

URGENT ACTION

SIX MORE HANGED IN UNPRECEDENTED EXECUTION SPREE

Following the executions of seven members of the religious cult Aum Shinrikyo (Aum) earlier this month, the remaining six men sentenced to death in the same case were hanged early on 26 July 2018. The last time Japan executed more than 10 people in a year was in 2008. It is also extremely rare for Japan to carry out two rounds of executions in the same month.

Satoru Hashimoto, Yasuo Koike (Hayashi), Kenichi Hirose, Kazuaki Okazaki (Miyamae), Toru Toyota and Masato Yokoyama were executed without any prior notice in the early hours of Thursday morning, 26 July 2018. Against international law and standards, the Japanese government again carried out executions despite the pending retrial request of four. The men were sentenced to death for their involvement in the deadly 1995 sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway, as well as other illegal activities.

This is the second group execution in Japan within a matter of weeks as seven other Aum members were hanged on 6 July. While 13 have now been executed in the month of July 2018, over 100 people remain on death row without knowing when their last day will be. Those on death row in Japan are kept in harsh conditions, including routine isolation and limited human contact. International human rights bodies have repeatedly condemned Japan's use of the death penalty, including with reference to the cruel secrecy that surrounds executions and prolonged periods of detention in solitary confinement.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty unconditionally, in all cases without exception, regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime, the guilt, innocence or other characteristics of the offender or the method used by the state to carry out the execution. Therefore, while the recent series of executions may demonstrate Japan's determination to retain the death penalty, we will continue to campaign to end this grave violation of human rights.

Many thanks to all who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the third update of UA 213/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa22/8803/2018/en/>

Name: Satoru Hashimoto, Yasuo Hayashi, Kenichi Hirose, Kazuaki Miyamae, Toru Toyota, Masato Yokoyama
Gender m/f: male

Further information on UA: 213/16 Index: ASA 22/8835/2018 Issue Date: 26 July 2018

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