

Boy, 16, held in girl's stabbing attack

Youth says he wanted to kill at random, hints role in another assault

Kyodo

SAITAMA — A 16-year-old boy arrested in the stabbing of a 15-year-old girl in Misato, Saitama Prefecture, has said he did not know the victim and was carrying blades to kill pedestrians at random, the Saitama Prefectural Police said Tuesday.

The boy, a high school student in Misato, was arrested Monday evening on a street for illegally possessing a clasp knife with a 15-cm blade and a hatchet with a 17-cm blade. Police later added the charge of attempted murder after he admitted stabbing the girl Nov. 18.



The youth also indicated he may have been behind the stabbing of an 8-year-old girl in Matsudo, Chiba Prefecture, last week.

Safety in numbers: Mothers walk children to school in Matsudo, Chiba Prefecture, on Tuesday morning near where an 8-year-old girl was stabbed last week. KYODO

The boy, whose name has been withheld because he is a minor, told police that he stabbed the 15-year-old Saitama girl with a kitchen knife, which he was not carrying at the time of his arrest.

Police found more than 20 blades in the boy's home Monday. They are looking into why the youth apparently had a desire to kill people at random.

The 15-year-old girl sustained stab wounds to her chin while she was on her way home from junior high school.

She told investigators that she did not know her attacker.

On Thursday in Matsudo, some 2 km away from Misato, the 8-year-old girl was also stabbed on a street, and the blade reached her lung.

Police had been on the lookout after residents reported seeing a man carrying a knife after the Misato stabbing.

A male carrying a knife was also spotted in Kashiwa, Chiba Prefecture, on Friday, but the boy denied it was him, a police official said.

The boy lives in Misato with his parents and a younger brother. Police confiscated a knife from his home they suspect may have been used in the Misato attack.

Neighbors in Misato described him as "just an ordinary kid." A 69-year-old woman who lives nearby said: "He is rather quiet. But he greeted me often, saying 'good morning.' "

Students at the girl's junior high school went to school Tuesday morning in groups with parents accompanying them.

"I've been telling my son to be careful as we live near the crime scene," said a woman whose son goes to the school. "I'm relieved that (the youth) was arrested."

Students in Matsudo have also been going to school in groups since the stabbing incident.

"I'm relieved to hear news of an arrest, but it's really regrettable that our community efforts against crime have not paid off," said a 67-year-old man who has been volunteering to watch over kids at crossings.

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