

1.2 million Afghans internally displaced in war

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Kabul: The number of internally displaced people has doubled to 1.2 million in the past three years due to the escalation in conflict in Afghanistan, Amnesty International said in its report on Tuesday.

The document, titled "My Children Will Die This Winter" and presented in Kabul, said the number of displaced people in 2013 was 500,000, but the growing clashes between security forces and different rebel factions forced more civilians to flee their homes for safer regions.

In 2015, 335,000 Afghans had to leave their homes due to the conflict, a 78 per cent jump from 2014, while 118,000 have been displaced in the first four months of 2016, translating into 1,000 people daily, the report said.

One of the report's researchers and authors, Olof Blomqvist, said the displaced were among "the most vulnerable in Afghanistan", Efe news reported.

Access to food, shelter, health care and education is among the challenges displaced people face daily, a situation that has become further complicated in recent years as the surge in their numbers creates greater competition for access to the scarce available resources, Blomqvist said.

The displaced population's numbers have risen considerably in the northern and western provinces, such as Badakhshan, Baghlan, Takhar and Kunduz, the study said.

Last year, Kunduz city, the capital of Kunduz province, was taken by the Taliban for several days -- the group's biggest military achievement since the US invaded the country in 2001 -- displacing large numbers of people.

Taliban infighting over who will lead the group has aggravated matters, while the Islamic State's appearance on the Afghan scene also triggered the displacement of "tens of thousands of civilians", the report said.

The report, based on interviews with 100 internally displaced people, criticised the progressive neglect by Afghan authorities.

One such person, Habibullah, who is in his sixties, said he was living with his family in a tent in Kabul for the past 14 years, and cited problems with the security forces and the lack of stable housing.

Some 2.6 million Afghans have fled the country due to 40 years of uninterrupted war.

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