

# 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. 404: 12:00, April 17**

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

(Fukushima NPP Site)

● **Workers prepare No.4 pool for fuel removal**

(Other news)

● **Governors propose conditions for nuclear restart**

● **Nuclear operating rate hits record low in FY2011**

● **Osaka mayor criticizes govt. on reactor restart**

● **Minamisoma residents visiting their homes**

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## ●Workers prepare No.4 pool for fuel removal

Workers will begin preparing the No. 4 reactor building at the damaged Fukushima Daiichi plant on Tuesday for the complex job of removing nuclear rods from its spent fuel pool.

A hydrogen explosion severely damaged the building following last March's massive earthquake and tsunami. Before the structure can be demolished, more than 1,500 fuel rods have to be removed.

On Tuesday, Tokyo Electric Power Company will begin attaching a special crane to take the fuel out of the pool and constructing a cover to prevent the spread of radioactive materials from the building. The cover will be 31 meters long and 69 meters wide and 53 meters high.

Unlike the shroud that entirely covers the No. 1 reactor building, the structure will cover only the upper part of the pool for the No. 4 reactor.

TEPCO will also install a filter to prevent the spread of radioactive materials.

The cover is expected to be completed by autumn next year. Spent nuclear fuel will then be removed from the pool and stored on the plant compound.

Tuesday, April 17, 2012 11:17 +0900 (JST)

## ●Governors propose conditions for nuclear restart

Two governors in western Japan will ask the central government to implement 7 steps before restarting the first batch of reactors since the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

The governors of Shiga and Kyoto will jointly announce the steps later on Tuesday. Their prefectures neighbor Fukui, home to the Ohi nuclear plant. The central government wants 2 of the plant's reactors to be reactivated soon.

But the Shiga and Kyoto governors say the public has not been sufficiently informed about the safety of the reactors and the need to restart them.

Their 7-point proposal calls on the government to clarify the outstanding safety problems that the Ohi plant needs to address.

It also seeks a timetable for scrapping aging reactors, so that the country can gradually reduce its dependence on nuclear power.

A new forum to discuss nuclear safety that involves local governments and residents is also requested.

The central government maintains that the Ohi reactors meet its recently adopted safety standards, and need to be reactivated to avoid a power shortage this summer. It is seeking the understanding of host prefecture Fukui, as well as of Kyoto and Shiga.

But the government has many opponents. Among them is the outspoken mayor of Osaka. Toru Hashimoto is pledging to bring down the government in the next general election by making nuclear power the key campaign issue.

Tuesday, April 17, 2012 09:58 +0900 (JST)

## ●Nuclear operating rate hits record low in FY2011

Japan's nuclear power plants were operating at a record-low rate during the just-

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ended fiscal year, due to the effects of the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

The Federation of Electric Power Companies says that the average operating rate for Japan's 54 nuclear reactors stood at 23.7% for the year that ended in March.

The figure is down 43.6 points from the year before and the lowest since 1966, when commercial nuclear power generation began in Japan.

Before the Fukushima disaster in March of last year, about 37 reactors were in operation. But many have since gone offline for regular inspections, with no clear prospects for reactivation. Only one reactor, in Hokkaido, northern Japan, remains online.

During the past fiscal year, Japan's 10 regional power companies generated or purchased about 937 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity.

The figure was down year-on-year by a record margin of 5%, due partly to nationwide efforts to save power in the wake of the nuclear disaster.

Monday, April 16, 2012 16:08 +0900 (JST)

## ●Osaka mayor criticizes govt. on reactor restart

Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto has pledged that his party will seek a public mandate on the central government's nuclear power policy.

Hashimoto criticized the government on Monday for giving the green light to restarting the Ohi nuclear power plant, which supplies electricity to Japan's second-largest city of Osaka and its surrounding areas.

He said the government had declared the plant safe without consulting the Nuclear Safety Commission. He added that if the plant resumes operation under the current procedures, Japan's system of government will face a state of crisis.

Hashimoto said he is against the government's handling of the matter and that his One Osaka Party will put up resistance.

The One Osaka Party is now a regional political group, and is preparing to field candidates in national-level elections.

Monday, April 16, 2012 15:27 +0900 (JST)

## ●Minamisoma residents visiting their homes

Residents of a coastal city in Fukushima Prefecture are being allowed to visit their homes after the government lifted an entry ban imposed on part of the city. The ban was imposed after last year's accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

Starting on Monday, residents in Minamisoma are being allowed to visit most parts of the city, except for some high-radiation areas deemed unsafe for extended periods of time. The visiting residents are not yet allowed to stay overnight.

Yoshikazu Takeuchi went to his home with his wife and mother. His district falls into a category of areas with relatively low radiation levels, where the government is encouraging the early return of residents.

Takeuchi has been running his construction materials store at a different location in the city. He hopes to return the store to its original location now that the entry

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ban has been lifted.

He said he wants to rebuild his relationships with his neighbors.

Much more work has to be done in areas around the damaged nuclear power plant before residents can return to the city to live. Full-fledged efforts have yet to begin on cleaning up debris, decontamination, or restoring infrastructure.

Mayor Katsunobu Sakurai says residents are still worried about the lack of infrastructure and about compensation for damages from the nuclear accident. He says he will ask the central government, which promoted nuclear energy, and Tokyo Electric Power Company, the plant's operator, to address these issues responsibly.

Monday, April 16, 2012 14:38 +0900 (JST)

END