

Armenian Genocide

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In News: The Armenian Genocide, the systematic killing and expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Armenians by the Ottoman Empire more than a century ago, is set to be officially acknowledged by US President Joe Biden.

About Armenian Genocide

- Armenian Genocide, campaign of deportation and mass killing conducted against the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire by the Young Turk government during World War I (1914–18).
- Armenians charge that the campaign was a deliberate attempt to destroy the Armenian people and, thus, an act of genocide.
- The Turkish government has resisted calls to recognize it as such, contending that, although atrocities took place, there was no official policy of extermination implemented against the Armenian people as a group.

What happened during the Armenian Genocide?

- While Turkey disagrees, the consensus among historians is that during the Armenian Genocide, between 1915 to 1922, in the First World War, thousands of Armenians perished due to killings, starvation and disease, when they were deported by Ottoman Turks from eastern Anatolia.
- It is difficult to estimate the total number of Armenians who died during the genocide, but the Armenian diaspora says that approximately 1.5 million died.
- Turkey rejects that number and claims that some 300,000 Armenians may have perished.
- The International Association of Genocide Scholars estimates that more than 1 million Armenians may have died.

Why is the acknowledgement significant?

- Researchers say that the acknowledgement by the US government would have little legal impact on Turkey, other than becoming a cause for embarrassment for the country and perhaps giving other countries the impetus to also acknowledge the genocide.
- Some researchers have asserted and drawn comparisons between the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide and this acknowledgement or wider acknowledgement of it in the international community may be unwelcome and unpalatable for Turkey.
- Countries including India, that have not formally recognised the Armenian Genocide have primarily adopted this stance in the interests of their wider foreign policy decisions and because of their geo-political interests in the region.
- According to the Armenian National Institute, an American non-profit organisation, 30 countries officially recognise the Armenian Genocide.