

US places Pakistan on Special Watch List for ‘violation’ of religious freedom



The US Secretary of State has placed Pakistan on a Special Watch List for severe violations of religious freedom, the State Department said.

In a press statement issued today (Thursday), the Department of State announced that the Secretary of State re-designated Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan as Countries of Particular Concern on December 22, 2017.

The Secretary also placed Pakistan on a Special Watch List for severe violations of religious freedom.

“In far too many places around the globe, people continue to be persecuted, unjustly prosecuted, or imprisoned for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief. Today, a number of governments infringe upon individuals’ ability to adopt, change, or renounce their religion or belief, worship in accordance with their religion or beliefs, or be free from coercion to practice a particular religion or belief,” IT SAID.

In accordance with the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, the US Secretary of State annually designates governments that have engaged in or tolerated systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom as “Countries of Particular Concern”.

The protection of religious freedom is vital to peace, stability, and prosperity. These designations are aimed at improving the respect for religious freedom in these countries.

We recognize that several designated countries are working to improve their respect for religious freedom; we welcome these initiatives and look forward to continued dialogue. The United States remains committed to working with governments, civil society organizations, and religious leaders to advance

religious freedom around the world.

Source: <https://www.samaa.tv/pakistan/2018/01/us-places-pakistan-special-watch-list-violation-religious-freedom/>

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