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BEYOND THE GURNEY AND THE CHAIR: INVESTIGATING EXECUTION METHODS

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Abstract

The topic of capital punishment has been the cause of heated discussions across fields of profession around the world. Many officials have raised concerns regarding the cruelty and effectiveness of this punishment while others have defended it. Hence, this paper aims to provide the reader with a peek into both sides of the argument through different aspects. The paper begins with a brief introduction of the topic and followed by its historical significance in cultures and legal systems across the world. A spotlight is focused on laws governing capital punishment in India and how it has evolved overtime. By analysing landmark court cases and constitutional considerations, the paper examines the intricacies of Indian statutes. Since this topic deals with the sensitivity of a human's life, the paper progresses into human rights arguments alongside the principles of equity and justice that the Indian judiciary boasts. Subsequently, the role and responsibility of healthcare professionals and doctors in this process is looked into. The discussion regarding the morality and ethicality of their presence in this process with respect to medical codes of conduct is reviewed. The factors influencing public attitude toward capital punishment are examined, since it plays an important role in the application and execution of the same. The societal impact of the death penalty is described as well. In summary, this thorough examination of the death penalty offers an elaborate overview of its historical roots, legal statutes, moral issues, and socio-political significance.

Keywords: capital punishment, death penalty, medicine, legality, humane

I. Introduction

The concept of the death penalty has been a part of civilization since 18th century BC. It was first mentioned in the Code of Hammurabi, a collection of Babylonian laws drawn up during the rule of Hammurabi, the sixth and most renowned ruler of the Amorite dynasty of Babylon (now in Iraq). It consists of 282 case laws which dealt with a variety of legal issues ranging from family law to criminal and civil law. The famous 'eye for an eye' theory originated here as well. Punishment for a crime was pronounced based on the criminal's status and the circumstances surrounding the offence.³⁵⁵ In this code, the death penalty was cited as the punishment for up to 25 different crimes, all

dealing with wrongdoings in different areas. If a person falsely accuses another of murder or laying a spell upon him, provides untrue witness testimonies, engages in acts of theft, kidnapping or rape, and/or builds unsound architecture, he was sentenced to the death penalty.³⁵⁶ Capital punishment is also mentioned in the Hittite Code, the Draconian Code of Athens, and the Roman Law of the Twelve Tablets, dating 14th century BC, 7th century BC and 5th century BC respectively. The Draconian Code, however, is considered one of the tougher statutes in this list since the death penalty was imposed on criminals irrespective of the severity of crime committed and damage caused by it. During these times, a person was

³⁵⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Code-of-Hammurabi>

³⁵⁶ <http://www.wright.edu/~christopher.oldstone-moore/Hamm.htm>

often executed by drowning, beating to death, burning them alive, impaling them or crucifying them.

Many centuries later, in the country of Britain, hanging became the most commonly used method of execution. While William the Conqueror mandated no execution for crimes except during times of war, his will would be struck down by Henry VIII six centuries later. Historians estimate that nearly 72,000 people lost their lives in the 16th century via execution. People were now executed for what were considered capital offences, such as treason, wedding a Jew and not confessing to a crime. Those found guilty of any of the above were executed through burning, boiling, beheading, hanging and the newly discovered method of drawing and quartering. Drawing and quartering was a method of execution wherein the convict's hands and legs were tied to four different horses and driven in different directions. This makes it evident that early forms of capital punishment showed no room for humanity and were designed to be painful and slow.

Over the next 200 years Britain would go on to use the death penalty for 222 different crimes. However, since the death penalty was considered as punishment for petty crimes such as theft, many juries would not convict defendants if their offences were not serious in nature. By 1837, there were 100 or so crimes that were punishable by death.³⁵⁷ However, as time went on, civilizations found these methods to be too gruesome, which led to the shift in methods of capital punishment to beheading through a guillotine and hanging. This was found to be more humanitarian despite still being intensely violent and widely public due to their speedy nature.³⁵⁸ On the basis of this information, we can safely assume that countries around the world developed different methods to execute their criminals which are in varying levels of

humaneness and pain. There are nearly 29 different methods of capital punishment recorded over the time of human history, but this paper will be majorly focusing on the most popular methods of carrying out capital punishment in India and across the globe.

Understanding these methods of execution helps address broader issues and discussions happening with respect to the death penalty and how it affects society. Studying the execution methods helps us observe the evolving nature of capital punishment across the world and reflect the shift in societal attitude towards the same. The relevancy of the topic also holds legal and ethical importance as it examines the various concerns associated with these execution methods.

This paper will go over the history of capital punishment across the world and in India specifically. The cause and evolution of these methods is discussed in detail. The execution processes of some of the most popular methods of punishment, such as the electric chair and lethal injection, are discussed. A light is shed on the medical, legal, ethical considerations of these two methods. Any challenges and concerns raised in the same regard are analysed as well. Finally, these methods are compared over a few criteria that will help assess which method better fulfils our need and end goal.

II. Historical Background

When we talk about capital punishment in India, the first mention can be traced back to the Mauryan dynasty, where the 'an eye for an eye' principle was used to punish the wrongdoer. In 1860, the concept of capital punishment was legally recognised with the Indian Penal Code that was introduced during the British Raj.³⁵⁹ After India gained independence, this particular aspect of the IPC was challenged by the Constituent Assembly. Efforts were made for the

³⁵⁷ <https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/facts-and-research/history-of-the-death-penalty/early-history-of-the-death-penalty>

³⁵⁸ <https://www.crimemuseum.org/crime-library/execution/origins-of-capital-punishment/>

³⁵⁹ <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-10250-the-capital-punishment-systems-in-india-.html#:~:text=India%20gives%20capital%20punishment%20only,of%20rarest%20cases%20in%20India.>

next 20 years to make amendments but none of them were enacted in the end. Nearly 4000 executions were carried out in the span of 30 years between 1950 and 1980. Even though there is no clear estimate of the numbers in the succeeding years, it is believed that there were a handful of people hanged every year. Hanging and shooting were the most commonly used methods of capital punishment in India after independence. Ramachandra Vinayak Gose, popularly known as Nathuram Godse was one of the primary individuals executed through hanging in post-colonial India.

As of now, after the landmark Bachan Singh judgement, the Supreme Court ruled that capital punishment can only be applied in the rarest of rare cases. It is to be noted, that there is no exact definition that defines what 'rarest of rare' denotes.³⁶⁰ The most recent case where the death penalty was carried out was in March 2020 when the four individuals convicted of the brutal 'Nirbhaya' rape case of 2012 were executed via hanging.

The electric chair was created and introduced in the United States by Thomas Edison's employees after the Constitution was amended to prohibit "cruel and unusual" forms of punishment. This move was made in an effort to carry out more humane executions. Following this invention in the 1800s, lethal injections were brought into the picture as late as 1970.³⁶¹

III. Execution Process

- Lethal injection³⁶²

The lethal injection is not a method used in India but it is the most popular methods of executing criminals in death row. It was responsible for the death of notorious criminals such as John Wayne Gacy, the Killer Clown who tortured and claimed the lives of 33 young boys. the process through which the lethal injection is administered is simple and usually takes 5 minutes to kill the person. They are strapped onto a stretcher of sorts after which medical

professionals put in two IVs or intravenous cannulas, one of which is for backup in case the primary line shows issues during the procedure. Saline drips are started in both arms of the person to make sure the IV lines are not blocked with chemical precipitate, which would prevent the person in question to receive the drugs later administered. A heart monitor is then attached to the prisoner which helps monitor cardiac activity of the inmate and pronounce their death. After this, the one or three-drug route is used to cause their death. Sodium thiopental or pentobarbital is the usual anaesthetic used, which knocks the inmate into unconsciousness in a 20 to 30 seconds. The one drug method is an overdose of said anaesthetic. After this, pancuronium bromide is introduced to relax the respiratory muscles, which causes asphyxiation. Potassium chloride increases concentration of potassium in the bloodstream which causes an abnormal heartbeat and subsequently stops the heart. The inmate dies due to cardiac arrest.

- Electric chair

This is the second most popular method of execution and has never been used in India similar to the lethal injection. The inmate is bound to a chair that has electrodes attached to it in places where the inmate would rest their head and legs, through which high voltage electric currents are sent. The first current knocks the prisoner unconscious and induces a cardiac arrest. The subsequent jolts are lesser in intensity and are sent to cause damage to the vital internal organs of the inmate. After a number of waves of current are sent, the doctor present checks for any probable signs of life in the inmate. If there are no signs, time of death is recorded, after which prison officials wait for the body to cool down to carry out an autopsy. If there are signs of life the prison warden is notified, after which another round of electric current is ordered or the execution is postponed.³⁶³

Ted Bundy was executed via the electric chair after being convicted and held guilty for the

³⁶⁰ <https://knowlaw.in/index.php/2020/10/14/capital-punishment/>

³⁶¹ <https://www.crimemuseum.org/crime-library/execution/origins-of-capital-punishment/>

³⁶² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/lethal-injection>

³⁶³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/electrocution>

murder and rape of 28 women across five states of USA in the span of four years. Though there are claims that he killed many more there is not sufficient evidence to support those claims. he was ordered to be put to death for the murder of two college students and a year later for the rape and murder of a 12-year-old.

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- Hanging³⁶⁵

Hanging is the most commonly used method of execution in India and was introduced during the British rule. Firstly, the inmate's hands are tied behind their back. After this, they are either suspended from a crossbeam or made to stand on a trapdoor with a noose around their neck. The trapdoor is then opened, which causes the convict to fall a certain distance, after which they are held back by the noose which by now must have broken their neck due to the force. The prison officials present ensure the execution of all present candidates occurs, after which the doctor present takes the body or bodies away for an autopsy.

Freedom fighter Bhagat Singh was hanged for the accidental murder of Officer Saunders. He and his co-revolutionary Rajguru shot him instead of James Scott, their actual target, who had caused the death of leader Lala Lajpat Rai. In the year 2020, four of the convicted rapists and murders of "Nirbhaya" were hanged to death as well.

- Gas chamber³⁶⁶

This method of capital punishment was first introduced in the US state of Nevada as an effort to make the process of death penalty more humane. Its use escalated to other states as well but declined rapidly later due to the high cost of renovating gas chambers no longer in use and questions regarding its cruelty. The inmate was sat on a chair with holes and below him was a container with three types of chemicals. It contained sulphuric acid, sodium cyanide crystals and distilled water. The

³⁶⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ted-Bundy>

³⁶⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/hanging>

³⁶⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/gas-chamber>

executioner would pull a lever from outside the sealed chamber the inmate was present in to mix these compounds and induce a chemical reaction. These compounds create hydrocyanic gas which is the poisonous gas responsible for causing the inmate's death. Studies, however, are unclear as to whether the inmate loses consciousness first or suffers a tremendous amount of pain for some time before dying.

Jimmy Lee Gray was executed through this method after he was convicted of kidnapping and sodomizing a 3-year-old while on parole for murdering his girlfriend seven years prior.

- Firing squad

This is the second and only other method of execution followed in India. The inmate is tied to a pole with their hands bound behind them or is seated on a chair in a similar manner. They are blindfolded and a cloth patch is attached on to their heart. A team of five people aim at the convict's heart and fire. In countries like Thailand and China some of the rifles are not loaded with bullets so the true killer is not known.³⁶⁷

All the above methods have varying rates of success. The firing squad boasts a 100% success rate, followed by electrocution and hanging at 98.08% and 96.88% respectively. The lethal gas has a 7.12% botched execution rate, and falls at the fourth position with a 94.6% success rate. The lethal injection is the most prone to not following through completely and among all the others has the most failure, succeeding 92.88% of the time.³⁶⁸

IV. Legal Framework

There are numerous statutes that detail about capital punishment in India. These include:³⁶⁹

1. Section 121 of IPC states that attempting to or waging war against India is recognised as an act of treason against the country and

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[https://www.advocatekhaj.com/library/lawreports/modeofexecutionofdeath/9.php?Title=Mode%20of%20Execution%20of%20Death%20Sentence%20and%20Incidental%20Matters&STitle=Firing%20Squad#:~:text=\(g\)%20Firing%20Squad,aim%20at%20the%20convict's%20heart](https://www.advocatekhaj.com/library/lawreports/modeofexecutionofdeath/9.php?Title=Mode%20of%20Execution%20of%20Death%20Sentence%20and%20Incidental%20Matters&STitle=Firing%20Squad#:~:text=(g)%20Firing%20Squad,aim%20at%20the%20convict's%20heart)

³⁶⁸ <https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/executions/botched-executions>

³⁶⁹ https://blog.ipleaders.in/capital-punishment-in-india-2/#Crimes_punishable_by_the_death_penalty

hence capital punishment can be awarded to the accused.

2. Encouraging another person or people to commit mutiny can be punishable by death under Section 132 of IPC. Mutiny is defined as 'a situation in which a group of people refuse to obey orders and try to take control away from the person who commands them.'³⁷⁰

3. Section 194 of IPC warrants the death penalty to anyone who is fabricating evidence to bring forth the conviction of a capital punishment in a trial. Similarly, Section 195A of the IPC deems the act of threatening or inducing a third party into fabricating evidence for the conviction and death of an innocent person to qualify them for the death penalty. Anyone who performs this act to implicate a party belonging to Scheduled Tribes or Castes is punishable by death as well under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

4. Section 302 of IPC imposes the death penalty on anyone who commits murder.

5. The IPC states in Section 305 that assisting a minor or a mentally ill person to take their life is a crime deserving of capital punishment. If a party coerces any person below the age of 18 or a psychologically disabled person to commit suicide they can be awarded the death penalty.

6. Section 307 of the IPC details about the death penalty that can be issued to convicts. If a convict attempts or does any act that is capable of causing bodily harm and/or death of another, they are prescribed with a death sentence. A point to be noted that it is only for prisoners serving a life sentence.³⁷¹

7. Kidnapping a person for the purpose of obtaining ransom from their family is considered a serious offence. If the kidnappers had the intention of causing harm to the kidnapped party and financially manipulate

them or their family, they can be awarded with the death penalty. This is laid down in Section 364A of the Indian Penal Code.

8. Section 376A of IPC rules the death penalty for the act of rape that causes the victim's death or causes them to be in a permanent vegetative state. Section 376 also includes clauses that also warrant the death penalty to parties that are involved in the rape or gang rape of a child who is below the age of 12 years.

9. A convict that is facing multiple or repeated claims of rape and is proved to have committed those repeat offences can be punished with the death penalty under Section 376E of the IPC.

10. Section 396 of IPC prescribes the death penalty to acts of dacoity that result in murder.

11. Any person who is directly or indirectly involved in the act of Sati or killing of widows after their husband's passing is punishable by death. This was ruled in the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act of 1987.

12. The Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act of 1985 declared the death penalty as a probable conviction for parties who financially support or play a role in producing and/or selling narcotic substances in set amounts. For example, these amounts are 10 kg for opium and 500 grams for cocaine.

13. Military professionals have separate statutes for offences that warrant the death penalty for them specifically. These are detailed in the Army Act of 1950, Air Force Act of 1950 and Navy Act of 1957.

There are nearly 25 other Sections that cite capital punishment across different statutes belonging to individual states and fields of work. These include the Andhra Pradesh Control of Organised Crimes Act (2001), the Assam Rifles Act of 2006, etc. Minors, pregnant women and intellectually disabled persons are parties who cannot be convicted and punished with the death penalty.³⁷²

³⁷⁰ <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/mutiny#:~:text=%2F%CB%88mju%CB%90t%2F%99ni%2F-plural%20mutinies,the%20person%20who%20commands%20them>

³⁷¹ <https://lawrato.com/indian-kanon/ipc/section-307#:~:text=10%20Years%20%2B%20Fine-Attempts%20by%20Life%20Convicts%20under%20Section%20307,causing%20hurt%20to%20such%20person.>

³⁷² https://loksabhadocs.nic.in/Refinput/New_Reference_Notes/English/CAPITAL_PUNISHMENT_IN_INDIA.pdf

- Notable cases or milestones that influenced adoption and use of these methods

➤ Mithu v State of Punjab (1983) ³⁷³

The Supreme Court of India ruled that the Section 303 of the IPC was to be struck down, which stated capital punishment mandatorily for offenders.

➤ Bachan Singh v State of Punjab (1980) ³⁷⁴

This was the landmark judgement during which the Supreme Court of India ruled that capital punishment must be awarded only in the rarest of rare cases. It laid down guidelines for future reference about how to decide whether the case in hand warrants the death penalty. It was stated that if life imprisonment is not adequate punishment for the crime committed, the death sentence can be imposed. Judges must also keep in mind to go over the aggravating and mitigating circumstances thoroughly before arriving at this decision.

➤ Jagmohan v State of UP (1972) ³⁷⁵

This was the first case in India where the lawfulness of the death penalty was questioned. The Supreme Court held in the judgement that Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution that guarantee the right to equality, freedom of speech and right to life did not violate the concept of capital punishment.

➤ Macchi Singh v State of Punjab (1983) ³⁷⁶

In this particular case the Justice Thakkar laid down the 'broad outline' of conditions under which the death penalty can be imposed. Five rules were announced with whose help one can categorize the case in hand as rarest of rare or otherwise. You had to consider the manner through which the murder was committed, what the motive was to the crime, whether the crime was socially repellent, the magnitude of the crime and who the victim or victims are.

V. Considerations and Perceptions

- Medical and Ethical Considerations

Medical professionals have a considerable amount of involvement in cases of capital punishment. Firstly, they are responsible for assessing an inmate's mental capability for standing trial and eventually getting convicted for the crime he or she committed. They also have to check the health status of inmates before and after their execution to provide an official time of death. In some cases, they play the role of executioner and might be coerced into procuring organs from prisoners executed. The World Medical Association, among other professional bodies of medicine, has criticized the role physicians and doctors play in executing capital punishment. They asserted that "it is unethical for physicians to participate in capital punishment, in any way, or during any step of the execution process, including its planning and the instruction and/or training of persons to perform executions". ³⁷⁷

The inmate becomes the doctor's patient when overseeing the execution, it is against the very morals of a doctor to aid in depriving the inmate of their life. Since the execution in no way provides any benefits to the inmate it is considered an act of maleficence. It is also argued that despite the death penalty being cited as a preventive measure it acts as a punishment of heinous crimes such as rape and murder instead of acting to prevent them from happening in the first place. The doctor's role is inactive, he neither saves nor takes a life but merely acts as a bystander while a stranger loses their life in front of his eyes. This situation places the medical professional in a moral dilemma regarding the rights of the prisoner, the wellbeing of the public, his responsibility as a healthcare worker and the morals he carries as an individual of society himself. Overall, the role of medical professionals, especially doctors, faces a lot of backlash since it is

³⁷³ AIR 1983 SC 473; 1983 Cri LJ 811

³⁷⁴ AIR 1980 SC 898, 1980

³⁷⁵ 1973 AIR 947

³⁷⁶ 1983 AIR 957, 1983 SCR (3) 413

³⁷⁷ [https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(23\)01004-8.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(23)01004-8.pdf)

deemed immoral after they've sworn with the Hippocratic Oath.³⁷⁸

- Human Rights

There are enumerable human rights activists who are strictly against the existence and imposition of the death penalty and cite statistics and historical occurrences to support their argument. In the United States of America, nearly 3% of all executions between years 1890 and 2010 did not go as planned and caused intense suffering and pain to the convict. The lethal injection is one of the most "flawed" methods of execution, with a considerably big margin of failure that causes a slow and painful death rather than an instant one. A convict by the name of Joe Nathan James suffered for three long hours due to medical professionals repeatedly puncturing his arm to put in the intravenous line. In 1945, Willie Francis, a 16-year-old convicted for murder and sentenced to death, survived the electric chair. The executioner responsible for setting up the chair and ensuring the working was reportedly drunk the night before the execution, which led to the chair failing. He stated that it felt like thousands of needles were pricking in skin and as if a blade was sliding across the flesh of his left leg. He would eventually be executed a year later through the very same method.³⁷⁹

The United Nations revealed in a report that the poor are discriminated against in the aspect of capital punishment. Since they are not financially stable enough to afford good legal representation and the alleged legal aid provided by governments across the world does not act as expected of them, they are more likely to be incarcerated. There is also evident racism and classism due to which certain communities of people are targeted and more likely to be arrested by the police.

Just like every tool initially made for the greater good of humanity, the death penalty also faced some extent of misuse, mostly by those in power. In Myanmar, protesters and journalists were executed through capital punishment when they questioned the rule of the tribunals. This is also observed in Iran where people were executed for same-sex relations, extramarital affairs, armed robbery, monetary crimes and drug trafficking. Governments and authorities of respective countries have their own criteria for what is considered acceptable and many of them are using capital punishment as a method to subdue their population.

There is also the issue of wrongful convictions, at which point we cannot reverse the death of the innocent person who lost their life. There are also alarmingly high rates of false convictions and exonerations, which raise the question of whether one could be slapped on the wrist with the death penalty when there is always a possibility of contaminated evidence, false confessions and numerous other errors that could've wrongfully convicted the defendant.³⁸⁰

- Public Perception³⁸¹

As time went on, the topic of death penalty faced a lot of backlash around the world. Those opposing stated that it was an inhumane practice and that despite the crime one has committed no one's life should be taken for it. With technological advancements, the world was introduced to DNA testing, which has since its discovery helped prove the innocence of many convicts on death row. Due to the pop up of innocence projects as well, the movement to ban capital punishment gained momentum and since then 23 states in the United States and about 110 countries across the world have completely abolished the death penalty.³⁸²

When we talk about the lethal injection and electric chair in particular, Indian laws have never considered them to be viable methods of

³⁷⁸ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2352552521000657>
³⁷⁹ <https://www.unilad.com/news/man-survived-electric-char-describes-527935-20221222>

³⁸⁰ <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/why-death-penalty-is-wrong/>

³⁸¹ <https://www.wionews.com/india-news/indias-top-court-rules-out-lethal-injection-as-alternative-to-hanging-method-of-capital-punishment-574724>

³⁸² <https://www.crimemuseum.org/crime-library/execution/origins-of-capital-punishment/>

carrying out the death penalty. In a recent statement by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud stated that shooting by a firing squad, lethal injection and electric chair were all methods renounced by the Indian justice system to implement capital punishment. He cited reports that showed enormous amount of pain convicts undergo when subjected to these methods. This statement was made in response to the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed six years ago that questioned the cruelty of death by hanging.

As mentioned in the sub-heading titled **Legal Framework**, a Public Interest Litigation was filed in the year 2017 and was addressed in the month of March this year. It was filed by Rishi Malhotra, a lawyer who was seeking a replacement of hanging as a method of execution death row inmates.³⁸³ It was initially heard in May, when Attorney General R. Venkataramani requested time from the Supreme Court until July to gather sufficient information regarding the matter. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud also suggested bringing together a committee consisting of doctors, law professionals and professors and medical practitioners to look into alternative methods that are more “humane.” Lawyer Malhotra suggested “intravenous lethal injection, shooting, electrocution or gas chamber” but the Chief Justice has ruled out the first three as options for a more humane execution.³⁸⁴

VI. Conclusion

Capital punishment is a necessary measure in the given situation of countries and crime around the world. It helps deliver justice and remove individuals who are a threat to the safety and harmony of societal structures. It acts as a deterrent for other criminals and possible deviants by instilling fear among them. However, capital punishment is a sensitive issue since there are human lives at stake. People

against the death penalty call it an inhumane practice that goes against the morals and purpose of law. They quote the Blackstone's ratio in criminal law that states “it is better that ten guilty persons escape than that one innocent suffer.” Due to an alarming amount of occurrences in the past during which wrongfully executed people were proven to be innocent too late, it is paramount that one does not leave any room for error when sentencing someone with the death penalty. Though these are valid concerns, advancements in the field of forensic science and evidence law have helped reduce the number to a great extent. Despite numerous claims, it acts as a punishment rather than a preventive measure it is made out to be, as statistics show countries without the death penalty have lower rates of crime. Opponents of the death penalty state that the judiciary is too focused on penalising convicts that they are forgetting to be considerate about it. They say that efforts must be made to implement more humane alternatives and help inmates reintegrate into society post incarceration.

In conclusion, one's personal opinions and ideals about what matters more – morality and ethics or justice and retribution – determine whether the death penalty is appropriate or not.

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