

## FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Japanese Political Party Objects to Dissolution of Family Fed

Knut Holdhus  
March 11, 2026



The Happiness Realization Party campaigning in Umeda, Osaka December 2, 2012



### Raising concerns over legal grounds for dissolution, religious-linked political party criticizes Japanese state action against Family Federation

Under the headline "[The Happiness Realization Party Says Dissolution Order for the Family Federation Violates 'Freedom of Religion'](#)", on 10th March the Japanese daily [Sekai Nippo](#) published a news item about a statement released by a political party the same day.

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The [paper](#) writes,



religion'.

"On 10th March, the political organization Happiness Realization Party (幸福実現党) released a statement regarding the [Tokyo High Court's decision](#) ordering the dissolution of the former [Unification Church](#), arguing that 'a dissolution order based on civil-law torts leads to a violation of freedom of

*In the statement, the party argued that creating a precedent in which the state determines the rightness or wrongness of a religion based on civil-law wrongdoing and orders its dissolution could 'leave room for arbitrary judgments by the state'.*

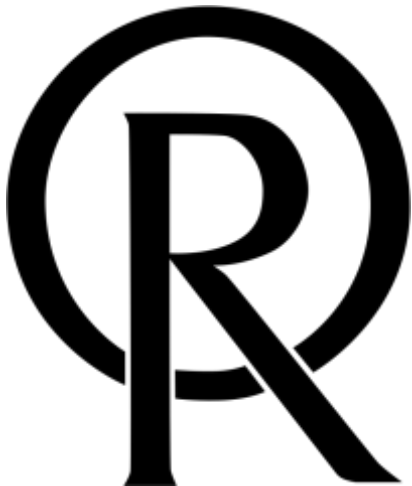
*It further emphasized that if the [organization's](#) assets - including [places of worship](#) - are liquidated, religious activities would be severely restricted, resulting in 'a clear violation of freedom of religion'.*

*The statement also claimed that it is 'obvious that the shooting incident involving former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三) had a significant impact' on the [dissolution order](#). It argued that treating 'an individual's crime' as a problem of an entire organization cannot be considered the stance of a state governed by the rule of law."*

The Happiness Realization Party (HRP) is a small Japanese political party founded in 2009 that is closely tied to the religious movement Happy Science (幸福の科学). It functions essentially as the political wing of that religious organization.



*Master Ryuho Okawa speaking at Osaka Shoshinkan, Japan, February 15, 2015*



*The RO logo of Happy Science. "RO" are the initials of its founder*

It was founded by Ryuho Okawa (大川 隆法 - 1956-2023), the spiritual leader of Happy Science. The party was created to translate the movement's religious and ideological ideas into political policy.

Happy Science itself is a new religious movement founded in 1986 that mixes elements of Buddhism, Christianity, New Age spirituality, and Okawa's own teachings.

The party describes itself as conservative, and typical policy positions include strengthening the Japan-U.S. alliance and revising Article 9 of Japan's constitution - the pacifist clause.

The economic policy includes tax cuts and creating new industries to boost growth. The party also puts an emphasis on religious values in politics and promotes a "spiritual foundation" for the Japanese state.

Despite fielding many candidates, the party has never won a seat in Japan's national parliament. In the 2009 general election, it ran hundreds of candidates but failed to win seats. It has had some minor success in local councils, with a small number of local representatives.

So politically, it remains marginal, though it maintains visibility through activism and media.

The Happiness Realization Party (幸福実現党) commenting on the dissolution case of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) is not accidental. Both Happy Science and the [Family Federation](#) are religious movements actively involved in creating a world of peace. It can be said that the HRP has a direct institutional interest in how the state treats religious groups.

Their concern is that if courts establish a precedent where the government can dissolve a [religious organization](#) based on civil-law violations, similar legal reasoning could potentially be applied to other religious movements, including Happy Science.

So the party frames the issue as a broader defense of religious freedom, not merely support for the [Family Federation](#).

The case revolves around whether the government can dissolve a religious corporation based on civil-law torts rather than criminal convictions.

Historically in Japan dissolution orders for religious corporations have been rare. They were typically tied to serious criminal activity, such as in the case of Aum Shinrikyo after the Tokyo subway sarin attack in 1995.

In the current case, the government argues that repeated civil-law violations justify dissolution. Groups like the HRP worry this expands the legal grounds for dissolving religious institutions.

The issue became politically explosive after the assassination of Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三) in 2022. The assassin, Tetsuya Yamagami (山上徹也), claimed he targeted Abe because of perceived ties to the [Family](#)

[Federation](#), which he held a grudge against because of his mother's donations.

The HRP's statement argues that the emotional and political fallout from the assassination influenced the legal process.

The HRP often presents itself as a defender of civil liberties and religious freedom against state overreach. By opposing the dissolution order, the party can reinforce its ideological stance, appeal to religious voters, signal solidarity with other religious groups concerned about government intervention.

Even though the HRP and the [Family Federation](#) are separate movements, they share an interest in resisting what they perceive as state intrusion into religious affairs.

The Happiness Realization Party is speaking out because the case could establish a legal precedent allowing the Japanese state to dissolve religious organizations based on civil liability, which religious movements - including the one behind the party - see as a potential threat to freedom of religion.

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## No Assembly Rights As Liquidators Take Control

March 10, 2026 • Knut Holdhus



*Liquidators lock churches after Japanese dissolution order raising freedom of assembly concerns as believers are left without places to gather*



Tokyo, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2026 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*. Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

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Sekai Nippo

## Second-Generation Family Federation Employee Couple Express Anxiety and Anger Over High Court Decision

by the Religious Freedom Investigative Team of the editorial department of *Sekai Nippo*



**No more access to hundreds of its own buildings:** Here, the property housing the [Family Federation](#) in North Hamamatsu, a city on the South coast on the main island of Honshu, Japan. Photo: IXTA9839 / Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC ASA 4.0 Int](#)

The first Sunday since the [Tokyo High Court issued its decision](#) on 4<sup>th</sup> March to uphold the [dissolution order](#) against the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) arrived on 8<sup>th</sup> March. Until now, believers and staff of the [organization](#) had gathered every Sunday at church facilities for worship and other activities.

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Although reports stated that “even if the [religious corporation](#) is dissolved, freedom of religion will be protected,” a married couple who are second-generation staff members revealed their anxiety and anger at the reality that, after being ordered to remain at home following the [high court decision](#), their religious freedom is not being protected in practice.

Within hours after the [dissolution order was decided](#), liquidators entered approximately 300 churches across the country, one after another, [rendering church facilities nationwide unusable](#). Notices were posted stating that “*this facility and all assets within it are under the management of the undersigned liquidator.*” As a result, staff are no longer able to enter the facilities or conduct religious activities such as worship.

A male staff member in his twenties, who continues to speak out as a second-generation member of the [Family Federation](#) under the X (formerly Twitter) account name “Gorijirō Ikeda” (ゴリ次郎いけだ), spoke of his mixed feelings of frustration and sadness, saying,



*Frustrated young Japanese believer.*  
Illustration: Grok xAI, 5th May 2025

“The freedom of religion that should be protected by the Constitution is being violated.”

Even though he wants to worship, there is no place where he can carry out activities, and he says that a colleague even had a personal laptop confiscated.

He also expressed growing concern about the [state of Japan’s](#)

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[judiciary](#) and administration, saying that because there is little understanding of religion and there are moves to enact [new laws](#) specifically targeting the [Family Federation](#), "Japan is becoming closer to a totalitarian state." His child is expected to be born later this month, and he said that the current social climate, in which people are viewed harshly simply for being [Family Federation](#) believers, is painful to him:

*"It hurts to think that my son, who is about to be born, might have to live [feeling marginalized](#)."*

The man's wife (X account name "Onigirimalu" – おにぎりまる) is also a second-generation employee of the [Family Federation](#). The couple has appealed in street campaigns and elsewhere that the image created by media coverage differs from the reality of the [Family Federation](#). However, the [High Court decision](#) has now placed them in a situation where they could be dismissed at any time.

She spoke about the sadness of having fewer opportunities to meet fellow believers in person and, with childbirth approaching, voiced concerns about their financial future, wondering "how long our savings will last." Nevertheless, the couple said they are trying to stay positive: "We can't just keep being sad."

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**Featured image** above: Image showing the situation that awaits [Family Federation](#) members coming to worship in Japan. Illustration. Chat GPT, 9th March 2026.

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