

## The Mass Deportation of Afghan Migrants from Pakistan Illustrates Once Again the Utter Inhumanity of Nationalistic Regimes

### News:

Hundreds of thousands of Afghans who have lived in Pakistan for decades currently face deportation from the country. The Pakistan government set March 31<sup>st</sup> as the deadline for all 'illegal foreigners' and Afghan card holders to leave voluntarily or face deportation. Since Eid, the regime has ramped up these expulsions, with thousands moved to deportation camps. Since September 2023 and February 2025, a systematic government crackdown on Afghan nationals resulted in the expulsion of nearly 850,000 Afghan men, women and children from Pakistan. In January this year, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's office outlined a 3-Phase "relocation plan": Phase 1 would involve the "immediate" deportation of all undocumented Afghan citizens as well as the 800,000 Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC) holders (an identification document issued to Afghan migrants by the Pakistan government itself); Phase 2 would focus on the deportation of the 1.3 million Afghans who possess a Proof of Registration (PoR) Card that was introduced in 2006 and issued by the UN Refugee Agency, and who have been granted relief to stay only till June 2025; and Phase 3 which would address the deportation of Afghan citizens who are awaiting relocation to a 3<sup>rd</sup> country. The Pakistan government has spuriously cited "national security" and "resource management" as reasons to justify this ruthless, racist policy.

### Comment:

Many of these Afghans facing deportation or already expelled have lived in Pakistan since the 1990's, having fled the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the time. So, they are being forced to leave a land that has been their home for decades, where they have established their lives, got married, had their children, set up businesses and built their houses - for no other reason than the nationality of their parents or where they were born. One of those facing this deportation, Mohammed Laal Khan, whose family has also lived in Pakistan since the 1990's said: *"It is as if being Afghan is a curse upon our existence."*

The Pakistan government has disgracefully demonized its Afghan residents by linking them to criminal activity or blaming them for deadly attacks by armed groups that Islamabad alleges operate from Afghanistan. However, these accusations simply mask the blatant and obvious racism that underlies this relocation plan. The government is essentially tarnishing a whole community who have tried to live peaceful lives in the country, with the criminal actions of individuals – the trademark behaviour of racist nationalistic regimes! The authorities have no shame in using their police to storm the homes of innocent Afghan Muslims, some where women are alone with their children, and dragging them away to a prison cell or deportation camps – as if being born in a different land or having parents with a different nationality is a grievous crime! Some Afghan men who married a woman of Pakistani nationality are even forced to leave their wives behind when deported.

This dehumanization, gross injustice and disgraceful humiliation of Muslims because of their land of origin, is due to the rotten concept of Nationalism which was imported into the Muslim world by western colonial powers to divide and weaken the Muslims in order to gain and maintain control over the region. It was consequently embedded within and peddled by the regimes that currently plague the Muslim world. These nationalistic regimes label fellow

Muslims as ‘foreigners’ or ‘illegal immigrants’ or portray them as ‘enemies of the state’ simply due to coming from a different land, even though they share the same Iman and Deen as the other Muslims of their state!

The Prophet (saw) said regarding nationalism, «دَعُوهَا فَإِنَّهَا مُنْتِنَةٌ» **“Leave it, it is rotten.”** [Muslim & Bukhari]. He (saw) also said, «لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى عَصَبِيَّةٍ وَلَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ قَاتَلَ عَلَى عَصَبِيَّةٍ وَلَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ مَاتَ عَلَى عَصَبِيَّةٍ» **“He is not one of us who calls for Asabiyyah (tribalism/nationalism) or who fights for Asabiyyah or who dies for Asabiyyah”** [Abu Dawud]. Allah (swt) says: ﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾ ***“The believers are nothing else but brothers (in Islam), so make peace between your brothers and have Taqwa of Allah so that hopefully you will gain mercy.”*** [Al-Hujuraat: 10]. And the Prophet (saw) said, «لَا يُؤْمِنُ الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ، وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ، وَلَا يَحْقِرُهُ، التَّقْوَى أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ» **“No one of you believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself”** and he (saw) also said, «الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ، وَلَا يَخْذُلُهُ، وَلَا يَحْقِرُهُ، التَّقْوَى أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ» **“The Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. He does not oppress him, nor does he disgrace him, nor does he hold him in contempt. Taqwa is here (pointing to his chest three times). It is evil enough for a person to hold his Muslim brother in contempt.”**

This toxic, rotten concept of nationalism, or nation-state politics is therefore abhorrent according to Islam and an aberration to our Deen. Therefore, if anything is ‘foreign’, ‘illegal’, ‘unwelcome’ or ‘an enemy to the people’ – it is this alien rancid concept of nationalism and these deviant nationalistic regimes and systems that have no place in our Muslim lands and should be discarded and deported! It is clear that these regimes have an utter contempt for Islam and do not deserve to rule over the Muslims whose allegiance and obedience is to Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw).

Nationalism and nation-state systems and politics erodes and undermines the Islamic concept of brotherhood. It is used by nationalistic regimes in the Muslim lands to give excuses for failing to intervene militarily when Muslims are being oppressed or slaughtered – as in Palestine, viewing them as foreigners in a foreign land rather than brothers and sisters in Islam; or to justify the mass repatriation of oppressed Muslims seeking sanctuary in their lands – as we see in Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia with the Rohingya Muslims. Therefore, as Muslims we should reject all aspects of nationalism outright, and stand against all policies, plans, laws and systems based upon it, as well as uproot rulers and regimes that uphold and implement it upon their societies. Alongside this, we need to discard the nationalistic colonial-imposed borders which separate our lands, and work to unify the Muslim Ummah through the establishment of the Khilafah (Caliphate) based upon the method of the Prophethood. This is the state which is the practical means to unite the Muslim Ummah according to what Allah (swt) has prescribed, and that will open its borders and provide a home for all Muslims regardless of their ethnicity, race, madhab or land of birth – viewing them as equal citizens under the law, with the same rights - as the Shariah obligates and as it did in the past.

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