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08:57 6 October

ANALYSIS: Utilities hold on to nuclear reactor plans despite minister's remark

TOKYO, Oct. 6, Kyodo

Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Yukio Edano has made it clear the government will not allow construction of the Kaminoseki Nuclear Power Station planned by Chubu Electric Power Co., underscoring its policy of prohibiting new nuclear power reactors, except those already being built.

But with the policy lacking any legal basis to stop construction, the power company does not appear to be giving up on its preparations. With a general election looming, the utility also appears to be hoping for the formation of a pro-nuclear government that could overturn the no-reactor policy.

After a Cabinet meeting Friday, Edano told reporters, "If any action is taken by Chubu Electric, I will consider a response that will account for it," a remark widely taken to mean he is determined to check any moves for pushing ahead with the construction of the Kaminoseki plant in Yamaguchi Prefecture.

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