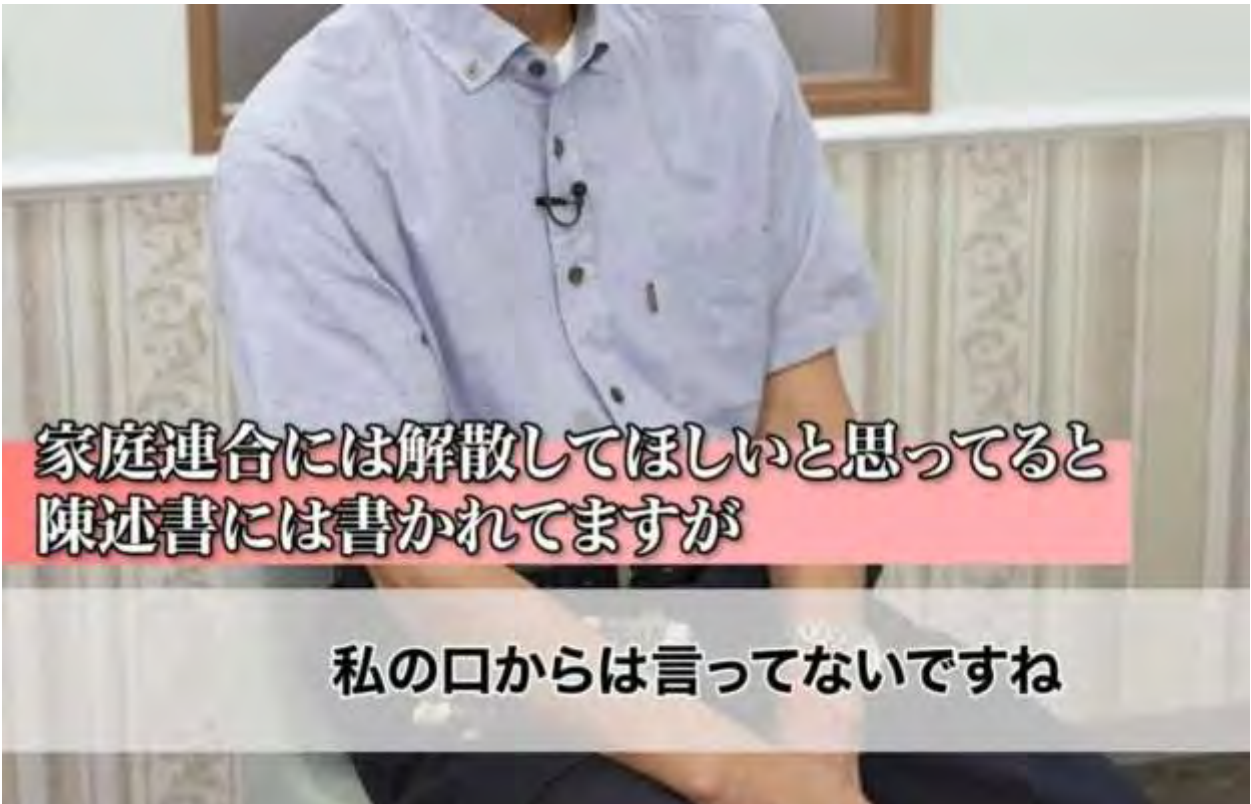


FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Forgery Charges Rock Japan's Education Ministry

Knut Holdhus
September 10, 2025



On September 5, 2025, Mr. A, the complainant, testifies via video during a press conference on the criminal complaint against Ministry of Education staff. Screenshot from YouTube channel "Association of Second-Generation Members for the Protection of Believers' Human Rights."



Forgery scandal as members and ex-members accuse government ministry of evidence fabrication in bid to dissolve Family Federation

Tokyo, 9th September 2025 - Published as an article in the Japanese newspaper [Sekai Nippo](#). Republished with permission. Translated from Japanese. [Original article](#).

"I Never Said That," Says Former Believer; Ministry of Education Staff Accused Over Statements

Request for Dissolution of the Family Federation

by the Religious Freedom Investigative Team of the editorial department of [Sekai Nippo](#)

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See also ["Poorly Compiled Evidence Including Falsehoods"](#)

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See also [Alleged Evidence Tampering in Dissolution Case](#)

In connection with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's (MEXT) request to the court for a dissolution order against the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (FFWPU, formerly the [Unification Church](#)), several former members [filed a criminal complaint](#) on September 5, against six ministry officials, including the former head of the Religious Affairs Division of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. They allege that written statements submitted as evidence of legal violations justifying dissolution were fabricated.

The charges filed with the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office include forgery of private documents with official seals and use of forged documents. This sheds light on misconduct by the ministry that had been hidden behind closed-door proceedings.

One of the complainants, a former male believer referred to as Mr. A, testified via video at the press conference that discrepancies existed between what he had actually said and what was written in his statement. Mr. A explained that he joined the [church](#) after being advised by relatives, as he was the eldest son of a farming family and had difficulty finding a marriage partner, and he studied the teachings with the purpose of finding a spouse.



However, the written statement submitted to the court by MEXT claimed he had participated in a [mass wedding](#) after being told that "joining would absolve the misdeeds of his ancestors," and that he had been made anxious and pressured to participate. It also described him as having been threatened with talk of ancestral sins and "squeezed for donations." But Mr. A insists he had no such perception.

While he did exchange documents with the ministry for confirmation purposes, he later discovered that wording he did not recall ever saying - such as "I want the [church](#) to be dissolved" - had been added. "I never said that. It wasn't even in the documents that MEXT sent me," he said, expressing deep distrust.

Another complainant, a former female believer referred to as Ms. B, was also troubled by fabricated content. Her statement included a passage claiming she "was persuaded by her daughter to make donations." But her daughter, Ms. Oyama (pseudonym), who had actually joined the [church](#) at her mother's invitation, denied ever saying such a thing when she spoke with her mother about the statement: "What is that? Where did it come from?" Ms. B herself had no memory of making such testimony, and when her daughter explained the details of the statement, she was shocked.



Hiroshi Ogasawara, June 2025

Ms. B had been interviewed by phone by MEXT officials around November 2023. Her statement, under her name, was 34 pages long in small 9-point font - too difficult for an elderly person to check thoroughly on her own. No reading aloud or confirmation work was conducted. The complaint asserts, "From the beginning, there was no intention of having Complainant B confirm the content," and harshly criticizes the ministry's sloppy procedures.

As a co-complainant, Ms. Oyama spoke at the press conference: "Donations are branded as shady, and as people age, religious practitioners are dismissed easily. Watching my mother, it feels like her whole life is being denied. I want to stop a society where such injustice prevails."

Another complainant, Mr. Hiroshi Ogasawara ((小笠原裕 - 62), a current member living in Yachiyo City, Chiba Prefecture, also attended. He had filed a complaint in December last year over suspected forgery of two statements discovered during questioning procedures at the Tokyo District Court. Former believers whose statements had been submitted testified in court but repeatedly gave accounts contradicting the written statements or said they had "no memory" of the contents.



Toshiko Abe, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) 2023

Of the 123 statements prepared and submitted by MEXT, four have now come under suspicion of fabrication based on the testimony of the supposed authors, leading to the complaints. To ensure fairness, the defense argues, all 123 authors should be called to testify. Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (徳永信一), representing the complainants, declared:

"This suggests systematic involvement. If the government fabricated evidence, it would be a huge scandal."

Meanwhile, Education Minister Toshiko Abe (阿部俊子), at a February press conference, argued that publicizing the alleged forgeries "goes against the purpose of keeping proceedings closed" and said it was inappropriate. However, she avoided commenting on the truth of the forgery allegations.

Attorney Tokunaga stressed,

"This must never be buried in history. It should become a case studied in textbooks."

See also [Writers, Clergy Urge Rethink of Media Narrative](#)
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“I he biggest scandal since the war!”

On his X account (formerly Twitter) 7th September, Haruhisa Nakagawa (中川晴久), Executive Secretary, Tokyo Institute for Christian Theology, calls it “The biggest scandal since the war!”

On 5th September, both current and former members of the Family Federation lodged a criminal complaint



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Symbol of the **Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology** of Japan. Photo: 文部科学省 (MEXT Japan) / Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC Attr 4.0 Int](#)

with the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office against six senior officials of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). They allege that key testimonies submitted as evidence in support of the dissolution request were fabricated.

Two major publications – the Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan's leading mainstream daily, and the Epoch Times (Japanese edition) – reported on this development.

Yomiuri presents the essential facts of the complaint, while Epoch Times offers a deeper dive into the details, voices of the complainants, and the broader implications for democracy, justice, and human rights.

These reports highlight a fundamental concern: whether state authorities have overstepped their bounds by manipulating evidence to secure a predetermined outcome, undermining both religious freedom and the rule of law in Japan.

Yomiuri's Coverage: Acknowledging the Complaint

The Yomiuri article adopts its usual restrained and factual tone. It reports that four individuals – two

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The logo of the Yomiuri Shimbun

current believers and two former members – accused six MEXT officials of fabricating depositions submitted between 2023 and 2024. These depositions, allegedly altered or invented, included statements such as “I want the church to be dissolved,” which the individuals never expressed. Yomiuri also notes that the Tokyo District Court already issued a dissolution order in March 2025, and that the case is now under appeal.

What is most striking in Yomiuri's coverage is the mere fact of publication. For Japan's largest newspaper to report on such allegations lends legitimacy to concerns long voiced by Family Federation members: that the government's case may be built on partial, manipulated, or even falsified testimony. Although Yomiuri presents the Ministry's defense – that the dissolution request was “carried out properly” – it nonetheless records the unprecedented move of believers and former believers jointly accusing state officials of forgery. This signals that the issue can no longer be dismissed as fringe complaint but has entered mainstream discourse.

Epoch Times' Coverage: Unmasking Structural Problems

While Yomiuri provides the facts, Epoch Times develops the story with a critical eye toward structural abuses of power. Its report identifies by name

大紀元

The logo of the Japanese division of the Epoch Times.

Religious Affairs Division Chief Taizō Yamada (山田泰藏) as one of the accused officials, giving the complaint concrete accountability. It explains that four out of 132 depositions were targeted in the complaint, and that unauthorized use of signatures and seals constitutes document forgery under Japanese law.



Hiroshi Ogasawara (小笠原裕). Photo (March 2025): Sekai Nippo

Epoch Times also relays testimonies from those directly affected. One complainant, Hiroshi Ogasawara (小笠原裕), argued that many statements followed a rigid template designed to paint the religious organization negatively – linking recruitment to personal troubles, ancestral burdens, financial donations, and subsequent hardship. Another woman described how a 30-page legalistic document was attributed to her 91-year-old mother, who firmly denied authoring it. Such details vividly illustrate

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how the state's narrative may have been manufactured through "cookie-cutter" testimonies that distort reality.

Remarks by attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (徳永信一) further elevate the discussion. He warns that the presumption of public servants' honesty makes misconduct hard to challenge in court, and compares the closed nature of Japan's "non-contentious proceedings" (非訟事件) [See editor's note below] to authoritarian practices in China. These statements, while provocative, underline a crucial point: when transparency is lacking, human rights violations become possible, even in democratic societies.



Attorney Shinichi Tokunaga (徳永信一).
Photo: [Sekai Nippo](#)

Epoch Times also contextualizes the complaint within parliamentary debate, recalling how lawmakers had already raised suspicions of fabricated evidence in 2024 and 2025, only to be stonewalled by ministers citing procedural secrecy. This indicates a long-standing pattern of avoidance rather than accountability.

A Turning Point for Justice and Religious Freedom

Together, these two articles illustrate both the **surface facts** and the **deeper implications** of the complaint. Yomiuri ensures that the matter cannot be ignored by Japan's mainstream readership, while Epoch Times sheds light on the systemic flaws and personal injustices involved.

The filing of this criminal complaint is not merely a defensive maneuver by a [religious organization](#) under siege. It is a courageous act of citizens – both current and former members – demanding that their government adhere to principles of fairness and truth. The fact that some former members have joined in the accusation suggests that concern transcends internal loyalty and speaks to the integrity of the legal process itself.

If it is true that officials forged or [manipulated evidence](#), the implications are profound. It would mean that Japan's first attempt in modern history to dissolve a major religious organization rests on tainted ground. Such a precedent, if left unchallenged, could open the door to arbitrary state intervention in religious life and civil society, eroding freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

The [Family Federation](#) case thus becomes more than a dispute about one organization. It is a test of Japan's democratic resilience. Will the courts and the public demand transparency and accountability from state authorities? Or will a culture of secrecy and political expediency prevail?

By reporting these allegations, both Yomiuri and [Epoch Times](#) have opened the door to a broader conversation about fairness, religious liberty, and the rule of law. Supporters of human rights should welcome this development as a chance to ensure that justice in Japan is not only done, but also seen to be done.

See also [6 Ministry Officials Sued Over Evidence Forgery](#)

See also [Big Paper: State Accused of Altering Evidence](#)

See also [Japan: Forgery Charges Rock Education Ministry](#)

Text: Knut Holdhus, editor, written based on the English translation of the above-mentioned articles.

Featured image above: Sign by the entrance of the Japanese HQ of the [Family Federation](#) in Japan, Shibuya, Tokyo. Photo: [Sekai Nippo](#)

[**Editor's note:** A **non-contentious case** refers to a legal matter where there is no dispute between parties. These cases typically involve administrative, procedural, or uncontested legal actions, such as **probate (handling a deceased person's estate), uncontested divorces, adoption, or registering a trademark**. Since there are no opposing parties or legal conflicts, these cases usually proceed smoothly through the legal system without litigation.]

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