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## New rules take effect on hearings for China gov't pricing

BEIJING, Dec. 1 (Xinhua) -- New regulations took effect in China on Monday that require more openness in public hearings, and greater access to information for consumers and the media, when changes are proposed for government-set prices.

The amendment to the regulation on hearings for government pricing was issued by the National Development and Reform Commission, the top economic planning agency, on Oct. 22 following public consultations in July.

One provision of the new regulations states that price hikes for public utilities and "natural monopolies" will not be valid without hearings.

Also, the results of hearings and final decisions must be communicated to the public via official websites and the media.