

been introduced in 18 cities, including Beijing. These have succeeded in providing education to almost 30,000 Tibetans. High school classes for Uygur students have been introduced in Beijing and 12 other cities, catering for 36,000 Uygur students. Ethnic minority students, mainly from remote rural areas, high-cold areas, mountainous areas and grasslands, can find enrollment in minority classes and preparatory classes opened in universities and colleges. By 2010, over 260,000 minority students had been enrolled in such classes in over 300 universities and colleges.

Pairing assistance

Developed cities have been paired up with impoverished ethnic minority counties (banners) to help develop local education through the provision of funds, equipment and teacher training. The universities and colleges in the west region also receive support from central government organs. Minzu University of China has been listed as one of the key universities in Project 211 and Project 985.

Preferential admission policies for minority students

A number of preferential policies have been introduced to increase the college enrolment of minority students. Minority students from border areas, mountainous areas, grassland areas and ethnic minority areas are eligible for lower admission criteria for college entrance, while

in Han-populated areas minority students with equal qualifications enjoy priority admission. There are also special admission criteria for postgraduate ethnic minority students. A plan has been established to train high-level personnel from ethnic minorities by means of lowering admission criteria.

Implementing bilingual teaching

Most ethnic minorities in China have their own language, and 22 of them use 28 scripts. With the dual objectives of improving teaching results and protecting the cultures of the ethnic minorities, bilingual teaching was implemented from the 1950s to ensure that people of ethnic minorities were able to learn both mandarin and their own language. Minority languages are permitted in the college entrance exam. The central government also gives support to compiling and publishing bilingual teaching materials for minority students. Bilingual teaching is available in over 10,000 schools across the country to five million minority students. Every year, more than 3,500 individual items of teaching materials are translated into minority languages, totaling over 100 million copies published.

Over more than 60 years, China has made great progress in developing education for ethnic minorities. At the beginning of New China, the numbers and ratios of minority students enrolled in different levels of schools were as follows: Higher education, 1,300 students representing 1.4 percent of the relevant population; middle schools, 40,300 students representing 2.6 percent of the relevant population; primary schools, 943,000 students representing 2.2 percent of the

relevant population.

By the end of 2010, the number of minority students in education at all levels had exceeded 23 million, representing 8.8 percent of the total number of students. The breakdown at each level of education was as follows: Undergraduate and postgraduate students, 2.1 million (6.5 percent); senior middle school students, 3.1 million (7.1 percent); junior middle school students, 4.98 million (9.4 percent); primary school students, 10.5 million (10.5 percent). A total of 699 governments at county level in the autonomous regions have succeeded in making compulsory education universally available, and eliminating illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults.

THE EDUCATION OF CHINA'S ETHNIC MINORITIES



Before the founding of the People's Republic of China in October 1949, social development in areas inhabited by the ethnic minorities remained at a low level for a variety of cultural and historical reasons. Education levels among the ethnic minorities were particularly backward. Some ethnic minorities continued to employ primitive means of data transmission such as carving wood and knotting ropes. Illiteracy was the norm for the majority of minority populations.

Since 1949, the Chinese government has promulgated a series of preferential policies aiming at developing the education of the ethnic minorities. Through ongoing efforts over more than 60 years, education programs have succeeded in establishing a basic education system in areas inhabited by the ethnic minorities. There has been a universal improvement in scientific and cultural development of the people. An equal and universal right to education is guaranteed to the ethnic minorities.

Guaranteeing the right of education to the ethnic minorities by means of legislation

There are explicit provisions concerning the right of education to the people of the ethnic minorities in the Constitution, the Law



of Regional Ethnic Autonomy, the Education Law, the Compulsory Education Law, and local regulations. The fundamental principle is this: all ethnic minorities have an equal right to receive education; sending school-age children to school is an obligation on all parents; the state supports the education of the ethnic minorities. As an example, the Outline of the Medium- and Long-term National Educational Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) contains specific provisions concerning the education of the ethnic minorities. The ethnic autonomous areas are empowered to develop local education initiatives. With the help of the central government and based on local conditions, they can work out plans, policies and teaching formulations for the development of local education, and set up education administration organs.

Refining management systems

In October 1949, the Ethnic Affairs Commission was established under the Central People's Government. Its Culture and Education Department was in charge of the education work of the ethnic minorities. In 1952 the central government decided to set up an education administration unit in government at all levels, or assign a special post responsible for ethnic education affairs. In accordance with this decision, the Ethnic Education Department was set up within the Ministry of Education, and education departments and departments of ethnic affairs of all provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities), autonomous prefectures and counties also established administration



units for ethnic education affairs. The management system of ethnic education from central government to local governments was thereby established.

Since 1949, the central government has convened five national work meetings on ethnic education, which has promoted the education to ethnic minorities.

Establishing and developing ethnic schools

Middle and primary schools for minority students have been established in areas mainly inhabited by ethnic minorities. There are about 3,500 secondary and 20,000 primary schools for minority students, and 15 ethnic universities and colleges, of which six are attached to the State Ethnic Affairs Commission. Additionally, there are 196 regular higher learning institutions in the ethnic autonomous regions. To raise primary and intermediate practical personnel, a vocational and technical education network for minority students has been established. There are currently 59 minority normal universities and colleges and 158 minority vocational schools throughout the country.

Preferential financial and policy support

By means of a range of financial measures including payment transfers, various funds, living subsidies, and assigned support,



investment in education for the ethnic minorities has substantially expanded. Examples include the Plan to Make Nine-year Compulsory Education Universally Available and Basically Eliminate Illiteracy among Young and Middle-aged Adults, the National Project of Compulsory Education in Impoverished Areas, the Project for Renovation of Dilapidated Buildings in Rural Primary and Middle Schools, and the Project of Modern Distant Education in Rural Primary and Middle Schools, designed to promote education in China's western ethnic minority areas. Special funds have been designated by the central government to minority students. The "Two Exemptions and One Subsidy" policy has been universally implemented: exempting the ethnic students from tuition and fees, and providing cost-of-living subsidies to those in lodgings for the term of their compulsory education. Some localities even provide free lodging and tuition to minority students. There has also been increased investment in universities and colleges, and in education programs and preparatory class for minority students. Ethnic universities and colleges enjoy preferential policies in the distribution of national scholarships.

Flexible teaching programs

Boarding primary and middle schools for minority students have been established in sparsely-populated grassland or mountainous areas with poor traffic provision. Ethnic minority schools and classes are opened in some cities. For example, classes for Tibetan students have

