



## Torture allegations at Buca reformatory investigated

**İZMİR** - Following claims that children at a reformatory in Buca were subjected to systematic torture, the parliamentary Human Rights Investigative Commission launched an investigation into the allegations.

Last week, young inmates had staged a riot at the facility to protest poor living conditions and isolation. Prison officials quickly suppressed the riots; however, allegations surfaced that prison guards had been beating and mistreating the children.

Commission Chairman Mehmet Elkatmış announced that during the course of a seven-hour investigation the commission team, consisting of Ahmet Ersin, Halide İncekara and expert İrfan Neziroğlu, interviewed 29 children and facility officials. They also spoke with the İzmir public prosecutor, the Buca prisons prosecutor and the facility's administrator for information on the allegations.

"After interviewing reformatory officials, we spoke with 29 children who claimed to have been tortured. The conversations took place in an isolated room in which only commission members were present. We will hear the claims of more inmates and then will confront the wardens accused of torturing the children," Elkatmış told members of the press.

Elkatmış said that after the investigation was concluded in Buca they would return to Ankara and discuss the allegations in Parliament. "We, as a lower commission, will

present the commission's findings to Parliament after completing the investigation. Our report will become a legal document."

Nalan Erken, head of the Human Rights Commission's İzmir branch, in talking to the Turkish Daily News said that they had received many complaints from families that their children had been subjected to systematic torture. "The living conditions in the facility are very bad. According to complaints filed by families of children in the reformatory, the children were continuously isolated and treated poorly by prison wardens. We have written a report and given it to the commission."

Saying that they had asked the reformatory's administration to take children to the doctor following the riot, Erken said: "We asked management many times to take those children for medical care, but they rejected our request by not accepting our petition. Children were taken for a medical examination three days after the riot. Of course, during this time, much evidence of torture disappeared. Furthermore, some children were taken to the doctor five days after the riot."

Erken said that the children were extremely afraid of the wardens: "They are afraid of being beaten again. For that reason, the children's testimony about the allegations would not be proper."

Turkish Daily News