

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. 384: 12:00, March 26

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

(Fukushima NPP Site)

● **TEPCO to conduct reactor endoscopy for 2nd time**

(Other news)

● **Minister requests debris disposal in western Japan**

● **53 of 54 nuclear plants suspends**

● **Countdown to shutdown of all nuclear plants**

● **Noda to visit S. Korea for nuclear security summit**

● **Anti-nuclear activists rally in Seoul**

● **Growing protests against nuclear power in India**

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●TEPCO to conduct reactor endoscopy for 2nd time

Tokyo Electric Power Company will begin on Monday a 2-day endoscopic examination of the inside of a damaged reactor at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

In a similar operation using an industrial endoscope in January, the utility obtained images of parts of the walls and pipes inside a containment vessel of the No.2 reactor.

But it was unable to see the condition of the contaminated water at the bottom of the vessel because the fiber-optic line was not long enough.

It is necessary to determine the state of the containment vessels before moving ahead toward the total shutdown of the plant.

This time, a longer line will be inserted to monitor the surface conditions and temperature of the contaminated water of the No.2 reactor.

A dosimeter will also be put inside to measure radiation levels on the walls and about one meter away from them.

TEPCO says through the operation it wants to confirm that the amount of fuel that melted and fell to the bottom of the containment vessels is being cooled properly.

It says the monitoring of the radiation levels will be useful for the development of equipment needed for the complete shutdown of the reactors.

Monday, March 26, 2012 09:32 +0900 (JST)

●Minister requests debris disposal in western Japan

Environment Minister Goshi Hosono has asked the municipal government of Kitakyushu in western Japan to accept a portion of the debris from last year's disaster in northeast Japan.

Hosono made the request when he visited the city and met Mayor Kenji Kitahashi on Sunday. It is the first municipality in western Japan the minister has visited to make such a request.

The tsunami and earthquake created more than 22 million tons of rubble in the worst-hit prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima. The central government is asking municipalities outside the stricken areas to help dispose of the debris.

Earlier this month, Kitakyushu City's assembly unanimously voted to accept debris. The city has since been studying a detailed disposal plan, including a new safety standard on radiation levels.

Hosono told Mayor Kitahashi that debris disposal is going slow in the stricken areas. He asked the city to accept debris from Ishinomaki City, which has a particularly large amount of debris.

Kitahashi said the city faces a variety of challenges, such as public concern, but that it needs to do its utmost to assist reconstruction efforts in the disaster-hit areas.

He revealed a plan to send city employees to Ishinomaki for a study before starting test incineration of the debris.

On March 16th, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda officially asked 35 prefectures

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and 10 major cities to help dispose of the rubble to promote reconstruction efforts. By mid-March, Tokyo and 8 other prefectures, as well as some major cities, had either begun to help in the disposal effort or had agreed to do so.

The government also says it will pay the necessary costs and extend support to build new disposal sites when existing ones become full.

Sunday, March 25, 2012 14:53 +0900 (JST)

●53 of 54 nuclear plants suspends

Tokyo Electric Power Company has stopped the energy output from a nuclear reactor in Niigata Prefecture, central Japan, while it carries out regular inspections on Sunday.

The reactor in Kasiwazaki-Kariwa was the last active nuclear generator operated by TEPCO. Only one other reactor is currently operating in Japan. Japan has 54 nuclear power plants.

TEPCO showed the media a central control center that monitors power in the Tokyo metropolitan area.

Around midnight on Sunday, TEPCO stopped the reactor from supplying power.

The company says all the procedures went well.

The last active reactor at Tomari in Hokkaido will suspend operations by early May. That means all of Japan's 54 nuclear power reactors will stop if none are allowed to resume.

Monday, March 26, 2012 05:38 +0900 (JST)

●Countdown to shutdown of all nuclear plants

All Japan's nuclear reactors face a possible shutdown if none are allowed to resume operations before the last working reactor in northern Japan, is turned off in May.

At the time of the Fukushima nuclear accident last March, 37 out of Japan's 54 nuclear reactors were operating.

The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency has now received the results of stress tests of 16 reactors checked since last October. The tests are designed to see how well the reactors can withstand earthquakes and tsunami.

Japan's Nuclear Safety Commission on Friday endorsed the test results of 2 reactors at the Ohi plant on the Japan Sea coast.

Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and 3 Cabinet members in charge of nuclear issues will decide soon whether the government can obtain local agreement and restart the 2 reactors.

The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency also finished assessing another reactor in Ehime Prefecture, western Japan.

The Nuclear Safety Commission says a second stage of stress tests are needed that takes into account whether reactors are prepared for severe accidents such as a nuclear meltdown.

Local municipalities such as Fukui Prefecture are demanding the government

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show a temporary safety guideline that reflects lessons from the accident of the Fukushima plant.

The government was planning to set up a new nuclear safety agency in April to unify supervision of nuclear power generation. But, the negotiation between the ruling and the opposition parties is deadlocked.

The report from the government's investigative panel probing the Fukushima accident is expected to be released in July. Some experts say the inspection of the accident is not enough at the present stage.

The main focus of the issue is how the government will judge the safety of a nuclear plant and how it can convince the local governments.

Monday, March 26, 2012 05:38 +0900 (JST)

●Noda to visit S. Korea for nuclear security summit

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda is expected to pledge that Japan will strengthen the defense of its nuclear facilities and emergency systems at the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul starting on Monday.

Noda will leave for the South Korean capital later on Monday. Leaders and representatives of 53 countries and international organizations will participate in the 2-day summit on Monday and Tuesday.

They will discuss countermeasures against nuclear terrorism and attacks on nuclear facilities.

Noda will speak on Tuesday at a meeting on international cooperation to strengthen nuclear security.

He will pledge measures to enhance defense of nuclear facilities and emergency systems based on lessons from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant following the massive earthquake and tsunami last March.

A joint-statement covering the prevention of nuclear terrorism and strengthening nuclear safety is expected to be issued at the end of the summit.

During his stay in South Korea, Noda will also meet with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak to discuss ways to pressure North Korea to stop its scheduled launch of a rocket in mid-April.

Monday, March 26, 2012 10:14 +0900 (JST)

●Anti-nuclear activists rally in Seoul

Hundreds of anti-nuclear activists staged a rally in Seoul, South Korea, ahead of the opening of the Nuclear Security Summit.

500 participants from some 40 South Korean civic groups, along with others from Japan, Taiwan, and the United States, gathered in front of Seoul Station on Sunday afternoon.

The 2-day summit will begin on Monday. 53 world leaders and representatives of international organizations will discuss measures to prevent terrorists from launching nuclear attacks.

An organizer of the rally said South Korea has encountered a series of problems

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at its nuclear power plants, including a power outage earlier this month.

He said the delegates must discuss not just nuclear security issues but nuclear disarmament and the abolition of nuclear power plants as well.

A woman from Fukushima Prefecture said she came to convey the suffering last year's nuclear accident has caused to the people of Fukushima.

She called on people to work together to create a society without nuclear power generation, as any accident could lead to similar suffering.

Sunday, March 25, 2012 23:18 +0900 (JST)

●Growing protests against nuclear power in India

Local residents in southern India are increasing their protests to block the start up of a new nuclear power plant, after police had temporarily detained hundreds of demonstrators.

The Kudankulam power station in the state of Tamil Nadu was completed last year and the government had planned to immediately start operations.

However, opposition to the project by local residents has grown following the nuclear accident in Japan.

On Friday, police detained about 500 protestors as a precautionary measure to prevent any disturbance.

India's national and local governments have been trying to persuade residents to accept the nuclear power plant.

They set up a panel of experts to convince people that atomic power generation is safe.

However, the mass arrest of protestors is likely to spur on greater local opposition to the start of operations at the nuclear power plant.

Sunday, March 25, 2012 04:52 +0900 (JST)

End