



Interview Four : #K.M

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Abstract:

"In search of a new beginning away from familial pressures, I set out on a chance journey from Côte d'Ivoire to Tunisia. Integrating into the capital city, Tunis, was more difficult than I expected. After only a month, due to aggression and discrimination, I considered going home. However, fate led me to Ras Djebel, Bizerte, an understanding and tolerant local community that welcomed me. Today I am facing a significant challenge: obtaining a residence card. I am concerned about my daughter's education as our residency situation remains uncertain..."

Story:

M, a 33-year-old man from Côte d'Ivoire, graduated in criminology, but his family's pressure to find employment caused considerable stress.

Driven by the constant demands of his family and seeking a fresh start, M impulsively secured a loan and embarked on an unplanned journey to Tunisia in 2019, guided by a 'friend' who had advised it as an alternative for better job opportunities.

His first destination was the capital city of Tunis, but the initial days and weeks posed immense challenges. M struggled to adapt to his new surroundings and quickly found himself on the verge of returning to his homeland, only one month after his arrival. M's attempts to integrate into Tunis society proved elusive, and the relentless aggression and discrimination he faced only intensified his frustration.

However, M was not one to give up easily. With determination and resilience, he pressed forward and relocated to Ras Jebel in Bizerte, a region in northern Tunisia. There, he found a more welcoming and tolerant local community, where he could start anew.

But the possibility of obtaining the essential residence card was a major obstacle. The bureaucratic complexities were so great that they made even the most basic duties impossible. These complications made it difficult to obtain a bank account, which was necessary for establishing oneself in a foreign nation. He needed a bank account to get paid for his employment, and getting this card turned into a complicated process.



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M's concerns began to extend towards his daughter, who would soon reach school age. The uncertainty of her legal status and residency left him apprehensive. His wife, determined to secure their family's place in Tunisia, had found employment, diligently paid taxes, and worked tirelessly to navigate the bureaucratic maze for the required papers. Their commitment was unwavering.

Their perseverance eventually resulted in an invitation from the border police, where they provided their digital fingerprints. While they hoped this might signal progress toward obtaining their long-awaited residence cards, no further information was forthcoming.

M harboured no thoughts of embarking on the path of illegal immigration. His priorities remained clear: securing the necessary papers for his daughter's future and establishing a reputable plumbing company in Tunisia. He carried within him a fighter's spirit, resolute in his pursuit of a brighter future, one that promised dignity and peace within the local community.

M's story repeatedly highlighted the urgent need for an online forum, a space where migrants could come together, share important information, and provide procedural advice. This cooperative endeavour has the potential to significantly improve the path for migrants like M, serving as a ray of hope for them as they pursue legal documentation and a better future for their families.

