

Eight migrants dead, at least 10 injured, following deadly vehicle crash in Brownsville, Texas

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Around 8:30 a.m. Sunday morning a man driving a silver Land Rover sport utility vehicle at a high rate of speed appeared to deliberately drive into a crowd of immigrants, including children, waiting at a bus stop in Brownsville, Texas. As of this writing, eight people have been confirmed killed, and at least 10 were injured.

Video taken from a security camera at the Ozanam Center, the only migrant and homeless shelter in Brownsville, shows roughly 20 people sitting on the curb outside the shelter waiting for a bus to arrive. Suddenly a silver Land Rover comes flying into frame and mounts the curb, in the process striking and killing several people, while also sending dozens of bodies flying through the air.

Speaking to local NBC affiliate *Valley Central*, Luis Herrera, one of the victims of Sunday's deadly crash, said he and his friends were waiting at the bus stop for a ride to the airport. "It happened unexpectedly," he recalled, "because a woman in a car passed by and advised us to separate and moments later the killer was coming in the car gesturing and insulting us."

In an interview with the *Washington Post*, Herrera said that driver was "taunting" people standing at the bus stop prior to the attack.

"He crossed the street, and he hit the gas and he drove by my legs, and hurt my arm," Herrera told the *Post* in Spanish. "The others, he killed almost all of them."

Herrera told the paper he remembered the driver yelling: "You're invading my property!"

Another survivor of the crash, Jesus, a Venezuela immigrant who has been at the shelter for the last three days, told *Valley Central*, "We were waiting there, and the truck sped through the traffic light, and by the grace of God nothing happened to us, but they did hit the others around us."

Seemingly confirming it was a targeted attack, another witness speaking to the *New York Times*, Michael Eduardo de Aponte Fonseca, a Venezuelan migrant, said the driver yelled anti-immigrant insults to the group while he fled.

"I saw what happened around me, and I didn't want to see more," Fonseca told the paper. "I grabbed my things ... scared and in shock, I crossed the street."

While multiple witnesses have stated it appeared to be a targeted attack, Brownsville police Officer Martin Sandoval told news outlets Sunday that it is unknown at this time if the crash was intentional, accidental or due to driver impairment. Sandoval said the driver is Hispanic and a resident of Brownsville and that he is being "uncooperative."

"He's being very uncooperative at the hospital, but he will be transported to our city jail as soon as he gets released," Sandoval said. "Then we'll fingerprint him and [take a] mug shot, and then we can find his true identity."

According to *NewsNation* reporter Ali Bradley, witnesses at the scene of the crash detained the driver until police arrived.

As of this writing the driver has been arrested on one count of reckless driving.

Victor Maldonado, shelter director at Ozanam Center, told the Associated Press that prior to the crash the center had not received any threats, but they have subsequent to the mass casualty event.

“I’ve had a couple of people come by the gate and tell the security guard that the reason this happened was because of us,” Maldonado said.

In an interview with the *Washington Post*, Osvaldo Prieto, a worker at the shelter, confirmed that the driver “ran them over, all of them.” Like Maldonado, Prieto told the *Post* he had not been aware of any threats against the shelter prior to the crash. However, he added, “It’s not a secret that this is a place where migrants are being welcomed.”

Brownsville is located in the Rio Grande Valley, opposite Matamoros, Mexico, and is the center of US Border Patrol operations. Speaking from the border town this past Friday, some 48 hours before the deadly crash, US Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, surrounded by Customs and Border Patrol agents, gave a press conference preceding the lifting of Title 42 restrictions and the imposition of new anti-immigrant measures.

Mayorkas issued threats to prospective migrants. He boasted, “We have a plan, we are executing on that plan, I have come to McAllen (Texas) and Brownsville to see firsthand that plan in action.” He warned potential migrants and asylum seekers: “We will deliver consequences to those who arrive at [the] southern border irregularly.”

Mayorkas added that “the border is not open, it has not been open and it will not be open.” Like former President Donald Trump, who has pledged if he becomes president again to expand the border agencies in order to carry out the “largest deportation operation in history,” Mayorkas hailed the various immigrant and border police as “extraordinary.”

While it is unclear at this time if the crash was intentional, Biden and the Democratic Party have worked with the Republicans in demonizing immigrants and playing up a manufactured “border crisis.” This has contributed to the poisoning of the political atmosphere, particularly in Texas, as seen in the mall massacre in Allen, a suburb of Dallas, the previous day.

The attacks on immigrants are an attack on the democratic rights of the entire working class, which has no country. They are being used by both capitalist parties to justify an expansion of the federal border police as well as additional anti-democratic measures which will be used against the entire working class.



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