

China tells police to use social media

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File photo shows policemen in China surfing the Internet. China has ordered police nationwide to make more use of social networking sites to ensure greater openness and "dispel misunderstandings", the state Xinhua news agency said Tuesday.

China has ordered police nationwide to make more use of social networking sites to ensure greater openness and "dispel misunderstandings", the state Xinhua news agency said Tuesday.

Huang Ming, vice-minister of public security, delivered the message at a conference on Monday aimed at helping [law enforcement officials](#) to use China's hugely popular microblogs -- sites similar to Twitter -- the report said.

"Internet users are one of the major groups of our society and they are not satisfied," Huang posted on the Beijing Public Security Bureau

microblog.

"Public security microblogging should gradually cross the country to each province and city and form the backbone of public security."

China's online population -- the world's largest at 485 million -- is increasingly turning to Internet services such as the microblogs for information, instead of relying on news from the country's official media.

Microblogs, known as weibos, have proved an effective public platform to report governmental and police malpractice as traditional media outlets such as newspapers remain more easily controlled by government authorities.

The recent case of a Chinese tourist who was dragged from his hotel room in [Beijing](#) and savagely beaten, reportedly by security staff local officials had hired, provoked outrage among [Internet users](#).

Huang said China's police had opened more than 4,000 accounts and almost 5,000 officers nationwide were using microblogs.

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