

11 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS

SAMPLES SHOW FUKUSHIMA 'DISCHARGED WATER IS SAFE'

Radioactive levels from samples and fish within acceptable standard, says nuclear plant operator, Japan govt amid concern

TOKYO

SEAWATER samples taken following the release of wastewater from the crippled Fukushima nuclear reactor showed radioactivity levels well within safe limits, operator Tepco said yesterday.

The start on Thursday of the discharge of some of the 1.34 million tonnes of water, collected on-site in the 12 years since the plant was swamped by a tsunami, prompted China to ban all Japanese seafood imports.

Tepco took what it called rapid tests on Thursday afternoon after the release into the Pacific Ocean began, and yesterday, it said that the results showed that radioactivity levels were within safe limits.

"We confirm that the analysed value is equal to the calculated concentration and that the analysed value is below 1,500 bq/L," Tepco spokesman Keisuke Matsuo told a news conference.

Becquerels per litre is a measure of radioactivity. The national safety standard is 60,000.

The results were "similar to our previous simulation and sufficiently below" the safety limit, Matsuo added.

"We will continue to conduct analysis every day over the next one month and even after that, we will maintain our analysis effort," he said.

"By providing swift, easy-to-understand explanations we hope to dispel various concerns."

Japan's Environment Ministry said it had collected seawater samples from 11 different locations yesterday, results of which would be released tomorrow.

The Fisheries Agency also pulled a flounder and a Gurnard fish yesterday from designated sampling spots near the pipe that released the Fukushima water.

"By publishing those data every day in a highly transparent fashion, we will demonstrate our actions based on scientific evidence," said Trade and Industry Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura, who is in charge of nuclear policies.

Tepco says that the water — more than 500 Olympic pools' worth — from cooling the remains of three reactors has been filtered of all radioactive elements except for tritium and is safe.

This is backed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, which said on Thursday that samples taken from the first batch of diluted water prepared for discharge showed that tritium levels were well within safe limits.

"IAEA experts are there on the ground to serve as the eyes of the international community and ensure that the discharge is being carried out as planned and consistent with IAEA safety standards," said the chief of the United Nations body, Rafael Grossi.

Most analysts agree although environmental pressure group Greenpeace has said that the filtration process, known as ALPS, does not work and that a vast amount of radioactivity will be released into the ocean.

Japan's move infuriated China, which says the action contaminates the ocean, and widened a ban on aquatic produce in place for 10 Japanese prefectures to cover the whole country.

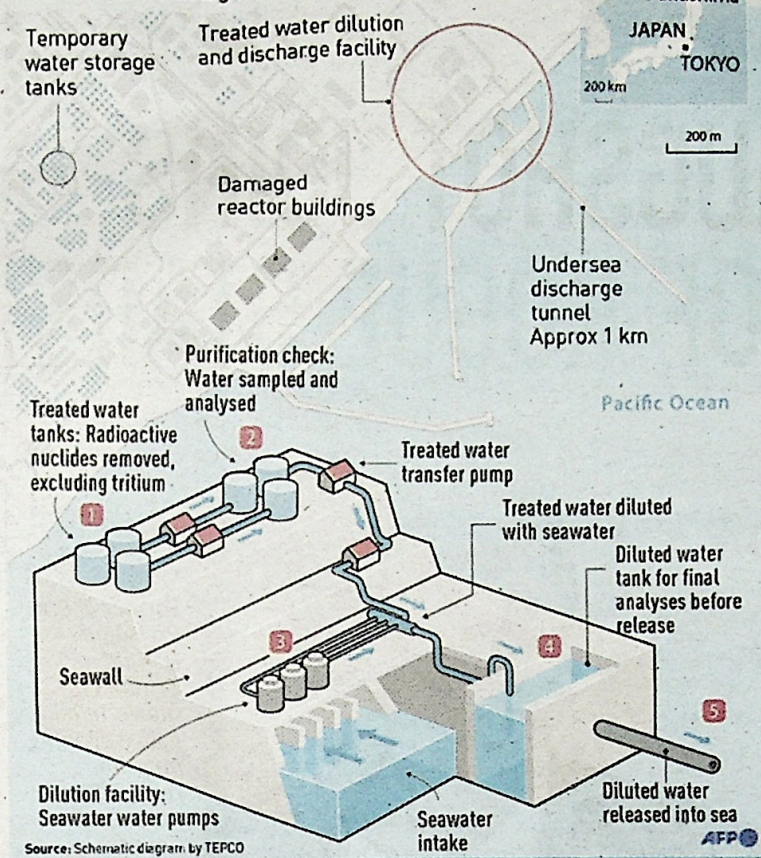
Nishimura yesterday echoed Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in urging China, Japan's biggest market for seafood, to reverse the ban.

"The Japanese government... will strongly demand baseless regulations to be immediately terminated," Nishimura said.

South Korea's government, which is trying to improve rela-

FUKUSHIMA WATER RELEASE

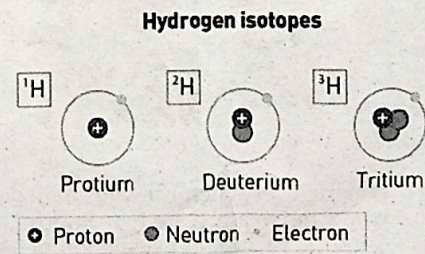
Treated water from wrecked nuclear power plant began being released into the ocean from Aug 24, 2023



TRITIUM

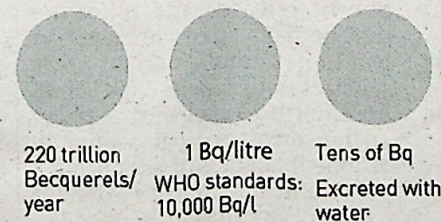
By-product of operational nuclear power plants regularly released into waterways, emits very weak radiation

Only radioactive isotope of hydrogen, very difficult to remove from water

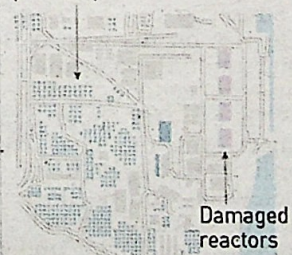


Radioactive half-life: 12.32 years (for any amount of tritium, only half will remain after 12.32 years due to decay)

Naturally exists in ...



Processed wastewater stored in tanks at Fukushima nuclear plant, Japan



TEPCO* claims to have diluted the water to reduce radioactivity levels to 1,500 Bq/l*

Japan regulatory standards: 60,000 Bq/l

Source: IAEA, *Plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Co.

tions with Japan to counter China, has endorsed the wastewater release although some ordinary people are alarmed.

More than 700 Japanese food exporters are affected by China's suspension of seafood imports from Japan after the release of water from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant, a report by market research firm Teikoku Databank said yesterday.

According to the Tokyo-based

Teikoku Databank, 727 Japanese companies currently export food products to China, accounting for about eight per cent of all Japanese firms shipping goods to China.

The report also said 316 Japanese firms export foods to Hong Kong, which announced its own ban on Japanese seafood imports from 10 regions following the Fukushima water release. **Agencies**