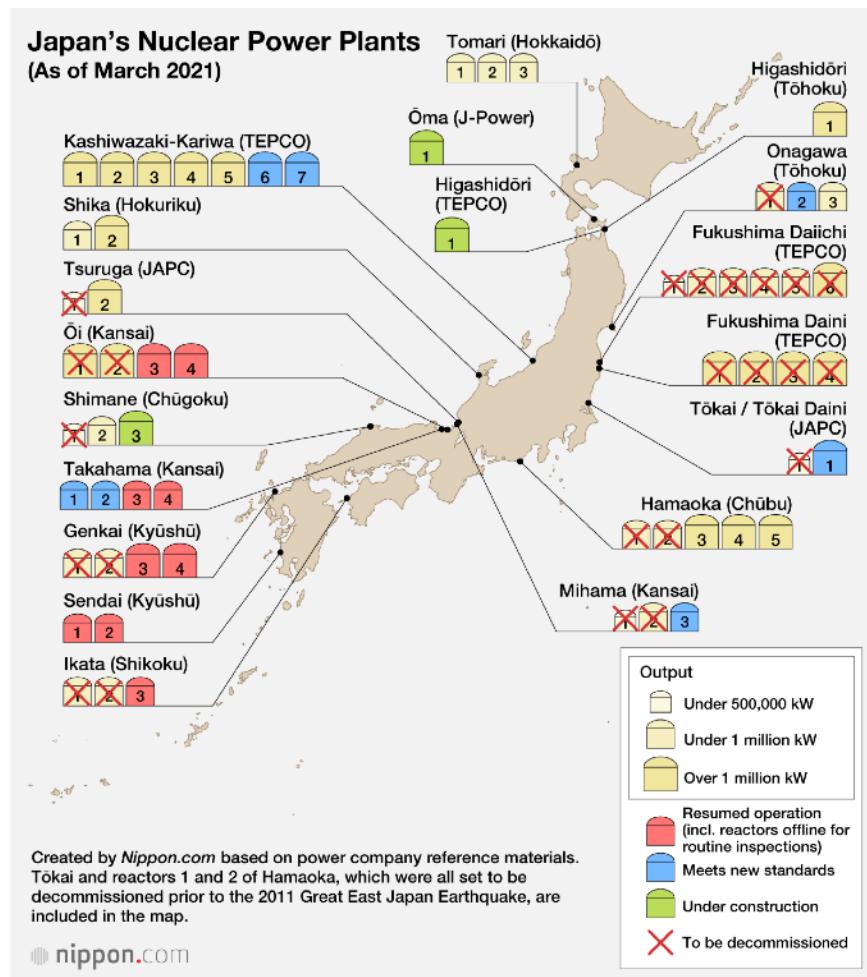


actually resumed construction; perhaps it's only "in construction" in the sense that it still remains partly built.



All Japanese reactors were shut down after the Fukushima disaster. When two reactors re-opened in 2015, the Japanese government promised that a considerable number of other shut-down reactors would also be re-opened in the next few years; however, six years later the number actually operating is still only nine, with the last of these reopened in 2018.

TEPCO, with no reactors currently operating or being built, has been planning to re-open reactors six and seven at its Kashiwazaki-

Kariwa (KK) plant. However, this April, Japan's nuclear regulator issued a "corrective action order" banning TEPCO from transporting new uranium fuel to KK or loading fuel rods into its reactors. This in effect prevents TEPCO restarting any of its seven nuclear reactors there.

This ban follows strong criticisms in March after a series of safety and security breaches came to light, including a failure to protect nuclear materials.

This is reportedly the first time that the nuclear regulation authority, formed after the 2011 disaster has prevented the operation of a nuclear power plant.

TEPCO has until the end of September to submit a report to regulators outlining improvements in the way it handles nuclear materials. Even then it could take at least a year to remove the order if the improvements satisfy the regulators.

In another blow to Japan on 13th April South Korea's president, Moon Jae-in, told officials to have the international tribunal for the law of the sea block Japan's decision to allow over one million tonnes of radioactive water - produced as a result of the Fukushima melt-downs and the continuing need to keep the melted-down cores cool by pouring water over them – into the Pacific.

REMEMBERING CHERNOBYL

April 26th marked the 26th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown, which resulted in the evacuation of 350,000 people, most of whom have never returned, and the setting up of a 1,004 square miles evacuation zone which still remains.

To mark the anniversary Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the exclusion zone where in a televised address he called on the international community to work together to prevent a repeat of the Chernobyl. "Our task is to do everything possible to bolster security and strengthen safety to avoid and never repeat a similar disaster in the future," he said.

Meanwhile, in the capital, Kyiv, dozens of people joined a ceremony and placed flowers at a Chernobyl memorial.

Others gathered in the ghost town of Prypyat in the zone and held an overnight vigil with 35 candles in memory of those who lost their lives in the accident. Prypyat, home to some 50,000 people, was evacuated along with other communities in the exclusion zone around the radioactive wreckage

An explosion and fire caused by a reactor meltdown at the Chernobyl power plant, located 110 kilometers north of Kyiv, on April 26th 1986 sent clouds of lethal nuclear material across much of Europe.

.Dozens of people, particularly firefighters and other first responders, died as a direct result of the disaster, but radiation poisoning is believed to have killed thousands more across Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and other countries in the years that followed.

In 2016, a crumbling "sarcophagus" used to contain radiation from the smoldering reactor was replaced with a \$2.3 billion metal dome in a bid to stop future leaks. More than 200 tons of uranium remains buried inside.

The area has attracted tourists, with flora and fauna taking over deserted streets and buildings, and Kyiv wants to make it a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

"Our goal today is to transform the exclusion zone...into an area of renaissance," Zelenskiy said in his address.



In the UK, Bromley CND held a Chernobyl vigil in Market Square on the 26th

KICK NUCLEAR

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“Remember Fukushima – End Nuclear Power” Friday vigils outside the Japanese Embassy in London are due to resume on a monthly basis from 11am-1pm from 7th May. E-mail for details.

JAPAN NUCLEAR REACTORS SITUATION

(See map on next page)

In the March edition of this newsletter I described the situation at Fukushima ten years after it suffered a triple meltdown.

I also mentioned the present situation regarding its reactors. I've since come across a graphic that illustrates the current situation, with nine reactors either currently in operation or offline "for inspection", six "meeting new standards", so presumably being made ready for re-opening, and three "in construction".

I was intrigued by the three reactors labeled "under construction", so I looked them up individually. The three all started building before the Fukushima disaster: Shimane in 2005, Oma in 2010 and

Higashidori in 2011. Building was suspended at all three after the Fukushima disaster, with the Shimane reactor due to open in December 2011. In 2012 permission was given to continue with building both Oma and Shimane. However there is still no new date given for the reopening of Shimane and in 2018 it was announced the planned opening date for Oma had been pushed back two years to 2026.

As for the Higashidori site, I can't find any evidence that the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) reactor there has