

Monday, January 9, 1995

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 Katashina 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 Katashina, 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.