

Twelve refugee workers die in Italian road crash



Rome, August 7 (RHC)-- Twelve refugee workers have lost their lives in southern Italy when the van they were traveling in collided with a semi-truck. Local officials said the accident took place near the city of Foggia in the southern Italian region of Puglia, adding that all the dead came from North Africa and had been returning home after spending the day working in the farms.

Pictures from the scene showed a white minivan flipped on its roof and lying in the middle of the road following a head-on collision with a truck that had been carrying flour. The accident happened two days after four African refugees died in a similar crash in the same region.

Thousands of refugees from around Europe and Africa work in Puglia, picking tomatoes during harvest season in the summer. Most refugees working in the fields in Italy have regular papers, but they live in squalid conditions and suffer tough working conditions and low pay.

In a separate incident on Monday, at least two people were killed and more than 60 others injured after two trucks collided on a motorway near Bologna airport in northern Italy. Italian media said a truck carrying cars collided on a bridge with another tanker-truck containing inflammable materials, adding that part of the bridge collapsed and the resulting explosion and fire spread to a car park below the bridge, where several other vehicles caught fire and exploded.

Reports said firefighters and ambulances had swiftly been dispatched to the scene. Footage released from the scene showed billows of black smoke soaring into the sky, with police saying they had closed off the road where the crash took place as well as the surrounding area.

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