

ACTIVITY: Fishing

CASE: GSAF 1997.07.12

DATE: Saturday July 12, 1997

LOCATION: The attack took place near Hirara, Miyako Island, Okinawa, Japan.

NAME: Shizuo Nakachi

DESCRIPTION: The fisherman was a 55-year-old male.

BACKGROUND

SEA CONDITIONS: Kazuo Yoza, who usually bought the catch from Nakachi, saw him swimming around his boat that day as he was heading to Irabu Island on a ferryboat. "I felt a little nervous because the water was muddy," he said. "Nakachi would have noticed the shark approaching if the water was clear."

ENVIRONMENT: The attack occurred on a shallow reef where many sharks had been seen. The reef is close to a swimming area, and swimming beyond the netted area was prohibited after last year's incident (GSAF 1996.07.23).

TIME: Early morning.

NARRATIVE: Nakachi had used the diving spot where the incident occurred to catch octopuses since he was young, and early on the morning of the incident he left Hirara Fish Port to hunt octopus on the reef. Kazuo Yoza, saw him swimming around his boat that day as he was heading to Irabu Island on a ferryboat. Nakachi failed to return to port and later that day he was found dead in his sabani fishing boat about 1.5 kilometers west of Miyako Island.

INJURY: Both legs were severed. The fisherman died from exsanguination.

SPECIES INVOLVED: It was believed that a white shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*, was involved in this incident. The Fisherman's Cooperative set traps for sharks around the spot where the incident happened, but the shark involved in the incident was not captured.

NOTE: Hirara City banned swimming at all beaches except one which has a shark net. Mayor Akira Ishimine expressed his concern about the incident influencing the island's tourism business. Hirara City will examine if the stationing of life guards and building nets at beaches are necessary.

Head of Irabu Town Fisherman's Cooperative Ryuji Okuhara said that "preparations for shark hunting by the cooperative is in progress." It will also request that the local administration hunt sharks all year round.

SOURCE: Okinawa Weekly Times,
<http://www.okinawatimes.co.jp/eng/19970719.html>

