



UN Department of Safety and Security, Afghanistan Security Situation Report, Week 34, 20 – 26 August 2010

JOINT WEEKLY SECURITY ANALYSIS

Countrywide security incidents continued to increase compared to the previous week with the NER, NR, SR and SER, recording higher levels of security incidents. In the ER a minor downward trend continues to be observed over the last three weeks, in the WR and CR records dropped. The dynamics along the south and south-eastern belt of the country vary again with the SR reasserting as the most volatile area. Security incidents were more widespread countrywide with the following provinces being the focus of the week: Kunduz, Baghlan in the NER; Faryab in the NR, Hirat in the WR, Kandahar and Helmand in the SR; Ghazni and Paktika in the SER and Kunar in the ER. Overall the majority of the incidents are initiated by insurgents and those related to armed conflict – armed clashes, IED attacks and stand off attacks - continue to account for the bulk of incidents. Reports of insurgents' infiltration, re-supply and propaganda are recorded in the NR, SR, SER, ER and CR. These reports might corroborate assumptions that insurgents would profit from the Ramadan time to build up for an escalation into the election and pre-election days. The end of the week was dominated by the reporting of the violent demonstration against the IM base in Qala-i-Naw city following a shoot out at the entrance of the base. Potential for manipulation by the local Taliban and the vicinity of the UN compound to the affected area raised concerns on the security of the UN staff and resulted in the evacuation of the UN building. Taliban issued no more statements in relation to the UNAMA Human Rights Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, shifting their attention to IM leadership statements.

Incidents affecting the wider aid community remain low, although significant for their nature. Intimidation targeting UN national staff members in the SR continued with one phone call addressing a staff member to quit his job of face severe consequences. Four INGO staff members were abducted in two different incidents in the NR and WR. The motives for both remain unclear. Three light road traffic accident involved UN national staff members countrywide.

While overall incidents levels remain high during the reporting period, Assassination and Intimidation incidents declined and Abduction incidents increased. Including those reported in the above paragraph, at least 33 individuals were abducted and another 24 assassinated country wide, 19 in the SR. Those assassinated included 15 civilians, five ANSF and four tribal elders. Although a lower number of intimidation incidents were recorded countrywide, these include a wide-spread distribution of night letters in the mosques of the northern districts of Sari Pul, Marmul and Darzab, encouraging locals to support insurgents, pay them Usher and join the Jihad. In the ER insurgents wearing ANSF uniforms were reported setting up illegal check points screening local travellers for their allegiance with the GoA and IM. Significant levels of incidents continue to undermine support for the GoA and the wider aid community throughout the country.

While no suicide attacks were recorded countrywide, two suicide vests were seized in the NR and one in the SER. In addition a suicide vest dropped in the vicinity of an ANSF CP exploded, wounding a number of ANSF officers. In 2010 only week 14 and 30 (April's first week and July's last week) have no records of suicide attacks.

Incidents related to the upcoming Parliamentary Elections decreased compared to last week; the majority falling into the category of intimidation of the local population, candidates and elections officials. Several intimidation incidents targeted females - IEC staff members, candidates or voters – warning them not to participate in the electoral process. Incidents were widespread and recorded in the NER, NR, WR, SR, SER and ER.

RISK ANALYSIS

High levels of threat reporting continues, and spectacular attacks in major urban centres remain probable. The highest risk to the United Nations in Afghanistan taking into account mitigating measures is exposure to direct suicide and complex suicide attacks in work, residence or travel situations. The second highest risk is targeting by IED of UN compounds or of UN staff working in government premises. Collateral damage as a result of such attacks against other entities remains a significant concern. Abduction of UN staff for political or criminal motives remains a significant risk, in particular in areas where the use of armoured vehicles is not yet widespread and new insurgent groups start operating. Abuse by local power holders is also rated as a high risk.

Significant Incidents after the end of the reporting period

On 28 August, Khost Province, IM bases Chapman and Seleron, around 02:30-0300 hrs, large scale attacks by AGE in a number of at least 30 fighters. AGE have used multiple SBBIED. IM got air support. All roads blocked. Several AGE killed, a few IM injured. The attacks ended at around 14:30 hrs.

On 28 August, Hirat Province, Kushk District, during the day, two INGO staff members abducted on 27 July 10, from Kushk District were released.

NORTH EASTERN REGION

The general security situation of the North Eastern Region remained unstable in the reporting period. The situation in Kunduz and Baghlan Provinces is tense, unstable and to some extent volatile. Badakhshan and Takhar Provinces are relatively calm and stable despite some security incidents related to AGE and IAGs.

Analysis of the Week's Events

There was an increase of incidents reported this week with 35 incidents compared to last week's 25. A high number of the incidents were AGE related. Kunduz Province, recorded a total of 11 incidents followed by Baghlan Province with 10. The increase in number of incidents is attributed in most part due to the lack of sufficient ANSF presence in the districts and minimizing of IM/ANSF joint operations into AGE controlled areas of Kunduz and Baghlan Provinces following the "Holy month of Ramadan".

The reporting week has seen intensified armed clashes and IED attacks in Kunduz and Baghlan Provinces in particular. 13 of the overall incidents recorded were armed clashes, out of which six were in Kunduz and five in Baghlan. IED explosions targeting IM and ANP have been reported in some parts of the Kunduz and Baghlan Provinces. Intimidating and harassing the local population and candidates of the upcoming election of WJ continued. The acts of intimidation are exhibited more in districts of Badakhshan Province. Some reports indicated that local authorities and militias were involved in intimidating and physically assaulting employees of the opposing candidates and their Campaign offices.

During the week, the IM/ANSF had conducted joint operations in selected areas and districts in the region. Reportedly six civilians were killed including a child and a female with four others injured during the operation in Tala Wa Barfak District of Baghlan.

The most significant incident in the reporting period occurred in Kunduz. On 26 August, AGE attacked the Puli Seyab ANP Check Point located 3 kms north of Kunduz City, eight ANP were killed in the attack. This is the second attack in almost one year period.

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The tense situation on the Kunduz – Baghlan Highway since April 2010 remained a matter of high concern as the ANSF and IM are still battling to clear the road from AGE influence and secure the peripheral districts along the main high way.

The re-appearance and persistent activities of AGE in Takhar Province along with AGE network is reported in the northern part of Kunduz Province. AGE influence continued where ANSF presence is less or none in the region. Northern and south west districts of Takhar, Eastern districts of Baghlan and bordering districts of Badakhshan with Takhar, despite the reports of AGE infiltrations from Nuristan Province to Badakhshan.

ANSF and IM have remained major targets during the reporting period, while there are still persistent threat warnings of the presence of suicide attackers in Kunduz and Baghlan Provinces.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

There were 13 armed clashes recorded over the week, out of which six were reported from Kunduz, five from Baghlan and two from Takhar Provinces. An armed clash erupted between two rival's leaders of pro-government militia groups on 23 August causing two fatalities and two more injuries to the militias. The motive behind the clash was reported personal rivalry and dispute between the two leaders of "Arbakai Militia". On 26 August, Kunduz Province, 3 km north of the Kunduz City outskirts, within UN movement box, at 0525 hrs, AGE used hit and run tactic, entered in to Puli Seyab ANP CP, killing five ANP soldiers, injuring three others that later died in hospital. AGE took one PK Machine Gun from the CP and managed to escape.

Air Strike

Two air supported raids/operations were conducted during the week. An air strike conducted by IM during a raid operation in Chahar Dara District on 20 August neutralized three AGE along with two locals and arrested five members of AGE. Reportedly two civilians, a child and a female were killed during the air strike. In a pre-dawn raid conducted by ANSF/IM on 22 August in Tala Wa Barfak District of Baghlan Province, six civilians were killed including a child and a female with four others injured during the operation. The IM/ANSF search operation ended up with the arrest of four suspected AGE members.

IED Detonated/Discovered

Six IED related incidents were reported during the week, five of the incidents were reported in Kunduz Province and one in Baghlan Province. Out of all six IED explosions reported during the reporting period, an IED attack followed by SAF in Baghlan Province Pulikhumri City, Cheshma Sher area, struck an IM convoy injuring three IM soldiers with minor damage to property. On 26 August, Kunduz City, close to Zakhel Bridge, a RCIED detonated and struck the ANP Deputy CoP vehicle, but no casualty was reported. The same day, at approx 1820 hrs, a RCIED went off in the main bazaar of Dasht-i-Archi District, killing two ANP and two civilians. Initial information suggests that approx 15 LNs including children have been injured.

Cache

One incident reported from Kishim District of Badakhshan Province. It was reported that the cache (light weapons assorted munitions and explosive materials) were seized during the ANSF/IM joint search operation conducted on 25 August in an area called Wakhshi. It was the first joint operation conducted jointly by ANSF/IM in the district.

Demonstration

One demonstration was reported in NER. On 21 August, around 300 people of Puli Khumri City staged a peaceful demonstration in protest of pre-dawn raid supported by air asset and the arrest of four suspected AGE members from Tala Wa Barfak District.

Intimidation

Four incidents of intimidation were reported all from Badakhshan Province. Intimidation incidents related to the upcoming WJ election dominates in the province.

Crime

Eight instances of crime were reported from all four provinces. As a result of criminal activities of individuals/IAG, six people lost their lives and three were injured. Seven criminals were arrested by ANSF in the region during the reporting period.

NORTHERN REGION

Despite the statistical increase of the security incidents numbers, the general security situation in the Northern Region remained calm and stable during the week.

Analysis of the Week's Events

The region witnessed a significant increase in the number of security incidents. A total of 31 incidents were reported compared to last week's 19. Faryab Province has been the scene of the highest number of the incidents totalling 19. Jawzjan Province recorded 3, Sari Pul Province recorded 3 and Balkh Province reported 6 incidents. Samangan Province maintained a relative profile of stability with no security incident reported during the week.

Armed clashes represented the highest recorded type of incidents with 12 incidents increase compared to the 8 incidents recorded in the previous week. Faryab Province accounted for eight in total followed by Sari Pul, Jawzjan and Balkh Provinces. The most significant of this type incidents, was the well coordinated attack against Darzab District Administrative Centre (DAC) staged by a large group of AGE and which led to a counter air strike by IM. Allegedly due to mistaken identity four ANSF were killed and thirteen others were injured as a result of that air strike. The recent AGE drive at Darzab, Qush Tepa, Sayed and Bilichiragh districts has been attributed to the reported arrival of new AGE mentors from outside the region.

The deterioration of the security situation on the ground continues with reports of AGE activity spreading to Kohistanat District in Sari Pul Province. It is important to mention that IM forces have accordingly elevated the threat level to high in these areas. On the other hand, it is also anticipated that there would be an increase in asymmetric attacks against the local parliamentary candidates and supporters of the forthcoming elections. Similarly, AGE attacks on IM/ANSF/GoA facilities and/or personnel are likely to increase with the aim of discouraging the populace from participating in the electoral process.

IED incidents are a major concern to UN AFP as they take place in the main roads used regularly by the UN and other international agencies while they remain to be the AGE's primary tactic of choice. The region has this week experienced an increase in IED attacks compared to the previous week. Five IED detonations were recorded in Faryab and Balkh Provinces against local civilians and ANP patrols while one IED was discovered. The most significant of these IED incidents was the premature detonation of an RCIED which was reportedly being transported by AGE and resulted in three AGE injuries in Chimtāl District of Balkh Province. It has been reported that the AGE usually plant pressure IEDs in the rural area of Chimtāl, Chahar Bolak and Balkh Districts of Balkh Province and that they were mainly using RCIED on the ring road Mazar-Shibirghan. The trend and frequency strongly suggests the presence of a professional IED cell in the area and accordingly IED attacks are most likely to increase in the coming few weeks on the main road Mazar-Shibirghan as well as in the rural areas west of Mazar.

Assassination, intimidation and abduction of locals/GoA continued in the region during the reporting period. At least two local civilians were assassinated by AGE in Dawlatabad District of Faryab Province. Two local staff members of an INGO were abducted by AGE in Qaysar District of Faryab Province. These were coupled with the distribution of night letters almost in all mosques in Sari Pul and Darzab Districts asking locals to support Taliban and Mujahidin and to pay their Ushor (Religious Due) to Taliban. In another development, the very peaceful district of Marmul which is considered as a stronghold of Balkh Mujahiddin with a solid history of anti TB, AGE were reported to have managed to infiltrate there posting seven night letters to mosque doors, agitating the locals against IM/ANSF forces and asking the youth support and subscription to Jihad.

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In a positive note, ANSF has reportedly arrested two male suspects in possession of two suicide vests while they were travelling in a bus originated in Faryab, heading towards Shibirghan town. ANSF also apprehended another person suspected of being a key cell operative. This has yet to be confirmed following the completion of the investigation process that is presently underway. The focus of the investigation is to find out the intention and the final destination of the suspects in custody in order to determine whether they were engaged in a delivery mission or were intending to carry out a suicidal attack themselves.

In the overall analysis and apart from the AGE drive related to the ongoing/upcoming electoral process, there is no significant change in the general trend, frequency or pattern of AGE acts of hostility including the target profile. None of the reported incidents of this week is expected to fundamentally affect the general security situation in the region. The UN programmes delivery in Qush Tepa, Dara-i-Sufi Payin and Bala, Kishindih, Sayyad, Darzab and the rural areas of Balkh, Chimtal, Chahar Bolak in addition to the eastern parts of Sholgara Districts of Jawzjan, Sari Pul and Balkh Provinces will most likely continue to be hampered due to the active presence of various AGE/IAG networks.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

Twelve armed clashes were reported in Faryab, Balkh, Sari Pul and Jawzjan Provinces.

IED Detonated/Discovered

In total, five IED detonations were recorded and one IED Discovery in Faryab and Balkh Provinces.

Air Strike

An attack against Darzab District Administrative Centre (DAC) staged by a large group of AGE and which lead to a counter air strike by IM. Allegedly due to mistaken identity four ANSF were killed and thirteen others were injured as a result of that air strike.

Abduction

Two local staff members of an INGO were abducted in Qaysar District of Faryab Province.

Intimidation

Two incidents of intimidation were reported in Balkh and Sari Pul Province. Both of them were directly related to AGE.

WESTERN REGION

The security situation in Western Region deteriorated marginally from stable to unstable.

Analysis of the Week's Events

There was a 19% reduction in the overall incident level with a drop from 31 to 26. All four provinces recorded decreases with most incidents reported in Hirat Province. An armed clash in Badghis that resulted in civil unrest destabilized the hither-to stable atmosphere in Qala-I-Naw while an abduction of INGO staff in Hirat Province raised anxiety among the international community.

Though only four armed clashes were reported as compared to six the previous week, the impact was significant. The most noteworthy was the attack on the IM in Qala-I-Naw City by a renegade ANP. The media reported that this was the driver of the ANP trainees. The spontaneous public response which undermined confidence in the IM, GoA and the international community was suspected to have been manipulated by the AGE. The attack demonstrated AGE capacity to strike at targets in supposedly safe enclaves. The AGE-initiated attack on an MP's relation in Hirat Province was believed to be politically motivated though its correlation to the on-going electoral campaigns is yet to be seen.

The abduction of INGO staff, one of whom was an international, coupled with a threat of attack on the UN office; all in Guzara District of Herat Province, created apprehension within the international community.

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AGE attack on facilities and abduction threats against members of the Aid Community remain extant. These threats continue to adversely impact on UN programme delivery with movement restricted to essential trips only.

Despite the 19% reduction in the overall incidents, targeting of election and election-related activities is likely to increase as the contest draws nearer. Abduction, assassination and intimidation are a high likelihood and may increase. The threat warnings against the UN and international organizations are clear indications that the insurgents plan to disrupt the election with a blow to the international community.

Main threats to UN staff are assessed as: direct loss in suicide and IED attacks, collateral damage due to close proximity to IED, abduction for political or criminal motives. It remains prudent for the aid community in WR to maintain adequate security alertness.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

Four armed clashes were reported. On 25 August, Badghis Province, Qala-I-Naw City, approximately 0900 hrs, an ANP opened fire at IM after being asked to hand over his weapon at IM base entrance. Two IM and their Afghan interpreter were killed and two IM wounded. The ANP was later shot dead by IM which resulted in a violent demonstration by locals. Reportedly, 25 persons were wounded. Some vehicles including an IM contracted vehicle, ANP booth providing security for an INGO compound and a Traffic booth were set ablaze. In another attack, AGE in Herat Province killed an MP's brother. In Farah Province two AGE groups fought resulting in the death of one AGE.

Stand-Off Attack

One stand-off attack was recorded in Farah Province, Bakwa District. Two 107 mm rockets were fired towards the District Centre. No casualties or damage was reported.

Air Strike

IM/ANSF conducted an air strike in Badghis Province against AGE resulting in the death and wounding of three and twelve AGE respectively.

IED Detonated/Discovered

Six IED detonated; three in Farah and three in Herat Province. Significantly, one local civilian was killed in Farah when his motorbike struck a roadside IED in Bala Buluk District and one person was killed and four injured in Herat province when a construction vehicle struck a roadside IED in the Injil district. Four IEDs were discovered. There were three in Farah and one in Ghor Province. They were all defused safely.

Cache

In Ghor Province ANA seized two motor bombs and a pistol. No arrest was made here.

Abduction

Two incidents of Abduction were reported in the Herat Province. In the Ghoryan district a local civilian was abducted by four armed men while in the Guzara two employees of an international organization was abducted by a group of unknown men.

Crime

In one incident in Ghoryan District, Herat Province, a local civilian was shot and wounded by two robbers. The perpetrators were arrested and one AK-47 seized.

Arrest

One arrest was made in Herat Province, Herat City where NDS arrested four criminals suspected of several abduction cases. An assortment of weapons and ammunition was also seized.

Confrontation / Dispute

There were three separate incidents of dispute. In Herat, two tribes fought over land and two persons were wounded. In Farah, local civilians fought over a personal matter and two persons were killed and three

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wounded. In Ghor 20 families of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) were attacked by opposing tribe but no casualties were reported.

Other

In Badghis Province, Qala-I-Naw, a prominent AGE commander and 24 of his followers joined the GoA and handed over an ANA vehicle that was previously stolen and an assortment of weapons and ammunition to NDS and, in Hirat Province a local civilian that was previously abducted from the Ghoryan District was rescued by ANA after a brief armed clash. There were no casualties.

SOUTHERN REGION

The security situation in the Southern Region remains volatile. The residual risk to both UN national and international staff is assessed as Very High.

Analysis of the Week's Events

The total number of reported security incidents increased significantly by 61%, from 114 security incidents in the previous reporting period to 184 incidents this week. Increases were primarily recorded in Hilmand Province, Uruzgan Province and Nimroz Province, whilst Kandahar and Zabul Provinces recorded relatively consistent numbers. The types of incidents recorded remained consistent, with armed clashes and IEDs forming the bulk of all incidents reported.

Hilmand Province and Kandahar Province remained the main areas of AGE's activity in the region. In Hilmand Province Sangin, Nahri Sarraj, Nad Ali and Marja Districts saw the highest activity, while in Kandahar Province, Zhari and Panjwayi Districts remained the most active followed by Kandahar District.

There was a significant increase in armed clashes recorded throughout the region; 72 attacks as compared to 38 in the previous week. Of the 72 armed attacks/clashes reported during the week, 39 occurred in Hilmand Province while 19 occurred in Kandahar Province. There was a significant reporting of AGE attacks in Uruzgan Province over the period, with 11 armed attacks compared to two reported last week. The significant increase recorded in armed clashes this week demonstrated a sustained insurgent intent, capacity and capability in the face of IM/ANSF ongoing operations in the region. IM/ANSF CPs, patrols, convoys and IM contracted logistic convoys remained primary targets of these attacks; consistent with previous patterns.

The number of IED incidents in the region significantly increased, with the majority occurring in Hilmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan Provinces. A total of 44 IED incidents including 37 detonations were recorded in the region, representing a 22% increase as compared to the previous week. AGE continued to target IM/ANSF patrols and convoys, PSC vehicles and civilians. There has been a steady deterioration in the security situation in TirinKot, Chora and Dihrawud Districts of Uruzgan Province, and in Khash Rod District of Nimroz Province, attributable to the reported movement and infiltration of AGE with IED making expertise. IEDs remain a primary concern on the main access and secondary roads to many districts throughout the region. Although no suicide attack occurred in the region this week, threat reporting indicating the potential for suicide attacks, particularly in urban centres in the region, remains high.

Stand-off attacks mainly in TirinKot, Chora and Dihrawud Districts of Uruzgan Province, and in Sangin and Marja Districts of Hilmand Province unlike the previous week increased, from five to eight. The majority of the rockets were directed against IM, ANSF and DAC but with no impact on intended targets due to lack of precision.

Assassination, abduction, and intimidation incidents against those perceived to be unsupportive of insurgents activity continued to occur at high levels during the week. Most significantly, targeted killings increased from 15 to 19 people assassinated, with incidents reported in all provinces and the majority from Kandahar Province. In Kandahar, one NDS officer, one PSC commander, one local translator for the IM, four tribal elders and four civilians accused of spying for IM and government were assassinated, while a tribal elder and a local staff of a "for profit" organization were killed in Hilmand. In Zabul, a NDS officer was

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killed and a tribal elder was killed in Uruzgan, while a civilian was assassinated in Nimroz. Coupled with these assassinations were the abductions of an ANP officer and three civilians in Hilmand, Zabul and Uruzgan Provinces. AGE also blew up a school in Nad Ali District, Hilmand Province and erected an illegal checkpoint in Khash Rod District, Nimroz Province.

There were three incidents involving UN staff during the past week. On 23 August, a UN vehicle collided with an IM contracted logistic truck on Highway 4 (KAF road); no casualty was reported only damages to the UN vehicle. On 25 August, in Kandahar, an IM contracted logistic truck that was fired at by AGE, crashed into the residence of a UN national staff member; no casualty was reported only damages to the perimeter wall of the staff member's residence. In Kandahar, a UN national staff member received a threatening phone call from an unknown caller, warning him to quit his job or face severe consequences.

Lastly, even though local security agencies in the province were unable to corroborate a threat report which indicated AGE plans to attack the UNAMA compound in Zaranj, Nimroz Province, additional provisional security measures were implemented during the week to mitigate the threat.

The likelihood of an incident taking place and involving UN staff is very likely with expected impact assessed as critical (i.e. involving death or serious injury). All UN activities must be considered and deemed critical to program delivery before they take place.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

There were 72 reported armed clashes/attacks over the period.

Stand-Off Attack

Eight stand-off attacks were reported during the week

IED Detonated/Discovered

37 IED detonations were reported during the week; an increase compared to 21 reported the previous week. Seven IED discoveries were made. They were all defused by EOD teams.

Assassination

17 incidents were recorded during the week; an increase compared to nine reported the previous week.

Abduction

Three incidents were reported during the week.

Intimidation

Three incidents were reported during the week, consistent with the number reported the previous week.

SOUTH EASTERN REGION

The security situation in the South-Eastern Region remained volatile during the reporting period.

Analysis of the Week's Events

A total of 166 security incidents (including 12 late reports), were registered in the SER during the reporting period as compared to 124 incidents recorded during the week before. Such a significant statistical increase – for the second week in a row – is for the most part explained by improving incident reporting while no overall major changes have been noted in the dynamics of the general security situation in the region. In the Ghazni province, which accounted for 62 incidents (44 reports the week before), AGE have again stepped up the tempo of kinetic attacks in most of the southern districts transited by the Highway One. Certain security situation deterioration due to increased AGE activity has also been noted in the northwest Paktika, especially in the Yusuf Khel and Yahya Khel districts; a total of 44 incidents were reported from that province as compared to 26 during the preceding week. 32 incident reports were received from Khost (23

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during the previous week) while the incident levels in Paktya remained somewhat consistent (28 incidents as compared to 31 the week before).

No major changes in the AGE modus operandi as well as the profile of their attacks have been registered in the SER during the reporting period with 89 percent of the security incidents believed to be AGE initiated. AGE continue maintaining relative freedom of operational manoeuvre throughout the SER and are reported to be currently re-supplying with IED materials, weapons and ammunition in a run-up for the election period and / or future operations. The AGE tactics remained a variety of complex / armed / standoff / IED attacks targeting IM / ANSF / GoA facilities / supply convoys, road construction companies, local population, and targets of opportunity as well as actions aimed at intimidating local population.

In line with the troop surge plans, IM continue deploying and relocating combat as well as combat service and support units into Paktika, Ghazni, and Khost – which should be completed in the next several weeks. The main IM / ANSF operational focus remains on securing key terrain districts, degrading insurgents' fighting capabilities, and most of all 'choking the rat lines' or disrupting AGE supply and infiltration routes.

The districts of Andar, Ghazni, Arjistan, Qarabagh, Waghaz and Zarghun Shahr of the Ghazni province, the Khost (Matun), Sabari, and Musa Khel districts of the Khost province, the Gardez and Shwak districts of the Paktya province as well as the Yousuf Khel, Yahya Khel, and Urgun districts of the Paktika province were the most active during the reporting week.

At least 47 people were killed, 124 wounded, and 24 arrested as a result the security incidents reported during last week in the SER (the number casualties is yet to be verified independently).

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

A total of 71 armed clashes reported (47 last week), the majority of which were of the hit-and-run type of attacks aimed at harassing IM / ANSF / targets of opportunity – especially in the southern Ghazni and some parts of Paktya.

Stand-Off Attack

A total of 35 incidents recorded – as compared to 20 during the preceding week. Occurrences of stand-off attacks during the reporting period were higher in the Arjistan and Ghazni districts of the Ghazni province as well as the Barmal and Zirok districts of Paktika.

Air strike

A total of two air strikes were reported (compared to five the week before).

IED Detonated/Discovered

A total of 41 incidents reported as compared to 27 the week before, including 30 detonations (13 last week). In Urgun Paktika two suspected VBIEDs were seized by ANSF on 24 and 25 August. A suicide vest was seized on 19 August, while a suspected suicide vest detonation after being dumped by a bomber next to an ABP CP on 21 August, this resulted in a number of wounded. Another VBIED was reported seized on 24 August in Gurbuz Khost where two Pakistani nationals were arrested in connection with the incident. Occurrence of IED incidents was higher in the Gardez, Ghazni, Khost (Matun), Yousuf Khel, Yahya Khel, and Urgun during the last week.

Abduction

Three such incidents reported, to include abduction of an unknown number of Jaghuri Hazaras traveling in three vehicles from the Ghazni City to Jaghuri in Gelan Ghazni on 21 August.

Assassination

At least one such incident reported (seven the week before).

EASTERN REGION

The security situation in the Eastern Region remains volatile.

Analysis of the Week's Events

The region recorded a total of 90 security incidents during the current reporting period against the 93 incidents recorded during the past period, representing a slight decrease of approximately 3%. The types of security incidents remained consistent with those recorded in the past few weeks.

Kunar and Nangarhar Provinces continued to be the most affected by AGE activities, although the dynamics differed; while Nangarhar Province recorded 39 incidents (i.e. 43%) out of the total number of incidents, the majority were criminal in nature. Kunar Province however recorded most of the significant incidents, and accounted for approximately 56% of the total number of recorded incidents. Overall the security situation has not changed much from the previous weeks possibly due to the occurrence of Ramadan.

Short attacks by the AGE on IM convoys continued without abate. The attacks mainly lasted for only twenty to thirty minutes before the AGE withdrew. The majority of the attacks occurred in the Kunar area with only five others being reported in the Nangarhar area. Despite the number of attacks only three IM vehicles, two contacted civilian trucks were damaged and four ANA soldiers were injured. It was also reported that two civilians were killed during an AGE attack on the IM in the Nari district (Kunar).

Stand-off attacks were recorded mainly in Kunar with only one attack occurring in central Jalalabad City. Most of the rounds missed their intended targets, except for a motor attack against the IM/ANA base in Kunar which resulted in three injured soldiers.

IED incidents continued to be a major concern to UN AFP because of wrong-time wrong-place scenarios. Although the number of incidents of IEDs are down compared to previous weeks at a total of six (4 Nangarhar, 2 Kunar) they still remain a unpredictable threat along the main MSR's especially considering the report of a group of 25 AGEs who have infiltrated into Kunar for the purpose of conducting IED attacks.

The AGE has continued to mount mobile CPs including one in Kunar in which the AGE were reported to be dressed in ANA uniforms and stopped vehicles to check for persons working for the IM or GoA. Abductions were also on the rise with the abduction of 12 private construction workers in the Tango area of Kunar while on the way to their work area.

Flooding mostly in the Nangarhar region continued to displace civilians in the Surk Rod, Rodat, Dih Bale, Kuz Kunar, Dara-I-Nur, and Sherzad districts. The flooding affected travel in those districts along with several homes being destroyed. Initial reports indicate that seven civilians were killed and eight others were injured, also 250 livestock were reported killed.

Continued reports of infiltration by the AGE into several districts of Nangarhar and Kunar Provinces have been confirmed by the ANSF. The AGE are reported to be concentrated in Chawakay, Nurgal and Narang Districts.

There were two air strikes reported in the reporting period, one of which was located in the Bar Kanday area of Kunar. The air strike is reported to have injured one civilian and killed six children. The air strikes by the IM were against suspected AGE positions.

The current trend and intensity of security incidents in ER is expected to continue, and perhaps increase, into the next reporting period. This could impact on UN operations as a result of access restrictions to a number of districts, which may also affect urgent humanitarian missions to those in need.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

Thirty Eight incidents were reported - An increase of two incidents compared to the last weekly report with 35 in Kunar Province and 15 in Nangahar Province.. The armed attacks mainly involved AGE targeting ANP CPs and IM locations and road movements. The possible objective of those attacks on IM/ANP bases and road convoys is to enable armed elements inflict casualties, capture weaponry and ammunitions and create instability in the region. It must be noted that there were only 3 reports of casualties in all the reported attacks the majority of which, apparently occurred in Kunar Province.

Stand-Off Attack

Eight incidents were reported - Seven attacks targeted ANP and IM locations in Kunar Province where a young girl was killed and one rocket fired within Jalalabad City, Nangarhar Province on 21 August that impacted on a medical supply store in Zone One area. The store was reportedly damaged but no casualty.

Air Strike

Two strikes reported - 21 August, IM operations in Nagarhar Province, Pachir Wa Agam District and Kunar Province, Pech Valley targeting suspected AGE positions resulted with eight (8) killed and nine (9) injured.

Abduction

Five incidents were reported - A total of four (4) abductions were reported in Kuna Province involving Age on a District Administrator and his son in Asadabad District, twelve (12) construction workers in Sirkanay District, a local teacher in Nari District and three (3) local males in Mano Gay District. In Jalalabad City Zone three (3), unknown group abducted a seven year old child for ransom. All incidents are basically politically motivated or with criminal intent to gain cash.

Crime

Twenty incidents were reported - The nineteen (19) criminal related incidents reported in Nagarhar Province during the week mainly involved family and personal, land and property related issues.

IED Detonated/Discovered

Six incidents were reported, three were detonations and three were discoveries – The three IED Discoveries in Nangarhar and Kunar Provinces were safely disarmed by IM MOD team.

Cache

Two incidents were reported - ANP discovered an ammunition cache in Nangarhar Province, Kot District including four (4) 82mm rocket rounds, four (4) RPG rounds and a number of PK rounds.

Arrests

Three arrest incidents were reported in Nangarhar province, Jalalabad City and Khogyani District involving illegal possession of firearms.

Intimidation

One incident was reported in KunAR Province, Asdabad District where a group of AGE activities wearing ANP uniform, established a mobile CP conducting searches and intimidation on government workers and supporters.

CENTRAL REGION

The security situation in the Central Region remained unstable with the provinces of Wardak, Logar and Tagab District of Kapisa Province rated as volatile. The provinces of Parwan and Panjsher remained calm. Kabul Province and Kabul City continued to be unstable.

Analysis of the Week's Events

For the second time in a month there was a decrease in the number of security incidents reported over the period. A total of 44 incidents were reported during the week compared to 58 for the previous week (16 incidents of previous week reported this week due to holiday on 19 August).

Significant drop in the AGE activities was witnessed in most types of incidents including armed attacks, stand-off and IED attacks while assassinations and IED discoveries increased. The fact however, still remains that IED attacks against ANSF/IM is the preferred choice for AGE throughout the region as it has the potential to inflict more casualties on its intended targets whilst reducing same on their side.

Arrests incidents of suspected AGE were noticeably high during the week, coupled with seizures of munitions. A surge of threat reports of possible suicide/complex attacks in Kabul City are being received on regular basis, however, none of these resulted into an actual attack. Threat reporting in Kabul City also indicated that AGE cells being present and building up resources in and around the city.

It is also evident that AGE are gradually expanding their area of influence in the northern districts of Kabul Province with propaganda activities.

Wardak and Logar Provinces remained active although at reduced levels from previous weeks. Insurgent activities in Kapisa, Parwan and Panjsher Provinces were at a much lower level. Only four security incidents were reported in Kapisa, and only three for Parwan. There were no security incidents in Panjsher. In Kabul City, majority of the incidents involved security forces operations to include criminality and Mine/UXO related.

As a new development, the restaurants known to be frequented by internationals have emerged as a possible target group, especially during the month of Ramadan. Therefore, foreigners having meals in public places/restaurants are likely to be seen as being in violation of Ramadan religious diktats and may invite hostile behaviours.

In Parwan Province, approximately 300 people staged demonstrations against ANSF demanding the release of a religious teacher who was arrested earlier by NDS. Subsequently, the demonstrations turned violent and burned down an ANP CP. Reportedly, ANP fired some shots and one civilian was killed whilst three other civilians were injured, complicating the situation. One ANP was also injured in the incident.

It is expected that levels of security incidents will remain elevated during the period of Ramadan. Asymmetric attacks against the population, electoral staff, candidates and campaign personnel is likely to increase. Suicide/complex attack threat reporting will remain high and the possibility of such attacks particularly in Kabul City and provincial centres will remain.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

There were seven reported armed clashes/attacks over the period. Six of these were initiated by AGE against IM/ANSF, civilian and logistics convoys while one armed clash was reportedly initiated by IM during a joint search operation in Tagab District of Kapisa. At least three AGE, two IM personnel and one civilian driver were killed, three ANA, three IM personnel and one civilian were wounded in the course of the attacks. IM also arrested two AGE during one incident.

Stand-Off Attack

There were six stand-off attacks recorded during the week. Maydan Shahr Provincial Centre, Jaghatu DAC, ANP CP and IM FOB in Nirkh District and ANA base in Saydabad, an IM FOB in Tagab district of Kapisa all came under AGE multiple rocket attacks. There were no casualties in those attacks.

Air Strike

IM reportedly conducted air strikes on a suspected AGE location in Uzbin valley of Surobi District, Kabul Province. At least eight persons were killed in the incident.

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IED Detonated/Discovered

There were three reports of IED detonation. Four ANA soldiers were killed and three ANA soldiers, one worker of a construction company were wounded in those attacks. There were seven reports of IED detection. All the devices were subsequently defused by EOD teams.

Cache

ANP discovered one cache in Paghman District and seized two rockets, 25 mortar bombs, three RPGs and three AT mines in Paghman Districts of Kabul Province.

Arrest

At least 21 suspected AGE were detained during search operations across the region.

Crime

One local was killed and another was wounded by unknown gunmen in PD 12 of Kabul City.

Intimidation

50 students and teachers were reportedly poisoned inside the classrooms in an all girls' primary school, located in PD 8, Kabul City. An ANP investigation is ongoing.

Demonstration

Two demonstrations were reported during the week, one of which in Bagram District of Parwan Province demanding the release of a Mullah who was arrested by NDS turned violent. ANP fired some shots when the protesters attacked an ANP CP. One protester was killed and five others including an ANP were wounded in two incidents.

Assassination

AGE reportedly killed three persons (a father and two sons) at a road construction site in Logar Province.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS REGION

The security situation in Central Highlands Region remained calm during the reporting period with the exception of Kajran District which raised security concerns due to a strong AGE presence in the neighboring Baghram and Gizab Districts of Helmand and Uruzgan Provinces in SR.

Analysis of the Week's Events:

There was one security related incident, consistent with the previous week. The incident was related to clashes between IAG and local residents in Daykundi Province.

In Bamyán Province, Shikary Valley of Kahmard and Shibar Districts are still unstable areas due to presence of AGE. IM and ANSF closely observe the area trying to neutralize the AGE, who are reportedly once in a while infiltrating by the neighboring Baghlan Province in NER. UN accessibility in the rest of the region remains open for activities.

No major change in security related incident is expected for the next reporting period.

Description of the Week's Significant Events

Attack/Armed Clash

On 23 August, Daykundi Province, Gaiti District, Tokhomjoy Village, night time, armed clash erupted among IAG and local residents. One IAG was injured. The fight stopped after intervention of elders. ANP is investigating the case.

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Crime

On 22 August, Bamyan Province, Yakawlang District, Tapee Wahdat Village, around 1200 hrs, a hanged male corpse was found in his house. It is believed to be suicide. ANP is investigating the case.

On 22 August, Daykundi Province, Nili Center, Sang e Moom Village, at around 1200 hrs, a hanged female corpse was found in her house. It is believed to be a suicide. ANP is investigating the case.

END OF REPORT

EM/CP/ES