

Nobel laureate, citizens urge abolition of nuclear reactors

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TOKYO (Kyodo) — Nobel literature laureate Kenzaburo Oe and antinuclear activists held a rally in Tokyo on Saturday calling for the abolition of nuclear reactors in the aftermath of radiation leaks at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant.

Addressing the protesters in Hibiya Park, who numbered around 5,500, according to the organizers, Oe condemned the Diet's approval Friday of nuclear cooperation agreements with Jordan, Russia, South Korea and Vietnam to allow exports of Japanese-made reactors and technologies to the countries.

"The levels of politicians' caution regarding nuclear reactors have returned to those before March 11" when the massive earthquake and tsunami crippled the Fukushima plant, Oe said.

Only citizens' movements based on a resolve to eliminate nuclear reactors are dependable when seeking to achieve that goal, now that politicians are increasingly losing a sense of danger in relying on nuclear power, the novelist said.

Ayako Oga, the 38-year-old chief of the secretariat of a civic group formed by Fukushima residents, said, "Our state of emergency will not end as long as there is a fear that radioactive substances could fall from the sky again (as a result of a nuclear accident), necessitating evacuation."

After the rally, the protesters marched to the head office of Tokyo Electric Power Co., the operator of the Fukushima plant, chanting, "Farewell to nuclear reactors, we cherish our lives."

Mizuho Fukushima, the leader of the Social Democratic Party who took part in the demonstration, said, "I felt the feelings and enthusiasm of these people. We would like to make efforts to abolish nuclear reactors through our activities on the Diet floor."

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