

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. 68: 18:00, May 1

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

(Fukushima NPP site)

- Water from 3rd reactor to be transferred
- TEPCO moving contaminated water to tanks
- TEPCO to take new measures against disasters
- Fukushima: measures against tsunami

(Workers)

- Radiation exposure for 2 workers nears limit
- More workers to be sent to Fukushima

(Environment, Compensation, etc.)

- TEPCO official: Fukushima is man-made disaster
- Edano: No compensation exemption for TEPCO
- TEPCO president pledges swift, fair compensation
- Kan comments on nuclear advisor's resignation
- Minute levels of radiation detected in breast milk

(Other NPPs in Japan)

- Safety agency seeks nuclear plant quake data

(World)

- Non-nuclear nations call for safer nuclear power
- Japan, China, S.Korea to share disaster info
- Japan steps up efforts to prove its food safe
- Tourists return to Tokyo

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● Water from 3rd reactor to be transferred

Tokyo Electric Power Company is preparing to transfer radioactive water from the Number 3 reactor of the disaster-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. Restoration work at the plant has been hindered by highly radioactive water that has been accumulating in the Number 1 to Number 4 reactors.

The utility has given priority to transferring the most highly contaminated water in the Number 2 reactor to a temporary storage site.

The operation was suspended for maintenance on Friday, but resumed shortly after 2 PM on Saturday.

TEPCO dropped a plan to add another pump to quicken the transfer.

The utility says it needs to set aside capacity in the temporary storage site to transfer contaminated water from the Number 3 reactor, as the water level in its underground tunnel has risen by 12 centimeters in one week.

The power company plans to start transferring water from the Number 3 reactor if the water level continues to rise, and is installing a hose that connects the tunnel with the temporary storage site.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 09:02 +0900 (JST)

● TEPCO moving contaminated water to tanks

The operator of the troubled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant plans to begin transferring highly radioactive water accumulated near the Number 6 reactor to a temporary storage tank.

Tokyo Electric Power Company, or TEPCO, is expected to start moving the water in the turbine house of the No. 6 reactor to the tank on Sunday afternoon.

At the Number 2 reactor, TEPCO continues to pump out highly radioactive water that has accumulated in a tunnel connected to the reactor to an on-site waste processing facility.

TEPCO says about 2,560 tons of the water has been moved into the facility since work began on April 19th.

The company says the surface of the water in the tunnel was 84 centimeters below ground level as of 7AM on Sunday, down 4 centimeters since the work began.

The utility adds that radioactive water in the tunnel of the Number 3 reactor facility has been rising for several days, and reached 90 centimeters below ground level at 7AM, 2 centimeters higher than the figure a day before.

To prevent the water from overflowing from the tunnel, TEPCO is preparing to transfer the water to the waste facility by connecting the 2 locations with a hose. TEPCO also says that a woman employee in her 40s was exposed to radiation of 7.49 millisieverts, 1.5 times the national legal limit, while she was working at an in-house medical office of the Fukushima plant.

The woman continued to work there until March 15th, 4 days after the disaster, then she was moved to another office within Fukushima Prefecture. She is

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described as having no apparent health problems resulting from the exposure. TEPCO says it is the second case of a woman worker being exposed to radiation exceeding the legal limit, and that no woman has been allowed to work at the plant since March 23rd.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 12:56 +0900 (JST)

●TEPCO to take new measures against disasters

The Tokyo Electric Power Company says it going to implement new measures at the disaster-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant to protect it from any other tsunami or aftershocks. The work will be completed by late July.

A utility official told reporters on Saturday that it is going to build 12-meter-high temporary levees consisting of stone-filled baskets to protect the plant from any tsunami.

The power company will also fill in the pits leading down to the 4 tunnels on the ocean side of the Number 2 and Number 3 reactors with concrete to prevent highly radioactive water from leaking into the sea.

As a measure to protect the plant from aftershocks, TEPCO will set up a steel pillar at the bottom of the spent-fuel storage pool of the Number 4 reactor, and reinforce it with concrete.

A hydrogen explosion last month damaged the wall of the reactor building, weakening its quake resistance.

An advisor to the prime minister and a senior member of the government's nuclear taskforce, Goshi Hosono, says a magnitude 8 aftershock may happen off the coast where the plant is located.

He says aftershocks and tsunami pose a big threat to the work being done to stabilize the situation at the plant.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 09:02 +0900 (JST)

●Fukushima: measures against tsunami

Tokyo Electric Power Company will implement new measures at the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant to protect it from any other tsunami or aftershocks.

It will build temporary levees on the ocean side and fill part of the tunnels with concrete.

Q: This is the video image taken near the nuclear power plant on March 11th when the massive earthquake hit northeastern Japan.

Tsunami more than 20 meters high hit the cliff.

Q: Aftershocks occur frequently in the area of the Fukushima Daiichi power plant. There is concern that aftershocks and tsunami will hinder restoration of the

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cooling functions of the reactors.

Q: Officials of the power company held a news conference on Saturday.

TEPCO: "The company will build levees on the southeastern side of the plant to protect it from tsunami."

Q: The temporary levees against tsunami will be built at these locations.

Q: They will be on the ocean side of Number 3 and Number 4 reactors.

Q: How are the levees going to be made?

Q: Steel baskets will be used.

Q: The baskets will be filled with rock.

Q: And the rock-filled baskets will be piled up.

Q: The levees will be 12 meters high. The work will begin within several days and is expected to be complete in mid-June.

Q: The second measure against tsunami is to reinforce the underground tunnels of the Number 2 and Number 3 reactors.

Water in the tunnels is contaminated with highly radioactive material.

Q: Work is needed to prevent the water from leaking into the sea at the time of a tsunami.

Q: TEPCO plans to fill in the pits leading down to the 4 tunnels on the ocean side of the reactors with concrete.

Q: This is the cross-sectional view.

Q: The work will be done by late May.

Q: Next is a measure against aftershocks.

A hydrogen explosion damaged the walls of the Number 4 reactor building, and weakened the quake resistance of the spent fuel storage pool.

TEPCO will set up steel pillars underneath the storage pool and reinforce it with concrete by the end of July.

Advisor to prime minister Goshi Hosono: "Aftershocks and tsunami will hinder the work to control the critical situation at the plant. Each measure will be verified for its validity against aftershocks and tsunami as it is put into place."

Sunday, May 01, 2011 11:01 +0900 (JST)

●Radiation exposure for 2 workers nears limit

Two workers at the crisis-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant have been found to have been exposed to radiation levels close to legal yearly limit.

Late last month, the plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Company measured the internal radiation exposure of the workers whose external exposure exceeded 100 millisieverts.

It says it found that the amount of internal and external radiation that 2 of its employees had been exposed to exceeded 200 millisieverts. The reading for one of the men reached 240.8 millisieverts.

The health ministry recently raised the legal radiation limit that workers can be

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exposed to in an emergency from 100 to 250 millisieverts.

On March 24th the 2 workers, without wearing proper protective gear, stood in highly radioactive water while working in the basement of the Number 3 reactor building.

The utility says it took about one month to measure their internal exposure levels. TEPCO says workers are transferred out of the Fukushima plant once their external exposure reaches 150 millisieverts, and that 8 workers in total have been relocated.

The utility says it will manage the situation with utmost attention to make sure that the workers are never exposed to radiation levels above the legal limit.

Saturday, April 30, 2011 16:51 +0900 (JST)

● More workers to be sent to Fukushima

The operator of the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant is studying the possibility of sending more employees and former employees to the plant. People who have previously worked at the plant and who have been trained in nuclear-related matters, such as radiation monitoring, are the potential candidates. About 3,000 people are believed to qualify.

About 1,000 workers of Tokyo Electric Power Company and its contract companies are currently working at the power plant to bring it under control. TEPCO laid out a plan on April 17th to stabilize the reactors in 6 to 9 months. But the work is expected to take a long time and the radiation level is high. On Saturday, 2 workers were found to have been exposed to more than 200 millisieverts of radiation.

Another 30 workers or so were exposed to radiation in excess of 100 millisieverts. The government recently raised the legal limit for radiation exposure during an emergency from 100 millisieverts to 250 millisieverts.

The power company considers it necessary to have more people on site to proceed with the operation while ensuring the safety of the workers.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 10:35 +0900 (JST)

● TEPCO official: Fukushima is man-made disaster

A vice president of Tokyo Electric Power Company says he believes the nuclear crisis at Fukushima nuclear power plant is a man-made disaster.

TEPCO vice president Norio Tsuzumi visited Iitate village in Fukushima Prefecture on Saturday and apologized to about 1,000 villagers who gathered to hear him speak.

When he was asked if he thinks of the nuclear crisis a man-made disaster or a natural disaster, he said personally he thinks it is a man-made disaster.

All of the 6,000 residents of Iitate were instructed to evacuate by late May based

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on accumulated radiation exposure levels caused by emissions from the Fukushima Daiichi power plant.

After the meeting with local residents, Tsuzumi explained to reporters why he feels it is a man-made disaster.

He said that some say the nuclear accident in Fukushima was beyond any expectations but personally he thinks adequate precautions should have been in place.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 09:02 +0900 (JST)

●Edano: No compensation exemption for TEPCO

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano emphasized that Tokyo Electric Power Company cannot be exempt from paying compensation for the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

The country's Act on Compensation for Nuclear Damages would allow the responsibility for compensation to be dismissed if the accident is regarded as an exceptionally massive natural disaster. TEPCO has implied this act should be applied to what happened at Fukushima Daiichi.

But Chief Cabinet Secretary Edano says while the earthquake and tsunami were very powerful, Japan's Diet had warned the nuclear plant would face problems if hit by an enormous tsunami.

Edano points out TEPCO cannot be exempt from its responsibility because the company was not prepared for what had been flagged by the Diet, and therefore the damage is not unexpected.

Saturday, April 30, 2011 09:03 +0900 (JST)

●TEPCO president pledges swift, fair compensation

The president of Tokyo Electric Power Company has promised to quickly and fairly pay compensation for losses caused by the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

Masataka Shimizu testified Friday before a Lower House committee. He referred to the 1st guidelines released Thursday by a government panel. They named evacuees, farmers and fishermen subject to shipping restrictions as among those eligible for compensation.

Shimizu said his company will follow the guidelines and study how to calculate damages and pay them out.

He acknowledged the number of claimants will be vast. But he said TEPCO will act fairly and swiftly with the government's support, financial and otherwise.

Prime Minister Naoto Kan addressed the same Lower House committee on Friday. He said he will ensure that adequate relief reaches all the victims of the March 11th disaster, which he pointed out is the government's responsibility.

Saturday, April 30, 2011 06:04 +0900 (JST)

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● Kan comments on nuclear advisor's resignation

One of the nuclear advisors to Prime Minister Naoto Kan has resigned to protest what he called the government's impromptu handling of the nuclear crisis. University of Tokyo Professor Toshiso Kosako, who tendered his resignation on Friday, also said that the government has belittled the law. Speaking at a Lower House committee meeting on Saturday, Kan said Professor Kosako resigned because of disagreements with other scientists. Kan said the government responded to the nuclear accident based on advice from the Nuclear Safety Commission and has never taken ad hoc measures. Kosako also criticized the education ministry for allowing students at primary schools in Fukushima Prefecture to perform outdoor activities if the level of radiation of the school ground does not exceed 20 millisieverts per year. The nuclear scientist said it's very unlikely that even workers at nuclear reactors could be exposed to such a high level of radiation, and therefore he cannot agree on that figure as an upper limit for children. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano told reporters that the ministry's decision seeks to reduce exposure to radiation and that it does not mean the government will allow the limit of 20 millisieverts per year for children.

Saturday, April 30, 2011 15:10 +0900 (JST)

● Minute levels of radiation detected in breast milk

Japan's Health Ministry says it has detected a minute amount of radioactive materials in breast milk in 7 mothers in central and northeastern Japan. The ministry says the amount does not pose a danger to their babies' health. The ministry on Saturday released the results of a study conducted in Fukushima, Tokyo and other 3 prefectures in Kanto region from last Sunday through Thursday. The ministry says breast milk samples from a mother in Iwaki City of Fukushima Prefecture contained 3.5 becquerels of radioactive iodine per kilogram and 2.4 becquerels of radioactive cesium per kilogram. Up to 2.8 becquerels of radioactive materials per kilogram were also detected in 6 mothers in 2 other prefectures. Japan has no regulatory levels to determine the health risk from radioactive substances in breast milk. But it sets the safety levels for babies' consumption of milk and drinking water at 100 becquerels of radioactive iodine per kilogram and 200 becquerels of radioactive cesium per kilogram. The detected amount in the samples was much lower than the regulatory levels and the ministry says it is too minute to have any impact on babies' health. It also says mothers who are breast-feeding should not be overly concerned. Professor Nobuya Unno of Kitasato University says it is necessary to carefully analyze how and for how long radioactive materials will affect breast milk when mothers drink water and eat food that contain such substances.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 09:02 +0900 (JST)

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● Safety agency seeks nuclear plant quake data

Japan's nuclear safety agency has asked all of the country's utilities to submit data on fault lines and other geological features beneath or close to their nuclear power plants by the end of May.

It made the request after the independent Nuclear Safety Commission ordered a reassessment of the quake-resistance of Japanese nuclear plants on Thursday.

12 utilities must submit data on safety assessments of their nuclear plants and facilities, including fault lines and other geological issues that were previously considered irrelevant to plant safety.

All the utilities conducted their own safety analyses after the government revised its quake-resistance guidelines 5 years ago.

The nuclear safety agency says the Magnitude-9 earthquake on March 11th has caused a dramatic shift in tectonic plates.

It says it's now become necessary to carry out a fresh round of detailed studies looking into which fault lines could pose a risk to nuclear plants.

Saturday, April 30, 2011 09:03 +0900 (JST)

● Non-nuclear nations call for safer nuclear power

Foreign ministers from 10 countries without nuclear weapons have agreed that international cooperation should be promoted to improve the safety of nuclear power plants.

They held the second non-nuclear state conference in Berlin, Germany, on Saturday, followed the first last September in the US.

Japan's Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto spoke about efforts by his government and the operator of the crippled Fukushima nuclear power facility, to bring its reactors under control.

Some participants voiced the need for increased international cooperation in the use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

The ministers issued a joint statement calling for a treaty that would ban the production of materials for nuclear weapons. The statement says that if necessary, it will ask the United Nations to discuss the matter at the General Assembly.

Matsumoto later told reporters that he recognized the importance of transparency in giving explanations about the accident.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 09:02 +0900 (JST)

● Japan, China, S.Korea to share disaster info

The environment ministers of Japan, China, and South Korea have agreed to step up their sharing of information to minimize the environmental impact of disasters. The 3 ministers met in Pusan, South, Korea, on Friday.

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Japan's Senior Vice Environment Minister, Shoichi Kondo, briefed his Chinese and South Korean counterparts on the aftermath of the March 11th earthquake and tsunami.

The Chinese and South Korean ministers said they wanted Japan to keep them updated on its handling of the Fukushima nuclear crisis and on the environmental impact.

At a news conference after the meeting, Kondo emphasized the need for the 3 countries to cooperate more closely. He said sharing each country's experience and knowledge is vital for dealing with the environmental impact of disasters.

Saturday, April 30, 2011 06:08 +0900 (JST)

●Japan steps up efforts to prove its food safe

Imports of Japanese food are banned in many parts of the world because of concern about radiation from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, so Japan is stepping up its efforts to prove that its food is safe.

Japan's foreign ministry says more than 50 countries and territories are not allowing imports of Japanese food and other products.

China has banned agricultural products from Tokyo and 11 prefectures including Fukushima and neighboring Ibaraki.

Hong Kong, the largest importer of Japanese farm and fishery products, is not allowing food imports from 5 prefectures.

Governments have kept import bans on Japanese food products that Japanese authorities have declared safe.

Japanese diplomats are stepping up their efforts to deal with the problem by giving governments accurate information on radiation and explaining Japanese screening measures.

They're also working with the Japan External Trade Organization to hold briefings for companies in Beijing and London.

Saturday, April 30, 2011 06:09 +0900 (JST)

●Tourists return to Tokyo

The first group of foreign tourists has arrived in the Tokyo Metropolitan area since the March 11th earthquake and tsunami.

More than 20 people from Singapore flew into Tokyo's Narita Airport on Saturday morning where they received a warm welcome from Japan transport bureau staff and others.

The Japan Tourism Agency says it is the first group from abroad to visit the Tokyo area since the quake.

The tourists traveled to the hot-spring resort of Hakone where they got to view cherry blossoms around Lake Ashi.

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One of the tourists posted a message on his Facebook page which said that attractions in the Tokyo area are as crowded as ever.

He said tourists can get around Tokyo with no problems and that he saw no damage from the earthquake.

He said he wants to tell many friends that Japan has returned to normal.

The manager of the hotel where the tourists ate lunch said he hopes they will spread the word that Hakone has not changed since the quake.

The tourists are staying at a hot-spring resort in Yamanashi Prefecture near Mount Fuji. On Sunday, they will return to Tokyo to visit an electronic district and a cultural site.

Sunday, May 01, 2011 09:02 +0900 (JST)

End