

Press briefing at the Prime Minister's Office for members of the foreign press

8 April 2011

Takeshi Matsunaga, Assistant Press Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA): Good evening. We would like to start today's briefing for international press. We have representatives from different ministries but I think Mr. Noriyuki Shikata, Deputy Cabinet Secretary for Public Relations at the Prime Minister's Office, will join us at a later time. So without further delay, let us start this evening's briefing.

I would like to introduce the briefers for this evening. To my right is Mr. Ichiro Nakayama, Counselor of the Resources Enhancement Promotion Department, Fisheries Agency of Japan, and Mr. Hidehiko Nishiyama, Deputy Director-General of the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA). Further to the right is Mr. Shinichi Kawarada, Advisor to Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and Mr. Masanori Shinano, Counselor Secretariat of the Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC). At the far right is Mr. Eiichi Yokota, Senior Technical Officer of the Food Safety Department of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). To my left is Mr. Koji Takahashi, Director, General Affairs Division, Ports and Harbours Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT).

Let me start this evening's briefing from my explanation with respect to one diplomatic event which is scheduled for tomorrow, which has a close association with the issue at hand to date in this briefing session. Tomorrow, Mr. Takeaki Matsumoto, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, will attend a special meeting of Japan with foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Jakarta, Indonesia. I would like to invite you to refer to the paper entitled, "Significance of Special ASEAN-Japan Foreign Minister's Meeting."

This is a historic meeting that demonstrates the deepening solidarity between ASEAN and Japan, and this special meeting is convened in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake at the proposal of Indonesia, the holder of current ASEAN presidency, with a view to demonstrating cooperation between Japan, which is tackling recovery and reconstruction as well as the strong and special solidarity between Japan and ASEAN. In this special foreign minister's meeting, Mr. Matsumoto will express the profound gratitude of the government of Japan to the various cooperative measures extended by

respective ASEAN countries in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake. He will also express appreciation for the holding of the meeting.

In the meeting, Mr. Matsumoto will explain the current situations as to Japan's handling of the damages caused by the earthquake and tsunami, including measures corresponding to the accident at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Japan will promise to continue to ensure the provision of information with great transparency. Mr. Matsumoto will also express Japan's determination to overcome the difficult situation and achieve its reconstruction with its own national strength with a view to reassure ASEAN countries.

Furthermore, Mr. Matsumoto will exchange opinions with foreign ministers and other participants from ASEAN countries on strengthening future cooperative relations between Japan and ASEAN, including cooperation on disaster prevention. We will promote our cooperation with ASEAN in disaster management in such areas as sharing experience and lessons learned from the earthquake supporting ASEAN, supporting the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), and, considering the continuous implementation of ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiREx). With respect to our cooperation with the AHA Centre, we envisage cooperation for the provision of equipment, particularly communication equipment which is of critical importance at the time of disaster; stockpiling of foodstuffs, water, medicines, and so on; and dispatch of experts.

ARF DiREx stands for, as I mentioned, the ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise. In March, Japan co-organized the ARF DiREx with Indonesia to develop the region's capacity to respond to disasters. While it was originally envisaged as a one-time event, we are considering the continuous implementation of this exercise in the light of the occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

In the meeting, Japan will further reconfirm its unchanged principle to support ASEAN community-building and enhancing ASEAN connectivity. The paper entitled "Japan-ASEAN Relations" provides further details on this matter.

As you see on the separate paper entitled "Mr. Matsumoto's Schedule," Mr. Matsumoto will arrive in Jakarta in the early morning tomorrow. During the morning, Mr. Matsumoto will have a Japan-Indonesia foreign ministerial meeting with his Indonesian

counterpart, H.E. Dr. Marty Natalegawa, Foreign Minister of Indonesia. The bilateral foreign ministerial meeting will be followed by a walking lunch, after which Mr. Matsumoto will call upon the President of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Dr. H. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. In the afternoon, after bilateral foreign ministerial meetings with his counterparts from Malaysia and Thailand respectively, Mr. Matsumoto will attend the Japan-ASEAN Special Foreign Minister's Meeting.

Immediately after the special meeting, a joint press conference is scheduled. In the late afternoon, Mr. Matsumoto will further meet the Secretary-General of ASEAN and his Philippine counterpart.

Next, I would like to, as usual, mention additional cooperative measures extended by foreign countries and territories in response to the earthquake. Relief supplies are scheduled to arrive in Narita Airport in the early morning tomorrow from the government of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong. The government of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong has announced that it would provide relief supplies worth HK\$5 million to Japan. The relief supplies are a part of that commitment, which consists of 20,000 canned foods that will be offered to Iwaki City of Fukushima prefecture.

Next, the other day, I referred very briefly to the provision of relief supplies from Turkey which requires further elaboration. In response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, relief supplies provided by the government of Turkey arrived at Narita Airport on Monday 4 April. Among the supplies, around 18.5t of drinking water, about 68,800 food cans of tuna and beans, and approximately 5,000 blankets will be delivered to Miyagi Prefecture, Fukushima Prefecture, and Tokyo, Setagaya city, and three other cities, which accepted disaster-stricken people, respectively. Turkey's aid-and-rescue team has been in operation since Monday, 21 March, in areas including Shichigahama Town in Miyagi Prefecture. The Government of Japan deeply appreciates the cooperation from the government of Turkey. Finally, I would like to mention about the Japan-India Vice Minister-Foreign Secretary Dialogue and Foreign Office Consultation, which has something to do with the earthquake. The Japan-India Vice Minister-Foreign Secretary Dialogue and Foreign Office Consultation was held today in Tokyo. The participants of the Vice Minister-Foreign Secretary Dialogue included Mr. Kenichiro Sasae, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan and Ms. Nirupama Rao, Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of India. They exchanged views on

countermeasures for the Great East Japan Earthquake and international agendas in general. The participants of the Foreign Office Consultation included Mr. Koro Bessho, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and Foreign Secretary Rao, Ministry of External Affairs of India. They exchanged views on bilateral relations, global and regional issues, among other topics. That is the end of my explanation. Thank you very much.

So, next, I would like to request Mr. Nishiyama for this evening's briefing. Thank you.

Mr. Nishiyama: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to update you on the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant's status. Regarding Unit 1, injection of nitrogen to the containment vessel is going on steadily. We have a plan to inject less than 6,000m³ of nitrogen. Although the pressure of the vessel is rising, we think it is because of the injection of the nitrogen and is not unusual. The temperature of the water supply nozzle went up suddenly after the midnight earthquake yesterday. We are carefully watching the trend after this hike.

Regarding stagnant water, we are transferring the water in the hot well to the condensate storage tank. We found the level of the surface of the water in the condensate storage tank has not been changed for two days. So we will add or change to one more pump. Regarding Unit 2, especially stagnant water, we are transferring the water in the hot well to the condensate storage tank. We will finish it by 8 or 9 April to prepare for the pumping up of stagnant water to the hot well. Regarding the highly irradiated water, which came from the crack on the outside wall of the pit, it was stopped, as I reported yesterday. We injected water glass and chemicals to strengthen the function of stopping the water. In the meantime, the surface of the water in the trench attached to Unit 2 went up by 2cm from last night to early morning, today. So, we have to be careful in watching this trend.

Regarding Unit 3, the parameters of the reactor of Unit 3 are relatively stable. We will throw 70t of pure water to the spent fuel pool of Unit 3 this evening. Regarding stagnant water, we would like to transfer the water in the hot well to the condensate storage tank, but there may be some inflow to the hot well, and we are investigating the source of this inflow.

Regarding Unit 4, we threw 20t of pure water to the spent fuel pool of Unit 4 by

concrete pumping machine, yesterday.

Regarding Units 5 and 6, we are releasing slightly radiated water from the sub-drain pit attached to Units 5 and 6. So far, we have released 1,100t and we will finish it on 9 April. We are releasing the slightly radiated water from the radioactive waste disposal system to the sea. So far, we released 7,400t of water and are looking for the measures to pump up the remaining 1,100t.

At 11:32, last night, a big earthquake occurred offshore of Miyagi Prefecture. The nuclear power plants of Higashidori lost outside power, and the emergency diesel generator began its operation. The outside power was restored at 3:30 a.m., today. Cooling of the spent fuel pool was never stopped. Regarding Onagawa Nuclear Power Plant, among five outside power lines, one is on maintenance and three were cut by the earthquake, so only one survived the earthquake. After that, some of the lines were restored. Cooling of the spent fuel pool was once stopped, but quickly restored thereafter. There was some water spilling probably because of the sloshing caused by the earthquake, which made the water flow out from the spent fuel pool in the buildings of the reactor controlling unit and seawater heat exchanges.

Regarding Fukushima Daiichi and Daini and Tokai Number 2 Plants, they have not been affected by the earthquake in a substantive way. In all those nuclear power plants, no unusual monitoring data was reported. I have one correction, which is regarding the spent fuel pool of Higashidori Nuclear Power Plant. It once stopped cooling, but it was immediately restored. Thank you very much for your attention.

Mr. Shikata: Good evening, my name is Noriyuki Shikata, Deputy Cabinet Secretary for Public Relations at the Prime Minister's Office. I am sorry to be late for this briefing. I would like to just introduce to you a couple of points from Chief Cabinet Secretary Mr. Edano's press conference that was held this morning. Regarding the issue of power shortages, we are trying to take measures against power shortages, which might happen this summer if we do not carry out planned outages.

Mr. Shikata: To that end, we intend to compile a comprehensive package for power supply and demand by the end of April. As for the contents of this package, it will be to formulate measures to increase supply capabilities for electricity and to present guidelines for the amount of power conservation in all possible areas, which not only

large electricity consumers but also general households may need to follow. And in this regard, the government would like to call on the public to take voluntary efforts to conserve the use of electricity.

The next point is, as you have experienced last night, an aftershock with a seismic intensity of 6-upper occurred. The government has already instructed each utility to take possible emergency measures if necessary based on the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. From the afternoon Chief Cabinet Secretary's press conference, I would like to just introduce to you one point regarding the policy on planting rice. Based on listening to the opinions of the NSC, today the government decided the way of thinking regarding the planting of rice. And this is regarding the prefectures in the vicinity of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. There have been surveys conducted regarding soil in the rice paddies. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has already announced it, but the gist of the announcement is regarding the areas where there is a high possibility that rice to be produced would exceed the provisional standard values, according to the Food Sanitation Law, there will be control over rice planting. And as for specific areas, there will be consultation between the government and the prefectures, and based on that consultation it will be decided. And when there will be regulations on the planting of rice, there will be appropriate compensation that will be paid. This concludes the Chief Cabinet Secretary's press conference.

Mr. Shikata: Now I would like to ask Mr. Shinichi Kawarada of MEXT to go next.

Mr. Kawarada: Thank you. MEXT would like to talk to you about the monitoring that we are carrying out in the 20km and further around Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. We are carrying out the land, sea, and air monitoring, and we have the material titled MEXT. I would like to introduce to you some of the salient points. Page 7 shows the results of the monitoring at the posts 20km or further of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. You will see there that the level is declining continuously. Also, we have the nationwide monitoring post where the spatial readings as well as the fallout readings are given. They can be found beyond page 30 and on. In the municipalities and townships around Fukushima, there is a slight increase over the ordinary figures, but in other prefectures and other municipalities, the values stay as ordinary values.

Mr. Shikata: Mr. Shinano, Counselor of the Secretariat of the Nuclear Safety

Commission.

Mr. Shinano: From the Nuclear Safety Commission I would like to give you a report concerning the evaluation of the environment radiation monitoring results. What I will be reporting to you is the information that was public between 10 a.m. on April 6, 2011 and 10 a.m. on April 7.

In the material that you see, you will find an address of the web page. This is the homepage of MEXT. But we carry out our evaluation based on the data that is published there. Therefore maybe you can refer to the figures that we reference that are provided from MEXT. This is the page for index. Therefore, in order to actually match the results today, you need to find the right page where the time stamp coincides with what we are using.

The overall evaluation is that there are no data found which have any effect on people's health. If we take each one, one is the ambient radiation dose rate. There are several points where a relatively high dose was recorded, but they do not pose any effect on people's health.

The second is the sampling in the air. Compared to the previous day, for iodine, there is an increase, but for cesium, there is a decline. None of these data have any impact on the people's health.

As for the airborne monitoring, there is no new information.

Fourth is the environment sample. On the surface of the sea and in the sea water, the numbers are larger for both as compared to the previous day's figures. As for the dust on the sea surface, the value is declining. These data does not have immediate risk on human health.

Fifth is environmental radioactivity level survey by prefecture. As for the tap water or the drinking water, iodine and cesium has a lower figure as compared to the previous day's readings. This concludes my report for today.

Mr. Shikata: Mr. Ichiro Nakayama, Counselor of the Resources Enhancement Promotion Department, Fisheries Agency.

Mr. Nakayama: Thank you very much. I would like to report on two issues today. The first item is, the material is, for today's material, there are two more samples. One is the bonito and the splendid alfonsino, they are below the provisional standard. They are the test samples from Chiba. And as was mentioned by the Minister Kano of MOF, strengthening of the monitoring needs to be implemented. Monitoring was mostly carried out by the prefectures, but the Fisheries Agency will provide full support for these inspections and testing. Choshi in Chiba, Nakaminato, Isozaki, Oarai in Ibaraki, these are the four areas in which inspections and monitoring will be enhanced. This concludes my report.

Mr. Shikata: Now I would like to ask Mr. Eiichi Yokota, Senior Technical Officer of the Food Safety Department of MHLW to go next.

Mr. Yokota: Thank you, good evening. Yesterday, there was a report to MHLW concerning the result of the monitoring of foodstuffs. Yesterday, nine prefectural products were tested. A total of 53 samples have been inspected.

Looking at this table, the values shaded in grey are the ones that exceeded the criteria, 43, spinach in Ibaraki, exceeded the provisional limit. Currently this has a ban on shipments so this is not on distribution.

The other piece of paper that we have prepared – from 19 March until yesterday, this is the total. So a total of 1,112 samples have been tested and 165 samples exceeded the provisional limit. That is all from me. Thank you.

Mr. Shikata: I will ask Mr. Koji Takahashi, Director of General Affairs, Ports and Harbours Bureau of MLIT, to go next.

Mr. Takahashi: Thank you from MLIT. Today the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism made a statement on the countermeasures against radiation in ports. At MLIT, in Tokyo, Yokohama, Kawasaki and Chiba, in these four ports, the ambient radiation level has been monitored and announced on MLIT's homepage. On the other hand, the radioactive substance release from the nuclear power plant is continuing, so the containers and the vessels that arrive into Japanese ports from abroad are now being measured for their radiation level. The shippers that have vessels coming

into Japanese ports have requested the reinforcement and enhancement of countermeasures against radiation exposure. As a result of that, MLIT has established a guideline for containers as well as the vessels that load the containers, and we have decided to initiative the measurement of radiation levels. The guideline stipulates the type of monitors, the safety criteria, what would be the certificate and the contents of the certificate, and when the containers exceeding the criteria are detected, what measures should be taken. In the Port of Yokohama, and also in the Port of Tokyo and others, we are going to start the measurements. However, we need coordination among the parties involved, so the time for starting the measurement would be in mid-April. Once we finalize the guidelines we can make a detailed announcement. Thank you.

Mr. Shikata: Now I would like to open the floor for questions. When you ask a question please identify yourself. Andy?

QUESTION (Mr. Pollack, New York Times): For Mr. Nishiyama, sorry to keep playing the same record but there seems to be some perception that there is a disagreement with the authorities in the United States about how serious the situation in Fukushima is or might be – what the risks are out there. How do you see that? And I had asked yesterday specifically about this idea that the core from Unit 2 had leaked down into the containment vessel. Are you saying that you are sure that that did not happen? Or what exactly is your position on that?

Mr. Nishiyama: Regarding what is said to be the view of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC), the USNRC itself has admitted that this view was a view that they had compiled at the stage when communication from the Japanese side was not necessarily going smoothly. The USNRC itself is admitting that this is not their view at the current stage.

And regarding the second part of your question related to the current status of the core of Unit 2, we also believe that there is some damage to the core of Unit 2, but at the moment we do not have any data that shows there has been leakage to the containment vessel.

And including these points, we are having an exchange of information with the USNRC everyday. So I believe that the view of the USNRC and the views that we have are coinciding with each other right now.

QUESTION (Mr. Pollack, New York Times): Just a follow up question. Do you have radiation readings from inside the containment vessels?

Mr. Nishiyama: As I am sure you know, we have the Containment Atmospheric Monitoring System (CAMS) data, which is being collected, and the data is being made public, and it is shared with whoever wishes to see it.

Mr. Shikata: Any other questions?

QUESTION (Mr. Pollack, New York Times): I don't have to keep everyone here, I could just talk to Mr. Nishiyama. CAMS – is that a simulation or is that an actual measurement?

Mr. Nishiyama: It is the actual measurements of gamma rays. CAMS stands for Containment Atmospheric Monitoring System.

Mr. Shikata: Any other questions? If there are no other questions, I would like to conclude this evening's press briefing. Thank you very much.