

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Large Daily on Hiroshi Ogasawara, FFWPU and Politics

Knut Holdhus
July 22, 2025



Hiroshi Ogasawara (left) on the campaign trail July 19, 2025

Large daily Sankei Shimbun reports that backing from Family Federation, known for its political clout, wasn't enough for success in 2025 Upper House elections

See also [Big Daily: Authorities Using Outdated Evidence](#)



The Sankei Shimbun, one of Japan's top five most circulated newspapers, carried on 21st July, the day after the national Upper House election, an analysis of the [Family Federation](#)'s ability to mobilize voters. The conservative paper claims that the [religious organization](#) enjoys a "long-standing reputation of having 'political influence'."

Back in the 1980s, the [organization](#) - then called the [Unification Church](#) - wielded considerable influence, offering strategic backing to candidates from both the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the former Democratic Socialist Party. The Sankei Shimbun maintains that the [Family Federation](#)'s "organizational strength has since declined."



The paper fails to mention that this has a lot to do with the fact that the LDP, during the veritable media witch hunt against the [Family Federation](#) after the Abe assassination in 2022, decided to sever ties with the religious corporation. In fact, the media competed to "expose" any LDP politician they in some way could connect to the [Family Federation](#). Having attended one single rally organized by the [federation](#) was enough to be deemed unworthy to hold a position within the government.

So, the situation is vastly different today. As the conservative daily, writes, the [Family Federation](#) is currently contesting a [dissolution order](#) issued by the Tokyo District Court, with its [appeal](#) now pending before the Tokyo High Court.

Despite its ongoing legal battle, the [organization](#) offered its backing to Satoshi Hamada (浜田聡参), the 48-year-old incumbent from the small NHK Party [See

editor's note below], during the Upper House election held on 20th July. However, Hamada failed to secure reelection.



Hiroshi Ogasawara

former [Unification Church](#).

Similarly, [Hiroshi Ogasawara](#) (小笠原裕), a 62-year-old candidate representing a minor political party and an active member of the [Family Federation](#), was [defeated](#) in Chiba Prefecture. The results underscore that the [religious organization](#) today has limited influence in rallying voter support, challenging its long-standing image of political clout.

The Sankei Shimbun reports that in parliamentary sessions, Hamada [has been vocal](#) in defending religious freedom and has criticized the government's attempt to dissolve the [Family Federation](#). His opposition is centered around concerns that the move infringes on constitutional rights.

The large paper also mentions that in a June press conference, NHK Party [See editor's note below] leader Takashi Tachibana (立花孝志) confirmed the party was receiving backing from the

He also criticized the government's handling of the case following the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三), remarking that Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (岸田文雄) appeared to have yielded to the motives of Tetsuya Yamagami (山上徹也), the assassin, by initiating the dissolution process - something Tachibana labeled as a significant issue.



Appears to have yielded to the motives of Tetsuya Yamagami, the assassin of Abe: Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan 2021-2024. Here, April 16, 2023

According to the Sankei Shimbun, sources connected to the [Family Federation](#) have revealed that the International Federation for Victory over Communism (IFVOC), a political arm historically affiliated with the [organization](#), coordinated campaign support efforts. This involvement marked the [group](#)'s first major political engagement in a national election since 2022, after being distanced by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in the wake of Abe's assassination.

In its article on 21st July, the Japanese daily writes that present-day estimates suggest the [Family Federation](#) can mobilize only about 60,000 votes nationwide - far below the roughly one million votes generally required to secure a seat through proportional representation. The latest election results further showed that the [organization](#) is currently not able to propel candidates to victory independently.

Following his loss, Hamada expressed regret on his video channel, offering his heartfelt thanks and apologies to his supporters, saying he was sorry for not living up to their expectations.

Ogasawara, who has been a follower of the [Family Federation](#) for more than four decades and heads the political group "Association to Protect Japan's Families", ran on a platform opposing the dissolution and advocating for a constitutional amendment that would introduce a "family protection clause." Nevertheless, his [campaign](#) was [unsuccessful](#), and he finished in last place.

Text: Knut Holdhus

[Editor's note: The Party to Protect the People from NHK (NHKから国民を守る党, NHK kara Kokumin wo Mamoru Tō, often abbreviated as N-Koku) is a minor political party in Japan. It was founded in 2013 by Takashi Tachibana, a former NHK employee, with the primary goal of opposing Japan's public broadcaster, NHK (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai). The party criticizes NHK's mandatory subscription fees and has campaigned to allow people to avoid paying for NHK if they don't watch it.

Over time, the party has shifted its focus, rebranding multiple times and addressing broader issues, but its core stance remains opposition to NHK. It has gained attention for its unconventional campaigning methods and populist rhetoric but has had limited electoral success.]

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Despite '25 Election Loss: Vows To Keep Fighting

• July 21, 2025
• Knut Holdhus

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Unyielding in spite of loss in Upper House election, party founder wants to keep standing for faith and family and push vision for Japan's future



Tokyo, 21st July 2025 – Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

“I Did Everything I Could”
Family Federation Believer Hiroshi Ogasawara Ran in Chiba Constituency for Upper House Election

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

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Hiroshi Ogasawara and supporter Kunihiko Shibamura on the campaign trail 14th July 2025. Photo: Hiroshi Ogasawara

Hiroshi Ogasawara (小笠原裕 – 62), a certified small and medium enterprise management consultant and an active member of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)), ran in the Chiba constituency for the *House of Councillors* election under the political group “Association to Protect Japanese Families”. In the late evening of 20th July, he announced via internet broadcast that he had no chance of winning. However, he expressed his commitment, saying,

“As an organization, we will continue political activities and work to change Japan.”

During the campaign period, Ogasawara gave more than 80 street speeches. Reflecting on the effort, he said,

“I did everything I could.”

In his speeches, he openly disclosed his affiliation with the [Family Federation](#) and criticized both the Ministry of Education’s request for the [religious organization](#)’s dissolution and the practice of [coercive faith-breaking](#) [\[See editor’s note below\]](#) through [abduction and confinement](#).



Hiroshi and Kaoru Ogasawara on the campaign trail 10th July 2025. Photo: Hiroshi Ogasawara

Together with his wife, Kaoru (薫 – 61), he traveled around the prefecture emphasizing the importance of protecting religious freedom and the [family](#). On 8th July, the anniversary of the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三), he held a memorial speech and moment of silence in public.

His campaign posters were sometimes defaced with slurs such as “Korean” and “idiot,” but he also recalled being approached by non-believing young people who expressed interest in his message. Ogasawara noted,

“What young people expect is not short-term policies, but a vision of what Japan should be 20 or 30 years from now. Japan must move forward with policies that consider future generations.”

He added,

“Our [religious organization](#)’s unique values and principles

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have the potential to improve Japan, but we need to find better ways to communicate them clearly to voters. I want to think about what we can do for Japan and its people and strive toward the 'beautiful Japan' that Abe envisioned."

See also [In Election Bid Citing Faith, Family, and Freedom](#)

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Featured image above: Hiroshi Ogasawara (小笠原裕) reporting the election results to his supporters late at night on 20th July in Chiba City. Photo: Takahide Ishii (石井孝秀)

[Editor's note: Coercive faith-breaking ("deprogramming", forced renunciation of faith) 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 Happy Science (Kōfuku 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 ASA 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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