

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Angry public demands more info

FUKUSHIMA (Kyodo) People in Fukushima Prefecture expressed concern and rage Wednesday as radioactivity readings remained high around the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant and kept them on high alert.

"Is the government and Tokyo Electric Power Co. giving us the whole story?" asked Atsushi Chiba, a 40-year-old owner of a barbershop in Iwaki, 50 km from ground zero.

A new fire was observed Wednesday at the No. 4 reactor and white smoke was visible coming out of the No. 3 reactor later in the day. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano said the vapor "is likely to be radioactive and leaking from the containment vessel."

Angered by the television news footage, Chiba said he had given up leaving his shop "because there isn't enough gas in the car."

"All the children have disappeared from the streets in fear of the radioactivity," he added.

A 75-year-old in Tamura, about 75 km from the plant, echoed Chiba's concern. The No. 4 reactor appears to be "wiped out," said the man, who asked to remain anonymous. "The prime minister's office and Tepco keep giving us statistics, but it's dubious how accurate they are, considering that no one is probably able to get in there."

Approximately 50 residents from Naraha taking refuge at a junior high school in Iwaki also expressed anxiety about the evacuation orders, questioning when they will be able to return home and wondering how farm products will be affected by radioactive rain.

"Explanations by the government and Tepco are very vague. They only raise the anxiety among us evacuees," said Takeshi Seya, a 30-year-old working in Naraha.

Takano Hospital in Hirono, which is mostly within the designated 20-km radius for evacuation, had more than 100 stranded patients. Most are elderly and some are bedridden, according to the hospital.

"Because of the blackout, we are not able to use our phones, and the cold temperature is taking a toll on them. We are making requests to the local government to seek a different shelter (for the patients), but that isn't going easy," a Hirono city official said.

Related links

[Keidanren urges 'command center'](#)

[Containment vessel failure unlikely: Edano](#)

By KANAKO TAKAHARA and KAZUAKI NAGATA

[EVA Airways cancels March flights](#)

[Identification of dead taxing as toll soars](#)

[Thousands swamp immigration](#)

By MIZUHO AOKI

[SDF chopper can't drop water](#)

Recommendations



[Quakes added to eruption risk on Mount Fuji | The Japan Times Online](#)

4 people recommended this.



[Soccer star Honda hits Japanese lack of patriotism | The Japan Times Online](#)

One person recommended this.



[Eliminating all nuke power cheapest option: Softbank's Son | The Japan Times Online](#)

3 people recommended this.



[College student held for forcing schoolgirl into bag | The Japan Times Online](#)

One person recommended this.



[It's never too late for more ice cream | The Japan Times Online](#)

One person recommended this.

By ALEX MARTIN

Capital has no iodine prep plans

By TAKAHIRO FUKADA

Embassies list 400 foreigners as missing

By MASAMI ITO, JUN HONGO and NATSUKO FUKUE

Foreign medics get OK to come

By MASAMI ITO

Seoul to send boron in bid to cool reactors

Shizuoka 6.4 temblor unwelcome harbinger?

Rice stockpile stands ready: Kano

Emperor issues video message over tragedy

Kansai officials brace for sudden deluge of refugees

By ERIC JOHNSTON

Blood donations up nationwide

By NATSUKO FUKUE

Quake manual now in 31 languages

Ueno Zoo panda coming-out delayed

International 'anime' fair canceled

Nikkei turmoil threatens economy

Demand for imported grain not to decline: U.N.

Lithium-ion battery, substrate markets said among hardest hit

Taiwan may delay start of new atomic plant

Stock buybacks by reinsurers could be halted: Deutsche Bank

PRINT

E-MAIL

Tweet 0

Like 0

We welcome your opinions. Click to send a message to the editor.

The Japan Times
(C) All rights reserved

Article 5 of 17 in National news
◀ Previous Next ▶

Poll Most read stories Editors' picks

A piece of your mind Scared or prepared?

The government [upped its casualty estimate for a killer quake-tsunami combo](#) by more than a factor of 10. What's your take?

- Forewarned is forearmed. This information will save lives.**
- All this does is scare people. It's not helpful.**
- It's inspired me to think more seriously about possible evacuation routes.**
- Numbers like these aren't much more than a guess.**

VOTE

Total Votes : 1780

[View past polls](#)

[Back to top](#) ▲