

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. 375: 12:00, March 16

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

(Fukushima NPP Site)

(Other news)

- **Japan's nuclear regulator opposed int'l standards**
- **Tons of debris waiting to be processed**

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●Japan's nuclear regulator opposed int'l standards

Japan's nuclear regulator has admitted that it strongly opposed a suggestion 6 years ago that international safety standards be applied in revising the guidelines for a nuclear accident.

The nation's Nuclear Safety Commission made the suggestion to the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency in 2006. The commission wanted to review the guidelines in line with the International Atomic Energy Agency's review of safety standards in an emergency.

Commission officials and the agency say that a key focus of debate at the time was whether to designate areas for immediate evacuation during a nuclear emergency, as called for by the IAEA.

The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency repeatedly opposed using the phrase "immediate evacuation" in proposed guidelines, saying it could trigger social confusion and heighten public anxieties.

Japan's new guidelines in 2007 ignored the IAEA standards.

In last year's nuclear accident, the government issued an evacuation order for residents living within 3 kilometers of the Fukushima Daiichi plant, but only more than 4 and a half hours after the plant operator informed the government of the emergency.

Critics say the government should have issued the order immediately.

Commission official Hideaki Tsuzuku says that if the guidelines had been revised 6 years ago, the evacuation would have been more efficient.

NISA official Yoshinori Moriyama says the agency had not anticipated the possibility of an emergency worsening so rapidly. He added that he believes the IAEA standards should have been included at an early phase, which could have allowed the government to handle the evacuation differently.

Thursday, March 15, 2012 20:59 +0900 (JST)

●Tons of debris waiting to be processed

Japan's Environment Ministry has briefed local governments across the country in a bid to persuade them to take debris left behind by the March 11th disaster.

Officials from 23 local authorities travelled to the tsunami-devastated town of Onagawa in Miyagi Prefecture for Thursday's briefing.

The tsunami and quake left behind an estimated 440,000 tons of debris in the town. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government agreed to accept a quarter of that.

The officials were shown how debris are sorted out, crushed, and loaded onto freighter trains before being shipped. They also saw workers check radiation levels at each step of the way, showing readings below government safety limits.

Tokyo was the first local government outside the disaster zone to accept some of the estimated 22.5 million tons of debris left behind. Only 6.7 percent of the total has been disposed of so far, partly due to concerns about radiation.

On Thursday, Shimada City in Shizuoka Prefecture, central Japan, also agreed to take from Iwate Prefecture about 5,000 tons of wood debris a year.

An NHK survey shows that at least 13 prefectures and 51 municipalities say they are considering similar moves.

On Friday, the central government plans to ask all the other prefectures outside

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the disaster zone to accept debris in a national effort to speed up reconstruction.
Thursday, March 15, 2012 19:24 +0900 (JST)

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