

by **R. Manirajan**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

'Man in the Hood' tells all

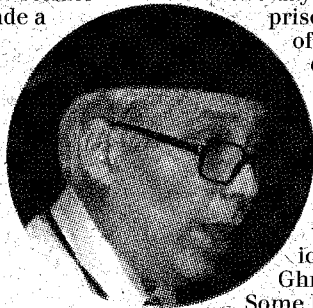
The Sun - 7/2/2007

KUALA LUMPUR: Ali Shalal, who claimed to be the "Man in the Hood" detained by American troops in Iraq and tortured at the Abu Ghraib prison, recounted his experience at a conference organised by the Perdana Global Peace Organisation yesterday.

The Iraqi, who now resides in Jordan, said he made a statutory declaration witnessed by a commissioner of oaths in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday "to put on record my experience of torture in the Abu Ghraib prison".

Ali (right), 45, a lecturer on Islamic education in Al-Alamiya, said he was arrested by US troops on Oct 13, 2003 on his way to a mosque.

"They tied my hands behind my back and put a bag over my head.



They took me to a small prison at a US military camp in Al-Amraya and two days later to the Abu Ghraib prison," he said on the second of the three-day *Expose War Crimes - Criminalise War* conference here.

Last year, Ali had claimed he was the hooded man standing on a cardboard box in the infamous photograph that had become the iconic image of the Abu Ghraib torture scandal.

Some US authorities had disputed the claim and said the photograph showed a different detainee.

In his statutory declaration, Ali said the first question the interrogator

had asked him was whether he was Sunni or Shiia.

He said that when he replied he was an Iraqi Muslim, the interrogator refused to accept his answer and accused him of the following:

- » he was anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic;
- » he supported the resistance;
- » he had instigated the people to oppose the occupation; and
- » he knew where Osama bin Laden was.

Describing the ways in which he was tortured, Ali said an Israeli in civilian clothing had interrogated and tortured him by inserting a jagged wooden stick into his rectum and then the barrel

of a rifle.

"I was cut inside and bled profusely. During this time, when any guard walked past me, he would hit me. I had no food for 36 hours."

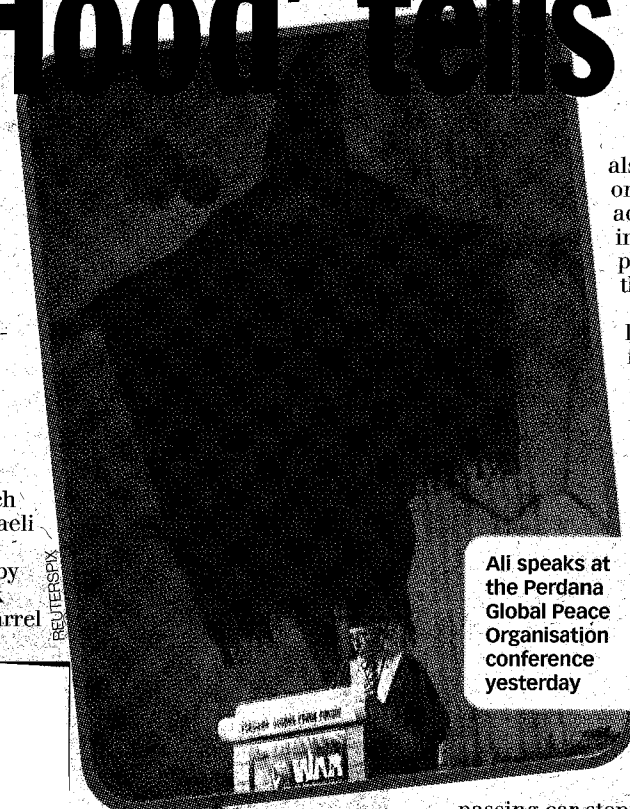
He said he was also electrocuted on three occasions, adding that the interrogators photographed all their actions.

Ali said he later learned from another prisoner that the latter had overheard several guards saying Ali was wrongly arrested and would be released.

He said that in March 2004, he was put into a truck, driven to a highway and thrown out of the vehicle. "A

passing car stopped and took me home."

Ali said that as a result of his experience, he had decided to work with several other former prisoners to set up an association to help torture victims.



Ali speaks at the Perdana Global Peace Organisation conference yesterday

REUTERS/PIX