



Weekly Report

Pakistan

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Pakistan crackdown on Afghan refugees amid fears of influx: report

- Pakistani authorities are cracking down on Afghan refugees residing illegally in the country, which may number up to 3 million. Another 1.6 million are legally registered.
- Officials in Pakistan fear the withdrawal of US forces in Afghanistan will increase the influx and believe the refugees' presence will make it easier for radical groups to operate in Pakistan.
- Local officials in Peshawar are employing policies to make it harder for Afghans to rent apartments or set up new camps. The city's police chief claimed 70 percent of serious crimes were committed by Afghans.
- Source: dawn.com

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106043/pakistan-crackdown-on-afghan-refugees-amid-fears-of-influx-report>

Pakistani police charge 68 lawyers with blasphemy over protest

- Pakistani police have charged 68 lawyers with blasphemy, for publicly protesting after a police officer detained one of their colleagues.
- A blasphemy charge carries the death penalty, but Pakistan has not yet executed anyone for it.
- Judges are reluctant to hear cases because presenting evidence can be considered a new infringement.
- Blasphemy accusations have increased in Pakistan from one case in 2001 to 80 complaints in 2011. False accusations carry no penalty.
- Last week a human rights lawyer was killed after defending a university professor accused of blasphemy. It had taken the professor a year to find a lawyer to defend him.
- Source: Times of India

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/Pakistani-police-charge-68-lawyers-with-blasphemy-over-protest/articleshow/35063476.cms>

Pakistan among countries where torture is rife: Amnesty

- Amnesty International's report, *Torture in 2014: 30 Years of Broken Promises*, says police, intelligence services, and the army frequently practice torture in Pakistan, especially in tribal areas and Balochistan. Victims are often human rights defenders, lawyers or journalists.
- The majority of respondents in Pakistan feared they could be tortured if taken into custody.
- Source: dawn.com

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1106202/pakistan-among-countries-where-torture-is-rife-amnesty>

"The shocking fact that so many people fear torture ... should spur authorities across Asia-Pacific into meaningful action by taking concrete steps to eradicate this horrific human rights violation,"
– Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific Director Richard Bennett
