

£TURKEY

@_evki Ak_nc_ - boy aged 16 tortured by burning

On 19 April 1992 the Turkish press reported an incident from Tanyeri (Kurdish: Rower) village near the Syrian border, where soldiers allegedly subjected the villagers to brutal ill-treatment, in particular @_evki Ak_nc_ and Hamza Ak_nc_.

According to press statements issued by two members of parliament, the general secretary of the People's Labour Party (HEP) and the president of the local Human Rights Association branch, a large contingent of soldiers came to Tanyeri village near Dargeçit, Mardin province, on 9 April 1992 between 4 and 5am, demanding that the villagers hand over their guns. One villager, Naz_m Ak_nc_, reportedly was taken from house to house blindfolded while being beaten with an iron bar, particularly on his legs. The security forces claimed that he had informed them that the villagers kept guns in their houses. When the villagers insisted that they had no guns, the soldiers began torturing them, killing their animals and destroying foodstuffs and houses.

During this operation a group of soldiers under the command of a non-commissioned officer came to the house of 16-year-old @_evki Ak_nc_. Upon his insistence that he had no gun, they blindfolded him, and took him out of the village, beating and verbally abusing him. At some distance from the village they tortured him and when he still insisted that he had no gun, they lit a fire. When it had burnt down they laid the boy naked on the embers holding him down by force. Allegedly this procedure was repeated five or six times before the soldiers eventually left him in a wood for dead. @_evki Ak_nc_, unable to walk, managed to crawl to a road where he was found by shepherds and taken to his village. He had to be transferred to Ankara for treatment in hospital of burns to his back, arms and legs.

Hamza Ak_nc_ suffered similar treatment at the hands of the soldiers. He had his hands tied behind his head and was then left to hang by his feet from a tree, his back lying on the embers of a fire which had been lit under the tree. His clothes caught fire and he suffered burns to his back and arms, but was able to free his hands, pull himself up and escape.

Amnesty International is appealing for a prompt, full and impartial investigation into all these instances of alleged torture and that those found responsible are brought to justice.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Turkey has a Kurdish ethnic minority which is estimated to number some 10 million people, living mainly in southeastern Turkey. Since August 1984, when guerrillas of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) started armed attacks on the security forces, an alarming number of reports of ill-treatment of detainees by the security forces have come from the eastern and southeastern provinces. More than 3,500 lives have so far been lost on both sides and among the civilian population in the context of the continuing fighting. Emergency legislation is in force in 10 provinces in the region and the Emergency Legislation Governor in Diyarbakir has extraordinary powers over three additional provinces. In May 1990 the Turkish Government issued Decrees 424 and 425 (in December 1991 replaced by Decree 430), further extending the powers of the Emergency Legislation Governor.