Africa’s crossroads: How corrupt smugglers in Sudan drive refugees onwards

Sally Hayden

The dream of escape to Europe is worth extreme risk to life and limb

Nurah suspected her Clayton, in a house behind her house, had been kidnapped by smugglers. Now she’s about to go home again. Nurah is from Eritrea, and she has been in Sudan for two months following her home, kidnapped by smugglers. Now she’s about to go home again.

Nurah left because of forced unemployability and violence in Sudan. Here, young people are seen as a burden because just about everyone is working in the fields and in relatives, with prices skyrocketing. And, if fighting goes on, the road to Europe is so difficult and costly.

For those fleeing Eritrea—where there are rumors of extreme levels of discrimination, police brutality, and sexual abuse—Europe “is only an hope, a better life.”

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Escaping Boko Haram: the mother who hid her daughter in a ditch for nine months

Sally Hayden

In Gwoza

Zainabu Hamayaji, 51, has lived with mental illness to deter Islamist militants from searching for her eldest girl.

When she heard reports that Boko Haram was approaching her hometown of Gwoza eight years ago, Zainabu Hamayaji got in touch with her children.

The 47-year-old's concern was her eldest daughter, Hassana, 14. She was young enough to enjoy childhood games with her siblings, but old enough to be a target for one of the violent militants whom her husband abandoned her and the children to.

In that moment, Hamayaji made a decision that would change all other family's lives. Speaking about it now, a range of emotions flit across her face as she recounts the happenings that precipitated the movement that would eventually save her daughter.

For women and girls, Boko Haram's atrocities are synonymous with destruction and bloodshed. She says, "I swear to God that they did not spare us."

In Nigerian, "Ammadun boko" means "the devil of our time". Hamayaji's memories are one of these.

Hidden in a hole

"I took a sheet which I spread across, she says, "inside of it, I wrapped a wooden box with the body of our daughter."

She and her daughter were not the only ones that lay in the hole. Four other children were also hidden in the same hole. They were all girls. According to Hamayaji, they had been there from the moment the group entered the village.

"I sang a song that the Devil knows and the devil knows it by the song," she says. "I sang it myself and went through the river."

Without water for days, Hamayaji's body broke down too. She noticed that she was losing blood and began to feel a sense of hopelessness. She decided to leave the hole.

"I came out of there when we were seven days away because I was feeling bad," she says. "I was almost dead."

Soldiers arrived

A month after Boko Haram attacked in Malamfah, it was raided by the Nigerian military.

When the army's soldiers arrived they were also searching for Hamayaji, asking her whether she had been married or not. She said she was hiding there, and the soldiers saw her, but she made a move to escape.

"I want to kill another, so I was spared because of their belief. They wrote something on the wall saying nicely to take her as a child to the madhouse, but I did not want that," she says.

After killing all the children in the room, the soldiers took them to a safe place.

Samuel Holland

Travel ban US prohibits visits to North Korea

China under pressure to allow Nobel laureate's wife move abroad

North Korea shrugs off sanctions to grow at fastest pace since 1999

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North Korea has shrugged off international sanctions imposed on it as a result of its nuclear tests and rocket launches to grow at its fastest pace since 1999.

In a statement to the United Nations Security Council, North Korea's foreign minister said that the country had not been a "troublemaker" and that "sanctions won't work" to contain its development of weapons.

North Korea has also requested that the UN Security Council be dissolved, as it believes that it is a "great danger" to the country.

The announcement comes amid growing tensions between North Korea and the international community, after its latest missile test.

Clifford Corkery

North Korea's economy shrugged off international sanctions as it posted its highest growth rate in two decades last year, the UN's latest report on North Korea has shown.

The country's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 8.8% in 2017, according to the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ECA). The growth rate is the highest since 1999, when the economy was hit by a famine and the lowest since 1973.

However, the report also noted that the country's per capita income remained relatively low, at $1,100, which is below the World Bank's threshold for poverty.

"While the economy has shown strength in recent years, it remains dependent on external assistance and internal reforms are needed to sustain growth," the report said.

The US government will ban Americans from travelling to North Korea for "security reasons" and will not extend travel visas to North Koreans who travel through South Korea, the State Department said yesterday.

The ban will affect "all Americans" and will last for 12 months from the date of the announcement, the State Department said.

The ban on North Korean citizens taking flights to the US through South Korea is also being expanded to include visitors from other countries.

"In response to the proliferation threat and the ongoing human rights abuses in the DPRK, the US government is imposing a travel ban on all North Korean citizens," the State Department said.

"We are also extending the ban to citizens of other countries who transit South Korea on their way to the US, including those who transit on their way to Europe or Asia.

"The ban is being implemented to prevent North Korean citizens from entering the US and to ensure that they are not able to obtain travel visas through South Korea.

The ban will also affect "all Americans" who travel to North Korea, the State Department said.

The US government has imposed a number of sanctions on North Korea in recent years, including economic sanctions and travel bans, in response to its nuclear and missile programs.

"We are committed to ensuring that North Korean citizens are not able to enter the US and that they are not able to obtain travel visas through South Korea," the State Department said.

The ban is expected to have a significant impact on tourism and business travel to North Korea, as well as on the ability of North Korean citizens to obtain travel visas.

The ban will take effect on March 13, 2018, and will last for 12 months from the date of the announcement.
**Syrians flee rebel-held Ghouta for second day**

Air strikes kill dozens in embattled enclave near Damascus

Turbo Kil 27 after shelling Kurdish-held town of Afrin in multi-sided war

Thousands of civilians were fleeing from besieged enclaves in Syria on Tuesday, including parts of the northern city of Afrin, raising the number of people in three cities fleeing as forces advance on the three cities, despite what would appear to be too late and would have to be overturned ad eath certificate of their deaths. The lawyer – who can’t be named because he hasn’t permission – said he had received death certificates for three of his clients in Afrin, who are still in the town, where they are being held captive.

More reports of the arrest and torture of refugees who return to government-held territories have been reported, with the Syrian People’s Council investigation into allegations by refugees living in Europe. The Syrian Times reported that a group of Syrian refugees are being returned home from countries where they have sought asylum, including family re-unification applications being rejected and problems in their newly arrived homes.

Three men had been arrested less than three months after coming back to the UK and had been awaiting trial for their return. The Syrian regime is known to have executed hundreds of thousands of people and forced hundreds of thousands across the border.

The court told him he was dead. I am officially dead, he replied, “I had to answer to the truth.” But the troops had come out yesterday. The Syrian army and allied rebel forces had recaptured the town from the rebels, and wanted to return to their homes.

A man drove his car into a group of soldiers, who were blocking the street in front of his home. The troops had come out yesterday, and wanted to return to their homes. But the man drove his car into a group of soldiers, who were blocking the street in front of his home.

More evidence of systemic arrest and torture of returning refugees

Sally Hayden

Tens of thousands of Syrians risk being sent back by host governments.

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