

17 hurt as van rams crowd in China

By JESSICA MEYERS

SHANGHAI — A burning minivan careened into pedestrians on a sidewalk in downtown Shanghai on Friday, injuring 17 people, local police said.

The crash, which left the driver with injuries, occurred at 9 a.m. outside a Starbucks near People's Park, a popular green area in the center of the city. All of those hit were taken to the hospital, including three who were seriously injured.

Authorities suspect the driver, identified only by his surname, Chen, was illegally transporting hazardous materials and lighted the van on fire by smoking while driving. Chen, 40, works at a Shanghai metal products firm and has no criminal record.

A witness told the Paper, a local news outlet, that the van held several gas tanks. The fire was quickly extinguished, and the canisters did not appear to explode.

Videos posted online show firefighters extinguishing flames pouring from a gray van blackened by the fire. People lay unconscious on the ground.

An eyewitness who goes by the surname Qian told the Paper that people tried to break the van's window to reach the driver. "Maybe the driver passed out," the witness said.

Shanghai police are continuing to investigate.

China has dealt with numerous situations in recent years in which citizens have used vehicles as weapons. Attackers last year drove a car into a government building and set off explosives in the volatile western region of Xinjiang. More than 30 people died in 2014 when two cars plowed into shoppers at a busy market, also in Xinjiang. In 2013, five people died and 40 were injured when a vehicle slammed into a crowd and caught fire near Beijing's Forbidden City.

That incident occurred four months after a driver plowed into a crowd in Barcelona, Spain, killing 13, one of many vehicular attacks in Europe in recent years.

Friday's crash occurred as British Prime Minister Theresa May prepared to speak in Shanghai.

Meyers is a special correspondent. Nicole Liu, Kemeng Fan and Gaochao Zhang in The Times' Beijing bureau contributed to this report.



Korean Sport and Olympic Committee

NORTH and South Korean ice hockey players train together in Jincheon. Their first game, a friendly contest with Sweden, is Sunday.

One team, two vocabularies

[Korea, from A1] ples, including the terms for "one timer" and "leg save" and "back skating."

Despite these barriers, the players — the first combined Olympic team in any sport in Korean history — are learning to play together, organizers say. "They're getting along just fine," said Kim Jeong-min, a spokesman for the Korean Ice Hockey Assn.

Players from both sides do use perhaps the most common of shared words in hockey: "skate" and "puck." But their coaches have had to address other linguistic hiccups with a cheat sheet of common terms needed to communicate on the ice. It lists numerous basic phrases that initially caused confusion among the players, who haven't competed together until now.

Their first game, a friendly against Sweden, is set for Sunday in Incheon, a city near Seoul.

The language differences are a consequence of the political divide on the peninsula, which has persisted amid an uneasy truce between North and South that stopped Korean War hostilities in 1953. Residents in both nations generally are prevented from crossing the fortified border, and those in the North are restricted from consuming media produced in the South.

Much of their shared Korean language and alphabet, which traces its roots for

centuries, has remained the same during the last seven decades. But significant parts of the vocabulary, grammar and pronunciations have changed.

The divergent language has been documented by linguists working on a common dictionary, and it also poses challenges for researchers and the tens of thousands of people who've defected from the North to the South since the war.

"I have to do a little on-the-job training for North Korean things," said Curtis Melvin, an expert at the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University who has meticulously documented geography, government agencies and other institutions in the totalitarian North.

Melvin has taught himself to read and type the common alphabet for his work. He also has interns — many of them South Koreans — who get confused and amused by North Korean documents in ways both cultural and linguistic.

"The tone and the vocabulary and the imagery are all very striking to them, not just the language," he said.

Researchers have documented the effects of the changes on communication among people from both countries, which have for the most part continued as adversaries while some still feel an instinctive tug toward unification of the peninsula.

One recent study by the National Institute of the Korean Language polled 200 people from the South — and 300 who defected from the North — who had experience communicating with someone from the other side. The study revealed that most of them could understand each other, generally, but that North Koreans struggled to comprehend South Koreans in situations where foreign-derived words were used.

Some immigrants from the North — who risk their lives to leave — face difficulty and discrimination in the South because they lack vocabulary or use differing dialects and accents. Others struggle with cultural assimilation that's related to language, such as not understanding jokes or an unfamiliarity with pop culture references, said Lee Eunkoo, who cofounded an organiza-

tion that helps defectors.

"One of the refugees we taught had the experience of being fired from her job at a bakery because she didn't know the exact bread names, such as 'baguette,'" said Lee, whose group is called Teach North Korean Refugees.

Three-quarters of the North Koreans said official terms in the South — like those for government, banking and medical interactions — were confusing.

"In the North, we try to use Korean in education and sports, whereas here they tend to just use the terms as they are," said Ken Eom, a North Korean who defected to Seoul eight years ago.

In hockey, common phrases like the "butterfly style" — a technique in which the goaltender spreads out to protect the upper right, upper left, lower right and lower left portions of the net — can be confusing for the inter-Korean players.

North Korea's players are likely to call it *nabihyeong makk* — literally "butterfly blocking." In the South it's called *beoteopeullai* — another Korean-accented interpretation of an English

word.

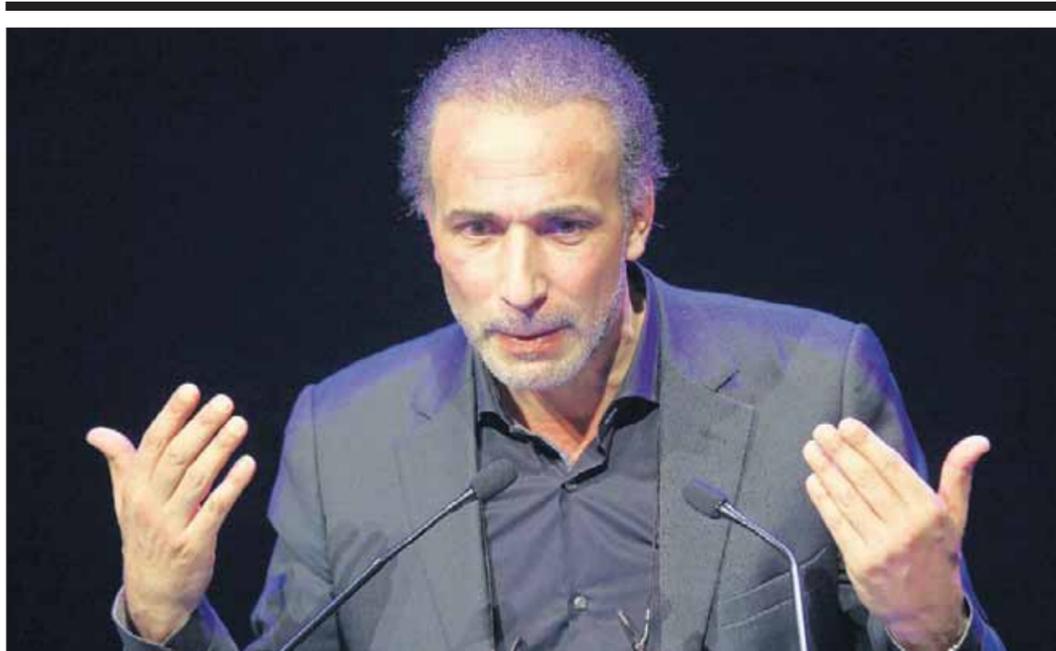
Compounding the difficulty, the inter-Korean squad enters the Olympics with a Canadian head coach, Sarah Murray, who doesn't speak Korean.

Murray, the daughter of former L.A. Kings coach Andy Murray, is relying on the South Korean manager and an assistant to translate her words to the players from the North, said Kim, the hockey association spokesman.

Even with more practice, the combined team wasn't favored to compete for a medal at the Games, which open Feb. 9. But there is evidence that they can learn to communicate more like a national team as the competition progresses.

"The more South Koreans actually talk to North Koreans, the lower their discomfort will be," said Park Seon, a researcher at the National Institute of the Korean Language. "More frequent communication and exchanges will diminish our discomfort with one another."

Stiles is a special correspondent.



MICHEL SPINGLER Associated Press

TARIQ RAMADAN, a Swiss national on leave from Oxford University, denies the allegations against him.

Scholar charged in 2 rape cases

Prominent Islamic academic is being held in France, where an inquiry is underway.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PARIS — Prominent Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan was handed preliminary charges in two cases of rape alleged by women who had sought his counsel, a judicial official said Friday.

Ramadan was jailed, at least temporarily.

Ramadan was placed under investigation on suspicion of rape in encounters in 2009 and 2012, the official

said. Both women filed the complaints last year.

The scholar, a Swiss national, asked to postpone a debate required before confinement, according to the judicial official, who was not authorized to speak publicly.

Ramadan denies wrongdoing and has filed his own suit asserting false allegations.

An investigating magistrate in charge of the case followed the request of the Paris prosecutor's office in charging him. Ramadan has been in custody in Paris since Wednesday.

Preliminary charges mean that after a full investigation the suspect can either be freed for lack of

grounds or be indicted and sent to trial. The investigation can be lengthy.

The prosecutor's office has asked the judge to keep Ramadan in custody, probably because of concerns he could leave the country.

Ramadan is on leave from England's Oxford University, where he is a profes-

sor of contemporary Islamic studies. He travels frequently and has written numerous books on Islam and the integration of Muslims in Europe.

He is being investigated by French authorities because the rapes are alleged to have taken place in Paris and Lyon.

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