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Rawalpindi Police Crack Down on Illegal Afghans

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In Rawalpindi, police have launched intensified operations against Afghan nationals residing illegally, following new directives from Pakistan's Ministry of Interior.

City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi, Khalid Hamdani, has issued orders to all divisional police leadership to enforce the ministry's instructions without delay. The crackdown focuses on identifying and detaining individuals without valid visas or proper legal documentation.

Police officials confirmed that only Afghan citizens holding valid visas will be allowed to remain in Pakistan. All others, including those with expired visas, no identity papers, or without Afghan Citizen Cards, will be detained and sent to designated holding centres. These centres are part of the government's wider effort to facilitate the orderly repatriation of illegal foreign residents.

In a recent communication, CPO Hamdani reaffirmed his concerns over inadequate enforcement by some sub-divisional officers. He directed all Station House Officers (SHOs) and Sub-Divisional Police Officers (SDPOs) to step up operations immediately. The renewed orders were outlined in an internal memo titled *Operations Against Illegal Afghan Nationals* and sent to the Superintendents of Police for Potohar, Saddar, and Rawal divisions.

Each police station has now been tasked with forming specialised teams to carry out targeted checks in their local jurisdictions. These teams are instructed to detain any Afghan nationals found staying without legal permission. Individuals carrying expired documents, lacking UNHCR registration, or holding no valid proof of residence are also subject to detention.

The directive clarifies that the presence of such individuals is in direct violation of Pakistani immigration laws. Once apprehended, the individuals will be swiftly transferred to the assigned holding centres. From there, arrangements for their return to Afghanistan will be made under government supervision.

According to officials, this action is part of a broader effort by the federal government to regularise the foreign population and uphold national immigration laws. Authorities emphasised that the operations will be carried out strictly within the legal framework and with full coordination among police divisions.

The Rawalpindi police have assured that legitimate Afghan residents with valid visas will not be affected by the ongoing operations. Police teams have been instructed to verify documentation carefully to avoid unnecessary detentions.

This development follows several months of pressure from federal authorities to enforce visa regulations more effectively across major cities in Pakistan. The Ministry of Interior has reiterated that all non-citizens must hold legal status or face repatriation.