

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. 151: 12:00, July 23

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

(Fukushima NPP Site)

- TEPCO probes Fukushima blackout
- External power supply cut at 2 Fukushima reactors

(Other news)

- Nuclear watchdog orders stress tests
- Hamaoka operator to build 18m-high embankment
- Education minister: check school food for safety
- Kaieda: Decision needed on nuclear exports
- Govt plans to buy up tainted beef
- IAEA chief to visit Fukushima plant next week

Earthquake Report – JAIF

●TEPCO probes Fukushima blackout

Tokyo Electric Power Company is investigating the cause of a sudden power failure at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. The blackout halted the cooling of a spent fuel pool for 5 hours.

The trouble occurred at around 7:10 AM on Friday, when a circuit breaker malfunctioned on the power feed to the No. 3 and 4 reactors.

The blackout halted equipment to cool the spent fuel pool for the No. 3 reactor.

Cooling was restored around 5 hours later by means of an alternative power source.

The utility says there has been no major change in the pool's temperature of around 30 degrees Celsius.

TEPCO says the incident did not cause any radiation leakage, as work to inject water and nitrogen into the reactors continued with the other power source.

The blackout also halted systems to treat decontaminated water flooding the underground levels of plant buildings, but the company says these were restored at around 3:30 PM.

The company says all facilities disabled by the incident have now been rebooted. The utility says that although it has installed several external power sources, their automatic switchover functions were not available. The company says it will improve the systems.

A sudden surge in the external power supply is thought to be behind the failure.

TEPCO says it is looking into the problem.

Friday, July 22, 2011 20:23 +0900 (JST)

●External power supply cut at 2 Fukushima reactors

Tokyo Electric Power Company says part of the external power supply has been cut at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant due to a problem in the transmission lines.

TEPCO said on Friday that a current breaker was tripped by a sudden surge in the external power lines, cutting off electricity to the No. 3 and 4 reactors.

The operator was forced to suspend a system treating radioactive water. Another system cooling the No.3 reactor's spent fuel storage pool was also shut down.

TEPCO says the pool's temperature remains stable at around 30 degrees Celsius.

After the power outage, a building serving as the headquarters for the plant's stabilization switched to an emergency generator.

TEPCO said work to inject water and nitrogen into the reactors has not been affected, as electricity is being supplied from other power sources.

It said radiation levels around the plant show no major change, and claimed there was little risk of a leak occurring.

TEPCO is working to restore external power, as it tries to find out what caused the problem.

Friday, July 22, 2011 11:42 +0900 (JST)

●Nuclear watchdog orders stress tests

Japan's nuclear watchdog has instructed power utilities to carry out additional safety tests on their nuclear plants.

The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency issued the order on Friday, after its

Earthquake Report – JAIF

plan for 2-stage stress tests was approved by its supervisory body, the Nuclear Safety Commission.

The tests involve computer simulations to assess how well nuclear plants can withstand such emergencies as earthquakes, tsunami and the loss of external power.

The first stage of tests will cover reactors that have been halted for regular safety checks. At present, about 20 reactors are offline.

The second stage tests will apply to all 48 reactors nationwide, excluding those in Fukushima Prefecture. The tests will determine whether the reactors should resume, continue or halt operations.

But how the test results will be used remains unclear, as the agency has yet to announce criteria for halting or allowing reactor operation.

Friday, July 22, 2011 18:22 +0900 (JST)

●Hamaoka operator to build 18m-high embankment

The operator of the Hamaoka nuclear power plant in central Japan plans to build an 18-meter-high embankment by December next year to prevent tsunami damage to the facility.

Chubu Electric Power Company said on Friday that the breakwater will be higher than the 15-meter waves that hit the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on March 11th. The barrier would also be 10 meters taller than the highest waves expected in the area in the event of 3 major earthquakes occurring at the same time.

The utility had been studying plans to build a new embankment 1.5 kilometers along the coast by the plant, in the wake of the Fukushima accident.

Chubu Electric said it will also extend the height of an embankment now surrounding the plant. The firm also plans to build a waterproof building to house a backup pump for injecting seawater into reactors in case other cooling functions are lost due to tsunami flooding.

The firm said the measures will cost around 1.3 billion dollars, and plans to complete all construction by December 2012.

The plant has 3 reactors, excluding 2 that have been stopped for decommissioning. Of the 3, one is undergoing a regular checkup, and the others were stopped in line with a request from Prime Minister Naoto Kan, who cited risks of major earthquakes and tsunamis.

Chubu Electric is to brief local residents on its new safety measures to gain support for resuming operations at the 3 reactors.

Friday, July 22, 2011 16:33 +0900 (JST)

●Education minister: check school food for safety

Japan's education minister Yoshiaki Takaki says he wants a thorough check of school meals to make sure they do not contain radiation-tainted ingredients.

Takaki spoke to reporters on Friday, one day after it was found that meat from cattle fed with radioactive rice straw was served in lunches at 3 elementary schools in Chiba, east of Tokyo. The rice straw contained radioactive cesium exceeding government-set limits.

Checks so far have found no excessive levels of cesium in the meat served at 2 of

Earthquake Report – JAIF

the schools. There is no information about checks at the third school. Takaki described the use of such beef as extremely regrettable. He added that he will instruct local education boards and schools to check the distribution routes of food used in their meals, as well as information on food shipment bans.

Friday, July 22, 2011 12:57 +0900 (JST)

●Kaieda: Decision needed on nuclear exports

Japan's trade and industry minister Banri Kaieda says cabinet ministers must reach an agreement on whether to continue promoting exports of nuclear power plants.

Kaieda spoke to reporters on Friday, one day after Prime Minister Naoto Kan called for discussions on the issue in the wake of the Fukushima accident. The government has been promoting exports of Japanese-developed nuclear plants as part of the nation's growth strategy.

Kaieda said some countries have high expectations for Japan's nuclear technology. He said Japan needs to fully explain how it can meet them, while ensuring safety.

The minister said Japan must act responsibly if it decides to stop these exports.

Asked about the timing of his resignation, which he suggested earlier, Kaieda replied that he will make a decision by himself.

He noted that the Diet will deliberate a bill to promote renewable energy after enacting a bill on compensation for people affected by the nuclear accident.

Friday, July 22, 2011 12:17 +0900 (JST)

●Govt plans to buy up tainted beef

Agriculture Minister Michihiko Kano says the government will swiftly consider ways to buy up all beef contaminated with radioactive cesium at levels exceeding the national safety limits.

Kano told reporters on Friday his ministry is now working on a basic outline of the buy-up system, which it hopes to release soon.

He said the ministry will refer to measures taken in 2001 during the outbreak of BSE, or mad cow disease.

Kano said the buy-up system will only cover beef, and not vegetables or other farm produce. He said this is because beef with excessive radiation levels has already reached the market, while this has not happened for other products thanks to inspections.

Reports surfaced last week that beef cattle fed with rice straw contaminated by radioactive fallout from the damaged Fukushima nuclear plant had been shipped to restaurants and retailers. Local municipalities and farmers' groups are asking the government to check all cattle for radiation before shipment.

Kano said he wants to study these measures, working with prefectures and other ministries concerned to develop a workable system.

Friday, July 22, 2011 12:44 +0900 (JST)

Earthquake Report – JAIF

●IAEA chief to visit Fukushima plant next week

The chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency says he will visit the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant next week to view progress made in efforts to stabilize the troubled reactors there.

IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano was speaking on Thursday at the agency's headquarters in Vienna.

Amano will visit the nuclear complex on Monday to confirm the extent of damage to the facility and inspect ongoing operations to cool the reactors.

Amano said he will wear protective gear and go as far into the plant as he is allowed so he can get a full understanding of what is going on.

The agency chief will hold talks with Prime Minister Naoto Kan during his visit. Referring to radioactive rice straw that was fed to beef cattle, he said he will tell Kan that the IAEA is ready to help Japan's decontamination efforts.

Amano said the agency is confident its experience in dealing with the Chernobyl accident will be useful to Japan.

Friday, July 22, 2011 09:36 +0900 (JST)

End