

Beat: Miscellaneous

Road accident in central Pakistan kills 26, injures 13

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USPA News - Women and children were among at least 26 people killed Tuesday when an overloaded passenger van collided head-on with a pick-up truck on a highway in central Pakistan, local authorities said. Police said it was likely caused by speeding.

The accident happened on a stretch of highway near the city of Bahawalpur, located in Punjab province near the border with India, when a packed passenger van collided head-on with a truck. The crash took place as the van was overtaking another vehicle just before a blind turn. A district police official said at least 26 people were killed, including eleven women and two children, while thirteen others were critically injured and rushed to area hospitals. It is believed both vehicles were heavily overloaded, with the pick-up truck carrying 15 people and the 14-seater van carrying 22. Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari expressed his "deep grief" over the loss of life in Tuesday's accident. In a condolence message, Zardari said he prayed upon Allah to rest the departed souls in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved families to bear their loss. Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf also expressed condolences. Road accidents are common in Pakistan with more than 5,500 fatalities in 2007, making it one of the world's worst records for road accidents, according to the most recent figures released by national police. Many accidents are the result of poor infrastructure and the disregard of traffic laws.

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