

Post-Fukushima News: Complaint over Tepco, Radioactivity, Oi Plant, Corruption, Safety, Britain

Saturday 1 December 2012, by [Kyodo News](#) (Date first published: 18 November 2012).

Contents

- [Another complaint filed \(...\)](#)
- [Radioactivity](#)
- [Oi plant](#)
- [Corruption](#)
- [Safety](#)
- [Britain](#)

Another complaint filed over Fukushima disaster against Tepco, ex-nuclear body

FUKUSHIMA – A criminal complaint was filed by 13,000 people nationwide Thursday against 33 senior officials of Tokyo Electric Power Co. and the government's now-defunct Nuclear Safety Commission over the meltdown disaster at Tepco's Fukushima No. 1 power plant that was triggered by the March 11, 2011 megaquake and tsunami.

In the complaint filed with prosecutors, the 13,000 demanded that the accused be investigated and charged with professional negligence resulting in death and injury.

The complaint was the second filed, following one made in June by 1,300 people mainly from Fukushima Prefecture.

Among the accused was Tsunehisa Katsumata, who was Tepco chairman at the time the crisis erupted.

The plaintiffs blame their exposure to radiation on the officials. Their complaint also focuses on people who died, for whatever reason, while working at the stricken nuclear plant, and local residents who committed suicide after being forced to evacuate.

In the earlier complaint, Tepco and the nuclear commission officials were accused of neglecting to take antidisaster measures, despite the frequency of earthquakes in Japan and the tsunami threat that experts pointed to.

The Fukushima District Public Prosecutor's Office accepted that complaint in August.

The Tokyo, Kanazawa and Nagoya district public prosecutor's offices have also accepted similar complaints.

Katsumata, who served as Tepco president between 2002 and 2008, resigned as Tepco chairman last June, while the Nuclear Safety Commission was succeeded by the independent Nuclear Regulation Authority, in September.

According to the Penal Code, those who fail to exercise due care and thereby cause the death or injury of another face up to five years in prison or a fine of up to \1 million.

It has been widely reported that Tepco was well aware of the tsunami threat at Fukushima No. 1 but failed to boost the plant's defenses. Two workers were found drowned, apparently by the tsunami, in a reactor building basement. Other workers dealing with the subsequent meltdown crisis have died, but to date no fatalities have been directly attributed to radiation exposure.

Kyodo Press, November 16, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121116b4.html>

Radioactivity

Japanese government radiation monitoring posts not showing reality: Greenpeace

Greenpeace said Tuesday a survey it carried out has found that many of the official radiation monitoring posts set up after the Fukushima nuclear crisis provide lower readings than nearby locations and the environmental group is urging the government to disseminate more accurate data to the public.

Greenpeace said its survey, conducted from Tuesday to Friday of last week in the city of Fukushima, showed that 30 of the 40 government-set monitoring posts recorded lower radiation levels than the environmental group found in spots just 5 to 40 meters away.

One monitoring post in a park showed less than one-twelfth the radiation levels seen in nearby areas in the same park, it said.

The differences may be a result of land at the monitoring posts being decontaminated when they were set up, Greenpeace said. Concrete and metal plates on the monitoring posts' bases are also believed to be screening the instruments from radiation.

"The government should not offer a wrong sense of security to citizens," a Greenpeace official said.

Kyodo, October 24, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121024b7.html>

Cesium in trout 110 times over limit

A mountain trout caught in the Niida River in Fukushima Prefecture contained 11,400 becquerels of radioactive cesium per kilogram, more than 110 times above the government limit for food products,

a survey by the Environment Ministry showed.

Presenting its findings Friday on cesium in fish and insects in rivers, lakes and sea in Fukushima, the ministry said it also detected 4,400 becquerels of radioactive cesium in a smallmouth bass and 3,000 becquerels in a catfish caught at the Mano Dam in Iitate.

The maximum threshold for food items is 100 becquerels per kilogram.

It is only the second time the ministry has conducted such a survey, after undertaking a study between December and this February. The first data were published in July.

“Like the previous survey, concentrations (of cesium) tended to be higher in rivers and lakes than in the sea. We want to grasp the extent of pollution by continuously conducting the survey,” a ministry official said.

Kyodo Press, November 18, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121118a8.html>

Oi plant

Regulators study disputed fault at Oi nuke plant

The Nuclear Regulation Authority conducted a one-day investigation Friday at the Oi nuclear power plant in Fukui Prefecture to check whether a disputed fault running underneath it should be viewed as active.

Less than solid ground?: Inspectors from the Nuclear Regulation Authority on Friday check the geological stratum at Kansai Electric's Oi nuclear plant in Fukui Prefecture. KYODO

Depending on the outcome of the investigation, Japan's only operating nuclear plant could be told to shut down, just months after two of its reactors were allowed to restart.

It is the first time the NRA, established in September, has conducted an on-site inspection at a nuclear plant.

At the government's request, Kansai Electric Power Co. is further studying the F-6 fault, which runs north to south, separating the plant's reactors 1 and 2 from units 3 and 4.

Kepeco has said it has yet to find data suggesting movements in the last 120,000 to 130,000 years, the current definition of an active fault in Japan.

The NRA plans to make its own judgment based on Friday's check, which was carried out by a team consisting of NRA Commissioner Kunihiro Shimazaki and four other experts selected from outside the authority.

They include Toyo University professor Mitsuhisa Watanabe, who has highlighted the risk posed by the F-6 fault, where a zone of crushed rocks has been found in the bedrock.

The shattered zone will not trigger an earthquake, but it is feared it could move together with active faults near the plant and damage a water channel that would be used to take in seawater to cool the reactors in the event of an emergency.

Utilities are not allowed to build reactors and other related facilities important for safe operation of reactors directly above active faults.

Prior to the investigation, NRA Chairman Shunichi Tanaka said that if F-6 is determined to be active, or if it is strongly suspected, the authority would call for the currently operating reactors be shut down.

The investigation team is expected to meet Sunday to discuss the outcome of the on-site inspection.

The regulators plan to conduct similar investigations at five other nuclear facilities, including Hokuriku Electric Power Co.'s Shika plant in Ishikawa Prefecture and Kepco's Mihama plant in Fukui.

Kyodo Press, November 3, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121103a6.html>

Panel at odds over fault at Oi nuke plant

A fault running under the Oi nuclear plant in Fukui Prefecture is definitely active, an expert on a Nuclear Regulation Authority panel investigating the compound's safety said Sunday, as other members continued to debate the potential danger.

Toyo University professor Mitsuhsa Watanabe is calling for the immediate halt of two reactors at the plant, the only nuclear facility reactivated since the Fukushima disaster last year, arguing evidence points to an active fault.

"It's certain there is an active fault. Operations should be stopped and another investigation should be conducted" at the Oi plant, Watanabe said.

But Norio Shigematsu, a researcher at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology, cautioned that the panel should not reach any conclusions until experts on landslides are consulted.

The panel ended its session Sunday without reaching a final decision.

The future of Japan's nuclear policy depends on whether the panel concludes the fault is active. Many activists have called for an immediate shutdown of the Oi reactors, but the government has so far rejected their demands.

While panel members are in agreement that a fault runs beneath key water pipe equipment for the No. 3 and 4 reactors, which are currently in operation, they are examining photos of soil samples taken from the complex to determine whether it is active.

Panel head Kunihiro Shimazaki, a professor emeritus at the University of Tokyo, said that if necessary, its members may ask operator Kansai Electric Power Co. to conduct another investigation

into the fault before drawing a conclusion.

Kyodo Press, November 5, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121105a2.html>

Kepeco to report fault under Oi plant inactive

TSURUGA, Fukui Pref. – Kansai Electric Power Co. plans to tell the government that it has not found any data to prove that a fault running under the Oi nuclear power plant in Fukui Prefecture is active, company officials said Monday.

The interim report on the fault under the nation's sole active nuclear plant is expected to be submitted to the government on Wednesday. The Nuclear Regulation Authority plans to hold an on-site inspection Friday.

Since August, Kepeco has been conducting additional probes into the fault called F-6, which runs north-south between reactors 1 and 2 and units 3 and 4, via digging and boring surveys.

But it has not come up with strong enough results to change its view that F-6 is inactive, or any data showing it could move in tandem with other faults on the periphery, the officials said.

Kepeco plans to compile a final report on the issue by year's end.

Utilities are banned from building reactors and related facilities important to ensuring reactor safety above active faults, which are defined as those that have moved in the past 120,000 to 130,000 years under the current Japanese criteria.

An NRA member, however, has suggested broadening the definition of active faults to those that have moved in the past 400,000 years.

The NRA-led probe could affect the fate of units 3 and 4, which were allowed to be restarted last summer.

Kyodo Press, October 30, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121030a9.html>

Corruption

Officials drafting new regulations raked in millions — Nuke industry funded NRA's safety experts

Four of the six members on a government panel drafting new nuclear safety regulations each received between ¥3 million and over ¥27 million in payments, donations and grants from entities in the atomic energy industry in the last three to four years, the Nuclear Regulation Authority said.

But after disclosing the data Friday, the new nuclear watchdog's secretariat said all four members "were selected in line with regulations, and there should thus be no problem" over their appointment.

Critics, however, cited the risk of their judgment being swayed by power companies and other nuclear-related bodies, and of the possibility that new safety regulations could be watered down.

The NRA requires experts involved in drafting safety standards for nuclear plants and other matters to disclose their remuneration and other payments received, but it has no provision to disqualify them if previously withheld information comes to light.

Of the four members, Akira Yamaguchi, a professor at Osaka University's graduate school, and Akio Yamamoto, a Nagoya University professor, each received payments in excess of ¥500,000 annually from entities including Nuclear Engineering Ltd., an affiliate of Kansai Electric Power Co.

In addition, Yamamoto received more than ¥27 million in donations and research grants from Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd., which manufactures equipment for nuclear reactors, while Yamaguchi raked in a total of ¥10.1 million from Japan Atomic Power Co., a constructor and operator of atomic plants, and from other nuclear-related parties.

Meanwhile, University of Tsukuba professor Yutaka Abe was paid a combined ¥5 million by a variety of bodies, including a research laboratory affiliated with Tokyo Electric Power Co., and Tomoyuki Sugiyama, a researcher at the state-run Japan Atomic Energy Agency, was awarded roughly ¥3 million in total from Nuclear Fuel Industries Ltd.

The only two panel members who did not receive any funds from entities in the nuclear power industry are Norio Watanabe, a researcher at the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, and Meiji University associate professor Tadahiro Katsuta.

Kyodo Press, November 4, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121104a1.html>

Safety

Projections for severe accidents — Regulator to urge wider nuclear safety zones

Nuclear regulatory authorities on Wednesday released their first projections for the spread of radiation from nuclear reactors in the event of severe accidents like the meltdowns at the Fukushima No. 1 power plant last year, and the results show that bigger evacuation zones may be needed.

The amount of radiation released a week after a catastrophic accident at Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant in Niigata Prefecture could reach the level where evacuation is recommended for people living as far as 40 km away, the Nuclear Regulation Authority said.

The regulatory body conducted radiation simulations for 16 nuclear plants to provide references for regional governments to expand areas subject to special preparations for nuclear disasters from the

current distance of 10 km from facilities.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority plans to propose disaster-mitigation guidelines under which 30-km emergency zones would be set around nuclear facilities, but the new estimates may prompt local governments to designate bigger areas. The new guidelines are to be compiled this month based on lessons learned from the Fukushima disaster.

The NRA found that radiation levels could reach 100 millisieverts in Uonuma, Niigata Prefecture, about 40.2 km from the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant, based on the assumption that all seven of its reactors suffer meltdowns.

Radiation doses could also reach 100 millisieverts in locations a little more than 30 km from Chubu Electric Power Co.'s Hamaoka plant in Shizuoka Prefecture, Kansai Electric Power Co.'s Oi plant in Fukui Prefecture and Tepco's Fukushima No. 2 plant in Fukushima Prefecture. The only commercial reactors currently operating are two units at the Oi plant.

The simulations were based on calculations of precipitation and wind velocity in each area throughout a year.

The NRA, however, noted that the simulations should be used only as a "guide" to likely trends of dispersal of radioactive substances because they did not take into account geographical features around the plants or changes in wind direction.

NRA Commissioner Kunihiro Shimazaki said the results are "very important" in getting a basic idea of how far contamination can spread but acknowledged the need to create simulations that also reflect land features so local governments can compile their evacuation plans in line with real-life conditions.

The International Atomic Energy Agency calls for evacuations when effective doses exceed 100 millisieverts in the first seven days of an emergency.

The NRA plans to introduce the idea of a "precautionary action zone" and "urgent protective action planning zone" in line with IAEA standards.

People in the precautionary zone would be told to evacuate immediately after an accident. It is expected to cover a 5-km radius around nuclear plants. People in the other type of zone, which is expected to cover a 30-km radius, would be told to prepare to get out, depending on the situation.

Local governments are expected to define the actual scope of the zones by themselves, but officials have called for more details about the simulations.

Kyodo Press, October 25, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121025a1.html>

Errors found in projections for spread of radiation in severe accidents

TOKYO (Kyodo) — Japan's nuclear regulatory authority apologized Monday after finding errors in its recently announced projections for the spread of radiation from reactors nationwide in the event of severe accidents.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority corrected the projections to show that the city of Nagaoka, rather than Uonuma, both in Niigata Prefecture, would be the most distant point from Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant where the amount of radiation released a week after an accident could reach 100 millisieverts, the level where evacuation is recommended.

The authority initially said the amount of radiation could reach that level in locations around 40 kilometers from the plant, reaching Uonuma, about 40.2 km away from the plant.

The NRA also revised the projections for Japan Atomic Power Co.'s Tokai Daini plant in Ibaraki Prefecture and Tsuruga plant in Fukui Prefecture, Hokuriku Electric Power Co.'s Shika plant in Ishikawa Prefecture, Kyushu Electric Power Co.'s Genkai plant in Saga Prefecture and Sendai plant in Kagoshima Prefecture.

An official of the NRA secretariat said many of the mistakes had occurred during the conversion of weather data received from each utility for use in a computer program.

The NRA detected the mistakes after being notified by Hokuriku Electric, the official said.

The regulatory body announced radiation projections for 16 atomic plants on Wednesday to provide references for local governments to expand areas that should be subject to special preparations against nuclear disasters following the meltdowns at Tokyo Electric's Fukushima Daiichi complex last year.

The simulation showed the distances at which doses could reach 100 millisieverts a week after severe accidents at the plants like the one at the Fukushima Daiichi complex last year.

The International Atomic Energy Agency calls for evacuation when effective doses exceed 100 millisieverts in the first seven days of an emergency exposure situation.

Kyodo Press, October 30, 2012

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20121030p2g00m0dm012000c.html>

Accidents at 4 nuclear plants could pose high radiation risk over 30 km

TOKYO (Kyodo) — Radiation doses in areas located over 30 kilometers from four nuclear power plants in Japan, including those in Niigata and Fukui prefectures, could reach 100 millisieverts in the first seven days following a severe accident like the one at the Fukushima Daiichi complex last year, estimates by the Nuclear Regulation Authority showed Monday.

The NRA is currently crafting new guidelines on nuclear disaster mitigation measures in the wake of the Fukushima disaster and has proposed a radius of 30 km from a nuclear plant as a rough standard for areas where special preparations should be made.

The latest simulation results, however, could lead local governments to set areas requiring preparations beyond the 30-km zone.

The four nuclear power stations are Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant in Niigata Prefecture and Fukushima Daini plant in Fukushima Prefecture, Kansai Electric Power Co.'s Oi plant in Fukui Prefecture, and Chubu Electric Power Co.'s Hamaoka plant in Shizuoka Prefecture.

In the simulation, the NRA assumed two cases — one in which the amount of radioactive substances released by a plant is as high as in the Fukushima disaster and another in which severe accidents occur in all reactors at each plant — to identify areas in which exposure could reach 100 millisieverts in the first seven days.

The simulation, however, did not take into account geological formations in areas around the plants.

As for the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant, areas located within a 40-km radius of the plant would also register 100 millisieverts.

Of the four power stations, only two reactors at the Oi plant are currently in operation.

Kyodo Press, October 23, 2012

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20121023p2g00m0dm024000c.html>

Britain

Japan's Hitachi set to win bid to buy Britain's Horizon Nuclear Power in \50 billion deal

Hitachi Ltd. appears set to win a tender to buy British energy company Horizon Nuclear Power Ltd., which plans to build nuclear power plants in the U.K., sources said Saturday.

Hitachi and Horizon, a joint venture set up by two German power companies in Britain in 2009, are close to concluding a deal that could be worth in excess of \50 billion, the sources said.

The founders of Horizon, RWE AG and E.ON AG, are looking for a buyer after the German government's decision to phase out nuclear power. A group led by Westinghouse Electric Co., a unit of Toshiba Corp., is the rival bidder.

Hitachi is seeking to expand its nuclear power business overseas after the Fukushima disaster effectively wiped out demand for new atomic energy reactors in Japan.

Kyodo Press, October 28, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121028a4.html>
