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<http://www.khaama.com/50-british-troops-committed-suicide-in-afghanistan-in-2012-1657/print/>

50 British troops committed suicide in Afghanistan in 2012

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More suicide cases among the British soldiers serving in Afghanistan were reported last year as compared to those who lost their lives in combat with the militants, BBC reported.

At least 21 serving soldiers killed themselves last year, along with 29 veterans, the BBC's Panorama programme revealed through a Freedom of Information request to the Ministry of Defense.

The latest findings shows an increase in suicide cases by British troops in Afghanistan, as only 44 services members were killed during clashes, out of which 40 died during action.

United Kingdom's Defense Ministry called the suicide cases as a "tragedy". Majority of the service members diagnosed with the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have reportedly committed suicide.

According to British Ministry of Defense around 2.9% of serving soldiers develop PTSD, which is lower than the general population.

However figures obtained from Ministry of Defense via Panorama Freedom of Information request, the number of soldiers with PTSD has more than doubled in the past three years among those who served in Afghanistan.

Clinical psychologist Dr Claudia Herbert said PTSD is the body's "natural response" to distressing events. It can take years to emerge but is treatable if caught early. Symptoms include flashbacks, severe anxiety and depression.

But Dr Herbert said: "Post-traumatic stress disorder in itself should not lead to suicide."

The British Ministry of Defense said it has committed £7.4m to ensure there is extensive mental health support in place for everyone who needs it.