

The Telegraph

Japan to close 'most dangerous nuclear plant in the world'

The operator of a nuclear plant that has been described as the most dangerous in the world is expected to give in to pressure from the Japanese government to shut it down.



The severity of the nuclear crisis at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant has been raised to the same level as Chernobyl Photo: AP

By Julian Ryall in Tokyo

7:00AM BST 09 May 2011

Chubu Electric Power Co. has scheduled a special meeting of its board today, during which the company will agree to suspend operations at the Hamaoka nuclear power station in Shizuoka Prefecture.

Naoto Kan, the prime minister, said on Friday that all operations at the facility must be suspended due to fears - heightened by the March 11 earthquake and tsunami that wrecked the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant in northern Japan - about its safety.

"This is a decision made for the safety of the Japanese people when I consider the special conditions of the Hanaoka plant," Mr Kan told reporters.

Seismologists have described Hamaoka as the most dangerous atomic energy plant in the world as its five reactors date back to the 1970s and sit directly on top of two major subterranean fault lines. The government has predicted there is an 87 per cent chance of a powerful earthquake in the region within the next 30 years.

The plant is only designed to withstand an 8.5 magnitude earthquake and a tsunami of up to 8 metres.

[Japan will not abandon nuclear power despite crisis](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/8501140/Japan-will-not-abandon-nuclear-power-despite-crisis.html)

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/8501140/Japan-will-not-abandon-nuclear-power-despite-crisis.html>)

[Japanese nuclear emergency workers enter Reactor No 1 for first time](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/8494701/Japanese-nuclear-emergency-workers-enter-Reactor-No-1-for-first-time.html)

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/8494701/Japanese-nuclear-emergency-workers-enter-Reactor-No-1-for-first-time.html>)

[Underwater robot films Fukushima pool](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/8506488/Underwater-robot-captures-Fukushima-wreckage.html)

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If a tremor on the scale of the magnitude 9 March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake were to cause the same problems as at the Fukushima facility, some 28 million residents of Tokyo - 125 miles to the north-east - would have to be evacuated.

Chubu Electric will suspend operations at two of the reactor and cancel plans to restart another reactor. Two others are undergoing decommissioning procedures, although the company had announced plans to build a sixth reactor at the plant, which supplies nearly 12 percent of the company's total energy output and powers the head offices of some of Japan's largest companies, including Toyota Motor Corp. and Suzuki Motor Corp.

Chubu Electric has expressed concern about how it will be able to meet its clients' needs in the peak summer months, suggesting that it may have to introduce rolling power blackouts.