



British troops are handing over Taliban suspects to the Afghan security service to face "horrible abuse" and torture, the High Court has been told. Government denials of such abuse are the result of a "head in the sand" attitude, partly borne out of a close intelligence relationship with the Afghans, the judges were told.

They are the latest allegations of British complicity in torture following investigations into MI5 and MI6. Human rights lawyers have assembled details of nine cases involving allegations of beatings, sleep deprivation, stress positions, electrocution, and whipping with rubber cables.

They are arguing that Britain has breached the Human Rights Act by handing over prisoners to a country known to participate in torture.

They say the Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS), the domestic security service, had a reputation for mistreating prisoners and British officers should have known what was happening.

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