

## **Thailand to deport 70 Pakistanis fearing persecution at home**

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**In this image made from video, Pakistani refugees exit a police truck as they arrive at the Immigration Detention Center, Thursday, Oct. 11, 2018, in Bangkok, Thailand. (Source: AP Photo)**

**Bangkok:** Thai authorities have convicted 70 Pakistani asylum seekers of staying illegally in Thailand despite their protestations that they face persecution if they are sent home.

The Taling Chan Provincial Court on Thursday issued fines and up to two-month suspended jail sentences to the group, which was charged with overstaying their visas and illegal entry.

An officer in charge of the case said they will be held in a detention center until they are deported.

One of the defendants said the group consists mostly of Christian Pakistanis and some Ahmadi Muslims, and that members of the two religious groups risk persecution in Pakistan.

Thailand regularly deports foreigners who are in the country illegally, even if they are recognised by the United Nations as refugees fleeing persecution.

- AP