

Locations near nuclear facilities in Japan could become active faults

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14 locations near nuclear plants could become active faults, agency warns

Some 14 locations near nuclear facilities in Japan have been found to have the possibility of turning into active faults in the future, the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) has announced.

NISA said on Aug. 30 that it has confirmed a total of 14 faults and other locations whose possibility of turning into active faults in the future cannot be ruled out near the Fukushima No. 1 and No. 2 nuclear power plants and Japan Atomic Power Co.'s Tokai No. 2 Power Station in Ibaraki Prefecture.

NISA had instructed plant operators to re-evaluate those locations after aftershocks following the March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake triggered the Yunotake fault in Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture, to slip even though it had been believed to be inactive.

As a result of the re-evaluation, it emerged that five locations near the Fukushima nuclear plant, including the Yunotake fault, have a possibility of moving in the future due to crustal twists and increased seismic activity in the wake of the March 11 quake. A total of nine locations near the Tokai No. 2 Power Station and the Japan Atomic Energy Agency's Tokai nuclear fuel reprocessing plant were also revaluated.

Even if any of these faults and other locations ever slipped, the intensity of tremors would be within the scope of the assumption, and the existing plants have no problem in terms of their quake resistance, according to NISA.

NISA will put together the re-evaluation results shortly and submit them to the Nuclear Safety Commission of Japan.

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* Mainichi Shimbun, August 31, 2011

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/08/31/20110831p2a00m0na024000c.html>