
NRA to warn Tsuruga plant fault may be active

An expert panel of Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority plans to issue a warning that a fault running under a nuclear power plant on the Sea of Japan coast could be active.

The panel will include its finding in a draft report to be presented at its meeting on Monday.

NRA official Kunihiko Shimazaki and other experts are examining fissures beneath 3 nuclear plants, including the country's lone operating plant in Ohi Town, Fukui Prefecture.

The draft report will say an analysis of nearby strata suggests that a fault under the Tsuruga plant in Fukui might have moved sometime after 120,000 to 130,000 years ago.

This means the fault that's been newly found in the government study meets one of the conditions to be declared as active.

The report will add the direction and other factors of the fault to indicate that it could be an extension of another fault running directly under the No.2 reactor. Based on the assessments, the report concludes the fault might be active.

The expert panel will submit a report to the NRA after hearing opinions from the operator of the Tsuruga plant, the Japan Atomic Power Company, in its next meeting.

Government guidelines prohibit building key nuclear facilities directly above active faults. If the regulators decide that they will ban restarting the No.2 reactor, it would be the country's first restriction of nuclear plant operation since the NRA's launch last September.

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