

We protest against Niigata Governor Hanazumi's approval of restarting Kashiwazaki-Kariwa NPP and demand its withdrawal

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Niigata Prefectural Governor Hideyo Hanazumi announced on November 21 that he has approved the restart of the Tokyo Electric Power Company's Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant. The governor stated that after the prefectural assembly, which is scheduled to begin its meeting on December 2, makes its decision, he will convey the "local consent" to the national government and TEPCO.

The Kashiwazaki-Kariwa NPP has a total output of 8.21 million kW, making it one of the world's largest nuclear power plants. If an accident spreads to the plant's multiple reactors, it could cause catastrophic damage and potentially become a widespread disaster exceeding the scale of the Fukushima Daiichi NPP accident in 2011. In earthquake-prone Japan, there is no guarantee that another major accident will not occur. It is absolutely unacceptable to proceed with restarting the plant while leaving unclear who will be responsible in the event of an accident.

In a survey conducted in Niigata Prefecture by the prefectural government, in answer to the question, "Are the conditions for restarting the plant in place?", over 60% of respondents said, "I don't think so," or "I tend to think not." Another survey in the prefecture by a civic group also showed that about 60% of respondents opposed the restarting of the reactors.

During the gubernatorial election, Governor Hanazumi pledged to "seek the confidence of residents" regarding the restart of the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa NPP. Despite this promise, he rejected the establishment of a prefectural referendum ordinance called for by 140,000 Niigata residents in April this year, prior to his latest approval of the restart of the nuclear power plant. His actions must be described as profoundly undemocratic.

TEPCO has not only failed to provide adequate compensation for the damage caused by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident. Its falsification of inspection data, unauthorized use of ID cards, and recent discovery of unauthorized copying of counterterrorism documents have exposed TEPCO's sloppy management system at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa NPP. TEPCO should no longer be qualified to operate dangerous nuclear power plants.

We strongly protest against Governor Hanazumi's approval of the restart and demand its withdrawal.

A policy of promoting nuclear energy is unacceptable as it completely disregards lessons from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident and creates a new myth of safety.

Min-iren is determined to stand by the victims of the nuclear accident, work in solidarity with a wide range of people, and continue to fight for the closure of all nuclear power plants and the transition to renewable energy.