NOWADAYS, HE FOUND DARKNESS UNSETTLING...

WHEN HE WALKED ALONE ON THE STREET, HE FELT WATCHED OR FOLLOWED ALL THE TIME.

"TORTURE IS A CRIME"

AN INFOCOMIC IN CONJUNCTION WITH:

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TORTURE VICTIMS 2017

CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM

WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

HE DREADED EVERY SINGLE SOUND FROM THE DARK ALLEYS...

HE WANTED TO REACH HOME...SOON.

SCREECHHH

COMIC BY: SHAZERIA A.Z
He was not normally an anxious man. At least not until a year ago. When they took his beloved son...

Most of the time...his fear was unfounded! And he knew that he will continue to live his life in fear. It was not by choice but rather, a tragedy...

He was not normally an anxious man. At least not until a year ago. When they took his beloved son...
He could not believe his son survived. He thought he would lose him forever. The injuries seemed beyond repair; both physically and mentally.

On that unforgettable night, two uniformed strangers stopped his son on his way home. An encounter that scarred his son for life!
"They wanted me to confess to a crime that I didn't do." His son told him.

When he refused to comply, the nightmare began...

They beat and kicked him from every angle mercilessly.

All he could think of was how to breathe.

After 2 hours of horror, they left, walking away from the crime scene...free.

The next day, some villagers found him weak and battered in the dark alley. They said he was barely breathing when he was discovered...

Who would have thought a common plastic bag can be so lethal...
I can't watch my son turned into a walking corpse! And it has been 4 years since it happened... what should we do?

Be patient! I met a paralegal from a group called Cross-cultural foundation yesterday. She said the government plans to make a law that can help our son.

But perhaps, there was a glimmer of hope. He learned that the government wanted to adopt a law that prohibits torture...

It sounded very promising...

While his son struggled to recover, the persons who caused him this pain are still out there.

He asked himself everyday... where is justice?
So, he waited... one year... two years... for this law that he heard about from the paralegal. Surely a law like this takes time to make.

I don't know what to do. He refuses to go to the authorities and ask for help. I am so worried about him... about his future...

Early 2017, the military appointed National Legislative Assembly announced that there needs to be more consultation on the bill before it can be passed. This will prolong the process, indefinitely...

Needs more study!

Postponed! Shelved!

But can justice be postponed, be shelved?

The law is after all for a good cause.

How is your son? Is he getting any better? Did you find out how he can get help?
THE DRAFT ANTI-TORTURE & ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE LAW:

**Criminalises torture and enforced disappearance with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment**

**Includes a specific obligation to investigate allegations**

**Creats a committee to establish policies on the prevention of torture and enforced disappearance.**

**The draft law does not provide specific protection for victims or witnesses from reprisal. There is also no mention of a proper complaint mechanism.**

**The draft law should include specific provisions forbidding the use of evidence obtained by torture in legal proceedings and criminalizing acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.**

**Pornpen Khongkachonkiet, Director of Cross Cultural Foundation**

**Kingsley Abbott, Senior Legal Advisor, International Commission of Jurists**
CHAPTER 2: WHY TORTURE SHOULD BE CRIMINALIZED

THAILAND HAS BEEN UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT FOR ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE FOR YEARS.

THERE ARE ALSO CONTINUING ALLEGATIONS OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE.

THIS IS WHY ADOPTING AN ANTI-TORTURE AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE LAW WAS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

SOMCHAI NEELAPAJIT, HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER.

PORLAJEE "BILLY" RAKCHONGCHAROEN, ETHNIC KAREN ACTIVIST.

BILLY DISAPPEARED AFTER HE WAS ACCUSED OF COLLECTING HONEY FROM THE FOREST ILLEGALLY.

THE GOVERNMENT AGREED TO MAKE TORTURE A CRIME WHEN IT RATIFIED THE UNITED NATION'S CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE (UNCAT) ON 2 OCTOBER 2007.

AN OBLIGATION PRESCRIBED BY ARTICLE 4 OF THE TREATY.


A PROMISE THAT IS YET TO BE FULFILLED.
When Thailand was reviewed by the UNCAT committee in 2014, it reiterated its commitment to criminalise torture.

Like the father of the tortured victim... everyone waited for Thailand to adopt an anti-torture and enforced disappearance law.

But, where is the law?

In 2016, the United Nation's human rights chief expressed his concern on Thailand's situation officially...

I also encourage the government to urgently enact the anti-torture and enforced disappearance bill....

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, at the Human Rights Council's 31st session.

At the same time, experts have proved that torture is not only illegal, in fact it doesn't work!

Starvation
Thirst
Extreme
Temperature
Deprivation
Of sleep

Methods of torture create problems for memory, mood and thinking. Sufferers will produce information that is deeply unreliable.

Shane O'Mara
"Why torture doesn't work: the neuroscience of interrogation"
As long as the anti-torture and enforced disappearance law is not passed, there will continue to be impunity in Thailand. Survivors and loved ones will continue to live in trauma; without proper access to justice and remedy.

Meanwhile, public will live in fear as perpetrators remain free in their community.

74 allegations
of torture & ill-treatment
from "Make Him Speak by Tomorrow!", a report by Amnesty International that covers allegations of torture from 2013 to 2015.

Torture is illegal and it doesn’t work. Hence, it should be criminalised...

82 cases
of enforced disappearance
from compilation of cases since 1980 by the United Nations Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance.

When now is the time to act?

Comic by: Shazeera A-Z