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Study on Private Economy in Tibet

LUO Ke*

School for the Study of the Southwest Minorities, Southwest University for Nationalities, Chengdu 610041, China

Abstract This paper analyses the status quo and characteristics of development of private economy in Tibet; the private economy shows the momentum of rapid growth, and is the main force for promoting prosperity of urban-rural market, becoming an important source of fiscal revenue and a major channel for social employment. The main factors restricting the development of private economy in Tibet are generalized as follows: first, the natural environment is inclement, and it is under great pressure of ecological resources; second, the development level of private economy is low with shaky foundation and small production scale; third, the laws, regulations and preferential policies have not been implemented well, and the supporting policies are yet to be improved; fourth, there is a dearth of financial support, and the individually-run enterprises yearn for capital; fifth, the workers' quality is low, and the management level of private economy is not high. Finally, the countermeasures and proposals are put forward to accelerate development of private economy in Tibet as follows: improve ecological environment, transform the pattern of economic development; implement well the relevant laws, regulations and preferential policies, perfect the supporting policies; strengthen the financial support, promote the development of private economy; improve the quality of workers in private economy, foster large quantities of entrepreneurs worth their salt.

Key words Tibet, Private economy, Development, Countermeasures study, China

Since the reform and opening-up, the private economy in Tibet has grown by leaps and bounds, becoming an important source of fiscal revenue, an important channel for social employment and the main force for promoting prosperity of urban and rural markets. Tibet's private economy has become the most dynamic economic sector in market economy of Tibet, and an indispensable important force for promoting social and economic development in Tibet. However, there is still a handful of problems in Tibet's private economy, such as low level of development, inefficient implementation of laws, regulations and preferential policies, restrictive financial factors and low quality of employees. Thus corresponding countermeasures and proposals are put forward to tackle these problems.

1 The status quo and characteristics of development of private economy in Tibet

The restructuring of Tibet's ownership has undergone the process from unitary to diversified, and with further deepening of China's reform and opening-up, the private economy gradually grows and develops. After decades of development and growth, the private economy not only becomes an important part of Tibet's economy and society, and a major force for driving economic growth, but also becomes an important growth point of fiscal revenue in whole region.

1.1 The private economy shows the momentum of rapid growth The private economy in Tibet is a new thing after reform and opening-up of China, and through 30 years of development, it has become an important part of Tibet's economy. With the constant deepening of reform and opening-up, the development of private economy in Tibet mainly experiences the

following stages of development. The stage of restoration and development (prior to 1980): it is "personal behavior" allowed by the policy; the stage of rapid development (1981–1989): it further develops under deepening of reform and opening-up; the stage of steady development (1990–2000): the government formulates the policies and measures to stimulate healthy development of private economy; the stage of rapid development (since 2011): under support of relevant policies, the private economy in Tibet enters a stage of rapid development.

Since the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, the non-public economy of Tibet develops by leaps and bounds, having become an important part of the national economy. As shown in Table 1^[1–3], from 2005 to 2010, the number of privately-run enterprises increased from 2 631 to 7 250, an average annual growth rate of 22.5%, and the registered capital increased from 7.128 08 billion yuan to 20.941 18 billion yuan, an average annual growth rate of 21.9%. The number of self-employed households or people registered in whole region increased from 61 886 to 94 000, an average annual growth rate of over 8.7%, and the registered capital increased from 1.086 93 billion yuan to 2.840 78 billion yuan, an average annual growth rate of over 20.4%. The number of foreign-invested enterprises increased to 320, the investment reached 646.89 million, and the registered capital reached 381.12 million. The investment in non-public economy has strong momentum of driving economic growth. In 2010, the ratio of investment in non-public economy to investment in fixed assets of whole society reached 27.9%, increasing by 11.2 percentage points as against that in 2005. The ratio of investment in non-public economy to GDP increased year by year, and the contribution of investment in non-public economy to GDP reached 45%. From the above data, we can find that the scale of private economy in Tibet is increasingly expanded, and it has basically completed the accumulation of capital, beginning a second undertaking.

Table 1 The basic information of self-employed households or people and privately-run enterprises in Tibet from 2005 to 2010

Year	Self-employed households or people			Privately-run enterprises		
	Amount of households household	Registered capital $\times 10^4$ yuan	Employees person	Amount of households household	Registered capital $\times 10^4$ yuan	Employees person
2005	61 886	108 693	90 600	2 631	712 808	22 800
2006	68 667	150 000	128 420	3 414	957 476	51 029
2007	77 501	186 000	166 818	4 236	1 396 000	80 994
2008	82 000	210 000	182 000	4 756	1 589 000	99 000
2009	87 000	246 600	202 400	6 286	1 769 000	118 000
2010	94 000	284 078	208 410	7 250	2 094 118	127 453

1.2 The private economy becomes an important source of fiscal revenue

Tibet's private economy has achieved remarkable social and economic benefits, and made outstanding contribution to fiscal revenue in whole region, becoming an important source of fiscal revenue and playing more and more important role in the economic development of the region. In 2005, the non-public economy turned in tax of 920 million yuan, accounting for 62.87% of total revenue; in 2010, the non-public economy turned in tax of 4.02 billion yuan, accounting for 82.9% of total revenue in whole region, with average annual growth rate of 34.30%^[4]. Economic development is an important basis for regional development, while the revenue is an important prerequisite for promoting economic development. The proportion of the contribution of private economy in Tibet to revenue increases year by year, and it has become a major force in revenue, playing a significant role in promoting the economic development of Tibet. And from November 1, Tibet comprehensively implemented preferential tax policies for the development of private economy, the private economy equipped with certain conditions timely handled tax relief, and Tibet raised the threshold of value-added tax and business tax of self-employed households or people, adjusted and increased the standard rate of small-scale value added taxpayers^[5].

1.3 The private economy becomes a major channel for social employment

Employment is not only related to the development of national economy, but also related to social stability. Most of the private economy is labor-intensive enterprises,

with large number and wide distribution, which can provide a large number of employment opportunities for urban and rural residents. In recent years, the private economy in Tibet has developed continuously and stably, and absorbed a large number of urban and rural surplus labor forces, largely improving employment situation and reducing the pressure on employment, thus it becomes an important channel for labor force in Tibet to get job. With improvement of the environment of private economy, it will play a greater role in solving the employment problems.

As shown in Table 2^[6], the self-employed households or people and employees in privately-run enterprises from 2005 to 2009 in Tibet increased year by year. As of the end of 2010, the number of self-employed households or people reached 0.208 4 million yuan, accounting for 6.94% of total population in whole region of Tibet, 2.3 times that in 2005. The number of employees in privately-run enterprises reached 0.1275 million, accounting for 4.25% of total population in whole region of Tibet, 5.59 times that in 2005. In 2010, the self-employed households or people and non-public enterprises in whole region create 0.335 million jobs, accounting for more than 75% of employment in whole region^[4]. The development of private economy becomes an important channel for employment, and the private economy makes positive contribution to social stability, becoming dynamic economic sector in the national economy and important force for achieving dramatic economic development in Tibet.

Table 2 The information about self-employed households or people and employees in privately-run enterprises in Tibet from 2005 to 2009

Year	Total population in the entire region $\times 10^4$ people	Self-employed households or people $\times 10^4$ people	Proportion of self-employed households or people // %	Employees in privately-run enterprises $\times 10^4$ people	Proportion of privately-run enterprises // %
2005	277.00	9.06	3.27	2.28	0.82
2006	281.00	12.84	4.57	5.10	1.81
2007	284.15	16.68	5.87	8.10	2.85
2008	287.08	18.20	6.34	9.90	3.45
2009	290.03	20.24	6.98	11.80	4.07
2010	300.21	20.84	6.94	12.75	4.25

Note: Data are from *Statistical Yearbook of Tibet* in 2011.

1.4 The private economy is the main force for promoting prosperity of urban-rural market

The private economy in Tibet plays a leading role in promoting prosperity of urban and rural markets. From 2005 to 2010, the total retail sales of goods in non-public economy increased from 5.78 billion yuan to 15 billion yuan, an average annual growth rate of 20.9%. In 2010, the total retail sales of goods in non-public economy accounted for 75% of the total retail sales of consumer goods, 88% of total volume of import and export, and 90% of income of market

subjects^[7]. The private economy becomes a strong impetus to the construction of new socialist countryside and the development of county economy in Tibet, which improves the level of industrialization in whole region, accelerates the level of urbanization in Tibet, and promotes the economic development in pastoral areas. Meanwhile, the import and export volume of non-public economy increased from 89.69 million dollars in 2005 to 835 million dollars in 2010, an average annual growth rate of 56.3%. As of the end of 2010, there were 444 enterpri-

ses engaging in import and export trade in Tibet, of which there were 386 non-public economic organizations, accounting for 86.94% of import and export trade enterprises in whole region^[7], thus the private economy has become a major force in Tibet's foreign trade.

On the whole, the aggregate of private economy in Tibet grows ceaselessly, and the social benefits of private economy are significantly promoted, making contribution to promoting Tibet's national economic development and maintaining social stability. The private economy strengthens vitality of dramatic economic development in Tibet, having become an important factor in Tibet's social and economic development and an important force for building a harmonious Tibet. In the meeting of promoting great-leap-forward development of non-public economy, the Party Secretary of Tibet Autonomous Region Chen Quanguo used "four important" to explain the status of non-public economy in Tibet: it becomes an important support for the economic development, an important source of fiscal revenue, an important channel for expanding employment, and plays a very important role in improving people's livelihood, promoting economic prosperity, ameliorating employment, and maintaining stability^[8].

2 Analysis of the main factors restricting the development of private economy in Tibet

Since reform and opening-up, Tibet's private economy has made great progress, and promoted great-leap-forward development of Tibet's economy. However, in comparison with the economy in the mainland, especially the developed areas, there is still a very large gap.

2.1 The natural environment is inclement and it is under great pressure of ecological resources The natural environment in Tibet is harsh, with an average altitude of more than 4 000 meters. Tibet is "roof of the world", where the plateau undulates, snow-capped mountains stretches, the valleys go deep, the air is cold and thin for want of oxygen. It has the world's largest Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon and the highest Mount Everest. Although Tibet has 1.2 million km² of area, accounting for one eighth of total land area of China, the vast majority of Tibet is cold and oxygen-deficient mountains, not suitable for human settlement and production. As opposed to the mainland, Tibet's economy activities are more difficult and simpler. And in the mean time, since the economic development has inflicted great havoc and pressure on overall resources and environment in Tibet, many kinds of private economy are not suitable in Tibet, restricted by harsh natural conditions and fragile ecological conditions. Although at present, the competitiveness of private economy in Tibet is promoted, under the pressure of harsh natural environment and ecological resources, most of the individually-run enterprises and self-employed households or people are in a very shaky state.

2.2 The development level of private economy is low with shaky foundation and small production scale The gap between private economy in Tibet and private economy in other

provinces is gradually widened, and it does not get rid of the situation of low technological content, low output value, low starting point, and weak basis. On August 25, 2011, in the *List of 500 China's Strong Individually-run Enterprises* in 2010 released in 500 China's Strong Individually-run Enterprises Conference^[9], there were 122 individually-run enterprises in Zhejiang Province in the list, with the largest number of enterprises in the list; there were 118 individually-run enterprises in Jiangsu Province in the list; there were 21 individually-run enterprises in Guangdong Province in the list; there were 11 individually-run enterprises in Liaoning Province in the list; but there is no individually-run enterprise in Tibet in the *List of 500 China's Strong Individually-run Enterprises* in 2010. It fully explains that the private economy in Tibet has low level of development and weak foundation. The production scale of many individually-run enterprises in Tibet is not big. After the products are sold greatly, the output can not keep pace with the sales volume, leading to decline in economic benefits of enterprises. For example, Zangyuan Group in Tibet, as sole representative of highland barley wine, was favoured by the consumers in the Shanghai World Exposition, whose products are in short supply. However, due to small production scale, the enterprises can only meet the needs of market in whole region, incapable of accepting many orders. The president of Business Association of Tibet Autonomous Region A'pei · Jinyuan said, "Going out" is the biggest issue faced by Tibet's individually-run enterprises, especially going to big cities like Shanghai^[10].

2.3 The laws, regulations and preferential policies have not been implemented well and the supporting policies are yet to be improved

After the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the government proposed a series of guidelines and policies for promoting the development of private economy, to eliminate institutional obstacles to the development of private economy from the theoretical level, and establish the equal status of main body of the market. Tibet Autonomous Region has also issued a series of laws, regulations and preferential policies for stimulating the development of private economy, such as *Opinions of the People's Government of Tibet Autonomous Region on Implementing Several Opinions of the State Council on Encouraging, Supporting and Guiding the Development of Non-public Economy*, *Opinions of the People's Government of Tibet Autonomous Region on Implementing Several Opinions of the State Council on Further Promoting the Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprise*, improving the legal and policy environment for the development of private economy in whole region, broadening the field for the development of private economy, so that the Tibet's private economy develops rapidly. However, according to the survey and research, it shows that the majority of people in private economy have low satisfaction with *Opinions of the People's Government of Tibet Autonomous Region on Implementing Several Opinions of the State Council on Encouraging, Supporting and Guiding the Development of Non-public Economy*, *Opinions of the People's Government of Tibet Autonomous Region on Implementing Several Opinions of the State Council*

on *Further Promoting the Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprise*, and about half of them hold that the problem of poor implementation of relevant departments and local governments is a major obstacle to implementation of two *Opinions*^[11]. The board chairman of Qizheng Tibetan Medicine Corporation in Tibet Lei Jufang expresses the misgiving about whether Tibet can truly implement the preferential policies for the private economy, "From the nation to the autonomous region, all kinds of preferential policies on non-public economy have always been there, but the implementation is poor. In order to effectively tackle difficulties and problems in non-public economy of Tibet, we must implement the relevant preferential policies, and mobilize the leaders in all related departments^[12]." The poor implementation of laws, regulations and preferential policies also indicates that the supporting policies on private economy supported, encouraged and led by the government remain to be improved.

Table 3 The information about fiscal revenue in Tibet after reform and opening-up

Year	Total revenue ×10 ⁴ yuan	Local fiscal revenue ×10 ⁴ yuan	The state financial subsidy // ×10 ⁴ yuan	The ratio of local fiscal revenue and total revenue // %
1978	47 063	-1 558	48 620	
1980	54 131	-5 973	60 104	
1985	99 735	-6 037	105 772	
1990	128 470	1 810	126 660	1.4
1995	334 940	21 500	313 440	6.4
2000	699 222	63 265	635 957	9.0
2005	2 058 670	143 330	1 915 340	7.0
2006	2 229 029	172 682	2 007 860	7.7
2007	3 101 337	231 437	2 804 127	7.4
2008	3 864 431	285 872	3 578 559	7.4
2009	5 018 573	309 108	4 709 465	6.2
2010	5 676 453	424 679	5 309 980	7.5

Note: Data are from *Statistical Yearbook of Tibet* in 2011.

In addition, the investment of the central government to Tibet mainly concentrates in the state-owned economy, and the investment for other types of economy is scanty. Because of weak economic base and unique social status, Tibet forms the central-based investment system, in order to promote rapid economic development in a short time. But the investment of the central government for economy is limited, and it can only conduct pivotal inputs to the state-owned economy, thus the investment obtained by the non-state-owned economy is insufficient. As can be seen from Table 4, the proportion of state-owned economy in 2000 was 94.8%, and the proportion of state-owned economy in 2007 and 2009 decreased, but also more than 60%. In 2010, the proportion of state-owned economy even reached 72.0%. Although the central government has a lot of investments every year to Tibet, there is a small proportion of investment in the collective economy, individual economy, pooling economy, share economy, the foreign investment economy, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan investment economy and other economy.

2.4.2 The individually-run enterprises are in face of difficulties of financing. The funds for the development of private economy in Tibet are not enough, and on the premise of insufficient national financial support, the individually-run enterprises in Tibet are needed for financing. However, due to weak strength,

2.4 There is a dearth of financial support and the individually-run enterprises yearn for capital

2.4.1 The state financial support is insufficient and it lacks capital for development. As Tibet's own local fiscal revenue is limited, it is mainly dependent on financial assistance from the central government. After the reform and opening-up, the proportion of Tibet's local fiscal revenue to GDP is very low, and the economic development depends mainly on financial support of the central government. Table 3 shows that after the reform and opening-up, although Tibet's financial revenue shows a gradual upward trend, and it is negligible compared to fiscal revenue of the state. The ratio of local fiscal revenue to total revenue also stagnates. And in 2010, the ratio was only 7.5%. This shows that Tibet's local fiscal revenue is limited, depending upon the local government for capital accumulation is very difficult, and it develops mainly dependent on subsidies from the central government.

small scale and unsound security mechanism, it results in financing difficulties for the individually-run enterprises in Tibet, thereby constraining the development of private economy. On the one hand, Tibet has not fully perfected the loan guarantee mechanism of small and medium-sized enterprise. As part of individually-run enterprises have no economic strength or collateral as guarantee, it is difficult to achieve conditions for bank loans. The financial institutions are very cautious of lending to these companies in order to prevent the risk of loaning, resulting in lack of effective loan demand for in the market; on the other hand, the financial institutions have a lot of idle funds. It can be seen from Fig. 1 that the deposit of Tibet's financial institutions each year is rarely converted into capital, the loan amount is less than half of the deposit amount, and idle funds greatly reduce the effectiveness of monetary policy. In 2010, the loans of Tibet Autonomous Region amounted to 30.15 billion yuan, only 23.3% of the amount of deposit, which led to the "two difficulties": loans are difficult to get for individually-run enterprises and the financial institutions are difficult to lend.

2.5 The employees' quality is low and the management level of private economy is not high Tibet is located in China's southwest border, whose special geographical location leads to the blocking of communication with the outside world, forming relatively independent space, and the traditional think-

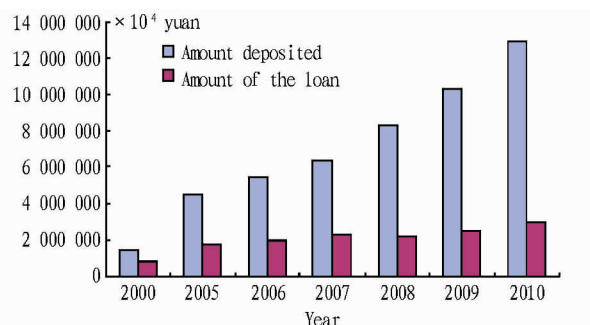
ing of "waiting, depending and wanting" is very serious. In the private economy in Tibet, the overall quality of employees is very low, and the illiterate workers or the workers with educational level below junior middle school account for 81%. Among the operators of large-scale privately-run enterprises, the employees with educational level below junior middle school account for more than 50%^[3]. Due to the shortage of high-quality talents in private economy in Tibet, it restricts the propulsion of product upgrading and enhancement of the independent innovation capability in the private economy in Tibet, failing to adapt to the needs of development of private economy under the new

situation. Meanwhile, many managers of private economy have low quality, and have not received professional training, lacking technical development capability and modern enterprise management concept. There is traditional thinking of "satisfying with being well off". Even some of the operators have weak legal concept, evade paying taxes, default on financial loans, and recruit employees illegally. In the internal management, the traditional mode of family management is still very popular, and the management is arbitrary. Low quality of employees and low management level of managers are responsible for the sluggish development of private economy in Tibet.

Table 4 Distribution of fixed assets investment in whole society

Year	Total investments ×10 ⁴ yuan	The state-owned economy ×10 ⁴ yuan	The proportion of state-owned economy %	The collective economy ×10 ⁴ yuan	Individual economy ×10 ⁴ yuan	Pooling economy ×10 ⁴ yuan	Share economy ×10 ⁴ yuan	The foreign investment economy ×10 ⁴ yuan	Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan investment economy ×10 ⁴ yuan	Other economy ×10 ⁴ yuan
2000	665 044	630 208	94.8	7 723	12 436	2 330	8 846	156	1 814	1 531
2007	2 711 811	1 699 162	62.7	45 619	367 200	9 154	317 174	1 790	3 800	267 912
2009	3 794 158	2 683 407	70.7	44 389	380 137	265	185 235	2 805		497 920
2010	4 632 585	3 337 026	72.0	30 332	209 378	580	458 886	8 339	18 000	570 044

Note: Data are from *Statistical Yearbook of Tibet* in 2011.



Note: Data are from *Statistical Yearbook of Tibet* in 2011.

Fig.1 Loans and deposits in Tibet in the year 2000 and the period 2005–2010

3 The countermeasures and proposals for accelerating development of private economy in Tibet

3.1 Improve ecological environment and transform the pattern of economic development In view of the inclement natural environment and fragile ecological environment in Tibet, Tibet's private economy cannot develop by plundering resources. The private economy in Tibet should change the development mode to gradually change the state of vulnerability, and strengthen publicity to outside, so that the international community can know a real Tibet. The government should vigorously publicize the dramatic change owing to the work of aiding Tibet, and vigorously publicize the successful experience of China's policy of regional ethnic autonomy in Tibet. And Tibet should further strengthen the work of "going out, inviting guests in", to attract tourists and business at home, as well as the international organizations, overseas Tibetan and foreign friends; to conduct on-site visit and inspection in Tibet, so that they intuitively and clearly know Tibet, and invest after feeling the dramatic changes in Tibet, in order to speed up the devel-

opment of private economy in Tibet, and promote better and faster development of economy in whole region, not just the economic development based on the destruction of ecological resources.

3.2 Implement well the relevant laws, regulations and preferential policies, perfect the supporting policies

The central government and Tibet Autonomous Region government both have issued a series of policies and measures to promote the development of private economy in whole region, but the implementation is not well, making these measures merely nominal, so it is difficult to guarantee and guide the private economy in Tibet. The government must seriously implement the laws, regulations and preferential policies, and improve the corresponding supporting policies, to promote rapid development of private economy in Tibet. From September 21, to September 22 in 2011, in Lhasa, Strengthening Work of Business Association and Promoting the Development of Non-public Economy Conference in Tibet Autonomous Region was held. The conference proposed that based on the reality of Tibet, we should work out a series of more flexible policies and measures that are better and more valuable than those of the mainland. And the conference also deliberated about two discussion drafts concerning the development planning of private economy in Tibet in the next 10 years, *Medium-and-long-term Development Planning Outline of Non-public Economy in Tibet Autonomous Region* (2011–2020), and *Opinions of Tibet Autonomous Region CPC Committee and Tibet Autonomous Region People's Government on Promoting Great-leap-forward Development of Non-public Economy*. The *Outline* suggested that we should constantly improve the relevant supporting policies and measures^[12]. It can be seen that the Tibet government always commits itself to creating better conditions for the development of private economy, and constantly working out the outlines and policies for the development of private economy. More perfect

supporting policies are needed to guarantee the implementation of policies, and the government should work out the corresponding supporting policies to ensure the implementation of laws, regulations and policies for the private economy in Tibet^[13].

3.3 Strengthen the financial support and promote the development of private economy

The private economy in Tibet has the following characteristics: the development funds are not enough; the national financial support is insufficient; the central government's investment for Tibet is mainly concentrated in the state-owned economy, and the investment for the private economy is insufficient^[14]. Consequently, in order to promote the development of private economy in Tibet, we need to initiate the private investment, namely the investment except the state-owned economic investment and foreign economic investment, including the investment of collective economy, individual economy, private economy, joint venture economy, non-state-owned economy and other types of economy^[3]. But at present, the enthusiasm of private investment in Tibet is very low, and the government should pay attention to and initiate the private capital; realize the economic and social effect of privately-run enterprises and individual investment; encourage the private capital to invest in individually-run enterprises in Tibet; offer preferential economic policies to investors to promote the rapid development of private economy in Tibet.

3.4 Improve the quality of workers in private economy and foster large quantities of entrepreneurs worth their salt

Nowadays, the competition of market economy is competition of talents. With increasing contribution of private economy in Tibet to economy in whole region, the improvement of quality of employees in private economy is increasingly urgent. On the one hand, the individually-run enterprises should intensify efforts to recruit talents. In May 2011, Tibet Autonomous Region held Individually-run Enterprise Human Resources Fair. The success of the job fair indicates that the individually-run enterprises in whole region have been fully aware of the importance of personnel quality to the development of enterprise. On the other hand, the individually-run enterprises should also pay attention to training for the staff, and the human resources trainer within the enterprises is an important factor affecting the competitive strength and growth potential of enterprises. As far as I'm concerned, the individually-run enterprises in Tibet should take advantage of the market competition mechanism to vigorously foster entrepreneurs, namely foster the professional managers having rich management experience and systematic management expertise. In the process of vigorously developing the socialist market economy, the excellent entrepreneurs in individually-run enterprises are always valuable and scarce human resources, and also the source of economic vitality in Tibet. Therefore, the government should always put fostering entrepreneurs in individually-run enterprises in an important position, and create the conditions from all aspects, to promote the cultivation of entrepreneurs in individually-run enterprises. In the period of the Twelfth Five-Year Plan, Tibet will work out some more flexible policies and measures than those of the main-

land, achieve "zero registration, light tax burden, strong support, less checking, more incentives", and fully mobilize all forces in whole region, to promote great-leap-forward development of private economy^[15].

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