

森友学園のホームページから消された 昭恵夫人のごあいさつ

名誉校長 安倍 昭恵 先生

安倍 晋三 内閣総理大臣夫人



籠池先生の教育に対する熱き想いに感銘を受け、このたび名誉校長に就任させていただきました。

瑞穂の國記念小学院は、優れた道德教育を基として、日本人としての誇りを持つ、芯の通った子どもを育てます。

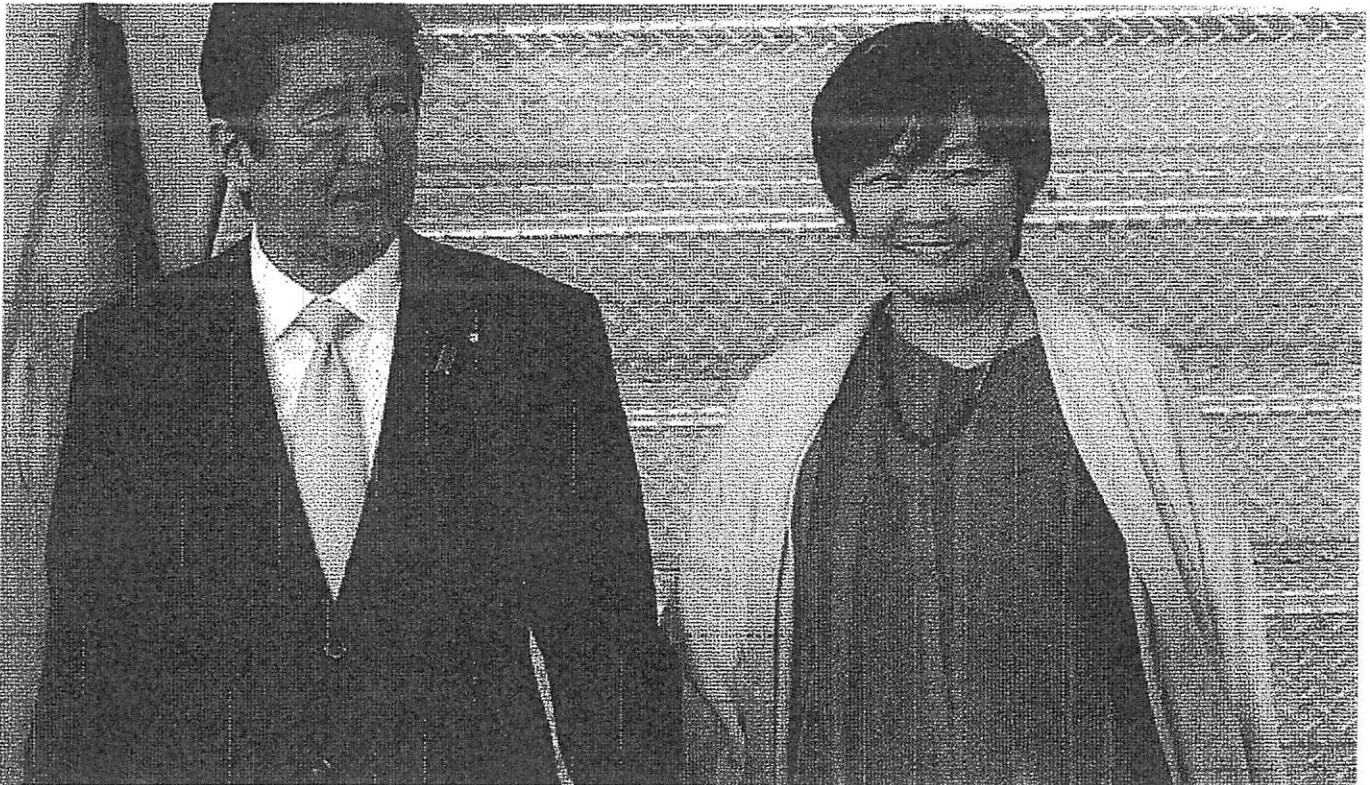
そこで備わった「やる気」や「達成感」、「プライド」や「勇気」が、子ども達の未来で大きく花開き、其々が日本のリーダーとして国際社会で活躍してくれることを期待しております。

Shinzo Abe and wife under pressure over ties to ultra-nationalist ... <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/24/shinzo-abe-wi...>

the **guardian**

Shinzo Abe and wife under pressure over ties to ultra-nationalist school

Akie Abe's links to kindergarten under intense scrutiny in Japan after reports it bought state land at a knockdown price



Shinzo Abe and his wife, Akie, who is accused of endorsing an educational approach that harks back to pre-war militarism. Photograph: Wilfredo Lee/AP

Justin McCurry in Tokyo

Friday 24 February 2017 08.01 GMT

Japan's prime minister, Shinzo Abe, and his wife, Akie, have attempted to distance themselves from an ultra-nationalist educational institution mired in allegations of racism and a sweetheart land deal.

Akie Abe's links to Moritomo Gakuen, a private kindergarten in Osaka, have come under scrutiny after the media reported that the preschool had bought state-owned land at a seventh of its listed price for a primary school it plans to open in April. She stepped down as honorary principal of the primary school on Friday, soon after it had removed her message of support from its website.

In the message, she endorsed the school's attempts to foster national pride through moral education - an approach that harks back to pre-war militarism - adding that she had been impressed by the passion shown by the Moritomo president, Yasunori Kagoike.

The issue has dominated parliamentary debate this week, with opposition MPs demanding an explanation as to why the school was allowed to buy land at such a low price.

Shinzo Abe said he had protested against the use of his name when Moritomo was seeking donations for the Abe Shinzo memorial primary school. It has since decided to call itself the Mizuho no Kuni -

Shinzo Abe and wife under pressure over ties to ultra-nationalist ... <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/24/shinzo-abe-wi...>

meaning “land of rice” - primary school.

He said his wife had decided to step down after the couple discussed the controversy, adding that she had been left with no choice but to accept the role of honorary principal after her appointment was announced in front of parents.

“Despite this, she decided that it would be detrimental for both the students and the parents if she continued and so she told them she would resign,” Abe told a parliamentary committee on Friday. “It is true that she was on the website as honorary principal but at her request, this was removed.”

He denied that either of them had played any role in helping Moritomo gain approval to purchase government-owned land for below its listed price. He has offered to resign if proof of his involvement is produced.

Moritomo’s curriculum is designed to instil patriotism in its pupils, who are required to bow before portraits of members of the imperial family and go on field trips to military bases. Children aged between three and five sing the national anthem every morning and memorise the 1890 imperial rescript on education (pdf), which demands loyalty to the emperor and sacrifice for one’s country. The US occupation authorities banned the rescript, believing it had fuelled pre-war militarism.

Kagoike is the Osaka branch leader of Nippon Kaigi, an ultra-conservative lobby group whose members include Shinzo Abe and more than a dozen members of his cabinet. The group wants to rebuild the military, claims that Japan “liberated” east Asia from western colonialism during the war, and that the US-authored post-war constitution has emasculated the country’s “true, original characteristics”.

Japanese media recently revealed that Moritomo had bought the 8,770 sq metre plot of government-owned land for 134m yen (£950,000), 14% of its appraisal price. Government officials claim the deduction was made to factor in the cost of cleaning up industrial waste on the site.

Earlier this month, Osaka officials questioned Kagoike after the kindergarten sent a letter to parents that denigrated Chinese people and Korean residents of Japan - for which it later apologised.

Kagoike has denied any wrongdoing in the land purchase. “I haven’t done anything wrong,” he said in a radio interview. Instead, he blamed the “non-conservative media” for attempting to “crush our plans for a school that respects history and tradition”.

Akie Abe’s connections to Moritomo run deeper than her short-lived role as honorary principal. Footage of a visit she made to its sister kindergarten in 2015 shows her telling parents: “My husband also thinks that education policy here is excellent.”

She has won plaudits for appearing to support liberal causes, having attended the Tokyo rainbow pride event in 2014 and spoken of her admiration for South Korean culture.

She has also questioned the government’s decision to build hundreds of miles of concrete sea walls to protect the coastline against tsunamis.

Shinzo Abe

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The Washington Post

Asia & Pacific

Japan first lady resigns from honorary position at school

By Mari Yamaguchi | AP February 23 at 11:56 PM

TOKYO — The Japanese first lady has resigned as “honorary principal” of a private elementary school run by a man with ultra-nationalistic views following an escalating controversy over the low price the school paid for government land.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told Friday’s parliamentary session that his wife Akie had resigned from the role. His confirmation comes a day after an endorsement of the school from her was removed from its website. Abe, however, has said he was aware that Akie served in an honorary position for the school, whose president is a passionate supporter of the prime minister’s views.

Abe said Friday that Akie decided to step down after the couple talked following “various developments” surrounding the school. He said he has protested to the school over its use of his name in a donation form despite Abe’s repeated objections.

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The Osaka property was sold in 2016 for 134 million yen (\$1.2 million), one-seventh of its appraised price. Abe has denied he or his wife had any influence over the land deal.

The same school operator runs a kindergarten with a curriculum said to resemble that of pre-World War II Japan. It plans a similar approach for the new elementary school, which is set to open in April, pending final approval by Osaka prefecture.

The scandal has dominated parliamentary debate, with opposition lawmakers summoning finance and education ministry officials to clarify how the school obtained the large discount.

Opposition Democratic Party lawmaker Masato Imai told reporters that the land deal must be scrutinized further because it’s the taxpayers’ money. “As honorary principal, Mrs. Akie Abe has served as a billboard for the school with various problems. We believe she bears a responsibility at least indirectly, if not directly.”

Nobutaka Sagawa, an official at the Finance Ministry, which oversees state land transactions, told parliament this week that industrial waste had been found on the land after the initial appraisal and the deduction involved the cleanup cost. He denied any illegality or political influence in the process. Officials said the waste removal was not compulsory, and they could not confirm whether the school had actually done it.

Akie Abe agreed to become honorary principal of the elementary school, “Mizuho no Kuni” (The Land of Rice),” after her visit a few years ago to the kindergarten run by Yasunori Kagoike.

apan first lady resigns from honorary position at school - The Wa... https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/japan-first-l...

Television footage from her September 2015 visit shows, she told the kindergartners' parents, "My husband also thinks that education policy here is excellent."

In a message posted on the school website, she wrote that she was deeply impressed with Kagoike's "passion for education" and that the school's moral education fosters Japanese pride and strong principles among children. The message and her photo, which were on the website on Wednesday, were no longer there on Thursday. Phone calls to the school were not answered.

The school and Kagoike have also drawn attention over a note distributed to parents of the kindergartners that criticized Koreans and Chinese, prompting Osaka prefectural officials to question the school, which later apologized. Similar statement was also posted on the kindergarten website.

"I haven't done anything wrong," Kagoike told TBS radio interview on Monday. "I think evil political power and non-conservative media are trying to crush our plans for a school that respects history and tradition, and is conservative."

This story has been corrected to say the name of opposition party is the Democratic Party, not the Liberal Party.

Follow Mari Yamaguchi on Twitter at twitter.com/mariyamaguchi

Her work can be found at <http://bigstory.ap.org/content/mari-yamaguchi>

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ASIA PACIFIC

Bigotry and Fraud Scandal at Kindergarten Linked to Japan's First Lady

By JONATHAN SOBLE FEB. 24, 2017

TOKYO — At Tsukamoto Kindergarten, an ultraconservative school at the center of a swirling Japanese political scandal, children receive the sort of education their prewar great-grandparents might have recognized.

They march in crisp rows to military music. They recite instructions for patriotic behavior laid down by a 19th-century emperor. The intent, the school says, is to “nurture patriotism and pride” in the children of Japan, “the purest nation in the world.”

Now Tsukamoto and its traditionalist supporters — including the wife of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe — are under fire. The school has been accused of promoting bigotry against Chinese and Koreans and of receiving illicit financial favors from the government.

A growing outcry has put Mr. Abe's conservative administration on the defensive and drawn attention to the darker side of an increasingly influential right-wing education movement in Japan.

Mr. Abe said on Friday in Parliament that his wife, Akie Abe, had resigned as “honorary principal” of a new elementary school being built by Tsukamoto's owner.

The school sits on land that the owner, a private foundation, bought from the government at a steep discount — a favorable deal that invited charges of special treatment after details surfaced this month.

“My wife and I are not involved at all in the school's licensing or land acquisition,” Mr. Abe told the legislature. “If we were, I would resign as a politician.”

Mr. Abe and other Japanese conservatives often accuse the education system of liberal bias, seeing it as a place where left-wing teachers spread “masochistic” narratives about Japanese war guilt and promote individualism and pacifism over sturdier traditional values.

Tsukamoto is at the extreme edge of an effort by rightists to push back, said Manabu Sato, a professor who studies education at Gakushuin University in Tokyo.

“It’s a rejection of the postwar education system, whose basic principles are pacifism and democracy,” Professor Sato said.

At Tsukamoto, displays of old-style patriotism have sometimes shaded into prejudice.

The school apologized on its website last week for statements that contained “expressions that could invite misunderstanding from foreigners.”

Parents said complaints about mundane-seeming matters like parent-teacher association fees would be met with chauvinistic diatribes, with school officials accusing “Koreans and Chinese with evil ideas” of stirring up trouble. They said the school’s principal, Yasunori Kagoike, accused parents who challenged the school of having Korean or Chinese ancestors.

“The problem,” Mr. Kagoike said in one notice sent to parents, was that people who had “inherited the spirit” of foreigners “exist in our country with the looks of Japanese people.”

Mr. Abe has made overhauling Japanese education a priority throughout his career, championing a similar if softer version of the traditionalism practiced at Tsukamoto.

In early publicity pamphlets for its new elementary school obtained by the Japanese news media, Mr. Kagoike proposed naming it after Mr. Abe. Mr. Kagoike later opted for a different name, a change that the prime minister said had been made at his request.

Mr. Abe has supported a drive to amend history textbooks, toning down depictions of Japan’s abuses in its onetime Asian empire, and he passed legislation to make “moral education” — including the promotion of patriotism — a standard part of the public school curriculum.

Tsukamoto has taken the patriotic approach to schooling further.

It first gained notoriety a few years ago for having pupils recite the Imperial Rescript on Education, a royal decree issued in 1890 that served as the basis for Japan’s militaristic prewar school curriculum and that was repudiated after World War II.

Conservatives see the rescript as a paean to traditional values; liberals as a throwback to a more authoritarian era. It encourages students to love their families, to “extend benevolence to all” and to “pursue learning and cultivate arts” — but also to be

“good and faithful subjects” of the emperor and to “offer yourselves courageously to the state” when called upon to do so.

In interviews, five mothers who pulled their children out of Tsukamoto said they had encountered chauvinism at the school or had been attacked by Mr. Kagoike or his wife, who serves as vice principal, often in ethnically bigoted terms. They asked for anonymity because they feared social ostracism for speaking out.

One mother said her family liked South Korea and often vacationed there, but that when her son told his teacher of a planned trip, the teacher said that Korea was a “dirty place” and that the family should visit “somewhere better in Japan.”

Another mother said teachers had told her that her son “smelled like a dog,” and that Mr. Kagoike had called her “an anti-Japanese foreigner.” (She is Japanese.)

Attempts to reach Mr. Kagoike failed. A woman who answered the telephone at the foundation that operates Tsukamoto, Moritomo Gakuen, said the Japanese news reports about the school and its land deal had been “unfair,” but she did not elaborate. Multiple follow-up calls went unanswered.

In addition to serving as principal of the kindergarten, Mr. Kagoike heads Moritomo Gakuen and is a director of the Osaka branch of Nippon Kaigi, a prominent right-wing pressure group that includes Mr. Abe and other influential conservative politicians as members.

In a message on Moritomo Gakuen’s website, which the foundation removed on Thursday, Ms. Abe praised it for “nurturing children with strong backbones, who have pride as Japanese, on a basis of superior moral education.”

Japan’s defense minister, Tomomi Inada, has also praised the foundation, sending Mr. Kagoike a formal letter of appreciation for his work.

The land deal that turned Tsukamoto from a subject of raised liberal eyebrows into a full-fledged scandal took place last year, though the details took months to emerge.

The Finance Ministry allowed Moritomo Gakuen to have the land — a two-acre vacant lot near an airport in an Osaka suburb — for 134 million yen, or about \$1.18 million, according to government records and testimony by ministry officials in Parliament.

The price, which the ministry initially kept sealed, was surprisingly low. The ministry had previously assessed the land’s value at 956 million yen, seven times higher. In comparison, a neighboring plot only slightly larger was bought by the local municipality, Toyonaka City, for 1.4 billion yen in 2010.

The ministry says it lowered the price to account for cleanup costs that Moritomo Gakuen would have had to bear. It said the lot contained discarded concrete and other refuse as well as elevated levels of arsenic and lead.

Opposition politicians are pressing the ministry to explain its calculations. The national daily Asahi Shimbun, which broke the story, quoted Mr. Kagoike as saying Moritomo Gakuen had spent “about 100 million yen” on cleanup, a fraction of the discount it received.

The new elementary school now sits partially built on the lot.

Eiichi Kajita, the president of Naragakuen University who also was chairman of the licensing council that granted Moritomo Gakuen permission for the school, said the council had not been told about the land deal when it made its deliberations.

He said Moritomo Gakuen’s ideology, which includes an emphasis on Shintoism, Japan’s ancient animist religion, was not a barrier to its opening a school, but that the council was reviewing its decision.

“If there was something inappropriate, permission could be revoked,” he said. “Whether they’re Shintoists or rightists, if parents want that, it’s not our place to object.”

Follow Jonathan Soble on Twitter @jonathan_soble.

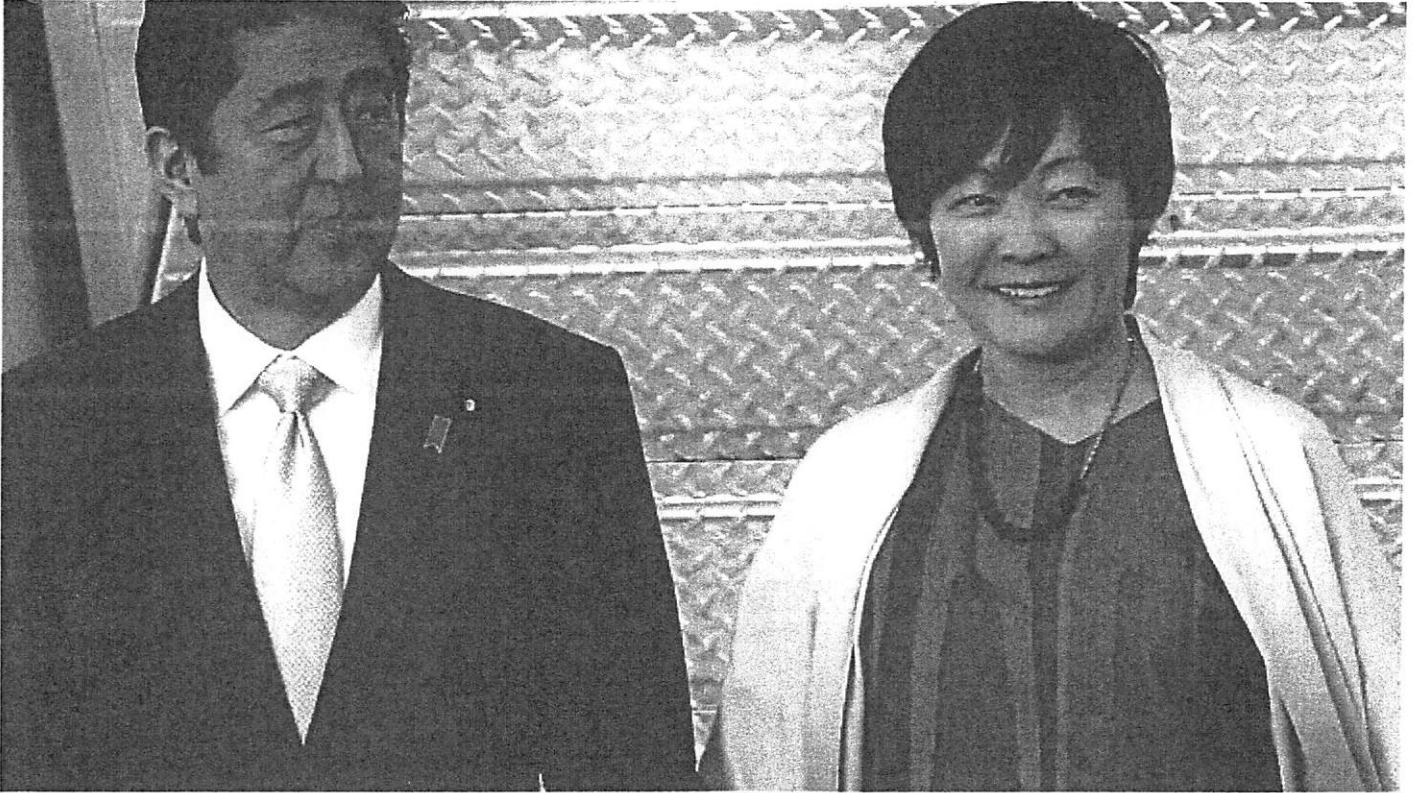
Makiko Inoue contributed reporting.

A version of this article appears in print on February 25, 2017, on Page A6 of the New York edition with the headline: Outcry Over School Accused of Bigotry Ensnarcs Wife of Japanese Premier.

Japan Politics

Japan's Abe pulled into scandal over cut-price land deal

PM's wife to be honorary principal of school that bought plot for 10% of market value



Shinzo Abe with his wife Akie, who was to become honorary principal of Moritomo Gakuen's new primary school © AP

FEBRUARY 23, 2017 by: **Robin Harding** in Tokyo

Shinzo Abe has been dragged into a scandal over the cut-price sale of public land to a religious school, in a row that threatens the Japanese prime minister's political standing.

Mr Abe (https://www.ft.com/topics/people/Shinzo_Abe) insists he had nothing to do with the sale of land to the controversial school operator even though his wife, Akie Abe, was to become honorary principal of its new primary school.

Although the issue seems unlikely to threaten Mr Abe's government, a sweetheart deal benefiting the Moritomo Gakuen school operator — which has been criticised as overly nationalistic — risks giving the impression that success has made the prime minister high-handed, and could hurt his popularity.

Mr Abe's first term as prime minister in 2006-07 came to grief when his robustly nationalist agenda fell apart in a welter of scandals. In his second term, Mr Abe has played down his

nationalism and tried to keep public attention on [the economy \(https://www.ft.com/topics/themes/Japan_Economy\)](https://www.ft.com/topics/themes/Japan_Economy).

“This is the first scandal to hit him personally in four years,” said Masatoshi Honda, a political analyst and professor at Kinjo University. “It’s going to be a big challenge.”

According to local media, Moritomo Gakuen bought the 8,770 square metre plot in Osaka prefecture last June for Y134m (\$1.18m). The land’s appraisal value was Y956m and a neighbouring plot of similar size went for Y1.4bn in 2010, suggesting it was sold for just 10 per cent of what it was worth.

In statements, school officials have said they did not receive any favours, and have had to spend millions of yen to remove waste from the site.

That has not prevented Mr Abe being pressed on his links to the school in parliament. The prime minister replied that he “would quit as prime minister and as a Diet member” if it turned out he or his wife had been involved in the land sale.

Prof Honda suggested that, given the prime minister’s statement, “Abe really did not know what was happening”.

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With his links to the school, however, it was possible that someone had sought to curry favour or anticipate his wishes. “The big question is how the public will feel about that,” Prof Honda said.

Mr Abe has been riding high in the opinion polls with 58 per cent approval — extremely rare for a Japanese leader after four years in office — most recently following the success of his [US trip \(http://next.ft.com/content/e6216868-efb3-11e6-930f-061b01e23655\)](http://next.ft.com/content/e6216868-efb3-11e6-930f-061b01e23655) to meet president Donald Trump.

One way Mr Abe has gained greater public support is by avoiding the nationalist statements that caused him trouble in the past.

For example, he has since 2013 avoided the controversial Yasukuni shrine that honours Japan’s

war dead, including its war criminals. But his political base is conservative and his wife’s

involvement with Moritomo Gakuen is an example of how he continues to signal his support for their causes.

At its private Tsukamoto kindergarten, the school operator is known for religious, conservative education, which is meant to instil patriotism in three- to five-year old pupils. Children memorise the 1890 Imperial Rescript, which tells them to “offer yourselves courageously to the state”. It was abolished by the US education authorities following the second world war.

According to the Kyodo news agency, Moritomo Gakuen was also questioned by prefectural authorities in January on suspicion of spreading hate speech, after it distributed a statement to parents containing alleged slurs against Chinese people and Korean residents of Japan.

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world

Japan PM's wife cuts ties with school at heart of political furor



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The construction site for an elementary school of Moritomo Gakuen, an educational institution, is seen in Toyonaka. Photo: Reuters

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PUBLISHED: 11:20 AM, FEBRUARY 24, 2017
UPDATED: 7:50 PM, FEBRUARY 24, 2017

TOKYO - Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's wife has cut ties with an elementary school involved in a land deal that provoked opposition questions just as the Japanese leader was basking in the glow of a friendly summit with U.S. President Donald Trump.

Abe has said neither he nor his wife, Akie, was involved in a murky deal for the purchase of state-owned land by Moritomo Gakuen, an educational body in the western city of Osaka that also runs a kindergarten promoting patriotism.

広告



The affair has energized the often-floundering opposition, offering a reminder of the unexpected pitfalls that could still emerge for Abe's seemingly stable rule, now in its fifth year.

Abe, grilled about the purchase of the land at a rock-bottom price, said on Friday his wife would scrap a plan to become honorary principal of an elementary school the institution will open in April.

Last year, Moritomo Gakuen paid 134 million yen (\$1.2 million), or 14 percent of the appraisal price, for an 8,770-sq-m (94,400-square-foot) plot on which to build the elementary school, official data show.

The difference reflects the cost of waste cleanup at the site, officials have said. Finance Minister Taro Aso told parliament this week there were no problems with the deal.

Abe said his wife had tried to refuse the role as honorary principal, and only accepted after it was announced to parents.

"Despite this, she decided that it would be detrimental for both the students and the parents if she continued, and so she told them she would resign," he added.

OPPOSITION ENERGIZED

The institution's president, Yasunori Kagoike, heads the Osaka branch of Nippon Kaigi, or Japan Conference, a nationalist lobby group with close ties to Abe and his cabinet.

On the school's website, Akie had said: "I was impressed by Mr. Kagoike's passion for education and have assumed the post of honorary principal."

Abe said the comments were removed from the website on Thursday at his wife's request.

Abe reiterated that he had declined to let his name be used when Moritomo Gakuen sought donations for what it called the "Abe Shinzo Memorial Elementary School".

He has also denied that either he or his wife was involved in obtaining approval for the school, or in the land acquisition, saying last Friday that he would resign if evidence to the contrary were found.

The main opposition Democratic Party has seized on the affair. "The prime minister is talking as if he were the victim, but it is the people who should be

angry," Democratic Party lawmaker Kiyomi Tsujimoto told reporters.

Abe returned to office in 2012 for a rare second term, promising to reboot the economy and bolster defense policies, after having abruptly quit in 2007, following a year marked by scandals in his cabinet, a big election loss and ill-health.

His cabinet this time has lost several ministers to money scandals, but Abe himself has been untainted by scandal.




Abe's approval rating rose five points to 66 percent in a media survey after his summit with Trump, where the leaders hugged, golfed and reaffirmed the U.S.-Japan alliance.

But his popularity could take a hit if the scandal continues to preoccupy the media, some political analysts said.

"The thing that makes a scandal really serious is when it keeps getting headlines," said Chuo University political science professor Steven Reed.

REUTERS

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Spotlight: Japanese kindergarten's suspected hate speech underscores endemic social malady

Source: Xinhua 2017-02-22 21:39:59



TOKYO, Feb. 22 (Xinhua) -- A Japanese kindergarten with ties to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his wife apologized for comments described as hate speech against Koreans and Chinese people, as the incident has underscored the seemingly indelible nature of racial discrimination in Japan.

The private Tsukamoto kindergarten in Osaka, western Japan was alleged to have handed out to students' parents a copy of a statement slurring both Korean and Chinese residents in Japan.

The kindergarten has a curriculum taught to 3-to-5 year old students based around notions of instilling national pride and patriotism.

The school has also come under fire for posting remarks on its web page that could have also been construed as hate speech.

According to Kyodo News, the statement handed out by the kindergarten described Korean residents in Japan and Chinese people as those with "wicked ideas," calling the latter with a term considered derogatory toward Chinese people.

Following these allegations, officials at the school, operated by Moritomo Gakuen, were questioned by Osaka prefectural officials for suspected hate speech.

A separate pamphlet was also distributed to parents in December, stating: "The problem is that people who have inherited the spirit (of Koreans) exist in our country with the looks of Japanese people," Kyodo News said in a recent article, having obtained a copy of the pamphlet.

On Feb. 17, local media here said the school apologized for its online remarks in a post stating: "We apologize for expressions about foreigners that caused misunderstanding," although added it believed some online reports about the kindergarten were "malicious criticism."

While the school may deny that it is a breeding ground for racial hatred, discrimination and nationalism, the children there begin their days singing Japan's national anthem in front of the country's flag and recite the Imperial Rescript on Education, which demands devotion to the emperor and sacrifice for the country.

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Spotlight: Japanese kindergarten's suspected hate speech underscores endemic social ... 2/4 ページ

The rescript was abolished after World War II, but reintroduced 15 years ago by Tsukamoto kindergarten, the walls of which are lined by historical pictures of the imperial family to which the students bow to as they pass in the corridor, according to local accounts.

Along with the rescript and other such "cultural" instruction, according to the kindergarten's principal, Yasunori Kagoike, the school's curriculum is supposed to foster patriotism and not nationalism.

However, with the students' visits to military bases and the fact that Kagoike heads the Osaka branch of Nippon Kaigi, or Japan Conference, a nationalist, non-political entity which supports the State Shinto religious organization, it would not be a huge leap to link the school, its teachings and supporters to discriminatory issues that plague the area and the broader nation.

Areas in Osaka, for example, the Tsuruhashi districts, and regions in Tokyo, like Shin-Okubo, which are home to hundreds of Korean restaurants, shops and businesses, and thousands of residents, have often been on the receiving end of discrimination, in the form of hate speech.

Such discriminatory contempt can be seen in the anti-Korean protests and hate speeches that are organized on the streets primarily by Zainichi Tokken wo Yurusanai Shimin no Kai - or the ultra-nationalist group Zaitokukai - a self-claimed "citizens" group that will not tolerate special privileges being given to Korean and Chinese residents in Japan.

Zaitokukai believe that some Koreans, known as "Zainichi Koreans" are being given special legal rights by the government to integrate them into Japanese society. The group also object to the fact that Koreans can use Japanese names here so that if they were, for example, to commit a crime, on the news or in the newspapers the offender would come across as being Japanese.

Zaitokukai also vocally oppose long-term Koreans who have been given permanent residence status by the Ministry of Justice and as such are eligible to claim welfare benefits like Japanese citizens.

And in Japan, there is a difference between a "hate crime" and a "hate speech" in terms of law, as only the former can be punishable by law, meaning that those who make hate speeches can do so with absolute impunity, although there has been a minor shift in this respect recently.

Human rights groups here have long been calling for legislation to curtail instances of hate speech, but have seen their efforts gain little traction in parliament.

According to a previous survey of attitudes toward discriminatory language among more than 700 Japanese lawmakers, only 46 of those polled at the time had an interest in the topic, despite the fact that Japan has been a signatory to the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination since the mid-1990s.

Japan's hate speech malady hit the international headlines in 2013 when a Japanese junior high school student was recorded yelling a torrent of abuse at a Korean passerby in Tsuruhashi in Osaka.

Spotlight: Japanese kindergarten's suspected hate speech underscores endemic social ... 3/4 ページ

The 14-year-old girl yelled: "I can't tell you how much I despise you and wish I could kill you all. You have smug faces and if you continue to behave in that way we will have a massacre here in Tsuruhashi. This is Japan, and you should go back to Korea. You do not belong here," she screamed.

While many denounced the young girl's actions, she had many supporters who, as is often the case with instances of hate speech, maintained that "freedom of speech" is the bedrock of any democracy and as such her comments were acceptable and need not be punished.

However, last year the Osaka District Court ordered Zaitokukai to pay compensation to a Korean resident of Japan for defamation of character, as a result of the group's hate speech, in an unprecedented case that could pave the way for legislation leading to the criminalization of such racially-motivated verbal assaults.

Lee Sin Hae, the plaintiff, claimed the group, and in particular its leader at the time, defamed her by dubbing her "anti-Japanese" in speeches made between 2013 and 2014. She also claimed that the right-wing group repeatedly made discriminatory remarks and mocked her looks in person and online.

Some headway on this social malady may be in the process of being made albeit at a snail's pace. However, the prime minister's connection to a school embroiled with instances of hate speech and itself has a jingoist ideology that it may be passing on to its pupils, does not bode well for Japan.

Abe and his government have been grilled in parliament recently over the sale of a plot of state-owned land to Moritomo Gakuen for far below the valuation price. The prime minister has also been quizzed as to whether he knew his name had been used to solicit donations for an elementary school purportedly to be built in his name.

According to local reports, Moritomo Gakuen, operator of the Tsukamoto kindergarten, bought the 8,770-square-meter piece of land last June in Toyonaka, Osaka Prefecture, for 134 million yen (1.18 million U.S. dollars), which is equivalent to just 14 percent of its appraisal price.

The land, state the reports, is intended for a new elementary school to be opened in April, with the prime minister's wife Akie, reportedly a frequent visitor to Tsukamoto kindergarten, as its honorary principal.

Editor: xuxin



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地下埋設物等に係る経緯

1. 事前に明らかとなっていたもの（低深度）

- H21～H24 大阪航空局において、地下構造物調査、土壌汚染調査を実施。
※土壌汚染（鉛、砒素）、廃材・コンクリートガラ等の地下埋設物が発覚。
- H27. 5. 29 近畿財務局において、買受け特約を付した有償貸付契約を締結。
- H27. 7. 29 学校法人森友学園による土壌改良、埋設物撤去工事等の実施。
～H27. 12. 15
- H27. 8. 27 近畿財務局、大阪航空局及び現場関係者と現地確認を実施。
- H28. 4. 6 大阪航空局において、学校法人森友学園による土壌改良、埋設物撤去工事等に係る有益費（約1億31百万円）を返還。

2. 森友学園への貸付中に明らかとなったもの（高深度）

- H28. 3. 11 学校法人森友学園から近畿財務局に対して、杭打工事を行う過程において、新たな地下埋設物が発見されたとの連絡。
- H28. 3. 14 近畿財務局、大阪航空局及び現場関係者と現地確認を実施。
- H28. 3. 24 学校法人森友学園から近畿財務局に対して、本地を購入したい旨連絡。
- H28. 3. 30 近畿財務局から大阪航空局に対して、地下埋設物の撤去・処分費用について、見積もりを依頼。
- H28. 4. 14 大阪航空局から近畿財務局へ、地下埋設物の撤去・処分費用の見積もり（約8億19百万円）を報告。
- H28. 4. 22 本地の鑑定評価を山本不動産鑑定士事務所に依頼。
⇒ H28. 5. 31 に不動産鑑定評価書を提出。
- H28. 6. 20 近畿財務局において、学校法人森友学園と売買契約締結。