

# *Six U.S. police officers plead guilty to torturing two Black men*



US Assistant Attorney-General Kristen Clarke (L) addresses reporters from a monitor during a news conference following a court hearing in Jackson, Mississippi, August 3, 2023. (Photo by AP)

Jackson, August 5 (RHC)-- Six white U.S. police officers -- who called themselves "The Goon Squad" -- plead guilty in the case of torturing two Black men in Mississippi.

Chief Investigator Brett McAlpin, 52, Narcotics Investigator Christian Dedmon, 28, Lieutenant Jeffrey Middleton, 46, Deputy Hunter Elward, 31, Deputy Daniel Opdyke, 27 and Narcotics Investigator Joshua Hartfield, 31, pled guilty to all 16 counts of charge filed against them.

The Department of Justice said the officers confessed that on January 24 they tortured two innocent Black men in an hours-long session that ended with one man being shot through the mouth and neck.

"The defendants in this case tortured and inflicted unspeakable harm on their victims, egregiously violated the civil rights of citizens who they were supposed to protect, and shamefully betrayed the oath they swore as law enforcement officers," said Attorney General Merrick Garland.

The Department of Justice also said the officers of the so-called Goon Squad "punched and kicked the men, tased them 17 times, forced them to ingest liquids."

Elward removed a bullet from the chamber of his gun without the victims knowing. The officer then forced the gun into the mouth of one of them and pulled the trigger. The unloaded gun clicked but did not fire, reports said. Elward racked the slide, intending to dry-fire a second time. When the officer pulled the trigger, the gun discharged. The bullet lacerated the victim's tongue, broke his jaw and exited out of his neck.

The U.S. Justice Department confirms systematic police brutality and racism in city of Minneapolis in a report three years after the police killing of an African American man amid persisting police cruelty across the country. Law enforcement agencies in the U.S. are notorious for the systemic racism and brutality of officers.

Crimes rooted in white supremacy in the United States has led to an endless cycle of violence by trigger-happy police officers targeting Black men.

The tragic death of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man who was murdered by a white police officer in May 2020 in Minneapolis, has boosted the "Black Lives Matter" movement. Floyd's death has turned into a symbol of US police brutality and provided a fresh hope for the movement for racial justice.

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