

NEW STRAITS TIMES

DATE: 30 / 10 / 2009

'Four years in Gitmo toughened me up'

NST - 30/10/09

KUALA LUMPUR: Guantanamo Bay toughened up Moazzam Begg. His four-year stint as a detainee there taught him to be brave and steadfast, although he was thrown naked into cages made of barbed wire.

During his imprisonment, Moazzam also had to endure hearing his Palestinian wife being tortured.

He said those who staffed Guantanamo Bay were either "torturers, bigots or racists", while the detainees were labelled "enemy alien" or "enemy combatant".

Speaking as a panellist during the Peace and Justice session at the Criminalise War Conference and Exhibition, Moazzam said during his time in prison, he felt as if the world had abandoned him.

He was one of nine British citizens who were held in Guantanamo.

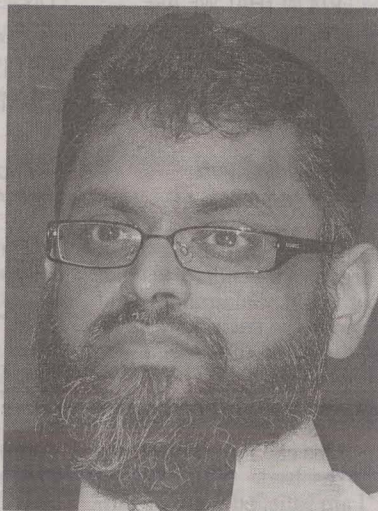
The son of Indian and Pakistani parents, Moazzam was born and raised in Britain and attended a Jewish school.

"I used to have a good view of all faiths," he said.

For many years, Moazzam was in Afghanistan during the Taliban administration to help in social projects such as building schools.

He was accused of being involved in the Sept 11 attack in the United States, but he was never convicted.

He said if the photographs taken by American soldiers of the atrocities committed at Abu Ghraib had not been leaked to the world, people would still be in the dark about what had happened there.



Moazzam Begg was accused of being involved in the Sept 11 attack