

Doctors 'made

Egypt

Bel Trew Cairo

Doctors, nurses and university professors were among 25 people arrested as police smashed what they called Egypt's largest organ-smuggling ring.

The trade has become a multimillion-dollar business in Egypt, where kidneys, corneas, parts of livers and hearts are known to sell for well over \$200,000 (£160,000) on the black market. Impoverished migrants are targeted as potential donors.

Traffickers took advantage of the tough economic circumstances suffered by the poorest, a statement issued by the country's official anti-corruption body said. Millions of dollars, jewellery

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millions from refugee organs'

and laptops were also seized, it said. The health ministry said that the suspects included personnel at Cairo and Ain Shams universities as well as doctors working in the National Institute of Urology and Nephrology and some privately owned laboratories. Gang members face up to seven years in jail if convicted.

In 2010 the World Health Organisation said Egypt was one of the top five countries for illicit organ sales.

In April images on social media showed the bodies of nine Somali migrants found on a beach in Sinai that were covered in huge scars, believed to be from having organs removed. In July a former Eritrean people smuggler, Nouredin Atta, told Italian police that

migrants in Libya were being sold for \$15,000 to Egyptians for organ harvesting.

Kidney donors can expect to receive between £2,000 and £15,000, depending on whether they "know the market value of their organ", according to Sean Columb, a law lecturer at the University of Liverpool. The brokers, lab technicians and surgeons then sell the kidney for upwards of £160,000.

Egypt was well placed for the trade—accessible to the Gulf, with good healthcare facilities and more advanced transplant systems, he said. There was also a huge domestic demand for organs, with chronic levels of kidney disease and organ failure within the country.

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