

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: 12 Years Forcible Detention And Abuse In Japan

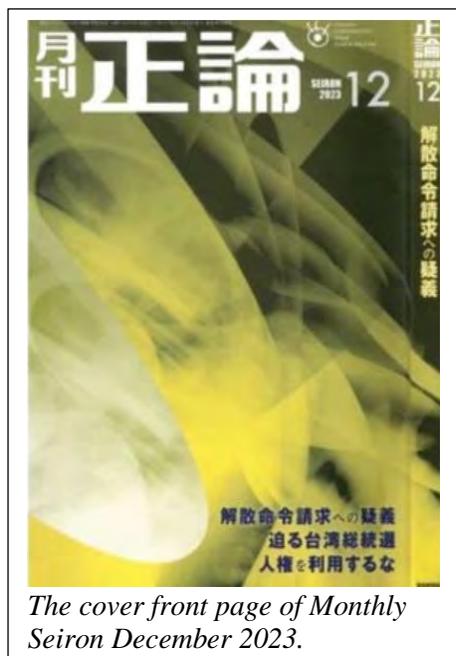
Knut Holdhus
January 30, 2024



How Toru Goto was treated. Illustration

The horrendous ordeal Toru Goto suffered during more than 12 years of forcible detention

5th of six parts of Monthly Seiron report - More on [part 1](#), [part 2](#), [part 3](#), [part 4](#)



The cover front page of Monthly Seiron December 2023.

The first page of the large report in the December 2023 issue of Seiron (正論) with the title "Doubts about the Request for a Dissolution Order".

The Japanese monthly opinion magazine Seiron (正論) published in its December 2023 issue a feature article on the vicious persecution of the [Family Federation](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) in Japan.

Two parts of the report by Makiko Takita, well known journalist and editor-in-chief of the magazine, contain an interview with Toru Goto, victim of horrible abuse during more than a decade of forcible detention.



[Bitter Winter](#) published this part of the report of Seiron on 23rd January 2024, as the fifth of six parts of the English version of the original Japanese feature article. More on [article 1](#), [article 2](#), [article 3](#), [article 4](#).

Read the [whole Bitter Winter article](#).
[3](#), [article 4](#).

This 5th article was titled "The Tragic Reality of Deprogramming, Part I". It delves into the harrowing experience of Toru Goto, who was forcibly confined for over twelve years as part of an attempt to coerce him out of the [Unification Church](#). The piece, penned by Makiko Takita, features an interview with Goto, who serves as the Representative of the National Association of Victims of Abduction, Confinement, and Forced Conversion.

Goto recounts his ordeal, which began in 1995 when he was abducted by his own family members, including his parents, brother, and sister, and detained for an extended period in various locations, primarily in an apartment near JR Ogikubo Station in Tokyo. He explains that the motive behind his prolonged confinement was his affiliation with the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), formerly known as the [Unification Church](#). He reveals that his family's actions were orchestrated with the involvement of faith-breakers and ex-members specialized in coercing individuals to leave the [church](#).

The narrative unfolds with Goto's brother initially being targeted for deprogramming after joining the [Unification Church](#) in 1986. Subsequently, Goto himself was coerced into leaving the [church](#) through manipulation and confinement from October 1986.

Goto recalls,

"I was so angry at being tricked and locked up that I started screaming in the bathroom, 'Get me out of here!' But they dragged me out and started a scuffle, helped by my father and brother, and they seized me. After a few days, the situation had not changed at all, and I decided to falsely pretend that I was leaving the church. I was released from the hotel when I said, 'I have found out that the [Unification Church](#) is wrong.'



*Professional deprogrammer
Takashi Miyamura*



*Illustration of Toru Goto, a member
of the [Family Federation](#), just
before he was kidnapped by his
parents and relatives in 1995 in
Tokyo*

But this time, I was moved to a small apartment in Tokyo. There were food and toilet facilities, but other than that, my parents and brother were always watching me, and there was no way to escape. There was no telephone or television. I was completely cut off from the outside world and was not even allowed to go outside."

He managed however to escape in late November after feigning apostasy. Still, Goto was abducted a second time eight years later and this time he remained captive for more than 12 years, enduring psychological and physical abuse at the hands of his family and deprogrammers led by a figure identified as Mr. M in the Seiron article. [Toru Goto had earlier stated it was Takashi Miyamura (宮村峻)].

Goto remembers it very well,

"It was September 11, 1995. When I returned home for the first time in a while, my father said, 'Toru, I need to talk to you.' The friendly atmosphere changed drastically, and he said, 'As a family member, I just can't leave Toru alone. Let's go somewhere else.'

As the back-and-forth with the family continued, my brother and sister-in-law said, 'Let's go.' Then my brother and father held both sides of me. Surrounded by my family on all sides, men I had never seen before appeared, and I was forcibly taken away in a car and once again imprisoned in an apartment. All the windows were fitted with security locks called wind-locks, which could not be opened from the inside. I can say that I was completely cut off from the outside world."

Throughout his captivity, Goto faced relentless pressure to renounce his beliefs and was subjected to continuous indoctrination sessions aimed at undermining his faith. He

describes the oppressive conditions of his confinement, including being isolated from the outside world, denied basic amenities, and subjected to verbal and physical assaults.

The article sheds light on the systematic nature of forced deprogramming orchestrated by Takashi Miyamura, who collaborated with parents and Christian pastors to abduct and confine individuals affiliated with the [Unification Church](#). Despite the illegality of such practices in other countries, including the United States, they persisted in Japan until Goto's legal victory against Miyamura in 2005.

Goto's testimony exposes the profound violation of human rights inherent in the practice of deprogramming and underscores the urgent need for legal intervention to protect individuals from such abuses. His account serves as a poignant reminder of the enduring impact of coercive tactics employed against religious minorities and the imperative of safeguarding religious freedom and individual autonomy.

To be continued. Part 6 coming soon.

Read Toru Goto's own account of his ordeals: [Heroic Battle Against Evil Japanese Practise](#) and [Gross Human Rights Violations in Japan](#)

More on [part 1](#), [part 2](#), [part 3](#), [part 4](#) of the Seiron article.

More on forcible detention: [Japan: 4300 Abductions and Forcible Detentions](#)
Even more on forcible detention: [Parents Pay for Activism of Pastors and Lawyers](#)
Still more on forcible detention: [Forcibly Medicated to Break His Faith](#)
Yet more on forcible detention: [Japan Criticized for Glaring Rights Violations](#)
And still more on forcible detention: [Police Turns Blind Eye to Forcible Detention](#)



NEWS AND INSIGHTS

HOME ABOUT ▾ TEACHINGS ▾ TOPICS ▾ GENERAL ▾

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

17:51

CONTACT US ▾

HAK JA HAN ▾

JAPAN ▾

MEDIA ▾

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ▾

COMMEMORATING ▾

VARIOUS ▾

REVIEWS ▾

Heroic Battle Against Evil Japanese Practise

November 22, 2023 • Knut Holdhus

Share:



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



More Posts



12 Years Of Forcible Detention And Awful Abuse

January 30, 2024



Inhuman Government-Supported Mass Deprogramming

January 28, 2024



Scholar Condemns Violation Of Minority Rights

January 27, 2024



Highly Distorted Media Reporting

January 24, 2024



Journalists Point Out Vicious Media Bias

January 23, 2024



Collusion To Rob Minority Of Its Rights

January 22, 2024



Malicious One-Sided Government Source Selection

January 21, 2024

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 Nobuyuki Kaeriyama, 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.

Search...



Categories

Send us a message

First Name Last Name

Email *

Email Address

Your Message *

Submit

...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](#).

More about evil Japanese practise: [Japan: 4300 Abductions and Forcible Detentions](#)

Even more about evil Japanese practise: [Religious Freedom Violated in Japan](#)

Yet more about evil Japanese practise: [Father Tricked by Deprogrammers to Kidnap Son](#)

And still more about evil Japanese practise: [In the Clutches of Abusive Deprogrammers](#)

Still more about evil Japanese practise: [Lawyers and Deprogrammers Hand in Hand](#)

And still more about evil Japanese practise: [Horrendous Persecution in Japan](#)

And still more about evil Japanese practise: [Japan Following the Way of China](#)

And still more about evil Japanese practise: [12 Religious Freedom NGOs Denouncing Japan](#)

More about evil Japanese practise: [Japan Urged To Make U-Turn](#)

« Previous
Kishida Administration ... Gross Human Rights Viol... Next
»