

# 14 arrested in Kabul alcohol raid

Associated Press

**KABUL, Afghanistan** - Afghan authorities raided dozens of guesthouses suspected of illegally serving alcohol and arrested 14 people, including five foreigners, in a crackdown on vice in this Islamic country, an official said Tuesday.

The Afghan attorney general and police confiscated about 750 bottles of alcohol from 27 guesthouses during the Monday night crackdown in central Kabul, said Ahmad Sameer Samimi, chief of staff of the attorney general's office.

Samimi said the 14 people were arrested for selling and drinking alcohol - banned under the Afghan constitution but available in shops reserved for foreign troops and civilians as well as licensed restaurants.

"These kinds of raids will continue in Kabul, by the order of the attorney general," Samimi told The Associated Press.

He declined to disclose the nationalities of the foreigners but said that some of them were owners of the guesthouses and some were drinking alcohol with Afghans.

Dozens of bars, restaurants and guesthouses have sprung up around Kabul since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, charging Western prices for alcoholic drinks to the burgeoning expatriate community and wealthy Afghans.

Several appear to double as brothels, prompting concern among ordinary Afghans and outbursts from religious conservatives that the post-Taliban influx of foreigners is undermining the country's strict Islamic mores.

Afghan officials have deported scores of women, most of them Chinese, from suspected brothels in recent years.