Beat: Travel

Bomb blast kills 3, injures 79 at train station in China;s Xinjiang

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USPA News - Knife-wielding attackers slashed people and set off explosives at a train station in China`s western region of Xinjiang on Wednesday, killing three people and injuring nearly 80 others, authorities said. It comes nearly two months after 29 died in an attack on another railway station.

The latest attack began at around 7:10 p.m. local time on Wednesday when a group of knife-wielding attackers slashed people at the exit of the South Railway Station in Urumqi, the capital of the restive region. They then set off explosives in an area between the station`s exit and a bus stop, causing a powerful explosion, before fleeing the scene. Officials from the regional committee of the Communist Party of China said three people were killed in the attack while 79 others were injured, including three people who were in a serious condition. The blast also damaged luggage and motorcycles and threw pedestrians in the area to the ground, according to witnesses. The attack comes nearly two months after a group of eight knife-wielding attackers went after a crowd at Kunming Railway Station, one of the largest railway stations in southwest China. A total of 29 people were killed and 143 others were injured before police shot dead four attackers and apprehended another. Three other attackers were later arrested. Responding to Wednesday`s attack, Chinese President Xi Jinping, who was visiting the region, urged "decisive actions" to stop further terrorist attacks. "The battle to combat violence and terrorism will not allow even a moment of slackness, and decisive actions must be taken to resolutely suppress the terrorists` rampant momentum," Xi said, as quoted by the state-run Xinhua news agency. Xi added that Xinjiang faces a long-term conflict against separatist forces, and said measures should be taken to safeguard the security of people of all ethnic groups. He also ordered all-out efforts of local authorities to treat the injured and to conduct a prompt investigation to find those responsible. The Kunming attack on March 1 followed a suicide car attack on Beijing`s Tiananmen Square in October 2013. Two people were killed and 40 others were injured when a jeep drove into crowds of tourists and police officers near the entrance to the Forbidden City that bears a giant portrait of communist revolutionary leader Mao Zedong. That attack was also blamed on a group from Xinjiang An estimated eight million Uighurs are living in the Central Asian region of Xinjiang, which is officially known as China`s Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. A large number of Uighur are reportedly unhappy about the large migrant Han Chinese settlers, accusing them of making their interests less important and generally disregarding their culture. Xinjiang was the scene of violent clashes between Uighur Muslims and Han Chinese in July 2009, leaving 197 people killed and more than 1,700 others injured. The riots were the region`s worst ethnic clashes in decades and the violence only stopped when a large number of troops were deployed to the remote western region. Following the riots, China cut all communications from the region to the rest of the world, including international phone calls, text messaging, and the Internet. Thousands of additional security forces have since been deployed and thousands of `riot-proof` closed-circuit television cameras have been set up in public places in an attempt to discourage any violence or unrest.

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UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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