

Torture in Iraqi Prisons

Case Study: Tikrit - Salah al-Din

Exclusive report by Dar Babel publishers.



Appeal

To all human rights organizations, the international organizations and the Red Crescent and Red Cross and any organization concerned with human rights.

There is an urgent need to send a qualified investigation team to inspect Iraqi prisons and investigate the credible claims of severe torture and extra judicial killings taking place in the prisons of Iraq.

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Testimony 1:

“The prison officers are like a pack of rabid dogs pouncing on us torturing us, treating us with no dignity, they insult and make threats of rape to our women (mothers, wives and sisters) .

He asks “Are these guards really Iraqis , how can they do this to their own people”?

Example 1:

We interviewed Ex-detainee WN, he asks us - “Is it one man’s honour, to resist and fight till death for what he believes in or should one man give up?”

“ I wish I had died in the battlefields of Iraq rather than to have been detained by them. But as I am here now I wish for the world to hear my story and to know the names of these criminals, so that when I die, I die with honour”.

“Are these animals Iraqis or foreigners ? “yes they are Iraqis”.

“I had been tortured by a man who goes by the name of Ahmed il Fahal, he said to me: ”he who resist our American brothers will pay a high price for doing so”.

I was resisting the Americans’ occupation. Should I not defend my country as any other man in my shoes would do? protecting my my honour and family?

Testimony 2:

A mother by the name Um Khalid tells us her story, her eldest son had died in the war and the Iraqi forces had detained her younger son. Um Khalid visited the detention centre to ask about her son, ‘ they told her, her son could be free if she agrees to have sex with them.’” I was dazed by this’ offer’ and went home not knowing what to tell my extended family about my petition. Do they want us to wish the Americans have got them rather than Iraqis”?

Crimes against humanity and gross violations Detention in Tikrit

We interviewed two detainees who had been captured by the Iraqi force nick named the Fahal force. The name comes from the force leader - Ahmed il Fahal. Ahmed il Fahal was interviewed by the Arabic news channel al Arabia. In his interview he is heard boasting about how he had killed tens of the Iraqi resistance fighters with his bare hands, completely bypassing the legal route (extra judicial killings).

There had been an attempt to assassinate Ahmed Il Fahal, it was unsuccessful Ahmed il Fahal killed the fighters and captured one of the men to make a model out of him to show what he would do to anyone else that wanted to kill him or to become part of the resistance. Instead of detaining him and allowing him to go to court Ahmed il Fahal shot him in his legs and set alight his car leaving the man to be burnt alive.

The Rape of Men

The witness W.N starts to tell us how the Iraqi forces raped men and sexual abuse them.

WN was detained several times during one year, they threatened to kill him should he be detained again.

W.N wishes that people should be aware of what is happening to them as most of the time innocent people are being captured the officers bargain with prisoners' families over them - they would let us go in return for sleeping with our mothers or in return for money.

W.N, C.S and (N female) describe the techniques of torture used on them, we have summarized these methods of torture below, however we have not specified the time or the place of detention to protect the detainees.

Torture and Death

This is an accurate account of the types of torture used on detainees.

Types of Torture

Torture is carried out by beating the detainee for 6 hours continuously without any interruption in each stage.

The other means of torture are as follows:

1. Being lashed with a large electrical cable
2. Torture by electricity

3. Bone breaking, Breaking the lower back bone (coccyx), breaking the foot, ankle and leg.

One detainee had been struck with a metal object on the back of his neck by a man called Faez Al Jalill; this had lead to the detainee being paralysed from the neck down. The other detainees have to take him to the toilet and feed him. His name is unknown but he is still a detainee in Tikrit prison.

4. Threatening to rape of female family members in order to pressure he prisoner into 'cooperating'.
5. Mental torture : arresting parents with their children, threatening the parents with killing the children and threatening the children with killing the parents.
6. Arbitrary arrests and extortion: Members of the police would arrest men as terrorism suspect and then demand money from their families before letting them go free.
7. Stealing personal possessions while conducting house searches .e.g. cars, watches, Jewellery and anything of value.
8. Tying the prisoner's hands behind his back and hanging him and hanging them by the arms until their shoulders are pushed completely backwards.
9. Taking them at night and hanging them off the railing on the bridge

During the torture process the detainees are made to sign(by thumb printing) a confession statement while blindfolded.

The Martyr Osama Ahmed Abu Al Aith

10. The Martyr Osama Ahmed Abu Al Aith had died during the torture process in 2007. They had ripped out his finger nails, electrically shocking him, torn out his teeth, breaking his ribs and bones and ripped open his chest. All of this had been too much for him which led to his death on the final 10 days of Ramadan.

11. 'Al setmooni' is an Iraqi police officer who rapes the prisoners. He makes the prisoner lie on his front, then he lies on the prisoner's back and threaten him with rape whilst surrounded by other policemen laughing and swearing at the detainee.
12. Undressing the detainee and electrocuting them on sensitive areas of the body - behind the ears and on the genitals.
13. Locking the prisoner up in a small filthy toilet for several days. He can only stand or squat in place covered in insects and germs, resulting in scabies and other more serious diseases.
14. Being injected with an unknown substances, this can result in kidney infection, body rash and peeling of the skin and in some cases even becoming impotent.

When Iraqi men seek treatment in fertility clinics the first question the doctors ask is "where you detained in US prisons or local jails?".

15. Pouring boiling water on the body of the prisoner, causing the skin to come up in blisters
16. Torturing until they become paralysed or dead.
This also happened to one unknown man but who lived in the Baiji . Eye witnesses had said two officers (Faez and Hamid) had killed this man.
17. Stamping on the body of prisoners in order to damage their internal organs.
18. The Tikrit prison there are currently more than 28 female prisoners who have been accused of helping the resistance or they are just been arrested in lieu of their men folk. Once the men are captured they are threatened with rape unless their men folk 'cooperate with them'.
19. Driving over the prisoner's feet.
20. Sexual abuse of male prisoners by inserting bottles and sticks into the annual passage and once they have recovered from the injuries the same process is repeated.

21. Known as 'Abu Hdayfa' Tahseen Al Azzawi was a university student he was tortured to death by unleashing fighter dogs on him in front of his mother, in the area of Semra near Tikrit.
22. It is well known fact that detainees who suffer death are buried in an area between Road 40 (Arbaeen) and the main highway which leads to the city of Mousel. The large number of dead bodies dumped in this area have attracted dogs that are seen feeding on the corpses. The Iraqi forces bury every 5-6 corpses together in the same grave.
23. Iraqis who live in Salah al Din province but who come from Fallujah, Sammara or Ramadi are vulnerable to being killed by the police. The police would claim that the victims were Iranians.
24. Any prisoner found to be involved in the resistance gets tied up and their legs tied to a heavy object then thrown into the river to drown.
25. The torturers ask the prisoner's family for a payment of \$2000 or more to reduce the amount of torture or to let them go.

Shihab Abu Ahmed and his brother Bayrum, and Youssif Al Sammrally are the officers that are involved in extorting money from the detainees' families. Um Khalid, a mother, had to pay \$2200 for the release of her son.

The size of the prison cells are 20 metres which is 4m x5m with a total of 218 detainees. This means the prisoners have sleep standing up or take turns to lie on the floor.

26. There is also two rooms of a size 2mx3m which again hold 36 prisoners
27. Prisoners live in conditions where rats and bugs are present for up to 12 to 20 days resulting serious infections.
28. Prisoners are only allowed to use the toilet once day and all at once.

29. They captured an old man from Sammara and his young son. They tortured the son for 10 days, they they released the son but kept the invalid elderly father.

Names of the torturers and place of work.

1. Ahmed il Fahal works in the anti riot special forces unit he oversees the detention and torture process.
 2. Faez Al Jaleel and his brother Mukdad work as body guards for Ahmed il Fahal. They live in Hay Il Qadisiya in Tikrit behind the police station.
 3. Shihab abu Ahmed and Bayrum his brother who lives also behind the police station
 4. Faez Al Jaborry AKA abu Derrea (one with a shield), works alongside Ahmed il Fahal
 5. Zeyad Al Akhudaira lives behind the mosque called al Huda on Raod number 40(Arbaeen)
 6. 'Al Setmoon' Al Jebboury officer involved in the torture and murder of detainees.
 7. Sergeant Sebba' works in the serious crimes unit and transfers prisoners to the 'anti terrorism unit' .
 8. Officer who is involved in torture is Thaker who is in the Joint Committee.
 9. Senior officer Ali also works in the Joint Committee.
 10. Officer Ayad in the Joint Committee, who struck a prisoner on the back of his neck with a metal object rendering the prisoner disabled from the neck down.
 11. Two brothers Sebba and Khalil Al Rummel, their speciality is torture till death.
 12. Yousif Al Samerly and Qassim his brother live in the Quadisiya district.
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The realities of torture in Iraq part 2

Detention Centre in Tikrit

A mother (A.M) gives us her testimony of what happened to her son.

“They took my son hostage because of my husband. They also took my neighbours son to get information from him about the neighbourhood and around the town of Baiji.

My son (M) was tortured, he was released the next day, he was wrapped in a blanket but underneath he was naked. However, he was tortured so badly that I had to take him to hospital. His kidney stopped working, we now run from hospital to hospital to treat his condition. A young man in his twenties with this serious disabling condition, but I thank God he is alive. A. M. refused to tell us her full name and her son refused to tell us who tortured him.

In The Town of Al Laklak

This is a testimony from people who witnessed the following case.

Abu Mohammed was arrested in the town of Al Baiji by police officers about a year ago. The police in Baiji sent him to the detention centre in Tikrit. He was released without charge he returned to Baiji and was arrested again. The people of Baiji found a body floating in the shallow waters of the river (when the water level had dropped). They identified the body as Abu Mohammed. His legs were rapped to a concrete block. It was obvious he was pushed into the river.

The police officers said that they could not identify the body and sent the body back to Tikrit detention centre, there he was identified and sent back to his family in Baiji.

Ex-detainee (H,E) born in 1986 from Tikrit was detained at the il fahal detention centre, he was released because his father was rich and well known in the town. H,E states that he is ready to speak out and to give evidence on TV and human rights organizations to what he saw in the detention centres. However today he will not give the names of the people involved because he wants to protect his family.

H. E. was arrested by the notorious il Fahal force, after his release by the US forces. H.E. gives us an account of what he saw in the detention centre: “ there was a young boy called Anmar Ali Hussain al Shatee , he was born in 1991, he was arrested several months ago by the American trained Iraqi forces. One of the main torturers was the boy’s own cousin, who was a local police officer. The poor boy, they found no evidence against him. His body was hanging for three days on the bridge with a rock hanging from his penis.

“They cut his fingers and pulled his nails out”

“There was a boy Omar from Sammara” continues H.E. “I think he was born in 1978, one of his legs were blown off from an unexploded ordinance in a street but the Americans thought he was a suicide bomber. The Americans detained him straight away and began torturing him. They took his nails out and cut his fingers. He stayed with the Americans for 1 year and 10 months. He was taken by Sammara police officers that were controlled by the infamous Badar Brigade. And finally they sent him to Ahmed Il Fahals forces. They tortured him and forced him to sign a list of confessions. But that was still not enough for them – they hanged him on the metal bars of the prison window by his remaining leg.” The other names I

remember were Ghaith, Khattab, Abu Fahd. Abu Fahd was tortured they wanted to get a confession out of him, they brought his wife in and he then told them that he would confess to whatever they wanted him to confess to even if it involved confessing to everything that happened during the 5 years in Tikrit, but to just leave his wife alone”.

“The Occupiers threaten us with Iraqi Forces”

Testimony of another ex-detainee:

“Can you believe that now the Americans have stopped torturing like the way they used to in Abu Ghraib now they let the Iraqis do their job for them”.

An ex-detainee said “ they sent me to the Iraqi forces in 2006 where I was detained in camp Bucca for 24 days. They kept me in a small room where no sun light can get through. After a time a guard came in and told me I had to get some sunlight. I went outside but it was night and very cold, they said I had to take a shower. They poured shampoo over my head and I started to scrub the shampoo over my head and face, suddenly they switched off the water and said sarcastically “sun bay thing time is over”.

“ Do you know what choices they gave me! They said I had a choice between going through the American or the Iraqi courts. They informed me that if I chose to go through the Iraqi courts I would be sentenced to double the time. So I chose to go through the American courts. I signed a paper written in English - I did not understand what I was signing. I was sentenced to 3 years and 6 months.

I was scared that I would be seen by Judge Lokman Al Samarai, because they say he gives out arbitrary sentences without any legal basis.”

1. We have been told that in Tikrit detention centres detainees have to pay for food, drink, medicine, and the cost of repairing electrical appliances that are used in the centre. If detainees can not pay then the money is taken from the other detainees.
2. Detainees are allowed to take a shower twice a week – Fridays and Sundays.
3. When Guards count the number of detainees present they ask those in solitary confinement to stick their hands out. The officers then go round hitting their fingers with a stick very hard.

