



SPOTLIGHT

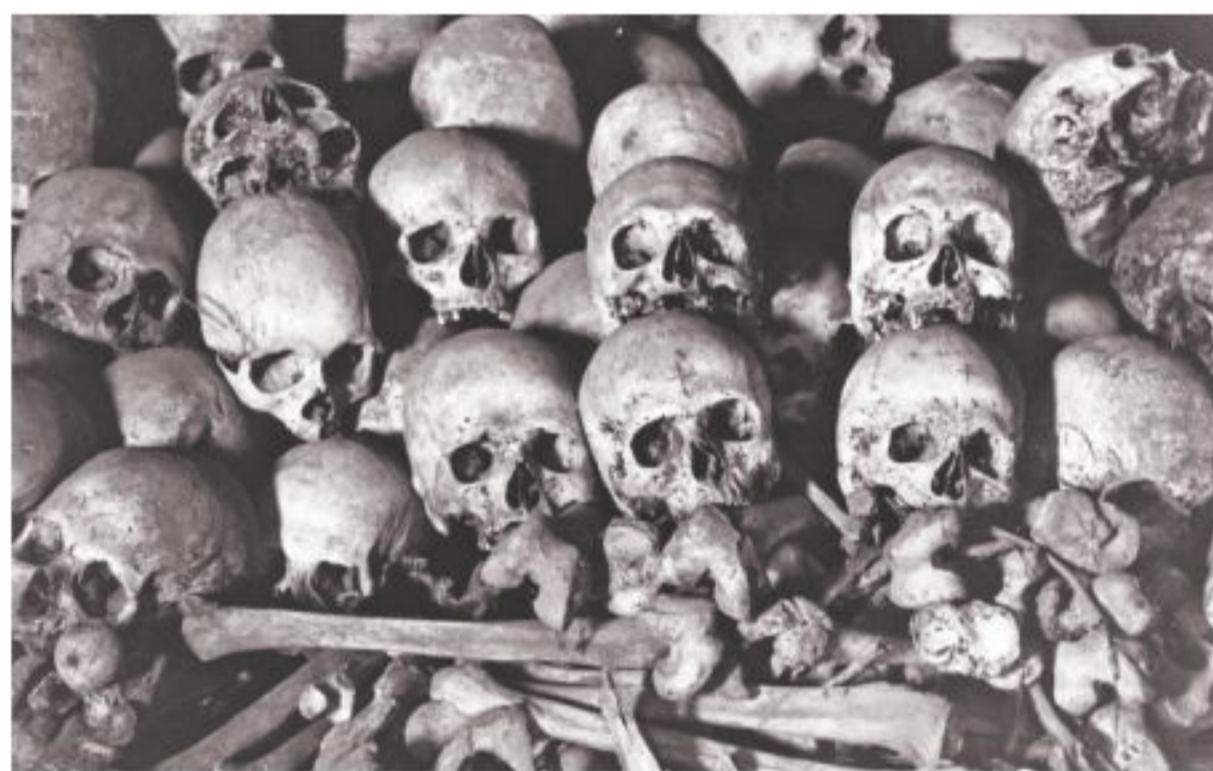
War. War never changes

In the ancient times the Romans waged war across Europe and forced an innumerable amount of civilians into slavery. By 1945, an estimated 80 million people were killed in World War II. 6 million Jews alone were slaughtered as a part of the infamous "Final Solution." In 1971 more than three million Bangladeshis lost their lives in a ruthless calculated massacre perpetrated by the Pakistani military.

In an ideal world, mankind would learn from its mistakes and that would mark the end of the systematic killing that has plagued the world for thousands of years. But sadly that will never be the case. The only thing the civilised world is capable of doing now is putting the villains on trial.

The Rwandan genocide was similar to that in 1971. In only a 100 days 500,000-1,000,000 Tutsi people were killed by Hutu extremists. It went down in history as one of the most ruthless acts of ethnic cleansing. The world only sat and watched as the Akazu, a Hutu political extremist party carried out systematic mass rape and murder. An alleged \$750,000 worth of machetes were distributed among the would be killers. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was created in November 1994. Its primary aim was to bring to justice those accused of the Rwandan genocide. It took over 20 years, but barely a third have been convicted. The ICTR has had its fair share of problems and mismanagement. However the sentencing of Jean Paul Akayesu and Jean Kambanda was a victory for the people of Rwanda.

The Bosnian genocide took place between 1991-1994. The ethnic cleansing



was organised and carried out by the Bosnian Serb forces. More than 8000 Bosnian Muslims were killed and 25,000-30,000 civilians were expelled. Alongside these astounding figures an estimated

20,000+ women were raped. The conflict was recognised as a genocide and the International Criminal Tribunal is currently underway. Like the ICTR the trials for the Bosnian genocide have had an alarming

amount of mismanagement.

By 2015, the most high profile convictions included Slobodan Milosevic, the former Serbian military leader. However he died in custody. Radovan Karadzic, the supreme commander of the Bosnian Serb army has been charged and his trial ended in 2014. He is currently awaiting a verdict. Ratko Mladic who has been accused of ordering the ethnic cleansing is currently on trial.

Despite the search for justice, the trials are rife with a lack of due diligence. This is a phenomenon that is commonly seen in such high profile trials. Given the controversial nature however, it is not surprising that the tribunals have not been as efficient as they could be. The primary problem with the trials is that the organisers were extremely short sighted when they created such a small tribunal with only a handful of judges and chambers when the crimes in nature have been so infamous. The funds available to the ICT were also grossly understated. This was evident when the Rwandan genocide trials were briefly halted due to financial troubles in the ICTR.

Has the International Criminal Tribunal been successful in bringing justice to the victims? Perhaps it is time to reconsider our approach to genocides and wars. The fault lies with us because of our inability to deal with ethnic cleansings such as the Rwandan genocide. It is up to us, we need to make sure that such a tragedy does not occur again.

War. War needs to change.

By Daneesha Khan
Photo: Collected