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Description
Tokyo police suspect a right-wing religious cult of involvement in the deadly 1995 nerve gas attack in the Tokyo subway system, and of manufacturing the Sarin gas used.

Keywords

Transcript
Possible Suspect ID'd in Tokyo Subway Nerve Gas Attack
BRIAN WILLIAMS, anchor:
The death toll is now higher in Tokyo tonight, and all available investigators are on the case looking for who is responsible for the deadly nerve gas released in the city’s subway system. Tonight, in a series of raids across Japan, investigators are zeroing in on a 10,000-member right-wing Buddhist cult that's been accused of manufacturing nerve gas. The latest now from NBC's Lucky Severson in Tokyo.
LUCKY SEVERSON reporting:
At dawn today, police staged coordinated raids on several offices throughout Japan on the militant religious cult suspected of making sarin, the deadly chemical used in the subway attack. The cult is called Omu and has denied any link to the attack, and says it is a victim of religious persecution. Chasing other leads, police spent the day interviewing 30 eyewitnesses and have now identified a suspect passengers saw leave one of the poisonous containers in a car. But they haven't interviewed him because he is one of the 75 victims still in critical condition from exposure to sarin nerve gas.
Unidentified Woman #1: (Through translator) I think they were negligent in that investigation.
SEVERSON: There is increasing criticism here that Japanese police could have prevented this disaster had they not botched an investigation of another sarin incident last summer. They accused this man, Yoshiuki Kono, of concocting the deadly mixture that killed seven and injured hundreds. Kono had worked for an industrial chemist and had chemicals in his back yard, but it turned out, not the kind that could make sarin. His wife is still in a coma from the contamination, and he says he's almost glad terrorists struck Tokyo because it removed the cloud over his head. It was a national holiday in Japan, but 30 percent fewer people rode the subway than would normally on this day. A subway official posted a new sign that says, `We apologize for the inconvenience.' Workers spent the day detoxifying contaminated cars and dusting for fingerprints. Outside one station, a man sells gas masks for $520. Two days ago, the Japanese would have laughed. But as they raided the 10,000-member Omu cult with gas masks and riot gear, troops were prepared for physical resistance or even worse. Lucky Severson, NBC News, Tokyo.