



Faith went from Phnom to Bangkok for her flight to South Korea.

By 2017, the situation had gotten so critical, with widespread arrests and only 1,127 refugees making it to freedom, that some activists worried about the future of the Underground Railroad.

But even the brokers were not prepared for when the longtime tyrant of North Korea died in 2011 and power passed to his 20-something son, Kim Jong-un, who made it his priority to destroy the Underground Railroad. One of his first orders was

for guards to shoot anyone caught defecting over the border. Then he boosted the number of border guards and installed tens of thousands of surveillance cameras. He also persuaded China to further crack down on the Underground Railroad within its borders. The year before Jong-un took power, 2,706 refugees made it to freedom. The next year, 2012, only 1,502 did.

Kim and NKHR had gone their separate ways after working together in the early