

**Refugee Review Tribunal  
AUSTRALIA**

**RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE**

**Research Response Number:** KOR31292  
**Country:** South Korea  
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Keywords: South Korea – Manmin Joongang Church – Reverend Jaerock Lee – Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation

This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

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**Questions**

- 1. Please provide a brief overview of the Manmin Joongang Church and Rev Jae Park Lee. What are its objectives, practices, etc?**
- 2. Please provide a brief overview of the events of 1999 at the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) broadcaster. Is there any information about the leaders involved in the attack on the broadcaster?**
- 3. Are there any reported incidents of violence by church members against those critical to the church (including former members)?**
- 4. Is there any information as to how the authorities respond to the activities of the church and their ability to effectively protect individuals who release information about the church?**

**RESPONSE**

- 1. Please provide a brief overview of the Manmin Joongang Church and Rev Jae Park Lee. What are its objectives, practices, etc?**

A search of the sources consulted found no reference to a Reverend Jae Park Lee in connection with the Manmin Joongang Church. There was a reference found to a Reverend Dr. Jaerock Lee, who is described on the Manmin Joong-ang Church website as “Senior Pastor, Manmin Joong-ang church”. He is also referred to as president of the United Holiness Church of Korea, the Global Christian Network (GCN), the National Evangelical Newspaper and the World Christian Doctor’s Network (WCDN). According to the website, Reverend Dr. Jaerock Lee was born in 1943 and founded “the Manmin Joong-ang Church in Seoul, Korea” in 1982. By 2006, there were “more than 94,000 members and 4,400 inland and overseas branch churches” (‘Introduction of Church – Rev. Dr. Jaerock Lee’s Profile’ (undated), Manmin Joong-ang Church website <http://www.manmin.or.kr/english/introduction/introduction.asp?sec=2> – Accessed 19 February 2007 – Attachment 1).

The Manmin Joong-ang Church website includes a number of articles on Reverend Dr. Jaerock Lee. According to the website:

Rev. Dr. Lee was born in Muan, Jeollanamdo, South Korea, in 1943.

He founded Manmin Joong-ang Church with 9 adults and 4 children in 1982 and the church has since grown rapidly.

Since the founding of Manmin, the work of divine healing has been greatly manifested through Rev. Dr. Lee.

Manmin became well known for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, continued its growth into a “mega-church” and was selected in 1993 as one of “The World’s Top 50 Churches” by the Christian World magazine of the United States.

In recognition of his work, Rev. Dr. Lee was awarded a Doctorate of Ministry from Kingsway Theological Seminary in Iowa, the U.S. in 1996.

Since 2000, Rev. Dr. Lee has been recognized as a world renowned revivalist, taking the lead in conducting overseas crusades at which hundreds of thousands and at times millions of people gathered, and his ministry was reported on CNN.

Orthodoxy and Heresy, published in June 2004 by The Union of Korean Presbyterian Churches, Inc. after many years of research, concluded that Manmin Joong-ang Church is a sound congregation based on faithful doctrines of the gospel.

Through the overseas crusades conducted in Tanzania, Argentina, Uganda, Japan, Pakistan, Kenya, the Philippines, Honduras, India, Russia, Germany, Peru, Democratic Republic of Congo and New York of the United States, Rev. Dr. Lee has brought countless souls back to the arms of God and received even greater recognition as the world’s top revivalist.

Rev. Dr. Jaerock Lee is the author of 40 books, including his testimonial memoirs Tasting Eternal Life before Death, The Message of the Cross, The Measure of Faith, Heaven I & II, Hell. Many these works have been translated into 17 languages.

Rev. Dr. Jaerock Lee currently serves as Chairman of the United Holiness Church of Korea, Founder and Chairman of the board of directors of the Allied Holiness Theological Seminary, President of Nation Evangelization Newspaper, Permanent President of the Christianity World Mission Revival Association, President of Manmin World Mission, Founder of Manmin TV Co. Ltd., Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Global Christian Network (GCN), Chairman of the Board of Directors of the World Christian Doctors Network (WCDN), and Chairman of the Board of the Directors of Manmin International Seminary (MIS) (‘Introduction of Church – Rev. Dr. Jaerock Lee’ (Undated), Manmin Joong-ang Church website <http://www.manmin.or.kr/english/introduction/introduction.asp?sec=1> – Accessed 19 February 2007 – Attachment 2).

Another article on the website includes information on “how Rev. Dr. Jaerock Lee received power from God” (‘Introduction of Church – Until Receiving the Most High Power of Creation’ (Undated), Manmin Joong-ang Church website <http://www.manmin.or.kr/english/introduction/introduction.asp?sec=4> – Accessed 19 February 2007 – Attachment 3).

Please see the Manmin Joong-ang Church website <http://www.manmin.or.kr/english/home.asp> for further information on Reverend Dr. Jaerock Lee’s life and books written by Reverend Dr. Jaerock Lee. There are also details of links to

Manmin TV, the Manmin Research Centre, Manmin Internet Magazine and the Nissi Orchestra on the website.

In relation to the Manmin Joong-ang Church, the website indicates that “under the motto “Arise, Shine”“, the Manmin Joong-ang Church “congregation that mirrors early churches as its servants and members have been one in faith and love and dedicated to national evangelization, world mission, and regional development. It has 4,600 branch churches throughout the globe and has commissioned 103 missionaries in 22 countries to fulfil the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.” The church “members frequently visit the neglected members of the community to serve them. Its Nissi Orchestra that only specializes in praise music and members of its Performing Arts Committee always magnify God with unparalleled levels of musical performances, praise, worship, and dance.” The World Christian Doctors Network was organised by the church in 2004 “to confirm the healing cases performed by the power of God with medically clarified data so that it may magnify the glory of God. And Global Christian Network was launched in 2005 to spread messages filled with life and the works of God’s power to all comers of the world through broadcasting media” (‘Introduction of Church – Manmin Joong-ang Church’ (Undated), Manmin Joong-ang Church website <http://www.manmin.or.kr/english/introduction/introduction.asp?sec=10> – Accessed 19 February 2007 – Attachment 4).

There is also information on the creed and doctrine of the Manmin Joong-ang Church on the website, including the following:

- [1. The Bible](#) – We believe the Bible is the Word of the Living God
- [2. God](#) – We believe in the Triune God
- [3. Man](#) – We believe that man was created by God, but he sinned and became corrupt by abusing his free will
- [4. Rebirth](#) – We believe that we have been reborn by Jesus Christ’s redemptive death and resurrection
- [5. Sanctification](#) – We believe that we become holy through the redemptive blood of the Lord Jesus and the baptism of the Holy Spirit
- [6. Healing](#) – We believe that God heals our physical diseases with the divine power through the redemption of the blood of Jesus Christ
- [7. Resurrection](#) – We believe that everyone who fully believes in Jesus Christ will resurrect with a glorious body the way Jesus Our Lord resurrected from death
- [8. The Second Advent of Jesus Christ](#) – We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ will come again in the body He had at the time of His Ascent
- [9. Church](#) – We believe that a church is where we worship God, enjoy the fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ, continue to train ourselves spiritually, and we will be preserved to the Last Day in order to change the world
- [10. The Millennium Kingdom](#) – We believe that Jesus Christ will descend again to Earth and establish the Millennium Kingdom of Peace here
- [11. Eternal Life and Eternal Death](#) – We believe that in the end every man will receive either an eternal life or an eternal death (‘Introduction of Church – Church Creed and Doctrine’ (Undated), Manmin Joong-ang Church website <http://www.manmin.or.kr/english/introduction/introduction.asp?sec=11> – Accessed 19 February 2007 – Attachment 5).

The World Christian Doctors Network (WCDN) India website includes information on the WCDN, Reverend Jaerock Lee, the Manmin Joong-ang Church, the Global Christian Network, books written by Reverend Jaerock Lee, the Manmin Research Centre and the Manmin International Seminary. In relation to the Manmin Joong-ang Church, the website indicates that the “Manmin Joong-ang Church has been trying to take the lead in spreading

the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world through books, seminars, crusades, high quality Christian culture, Internet broadcasting, and satellite” (‘Manmin Joong-ang Church’ in ‘Rev. Dr. Jaerock Lee’ (undated), WCDN India website <http://www.wcdnindia.org/miracle/jaerocklee/jaerocklee.htm> – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 6).

There was also reference found to what appear to be variations on the name of the Manmin Joongang Church and Reverend Jaerock Lee. An article dated 10 July 2000 describes Jae Rock Lee as “a senior pastor of the Man Min Joang Ang Church of Kuroku in Seoul” (‘S. Korean evangelist’s Uganda visit prompts cult jitters’, *Asian Economic News*, 10 July – Attachment 7).

The Apologetics Index website refers to a “Korean sect of Christianity” called the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol, headed by Lee Jae-rok. The sect was “thrown out of the Christian Council of Korea in April, 1999, over heretical claims” (‘Manmin Chungang Sungkyol’ (undated), Apologetics Index website <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/m00.html#manmin> – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 8). A translation of an official statement dated April 1999 by the Christian Council of Korea (CCK) indicates that “The Christian Council of Korea specified Lee-Jaerock of Manmin Joong-ang Holiness Church as sect on April 16 1999” (Christian Council of Korea 1999, ‘1999 Official statement of CCK regarding Manmin and Lee-Jaerock’, Anti Manmin League – Countercult Measures website, April [http://www.geocities.com/anti\\_manmin/cck\\_statement.htm](http://www.geocities.com/anti_manmin/cck_statement.htm) – Accessed 20 February 2007 – Attachment 9).

A *BBC News* article dated 12 May 1999 indicates that Lee Jae-rok was the leader of “the 65,000-strong Manmin Chungang Sungkyol sect, a Protestant denomination whose name roughly translates as All Holiness Church” (‘Korean TV airs controversial documentary’ 1999, *BBC News*, 12 May <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/342414.stm> – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 10).

An article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* dated 26 August 1999 indicates that “Rev. Lee Jae Rok” was the founder of “the All People’s Holiness Church” (Jung A, Song 1999, ‘Religion – Apocalypse Now: Hard times and the looming millennium impel increasing numbers of South Koreans to find solace in religious cults – sometimes with tragic results’, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 August – Attachment 11). The US Department of State religious freedom report on the Republic of Korea for 2005 refers to the “the All People’s Holiness Church” as a religion in that country (US Department of State 2005, *International Religious Freedom Report 2005 – Republic of Korea*, November, Section 1 – Attachment 12). The most recent US Department of State report on religious freedom in the Republic of Korea does not mention the All People’s Holiness Church (US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report 2006 – Republic of Korea*, September – Attachment 13). An article in *The Korea Herald* dated 13 May 1999 indicates that the “Manmin Chungang Songkyol Church (All People’s Holiness Church)” was “a Baptist church” (Hye-son, Shin 1999, ‘Six Baptist church members charged with interrupting public broadcasting’, *The Korea Herald*, 13 May – Attachment 14).

An *Agence France-Presse* article dated 12 May 1999 refers to Reverend Lee Jae-Rok leading “the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol Church (All Peoples Central Baptized Church)” (Park, Zeno 1999, ‘Church members storm South Korean TV station’, *Agence France-Presse*, 12 May – Attachment 15).

An editorial in the *Korea Times* dated 12 May 1999 indicates that Lee Che-rok was the pastor of the Manmin Central Church ('[Editorial] Intrusion Into MBC' 1999, *Korea Times*, 12 May – Attachment 16).

A number of articles refer to a finding by the Christian Council of Korea that Lee was heretical. As mentioned above, a translation of an official statement dated April 1999 by the Christian Council of Korea (CCK) indicates that "The Christian Council of Korea specified Lee-Jaerock of Manmin Joong-ang Holiness Church as sect on April 16 1999." The CCK described itself as "the representative [sic] protestant Christian association of Korea with which 51 Korean protestant denominations joined." The official statement sets out reasons for finding that Lee was heretical. These include that his "view on revelation", his "eschatology and the believing in the future existence", his "doctrine of sin", his "doctrine of church" and his "doctrine of salvation and the deification for Lee" were heretical (Christian Council of Korea 1999, '1999 Official statement of CCK regarding Manmin and Lee-Jaerock', Anti Manmin League – Countercult Measures website, April [http://www.geocities.com/anti\\_manmin/cck\\_statement.htm](http://www.geocities.com/anti_manmin/cck_statement.htm) – Accessed 20 February 2007 – Attachment 9). A translation of a later article from the 'Cult, Sect General Report 2004' by the CCK refers to Lee-Jaerock as "a terrible sect teacher of an extremely mystic nature, and it is concluded that the Korean churches should be warned thoroughly against him." The article also notes that "Lee-Jaerock had been specified as sect by Korean Holiness Church of Jesus (<http://www.sungkyul.org>) in May 1990" (Christian Council of Korea 2004, '2004 Annual Research Report by Christian Council of Korea Against Manmin Sect', Anti Manmin League – Countercult Measures website [http://www.geocities.com/anti\\_manmin/cck\\_research.htm](http://www.geocities.com/anti_manmin/cck_research.htm) – Accessed 20 February 2007 – Attachment 17).

The *BBC News* article dated 12 May 1999 indicates that Lee Jae-rok's "Manmin Chungang Sungkyol sect, a Protestant denomination whose name roughly translates as All Holiness Church" believes "that he can cure people by touching them". The organisation had been "thrown out of the Christian Council of Korea last month in a row over "heretical" claims" ('Korean TV airs controversial documentary' 1999, *BBC News*, 12 May <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/342414.stm> – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 10). According to an article in the *Korea Times* dated 14 May 1999, "The All Holiness Church was expelled from the Korean National Council of Churches in late April because Pastor Lee claimed to be Jesus Christ. The church claims a membership of 60,000. It is one of 3,000 Holiness Churches, a protestant denomination known only in Korea" ('Police Embark on Probing Pastor Over Raid on MBC' 1999, *Korea Times*, 14 May – Attachment 18).

The editorial in the *Korea Times* dated 12 May 1999 indicates that the Manmin Central Church had been "declared heretical by the National Council of Churches in Korea owing to its aberrant religious faith, corruption and a sex scandal surrounding the church leader" ('[Editorial] Intrusion Into MBC' 1999, *Korea Times*, 12 May – Attachment 16).

The *Asian Economic News* article dated 10 July 2000 notes that the Korean Missionary Association (KMA) in Uganda had "released a statement saying" that Jae Rock Lee, who was visiting "Uganda to hold a Christian leaders' conference and a gospel crusade", was "a cult leader and that he is not well accepted by Korean churches." According to the article:

“First of all, he was excommunicated as a cult leader from his own denomination (Church of Holiness) in May 1990 and from the Korean Christian Association (Han K Chong) on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 1999 because of his unbiblical teachings,” the statement says.

The statement also claims that on July 5, 1998, Lee said he was sinless and exempted from dying and that he and Jesus Christ are one. This allegation has also caused born-again Christians of other denominations to react angrily (‘S. Korean evangelist’s Uganda visit prompts cult jitters’, *Asian Economic News*, 10 July – Attachment 7).

The article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* dated 26 August 1999 refers to the All People’s Holiness Church founded by Reverend Lee Jae Rok as one of the “cults and sects” that had emerged in South Korea. “Fuelled by the rigours of the Asian slump, hundreds of such groups” boasted “hundreds of thousands of followers across the country.” It is stated in the article that:

All this represents the underside to South Korea’s dramatic conversion to Christian religion in the 100 years since Western missionaries first brought it to the peninsula. Today, more than 20% of the population of 45 million identify themselves as Christians, and according to a 1996 report by the Christian Council of Korea, a nationwide Presbyterian organization, the country holds the dubious distinction of hosting 405 cults and sects, including 70 that claim connections to the Christian faith (Jung A, Song 1999, ‘Religion – Apocalypse Now: Hard times and the looming millennium impel increasing numbers of South Koreans to find solace in religious cults – sometimes with tragic results’, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 August – Attachment 11).

The article also refers to the comments of a psychiatrist at Hanyang University Hospital in Seoul who said that “Cult leaders tap into the insecurity of underprivileged people with promises of instant deliverance from all sorts of trouble”. According to the article:

Lee of All People’s Holiness Church is a typical example. Since founding the church in 1982, Lee has attracted about 65,000 followers, mostly low-income factory workers. A former believer of the All People’s Holiness Church, Oh Sei Wook, a middle-aged car-rental businessman, recalls: “The Rev. Lee was really good at grasping the spiritual needs of socially alienated people” (Jung A, Song 1999, ‘Religion – Apocalypse Now: Hard times and the looming millennium impel increasing numbers of South Koreans to find solace in religious cults – sometimes with tragic results’, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 August – Attachment 11).

An article in *The Korea Herald* dated 13 May 1999 notes that “According to deserters of the church, Lee has told that only followers of his church would survive a coming Armageddon. He also preached that he has got so many revelations of God that the contents pack more than 100 pages of a notebook.” The article also indicates that “Detractors of the church say that Lee claimed that he was endowed a magical healing power from God and actually many sick people flocked to the church, having a faith in Lee’s allegation. Lee opened a small church in Kuro-dong in Seoul in 1982. Over the past 22 years, the church has fastly grown to claim more than 60,000 members” (Eun-mi, Byun 1999, ‘Raid of TV station places fervid religions under spotlight’, *The Korea Herald*, 13 May – Attachment 19).

A more recent article dated 26 July 2006 indicates that local Korean ministers in New York planned to “protest what they say are the heretical teachings of the Rev. Jae Rok Lee” at the start of Lee’s “three-day crusade”, which was to be held in Madison Square Garden. The

crusade was “expected to draw tens of thousands of people” and was to “focus on family, youth, addiction and violence.” It is stated in the article that:

Jae Rok Lee, 64, is pastor of the 150,000-member Manmin Joong-ang Church in Seoul and controls 4,500 other churches around the world, [chairman of the crusade, Ricardo] Reyes said. He says he can cure illnesses that the best doctors cannot, including HIV and cancer, according to Reyes.

The accusations against Lee, reported in the Korean media, are equally fantastic: that he has preached about UFOs, that he has sex with church members who revere him as God, and that he has justified gambling trips to Las Vegas with the need to improve church finances.

Reyes denied those accusations. Speculating on the source of the criticism, he said, “There’s only one answer – envy” (Farnam, T.W. 2006, ‘Plan to protest minister’s NY visit’, *Newsday*, 26 July – Attachment 20).

Please see the attached document for further links regarding Lee Jae-Rock and the Manmin Joong-Ang Church (‘Links relating to Lee Jae-Rock and the Manmin Joong-Ang Church’ (Undated), Angelfire.com website [http://www.angelfire.com/space/lee\\_jae-rock/links.html](http://www.angelfire.com/space/lee_jae-rock/links.html) – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 21).

## **2. Please provide a brief overview of the events of 1999 at the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) broadcaster. Is there any information about the leaders involved in the attack on the broadcaster?**

The *BBC News* article dated Wednesday 12 May 1999 indicates that on the previous day, members of the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol sect had forced a programme that was being broadcast on the “Seoul-based Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)” off air. The sect accused “the programme of distorting facts and defaming its image.” The documentary “examined claims that sect leader Lee Jae-rok could cure illness”. It is stated in the article that:

Approximately 300 followers invaded the television station on Tuesday evening, cutting power supplies five minutes after the hour-long documentary had started.

MBC officials estimated 50 protesters had overpowered security guards and broken into the control room where they cut the power. The picture was restored, but lost again on three further occasions.

An MBC spokesman said: “The programme was interrupted just five minutes after it began. We had to broadcast other programmes instead.”

Others attacked the producer of the programme, which is entitled PD-Notepad, and then held a sit-in in the lobby. Another 1,500 supporters blocked a neighbouring street with a sit-down protest.

At least 600 South Korean riot police were mobilised to end the occupation.

...Six people were arrested during the incident, which is understood to have ended without injuries. Investigators are reportedly seeking to question church leaders in relation to the incident, although it is not thought that Mr Lee is wanted.

The sect had earlier reportedly obtained a court order preventing MBC from screening a story about Mr Lee's sex life. ('Korean TV airs controversial documentary' 1999, *BBC News*, 12 May <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/342414.stm> – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 10).

MBC subsequently broadcast the programme on 12 May 1999. "Riot police were out in force as the programme went out on Wednesday to prevent further trouble" ('Korean TV airs controversial documentary' 1999, *BBC News*, 12 May <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/342414.stm> – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 10).

According to the *Agence France-Presse* article dated 12 May 1999, "Members of the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol Church (All Peoples Central Baptized Church)" had "launched an operation late Tuesday against MBC TV, one of the country's three major TV stations." The article refers to around 50 members occupying the main control room and blacking out screens. "Some 20 others entered another room and roughed up a senior producer, while hundreds more staged a sit-in protest in the lobby of the TV headquarters." There was also "a sit-down protest" by "some 2,000 others" in "the nearby street". The article indicates that:

Witnesses said the protestors included small children, young women in uniforms, middle-aged women in white gowns and men in orange-colored suits.

During a sit-down protesty [sic], the protestors displayed a cult-style unity, responding with loud "Amen" in unison to every sentence of a speech by a church official.

A platoon of riot police, who arrived at the scene five minutes into the incident, were outnumbered by the angry protestors. Police had to mobilize 600 reinforcements to end the rampage (Park, Zeno 1999, 'Church members storm South Korean TV station', *Agence France-Presse*, 12 May – Attachment 15).

A previously mentioned article in *The Korea Herald* dated 13 May 1999 indicates that the programme objected to by the members of the "Manmin Chungang Songkyol Church (All People's Holiness Church)" who raided the MBC television station, explored what MBC "called the church's pastor Lee Jae-rok's "heretical" statements and his gambling habits based on the witnesses of deserters of the church." The church had earlier "asked the Seoul District Court to keep MBC from airing the program. The court allowed MBC to air the program on the condition of deleting parts referring to Lee's sexual life" (Eun-mi, Byun 1999, 'Raid of TV station places fervid religions under spotlight', *The Korea Herald*, 13 May – Attachment 19).

Another previously mentioned article in *The Korea Herald* dated 13 May 1999 provides the following description of the raid on the MBC television station:

The incident took place around 11 p.m. Tuesday, when about 300 people arrived at the station in nine buses with Manmin Chungang Songkyol Church markings on them. The group then overpowered MBC guards and broke into the building. They occupied the lobby of the building demanding a stop to the broadcast of a program called "PD Memo", then on the air. The weekly investigative news program was scheduled to deal with the alleged corrupt activities of the church's pastor, Lee Jae-rok, for one hour beginning 11 p.m. Shortly after the program went on air, about 50 protesters forced their way into the main control room on the second floor of the broadcasting station and turned the program off the air. Network engineers reaired the program, but not until the intruders interrupted it three more times. The incident was followed by a sit-down protest outside the building by about 1,700 churchgoers who

arrived at the scene later and demanded the network to cancel the program. They accused the program of distorting facts and defaming the image of the group and their leader. Police dispatched about 3,000 riot forces in 27 units to break up the protest by 1:25 a.m. yesterday (Hye-son, Shin 1999, 'Six Baptist church members charged with interrupting public broadcasting', *The Korea Herald*, 13 May – Attachment 14).

In relation to information about the leaders involved in the attack on the broadcaster, the article notes that the secretary general of the church was amongst those “charged with interrupting public broadcasting” following the incident. According to the article, the police had sought arrest warrants for six people. “The police said that the six people including Chung Yon-ha, 39, the secretary general of a church called the Manmin Chungang Songkyol Church (All People’s Holiness Church) headquartered in Kuro-dong, southwestern Seoul, and five other church officials were charged with interrupting public broadcasting” (Hye-son, Shin 1999, 'Six Baptist church members charged with interrupting public broadcasting', *The Korea Herald*, 13 May – Attachment 14).

The *Korea Times* article dated 14 May 1999 notes that following the raid on MBC-TV by members of the All Holiness Church, police had arrested “a church member, identified only as Lee, who forced his way into the control room and threw a switch that cut the show off [sic] the air”. The police had also “sought warrants for three other church leaders” and had “been issued warrants for eight church believers” ('Police Embark on Probing Pastor Over Raid on MBC' 1999, *Korea Times*, 14 May – Attachment 18).

An article in *The Korea Herald* dated 28 August 1999 indicates that “three church officials” from the Manmin Chungang Church had been sentenced by a Seoul court “to prison terms of up to three years for their roles in the raid of a television station in May.” The article includes the names of the three church officials and also names the church’s youth leader, who was given a two and a half year suspended prison term. It is stated in the article that:

A Seoul court yesterday sentenced three church officials to prison terms of up to three years for their roles in the raid of a television station in May. The Seoul District Court handed down three-year sentences to Chu Hyung-gwon, 43, the associate pastor of the Manmin Chungang Church in southwestern Seoul and Chung Kwon-ha, 38, the church’s secretary-general. Another official, Lee Kang-jun, 34, was given two and a half years. The court also sentenced eight lay followers, including Ko Hyung-dae, 29, the church’s youth leader, to suspended prison terms of two and a half years (Min-hee, Kim 1999, 'Church officials given prison sentences for raiding TV station', *The Korea Herald*, 28 August – Attachment 22).

According to the article, “Chu and others were arrested June 11 for leading their congregation’s raid of Munwha Broadcasting Corp. in Yoido in May in protest of the program, “PD Memo,” which dealt with the alleged corrupt activities of the church pastor, Lee Jae-rok” (Min-hee, Kim 1999, 'Church officials given prison sentences for raiding TV station', *The Korea Herald*, 28 August – Attachment 22).

An article in the *Korea Times* dated 27 August 1999 refers to a Seoul court sentencing members of the All Holiness Church over the raid on the television network. The article indicates that the Seoul District Court had “sentenced Joo Hyon-kwon, 43, the church’s deputy pastor, and Chung Kwon-ha, 38, the church’s secretary-general, to three years in jail and another church official to two and a half years of imprisonment. In addition, eight religious members of the All Holiness Church were handed two and a half years in jail, suspended for three years.” The article also notes that the pastor of the church, Lee Jae-rok,

“was not among the church leaders indicted over the incident” (‘3 Church Leaders Handed Jail Terms Over Seizure of MBC-TV’ 1999, *Korea Times*, 27 August – Attachment 23).

### **3. Are there any reported incidents of violence by church members against those critical to the church (including former members)?**

As mentioned in the previous answer, a number of articles refer to members of the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol Church raiding the MBC television station in May 1999 to stop the broadcasting of a programme on the church. The *BBC News* article dated Wednesday 12 May 1999 indicates that on the previous day, members of the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol sect had forced a programme being broadcast on the MBC that the sect accused “of distorting facts and defaming its image”, off air. The article refers to protesters overpowering security guards and breaking into the control room. “Others attacked the producer of the programme, which is entitled PD-Notepad, and then held a sit-in in the lobby. Another 1,500 supporters blocked a neighbouring street with a sit-down protest.” There were six arrests. However, the article also notes that the incident was “understood to have ended without injuries” (‘Korean TV airs controversial documentary’ 1999, *BBC News*, 12 May <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/342414.stm> – Accessed 12 February 2007 – Attachment 10).

The *Agence France-Presse* article dated 12 May 1999 indicates that some 20 members of the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol Church “roughed up a senior producer” during the raid on the MBC television station to stop the broadcasting of a programme on the church. The article also notes that “A platoon of riot police, who arrived at the scene five minutes into the incident, were outnumbered by the angry protestors. Police had to mobilize 600 reinforcements to end the rampage.” The church “accused the programme of distorting facts and defaming the image of the group and their leader, Reverend Lee Jae-Rok” (Park, Zeno 1999, ‘Church members storm South Korean TV station’, *Agence France-Presse*, 12 May – Attachment 15).

The *Korea Times* article dated 14 May 1999 indicates that members of the All Holiness Church who raided MBC-TV had “overpowered guards and seized control of the lobby of the network’s building Tuesday night shortly before the program, “PD Memoir,” was to go on the air.” The article also refers to “a church member, identified only as Lee, who forced his way into the control room and threw a switch that cut the show o f [sic] the air” (‘Police Embark on Probing Pastor Over Raid on MBC’ 1999, *Korea Times*, 14 May – Attachment 18).

A search of the sources consulted did not find specific reference to other reports of incidents of violence by church members against those critical of the church (including former members).

### **4. Is there any information as to how the authorities respond to the activities of the church and their ability to effectively protect individuals who release information about the church?**

Previously mentioned articles include information regarding the response of the authorities to the raid in May 1999 by members of the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol Church on the MBC television station to stop the broadcasting of a programme on the church.

The article in *The Korea Herald* dated 28 August 1999 indicates that “three church officials” from the Manmin Chungang Church had been sentenced by a Seoul court “to prison terms of up to three years for their roles in the raid of a television station in May.” The court had “also sentenced eight lay followers” of the church “to suspended prison terms of two and a half years. In the ruling, the court rejected the church officials’ assertion that the raid, in which 2,000 congregants stormed the broadcasting company late at night, had not been premeditated. “Church leaders who are responsible for the disruption of broadcasting should deserve to assume legal responsibility,” the court said” (Min-hee, Kim 1999, ‘Church officials given prison sentences for raiding TV station’, *The Korea Herald*, 28 August – Attachment 22).

According to the *Agence France-Presse* article dated 12 May 1999, following the raid by members of the Manmin Chungang Sungkyol Church on the MBC television station, “a spokesman of the presidential palace” described “the incident as “intolerable,”” and “said “Prosecution authorities are expected to arrest and punish all those who are responsible for the raid.”” The article also notes that “A statement from the Federation of Churches urged prosecution authorities to investigate the church. The federation accused the government of failing to look into allegations of wrongdoings by religious groups” (Park, Zeno 1999, ‘Church members storm South Korean TV station’, *Agence France-Presse*, 12 May – Attachment 15).

A search of the sources consulted found no specific information regarding the ability of the authorities to effectively protect an individual who releases information about the church.

In relation to religious freedom generally, the US Department of State religious freedom report on the Republic of Korea for 2006 notes that the government sought to protect freedom of religion “and did not tolerate its abuse, either by governmental or private actors.” It is stated in the report that “The constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respected this right in practice. The Government at all levels sought to protect this right in full and did not tolerate its abuse, either by governmental or private actors” (US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report 2006 – Republic of Korea*, September, Section II – Attachment 13).

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### Internet Sources:

Apologetics Index website <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/>

### **Government Information & Reports**

Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada <http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/>

UK Home Office <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

US Department of State <http://www.state.gov/>

### **United Nations (UN)**

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd>

### **Non-Government Organisations**

Human Rights Watch <http://www.hrw.org/>

Amnesty International <http://www.amnesty.org>

### **International News & Politics**

*BBC News* <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

### **Region Specific Links**

Manmin Joong-ang Church website <http://www.manmin.or.kr/english/home.asp>  
Anti Manmin League – Countercult Measures website  
[http://www.geocities.com/anti\\_manmin/](http://www.geocities.com/anti_manmin/)

### **Search Engines**

Copernic <http://www.copernic.com/>

### Databases

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

RRT Library Catalogue

### **List of Attachments**

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9. Christian Council of Korea 1999, '1999 Official statement of CCK regarding Manmin and Lee-Jaerock', Anti Manmin League – Countercult Measures website, April [http://www.geocities.com/anti\\_manmin/ckk\\_statement.htm](http://www.geocities.com/anti_manmin/ckk_statement.htm) – Accessed 20 February 2007.

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17. Christian Council of Korea 2004, '2004 Annual Research Report by Christian Council of Korea Against Manmin Sect', Anti Manmin League – Countercult Measures website  
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