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Sunday, Sep. 23, 2012

Kamihatori district exposed to 1,590 microsieverts per hour before first explosion at nuke plant **Futaba worst hit by Fukushima fallout**

Kyodo

FUKUSHIMA — The area most intensely irradiated by the meltdowns at the Fukushima No. 1 power plant was the Kamihatori district in the town of Futaba, about 5.6 km northwest of the facility, data collected by the prefecture show.

Just before a hydrogen explosion ripped apart the No. 1 reactor building, the plant's cohort was being zapped by 1,590 microsieverts of radiation per hour at 3 p.m. March 12, 2011, the day after the Great East Japan Earthquake and ensuing tsunami crippled the complex, data retrieved from monitoring posts showed Friday.

At present, the government's limit for the public is set at 1,000 microsieverts for an entire year.

When the natural disasters struck the Tohoku region on the afternoon of March 11, they triggered a blackout at the Tokyo Electric Power Co. plant that led to three core meltdowns. A hydrogen explosion blew up the building housing the No. 1 reactor at 3:36 p.m. the following day.

Given that the record dose was detected before the explosion, "radioactive materials must have been leaking even before the blast, and wind direction may have played a role," an official said.

The first explosion occurred after steps had been taken to vent steam from the No. 1 reactor on the morning of March 12 to reduce rapidly building pressure.

The prefecture has been retrieving data from its 25 monitoring stations near the plant after some were hampered by communications disruptions or power outages caused by the quake and tsunami.

New debris reaches Hawaii

AP

HONOLULU — A large plastic bin is the first confirmed piece of marine debris from the March 2011 tsunami to arrive in Hawaii, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported.

Japanese consular officials confirmed that the blue bin found floating in the ocean last week is from Fukushima Prefecture, Ben Sherman, a NOAA spokesman in Washington, said Friday, noting it is the 12th confirmed piece of debris to arrive in U.S. or Canadian waters.

The bin was spotted off Waimanalo on the southeast coast of Oahu by Makai Ocean Engineering staff, and was retrieved by the Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory. Used for transporting seafood, the 1.2-meter cube bears the name Y.K. Suisan Co. Ltd., Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources said.

Crabs and barnacles were found on the bin, along with five local seabirds. There were no foreign plant or animal species in or on the bin, but it has been put in quarantine anyway, state officials said.

Nikolai Maximenko, a University of Hawaii researcher and ocean currents expert who is studying the trajectory of tsunami debris, said the bin's arrival is



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- The teen should have stayed away from drugs. Period.**
- They should focus on locking up the dealers, not the buyers.**
- Indonesia is known for strict drug laws. He's lucky the punishment isn't more severe.**
- The penalty is too harsh for someone so young.**
- This seems excessive for pot possession.**

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Expert who is studying the trajectory of tsunami debris, said the debris arrivals consistent with his forecasts regarding the arrival of the first pieces in the state's waters.

"It came at the right time, according to our model," he said. "But in some sense, it could just be a coincidence."

One million to 2 million tons of debris remain in the ocean, but only 1 to 5 percent could reach U.S. and Canadian shorelines, Maximenko has estimated.

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