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GALLUP PAKISTAN POLL FINDINGS ON

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF A SURVEY ON AFGHAN REFUGEES

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PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF A SURVEY ON AFGHAN REFUGEES

According to a recent study on the afghan refugees, 9% or one in every eleven family members of the refugees were killed in their decade long struggle against a hostile regime. Another 3.1% of those fleeing their country were invalidated or seriously injured. These figures are one of the highest of casualties in recent history and are higher than the casualty rates suffered by the Soviet Union and Germany during the Second World War. Aerial bombing on the major civilian housing or fleeing refugees was reported to be the major cause of death or invalidity (46%), followed by other causes such as hit by bullets (33%), artillery shelling (12%), mines (3%), exhaustion (2%) and 4% miscellaneous reasons.

About five and a half percent of the refugee population died of natural death caused by aging or harshness of life in exile.

These findings have emerged from a study just completed under the guidance of Dr. Marek Sliwinski of Geneva University and Dr. Ijaz Gilani of Gallup Pakistan. The study is based on one of the first scientific surveys of the 3 million afghan refugees settled in approximately 350 settlements along the 1000 mile long Pakistan afghan border. Statistical sample of 1300 refugee families were interviewed in their camps located in more than 20 districts or administrative units of Pakistan. The survey obtained information on a statistical sample of approximately fourteen thousand (13, 877) refugees. A majority of the sampled population lived in the refugee camps of Pakistan while the remaining were dispersed in different regions of Afghanistan and Iran. Information on those living outside Pakistan was obtained from their available relatives. The sample is a true statistical representative of the afghan refugee population and closely approximates the entire population now living in Afghanistan.

The survey questionnaire conducted by Gallup Pakistan listed all family members present in April 1978 when president Daoud's government was overthrown and then updated the list by enumerating everyone died or born in the family since then. For those reported to be killed in the war, the survey probed in to the circumstances which led to their death.

The first ever Gallup survey of the afghan population shows that war casualties have been steadily increasing over the years and this trend has not been halted or reversed during the Gorbachev period. During the last two years an average of 10% of those fleeing their country were killed or invalidated compared with less than half that figure in the period prior to that.

Approximately 70% of the refugees said their houses and irrigation systems had been destroyed when they were fleeing their country.

According to the survey findings the younger male population has suffered the highest, even among women and children.

Alongside high casualty rates the afghan population in exile has also been growing at a fairly rapid rate. The survey points out that approximately 24% of the refugee population was born in exile in the camps.

A Research team is currently working on further analysis of the survey findings. According to preliminary estimates on projection of casualties for the entire afghan population, approximately 1.5 million Afghans has been killed invalidated or seriously wounded during the ten years of fierce resistance.