

A PAPER ON THE EXPEDIENCE OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

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Abstract:

Capital punishment, a government-sanctioned practice has had its share of support as well as that of dismay through the course of history in different parts of the world. The public opinion on the idea of capital punishment varies considerably by country and by the crime in question, which is why its prohibition and approval has been skewed throughout nations.

Through this paper, we primarily delve into the expedience of capital countries in third-world countries. We discuss about the causes that led or are likely to lead to either the disapproval or unanimity towards capital punishment. Similarly, we use pre-available statistics to predict the severity of this issue and hence provide new-found conclusion on the extent of its feasibility.

Keywords: crimes, death penalty, HDI, heinous, third world

Introduction:

Capital punishment, also known as the death penalty, is a government-sanctioned practice whereby a person is killed by the state as a punishment for a crime. The sentence that someone be punished in such a manner is referred to as a death sentence, whereas the act of carrying out the sentence is known as an execution. Crimes that are punishable by death are known as capital crimes or capital offences, and they commonly include offences such as murder, treason, espionage, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Etymologically, the term *capital* (lit. "of the head", derived via the Latin *capitalis* from *caput*, "head") in this context alluded to execution by beheading.

As of date, fifty-six countries retain capital punishment, 103 countries have completely abolished it, six have abolished it for ordinary crimes (while maintaining it for special circumstances such as war crimes), and 30 are abolitionist in practice.

Capital punishment is a matter of active controversy in several countries and states, and positions can vary within a single political ideology or cultural region. The United Nations General Assembly has adopted, in 2007, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014, non-binding resolutions calling for a global moratorium on executions, with a view to eventual abolition. Although most nations have abolished capital punishment, over 60% of the world's population live in countries where the death penalty is retained.

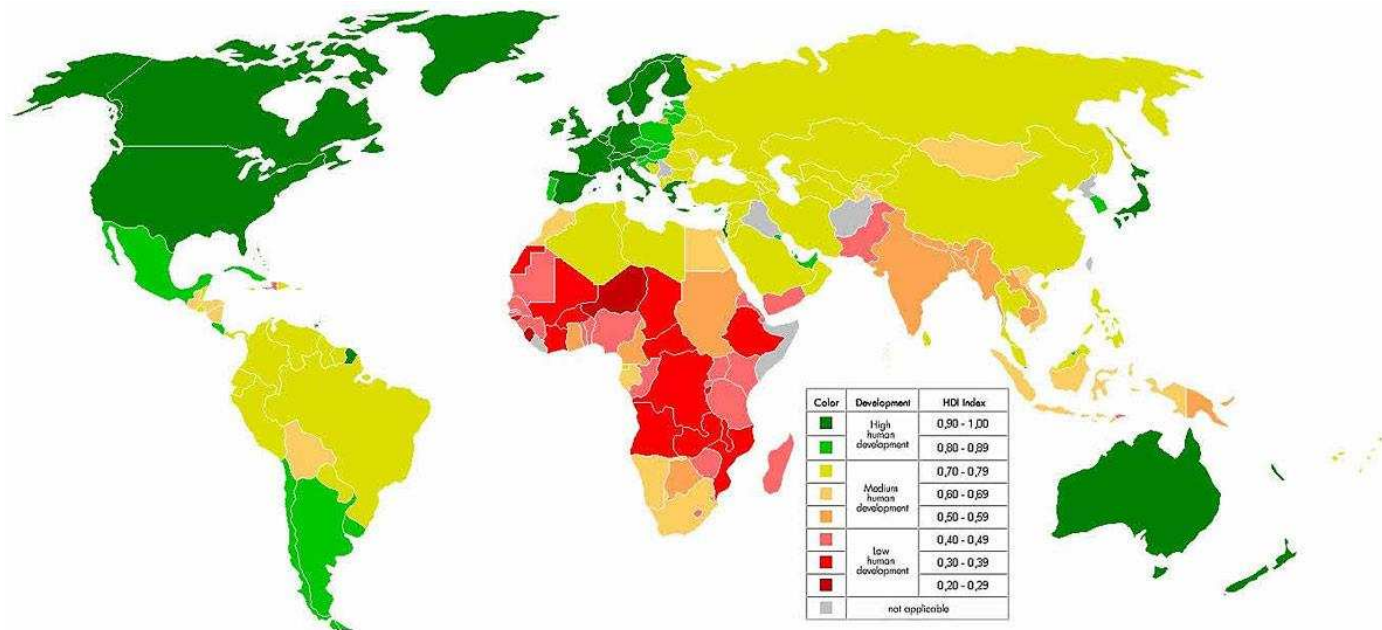
In Relation to Third-World Countries:

Third world countries refer to the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, nations not aligned with either the First World or the Second World. But this usage has become relatively rare, since the end of the Cold War. Thus, third world countries, now, refer to developing countries of the afore mentioned region based on their level on the Human Development Index (HDI) along with other factors.

Third World countries are largely characterized as poor and underdeveloped. In these countries, low levels of education, poor infrastructure, improper sanitation and poor access to health care mean

living conditions are seen as inferior to those in the world's more developed nations. As a result, the terms Third World country and developing nation have become increasingly interchangeable in recent decades. However, countries with a capitalistic economy such as China and Saudi Arabia fall under third world countries as well.

WORLD MAP OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX



Source: nationsonline.org

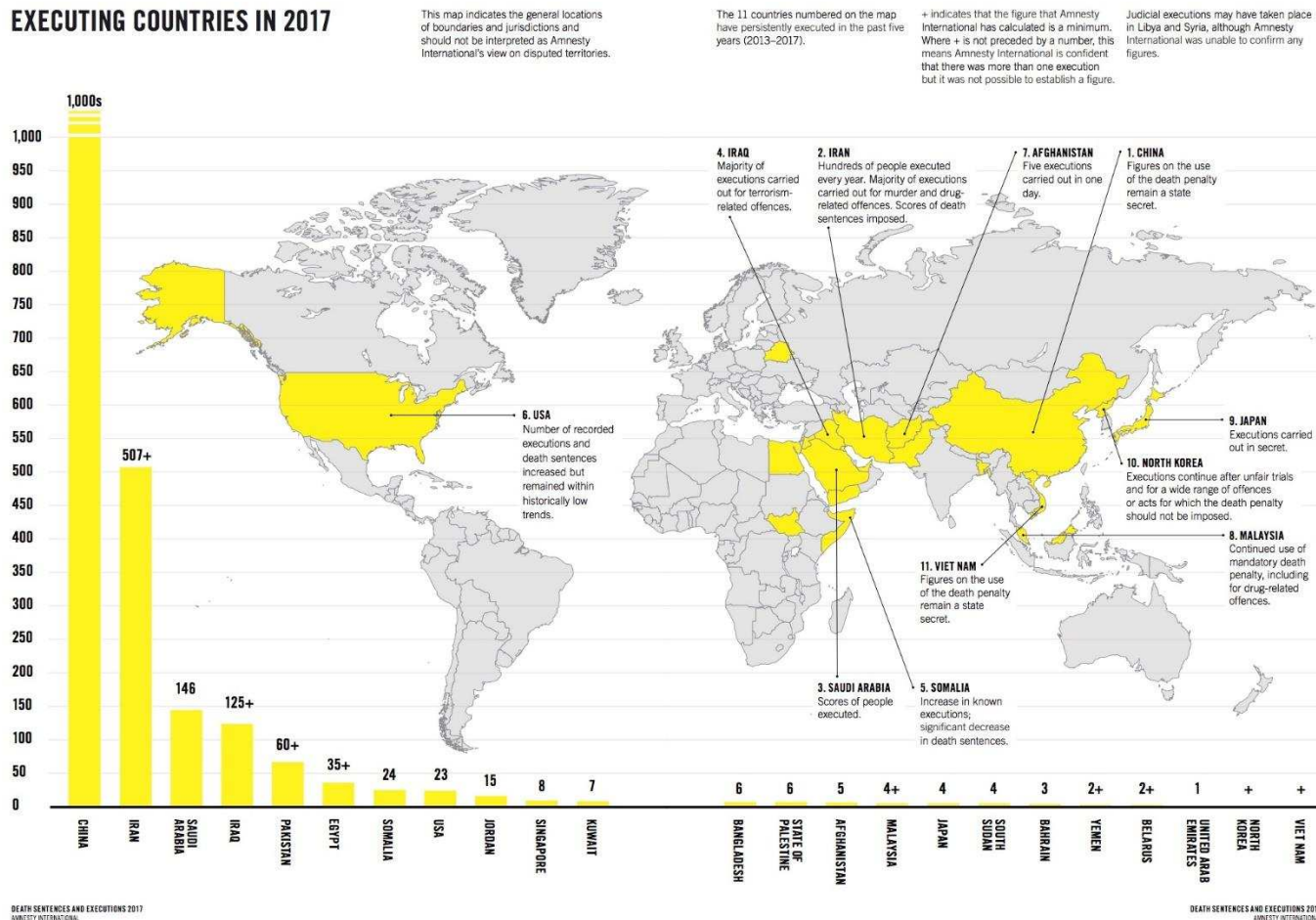
Methodology:

The observations and conclusion of this research paper were based on the use of pre-available findings which were compiled to give meaning to the widespread of capital punishment. The internet and research paper on similar topics were read for this research paper to shed some light on the presented topic. Various charts, data, bar graphs, and statistics have also been provided along with their respective sources to affirm the viability of the findings. Data on third world countries have been provided relative to that of the world in order for the readers to gain a perspective or know of the contrast of this situation. Observations and archival research have been a major influence on this research paper.

Observations & Findings:

According to recent findings, 141 countries around the world have completely abolished capital punishment. Nevertheless, a large portion of the existing nations that still have capital punishment are from third world countries.

EXECUTING COUNTRIES IN 2017



Source: deathpenaltyinfo.org

The highest number of people executed was from China last year, which even though has a capitalist economy is still regarded as a third world country. Similarly. China was followed by Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq as the leading countries in providing the death penalty, all of which are third world countries. Methods of execution included beheading, electrocution, hanging, lethal injection and various kinds of shooting (by firing squad, and at close range to the heart or the head). Public executions were known to have been carried out in Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Somalia. In Saudi Arabia, executions are usually beheadings with a sword. In one case recorded by Amnesty, a Sudanese man's head was sewn back onto his body and hung from a pole in a public place.

Highest Death penalty in Third World Countries	
Country	Total executed, 2016-17
SOURCE: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Source: Amnesty International	
CHINA	1551+
IRAN	506+
SAUDI ARABIA	146+
IRAQ	125+
PAKISTAN	60+
EGYPT	35+
UNITED STATES	24 (reference*)
SOMALIA	24

Apart from the United States, the most death penalties in the year 2016-17 were all from third world countries, with China having the most death penalties to over 1550 people.

Likewise, the death penalties in third world countries around the world in 2017 were:

Asia-Pacific (16 countries): Afghanistan (5), Bahrain (3), Bangladesh (6), China (1,551+), Iran (506+), Iraq (125+), Japan (4), Jordan (15), Kuwait (7), Malaysia (4), Pakistan (60+), State of Palestine (6 [Hamas authorities, Gaza]), Saudi Arabia (146+), Singapore (8), United Arab Emirates (1), Yemen (2+)

Africa (3 countries): Egypt (35+), Somalia (24 [Puntland 12, Federal Government of Somalia 12]), South Sudan (4)

DISCUSSION:

The lack of abolition of death penalties to this date in more than 21 countries, almost all of which are third world countries, around the world is because of the prevalence of strong counter-argumentative reasons.

Causes of Prevalence of Death Penalty:

1. Overpopulation:

The death penalty may be legal in overpopulated countries. The more people a country has, the less value each person in that country has, for the country has less need of each one. A poor country will have few resources available to incarcerate its criminals, leaving fewer punitive options. The death penalty (and corporal punishment, for lesser offenses) arguably can involve much fewer resources than incarceration can. Whether or not third world countries tend to be poor is left as an exercise for the reader.

2. Need to be “tough on crime”:

Everyone agrees that crime is bad, and we need to stop it. This seems sensible and logical in every way, until we ask the question: do we need the death penalty to be ‘tough’ on crime? Death penalties, in most cases, sprout from the idea of setting an example to prevent further inhumane criminal actions. Many would put it as “fighting fire with fire; injustice with extreme justice.”

3. Conscience:

The execution of “guilty” criminals, who have gone way past their share of forgiveness and redemption, help people feel what they have done is a boon to the society and a brick on a wall of justice.

4. Rational and Moral Response:

What you sow is what you reap. Death penalty, as per each nation, is given to an individual on the severity of his/her crimes. Thus, death penalties to most seem like a proper or befitting response to the heinous acts committed by the wrong-doer.

5. Deterrent to Violent Crime:

Death Penalties are the most severe judgments that can be given to a criminal. So, for a wrong-doer to receive a death penalty reflects on the extent of heinous crime s/he has committed. The death penalty therefore, acts as a reminder to those who may act accordingly and his deters future inhumane acts.

6. Cost-benefit Analysis:

Even though this argument may seem very meagre and secondary, it is important from the author’s point of view, insofar as the life of the most brutal convicts is in question. At what cost is the State going to keep the convicts alive? Especially the convicts with no sense of remorse or guilt, who can prove to be dangerous to the society in the future. The chances of a life convict escaping from prison are not unknown to the history of Indian prison. In the backdrop of this scenario the question of safety of the society at large arises. The potential risk to the society by a convicted criminal cannot be kept at bay under the cloak of human rights.

While there are many third world nations that do not prohibit death penalties, there are those that do. Out of the 150+ countries who have now fully abolished death penalties, there are many that fall under being third world countries. So, analysing from a counter-perspective, the

Reasons for the Abolition Of Death Penalty:

1. Irreversible Act:

Death Penalty is irreversible. Such absolute judgement may lead people paying for crimes they did not commit. Likewise, people who learn from their mistakes and want a chance at redemption are also denied from this opportunity.

2. Public Spectacle:

Executions are often undertaken in an extremely public manner, with public hangings in Iran or mutilation in China. According to UN human rights experts, executions in public serve no legitimate purpose and only increase the cruel, inhuman and degrading nature of this punishment.

3. Moral Hypocrisy:

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind." So, to pass down absolute judgement on another individual for his/her sins would be a sin of our own and so is deemed as moral hypocrisy.

4. Exoneration:

Death penalties render people unable to plea for their case and if found guilty will never have the chance to do so. Were some additional evidence to be found and known that the guilty person was in fact innocent, all would have been in vain.

5. Costs:

As opposed to the popular belief, death penalties in fact incur more costs as opposed to life sentence without parole. Due to the extra measures taken in judicial proceedings, lawyer fees, extended trials, and expert witnesses, costs end up being higher.

6. Socio-economic discrimination:

One of the most heard arguments against death penalties is the socio-economic discrimination. People who are from a wealthy background will always find a way to get out of their dirty acts, though how heinous may they be, whereas people from a poorer background in addition to being charged wrongfully, are not given the same say in things.

Final Analysis:

The debate on the feasibility of a death penalty in third-world countries is a productive as well as counter-productive argument. While a death penalty may be an inhumane act that renders a person incapable of atoning for his/her sins, it helps deter social crimes and help bring a sense of justice to the global community. After all, in the end, each and every efforts matter and build up like each brick on a wall.

Conclusion:

Thus, to conclude, the existence of death penalty can be explained based on the principle of free will. Every person, in most cases, is the master of his/her own will. A person who commits the offence of murder for instance, does it of his own free will (again, in most cases) all the while being aware of the repercussions. As such, every person is free to choose the path he / she wants to tread on. Hence, it is only just to ensure that the convict is adequately punished for the crime he has partaken in.

Likewise, the concept of capital punishment can also be viewed from a psychological perspective. It is a basic psychological principle that death is the greatest fear for most of the normal people. Most humans have a natural fear of death. It is the basic trait of humans to fear the unknown, and death is the most unexplored area. Thus, it has also been the most naturally feared, which is why it is an effective carrier of justice.

In cases of not only third-world countries but that of all, man is deterred from committing crimes mainly owing to the existence of laws that penalize the committing of such acts. There are very few people who believe it is immoral to commit wrongful acts. If laws preventing wrongful acts do not exist, then the human society would be equalled to a barbarous society that thrives on the principle of survival of the fittest. It would be each man for himself and we would have set ourselves back hundreds of decades amidst all the chaos.

Death penalty itself has a myriad of dimensions to it. But one unchanging aspect is that some crimes are so culpable that death is the only suitable penalty. While abolitionists argue that awarding death sentence serves no purpose at all, unfortunately keeping a person who committed such a heinous crime alive serves one neither, except for one of keeping the society at a risk.

In conclusion, it can be reiterated that death penalty is a just judgement which is a necessity on the contemporary society of now, and mainly those of third-world countries. At a point in time where progress and justice are now more important than ever, and order of the society is at compromise, capital punishment should be by far the least of our worries. A nation cannot put at risk, thousands of lives for the sake of one person who has earned his due share of sins and crimes and lost his place among society. Therefore, death penalties in third world countries must continue to exist and are expedient by all measures.

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