

AND ALSO

Sex, Spies and Videotape in China

REUTERS

TAIPEI - Four Taiwan civil servants filmed visiting hostess bars in China have been blackmailed into becoming spies for Beijing, Taiwanese officials said.

The civil servants were filmed in hostess lounges while in China and blackmailed into becoming informants, Taiwan Justice Ministry spokesman Luo Chi-wang said. He did not say what has happened to

them since being uncovered.

Another 36 civil servants conducted themselves in "inappropriate ways" with Chinese officials, he said without elaborating.

China's Taiwan Affairs Council said it did not know about the case and could not comment.

The case follows the arrest last month of a Taiwan presidential office employee on suspicion of leaking secrets to Beijing.

NEWSMAKERS

■ MONTERREY, Mexico - "Stupid" prices for art could be brought down to earth as the global economic slump tightens pursestrings, British sculptor ANTHONY CARO said. Caro, one of the biggest names in sculpture and famous for revolutionizing the art form in the 1960s, said sky-high prices have been a distraction for young artists, some of whom are more concerned about getting rich than making meaningful work. "Because of this crisis, something will change in art, and there may be a rethinking of value. Some art has got some stupid, outrageous values, and it is very sad that money has become a very important part of the art world," said Caro. Buyers are losing sight of quality as artworks become commodities, said British sculptor and Caro disciple TIM SCOTT. "As soon as an artist becomes well known, the name is the thing and you are not buying what you are looking at, you are buying the name," he said. (Reuters)

Duch...

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take the stand.

Lim Phanny, head of the Battambang Church Association, said Duch has shown a sincerity of faith since his conversion. This sincerity, Lim Phanny said, will prompt Duch to be candid about his role in the Khmer Rouge when questioned at trial by the court's judges.

During an interview at his small church in Battambang town, Lim Phanny opened his Bible to 1 John 1:9 and read: "If we confess our sins...[God] will forgive us." He then looked up and said, "If we are a true Christian, we will confess everything we have done."

John Ciociani, a senior legal adviser at the Documentation Center of Cambodia, agrees that Duch's turn to religion will have an impact on how he speaks of his role in the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

"I can imagine his faith influencing his testimony in a few ways," Ciociani wrote in an e-mail from Stanford University in the US. "First, he has indicated that he now serves God, whereas in the past he served communism. Thus, he seems less likely than other defendants to justify the regime's abuses as necessary but painful steps toward socialism. Second, Duch has indicated that his conversion makes him less afraid to bear the risks of implicating his former colleagues."

To date, Duch has been the only one of the five suspects held by the ECCC to cooperate with investigators.

Duch's French lawyer Francois Roux declined to comment on his client's faith, writing in an e-mail: "It is his private life. Only he will decide what he shall or shall not say about this topic."

Duch's path to Christianity began more than a decade after Vietnamese and Cambodian forces ousted the Khmer Rouge from Phnom Penh in 1979. He had fled



Neou Vannarin/The Cambodia Daily

Duch's photograph hangs on the wall in the Samlot home of his sister Hang Kim Hong. 'I pray every day with my children for his release,' she said last week.

to the Thai border and lived in refugee camps during the 1980s and, from 1989 to 1991, started selling Thai goods on regular visits to Sway Chek district's Phkoam commune in Banteay Meanchey province.

In 1992, Duch's family, along with a group of former Khmer Rouge cadres, settled in Phkoam, recalled lifelong resident Suon Sito, who lived next door to Duch's family on the village's sole, dusty road. Within months of his arrival, Duch visited a local house church that Suon Sito also attended. Duch soon took up Christianity, Suon Sito said, and together the two occasionally attended services at their sponsor church in Battambang town, where Duch would eventually at-

tend a training course in evangelizing—that is, converting others.

Cheam Sochoeng, the director of Phkoam's local high school where Duch taught math, physics and chemistry from 1993 to 1995, said Duch once invited him to attend the village church.

"He showed me how to pray," Cheam Sochoeng recalled during an interview at his office in the 400-student school. "Duch talked often of God and of the good way. He asked me why I didn't go to church. He tried to convert me," he added.

Just as Duch sought for his friends and colleagues to embrace Christianity, Cheam Sochoeng said Duch also aggressively strove for

his students to delve into their curriculum. He was an intimidating teacher, Cheam Sochoeng said, but he was also intent on everyone understanding his lessons.

"In his work, he was very serious and strict. He always followed the curriculum. If the lesson was scheduled to finish in one hour, he had to finish in one hour," Cheam Sochoeng said, adding, "He was very respectful of orders from his superiors."

In one of Duch's math classes sat Thuor Ham, who today is a 32-year-old rice farmer in Phkoam. Duch always kept on topic during class and never mentioned his faith or his past, Thuor Ham recalled in an interview outside his home near the school.

"He seemed different from the other teachers. They taught from the book, but he did not. He'd just put the book on the table without opening it," Thuor Ham recalled. "Most students liked to learn with him. If a student didn't understand, he would explain it to them until they understood."

Duch's education and intelligence became known throughout the small village. People called him Kru Ta, or "Grand Teacher," because he could speak five languages, recalled villager Ny Lath, 32, who also lived near Duch's simple cottage in the village.

Everybody also knew he could be stern, even volatile. Duch's thumb had been maimed by a bullet, reportedly fired by his wife during an argument, Ny Lath said. She added that on one occasion Duch drew a circle in the dirt around his mischievous son and threatened to disown him if he moved outside of it before proceeding to beat him.

All this time, Duch was living under the name Hang Pin, hiding his identity as chief of S-21, said Ny Lath's husband Muth Theng. But signs surfaced, he added, that Hang Pin was a former high-ranking Khmer Rouge official.

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