

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. 93: 18:00, May 26

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

(Fukushima NPP site)

- **TEPCO suspects new leak at Fukushima**
- **Nitrogen injection into No.1 reactor stops again**
- **Quake may have damaged key piping at No.3 reactor**

(Environment)

- **Radioactive substances detected in tea leaves**

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- **IAEA team visits Tokai Daini nuclear plant**
- **Japan pledges full cooperation with IAEA**
- **IAEA team briefed on Fukushima accident**
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- **Japan to express concern over import restrictions**
- **DPJ calls to keep Fukushima cattle for research**

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●TEPCO suspects new leak at Fukushima

The operator of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant is inspecting a wastewater disposal facility for possible leaks, after finding that its water level had dropped. Tokyo Electric Power Company has been removing highly radioactive wastewater from the plant's Number 2 and Number 3 reactors to waste disposal facilities within the compound.

The utility initially planned to transfer 14,000 tons, but it now wants to remove an additional 5,000 tons because there has been no noticeable drop in accumulated water in the reactors.

TEPCO suspended the transfer from the Number 3 reactor on Thursday to check whether the disposal facility could hold more water.

It found that the water level at the facility had dropped by 4.8 centimeters over a 20-hour period, meaning some 57 tons of water had been lost.

TEPCO says there has been no increase in radiation levels in nearby groundwater, but that the water level continues to fall.

The utility plans to begin running a water purifier on an experimental basis in early June.

If a leak is found at the waste disposal facility, it could delay the resumption of water transfer from the Number 3 reactor, raising the risk of radioactive wastewater spilling into the sea or seeping underground from the reactor.

Thursday, May 26, 2011 13:06 +0900 (JST)

●Nitrogen injection into No.1 reactor stops again

Nitrogen injection to prevent a hydrogen explosion was stopped for more than 4 hours at the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on Wednesday.

Engineers have been pumping nitrogen into the No.1 reactor since April 6th. The aim is to prevent another hydrogen blast when hydrogen - created when nuclear fuel reacts with water - builds up inside the containment vessel.

On Saturday, the device for pumping nitrogen temporarily stopped, but plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company, quickly replaced it.

On Wednesday afternoon, the firm confirmed that the injection had been stopped again. TEPCO used another spare device and resumed work after at least 4 hours.

The plant operator says the stoppage caused only minor change in the pressure inside the containment vessel, and that there is no increase in the risk of a new hydrogen blast.

TEPCO is trying to identify the cause of the problem.

Thursday, May 26, 2011 04:39 +0900 (JST)

●Quake may have damaged key piping at No.3 reactor

Tokyo Electric Power Company has released data which suggests the March 11th earthquake damaged a critical piping system in the No. 3 reactor at its Fukushima

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Daiichi nuclear plant.

The utility said that analysis of pressure and temperature data from the days after the quake shows that the No.3 reactor lost its cooling system on March 13th.

Much of its nuclear fuel likely melted down and collected at the bottom of the pressure vessel over the next 24 hours.

The analysis also shows that piping in an emergency cooling mechanism, known as a high-pressure coolant injection system, may have been damaged by the earthquake. The system is designed to maintain the water level inside the reactor vessel during an emergency.

The system is known to have automatically switched on shortly after noon on March 12th.

Pressure inside the reactor, which was 75 atmospheric pressure, plunged to about 10 atmospheric pressure over the next six hours.

Tokyo Electric says the drop in pressure is consistent with analysis which assumes the piping system had been damaged.

The piping system is one of the plant's most important structures in terms of safety, and must be damage-proof.

Tokyo Electric refuses to confirm, however, that the key piping system was damaged by the quake, and suggests that it is possible a gauge malfunction may be to blame for the data fluctuation.

Experts note that extensive investigation is needed to examine whether the massive earthquake damaged the cooling system.

Wednesday, May 25, 2011 18:46 +0900 (JST)

●Radioactive substances detected in tea leaves

Radioactive contamination has been found in tea leaves in Chiba and Gunma prefectures, about 200 kilometers from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. Similar contamination has been found over a wide area around Tokyo including Ibaraki, Kanagawa, Saitama and Shizuoka prefectures.

Chiba authorities say up to 763 becquerels per kilogram of radioactive cesium were detected in tea leaves picked on Tuesday in Narita and 3 other cities.

The provisional state limit is 500 becquerels per kilogram.

The Chiba government on Wednesday requested tea growers in the 4 cities to voluntarily halt shipments, and asked dealers not to sell the tea produced in the areas.

But 2 tea growers in Narita City reportedly shipped their tea leaves, and dealers sold some processed tea to local consumers.

Radioactive materials in tea leaves exceeding the legal limit was earlier detected in other areas in the prefecture.

In Gunma Prefecture, 780 becquerels per kilogram of radioactive cesium were detected in tea leaves picked on Tuesday in Shibukawa City.

The Gunma government on Wednesday asked farm cooperatives to halt shipment of tea leaves.

This is the first tea contamination case reported in Gunma Prefecture.

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Thursday, May 26, 2011 07:45 +0900 (JST)

●IAEA team visits Tokai Daini nuclear plant

Experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency have visited the Tokai Daini nuclear power plant in Ibaraki Prefecture, eastern Japan, to see the damage caused by the tsunami.

The IAEA team has been in Japan since Tuesday to investigate the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

On Thursday, a 20-member team visited the Tokai Daini plant, which is operated by Japan Atomic Power Company.

The plant's only reactor shut down automatically after the March 11th quake. But a 5-meter tsunami disabled one of the plant's 3 backup sea-water pumps for cooling the reactor. The plant remains closed for a regular inspection.

The head of the IAEA fact-finding mission Mike Weightman says his team wants to gather information of what happened at the plant to learn lessons for improving nuclear safety around the world.

The experts inspected the damaged sea water pump and a backup diesel generator housed inside the reactor building. They also interviewed officials of the operating company about the damage suffered at the plant and additional safety measures taken after the disaster.

The IAEA team will head to Fukushima later on Thursday for a 2-day visit. They will go to the troubled Fukushima Daiichi plant and the Fukushima Daini plant. Both plants suffered damage from tsunami and Daini is now stable.

The IAEA team will compile their findings in a report to be presented at an international meeting in June.

Thursday, May 26, 2011 13:06 +0900 (JST)

●Japan pledges full cooperation with IAEA

Japan has pledged full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency in its investigation into the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano made the pledge when he met IAEA team leader Michael Weightman in Tokyo on Wednesday.

Edano said it is extremely regrettable that the accident has caused worry and trouble around the world. He added that Japan is doing all it can to bring the plant under control, and that it has made efforts to disclose information with maximum transparency.

Edano said the IAEA's study will be crucial to secure transparency, and he asked the team to conduct a full, professional investigation. He added that the government has instructed relevant offices to provide utmost cooperation.

Weightman said the fact-finding mission provides an important opportunity for the world to learn lessons from the accident.

He said the team will submit its findings to an IAEA ministerial meeting scheduled for the end of June.

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After the meeting, the chief British nuclear regulator told reporters that his team expects to find out what's happened and what is happening at the Fukushima plant, and the conditions of the sites. He said the team wants to find lessons to learn because high standards in nuclear safety are based on continued improvement.

Wednesday, May 25, 2011 19:44 +0900 (JST)

●IAEA team briefed on Fukushima accident

A team from the International Atomic Energy Agency has launched a full investigation into the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident with briefings by Japanese officials in Tokyo.

The team of 18 experts from 12 countries including Britain, France and South Korea was briefed on Wednesday by officials of the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency, or NISA, the Nuclear Safety Commission and the technology and science ministry.

At the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry, NISA Director-General Nobuaki Terasaka explained an analysis by the Tokyo Electric Power Company, or TEPCO, of suspected meltdowns involving the plant's Number 1, 2 and 3 reactors.

TEPCO says a fuel meltdown likely occurred at the Number 1 reactor 15 hours after the magnitude-9.0 earthquake on March 11th, and that meltdowns also likely occurred at reactors 2 and 3 within days of the disaster.

Terasaka said Japan is striving to shift its efforts from stopgap measures to organized, stable containment of the accident.

The team's leader Michael Weightman said it will submit its findings at a meeting of the UN nuclear agency next month. He asked Japan to share all information so that the international community can learn from the country's experience.

The team is to visit the plant on Thursday and plans to submit an outline of its findings to the government next Wednesday.

Wednesday, May 25, 2011 18:39 +0900 (JST)

●Kan to state nuclear safety

Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan will pledge at the upcoming Group of Eight summit to make nuclear power safe, following the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi plant.

The summit opens in Deauville in France on Thursday, chaired by French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

The safety of nuclear power will top the agenda.

Prime Minister Kan plans to express his deep gratitude for the support extended by many countries in the aftermath of the March 11th earthquake and tsunami. Kan will also express his determination to realize the highest-possible levels of safety for nuclear power, by sharing the lessons of the Fukushima crisis with the international community, and by joining hands with the International Atomic

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Energy Agency.

The prime minister will also announce a policy of raising the ratio of solar and other renewable energies in Japan as a percentage of power generation from 9 percent to 20 percent by the next decade.

Thursday, May 26, 2011 04:39 +0900 (JST)

●Kan: Japan to reduce nuclear energy

Prime Minister Naoto Kan has said Japan will aim to dramatically reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear energy. He said the country plans to have 20 percent of its electricity come from renewable sources.

Prime Minister Kan spoke at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development forum in Paris on Wednesday, ahead of the G-8 meeting. Attendees included US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso.

Kan thanked the group for their support in the effort to bring the crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant under control. He said it is Japan's historical responsibility to turn the accident into a lesson for the entire world.

Kan went on to unveil the country's new basic energy policy, saying that renewable sources and energy conservation will become new pillars.

He added that the country will aim to more than double the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources. Kan said Japan wants that amount to be a fifth of the total by the early 2020s.

Japan will also aim to reduce the cost of generating solar power to a third of the current level by 2020, and to one-sixth a decade later. Another plan is to install solar panels in 10 million houses.

The prime minister will attend the meeting of the Group of Eight slated to open on Thursday. It is thought he will present the new policy at the meeting as well, where the safety of nuclear energy will be high on the agenda.

Thursday, May 26, 2011 10:00 +0900 (JST)

●Switzerland heading for non-nuclear energy

The Swiss government has decided to decommission all existing nuclear reactors, heading for a major shift in the nation's energy policy.

The Cabinet decided on Wednesday to shut down and decommission all 5 reactors in the country by the year 2034 after each one reaches the end of its lifespan.

The nuclear reactors supply 40 percent of Switzerland's electricity demand.

The government says nuclear energy will become more costly if safety measures at nuclear plants were to be enhanced. It says it will instead boost the use of renewable energy, such as solar and wind power.

The new policy will be debated at the parliament next month.

Public concern over nuclear energy has been growing in Switzerland in the wake

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of the accident at Japan's Fukushima plant. On Sunday, some 20,000 people held a massive anti-nuclear rally.

Thursday, May 26, 2011 10:25 +0900 (JST)

●Japan to express concern over import restrictions

Japan will express concern at the ongoing ministerial meeting over import restrictions against Japanese foods imposed by many countries following the radioactive contamination caused by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant accident.

The Japanese Foreign Ministry says since the nuclear accident more than 60 countries have banned or put restrictions on imports from Japan.

The European Union is requiring that products from 12 prefectures in Japan have documents certifying that they are free of radioactive contamination.

The Japanese government plans to express concern over the measures at the ministerial meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on Thursday.

Japan wants to explain that it is now easing shipment restrictions in Japan.

The Japanese government also wants to state that the import restrictions should be based on scientific findings.

Thursday, May 26, 2011 04:39 +0900 (JST)

●DPJ calls to keep Fukushima cattle for research

Japan's governing Democratic Party has proposed that livestock left near the crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant be kept for research purposes rather than culled as planned by the government.

DPJ deputy policy chief Koriki Jojima said at a news conference on Wednesday that his party hopes to negotiate with the government on the proposal.

The government has already instructed the Fukushima prefectural government to cull livestock left in a 20-kilometer exclusion zone, with their owners' consent.

The DPJ says its proposal is for animals whose owners have rejected the government plan.

Veterinary scientists at Wednesday's news conference told reporters that the proposed research would be very valuable since almost no studies have been conducted on livestock continually exposed to low levels of radiation.

The party says it will look for fields in the exclusion zone that can be made available for keeping the animals.

Wednesday, May 25, 2011 19:48 +0900 (JST)

End