

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Mother Han Seeking Bail and Release Extension

Knut Holdhus
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Mother Han arriving in the heavy rain at Seoul Central District Court on August 31, 2026



The building housing Seoul High Court, where Mother Han's appeal case will be tried, and where also Seoul Central District Court is located. AI-illustration

Seeking bail while her lawyers request continued medical release beyond the 30th September deadline

The legal position of [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) - also called [Mother Han](#) - leader of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (FFWPU), has entered a new procedural phase following her [two-year prison sentence](#) at first instance. On 23rd September, several South Korean media outlets reported that her defense team had applied for bail before the Seoul High Court, where her appeal is now being heard. The news agency Newsis writes that the application was handed in with the 13th Criminal Division with Kim Mu-shin (김무신) as presiding judge, and Lee Woo-hee (이우희) and Yoo Dong-gyun (유동균) as associate judges.

The media reports also make clear, however, that bail is not the only issue: According to [News1](#), [Mother Han](#) is already outside detention under a [temporary suspension of the execution of her detention](#), and her lawyers have simultaneously asked for that [suspension](#) to be extended beyond its current expiry date.

These are related but legally distinct procedures. Under South Korean [criminal procedure](#), bail (보석) is a mechanism by which a defendant who is detained may be released subject to conditions, potentially including a security deposit, restrictions on residence and other requirements. The court can cancel bail if, for example, there are grounds to believe that the defendant may flee or destroy evidence, fails to appear, or violates the conditions imposed.



Suspension of the execution of detention (구속집행정지) is different. Rather than constituting ordinary bail, it temporarily suspends the enforcement of an existing detention order. Article 101 of South Korea's [Criminal Procedure Act](#) allows a court, when there is sufficient reason, to suspend detention, including by entrusting the defendant to an appropriate person or restricting the defendant's residence.

In [Mother Han](#)'s case, this mechanism has already enabled her to remain outside detention, with the present order keeping her released until 6 p.m. on 30th September.

According to [Newsis](#), her lawyers submitted a new application on 23rd September to extend this [suspension of detention](#). [News1](#) and [Edaily](#) likewise report that the existing [suspension](#) is approaching its expiration and that [Mother Han](#)'s side is seeking continued release, citing health difficulties including surgery following a shoulder fracture and problems with her eyesight. Thus, the request for an extension is important in its own right: unless the court extends the existing order or grants another form of release, the temporary basis on which she is currently outside detention will expire.



There is a further procedural development that [News1](#) emphasizes. The special-prosecutor team headed by Special Prosecutor Min Joong-gi (민중기) had appealed against the court's decision extending Mother Han's suspension of detention, but the court rejected that appeal on 23rd September. In other words, the prosecution sought to challenge her [continued temporary release](#), while the court did not accept that challenge. [News1](#) reports that [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) therefore remains temporarily released under the existing order until 30th September.

This should not be confused with the appeal against the criminal conviction itself. [Mother Han](#) and the special-prosecutor team have both appealed the 31st August first-instance judgment. The criminal appeal therefore concerns the underlying conviction and sentence, whereas the dispute over [suspension of detention](#) concerns whether she should remain outside custody while that appeal proceeds. Under the [Criminal Procedure Act](#), decisions concerning detention, bail and suspension of detention in an appeal case are handled in accordance with the procedural rules governing the appellate court.



The background is the 31st August first-instance judgment. [Newsis](#) and [Edaily](#) report that [Mother Han](#) received one year for violating the Political Funds Act and a further year for violations of the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act and occupational embezzlement. [News1](#) writes that the court found her guilty of providing 100 million won in cash to former lawmaker Kweon Seong-dong (권성동), making so-called "split donations" to

People Power Party lawmakers, and providing Kim Keon-hee (김건희) with luxury items including a Chanel bag and a Graff diamond necklace.

At the same time, the first-instance court did not convict her on every allegation. [Newsis](#) and [Edaily](#) report that the court dismissed the indictment concerning alleged obstruction of an investigation into overseas gambling and acquitted her of the alleged embezzlement of [Family Federation](#) funds.

The immediate procedural picture, therefore, is: [Mother Han](#) is appealing her [two-year sentence](#); she is currently outside detention under a [temporary suspension](#); her lawyers have applied both for bail and for a further extension of that [suspension](#); and the special prosecutor's challenge to the existing suspension has been rejected. The next question is whether the appellate court will extend the present [suspension](#), grant bail, or otherwise alter the conditions of her release before the 30th September deadline.

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again and began a more than 12-year-long forced detention



Toru Goto speaking during the online conference on 19th September 2026. Screenshot

Part 2 of "My Experience of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Deconversion", a testimony on 19th September 2026 by Toru Goto (後藤徹), a Japanese member of the [Family Federation](#) and victim of attempted coercive [faith-breaking](#) – locked up for over 12 years in [apartment turned prison](#). This first-hand witness account – of [high relevance for the current dissolution case](#) against the [Family Federation](#) in Japan – was delivered at a Zoom conference organized by [Peace and Reconciliation Together \(PnR-T\)](#), a Dutch-registered foundation focused on reconciliation, peacebuilding, dialogue, and healing historical conflicts.

Continued from part 1: [Apartment Turned Prison: 12 Years to Break Faith](#)

Then a man named Takashi Miyamura (宮村峻) appeared, who was known for his involvement in [faith-breaking](#) activities. Miyamura and former members forced me to listen to attacks and insults against the [church](#) and its teachings. Gradually, I was driven to the limits psychologically. I became deeply afraid that I might lose my faith.

I barricaded myself in the bathroom, shouting, "Let me out! Help me!" I struggled with my father and brother. But there were several people against me, and I could not overpower them.

I realized that there was no way I could escape by force. So I decided that the only way to get out of confinement was to pretend that I had been deconverted. Several days later, I told my family that I had realized that the teachings of the [Unification Church](#) were wrong.

Even after leaving the hotel, however, I was moved to another apartment and remained under surveillance.

Then, when I was taken to a Christian church for Sunday worship, everyone began closing their eyes and praying. I thought, "This is my chance."

I told my mother that I was going to the bathroom. I left the building, ran as fast as I could, and jumped into a taxi.

That was how I escaped from my first period of confinement.

But even after escaping, I continued to live with the fear that I might be [abducted and confined](#) again at any time.

My brother began acting together with Miyamura and helping with [faith-breaking](#) activities.



Professional faith-breaker **Takashi Miyamura** (宮村峻), responsible for hundreds of [coercive faith-breakings](#) based on [abduction and forcible detention](#). He is said to have been advisor to the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP). Photo: [FFWPU](#)



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Protesting the coercive faith-breaking (deprogramming) business in Japan. Toru Goto (second from the right, front row) and others from the *National Association of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Deconversion Victims* participating in a protest march, 10th February 2025, Suginami Ward, Tokyo. Photo: Yasuhiro Uno (宇野泰弘)

At that time, there were periods when the church was aware of around 300 cases a year, and fellow believers were disappearing one after another.

It is said that approximately 70 percent of believers subjected to this kind of confinement eventually were deconverted and left the church.

Faith-breaking conducted while a person was deprived of freedom in this way was an extremely intense experience that placed enormous psychological pressure on people's minds and faith.

I changed the church congregation I belonged to so that my whereabouts would not be discovered. I moved my base of residence without telling even my fellow believers where I was living.

Even then, I did not feel safe, so I adopted the alias Yuji Suzuki.

I was also forced to resign from a major general construction company and lived in a way that concealed my identity.

Later, my younger sister was also abducted and held captive, and she lost her faith.

Furthermore, the woman to whom I had been engaged through a Marriage Blessing and with whom I had pledged our future was also abducted and confined. She lost her faith and left me.

In this way, because of these abductions and confinement, the people most precious to me were gradually taken away from me.

I lived each day wondering when I might again be abducted and confined, and I became consumed by loneliness and anxiety.

But then I was given one "weapon" to tackle this situation: praying day after day.

And as I continued praying, I received an answer from God.

Even if I were abducted and confined again, I had to build within myself a faith that could never be destroyed.

The problem was not the environment. The problem was myself.

In addition to praying, I earnestly immersed myself in God's word. In particular, I memorized the words of Sun Myung Moon during his time of suffering and recited them repeatedly, so that I could recall them at any time, even if I were confined.

In 1995, I received the Marriage Blessing again. I told my partner, who was worried that I might once



again be kidnapped and locked up, "Don't worry. Even if I am **abducted and confined**, I will definitely come back. Please believe me."

I was 31 years old at the time. I was working hard in my mission and was filled with dreams and hope for the future.

One month later, my second abduction and confinement began.

On 11th September 1995, I was having dinner with my family at my parents' home.

When I finished eating and was about to leave, my father suddenly said,

"Wait a moment. There's something I want to talk to you about."

The peaceful atmosphere suddenly changed.

My mother looked down. My brother, sister-in-law and younger sister all fell silent.

My father said, "Everyone has been very worried about you," and suggested that we go somewhere else. I said,

"If you have something to discuss, we can discuss it here."

But my family would not accept that.

Then my uncle, a large, physically strong man who lived some distance away, also appeared.

I realized that it was happening again.

I immediately understood that they intended to confine me.

My mind was overwhelmed by tension and fear, and I became unable to move.

Eventually, my father and brother grabbed me by both arms, while my uncle also surrounded me. I crouched down and resisted, but an overwhelming sense of despair ran through my entire body.



How *Father Moon* described his own suffering was a tremendous help for Toru Goto while held captive for **12 years and 5 months**. Here, an illustration of how *Sun Myung Moon* was tortured by the Japanese police in Korea in 1944 and 1945. Illustration: *FWWPU*



Young believer being abducted in order to have his faith broken. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 10th August 2024.

They dragged me out of the house and forced me into a van. Inside

the vehicle, I was squeezed between people on both sides of the seat so that I could not escape.

After we had been driving on the expressway for about two hours, I needed to use the bathroom. I thought that if I could go to the bathroom, I might be able to take advantage of the opportunity and escape.

But my brother handed me a portable plastic toilet that they had prepared in advance. They had done this specifically to prevent me from having any opportunity to escape. Having to relieve myself in that vehicle, surrounded by my family and strangers, was a humiliation I can never forget.

The van continued through the darkness. Feeling as though I was about to be crushed by despair, I closed my eyes and prayed:

"Heavenly Father, I believe a difficult battle awaits me from this point onward. But I will never betray you. I will surely return to you. Please be with me and protect and guide me."

To be continued. Part 3 coming soon

Continued from part 1: [Apartment Turned Prison: 12 Years to Break Faith](#)

Featured image above: The abduction of Toru Goto on 11th September 1995. Illustration: Grok xAI, September 2026, based on original by [Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion](#)

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