"From Hope to Hardship: Liaqat Ali's Journey Back to an Uncertain Future"

Liaqat Ali, 36, recently crossed the Spin Boldak border into Afghanistan with his wife and four children after being forcibly deported by the Pakistani government. He spent 31 years of his life in Pakistan, where his children were born and raised, and where his wife's parents still live.



Liaqat Ali, 36, crossed the Spin Boldak border into Afghanistan on May 27, 2025. Photo by COAR.

"We were forced to leave with empty pockets," Liaqat said. "It was especially hard for my wife to leave her parents behind in Pakistan."

Originally from Nad Ali district in Helmand province, Liaqat had built a modest but stable life in Quetta, Pakistan. He supported his family by driving a rickshaw, which provided enough income for a decent daily life. His children were studying in a good school and were learning well.

"I had spent my whole life there," he said. "Now, I don't know where we will go or how I will take care of my children in a country struggling with poverty, unemployment, and a lack of education."

Liaqat hopes to go to Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province, if he can find some money to buy another rickshaw. He has years of experience as a rickshaw driver and also knows basic mechanical skills to repair it.

At the border, he received a small amount of emergency financial support from the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), which helped him buy some food. However, the money is not enough for rent or transportation.

Liaqat is also deeply worried about the future of his daughters. “There are no proper schools for girls here,” he said.

“The Afghan government doesn’t allow girls to study beyond the sixth grade. My two older daughters dreamed of becoming doctors, but now their hopes are crushed.”

He added, *“My wife and I are heartbroken. Our children wanted to study and build bright futures, but the education system here is broken.”*

Liaqat Ali’s story is one of thousands—people forced to return to a country where their dreams face uncertainty, and where the future of an entire generation hangs in the balance.