

Pakistan starts mass deportation of undocumented Afghans

Authorities go 'door to door' to round up and return thousands - many who fled from the Taliban - on first day of nationwide crackdown

Pakistan has begun arresting and deporting Afghan refugees who missed Wednesday morning's deadline for them to leave, a government minister has announced. At least 200,000 people have already returned to Afghanistan voluntarily, said Pakistan's acting interior minister, Sarfraz Bugti.

The crackdown on unregistered foreigners, part of Pakistan's new anti-immigrant policy, affects some 2 million Afghans thought to be in Pakistan without documentation.

Bugti said: "There will be no compromise against illegal refugees. We have the data on who are staying illegally in Pakistan. We are going door to door, and we have done geofencing. We will detain and deport them. We have arrested dozens across the country so far, including in the capital."

Afghans would be put in buses, trucks or whatever was available to transport them to the border, said Bugti, and authorities would be tracking them to ensure they did not return. He attacked the west for not doing enough to help relocate Afghans at risk from Taliban retaliation if they return.

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