

Japan says radiation leak risk 'significantly smaller'

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Tokyo Electric Power Co (TEPCO) shows an aerial view of the fourth reactor building of TEPCO's No.1 Fukushima nuclear power plant at Okuma town in Fukushima prefecture on April 10. The risk of a massive leak of radioactive materials from the crippled nuclear plant in northeast Japan is becoming "significantly smaller," the government said Monday.

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"The possibility that the situation at the [nuclear plant](#) will deteriorate and lead to new leakage of massive radioactive materials is becoming significantly smaller," chief government spokesman Yukio Edano told reporters.

"Obviously, the nuclear plant is not running normally. We have to

continue to ask nearby residents to remain evacuated in case the situation deteriorates.

"We believe the risk of that has become significantly smaller compared to one or two weeks after the [earthquake](#)," Edano said, a month to the day after a huge earthquake and [tsunami](#) knocked out cooling systems at the Fukushima plant.

The government believed the current 20-kilometre (12-mile) exclusion zone was sufficient to protect people living near the plant against any sudden spike in radiation levels, he added.

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