

Japanese scientist: assistant faked data

January 23 2006

A University of Tokyo biochemistry professor is reportedly blaming his assistant for faking data in a human enzyme experiment.

Kazunari Taira told Kyodo news service it was his unidentified assistant who may have faked data for the experiment. But the 37-year-old assistant denies the allegation, saying he did not fabricate data and Taira was trying to put the blame on him.

The University of Tokyo says it plans to make public a report indicating Taira was involved in fabricating a scientific paper published in February 2003. The paper described how Taira and colleagues coaxed *E. coli* bacteria to produce a human enzyme called Dicer -- because it dices RNA -- by implanting a Dicer gene in a plasmid.

It was the first such scientific feat reported.

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