

16,000 demonstrators rally against restarting Japan nuke plant

September 23 2014



Cranes work at the tsunami-crippled Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Okuma, Fukushima Prefecture, northeast of Tokyo on July 9, 2014

Some 16,000 people rallied Tuesday in the Japanese capital against the government's plan to restart nuclear reactors, more than three years after the Fukushima disaster, Jiji Press said.

It was one of the largest anti-nuclear demonstrations since the nuclear

watchdog on September 10 approved plans to restart two [reactors](#) at the Sendai plant in southern Japan.

"Three and a half years has passed since the nuclear accident, but self-examination has yet to be made," Nobel literature laureate Kenzaburo Oe told the Tokyo rally, according to public broadcaster NHK.

"(The [government](#)) is going ahead with the plan to resume operation at the Sendai plant without compiling sufficient anti-disaster plans," Oe said.

After the rally demonstrators marched through the capital, carrying banners reading: "We don't need nuclear plants".

On Sunday new industry minister Yuko Obuchi said the resource-poor nation should be realistic about its energy needs as the government tries to convince a sceptical public about the necessity of nuclear power.

In pre-Fukushima Japan, [nuclear power](#) accounted for nearly one-third of the country's energy needs.

The Nuclear Regulatory Authority has said the two reactors were satisfactory but hurdles still remain, including getting the consent of local communities in a country still scarred by the catastrophe where all 48 viable reactors are offline.

Widespread anti-nuclear sentiment has simmered ever since the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011 caused meltdowns at Fukushima, sparking the worst atomic disaster since Chernobyl.

Tens of thousands of people were evacuated from their homes, many of whom have not been allowed to return. Scientists say some areas might have to be abandoned forever.

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