

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Japan Government Fabrications Decried

Knut Holdhus
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Allegations of MEXT fabricating evidence. Illustration: Chat GPT



Did the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) fabricate evidence? Social media demands answers as doubts deepen over court filings

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"MEXT Fabrication" Trends - Suspicion Over Written Statements Reignites on Social Media

by editorial staff of the [Sekai Nippo](#)

Suspicion toward the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has resurfaced, primarily on social media, with the term "MEXT fabrication" (文科省捏造) trending on X (formerly Twitter). This comes amid allegations that the ministry, which petitioned for a dissolution order against the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly known as the [Unification Church](#)), has fabricated written statements. And those were submitted as evidence of legal violations constituting grounds for dissolution of the religious organization.



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MEXT has submitted written statements from 261 former believers to the court. However, in an [article dated 21st January of last year](#), [this newspaper](#) reported that "there have been multiple cases in which the submitted written statements were not written by the individuals who were allegedly harmed, and those individuals claim that the contents are false."

Subsequent reporting uncovered additional cases, including instances in which testimony from a former believer of a separate organization unrelated to the [Family Federation](#) was included in the written statements. There were also testimonies of "[signatures with no recollection](#)", in which individuals stated they had no memory of signing the statements, yet their signatures appeared in their own handwriting.

On X, comments poured in such as "This is plainly a major problem," "They are trying to force the dissolution through," and "A fabrication by the state". Some users also called on MEXT to fulfill its responsibility to provide an explanation. As of 7:00 PM on 13th February, the newspaper's article posted on X on 21st January last year had been viewed more than 760,000 times.



Masumi Fukuda, here Jan. 20, 2024



Former House of Councillors member for the NHK Party Satoshi Hamada here speaking on January 26, 2025



Sam Brownback, US ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom 2018 - 2021. Here, at the IRF Summit in Washington 5th Feb. 5, 2025

Nonfiction writer Masumi Fukuda (福田ますみ), who has been covering the dissolution order against the [religious organization](#), referred in her book [Sacrificed by the State](#) (Asuka Shinsho) to witness examinations held at the Tokyo District Court in December 2024. She pointed out that a former believer who had submitted a written statement "was unable to answer at all about the contents written in the statement," and "testified that matters were written that he did not remember."

Regarding the allegations of fabricated written statements, in March last year Satoshi Hamada (浜田聡), then a member of the House of Councillors from the NHK Party, [raised questions](#) during a session of the House of Councillors' Committee on Internal Affairs and Communications. Mariko Kobayashi (小林万里子), Director-General for Policy Planning at the Agency for Cultural Affairs, stated that she was "aware of the contents" and did not deny the allegation of fabrication.

Meanwhile, criticism has been raised from the international community that the Japanese government's stance infringes upon freedom of religion.

On 4th February, during a hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, former U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback [expressed concern](#) regarding the Japanese government's response.

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世界日報

Zenkoku Benren Is a “Left-Wing Movement Concealing Its True Identity,” Says Masumi Fukuda in Lecture in Chiba

by Takahide Ishii (石井孝秀)

See also [Japan: "MEXT Fabrication" Storm Grows Online](#)

She stated that, due to the activities of *National Network of*



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(Zenkoku Benren – 全国霊感商法対策弁護士連絡会), the image spread that “the **Unification Church** is absolute evil.” Masumi Fukuda emphasized,

“Without carrying out a revolution, the activist lawyers completely changed people’s will. It is the most successful postwar left-wing movement that has concealed its true identity.”

Fukuda analyzed that lawyers affiliated with Zenkoku Benren instilled societal prejudice portraying believers as “mind-controlled followers” [See editor’s note 1 below], including claims that they were “indoctrinated to believe they would go to hell if they did not maintain their faith.” She further stated,

“Even judges begin with prejudice due to Zenkoku Benren’s propaganda. They do not see believers as ordinary people who might be living next door.”

At the same time, she pointed out problems with the **religious organization’s** own response. Fukuda commented on the issue in which many followers were allegedly abducted and confined by members of their own family – under the guidance of professional “deprogrammers” (specialists who pressure individuals to renounce their faith) [See editor’s note 2 below] – for the purpose of forcing believers to leave the **religious organization**. She said,



Abduction for the purpose of deprogramming (faith-breaking): A reenactment of Yukie Kanamori (pseudonym) having been forced into a sleeping bag and abducted into a van by several men. Image provided by the person involved, partially edited.

“There may have been circumstances, but there was insufficient outreach to society. If they had made greater efforts to communicate to more people, perhaps things would not have gotten this bad.”

She also referred to allegations of fabrications of some written statements by former believers, submitted by the *Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology* as evidence of legal violations constituting grounds for the **organization’s** dissolution. Masumi Fukuda asserted,

“Forgery by government officials would be a major incident. It would be a huge scandal, and the media must give it more coverage.”

See also [Japan: “MEXT Fabrication” Storm Grows Online](#)

Featured image above: Nonfiction writer Masumi Fukuda (福田ますみ) delivering her lecture on 1st February 2026 in Chiba City, Chiba Prefecture, Japan. Photo: Takahide Ishii (石井 孝秀)

[Editor’s note 1: In Japan, the “**mind-control**” myth has been a powerful tool used to stigmatize and suppress new religious movements (NRMs), particularly since the 1980s. The concept suggests that NRMs manipulate or “brainwash” their followers, depriving them of free will and rational thought. This narrative gained traction after the 1995 Aum Shinrikyō sarin gas attack, when public fear of dangerous cults intensified. Although Aum was an extreme and violent exception, the incident cast suspicion on all NRMs, allowing critics, media, and the government to label diverse groups as manipulative or psychologically coercive.

The “mind-control” myth serves multiple social and political functions. It simplifies complex questions of belief, making it easier to portray converts as victims rather than as individuals exercising spiritual agency. This framing justifies legal and social intervention, including the coercive “**deprogramming**” of believers – sometimes involving confinement or psychological pressure to force renunciation of faith. Lawyers, ex-member groups, and certain media outlets have used the idea of mind control to construct NRMs as threats to family stability and national order, reinforcing social conformity and Japan’s preference for established, non-controversial religions such as Buddhism and Shinto.

In recent years, the myth resurfaced following the 2022 assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, whose attacker cited resentment toward the **Unification Church**. A public outrage largely created by media reignited scrutiny of NRMs, and politicians and journalists revived “mind-control” rhetoric to explain the **Church’s** fundraising and recruitment practices. Critics argue that this framing discourages genuine religious tolerance and critical examination of Japan’s restrictive religious climate. Overall, the “mind-control” myth functions less as a scientific or psychological concept and more as a moral panic – a cultural weapon used to delegitimize minority faiths and to reaffirm mainstream social norms about religion, obedience, and the boundaries of acceptable belief.]

[Editor’s note 2: Coercive faith-breaking (“deprogramming”) in Japan refers to the practice of coercively attempting to separate individuals from their religious affiliations or beliefs, typically through intervention by family members, professional faith-breakers (deprogrammers) or organizations hostile to new religious movements (NRMs). This phenomenon often targets members of such movements, e.g. relatively large faiths like the **Family Federation** or Jehovah’s Witnesses, but also smaller groups like **Hannu Science** (Kōfiki no Kagaku) and other newer religious movements



Also subject to faith-breaking attempts: Members of **Soka Gakkai**. Here students belonging to the faith in 2001. Photo: Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC BY-SA 3.0 Unp. Cropped](#)

However, also Soka Gakkai, a Buddhist-based lay organization with more than 8 million Japanese members, and affiliated with Nichiren Buddhism, has occasionally been subject to faith-breaking attempts.

The practice gained attention in the latter half of the 20th century, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s. Parents or concerned family members often hired faith-breakers who taught them how to abduct and forcibly detain believers. Almost all such cases involved confining the individual believer and cutting him or her off from the religious community. During the confinement, the believer was subjected to intense questioning or indoctrination designed to break his or her faith. The aim was to “rescue” the person from what the family often had been tricked by faith-breakers or lawyers to regard as harmful influence from the religious organization.

Critics of forced de-conversion argue that it violates fundamental human rights, including freedom of thought, religion, and association. Reports of psychological trauma and accusations of unlawful detention have sparked debates over its ethical and legal implications. In response, some religious groups, particularly NRMs, have lobbied for greater protections against such practices.

Japanese courts have been inconsistent in addressing cases of coercive faith-breaking. While some verdicts have condemned the practice as illegal detention, others have been more lenient, citing family concerns about “mental health” or alleged “exploitation” as mitigating factors.]

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