

Genocide Against the Hazara People in Afghanistan: An Analysis of Historical and Contemporary Contexts

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Abstract: *This research examines the concept and instances of genocide against the Hazara people in Afghanistan, highlighting the systematic violence and discrimination they face. The study utilizes various sources to outline the history and current situation of the Hazara community, aiming to raise awareness and call for international action to recognize and prevent further genocide. This research is so important because the Hazara people as a minority community are facing Genocide in Afghanistan. for many years they have been killed in school, university, club, hospital, which prevents them from participating in public society. so this is a clear violation of their rights and it leaves a negative impact for them, therefore, The purpose of this research is to determine the challenges and threats that exist against the Hazara people in Afghanistan and explain what is the example of the genocide against the Hazara community in Afghanistan. This study is significant as it brings attention to the ongoing genocide against the Hazara people, advocating for global recognition and action to prevent further atrocities. For doing this research the researchers faced a lot of limitations in collecting the sources. Despite that, have tried to gather the data by using and referring to a descriptive and analytical method and various sources such as books, websites, online Journal and articles.*

Keywords: Genocide, Hazara people, Afghanistan, Human Rights, Ethnic Violence

1. Introduction

The crime of genocide is an ugly and tragic act that has caused serious damage to humanity. In various legal systems, including the International Criminal Court and the courts of Rwanda and Yugoslavia, this Crime and its punishments have been addressed and have always been raised as important and fundamental issues.

According to Article 2 of the 1948 United Nations Convention on Prevention, and punishment of the crime of genocide defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, such as: killing members of a group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (1)

According to the explanation of the concepts and examples of the crime of genocide at the international level, today the examples of this crime have been realized in Afghanistan against the Hazara ethnic group. As the Hazaras of Afghanistan are an ethnic and religious minority that has been oppressed by the ruling groups since the distant past, this ethnic group lives scattered in different cities of Afghanistan, mainly in the central and mountainous regions. The Hazara community in Afghanistan has always been subjected to systematic violence and oppression; Governments have not taken any practical or supportive measures to protect the lives of Hazara people in Afghanistan. Because acknowledging that Hazaras are vulnerable to genocide in Afghanistan means that the government has failed to protect them, which can give moral justification to the intervention of the United Nations and other countries. (2) Since the Taliban took over in August 2021, the situation has deteriorated because they have not been able to, stop the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)

and the Taliban doesn't want to stop attacks against the Hazara people in Afghanistan. (3)

Therefore, doing such research to clarify the threats and risk against the Hazara people in Afghanistan and describe the Example and concepts of genocide against the Hazara community in Afghanistan. In this way, the rights of Hazara people in Afghanistan should be taken into consideration of international forums and organizations who are defending of human rights. In this research, the researchers have tried to collect the data by referring to different sources of books, articles, online journals and national and international websites.

a) History of genocide against the Hazara people in Afghanistan

By studying the history and position of the Hazara people in Afghanistan, it can be clearly seen that this people have experienced difficult times. They have always been brutally persecuted and massacred because of their ethnic identity The Hazara nation, now living mostly in Central Afghanistan region known as Hazarajat. (4) Here is a brief overview of the situation of Hazaras in different regimes in Afghanistan to clearly express the oppression, discrimination and torture that existed against Hazaras.

During the reign of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan, who belonged to the Pashtun tribe of Afghanistan, in the late nineteenth century (1880 - 1901); The Hazara people were brutally oppressed by this cruel ruler. As a result of an oppressive order, a bloody and brutal war was launched against the Hazaras. All the property of the Hazara people was confiscated and they were forced to migrate, and it is estimated that Hazar people lost about 60 percent of its population to ethnic cleansing, which has been known an example of genocide against the Hazaras. (5)

After the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan, the Hazara community was not safe and secure and was involved

in civil wars between different parties and groups; With the coming to power of the Mujahideen government in 1993, most of the attacks against Hazara groups took place in Afshar, west of Kabul. They committed horrific crimes against this ethnic minority group, which is an example of war crimes and genocide.

With the presence of international forces in Afghanistan; The Hazaras became hopeful for a more peaceful life, but after a while, systematic and targeted attacks against the Hazaras resumed, particularly in schools, hospitals, stadiums, vehicles, and places of worship over the past twenty years. ISIS has claimed responsibility for most of the attacks. With the re-establishment of the Taliban, these attacks have increased and the Hazara generation is being tortured and killed by extremist and unknown groups every day.

b) Example of genocide against the Hazara people in Afghanistan

Genocide of Hazaras has become more intense and spread in recent years and through killing members of the group in a cruel and violent manner, continuously, repeatedly, purposefully and with prior planning by terrorist groups such as Taliban and ISIS in the form of operations Suicide bombers, bombings, directly target the people of Hazara Shia ethnic and religious group with the intention of destroying all or part of this group and in mosques, schools, educational centers, universities, hospitals, sports clubs, wedding halls, demonstrations and Peaceful protests, shooting of civilians and selective killing of passengers on highways and crossings have been repeated many times over the years.

To provide evidence of this crime, we can refer to the attacks such as attack on Seyed al - Shaheda Girls' School in 2021 in the west of Kabul, which targeted hundreds of female Hazara students (85 female students were killed and 147 were injured), the attack on a maternity hospital in the west of Kabul. (2020), in which dozens of mothers and newborn children were targeted (46 mothers and children were killed and 30 people were injured), the attack on the Mahwood education center in the west of Kabul, 2018 (47 students were killed and 67 people were injured), the attack of a suicide bomber to the demonstrations of the Enlightenment Movement, which led to the death and injury of hundreds of people in 2016 (80 people killed and 231 injured) and the attack on the Abdur Rahim Shahid Girls' School in 2022 (26 students killed and 57 injured), as well as an attack on an educational course In Kaj, 55 girls were killed and 120 people were injured while the students were taking the entrance exams. And other attacks on vehicle transportation of Hazara people.

All these attacks and dozens of other cases are examples and evidence of a systematic and targeted attack on the Hazara ethnic and Shia religious groups with the intention of destroying all or part of this group, which is based on Article 2 of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide and Article 6 of the Statute of the Court. International criminal law and paragraph 2 of Article 4 of the Statute of the Yugoslavia Tribunal, paragraph 2 of Article 2 of the Statute of the Rwandan Tribunal and Article 333 of the Afghan Penal Code are examples of the crime of genocide. (6)

c) Who is responsible for the killing of Hazaras?

There is no clear answer to the question of who or which group is responsible for the killing of Hazaras, but terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan have claimed responsibility for most of the targeted attacks in the past 20 years. Lashkar - e - Jhingi and Jaish - e - Islam in Pakistan, the Taliban and ISIS Khorasan in Afghanistan have been the key perpetrators of attacks on Hazaras in the past two decades.

According to the Balaq Analytical Network, from August 2021, when the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan, to September 2022, Hazaras have been faced more than 60 targeted attacks. (7)

d) Efforts to recognize the genocide against the Hazara people in Afghanistan.

Continuous and extensive efforts by Hazara community activists; Human rights activists and human rights organizations at the international level have been working to draw the attention of the international community to this issue and recognize it as a genocide against the Hazaras. The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights also called the killing of Hazaras in Afghanistan an example of international crimes. Richard Bennett, the UN human rights rapporteur on Afghanistan, noted in his September 2022 report to the UN: "Hazara communities have been subjected to various forms of discrimination that have negatively affected their economic, social, cultural and human rights. "There are reports of arbitrary detentions, torture and other ill-treatment, summary executions and enforced disappearances, " the Special Rapporteur stressed. "In addition, there is a reported increase in inflammatory rhetoric both online and in some mosques during Friday prayers, including demands to kill Hazaras. " This senior law expert, who works in an independent capacity, also explained how Afghanistan's de facto rulers have appointed Pashtuns "to senior positions in government structures in Hazara - dominated provinces. " This led to the forced expulsion of the Hazaras and the imposition of religious taxes contrary to Shia principles. (8) in April 2022, British Parliamentarians launched a parliamentary inquiry into the situation of Hazara in Afghanistan and Pakistan (the Inquiry). The aim of the Inquiry is to consider the situation of the Hazara in Afghanistan and in Pakistan.

In September 2022, after a bloody attack on Hazara students at the Kaj education center, which resulted in the deaths and injuries of about 700 people. A worldwide Twitter campaign called Stop the Hazara Genocide began, which was the biggest hashtag on Twitter. "StopHazaraGenocide" Twitter campaign garners 10 million tweets, 16million interactions and billions of views has become one of the most popular trends in Afghanistan. (9)

On August 4, 2024, the American Bar Association adopted a resolution calling on all governments and international organizations to recognize the killing of Hazaras in Afghanistan as genocide and take action to protect the lives of Hazaras. (10)

2. Conclusion

This study highlights the systematic violence faced by the Hazara people in Afghanistan, categorizing these acts as genocide. It calls for international recognition and action to prevent further atrocities and protect the rights of this vulnerable community. We can say that the Hazara ethnic minority of Afghanistan has been subjected to targeted and systematic attacks by extremist groups because of their ethnic and religious identity. The most of these bloody attacks have been happening against the Hazara people in schools; mosques; education center; hospital; university; vehicles; Stadiums and other public places. Since most of these attacks are carried out against a specific ethnic group called Hazara and among civilians in public places, so this is one of the examples of genocide against the Hazara people in Afghanistan; that reports from human rights organizations and independent international organizations and the UN Special Rapporteur He also considered it an important example of international crimes, especially the genocide against the Hazaras. Therefore, we can say that there is no psychological and physical security for the Hazaras in Afghanistan and no practical efforts have been made to protect the lives of the Hazara people in Afghanistan.

3. Recommendation

The following action should be considered to prevent the ongoing genocide and brutal massacre against the Hazara community in Afghanistan. The genocide against the Hazaras should be recognized by the United Nations as an international crime. The perpetrators of the killing of the Hazara people should be identified and brought to an international court. Human rights organizations and institutions should make humanitarian efforts to support the rights of the Hazara people and condemn this heinous and tragic act and force governments to recognize the genocide against the Hazaras. Put pressure on the ruling group in Afghanistan to protect the lives of the Hazara people.

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