

STANDARD PRESS RELEASE

Contact Information

The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light
Syeda Ailia Muhammad
contact@theahmadireligion.org



The Ahmadi Religion
of
Peace and Light

Release Date:

26/05/2023

104 MEMBERS OF A RELIGIOUS MINORITY FACING EXECUTION AND IMPRISONMENT IF DEPORTED

[EDIRNE, TURKEY, May 26th] - Over 100 members of The Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light, a persecuted religious minority, who have presented themselves at the Turkish-Bulgarian border claiming asylum Wednesday are now being held at the Edirne public safety office and face deportation within the next 7-10 days, a decision that will most likely subject them to either imprisonment or death sentences in their countries of origin. They had been refused entry, violently beaten, pushed back and detained by the Turkish border police Wednesday. [Gunshots were fired at them](#), they were threatened and their belongings thrown away. The group includes families, women, children and elderly.

The 104 individuals have been subjected to extreme and systematic forms of religious persecution all across Muslim-majority countries because of their faith. The reason why they face these persecutions is because they follow a man named Aba Al-Sadiq whom they consider to be the awaited Mahdi. They follow his controversial message which includes the establishment of a new Covenant after Islam. Some of the controversial teachings of this Covenant state that the wearing of the headscarf is not an obligation, the fasting of the month of Ramadan falls in December of each year, the five daily prayers are abrogated and the consumption of alcoholic beverages is permissible. Due to these beliefs they were considered “heretics” and “infidels” which posed significant threat to their lives. They had been beaten, imprisoned, kidnapped, humiliated and terrorized in countries like [Iran](#), [Iraq](#), [Algeria](#), Egypt, Morocco, Azerbaijan and Thailand.

They had gathered in Turkey and were on their way to the Turkish-Bulgarian border to assume their human right to request asylum directly from the Bulgarian Border Police, in line with Article 58(4) of the Law on Asylum and Refugees (LAR), which states that asylum can be applied for with a verbal statement submitted in front of the border police.

Additionally, an [open letter](#) by the European Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN) was sent on Tuesday, the 23rd of May, 2023, with 28 human rights organizations and bodies signing their endorsement, urging for the protection of the group and that their right to claim asylum at the border be upheld, in accordance with international law.

After being held at the Edirne public safety office for more than 24 hours, 83 members of the group have been transferred to a deportation center, the remaining 20 will likely follow. It is expected that deportation decisions be issued within 36 hours.

In Iran members of the Ahmadi Religion of Peace and Light had been detained in Evin prison in December 2022 because of their beliefs. They were threatened with execution if they don't sign papers to recant their faith and defame the religion. Similarly, members in Iraq have suffered gunned attacks on their homes by armed militias, and scholars have called for them to be killed.

Issuing deportation decisions for these families would be a clear violation on Turkey's behalf of the core principle of non-refoulement, which according to international refugee and human rights law, prohibits returning individuals to a country where they would face torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and other irreparable harm.

We implore Turkey not to proceed with the deportation of these families to their countries of origins. These families would be put in danger in their countries of origin and Turkey would be responsible for any loss of life if they are returned to the countries they have escaped from.