

Ibaraki station stabber gets his wish: the death sentence

MITO, Ibaraki Pref. (Kyodo) A man who says he wants to end his boring life by being executed appeared to get his wish Friday when he was sentenced to hang for a stabbing spree last year that claimed two lives and left seven people wounded in Tsuchiura, Ibaraki Prefecture.

The Mito District Court sentenced Masahiro Kanagawa, 26, to death — the very idea that motivated him to carry out the stabbings — after psychiatric examinations deemed him mentally competent to be held legally responsible for his actions.

On March 19, 2008, Kanagawa fatally stabbed Yoshikazu Miura, 72, at Miura's home in Tsuchiura and went on a second attack four days later at Arakawaoki Station, killing Takahiro Yamakami, 27, and wounding the seven others.



No mercy sought, given: Masahiro Kanagawa, who randomly stabbed two people to death and injured seven others last year in Tsuchiura, Ibaraki Prefecture, stands Friday before the Mito District Court, which sentenced him to hang. KYODO

"It is a grave case not seen before in our country's history of criminal cases, and the defendant has shown no signs of remorse," Judge Shinichi Suzushima said.

Prosecutors said the case may have influenced another stabbing spree in Tokyo's Akihabara district two months later, which was followed by a similar attack the next month.

They said Kanagawa deserved capital punishment because he tried to "fulfill his death wish by taking people's lives and get a death sentence," and he cannot be rehabilitated.

The defense argued for life imprisonment, saying Kanagawa has a personality disorder that put him in a state of diminished capacity at the time of the attacks.

Throughout his police questioning and trial sessions, Kanagawa claimed he went on the bloody rampage with the aim of being sent to the gallows.

In an interview on Dec. 11, Kanagawa repeated his wish to get the death penalty.

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