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# Neutron beam observed 13 times at crippled Fukushima nuke plant

Thursday 24th March, 06:31 AM JST

TOKYO —

Tokyo Electric Power Co said Wednesday it has observed a neutron beam, a kind of radioactive ray, 13 times on the premises of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant after it was crippled by the massive March 11 quake-tsunami disaster.

TEPCO, the operator of the nuclear plant, said the neutron beam measured about 1.5 kilometers southwest of the plant's No. 1 and 2 reactors over three days from March 13 and is equivalent to 0.01 to 0.02 microsieverts per hour and that this is not a dangerous level.

The utility firm said it will measure uranium and plutonium, which could emit a neutron beam, as well.

In the 1999 criticality accident at a nuclear fuel processing plant run by JCO Co in Tokaimura, Ibaraki Prefecture, uranium broke apart continually in nuclear fission, causing a massive amount of neutron beams.

In the latest case at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, such a criticality accident has yet to happen.

But the measured neutron beam may be evidence that uranium and plutonium leaked from the plant's nuclear reactors and spent nuclear fuels have discharged a small amount of neutron beams through nuclear fission.

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[Laguna](#) at 07:13 AM JST - 24th March

From Wikipedia: "Another, sometimes more severe hazard of neutron radiation, is neutron activation, the ability of neutron radiation to induce radioactivity in most substances it encounters, including the body tissues of the workers themselves. "



[DentShop](#) at 07:55 AM JST - 24th March

Sounds like the wok of Dr. Evil...



[Alphaape](#) at 08:51 AM JST - 24th March

From Wikipedia: "Another, sometimes more severe hazard of neutron radiation, is neutron activation, the ability of neutron radiation to induce radioactivity in most substances it encounters, including the body tissues of the workers themselves. "

Thus the whole theory behind the neutron bomb that the US invented. Nuke an area, but destroy it with enhanced radiation and not have the massive blast associated with a nuke bomb.

I understand nuclear power reactors are not designed to go "boom" in a nuclear weapons type explosion, but the threat of radioactive material is still there, just like a neutron weapon.



[TumbleDry](#) at 09:11 AM JST - 24th March

What does it mean? Cracks in the reactor? Nuclear fuel exposed to the open air?



[kurumazaka](#) at 09:41 AM JST - 24th March

I have seen a couple of comments on other forums stating that "neutron beam" was a mis-translation and that "neutron flux" is more accurate. Can't say I know the difference between the two other than "neutron beam" is probably worse. Any of you who actually know what you are talking about know anything about this?



[as the crow flies](#) at 10:15 AM JST - 24th March

TEPCO, the operator of the nuclear plant, said the neutron beam measured about 1.5 kilometers southwest of the plant's No. 1 and 2 reactors over three days from March 13

Could someone translate this into English? Did the bean extend 1.5km from the plant? Was it 1.5km in diameter? Is km some kind of measure of radiation? Please, JT, if you're going to post on an English-speaking site, can you post in meaningful English when it's something this important.



[Scrote](#) at 10:18 AM JST - 24th March

Neutron beam = neutron flux = an emission of neutrons. It requires a large amount of energy to emit neutrons. If the energy source is fission occurring inside the reactor it's not good news. Fission should be stopped by the control rods inside the reactor. Shielding around the reactor should prevent neutrons escaping.

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