**Azerbaijani children as war victims**

The tragedy of Zahra, a 2-year-old little girl killed by Armenians in Alkhanli village of Fuzuli region on July 4, has prompted us to look at our history of the murder and hostage of Azerbaijani children over the past 20 years.

Unfortunately, Azerbaijan also has been living in war for the last 20 years of its modern history. In 1988-1994, Armenian terrorist groups and armed groups led to the brutal killing, injury, loss and captivity of thousands of Azerbaijani children, as well as the loss of one or both parents. There are hundreds of facts about this. Even though the refugees and internally displaced children have been the most affected by the conflict, driven by international forces and the Armenian lobby, there are thousands of children whose fathers or mothers have been killed or disabled, they are also considered victims of the Karabakh war.

In 1988-1989 during deportation of more than 250 thousand Azerbaijanis living in western Azerbaijan as a result of ethnic cleansing, 216 Azerbaijanis were killed and 23 of them were children. On 26th, 1992, as a result of Khojali genoside, 63 of killed people were children. As a result of that genoside, 25 children lost both parents, 130 of them lost one of their parents. Overall, 195 Azerbaijani children were killed in the Karabakh conflict.

İn 1988-1994, 53 out of 4566 lost people were children. According to to the information of January 1, 2014, 22 out of 877 hostages are children and are still in captivity in Armenia. According to the report of the State Commission on Prisoners of War, Hostages and Missing Persons dated March 1, 2004, “18 of captives and hostages in the conflict zone are children under the age of 14. This fact was denied by Aemenia side. When the children were hostaged, the eldest one was Gulaf, who was 14 years old, and the youngest Mahsal was only half a month old. These 18 children, whose fate is unknown after the hostages are being sought by their parents and relatives”. Nurlana from Lachin region who lost her motherland, her mother and her eyes...

On March 31, 1993, 20-year-old teacher Sama Karimova from Shamkend blockaded village of Lachin, was captured with her a 2-year-old daughter Humbatova Nurlana when Kalbajar was occupied. Sama Kerimova could not tolerate the sufferings that other captives and hostages, as well as her infant child Nurlana faced and committed suicide on May 15, 1993. As a result Nurlana and her brother Rufet Hubatov were lleft motherless. At the end of the four months of captivity, as a result of buttstroke by the Armenians, Nurlana has undergone 8 surgeries so far, but only a small percentage of her vision has been restored. Nurlana, the daughter of a martyr who writes poems with nickname of Nursuz wrote a strong, incisive letter to the world community and Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan on May 18, 2012. His brother Rufat has exposed to diabetes because of the suffering and motherless refugee life that he lived in other doors and hostels for more than 20 years.

Amirova Khazangul Tavakul gizi: When the Khojaly was occupied, Armenian armed forces captured her family as a whole. Armenians shot Khazangul's mother, Raya, 7-year-old sister Yegana, and her aunt Goycha, and set fire to her father, Amirov Tavakkulu by dausing him in petrol.

Armenian physicians removed 10-year-old Shovgyi's upper arm bones… According to Imaret Mamishova’s deposition, she was captured with her two young children during the occupation of Kalbajar region. Armenians shot and burned dead bodies of eight civilians, including her eight-year-old son, Taleh in front of Mamatova's eyes. After that, the Armenians took her, her 10-year-old son Yadigar, and other women, children and elder people to Khankendi and tortured them terribly. The upper arm bones of 3-year-old Shovgy Khagani oglu Aliyev (24.07.1993) were removed by Armenian doctors in Khankendi, and as a result, Shovgyi became a lifelong invalid.

Guljamal Guliyeva was captured with her son by armenians during the occupation of Kalbajar region (31.03.1993). Armenian doctor Aida Serobyan injected unknown substance to Guljamal Guliyeva’s new born son, Arzu Hajiyev.As a result, Arzu Hajiyev became invalid and died at the age of 10 in May 2003.

The 15-year-old Nazakat’s father’s ears were cut off in front of her eyes ...

Armenians tortured a 15-year-old, Nazaket Mammadova’s father in front of her eyes . They cut off his ears, and her mother could not tolerate to threats and blackmails and became mad, and the girls was sold to her family for 4,000 rubles.

Former resident of Aghdam, Vladimr Ivanovic Shevelyov who is originally Russian subjected to extreme torture in Armenian captivity says he saw countless bodies of women and children near the Aghdam Canal during the occupation of Aghdam in 1993.

During the ceasefire, Armenians continued murdering children

In 1994, the Armenians, who set up an explosive substance into a child’s toy and dropped them into a river flowing from the Tovuz region caused to the death and injury of two children in the village of Alibeyli, bordering Armenia. On March 8, 2011, a 9-year-old boy Fariz Badalov, grown up without father, the only child of the family, was shot dead by an Armenian sniper while playing with his friends in his yard in the village of Mid-Kishlak locatedon the front line of Agdam. In July, 2011, a 13-year-old girl Shahmaliyeva Aygun Ziraddin gizi lost her life as a result of activation of explosive device inside a toy found in the river in Alibeyli village of Tovuz region. There are many facts like these. The pain of the war years is still being lived...

After the end of the first Karabakh war, signing the ceasefire agreement in May 1994, our government has implemented a number of measures and projects aimed at improving the living conditions of citizens, including children with oil and gas revenues. International organizations, including UNICEF, have also supported Azerbaijani government for providing humanitarian aid to refugee children in various ways. In the last 10-15 years, tent camps have been abolished and ten thousands of displaced families living in tents as well as trains, dormitories, government offices and have been moved to new apartments. All these measures impacted on the rehabilitation of refugee and internally displaced children positively. However, the children of war of 1988-1994, who have already given birth their children, are still experiencing many psychological and physiological traumas of those years. These young men and women who are invalid and have hearing, vision, speech, etc defects are the children of those years.The mortality rate of refugee children was 3-4 times higher than the others…

Living in bad conditions and unsuitable places from sanitation perspective have led to being struck by variety of diseases of displaced people and their children. It is stated in the report of the State Program on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development that due to poor living conditions and lack of access to clean drinkable water, 40 thousand IDP women were suffered from various diseases (gastrointestinal, viral infections, skin diseases, malaria, diarrhea, abdominal bed, nervous disorders, tuberculosis, anamia, diebets, etc. As a result, the ilness cases of of childdren and newborn babies have increased. Therefore, infant mortality rates are 3-4 times higher than the country average.

Women and children from the displaced population are considered the most vulnerable groups. 200,000 of displaced people are children… Majority of the displaced schools were operated in trains, houses, and inadequate facilities. Because of lack of classrooms, classes were delivered in 2-3 shifts. These also had a negative impact on the quality of teaching.

4200 children were born in tents…

Between 1992 and 2007, 4,200 children were born in tent camps. These children, born in tent camps, are also living the fate of being refugees. 300,000 to 500,000 children, who witnessed the horrors of war are still suffering from psychological traumas. They are in need of social rehabilitation. According to a press release of the League for the Protection of the Rights of the Child, 45% of the current problems of approximately 3 million children in Azerbaijan are related to refugee children. In fact, refugee children contain only 10% of total number of children.

70.2% of refugee children are included to risk groups

Professor Ibrahim Isayev, Head of the Department of Child Diseases at the Azerbaijan Medical University, and Sevinj Huseynova, doctor of medical sciences, have prepared a report examining the health and personality conditions of IDP children s in 2010 in Ganja. During the study, 342 IDP children from 7 to 17 years old who live in the worker and student dormitories in Ganja, Azerbaijan. were examined. Only 8.2% of the examined children were practically healthy, 70.2% were included in the risk group, and 21.6% were diagnosed with various chronic diseases. The results of the research have indicated that the unusual life conditions of IDP children have long-term effects on their organizms and are increasing the development of various pathological conditions by creating "distress" in their bodies.

This influences the condition of social adaptation process of internally displaced children. These children are characterized as anxious, low self-confident, non-communicative, non sociable, who do not love active life,very sensitive, shy, skeptical, often indifferent, frustrated, pessimistic, and often stubburnş Their social adaptations are very weak, they have difficulty in choosing a profession, and when they face difficulties, they are more likely vulnurable to various negative situations and psychosomatic diseases, including commiting suicides.

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(The study used a number of internet resources such as "Moning", "Reuters", "Ramallah news", CNN, week.az, wikipedia, youtube etc.