

In China, Fraudsters Prepare Fake Defectors from North Korea

By [Oleg Kiryanov](#)

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Significant financial benefits, which Western governments are ready to pay to refugees from North Korea, have attracted the attention of fraudsters in China.

As reported by the South Korean newspaper “Chosun Ilbo”, in Beijing there is now a special “Academy”, which teaches ethnic Koreans of China how to impersonate “a defector from repressive North Korea” and eventually to get the refugee status, benefits, and citizenship in the West.

Experts confirmed to “Rossiyskaya Gazeta” that the problem of bogus defectors does exist, and has also acquired noticeable dimensions.

As reported by “Chosun Ilbo”, citing sources in Beijing area of Wangjing, where a large number of ethnic Koreans live, there are special courses or “Academy” where they promise to turn you into a refugee from North Korea.

Main customers are naturally Chinese Koreans who are Chinese citizens, but are fluent in Korean, having the accent, similar to the Northern areas of the DPRK. In these “educational institutions” they help customers to make up stories about their “life and escape from North Korea”, and at the same time to provide documents confirming imaginary stories.

Ethnic Koreans living in northeast China generally speak Korean as a native tongue, and their dialect is similar to that used in some regions of the DPRK. In addition, they know what is happening “across the border” that allows them to pretend to be defectors.

“This problem really occurs. I haven’t heard about the special Academy previously, but that is true that the citizens of China often take the guise of defectors. This is especially prevalent in third countries, where there are more benefits for defectors, and the low level of training of immigration officers on the DPRK facilitates this deception. As far as I know, according to the assumptions of some public organizations, about **half of the “defectors from the DPRK”, which arrived in Australia and received the status of refugees, are really simple ethnic Koreans from China,**” – said to “Rossiyskaya Gazeta”, one Western expert.

He added that even South Korean intelligence services, which are much better able to separate North Koreans from all the others, often get it wrong. “According to one of employees of the South Korean counter-intelligence, they admit that one or two percent of defectors who to get to South Korea are not North Koreans. If you live across the river from a North Korean village, then you know very well the details of the life of the neighbours, and some cheaters use that,” said the expert.

The problem is not just that under the guise of refugees ordinary Chinese come to the West in the pursuit of benefits, but also a more suspicious attitude to the real escapees from North Korea. "Often, many run from the DPRK, not having any documents. And then there are "graduates of the academies" of China, where teachers provided them with documents confirming their story. The result is that you believe the second, while the real defectors are waiting for their fate for a long time and are constantly under suspicion," said one of the employees of South Korean media, which deals with the coverage of the topic of the DPRK

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