CHAPTER-TWO
THE WORLD AS AN EYE WITNESS TO MANY HOLOCAUSTS

It is a universally accepted fact that the world has indeed been an eyewitness to many ‘Holocaust’ ever since human beings found their very existence in this universe. It may, well be of interest to first known what exactly ‘Holocaust’ means. The term has been explained and interpreted differently by various learned men. We would, thus, be right is stating that incidents which cross all moral and ethics of war and conflicts lead to ‘holocausts’. Unjustifiable large scale devastations against humanity may be classified as ‘Holocaust’.

Needful to state that ‘Holocaust, an Old Testament sacrificial term has been used in the recent times by historians to describe the massacre of 6 million Jews by the German Nazi regime during World War II’. Yet, others have stated the same facts as on historical summary and said that, ‘The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic annihilation of six million Jews by Nazi regime and their collaborators as a central act of State during the World War II’. There is also a need to strive to combat prejudice and bigotry by transforming the horrors of holocaust into positive lessons to help make a better and safer world to live.

It may, thus, be noted that holocaust differs from the phenomena of natural calamities or natural disasters over which a man has no control. Men are always ready to fight such natural disasters but do fail at times since nature is indeed too strong. If we cast a glance at the damages and death tolls which have taken place ever since the origin of man as a result of the natural calamities, the figures are beyond imagination and human reconciliation. The pity is that events such as earthquakes, draughts, floods, Tsunami and the alike are beyond the control of human beings and do erupt from time to time in the form of natural ‘Holocausts’.

A statistical check on the available figures, say for just a period of last 100 years, indicates that earthquakes all over the world have taken a toll of over 20 lakhs people. Tsunami alone in December 2004 took about one lakhs lives. More than 1, 35,000 people had died of similar Tsunami from 1755 to 1976. In China, India and Brazil across the southern hemisphere, the years between 1876 and 1902 witnessed a near permanent cycle of draughts, bad harvests and subsequent famines. Between 1876 and 1878 alone, seven million people were killed as a result of draughts in India and by 1896 to 1897; catastrophic harvests affected every tropical country in the world. In total, some where between thirty million and sixty million people died.

However, no person can be blamed for such colossal loss of human life since it has not been the creation of man but that of ‘Nature’, which indeed is beyond control of any and everyone. Thus, responsibility of such natural ‘Holocausts’ lies purely with nature and non else. But, let us not only blame nature or God for everything wrong that goes on in this world. Man has thought himself to be the wisest creature made by God but forgets that his selfish motives, unending desires, lust and over ambitions have diverted his energy to be channelized into wrong directions which create conditions for violence and terrorism, thus taking the lives of his co-beings for petty causes and penny packet benefits.

†Dictionary meaning of Holocaust is ‘Whole sale destruction or sacrifice in which the victims are burnt alive or slaughtered or result in a massive destruction of life’.
Thus, the phenomenon of terrorism, world over has become an active participative ingredient of the ‘Holocaust Industry’, which has accounted for the death and destructions of not only hundreds or thousands but also millions of innocent people of the world.

Notwithstanding the above, other holocausts as may well be evaluated have been purely man’s creation which has been ill fated by men themselves on mankind since times immemorial. The detailed analysis of human psychology brings out a major fact that man has always endeavored to dominate his co-brothers in order to fulfill his ambitions, desires and lust which has encouraged bringing in confrontation and conflicts to date.

Historical facts do confirm that the most powerful always dominated the weak and the timid because such human desires have been unending. As a result of this tendency, Man even today continues to dominate the same way and reaches a point of no return i.e. when he has no consideration for any moral and ethical values in general and human values in particular. Such human psychology aids Man at putting his focus on how to achieve his ultimate aim of fulfillment of his desires. This ultimately leads him to follow the ruthless path of massive destruction and terror in his actions, which take the shape of holocaust. Excessive activities and annihilations of human race carried out by Men against Men have thus come into existence as a result of human weakness and unfulfilled desires.

History is full of examples like the ‘Mahabharata’ in ancient times, wherein, one group ‘Karva’s’ led by ‘Daryodhan’ never wanted to part with or share anything with his co-brothers ‘Pandavas’ since he wanted to be the sole king of Hastinapur. Lord Krishna even tried to bring in peace but could not succeed to maintain peace and thus left the situational circumstances on the mercy of time. The award of time was severe disaster which took place in the 14 days war. However, it may be appropriate to call it not merely a conflict but indeed a ‘Holocaust’ since lakhs of people died resulting in massive annihilation of mankind for the basic cause of desire fulfillment and lust of Daryodhan.

Then came the era of Alexander, who wanted to conquer the world with his sword and be called as ‘Alexander the Great’. In order to fulfill his desire of conquering the world, he ruthlessly massacred hundreds and thousands of people. These mass killings may thus be classified to be a form of holocaust. The world has been a witness to the fact that Alexander’s triumphant march over the dead bodies of thousands of heroes and patriots is accepted as a brilliant episode in the history of Greece. During an attack on Assakenoi, Alexander himself received a wound; in retaliation he put the whole population to the sword. This massacre has been condemned even by the Greeks themselves and is regarded as the greatest military feat of Alexander in his Indian Campaign.¹ Later, while taking another town by assault Alexander was severely wounded and when it was captured, his infuriated soldiers killed every body they found within the town irrespective of age and sex.

¹ Majumdar, RC, ‘Ancient India’, p. 99
Yet another Holocaust during Alexander’s times is capture of another town of Agalassoi tribe by him, where circumstances forced 20,000 citizens to throw themselves into the fire along with their wives and children. This is the first recorded Jauhar\(^2\) ceremony in Indian history, the precursors of many terrible repetitions in times to come. The invasion of Alexander in India was not crowned by military successes like that of Nadir shah or Tamerlane who basically were plunderers. It was nevertheless characterized by cruelties of massacre of the garrisons which have recorded instances of the blood-thirsty Greek troops slaughtering the inhabitants of captured cities, sparing neither any man, woman nor child. The Greek historians themselves have recorded that during the campaign of lower Sindhu valley alone, 80,000 of the natives were killed by Alexander in one stroke, which may well be classified nothing short of the holocaust. Yet, Alexander comes close, though never matched Genghis Khan in ruthlessness as he died at half the age of Genghis’ Khan and probably just never had a proper chance.\(^3\)

Next came the era of ‘Emperor Ashoka’. The Thirteenth Rock Edicts of Ashoka gives a vivid account of the conquests of Kalinga after a terrible war in course of which 1, 50,000 persons were captured, 1, 00,000 were slain and many times that number perished, which the historians have appropriately interpreted to be a holocaust and not just a mere war\(^4\). Later, Qutlai Khan, Sultan Mohamed and their successors had also dyed the Indian rivers with blood of hundreds and thousands of Indian patriots and its bravest soldiers. They created mayhem on thousands of innocent human beings giving no consideration and created holocaust of their times.

People of this world can never forget the genocides of brutal Mongols and their so called Mongol Champion, Genghis khan, popularity called Changez Khan. The roots of ambition developed in him the animal instinct and inhumane approach towards the values of life and consequences of death. He not only possessed the signs of blood thirst but he was indeed a ‘Blood Thirsty Monger’ who quenched his thirst and filled his ‘lust and ambition’ by stepping on dead bodies of not hundreds and thousands but millions of innocent people. In his life span, Genghis Khan did his best to wipe out States, Culture and People from the face of the earth, a holocaust which he not only deliberately planned but also executed successfully. History is supportive of the facts that bones of the slaughtered formed mountains and that the soil became greasy with the human fat and thus hundreds and thousands also died from the diseases spread by rotting bodies as a result such a ‘Holocaust’. It is pertinent to highlight the fact that no culture ever before had wielded such destructive power as the Mongols. **Destructions were a matter of Genghis Khan’s strategy.** Cities, regions, kingdoms and empires tumbled with no other purpose than to assure the next victory and fulfill his lust. **Massive deaths and destruction were indeed incidental.**

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\(^2\) *Ibid*, p. 101-102

\(^3\) *John Man, ‘Genghis Khan’,* p. 281

Genghis Khan had himself declared, ‘Let us ride out against the Islamic people, to gain vengeance! Let us kill the men, rape the women and enslave the children’. Further he claimed himself to be the ‘Gods punishment’ and strongly believed that ‘God had sent him to punish people’. Thus, in 1221, by the time final victory came, the Mongols were in no mood for mercy. Those with any skill were led away as captives and the rest were slaughtered. With regard to statistics, Juvaini speaks of 50,000 soldiers dispatching 24 men each which made 1.2 million killed in Urgench.

The Mongols under Genghis Khan had orders that apart from 400 artisans whom they specified and selected amongst men, the whole population including the women and children should be killed and no one whether man or woman be spared. Each of the soldiers was allotted the execution of three or four hundred persons, which amounted to one lac three hundred thousand in Merv. This was in addition to those killed in Urgench. Genghis Khan’s approach of slaughtering lakhs of people had been every morning’s routine work. At a glance, we may sum up that over a million were killed in Urgench, Merv and tens of thousands in several other cities. This was undoubtedly a ‘holocaust’ at an unprecedented scale. Given the Mongols attitude to non-Mongols, their obedience and their slaughtering skills, it is technically possible for them to have killed perhaps three million or more people in the two year course of their reversion of Muslims empire. The Mongols not only killed every inhabitant in some major cities but the whole population of their new domains.5

Thus, events proved to Genghis Khan that Heaven ordained him for the world domination for which he worked on the principle to ‘Kill enemies without compunction’.† Naturally, those on the receiving end judged him only in these terms, as a bloodthirsty barbarian. He believed that ‘Man’s greatest good fortune was to chase and defeat his enemy, seize all his possessions, leave the married women weeping and wailing, red his gelding, use the bodies of his women as night shirts.6 At the time of his death, Genghis Khan ruled from the Pacific to the Caspian i.e. an empire four times the size of Alexander and larger than any nation today except Russia.

Now let us cast a glance say at one sect of people in this world i.e. Muslims. The statistics of major ‘Holocausts and Genocide of Muslims’ are indeed alarming being an eye opener to the world at large. This would be evident from the fact that from the very beginning the first major holocaust of Muslims took place on July 15, wherein, the Crusaders had killed more than half a million Muslims during and after occupying Jerusalem. Historical facts further supplement that Ganghis Khan although himself a Muslim, his great desire and lust had resulted in ruthless killing of more than a million Muslims during the occupation of Iraq and neighboring areas, leaving aside the mayhem which he had created in his other ‘Mongol Wars’.

5 John Man, op.cit, p.164

† Those who were not bound to him or opposed him, for them he was merciless. For Genghis, an enemy that did not at once defer was alien, hardly human, fit for destruction without second thought.

6 Ibid, p.279
Later, more than a million Muslims were killed or forced to change religion by Spanish crusades in South America. Not only that, even more than a million Muslims were killed or displaced by the Spanish and other European extremists during the rebellion against the Ottoman Empire. In the previous century, more than three million Muslims were killed by the European colonial powers during and after the occupation of Muslim Countries after World War I and II. Further, more than eight million Muslims were killed or displaced by Tsars of Russia in addition to three million, which were killed by the Communist Government of Russia. Likewise, more than a million Muslims were killed in East European Countries by the Communist Governments. 7

A look at a few countries like China, Cambodia, Vietnam and other Far East governments confirm that more than 1.5 million Muslims were killed in these countries since World War II. Likewise, more than half a million Muslims have been killed or displaced in Burma since World War II. An equal number of about half a million Muslims were killed by Serbs and Croats in Bosnia during early 1990’s and more than one million were killed in Kosovo and Albania during mid 1990’s. The story does not end here because more than five million Muslims have been killed or displaced in Palestine since 1948 and more than six million were killed or displaced by the Russian occupation of Afghanistan.

A look at yet another caste i.e. Jews during World War II shows, it is indeed most disheartening to note that ‘Burning Pits’ were used mainly in the summer of 1944, when their ex-termination was going at such a rate that the furnaces even could not handle the number of corpses (Photo-1).

PHOTO - 1 : BURNING PITS: ONE OF THE CREMEATION PITS USED TO BURN THE VICTIMS OF THE GAS CHAMBERS IN AUSCHWITS

7 loc. cit
From 1933 to 1945, the Nazis murdered 6,000,000 Jews and millions of others. This tragedy, called the ‘Nazis Holocaust’ represents the world’s most overwhelming example of intolerance of one human being, named ‘Adolf Hitler’. The world witnessed the mass murders of pregnant women, others holding hands of little children or carrying infants in their arms on the way to be gassed. Those mothers went in hiding gave their children to be hidden, many never to find or see them ever again. What could be more demoralizing and disheartening for any human being?

In remembrance, ‘The Holocaust can be described as one of the darkest era in human existence’ and the greatest crime imposed upon people by people. The ‘Holocaust’ which was a product of Hitler’s Nazi Germany is an event that the world needs to study and learn from this holocaust since it caused the death of over six million innocent people, the majority of whom were of Jewish descent as already explained. Facts are evident as given out in the description of concentration and extermination camps in Poland during the Nazi occupation in World War II. These were indeed horrifying and most treacherous modes of ending valuable human lives of millions of people who were victimized just because of the lust of Hitler and the Nazi regime. Between 1933-1945 under the Nazi rule, there were mainly two types of Concentration Camps (Photo-2).

† Adolf Hitler while speaking before the Reichstag in 1939 said, ‘Today I will once more be a prophet: If the international Jewish financiers inside and outside Europe should again succeed in plunging the nations into a World War, the result will be not the bolshevization of the earth and thus the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of Jewish race throwing out Europe’.

‡ The slave labour Concentration Camps where inmates were placed under harsh working conditions and starvation and the actual death camps, whose sole purpose was the annihilation of the Jewish population and any other ‘enemy’ of the Nazis.
Pertinent to note that there is not an inch of land of Poland that has not had a tragic history, not a single Polish family that escaped the Nazis and not a single family that didn’t suffer during the Nazis occupation. This would well be evident from the cremating capacity of the Nazis five Auschwitz crematoriums, which is specified as 4,756 per 24 working hours. Over and above, other victims were not buried but burnt and their ashes spread infields in the vicinity. Most of us refuse to accept the fact that all this actually happened since it is nothing more and nothing less than a wildly exaggerated, freely invented horror story used by the victorious Allies to saddle the German people with a bad conscience for all eternity. However, the human scars and the photographic records do make us believe that these were hard facts of life and indeed a dark chapter in the history of mankind, where a man called Adolf Hitler was unkind to the complete human race.

The Extermination Factory had the extermination plant with the most advanced design anywhere in the world. It was consisting of two large crematoria or gas chambers (Photo-3) and two smaller ones.

PHOTO - 3 : AN OVERVIEW OF CREMA IV IN AUSCHWITS; THE GAS CHAMBERS ARE IN THE BACK : IN THE FORGROUND, BEING SEEN ARE THE MORGUE AND THE CREMATORIUM
Crematoria four and five were built on the surface of the ground. Crematoria two and three had subterranean gas chambers and reception areas. They were about 10 meters long and 51 meters across. The basement consisted of two main rooms, the undressing area which also served as a mortuary and a gas chamber. Victims climbed down the steps into the basement. **Those who could not walk were pushed down a concrete slide.**

Let us now take our attention to the other side of the coin. Man and the Nations have always believed in show of force and exercised their muscle power through display of their might. A critical look at both the world wars reveals the gravity of ‘holocaust’, which these wars created. **The First World War showed large scale annihilation which estimates confirm that the number of civilian deaths itself were higher than the military casualties numbering around 13,000,000.** World War II, was even worse since it showed how the world dominated by super powers exhibited their power and potentials which resulted in annihilation of human race. **The statistics suggest the estimate of deaths ranging between 35,000,000 to 60,000,000.** Such horrified horrors and ‘holocausts’ are indeed beyond human comprehension.

We must be aware of one fact that such events and personalities like Alexander, Genghis Khan and Hitler etc form part of a temporary phase in this world and become only part of history. On the other hand ‘Peace’ which is the only permanent phenomena takes the front seat. It may still be possible for the world to see yet another ‘Gandhi’ since man by nature is basically ‘Peaceful’ and aims at avoiding wars and holocausts so as to ensure a peaceful world.

We do need to learn lessons from the society and civilization to reconcile with the fact that life indeed is very precious. Those who fail to realize the real value and worth of life do take recourse to violence leading to massacres of mankind through their inhumane acts which ultimately lead to ‘holocausts’. We may well appreciate that the role of peacekeeping is ever demanding. UNO has been one such agency whose presence has been felt after the Second World War, with the League of Nations having been its forerunner or precursor. UNO, as the world body, has felt the need to establish peace so as to eliminate the chances of war and bring harmony amongst countries with a view to establish universal brotherhood.

In the 20th Century, ever since the emergence of League of Nations and the United Nation the world has still seen numerous holocausts. The US military Government in Korea (USMGK 1945-1948) directly and indirectly killed some 500,000 Koreans.† The gas chamber, about 225 square meters, looked like a large communal bathroom with shower heads.

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1. The gas chamber, about **225 square meters, looked like a large communal bathroom** with shower heads.
3. Ibid, p.759
4. There is generally no accepted figure: however, estimates range from **100,000 to 800,000** in the name of Anti-Communism during 1945-1948
However, people controlled by the US Military i.e. the ‘Blood Thirsty Gooks’ actually committed crime. Further, the USMGIK and the Korean butchers killed innocent civilian’s even infants being born. The tragedy of Korea is that these ‘Blood Thirsty Gooks’ i.e. military leaders and those North Koreans, who had no sense of patriotism were recruited by US military. Such criminals joined hands together and destroyed the democratic peace logging Koreans (labeled as ‘Communists’). Of those cities that have suffered catastrophe in the recent past there are few that retain their scars and Hiroshima has built a new urban skin over its dreadful atomic burn.

In the recent times the Armenian measures of 1915, Turks killed 1.4 million out of an Armenian population of 2.1 million, the Nazis slew six millions in the mid 1970’s, 1.7 million (out of 8 million) died, 800,000 were killed in Rwanda genocides of 1994. We may, thus, say that the recent ‘Holocaust’ was spread over five years, the Khmer Rouge murders over three and the Rwanda genocide which Samantha power has called ‘The most rapid genocide the world has ever known’ 10. In this regard Ross Gurney, in his writing work of ‘The Trumpet Shall Sound’ has expressed the fact that, ‘we have lived in one of the bloodiest centuries with the world wars,’ holocaust’ in Cambodia and Rwanda as well as Germany,

Derek J. Wilson11 from his long study and many years of thinking about the future of this planet has very aptly appreciated the need of overcoming ‘holocausts’ so as to avoid destructive behavior on global scalef. Further, it would not be out of place to mention that the world would not have the will or the means, to act on its own best interests until all individuals decide that it must. The first step we can take is to increase our understanding and awareness of the threats and ‘holocausts’ being faced by mankind.

Needful to further state that it was in June 1992, at the Earth Summit, world scientists ‘Warning to Humanity’ was signed by 1,600 senior scientists from all over the world, including more than half of all living Nobel Prize Winners‡.

11 Derek J, Wilson, ‘Five Holocausts’, loc.cit

f He visualizes the answer for coming crises by stating that. ‘If we, as the world’s population, formed a clear view of our own interest and the interest of the planet, disaster could be and would be, avoided. The conditions which currently make it inevitable would not the tolerated’.

‡ They said ‘Human beings and the natural world are on collision course….. Many of our current practices put at serious rest the future for human society…. and many so after the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner that we know. Fundamental changes are urgent…. No more than one or a few years remain before the chance to event the threats we now confront will be lost and the prospects of humanity immeasurably diminished’. 
Isn’t it about time that we seriously confronted the ideology of such limitless growth on Earth, or do we still continue in this demented fashion sleepwalking our civilization towards its final ‘Holocaust’. Let’s wake up now and make this world more peaceful and free from the miserable faces of dreadful holocausts (Photo - 4).

PHOTO - 4 : REMNANTS OF A MISERABLY DREADED FACE AS A RESULT OF RECENT HOLOCAUST OF WORLD WAR II