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AP Associated Press

Official: Rods likely melting in Japanese reactors

Monday, March 14, 2011

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(03-14) 08:26 PDT
TOKYO, Japan (AP) --

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Japanese officials say the nuclear fuel rods appear to be melting inside all three of the most troubled nuclear reactors.

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Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano said Monday: "Although we cannot directly check it, it's highly likely happening."

Some experts would consider that a partial meltdown of the reactor. Others, though, reserve that term for times when nuclear

fuel melts through a reactor's innermost chamber but not through the outer containment shell.

In this image made off Japan's NTV/NNN Japan television footage, smoke ascends from the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant's Unit 3 in Okumamachi, Fukushima Prefecture, northern Japan, Monday, March 14, 2011. The second hydrogen explosion in three days rocked Japan's stricken nuclear plant Monday, sending a massive column of smoke into the air and wounding 11 workers. (AP Photo/NTV/NNN Japan) MANDATORY CREDIT, JAPAN OUT, TV OUT, NO SALES, EDITORIAL USE ONLY

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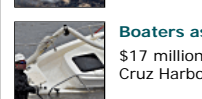
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