

Earthquake Report - JAIF

We have been reporting a status of Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station by summarizing news aired by NHK, which is Japanese national broadcasting company. We regard it as most credible news among many news sources and we are happy to say that NHK's English website has gotten enriched and now you can see movies and English scripts at <http://www3.nhk.or.jp/daily/english/society.html>. Given this situation, we decide to simply place these scripts as it is for the record in case that it will be deleted from the website later, rather than summarizing news as we did.

No. 171: 12:00, August 12

NHK news regarding status of Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station yesterday and today.

(Fukushima NPP Site)

● **Decontamination not successful at nuke plant**

(Other news)

● **Radiation measurement experts trained**

● **Japan to provide nuke plants for Vietnam**

● **Tomari No.3 nuclear reactor restart not decided**

● **Children from Fukushima visiting Australia**

● **US military keeping radioactive waste in Futenma**

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●Decontamination not successful at nuke plant

5 months after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant crisis started, workers are still struggling to decontaminate large amounts of highly radioactive water.

The plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company, has now restored all circulating cooling systems for spent-fuel storage pools at 4 of its reactors, after the system was restored at the Number One unit on Wednesday.

Cooling of 3 reactors has been continuing since late June, by decontaminating highly radioactive stagnant water and then circulating it.

The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency says the temperatures of the reactors have been relatively stable at around 100 degrees, lowering the risk of another hydrogen explosion.

But the filtering equipment -- the key part of the system -- has been plagued with problems. Repeated suspension of the equipment's operation has slowed down the water decontamination process.

In the week until Tuesday, the filtering equipment ran at 77.4 percent of its capacity, the largest-ever. But the overall figure stands at 66.4 percent, failing to achieve the initial target of 90 percent.

The utility is now at stage two of its timetable to end the nuclear crisis, which aims to reduce the amount of contaminated water to curb the risk of radioactive releases from the plant.

The stage also calls for achieving a cold shutdown with reactor temperatures being kept stable and below 100 degrees.

TEPCO is reducing the amount of water injection into the reactors to prevent an increase in the amount of contaminated water, but the effort could be a hurdle in achieving a cold shutdown.

Friday, August 12, 2011 02:06 +0900 (JST)

●Radiation measurement experts trained

The operator of the damaged Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant plans to train about 4,000 workers as experts on the safety of irradiated areas.

The government plans to consider lifting evacuation orders for zones which are deemed safe after it achieves the second phase of bringing the plant under control.

In the second stage, the government aims to significantly reduce the amount of radiation emitted from the plant.

To determine the safety of the 20-kilometer no-entry zone and the evacuated areas, a large number of experts on radiation exposure will be required. Tokyo Electric Power Company is now training staff for that purpose.

TEPCO plans to have about 4,000 workers take the training by the end of the year. Around 1,900 workers have already completed it.

The Natural Resources and Energy Agency also plans to train 250 personnel by year-end.

TEPCO will have the experts control exposure for workers at the Fukushima plant and measure radiation levels to confirm the evacuated zones are safe enough for people to return home.

Friday, August 12, 2011 08:08 +0900 (JST)

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●Japan to provide nuke plants for Vietnam

Japan and Vietnam have agreed that Japan will continue with a plan to support Vietnam by building 2 nuclear reactors in the country.

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Chiaki Takahashi, met Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Hoang Trung Hai in the capital Hanoi on Thursday.

The governments of the two countries reached an agreement last October under which Japan would build 2 reactors in 2021. Vietnam plans to build a total of 14 nuclear reactors by 2030 to meet the country's growing demand for electricity.

Takahashi said Japan will learn from the Fukushima Daiichi accident and provide assistance with higher safety standards than ever before.

Hai said he trusts Japan's technology and wants Japan to keep providing help.

Since the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Prime Minister Naoto Kan has called for Japan to reduce its dependence on nuclear power generation.

But Japan's government has decided to honor contracts that have already been concluded, or are under negotiation, for exporting nuclear plants.

Friday, August 12, 2011 02:06 +0900 (JST)

●Tomari No.3 nuclear reactor restart not decided

Japan's industry ministry has deferred a final decision on restarting a nuclear reactor in Hokkaido following local government criticism.

The No.3 reactor at the plant in Tomari Village operated by Hokkaido Electric Power Company has been undergoing trial runs for 5 months.

Trials usually last about a month in the final phase of regular checkups by the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency, the organization controlled by the ministry, before commercial operations are resumed.

The agency told the Nuclear Safety Commission on Thursday that no abnormalities were found in the reactor during a 2-day final check that ended the previous day. The commission endorsed the view that the reactor can restart commercial operations.

But Hokkaido's prefectural government has criticized the operator for applying final tests of the reactor before it has reached its own decision on restarting.

Industry minister Banri Kaieda told Governor Harumi Takahashi on Wednesday that the prefecture's consent is vital, and that he intends to wait for that.

Since the nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi plant in March, nuclear reactors in Japan are struggling to resume operations after regular checkups.

Friday, August 12, 2011 02:06 +0900 (JST)

●Children from Fukushima visiting Australia

A group of children from Fukushima is spending their summer break in Australia, on a homestay program designed to give them time away from the fears of radiation from the Fukushima Daiichi plant.

The 10 children, from elementary to high school, took part in an event on Thursday in Sidney, featuring music, dancing and other culture of the indigenous Aborigines.

Along with host families, the children watched an Aborigine performing a woodwind instrument to mimic the sound of an emu---the largest bird in

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Australia.

14-year-old Anju Sato says that back in Fukushima, she could not swim in a pool, or work out outdoors in gym classes. She says she's enjoying herself here, playing on the beach and doing other things.

The children have been invited by a volunteer group of Japanese expatriates in Sydney to spend 10 days in the city from this Tuesday.

Friday, August 12, 2011 02:06 +0900 (JST)

●US military keeping radioactive waste in Futenma

The Okinawa prefectural government has asked the Foreign Ministry to provide information on radioactive waste held at a US base in the prefecture. The US military carried out an operation to help Japan's northeastern areas that were hit by the earthquake and tsunami in March.

Aircraft and other equipment mobilized in the operation were contaminated by fallout from the ensuing nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. Radioactive waste such as cloth and other material used to remove contamination are being kept at the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa, as well as at a US naval base in Sasebo, Nagasaki Prefecture.

The Foreign Ministry notified the Okinawa prefectural government about the matter on Wednesday.

The Japanese government is reportedly working on setting standards and guidelines for disposing of radioactive waste.

A spokesperson for the US Marines in Okinawa said the US military will properly keep the waste until the Japanese government disposes of it, adding its radiation level is so low that there is no possibility of a leak to the outside.

Thursday, August 11, 2011 11:57 +0900 (JST)

End