



# Post Bangladesh Liberation War - Is Pursuit of Peace and Justice Mutually Reinforcing?

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## INTRODUCTION

The Bangladesh Liberation war was a dramatic geopolitical change in South Asia. Bangladesh, formerly known as East Pakistan after the India and Pakistan partition in 1947. It is often known as the Indo-Pak war 1971. It was a difficult period marked by violence, atrocities and war crimes. The question that we have to address is whether justice and peace are achievable together or they are just two different components influencing each other. The conflict led to several social divisions as the balance between justice and a new state hung dangerously in the balance. The trauma of legacy from colonialism of the British and the division of countries shaped the political structure of the nation<sup>1</sup>. Due to the scars left behind, violence and displacement became a collective memory for all.

Justice and peace became significant as the conflict settled and the impact of war started to cause a wave. 1971 was a year that ended in mass killings, systematic rape and violence<sup>2</sup>. Against such backdrop, transition justice played a pivotal role to address the violence, loss, injustices and discrimination. This essay is a study of the complexities in the post conflict Bangladesh and the transitional justice mechanisms that came into play. The essay will unravel the dynamics of justice and peace, whether they can be achieved together to build a foundation

<sup>1</sup> M. Rafiqul Islam, 'Transitional Justice in Bangladesh: A Background Profile', in National Trials of International Crimes in Bangladesh 1–27.

<sup>2</sup> Eric A. Strahorn, 'The Bangladesh Liberation War' (Origins) [https://origins.osu.edu/milestones/bangladesh-liberation-war?language\\_content\\_entity=en](https://origins.osu.edu/milestones/bangladesh-liberation-war?language_content_entity=en) [accessed 27 April 2024].

of stability for a new state. The primary objective is following the basic principle of Transitional Justice, i.e., focus on the victims. Healing and reconciliation can be achieved with accountability, which became paramount for the Bangladeshi citizens.

While Justice and pursuit of truth can seem like a step towards peace, it can pose challenges for peacebuilding efforts. Justice for war crime victims is essential, however, it can open a past chapter that can cause political and societal tension. In this essay we will navigate the journey of justice and peace in Bangladesh and analysis the interplay between the two.

## II. Historical Overview of the Bangladesh Liberation War

Bangladesh and Pakistan used to be a part of the Indian subcontinent, which the British had governed for over two hundred years. In 1947, when India gained independence from colonial rule, Pakistan was born out of separation. The partition was based on a religious majority; therefore, all the Muslim-majority areas became Pakistan, and the Hindu majority became India. The idea of religious division started in 1940 by the Britishers in the Lahore Resolution<sup>3</sup>. The geographical location of Pakistan as a whole was highly inconvenient. West and East Pakistan had different cultures, languages, and traditions, which would later play a factor in the War. East Pakistan became a marginalized community in Pakistan. They were being alienated from their roots and culture to become an example of a Muslim country. The very religion that brought the two regions together became the reason for their separation.

The government headquarters was based in West Pakistan, which led to unequal political representation of the East. While India implemented democracy immediately, Pakistan struggled with military rule till 1971, which became a prominent issue for minorities and ethnic communities. Urdu was imposed in the East, as it was recognized as the official language of Pakistan<sup>4</sup>. However, Bengali was commonly spoken. Bengali is a very rich language associated with art, culture, and heritage, and it is spoken by Muslims and Hindus. The linguistic

<sup>3</sup> "Lahore Resolution" (Banglapedia) [https://en.banglapedia.org/index.php/Lahore\\_Resolution](https://en.banglapedia.org/index.php/Lahore_Resolution) accessed [27 April 2024].

<sup>4</sup> "The Independence of Bangladesh in 1971" (The National Archives), <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/the-independence-of-bangladesh-in-1971/> accessed [27 April 2024].

imposition led to the 'Bengali Language Movement' in 1952<sup>5</sup>, as they did not want to adhere to the strict principles of an Islamic State. However, in 1956, Pakistan declared itself to be an Islamic State.

In 1966, a Six Point Movement<sup>6</sup> was held in the East, headed by Mujibur Rahman, who advocated for autonomy for the Eastern region. The six demands were recognizing the East as a federal state, different currency, independent tax authority, separate army and navy, trade and forex reserve, and control of all subjects except defence and foreign affairs<sup>7</sup>. But in 1968, the 'Agartala Controversy' took place. Rahman went to Agartala seeking support from Indian authorities for East Pakistan's independence<sup>8</sup>. He was charged with sedition for conspiring with India to start an armed revolt. Students, farmers, teachers, and other communities started protesting for the release of Rahman<sup>9</sup>. This was a milestone for the East as the army was forced to release Rahman and declare national elections.

Before the general elections, 'Cyclone Bhola'<sup>10</sup> struck East Pakistan and Bengal (State in India). It reportedly killed over 3-5 lack people. General Yahya Khans' government did not provide the financial relief needed in the East, which caused friction in the already strained relationship between the two regions. Rahman was the Awami league's leader, a dominant political party in the East. They won the first general elections in December 1970<sup>11</sup>. For the first time in Pakistan's History, the East had representation and a voice.

On the demands of Sheikh Mujib, General Yahya Khan declared a National Assembly for East-Pakistan's development in Dhaka. Elite political leaders and army officials from the West influenced Yahya Khan to cancel the National Assembly<sup>12</sup>. This caused a spark of Liberation from the West, followed by civil unrest and mass protests in East Pakistan. Zulfikar Bhutto, the opposition from the West, did not accept the election result, which

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<sup>5</sup> Rush Lee, "The Language Movement" (Global Political Theory Project, 16 May 2022) <https://globalpoliticaltheoryproject.pages.wm.edu/2022/05/16/the-language-movement/> accessed [27 April 2024]

<sup>6</sup> "Indo Pak War 1971: The Bangladesh Liberation War" (ClearIAS, last updated on October 9, 2023) <https://www.clearias.com/indo-pak-war-1971/> accessed [27 April 2024]

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Agartala case: Evidence of Bangabandhu's armed struggle for independence' (Awami League, 7 January 2022) <https://albd.org/articles/news/38218/Agartala-case:-Evidence-of-Bangabandhu's-armed-struggle-for-independence> accessed [27 April 2024].

<sup>10</sup> Sravani Biswas and Patrick Daly, "Cyclone Not Above Politics: East Pakistan, disaster politics, and the 1970 Bhola Cyclone," *Modern Asian Studies* (2021) 55(4): 1382-1410, doi:10.1017/S0026749X20000293.

<sup>11</sup> "1971 Liberation War, Birth of Bangladesh and Comparison with Present Day Pakistan," European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS), April 2017, <https://www.efsas.org/publications/research-dossiers/1971-liberation-war,-birth-of-bangladesh-and-comparison-with-present-day-pakistan/> [accessed: 27 April 2024]

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

started a civil disobedience movement<sup>13</sup>, and in 1971, the flag of Bangladesh was raised in the East for the first time. This event marked the landmark inception of the Bangladesh Liberation War.

### III. Transitional Justice Mechanisms

To evaluate if Justice and Peace are mutually reinforcing, we have to understand the mechanisms of Transitional Justice that address the atrocities, human right violations and injustices that occurred during the Bangladesh Liberation War. While Transitional Justice is a way to respond to the legacies of trauma, it is also about the recognition of the victims while promoting peace and reconciliation. As a multidisciplinary approach, there are different mechanisms that are adopted by states to deal with past abuses to facilitate reconciliation and justice<sup>14</sup>.

There are different mechanisms, such as<sup>15</sup>:

i. Truth commissions:

These commissions are usually state bodies, non-judicial, whose primary objective is to investigate, document and report the abuses occurred in the past and make recommendations as to how to remedy and prevent them in near future. They focus on the victims and give them an opportunity to seek recognition for the abuse against them. They use reconciliation measures and institutional reforms.

ii. Institutional reforms:

These reforms are specifically to transform the police, judiciary, military or any other state institutions from the influence of corruption and repression to public service, transparency and integrity. This promoted proper governance by following rule of law.

iii. Criminal Prosecution:

These are investigations conducted against those responsible for violation of human rights. They vary from tribunals to international trials. They seek individual responsibility to provide justice to the victims. Often, people suspected of carrying out mass atrocities of systematic violence are held responsible instead of going after all.

iv. Reparations Programmes:

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> International Center for Transitional Justice, "What is Transitional Justice?" <https://www.ictj.org/what-transitional-justice> accessed [27 April 2024]

<sup>15</sup> International Center for Transitional Justice, "What is Transitional Justice?" (ICTJ, 2008) [https://legal.un.org/avl/pdf/ls/Van-Zyl\\_RecReading1\\_.pdf](https://legal.un.org/avl/pdf/ls/Van-Zyl_RecReading1_.pdf) accessed [27 April 2024]



These programmes are state sponsored that seek to repair the moral and material harms caused to the victims. Their main objective to remedy the abuse by providing compensation, rehabilitation or other forms of assistance. Reparations vary from monetary help to funded education or healthcare.

v. Commemoration Initiatives:

These are efforts that aim to memorialise and preserve the memory of the past to honour the victims. They include memorials and museums that commemorate the events for moral awareness, educational purposes and remembrance. This is an initiative to promote healing in the society.

In case of a post conflict society, a more holistic approach is required. There has to be a truth-telling/story-telling component along with accountability and institutional reform. While the focus is on peacebuilding for the future, justice for victims is equally, if not more important. However, in theory this seems like an achievable transition from conflict to peace, but peace is not always a direct result of justice. Taking every component into full account should be the central objective of transitional justice, but there is no single concept or theory that works for large scale human right atrocities. While we study further about Transitional Justice in the context of war crimes in Bangladesh, we have to understand that systematic abuse is not achievable by one individual. Compliance and approval of individuals is required to carry out abuses. Each society decides how to deal with the past, it can be prosecution or reconciliation, but the question of justice and peace together remains.

#### IV. War Crimes in Bangladesh: Pursuit of Justice

Recognising the genocide that occurred in Bangladesh is crucial. Post conflict, societies try to build a new foundation of justice and peace which is sustainable so the past isn't reoccurring. There is a balance that is needed to confront the abuse and plan the future. The war crimes committed by the Pakistani Army during the liberation war 1971, till date continues to haunt specific communities in Bangladesh.<sup>16</sup>

After the first general elections, East Pakistan started their struggle for independence. As Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan, they resorted to help from India. The war led to massive displacement, planned genocide of Bengalis, Hindu and other religious minorities and systematic rape committed by the Pakistani army. Roughly three million

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<sup>16</sup> Lorraine Boissoneault, "The Genocide the U.S. Can't Remember, But Bangladesh Can't Forget," Smithsonian.com, Smithsonian Institution, 16 Dec. 2016, accessed [28 April 2024]

people were killed (reported number)<sup>17</sup>. The annihilation of journalists, academics, Hindus and enslavement of women took place. Over 400,000 women were raped, enslaved and mutilated by the Pakistani army. This was not only an act of war but also an act of hate. All of these atrocities were committed in nine months, this military act was termed as Operation Searchlight by Pakistan. There were torture sites, mass graves and rape camps started to come into light after the war<sup>18</sup>. Bengalis were ethnically cleansed by the Pakistani army which left the country traumatised.

### Transitional Measures Adopted by the Bangladeshi Government:

*"We still haven't received an apology from Pakistan for the horrendous war crimes it committed against the Bengali people"* - Saida Muna Tasneem<sup>19</sup>

1. The survivors of rape camps were called Birangona Women (war heroines) and their stories have been erased from the history. To call the survivors Birangona was done to recognise their victimisation and suffering. As South Asian societies outcaste rape victims generally, giving the survivors a title prevented them from being excluded from their community. In 1971 December when the Pakistani army was overpowered by India and they surrendered. Several rehabilitation programmes were opened for the survivors<sup>20</sup>. Rehabilitation centres for medical support were constituted which offered adoption of 'war babies' (babies born out of rape) and some offered abortion rights for pregnancies that arose out of rape.
2. Immediately after the Liberation War, 'Collaboration Act, 1972' was formed, which prosecuted local collaborators who helped the Pakistani Army. It was an accessible tool for victims that allowed written complaints and appeals were allowed. Minor crimes were pardoned but offences like murder, rape,

<sup>17</sup> "Bangladesh: The Forgotten Genocide," University of Alabama Birmingham, 21 April 2017, <https://sites.uab.edu/humanrights/2017/04/21/bangladesh-forgotten-genocide/> accessed [28 April 2024]

<sup>18</sup> Rounaq Jahan, "Genocide in Bangladesh," in 1971 Genocide in Bangladesh (Columbia University: South Asia Institute, <https://sai.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/docs/1971%20Genocide%20in%20Bangladesh.pdf> accessed [28 April 2024]

<sup>19</sup> "We lay like corpses. Then the raping began': 52 years on, Bangladesh's rape camp survivors speak out," The Guardian, 3 April 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/apr/03/52-years-bangladesh-birangona-women-mass-rape-survivors> accessed [28 April 2024]

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

amputation where tried. This act was later repealed due to criticism, however, it was a motivating factor to start International Crimes Tribunal.

3. Several freedom fighters and military officials were compensated as a trust was started in their name. The Bangladeshi government issued official 'Gallantry Awards'. They were a symbol of respect and since 2001, individuals who received the awards were awarded massive financial allowances by the government. In late 2000's, international recognition for the genocide were initiated by civil society groups, NGO's and diaspora groups. One of the Transitional Justice mechanisms, Commemoration were utilised. Websites, forums, Liberation War museums and Torture archive and museum were set up<sup>21</sup>. Several research organisations such as "Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, Genocide Watch, the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and International Association of Genocide Scholars (IASG)"<sup>22</sup> recognised the genocide in Bangladesh.
4. War crime trials were initiated by Mujibur Rahman. He started the process of taking the perpetrators to trial and highlighting the savage actions of Pakistani army internationally, but he was soon assassinated and the crimes were buried with time. Sanchita Haque<sup>23</sup>, a permanent Deputy Representative, advocated for recognition of the war crimes and cruelties to the United Nations.

In 2017, one of the most recent transitional measure that has been adopted is 'Genocide Day'. This initiative was taken to commemorate the victims. Bangladesh has asked international organisations and United Nations to recognise this day internationally memorialise the suffering of Bangladeshi people at the hands of the Pakistani army.

Today, while Pakistan is not playing a direct role, the remnants of hate towards a different religion and Islamic extremism still prevails. The Hindu population has declined rapidly from 20% in 1971 to only 8.9% as of 2023<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> Center for Research and Information (CRI), "10 things you need to know about 1971 Bangladesh Genocide" (24 March 2023) <https://cri.org.bd/2023/03/24/10-things-you-need-to-know-about-1971-bangladesh-genocide/> accessed: [28 April 2024]

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

<sup>23</sup> Harvard International Review, "The Past has yet to Leave the Present: Genocide in Bangladesh" (2023) 44 Harv Int'l Rev 105 <https://hir.harvard.edu/the-past-has-yet-to-leave-the-present-genocide-in-bangladesh/> accessed [28 April 2024]

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

The question we have to ask ourselves is whether, peace should be the motive or justice. Justice comes at the price of prosecution, opening up about the abuses and taking accountability, this slows down the process of peace. How can a new foundation be built on the grave of several people without proper justice?

## V. International Crime Tribunal: Prosecution of War Crimes

*“..... we were told to kill the Hindus and Kafirs (non-believer in God). One day in June, we cordoned a village and were ordered to kill the Kafirs in that area. We found all the village women reciting from the Holy Quran, and the men holding special congregational prayers seeking God’s mercy. But they were unlucky. Our commanding officer ordered us not to waste any time.” – Confession of a Pakistani Soldier<sup>25</sup>*

The UN Security Council established an International Criminal Tribunal for Former state of Yugoslavia to try the perpetrators of war crimes and conflict. The Tribunal (ICTY) was situated at Hague. Another example of a crime tribunal is the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, established for prosecution and accountability of the ethnic cleansing of Tutsi Rwandans and other communities<sup>26</sup>. The essence of these tribunals can be traced back to the Nuremburg Trials, as Bangladesh set the foundation of its International Crime Tribunal based on the paradigm that was adopted for such judicial bodies. Hence, these tribunals became a way to implement transitional justice with an aim to achieve peace.

Justice can vary from Legal Justice, restorative, reformatory to commemorative. The delay in legal justice was due to the instability of democracy and political parties. Delayed prosecution brings in lots of factors that can slow down the trial process. International Law comes into play as it was an armed conflict but evidence, witnesses and documents are the primary factors that the Tribunal could turn to for the trials<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> Bangladesh Genocide Archive <https://www.genocidebangladesh.org/> [Accessed [28 April 2024]]

<sup>26</sup> International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), 'About the ICTR' <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/icttr/icttr.html> accessed 28 April 2024.

<sup>27</sup> Aldo Zammit Borda and Sajib Hosen, "Impact of Long-Delayed Prosecutions on Fighting Impunity in Bangladesh: Policy Recommendations" (Anglia Ruskin University, Centre for Access to Justice and Inclusion) <https://www.aru.ac.uk/business-and-law/research/centres/centre-for-access-to-justice-and-inclusion/fighting-impunity-in-bangladesh> accessed 28 April 2024.



UN proposed five pillars on which a state can take transitional measures, “Prosecution Initiative, Right to Truth, Delivering Reparations, Institutional Reforms and National Consultations”.<sup>28</sup> On the principles of the five pillars the ICT issued the very first arrest warrant in 2010 to provide justice to the victims. Several leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami and Razakars were indicted and sentenced to death by hanging. Many were found guilty of rape, mass murder, religious persecution and other war crimes.<sup>29</sup>

### **Limitations of ICT that influenced Justice and Peace:**

*“despite the effort to update the Tribunal’s foundational framework, many of its substantive as well as procedural provisions have caused concern among human rights groups. The ICT Act’s inclusion of the death penalty amongst the possible punishments for crimes under its jurisdiction has drawn criticism. Human rights groups and legal monitors have also urged, inter alia, that offences under the Act be delineated more clearly, and that due process rights for the accused be enhanced. The ICT Act, as amended, did not grant suspects a right against self-incrimination or a right to legal counsel when being questioned by the police, nor did it give them adequate time to prepare a defence. Other problematic provisions include restrictions on interlocutory appeals [...] to the Supreme Court and restrictions on challenging the composition of the judicial bench.”<sup>30</sup>*

‘Justice delayed is Justice denied’<sup>31</sup>. While reconciliation and healing plays an essential part for a community to grow, the individual trauma persists. Justice delivered after several years of the war can develop obstacles for an individual to contribute to peacebuilding.

While ICT did prosecute war criminals, there were several allegations of only prosecuting collaborators from the opposition party. The use of death penalty was severely criticised by human right groups and organisations. Few prominent people who were accused of direct and indirect participation in the atrocities, allegedly were free due

<sup>28</sup> Madayil Sherina, 'Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971: Decisive Role of India in Mediation and Conflict Resolution; and Transitional Justice in Bangladesh' (2022) 2022 <https://irpj.euclid.int/articles/bangladesh-liberation-war-of-1971-decisive-role-of-india-in-mediation-and-conflict-resolution-and-transitional-justice-in-bangladesh/> accessed 28 April 2024

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> A Zammit Borda and S Hosen, 'The Challenges of Long-Delayed Prosecutions in Fighting Impunity in Bangladesh' (City Law School Research Paper, City, University of London 2022) <https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/28325/1/CLS%20WP%202022-07.pdf> accessed 29 April 2024.

<sup>31</sup> Juris Academy, "Justice Delayed, Justice Denied" (2024) <https://www.jurisacademy.com/justice-delayed-justice-denied>

to political protection. Right to legal representation, fair trial and adequate time to prepare for the trial was questioned as well.

Domestic trials for international crimes should have a certain level of high tolerance for compromising on international standards of war crime trials. In countries in Bangladesh, a relatively new country, after all the delay would want to legally deliver justice as soon as possible. The moral dilemma of proper legal representation or other international standards could have compromised for the prosecution of war criminals due to the political instability. Their aim would not have been protection of basic human rights for the accused but starting a healing process for the society to bury the past.

While we end the analysis of ICT, the emphasis on religion and politics is imperative. Bangladesh adopted 'two nation theory'. After the assassination of Rahman, the want for an Islamic country started to reoccur. Islam was adopted as the official state religion, leaving the minorities insecure and vulnerable. While the constitution claims to be secular, minorities such as Hindus, Christians and Buddhists have faced several instances of communal violence<sup>32</sup>. The discrimination faced by minorities is not occasional but almost an everyday instance. Religion has led to civil unrest in Bangladesh which has caused the country to fall back in the pattern of abuse and oppression.

## VI. Effectiveness of Transitional Justice Mechanisms: Peace or Justice?

*"This debate of justice and peace, which sometimes becomes so acrimonious, is a false debate in the sense that you need both. Justice reinforces the long-term peace that one is looking for." - Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General<sup>33</sup>*

While there has been some criticism, there were several peacebuilding factors that were adapted in the initial phases. International Crime Tribunal provided a platform to the victims for justice and compensation and

<sup>32</sup> US Department of State, '2022 Report on International Religious Freedom: Bangladesh' <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/bangladesh/> accessed 29 April 2024

<sup>33</sup> 'Peace versus Justice: A False Dilemma' (International Center for Transitional Justice, accessed April 29, 2024) <https://www.ictj.org/media/5439>.

reparations. There was some transparency and accountability during Rahman government. The trial, allegedly flawed with political interference, did provide relief to rape victims, freedom fighters and families of the deceased.

Despite ICT and transitional mechanisms, the status of the country today for specific communities is not the best. There has been selective justice and political interference which can hamper the credibility and effectiveness of the transitional efforts. The limited scope of ICT and not keeping up to the international standards is a direct violation of human rights.

Justice and Peace are influenced by each other but both are directly connected to the root cause of the problem and the failure to address that has led the state back in the spiral. Religion, political structures and social inequalities are highly prevalent<sup>34</sup>. Complete focus on punishment takes away the reconciliation component from transitional justice. However, if we look at the current situation, institutional reforms are required. A more comprehensive structure for the state will allow the community to grow. International support has been minimal. The genocide that was caused by the Pakistani army is usually unheard of. While international law dictates specific standards, there has to be recognition and acknowledgment.

These facts have led to the failure of mutual reinforcement of peace and justice. A more inclusive approach towards society will promote societal cohesion. Bangladesh's socio-political reality today threatens the state's already unstable foundation.

Where does this leave us with Justice and Peace? The objective to achieve both together is a false narrative. It is a theory every state would want to implement post-conflict, but to achieve that, the other state factors must be transparent and dedicated to protecting human rights and the rule of law. However, corruption, religion, and socioeconomic components tend to arise as a society. Peace is one of a state's most outstanding achievements; it can be achieved either with the acceptance of distinction or complete control (which will not always result in absolute peace). At the same time, justice can have a different impact. The image of how a state should be can be the same for both, but they are not identical. Justice is a political and social concept, whereas peace is more theoretical. The principle of peace and the Principle of justice are conflicting; for example, a rape survivor of the liberation war would prefer life imprisonment or the death penalty for the accused, which will involve several state factors, but society could instead choose reconciliation and move on. The interests of both these concepts are the same, yet different.

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<sup>34</sup>'Churches, Human Rights and Issues of Justice and Peace in Bangladesh' (World Council of Churches, accessed April 29, 2024) <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/churches-human-rights-and-issues-of-justice-and-peace-in-bangladesh>

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, The Bangladesh Liberation War is a perfect example of how, even after transitional mechanisms, justice and peace can be difficult to achieve together. The trial of war crimes should have set an example in the country, ideally and in theory. The struggle for independence was not just for sovereignty but for integrity, human rights, and justice. The immeasurable loss would cause a demand for justice, as it did in Bangladesh, but post-war, implementing both principles was a difficult task.

The study of Bangladesh highlights the conflict between peace and justice, which, to conclude, are not mutually reinforceable. They complement and influence each other but do not fall under one umbrella. True peace cannot be achieved without addressing the root cause and trauma of the victims. One can come after another, but not at the same time. They are both important for society as the balance would be disrupted if one is removed.

To conclude, the study of Bangladesh reminds us not to pursue hollow or false justice. A country requires punishment for crimes but reconciliation for a society. As Bangladesh continues to move away from past atrocities, absolute and true democracy should be upheld to achieve peace and justice in the near future.

