

Recent Incidents of Torture

Compiled by BPSOS

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Following are detailed accounts of torture from the interviews conducted by BPSOS.

(1) Tran Thanh Tien, subjected to torture at Cam Le District Police Station, Da Nang

On May 4, 2010 as the police cracked down on the mourners attending a parishioner's funeral in Con Dau Parish, Tien fled to his uncle's home. The police crashed the fences and broke down the entrance door and captured Tien as well as others who were in hiding in the house. As he was led to the police truck some 500 meters away, every 10 -15 meters Tien was kicked and beaten at his legs by two police officers standing on each side. People dressed in civilian clothes and with their faces covered attacked and beat Tien up. Tien was then handcuffed behind his back and pushed onto the police truck. He was made to lie face down to the truck's floor bed. At the District Police Station, other parishioners and Tien were lined up face against the wall. The police officers took turn to beat the detainees in the chest, sides and legs. Tien was then brought into the investigating room for further torture. He was beaten until unconscious; his interrogators threw water over his face to wake him up. A police officer then beat him in the back with a stack of chairs and broke the chairs. As he refused to admit to false allegations, he was repeatedly called in for interrogation and forced to write a self-incriminating report. A police lieutenant named Thanh handcuffed one of his hands to the upper rim of the interrogation room's window, causing him to stand on his toes. This interrogator used batons, electric rods to beat him. The interrogator said: "I will break you. Look at me well and remember my face in case you want revenge." On another day, a police officer with civilian clothes ordered Tien to undress. Pointing to the bruises on his body, this officer asked what happened. When Tien answered that he was beaten by the police, this officer beat him up badly and screamed: "Which police that beats you? I am a civilian, you bastard. I'll beat you to death!" On the seventh day he succumbed and signed the statement prepared by the police. He was released but ordered to not leave home or seek medical care.

Tien was recently resettled to the US.

(2) Nguyen Lieu, subjected to torture at Cam Le District Police Station, Da Nang

On May 4, 2010, for participating in the funeral of a fellow Con Dau parishioner, he was beaten with an electric baton and then taken to the district police station. He was pulled off the truck and ordered to stand face to the wall. A police officer kicked him and punched him on the head. During interrogation he was beaten until he fell unconscious. Each time he passed out, his interrogator poured water over his face and interrogated him again. He was physically assaulted

until he signed a statement admitting to the police's allegation of causing public disturbance and interference with officers on duty. He was released the next day at 10pm. He suffered multiple injuries and could not walk for days but was ordered not to seek medical care.

Lieu was recently resettled to the US.

(3) Tran Thanh Lam, subjected to torture at Cam Le District Police Station, Da Nang

On May 4, 2010 he was arrested for participating in the funeral of a Con Dau resident. He was beaten severely on the head and then transported to the county police station. There he was tortured by police officers during the interrogations. They beat him with batons and kicked him in his back, belly and hips. Interrogation sessions sometimes lasted from morning to evening. The interrogators told him to admit guilt and beat him when he did not. They told him to lie down and beat him on his back. He threw up blood and his body was all covered with bruises. He was not allowed a family visit until three months later when he was transferred to a larger prison in Hoa Khanh. During a visit by his wife, he asked her to hire a lawyer. The police did not allow him to hire a lawyer and he was sentenced to 12 months of suspended sentence and 12 months of probation.

(4) Tran Thanh Viet, subjected to torture at District Police Station, Da Nang

On May 4, 2010 he was arrested for participating in the funeral of a Con Dau parishioner. Police officers beat him and dragged him to the transport truck. He was beaten badly along the way and his body was battered. At the police station, he was subjected to further beatings during interrogation sessions. Two police officers stood on each side and one in front of him, recording his statement. They used batons to beat him on the head and body, and kicked his sides and back until he became unconscious. When he regained consciousness, they forced him to sign in a prepared statement to admit guilt that he did not commit such as assaulting the police. As punishment for his refusal to admit guilt, he was placed in solitary confinement in a cell with no light and with poor ventilation for 3 months and 9 days. He was beaten every 2 or 3 days. He was not allowed to hire a lawyer. He was sentenced to 12 months of suspended sentence and 12 months of probation.

(5) Over 60 Con Dau parishioners subjected to torture at Cam Le District Police Station, Da Nang

According to the above eye-witnesses, most of these detainees were subjected to brutal forms of torture including beatings, electric shocks, humiliation (stripped naked and photographed), death threats, among others.

(6) Nguyen Thi Huan, subjected to torture at the detention center of Tay Ho District, Ha Noi

A member of the Dân Oan (*Victims of Social Injustice*) movement, she participated in sit-ins since 2003. In April 2009 she was arrested and on May 17, 2010 sentenced to one year of imprisonment for creating “public disturbance.” On June 9, 2009, the interrogator named Vu The Anh, around 30, hanged Huan to the ceiling and used a slipper to beat her at the face and on the head and body. As he beat her, Anh said: “You want justice? Here is justice.” After several hours, Huan coughed out blood and suffered a broken facial bone. She continues to experience pain in her head and chest.

(7) Ho Thi Bich Khuong subjected to torture at the K2 Detention Center, Camp 6, Thanh Chuong, Nghe An

A member of the *Victims of Social Injustice* movement, Khuong was arrested and incarcerated on Sep 12, 2008. Three male police officers used batons to beat her on her back, legs, and knees. As she fell down, they stepped on her face with their cleated shoes. She passed out, urinated and suffered internal bleeding, which lasted for ten days. Her legs became so swollen that she could not wear pants. She was denied medical care and medication. She was held in solitary confinement for 8 months.

After her release from prison, Khuong continued to pursue social justice. The evening of June 14, 2010 she was again arrested by the police. At the police station she was beaten on the head and kicked at the face repeatedly throughout the night and was then dumped at a public park the following day. She suffered many bruises and injuries.

(8) K’ Theo subjected to torture at police station in Moc Bai, Tay Ninh

A Montagnard in Lam Dong, he signed up to go to Malaysia as a migrant worker. There he suffered severe exploitation. Upon return to his home village in Lam Dong, Vietnam he spoke out about his experience. The public security police took him into custody and beat him up. He later managed to escape to Thailand, where he joined the Vietnam Forum for Democracy. Late last year, the UNHCR rejected both his claims and appeal, and took away his asylum seeker certificate (UNCHR Asylum Seeker Certificate NI – 23249). A UNCHR official told him that since he knew how to come to Thailand from Vietnam, he should be able to find his way home in safety.

As he could not survive and faced the constant risk of being caught by the Thai police, he decided to return to Vietnam in late 2010. He called home to Lam Dong and asked his sister to pick him up at the bus station in HCM City. On December 10, 2010 he left for Vietnam. His sister showed up at the bus station but could not find him. His father contacted the police in Lam Dong but was not given any information of his whereabouts. Later on his family learned from a news article in a government publication that he had been arrested and taken into custody by the police.

It turned out that he was captured by the Vietnamese public security police at Moc Bai, Tay Ninh, along with another Montagnard, K' Khiep. The police accused him of escaping Vietnam to join the reactionaries in opposing the government. He was interrogated almost every day and was tortured during interrogation. His interrogators beat him in the face, on his head, and all over his body, using with whatever available in the room, including furniture. He suffered many bleeding injuries.

They forced him to admit to all of those accusations. He was injured both inside and on his body due to the beatings but was not given access to medical treatment. During the 6 months in detention, he was held incommunicado from his family; they did not know his whereabouts.

On June 14, 2011 he was released without any given reason. The police warned him against any attempt to escape again or involvement in activities to oppose the government. They ordered him to pay the police 3.5 million Vietnamese dong for the expenses of detaining him. As he had no money, the police put that down as a debt that he had to pay later.

He now has to report to the local police station every day. He cannot find work to earn a living. He has to depend on his family to survive. He is in poor health and still suffers from the injuries inflicted while in detention.

He reported that K' Khiep was similarly tortured while in detention.

(9) Krajan K' Khiep subjected to torture at police station in Moc Bai, Tay Ninh

UNHCR Asylum Seeker Certificate NI – 23250

A Montagnard, he also worked in Malaysia. Back at his home village in Lam Dong, Viet Nam he was apprehended by the police after he had shared his experience of being exploited in Malaysia with other villagers. He was reportedly beaten by the police during interrogation. He managed to escape to Thailand, where he joined the Vietnam Forum for Democracy. His claims for refugee protection were denied by the UNHCR. He returned to Vietnam on December 15, 2010 and has reportedly been held in detention by the public security police. He was reportedly tortured almost on a daily basis during interrogation.

Recently he made it back to Thailand.

(10) Nguyen Thi The, subjected to torture at police station in Cam Le, Da Nang

PA Date and Place of Birth: 1960. Con Dau Village, Hoa Xuan Ward, Cam Le District, Da Nang City, Vietnam

She is a member of the Catholic Parish of Con Dau, Da Nang. She was very active in the parish, being a member of the church's choir and volunteering for many other activities, especially with the parish's women organization.

When the government of Da Nang announced its plan to practically disperse the Con Dau parish, which has had 135 years of history, she was vocal against the government's policy and kept the parishioners unified in the defense of their parish's integrity.

She attended the funeral of Mrs. Dang Thi Tan on May 4, 2010 and was one of the women who protected the coffin from being taken away by the police. She was beaten and arrested along with more than 60 other parishioners from Con Dau during the police crackdown. The police dragged her to the police truck about 500 meters away, handcuffed her and started beating her mercilessly with batons and electric rods before throwing her on the truck bed and drove her and other parishioners to the Cam Le Police Station.

At the police station, she was hung to the ceiling beam of the investigating room. The police stripped her naked and took turn to beat her on her chest and stomach. They applied electric shocks to her vagina until she went unconscious.

They ordered her to admit to motivating people to oppose the government's policy and to attack the police during the funeral. She was forced to sign a self-incriminating statement while she was in great pain and only half conscious.

After more than 6 months of detention, on October 27, 2010 at the county court of Cam Le, she was sentenced to 12 months of house arrest followed by 12 months of probation.

She filed an appeal to the City of Da Nang Court of Appeal pleading for her innocence and was called to the Court January 26, 2011. She pleaded not guilty for all of the charges against her, but the court still kept the same sentence as the lower court.

She was released in May 2011 and is now living under house arrest. She may not travel outside of the village without police permission. She has heart problem and becomes fearful every time the police visits her house.

The police constantly monitor her movement and her contacts. They instructed her not to speak to anyone about the police beatings and torture. The police threatened to throw her in jail again if she fails to cooperate with the police and report suspicious activities at the church or by other members of the parish.