

LANGUAGE

A. National.

1. *Notice of the State Council on the Division of Labor for the Approval and Experimental Implementation of the Proposal to Establish and Reform the Written Language of All Minorities* (March 10, 1956).

(a) This Notice describes the approval procedures for proposals to establish and reform the written languages of minorities and the division of labor when such proposals are being implemented on an experimental basis.

(b) The Minority Languages Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences is responsible for making a preliminary plan, which will be examined by the people's committees of the provinces and autonomous regions. The views of the minority in question will be solicited and after full consultation and agreement, the proposal will be submitted to the Ethnic Affairs Commission for confirmation. After trial implementation for a certain period, any required amendments will be made, the proposal resubmitted to the Ethnic Affairs Commission for review and thereafter submitted to the State Council for approval.

(c) The Second Office of the State Council is responsible for the trial implementation work. The Ministry of Education will be in charge of selecting the schools that will use experimental text books. The Ministry of Culture will be in charge of trial implementation in social and cultural enterprises and publishing. In addition, the relevant departments of local governments will also divide their responsibilities in accordance with this Notice.

2. *Report of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission and the State Publishing Bureau on Strengthening the Publication of Books in Minority Languages* (transmitted on March 14, 1981 by the State Council).

(a) The Report is a summary of the outcome of a meeting convened in Beijing in November 1980 to discuss minority publications in the country. The Report noted that minority publishing work is an important integral part of the entire work of ethnic groups. In the new historical period of the Four Modernizations, strengthening the work of minority publishing has a major significance in fully implementing the Party's ethnic group policies, supporting the Four Principles, promoting the exchange of thoughts and culture between all ethnic groups, strengthening the unity of ethnic groups and safeguarding the unity of the Motherland, as well as improving the political thinking and level of scientific and cultural knowledge of all ethnic groups, and promoting the Four Modernizations. At the same time as improving the material civilization of all ethnic groups, it improves spiritual civilization and gradually eliminates inequalities that exist among different ethnic groups.

(b) Regardless of the size of the population of the ethnic group, so long as such ethnic group has its own common written language and requests that books be published in such language, the publishing departments shall actively support such requests in accordance with the decision of the people's government of the autonomous region or province. Publishing books in minority languages shall be the top priority for publishers in minority autonomous areas. Minority peoples are encouraged and advocated to create books in their own languages. The percentage of books in minority languages shall be gradually increased.

(c) The cultural relics of ethnic groups are to be excavated and saved. Excellent minority traditions shall be continued and advocated.

(d) The Report also states that the establishment and reorganization of ethnic group publishing agencies should be done to benefit the development of minority publications work. The number of editors is to be gradually increased, as well as translators. Flexible measures are to be adopted to speedily develop publishing, printing and distribution of ethnic group publications. The budget for ethnic group publications is to be gradually increased each year. Losses are to be resolved by the local finance departments in accordance with the financial system.

3. ***Report of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission on Further Doing a Good Job in Respect of Minority Languages*** (issued on April 30, 1991 by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission and transmitted on June 19, 1991 by the State Council).

(a) The Report notes that China is a unified socialist country with many ethnic groups, with many ethnic spoken and written languages. Of China's 55 minorities, 53 have their own languages (the Hui and Man peoples use Chinese as their language). At present, most peoples of minority groups use their own language as their major tool of communication. Each ethnic group has the freedom to use and develop its own language. Autonomous agencies of minority autonomous areas are to use the one or several commonly used languages when performing their duties. If several commonly used languages are used, then the autonomy agencies may use the language of the minority that has autonomy in that area as its main language. The people's governments are to help minorities develop cultural and educational enterprises that use minority languages, advocate the mutual study of languages by minority cadres and the masses — with Han cadres studying the local minority language and minority cadres studying Chinese.

(b) The Report stipulates that the guiding thought and direction of minority language work is to support the Marxist principle of the equality of all languages, guarantee the freedom of minorities to use and develop their own languages, and to go forward based on the premise that it is beneficial to the unity, progress and collective prosperity of ethnic groups.

(c) The main task of minority language work is to implement the language policy of the Party and the State, strengthen the minority language legal system, advocate Marxist theory and policies on minority languages, regularize and

standardize minority languages and information processing, and advance undertakings involving minority language translation, publication, education, news, broadcasting, films and television and the organization of ancient texts; promote the academic study of minority languages and exchanges and the training of talent and encourage ethnic groups to learn each other's languages.

(d) With respect to minority languages that are commonly used, they should continue being studied, used and developed. With respect to minority languages created or modified in the 1950s, if the results of using such languages have been good and these languages have been welcomed by most of the masses, then they shall be promoted. But if the results of usage have not been ideal, then the languages shall be further improved, and if the results have not been good and the language has not been welcomed by the masses, then the wishes of the masses are to be respected and the language will not be forced on them.

(e) With respect to ethnic groups that do not have their own written language or standard written language, they are encouraged to choose an existing written language as their written language. With respect to those ethnic groups that have chosen Chinese or another minority written language as their written language, the wishes of the ethnic group will be respected and their choice shall be affirmed.

(f) All ethnic groups are encouraged to learn each other's languages. Han cadres working in minority areas shall actively learn the local minority languages. Minority cadres shall also learn Chinese while using their own languages. Cadres who are familiar with and can use more than one language shall be encouraged and rewarded.

(g) In accordance with the spirit of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Autonomy of Ethnic Areas, schools where minority students are recruited as the main student body and which have the conditions shall use textbooks in minority languages and the language of instruction shall be the minority language. At appropriate grades, Chinese shall be taught. Schools shall use two languages of instruction and shall promote Putonghua.

4. *Notice of the State Education Commission on Pursuing Testing of Chinese in Minority Schools* (July 18, 1997).

Because of the flaws in the current teaching of Chinese as a second language in minority schools, this Notice requires the implementation of Chinese language level testing in several provinces and prefectures (including Tibet). The State standard testing, known as "HSK" (an acronym for the hanyu pinyin of Chinese language level testing), is for persons whose mother tongue is not Chinese (including foreigners, overseas Chinese and Chinese minorities). The Notice describes the different levels of Chinese proficiency, grading, testing fees, testing times and so forth.

5. ***Notice of the News and Publications Bureau on Issues Relating to the Publication of Minority Language Periodicals*** (effective November 18, 1998).

This Notice has been issued in response to a request by the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region News and Publications Bureau as to whether they may use a unified state code for publications that are in multiple minority languages. The Notice allows a unified state code to be used for certain periodicals and stipulates the form of the code. The Notice applies to any periodicals that are published in a minority language.

6. ***Law of the People's Republic of China on the Commonly Used Oral and Written Language of the State*** (effective January 1, 2001; adopted on October 31, 2000 by the 18th Session of the Standing Committee of the Ninth National People's Congress, and published on October 31, 2000 by Decree No. 37 of the People's Republic of China).

(a) This Law has been formulated to promote the standardization of the commonly used oral and written language of the State, *i.e.*, Putonghua, and its healthy development so that the language may be better used in social life, and to promote economic and cultural exchange among all ethnic groups and areas. The Law states that the use of the commonly-used language will be beneficial to safeguarding the sovereignty of the State and the dignity of ethnic groups, the unity of the State and the unity of ethnic groups and the construction of a socialist material and spiritual civilization.

(b) Each ethnic group has the freedom to use and develop its own oral and written language. The use of the language of minorities shall be in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Constitution, the autonomy laws of ethnic areas and other laws.

B. Tibet Autonomous Region.

1. ***Provisions of the TAR on the Study, Use and Development of the Tibetan Language*** (adopted on July 9, 1987 by the Fifth Session of the Fourth TAR People's Congress, and amended on May 22, 2002 by the Fifth Session of the Seventh TAR People's Congress).

(a) The TAR supports the principle that the languages of all ethnic groups are equal. The people's governments at all levels shall emphasize and strengthen the study, use and development of the Tibetan language.

(b) Tibetan and the language commonly used in the State shall have equal validity when state agencies at all levels perform their duties.

(c) All important meetings and assemblies of state agencies at all levels shall concurrently use Tibetan and the language commonly used in the State, or only one of such languages. Documents for normal circulation by the state agencies at all levels shall be written in both Tibetan and the written language commonly used in the State.

(d) To guarantee that all ethnic groups shall have the right to use their own languages in conducting litigation, the judicial agencies at all levels shall, in judicial activities, according to need, use the locally commonly used language or languages.

(e) During the period of compulsory education, Tibetan and the language commonly used in the State shall be used as the basic languages of instruction. Tibetan languages classes and classes in the commonly used language in the State shall be offered, together with foreign language classes at the appropriate time.

(f) The TAR shall adopt measures to eradicate the Tibetan language illiteracy of Tibetan youth.

(g) The TAR encourages and advocates the mutual study of the languages of different ethnic groups. Tibetan cadres shall learn and use the language commonly used in the State and Chinese and other minority cadres shall learn and use Tibetan.

(h) The TAR actively develops Tibetan language education, news, publications, broadcasting, films, television and other undertakings, and pays attention to the publication of children's, popular and scientific reading materials.

(i) People who can use both the Tibetan language and use the language commonly used in the State shall, where all conditions are equal, have priority during the hiring process for public functionaries by the state agencies at all levels and for technical personnel by enterprise units.

(j) All official seals, forms of identification and signs of state agencies at all levels, people's groups and enterprise units, as well as agencies from outside the TAR that have set up offices in the TAR shall use both Tibetan and the language commonly used in the State. Tibetan and the language commonly used in the State shall both be used for public utilities, signs and advertisements, and shall be written in regular form, neat and with accurate translations.

(k) The packaging and product information of goods that are manufactured in the TAR for sale in the TAR shall be written in Tibetan and the language commonly used in the State. The name, business purposes, prices and invoices of all types of service industries in the TAR shall be in both Tibetan and the language commonly used in the State.

(l) The TAR shall adopt measures to train translators, and emphasize and strengthen the translation work of the Tibetan language and the language commonly used in the State.

C. Gansu Province.

1. *Working Regulations of the Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Gansu Province on the Tibetan Language* (approved on June 1, 1996 by the 21st Session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth People's Congress of Gansu Province).

(a) The prefecture government shall support the principle of the equality of the languages of all ethnic groups and guarantee the freedom of all ethnic groups to use and develop their own languages. The Tibetan language is the main language that shall be used to exercise the right of autonomy within the prefecture. The autonomy agencies of the prefecture shall guarantee the freedom of Tibetan citizens to use and develop their own language and to give full play to the use of the Tibetan language in the development of politics, the economy and culture in the prefecture.

(b) When developing the work of the Tibetan language, the state agencies at all levels shall promote the equality, unity, mutual assistance and collective prosperity of all ethnic groups, as well as service to the economic development and progress of society in the prefecture.

(c) When hiring or promoting cadres, the prefecture shall treat on an equal basis those persons who have the same educational backgrounds and levels of Tibetan and Chinese languages, and shall oppose any discrimination against any language. The prefecture advocates that all workers within the prefecture units and enterprises shall study and use Tibetan and encourages Tibetan workers to learn and use Chinese and Putonghua while studying and using Tibetan.

(d) The study and use of the Tibetan language shall be one criterion for the evaluation of cadres.

(e) Elementary and middle schools, most of whose students are Tibetan, shall use both Tibetan and Chinese as their languages of instruction.

(f) All important notices and propaganda materials that are issued to villages shall, in accordance with actual needs, be in Tibetan or in both Tibetan and Chinese. All documents submitted by the counties or villages to higher level authorities may be in either or both languages. The signage for all important meetings or assemblies of the prefecture state agencies shall be in both Tibetan and Chinese. Such meetings and the meeting materials shall be in both Tibetan and Chinese. Work meetings of departments of the autonomy agencies and enterprise units shall, in accordance with actual needs, be conducted in both Tibetan and Chinese.

(g) The autonomy agencies shall guarantee the right of Tibetan citizens to use Tibetan to carry out litigation. The judicial agencies may not reject any proceeding initiated, reviewed or appealed by any litigant in oral or in written form. The people's courts, people's procuracies and public security agencies at all levels shall use Tibetan when dealing with Tibetan litigants or offer them interpreters. Legal documents shall be in Tibetan and Chinese.

(h) All official seals, letterhead, other signs, certificates of merit, certificates, notices, and signs in cars of state agencies, enterprises, units and provincial level agencies in the prefecture, as well as the names of towns and streets and border signs shall be in both Tibetan and Chinese. The name and trademarks of products manufactured within the prefecture and all shops, price lists and product information shall be in both languages. The service industries within the prefecture such as the postal service, banks, cereal/grain stores, bus/railroad stations, restaurants, hotels, shops, bookstores and hospitals, shall use Tibetan to serve Tibetan customers or patients or provide them with translation services.

(i) Cadres, specialists and workers may use Tibetan to take any employment tests. When recruiting preliminary or middle level specialists, following uniform testing or review by the labor departments of the prefecture, those persons whose level of Tibetan has reached the required levels may apply to be exempted from foreign language testing. Scientists and artists are encouraged to use the Tibetan language for research, creation and invention.

2. ***Working Regulations of the Tianshu Tibetan Autonomous County of Gansu Province on the Tibetan Language*** (adopted on January 18, 1999 by the Second Session of the 14th People's Congress of the Tianshu Tibetan Autonomous County, and approved on March 26, 1999 by the Ninth Session of the Standing Committee of the Ninth People's Congress of Gansu province).

(a) These Regulations are substantially similar to the Regulation described for the Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in item 1 above. Certain variances are noted below.

(b) When state agencies and enterprise units of the county hire functionaries and technical people, citizens who are proficient in both Tibetan and Chinese will have priority if all other conditions are equal.

(c) The county shall use its best efforts to create Tibetan language broadcasting and television programs. Bookstores and post offices in the county shall do a good job of the distribution and delivery of Tibetan language books and magazines so as to satisfy the needs of Tibetan language readers.

(d) The people's courts and people's procuracies shall be staffed with judges and investigators who are proficient in both Tibetan and Chinese.

D. Qinghai Province.

1. ***Working Regulations of the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the Tibetan Language*** (effective on June 28, 1990, adopted on May 20, 1989 by the Fifth Session of the Eighth People's Congress of the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and approved on June 28, 1990 by the 15th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Seventh People's Congress of Qinghai Province).

(a) When engaging in political and social activities, the autonomy agencies of the prefecture shall seriously implement the relevant laws and minority policies of the Party and the State and support the principle of the equality of the languages of all ethnic groups. The freedom of all ethnic groups to use and develop their own languages shall be fully guaranteed, causing ethnic languages to serve in the strengthening and development of the equality, unity and mutual assistance of socialist ethnic relationships, and in the promotion of the development of a socialist material and spiritual civilization.

(b) Tibetan shall be the main language in the exercise of the right of autonomy by the ethnic groups in respect of which autonomy is implemented in the prefecture, and shall also be the one of the main commonly used languages in the prefecture. The autonomy agencies shall guarantee the freedom of Tibetan citizens to use and develop their own language.

(c) Autonomy agencies shall use both the Tibetan and Chinese languages when performing their duties.

(d) Autonomy agencies shall educate and encourage cadres and workers of all ethnic groups to study each other's language. Tibetan cadres and workers shall learn Putonghua and the Chinese written language. Chinese cadres and workers are encouraged to learn Tibetan.

(e) The prefecture and county people's governments shall establish Tibetan language working committees, which shall supervise the work on the Tibetan language.

(f) The autonomy agencies shall strengthen the study and use of Tibetan in the fields of politics, the economy, culture, education, science, health, physical education, and so forth.

(g) All important documents and notices issued by state agencies in the locality shall be in both Tibetan and Chinese. All study and promotional materials may be in both Tibetan and Chinese or either such languages.

(h) All official seals, signs, awards, certificates, letterheads, envelopes, labels, public notices and advertisements of units of state agencies in the locality shall be in both Tibetan and Chinese. In addition, the names of public utilities in public places, boundary signs, street signs, traffic signs and car door signs shall be in both languages. All the trademarks of, and product information relating to, products

manufactured within the prefecture, as well as the business scope, product names, price lists, invoices and other documents of service industries shall be in both languages.

(i) Large scale meetings of the autonomy agencies shall be conducted in both Tibetan and Chinese. State agencies and enterprise units in the prefecture shall, in accordance with actual needs, use either language when conducting work meetings.

(j) Tibetan citizens in the prefecture may use Tibetan to complete all types of applications, application forms or registration forms and to write other types of documents.

(k) When recruiting students, workers or cadres, the state agencies and enterprise units in the prefecture shall use both languages. Applicants who are to be tested shall have the right to select the language in which he/she will be tested. An applicant may use his or her own language when undergoing technical testing or evaluation for a job. People who are familiar with and can use both Chinese and Tibetan shall be encouraged and shall enjoy preferential treatment.

(l) The people's courts and people's procuracies shall use either or both Tibetan and Chinese in their adjudication and investigation activities. Interpreters shall be made available to litigants who are not familiar with Tibetan or Chinese. The right of each ethnic group to use its own language to conduct litigation shall be guaranteed. The notices and public announcements of the people's courts at all levels shall be in both languages. Legal documents formulated by the people's courts and people's procuracies at all levels shall, in accordance with actual needs, be in either or both languages.

(m) When receiving letters and visits from citizens of different ethnic groups, state agencies and enterprise units shall use the language that has been used by the petitioner.

(n) Tibetan elementary and middle schools shall use Tibetan as their main language, and will also offer Chinese classes. Elementary and middle schools with a significant number of Tibetan students shall, in accordance with actual circumstances, offer Tibetan classes. Party schools, cadre schools, teachers training schools, public health schools and professional schools and classes shall, in accordance with actual needs, offer Tibetan classes.

(o) The autonomy agencies shall handle Tibetan language broadcasting and television, and gradually increase the amount of self-produced Tibetan content. Autonomy agencies shall strengthen the work of translating into Tibetan and dubbing of films and television programs. In addition, the autonomy agencies shall do a good job of the distribution of Tibetan books, periodicals and other written materials and gradually increase and expand the variety and scope of Tibetan books and strive to increase the quality of distribution.

(p) The autonomy agencies shall strengthen Tibetan language translation work. The scientific research of the Tibetan language shall stress the basic research of the Tibetan written language, the collection and tidying up of outstanding cultural relics, applied research and standardization research of modern Tibetan nouns, technical terms and scientific language.

2. ***Working Regulations of the Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the Mongolian and Tibetan Languages*** (effective March 4, 1991, adopted on May 12, 1990 by the Sixth Session of the Eighth People's Congress of the Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and approved on March 4, 1991 by the 19th Session of the Standing Committee of the Seventh People's Congress of Qinghai Province).

(a) These Regulations are substantially similar to those summarized in item 1 above for the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. In the Haixi Autonomous Prefecture, Mongolian, Tibetan and Chinese are commonly used. This summary highlights certain variances.

(b) Important documents issued by the autonomy agencies shall, subject to the recipients thereof, be in Mongolian, Tibetan and/or Chinese. Depending on the different areas, official seals, door signs, certificates, labels, meeting signs, trademarks, billboards, as well as railway stations, airports and street signs for major roads may be in any of the three languages.

(c) Chinese cadres of party and government agencies at the county level and above shall, within two or three years of their appointment, be basically proficient in Mongolian or Tibetan. State agencies and service industries that have relatively significant interaction with minorities must have a certain member of work personnel who are proficient in two or all three languages.

3. ***Working Regulations of the Guoluo Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the Tibetan Language*** (effective July 17, 1993, adopted on April 24, 1993 by the Fourth Session of the Ninth People's Congress of Guoluo Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and approved on July 17, 1993 by the Fourth Session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth People's Congress of Qinghai Province).

(a) These Regulations are substantially similar to those summarized in item 1 above for the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. This summary highlights certain variances.

(b) Election documents, voter lists, voter certificates, candidate lists, candidate certificates and the seals of election committees that are formulated or announced by the autonomy agencies shall be in both Tibetan and Chinese.

(c) The post office departments shall strengthen the ordering and delivery system for Tibetan periodicals, letters, telegrams and postal items. The Xinhua bookstores at all levels shall strengthen the ordering and distribution work for

Tibetan teaching materials and books. Libraries and ethnic group schools shall fully increase the variety and scope of their holdings of Tibetan books and information.

4. ***Working Regulations of the Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the Tibetan Language*** (effective January 1, 1994, adopted on May 30, 1993 by the Third Session of the 10th People's Congress of the Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and approved on September 18, 1993 by the Fifth Session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth People's Congress of Qinghai Province).

(a) These Regulations are substantially similar to those described in item 1 above for the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. This summary highlights certain variances.

(b) Departments and service industries in the prefecture that have relatively significant interaction with Tibetan citizens shall have work personnel who are familiar with Tibetan and Chinese.

5. ***Working Regulations of the Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the Tibetan Language*** (effective October 1, 1995, adopted on March 21, 1994 by the Fifth Session of the Ninth People's Congress of the Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai Province, and approved on March 30, 1995 by the 17th Session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth People's Congress of Qinghai Province).

These Regulations are substantially similar to those described in item 1 above for the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

6. ***Working Regulations of the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the Tibetan Language*** (effective July 1, 1995, adopted on May 13, 1994 by the Fifth Session of the Eighth People's Congress of the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai Province, and approved on May 31, 1995 by the 18th Session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth People's Congress of Qinghai Province).

(a) These Regulations are substantially similar to those described in item 1 above for the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. This summary highlights certain variances.

(b) The autonomy agencies shall pay attention to the Tibetan language training of young cadres and work personnel and strengthen the work of eliminating Tibetan language illiteracy of the rural and pastoral masses.

E. Sichuan Province.

1. ***Working Regulations of the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the Use of the Tibetan Language*** (adopted on November 21, 1997 by the Fifth Session of the Seventh People's Congress of the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and approved on April 6, 1998 by the Second Session of the Standing Committee of the Ninth People's Congress of Sichuan Province).

(a) These Regulations are substantially similar to those described in item 1 for Qinghai Province for the Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. This summary highlights certain variances.

(b) The state agencies at all levels shall use Tibetan and Chinese when performing their duties, but may also, in accordance with actual circumstances, use only one of those languages. All meetings conducted in the prefecture may, in accordance with actual needs, use either or both languages. However, where the Tibetan masses are the main participants in any meeting, Tibetan shall be used, and simultaneous Chinese translations shall be given.

(c) Election documents, voter lists, voter certificates, candidate lists and candidate certificates that are formulated or announced by the county or village (townships) where Tibetans live shall be in Tibetan and Chinese.

(d) People's courts and people's procuracies shall, in accordance with actual needs, use either or both Tibetan or Chinese in their adjudication or investigation work, and in the distribution of legal documents and legal announcements, and shall provide interpreters for litigation participants.

(e) In recruiting and testing workers or students for state agencies and enterprise units, Tibetan and Chinese tests shall be given. However, a candidate is permitted to select one language to be tested in.

(f) Elementary and middle schools in areas where Tibetans live shall, in accordance with the language environment, and the wishes of the masses, use Tibetan and Chinese as their languages of instruction. Middle and specialist schools under the control of the prefecture shall offer Tibetan classes.

(g) The prefecture shall pay attention to Tibetan language education in the education of Tibetan work personnel and adults. In villages (townships) where Tibetans live, Tibetan shall be used to wipe out illiteracy and to promote applicable technologies, public health, family planning and other knowledge.

(h) Service industries shall actively create the conditions to gradually use Tibetan and Chinese to serve the masses.