

2012 September 26 – October 2 TOP3 [NUCLEAR CRISIS]

## Akahata protests NRA regarding coverage limitation

September 27, 2012

Akahata on September 26 lodged a strong protest with the Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) about the authority's policy to shut out some newspapers from news gathering activities.

The NRA announced a policy the previous day to exclude party organs such as Akahata from weekly press conferences held by the authority under the pretext that they have "specific ideas and principles".

The protest document submitted by Akahata points out that the NRA stated: it will positively provide information to the news media; and the media includes organizations and individuals engaged in the press business. The document states that it is unfair to leave Akahata out of the news conferences.

Akahata also criticized the authority for denying coverage to some freelance journalists because of their "specific ideas and principles". The protest statement stresses that it is absolutely unforgivable for public servants, who have an obligation to observe the Japanese Constitution, to proclaim an endorsement of "news censorship" that is strictly prohibited by the Constitution.

Asked about the limitation on coverage after the authority's second meeting on September 26, NRA Chair Tanaka Shun'ichi said, "If we allow reporters of party organs to attend our news conference, we cannot ensure our body's independence from politics."

Some reporters criticized the NRA's policy change as taking a step backwards from other administrative authorities' positions.

Many messages were posted on Twitter such as: "Will the NRA deprive the public of the freedom of speech to protect those who profit from nuclear power generation?" and "The regulatory body intends to 'regulate' not nuclear power but the anti-nuclear movements."