

**The 6th Press Briefing of the Investigation Committee
on the Accidents at Fukushima Nuclear Power Stations,
Given by Committee Chairperson Yotaro Hatamura**

Date and time: from 7:00pm, Monday, December 26, 2011
Venue: 1st floor lecture hall, No. 3 Government Building Complex, Otemachi, Tokyo

Now that our Investigation Committee on the Accidents at Fukushima Nuclear Power Stations of Tokyo Electric Power Company has completed its interim report, we are prepared to give you this briefing this evening.

I have with me here Committee Deputy Chair Kunio Yanagida, and other committee members and technical advisors who are able to attend.

A little while ago, I submitted our Interim Report to Prime Minister Noda at Prime Minister's Office , and briefly explained to him our approach while compiling it and the steps leading up to its completion.

At the end of my explanation to him, I stated that while compiling the Interim Report we worked under the belief that we would, through our report, be able to answer at least to some degree the questions and doubts of those who are suffering the most — the accident victims. After this was made clear, I explained that our Interim Report contained a number of proposals and recommendations that we strongly feel should be implemented.

The Prime Minister replied that he was keen to ensure that was done thoroughly.

Since the time our Committee was first asked to conduct an investigation, we have worked for almost seven months with the thoughts I have just imparted to you in mind. The Interim Report is the result of our investigation to date.

There were a great number of issues that had to be investigated, so many that we became anxious we wouldn't be able to compile an interim report. But in the end we were able to finish it.

The Interim Report represents a mid-point in our investigation. It does not include all aspects of what we are investigating. But it does include, as much as possible, the facts that have become clear through our investigation up to the present time, and it contains our evaluations and proposals within those parameters.

The Interim Report consists of two volumes: the main document, and accompanying reference material. The main document runs to more than 500 pages, while the accompanying reference material has more than 200 pages.

The result is quite voluminous, so we also compiled a Summary of the Interim Report.

This evening, I will use the Summary to briefly go over some of the content of the Interim Report. You have a copy of the Summary of the Interim Report, so please feel free to refer to it while I give an explanation.

First of all, page 1, section 1, *Introduction*. The text sets out the aim for establishing the Committee, gives a summary of its activities and the background for the Interim Report, and specifies when the final report is scheduled to be produced.

Part of our Committee's activities was hearings. During hearings conducted so far, up to December 16, we received testimony from 456 people who were involved in some way with the accident.

The names of the interviewee who consented to the release of their names have been disclosed. This evening I can name two more individuals who gave testimony: Mr. Goshi Hosono, a Cabinet Minister who was Special Advisor to the Prime Minister at the time of the accident, and who we interviewed on December 14, and Mr. Seiki Soramoto, a member of the House of Representatives, who we interviewed on December 7.

We plan to complete our final report and release it during the summer of 2012.

Section 2, *Outline of the Accidents*, begins on page 2.

Section 3, *Problems of the Responses by Government Organizations to the Accidents*, begins on page 2. In this section, we examine problems evident at the Local Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters and at the national government's Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters, and we make a recommendation regarding local headquarters.

Section 4, *Problems of Responses to the Accidents at the Fukushima Dai-ichi NPS*, begins on page 6. This section identifies erroneous assumptions regarding the operation status of the isolation condenser (IC) for Unit 1, and failures in alternative means for injecting water into Unit 3.

Section 5, *Problems of the Hazard Control Measures*, begins on page 8. The four problem areas identified are: (1) problems regarding the initial monitoring activities; (2) problems regarding the use of the System for Prediction of Environmental Emergency Dose Information (SPEEDI); (3) problems regarding the making of decisions about the evacuation of citizens and the confusion experienced by the affected communities; and (4) problems regarding the supply of information to the people of Japan and to the international community. Our Committee makes a number of recommendations on ways to resolve some of these problems.

Section 6, *Inappropriate Precautionary Measures against Tsunamis and Severe Accidents*, begins on page 13. As the title indicates, this section examines problems in measures to prevent damage from tsunamis and other severe accidents, before they occur.

Those problems are dealt with in greater depth beginning on page 18 in section 7, *Why Were the Measures against Tsunami and Severe Accident Insufficient?*

Section 8, *Recommendations on the New Nuclear Safety Regulatory Body*, begins on page 19. Due to the fact that the government is now working toward establishing a

new regulatory body, in this section we recommend five qualities that such a body should have. It is our sincere hope that the government will consider our recommendations favorably while discussing the future establishment of the regulatory body.

Section 9, *Interim Conclusions*, begins on page 20. It examines issues and identifies problems from a general perspective, based on facts that became apparent during our investigation to date.

The report contains this interim conclusion, while our final report will have a general conclusion summing up our Committee's investigation.

Section 10, *Final Remarks*, concludes the interim report on page 21.

This ends my brief discussion of the interim report summary.

Next, I would like to express my own views, which, in my capacity as Committee Chair, I developed while we were conducting the investigation leading up to this Interim Report.

During the investigation process, we examined various factors and slowly but surely came to understand various things. While discussing these matters with other Committee members, technical advisors and others, we gradually formed opinions on the various issues, but this does not mean that we all came to the same conclusions regarding the issues I will now present to you. What I will say now are my own personal opinions.

There are a number of topics I wish to raise now, so first I will name the topic, and then I will explain my thoughts on it.

The first topic I wish to discuss is hindsight.

Our investigation enabled us to see, to a certain extent at least, the overall picture. Once one grasps that overall picture, one realizes that there were decisions and actions that could have been taken to develop measures to minimize the damage. However, the people responding to the accident and its repercussions were not able to grasp the overall picture during their response, so they could not be aware that such measures existed. Therefore, one cannot cast blame on them. That is what I believe.

My second topic is the core issue at the heart of the disaster.

There is a tendency to focus on the physical processes that occurred during the nuclear accident. But I believe the most terrible aspect of the disaster was the fact that the spread of radioactive substances forced local residents to leave their land and their homes.

This most terrible aspect is a distinguishing feature of a nuclear accident. All activity in the affected area is halted. Evacuees cannot return to their own land and homes for a long time, and they feel a bitter distress that has psychological, social and economic dimensions.

It is true that the nuclear accident occurred inside a power station, but I feel it would be wrong to concentrate only on that fact. At the heart of the problem lies the fact that people were suddenly forced to leave their land and homes, and remain away for a long time.

My third topic is the expression, “beyond the scope of assumption.”

We often heard that expression. I believe, though, that when people hear, “It was beyond the scope of assumption, so it couldn’t be helped,” they feel that the speaker is trying to avoid responsibility for something they are indeed responsible for.

And yet, I think we must ask ourselves, what is implied by the words “within the scope of assumption,” and “beyond the scope of assumption”?

When we humans begin thinking about something, we have to determine the scope of what we are going to think about — otherwise, we can’t think about it properly. And, once we decide on the parameter within which we will think about the thing, we apply our mind carefully to what is inside the parameter, and no longer think of things beyond it.

What is outside that parameter is something beyond the scope of assumption. And, in many cases, we no longer even consider the existence of anything beyond the parameter. We realize it could exist only after it happens.

My fourth topic is what I would call, “for form’s sake, but not effective.”

There exist excellent organizations that intend to earnestly take things into consideration and act in the most appropriate manner. Those organizations have admirable rules and manuals, and their personnel are assigned to follow those rules and manuals.

However, it may happen that the personnel in such an organization do not properly understand the role their organization is expected to play. In such a case, when an emergency strikes, they will think they are responding diligently, but they may be almost completely unable to function as expected.

I believe that this applies to the response of the Nuclear Safety Commission and the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency during the emergency. It also applies to SPEEDI.

The investigation has led me to a lot of other thoughts as well. And, each time I understand a little more about different things, my thoughts take me further.

We will consider things even more deeply, and when it is time to submit our final report I hope to present to you thoughts that will have formed in my mind by that time.

It has been an occasion to feel and think on a great many things – so much so that it would be impossible to gather together all my thoughts and feelings properly and present them to you.

What I have said up to now has been some of the things I personally feel.

As Committee Chair, I now conclude my remarks.