

Chapter One Land and People

Introduction

People's Republic of China, referred to as "China", was established on October 1, 1949. China is the most populous developing country in the world. It is a unified multi-ethnic country with Han people as the main body. China is one of the four ancient civilizations in the world, with a long history of more than 5,000 years. China has a vast territory and its land area ranks third in the world. The Chinese culture is broad, profound and colorful. It is the cultural sovereign of the East Asian cultural circle and occupies an important position in the world cultural system. China is the world's second largest economy and continues to be the world's largest contributor to economic growth. It is also one of the countries with the most development potential in the world. In this chapter, you will firstly learn about China from the perspectives of national symbols, administrative divisions, and human geography.



Lesson 1 National Symbols and Administrative Divisions of China

National symbols of China

National symbols refer to the symbols generally prescribed by the Constitution and laws and representing the sovereignty, independence and dignity of the country. The national symbols of the People's Republic of China mainly include the national flag, the national emblem, the national anthem, the capital and the National Day.

National flag

The national flag of the People's Republic of China is the five-starred red flag. The face of the flag is red and rectangular, with a ratio of 3:2 in length to height. The top left of the flag is decorated with five yellow five-pointed stars. One star is larger and is located on the left; the other four are smaller and arched to the right of the big star. The red on the face of the national flag symbolizes the revolutionary struggle; the five-pointed star uses yellow to indicate the light displayed on the red earth. The big five-pointed star represents the Communist Party of China, and four small stars represent the Chinese people; the mutual relationship of the five stars is a symbol of the great unity of the people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China.



The national flag of China

National emblem

In the middle of the National Emblem of the People's Republic of China is Tiananmen Square illuminated by the five-starred red flag, surrounded by ears of wheat and gears. Ears of wheat, five stars, Tiananmen, and gears are golden yellow, and the base and its ribbon in the circle are red. The two colors of gold and red are traditional colors symbolizing auspiciousness and joy in China.

Tiananmen symbolizes the unyielding national spirit of the Chinese people against imperialism and feudalism; gears and wheat ears symbolize the working class and peasant class; five stars represent the great unity of the people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China.



The national emblem of China

National anthem

The national anthem of the People's Republic of China was written by the poet Tian Han and composed by the musician Nie Er. It was born in 1935.

This song was originally called *March of the Volunteer* and was the theme song of the movie *Children of Troubled Times*. The film depicts the story of people bravely marching towards the front line of the Anti-Japanese War when Japan invaded Northeast China in the 1930s and the Chinese nation was at a critical juncture.

March of the Volunteer is a high-pitched and powerful song that expresses the determination of the Chinese people to sacrifice themselves for the cause of national liberation. Therefore, on September 27, 1949, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference decided to use this song as the national anthem of the People's Republic of China.

The lyrics (English translation) of March of the Volunteers goes as follow:

Arise, ye who refuse to be slaves;

Let us amount our flesh and blood towards our new Great Wall!

The Chinese nation faces its greatest peril,

The thundering roar of our people will be heard!

Arise! Arise! Arise!

We are many, but our hearts beat as one!

Selflessly braving the enemy's gunfire, march on!

Selflessly braving the enemy's gunfire, march on!

March on! March on! On!

Capital

On September 27, 1949, the first plenary session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference unanimously adopted: The capital of the People's Republic of China is set in Peiping, and Peiping will be renamed Beijing from now on.

As the capital of the People's Republic of China, Beijing is one of the four municipalities directly under the Central Government, the center of national politics, science and culture, the center of international exchanges, and a famous historical and cultural city in China.

It is located at the northern end of the Great North China Plain. The west and north of the city are continuous mountains, which belong to the Taihang Mountains and Yanshan Mountains, and the east and south are the Great Plains that gradually lean towards the Bohai Sea.

Beijing has an area of 16,808 square kilometers, an altitude of 43.5 meters, and a population of about 12 million. The administrative division of the city is divided into 10 districts and 8 counties. Among them, Dongcheng District, Xicheng District, Chongwen District and Xuanwu District within the Second Ring Road are traditional inner districts. In recent years, the northeastern part of the inner city has developed rapidly, and the southwestern part has retained more of its old style.

Beijing has a warm temperate continental monsoon climate with four distinct seasons. Winters are cold and dry, sometimes with sand; summers are wet and rainy. The average temperature in January was -4°C, and the average temperature in July was 26°C. The best tourist season is from late April to early June, late August to late November.

Beijing has a very long history, and its experience as a city can be traced back to 3000 years ago. During the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period (770 BC to 221 BC), Yan^[1] established a capital in the Beijing area called "Ji" (蓟).

During the Qin, Han and Three Kingdoms period, the Beijing area was an important town in northern China. In the late Western Han Dynasty, Wang Mang established the Dayan Kingdom in the Beijing area, and Beijing 's nickname "Yanjing" was born. During the Southern Song Dynasty, Liao established a companion capital in Beijing, and Jin was formally established in Beijing.

Since then, the capitals of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties were all established in Beijing, and a total of 34 emperors issued orders here to rule the country.

The long history left a lot of cultural relics and colorful cultural landscapes in Beijing. The magnificent Great Wall and the huge Forbidden City are world-famous tourist attractions; the beautiful scenery and magnificent buildings of the Royal Gardens such as the Summer Palace, Beihai, Xiangshan, and Temple of Heaven make visitors linger.

After the founding of New China, Beijing, as the political and cultural center of the country, has made great progress in various undertakings and urban infrastructure. Especially in the more than two decades since the implementation of "reform and opening up" in 1978, Beijing has been undergoing rapid changes.

In Beijing, various modern buildings have risen from the ground, and foreign exchanges have been expanding. With the successful hold of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Beijing is striding into the ranks of international metropolises.

[1] Yan: 1044 BC-222 BC, one of the kingdoms of the Warring States Period.



The Tiananmen Square in Beijing

National Day

On December 2, 1949, the fourth meeting of the Central People's Government Committee accepted the recommendations of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and passed the "Resolution on the National Day of the People's Republic of China." Since then, October 1st each year has become the National Day of the People's Republic of China.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949, the form of National Day celebrations has changed several times.

In the early days of the founding of New China (1950-1959), a large celebration was held every year on National Day, and a military parade was held at the same time. In September 1960, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council decided to reform the National Day celebration system in line with the principle of being diligent and thrifty in building the country. Since then, from 1960 to 1970, every year's National Day held a grand rally and mass parade in front of Tiananmen Square, but did not hold a military parade.

From 1971 to 1983, the annual October 1, Beijing celebrated the National Day with large-scale garden parties and other forms, without mass parades. In 1984, on the 35th National Day, a grand military parade and a mass celebration parade were held. In the

following ten years, other forms were used to celebrate the National Day, and no military parade and mass celebration parade were held. On October 1, 1999, the 50th National Day, a grand military parade and a mass celebration parade were held. This is the last National Day celebration held by the People's Republic of China in the 20th century.

Since the founding of New China, there have been 15 military parades in the National Day celebrations including the 11 times between 1949 and 1959 and four times respectively held for the 35th National Day in 1984, the 50th National Day in 1999, the 60th National Day in 2009, and the 70th National Day in 2019.



Military parade on National Day

Administrative divisions of China

Administrative divisions are regions divided by the state for administrative convenience. Therefore, administrative divisions are also called administrative regions. The Chinese Constitution stipulates that the administrative regions of the People's Republic of China is divided as follows:

(1) The country is divided into provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the Central Government;

(2) Provinces and autonomous regions are divided into autonomous prefectures, counties, autonomous counties, and cities;

(3) Counties and autonomous counties are divided into townships, ethnic townships, and towns.

Municipalities and larger cities are divided into districts and counties. Autonomous prefectures are divided into counties, autonomous counties, and cities.

Autonomous regions, autonomous prefectures and autonomous counties are all ethnic autonomous regions. The state may establish special administrative regions when necessary. The system implemented in the special administrative region shall be prescribed by law by the National People's Congress in accordance with specific circumstances.

Currently, China has 34 provincial administrative regions, including 23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, 4 municipalities, and 2 special administrative regions. Historically and customarily, all provincial administrative regions have abbreviations. The resident of the provincial people's government is called the provincial capital, and the seat of the central people's government is the capital. Beijing is the capital of China.

Townships and towns are the most basic administrative units in China. Autonomous regions, autonomous prefectures and autonomous counties are ethnic autonomous regions inhabited by ethnic minorities, and they are all inseparable parts of China. The state may also establish special administrative regions as needed. In addition, in order to

facilitate administrative management and economic construction, and to strengthen national unity, the state may make necessary adjustments and changes to administrative divisions as needed.

Hong Kong and Macau are part of Chinese territory. The Chinese government resumed its sovereignty over Hong Kong on July 1, 1997, and established the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. On December 20, 1999, the exercise of sovereignty over Macao was resumed and the Macao Special Administrative Region was established.



Map of China's administrative divisions

Provinces

The province is a first-level local administrative division in China. Province as a first-level administrative division began in the Yuan Dynasty and has a history of more than 700 years. There are currently 23 provinces in China. According to the division method of the

seven natural geographical divisions in China, the distribution of each province is as follows.

The Northeast region includes Heilongjiang Province, Jilin Province, and Liaoning Province.

Heilongjiang Province is abbreviated as "Hei" (黑). The provincial capital city Harbin is China's famous "Ice City". The annual Ice Sculpture Art Festival attracts innumerable Chinese and foreign tourists.

Jilin Province is abbreviated as "Ji" (吉), and the provincial capital city is Changchun. Changbai Mountain District in Jilin Province is known as the "Changbai Forest Sea" and is one of the six major forest areas in China.

Liaoning Province is abbreviated as "Liao" (辽). The provincial capital city Shenyang is a national historical and cultural city, known as "the birthplace of one dynasty, the capital of two generations of emperors".

The North China region includes Hebei Province and Shaanxi Province.

Hebei Province is abbreviated as "Ji" (冀), and it faces the Bohai Sea in the east. The province's historical relics rank first in the country with Shaanxi Province, and the total natural and human landscape resources rank second in the country. Among them, the

most famous are Chengde Mountain Resort, Shanhaiguan, the head of the Great Wall, and Beidaihe Tourism Resort.

Shanxi Province is abbreviated as "Jin"(晋), and is named after living in the west of Taihang Mountain. Shanxi is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization and has rich tourism resources. Among them, Yungang Grottoes in Datong, Pingyao Ancient City and Wutai Mountain are world cultural heritages.

East China includes Shandong Province, Jiangsu Province, Zhejiang Province, Anhui Province, Jiangxi Province, Fujian Province, and Taiwan Province.

Shandong Province is abbreviated as "Lu"(鲁), and Jinan City, the provincial capital, is also known as "Spring City" due to its numerous springs. Shandong is the hometown of Confucius and Mencius, the representatives of Confucianism.

Jiangsu Province is abbreviated as "Su"(苏), located in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River, facing the Yellow Sea in the east. The provincial capital city Nanjing is the famous "Ancient Capital of the Six Dynasties".

Zhejiang Province is abbreviated as "Zhe"(浙), facing the East China Sea in the east. The provincial capital, Hangzhou, is one of China's "seven ancient capitals" and is famous for its beautiful and charming scenery of the West Lake. Since ancient times, it has been famous for the old saying "Up in heaven, there is paradise; down on earth, there are Suzhou and Hangzhou".

Anhui Province is abbreviated as "Wan"(皖), and it is an inland province in the east. There are 12 national scenic spots such as Mount Huang and Mount Jiuhua.

Jiangxi Province is abbreviated as "Gan"(赣). The province has rich tourism resources. Jingdezhen, China's porcelain capital, and Tengwang Pavilion, a thousand-year-old famous building, attract a large number of Chinese and foreign tourists.

Fujian Province is abbreviated as "Min"(闽), the capital of Fuzhou City. Fujian Tulou, as a wonderful building in the world, attracts countless Chinese and foreign tourists.

Taiwan Province is abbreviated as "Tai"(台). Taiwan is China's largest island and an important transportation hub for maritime links between China and countries in the Pacific region. Ali Mountain, Sun Moon Lake and other scenic spots are well-known at home and abroad.

Central China includes Henan Province, Hubei Province and Hunan Province.

Henan Province is abbreviated as "Yu"(豫), and is named after its location at the south of the Yellow River. The world-famous Shaolin martial arts and Tai Chi originated in Henan.

Hubei Province is abbreviated as "E"(鄂), and is named after its location at the north of Dongting Lake. The splendid Chu cultural relics, the majestic Three Gorges of the Yangtze

River, and Wudang Mountain, the first mountain of Taoism, have attracted worldwide attention.

Hunan Province is abbreviated as "Xiang"(湘), and is named after its location at the south of Dongting Lake. Hunan Zhangjiajie Geopark is included in the first batch of world geoparks and is also the first national forest park.

South China includes Guangdong and Hainan.

Guangdong Province is abbreviated as "Yue" (粤), and the provincial capital city Guangzhou, is the largest business center in southe China. One of its cities Shenzhen is China's first special economic zone, and the "Splendid China" here is the world's largest and most abundant real miniature scenic spot.

Hainan Province is abbreviated as "Qiong"(琼), which is located at the southernmost tip of China and is the province with the widest latitude. Hainan is the most tropical oceanic climate in China and has the reputation of "Oriental Hawaii".

The Southwest region includes Sichuan Province, Guizhou Province and Yunnan Province.

Sichuan Province is abbreviated as "Chuan"(川) or "Shu"(蜀). The provincial capital Chengdu is a technology, commerce, financial center and transportation and communication hub in southwest China. The Chinese national treasure giant panda mainly lives in Sichuan.

Guizhou Province is abbreviated as "Qian"(黔) or "Gui"(贵), and the provincial capital is Guiyang. Guizhou Province has national-level scenic spots such as Huangguoshu Waterfall and Dragon Palace.

Yunnan Province is abbreviated as "Dian"(滇) or "Yun"(云), and the provincial capital Kunming is also called "Spring City" because it's like spring all the year round. Yunnan is a major tourist province, and the beautiful scenery of Xishuangbanna has intoxicated Chinese and foreign tourists.

The northwest region includes Shaanxi Province, Gansu Province and Qinghai Province.

Shaanxi Province is abbreviated as "Shan"(陕) or "Qin"(秦), and the capital of Xi'an, known as Chang'an in ancient times, is a famous "millennium ancient capital" in China. The Terracotta Army of Qin Shihuang's mausoleum was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Gansu Province is abbreviated as "Gan" (甘) or "Long"(陇), the provincial capital is Lanzhou. Thousand Buddha Cave murals in Jiayuguan and Dunhuang Mogao Caves at the westernmost end of the Great Wall of China are world-famous.

Qinghai Province is abbreviated as "Qing"(青) because it has the largest inland saltwater lake in China-Qinghai Lake. Xining is the provincial capital. The number of yaks ranks first in the country, accounting for 1/3 of the world's total yaks.

Autonomous regions

Autonomous regions refer to places under the unified leadership of the country where the ethnic minorities live. In autonomous regions, autonomous institutions are established, and autonomous powers are exercised.

China currently has five autonomous regions, namely Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Tibet Autonomous Region, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

The Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, abbreviated as "Inner Mongolia"(内蒙古), is located in the north of China. It is the provincial administrative region with the longest longitude and the earliest ethnic regional autonomous region. The capital is Hohhot. Inner Mongolia is dominated by agriculture and animal husbandry, and has unique grassland scenery.

The Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is abbreviated as "Gui"(桂), and the capital is Nanning. Guangxi has beautiful natural scenery, and cities like Guilin and Yangshuo are world-famous tourist attractions, and it has the reputation of "Guilin's landscape is the best in the world".

The Tibet Autonomous Region is abbreviated as "Tibet"(西藏), and the capital Lhasa is known as "Sunshine City". Tibet is the center of Tibetan Buddhism. The Potala Palace, a world cultural heritage site in Lhasa, attracts many believers and tourists to worship and visit every year.

Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region is abbreviated as “Ning” (宁), and Yinchuan City, the capital, has been known as “Frontier Jiangnan” since ancient times. Ningxia's scenery is highlighted by "Desert, Yellow River, the Western Xia regime, hometown of Hui nationality".

The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is abbreviated as "Xin"(新) and the capital is Urumqi. Xinjiang is known as the "Hometown of Songs and Dances" and "Hometown of Melons and Fruits". The colorful folk entertainment and sweet and fragrant melons and fruits attract a large number of tourists.

Municipalities

A municipality is an administrative area directly under the control of the central government and is a national first-level administrative area. There are currently 4 municipalities in China: Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing.

Beijing is abbreviated as "Jing"(京). Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China, the political and cultural center of China, the center of international exchange, the center of technological innovation, and a world-famous historical and cultural city. It is established as a municipality in 1949.

Shanghai is abbreviated as "Hu"(沪). Shanghai is China's largest city, largest economic center, industrial center, business center, and technology center. It is established as a municipality in 1949.

Tianjin is abbreviated as "Jin"(津). Tianjin is a major industrial and commercial city in northern China and the largest coastal open city in northern China. It has been known as the "Pearl of the Bohai Sea" since ancient times. It is established as a municipality in 1949.

Chongqing is abbreviated as "Yu"(渝). Chongqing is the largest industrial and commercial center in southwest China and a water and land transportation hub in the upper reaches of the Yangtze River. It is youngest municipality in China and was established in 1997.

Special administrative regions

Special administrative regions are local administrative regions directly under the Central Government, and the systems implemented within the administrative regions are prescribed by law by the National People's Congress in accordance with specific circumstances. At present, China has two national first-level special administrative regions, Hong Kong and Macau.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is abbreviated as "Gang"(港) and is composed of three regions: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories. Hong Kong is known as the "Pearl of the East", "Dynamic Capital" and "Gourmet Capital". On July 1, 1997, the Chinese government resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was established.

The Macao Special Administrative Region is abbreviated as "Ao"(澳). The whole territory is composed of the Macao Peninsula, Taipa and Coloane. On December 20, 1999, the Chinese government resumed its exercise of sovereignty over Macao, and the Macao Special Administrative Region was established. The "Macao people rule Macao" and "a high degree of autonomy" policies are implemented under "one country, two systems".

Exercises:

Part I Based on the text, answer the following questions.

1. What are the national symbols of the People's Republic of China?
2. What are the first-level administrative regions in China?
3. How many municipalities are there in China? Which is the youngest municipality?

Part II Group discussion

1. What is the national flag pattern of your country, and can you explain its connotation?
2. In your opinion, what are the differences between China's municipalities and provinces?