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The Nation

Afghanistan emerges as worst violence-hit state

By Syed Danish Hussain

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In average, 10 incidents of armed conflicts and 39 consequent deaths were reported in three main South Asian states - Afghanistan, India and Pakistan - on every day of last month.

Every fourth victim of violence was a civilian. Afghanistan continued to be worst hit state by violence in the region as about half of the incidents as well as resultant deaths were reported in the country.

Says a monthly security report of the Conflict Monitoring Center (CMC), an Islamabad based research organization, which focuses on anti-state, anti-government insurgency and counter-militancy campaigns in South Asia.

The report is based on the data compiled from mainstream national and international media organizations. The report says that at least 1,166 people were killed and 783 others injured in 303 different incidents of armed conflicts in Afghanistan, India and Pakistan during April 2011.

Such incidents have been divided into two broad categories, that is, security forces actions and militant activities. The former refers to the actions of armed forces, paramilitary forces, police etc. The militant activities refer to all sorts of militant actions carried out by anti-state/anti-government elements against security forces, government machinery, and civilians.

More than one-half of the victims of armed conflicts during April 2011 were alleged militants

while civilian deaths constituted over one-fourths of total casualties. Afghanistan witnessed the highest numbers of incidents as well as resultant deaths as at least 689 people were killed and more than three hundred others left wounded in about 159 incidents in the country.

In Pakistan, 393 people were killed and 407 others injured in 91 incidents while 53 incidents took 84 lives and left 67 others injured in India.

The security forces' actions took more lives than insurgencies in the region and most of their victims were alleged militants. In all, security operations took lives of 579 people including 488 alleged militants in 77 different incidents. The highest numbers of security operations and resultant deaths were reported in Afghanistan where 437 people, including 374 alleged militants, were killed in 49 different incidents.

The highest ratio of civilian to total deaths was observed in India, that is 65 per cent and it remained lowest in Pakistan, that is 5%. It was 8% in Afghanistan.

The insurgents took 531 lives in 211 different incidents in the region. Afghanistan remained worst hit state by insurgency both in terms of number of incidents as well as resultant deaths in a single country. The militants took lives of 237 people in 104 incidents in Afghanistan, killed 241 people in 78 militants' activities in Pakistan, and took 53 lives in 29 incidents in India.

Slightly less than one-half of the victims of insurgencies in the region were non-combatant ordinary persons. The highest civilians' deaths in militants' activities were reported in Pakistan, that is 150, constituting about 60 % of the total victims.

In Pakistan, about three-fourths of those killed in bomb blasts were non-combatant ordinary persons while 5 suicide attacks also took lives of 53 civilians, besides 2 security personnel. In Afghanistan, 14 suicide attacks killed 58 people including 25 security personnel and 13 civilians. In Pakistan 32 people were also killed in 2 drone attacks carried out by American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

The armed conflicts took lives of 212 security personnel in the region.