

# **Fukushima: It is “not sure whether and how far government officials were aware of TEPCO’s plan to inject seawater into the crippled reactor”**

Thursday 26 May 2011, by [Kyodo News](#), [Mainichi Shimbun](#), [Yomiuri Shimbun](#) (Date first published: 28 May 2011).

**Who is responsible for the Fukushima disaster? Tepco and the government put the blame on one another. Below, the latest items on this question as published in the English language Japanese press.**

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## **Tepco disclosure said lacking from get-go**

Tokyo Electric Power Co. did not fully disclose radiation monitoring data after its Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant was crippled by the March 11 earthquake and tsunami, the government revealed Friday.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano, after being informed by Goshi Hosono, a special adviser to Prime Minister Naoto Kan, told reporters that he instructed Tepco to sort out the data, make it public and make doubly sure no more information-withholding occurs.

Coming a day after he blasted Tepco’s flip-flop over the injection of seawater into the plant’s reactor 1, Edano said the government “cannot respond to this matter on the premise” that no more undisclosed information will emerge.

“There is a distinct possibility that there is still more,” he said, urging Tepco to accurately and swiftly report the truth to the government.

Hosono also noted Tepco’s delay in revealing this fact, 2? months after the nuclear crisis started.

The government will look into how this happened, the two officials said.

**Kyodo**, May 28, 2011

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20110528a3.html>

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## **TEPCO took 2 months on report**

It took more than two months for Tokyo Electric Power Co. to submit its report to the government on its analysis of what occurred in the Nos. 1, 2 and 3 reactors at its Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant since the March 11 earthquake and tsunami crippled the power station.

Many people have asked why it took so long for TEPCO to submit the report, which reached the agency under the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry just before the deadline late Monday.

The primary reason for the delay was that the reactors were without power, as their switchboards were submerged in water when the powerful tsunami struck. Most of the data TEPCO used to grasp what had happened in the reactors is normally recorded on computers at the reactors' central control rooms.

But shortly after the tsunami, this recording capacity at the Nos. 1 and 2 reactors was largely disabled. Extremely high radiation levels near the control rooms in the early days of the crisis delayed the utility's ability to retrieve data that had been recorded.

It was not until earlier this month, when radiation levels declined and rubble was cleared from the area, that TEPCO workers were able to enter the control room to collect the data.

Besides electronic data, paper records were also left inside the control rooms, which TEPCO scanned to add to the electronic records.

To fill in the gaps when there was neither electronic nor paper records, the utility interviewed officials who were at the plant at the time, and looked at job sheets and other notes left on whiteboards in the control rooms.

The International Atomic Energy Agency will convene a high-level ministerial conference on nuclear safety June 20-24 in Vienna, where the government will make a report on the Fukushima disaster. The government had asked the utility to submit its report on Monday, and the utility handed it in at 11:30 p.m.

***The Yomiuri Shimbun*** , May 25, 2011

\* <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110524004474.htm>

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## **TEPCO claims it notified gov't of seawater injection plan at Fukushima plant**

Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), operator of the crisis-stricken Fukushima No. 1 Nuclear Power Plant, said on May 25 that it had informed authorities before it began to inject seawater into its overheating No. 1 reactor on March 12.

During a Diet session on May 23, Kan denied news reports that the seawater injection was temporarily suspended for 55 minutes at his instruction, aggravating the nuclear crisis, saying the government had never been notified of the plan in the first place. "I couldn't say, 'stop' or 'go ahead' to something we were never notified of."

However, the government's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) also admitted on May 25 that it has a fax it received at 3:20 p.m. on March 12, which states that TEPCO would begin injecting seawater as soon as preparations were completed, and delivered copies of it to attendees of an emergency meeting on the crisis.

Government officials denied, however, that NISA's admission contradicts Prime Minister Naoto Kan's May 23 statement. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano emphasized the government was only notified that TEPCO was preparing to inject seawater.

"It was reported during a meeting at 6 p.m. (on March 12) that the utility was preparing to inject seawater into the No. 1 reactor, but that it would be a considerable amount of time before the work began. We never received any report that TEPCO had actually begun the injection," he said.

Hidehiko Nishiyama, a high-ranking NISA official, says TEPCO sent the fax primarily to notify the agency that the utility would begin to vent the reactor building to release steam containing radioactive substances, adding that seawater injection was only a side note in a corner of the page.

He then said he is not sure whether and how far government officials were aware of TEPCO's plan to inject seawater into the crippled reactor.

TEPCO sent the emergency message to NISA and local governments concerned in accordance with the Act on Special Measures Concerning Nuclear Emergency Preparedness.

A hydrogen explosion occurred in the reactor building at 3:36 p.m., 16 minutes after the fax was sent.

TEPCO President Masataka Shimizu had confirmed at around noon on March 12 that the company was preparing to inject seawater into the No. 1 reactor, and approved the measure shortly before 3 p.m.

**Mainichi** , May 25, 2011

\* <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20110525p2a00m0na013000c.html>

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