

# Starved, 'mutilated' and blackmailed migrants auctioned off as slaves by smugglers in Libya

**The migrants are forced to work as slaves after they run out of money to pay the smugglers to find them passage to Europe.**

By Lara Rebello

Updated November 18, 2017 07:33 GMT

Slave markets are springing up across Libya trading impoverished African migrants who have arrived on the Mediterranean coast dreaming of a new life in Europe. A new investigation has revealed people are being sold as modern-day slaves for as little as £300 (\$400).

According to CNN which exposed the racket, slave sales are conducted on the outskirts of the nation's capital, Tripoli, where auctions take place for various types of manual labourers. In one case, a video was made available, which shows the sale of "big strong boys for farm work".

An undercover operation revealed similar auctions where around a dozen people were sold in a matter of five to six minutes. "Does anybody need a digger? This is a digger, a big, strong man, he'll dig," an auctioneer calls out in one clip. "What am I bid, what am I bid?"

The interested bidders raise their hands till a final price is decided on following which the new slaves are transferred in the possession of their new "masters".

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Slavery is getting a boost in places like Libya that are seeing a wave of desperate migrants from North Africa, hoping to find a better life in Europe. A crackdown by local authorities on boats ferrying people to the coast of Italy has turned smugglers to another profession — that of flesh traders.

At a detention centre in Tripoli, one man recalled how he ended up becoming an indentured servant after he ran out of money. Victory, 21, left Nigeria with his life savings and hopes of a



He expected to pay off his debt through work but was unable to make enough. Finally his smugglers contacted his family for ransom. He was released after paying them a total of more than \$2,780.

"If you look at most of the people here, if you check your bodies, you see the marks. They are beaten, mutilated," he said of his fellow detainees who have reportedly suffered a similar fate.

On being made aware of the slave trade in the region, the authorities said they were not aware of the auctions but confirmed the presence of organised gangs operating smuggling rings.

Earlier this year, the International Criminal Court (ICC) expressed interest in investigating crimes against immigrants in Libya, after the [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\)](#) warned about people being sold at slave markets in the country.

*This article was first published on November 15, 2017*

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**Kanyenje Muriithi**

7 hours ago

I am a dancer choreographer and I did a piece about African migrating to Europe escaping persecution, looking for greener pastures, But what they are encountering in libya it is a shame, where treat fellow African like that or just any human for that matter, they are video of ... more

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**Jeremy Pf**

13 hours ago

I guess President Obama's and Secretary Clinton's war in Libya/regime change did not work out for these people.

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**Nathan Keser**

13 hours ago

History will always repeat itself because we are not taught how to properly use our own minds. All of the biblical text tells use to not let the middle mind be the leading force in our lives and when we let it we commit sin and stray further from the lords words for us. Its time ... more

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**Pierre Harbin Ahmed**

46 hours ago

Arab American Imams should not be welcomed in American Islamic Centers as long as they fail to speak out against the genocide being carried out in Libya in the name of pan-Arabism. Arab and Pakistani Imams often weave into their Friday Kutbah, an appeal for aid to Syrian, Iraqi ... more

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**Viivi Senghore**

2 days ago

When a wrong is wrong, it does not matter who does it. What matters is who STOPS it!



wakitambo

2 days ago

Islam is religion of slavery. Arabs are the masters and blacks are seen as slaves. Wake up black people

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**Pierre Harbin Ahmed**

47 hours ago

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**Pierre Harbin Ahmed**

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You are confusing Islam with the ideology of white supremacy, i.e., Arab nationalism. You fail to point out that the crimes committed against the humanity of African people in Libya is committed by Arabs against Sub-Saharan African people. Many of the enslaved people in Libya ... more

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**Allen Battssonelli**

42 hours ago

**@Pierre Harbin Ahmed** First off, why don't you stop blaming White people for your problems and issues in life? Every single time something doesn't go your way, and or something doesn't compute with your paradigm, its time to complain and scream "White Supremacy?" I don't ... more

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**Eyes Ofpro**

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#LaKeshanetwork #5000Elite

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**Denise Shabazz Muhammad**

3 days ago

Under The Leadership Of My Brother Maui Maui Gaddafi This Would Have Never Been Allowed...I Pray Our Other Afrikan Nations Will Assist Our Family.

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**Rollen Norico Pecson Salmon Nolasco**

3 days ago



Judas committed unforgivable sin, because he confess his sin to the Pharisees ... more

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**Pierre Harbin Ahmed**

*46 hours ago*

To my knowledge, none of the enslaved African people in Libya are Jewish or Hebrew. They are Muslim or Christian, or Traditionalist. The crimes Arabs are committing against the humanity of African people in Libya are because of their false pride in the so-called Arab race. Their ... more

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