

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Gross Human Rights Violations In Japan

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Toru Goto 3 days after being released from 12 years and 5 months of forcible detention on 10th Feb. 2008

The cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of Toru Goto for more than 12 years - one of thousands of human rights violations in Japan

2nd part of the amazing story of Toru Goto, told in his own words

See [part 1](#)

Toru Goto (後藤徹) shared his story at a special symposium on the theme "Abduction and Confinement - Who Destroys Families?" 10th September 2023 at the Shibuya, Tokyo headquarters of the [Family Federation](#) of Japan. It was organised by the the [Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion](#). At the symposium, several victims of horrendous deprogramming attempts spoke.

Here is part 2:

At last, I thought I'd reached the point where I could visit my parents' home again. However, I was the only one who thought so, and behind the scenes, my family, under the guidance of an "exit counselor", was steadily looking for an opportunity to abduct me a second time and lock me up to get me to leave the group.

And the opportunity came. On 11th September 1995, when I returned to my hometown, a total

of eight people were waiting for me, including not only my family, but also relatives and employees of Takashi Miyamura's company. I don't think anyone, let alone me, could have imagined that this confinement would last for an incredible 12 years and five months.

For the first two and a half years, I was forcibly detained in an apartment in Niigata (新潟), and after my father's death, the place of detention was moved to Ogikubo (荻窪), Tokyo. There, I was to confront Miyamura (宮村峻) again.



Deprogrammer Takashi Miyamura

In the innermost room, the size of six tatami mats [ca. 9,7 m²], I was made to face Miyamura across a low tea table. Former believers surrounded him. As many as ten people had gathered together in that small room. There, a faith-breaking operation was carried out on one member of the [Family Federation](#).

By the way, Fumiaki Tada (多田文明), who is often seen on TV as a journalist knowledgeable about fraud and malicious business practices, was one of the former believers who came many times to the flat where I was locked up in Ogikubo (荻窪) to persuade me to leave the group.

I was forced to hear only bad information day in and day out. I felt afraid and in despair as I was having my faith destroyed. My faith was more important to me than my own life. No words can express how terrible the pain was.

One time, I climbed up on the bathtub and put my hand on the ventilation opening and shouted, "Help me!" I yelled as loud as I could. Then, I was dragged down with tremendous force from behind.

It was Miyamura.



Toru Goto in forcible detention for more than 12 years

I grabbed whatever object I could to prevent being dragged away, but one by one, those were knocked down. The kitchen became a mess, and I was dragged by force to the innermost six-mat room. Such violent acts were carried out in the place I was detained.

After ten years in captivity, I went on a hunger strike to protest my forcible detention. The third time I decided to go on an indefinite fast, I gave up on the 30th day because I felt my life was in danger. However, after that, I was not given proper food for many days, and I was on the verge of starvation.

The end of the confinement came suddenly.

It was the evening of 10th February 2008, one year and ten months after my last hunger strike.



The end of Toru Goto's forcible detention 10th Feb. 2008

Suddenly, I was thrown out the front door, penniless and with only the clothes I was wearing.

That's how I was released from captivity.

If you are released from confinement after 12 years and five months, what do you think would be the first thing you would feel? I looked up and saw the blue sky above me. Just to watch it really moved me as I saw it for the first time in a long time.

The freedom to look up at the blue sky. At the time, I was deeply moved by the fact that I could look up and see the blue sky. How precious it was! How grateful I felt! How wonderful that freedom was! Now, it's nothing special, but when I was released, I was in that kind of state.

The photo below was taken by reporter Kazuhiro Yonemoto at the hospital where I was admitted on the third day after my release from confinement, I was in a physically debilitated state, penniless and without a livelihood. I did not know where my former acquaintances were.

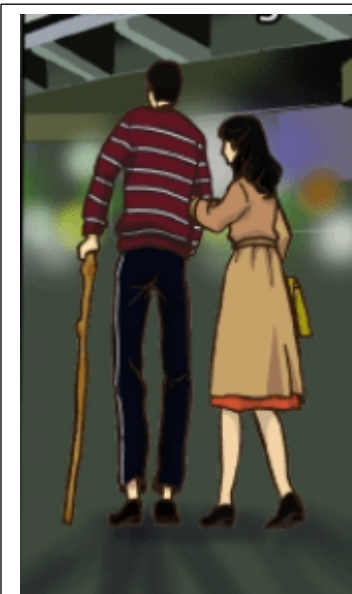
The only church facility whose location I knew, was here at the Shoto (松濤) headquarters in Shibuya (渋谷). I started walking from Ogikubo (荻窪) towards the Shoto headquarters. I later checked it, and it turned out to be about a distance of 10km. After a while, I suddenly started to feel pain below both knees because I hadn't walked for a long time.

I used a wooden stick that I found on the side of the road as a cane and slowly moved forward. When I reached the intersection of Shoto (松濤) 2-chome, I couldn't move a single step due to severe knee pain. Four hours had passed since I left the apartment, and it was already 8 pm at night. At that time, I was wearing a sweater that had been torn in a scuffle, old jersey pants, and leather shoes. My hair had been cut with scissors, so I had a buzz cut. I was walking with that stick, so I guess I looked like a homeless person.

It was a cold day in February. There were hardly any people on Yamate Street (山手通) at night. I was prepared to die for my faith. A young woman walked by, so I took the plunge and spoke to her. She was startled and stopped. She looked at me with suspicion. When I explained my situation, she gradually relaxed, and the expression on her face became softer. She pulled out a hymnbook used for [Family Federation](#) services from her bag and showed it to me.



Toru Goto in 2008 after being held in forcible detention by deprogrammers for more than 12 years, barely able to move



Toru Goto being helped by woman 10th Feb

And I said, "I'm a member." It was a Sunday, and there was a worship service. With the help of that woman, I was able to make it to the Shoto (松濤) headquarters alive. When I later spoke to her, she told me that she usually didn't pass by that place at that time of night. However, that day she happened to be delayed by something. I am convinced that the living [God](#) helped me.

I'll say it again. It is absolutely impossible for family members or relatives to force someone to leave a religious organisation by kidnapping him or her and keeping the person forcibly detained. A deprogrammer must always intervene as a third party, and the believer's family must receive lectures before the deprogramming can begin.

In that sense, I believe that also my family is a victim. This concludes my story. Thank you for your attention.

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Heroic Battle Against Evil Japanese Practise

November 22, 2023 • Knut Holdhus

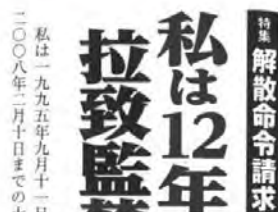
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Toru Goto recalls his horrendous ordeal fighting evil Japanese practise – part 1

Read [part 2](#)

Toru Goto (後藤徹) is a victim of abduction, forcible detention for incredible 12 years and 5 months, during which time he was put under constant duress to give up



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his faith. He could tell his story in great detail in an 8-page feature article in the December 2023 issue of the Japanese monthly opinion magazine *Seiron* (正論), published by the *Sankei Shimbun*, one of the country's top 5 daily national newspapers.

Another recent event that threw Goto onto the main stage of the Japanese media world, was his 4th October defamation lawsuit against anti-religious activist journalist Eito Suzuki. See [Kidnapping Victim Sues Activist Journalist](#)

Today, we are able to bring you some glimpses into the extraordinary life of Toru Goto, told in his own words.

He shared his story at a special symposium on the theme "Abduction and Confinement – Who Destroys Families?" 10th September 2023 at the Shibuya, Tokyo headquarters of the [Family Federation of Japan](#). It was organised by the [the Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion](#). At the symposium, several victims of horrendous deprogramming attempts spoke.

Toru Goto was introduced by Mamoru Kamono, a spokesperson for the [association of victims](#), with the words,

"I would like to move on to a testimony from a victim of abduction and confinement. First, the representative of our association, Toru Goto, will take the stage. The title of his speech is 'I learnt how precious freedom is through my 12 years and 5 months of abduction and confinement.'

Toru Goto was abducted and forcibly detained when he returned to his parents' home on the night of 11th September 1995. He was not released from his captivity at all until 10th February 2008.

Indeed, over a period of 12 years and 5 months, he was put under duress to renounce his faith and subjected to mental and physical abuse in a group setting, pushing him to the breaking point. However, he survived.

Today, he testifies to the existence of a living and working [God](#). Let's all welcome him with a big round of applause."

Here is part 1 of Toru Goto's keynote speech,

I was abducted and imprisoned for 12 years and five months, from the age of 31 to 44, because of my faith in the [Family Federation](#).



Toru Goto at the beginning of civil case in March 2011. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

unbelievable in today's Japan. However, in my case, in a civil lawsuit that I filed, the High Court ruling in favor of the plaintiff was finalized by the Supreme Court on September 29, 2015. In that ruling, the fact of my 12-year and 5-month abduction and



Facsimile from page 53 of *Monthly Seiron* Dec. 2023.

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Many people say that this is

...my 12-year and five-month imprisonment and confinement was recognized, and a total compensation order of 22 million yen was issued. So, at least, I hope you can understand that this is not entirely unfounded.

I would like to talk about my experience in the said confinement for 12 years and five months. It was my family that abducted me. First of all, I would like to tell you how I got to this point.

My older brother was the first member of my family to join the [Family Federation](#). I am the middle one of three siblings, with an older brother and younger sister.

My family was a most ordinary family. My father was a "corporate warrior" [salaryman loyal to his company] and had a habit of saying, "Study hard!"

My mother was kind and gentle, and she never complained even when I wet the bed and made the sheets soaking wet. She washed them every day without a word. My older brother worked in a construction company and was a talented guy, but he was a bit of a hothead.

Whenever I taught my sister maths, she would say, "I always get good marks thanks to you, big brother." She was really happy. We were a normal, close-knit family. In my family, the person I respected the most was my elder brother.



Toru Goto speaking with handheld loudspeaker at demonstration at Ogikubo Station in Tokyo 24th May 2009. Photo: FFWPU

I decided to pursue a career in architecture at university because of the influence of my older brother, who graduated from the architecture department.

My brother introduced me to the [Family Federation](#). I was in my fourth year of university. He was deeply moved by the teachings of the [Family Federation](#) and enthusiastically preached to me. He also converted my sister. In this way, all three of us became members of [Family Federation](#). That was already 36 years ago.

My brother, who was the first to join the [Family Federation](#), was able to quit his job and explain to his parents how to become a devotee of the [Family Federation](#). My parents were surprised, but my brother spoke about it with so much passion that they eventually approved.

My brother told me that my father told him something like, "It's your life, so live it without regrets."

If it had not been for certain events in the Goto family, we would probably still be a close-knit family.

As the name suggests, the [Family Federation](#) is a religion that values the family above all else.

Let's say that three siblings had lived a life with God at the center, where they loved each other and practiced the faith of the [Family Federation](#). If all

three had continued like that, they would have got married, started their own family, and gathered together for a fun time during the New Year. We would probably have become a closer family than before we became religious.

However, due to a certain incident, our family was destroyed. That particular event was the intervention of a third party.

Who was the third party? He was a specialist in persuading members to quit their faith, called a faith-breaker ["exit counselor"].



Satoshi Moriyama (森山諭 - 1908-1996), Japanese pastor and co-founder of Ogikubo Glory Church. Photo: [日本イエス・キリスト教団 荻窪栄光キリスト教会 / Wikimedia Commons](#). [Public domain image](#). Cropped



Professional deprogrammer Takashi Miyamura (宮村峻). Photo: [FFWPU](#)

In the case of the Goto family, the faith-breaker was Takashi Miyamura (宮村峻). At that time, my parents began attending a study group run by Miyamura. He worked with Satoshi Moriyama (森山諭) of Ogikubo Glory Church.

The focus of the study group was "exit persuasion".

It was a study group to encourage members of the [Family Federation](#) to leave the group. What triggered it, seems to have been hearing bad rumors about the Family Federation from relatives and becoming anxious. Parents learnt how to get their children out of the group. The method was abduction and confinement.

A family abducts a son or daughter, isolates and confines him or her in an apartment or some other place. There, a third-party "exit counselor" meets the believer face to face, slowly destroys the person's faith, and does not release the believer until he or she quits the group. The "exit counselors" refer to this method as "protective persuasion".

At first it was my brother. After being summoned by our father to our parents' home in Tokyo, my brother disappeared without a trace. He was abducted by several men who were waiting for him on the street and taken away in a van.

My brother was forcibly detained in an apartment for about a month. Takashi Miyamura (宮村峻) destroyed his faith, making him quit our movement.

My older brother did not just leave the [Family Federation](#), but began being hostile and hateful towards it, due to the influence of Miyamura.

And then I was abducted and held captive. At that time, Miyamura persuaded me to leave the [Federation](#), but after just over a month, I was able to escape and went straight back to the [Family Federation](#). However, after that, my younger sister was abducted and forcibly detained and quit our group.

Eventually, I became the only one to remain in the [Family Federation](#). My parents and siblings became vehemently opposed to it.

I was forced to use a false name and quit my job out of fear that I might be abducted at any time and held captive again.

If a believer who spends time with other believers, is abducted, forcibly detained and then leaves the group, there is a risk that the whereabouts of the other believers will be known, and that they will be ambushed and abducted. Since my family knew where I worked, there was a risk that I would be ambushed, kidnapped and confined.

Originally, one's family should have been those you trust the most. But when they may be involved in kidnapping you again at any time, they have become a terrifying presence that you cannot trust even if you want to.

After that, I gradually built a certain level of trust with them over the course of eight years.

Continue to read: [Part 2](#).

Featured image above: Toru Goto speaking 10th September 2023 in Tokyo. Photo: Screenshot from live transmission by the [Japanese Victims' Association against Religious Kidnapping and Forced Conversion](#).

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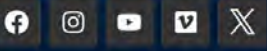
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