

State secrets in China need definition

by UPI

BEIJING - Chinese citizens can be imprisoned for revealing a state secret but it seems what constitutes a state secret in China is a secret itself.

According to New York-based Human Rights in China, the world's most populous country needs to come up with a clear definition of what it considers to be a state secret, The Los Angeles Times reported.

In a study released Tuesday, Human Rights in China said citizens in China have been thrown into jail for mailing newspaper clippings, defending displaced tenants and writing a doctoral thesis using 50-year-old library records.

A Chinese woman whose son was imprisoned for revealing state secrets said the lack of a clear definition means they can call anything they want a state secret, the Times said.

"It's a conspiracy. They can use these at will to punish people," Gao Quinsheng said in the article.

Human Rights in China said China's current secrecy laws grew out of regulations dating back to 1951.

They have since become the last line of defense for the post-Mao Communist Party in its efforts to maintain control.

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