

A Teacher Remembers



Abinta Kabir



Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain



Tarishi Jain

ALEX KEEFE & ANNIE RUSSELL

RUSSELL Williams, a teacher at the American International School of Dhaka, remembers three of his students – Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, Abinta Kabir and Tarishi Jain – who fell victim to one the deadliest terror attacks in the country that took the lives of 22 people. Williams spoke with VPR from California about his experiences over the past week. Here is the text of his interview.

On the students lost in the attack
“I’m dreading hearing an American here say something about Muslims, because — and this is from accounts that I’ve read on a bunch of different sites and also with talking with a few people — [the attackers] went in and said, ‘We are here to kill the foreigners. If you’re a Bangladeshi, you don’t have to

worry.’ They started separating people, and the determining factor was whether or not they could recite prayers from the Quran.

“There were three kids from our school, two girls and one boy. All three of them studied in the States and the one boy — Faraaz [Hossain] was a good Muslim boy. My friend told me that he used to see him at the mosque every Friday.

“And when the attackers quizzed him on his verses he passed and they told him he could go and he asked about his friends, the two young women that he was with. They were in western clothes and [the attackers] said no, they had to stay. And so Faraaz said that he was going to stay with them because he didn’t want to leave his friends.

“And he did that because he’s a good Muslim boy, because that’s what his culture tells him, that’s what his religion tells him. And I just can’t handle hearing people

talk about Muslims in that negative way because that’s why he stayed.”

On returning to Dhaka:

“I am apprehensive, but I’ll tell you something else: Two days after the attack when I went out I was on my way to the American Club and I stopped at an ATM. A guy came in and he started doing his business in the machine next to mine. We finished at the same time and he stopped as he went out and he just touched me on the shoulder, and he just looked at me and said, ‘I am so sorry,’ and almost looked like he was going to cry. And he said, ‘This is not Bangladesh. Please forgive us.’ And I feel like he represents the people that I’ve come to know there.”

To listen the interview please visit:
<http://www.thedailystar.net/dhaka-attack/teacher-3-dhaka-attack-victims-remembers-his-students-1256098>

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