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Italian police arrest 40 'Ndrangheta suspects: media

MILAN, Italy, Nov. 18 (Xinhua) -- A total of 40 people suspected of links with the 'Ndrangheta syndicate were detained on Tuesday mainly across the wealthy regions of northern Italy, local reports said.

The syndicate was based in the southern region of Calabria and was considered Italy's most powerful mafia. The operation, which resulted from a two-year investigation, was carried out in industrialized Lombardy, of which the capital is Milan, and Veneto as well as in Sicily, a less developed southern region. The arrested, allegedly belonging to three clans operating in Lombardy, were charged with mafia association, extortion and illegal possession of weapons, according to Milan-based *Corriere della Sera* newspaper. Milan Prosecutor Ilda Boccassini told a press conference that a swearing-in ceremony during a convivial gathering of members of the three clans was filmed for the first time during the investigation.

A study conducted by **Demoskopika**, a research institute based in the town of Rende in southern Italy, said earlier this year that turnover of 'Ndrangheta was equal to 3.5 percent of Italian gross domestic product (GDP) in 2013. The syndicate, which is widely considered Italy's most powerful mafia, made 53 billion euros (66.4 billion U.S. dollars) in revenues last year, the study said. According to **Demoskopika**, 'Ndrangheta counted around 60,000 affiliates in some 30 countries of the world.