

Newspaper	The Star
Date	10/05/2012

# 'Bush gave war crimes the greenlight'

The Star - 10/5/2012

## Prosecution: Ex-US president sanctioned torture of prisoners

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former US President George W. Bush had issued an executive order to commit war crimes in Iraq and Afghanistan, the prosecution submitted at the War Crimes Tribunal here.

Head of the prosecution Prof Gurdial Singh Nijar said, as Commander-in-Chief of the military of the United States, Bush intended these orders to be acted on.

"Bush did nothing to stop war crimes from being committed," said Prof Gurdial in his submission at the public hearing held in an open court at the Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War here.

The tribunal heard the second charge of Crime of Torture and War Crimes against Bush and his associates, among others, former vice-president Dick Cheney and former secretary of defence Donald Rumsfeld.

Five former Iraqi detainees, who were tortured while being detained in various prisons including Guantanamo Bay, were called to give their testimonies before tribunal president judge Lamin Mohd Yunus

who chaired the five-member panel.

Prof Gurdial submitted that Bush issued the orders authorising treatment that would constitute a war crime and knew there were violations of the Torture Convention and/or the Geneva Convention III and failed to intervene.

"The violation of Article 3 of the Geneva Convention III implies the cruelty was undertaken for no purpose at all except to inflict suffering short of torture.

"Prisoners were deprived of food and sleep, they were forced to stand naked for long hours in the cold night and beaten until blood covered their bodies," he said.

Prof Gurdial also submitted that Bush issued a memorandum on Feb 7, 2002 declaring that al-Qaeda prisoners were outside the protection of the Geneva Conventions as they were "enemy combatants", not prisoners of war.

He said this was a prelude to subjecting them to torture and inhumane acts.

The hearing continues today with the defence team led by Jason Kay expected to give submissions.