xinjiang, setting up more circuit courts, service stations, and circuit trial centres.

In a similar fashion, the paper discusses “Political Rights” as well, including regional autonomy and democratic institutions, such as universal suffrage and the right to political participation. This section makes mention of the many elections and resolutions made by the People’s Congress of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and its Standing Committee; and the various community-level self-governance institutions through which the people of Xinjiang have control over on issues including politics, the economy, culture, education, science and technology, and public wellbeing.

The section on “Economic rights” is devoted to illustrating the economic and development progress the PRC has coordinated in Xinjiang, including welfare and poverty eradication schemes. For example, *“Rural residents in poor areas have seen rapid growth in both incomes and consumption spending. Their per capita disposable income was RMB13,052 in 2020, an average annual increase of 10.8 percent since 2012; their per capita consumption spending was RMB9,007 in 2020, an average annual increase of 9 percent since 2013.”* There is also a discussion on the PRC’s “pro-employment” strategy, including business initiatives and entrepreneurship and vocational training to increase peoples’ employability.

Under “Cultural Rights” the PRC’s commitment to preserving UNESCO World Heritage sites in Xinjiang is discussed, including folk cultural events, traditions, and the six spoken and written languages of Xinjiang – standard Chinese, Uyghur, Kazak, Kirgiz, Mongolian, and Xibe. Education is

another right emphasized in this section, illustrating the expansion and access to schooling and investments towards post-secondary education. *“Funding for education has steadily increased. In 2020, public education expenditure reached RMB102 billion, including RMB9.1 billion of direct subsidies for 6.7 million students. By 2020, 160,200 students from Xinjiang, including 138,500 ethnic minority students, had received senior high school or secondary vocational education at classes designed for them in more developed areas of the country.”*

Social rights and rights of women and children are discussed towards the end of the paper, where the PRC’s efforts to erect a robust social security and pension scheme in Xinjiang and as well as public health services and infrastructure in the region are presented. This is said to include protecting the reproductive rights of ethnic minorities, including family planning and early-child care. Female employment, leadership, and participation in the public sphere are encouraged, and the government notes several statistics demonstrating an increase in women taking part in public affairs. *“The region attaches importance to the training and selection of female officials, and the number of women participating in the administration of public affairs has continued to grow, from 16,338 in early 1955 to 460,600 in 2019.”* Lastly, the paper emphasizes the guarantee of religious freedom by law, including religious practices and seeking of religious knowledge; and the protection and funding of religious facilities and events through religious institutions, such as China Islamic Institute, Xinjiang Islamic Institute, and Xinjiang Islamic School.

The paper concludes by reiterating the Chinese government’s commitment to human rights and dismissing accusations made against the PRC that are contrary to the information presented in this paper. *“Currently, rumors, distortions, and complete fabrications are being spread by some foreign media and politicians. This is a calculated campaign to undermine the Chinese government’s enormous efforts to protect ethnic equality and misrepresent the historic progress that has been made on human rights in the region. Their goals are to discredit China, interfere in China’s internal affairs, restrict China’s development, and destroy stability and prosperity in Xinjiang. This has aroused indignation among the people in Xinjiang and the rest of China and is condemned by those in the international community who seek to uphold justice.”*

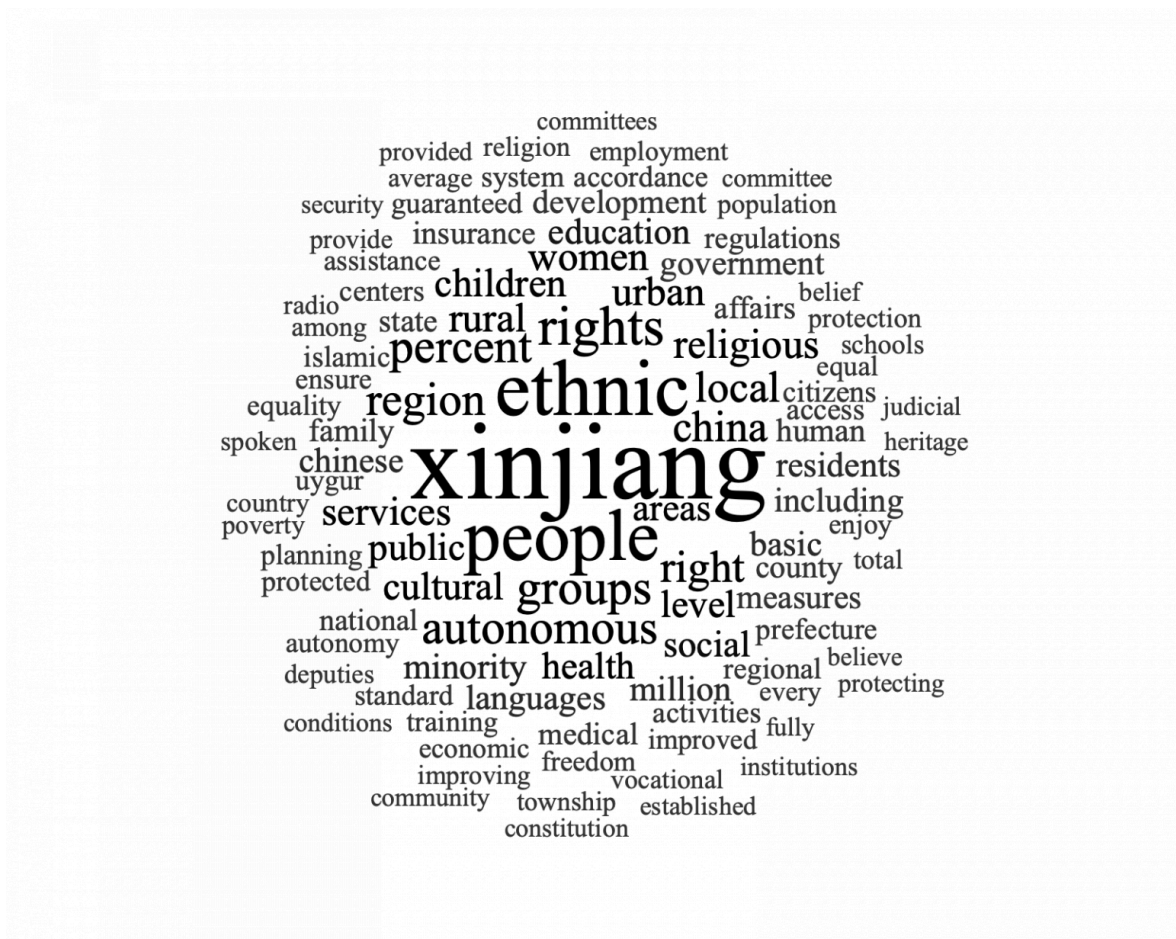
The enjoyment of many of these rights and protections in Xinjiang today are contested among Xinjiang scholars, activists, and researchers. While this paper presents the PRC’s commitment to “Cultural Rights”, first-hand accounts of those living in the region suggest ancient Uyghur settlements and landmarks are almost completely destroyed (<https://xinjiangdocumentation.sites.olt.ubc.ca/?p=24755>) and evidence of ecological tourism as a guise for settler colonialism (<https://lausan.hk/2021/camp-land/>). Claims of protecting reproductive rights of ethnic minorities through family planning and early-care child, are disputed with claims of medical abuse (<https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1834&context=gsp>) and textbooks geared to young children promoting ‘ethnic unity’ (<https://xinjiangdocumentation.sites.olt.ubc.ca/?p=25854>) as a coercive discourse. Praise for the economic growth in the region is matched by criticism of forced labour within supply chains (<https://www.shu.ac.uk/helena-kennedy-centre-international-justice/research-and-projects/all-projects/financing-and-genocide>). This paper presents a clear narrative that Xinjiang is a place where the rights of ethnic minority groups are supported and protected equally, however, these claims have been met with considerable criticism.

13 most common words:

Word	Count
Xinjiang	126


ethnic	84
people	75
rights	50
groups	41
autonomous	39
percent	39
region	37
right	34
china	33
local	33
religious	30
rural	29

Word cloud: (Minimum 5 letters)



1855, C.K. Choi Building, West Mall
West Mall
Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z1

Find us on

 (<https://twitter.com/ProjectXinjiang>)
[\(javascript:;\)_](#) [\(javascript:;\)_](#) [\(javascript:;\)_](#)