

A Report on a Survey of Torture on North Korean Defectors Deported Back to North Korea



This is a translation of a report issued by
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Democracy Network against North Korea Gulag, which is working for the abolition of political prison camps in North Korea, has conducted a survey on a hundred individuals who have escaped from North Korea had settled in South Korea to learn about the torture they suffered under the dictatorship of Kim Jong-il.

1. Method of the survey of torture victims

Primarily questionnaires and personal interviews

2. Respondents to the survey

2.1 Of a total of 120 North Korean defectors who currently reside in South Korea, 100 individuals who have been directly tortured by the National Security Agency (NSA) and People's Safety Agency (PSA) of North Korea participated in the survey.

2.2 Male-to-female ratio of the respondents

Male: 36; female: 64 (100 in total)

2.3 Ages of the respondents

10 - 19 yrs. old: 3	20 - 29 yrs. old: 18	30 - 39 yrs. old: 27
40 - 49 yrs. old: 3	20 - 59 yrs. old: 10	60 - 69 yrs. old: 10

3. Reasons for being tortured

All 100 respondents were tortured by the NSA and PSA for the reason that they had defected from North Korea and fled to China.

4. Reasons why the torture victims had defected from North Korea

- 4.1 The largest number of respondents, 52, said they had no other choice but to seek income outside North Korea.
- 4.2 30 respondents said because of their hatred of the regime.
- 4.3 16 respondents said they had intended to follow their family members who had fled from North Korea or taken refuge in South Korea ahead of them.
- 4.4 Two respondents indicated other reasons.

5. Description of the torture inflicted by the NSA and PSA

5.1 Types of torture

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| (1) Caning | Beaten all over the body with a 50-cm long round bar or scantling |
| (2) Joint breaking | Kneeling on the floor and sitting on the heels for a long time with a 50-cm long scantling placed behind and between knees and calves. |
| (3) "Pigeon torture" | Hung from a ring fixed on the ceiling with arms and legs tied behind back. |
| (4) "Pump" | Squatting several hundred times in a row with arms behind back. |
| (5) "Water ghost" | The head is repeatedly pushed in and pulled out of a water tub. Water is continuously poured into the nose and mouth. Filthy, contaminated water is used. |
| (6) Electric torture | Receiving electric shocks with an electric club or being tied to a chair with an electrical wire connected to the body, through which shocks are given. |
| (7) Shoe torture | Kicked and stamped all over the body with shod feet. |
| (8) "Head stamp" | Grabbed by the hair and the head is slammed against a wall. |
| (9) Gunstock blows | Specific body parts such as the head are struck with a gunstock of an automatic rifle. |
| (10) Beating palms with a scantling | Palms are beaten with a scantling of more than 40 cm in length. |
| (11) Fist blows | Struck with fists in the face and stomach with fists. |
| (12) Genital torture | kick testicles, insert a spit into the male anus and dig, kick the female genitals, insert a finger into the female genitals, insert a spit into the female anus and dig, insert a finger into the female anus and dig, strike the stomach of a pregnant woman and cause miscarriage |
| (13) Torture against children | Children younger than ten years old are also physically abused. |

This survey has discovered, in particular, that females are exposed to sexual violence and de-praved sexual torture is commonly practiced in North Korean prison camps. They are exposed naked in the presence of many spectators and forced to insert their fingers into the genitals of others and dig inside. Even a two-year old toddler was victimized by violence. Prisoners who have gone through the investigation involving such torture by the NSA and PSA are sent to long-term prison labor camps and/or labor detention facilities, in which they engage in forced labor for three months to three years, working more than ten hours everyday.

6. Aftereffects of torture

6.1 Psychological aftereffects

The majority of prisoners who have experienced the torture by the NSA and PSA suffer from

insomnia, melancholia (depression), anthropophobia, neurasthenia (nervous breakdown) and amnesia. They are agonizing particularly over psychological fear, including insomnia and nightmares even when sleeping.

6.2 Physical aftereffects

The vast majority of the victims suffer from migraines. Other physical aftereffects include cardiopathies, bronchitis, arthritis, indigestion, spinal injury and difficulties in moving the lower back. Some of those who have experienced sexual torture suffer from aftereffects that are so serious that they are no longer capable of having a sexual life.

[Testimony]

Testimony No. 1

Name	Moon Sook
Sex	female
Date of birth	_____, 19xx, aged 61
Address in North Korea	Pohang District, Chongjin City, North Hamgyong Province
Occupation in North Korea	Laborer
Reason for defection	Hatred of the class discrimination in North Korean society
Date of defection	1st: Nov. 1, 2002; 2nd: Apr. 30, 2003
Date of entry to South Korea	May 18, 2003
Deportation to North	On Nov. 1, 2002, she crossed the Tumen River and fled to China and lived there for a while, but was arrested by Chinese police. After detained for 50 days in a prison in Tumen in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, she was deported back to North Korea. Following the deportation, she was tortured during a ten-day investigation by the NSA. After the NSA investigation, she was forced to work in slave labor at a detention facility in Nongpo, Chongjin City.
Description of torture	During her detention in the Tumen prison, she was severely tortured such as being beaten with an electric bar for the reason that she had sung a North Korean song. At the time, she bled and was bruised all over the body from the torture by Chinese police. They also confined her in a toilet and beat her for being a North Korean defector. Following her deportation to North Korea, the NSP officials in Onsong County, North Hamgyong Province, "inspected" her by inserting their fingers into her genitals and anus, saying that they would find money that she had brought from China. During the investigation, her head was kicked and she fainted and was also beaten with a stick and tortured in other ways.
Aftereffects of torture	She still suffers from severe migraines and flashbacks of the time, and has not been able to recover from the trauma.

Testimony No. 2

Name	Miran Kim
Sex	female
Date of birth	Jul. 27, 1965, aged 42
Address in North Korea	Ryongdam District, Haeju City, South Hwanghae Province
Occupation in North Korea	Laborer
Reason for defection	Had no other choice but to seek income outside North Korea
Date of defection	1st: Aug. 11, 1997; 2nd: Nov. 22, 2005
Date of entry to South Korea	Jun. 15, 2007
Deportation to North	On Aug. 11, 1997, she crossed the Tumen River and fled to China. She lived in China thereafter, but was arrested by Chinese police and detained for 78 days in a prison in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province, then was deported back to North Korea. She was tortured by the NSA and PSA in Sinuiju City, North Pyongan Province, during a 30-day investigation. She was subsequently imprisoned at No.11 long-term prison labor camp (Jyoonsan) for two years, in which she was forced to work more than 12 hours everyday. She also witnessed a public execution by firing squad.
Description of torture	During her detention in the Shenyang prison, she was beaten by Chinese prison officials for being a North Korean defector. If she protested, the police in the prison would intensely batter only North Korean defectors. Following her deportation to North Korea, the NSP and PSA officials in Sinuiju sexually molested her through an "inspection" by inserting their fingers into her genitals to "look for the money she was hiding." She also suffered intense verbal abuse, torture using water and bars, "pump" torture, etc.
Aftereffects of torture	Her spine was injured in the torture, and although she had a surgery after moving to South Korea, she still suffers pain from the aftereffects. She has nightmares and is unable to remove her psychological fear.

Testimony No. 3

Name	Pang Chang Gum
Sex	female
Date of birth	Apr. 12, 1957, aged 51
Address in North Korea	Onsong County, North Hamgyong Province
Occupation in North Korea	laborer
Reason for defection	to seek income for living
Date of defection	1st: Feb. 15, 2000; 2nd: Jul. 20, 2003
Date of entry to South Korea	Jul. 27, 2004

Deportation to North

On Mar. 5, 1999, she crossed the Tumen River and fled to China. She lived in China thereafter, but was arrested by Chinese police and detained for 30 days in a prison in Yanji City, then was deported back to North Korea. She was transferred to the NSA and PSA in Samjiyon County, Ryanggang Province, where she was tortured during a 15-day investigation. After the NSA and PSA investigation, she was forced to work at a detention facility in Hyesan City, Ryanggang Province, for four months, working more than 12 or 13 hours everyday. She was released after falling ill.

Description of torture

She has testified that she was accused of being a traitor to the country in abusive language and kicked and battered using fists, a leather belt, scantling, etc. Upon deportation to North Korea, she was "inspected" with fingers forced into her genitals and anus to "look for the money brought from China," and forced to "pump" (squat) naked more than 500 times. She has also testified that she was caned while being tied to a chair for a week and tortured with water for the reason that she had gone to church in China.

Aftereffects of torture

She still suffers from a spinal injury, arthritis and anal fissure. She had a surgery for the anal fissure after moving to South Korea. She suffers from insomnia, melancholia (depression) and nightmares caused by her experience in North Korea.

Testimony No.4

Name	Lee Bok-Nam
Sex	male
Date of birth	May 25, 1958, aged 49
Address in North Korea	Hoeryong City, North Hamgyong Province
Occupation in North Korea	coal miner
Reason for defection	Hatred of the North Korean regime, discrimination that his father suffered for being a South Korean prisoner of war
Date of defection	1st: Sept. 8, 1994; 2nd: Mar. 1, 1998; 3rd: Mar. 2, 2003; 4th: beginning of Mar. 2004
Date of entry to South Korea	Apr. 16, 2004
Deportation to North	In Sept. 1994, he attempted to defect from North Korea with his father (Gi-Dong Lee, deceased in 1994) who had been a military prisoner of war. They were captured by North Korean border guards near the border of the Tumen River and grappled with them. His father was arrested. He fled to China but was arrested by police and deported back to North Korea. He was subsequently transferred to the NSA in Onsong County, North Hamgyong Province, where he was severely tortured during a 50-day investigation. In March 1998, he fled again to China, but was arrested by police in Yanji City

and deported to North Korea. He was tortured for six months during an investigation by the Hoeryong City NSA and North Hamgyong Province NSA. In March 2003, he escaped for the third time, but again, arrested by Chinese police in Yanji City and deported. He underwent yet another torture during an investigation by the NSA in Onsong, North Hamgyong.

Description of torture

In the interrogation at the Onsong NSA conducted with his father, they were accused of telling inconsistent stories and punished with "joint breaking" - kneeling and sitting on the heels with a scantling placed behind and between knees and calves. Their faces were kicked by shod feet and all front teeth broke. He escaped from the Onsong detention facility and attempted to cross the border; however, was arrested and assaulted by North Korean border guards at the Tumen River and suffered injuries on his head and right chest, leaving large scars until now.

Aftereffects of torture

He suffers from headaches, melancholia and hallucinations. He was diagnosed with a second-degree mental disorder in South Korea. The pain on the lower back and legs is so intense that he has difficulty moving his body.

Testimony No.5

Name	An Min-Hyuk
Sex	male
Date of birth	Sept. 14, 2000, aged 7, born between a mother who was a North Korean defector in Yanji City, China, and a father who was a South Korean national.
Address in North Korea	Songchyon-dong, Hoeryong City, North Hamgyong Province
Date of deportation to North Korea	Aug. 20, 2004
Date of entry to South Korea	Jul. 3, 2007,

On Sept. 14, 2000, An Min-Hyuk (currently aged 7) was born between a North Korean woman who had defected from North Korea and was living in Yanji City, China, and a man with South Korean nationality who was running a private business in China. At the beginning of Jul. 2002, the mother and child were arrested by Chinese police, detained in a prison in Longjing, China, and a border guard detention facility and deported to North Korea on Aug. 20, 2002. They were subsequently imprisoned by the NSA. An Min-Hyuk was only a two-year old toddler at the time, but was separated from his mother in the NSA detention facility for being a male. The prison guards did not feed him when he cried for his mother and battered him.