

EXTERNAL

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GERMANY: ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF JEONG-SEOK LIM

The following information is based on a written complaint by Jeong-Seok Lim's lawyer, a written statement by his wife, and on medical certificates.

On 8 September 1992 shortly after 3am Jeong-Seok Lim was driving home in Berlin, accompanied by his wife, Haeng-Hee Yun. The 33-year-old Korean student, who admits having consumed some alcohol, was involved in a minor car accident. Two police officers arrived at the scene and after breathalysing Jeong-Seok Lim, stated their intention of taking him to the police station for a blood test. Haeng-Hee Yun asked if she could accompany her husband as she was afraid of being left alone on the street in the middle of the night, however her requests were repeatedly refused. On hearing her frightened pleas, Jeong-Seok Lim tried to get out of the police car to speak to the police officer concerned, but he was grabbed roughly by the chest and pushed back with such force into the police vehicle that his head hit against the window. The police officer then allegedly grabbed his head and deliberately banged it against the window a second time. Haeng-Hee Yun became quite distraught at her husband's treatment and begged the officer to stop hitting him ("Bitte schlag ihn nicht"). **The couple were then placed in handcuffs and taken in two separate police cars to the police station.**

In the corridor of the police station Haeng-Hee Yun saw the same officer hit her husband's head against the wall repeatedly, although he had offered no resistance at all throughout the incident. He remained handcuffed and his glasses had been removed, making it very difficult for him to see. After the blood test had been carried out, the same police officer continued to hit Jeong-Seok Lim's head against the corridor wall in full view of his wife. This caused her considerable distress, particularly when her pleas to stop hitting him were ignored. When she attempted to go to her husband's aid she was restrained by a woman officer.

Haeng-Hee Yun also had to undergo a blood test although she had not been driving the car. When she was finally released she found Jeong-Seok Lim slumped in the street outside the police station, barely able to walk, and complaining that he had suffered more blows on his way out of the station.

Medical examinations conducted later the same day by Sankt Gertrauden Hospital (Sankt Gertraudenkrankenhaus) and by another doctor the following day reveal that Jeong-Seok Lim had suffered multiple bruising to his skull, bruising behind his right ear and to his jaw, and bruises to his elbow. He was also suffering from headaches and anxiety attacks.

Jeong-Seok Lim's lawyer has lodged official complaints about his ill-treatment to the Berlin Public Procurator (Staatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht Berlin) and Interior Ministry (Senatsverwaltung für Inneres). A complaint has also been brought against Jeong-Seok Lim by the police for "resisting police officers" (Widerstand gegen Vollstreckungsbeamte).

Amnesty International is seeking information about the outcome of the investigation into Jeong-Seok Lim's allegations of police ill-treatment.