

**Documentation**

***Decree of the State Council of the  
People's Republic of China***

No. 144

*Translated by Peter Barry, M.M.*

Herewith are issued *The Regulations on the Supervision of the Religious Activities of Foreigners in China*. They take effect from the day they are issued.

(signed) Prime Minister Li Peng  
January 31, 1994

1. In order to safeguard the freedom of religion of foreigners within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China and the public interest of society, these regulations have been formulated, based on the Constitution.

2. The People's Republic of China respects the freedom of religion of foreigners residing within China's borders, and it protects the friendly religious and cultural exchanges which take place between foreigners and Chinese religious personages.

3. Foreigners can participate in religious activities held in Chinese temples, mosques and churches. With the invitation of religious organizations at or above the provincial, autonomous region or municipality level of government, foreigners can lecture and preach in places for religious activity in China.

4. Foreigners can carry out religious activities for other foreigners in places approved for religious activities by Religious Affairs Bureaus at or above the county level.

5. Within China's borders foreigners can invite Chinese clergy to perform baptism, marriage, funerals, Taoist, Buddhist and other rites for them.

6. When entering China, foreigners can bring printed religious materials, audio and video tapes, and other religious equipment for their own use; to bring into the country printed religious materials, audio and video tapes and other religious equipment, which go beyond personal use, this must be handled in accordance with the concerned regulations of Chinese Customs.

It is forbidden to bring into the country printed religious materials or audio and video tapes which are harmful to China's social and public interest.

7. For foreigners to seek persons within China's borders to go abroad for study in order to train them as religious professionals, or for foreigners to go for study or lecturing at Chinese religious academies, this is to be handled in accordance with the concerned regulations.

8. Foreigners carrying out religious activities within China's borders should obey China's laws and regulations. Within China's borders they should not set up religious organizations, establish religious business offices, found places for religious activity nor open religious academies. They should not seek believers from among the Chinese public, nor should they appoint religious professionals or carry out any other missionary activities.

9. Religious affairs bureaus and other concerned departments of governments at or above the county level should dissuade and put a stop to foreigners who violate these regulations concerned with the carrying out of religious activities. If the behaviour constitutes a violation of immigration regulations or of rules governing public order, then punishment should be meted out by the Public Security organs in accordance with the law. If a crime has been committed, then judicial departments should in accordance with the law investigate who is responsible for the crime.

10. These regulations are applicable to the religious activities of foreign organizations within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China.

11. The religious activities of Chinese citizens from abroad while they are in China, of Taiwan citizens while they are on the mainland, of Hong Kong and Macao citizens while they are in the interior, must also be carried out in accordance with these regulations.

12. The Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council is responsible for the explanation and interpretation of these regulations.

13. These regulations take effect on the day they are issued.

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*Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief....*

*The state protects normal religious activities. No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state.*

*Religious bodies and religious affairs are not subject to any foreign domination.*

Article 36 of the Constitutions of the People's Republic of China.

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