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Pakistan Orders Afghans to Leave Balochistan

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— *Categories: Human Rights*

Pakistan demands Afghans in Balochistan depart, intensifying its repatriation drive, as thousands head to the Chaman border.

Pakistan has issued a renewed directive for Afghan nationals residing in Balochistan to leave the country, prompting thousands to gather at the Chaman border crossing on August 1, 2025. The order, part of the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Programme (IFRP), targets over 800,000 Afghans holding Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC), escalating a deportation campaign that began in 2023, according to The Express Tribune.

The Balochistan Home Department instructed officials to repatriate Afghans "in a respectful and orderly manner," with senior official Mehar Ullah estimating 4,000 to 5,000 people at the border, as reported by Agence France-Presse (AFP). Since April 2025, over 200,000 Afghans have left Pakistan, contributing to more than one million departures since 2023, per Arab News. Pakistan's government cites security and economic pressures, noting a decade-high death toll from militant attacks in 2024, often attributing violence to Afghan nationals, a claim the Taliban rejects, per Al Jazeera.

The policy has drawn criticism from human rights groups, with Amnesty International's Isabelle Lassée condemning it as scapegoating a disenfranchised community, per amnesty.org. Many Afghans, including those born in Pakistan, face deportation despite deep ties to the country. The United Nations (UN) has raised concerns about violations of non-refoulement, a principle barring the return of refugees to persecution, given Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis and Taliban restrictions on women, according to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Pakistan's Interior Ministry insists the deportations comply with legal formalities, warning against harboring undocumented foreigners, per Reuters. Security analyst Mosharraf Zaidi, quoted by The News International, noted that public support for the policy, reported at 84% by Gallup Pakistan, reflects frustration over economic strain and border insurgencies. The Joint Action Committee for Refugees (JAC-R) documented 2,600 detentions in early 2025, highlighting the policy's harsh enforcement, per amnesty.org.

As Pakistan presses forward, the mass exodus strains Afghanistan's fragile infrastructure, with returnees facing economic collapse and limited aid, per the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The government's firm stance underscores its priority to secure borders and alleviate domestic pressures.