



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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08 May 2007

### CHN102493.E

China: Whether a person detained at an underground church meeting would have his or her name placed in the Public Security Bureau (PSB) database

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In 26 March 2007 correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, a representative of the New York-based organization Human Rights in China (HRIC) stated that

[o]nce a person has been rounded up in a church raid, he'll be known to local officials, who will also mark him as a recidivist if he pops up in future raids. ... It is very likely that a person detained at an underground church meeting would be entered into the [Public Security Bureau (PSB)] database.

According to the Representative, China's security databases are becoming "increasingly comprehensive" (HRIC 26 Mar. 2006).

In 2003, the PSB established its "Golden Shield" program, designed to monitor and collect information on Chinese citizens (Reuters 7 Apr. 2006; see also CQ Transcriptions 15 Feb. 2006; *Legal Affairs* Jan.-Feb. 2006). "Policenet," which is part of the program, reportedly allows PSB officers to access a Chinese citizen's work history, financial information, and law enforcement records from a central database (*Legal Affairs* Jan.-Feb. 2006; see also CQ Transcriptions 19 Apr. 2006). Other types of personal information accessible to PSB officers through "Policenet" include political activities of citizens, as well as family background, internet surfing history, and fingerprints (CQ 19 Apr. 2006; *Taipei Times* 1 Sept. 2005). Photographs and other images are also apparently stored in the database (*Taipei Times* 1 Sept. 2005; see also CQ Transcriptions 15 Feb. 2006).

Since the implementation of China's "Golden Shield" program, the PSB has reportedly collected information on more than 96 percent of the country's population (Reuters 7 Apr. 2006; CQ Transcriptions 19 Apr. 2006). Sources consulted indicate that, with the exception of the province of Sichuan, the "Policenet" system has been introduced in all of China's 22 provinces (*Taipei Times* 1 Sept. 2005; see *Legal Affairs* Jan.-Feb. 2006).

Officials in the PSB's State Council Leadership Team for Preventing and Monitoring Cults Tianjin [northeast China] branch reportedly keep a database containing over 30,000 names of Falun Gong practitioners, as well as names of persons belonging to other banned religious groups (*Independent On Sunday* 10 Sept. 2006). Some of the data on these persons has apparently been drawn from the country's *hukou* registration system, which is being digitized under the "Golden Shield" program (*ibid.*).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

### References

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**Internet sites, including:** Amnesty International (AI), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), China Aid Association, Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), Dui Hua Foundation, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Factiva, Forum 18, Human Rights in China (HRIC), Human Rights Watch (HRW), United Kingdom Home Office, United States - Congressional Executive Commission on China (CECC), United States Department of State.

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