

UK Relocates Afghan Family Following Legal Push on Data Breach

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A family resettled in the United Kingdom after the fall of Kabul was recently moved from their government-provided accommodation after they sought legal action regarding a Ministry of Defence (MOD) data breach that exposed sensitive personal information. The sudden relocation, which came after their legal team submitted a subject access request, has raised concerns about possible retaliatory treatment.

The family, who had worked closely with British forces in Afghanistan, was among the many Afghans evacuated to the United Kingdom during the chaotic withdrawal in 2021. After settling in the country, they discovered that their data, including names and contact details, had been mistakenly shared in an email chain by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in a highly publicised breach that affected more than 250 Afghan nationals.

In response, the family instructed a legal firm to request full disclosure of the breach under data protection laws. According to their lawyer, shortly after this request was submitted, the Home Office ordered their relocation to a different region. The move disrupted their children's education and the family's ongoing efforts to integrate into the local community.

Speaking to The Guardian, their solicitor argued that the timing of the relocation "raises questions" about whether the family's attempt to hold the government accountable played a role in the decision. However, government officials insist the move was not connected to the legal request and was based solely on accommodation availability.

The Ministry of Defence issued an apology when the breach was first revealed, acknowledging the potential risks posed to Afghan allies still under threat from the Taliban. The incident sparked widespread criticism and calls for tighter safeguards on sensitive data, especially concerning individuals who supported British operations overseas.

While the government continues to deny any retaliatory motive, the case underscores the ongoing challenges faced by Afghan evacuees in the United Kingdom, including data protection concerns and the complexity of post-resettlement support. For many of those who risked their lives assisting British troops, the promise of safety remains entangled in bureaucratic missteps.