

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Protestors - Japan, Let Us Freely Practice Our Faith!

Knut Holdhus
August 2, 2025



[Family Federation](#) believers parading in front of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) - afternoon of July 30, 2025, Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo, Japan



Protesters march through government area in Tokyo demanding their freedom of religion as they call for the authorities to withdraw 2025 dissolution order

Tokyo, 31st July 2025 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

A Fight to Defend Freedom

1,000 Family Federation Believers March in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo

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

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Tomihiro Tanaka being interviewed on July 30, 2025

"We won't let our freedom of faith be taken away!" - On 30th July, the "Tokyo Citizens' Association to Protect Basic Human Rights and Freedom of Religion," composed of members of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)), held a rally at the Hibiya Park Open-Air Concert Hall (Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo) to call for a society where people can freely practice their faith.

According to the organizers, about 1,000 people participated. After the rally, they marched through the streets of Kasumigaseki, where many government ministries are located, chanting slogans.

Tomihiro Tanaka (田中富広), President of the [Family Federation](#) in Japan, who was invited as a guest speaker, claimed that communist ideology, which denies religious values and traditional family structures, is spreading throughout Japanese society. He stressed,

"Those with anti-Japanese ideologies are labeling us as anti-Japanese."

He continued,

"(Family Federation believers) have been standing firmly against communism. No matter how we're perceived, let's continue to raise our voices with pride and confidence."



Fumiya Sakeo addressing the rally July 30, 2025

Also speaking at the rally was Fumiya Sakeo (酒生文弥), Chief Priest of Kōjūin Temple of the Jōdo Shinshū school of Buddhism [See editor's note below]. He declared,

"Right now, 'freedom' is like a flickering candle about to go out. Your march today, in this intense heat, is not merely for one religious group - it is a fight to protect the precious 'freedom' that is under threat."

After the rally, participants began their protest march from the park, walking past the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and other government buildings while chanting slogans like,

"Don't take our [church](#) away!"

"We love Japan!"

See also [Protesters Warn of Wider Impact of Dissolution](#)

[**Editor's note:** Jōdo Shinshū (浄土真宗), often translated as the "True Pure Land School", is one of the largest and most widely practiced schools of Pure Land Buddhism in Japan. It was founded by the monk Shinran (1173 - 1263), a former disciple of Hōnen, who also promoted Pure Land teachings.

The central tenet is reliance on the compassionate vow of Amida Buddha, who promised to save all beings who sincerely entrust themselves to him and recite his name (nembutsu - "Namu Amida Butsu", meaning "I take refuge in Amida Buddha").

Unlike some other Buddhist traditions that emphasize rigorous meditation or ascetic practices, Jōdo Shinshū teaches that salvation cannot be achieved through one's own efforts (self-power, jiriki), but only through Amida's grace (tariki, or "other-power").]

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Provisional Seizure Of Family Federation Land

• July 31, 2025
• Knut Holdhus



Family Federation denounces provisional seizure of land as unfair as Tokyo District Court approves request from hostile lawyers' network




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Based on a request from former followers, the Tokyo District Court has issued a decision approving a provisional seizure (temporary court freeze) of the land in Shibuya Ward, Tokyo, where the headquarters of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) is located.



Sign at the entrance of the headquarters of the [Family Federation](#) of Japan in Shibuya, Tokyo. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

In response, the [religious organization's](#) Public Relations and External Affairs Office commented on the official X account (formerly Twitter) on 30th July, stating:

“An entirely unnecessary and wasteful procedure has been carried out. There are absolutely no plans to dispose of the land in question.”



[Family Federation's arguments not taken into consideration](#) at Tokyo District Court. Here, sign outside the courthouse. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

The [National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales](#) announced on 30th July that ten former followers currently undergoing civil mediation with the [religious organization](#) filed the request in June of this year. On 18th July, the Tokyo District Court approved the provisional seizure of the [Family Federation](#)

headquarters' land.

This marks the first application of a special law enacted in December 2023 [[See editor's note 1 below](#)]. While the [religious organization](#) can continue operating from its headquarters as before, in principle, it will no longer be able to sell or transfer the land.

The official X account also posted:

“This one-sided (unilateral) [[See editor's note 2 below](#)] provisional seizure is contrary to good faith, dishonest, and deeply regrettable.”

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Featured image above: Tokyo headquarters of the [Family Federation](#) of Japan. Photo: Asanagi / Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain](#) image. Cropped

[Editor's note 1: The **“special law enacted in December 2023”** refers to a legal change that significantly increased government oversight of religious organizations like the former [Unification Church](#) (now the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#)). Key features include:

1. Religious organizations are required to report their assets – including real estate holdings – to the government at least once every three months.
3. The religious organizations must notify the government in advance before selling or transferring real estate.
4. The law provides assistance to former members seeking compensation for “damages” caused by donation practices.
5. Authorities can order a religious organization to halt certain

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activities; failure to comply may result in fines (up to ¥1 million) or imprisonment (up to 1 year).

The Tokyo District Court's decision on 18th July 2025 to approve a provisional seizure of the Family Federation's Tokyo headquarters land was the first time this law was applied in practice. While the religious organization can continue to operate from the site, the law effectively prevents any sale or transfer of the land, since that would trigger the legal requirements or violate the new restrictions.



The viewpoint of the Family Federation was not heard. Here, its flag waving in Japan. Photo: FFWPU

This law is often referred to in reports as the special or “asset-tracking” law and was enacted on 13th December 2023. Its application in July 2025 sets a legal precedent by allowing the court to temporarily freeze the Family Federation's property under these provisions.]

[Editor's note 2: “One-sided” here means the Family Federation sees the court's decision as favoring the plaintiffs and ignoring the religious organization's side of the story. The statement that the provisional seizure is “one-sided” means that the Family Federation believes the seizure was done without fair consultation, without their agreement or input, and solely at the request of the opposing party, the former followers. In other words, the religious organization feels the process was unfair or lacked due consideration of their position. They were not properly heard or involved before the court made the decision. The court granted the seizure based only on the claims of the former members.

In legal terms, a provisional seizure (仮差し押さえ) is often granted by a court before a full trial, usually based on a request from one party. It temporarily freezes property (like land or assets) to prevent it from being sold or transferred while a legal dispute is ongoing.

Even though the Family Federation denounces the court's decision as biased or unjust, in practice, and as spelt out in the law of December 2023 [See above editor's note 1], Japanese courts can grant provisional seizures without prior notice to the opposing party, precisely to prevent asset transfers.]

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