



Armenian Genocide

For Prelims: Genocide, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, United Nations General Assembly, Indian Penal Code (IPC), Article 15, Article 21,

For Mains: Genocide and its repercussion, international measures, Measures adopted by India to combat genocides.

Why in News?

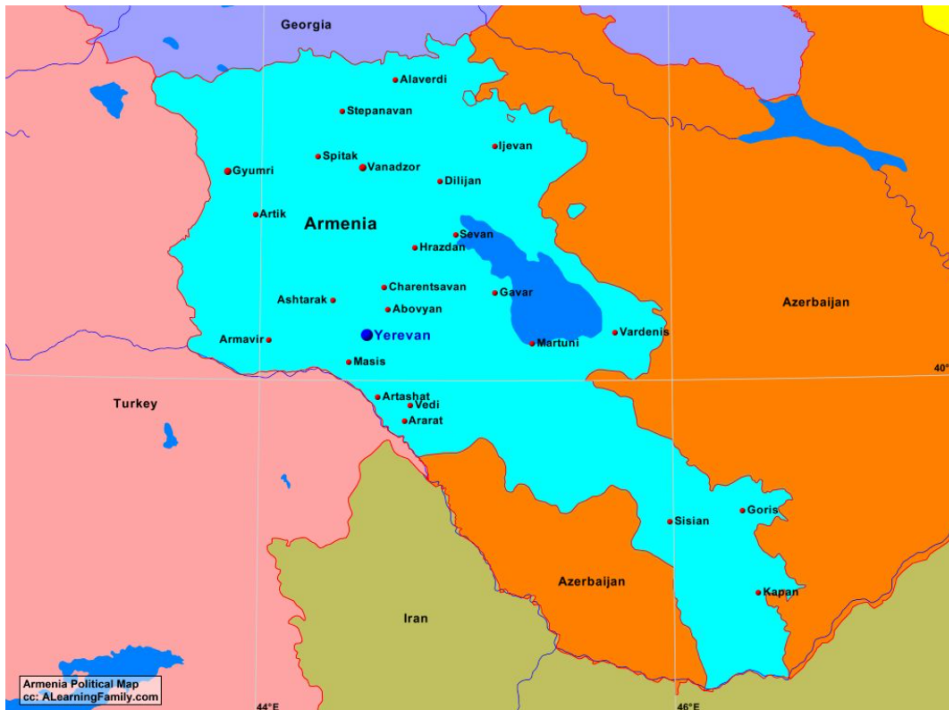
April 24, 1915 marks the beginning of what came to be known as the [Armenian genocide](#). It is when the **Ottoman Empire (modern-day Turkey)** initiated the detainment of **Armenian intellectuals and leaders in Constantinople**.

What is Genocide?

- **Origin:**
 - The word '**genocide**' was first coined by **Polish lawyer Raphaël Lemkin in 1944** in his book **Axis Rule in Occupied Europe**.
- **About:**
 - **As per UN, [Genocide](#)** is the intentional and systematic destruction of a **particular ethnic, racial, religious, or national group**.
 - This destruction can occur through a variety of means, **including mass killing, forced relocation, and the imposition of harsh living conditions** that result in widespread death.
- **Conditions:**
 - UN says a **crime of genocide** includes two main elements:
 - **Mental Element:** The intent to destroy, in whole or in part, **a national, ethnic, racial or religious group**.
 - **Physical Element:** It includes the following five acts, enumerated exhaustively:
 - **Killing** members of the group
 - Causing **serious bodily or mental harm** to members of the group
 - **Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions** of life is calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
 - Imposing **measures intended to prevent births** within the group
 - **Forcibly transferring children** of the group to another group
 - Also, the **members of the attacked group must have been attacked because they are members of the group, and not as individuals**, for the crime to qualify as a genocide.
- **Genocide Convention:**
 - The **Genocide Convention**, also known as the **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide**, is an international treaty that was adopted by the **UNGA** on **December 9, 1948**.
 - The purpose is to prevent and punish the crime of genocide and requires **signatory nations** to take action to prevent and punish genocide, including by **enacting laws that**

criminalize the crime of genocide and by cooperating with other nations in the investigation and prosecution of individuals suspected of committing genocide.

- The Convention also establishes the **International Court of Justice** as the primary judicial body responsible for interpreting and enforcing the Convention.
- It was the **first human rights treaty** adopted by the **General Assembly** of the **UN on 9 December 1948**.



What is the Armenian Genocide?

- **Background:** Armenians are an ancient people whose traditional homeland by the beginning of the **20th century** was divided between the **Russian** and the **Ottoman empires**.
 - In the **Ottoman Empire**, dominated by **Muslims**, Armenians were a **Christian**, well-off minority.
 - On account of their religion, they faced discrimination, which they had been protesting and demanding greater say in the government. This had led to resentment and attacks against the community.
- **Role of Young Turks and WW-I:** A revolution brought in 1908 by a group called the **Young Turks** and paved the way for the **Committee of Union and Progress (CUP)** forming the government which wanted '**Turkification**' of the empire and was hard on minorities.
 - In **August 1914**, **World War I** broke out, and the **Ottoman Empire** joined forces with Germany and Austria-Hungary against **Russia**, **Great Britain** and **France**.
 - The war brought antipathy towards **Armenians** to a boil, especially as some **Armenians** were sympathetic to **Russia** and even willing to help it in the war.
 - Soon, the Armenians as a whole were seen as a threat.
 - The crackdown of April 14, 1915 on the community began in earnest with the arrest of prominent citizens in **Constantinople**, many of whom were executed.
 - The government then ordered forcible eviction of **Armenians**.
 - In spring **1915** the **Ottoman government** began the deportation of the **Armenian population** from its **northeastern border regions**.
- **Recognition as 'Genocide':** Armenian genocide has been recognized so by **32 countries as of now**, including the **US**, **France**, **Germany**, the **Armenian genocide**.
 - **India** and **UK** do not recognize the **Armenian Genocide**. India's stand can be attributed to its **wider foreign policy decisions** and **geo-political interests** in the region.
 - **Turkey does not recognize the Armenian massacre as genocide** and has always claimed that there is no proof the deaths were planned and targeted.

- **Current Status of Armenia-Turkey Relations:** The **modern state of Armenia** has in the past sought better ties with **Turkey**, although the two are now locked in a tussle over the [Nagorno-Karabakh region](#) an **Armenian-dominated part of Azerbaijan where Turkey supports Azerbaijan**.

What are the Law and Regulations in India for Genocide?

- **India does not have any domestic law on genocide, even though it has ratified the UN Convention on Genocide.**
- **Indian Penal Code (IPC):**
 - The [Indian Penal Code \(IPC\)](#) provides for the punishment of genocide and related crimes, and sets out the procedures for investigation, prosecution, and punishment.
 - Genocide has been defined as a crime under **IPC Section 153B**, which criminalizes acts that promote enmity between different groups on grounds of **religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc.** with the intent to cause riots or commit acts of violence.
- **Constitutional Provisions:**
 - The **Indian Constitution** provides protection against discrimination on the basis of **religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth**.
 - [Article 15](#) of the Constitution prohibits discrimination on these grounds.
 - [Article 21](#) guarantees the **right to life and personal liberty**.

Way Forward

The prevention and punishment of genocide is a complex issue that requires a multi-faceted approach. Some possible ways forward include:

- **Strengthening legal frameworks:** Countries should continue to adopt and enforce laws that criminalize genocide and related crimes. Governments should also ensure that these laws are in line with international legal standards, such as the Genocide Convention.
- **Education and awareness-raising:** Education and awareness-raising campaigns can help to promote tolerance and understanding between different groups and reduce the likelihood of discrimination and violence. Governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders should work together to promote these initiatives.
- **Early warning systems:** The development of early warning systems can help to detect and prevent the escalation of tensions between different groups. These systems can include the monitoring of hate speech, social media platforms, and other indicators of potential violence.
- **International cooperation:** International cooperation is essential in the prevention and punishment of genocide. Countries should work together to share information, resources, and expertise in order to prevent and respond to potential instances of genocide.
- **Support for victims:** The provision of support and reparations to victims of genocide is essential in promoting healing and reconciliation. Governments and other stakeholders should work together to provide support to victims, including access to justice, reparations, and mental health services.
- **Addressing root causes:** Addressing the root causes of discrimination and violence is essential in the prevention of genocide. This can include addressing poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, as well as promoting inclusive governance and democratic institutions.

[Source: IE](#)

