

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

Research Response Number: KOR33839
Country: South Korea
Date: 22 October 2008

Keywords: South Korea – Religious groups – Daesunjinrihui – Crime – State protection – Police

This response was prepared by the Research & Information Services 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. This research response may not, under any circumstance, be cited in a decision or any other document. Anyone wishing to use this information may only cite the primary source material contained herein.

Questions

- 1. Please provide a general background history of the Daesunjinrihui religion and its leaders.**
- 2. What are the basic beliefs of the religion?**
- 3. Is there any evidence of crimes committed by people associated with the religion, in particular relating to attacks against former members?**
- 4. If there is any such evidence, please provide examples of such incidents in the past 10 years.**
- 5. If there is any evidence of such crimes, how successful have Korean police been in prosecuting the perpetrators?**

RESPONSE

Background on transliterating/transcribing the Korean language

A 1999 report by John Holstein on the romanisation (changing the characters into those of the Roman/Latin alphabet) of the Korean language indicated that there were four different systems widely used to romanise the Korean language. Each of these systems can potentially result in different romanised spellings of Korean words; there can even be more than one way of romanising a Korean word using a single system. Holstein provides an example of how, depending on the type of system used, the Korean text 김정호 can be transcribed (writing the phonetic sound of a word using characters) as *Kim Chôngho*, *Kim Chông-ho* or *Kim Chong-ho*, and transliterated (changing the text of a word into characters from a different alphabet) as *Gim Jeong-ho* or *Kim Chengho*. As a result, a single Korean word/title may have several different romanised spellings (Holstein, J. 1999, 'The McCune-Reischauer Korean Romanization System', *Transactions*, Royal Asiatic Society, vol. 74, pp. 3-5 <http://www.koreamosaic.net/articles/mccune-reischauer-ras.pdf> – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 1).

1. Please provide a general background history of the Daesunjinrihui religion and its leaders.

No information was found in the searches conducted on the given spelling of *Daesunjinrihui*, but some references were found to the alternative spellings *Daesun Jinrihoe*, *Daesunjinrihoe*, *Daesun Chilliho*, *Taesunchilliho*, *Daesoonjinrihoe*, *Daesoon Jinrihoe* and *Taesŏn Chilliho*. Limited information could be found in English language sources on these names in general. Their similar origins, backgrounds, and beliefs suggest that they are all the same religion; however, no absolute verification of this could be found in the sources consulted. In Don Baker's 'Introduction' to Robert E. Buswell Jr.'s book on *Religions of Korea in Practice* he referred to one of these as "Taesŏn Chilliho (Daesun Jinrihoe)", suggesting that there may be different ways of spelling or transliterating/transcribing the name of the religion (Baker, D. 2007, 'Introduction' in *Religions of Korea in Practice*, (ed) Buswell Jr., R. E., Princeton University Press, New Jersey, p. 29 <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i8310.pdf> – Accessed 2 October 2008 – Attachment 2).

There are two main websites for the religion, <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> (for *Daesunjinrihoe*) and <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> (for *Daesoonjinrihoe*). Both websites are available in English, and provide almost identical histories, and cite similar dates for significant events. For example, <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> dated the ascendancy of "The Almighty", Kang Jeungsan Sangje, as 24 June 1909, whilst <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> also dated the ascendancy of their "Lord and Creator", Gucheon Sangje (cited elsewhere on the website as Gang Jeungsan Gucheon Sangje), as 24 June 1909. No definitive information could be found on why there are two different websites for the religion (albeit with the different spellings of their leaders and some other small discrepancies). It should also be noted that these websites appear to be administered by practitioners of the religion and, as such, care should be exercised when using the information provided on these sites ('History' (undated), *Daesunjinrihoe* website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 3; 'The History' (undated), *Daesoonjinrihoe* website <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 4).

Leadership

Sources indicate that Pak Han'gyŏng (different spellings/transliterations/transcriptions are provided in different sources) was the founder and leader of the religion from 1969 until his death in 1996. Following his death, the religion split into a number of factions and no specific information could be found in the searches conducted on the current leadership (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, 'Taesunchilliho: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion', in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, pp. 81-82 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

Massimo Introvigne noted in a book review on *Religions of Korea in Practice* that *Daesun Jinrihoe* was "promoted by Hangyong Pak, 1917-1996" (possibly an alternative spelling/transliteration/transcription of Han Kyung Park) (Introvigne, M. (undated), 'Religions of Korea in Practice: A Summa on Korea's New (and Old) Religions', CESNUR:

Center for Studies on New Religions website <http://www.cesnur.org/2006/korea.htm> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 5).

John Jorgenson also noted in an article from 2001 that “Pak Han’gyông (1917-1996)” (possibly another alternative spelling/transliteration/transcription of Han Kyung Park) was the “leader or tojôn” of *Taesunchillihoe* (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’, in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, p. 79 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurllogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

The website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> provides an account of the origin of the religion on their ‘History’ page. This notes that Park Wudang Dojeon (possibly another alternative spelling/transliteration/transcription of Han Kyung Park) established *Daesunjinrihoe* in 1969 (the same year that Jorgenson argues Pak Han’gyông established the religion that was later named *Taesunchillihoe*), but there is a one-year discrepancy in the date of his death (or ‘ascendancy’) – recorded as 1995 on the <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> website, and 1996 in other sources (‘History’ (undated), Daesunjinrihoe website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 3; Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’, in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, p. 79 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurllogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6; Introvigne, M. (undated), ‘Religions of Korea in Practice: A Summa on Korea’s New (and Old) Religions’, CESNUR: Center for Studies on New Religions website <http://www.cesnur.org/2006/korea.htm> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 5).

The website <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> also provides an account of the religion on their ‘The History’ page. This argues that “In March 6 1958, He [Doju Jo Jeongsan] transmitted Religious Orthodoxy to Dojeon Bak Hangyeong [possibly another alternative spelling/transliteration/transcription of Han Kyung Park] and ascended to His throne in Heaven”. This website makes no mention of the date of Dojeon Bak Hangyeong’s death, but notes that “the royal burial site of Dojeon, Bak Wudang has special meaning to doins [followers/practitioners]” (‘The History’ (undated), Daesoonjinrihoe website <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 4; ‘Geumgangsân Toseong Suryeon Dojang’ (undated), Daesoonjinrihoe website <http://eng.idaesoon.or.kr/Toseong.htm> – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 7).

John Jorgenson argued that the “demise” of Pak in 1996 led to further leadership disputes and the subsequent division of the religion into a number of factions. Whilst the number of factions and the names of their respective leaders are unclear, Jorgenson mentioned at least three factions of the religion: “Kyông Sôkkyu” (likely named after Kyông Sôkkyu, Park’s brother-in-law), “Yi Yujong” (likely named after Yi Yujong, who reportedly had some religious followers in July 1999), and “An Yông’il” (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’, in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, pp. 82-83

<http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

Background

The ‘History’ pages on the websites for *Daesunjinrihoe* and *Daesoonjinrihoe* both provide similar backgrounds to the religion, though the spellings of key words differ slightly. These pages indicate that the religion had its origins in the experiences of Kang Jeungsan Sangje/Gucheon Sangje. Sangje was ostensibly a “Lord and Creator” who had come down to earth incarnated as a human being to “save all human and spiritual beings” through the religious principle of *Daesunjinri/Daesoonjinri*. Sangje purportedly “ascended to Heaven” in 1909. In 1917 Jo Joeongsan Doju/Doju Jo Jeongsan “attained spiritual enlightenment” and “realized the Truth of Daesunjinri”. Doju reportedly established the religious order *Mugeukdo* in 1925. Both websites note that Doju “ascended” on 6 March 1958 and “handed down the religious order” to Park Wudang Dojeon/Dojeon Bak Hangyeong. Dojeon reportedly received this religious order, and in 1969 reorganised the structure of the system and established *Daesunjinrihoe/Daesoonjinrihoe* (‘History’ (undated), Daesunjinrihoe website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 3; ‘The History’ (undated), Daesoonjinrihoe website <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 4).

John Jorgenson provided another background to *Taesunchillihoe* in his 2001 article ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’. Jorgenson argues that Cho Ch’ôlje (possibly an alternative spelling/transliteration/transcription of Jo Joeongsan Doju/Doju Jo Jeongsan) formed the religion *Mugûkdo* in 1921. This was later modified to *Mugûktaedo* in 1925, and “reactivated” as *T’aegûkdo* in the 1940s. In 1958, Cho Ch’ôlje died, and as he had not nominated a successor, the religion split into two factions, the “Old faction” led by Cho Yôngnae (Cho Ch’ôlje’s son), and the “New faction” led by Pak Han’gyông. In 1969 Pak Han’gyông established a new religion, and the name *Taesunchillihoe* was adopted for this religion in 1972 (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’, in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, pp. 80-81

<http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

Jorgenson argues that “intimations of secrecy, violence, exploitation, predictions of an apocalypse, and fights with rivals continuously reappear as a pattern throughout the genealogy of Taesunchillihoe”, and “Taesunchillihoe’s success ... can partly be explained by its financial astuteness, the exploitation of the religious zeal of its members, the positive image it has cultivated by charitable works, the manipulation of academic prestige, the play on nationalism, the repeated promises of a coming utopia after an ever-imminent apocalypse, the refusal to reply to criticism in order to garner sympathy, and the reclusiveness of its leader who thereby cultivated an aura of sanctity”. Jorgenson further adds that according to a “decennial survey by the Chosôn ilbo, in 1995 Taesunchillihoe had 67,632 believers, making it the sixth largest religion in South Korea after Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, Confucianism and Wôn Buddhism” (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’, in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium*:

Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, pp. 77, 79, 85
<http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurllogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

A review written by Massimo Introvigne to Robert E. Buswell Jr's book, *Religions of Korea in Practice*, also provides some brief information on *Daesun Jinrihoe*. Introvigne argued that there are some two hundred new religious movements (NRMs) in South Korea:

Of these, the most successful in South Korea is ... Chungsan'kyo, which believes that its founder Chungsan Kang (1871-1909) [possibly an alternative spelling/transliteration/transcription of Kang Jeungsan Sangje] was actually God the Almighty incarnated in human form. Although Chungsan'kyo splintered into various branches after Kang's death, two of them (**Daesun Jinrihoe**, promoted by **Hangyong Pak**, 1917-1996, as a splinter of the branch T'aegukto, which had been founded by Ch'olche Cho, 1895-1958 [possibly an alternative spelling/transliteration/transcription of Jo Joeongsan Doju or Cho Ch'ôlje], after he had a vision of Kang in 1917; and Jeungsando, which claims a lineage reaching back to Kang's family) claim each a membership in excess of six millions (Introvigne, M. (undated), 'Religions of Korea in Practice: A Summa on Korea's New (and Old) Religions', CESNUR: Center for Studies on New Religions website <http://www.cesnur.org/2006/korea.htm> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 5).

It should be noted that Jorgenson argued that claims by *Taesunchillihoe* on the number of their members are "Undoubtedly pious exaggerations" (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, 'Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion', in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, p. 77
<http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurllogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

2. What are the basic beliefs of the religion?

The websites for *Daesunjinrihoe* and *Daesoonjinrihoe* both outline some of the basic beliefs of the religion. For example, the 'Daesunjinrihoe' page on the <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> website highlights the religion's aim to "save the world and build utopia on this earth by practicing the precept of Sangje (The Almighty) to restore the universal conscience to its original condition". The 'Outline of Religious Doctrine' page on this site also displays the "Tenet", "Creed", and "Goal" of the religion and is supplied at Attachment 9. The *Daesoonjinrihoe* website also provides some information on its 'The Object of Belief' page and is provided at Attachment 10 ('Daesunjinrihoe' (undated), Daesunjinrihoe website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 8; 'Outline of Religious Doctrine' (undated), Daesunjinrihoe website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 9; 'The Object of Belief' (undated), Daesoonjinrihoe website <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 10).

Don Baker summarised the beliefs of *Chillihoe/Daesun Jinrihoe* in his 'Introduction' to Robert E. Buswell Jr.'s book *Religions of Korea in Practice*:

Taejonggyo goes even farther in its assertion of a leading role for Korea in modern religion. Because Taejonggyo worships Tan'gun, the mythical ancestor of the Korean people, it is able to claim that God is a Korean. That belief is shared by both Ch'ungsando (Jeungsando) and **Taesŏn Chilliho (Daesun Jinriho)**, though they do not worship Tan'gun as the Supreme Deity. **Instead, they worship Kang Ch'ungsan, whom they believe is the incarnation in human form on earth of the Supreme Lord Above. Ch'ungsando and Taesŏn Chilliho, though they worship the same God, disagree on many of the details of what their God taught in the first decade of the twentieth century, when he walked on Korean soil. However, they are alike in at least one important aspect. Neither Ch'ungsando nor Taesŏn Chilliho shows much Christian influence in their doctrines, their architecture, or their practices. Neither their services nor their worship halls look anything like Christian services or churches. They do not sing hymns or sit in pews. Instead, they chant sacred mantras taught by their God. Both religious organizations have grown rapidly in the last two decades of the twentieth century, a possible sign of greater self-confidence among the indigenous Korean religious traditions** (Baker, D. 2007, 'Introduction' in *Religions of Korea in Practice*, (ed) Buswell Jr., R. E., Princeton University Press, New Jersey, p. 30 <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i8310.pdf> – Accessed 2 October 2008 – Attachment 2).

John Jorgenson argued that the secrecy surrounding *Taesunchilliho* has made research difficult, but he provided some information on the basic beliefs and practices of the religion:

On 8th April 1984, the KBS programme "Pursuit (ch'ujŏk) 60 Minutes" stated that **Taesunchilliho members believed that as the year was kapja in the 60-year cycle, the "apocalypse" or kaebyŏk (for this idea, Jorgensen 1999) would arrive immediately, and so they abandoned study and jobs, extorted money, broke up families by leaving to join the order, and disappearing with the family savings.** Believers reportedly made statements such as, "When the Latter Heaven arrives, body temperatures will rise to 3,600 degrees... and all will ride on clouds and fly up into heaven" (CSD 1996: 74-75). Similar apocalyptic events were predicted for 1988 or 1989, with a similar threat of a malicious ki descending to melt bodies, something avoidable only by joining Taesunchilliho (Choi 2000: 85; Ch'oe 1998: 235). As with many of the allegations of criminality, these predictions and their failures were hushed up.

...One of the reasons for the success of Taesunchilliho lies in its ability to obtain wealth, whether it was through appropriating the funds amassed by Cho and the T'aegŭkdo believers, and later through the tithes on members, and possibly even by extortion. Some members live like monks or nuns, giving all their labour for free, working diligently for long hours on minimum sleep. Pak recommended the diminution of sleep in order to devote more time to practice, while encouraging frugality, supposedly by personal example. He stated that members should make donations to charity even when poor. The massive construction projects have been completed in extraordinarily short periods (Mun 1997: 51, 77, 83, 25) because the worker members lived on site, slept as little as two or three hours per night, and took hardly any breaks. **I was told at Yŏju that this was due to divine energy (ki) channeled from Heaven into the laborers.** Even ordinary believers are expected to practice nightly chanting from 1.00 to 2.00 am, and at least at the Kunja chapter where I stayed, rise at 6.00 am to begin chanting again at 7.00am. At Tongdŭchŏn I was told in February 1997 that the construction workers at the hospital were paid virtually nothing, and the area was strictly guarded.

...It provides an appealing mixture of the familiar, "Korean" and shamanistic or ancient with the modern (pseudo)-scientific. Explications are made by compounding popular notions of ki together with science, and so the vaguely familiar symbols and half-understood science give verisimilitude for the young. Taoist immortals, figures from the Sino-Korean past, explanations of the 28 lunar mansions and five physical

phases are found juxtaposed with modern medical facilities and computers. The spiritism and New Age theories found in Japanese NRMs surfaces here also (Young 1990: 29-33). Globalisation is resisted and native identity heightened by rules requiring the wearing of traditional Korean dress, which symbolises peace (Mun 1997: 95), for all major ceremonies and in the sanctums such as Yôju, where no cameras are permitted. Watches and glasses are forbidden here and at initiation rituals, for such items prevent the descent of correct ki from Heaven into the performers (personal observation). Like many NRMs, the spirits are very important, as is the use of incantations and the theory of the physical transformation of the body via these practices.

... While it is a syncretic religion based on a chaotic jumble of the incoherent or symbolic aphorisms and deeds of Kang Ilsun, Taesunchillihoe has, unlike most of the Chûngsan NRMs whose scriptures follow the biographical and chronological collection of unconnected aphorisms, abandoned that approach in its Chôn'gyông. Rather, it retained the chronological approach in the first three chapters and then adopted a thematic approach in the last four (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, 'Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion', in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, pp. 79, 83-84 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

A July 2005 report in *Business Korea* also commented on the beliefs of the religion:

As an ethnic religion, the root of Daesoonjinrihoe can be traced back to Kang Jeung-San Sangje (the Supreme God, 1871-1909). According to the religious myth, Kang Jeung-San Sangje, the owner of the supreme wisdom, infinite grace and great power superintends the whole universe. After itinerating and looking carefully at the earth, he came down to the human world, adjusted the deviated order of the universal system, and opened the way to go to the Infinite Paradise of Heaven after one's death.

His religious tenets can be categorized into Eumyanghapdeok the integrated virtue of Yin and Yang, Shininjohwa the harmony between Spirits and Men, Haewonsangsaeng reliving grudge and living together and Doton-gjinkyunga perfected state of spirit and body. Realizing the four tenets, all the eternal grudges could be dispelled and relieved thus the world finally could become a paradise without eternal conflict. That is the very truth of His Great Itineration.

Respecting the law of Sangje, Jo Jeong-San Doju (1895-1958) followed up Sangje's intention with the completion of his 50 years of religious austerities and created Mookeukdo in 1925. Later it changed to the name to Taekeukdo in 1948 and finally in 1969, Park Han-Kyeong who succeeded Sangje's religious orthodox, set up Daesoonjinrihoe.

The phrase of Daesoon comes from the following Sangje's works. According to Kyoum (the Holy Bible of Daesoonjinrihoe) 1-9, it says that when Sangje was in Kucheon (the Highest Heaven), the Holy Spirits, Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas asked that the only Sangje could set the World properly. Then Sangje came in at Cheonkyetop in Daebeopkook (Nation of the Great Law in the West), itinerated and watched Smakye carefully (the whole universe of the Heaven, the Earth, and the Human Beings), and finally arrived at the Eastern point...?

In fact, the name of Daesoon comes from the meaning of Samkye-daesoon and Kaebyukgongsa (opening the new Heaven and the new Earth). Consequently, Daesoonjinrihoe's tenet is the truth that Sangje conducts the great Daesoon. In addition, the religious order is established to accomplish the goal of the propagation of the virtue

throughout the world, redemption of all human beings, and the construction of an earthly paradise through reconstructing the human beings and opening the new spiritual world.

In the core of the religious doctrines, it is said that by reaching the right stage of Do, the religious truth in Daesoon, one can transcend Samkye, understand every part of all nature, and have the omnipotent power everywhere. This is the perfected state of soul, also realizing the real truth, says Daesoonjinrihoe ('Yeoju Bonbu Dojang, the Kernel of Daesoonjinrihoe' 2005, *Business Korea*, 1 July – Attachment 11).

3. Is there any evidence of crimes committed by people associated with the religion, in particular relating to attacks against former members?

Little information could be found in the searches conducted on crimes committed by people associated with the religion, or on attacks against former members. John Jorgenson made some comments on “allegations of criminality” in his 2001 paper:

...Research is hampered on Taesunchillihoe because it provides limited access to external observers, and much information has to be gleaned from apostates, rival NRMs, written materials (not all readily available), media reports, and full participation, which can only be achieved by membership. **Although it does not murder people who attempt to desert**, as was the case with Aum Shinrikyô (Reader 2000), **such allegations have been aired in the press against its precursor, T'aegûkdo, in March 1965, and against four Taesunchillihoe members for beating to death a member because he was drunk (CSD 1996: 44, 48, 58), and I have heard such rumours. A pattern of alleged extortion, theft, embezzlement and violence involving thugs against members and local residents opposed to the building of Taesunchillihoe halls in their area can be found in the press and in attacks by its rival NRM, Chûngsando.**

...As with many of the allegations of criminality, these predictions and their failures were hushed up. Virtually no mentions of them were made in the religion's literature, and vague responses were given by leaders.

...Such secrecy and seeming deceit has made it difficult to trace the inner history of this NRM. Even the repetitive hagiography of Pak Han'gyông (1917-1996), the leader or tojôn, by Mun Ilsôk is devoid of much other than pious tales, supposedly due to Pak's “humble desire” not to make himself known outside of Taesunchillihoe circles.

...Such intimations of secrecy, violence, exploitation, predictions of an apocalypse, and fights with rivals continuously reappear as a pattern throughout the genealogy of Taesunchillihoe.

...In 1965, Park violently chased out a former tojôn, Yi Yunsôp, and he was denounced for leading a terror campaign. Pak was questioned by police about the violence, the financial books were examined, **and a few days later questions were asked about the death of 76 members.** Pak was eventually released for lack of evidence or because corrupt politicians wanted his followers' votes. Again, Pak was denounced as leading a pro-communist group, was arrested, and released because he supposedly paid huge bribes, and the accusers were charged with libel. In 1961, Pak bought off the gendarmes of the new military regime with massive quantities of gold, and so his court-martial was suspended (CSD 1996: 25, 44, 48-50) (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, 'Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion', in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, pp. 78-79, 81

<http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

Jorgenson also argued that the leadership challenges following Pak's death in 1996 eventually led to violent in-fighting between factions, and that one reason for this "is the 'mafia family'-like structure" of the religion. One incident of violence was also reported in an *Agence France Presse* report from January 2000. For more on this see the response to question 4 in this Research Response (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, 'Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion', in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, p. 82 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6; 'S.Korean cult infighting leaves 170 injured over two days' 2000, CESNUR: Center for Studies on New Religions website, source: *Agence France Presse*, 7 January http://www.cesnur.org/testi/Y2K_001.htm – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 12).

4. If there is any such evidence, please provide examples of such incidents in the past 10 years.

The only record of criminal activity committed by practitioners of the religion in the past ten years that could be found in the searches conducted is that relating to the violent in-fighting between factions in the years following the death of Pak in 1996. Jorgenson argues that "war began at 2.15am, 16th July 1999, when a group of 1,500 invaded the Yôju headquarters and drove out Yi Yujong and 100 of his followers ... By 4 pm, about 3,000 members formed two warring factions in a face-off, and 15 squads of riot police intervened ... At dawn, 6th January 2000, the Yi Yujong faction tried to forcibly eject that of Kyông Sôkkyu, Pak's brother-in-law, from Yôju, after the failure of a court application for a temporary evacuation. Barricades were made with overturned buses and cranes, molotov cocktails were thrown. Shouting "thief," the invaders, armed with clubs, charged, but the riot police repelled them. The next day, both sides even rallied children, with the occupiers bringing 2,500 supporters into the compound" (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, 'Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion', in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, p. 82 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

An *Agence France Press* report from 7 January 2000, provided on the CESNUR website, noted:

Some 70 people were injured Friday as rival factions of a South Korean religious cult battled each other with petrol bombs and metal pipes here, witnesses said

About 500 followers of the **Daesoon Jinri Hoe** cult clashed with an equal number of rival members for the second straight day despite a massive police presence at their provincial headquarters on the southern outskirts of Seoul.

The fight occurred as about 4,000 members of one faction tried to fend off 3,000 followers of a rival clique who attempted to storm the headquarters building as an internal feud turned violent

“They fought like devils, hurling petrol bombs, firing gas launchers, wielding metal pipes as one faction, backed by heavy trucks, attempted to break through barricades set up by the other faction,” a witness said here

The sprawling compound of the cult was reminiscent of a battle zone late Friday. An overturned bus, gutted trucks and shards of glass bottles that had once been petrol bombs littered the freezing ground

About 6,000 riot police were standing guard at the premises when the clash -- in which reports said around 70 people were injured -- occurred (‘S.Korean cult infighting leaves 170 injured over two days’ 2000, CESNUR: Center for Studies on New Religions website, source: *Agence France Presse*, 7 January http://www.cesnur.org/testi/Y2K_001.htm – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 12).

This *Agence France Presse* report noted that Park Han-Kyung died in 1969, but this may be a misprint or misinformation as it is far from the date (1995/1996) recorded in other sources and is the same year that Park reportedly established *Taesunchillihoe* (1969) (‘S.Korean cult infighting leaves 170 injured over two days’ 2000, CESNUR: Center for Studies on New Religions website, source: *Agence France Presse*, 7 January http://www.cesnur.org/testi/Y2K_001.htm – Accessed 7 October 2008 – Attachment 12; Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’, in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, pp. 81-82 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

Jorgenson also noted in his 2001 paper that there were reports of allegations of other forms of criminality, such as “extortion, theft, embezzlement and violence”; however, no specific examples of these could be found in the English-language searches conducted (Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, ‘Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion’, in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia, p. 78 <http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008 – Attachment 6).

5. If there is any evidence of such crimes, how successful have Korean police been in prosecuting the perpetrators?

No information could be found in the searches conducted on the success of the Korean police in prosecuting practitioners of the religion who perpetrated crimes.

Several previous RRT Research Responses have explored the effectiveness of the Korean National Police Agency (KNPA or NPA) in relation to cults and gangs.

RRT *Research Response KOR33212* from April 2008 explored cults and gangs in South Korea. Question 3 of this response briefly addressed the effectiveness of the South Korean police force, but this found no information on whether the police would investigate an individual's claims of being threatened with violence by cults (RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response KOR33212*, 29 April – Attachment 13).

Question 2 of RRT *Research Response KOR33213* from April 2008 addressed the effectiveness of the South Korean police force against organised crime, and this may be of interest (RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response KOR33213*, 22 April – Attachment 14).

List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:

Google <http://www.google.com.au/>

All the web <http://www.alltheweb.com/>

Altavista <http://www.altavista.com/>

Ask <http://www.ask.com/>

Exalead <http://www.exalead.com/search>

Yahoo! <http://search.yahoo.com/>

Government Information & Reports

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

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

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

Non-Government Organisations

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

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

International News & Politics

BBC News <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/index.shtml>

Databases:

BACIS (DIAC Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

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

RRT Library Catalogue

List of Attachments

1. Holstein, J. 1999, 'The McCune-Reischauer Korean Romanization System', *Transactions*, Royal Asiatic Society, vol. 74
<http://www.koreamosaic.net/articles/mccune-reischauer-ras.pdf> – Accessed 7 October 2008.

2. Baker, D. 2007, 'Introduction' in *Religions of Korea in Practice*, (ed) Buswell Jr., R. E.), Princeton University Press, New Jersey
<http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i8310.pdf> – Accessed 2 October 2008.
3. 'History' (undated), Daesunjinrihoe website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008.
4. 'The History' (undated), Daesoonjinrihoe website <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> – Accessed 7 October 2008.
5. Introvigne, M. (undated), 'Religions of Korea in Practice: A Summa on Korea's New (and Old) Religions', CESNUR: Center for Studies on New Religions website
<http://www.cesnur.org/2006/korea.htm> – Accessed 1 October 2008.
6. Jorgenson, J. A. 2001, 'Taesunchillihoe: factors in the rapid rise of a Korean new religion', in *Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium: Proceedings of the Second Biennial Conference Korean Studies Association of Australasia*, (ed) Cho, Y., The Korean Studies Association of Australasia
<http://www98.griffith.edu.au/dspace/publisherurilogger?itemId=9503&uri=http%3A%2F%2Farts.monash.edu.au%2Fkorean%2Fksaa%2Fconference%2F06johnjorgenson.pdf> – Accessed 1 October 2008.
7. 'Geumgangsán Toseong Suryeon Dojang' (undated), Daesoonjinrihoe website
<http://eng.idaesoon.or.kr/Toseong.htm> – Accessed 7 October 2008.
8. 'Daesunjinrihoe' (undated), Daesunjinrihoe website <http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008.
9. 'Outline of Religious Doctrine' (undated), Daesunjinrihoe website
<http://www.daesun.or.kr/> – Accessed 1 October 2008.
10. 'The Object of Belief' (undated), Daesoonjinrihoe website <http://www.idaesoon.or.kr/> – Accessed 7 October 2008.
11. 'Yeoju Bonbu Dojang, the Kernel of Daesoonjinrihoe' 2005, *Business Korea*, 1 July. (FACTIVA)
12. 'S.Korean cult infighting leaves 170 injured over two days' 2000, CESNUR: Center for Studies on New Religions website, source: *Agence France Presse*, 7 January
http://www.cesnur.org/testi/Y2K_001.htm – Accessed 7 October 2008.
13. RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response KOR33212*, 29 April.
14. RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response KOR33213*, 22 April.