

Gallows urged for trio in abduction-slaying

NAGOYA (Kyodo) Prosecutors on Tuesday demanded the death penalty for three men accused of killing a woman in 2007 after the trio became acquainted with each other via a mobile phone bulletin board used for exchanging shady information, including on drug-trafficking and finding "crime mates."

Presiding Judge Hiroko Kondo of the Nagoya District Court said that she will hand down a decision March 18 on Tsukasa Kanda, 37, a former newspaper salesman, and Yoshitomo Hori, 33, and Kenji Kawagishi, 42, both unemployed.

In their closing argument, the prosecutors accused them of committing an "extremely cruel," inhuman crime for money.

The prosecution said Kawagishi, who had surrendered to police, is unrepentant and there is no mitigating reason to spare him from the gallows.

According to the prosecutors, the three men got acquainted with each other over the bulletin board, called the "employment service agency in the dark."

They allegedly abducted office worker Rie Isogai, 31, while she was on her way home on a street in Nagoya on Aug. 24, 2007.

After stealing her money and belongings, the three allegedly beat her with a hammer and strangled her with a rope early the following morning in Aisai, Aichi Prefecture.

They later allegedly dumped her corpse in a forest in Mizunami, Gifu Prefecture, about 50 km northeast of Nagoya.

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