

PAKISTAN: Thousands of Ahmadis fleeing persecution in Pakistan and seeking Asylum overseas

Rabwah Times (04.09.2016) – <http://bit.ly/2cAq5Sb> – More and more Ahmadis are leaving Pakistan and seeking asylum overseas as persecution in Pakistan increases. Sources within Pakistan and stats released by the U.S. indicate that Ahmadis are the largest asylum seeking group from Pakistan. Newly published statistics by Germany, U.K., and the US revealed that over 10,000 Pakistanis had sought asylum in these three countries over the past year.

Data from US Department of State which classified refugees by religion showed that most of the 376 Pakistanis who applied for refuge in 2016 were Ahmadis. Throughout the last five years, Ahmadis were the single largest group of Pakistanis seeking refuge in the US. Ahmadis accounted for over half of all Pakistani asylum applicants with 746 claimants. The data further revealed that 240 Christians and 66 Shias also sought refuge.

Meanwhile, Germany received the highest number of asylum application from Pakistanis. Data from the German interior ministry showed that 9,185 Pakistanis applied for asylum from January to July 2016. This was in contrast to just 2,546 applications in 2015. Sources within the Ahmadiyya community say, most of those applicants were Ahmadis.

Similarly, in the UK, 2,992 Pakistanis applied for asylum from June 2015 to June 2016, however only 16 percent of the applications were accepted.

Europe and U.S. are not the only destinations for Ahmadi asylum seekers. Many have even fled to South East Asia and remote parts of Africa. Countries with a significant Ahmadi refugee population include Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Uganda and Ghana.

The Ahmadiyya sect of Islam is practically banned in Pakistan. Ahmadi Muslims are targets of extremist groups who consider them heretics and under the Pakistani law it is a crime for Ahmadis to label themselves Muslims.