

S KOREANS TOLD 'CONVERT OR DIE'

Sept 12, 07. The group of South Koreans who held hostage by Taleban militants in Afghanistan recently have said they were beaten and ordered at gunpoint to convert to Islam. At a news conference in Seoul, the former captives also said they were made to work "like slaves" during their six-week ordeal.

Twenty-one members of the group were freed last month following an agreement between South Korea and the captors. Two of the hostages - all Christian aid workers - had already been killed.

The former hostages said they feared for their lives at times when their captors turned violent. "We were beaten with a tree branch or kicked around. Some kidnappers threatened us with death at gunpoint to force us to follow them in chanting their Islamic prayer for conversion," said Jae Chang-hee.

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