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Iran offers 'proof' of CIA torture

Iranian state television has shown officials from the International Committee of the Red Cross examining an Iranian diplomat who has accused the CIA of torturing him while he was detained in Iraq.

Jalal Sharafi was shown in a hospital bed being examined by Peter Stocker from the ICRC and the Iraqi ambassador in footage broadcast on Wednesday.

During the examination, the voice of a doctor could be heard describing how Sharafi - formerly the second-most senior official in Iran's embassy in Baghdad - had been beaten with a cable during his detention.

After his visit to the diplomat, Stocker told The Associated Press that he saw wounds on Sharafi's body that "were several weeks old", but said he did not know how the injuries occurred.

"I cannot say who did it and where it happened," the ICRC official said. "I can only say that it happened during his detention."

Stocker was accompanied to the hospital by Majid Sheikh, the Iraqi ambassador to Iran.

Diplomat accuses US

Earlier in the week, Sharafi's Iranian doctors had reported that holes had been drilled into his foot, but the TV images were not clear enough to indicate whether the small, red marks on his foot were indeed holes.

Doctors also reported earlier that he had suffered a broken nose, serious injuries to his back, bleeding in his digestive system, and damage to his ears.

None of these injuries has been independently verified, nor were they discernible from the TV footage.

A spokeswoman for the ICRC in Tehran, Katayoun Hosseinnejad, confirmed the visit to Sharafi had taken place and said it had been initiated by the Iranians.

Sharafi was released from Iraq last week and later said that the CIA had questioned him about Iran's relations with Iraq and its assistance to various Iraqi groups.



Jalal Sharafi said that US agents had drilled holes in his foot






Footage released by Iranian TV showed Jalal Sharafi in hospital being examined by doctors

US officials have repeatedly said that Iran provides money and weapons to Shia militias in Iraq. Iran has denied this.

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On Wednesday the US military put more weapons on display in Baghdad that it said were made in Iran.

An army spokesman said that Iran had trained Iraqi insurgents in the use of roadside bombs as recently as last month.

Source: Agencies