

3 injured as criminals fire on private car

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Three people including two hijras were injured when unidentified assailants stopped their car and opened fire on them on Baipail-Abdullahpu Highway in Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

The injured are chief of Ashulia transgender community Abdul Rashida, 40, a member of the same community Shikha, 28, and driver Nurun Nabi, 24.

Police said four transgender people from Jamgara area of Ashulia were heading towards Tongi to attend a community meeting when a microbus intercepted their vehicle near Moragang Bridge around 10:30am.

Three to four unidentified attackers had opened fire on the car and sped away. Hearing their scream, locals rushed to the spot and took the injured to Enam Medical College Hospital in Savar.

Of the injured, the condition of Rashida, who was at the Intensive Care Unit, was critical with bullet injuries in the abdomen and chest. Shikha suffered bullet injuries in the chest and Nurun Nabi in his left arm, doctors said.

Akhi, who was also in the car, said the unidentified criminals shot five to six bullets.

According to the community members, there are more than 500 transgender people living in several areas in Ashulia. They said they have no enmity with anyone who might plan to kill their chief.

Rezaul Haque, officer in-charge of Ashulia police, said the reason behind the attack could not be known, adding, they are investigating the matter.

The transgender communities of Savar and Ashulia demanded fair investigation into the incident and immediate arrest of the attackers.

MP's event

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They cooked here. Several thousand people took turns to eat in the classrooms."

He added that all classes would resume from today.

Some of the students who came yesterday were turned away by the litter and smell.

"I came to school after two days only to find that there is no way I could stay there for long," said a teenager.

The feast was part of lawmaker Khandakar Azizul Haque Arzu's effort to get the Awami League ticket in the next elections, locals said.

Asked, lawmaker Azizul Haque Arzu told reporters on Saturday that the students and parents would have no problem with what was happening.

"The parents and children are willingly making the sacrifice.... I am their guardian," he said.

Contacted, Shajahan Ali Saju, president of the school governing body, said he saw nothing wrong with holding the programme there.

"The institution is located near the MP's house. So the campus was used for the purpose," he said.

Bera Upazila Parishad Chairman Abdul Kader, also president of the Upazila Education Committee, said nobody had the right to do such a thing.

"Nobody can do this. It is very painful when a lawmaker does such a thing..." he said.

Germany

FROM PAGE 16

cities of Cuxhaven, Bremerhaven, Bremervoerde and Buxtehude in northern Germany -- a stretch normally plied by diesel trains.

"The world's first hydrogen train is entering into commercial service and is ready for serial production," Alstom CEO Henri Poupart-Lafarge said at an unveiling ceremony in Bremervoerde, the station where the trains will be refuelled with hydrogen.

Alstom has said it plans to deliver another 14 of the zero-emissions trains to Lower Saxony state by 2021, with other German states also expressing an interest.

Hydrogen trains are equipped with fuel cells that produce electricity through a combination of hydrogen and oxygen, a process that leaves steam and water as the only emissions.

Excess energy is stored in ion lithium batteries on board the train.

The Coradias iLint trains can run for around 1,000 kilometres on a single tank of hydrogen, similar to the range of diesel trains.

Alstom is betting on the technology as a greener, quieter alternative to diesel on non-electrified railway lines -- an attractive prospect to many German cities scrambling to combat air pollution.

"Sure, buying a hydrogen train is somewhat more expensive than a diesel train, but it is cheaper to run," Stefan Schrank, the project's manager at Alstom, told AFP.

Other countries are also looking into hydrogen trains, Alstom said, including Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Italy and Canada.

In France, the government has already said it wants the first hydrogen train to be on the rails by 2022.



Hijras (transgender) wail in front of Enam Medical College and Hospital in Savar after unknown criminals shot two members of the community in Ashulia yesterday. Inset, one of the injured being taken to the operation theatre at the hospital.

PHOTO: STAR

Millions evacuated

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and bare hands to dig through mounds of rocky soil in the northern Philippine mountain town of Itogon, where 11 bodies have been pulled from the rubble and dozens more may still be trapped after a landslide buried an emergency shelter.

Relatives of the missing were among those taking part in the search for survivors, with little hope they are still alive.

"We believe that those people there, maybe 99 percent, are already dead," the town's mayor Victorio Palangdan told reporters.

Tearful families surrounded a whiteboard bearing names of the dead and missing as others inspected recovered bodies for signs these could be their loved ones.

Joan Catteg, 42, told AFP her missing cousin Harvey had taken shelter at the bunkhouse.

"He texted his wife not to worry. He said nothing bad will happen to him and that once the rain stops, he will go up. But he hasn't returned until now."

More than 155,000 people remain in evacuation centres in the Philippines two days after Mangkhut -- the world's most powerful storm this year -- struck, said national police spokesman Benigno Durana.

Across northern Luzon, which produces much of the nation's rice and corn, farms were under muddy floodwater, their crops ruined just a month before harvest.

Hong Kong began a massive cleanup yesterday after the typhoon raked the city, shredding trees and bringing damaging floods in a trail of destruction.

The government of the high-rise city described the damage as "severe and extensive" with more than 300 people injured.

The monumental task of cleaning up began as residents, some in suits and ties, struggled to get back to work on roads that remained blocked by felled trees, mud and debris.

Bus services were halted and commuters piled onto platforms trying to board infrequent trains after trees fell on overhead power lines. Schools will remain closed through today.

Landslides and severe flooding affected some areas, with over 1,500 residents seeking refuge in temporary

shelters overnight.

KING OF STORMS'

The storm, with gusts of more than 230 kilometres per hour (142 mph), sent buildings swaying and water surging into homes and shopping malls in Hong Kong, with some roads waist-deep in water.

Windows in tower blocks and skyscrapers were smashed as people crowded inside.

In the neighbourhood of Heng Fa Chuen, thousands of rocks and pebbles from the sea covered parkland along the coastline which had been battered by waves.

The city's main Victoria Park became an obstacle course with hundreds of trees down and many completely uprooted.

In the neighbouring gambling enclave of Macau, all 42 casinos shut down for the first time in its history as the storm approached.

They opened again yesterday but Macau was still in recovery mode after severe flooding hit parts of the city, forcing emergency workers to rescue people from shops and homes using boats and jetskis.

Yesterday morning, shopkeepers in Macau were hosing down their stores which had been caked in mud after the floodwaters receded.

The storm made landfall in mainland China late Sunday, killing four in Guangdong including three hit by falling trees.

Authorities there said they had evacuated more than three million people and ordered tens of thousands of fishing boats back to port before the arrival of what Chinese media dubbed the "King of Storms".

In the city of Zhuhai, a stone's throw from Macau, volunteers and police pulled fallen trees and debris off highways.

"I think it will take us three or four days before it gets back to normal," said Zhang, a police officer clearing a road near Nanshui town.

Rice paddies and banana plantations along the highway were flooded and destroyed, while some factories in nearby industrial areas suffered damage.

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Krishak Sramik Janata League President Kader Siddique, who once tilted towards B Chowdhury and Kamal Hossain, is maintaining regular contacts with AL leaders.

"We are observing the situation. We are yet to decide. We will decide considering the welfare of the country," Habibur Rahman Talukdar, general secretary of Krishak Sramik Janata League, told The Daily Star.

Bangladesh Nationalist Front (BNF) President SM Abul Kalam Azad also expressed his interest in staying with the AL alliance.

On Saturday, Juktofront, comprised of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and Nagarik Oikya, forged unity with Dr Kamal Hossain's Jatiya Oikya Prokriya. They said they would work together for their demand for election under a non-partisan interim government. The BNP is likely to form an alliance with them.

The Left Democratic Alliance, a newly formed platform of eight left-leaning parties, also raised the demand for holding of the parliamentary election under a non-partisan administration.

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