

North korea's death camps

[Business](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Deep within the Rangrim Mountains of North Korea, hidden from the watchful eye of the world, lie some of the most atrocious human rights violations that have ever existed.

North Korea's labor camps are built around a twisted ideology that encourages the infliction of pain as a routine activity. The careful dismantlement of these camps should be a non-aggressive process, as to not provoke a volatile government in possession of nuclear weapons. The labor camps in North Korea hold many secrets, so much so that North Korea doesn't even acknowledge their existence. However, through satellite imaging and scarce testimonials of escapees, it's been possible to confirm their location. What is known about the camps is based almost exclusively off of accounts from former guards or prisoners that somehow escaped.

Prisoners are often sent to the camps for reasons as trivial as sitting on the image of Kim Jong Il, or singing a popular South Korean song. Many of the prisoners at the labor camps are political prisoners, sent there as a way of preventing public dissent and suppressing any possible revolt against the government. The labor camps are a way for Kim Jong Il and the Communist regime to maintain power, controlling their people through fear. In addition, the labor camps are also vital to North Korea's economy. Many of the natural resources that are extracted or products manufactured in North Korea, such as: " minerals, metallurgical properties, manufactures (including armaments), textiles, agricultural and fishery products," (CIA World Factbook), come from these labor camps.

Without the labor camps, North Korea's production and exportation would go from miniscule to almost non-existent. In the camps, corporeal punishment is commonplace. Guards inflict unreal amounts of pain upon prisoners for little more than amusement. Stories have been told of fetuses being aborted by injecting salt water into the uterus. If that is not effective, the baby is strangled upon delivery. One escapee, Lee Soon Ok, recounts how, " Guards stepped on her head, knocking out teeth and skewing the left side of her face.

During one beating her left eye started to pop out of its socket," and how they, " force-fed her water by pushing the spout of a canister into her mouth. They laid a wooden plank across her abdomen- and pressed down, forcing water out through her mouth, nose, and bladder," (Omestad). Prisoners are subjected to horrific working conditions, often dying from exhaustion, which is accelerated by tiny rations and beatings by guards. As horrific as some of the accounts are, there is still very little international awareness of the situation. Even many South Koreans are ignorant of the civil rights violations that are occurring just across the border.

Raising international awareness of the situation, through the media, would put pressure on North Korea to change. The first step for change is having North Korea admit the existence of these camps. However, North Korea will not simply admit the existence of these camps on its own accord. In the past, negotiating with North Korea has proven to be similar to negotiating with a child. If the United States can offer something in exchange for revealing the existence of the camps, such as lifting some of the sanctions imposed on the country, they might be more willing to act.

<https://assignbuster.com/north-koreas-death-camps/>

Negotiations like this are not possible without pressure from the public. If it can become common knowledge that there are labor camps in North Korea, and the public knows about the atrocities that take place there, it will make the acknowledgment by North Korea much easier. The second step would be for North Korea to allow international officials to examine these camps.

These officials would report any violations of international codes and civil rights violations. This would provide a diplomatic, interim step. Once North Korea had acknowledged that the camps existed, the examination of these camps would be soon to follow.

Examination would allow for more, credible information so that an informed decision on the best course of action by international authorities can be determined. The absolute abolishment of labor camps would be too large of a step for North Korea, especially since their economy relies upon the production at these labor camps. The immediate dismantlement of the labor camps would not be wise. Doing so could be perceived as an aggressive act by North Korea. Remember, the same people that instituted these Gulags also hold the keys to nuclear weapons. During the end of World War II, the Russians liberated many concentration camps through invasion and a wave of overwhelming force.

This can't be the case with North Korea. Unlike Nazi Germany, North Korea has the power to destroy any city in the world and initiate global nuclear warfare at the slightest provocation. Any action that could offend the North Korean regime or could be seen as a threat to their power could halt any diplomatic talk for years. The key is to be stern but not demeaning, demanding but not belittling.

<https://assignbuster.com/north-koreas-death-camps/>