

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. 162: 12:00, August 3

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

(Fukushima NPP Site)

- **High radioactivity level at reactor building**
- **TEPCO to check plant radiation levels carefully**

(Other news)

- **Fukushima to begin beef cattle buy-up next week**
- **Shimane Prefecture to test all beef cattle**
- **Hiroshima University to study low-level exposure**
- **Court injunction sought against reactor restarts**
- **Govt to conduct comprehensive radiation monitoring**
- **Govt bans shipments of Tochigi beef cattle**
- **Govt sets new criteria for contaminated fertilizer**
- **Hiroshima mayor to call for energy review**

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●Fukushima to begin beef cattle buy-up next week

A plan by the Fukushima prefectural government to buy up beef cattle from farmers will be launched as early as next week. Producers there have been unable to ship their cattle after beef in the region was found to be highly radioactive.

The cattle are believed to have been fed rice straw contaminated with radioactive cesium exceeding the government limit.

Fukushima Prefecture has decided to buy back beef cattle that have become too old for shipment due to the shipping suspension in place since last month.

On Tuesday, a producers' group agreed with the Fukushima prefectural government that it would set up a consultative body as early as next week to process applications. The body will purchase beef cattle from farmers and the prefectural government is to provide subsidies.

But the producers and the prefecture failed to agree on purchase prices, and will continue discussions.

A senior official of the producers' group said the number of beef cattle ready for shipment is on the rise and farmers are struggling with how to feed and manage the animals. The official said the buy-up plan needs to be implemented without delay.

Wednesday, August 03, 2011 10:19 +0900 (JST)

●Shimane Prefecture to test all beef cattle

Another local government in Japan says it will conduct radiation checks of all beef cattle to ease consumer concerns about food safety.

Shimane Prefecture in western Japan said on Tuesday that it will blanket-test cattle starting as early as next week.

The local government decided to run tests after radioactive cesium exceeding government safety levels was detected in rice straw used for feed at a farm in the prefecture in late July.

Although subsequent tests of beef cattle found far lower levels of radioactivity than the government standard, prices of beef from Shimane have plummeted and wholesalers are avoiding all beef cattle from the prefecture.

Officials of the prefecture say all processed beef will undergo preliminary screening, and meat registering 250 becquerels per kilogram or more of radioactive cesium, or half the government safety level, will be tested further.

A senior agricultural official of the prefecture says it decided to conduct the tests to stop unfounded rumors from spreading. He said the prefecture will ask the national government to fully fund the tests.

Wednesday, August 03, 2011 10:19 +0900 (JST)

●High radioactivity level at reactor building

The operator of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant says it has detected the highest confirmed indoor level of radioactivity at the facility since the March accident.

The Tokyo Electric Power Company, or TEPCO, said on Tuesday that the level in a room on the second floor of the Number One reactor building was 5,000 millisieverts per hour.

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The utility restricted access to the room, saying it will consider measures to block the radioactivity and that it has no immediate plans for operations needed in the room to bring the troubled reactor under control.

TEPCO says the level was detected because pipes running through the room were used to vent air containing radioactive substances from the reactor on March 12th.

On Monday, a level of 10,000 millisieverts per hour was detected near pipes outside the building.

Tuesday, August 02, 2011 20:24 +0900 (JST)

●TEPCO to check plant radiation levels carefully

The operator of the crippled Fukushima nuclear complex is searching for radioactive hotspots after finding record high radiation near an exhaust pipe at the plant.

Tokyo Electric Power said on Monday that over 10,000 millisieverts per hour had been detected at the bottom of the exhaust pipe in between reactor buildings No.1 and No.2. That's the highest level detected since March when the quake and tsunami disabled the plant.

A photo released on Tuesday shows workers taking measurements with a detector attached to the tip of a 3-meter-long arm. The level of radiation where the workers stood reportedly reached 40 millisieverts per hour.

TEPCO says the exhaust pipe was used when radioactive air was vented from the No.1 reactor's containment vessel one day after the March 11th disaster.

The company subsequently revealed that the reactor had suffered a nuclear fuel meltdown. The utility believes highly radioactive substances that leaked from the container flowed into the pipe and accumulated inside.

The utility has declared the area off-limits, and is planning to seal it off with mats stuffed with lead.

It will also carefully check whether there are other highly contaminated sites within the premises that may hamper cleanup work.

Tuesday, August 02, 2011 12:34 +0900 (JST)

●Hiroshima University to study low-level exposure

Hiroshima University is to launch a study focusing on the health impact of exposure to low-level radiation.

The university has set up a committee of about 40 researchers to apply their knowledge to support people affected by the Fukushima nuclear accident. The university has been providing medical care to atomic bomb survivors.

The committee has 3 main themes: analysis of the impact of low-level radioactive exposure on human genes; medical response to internal exposure and exposure during an emergency; and support for a health survey conducted by Fukushima Prefecture.

The university says that when cumulative exposure reaches 100 millisieverts, the chances of developing cancer are said to rise by 0.5 percent.

It also says there is not enough data available anywhere in the world about an exposure to radiation below that level.

Wednesday, August 03, 2011 00:49 +0900 (JST)

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●Court injunction sought against reactor restarts

People living near 7 nuclear reactors in Fukui Prefecture, central Japan, have sought a court injunction against restarting them. The reactors are currently offline for scheduled maintenance.

Some 170 people, including residents of neighboring Shiga Prefecture, oppose the restart of 7 reactors at 3 nuclear power stations due to safety concerns.

They filed their petition with the Otsu District court in Shiga Prefecture on Tuesday.

In the petition, they argue that the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi plant has revealed flaws in the government's safety guidelines for nuclear power stations.

They express concern about the possible radioactive contamination of Lake Biwa in Shiga Prefecture if another nuclear accident occurs. Japan's largest lake supplies drinking water for the Kansai region.

The petition argues that the reactors should not be restarted until the government sets new safety guidelines and carries out checks based on these guidelines to ensure that the reactors can be operated safely.

Kansai Electric Power Company, which operates the 7 reactors, has declined to comment, saying it has not read the petition.

Wednesday, August 03, 2011 00:49 +0900 (JST)

●Govt to conduct comprehensive radiation monitoring

Japan's government has decided to start comprehensive radiation monitoring this year by coordinating organizations that have been checking radiation levels since the Fukushima nuclear accident in March.

The government decided on the plan on Tuesday in response to criticism about difficulty in referring to results of such checks by various ministries, agencies, prefectural governments and utilities.

The plan divides monitoring activities into 6 fields including air, water, farm soil and grass, and food.

Organizations are to be in charge of monitoring and analyzing results in each field and proposing concrete measures.

The government is to set up about 250 monitoring points across the country and draw up maps showing radiation levels at children's facilities, such as schools and public libraries.

The science ministry is expected to set up a website to provide such data by mid-August.

Tuesday, August 02, 2011 19:33 +0900 (JST)

●Shizuoka begins checking rice for radiation

Shizuoka Prefecture, central Japan, has begun checking locally grown rice for radiation to prove its safety.

The prefectural government brought 2 kilograms of rice in their husks from Kikugawa city to a private testing institution. The early-ripening variety of the rice will be harvested soon.

Shizuoka plans to announce the result of the test on Wednesday.

The farmer who provided the sample rice says he hopes the test will certify the safety of his product.

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Shizuoka Prefecture is checking 36 food items including milk and wasabi horseradish. As for rice, the prefecture plans to inspect produce from 3 others areas in early October.

Tuesday, August 02, 2011 20:54 +0900 (JST)

●Govt bans shipments of Tochigi beef cattle

Japan's government has ordered Tochigi Prefecture to suspend its shipments of beef cattle due to fears of radioactive contamination.

The government ordered the ban on Tuesday after beef from 4 head of cattle shipped from 2 municipalities in the prefecture was found to contain unsafe amounts of radioactive cesium.

Cesium contamination was also detected in rice straw used to feed beef cattle in the prefecture.

Tochigi is the fourth prefecture ordered to suspend beef cattle shipments, following Fukushima, Miyagi and Iwate.

The government says it will allow resumption of shipments if radiation levels of all beef from farms whose shipments and feed were contaminated, as well as beef from other farms, fall below the government standard.

Tochigi says it will test all of its beef cattle, but the prefecture ships up to 55,000 head of cattle per year, and fewer than 30,000 can be processed locally.

The government is to ask the prefecture to draw up realistic plans for resuming shipments, such as limiting the number of cattle to be shipped.

Tuesday, August 02, 2011 18:07 +0900 (JST)

●Govt sets new criteria for contaminated fertilizer

Japan's government has laid down a new set of criteria for the use of fertilizers that may be contaminated with radioactive cesium.

On Tuesday, the agriculture ministry urged farmers not to use humus and compost that contain 400 becquerels of cesium per kilogram or more.

It also called on them not to use livestock feed containing 300 becquerels of cesium per kilogram or more. For fish feed, the limit was set at 100 becquerels per kilogram.

The ministry says it will notify local governments how to measure cesium in fertilizers as soon as possible.

Last week, the agriculture ministry asked farmers and fertilizer producers in 17 prefectures in eastern and central Japan to voluntarily refrain from using or selling compost and humus made from fallen leaves possibly contaminated with radioactive cesium.

This was after humus shipped from Tochigi Prefecture was found to be contaminated with radioactive substances.

Tuesday, August 02, 2011 17:55 +0900 (JST)

●Hiroshima mayor to call for energy review

Hiroshima's mayor will call on the Japanese government to review its energy policy in an annual peace declaration on August 6th, the day the city was hit by a US atomic bomb in 1945.

At a news conference on Tuesday, Mayor Kazumi Matsui said Japanese people

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have lost their trust in nuclear power amid the ongoing crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi plant.

But the mayor said people are divided over whether to totally scrap nuclear power generation. He said it will be best for him to describe the situation realistically in the declaration.

The mayor of the other atom-bombed city, Nagasaki, already disclosed last month that he would urge the government to shift away from nuclear energy to safer sources in his annual peace declaration on August 9th.

Tuesday, August 02, 2011 14:10 +0900 (JST)

End