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## TEPCO to inject nitrogen into No. 3 reactor

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The operator of the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant is preparing to connect pipes to the plant's No. 3 reactor to inject nitrogen to prevent a hydrogen explosion.

Tokyo Electric Power Company workers spent 10 minutes in the reactor building on Friday to determine whether pipes can be connected to the reactor's containment vessel.

The utility says the workers confirmed that the reactor's connections are intact, and that work to lay the pipes can start on Saturday.

The firm had sent a robot equipped with a camera into the building to check the situation, but the device was blocked and could not finish the work.

Stably cooling the plant's reactors and preventing hydrogen explosions are the pillars of the utility's plan to bring the facility under control.

Nuclear crisis minister Goshi Hosono says that around July 17th, he hopes to begin studying whether to lift advisory designating areas where residents are required to be prepared to evacuate in case of emergency.

But the work to lay the pipes has already been delayed, and the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency must confirm safety for several days before beginning the nitrogen injection.

It remains uncertain whether the injection can be carried out by July 17th as scheduled.

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