

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Major Newspaper - Japanese Regime Alters Evidence to Ban FFWPU

Knut Holdhus
February 26, 2025



Toshiko Abe, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) 2023

Sankei Shimbun reveals controversy over Family Federation trial as government ministry faces accusations of altering evidence

See also [Big Daily: Authorities Using Outdated Evidence](#)



The Sankei Shimbun, one of Japan's five largest national newspapers by circulation, revealed in [an article](#) on 25th February 2025, details of a controversy that involves the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), formerly known as the [Unification Church](#). A dispute has arisen over a closed-door hearing at the Tokyo District Court regarding the petition from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to dissolve the [religious organization](#) that is relatively large in Japan, with its 600,000 members.



Japanese government official getting woman to sign document containing evidence tampering

The [Family Federation](#) has challenged the credibility of some evidence submitted by MEXT, arguing that statements collected from current and former members include fabrications. In response, Minister Toshiko Abe (阿部俊子) maintained that disclosing evidence from a confidential court session is not appropriate.

According to the Sankei Shimbun, the [religious organization](#) released on 19th February a [report authored by its legal team](#), titled "Fabrication of False Evidence by MEXT". The report claims that a significant portion of the 261 written statements presented by MEXT in court were compiled by government officials following interviews with members and ex-members.

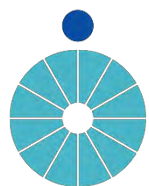
The Sankei article claims that two former members of the [religious minority](#) during the hearing process testified that portions of their

written statements contained information unfamiliar to them. They admitted to signing and stamping the documents without thoroughly reviewing their content.

Meanwhile, a current member alleged that MEXT officials recorded their testimony without explaining its

purpose and later compiled it into a statement. This document concluded with the phrase "I can only hope for the dissolution (of the [religious organization](#))," but the individual insisted they had never made such a remark and did not view themselves as a victim. Consequently, they requested a correction.

Additionally, the large daily reports that other statements included errors unlikely to have been made by actual members. One example involved a linguistic inconsistency: within the [Family Federation](#), the biblical figure Eve is traditionally referred to as "Eba" in Japanese, yet the statements used "Ibu", which closely mirrors the English pronunciation of "Eve".



MEXT

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
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Another discrepancy was the use of the term "priest" (Japanese: 神父 - shinpu) - a designation common in Catholicism but not used within the [Family Federation](#) to refer to religious leaders. The [organization](#) argues that these inaccuracies indicate the statements were crafted by officials from MEXT, and not by members of the [Family Federation](#) or former adherents.

The Sankei Shimbun mentions in addition that the [religious organization](#) asserts that some individuals whose statements were included had no known record of membership of the [Family Federation](#). Among them were people who had previously made donations, but not necessarily to the [religious organization](#) - some had contributed to other religious groups.

Responding to these allegations, Minister Abe stated - according to the Sankei - at a press conference on 21st February that the government's request for a court order to dissolve the [Family Federation](#) "was made appropriately".

The government minister criticized however the decision by the [religious organization](#) to release the report, contending that making evidence from the trial public contradicts the very rationale for conducting the hearings privately. She also stated that the government had communicated its concerns about this disclosure to the court. However, she refrained from expressing whether the statements the [Family Federation](#) has called into question were correct or not.

This ongoing dispute adds further complexity to the case, as the credibility of key testimonies is now under scrutiny. The controversy surrounding the evidence could potentially impact the court's decision on whether to approve the dissolution order sought by MEXT.

Text: Knut Holdhus

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Sankei Shimbun publishes figures that clearly show weakness in Japanese authorities' case against Family Federation – much outdated evidence

See also ["Anti-Cult" Forums' Role in 2022 Abe Assassination](#)



Header of publication on operations of the Japan Legal Support Center, issued by Ministry of Justice

The Sankei Shimbun, one of Japan's top 5 most circulated national dailies, disclosed in an article 16th January 2025, figures from the Japan Legal Support Center (Houterasu) that could spell troubles for the authorities' campaign

against the relatively large religious minority the *Family Federation for World Peace and Unification*, formerly known as the *Unification Church*. The headline of the Sankei piece was "Spiritual Sales Consultants – Only 30% Related to the Former Unification Church"



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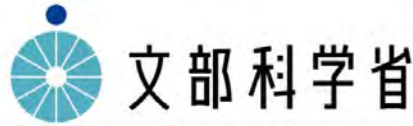
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Sales Consultations – Only 20% Related to the Former **Organization Church**; 40% of Monetary Troubles Date Back Over 20 Years”.

The *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology* (MEXT) has requested *Tokyo District Court* to issue a court order to dissolve the **religious organization**. The authorities have largely built their case on terms taken from consumer affairs laws, even to the extent that donations are called “spiritual sales”.



Symbol of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan. Photo: 文部科学省 (MEXT Japan) / Wikimedia Commons. License: CC Attr 4.0 Int



Consultation hotline. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 16th January 2025

According to the *Sankei Shimbun* it turns out that less than 20% of the cases handled by the “Spiritual Sales Consultation Hotline” operated by *Japan Legal Support Center* are associated with the **Family Federation**. Furthermore, 41% of the monetary disputes involving this **organization** occurred more than 20 years ago. A critical question is how the *Tokyo District Court* will interpret the

continuity of these issues, a key argument in the petition by the administration led by the Liberal Democratic Party for the dissolution of the **religious organization**.

According to the large newspaper, this hotline, established in November 2022 to replace the government’s previous phone consultation service, has fielded 10,003 inquiries over the last two years, ending in November 2024. Of these, 1,979 (19.8%) were linked to the **Family Federation**. The names of other implicated organizations have not been revealed by the *Japan Legal Support Center*.

The timeline of financial troubles involving the **Family Federation** provides some insight:

- 5% occurred within one year prior to the consultation.
- 2% occurred within three years.
- 3% occurred within five years.
- 11% occurred within ten years.
- 12% occurred over ten years ago, but within twenty years.
- 41% occurred more than twenty years ago.

The *Sankei Shimbun* points out that this distribution suggests a reduction in incidents over time, particularly after the **organization** introduced a compliance declaration in 2009, which committed to stricter adherence to laws and regulations.

According to the newspaper, MEXT has based its dissolution request on the argument that the **Family Federation** meets the criteria for organizational dissolution, namely illegality, maliciousness, and continuity. These elements are central to the Ministry’s claim that the **federation** has engaged in systematic and ongoing “harmful activities”.

According to informed sources, the *Tokyo District Court* is expected to conclude its review of the case by the end of January 2025. A judgment may be announced as soon as March.

On 15th January, the **Family Federation** issued a statement emphasizing the declining number of complaints linked to the **organization** in recent years. The statement read,

“The analysis of the hotline, which specifically targeted our **organization**, highlights that ‘troubles’ involving us have significantly decreased in recent years.”



Weighty arguments on scale of justice presented by **Family Federation** to *Tokyo District Court*. Photo: 991joseph / Wikimedia Commons. Public domain image

This issue has sparked significant public and legal interest, with many watching closely as the court deliberates the fate of the **organization**.

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watching closely as the court deliberates the fate of the organization. Central to the decision will be whether the **federation's** past activities, many of which predate 2009, still bear relevance to its current operations and whether they satisfy the criteria for dissolution under Japanese law.

See also ["Anti-Cult" Forums' Role in 2022 Abe Assassination](#)

Featured image above: Sign at the entrance of the headquarters of the **Family Federation** of Japan in Shibuya, Tokyo. Photo: [Sekai Nippo](#)

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