

# Sarin cult leader sentenced to death

Former doomsday cult guru **Shoko Asahara** – who founded and led the **Aum Shinrikyo** cult – has been convicted and sentenced to death for masterminding the deadly 1995 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway and a string of other crimes that killed 27 people



Matsumoto

JAPAN



**Kamakuishiki:**

Chemical plant at Aum HQ capable of producing enough Sarin to kill millions

**Shoko Asahara:**

Born 1955, real name **Chizuo Matsumoto**. Also charged with 15 other murders, including seven in 1994 Sarin attack in Matsumoto

**Aum Shinrikyo:** Cult founded 1984.

Asahara concocted mix of Hinduism, Buddhism and yoga and promised followers new world after Armageddon in 1997

Recruits included top scientists and other highly-educated graduates to produce weapons. Brainwashing techniques included sipping Asahara's blood and wearing electric caps to synchronise brain waves with guru



**Aum now renamed Aleph** – says it has renounced violence but followers still show signs of allegiance to Asahara.

Aleph claims 1,950 members in Japan and Russia, down from peak of 40,000 in 1995

Sources: Aleph, FAS, CDC

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**Mar 20, 1995**

**Tokyo:** Sarin gas released on five subway trains converging on station in government ministry district in morning rush-hour.

**12 dead, 5,500 injured**

