



RAPE OF NON - BENGALI WOMEN IN ERSTWHILE EAST PAKISTAN (1971)

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Abstract

This article addresses the painful subject of rape of non - Bengali women by Bengali terrorists supported by Awami League and India in 1971 Civil War. It is an attempt to draw academic attention to this neglected chapter in the sad history of secession of East Pakistan from Pakistan with the objective to develop understanding of and spread awareness about the gruesome consequences of ethnic and nationalist hatred that not only provoked brutal rape of non -Bengali women but also justified it. The conduct of individual soldiers in war is significantly impacted; they are embroiled in reprehensible behavior that they may normally see as brutal and depraved in times of peace. The issue of rape in war drew academic attention with the emergence of wide reports about mass rapes of Muslim women in the Bosnian war between 1992 and 1995. Regrettably, the contemporary works have given scant attention to the violation of non-Bengali women by Bengali terrorists in 1971 in erstwhile East Pakistan now called Bangladesh. In response to this major gap in the literature, this paper represents an attempt to examine the rape of non-Bengali women as a political and military weapon via evidence and psychological theoretical frameworks enabling an analysis of ethnic hatred prompted by Bengali nationalism that had come to replace the Bengali identity of Muslim nationalism. This is an attempt to break the silence on the vulnerability of women in wartime situations and their subsequent suffering as it increases the possibility of sexual violence with impunity against them.

Key words: Sanctioned rape of non-Bengali women; 1971 Civil War; Erstwhile East Pakistan

Introduction

Since olden times, rape has been used as a weapon in war. It is also deployed as a war strategy. Wartime has been identified as a "transitory disinhibitor" (Marshall and Barbaree, 1990) that can propel even a socially responsible man to bypass ordinary restraints on behavior. There are various examples of such crimes committed in wars across the world.

Conflict situations have always abounded in sexual crimes perpetrated against women. These are sordid social, ethical and political realities that pervade present-day war settings. The conduct of individual soldiers in war is significantly impacted; they are embroiled in reprehensible behavior that they may normally see as brutal and depraved in times of peace. The issue of rape in war drew academic attention with the emergence of wide reports about mass rapes of Muslim women in the Bosnian war between 1992 and 1995. Regrettably, the contemporary works have given scant attention to the violation of non-Bengali women by the Bengali terrorists in 1971 in erstwhile East Pakistan now called Bangladesh. In response to this major gap in the literature, this paper represents an attempt to examine the rape of non-Bengali women via evidence and psychological theoretical frameworks enabling an analysis of ethnic hatred prompted by Bengali nationalism that had come to replace the Bengali identity of Muslim nationalism. This multidimensional analysis of civil wartime mass rape of non-Bengali women that is presently lacking in current literature looks into the "situational variables" (1990) that facilitate sexual offence during war.

The connection between sexual violence and conflict has been neglected by both general public and academia, especially the rape of non-Bengali women in 1971 has virtually been ignored. In 1993, when rapes in the Bosnian war circulated in the news channels, the subject of rapes in war drew the attention of academia to understand this phenomenon. Nevertheless, current literature on wartime rape tends to remain mute about sexual aggression against non-Bengali womenfolk in 1971.

Data Representation

The analyst Hali in his book *Tormented Truth 1971 & Beyond* ...writes, "One day my parents received a letter that my young sister, who was only fourteen then, should be handed over for interrogation on a trumped - up charge that she had been heard hurling abuses at Sheikh Mujib." (2021, p. xxi). Alarmed and terrified, Hali's parents, who belonged to the Bihari community, secretly whisked away their daughter to the airport and managed to get her on board to Karachi to stay with relatives till they joined her. Other young girls and even married women were not so

lucky. Karar Ali Agha in his book *Witness to the Carnage 1971* (2021) writes that in order to prevent the further mounting series of murders and rapes of non-Bengalis, when the Pakistan Army raided Dacca University on March 26 1971, that had been turned into the head quarter of training for terrorists, they found locked up in one of the rooms of the Jagan Nath hostel, "twenty stark naked young girls of West Pakistan and Bihari origin" (Agha, p.217). Some had been detained there for 15 days. So horrendous was the sight, that even years later, the "tough and hardy" soldiers who recovered those unfortunate girls found it hard to shed off the memory of that unbearably dreadful sight, exclaiming that such an act of brutality committed against innocent, harmless girls could neither be forgotten nor forgiven by any one present there. "The young and innocent girls had been kept naked throughout their captivity and were sadistically tortured and brutally raped beyond all conceivable limits. The last addition to this group was a fifteen-year daughter of a Bihari business man, who had been forcibly lifted from her house on 23 March and during the last two days had been raped by at least 50 hoodlums. Five of these girls later expired due to internal injuries." (Ibid., p.217).

Such gruesome acts were committed in other cities as well. Ziaur Rahman (1936 — 1981), who had served in the Pakistan Army as a major, revolted and assumed the title of a general and declared himself as the supreme commander of Peoples Republic of Bangladesh, unleashed an unprecedented reign of terror on non-Bengali population in Chittagong; he organized systematic, organized mass murder of his erstwhile colleagues, subordinates and non-Bengalis. This carnage can rightly be called genocide as it was deliberately planned in cold blood and "executed with brutal efficiency" (Agha, p.249) in a systematic way. "He [Ziaur Rahman] had set up three slaughter houses in the city each staffed by 7 to 10 butchers from the city shops ... Gangs of armed Bengalis, escorted by police or East Pakistan Rifles personnel, went around each locality and picked up any non-Bengali family living there. Young girls were separated from the rest like wheat from chaff and sent to the Circuit House. The rest of the unfortunate family was sent to one of the slaughter houses where they were impaled and then killed by the butchers. Their blood was collected in large drums and subsequently sent to the fields as fertilizer. The unfortunate girls, who were sent to the Circuit House, were distributed and rotated amongst the officers of the rebel forces and Awami League leaders. The innocent girls were subjected to this inhuman treatment under the supervision of Mustafizur Rahman, the Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong". Agha writes in his book *Witness to the Carnage 1971*, "Indiscriminate and barbaric orgies became the established norm. Lt.

Shamsher, a young Bengali officer of 8 EBR (East Bengal Regiment), confessed to have raped 14 virgin girls during this period." (2021, pp.249 - 250).

Kaptai was an idyllic small town in the Hill Tracts of Chittagong. This beautiful and heavenly place was transformed into a stage for the unfolding of a macabre tragedy. 17 EPR was commanded by Maj Pir Mohammad, a very gentle Punjabi officer from the Baloch Regiment. Capt. Haroon was the Bengali officer who assisted him. Capt. Haroon belonged to a well-educated, well-reputed, nice family. His father was a judge of the High Court. Nevertheless, caught in the frenzy of ethnic hatred, Capt. Haroon, on receiving orders to start the insurrection disarmed Maj. Pir Mohammad and 3 other officers. Killing them in cold blood, he threw their bodies into the lake. This act in defiance of the code of honor and chivalry that every army personnel is required to observe was repeated again and again by the Bengali insurgents. Maj. Pir's suffering was short lived as he was immediately put to death, but his subordinate "Urbane" officer subjected Mrs. Pir Mohammad to a "more horrible and prolonged agony" (Agha, p.267). She was forcibly taken away by Capt. Haroon and raped and tortured for three days. She was then passed down the ladder to the East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) junior commissioned officers and circulated like chattel among the troops. Finally, this gentle, noble but unfortunate lady came to the end of her miserable ordeal in Rangamati jail, where she was raped to death by the jail guards." (Agha, p.267). Agha narrates similar gruesome stories that were repeated in the Karnaphuli Paper and Rayon Mills, located in the close vicinity of Kaptai. There was arson, large scale looting and killing; about 2000 non - Bengali men were massacred here. Their women were locked in their houses and when they were rescued by Pakistan Army (2 Commando Battalion) they "narrated unmentionable tales of rape and brutality" (p.269). Isphahani Jute Mills was on the outskirts of Chittagong. This place became "another unfortunate site for mass murder" (p.250). "The hapless non-Bengalis were collected in the Club House and hacked to pieces". Agha says that when he visited this site, the walls were still bloodstained and floors crusty with the blood of the helpless victims. "Women's clothes still lay soaked in a congealing pool of blood, indicating that the poor women might have been disrobed or raped before being killed. Similar acts of barbarism were perpetrated in other cities as well (pp.250 - 258).

Junaid Ahmad in his book *Creation of Bangladesh: Exploding Myths* describes in detail the "Reign of Terror" (2018, p. 202) established by Awami League supported terrorists, who unleashed brutality against non - Bengali "women [who] were brutally raped and their naked bodies mutilated

in streets" Ahmad, p. 202). According to Noor Jehan, a witness of the carnage at Saidpur on March 25th 1971, men were mercilessly shot dead, while women were forcibly taken to another village where they "were raped every night and those who resisted were killed, their bodies were torn into pieces while their breasts amputated and 'Joi Bangla' was carved on their foreheads. She along with other victims was rescued by Pakistan Army on 10th April" (Ahmad, p.212). Between 26th March - 22 April around 15,000 people perished in Naogaon and Santahar. Bihari people were besieged, their movement was blocked by the Awami League militants. "The women were separated from their male family members, raped and paraded naked in the streets to be killed when the abusers got bored or found new victims to replace them" (Ahmad, 2018, p. 213). In Dinajpur Town from 28th March to 1 April 1971, "one of the most barbaric bloodbaths occurred", the young girls who survived were abducted and "taken to India for a life worse than death" (Ahmad, p. 215). Similarly, in Thakurgaon, the "women were raped; young ones were abducted while the pregnant and older women were murdered...The raped and killed women's naked bodies were dragged in streets for a show animal were too human to watch" (Ahmad, p.215). In Afar Kandy, Bihari women were seized violently and later butchered. "The atrocious rapists and killers had mercilessly mutilated the bodies of their female victims; bodies were in pieces; breasts were sliced off and their wombs were slit open. The delirious killers ravished the women, slicing their breasts off when they had some breath left in them" (Ahmad, p.217 [Govt of Pakistan, 1971 "White Papers. p.27]).

Bose (2011) in her book *Dead Reckoning* recounts blood curdling details of the carnage and rape of non-Bengalis. She writes that Ahmad, one of the witnesses of the carnage, confessed in an interview his feeling of guilt and expressed his contrition on his helplessness in stopping violence against innocent civilians. He confessed sight of such scenes saddened and disturbed him badly. He said "women and children were killed by the Bengalis and, some women were raped and killed, or abducted. Some were rescued by other Bengalis and kept in the nearby jails along with a few officers". Blood-stained clothes of many women were found, but the women went missing.

Critical Discussion and Analysis

There are many determinants on behavior during war. Situational and affective determinants that are conducive to rape of women in war have been explored by psychologists. The impact of these features over conduct (Bandura, 1986) raises the possibility of women subjected to sexual aggression. Abnormal situations like war encourage rape (Malamuth, 1996); thus, a study of the

situational context and affective dyscontrol is necessitated to explore why Bengali insurgents raped non-Bengali women in the situation of armed conflict when they would not do so in peacetime.

1.Situational Determinants of Rape in Wartime

1.1 Violent Situation

A violent situation triggers male aggression against women. Marshall and Barbaree (1990) have argued that wartime is characterized by ferocious belligerence that not only enfeebls but also deteriorates individual self-discipline and constraining ethics against indulging in sexually aggressive behavior. The experiences of seeing fellow soldiers killing, being killed, wounded, immediate threat of death intensify enemy sentiment to such an extent that at times even polite, cultured individuals are driven into performing morally vile acts that are unthinkable to them in times of peace: "There are moments in war when men become different men, who can do things that in their peacetime lives they would call monstrous and inhuman...War is another world, where men feel and act differently..." (Henry, 1997, p. 10).

However, situational factors do not always "trigger" disinhibitors in war. Historically, war has been seen as a test of the mettle of men. War history, especially the history of wars fought by Muslims is replete with glorious examples of chivalry, observance of the highest code of conduct in the most trying and desperate violent situations. Secondly, the discipline and restraint of Pakistan army in the face of violent behavior by Awami League supported terrorists has been acknowledged and praised by even biased journalists like Anthony Mascarenhas, who organized and conducted a very systematic malicious propaganda campaign against Pakistan Army. In addition, there were many Bengalis whose minds remained non poisoned by the virulent propaganda. There was a big number of benign and brave Bengalis who retained their sanity, whose better judgement remained unclouded by ethnic hatred, whose conscience and humanity remained intact. They risked their lives to protect and rescue the non-Bengali victims. Violent situation did not trigger their disinhibitors. Their humane behavior has been documented by various writers (See Stolen Victory, From East Pakistan to Bangladesh, The Wastes of Time, Witness to Carnage, 1971).

Moreover, most of the rapes were committed before March 26, 1971 or immediately after wards i.e., before or after Operation Searchlight, the actual confrontation with Pakistan Army. The violent situation was created by the narrative of hatred that Awami league was gurgling out. Sheikh Mujib Ur Rehman exhorted his followers on March 1, 1971 to turn every house into a fortress. The use of his militant language served as a weapon to provoke and induce violent behavior.

1.2 Propaganda: Negative Presentation of Non-Bengalis

The demonized, dehumanized behavior of the Bengali terrorists was generated by the Indian funded propaganda that maligned non -Bengalis as intruders, invaders, exploiters, enemies. This false perception created extreme dichotomies between Bengalis and non-Bengalis. Partisan or nationalistic loyalties in wartime generate polarized dichotomies between “we” and “them.” This procedure of rousing up loathing for the non-Bengalis in conflict time was also extended to non-Bengali women who were not seen as human beings, but simply seen as despicable enemy, allowing Bengali insurgents to swamp empathy and concern for their victims in civil wartime. Hatred for “the other”, the out group i.e., the non-Bengalis had become such a powerful internal state that it overpowered the inhibitory controls of Islamic teachings of compassion, mercy and released brutal sexual aggression. Replacement of Muslim identity with Bengali nationalism swamped the humanity of these men, dehumanized them into behaving in a monstrous way. This kind of monstrous behavior is not even witnessed in the animal domain.

In the 1971 Civil War, culprits’ abdication of moral and civilized code of conduct deepened due to group identification, that considerably increased because of the presentation of non-Bengalis as exploiters, as the cause of economic deprivation as enemies. The widespread popularity of Awami league and its unrelenting call for group fidelity increased the vulnerability of even those individuals who were sitting on fences to comply with the group norms of the insurgents. Divergent voices like those of *Jamait-e-Islami* and later on *Al Badar* were muzzled. The Bengali supporters of Pakistan ideology were ruthlessly punished. They were mercilessly tortured and slaughtered in cold blood. *Albadar* written by Saleem Mansoor Khalid (1985) gives a detailed account of targeting, persecution and cold-blooded murders of Bengalis who remained loyal to Pakistan. The threat of punishment i.e. rapes of the women of the family of Chaudry of Dhulla and murders of family members of Hadi (Bengalis loyal to the ideology of Pakistan) narrated in *East Pakistan to Bangladesh* (Khan, 2021) are examples of dire consequence of refusal to comply with group norms.

1.3 Advantageous Comparison

According to Bandura (1986), another strategy that serves to undo internal regulatory mechanisms and loosen self – control, thereby transforming conduct is “advantageous comparison”. During war, comparisons are fabricated and well propagated as a tool to reduce one’s own behavior and accentuate the conduct of the enemy, thereby strengthening and justifying action

against them. Wartime rape has been pervasively used as a means of propaganda and political manipulation to generate hatred against the enemy. For example, rumors were spread that young girls and boys were being raped by Pakistan Army and that they were killing innocent Bengali civilians. This kind of propaganda misled and incensed many Bengalis, provoking them to retaliate by mass rapes and murders.

1.4 The Impact of Group Dynamics: Deindividuation

A significant determinant of the rape behavior during war is the impact of group dynamics. Henry (1998) argues that war produces “accidental” comradeship that is “intense beyond the likelihood of back-home life” (p.9). The strong comradeship established in war, and the consequent slim possibility of detection and diffusion of responsibility, permits an individual to drop normal regulatory controls and thus involve in “immoral” behavior (Janis, 1972). Bengali rapists’ behavior can be explained as an example of deindividuation. Deindividuation is characterized by lack of compassion for the welfare of others. Deindividuation is more dominant when individuals pack together to attack in groups. Mass rapes of non-Bengali women and the way they were moved down the ladder and circulated like chattel demonstrate the mechanics of intensification of group identification. As Groth (1979) has argued, “the presence of codefendants diminishes their sense of personal responsibility for the sexual offense” (p. 113), thus allowing offenders to overcome inhibitions. Furthermore, offenders may “take part [in gang rape] out of a sense of indebtedness or emotional dependency or as a way of validating their manhood or to retain membership in a peer group” (Ibid., p.113). The refusal to be a part of group actions means rejection by the group and the resultant ostracization. Usually, the fear of exclusion or of penalty coerces people into compliance to group norms.

1.5 Displacement of Responsibility

Bandura (1986) has also identified the influence of authority as another mechanism that causes the shift of responsibility. Bandura argues that people’s conduct will degenerate morally if the authority not only accepts responsibility for committing the immoral behavior but also encourages cruelty. In the 1971 civil war, atrocities and rape of non-Bengalis were done under instructions from power structures. This vindicated morally inexcusable acts and dismissed personal accountability. As Kelman has argued, “when acts of violence are explicitly ordered, implicitly encouraged, tacitly approved, or at least permitted by legitimate authorities, people’s readiness to commit or condone them is considerably enhanced” (1973, p. 39). The rapes of non-Bengali

women are examples of diffusion and displacement of responsibility as these rapists shifted the responsibility for rape and other related violent acts to higher authority, and this perception disinhibited self – regulatory civilized code of conduct (Henry et al., 2004).

According to the cultural spillover theory as theorized by Baron et al. (1998), the elimination of moral inhibitions against violence (e.g., killing, because war is a sanguine art) may be extended to other immoral acts, such as rape. Rape was perceived by the Bengali rapists as part of the prescriptive rules of armed struggle as well as a prize for them. As Awami League terrorists and Mukti Bahini explicitly endorsed the use of violence, it subsequently spilled over into overtly encouraging sexual violence against non-Bengali women as an acceptable act.

1.6 Reduced Possibility of Punishment

Sexual violence in war was committed with impunity because the Bengali terrorists were assured that they will be exonerated from any punishment for rape in wartime. This assurance weakened their moral restraint and dropped their reserves against becoming engaged in rape. The absence of anticipated punishment (Bandura, 1986) (see Thomas & Ralph, 1994) was another cognitive mechanism that served as a disinhibiting device for Bengali terrorists committing the reprehensible conduct. After the war, the perpetrators were not prosecuted, rather many were awarded with lucrative posts, for example Capt. Haroon was made ambassador. The Bengali insurgents not only legitimized rape as an appropriate weapon to punish, chastise, harass intimidate and demoralize the people loyal to Pakistan, it was construed as a reward for the perpetrators of this shameless and brutal act.

1.7 Justification of Criminal Behavior

Criminal behavior is morally justified by what Bandura (1986) calls “cognitive restructuring” that is, a process in which “reprehensible conduct is made personally and socially acceptable by portraying it in the service of moral ends” (N. Henry et al., 2004). Destruction of the enemy is the major goal in a war (Scarry, 1985). Viciousness legitimized in the name of the main ideology functions to exonerate various forms of atrocities by ascribing a moral character to them. Sexual brutalities against women in times of war are justified as a part of the ideological objective aimed at the destruction of the enemy. The methodical, organized mass rapes of non-Bengali women in erstwhile East Pakistan by the Bengali insurgents in the Civil War were carried out to punish the West Pakistani Government and the supposedly offensive Pakistan Army. Rapes of non-Bengali women were committed to humiliate and thus destroy the “exploiters” despite the strict Islamic

prohibition against dishonoring women and shedding blood. Rape of “enemy” women was perceived as ethically needed in the name of a Bengali nationalist ideology. As a political and military policy, an unwritten, implicit official doctrine underlay the insurgents’ ethnic cleansing of non- Bengalis. To materialize this policy, Bengali insurgents were stimulated to sexually assault women to engender eviction of non-Bengali people through fear and the danger of rape. This ideological and moral justification for cruel behavior made it not only excusable but also transformed it into heroic conduct.

1.8 Dehumanization of Non-Bengalis

Dehumanization is a process of attaching subhuman qualities to others, to victims with the purpose to absolve and validate vicious actions toward them. The dichotomy of in-group/out-group nurtures dehumanization as it facilitates an individual to powerfully identify with one’s own group whereas concurrently denying the adversaries of human features. Dehumanization of the enemy legitimizes morally inexcusable conduct. Human estrangement and unfamiliarity provoke aggression. Once the “other” or enemy is stripped of his humanity, and the dichotomy between “we” and “them” is sharply defined and asserted on the basis of race or language or religion or ethnicity, it is easier to generate dangerous xenophobia and intolerance, destroying feelings of compassion for the enemy because the perception construes them as different and, thus bereft of human features.

The human status of non-Bengalis was reduced by looking down upon them and labelling them as vermin, as lice; blood sucking, parasitic worms causing problems for the rest of the people; worthless, annoying, harmful, despicable insects without feelings and emotions, who therefore can be stamped upon without any moral scruples.

1.9 Attribution of Blame

Another source of dehumanization is the mechanism of attribution of blame. When the enemy is dehumanized, morally culpable acts against them are justified; thus, the rape of an enemy woman is perceived as a just punishment that she deserves. For example, non-Bengalis were accused of usurping key positions in government and blamed for all the problems and ills of Bengalis. Attribution of blame was extended to non-Bengali women as well. They were also seen as the enemy, and dehumanized as ‘Khanki’. Khan was a derogatory term used for the West Pakistanis by the insurgents; the derivative of this abuse was Khanki i.e., anybody related to the West Pakistani, be it his wife or children or friend. Till today, in Bangladesh this term is used as a word

of abuse. As the label 'Khan' represented the enemy, therefore women related to them were perceived as deserving of punishment. Non-Bengali woman was incriminated, deserving punishment because she symbolized the resented enemy; thus, the extension of accusation and blame for the problems of Bengali people to her, provided justification for sexual violence against her. This perception exonerated the insurgents from moral responsibility and justified their brutal conduct as a defensive reaction. This was a way of transforming the monstrosity of their crime into a trivial wrongdoing. Attribution of blame to non-Bengalis allowed the offenders to disengage their internal control in raping, torturing, killing and mutilating the dead bodies of those unfortunate women.

2. Affective Dyscontrol: Rape as a Coping Mechanism for Stress

Affective states in times of war also significantly impact individual behavior. The estrangement from peace may prompt some affective states encouraging sexual aggression. War creates an abnormal condition; not only there is physical injury there is also considerable emotional damage and hurt. A highly charged atmosphere is generated by war — at an emotional level the feeling of uncertainty, insecurity and fear is compounded with hostility, hatred and revenge. Physiologically there is deprivation and denial - people are deprived of the comforts of living in peace, libido is denied consummation. Rape during war is at times explained as a way of giving vent to pent up libido to satisfy animal instincts, or get relief from stress. Titillation of instincts and senses serves to forget momentarily the grinding stress and danger. War generates emotional states such as stress, fear, anxiety, anger, shock and frustration; rape in such a situation may be used as a coping tactic. Rape serves as a temporary escape from the horrors and painful experience of war (Ward, Hudson, & Marshall, 1995). As Henry et al. (1995) have suggested, "In the fully deconstructed state, the person functions as a mere body experiencing sensations, with little or no directed control over behavior" (p. 72).

However, the rape of non-Bengali women can neither be explained as a desperate way of coping with stress nor as the influence of situational determinants of behavior in wartime. The civil war continued for 9 months i.e., from March till Dec 16 1971, whereas most of the non-Bengali women were either raped before Pakistan Army started Operation Searchlight on March 26, 1971 to restore law and order, and rescue non-Bengalis from mass massacre, brutal rapes, arson, loot, plunder or the non-Bengali women were sexually assaulted immediately after March 26, 1971, i.e., when the Bengali insurgent troops rose in revolt against the Pakistan Army. Unprecedented acts of sexual

torture were committed against innocent non-Bengali women. They were raped, used as a plaything, killed and their bodies were mutilated. Atrocious sexual assault against innocent women was committed before March 26 when the Pakistan Army started Operation Searchlight to stop further atrocities and rescue the victims.

Another argument put up to elucidate the occurrence of rape in war is the non-availability of women in a foreign land. The “availability” of enemy women and the nonavailability of ingroup women for engaging in sex in wartime is another determinant that might determine the act of rape. As Bengalis were fighting on their own soil, this argument does not carry any weight as a pretext to justify and rationalize their cruel behavior.

2.1 A Sense of Power

It is argued that in a violent conflict situation, the experience of affective dyscontrol (Hall & Hirschman, 1991) can engender a pervasive sensation of numbness and helplessness. Rape may symbolize a coping mechanism for overcoming the feeling of powerlessness. Sexual coercion is then used as a means of obtaining power. The feeling of acquiring power may lower an individual's self-regulatory restraints against engaging in rape. As women are more vulnerable, they are easy victims. Rape was systematically used by Bengali terrorists not only as a show of masculine power over women but as a combat weapon, as a tactic of war with the explicit aim to demonstrate power over the defenders, to intimidate, create fear and chaos, and to humiliate and demoralize the Pakistan Army. What could be more tragic than this that the wives and daughters of fellow brothers, compatriots were brutally raped, tortured and killed simply on the basis of their ethnicity. The display of this extreme ethnic hatred is, according to the founder of Genocide Watch Prof. Stanton, an alarming indication and condition of genocide. The rape of non-Bengali women was genocidal in nature, systematically planned to kill non-Bengali people identified and discriminated by their ethnicity. According to the UNO definition of Genocide, creating an atmosphere of fear, harassment, threats is tantamount to genocide as it frightens people into fleeing. Had the Pakistan Army not intervened, there would have been a terrible orgy and complete bloodbath. The plan was carefully, calculatedly designed in cold blood to create not only an atmosphere of fear, chaos, anarchy, despair, but to go beyond to terminate all non-Bengalis. This is testified by the documents that give a detailed account of the plans, war strategies prepared by the insurgents.

Concluding Note

There are three - fold findings of this study. Firstly, the outcome of the study recognizes that civil wartime mass rapes of non - Bengali women were abominably ruthless crimes against humanity that can in no way be forgotten or forgiven. Secondly, all men in violent situations of war do not commit rape. Though a study of the situational determinants of mass rapes in the context of war helps to understand the cognitive and affective mechanics of this monstrous behavior, yet it cannot exonerate the culprits from their heinous crimes. It must be noted and there is evidence to support the fact that all men are not guilty of rape in war; rather many remain incorruptible. Under the horrific conditions of war, moral restraint is loosened more frequently, but there are never-ending cases of peoples' inner moral values triumphing over collective immorality and cruelty. Thirdly, the cause of this atrocious phenomenon can be traced to the rhetoric of hatred, xenophobia that was deliberately, systematically spread by Indian funded propaganda to dismember Pakistan.

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