China to punish officials for statistics fraud

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BEIJING, Dec. 8 (Xinhuanet) -- China is to hold officials guilty of statistical fraud accountable under law, said a deputy head of China's top legislature.

He Luli, vice-chairwomen of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress here Monday that government officials at all levels should be fully aware of the seriousness of statistical fraud and act in a responsible way in statistics activities.

She said no officials are allowed to ask statistical agents to fake or change statistics, and those involved in statistical fraud would be held responsible according to the law.

She made the remarks at a seminar marking the 20th anniversary of the release of the Statistics Law. Since it promulgated the law on Dec. 8, 1983, China has waged five nationwide inspections of the enforcement of the law. Over the past few years, China has dealt with over 10,000 cases of statistical frauds every year. In 2002, authorities investigated 18,300 cases of violations of the law. Some 15,600 of the cases have been wrapped up.

Head of China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) Li Deshui said some local officials had realized that fiddling with statistics was against the law.

He Luli said the legislature would not hesitate to investigate and expose officials who gain through twisting statistics to exaggerate their achievements.

She said China would continue to step up legislation on statistics. Enditem

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