

CHINA: A 'REAL' MAO FOR EVERYBODY



China approved new regulations concerning the production of Chairman Mao's souvenir statues because of complaints about its appearance and quality. Xinhua News Agency reported that the initiative started in Hunan province, where the chairman was born. Chinese authorities want everybody to be able to buy a 'real' Mao.

China introduces tough measures of state supervision of souvenirs for tourists to combat the "inaccurate interpretation" of the image of Chairman Mao. According to the Xinhua News Agency, **the Office of Quality and Technical Supervision of the Hunan Province issued a set of strict regulations regarding the production of statues of Mao in Shaoshan**, where the leader of the Chinese revolution was born.

As the chief engineer Jiang Tao stated, "such actions by the authorities should lead to reductions in production and sales of low-quality figurines of Mao, which are harmful to the development of the tourist market and hurting the feelings of people towards the great man." Xinhua noted that the Office launched such an initiative in response to complaints of tourists who cannot buy a 'real' Mao neither from street vendors nor in stores.

New regulations set rules for materials, according to which producers can only work with a copper alloy, silver and polyester resin. Plastic, brass and brass-containing composites were banned. But most importantly, **mass production is subject to comprehensive check before the release of souvenirs to the market**. As stated in the new document, a quality assurance team of at least five experts is responsible for the fact that in his appearance, hair, face, posture, and clothing Mao's souvenir statues will be not much different from the real person. According to the city's tourism administration, Mao's statues took 70% of the market share of souvenir products, the volume of which totaled 18.2 million dollars in 2009.

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