

Japan: Onagawa N-plant restart has local mayor's support

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SENDAI—The mayor of Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, one of two municipalities that host Tohoku Electric Power Co.'s Onagawa nuclear power plant, on Monday indicated his support for the firm being given permission to resume operations at the facility.

"We need to consider restarting [the nuclear facility] after the necessary precautions have been taken," Hiroshi Kameyama said at a press conference.

His remarks came about two months after the facility was brought to an emergency halt due to the March 11 earthquake.

Kameyama became the first head of a local government to call for resumption of operations at a nuclear power plant that was shut down or brought to an emergency halt due to the disaster.

The facility straddles the border of Onagawacho and Ishinomaki, both in Miyagi Prefecture.

The Nos. 1 and 3 reactors at the plant were both in operation at the time of the March 11 disaster, and automatically shut down when the earthquake hit. The facility's No. 2 reactor was undergoing a periodical inspection at the time, and activity there was also brought to an immediate halt.

Kameyama emphasized the need to take precautions against accidents, noting a fire broke out in a switchboard inside the Onagawa facility during the March 11 disaster. However, he said the power company deserved "some credit" for its anti-tsunami measures, which he said saved the Onagawa plant from suffering a disaster comparable in scale to the ongoing crisis at Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant.

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<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110509004940.htm>