

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE PERPETRATED DURING ARMED CONFLICTS: THE COMPLEX DYNAMICS OF REVICTIMIZATION

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### **ABSTRACT**

Wartime sexual violence is not a result of sexual desire, but it is seen as a symbol of power, dominance, victory and abuse of authority. It is used as a military strategy and also as a tool for ethnic cleansing. In the conflicts in Bosnia more than twenty thousand Muslim girls were raped and were compelled to give birth to their victimiser's child. Bangladeshi independence War witnessed the systematic genocidal rape of around 2-4 lakhs women. Pakistani military gave complete licence to their troops, activists and Islamic leaders to rape the innocent Bangladeshi women who were seen as 'booty of war'. This is considered to be one the most severe war time atrocities observed. The Nanking Massacre during the Second Sino Japanese War was a heart wrenching episode of the mass rapes of around twenty thousand women who were not spared even after the rape and were killed by penetration of objects or by explicit mutilation. One of the endowment of Nanking Massacre was fortification of comfort station by Japanese high officials. Rather than considering their high officers answerable for the mass assault and murder of the common people in Nanking, Japanese authorities additionally united an underground arrangement of mobilised prostitution by attracting, purchasing or abducting women and girls into sexual slavery. Women are not the sole victims of sexual violence. Children and men are also vulnerable to sexual atrocities during wars. Sexual atrocities against women disintegrates a community in a manner in which a very few weapons can.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Before delving into the area of wartime sexual violence it is very important to understand what is meant by sexual violence. Sexual violence does not have any definite meaning in the field of international law. Sexual violence includes all kinds of physical and psychological violence aimed at the sexual characteristics of a human being. It includes rape, forced nudity, forced pregnancy, mutilation, etc.

The Rome Statute of International Criminal Court states that rape, sexual enslavement, forced pregnancy, forced prostitution, forced sterilization or any other form of sexual atrocities is a criminal act against humanity.<sup>1</sup> The Geneva Conventions outlaws rape and any other form of sexual violence inflicted on women during wars.

Sexual violence is an age-old practice. Sexual violence is as old as war itself. Sexual violence perpetrated during the times of wars is the most ignored area of research in the boom of rape studies.<sup>2</sup> It is ubiquitous in the military campaigns.

## **WARTIME SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

Sexual violence is one of the most recurring issues during wars and armed rebellions.<sup>3</sup> Sexual violence against women is no more an undisclosed element in the history of warfare; it is almost noted in history of every conflict. The way women are treated is the problem boiled down to the question of property right and the proper outlook of property after every military episode. When the women are considered to be a property, they become a plunder. It is evident from the history of warfare that women have been a 'spoils of war.'<sup>4</sup> Prior to the popularization of professional army, looting was the only means through which men were rewarded for their services and encouraged to instill resentment. The chances of sexual release were considered as a petty reward; however, abduction of foreign women as chattel of victory and making their

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<sup>1</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict*, 18 E.J.I.L. 253, 262(2007).

<sup>2</sup> Christopher W. Mullins, *We Are Going To Rape You and Taste Tutsi Women*, 49 BRIT. J. CRIMINOL. 719, 719(2009).

<sup>3</sup> Miranda Alison, *Wartime sexual violence: women's human rights and questions of masculinity*, 33, REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES 75, 75(2007).

<sup>4</sup> Christopher W. Mullins, *We Are Going To Rape You and Taste Tutsi Women*, 49 BRIT. J. CRIMINOL. 719, 720(2009).

wife was common. It was rapine in the standard sense of terms. The abduction of women and forced sexual slavery or domestic enslavement is the essential part of the 'plunder'.<sup>5</sup>

Sexual violence or rape is a key feature of war because war becomes the pivot for masculinity depiction. This unsympathetic enactment of gender is the single-mindedness of soldier's hostility, once the conflict is finished, the women of the captured territories then becomes the site for related process.<sup>6</sup> Sexual violence has been defined as the amalgamation of biological drive for sexual release along with the distinctive stress and turmoil experienced during the time of the conflict.<sup>7</sup>

Wartime sexual violence can be of varied forms and types. The perpetrator can be one person or several persons (example- gang rapes); it may be planned or unplanned; it may be done for sexual pleasure or as a means to oppress or as a vital tool to accomplish some hidden military strategy.

## **RAPES DURING WARS**

Rape is the most common form of sexual violence used in a war. Women are seen as property and are plundered, misutilized and degraded. They are seen as easy targets. In ancient times the loot amount was the reward given to soldiers to make them venture in wars and risk their lives.<sup>8</sup> The possibility of getting sexual pleasure was an additional benefit. The abduction of women and their misuse is a part of every war. The practice of taking a foreign woman and having her as wife due to victory in some war was very common and was termed as *Rapine*.<sup>9</sup>

Susan Brownmiller opined that rape is a by-product of all wars because wars are the centres of Masculinity enactment.<sup>10</sup> It is also the by-product of the need of power and dominance exhibited by the men. Sometimes the rape is done to purposefully infect the victims with HIV. Women are also raped to make them incapable of bearing children.

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

Rape has been the spoils of war and a vital weapon since ancient times. It is a means to torture and oppress which leaves an everlasting impact in the minds of the victims and the entire community. In many cases the victims are raped till death.

Rapes can be of various kinds. Some are opportunistic while others are the result of systematic military strategies for fulfilling goals like genocide, forced pregnancy, etc. There were highly systematic mass rapes in the armed conflicts in Rwanda and Yugoslavia. In the First World War there were systematic rapes of the German women by the Soviet Army.

Opportunistic rapes - Opportunistic rapes are the sexual atrocities which surface during the time of chaos and military confusion. These rapes are the result of individual sexual desire and are not a part of the military strategy.<sup>11</sup>

Genocidal Rapes-The motive behind these rapes is to eliminate the whole population or a part of it and sexual violence is only used as a means to achieve this. These rapes are pre-planned and deliberate. This was done in a very large scale in the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 and in the Bosnian Genocide which resulted in the death of around hundred thousand people.

## **SEXUAL SLAVERY**

Sexual slavery is a kind of prolonged torture in which women are detained and are raped and abused typically for the pleasure of the perpetrator. The most common example is that of the Korean Comfort Women. In the Nanking Massacre during the Second Sino Japanese War Korean were abducted and forced into sexual slavery. There was mass rape of around twenty thousand women.

Other forms of sexual violence like gang rapes, forced pregnancy, mutilation, harassment, forced marriage, penetration of objects, forced nudity, etc. were also prevalent during wars.

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<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

## **WHY SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS USED AS A WEAPON DURING ARMED CONFLICT?**

Sexual violence during wars is used as a military strategy. It is used tactically in wars to achieve military strategies.<sup>12</sup> The reasons for the use of sexual violence as weapon during armed conflict vary from case to case, though it is difficult to enlist all the reasons or motives behind wartime sexual violence. Wartime sexual violence is used as a weapon to establish power and dominance. Women are the representatives of chastity of certain community. If a woman is raped it will signify the failure of the community's responsibility to protect their chastity.

### ***1. Sexual violence used as a wartime strategy:***

Rape during war is used as weapon to demean the opponent and to achieve victory. Women's virginity is considered as a pride and honour of men and by raping the women belonging to the enemy country automatically brings the defeat. The most heinous evident of the use of sexual violence as wartime strategy is the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda where rape was used to fulfil the war objective. This war objective was primarily ethnic cleansing and genocide, this objective was achieved by making the women pregnant as a result of rape, by transmitting sexual disease among the enemy. The perpetrators by committing atrocities against the women tried to achieve victory.

### ***2. Rape as weapon of creating solidarity among combatant:***

During the time of war in order to create solidarity or to say togetherness among the combatant the new young soldiers were forced to perform such taboos which left certain negative psychological impact on them. These new soldiers were asked to rape their relatives to make their connection with the community stronger and to muddle them to the armed group. The newly recruited soldiers were forced to rape to create solidarity among the unit, and to make them resistant towards violence if committed against them during the war.

### ***3. Rape used as reward:***

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<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Q. Thomas and Regan E. Ralph, *Rape in War: Challenging the Tradition of Impunity*, SAIS REVIEW 82, 84(1994).

Sexual violence or rape was used as a reward by the dominating force to the men who have not been paid. By giving freedom to rape, the dominating force tries to compensate its force to which they are unable to pay. History of war has seen looting as the essential key for achieving war goals followed by the rape of women as reward. The rape of women during the armed conflict is the common atrocity.

#### ***4. Sexual violence used to destroy the cultural and social solidarity:***

Sexual violence is also used to destroy the social and cultural solidarity. The social norm that men signified as the symbol of dominance, power and control whereas women are seen as the property which should be protected by the men from invasion. And one of the strongest weapons used during wartime is rape because raping women means defeating the men of the enemy country as women are considered as the pride and honour in the patriarchal society. Raping women destroys the culturally as well as socially.

#### ***5. Sexual violence as means of extracting information:***

Sexual violence is also used to extract information specifically during the time of incarceration. There is a lot of war in which women were brutally tortured and raped to extract the information regarding location the army camps.

### **SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN**

Sexual Violence against men is a topic which is much less researched in comparison to the sexual violence perpetrated against women. Sexual violence against men is much more prevalent in reality than it is thought of. Sexual violence committed against women is a very common occurrence in an armed conflict.<sup>13</sup> Sexual violence against men also takes place in almost every war in which sexual abuse takes place but the extent of this prevalence is unknown.<sup>14</sup> The cases of sexual violence against men is drastically under-reported. This basically occurs due to the emergence of the feelings of humiliation, embarrassment, turmoil,

<sup>13</sup> SUSAN BROWNMILLER, *AGAINST OUR WILL: MEN, WOMEN AND RAPE* 31(1<sup>st</sup> ed 1993).

<sup>14</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict*, 18 E.J.I.L. 253, 255(2007).



disgrace, dread and stigma.<sup>15</sup> Men are prevented from discussing about the atrocities inflicted on them because it will hamper the masculinity attached with their image, especially in the communities in which men are discouraged from expressing themselves emotively.<sup>16</sup> There is a general notion that the men folk should be able to defend themselves in all circumstances and perhaps if something occurs they should cope with the consequences 'like a man'. Masculinity is stereotyped to such an extent that even if some victim wants to express themselves they are not able to do so.

Male rape survivors who want to report the offence inflicted on them are prevented from doing so because of the fact that proving the rape in case of males is difficult and if they are unable to prove it they will have to face immense humiliation.<sup>17</sup> This may make the victim appear to be engaged in homosexual activities which is unlawful and prohibited in many countries.<sup>18</sup> This discourages many victims from reporting the abuse they suffered. The physicians, counsellors and other workers are so attuned to the occurrence of sexual violence against women that they overlook the fact that the same abuse can be perpetrated against men. They are trained to recognise the symptoms of sexual abuse of women and may not specialise in detecting the same in case of men.<sup>19</sup> Those who specialize mainly focus on rape as a means of wartime sexual violence ignoring other forms of sexual abuse of men which are frequent during wars. The wartime sexual violence perpetrated against men are not limited to the armed forces, by the age of the victim, the religion of the victim and the place of its perpetration.<sup>20</sup> It has been witnessed in many armed rebellion of the past like those of Ancient Persia, the Crusades, and the Ancient Greece Army. It has also been a part of the conflicts of the Second Sino Japanese War, Guatemala, Yugoslavia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>21</sup>

## Wartime

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<sup>15</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Male/Male Rape and the "Taint" of Homosexuality*, 27 HUMAN RIGHTS Q. 1274, 1288(2005).

<sup>16</sup> Stanko and Hobdell, *Assault on Men : Masculinity and Male Victimization*, 33 BRIT. J. CRIMINOL 400, 403-404(1993).

<sup>17</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict*, 18 E.J.I.L. 253, 255(2007).

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.* at 256.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> *Id.* at 258.

Sexual Violence against men is recognized to be ordinary and unremarkable, inescapable and widespread but it is not as widespread the sexual violence committed against women. The war in Yugoslavia which is the most investigated in terms of sexual violence shows the evidence of sexual violence committed against men.<sup>22</sup> In the armed rebellion in the Democratic Republic of Congo there are many evidences proving that sexual violence against men was prevalent. Amnesty International in one of its reports mentioned that in this war there were many cases of unreported sexual violence against men. The Human Rights Watch mentioned in its report that a large number of men and young boys are reportedly raped and sexually assaulted by the attackers. There were also reports that along with several women, men also started coming to the doctors for consultation.<sup>23</sup>

The number of men who are sexually abused during armed conflicts is highly unlikely to be equal to the number of women who are sexually abused during wars.<sup>24</sup> But still emphasis should also be given to the sexual atrocities faced by men during wars. This is because these victims also suffer the same pain and humiliation as suffered by a female victim. This will not take away the importance given to the prevention of sexual violence committed against women. It in turn will help to sensitize the issue to a greater extent. The spreading of awareness about this issue will remove the stereotypes in the society which views men as the perpetrator of all the sexual crimes committed and women as the victims.

### **Types of abuses against men**

It is very necessary to differentiate between the various type of sexual abuses committed against men and to treat them differently rather than covering them all under the umbrella term of 'Sexual Violence'.

1. RAPE: Various forms of rapes of men occur during the times of war. Men are forced to rape other men which is commonly termed as enforced rape, they are raped by the combatants anally, by themselves or by forcing objects or the victims were forced to perform fellatio on the perpetrators or on other victims.<sup>25</sup> In the war in Sri Lanka there were reports which mentioned that men were abused by inserting stick in their anus which were first rubbed with

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<sup>22</sup> Id. at 259.

<sup>23</sup> Id. at 260.

<sup>24</sup> Id.

<sup>25</sup> Id. at 263.



chillies, were forced to orally stimulate the combatants, were forced to rape their friends in front of the enemies for fun and enjoyment of the attackers and were raped anally by the combatants themselves.<sup>26</sup>

Rape plus was also a practice in which the plus signified HIV-AIDS to induce forced pregnancy in women or to make the victim HIV positive.<sup>27</sup> In Kosovo a witness reported that he saw two policemen raping two male prisoners and later claiming that they had HIV-AIDS.<sup>28</sup>

2. ENFORCED STERILISATION: Enforced Sterilisation mainly consists of castration and forced and mutilation. This is a not a new phenomenon and was practiced even in the ancient world which is evident by the many Persian murals which depict victorious warriors moving forward triumphantly holding their plates to which their enemies penises were attached.<sup>29</sup> In a report of the UN Commission of Experts it was stated that “castrations were performed through crude means such as, forcing an internee to bite off another’s testicles, and tying one end of the wire to testicles and other end to a motorcycle and then using the motorcycle to yank off the testicles.”<sup>30</sup>

3. GENITAL VIOLENCE: Rapes are not the only forms of sexual violence. There are other forms of sexual violence like Genital Violence which covers variety of atrocities like beating the penises and testicles of men using various object like metal rods, etc., being kicked in the private parts, giving electric shock to the privates etc.

4. ENFORCED NUDITY: Various forms of sexual violence is preceded by enforced nudity in which the victim is forced to strip and it is in most cases accompanied by verbal sexual threats to add to the disgrace and shame.<sup>31</sup> It was the most common method of abuse. Men were forced to stand naked in public for long periods of time.

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<sup>26</sup> *Id.* at 264.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.*

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> Augusta DelZotto & Adam Jones, *Male-on-Male Sexual Violence in Wartime: Human Rights Last Taboo*, INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION, (March 2002), <http://adamjones.freesevers.com/malerape.htm>.

<sup>30</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict*, 18 E.J.I.L. 253, 265(2007).

<sup>31</sup> M. Peel et al., *The Sexual Abuse of Men in Detention in Srilanka*, THE LANCET 2069, 2069(2000).

5. ENFORCED MASTURBATION: The Taguba Report mentioned that men were forced to masturbate while they were being photographed and video graphed.<sup>32</sup> The men were forced to masturbate their enemies in the Sri Lankan War.<sup>33</sup>

### *Dynamics:*

The sexual atrocities committed against men are not restricted to any single reason. There are a variety of reasons and causes why these atrocities are inflicted on men.

1. POWER AND DOMINANCE: Wartime sexual violence in case of men and women have a deep relationship with the power and dominance that is achieved by the perpetrator. In the times of war the power ratio in the society is completely disrupted. The prevalence of such violence is high where the male power is disrupted.<sup>34</sup> In wars sexual violence against men occurs to maim the stronger sex and to suppress their voice. Males are seen as the protectors of their community and society and if sexual violence is inflicted on them it will signify the glorification and empowerment of the oppressor and the disempowerment of not just the man as an individual man but also of the society as a whole.

2. EMASCULATION: When sexual violence occurs against men their masculinity is deemed to have been taken away from them which is termed as emasculation.<sup>35</sup> This is an age old phenomena. A man who is raped is considered to have been robbed of his manhood. He is no longer considered to be a real man because a real man would not have let this happen to himself. This loss of the sense of masculinity is the main reason for the perpetration of the sexual violence against men. Forced nudity, rape and mutilation of men is done to weaken the community as a whole.

- a. FEMINISATION: In the society the victim is regarded to be the female or the weaker sex and the victimiser is considered to be the male or the stronger sex regardless of their gender. The plight of the victim is attributed to his femininity and he is looked down upon by the whole community. The intention of raping a man may be to degrade his

<sup>32</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict*, 18 E.J.I.L. 253, 266(2007).

<sup>33</sup> M. Peel et al., *The Sexual Abuse of Men in Detention in Sri Lanka*, THE LANCET 2069, 2069(2000).

<sup>34</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict*, 18 E.J.I.L. 253, 267(2007).

<sup>35</sup> *Id.* at 270.

masculinity to the status of a feminized male which is considered to be one of the most lethal weapons of the modern era.<sup>36</sup>

- b. **HOMOMOSEXUALIZATION:** This is another way for a male rape survivor to feel emasculated. A heterosexual male is seen as a figure of power. A homosexual male is deemed to be effeminate and have very less masculine characteristics. A male rape victim survivor starts doubting his sexuality. He is deemed to have been tainted with homosexuality. His social status is degraded.
- c. **PREVENTION OF PROCREATION:** If sexual assault on a man is done to an extent that he is rendered impotent then it severely affects their image of masculinity and they are considered to have been emasculated. They are under the constant fear that they will no longer be a complete man. The abuse like castration, beating the testicles, etc. are often done to make a man incapable of having children.

Men are considered to be the providers and protectors of the community. Emasculation of a man does not only signify the weakening of that individual but signifies the weakening of the entire community as a whole. So emasculation is considered to be a very valuable tool in armed rebellion.

## **IMPACT OF WARTIME SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITIES**

The war, no doubt has a devastating effect on the life of the people in every aspect, but the more devastating aspect of the war is it's after effects. The survivors of the wartime sexual violence are the sole sufferer who has to bear the repercussion of the war. The victims of wartime sexual violence suffer an extensive consequence of the war such as physical injury, psychological injury, and psychosocial and social stigma, pregnancy due to rape, etc. The wartime sexual violence mainly involves rape and rape by inserting objects; it also includes forced prostitution or sexual slavery by these dominating powers. The victimization is not concentrated to women and girls but men too are the sufferers of sexual violence during the armed conflict.

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<sup>36</sup> Jones, *Straight as a Rule: Heteronormativity, Gendercide, and the Noncombatant Male*, 8 MEN AND MASCULINITIES 451, 462 (2006).

Sexual violence during an armed conflict is used as psychological weapon to humiliate or demean the enemy. Wartime sexual violence is no more a phenomenon which is new, as rape is older than the war itself. Women have always been considered as chattel of the war since decades. The war of Bosnia Herzegovina witnessed the great atrocities which were committed against women; this war along with it brought the term 'Rape as a Weapon of War<sup>37</sup>'. 'rape was used as systematic war strategy to defeat the opponent. The survivor of the war witnessed a perplexing atrocity such as gang rape, genocide, forced pregnancy, forced sexual slavery etc. Wartime sexual violence has array of long as well as short term social, economic, political, cultural effect on the survivor of the war. The most significant effect of sexual violence is death. The victim becomes the sufferer of prolonged psychological trauma which primarily includes social exclusion, hot flashes, suicide, unworthy feeling. The victim along with the psychological trauma also suffers medical trauma. The wartime sexual violence decreases the chances of women's contribution in economic development and further leads to poverty.

The impact of Wartime sexual violence can be classified into following:

### ***1. Physical impact of war on the victims:***

During war rape and abduction were the most common means of sexual violence. the crucial concern of physical injury was injury incurred out of trauma, disease which are generally sexually transmitted, maternal mortality, un-wanted pregnancy due to rape, unsafe abortion, and various gynecological problem.<sup>38</sup> As the rapes were committed in the conflict zone the availability of contraceptive and methods of abortion were inadequate.<sup>39</sup> The soldiers of the dominating power who were infected with the HIV/AIDS raped women purposely to spread the disease. The wartime sexual violence not only includes penetration of male organ but also the penetration of object such as sticks, fists, barrels were used to harm the victim, the object

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<sup>37</sup> *War on Women-Time for action to end sexual violence in conflict*, NOBLE WOMEN INITIATIVE (May, 2011), <http://nobelwomensinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/war-on-women-web.pdf>.

<sup>38</sup> O'Brian and Daniel P, *Sexual and gender based violence in areas of armed conflict: a systematic review of mental health and psychosocial support intervention*, CONFLICT AND HEALTH (Apr. 30, 2014), <https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1752-1505-7-16>.

<sup>39</sup> O'Brian and Daniel P, *Provision of antiretroviral treatment in conflict setting: the experience of Medicines Sans Frontiers*, CONFLICT AND HEALTH (Aug. 15, 2013), <https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1752-1505-7-16>.

such as rods were rubbed with the chili powder and were inserted into the anal of the victim. The women victims were majorly suffered with incontinence and vaginal fistula due to the unhygienic penetration of the object, vaginal fistula is condition where a woman suffers from vaginal abnormality i.e. the vaginal opening becomes smaller as the size of the anus due to brutal rape or penetration of any harmful object. Whereas men victim were forced to strip in front of the women and were subjected to mockery, they were forced to masturbate orally, they were also subjected to genital violence such as beating the penis and the testicles, and they were even forced to rape each other.<sup>40</sup>

Further the women were abducted by the dominating power and forced to sexual slavery. These women were kept to fulfil the sexual desire of the soldiers. During the Bangladesh liberation war, people saw the systematic genocidal rape. The Bangladeshi Muslim women were the victim of this systematic genocidal rape. The Pakistani armies were given complete freedom to rape, and they were mainly supported by the Islamic activist and the renowned leaders. The Pakistani army considered the Bangladeshi women as 'booty of war' which is still now remembered as one of the brutal atrocity committed against the women by the survivor of the war. The physical injury may also include the bodily injury inflicted by brutal beating which leads to lifetime disability.

## ***2. Psychological impact of wartime sexual violence on the victim:***

The war not only had physical impact on the victim but it has a major psychological impact on the victim too. It can also be said that more than a physical injury, the victim suffers psychological trauma. The victim who has survived the war is mostly at the higher risk of suffering from psychological problems.<sup>41</sup> The psychological impact can short term as well as long term. Short term psychological impact can be constant feeling of fear, depression, isolation; dissatisfaction etc. if this psychological effect which is the result of wartime sexual violence is left untreated then the repercussion can be devastating, It can cause death of the victim whereas the long term effect of war can lead to post traumatic stress syndrome, multiple

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<sup>40</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran, *Sexual Violence Against Men in Armed Conflict*, 18 E.J.I.L. 253, 262(2007).

<sup>41</sup> *Sexual and gender based violence against refugees, internees and internally displaced person* UNITED NATION HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (Apr. 30,2014), <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3f696bcc4.pdf>.



somatic syndrome, chronic insomnia, on-going trauma, flashbacks, self-hatred, paranoia, nightmares, difficulty in reestablishing intimate relationship, shame, disgust, anger, frustration, constant fear etc. further the psychological trauma can be classified into individual trauma and collective trauma.

**Individual trauma:** The victims of wartime sexual violence suffer an array of psychological as well as physical trauma individually. The wartime sexual violence shatters the trust and belief of the person, and it becomes difficult for them to believe in the existence of a safe and fair society. The feeling of distrust in the relationship, insecurity surrounds them. And the process of re-victimization makes their lives unworthy. Re-victimization prevents the wounds of the victims from healing. Psychologically the survivor of the war suffers with the post-traumatic stress disorder, they are hardly interested in the happenings around the society, they are engulfed by the feeling of fear and anxiety, they are hardly able to feel connected to people in the society. Social seclusion and hatred for one's own body leads to self-injurious behavior and suicidal tendencies. The individual trauma which one suffers is the shame and humiliation armor-plated by the society. In short there are various psychological harms inflicted by sexual violence on the victims which results in the loss of one's identity, disillusionment from the society and decreased self-esteem.

**Collective trauma:** The victim of the wartime sexual violence is not only suffers the pinch of trauma at the individual level but they suffer also on the collective level or in other words the harm inflicted by the society.

### ***3. Social exclusion experienced by the victim of conflict:***

I. Stigmatization and social exclusion: The survivor of the wartime sexual violence apart from physical and psychological injury also suffered social exclusion such as unacceptance by the families and the society. The rape is seen as a social stigma and the process of re-victimization shows the devastating condition of the victims even after the war.<sup>42</sup> The trauma received is not enough, they are socially abandoned by their husband, families and society. This social exclusion is pretty much evident in the patriarchal society where women's virginity is seen as

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<sup>42</sup> DAVID BLOOMFIELD, ET AL., RECONCILIATION AFTER VIOLENT CONFLICT-A HANDBOOK, 61 (David Bloomfield, Teresa Barnes and Luc Huyse 2003).

man's honor and rape as transmission of ethnicity. Later these ethnic dimensions are used as a weapon for ethnic cleansing or genocide. Rape is not the only weapon of war, but it has its tentacles spread in the society even after the war. The transmission of HIV/AIDS virus due to rape makes the victim a subject of discrimination in the society. These are the long term effect which the survivor had to face throughout their life even in the peacetime.

II. The psychosocial condition of children borne out of rape: the wartime sexual violence not only has a prolonged effect on the victim but it has a negative impact on the children born out of wartime rape. These children don't have their identity; they are unknown of their origin throughout their lifetime. These children are given the identity of 'war babies' and looked upon as 'others' by the society.<sup>43</sup> Children borne as a result of wartime rape are deprived of basic needs such as education, food and are discriminated due to which the psychological condition of these 'war babies' becomes the matter of concern. The primary impact of social exclusion is that they develop the feeling of persistent fear, isolation, etc.

#### **4. Taboo around sexual violence:**

Sexual violence is engulfed by a taboo. Rape is seen as a taboo in the society, and the victims are treated as if they had committed a crime by becoming a victim of rape. These sufferers are not provided with the medical facility which discourages them from seeking any kind of help. Basically, the patriarchal society looks down upon these victims as the virginity of the women are the symbol of pride of the society. And when the women's virginity is lost as a result of rape it is considered that the honor and pride ruined.

## **CONCLUSION**

The extent of wartime sexual violence has more complex consequences. There was a time when the war were fought thinking of the least possible casualties to the common people which now has been substituted by the war which emphasizes on terrorizing, sexually victimizing common

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<sup>43</sup> R. Charli Carpenter, *Wars Impact on Children Born of Rape and Sexual Exploitation: Physical, Economic and Psychosocial Dimension*, SEMANTIC SCHOLAR (2007)

<http://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/14ad/f3fb3bd28631a903c02dce164cc68cbec56a.pdf>.

people specially the women and children. The war primarily aims women's body through sexual violence to dictate, regulate and destroy not only the women but the also the culture she represents. The society were men decide not to rape can only be possible in a utopian world.

Various measures have been observed by the UN peacekeeper in order to prevent wartime sexual violence, such as deployment of military peacekeeper in the area where women and children are in a vulnerable situation. The system of hotspot mapping is also one of the measures which can help in identifying and monitoring the perpetrator and prevent sexual violence.

