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CNIC Citizens' Nuclear Information Center

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# NIT Enters Second Decade

## A Step Further Toward Nuclear Free World

CNIC Staff: Clockwise from top left - Mitsuko Yanakita, Baku Nishio, Masako Sawai, Mika Ohbayashi, Hideyuki Ban, Satoshi Fujino, Akiko Fukami, Jinzaburo Takagi, Mikiko Watanabe, Chihiro Kamisawa

IN THIS ISSUE



This issue of Nuke Info Tokyo (No.61) marks the start of the second decade of our newsletter, which started in October 1987. We are pleased that we have been able to continue issuing NIT for 10 years despite persistent difficulties in securing financial support and working staff.

Attending the Anti-Atom International Conference organized by Austrian anti-nuke groups in Vienna in September 1986 to counter the IAEA Assembly on Chernobyl, I shared with participants from around the world the feeling that the world was just entering the

age of "the beginning of the end", i.e. the beginning of the age of the nuclear phase out ("Ausstieg" in German). At that time, I strongly felt the necessity for a strengthening of international cooperation between anti-nuke movements, and for exchange of expertise for the phase out. I also discovered and was shocked by the fact that very little was known about Japan's nuclear industry and even less about its anti-nuke movements.

After returning from Vienna, I therefore started preparing for the publication of CNIC's English newsletter. It took more than half a year for the first issue of the newsletter, titled Nuke Info Tokyo, to be published. I clearly remember the discussions we had in the publishing committee during this preparatory period in which not only CNIC staff members but also activists from other citizens' groups were involved. Everybody was aware of the importance of transmitting information and messages from Japan to overseas, but no one was sure how it could be made financially viable and maintainable in terms of the labor force.

At the last stage of the discussions, an activist said, "Let us try just 5 or 6 issues and then think again whether to continue." This was how Nuke Info Tokyo actually started. Yet, I wrote in the Foreword to the very first issue: "We are determined, however, to continue Nuke Info Tokyo for the foreseeable future."

I was not certain what "foreseeable future" meant, but I was thinking, "at least several years." The greatest reason NIT has managed to survive and enter its second decade is obviously the continuing encouragement and support of international readers. We now send about 500 copies to people of about 48 countries and regions. Readers include activists, researchers and journalists as well as government officials and legislators.

During the past decade, our topics and emphases have evolved naturally. In the first few years, we dedicated ourselves to reporting the Japanese situation in general regarding nuclear power developments and anti-nuke movements from an objective viewpoint. We then focused on Japan's plutonium programs, as CNIC became deeply involved in the campaigns against it.

Looking back on those years, I believe NIT played an important role in the international campaign against the civil use and transport of plutonium. But we are also aware that NIT's key role should be to provide accurate reporting of nuclear issues and citizens' movements, and that a proper balance in the coverage of varying issues is required.

Now our concern is, among others, Asian nuclear power programs, as indicated in the last two issues of NIT. This is largely because the world nuclear industry is working hard to capture the last untapped market in Asian countries, and also because there is a lack of international newsletters covering this region from the citizens' perspective. Perhaps this will be the most important issue NIT should address in its second decade, provided that it can survive for another decade.

We would like to ask all readers to give us advice and suggestions that will help us make this small newsletter more useful for those who are working hard toward a nuclear free world.

(by Jinzaburo Takagi)

## Nuke Info Tokyo: A Beacon In The Nuclear Darkness

by Paul Leventhal, President, Nuclear Control Institute (NCI)

As Nuke Info Tokyo observes its tenth anniversary, it can take great pride in the role it has played as a highly authoritative source of information for activists throughout the world on Japan's nuclear program and on the growth of the Japanese movement in opposition to this program.

Since 1984, I have been privileged to collaborate with Dr. Jinzaburo Takagi and his colleagues at the Citizens Nuclear Information Center. When he started up the English-language Nuke Info Tokyo three years later, it became immediately apparent that this would become an invaluable tool for organizing international collaborations among arms-control, safe-energy and environmental organizations in opposing Japanese plans to introduce separated plutonium, an atom bomb material, as fuel in nuclear power reactors. He wisely understood that international as well as domestic pressure would be needed if this exceedingly dangerous program was to be stopped.

Now the Japanese plutonium program is in deep trouble. These troubles can be attributed in large measure to the "watchdog role" of CNIC and the accurate reporting in Nuke Info Tokyo of CNIC's disclosures of the many safety and security problems and deceptions by the government and industry associated with the plutonium program over the years.

The fruits of the CNIC-NCI collaboration - documenting the false plutonium supply-and-demand data used by the Japanese plutonium industry to justify plutonium imports from Europe, the safety defects in the packaging and transport of plutonium by air and sea, the defective canisters used for international transport and domestic storage of vitrified reprocessing wastes, the large imbalances in plutonium accounting at the Tokai MOX fuel plant, and the ludicrous inaccuracies in PNC's "Pluto Boy" video - all have been faithfully reported in Nuke Info Tokyo to good effect.

If the Japanese plutonium industry is eventually shut down - and I believe it will be - much of the credit should go to CNIC and Nuke Info Tokyo. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, rarely have so few done so much to halt such a great danger. Congratulations on a job superbly done!

## CNIC - Japan's Best Source of Nuclear Information

by Tom Clements Greenpeace International Nuclear Campaign

With consistency, one of the files which I turn to most often in my international work is labeled "CNIC." With a turn of my chair, I can quickly pull out the collection of Nuke Info Tokyo newsletters from the Citizen' Nuclear Information Center. Reaching for that file is the highest praise that I can give to CNIC and its work - the information is timely and useful, and there is no doubt that it has had a positive impact in the debate over nuclear and plutonium issues in both Japan and throughout the world. Happy 10th anniversary!

I first became associated with CNIC at the International Conference on Plutonium in Omiya, Japan, in November 1991, held in anticipation of the controversial plutonium shipment of 1.5 tonnes from France to Japan. With CNIC providing important technical and political information and organizing international protest over the shipment literally changed the way the world looked at plutonium. A new skepticism over uneconomic nuclear policies built around weapon-usable plutonium emerged and the industry has been hiding behind weaker and weaker justification ever since.

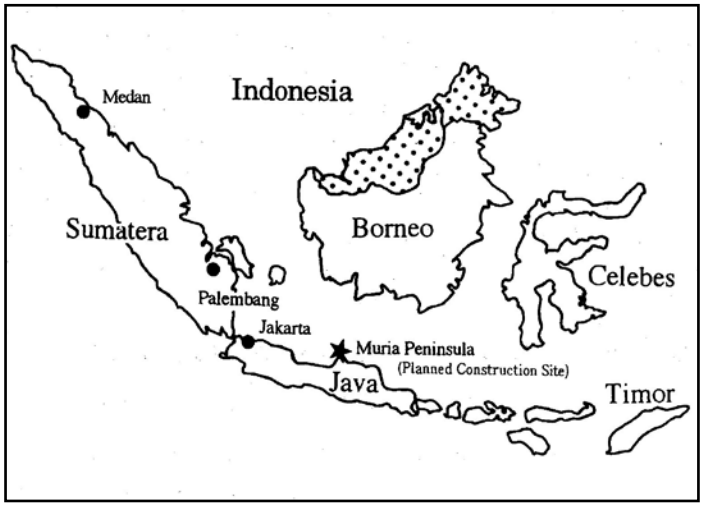
From articles on the accident at Monju, to government White Papers on nuclear energy, to nuclear shipments and the rash of problems at Tokai, CNIC has been the main source of reliable and accurate technical information on Japan's nuclear program. In particular, graphs and charts on the projected plutonium supply and demand have debunked misleading and inaccurate information supplied by STA and PNC, arming critics with strong arguments as to why Japan's plutonium program is to be questioned. Researchers, activists,and journalists alike have shared with me the same appreciation of CNIC's information.

Beyond providing information on Japan, Nuke Info Tokyo is a good source of information on other countries in the east Asia region. As the region's economy grows and reliance on nuclear energy expands, reports on the nuclear situation in China, Korea and Taiwan are of increasing importance. Clear maps of location of nuclear plants in the region have proven helpful in my responses to inquiries - and they are only an arm's length away.

I certainly speak for my entire organization when I extend a thanks to Dr. Takagi and the staff of CNIC for the informative publication that now celebrates its 10th anniversary. Along with our thanks we also express the desire that CNIC and Nuke Info Tokyo celebrate many more such anniversaries. I'm already looking forward to the valuable information contained in the next issue!

# Nuclear Power Developments in Asia

## Indonesia - Japan plays major role




At the end of the 1970s, Indonesia began introducing feasibility studies (FS) on the construction of nuclear power plants. In 1989, the Muria Peninsula in Northern Java was chosen as a possible site, and the decision was taken to conduct the FS and the actual on-site research. New Japan Engineering Consultant Inc. (NEWJEC), a subsidiary of Japan's Kansai Electric Power Co., obtained the contract for the research which actually started in 1991. About half of the 1.5 billion yen research cost was financed by the Japan Exim Bank.

In June 1996, NEWJEC submitted their report on the final FS. A debate on the nuclear power bill began in the Indonesian Parliament a few months later. The bill was initially expected to be approved in December, but because the debate was stalled by strong resistance from the opposition, it was forced through in February, in the absence of opposition party representatives.

However, right after the bill was passed, the hard line of the government changed drastically, and Minister for Research and Technology B.J. Habibie commented that "a nuclear power plant will not be constructed in the near future." Following this comment, Russia announced in July that it will sign a nuclear agreement with Indonesia sometime during 1997, and has already signed a contract with the Indonesian government to construct two 100 MW-300 MW small-size reactors in the future. However, Habibie reiterated his comment saying, "construction of nuclear power plants will be postponed until after 2020."

Indonesia is a country well known for its abundance of energy resources. Some believe that the main reason why Habibie made these comments concerning postponement of the nuclear power construction in February and again recently is the discovery of a vast natural gas field in the country, sparing them from the need to rush into the construction of the nuclear power plant, originally scheduled to begin operation in 2003.

Still, it seems that the real reason for the postponement is the enormous cost of building the nuclear plant. The fact that it is trying to develop nuclear power by the "build, operate and own" system (BOO), in which foreign companies take charge in operating the utility business, is discouraging local companies from getting involved.

In a series of comments made by Habibie, the government has continued to use the word "postponement," but has never said that it will "cancel the construction." The government's strategy of changing its position day after day, is a method of protecting itself whenever public criticism of its pro-nuclear program becomes too vociferous.

As nuclear development is becoming a long-term issue, people working in anti-nuclear movements in Indonesia formed the National Network Forum for Indonesian Anti-nuclear Communities on 5 August to launch a nation-wide anti-nukes movement.

(by Mika Ohbayashi)

# Yet Another PNC Flop

## Massive Leak of Radioactive Substance Found at Tokai

Corroded drum containers inside Tokai waste storage pit

On August 26, it was revealed that radioactive substance had been leaking from the outdoor low level radioactive waste storage pit at the Tokai Reprocessing Facility in Ibaraki Prefecture operated by Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corp. (PNC)

Inside the pit were 2,000 200-liter steel drums containing low level waste generated from the dismantling of Tokai Uranium Refinement Plant more than 30 years ago, which had been stored there since 1967. The storage facility consists of five pits made of reinforced concrete, each measuring 3 to 4 meters in depth, with concrete lids. The steel drums were found standing in a pool of rain water 1.3 to 2.5 meters deep, causing them to corrode and leak radioactive material which has contaminated the surrounding grounds for a considerable period of time. Since PNC had not fitted the facility with a water outlet, the water was being pumped out whenever the pits became flooded.

Although PNC was aware of its sloppy waste management, it had done nothing to improve the situation, and had been hiding the facts from the public. There were absolutely no reports made to the Ibaraki Prefectural Government on the situation. When the government was finally informed recently, it immediately sent out its officers to the location to conduct an investigation. According to the officer in charge, the drum containers had holes as big as 20 cm in diameter, through which the contents could be seen.

Due to contamination by radioactive substances, including uranium, the radioactivity of the water inside the pits measured up to and over 10,000 times the standard level (.001Bq/cm3 for alpha rays) permitted for discharge outside the facility. Up to 470 Bq. of Uranium-238 was detected three meters underground near the facility.

In 1982, the government's Science and Technology Agency (STA), the supervisory body for PNC, sent an instruction to PNC Tokai to drain the water out, but had never conducted an inspection. Soon after the leakage came to light, it was also discovered that PNC had been using part of the budget earmarked for rebuilding the nuclear waste storage facility on its plutonium project. The money was used to recover 70 kg of "held up" plutonium from pipes at the plutonium fuel production facility in Tokai.

(by Masako Sawai)

# CGEMA's Final Report on Monju Accident

## - Proposals to Set Up Better System for Public Participation

The CNIC-organized Committee for a General Evaluation of the Monju Accident (CGEMA), released its final report on July 22. The report consisted of three parts: the cause of the accident and related problems evaluated from a technological aspect; problems in the legal and administrative systems and lessons to be drawn from these; and problems concerning Japan's plutonium policy.

Although the final report on the accident issued by the Science and Technology Agency (STA), released in February and later approved and officially issued by the Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) in August, is limited to the cause of the accident, CGEMA's report refers to the background of the accident and offers proposals to the government.

### Criticism on Legal and Administrative Systems

The report predicts that due to the Monju accident, Japan will have difficulties in maintain its nuclear fuel cycle policy. Although the accident has raised public awareness in knowing the truth about the accident and getting accurate information on the government's nuclear policy, the government remains slow in reforming the system.

Even after the accident, STA's committee for the investigation of Monju accident never became open to the public. The only thing that did change was the record of the proceedings of Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) were made open. Considering the fact that members of AEC, which promotes nuclear development, are often the same people who sit on the NSC, and these members are appointed by STA, the government still need to make a big change in its attitude..

The nuclear industry also remains slow in offering information to the public for reasons such as protection of nuclear substance and commercial secrets. The companies are left to decide for themselves which information is considered commercial secrets, therefore it is easy for them to label almost all information "confidential."

Although most countries are withdrawing from the development of fast breeder reactor (FBR), Japan still remains reluctant to reconsider its policy. This is largely due to Japan's political system which is controlled by bureaucrats. However, Japan's FBR development project is currently being suspended, and it is most unlikely that Japan alone will find the technological solutions that will allow the resumption of its FBR project.

### Proposals to the Government

In regard to these problems, the final report calls for the establishment of a legal system that will ensure the public freedom of information and allow them to review the government's nuclear policy. Furthermore, it asks for a separation between the administration responsible for nuclear development and that which is responsible for safety and control. The final proposal it makes is for the government to conduct an overall review of its plutonium program and to freeze all related projects until that work is completed.

CGEMA's final report will shortly be published as a book.

(by Hideyuki Ban)

# Agenda of the Citizens' International Conference for Sustainable and Peaceful Energy Future

Citizens' Nuclear Information Center & Friends of the Earth Japan

DATE&TIME: 2 DECEMBER 1997 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM
PLACE: Kyoto International Community Center, Kyoto, Japan

10:00 - 12:00 PLENARY SESSION I

Keynote Speech:
"Change for a Sustainable and Peaceful Energy Policy"
Dr. Edda Mueller, Director, Climate Policy Division
Wuppertal Institute (to be confirmed)
Special Presentation I:
"Nuclear Phase Out and Citizens' Role"
Dr. Jinzaburo Takagi, Executive Director,
Citizens' Nuclear Information Center
Special Presentation II:
"Energy Policies in Europe"
Dr. Patric Green, Friends of the Earth International

13:30 - 16:00 Workshop 1 - "Sustainable Energy Future in Asia", organized by CNIC

The government of Japan promotes nuclear energy as one of the best solutions to global warming. The session will reinforce the idea that nuclear power generation imposes environmental burdens and proliferation risks other than carbon emission, and aims at critically analyzing the current policy trends of the government by using up-to-date scientific studies. Many Asian countries undergoing rapid economic growth are planning to shift their energy production to coal and nuclear energy which will exacerbate the environmental conditions in the region. There are, however, some environmentally sound and socially appropriate initiatives implemented by both government and NPO sectors throughout the region. The discussion will also focus on the current status and identify obstacles and potentials for a sustainable and more peaceful energy future in Asia.

13:30 - 16:00 Workshop 2 - "Sustainable Finance in the Developing World ", organized by FOE, Japan

Countries such as U.S. insist on the involvement of new obligation to the developing countries. However, such developing countries have already committed significant amount of efforts in reducing CO2 emissions while the promise of increased ODA and technology transfer to the South have been neglected by the Northern governments, which hold the key in forming energy policy in the South - i.e. by using North-oriented international financial institutions such as the World Bank, and through bilateral aid agencies that put a large sum of money in conventional fossil fuel power plant and road transport. The discussion will examine the role of those financial flows and possible policy changes required by the UN Climate Convention.

16:30 - 18:00 PLENARY SESSION II
"New Aspects of Energy Future ---To Create New Perspectives"

18:30 - 19:00 Press Conference

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## Significant Incidents at Nuclear Plants (July to December 1996)

| Date | Plant | Short Description of Events |
|---|---|---|
| 14 July | Takahama 1 | Reactor power dropped due to operational error of high pressure feed water heater induced by compressed air pipe break. |
| 19 July | Tokai | Vitrification facility ventilator system failed due to insufficient contact of electric current switch coil during regular inspection of electric equipments. |
| 1 Aug. | Tsuruga 1 | Reactor manually shut down due to increased water leak from bearing seal. |
| 4 Aug. | Monju | Secondary sodium circulation pump overheated due to lubricating oil entering inside pump. |
| 10 Aug. | Tokai II | Reactor manually shut down due to turbine control oil leak. |
| 22 Aug. | Tokai | Reprocessing plant electric power supply lost for 3 minutes due to operational error of auxiliary electric power supply system when station black out occurred at separation and puryfication plant during periodic inspection. |
| 24 Aug. | Kashiwazaki-Kariwa 6 | Reactor manually shut down due to radioactive leak from fuel rod. 5cm. long crack found on fuel cladding until January, 1997. |
| 25 Aug. | Ohi 2 | Reactor manually shut down due to significant overheating of lower part of primary water pump motor. |
| 7 Sept. | Hamaoka 3 | Fire at emergency diesel generator power supply room during periodic inspection. |
| 16 Sept. | Ohi 4 | Reactor automatically shut down due to generator damage. |
| 4 Oct. | Tsuruga 1 | Reactor manually shut down due to increased water leak from recirculation pump bearing seal. |
| 5 Oct. | JRR-3 | Reactor manually shut down due to vacuum break of cold neutron source equipment. |
| 9 Oct. | Ohi 4 | Cracks found at upper leaf springs of fuel assembly during periodic inspection. |
| 18 Oct. | Ikata 1 | Damage to 87 steam generator tubes found during periodic inspection. |
| 23 Oct. | Fukushima I-1 | Fire at basement of turbine building. |
| 27 Oct. | Sendai 1 | Primary water leaked due to damage of control rod drive mechanism housing weld during periodic inspection. |
| 11 Nov. | JMTR | 4 cracks found at pressure control tank of primary coolant system. |
| 20 Nov. | Takahama 2 | Reactor manually shut down due to high pressure feed water heater tube break. |
| 26 Nov. | Fukushima I-1 | Cracks found on two jet pump inlet pipes of recirculation system inside reactor pressure vessel during periodic inspection. |
| 6 Dec. | Atomic Fuel Industry (Kumatori) | Worker injured during transfer of solid waste drums. |
| 23 Dec. | Kashiwazaki-Kariwa 2 | Reactor manually shut down due to increased primary coolant radioactivity. Pin-hole found on fuel cladding during inspection. |
| 24 Dec. | Tsuruga 2 | Reactor manually shut down due to borated water leak induced by crack of chemical volume control system piping. |

# NEWS WATCH

## Forcible Expansion of Spent Fuel Storage Capacity

As spent fuel storage pools at Japan's nuclear power plants are about to reach capacity, continuing attempts are being made to forcibly expand the storage capacity, including raising the storage densities. For example, Kyushu Electric Power Co.(KEPC) applied to the Minister of International Trade and Industry for approval to change the specification of the spent fuel storage capacity at its Sendai 1 and 2 (PWRs, 890 MW each). Currently, the rack pitch of the spent fuel pits are 40 cm for Sendai 1 and 36.5 cm for Sendai 2.

The utility is attempting to reduce these pitches to 28 cm in order to raise the capacity from 904 to 1,336 fuel assemblies at No. 1, and from 756 to 1,038 at No. 2. Although KEPC claims that the racks will be made of stainless-steel containing boron (a neutron absorber) to assure subcriticality, the overall safety level including cooling ability will definitely decline. Similar reracking is either being conducted or in plan at various PWR and BWR plants throughout Japan. Applications are also being submitted for approval to allow the use of spent fuel storage pits of new reactors having bigger storage capacity to store the spent fuel coming from the old reactors. (See NIT No.60, News Watch.)

## Hitachi Filed False Reports on Nuclear Plant Maintenance

Hitachi Ltd. and an affiliated firm had been submitting false maintenance reports concerning post welding pipe temperatures for 18 BWR reactors throughout Japan for nearly two decades, Japanese newspapers reported on September 17.

The false reports were originally made up by Shinko Co., a firm subcontracted by Hitachi since 1973 to heat treat the pipes which relieves the stress and prevents them from falling apart. Regulations require a record of the temperature of the welded sections taken after heating to a designated temperature. Shinko said it had been submitting records taken from other tests because they feared the original data would be judged insufficient by inspection authorities and the work would have to be redone.

On the same day the newspaper reports were published, inspectors of the Agency of Natural Resources and Energy began an on-site probe of Hitachi and the affiliated firms to determine the location of the welding believed to total 167 spots on piping around turbines.

In response to this, CNIC submitted a letter of request to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry and electric power companies to close down the 18 reactors suspected of having defective pipes.

## Russians Say "No" to Radioactive Waste Disposal Plan

A referendum was held on August 17 at Shkotovsky in Russia's Far East, to decide whether or not to allow construction of storage and disposal facilities for liquid radioactive wastes from nuclear submarines. The turnout exceeded the 50% minimum required to make the referendum valid, and 93% of the voters were against the plan. The Japanese government has contributed about $25 million for the construction in order to ensure that the Russians refrain from dumping any more liquid radioactive wastes in the Sea of Japan.

## Shipping of Spent Fuel to U.K. and France Protested

On July 15, Hokuriku Electric Power Co. (HEPC) shipped out 92 spent fuel assemblies discharged from Shika 1 (BWR, 540 MW) aboard the Pacific Pintail to the reprocessing plants at Sellafield in Britain and La Hague in France. About 300 people, including trade union members in Ishikawa Prefecture gathered and held a rally against the shipping, and protested against HEPC's imposition of the danger of radioactive wastes on the people of Britain and France, as well as on the people living on the coastlines along the shipping route.

## Hiroshima Peace Declaration Tells Japan to Leave Nuclear Umbrella

Hiroshima Mayor Takashi Hiraoka read out the peace declaration at a peace memorial ceremony held on August 6 in Hiroshima City. In the declaration, Hiraoka called for the Japanese government to make efforts to establish a security system which does not depend on the "U.S. nuclear umbrella." It was the first time that a demand for the government to change its security policy was made in a peace declaration. (by Baku Nishio)

## Jinzaburo Takagi Receives Right Livelihood Award

The internationally esteemed Right Livelihood Award for 1997 was presented to CNIC representative Dr. Jinzaburo Takagi and Mycle Schneider of the Paris-based World Information Service on Energy (WISE) on 1 October.

CNIC feels the award is a result of the efforts paid by many individuals and citizens' activities throughout the world who have continued to work in opposing plutonium utlization in the world.

The award is a huge encouragement for the international NPO activities coming ahead, and CNIC renews its deep commitment toward the complete cessation of the Japanese plutonium program.

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NUKE INFO TOKYO is a bi-monthly newsletter that aims to provide foreign friends with up-to-date information on the Japanese nuclear industry, as well as on the movements against it. Please write to us for a subscription (subscription rates: Regular subscriber - $30/year or 3,000 yen/year; supporting subscriber $50/year or 5,000 yen/year). The subscription fee should be remitted from a post office to our post office account No:00160-0-185799, HANGENPATU-NEWS. We would also appreciate receiving information and newsletters from groups abroad in exchange for this newsletter. (When sending the subscription fee from overseas, please send it by international postal money order.)