SCRIPT SOUTH TEXAS A NEW SPOT FOR ILLEGAL CROSSING

Illegal immigrants coming from Mexico used to cross into the US through California. As the government put up fences and stepped up surveillance, immigrants found it easier to cross into Arizona. That migration movement now too difficult, the new entry point is in Texas. This has left the border patrol and local authorities straining to deal with a surge of immigrants, not all of them survive that journey. And NPR Ted Robins reports from the American side of the Rio Grande river.

(reporter) We begin in Reynoso, Mexico, just across the Rio Grande from Mc Allen,Texas, in Casa Del Mi Grande, a catholic-run shelter. It’s a relatively safe place in what can be a dangerous city for migrants like Mario Torres. Soft-spoken 25-year-old has already travelled 15 hundred miles from his home in Honduras. He paid fees to guides and bribes to bandits rather than staying home he says:

(Mario Torres translated) I couldn’t find work, I came with my wife.

(reporter) We came together, the 2 of us, he says. Criminals killed one of our brothers. We had to come because they were threatening us. Torres was a truck driver, his wife a highschool teacher. He said they had no choice but to escape the poverty and violence in Honduras, the country with the highest murder rate in the world. His wife is already in the US with relatives in South Carolina. They paid smugglers a premium price for her to cross safely: $ 13 000.

(Mario Torres translated) I have a cousin in the United States, he says. She loaned us the money […]