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Genocide: Killing the Human Rights

GAURAV SONKAR¹

ABSTRACT

In this research paper, we are going to discuss the violation of the primary human right, and which is also the most important right of every human; that is the “Right to live a healthy life”, without any oppression or discrimination. In this world, almost all the nations have given this right to their citizens, but sometimes due to some worst circumstances like; war, civil war, clashes and conflicts between two particular groups or community lead to the mass killing/ genocide of the minor or weak one. In these events innocent peoples lose their lives, and the major or strong one dominates other. In these types of events, the inhumane face of rules or peoples from majority/strong community come Infront of the world, when they kill lakhs of people without taking into the account that; the person who is going to die in the massacre is a child, or a woman, or a senior citizen. In this work, I have taken the records from the history from the first world war as well and also discussed the recent event of mass killing also.

Keywords: - Genocide, Mass killing, Massacre, Civilians, Citizens, Innocent peoples, War, Civil War, Inhumane events etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Genocide; we have often heard and also had read about the term called “GENOCIDE”, or “MSSACRE”, or “MASS KILLING”. The word “Genocide”, was first coined by polish lawyer Raphael Lemkin in the year 1944, in the book “Axis Rule in Occupied Europe”. The word made by combining a Greek prefix, “genos”, which means race or tribe and a Latin suffix “cide”, which means killing². Genocide is generally refers to the murder of a particular group of a particular race, religion, caste, creed etc. according to The United Nations’, genocide prevention convention, article-II³, “Genocide is a crime committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group in whole or in part. It can take place in both in the time of war as well as in the time of peace. These types of events deprive the human being from their most important and primary right, which is “right to live a healthy life.”

In this research work. We are going to discuss various topics such as the various mass killings

¹ Author is a student at National Law University, Odisha, India.

² United Nations, “office on genocide prevention and the responsibility to protect”, Definitions/Genocide, <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>.

³ United Nations, (9th December, 1948), “The Convention on The Prevention and Punishment of The Crime of Genocide”, retrieved from the website: THE UNITED NATIONS, <https://www.un.org/genocideprevention>.

or genocides in the past, we are going to look the various mass killing events in the world from World War 1 onwards; due to which a huge number of innocent people had died. How this kind of event marginalizes and humiliated the rights of every human being? A number of innocent civilians all around the world, in a number of mass killing event lost their lives, because of the conflict between two or more nations, called war; or in the clash between two civilizations, races, religions, caste and creed, where dominant one oppresses the minor. after, it we will look into the present scenario and recent events of mass killing as well. so, firstly take a look on the horrible and inhumane mass killing genocides in the history from the first World war.

II. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

(A) World War 1

The First World War had broken out in the year 1914 and continued for 4 years, till 1918. Throughout the World War 1, there were three mass killings/genocides by the Ottoman forces, which we are going to discuss and out of these three, one mass killing was the most horrible. So, we are starting with the “ARMENIAN GENOCIDE”⁴: it was a systematic destruction of the Armenian Christians and their identity in the Ottoman empire during the world war 1⁴. Primarily, it refers to the physical annihilation of Armenian people; this genocide begins by the Ottoman forces in the spring, 1915 and ended in Autumn, 1916. This massacre had swallowed the lives of more than 1.2 million Armenian Christians. But, the exact number of people killed during this mass killing is also under dispute among many historians.

Secondly, another genocide during first world war is the Greek genocide. This genocide was also systematic, extermination of native Greek peoples in the Ottoman empire, during and after the first world war⁵. Between 1913-1922, the Greek population had targeted by the Ottomans and their leaders from CUP party. Almost 3,00,000-9,00,000 Greeks were killed during this massacre. The main cause for this type of mass killing was that the Ottomans seen Greek peoples as a threat to their empire⁶. So, without any mercy they killed almost 1 million people in the Greek region, during the first world war.

The third mass killing during the first world war was the Sayfo/Seyfo or Assyrian genocide by the Ottoman forces. It was the mass slaughter and deportation of Assyrian/Syriac Christians in

⁴ Wikipedia, “*Armenian genocide*”, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armenian_genocide

⁵ Greek genocide Resource Centre, (16th September, 2020) “*A General Overview on Greek Genocide*”, retrieved from the website: Greek genocide Resource Centre, <https://www.greek-genocide.net/index.php/overview>.

⁶ Brianna Summ, “*10 Important & Little-Known Facts About the Greek Genocide*”, retrieved from the website: The Bargaen Project, <https://bargaenproject.org/10-facts-about-the-greek-genocide>.

the southeastern Antolia and in the in the Azarbaijan province⁷. Due to this mass killing 3,00,000 Assyrians were died. They were killed by Ottoman forces during raid. Another cause of these genocides was that these Christian peoples have not converted into Muslims, so the forces straightly wiped them out from the Ottoman empire. In these genocides the Ottoman forces had used the techniques like; death march, deportation, mass murder, raids to kill the innocent Armenian, Greek, and Assyrian civilians.

(B) World War 2

During the second world war (1939-1945), the biggest and most horrible genocide ever in the human history had happened. We all know it very well, it called “THE HOLOCAUST”; which was a state sponsored killing of European Jews community, led by Nazis and their leader Adolf Hitler. This genocide has shown the inhumane face of Nazis in front of the world.

In this mass killing, during the period of 1941-1945, around 6 million Jews were killed on the order of Hitler, in the German occupied Europe. The portion of Jews killed during this mass killing were the 2/3 population of Jews in Europe. The killings were carrying out in pogroms, mass shootings, concentration camps by a policy of extermination labor and also in gas chambers and gas vans in German extermination camps, chiefly Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelimo, Majdancts, Sobibor, and Treblinka in the occupied Poland⁸. This genocide had started because of radicalization of Nazis between 1933-1945. The radicalization culminated in a plan that the Nazi leaders referred it to as, “FINAL SOLUTION TO THE JEWS QUESTION”. “THE FINAL QUESTION”, was the organized and systematic mass murder of the Jews in the Europe⁹.

This genocide was implemented by the state of Germany in persecution in stages, after Adolf Hitler appointed as the chancellor of Germany on 30th January, 1933; the whole regime built a network of concentration camps in Germany to oppress political opponents, and those who were deemed to be undesirable, and it started with Danchau on 22nd march, 1933¹⁰. Later, after passing the Enabling act, on 24th march¹¹, through which dictatorial powers were given in the hands of Hitler; the Nazi government began to isolate the Jews from the civil society. This isolation process includes, boycotting Jews businesses, in April, 1935 and enacting numberg

⁷ Wikipedia, “*Assyrian Genocide*”, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sayfo#World_War_I.

⁸ Wikipedia, “*The Holocaust*”, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Holocaust.

⁹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, (5th November, 2021) “*Introduction to Holocaust*” retrieved from the website: [encyclopedia.ushmm.org, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust](https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust).

¹⁰ Stackelberg & Winckle (2002), pp.141-143.

¹¹ Mancurse (2001), pp. 21.

laws in September, 1935¹². Jews businesses and buildings were ransacked and set on fire throughout Germany and after eight months of the day, when Germany annexed Austria in April, 1938 (in November,1938), more violent boycott of Jews businesses and destruction of their properties were started. Along with the Jews peoples, mass murders of other population were also done by the Nazis, these groups include Roma, Poles, Ukrainians and soviet civilians and prisoners of war.

(C) The Indonesian Genocide

This mass killing in Indonesia is also known as “INDONESIAN GENOCIDE”. It was the large-scale killings and civil unrest that occurred in Indonesia over several months in the year, 1965-1966, targeting the communist party of Indonesia (PKI), party members, communist, sympathizers, Gerwani women, ethnic Javanese, Abangan, ethnic Chinese and alleged leftists. This mass killing had begun as an anti-communist purge following a controversial, attempted coup defeat by the 30th September movement. According to majorly published estimates at least 5,00,000 to more than 1 million peoples were killed¹³, with some estimates going as high as 2 or 3 million¹⁴¹⁵. This purge in Indonesia was a pivotal event in the transition of “NEW ORDER” and the elimination of PKI as a political force in Indonesia, with the impacts of global cold-war as well. In that period, communists were purged from the political, social, and military life and PKI itself was disbanded and also was banned. This Massacre had begun in the October, 1965, in the weeks of the following coup attempt and reached its peak over the remainder of the year before subsiding in the early months of 1966¹⁶.

(D) Indo-Pak War, 1971 & The Bangladesh Libretion War, 1971 And The Bengali Genocide

In the year, 1971, march,25; the Pakistani military in the eastern Pakistan (current Bangladesh), began a 10 months campaign of killing the innocent Bengalis, Hindus, Christians and other communities, in the name of “OPERATION SEARCHLIGHT¹⁷”. This spurred the Bangladesh liberation war and later a 13 days long Indo-Pak war in December,1971. Both of them were ended with the surrender of Pakistani military.¹⁸ During, that period the Pakistani military

¹² Wikipedia, “*The Holocaust*”, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Holocaust.

¹³ Princeton University Press, “*A Killing Season: A History of Indonesian Massacres (1965-66)*”, published by: Princeton University Press.

¹⁴ Gellately, Robert, Kiernan, Ben (July,2003), “*The Spector of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*”, Cambridge University Press, pp. 290-291.

¹⁵ Aljazeera, (21st December,2012), “*Indonesia’s Killing fields*”, published by: Aljazeera.

¹⁶ Wikipedia, “*The Indonesian Genocide*”, retrieved from the website: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indonesian_mass_killings_of_1965%E2%80%9366

¹⁷ Haroon Habibi (11th February,2022), “*East Pakistan in 1971: A Forgotten Genocide*” published by: Frontline.

¹⁸ Hindu American Foundation, “*1971 Bangladesh Genocide*”, retrieved from the website: Hindu American

killed almost 3 million peoples and 2,00,000 women were raped. For 10 months this whole mass murders were going on freely.

According to the Bangladeshi journalist and policy analyst Anushay Hossain, “many experts put that number closer to **400,000 women and girls who were raped**, mass-raped, and imprisoned for months in notorious rape camps.”¹⁹ **"Nothing is clearer or more easily documented, than the systematic campaign of terror - and its genocidal consequences launched by the Pakistan army on the night of March 25th... Hardest hit have been members of the Hindu community who have been robbed of their lands and shops systematically slaughtered, and, in some places, painted with yellow patches marked 'H'."** — **Sen. Edward M Kennedy, November 1971.**²⁰

Over 1.5 million Bengalis were displaced and by November 1971, 10 million Bengalis of whom majority was non-Muslims fled to India to save life of their family and their own.

(E) Bosnian Genocide

The Bosnian genocide was also known as Srebrenica Massacre, throughout the areas controlled by the army of Republika Srpska, during the Bosnian war of 1992-1995. This event includes killing more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys, as well as the mass expulsion of another 25,000-30,000 Bosnian civilians by VRS units under the command of Ratko Mladic.²¹ this is also called “ETHNIC CLEANSING”, which has taken place in VRS controlled areas, targeted the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats. This ethnic cleansing campaign included extermination, unlawful confinement, mass rape, sexual assault, torture, plunder and destruction of private and public property, as well as the inhumane treatment and action towards innocent civilians. After, the death of more than 8,000 citizens, NATOs’ air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs in 1994, puts them on back. Many experts and historians titled this Bosnian Genocide the worst Massacre within Europe since the Holocaust in the second world war.

(F) The Cambodian Massacre/Genocide

This genocide had carried out by an extreme leftist organization, KHMER ROUGE. It was the systematic persecution and killings of Cambodian civilians by the soldiers of Khmer Rouge which was under the leadership of the communist party of Kampuchea’s general secretary Pol-

Foundation, <https://www.hinduamerican.org/1971-bangladesh-genocide>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Wikipedia, “*Bosnian Genocide*”, retrieved from the website: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bosnian_genocide.

Pot, who radically pushed Cambodia towards an entirely self-sufficient agrarian socialist society. It had been started in 1975 when Cambodia came under the Khmer Rouge's rule; it caused the death of almost 1.5 million to 2 million people, who were the innocent citizens of Cambodia. It continued for 4 years, till 1979. The number of people got killed in the massacre was nearly the quarter of Cambodia's whole population, which was 7.8 million at that time. The Khmer Rouge had supported by the Communist party of China and its' chairman Mao Zedong for a long time. Many researches and surveys had estimated that 90% of foreign aid of Khmer Rouge was coming from China and China gave at least US \$ 1 billion as military and economic aid to Khmer Rouge. This was the vast and terrible genocide in the south-eastern Asia. This massacre had continued for a long period of 4 years and ended after, the Vietnamese military invaded Cambodia in the year 1978 and toppled the Khmer Rouge regime. The Vietnamese forces had stayed in Cambodia for 10 years till 1989, so that Khmer Rouge could not attain the authority in Cambodia again. Till January, 1979 1.5-2 million people had died due to Khmer Rouge policies including 2-3 lakhs Chinese Cambodians, 90,000 Muslims, and 20,000 Vietnamese Cambodians. For killing the innocent civilians, Khmer Rouge used "KILLING FIELDS", where more than 1 million peoples were killed and buried. The massacre was so horrible that Cambodia could not able to recover from the memories of that inhumane event till now.

(G) Vietnam (My Lai) Genocide

During, the Vietnam war, My Lai village had witnessed a mass killing of unarmed and innocent villagers by the United States' troops. It had occurred in the Son Tinh district of south Vietnam. On 16th March, 1968, the troops of US armed forces entered into the My Lai village and suddenly, before that the villagers would able to understand the matter. They opened the fire at those innocent peoples, who were doing their routine work. In this mass killing, between 347 to 504 civilians were killed including women, children and infants as well. Some of the women were gang-raped and their bodies were mutilating as were children as young as 12²². After, the murder of more than 500 civilians, a soldier named; Thompson put his efforts to stop this massacre, without delay. Dead bodies of those innocent villagers were lying in the ditches, roads and they were wounded badly.

(H) Chinese/ Tiananmen Square Genocide

In the year, 1989 in Beijing, a student protest was held in the Tiananmen square. This protest had been started from the 15th April, 1989 against the corruption in the country and in the

²² BBC news (20th July, 1998), "*Murder in the Name of War: My Lai*" published by: BBC news.

Communist party of China. On June 4th, 1989; the Chinese government imposed the martial law in the country and sent the Peoples Liberation army of China to occupy the central parts of Beijing, and to end this protest. The soldiers of PLA accompanied with tanks without any mercy fired on the demonstrators. This incident is also known as “June fourth incident”, & “Tiananmen square Massacre”. Estimates of death toll vary from several hundreds to several thousand with thousands more wounded²³.

(I) Rwandan Genocide

This genocide had taken place in 1994 in Rwanda. It was the result of the conflict between two communities, (i) HUTU; (ii) TUTSI. In this massacre a huge number of people had been died of TUTSI community, they were almost vanished from Rwanda. Till the second world war, in Rwanda mainly Tutsi were administrating and governing the country with the help of colonial forces, this was a cause that Hutus were hating Tutsis. But, after second world war, this power balance had changed and Hutus came into the power. In 1962, Rwanda got independence and first Hutu president elected in the country. Tutsi due to the threats from Hutus migrated from Rwanda to neighboring countries. Those Tutsis’ who fled Uganda have established the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), and established the Tutsi rule in Uganda, as a Tutsi was elected as president. After that, the second president, who was also a Hutu, “Habyarimana” came into power, he was a dictator and ruled on Rwanda till 1994. In 1993, in Burundi also a Hutu president, “Melchior Ndadaye” was elected and he was assassinated by an extremist Tutsi army officer, so in 1994, a new president was elected in Burundi, who was also a Hutu. During that political instability in Rwanda and its’ neighboring countries, UN had sent his forces (United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda) in Rwanda. On 6th April, 1994 this whole consequence taken a new turn, when the airplane carrying the Rwandan Hutu president “Habyarimana” and Burundi’s Hutu president “Cyprien Ntaryimira” was shot down; by evening the Rwandan PM was also killed by the military, and from the next day Hutu community started a mass genocide against Tutsis, alleging that they have killed the president and they are a threat for Hutu community. It is estimated that in the first six weeks 8,00,000 Tutsis were killed, every Tutsi had been killed very inhumanely. Almost 1.1 million peoples were killed in just 100 days; after the genocide only 3,00,000 Tutsis survived. Mass killings, rapes and many inhumane events were happened during that time. UN’s peacekeeping force, which was there in Rwanda did not interfere in that genocide, even not tried to stop it. When the Commander of UN’s peacekeeping force, “Romeo Dallaire”, sent his “genocide fax” to the UN headquarters, the UN responded

²³ Wikipedia, “*Tiananmen Square Protests and Massacre*”, retrieved from the website: Wikipedia, <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/1989-tiananmen-square-protests-and-massacre>.

that, “we have not any authenticate data, so do not intervein.” And the UN Assistance force in Rwanda were bound to just see that inhumane event. After, few months the massacre stopped because of the military operations of France and the returning of Rwanda patriotic front (RPF), from Uganda. After, this genocide again the power came into the hands of Tutsis, as a new Tutsi president was elected, which is in rule continuing till now.

III. RECENT EVENTS & CURRENT SCENARIO

We have taken a look on the historical events of genocides and mass killings, so now we would take a look on the current scenario of the world;

(A) Rohingya Genocide In Myanmar

This genocide or mass killing is a result of religious clashes between Rohingya Muslims and Buddhists. It is a series of persecution and killings of minority by the Burmese military. It has two phases, phase 1 had occurred from October, 2016 to January, 2017, which was a military crackdown and the second phase is occurring since 2017 till now. Due to this crisis, 1 million Rohingya people has flew to other countries, most of them flew to Bangladesh, resulting in the creation of world’s largest refugee camp²⁴.

(B) Uighurs Genocide In China

In China, another genocide or human rights abuse committed by the Chinese government is against the Uighur Muslims and other ethnic and religious minorities. In Xinjiang, since 2014, the Chinese government under the administration of Xi Jinping has pursued policies that incarnated more than an estimated 1 million Turkic Muslims in internment camps without any legal process²⁵. This is the largest scale detention of minor ethnic and religious groups since the second world war²⁶.

(C) Genocide/Mass Killing In The Russia-Ukraine War (2022)

Bucha Genocide & Killing The Ukrainains In The War

On 24th February, 2022, Russian armed forces on the order of the Russian president Vladimir Putin, started military operations against Ukraine, which is continuing till now (till the time this paper is written). Because the Russian military could not succeed to capture the capital Kyiv, after many weeks, in frustration and anger they started attacking the civilians and residential houses as well in the cities of Ukraine. In this sequence, the Russian army done the

²⁴ UN (27th December, 2019), “*The 2010-20 UN News decade in Review (3)*”, published by: Un News.

²⁵ Al Jazeera (10th August, 2018), “*One Million Muslim Uighurs Held in Secret China camps: UN Panel*”, published by: Al Jazeera.

²⁶ Wikipedia, “*Uyghur Genocide*”, Wikipedia, <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/uyghur-genocide/>.

largest human rights abuse, of this war; that is, the Bucha genocide/massacre. In March-April, they killed hundreds of innocent civilians in Bucha, and then buried them into mass graves, which were found in various sites in the city, and the dead bodies of peoples were also fell here and there all around the city. The mayor of Bucha said, 412 bodies were found in the aftermath of the incident²⁷. There were many photos and videos which shows the evidence of corpses of the civilians, who are lined up with their hands bound behind the backs, and shot at point-blank range. An inquiry by the Radio Free Europe, confirmed the use of a basement beneath a campground as a torture chamber²⁸. Apart, from this massacre, a number of citizens have also died due to the attacks of the Russian forces. Apart from Bucha, there are also many mass graves have found in another city of Ukraine “Mariupol”, where the dead bodies of innocent civilians buried, and the number of dead bodies is still increasing. The war between Russia-Ukraine is still going on in the current time, so, there might have a chance that these types of inhumane events may occur again in future.

IV. CONCLUSION

We have taken a look on the various massacres that have happened in the past and which are happening or has happened recently. We can see and also feel the horror and terror that felt by peoples who have suffered these events, when there is no hope or feeling or any source to ensure their safety. One dominant race, religion, nation, caste or creed rule and exploit and also kill people of the minor or weaker community’s huge portion. They wanted to establish their rule over the weaker group; and most of time they achieve it through violence, mostly through Genocide. This violates and abuses the basic and most important human rights of peoples. It is shown that during any war, civil war, clash, conflict, how the basic rights of weaker one has been taken away or restricted, the genocides, massacre and mass killings also shows the inhumane face of the community who has committed these crimes. The UN has implemented “THE CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE”, in the year 1948; which seems to be ineffective, because there are a number of mass killings and genocides all around the world, and this convention could not able to restrict or prevent these acts. So, in my opinion to stop these kinds of activities in the future all the nations around the globe, have to stand together, so that these types of killings of innocent people would be stopped. Without a strong commitment to stop these activities that it should not occur in future, this cannot be stopped. Every country has to come forward, and stand

²⁷ BBC News (23rd Aril,2022), “*Bucha Counts Toll of Russian Occupation*”, published by: BBC News.

²⁸ Wikipedia, “Bucha Massacre”, retrieved from the website: Wikipedia, <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/bucha-genocide>.

against in genocide strongly and also to implement strict rules and laws, for those who commit these crimes.
