interests and motivations of individuals or groups.

Third, the desire is for identifying individuals, not groups or political parties as a whole for crimes they committed in 1971. Being able to separate group identities and focusing on individuals for their role in causing suffering goes a long way to establishing individual culpability and exonerating those who have had to shoulder the stigma of being associated with collaborators.

Fourth, there needs to be recognition that such a process will never be clean and easy. Serving justice is a messy business, and when it involves war crimes and crimes against humanity, the reality is messier. There is no pretty picture to paint for this reality. If the reliance is on punitive measures, and barring any possibility of a truth and reconciliation commission, then the country has to live with the "not guilty" verdict while it celebrates guilty verdicts. And finally, because these individuals who did not believe in Bangladesh are still citizens of the country, they deserve a fair trial, regardless of whether we can truly grasp the ramifications of such decisions.

It is also important to note that those who suffered the least, are the most willing to forgive and forget, and some of those who have suffered the most, still hold out for some hope of justice. From a bird's eye view, the quiet resignation of many have implied that in general we had reconciled with our horrific past. I question this. With blanket amnesties provided for political reasons after the war, and incorporating purported war criminals into the political process, there has been little scope to discuss the issue of accountability and little hope that demands for justice will ever be heard.

Resignation, as has happened in many countries, has been mistaken for reconciliation. In turn, for thirty seven years, the state and those who are wary of the tribunals have basically asked rape victims, torture survivors, orphans, persecuted religious minorities, eyewitnesses, and those who have lost homes, families, identities to live side by side by those who have betrayed them as a demonstration that we as a nation have reconciled, and are ready to move on. May it be contemplated that we have punished our own, by making them relive the horrors of their experiences for 13,505 days and counting. 1971, a

