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**The New York Times**

Sunday, May 15, 2011

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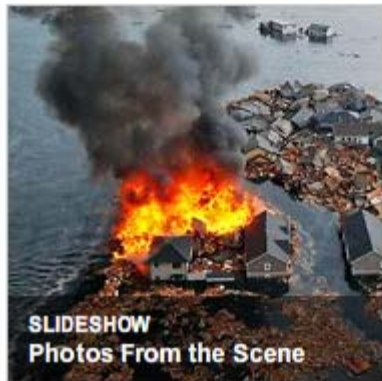


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WORLD > COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES > JAPAN

## Japan — Earthquake, Tsunami and Nuclear Crisis (2011)



Updated: May 13, 2011

### EARTHQUAKE, TSUNAMI AND NUCLEAR CRISIS

On March 11, 2011, [an earthquake struck off the coast of Japan](#), churning up a devastating tsunami that swept over cities and farmland in the northern part of the country and set off warnings as far away the west coast of the United States and South America. Recorded as 9.0 on the Richter scale, it was the most powerful quake ever to hit the country.

As the nation struggled with a rescue effort, it also faced the worst nuclear emergency since Chernobyl; explosions and leaks of radioactive gas took place in three reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station that suffered partial meltdowns, while spent fuel rods at another reactor overheated and caught fire, releasing radioactive material directly into the atmosphere. Japanese officials turned to increasingly desperate measures, as traces of radiation were found in Tokyo's water and in water pouring from the reactors into the ocean. A month after the quake, nuclear officials put the crisis in the same category of severity as the Chernobyl disaster. In May, Prime Minister [Naoto Kan](#), who had been criticized for showing a lack of leadership, said Japan would abandon plans to build new nuclear reactors, saying his country needed to "start from scratch" in creating a new energy policy that should include greater reliance on renewable energy and conservation.

### Headlines Around The Web

What's This?

**FINANCIAL TIMES**

MAY 15, 2011

[Asian focus turns to social responsibility](#)

**REUTERS**

MAY 15, 2011

[Japan officials deny asking for Tepco loan waiver](#)

**SEEKING ALPHA**

MAY 14, 2011

[Economic Calendar: EU CPI, Japan GDP, U.S. Housing Market](#)

**LOS ANGELES TIMES**

MAY 14, 2011

[Japan's thin, white security blanket](#)

**USGS M>2.5 EARTHQUAKES**

MAY 14, 2011

[M 4.7, off the east coast of Honshu, Japan](#)

[More at Blogrunner »](#)

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As of April 25, the official death toll had been raised to 14,133, and more than 13,346 people were listed as missing, although there may be some overlap between the two groups. The final toll is expected to reach 20,000. More than 130,000 people remained housed in temporary shelters; tens of thousands of others evacuated their homes due to the nuclear crisis.

**Live Updates** on [The Lede blog](#), including selected video clips and coverage from Twitter.

**Multimedia:** see what [happens in a meltdown](#), a map of the [areas of damage](#), satellite [before and after photos](#), the [cause of the quake](#) and [readers' photos](#).

### Crisis Timeline

**May 12** In a development that is likely to delay efforts to bring the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station under control, the plant's operator said that one reactor, No. 1, [had sustained much more damage than originally thought](#) and was leaking water.

**May 9** In a sharp reversal, Prime Minister [Naoto Kan](#) said Japan [would abandon plans to build new nuclear reactors](#), saying his country needed to "start from scratch" in creating a new energy policy. Mr. Kan said Japan would retain nuclear and fossil fuels as energy sources, but vowed to add two new pillars to Japan's energy policy: renewable energy and conservation.

**May 8** Japan remains [committed to nuclear power](#) despite the crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, Prime Minister [Naoto Kan](#) indicated, as workers moved closer to repairing the crippled plant by opening the doors of a damaged reactor building.

**May 5** Workers [entered a damaged reactor building at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant](#) for the first time since explosions crippled the Japanese power plant, trying to install a ventilator to help lower radiation levels.

**April 30** The embattled prime minister, [Naoto Kan](#), [defended his government's handling of Japan's nuclear crisis](#) a day after an adviser resigned, charging that the population was not being adequately protected from radiation. The adviser, Toshiso Kosako, had pointed to a recent government decision allowing children living near the crippled nuclear plant to receive doses of radiation equal to the international standard for plant workers — a level far higher than those set for the public.

**April 29** A senior nuclear adviser to Prime Minister [Naoto Kan](#) resigned, saying the government had ignored his advice and failed to follow the law. He said the government had taken only ad hoc measures to contain the crisis at the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant.

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## Japanese Worker's Death Not Linked to Radiation

By MARTIN FACKLER

The body of a worker at Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant did not show high levels of contamination, the plant's operator said.

May 14, 2011

### Multimedia



[Slide Show](#)

#### Briefly Returning to the Nuclear Zone

Residents who lived near the damaged Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant flocked to the area on Thursday ahead of a midnight evacuation deadline imposed by the government.



[Slide Show](#)

#### Restoring Sendai's Airport

On Wednesday, the airport in Sendai, Japan, reopened to commercial flights for the first time since the earthquake and tsunami struck on March 11.



[Slide Show](#)

#### Opening Day in Japan

The return of baseball has been infused with meaning this year as Japan struggles to right itself after the earthquake and tsunami on March 11.

[More Multimedia »](#)

### Japan at a Glance

**Official Name:** Japan

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## Matt Murton Breaks Records in Japan

By BRAD LEFTON

Matt Murton, a first-round draft pick for the Boston Red Sox in 2003, now holds the single-season record for hits — in Japan, that is.

May 13, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: BASEBALL, BOSTON RED SOX

## Murton, Obscure Major Leaguer, Finds Fame in Japanese Baseball

By BRAD LEFTON

Matt Murton, one of the lesser-known players in a trade that helped the Boston Red Sox win a title, broke an Ichiro Suzuki record in his first Japanese season.

May 13, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: BASEBALL, BOSTON RED SOX, SUZUKI, ICHIRO

## Japanese Nuclear Reactor Damage Is Worse Than First Thought

By HIROKO TABUCHI and MATTHEW L. WALD

New data from Unit 1 of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant represents a setback to efforts to stabilize the plant.

May 12, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), NUCLEAR ENERGY

## Met Opera Singers Pull Out of Japan Tour

By DANIEL J. WAKIN

Jonas Kaufmann withdrew from the title role of "Don Carlo" for "personal reasons" and that Olga Borodina would not sing the role of Eboli on the Metropolitan Opera's two-week tour of Japan in June.

May 12, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: CLASSICAL MUSIC, JAPAN, METROPOLITAN OPERA, BORODINA, OLGA, GUBANOVA, EKATERINA, KAUFMANN, JONAS, LEVINE, JAMES

## Fukushima Nuclear Payment Plan Announced

By HIROKO TABUCHI

The government's plan would help the operator of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant survive, but it would not cap payouts that could run into the billions.

May 12, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), NUCLEAR ENERGY, TOKYO ELECTRIC POWER CO

## Panel Urges Germany to Close Nuclear Plants by 2021

By JUDY DEMPSEY

The commission said such a move could help the German economy by reducing energy use and developing other power sources.

May 11, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND TRENDS, ALTERNATIVE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, SOLAR ENERGY, FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, COAL, ENERGY EFFICIENCY, ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY, WIND POWER, ENVIRONMENT, NUCLEAR ENERGY, GERMANY, UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM, E.ON AG, INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, ETHICS COMMISSION, ORGANIZATION



**Capital:** Tokyo (Current local time)

**Government Type:** Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government

**Chief of State:** Emperor Akihito represented by Naoto Kan, prime minister

**Population:** 127.43 million

**Area:** 145,902 square miles; slightly smaller than California

**GDP Per Capita:** \$33,100

**Year of Independence:** 660 B.C.

**Web site:** [Kantei.go.jp](http://Kantei.go.jp)

### Japan Navigator

A list of resources from around the Web about Japan as selected by researchers and editors of The New York Times.

#### GENERAL RESOURCES

- [C.I.A. World Factbook country profile](#)
- [State Department -- history and overview](#)
- [BBC country profile](#)
- [The Economist - forecast and economic data](#)
- [News and online media](#)
- [National Geographic world music guide](#)

#### OTHER COVERAGE

- [Japan Focus](#)  
Analysis on Japan and region.
- [Japan Policy Research Institute](#)  
Domestic policy analysis.

- [The Japan Times](#)  
English-language daily.

#### CITIZEN JOURNALISM

- [Ohmy News](#)
- [JanJan](#)

#### Books

- ["The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire 1936-1945"](#)

FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, KAN, NAOTO, MERKEL, ANGELA

## Reopened School Soothes Tsunami-Torn Town in Japan

By MARTIN FACKLER

Teachers and students in Otsuchi, Japan, hope that resuming pre-disaster routines leads to healing.

May 10, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS, EDUCATION (K-12)



## In Japan, a Boat Stranded by Tsunami Is Lifted From Rooftop

By KEN BELSON

The boat balanced precariously in the background of a photo featured in Sunday's Automobiles section.

May 10, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: AUTOMOBILES, JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), JAPAN

## Fukushima in America

By NASSRINE AZIMI

The Japanese now have an attitude of 'rightful fear' toward nature and technology. So should Americans.

May 10, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), NUCLEAR ENERGY

## Japan's Leader Cancels Plan for New Nuclear Plants

By MARTIN FACKLER

Prime Minister Naoto Kan said Tuesday that Japan must "start from scratch" in creating a new energy policy.

May 10, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: NUCLEAR ENERGY, KAN, NAOTO



## Pictures of the Day: Libya and Elsewhere

By THE NEW YORK TIMES

Photographs from Libya, Japan, Uganda and Afghanistan.

May 10, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: AFGHANISTAN, JAPAN, LIBYA, UGANDA

## Japan Reaffirms Nuclear Energy Use

By MARTIN FACKLER

Japan remains committed to nuclear power despite the nuclear plant crisis, Prime Minister Naoto Kan said.

May 9, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), NUCLEAR ENERGY



## Lag in Closing Plant Highlights Problems in Japan

By MARTIN FACKLER and HIROKO TABUCHI

A test of wills over the weekend pitted Japan's leader against one of its most coddled interest groups, the nuclear power industry.

May 9, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), SHUTDOWNS (INSTITUTIONAL), NUCLEAR ENERGY



## Japan Derives Little Electricity From its Hot Springs

By ANDREW POLLACK

By John Toland, 1971

"MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975"

By Chalmers Johnson, 1982

"Divided Sun: MITI and the Breakdown of Japanese High-Tech Industrial Policy, 1975-1993"

By Scott Callon, 1995

"We Were Burning: Japanese Entrepreneurs and the Forging of the Electronic Age"

By Bob Johnston, 1998

"A Japanese Mirror: Heroes and Villains of Japanese Culture"

By Ian Buruma, 1984

"Shadow Shoguns: The Rise and Fall of Japan's Postwar Political Machine"

By Jacob Schlesinger, 1997

"Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II"

By John Dower, 1999

"Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia"

By Richard Samuels, 2007

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[Business conditions](#) (World Bank)

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[Economic outlook for the most developed countries](#) (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)  
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Despite volcanic activity and many hot springs, Japan's geothermal power plants account for only 0.3 percent of its electricity production.

May 9, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: GEOTHERMAL POWER

## Gilt Groupe Valued at Roughly \$1 Billion

By EVELYN M. RUSLI

In a bid to expand its e-commerce empire, the Gilt Groupe has raised \$138 million in its latest financing round, from investors including Goldman Sachs.

May 09, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN, MANHATTAN (NYC), GILT GROUPE, GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC, GOOGLE INC, GROUPON, HAUTELOOK, NORDSTROM INC, RYAN, KEVIN

## Nuclear Accident Clouds Japan's Plan to Build 14 New Reactors

By ANDREW POLLACK

The accident at the Fukushima Daiichi plant may cause Japan to import more fossil fuels rather than increase its reliance on renewable energy sources, experts say.

May 9, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), ALTERNATIVE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), NUCLEAR ENERGY



## Wikileaks Cables Show U.S. Concern on Japan Nuclear Security

By MARTIN FACKLER

Concerns about the security of Japanese nuclear plants from terrorist attacks were rebuffed by local officials at least once, according to classified State Department cables made available by Wikileaks.

May 8, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, TERRORISM, NUCLEAR ENERGY, UNITED STATES, WIKILEAKS, STATE DEPARTMENT

## Japan Remains Committed to Nuclear Energy, Prime Minister Says

By MARTIN FACKLER

Japan remains committed to nuclear power despite the nuclear plant crisis, Prime Minister Naoto Kan said.

May 8, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), NUCLEAR ENERGY



## After Disaster Hit Japan, Electric Cars Stepped Up

By KEN BELSON

With oil refineries out of commission and clogged roads slowing gasoline deliveries, Japan turned to electric cars to help provide needed services.

May 8, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: AUTOMOBILES, JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), ELECTRIC VEHICLES, NISSAN MOTOR CO



## Japan Asks a Nuclear Plant to Suspend Operations

By HIROKO TABUCHI

The Japanese prime minister said Friday that he has ordered a nuclear plant closed until it can build stronger defenses against earthquake and tsunami risks.

May 7, 2011



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MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), NUCLEAR ENERGY, KAN, NAOTO

## Workers Enter Reactor Building at Japanese Nuclear Plant

By MARTIN FACKLER; KEVIN DREW CONTRIBUTED REPORTING FROM HONG KONG.

Workers entered a damaged reactor building at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant for the first time since explosions crippled the plant two months ago.

May 6, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN)

## With Supplies Dwindling, Some Honda Dealers Foresee Long, Dry Summer

By JONATHAN SCHULTZ

North American deliveries of the brand's most fuel-efficient models are delayed until September, and potentially beyond.

May 04, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: AUTOMOBILES, JAPAN, HONDA MOTOR CO LTD

## Adorable Anime Characters Go Speed Metal

By WM. FERGUSON

The films of Hayao Miyazaki are amazing, unlike anything else. And yet, the music.

May 04, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: ANIMATED FILMS, MUSIC, JAPAN, MIYAZAKI, HAYAO

## Language Study Casts New Light on Japanese Origins

By NICHOLAS WADE

New research suggests that the Japanese language is not descended from that of the hunter-gatherers who first inhabited the islands some 30,000 years ago.

May 4, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPANESE LANGUAGE, LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGES

## Cables Show U.S. Concern on Japan's Disaster Readiness

By MARTIN FACKLER

State Department cables show concerns on both sides about the nations' security relationship and American doubts about Japanese preparedness.

May 4, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES, CLASSIFIED INFORMATION AND STATE SECRETS, WIKILEAKS

## Many Japanese Factories Have Recovered From Quake

By ANDREW POLLACK; DAVID JOLLY CONTRIBUTED REPORTING FROM TOKYO.

Ricoh, a maker of copiers, swung into action after the March earthquake and has nearly recovered. Japan says 64 percent of damaged factories have bounced back.

May 2, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), FACTORIES AND MANUFACTURING, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND TRENDS, RICOH COMPANY LTD



## Life in Limbo for Japanese Near Damaged Nuclear Plant

By MARTIN FACKLER and MATTHEW L. WALD; MARTIN FACKLER REPORTED FROM TENEI, and MATTHEW L. WALD FROM WASHINGTON. MAKIKO INOUE CONTRIBUTED REPORTING FROM TOKYO.



People outside evacuation zones are being exposed to radiation levels several times more than normal.

May 2, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), RADIATION

## After Disaster, Ando Brings Smile to Japan With Skating Gold

By CHRISTOPHER CLAREY

Miki Ando of Japan won the women's figure skating world championship in Moscow on Saturday over Kim Yu-Na of South Korea.

May 1, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), WORLD FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS, FIGURE SKATING, ANDO, MIKI



## Japan's Leader Defends Handling of Nuclear Crisis

By MARTIN FACKLER; MATTHEW L. WALD CONTRIBUTED REPORTING FROM WASHINGTON.

Naoto Kan's remarks came after an adviser resigned to protest what he called unsafe measures.

May 1, 2011

MORE ON JAPAN AND: SUSPENSIONS, DISMISSALS AND RESIGNATIONS, JAPAN EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI (2011), FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (JAPAN), RADIATION, NUCLEAR ENERGY, KAN, NAOTO



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