

Feminist Newswires

Sudan Closes all Schools as Students are Killed in Country-Wide Protests

August 1, 2019

[GLOBAL](#)

As protesting students took the streets of Sudan, their cries were drowned by heavy gunfire which led to the authorities suspending all schools beginning this Wednesday. Governors of all states have been ordered to shut kindergartens, primary, and high schools until further notice.

Children in their uniform joined other demonstrators to protest horrific living conditions and food shortages. These street protests turned deadly on Monday when six people were killed and 62 were injured in demonstrations where security forces open fired in order to disperse the crowd.

The chaotic atmosphere in the country is the direct result of the recent Sudanese uprising. Rallies were held to protest rising costs of food and the shortage of basic amenities but eventually turned into a campaign calling for the removal of President Omar al-Bashir. A military council took control to oversee a transition of power after al-Bashir was removed from office, but civilians continued to protest for democratic elections.

Widespread violence has marked Sudan's political upheaval as paramilitary groups open fired on peaceful protestors earlier in June plunging the state deeper into mass bloodshed and chaos. These protests have been largely dominated and led by Sudanese women who were ferociously oppressed under Bashir's government. As women took part in protests, they were systemically targeted by security forces and soldiers who arrested, senselessly beat and raped women in order to deter them from protesting.

Media Resources: BBC 07/30/19, CNN 07/31/19, CNN 06/13/19, CNN As Equal Series

Independence Day Afghan Women's Handicraft Exhibition Uplifts Communities

August 9, 2019

GLOBAL, ECONOMY

This week, a three-day long exhibition of handicrafts made by Afghan women was showcased in Afghanistan's capital city, Kabul, to celebrate the country's 100th independence day. The handicraft exhibition was a part of several other upcoming programs focused on celebrating Afghan culture, people, and history.

Women from the capital and neighboring provinces were able to put their products on display and up for sale in their individual stalls. There were over 50 stalls in the exhibition. The exhibition included [things](#) such as handicrafts, edibles, jewelries, clothes and many other domestic items. While the exhibition proved to be a great program to celebrate Afghanistan's independence, it was also an amazing opportunity for Afghan women.

The exhibition provided a financially independent space for Afghan women looking to support their families and uplift their communities. The expo was also aimed at finding a market for the products made by Afghan women. Spozhmai Wardak, deputy of women's affairs minister, who attended the exhibition [said](#) that "organizing such programs are the best way to empower women in the country. Afghan women are skillful and they could become a good income source for their families."

Historic strides have been made in recent years especially in women's' rights in the country. Afghan women and the society have changed significantly for the better with the emergence of female entrepreneurs, political leaders, and even nightly news anchors.

Media Resources: Tolo News 08/05/19, Outlook Afghanistan 06/08/19

Cyntoia Brown, Victim of Sex Trafficking, Released from Prison after 15 Years

August 7, 2019

[POLICE, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN](#)

Wednesday morning, Cyntoia Brown was released from jail after being sentenced to life in prison for killing a man responsible for sex trafficking her when she was only 16. She was granted clemency in January by then Tennessee Governor Haslam.

Her clemency came after high-profile advocates and popular celebrities highlighted the injustice she had faced. Years after her sentencing, her case sparked widespread discussion across social media inspiring the hashtag [#FreeCyntoiaBrown](#). Her case was also brought to the world's attention through filmmaker Dan Birman's documentary that filmed her case from trial to her incarceration. Celebrities like Rihanna and Kim Kardashian took her case to their millions of followers around the world explaining the horrible injustice she was facing as she suffered in prison. Kim Kardashian even called her personal attorneys to work Cyntoia Brown's case.

Brown was tried as an adult at the age of 16 and convicted of first-degree murder for killing a 43-year old man. She had testified that she was forced into prostitution by a pimp and then solicited for sex to Johnny Mitchel Allen who she then later shot and killed. She claimed that she resisted Allen and killed him in self-defense in the hope that she could escape the horrifying abuse.

Advocates have highlighted how institutional racism and discrepancies in the criminal justice system criminalize black and brown girls by labeling them as prostitutes when they are victims of sex trafficking. According to the Bureau of Justice, more than 1,000 children are arrested for prostitution every year in the United States. Many have also argued that cases like Brown's should be reconsidered under the new "safe harbor" laws that protect minors that are trafficked into sex slavery from criminal charges.

Media Resources: U.S Department of Justice 10/2012, The Root 11/21/17, NPR 12/01/17, CNN 08/07/19