

PUBLIC

File Index: A/S/22/006/2002

18 September 2002

Further information on EXTRA 59/02 (A/S/22/005/2002, 31 July 2002) - Fear of Imminent Executions

JAPANESE Omori Katsuhisa (m), aged 53

New names: 53 unnamed prisoners under sentence of death

Executed: Yoshiteru Hamada (m), aged 51  
Tatsuya Haruta (m), aged 36

---

Omori Katsuhisa has not been executed, as was feared. However, two people, Yoshiteru Hamada and Tatsuya Haruta, were executed on 18 September. Amnesty International fears that other executions, including that of Omori Katsuhisa, could be carried out soon. There are currently 54 people on death row in Japan.

It appears that the date for the two executions was chosen to coincide with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's historic meeting in North Korea. All media attention in Japan has been focused on this meeting and therefore any public criticism of these executions has so far been avoided. The Japanese Parliament (the Diet) is currently in recess; this is often a time when executions are carried out.

Yoshiteru Hamada was sentenced to death at Gifu District Court in 1998, for murdering three members of his girlfriend's family. Tatsuya Haruta was sentenced to death in March 1988, after being convicted of the kidnapping and murder of a university student. His sentence was finalised in August 1998.

Omori Katsuhisa's death sentence was finalised in July 1994, for his alleged role in the bombing of the Hokkaido prefectural government building in March 1976.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Executions in Japan usually take place during parliamentary recesses or public holidays, to avoid public and parliamentary criticism. The application of the death penalty in Japan is arbitrary and cruel, the prisoner being informed of the execution just hours in advance. Execution is by hanging. There is also a trend to carry out more than one execution at the same time.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty as a violation of the right to life and the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment, and calls on the Japanese government to cease all executions, to commute all death sentences and take positive steps towards the abolition of the death penalty.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION:** please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible in English, Japanese or in your own language:

- expressing concern that Omori Katsuhisa and other unnamed death row prisoners are under threat of imminent execution;
- condemning the executions of Yoshiteru Hamada and Tatsuya Haruta, and urging the Japanese authorities to ensure that no further executions are carried out;
- calling for all death sentences to be commuted to prison terms, and for Japan to take concrete steps to abolish the death penalty, which is the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment.

#### APPEALS TO:

Mr KOIZUMI Junichiro

Prime Minister  
Prime Minister's Office  
2-3-1 Nagata-cho, Chigoda-ku,  
Tokyo 100-0014, Japan  
**Fax: + 81 3 3581 3883**  
**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

Ms MORIYAMA Magumi  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
1-1-1 Kasumigasaki, Chigoda-ku,  
Tokyo 100-8977, Japan  
**Fax: + 81 3 3592 7008/5511 7200**  
**email: webmaster@moj.go.jp**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

**Japanese national newspaper**  
*Asahi Shimbun*  
5-3-2 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku,  
Tokyo 104-8011, Japan  
**Fax: + 81 3 3545 0285/3593 0438**  
**email: kouhou@mx.asahi-np.co.jp**

**English-language newspaper**  
*Japan Times*  
4-5-4 Shibaura, Minato-ku,  
Tokyo 108-0014, Japan  
**Fax: + 81 3 3453 5456**

**Japanese national newspaper**  
*Yomiuri Shimbun*  
1-7-1 Ohtemachi, Chigoda-ku,  
Tokyo 100-0004, Japan  
**Email: gaihou@tokyo.yomiuri.co.jp /dy@yominet.ne.jp (newsroom email)**  
**Fax: + 81 3 3245 1277/3581 0434/3279 6324/3217 8247 (newsroom)**

and to diplomatic representatives of Japan accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**