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Factbox: Afghan police violence and corruption charges

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Police violence and corruption are alienating ordinary Afghans, even as foreigners pour billions of dollars into building up the security forces.

With Western exit strategies focused on shoring up the Afghan government to pave the way for all foreign combat troops to return home by the end of 2014, police misdeeds are corrosive to vital public confidence.

Here are some facts about the police and the problem:

* There are around 142,000 Afghan National Police. Along with the usual police duties of ensuring civil order, the rapid spread of the insurgency means the police are often on the front lines, serving more as paramilitary units.

* In the four months to July 16 this year, more than 1,700 criminal cases involving 2,533 policeman have been sent to the Attorney General's office for prosecution, according to Lieutenant General Mohammad Rahim Hanifi, head of the Attorney General's statistics and analysis department.

* There was not enough evidence to prosecute in 100 cases, 135 cases were sent back for further investigation, and nearly 1,400 were earmarked for trial, Hanifi said. The rest are currently being heard by the courts.

* Police officers had been accused of crimes including murder, assault, theft, kidnapping, buying or selling weapons, fraud and misuse of authority, Hanifi said.

* Between March 2010 and March 2011, 4,646 policemen were accused of crimes in 3,026 separate cases that were sent to the Attorney General in Kabul for prosecution, Hanifi said.

* Those included 85 cases of murder involving 197 policemen, 109 cases of beating civilians involving 218 policemen, 12 cases of kidnapping involving 18 police officers, and 15 cases of rape involving 19 policemen, he said.

* According to the U.N. study, about 50 percent of Afghans said that they would report criminal matters elsewhere, such as to tribal leaders, instead of going to the police.