

Ongoing Nuclear Crisis in Japan: TEPCO Finally Admits Stabilizing Reactors by 2012 impossible

By [Global Research](#)

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Tokyo Electric Power Co. (9501.TO) is coming to the view that it will be impossible to stabilize the crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant by the end of this year, possibly affecting the timing for the government to consider the return of evacuees to their homes near the plant, Kyodo News reported, citing senior company officials.

The revelation that meltdowns had occurred at the Nos. 1 to 3 reactors at the plant, most likely with breaches to pressure vessels encasing nuclear fuel, has led the officials to believe that “there will be a major delay to work” to contain the situation, one of them said.

The plant operator, known as TEPCO, announced on April 17 its road map for bringing the troubled reactors at the plant into a stably cooled condition called “cold shutdown” in six to nine months.

Even though the No. 1 reactor was later found to have gone through the critical melting of nuclear fuel, the utility said as recently as May 17 that it did not see a need to revise its road map.

But “the nine months is just a target deadline for which we are making efforts,” a senior TEPCO official said, indicating that the likely delay would affect the plan to review the evacuation of local people, which the government is hoping to implement once the reactors are brought under control.

Given that the contaminated water has leaked from the No. 1 reactor’s containment vessel, a TEPCO official handling the technical aspects of the crisis, said, “We must first determine where it is leaking and seal it.”

The official added, “Unless we understand the extent of the damage, we don’t even know how long that work alone would take,” noting the need for one or two months more than previously thought to establish an entirely new cooling system.

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Another senior TEPCO official said workers tackling the crisis at the plant are likely to have to give up their New Year’s holidays, saying that work has not been proceeding at an equal pace at the three troubled reactors.

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