

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Japan's Blitz Krieg to Crush Family Fed Rolls On

Knut Holdhus
April 22, 2026



Japan's legal campaign against the [Family Federation](#) - the [liquidation](#) phase. Illustration: ChatGPT



For many, dissolution and liquidation mean the Japanese state steals properties members built with their own hands and years of investment to realize their dream. Here, the sanctuary of the [Family Federation's](#) Koriyama Church.

The continuation of Japan's controversial legal offensive to crush religious minority based on disputed civil cases: from dissolution to assets seizure and now assets distribution

The Japanese [liquidation](#) of the religious organization formerly known as the [Unification Church](#) - since 2015 named [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) - marks a decisive phase in one of Japan's most consequential legal and social reckonings with a persecuted [religious movement](#) originating in South Korea.

See also [Religious Freedom in Jeopardy After Dissolution](#)

Following a [dissolution order](#) issued by the Tokyo High Court on 4th March 2026, court-appointed [liquidator](#) attorney Hisashi Ito (伊藤尚) has begun the complex process of identifying, securing, and distributing the [religious organization](#)'s assets while addressing claims from alleged "victims" represented by a hostile network of lawyers, allegedly working to maximize such claims.



Two reports on 22nd April - one from [NHK World](#) and another from [Sankei Shimbun](#) - offer complementary perspectives on this process, highlighting both the administrative scale of the [liquidation](#) and the broader implications for "victims", employees, and institutional accountability.

[NHK World](#) frames the developments primarily through the lens of victim compensation, emphasizing that individuals who claim to have suffered harm linked to the [organization](#) will be able to apply for compensation beginning 20th May 2026. According to [NHK](#), this application window will remain open for one year and is widely regarded as the final opportunity for persons claiming to be victims to seek financial redress.

In parallel, [NHK](#) notes that the [liquidation](#) team - comprising 415 members - has already visited more than 400 facilities nationwide and secured at least ¥40 billion (approximately \$250 million) in deposits and savings. However, it also points out that this figure is roughly 40 percent lower than the asset level cited in the [dissolution order](#) for fiscal year 2024.



One of 400 facilities nationwide targeted by liquidators: The headquarters building of the [Family Federation](#) in Japan, located in Shibuya, Tokyo

[Sankei Shimbun](#), by contrast, provides a more procedural and legalistic account of the [liquidation](#) process. It reports that the [liquidator](#) has frozen the [religious organization](#)'s bank accounts to preserve assets totaling at least ¥40 billion, aligning with [NHK](#)'s figures but adding operational detail about the mechanisms used to secure these funds.

[Sankei](#) also highlights that a formal report was submitted to the Tokyo District Court on 20th April and subsequently made public, reinforcing the judicial oversight underpinning the process. Like [NHK](#), [Sankei](#) confirms that more than 400 church facilities were inspected and that key accounting records were obtained, suggesting a comprehensive effort to map the [organization](#)'s financial structure.

Both outlets converge on the issue of workforce reduction, though with slightly different emphases. [NHK](#) reports that the [religious organization](#) had approximately 1,900 employees as of early March, with around 340 voluntarily resigning shortly after the [dissolution order](#), leaving about 1,400 staff members. Of these, roughly 900 who are not directly involved in [liquidation](#) will be dismissed as of 20th May.

[Sankei](#) corroborates the figure of 900 layoffs but frames it as a policy decision tied to operational necessity, specifying that only personnel in essential functions such as accounting and general affairs will be retained temporarily.

On employee compensation, the two reports again align but differ in nuance. [NHK](#) states that the [liquidator](#) will not provide additional retirement payments or merit-based bonuses to those who resigned voluntarily, indicating that this decision has received court approval. [Sankei](#) expands on this point by explaining that such payments had initially been planned during January and February as part of a voluntary resignation program, but were later suspended because their legal basis was deemed unclear.

Finally, both reports address the handling of the [religious organization](#)'s real estate holdings - estimated at around 200 properties. [NHK](#) notes that these assets will be sold, prioritizing those not currently in use, while [Sankei](#) adds that decisions regarding these properties, as well as nine [cemeteries](#) and memorial parks, are still under consideration. Both sources also confirm that creditors and claimants must file their

claims within a one-year period starting 20th May, as announced in the government journal Official Gazette.

[NHK World](#) and [Sankei Shimbun](#) present a consistent but multidimensional picture: a tightly supervised [liquidation](#) process balancing asset preservation, workforce reduction, and compensation for persons claiming to have suffered harm.

See also [Religious Freedom in Jeopardy After Dissolution](#)

Text: Knut Holdhus, editor

Related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Lawfare: State Uses Legal System in War on Faith](#)
More, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Scholar Questions Secrecy in Dissolution Case](#)
And more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Shocked Author: "Japan Ignores Basics of Justice"](#)

Still more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Legal Inconsistencies A Blow to Democracy](#)
Even more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Japan: Court Accused of Using Speculation](#)
Also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [MEXT's Legal Spin and "Dissolution at All Costs"](#)

Also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [UN Report: Japan's Lawfare Against Faith Minority](#)
And also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Protesting No Transparency in Closed-Door Trial](#)
More, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Dangerous Flaws in Dissolution Order Decried](#)

Also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: ["Lawyers Lying and Shaming Japan" for 50 Years](#)
And also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Japan Following the Way of China](#)
And also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Japan's Dissolution Case Echoes China's Playbook](#)

More, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Media/Legal Expert: Communism Behind Persecution](#)
And more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Militant Lawyers Dictate Government Policy](#)
More, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Collusion to Rob Minority of Its Rights](#)

And more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [State and Media Creating "Today's Non-Citizens"](#)
Still more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Japan Copying China: State Seizure of Churches](#)
And still more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [12 Religious Freedom NGOs Denouncing Japan](#)

More, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [4300 Abductions and Forcible Detentions](#)
And more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Japan: Families Fear for Graves of Loved Ones](#)
Yet more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Lawyers Manipulating, Coercing, Lying](#)

Also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Kishida Follows Anti-Family Federation Minister](#)
Also related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Militant Lawyers Dictate Government Policy](#)
Still more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Malicious One-Sided Government Source Selection](#)

And still more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Japan Urged to Make U-Turn](#)
And yet more, related to asset distribution in legal offensive: [Dangerous Precedent to Crush Religions](#)
Even more, related to asset distribution: [Japan Following the Way of China](#)

Yet more, related to asset distribution: [Japanese Communists' Final War](#)
Still more, related to asset distribution: [Political and Social Activism behind Oppression](#)
Still more, related to asset distribution: [Dissolution Case: Rule of Law on Trial 4th March](#)



Japan Sued Over "Religious Abuse" Guidelines

April 21, 2026 • Knut Holdhus



As the Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan has sued the state, rushed policy on religion and child abuse faces backlash being accused of bias

Tokyo, 21st April 2026 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

[Editorial] "Religious Abuse" Lawsuit The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's Q&A Should Be Withdrawn

by the editorial board of *Sekai Nippo*



Logo of the Sekai Nippo



Logo of Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare. *Public domain image*

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's Q&A guidelines on "child abuse related to religious beliefs" (so-called "religious abuse") have faced strong criticism since their publication for allegedly promoting prejudice and discrimination against religion. A lawsuit has now been filed against these guidelines. At this point, the government should withdraw them.

Jehovah's Witnesses Seek Declaration of

Invalidity

See also [Religious Minorities: UN Experts Caution Japan](#)

See also [Religious Freedom in Jeopardy After Dissolution](#)

The plaintiffs seeking confirmation of invalidity of the guidelines and compensation from the state are the religious organization *Jehovah's Witnesses* and 20 of its members. This is because the guidelines include items related to the organization's teachings.



For example, the guidelines state that if a child falls asleep during a

Share: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Email icons

- More Posts**
- Religious Freedom In Jeopardy After Dissolution**
April 23, 2026
- Legal Offensive Enters Asset Distribution Phase**
April 22, 2026
- Cemetery Last Refuge For Displaced Worshippers**
April 20, 2026
- Scholar: "Unconstitutional, Invalid" Dissolution**
April 19, 2026
- "Church Closure" Risks In South Korea's New Bill**
April 18, 2026
- Mental Health Risks Emerge After Dissolution**
April 18, 2026
- Manufactured Victimhood, Lawsuits, Faith-Breaking**
April 17, 2026

Search...

Categories

Send us a message

First Name * Last Name

Email *

Your Message *

Submit



The Jehovah's Witnesses, another persecuted religious minority in Japan. Here, a female believer at a street display for Jehovah's Witnesses in Naha City, Okinawa, Japan 13th January 2025. Photo: Naha Mama Pavilionz. [Public domain image](#). Cropped

doctrinal lecture and a parent responds by hitting or whipping the child, this constitutes "physical abuse". They also classify refusal of a blood transfusion deemed necessary by a physician as "neglect". However, the Bible – highly valued by believers – contains teachings such as "do not withhold discipline from a child" [Proverbs 23:13] and "abstain from blood" [Acts 15:29].

From the standpoint of current social norms, it may seem reasonable to interpret corporal punishment and refusal of medical treatment as child abuse. In particular, refusal of blood transfusions is a difficult issue

because it can be life-threatening and lies at the boundary of religious freedom. However, if cases involving individuals aged 15 or older who possess decision-making capacity and voluntarily refuse transfusions are mechanically deemed "child abuse", does this not amount to denying the child's personhood? Would it not run counter to the growing emphasis on respecting children's right to self-determination? These issues require discussion from multiple perspectives.

Although Japanese media have largely not reported on it, attention should be



paid to the fact that not only Japanese education experts but also the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has issued warnings regarding these guidelines. The guidelines include provisions that classify religious instruction using phrases such as "you will go to hell if you do/do not do this" as "psychological abuse", potentially rejecting religious education itself and fostering prejudice and discrimination against religion.

There is no evidence that religious households have higher rates of child abuse than non-religious ones, yet these guidelines risk establishing a new category of "religious abuse". This cannot be accepted. Rather, it should be recognized as problematic that religious education for children has been neglected and that materialistic ways of thinking are spreading in society – factors that may be contributing to the rapid increase in child abuse.

However, even if an act is religious in nature, causing harm to another person's body constitutes a violation of the freedom of religion, as established by Supreme Court precedent. At the same time, the guidelines raise a fundamental question: to what extent can public authorities intervene when guardians, who hold the right to educate their children, provide religious instruction privately as part of passing on their faith? The failure to engage in this discussion is what constitutes a flaw in the guidelines.

Following the July 2022 assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the media focused on so-called "second-generation religious adherents" who claim to have been abused by parents with religious beliefs. Amid this surge of attention, the guidelines were hastily created. The religious organization's claim that the guidelines were drafted without seeking input from independent experts or the general public, and thus lack transparency, accurately points to a failing on the part of the government.

Discussion from Multiple Perspectives Is Needed

In drafting such guidelines, it is essential to hear from religious organizations and to engage in discussion from multiple perspectives, including the religious freedom of both parents and children, improvements in parenting difficulties, and the protection of children from abusive conduct. Only then should it be determined whether such guidelines are necessary.

See also [Religious Minorities: UN Experts Caution Japan](#)

See also [Religious Freedom in Jeopardy After Dissolution](#)

Featured image above: *Japan sued by the Jehovah's Witnesses*. Illustration: ChatGPT, April 2026.

See also ["Loss of Appeal Part of Systemic Persecution"](#)

See also [Social Ostracism for Believers After Legal Loss](#)

See also [State Grabs 260 Churches After Dissolution](#)

See also [UN Submission Protests Mass Closure of Churches](#)

Related to Japan sued: Lawfare: State Uses Legal System in War on Faith

Also related to Japan sued: [MEXT's Legal Spin and "Dissolution at All Costs"](#)

Also related to Japan sued: [UN Report: Japan's Lawfare Against Faith Minority](#)

And also related to Japan sued: [Protesting No Transparency in Closed-Door Trial](#)

More, related to Japan sued: [Dangerous Flaws in Dissolution Order Decried](#)

Also related to Japan sued: ["Lawyers Lying and Shaming Japan" for 50 Years](#)

And also related to Japan sued: [Japan Following the Way of China](#)

And also related to Japan sued: [Japan's Dissolution Case Echoes China's Playbook](#)

More, related to Japan sued: [Media/Legal Expert: Communism Behind Persecution](#)

And more, related to Japan sued: [Militant Lawyers Dictate Government Policy](#)

More, related to Japan sued: [Collusion to Rob Minority of Its Rights](#)

And more, related to Japan sued: [State and Media Creating "Today's Non-Citizens"](#)

Still more, related to Japan sued: [Japan Copying China: State Seizure of Churches](#)

And still more, related to Japan sued: [12 Religious Freedom NGOs Denouncing Japan](#)

More, related to Japan sued: [4300 Abductions and Forcible Detentions](#)

And more, related to Japan sued: [Japan: Families Fear for Graves of Loved Ones](#)

Yet more, related to Japan sued: [Lawyers Manipulating, Coercing, Lying](#)

Also related to Japan sued: [Kishida Follows Anti-Family Federation Minister](#)

Also related to Japan sued: [Militant Lawyers Dictate Government Policy](#)

Still more, related to Japan sued: [Malicious One-Sided Government Source Selection](#)

Yet more, related to Japan sued: [Kishida's Self-Defeating Populist Decisions](#)

And still more, related to Japan sued: [Japan Urged to Make U-Turn](#)

And yet more, related to Japan sued: [Dangerous Precedent to Crush Religions](#)

Even more, related to Japan sued: [Japan Following the Way of China](#)

Yet more, related to Japan taken to court: [Japanese Communists' Final War](#)

Still more, related to Japan taken to court: [Political and Social Activism behind Oppression](#)

Still more, related to Japan taken to court: [Dissolution Case: Rule of Law on Trial 4th March](#)

« Previous Cemetery Last Refuge For Displaced Wor... Legal Offensive Enters Asset Distributio... Next »



GET STARTED

[Home](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

First Name Last Name

Your Email Address

I consent to have this website store my submitted information so they can respond to my inquiry

Follow us

