



Fukushima Thread: March 14, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on March 14, 2011 - 11:09am

[High radiation levels risk to human health: Japanese government](#)

Japan faced the growing possibility of serious radiation leaks – maybe even a catastrophic meltdown –after two more explosions rocked a nuclear power plant and workers were forced to abandon the most dangerous reactor, which suffered damage to its containment structure.

A spokesman said radiation was high enough in nearby areas to damage people's health.

...“It’s like a horror movie,” said 49-year-old Kyoko Nambu told the Associated Press as she stood on a hillside overlooking her ruined hometown of Soma, 40 kilometres from the plant. “Our house is gone and now they are telling us to stay indoors.”

[Third explosion rocks Japanese nuclear power plant](#)

Japan's nuclear crisis reached new heights as a third explosion rocked the crippled Fukushima power plant and officials acknowledged that the radioactive fuel inside one of the damaged reactors was in jeopardy of melting down.

[KEY POINTS-Japanese govt's comments on nuclear crisis](#)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/03/15/japan-quake-pm-highlights-idUSL3E7EF08P20110315>

[Emergency Cooling Effort at Reactor Is Failing, Deepening Japanese Crisis](#)

Industry executives in touch with their counterparts in Japan Monday night grew increasingly alarmed about the risks posed by the No. 2 reactor.

“They’re basically in a full-scale panic” among Japanese power industry managers, said a senior nuclear industry executive. The executive is not involved in managing the response to the reactors’ difficulties but has many contacts in Japan. “They’re in total disarray, they don’t know what to do.”

[Crisis continues at Fukushima nuclear plant as fuel rods exposed again](#)

A crisis continued Tuesday at the troubled No. 2 reactor at the quake-hit Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, as fuel rods became fully exposed again after workers recovered water levels to cover half of them in a bid to prevent overheating.

The plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., said a steam vent of the pressure container of the reactor that houses the rods was closed for some reason, raising fears that its core will melt at a faster pace. It said it will try to open the vent to resume the operation to inject seawater to cool down the reactor.

[U.S. nuclear experts arrive in Japan](#)

MINAMISANRIKU, Japan (UPI) -- The United States dispatched two technical experts to help Japan address the crisis at its quake-damaged nuclear plants, White House officials said Monday.

[Risk of meltdown increases at Japan nuclear reactor](#)

The fuel rods at a third nuclear reactor at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant have been fully exposed to air, allowing them to heat up and raising the risk of a meltdown, according to officials of the Tokyo Electric Power Co., which owns the plant.

Engineers had begun pumping seawater into the reactor at the facility, the third reactor to receive the last-ditch treatment, after the plant's emergency cooling system had failed and the fuel rods had been partially exposed to the air. But apparently something went wrong and the injection of water failed.

Workers were scrambling to re-immerses the fuel assembly before more damage is done to the reactor core.

[Tokyo Electric sees rise in radiation at Fukushima Daini plant](#)

(Reuters) - Tokyo Electric Power Co Inc said on Monday it had detected a rise in radiation levels at its Fukushima Daini nuclear power plant.

[Radiation health risk in Japan called low](#)

Multiple worries grip Japanese survivors of Friday's earthquake and tsunami, one of the most frightening of which is the possibility of health risks from the nation's damaged nuclear reactors.

[Japan distributes iodine to evacuation centres--IAEA](#)

(Reuters) - Japan has provided 230,000 units of stable iodine to evacuation centres as a precautionary measure in the country's nuclear emergency, the U.N. atomic watchdog said on Monday.

[Japan's nuclear crisis turns spotlight on U.S. plants](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- The safety of America's nuclear reactors is being questioned as Japanese engineers scramble to avert a total meltdown at two of that country's quake-stricken power plants.

Like in Japan, some of the 104 nuclear reactors in the United States are situated along the ocean -- some in earthquake-prone areas.

[Kibosh on nuclear renaissance? Not so fast](#)

The earthquake and tsunami in Japan have made the world rapt, punctuated by a new explosion at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station this morning, and fear of nuclear contamination should the Japanese fail to contain the radioactivity. The probable outcome, given how the world reacted to the 1979 Three Mile Island and 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accidents, is that the much-ballyhooed global "nuclear renaissance" will be much-slowed or perhaps even still-born. That's the thrust of a piece at Bloomberg. The *Financial Times's* Sylvia Pfeifer reports that the accidents have "cast a shadow over proposals for new nuclear reactors around the world." U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman has suggested good hard new scrutiny of the industry's plans.

Yet the tenor of conversations I've had with industry experts and investment bankers - the latter who raise money to pay for the reactors - isn't panic. They suggest that -- while the public and regulators will demand far stricter inspection of the safety plans for new nuclear reactors, and financiers will demand higher fees in line with the greater perceived risk -- the renaissance will go ahead.

[No laws needed for German nuclear deal suspension](#)

(Reuters) - Germany's decision to suspend an agreement prolonging the life of its nuclear power stations will require talks with service providers but no changes to laws, Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday.

[Japan Nuclear Meltdown Forces China Review as India Sees Safety Backlash](#)

Japan's worst nuclear accident in at least 33 years has compelled China and India to review plans for atomic energy that were set to provide a boon for suppliers including Areva SA and General Electric Co.

[Local govt in Japan calls for caution over new nuclear plant](#)

(Reuters) - The governor of Japan's Yamaguchi prefecture has asked a power company planning to build a nuclear plant there to ensure its safety, voicing caution in the wake of the nuclear accident caused by Friday's massive earthquake.

[Water level near empty at Japan nuclear reactor - owner](#)

(Reuters) - Water levels inside a quake-stricken Japanese nuclear reactor were almost empty on Monday night, said the power plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co .

Earlier, news agency Jiji said a meltdown of fuel rods inside the Fukushima Daiichi complex's No.2 reactor could not be ruled out.

[Blast destroys nuclear power station roof in Japan](#)

TOKYO — An explosion Monday afternoon ripped through Unit 3 of the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Station in northeastern Japan and destroyed the roof of a reactor building. The Japanese government quickly imposed a 12 mile quarantine and required residents to immediately evacuate, but said those beyond were not at risk.

[3 injured, 7 missing in blast at Japan nuke plant](#)

Tokyo Electric Power Co. says three workers have been injured and seven are missing after an explosion at the stricken Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant.

[Tepco Battles Cooling Failures in 3 Reactors Hit by Quake](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Tokyo Electric Power Co. engineers tried to stabilize three nuclear reactors damaged by the biggest earthquake in Japan's history, as a second explosion disrupted efforts to cool fuel rods and prevent a meltdown.

[Nuclear Emergency Is Worst in Decades](#)

The earthquake and tsunami that battered northern Japan on Friday set in motion one of the worst nuclear accidents in over two decades.

The International Atomic Energy Agency rates the severity of radiological events, with a scale starting at one, an "anomaly," and rising to seven, a "major" accident. Six and seven designate full meltdown, where the nuclear fuel or core of a reactor overheats and melts. The scale of the ensuing uncontrolled release of radiation that follows differentiates the two. Partial meltdowns, in which the fuel is damaged, are rated a four or a five.

[Danger Posed by Radioactivity in Japan Hard to Assess](#)

The different radioactive materials being reported at the nuclear accidents in Japan range from relatively benign to extremely worrisome.

The central problem in assessing the degree of danger is that the amounts of various radioactive releases into the environment are now unknown, as are the winds and other atmospheric factors that determine how radioactivity will disperse around the stricken plants.

[U.S. Nuclear Industry Faces New Uncertainty](#)

WASHINGTON — The fragile bipartisan consensus that nuclear power offers a big piece of the answer to America's energy and global warming challenges may have evaporated as quickly as confidence in Japan's crippled nuclear reactors.

[Japan Disaster Ends Hopes on U.S. Energy Deal](#)

Every path to political compromise on a U.S. energy policy runs through nuclear power. And no matter how serious the problems at the quake-ravaged Fukushima Dai-ichi reactors in Japan turn out to be, the situation there has likely snuffed any hopes of a deal on energy until at least 2013.

[Crisis Underscores Fears About Safety of Nuclear Energy](#)

The official announcement that two reactors at an earthquake-damaged nuclear plant could be suffering meltdowns underscores the Japanese nuclear industry's troubled history, and years of grass-roots objections from a people uniquely sensitive to the ravages of nuclear destruction.

[Tests detect radioactivity on 17 U.S. Navy crew members in Japan](#)

(CNN) -- Tests detected low levels of radioactivity on 17 U.S. Navy helicopter crew members when they returned to the USS Ronald Reagan after conducting disaster relief missions in Japan, the military said Monday.

No further contamination was detected after the crew members washed with soap and water, the Navy said.

In addition, the Navy said the U.S. 7th Fleet has temporarily repositioned its ships and planes away from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant after detecting low-level contamination in the air and on its planes in the area, the Navy said.

[Nuclear power remains key to China's carbon targets](#)

Beijing - Rapid expansion of nuclear power remains a key element in China's five-year plan to reduce carbon emissions and promote more sustainable development, experts said on Monday, despite fears generated by Japan's struggle to control nuclear plants damaged by last week's devastating earthquake.

[Swiss suspend nuclear plant replacements approvals](#)

(Reuters) - Swiss Energy Minister Doris Leuthard has suspended the approvals process for three nuclear power stations so safety standards can be revisited after the crisis in Japan.

[Older nuclear reactors: cooling is core of the problem](#)

The risk of a meltdown at a damaged Japanese nuclear plant has raised questions about how quickly older nuclear reactors should be phased out.

[The End of Nuclear and its Timing](#)

Three days before the Fukushima nuclear power explosion, I made this comment on a peace activist's Facebook page: "I believe a successful, final anti-nuke campaign will only take place in one of two ways: (1) collapse puts the entire infrastructure of industry and consumption out of business, forcing the survivors to minimally babysit the nukes forever, or, there's an accident or deliberate blast or meltdown that motivates people all over the world to shut down the mechanical beast once and for all."

I didn't think it would come so soon. But that has been the pattern for our planet in peril in recent years: acceleration of disasters, climate destabilization, peak oil, strife such as wars and revolutions, extremes of elitist wealth and overwhelming poverty, fresh water depletion -- all prelude to complete collapse. However, to use the equivalent of jiu-jitsu or aikido to rapidly channel the onslaught of negative energy toward something positive is our duty and opportunity. It takes not only a mass awakening to the insane futility of nuclear power, but a realization that the present system; a.k.a. Western Civilization, is hitting bottom. As glorifying as our civilization is in some respects, the extinction of species and the sprawling, cancerous waste known as development (for profit of the few) are impossible to ignore and excuse.

[Japan Atomic Power expects quake-hit plant cooled by Tues](#)

(Reuters) - The quake-hit Tokai Daini nuclear plant, located on the northeast coast of Japan and north of Tokyo, is expected to be safely cooled down by Tuesday morning, a spokesman for the operator, Japan Atomic Power Co, said on Monday.

[EDF Leads Nuclear Utility Slump After Japan Earthquake; Solar, Gas Advance](#)

Electricite de France SA and E.ON AG (EOAN) led declines among nuclear utilities on concern that explosions at two Japanese reactors may spur governments to backtrack on plans to expand atomic energy. Renewable power and natural-gas stocks rose on prospects for increased demand.

[Quake Moves Japan Closer to U.S. and Alters Earth's Spin](#)

The magnitude-8.9 earthquake that struck northern Japan on Friday not only violently shook the ground and generated a devastating tsunami, it also moved the coastline and changed the balance of the planet.

Global positioning stations closest to the epicenter jumped eastward by up to 13 feet.

Japan is "wider than it was before," said Ross Stein, a geophysicist at the United States Geological Survey.

[Japan 'Big One' May Raise Quake Risk for Years, Scientists Say](#)

"The model predicts that while a few large earthquakes will occur soon after the last one, most will occur at much longer times, typically years, after the last one," she said.

Japan, the world's third-largest economy, lies on the so-called Ring of Fire, an arc of volcanoes and fault lines surrounding the Pacific Basin including Sumatra, site of the Indonesian quake.

"Before 2004, most geophysicists taught that only limited parts of the Ring of Fire could be capable of generating really giant earthquakes," Antonio Piersanti, head researcher of the Rome-based Italian Institute of Geology and Vulcanology, said in an e-mailed statement. "After the Sumatra event and especially after this last event maybe we should seriously consider the possibility that any part of the Ring of Fire could generate a 9-plus earthquake," Piersanti said.



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