



You are in: World: **South Asia**
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Afghanistan's civilian deaths mount

Front Page
World



- Africa
- Americas
- Asia-Pacific
- Europe
- Middle East
- South Asia

From Our Own Correspondent

- Letter From America
- UK
- UK Politics
- Business
- Sci/Tech
- Health
- Education
- Entertainment
- Talking Point
- In Depth
- AudioVideo



American bombs have reportedly killed thousands of civilians

The number of Afghan civilians killed by US bombs has surpassed the death toll of the 11 September attacks, according to a study by an American academic.

Nearly 3,800 Afghans died between 7 October and 7 December, University of New Hampshire Professor Marc Herold said in a research report.

Professor Herold has been gathering data on civilian casualties since 7 October by culling information from news agencies, major newspapers and first hand accounts.

His report, which places the death toll at 3,767, lists the number of casualties, location, type of weapon and source of information.

"In fact the figure I came up with is a very, very conservative estimate," Professor Herold said in a radio interview.

"I think that a much more realistic figure would be around 5,000. You know for Afghanistan, 3,700 to 5,000 is a really substantial number."

The figure is well in

“
The figure I came up with is a very, very conservative estimate.
 ”
Professor Marc Herold



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excess of the estimated 2,998 people killed in the 11 September attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center.

Professor Herold said his calculations are based only on deaths reported in the mainstream media, so would not include those in remote areas of Afghanistan.

It also omits those killed indirectly, when air strikes cut off their access to hospitals, food or electricity.

Also exempt are bomb victims who later died of their injuries.

When there were different casualty figures from the same incident, in 90% of cases Professor Herold chose a lower figure.

US military professionals told the Financial Times that the quality of this sort of information must necessarily be mixed.

Latest deaths

US forces were reported to have killed 106 Afghan civilians when they dropped bombs on the village of Qalaye Naizi, in eastern Afghanistan.

Military authorities denied having mistakenly bombed a village, and said the warplanes had targeted a compound used by al-Qaeda.

On 27 December, US bombers were said to have killed 40 civilians in Ghazni, south-west of Kabul.

“
We have lost too many innocent lives already.
 ”

Afghan government official

And last month, American warplanes hit a convoy transporting tribal elders to the inauguration of the Afghanistan government in Kabul. About 65 people were killed.

Other reported incidents include:

- **11 October:** Two US jets were said to have bombed the mountain village of Karam. The death toll was estimated at



Afghan officials want the bombing to stop

internet sites

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between 100 and 160.

- **13 October:** Bombs fell on the Qila Meer Abas neighbourhood, two kilometres south of Kabul airport. Four civilians were reportedly killed
- **18 October:** Some 47 civilians were said to have been killed when a central market place, Sarai Shamali, near Kandahar, was bombed.
- **23 October:** More than 90 civilians were reportedly killed when low-flying US gun ships fired on the farming villages of Bori Chokar and Chowkar-karez, north of Kandahar.
- **31 October:** An F-18 was said to have bombed a Red Crescent clinic in a pre-dawn raid, killing between 15 and 25 people.
- **10 November:** Villages in the Khakrez district were reportedly bombed, killing more than 150 civilians

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[^^ Back to top](#)

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