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# £SOUTH KOREA

## @Sok Tal-yun

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Sok Tal-yun, aged 60, is serving a life term in Chonju Prison on charges of meeting an alleged North Korean spy and passing military secrets to him. His family claim that he was held incommunicado for 47 days after his arrest and tortured into making a false confession. Amnesty International believes that Sok Tal-yun may have been convicted after an unfair trial. It is urging the South Korean authorities to review his case and conduct an inquiry into the allegations that he was tortured during interrogation.

Sok Tal-yun was born in 1931 on Chin Island off the southwest coast of Korea and graduated from agricultural school before moving to Seoul where he attended the Sollin Commercial School. At this time he was living in the same boarding house as Pak Yang-min, a relative who was studying political science at Yonhi college. When the Korean War broke out in 1950, Sok Tal-yun returned to his home town and Pak Yang-min is said to have gone to North Korea. In 1960 Sok Tal-yun graduated from the National Police Academy in Pupyong, Kyunggi Province, and was posted to the Chongnyang-ni Police Bureau where he was trained in counter-intelligence activities. Amnesty International does not have any information about Sok Tal-yun's later professional activities in the 1960s and 1970s.

On 21 August 1980 Sok Tal-yun was arrested on Chin island and taken the next day to the headquarters of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) in Namsan, Seoul where he was held incommunicado for a period of 47 days. During this time Sok Tal-yun's family claim that he was severely tortured by three teams of interrogators. They say that he was beaten frequently with army batons on his back and shoulders. During the night he

was handcuffed, hung in mid-air and forced to stay awake. He was regularly bound and suspended from a horizontal pole and forced to swallow large quantities of water. On other occasions his face was covered with a towel onto which water was poured so that he was unable to breathe and lost consciousness. Other torture included the drilling of small holes in his loins and thigh area and the insertion of a ball pen ink plastic tubing into the urinary canal of his penis. He was also often deprived of sleep and was threatened with electric torture.

Sok Tal-yun confessed that he had met Pak Yang-min, an alleged North Korean spy, on three occasions when he was living in Okpong village near Kunsan Airport in the mid-1960s and on five occasions at the town of Saewanggol on Chin Island. He also confessed to receiving 100,000 won from Pak Yang-min. Sok Tal-yun's family say that he was forced to memorize and copy the details of his eight alleged meetings with Pak Yang-min. On 6 October 1980 Sok Tal-yun was transferred to Seoul Detention Centre. There he was interrogated by a prosecutor who threatened him with further torture by the KCIA after he repudiated his confession. He was also forced to confess his guilt before a prosecutor to a member of his family who lived in Seoul.

Sok Tal-yun was tried under the National Security Law with espionage and in January 1981 was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was convicted of passing military secrets to and receiving money from a North Korean spy. He was also said to have formed the group *Minchong* (Democratic Youth) and to have recruited Chang Chae-yong into his spy-ring and to have introduced him to Pak Yang-min. Chang Chae-yong, Director of Hwasong Medical Centre on Chin Island, lived in the same boarding house as Sok Tal-yun and Pak Yang-min just before the outbreak of the Korean War when he was studying medicine at Seoul National University. He was also arrested and spent four years in prison. Pak Yang-min's younger sister, Pak Kong-sim, was arrested in the same case and spent two years in prison.

Amnesty International is urging the South Korean authorities to review the case of Sok Tal-yun, in view of the claims that he was convicted on the basis of a confession obtained under torture. It is also concerned that he was apparently held incommunicado for 47 days following his arrest and did not have access to legal counsel at some of his trial hearings. To Amnesty International's knowledge, the only evidence produced in court, apart from his confession, were two notebooks which, according to Sok Tal-yun's family, contained the names and addresses of his relatives and notes concerning his business. The prosecution alleged that he had prepared these notebooks in connection with his espionage activities. Sok Tal-yun denies the accusations of espionage and claims not to have met Pak Yang-min since the outbreak of the Korean war.

In June 1981 Sok Tal-yun's sentence was upheld by Seoul High Court and in September 1981 it was confirmed by the Supreme Court. In September 1981 he applied to the courts for a retrial but this was rejected in October 1982. Sok Tal-yun is now held in Chonju Prison

<b>KEYWORDS: LONG-TERM IMPRISONMENT / TORTURE/ILL-TREATMENT1 / CONFESSIONS / INCOMMUNICADO DETENTION / TRIALS / ESPIONAGE / POLICE AS VICTIMS /</b>
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