

Exec mutilated in pet facility

Room searched where other killings are suspected

URAWA, Saitama Pref. (Kyodo) A laboratory analysis has confirmed that a 39-year-old company executive, one of four people whom a dog breeder under arrest has either admitted or hinted at having murdered, was mutilated inside a washing room for dogs at a facility in Katsushina, Gunma Prefecture, investigation sources said Monday.

Further analysis is being conducted by police on sand and other material confiscated from the washing room at the dog training facility, they said.

Investigators are concentrating on finding hair and any tiny pieces of bone that might be in the sand, they said.

It is possible that the 53-year-old dog breeder, Gen Sekine, used the same washing room to mutilate other victims, according to the sources. Sekine has hinted that he is involved in the disappearance of three more of his patrons who have been listed as missing.

Sekine has been in custody for allegedly abandoning the body of Akio Kawasaki, the company executive.



OMIYA, Saitama Pref. — Gen Sekine, a dog breeder suspected of murdering his customers, is shown with his van and a dog in a photo taken last February.

KYODO PHOTO

Police said that if murder charges are substantiated they will ask the court to issue a second arrest warrant for Sekine.

On Sunday, police arrested Nagayuki Yamazaki, 38, a dog trainer and former board member of Sekine's company, on suspicion of helping Sekine dispose of Kawasaki's body.

Yamazaki told police Monday that Sekine had obtained poison from an acquaintance who is a vet, according to the sources. The poison is usually used to put dogs to sleep.

Yamazaki has been quoted as saying that he was not involved in the murder of Kawasaki and that he saw Sekine giving Kawasaki a drink shortly before he disappeared, the sources said.

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Yamazaki was also quoted as saying that he helped Sekine dispose of the bodies of three people as well as Kawasaki in 1993, the sources said.

According to police, Sekine mutilated the body of Kawasaki, put each piece in a plastic bag and burned them inside a drum near the site.

Police suspect that the three missing people were dog lovers who disappeared in Saitama Prefecture at about the same time as Kawasaki.

According to sources close to Sekine, Kawasaki purchased one male and one female Rhodesian Ridgeback from Sekine for about ¥11 million in early 1993.

Kawasaki received only one of the dogs and was demanding that Sekine return part of the fee around the time he went missing, the sources said.

Kawasaki disappeared after leaving work at a factory in Kumagaya, Saitama Prefecture, on April 21, 1993, the sources said.

Police suspect that Kawasaki was murdered in a dispute over money, they said.

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Dog breeder confesses to slaying

Former employee admits to helping dispose of bodies

URAWA, Saitama Pref. (Kyodo) A dog breeder in Saitama Prefecture has confessed to killing a 39-year-old male customer, one of several of the man's customers who are missing, police sources said Sunday.

Gen Sekine, 53, under arrest since Thursday for allegedly abandoning the body of company executive Akio Kawasaki of Saitama Prefecture, has provided investigators with information about the murder of the man, the sources said.

Police will file another arrest warrant on Sekine if the confession is corroborated, the sources said.

A team of investigators from Saitama and Gunma prefectural police arrested Nagayuki Yamazaki, 38, one of Sekine's former employees, Sunday afternoon on sus-

picion of damaging and dumping Kawasaki's body in conspiracy with Sekine, police said.

Sekine's former wife, Hiroko Kazama, 37, was also taken into custody Thursday for allegedly dumping Kawasaki's body in a forest in Gunma Prefecture, north of Saitama, in April, 1993.

Kawasaki disappeared on the evening of April 20 last year after leaving his company in Kumagaya, Saitama Prefecture, police said.

His family said Kawasaki had previously purchased two rare dogs — Rhodesian Ridgebacks, used for hunting lions — for ¥11 million from a pet shop owned by Sekine earlier the same year but had a disagreement with him about the deal.

The suspects were sent to prosecutors Saturday. Kaz-

ma has so far remained silent, police sources said.

Sekine has told police that he dismembered the man with a knife, burning and abandoning the body in Katsushina Village in Gunma Prefecture, the sources said.

Meanwhile, Yamazaki told police that he helped the dealer dump the bodies of three more people, all of whom had business contacts with Sekine, investigative sources said.

The three are believed to be a 51-year-old man from Konan, Saitama, and his 21-year-old driver, as well as a 54-year-old woman from Gyoda, Saitama, the sources said.

The two men disappeared in July 1993 and the woman disappeared the following month.

Yamazaki's testimony has led police to suspect that Sek-

ine and others disposed of the four bodies at a dog training area owned by Yamazaki in the village of Katsushina, they said.

Saitama police secured testimony regarding the abandoning of the bodies from an acquaintance of both Sekine and Yamazaki. The acquaintance heard Yamazaki say that he "helped Sekine dismember and abandon the bodies of the four people" at various locations, they said.