

Fukushima Nuclear Disaster Three Years On **Doro-Mito Strikes Against Work Exposed to Radiation** **Stop Reopening of Rail Truck to Tatsuta Station!**

Yosuke Oda,

Secretary General of National Conference for Worldwide Immediate Abolishment of All Nuclear Power Plants (NAZEN)



Striking Doro-Mito members (May 31, in front of Iwaki Transport Bureau of JR East)

Doro-Mito, a sister union of Doro-Chiba, have been repeatedly waging strikes against re-opening of rail truck near Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. This struggle of rail workers in their own workplace against radiation-exposed work immensely shook Iwaki City where many of “Fukushima Liquidators” (nuclear plant workers to settle the catastrophe) live. We sincerely ask you, friends all over the world, to support this struggle and urge you to fight with us.

In concert with the Abe administration, which has been exerting enormous pressure on the evacuees to return to their contaminated hometown, the East Japan Railway Company (JR East) began test operation for the restoration of the disrupted railway line on Saturday May 10 on the rail

truck between Hirono Station and Tatsuta Station, 16 kilometer (10 miles) from the Fukushima Daiichi NPP. On Monday June 1, it extended “commercial” service to the



Doro-Mito, Doro-Chiba and their supporters march in Iwaki City (May 31)

Tatsuta Station. Now, trains are running inside the 20 Kilometer Radius—“the Evacuation Zone.”

For the safety of workers and passengers, Doro-Mito' maintenance and inspection workers waged a strike on May 10 and the drivers struck on May 30 and 31. On May 31, Doro-Mito and its supporters from around the country held a rally and marched in Iwaki City with several hundred participants.

Tens of thousands evacuees have been living their hard lives in “temporary” housing for over three years. On top of it, they are now faced with TEPCO's stoppage of paying damages and administrative pressure to return to their contaminated hometown. Most importantly, the evacuees from the Town of Naraha, where the Tatsuta Station is located, were not even informed about the re-opening of the rail truck to there. Doro-Mito's visit to the temporary housing for evacuees from Naraha and handing the strike leaflet produced a big resonance with the evacuees' longstanding anger and eagerness to fight back, “Thanks for speaking out!” “You are real unionists of the National Railways!”

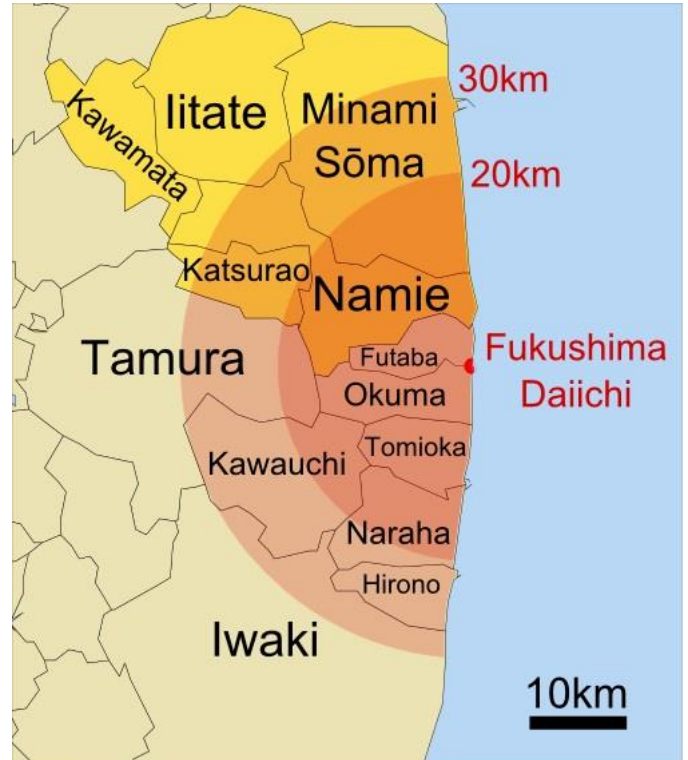
The town of Naraha houses Japan's largest soccer training facility “J-Village,” which has been used as the operation base for dealing with the nuclear catastrophe since March 2011. The decontamination workers there told that they were warned, “Avoid drinking water from Naraha!”

Among children in Fukushima, as many as 89 thyroid cancer cases, including “suspected” cases, have been already found which is over 300 times more frequent than among the general pediatric population. The Abe administration shamelessly insists, “it is quite unlikely that the Fukushima nuclear accident caused such child cancer cases” to evade the responsibility.

A plan is under way to construct interim radioactive waste storage facilities in two towns, Ohkuma and Futaba. In

spite of the promise to the inhabitants in Fukushima to remove the harmful waste from there to outside Fukushima Prefecture for final disposal within 30 years, the government intends to settle the dangerous facilities there for “permanent disposal”.

It is evident from the revealed fact that the government had concealed its plan to purchase, not to rent, land for construction of the storage facilities. It shows that the



governmental plan is to turn “interim” facilities into permanent ones. Brutality of the “Return home” policy became ever more evident. The government is driving the evacuees into the very land, which is destined to be a deserted area, or a desolate wilderness, according to the governmental scheme. What an outrageous deed!

In face of people's outrage, the administration of Town of Naraha was forced to change its previous plan to issue a declaration of “return to hometown by the end of May 2014”; the new policy states, “We strive to achieve the return home of the evacuees from Naraha after June 2015.”

As a result of these severe developments, the



Test operation between Hirono Station and Tatsuta Station; innumerable radioactive waste in flexible container bags are piled up on lands adjacent to the rail truck.

newly-reopened train has actually no passenger on board to and from Tatsuta Station. We'd like to ask the East Japan Railway Company: "For what purpose then do you continue to run trains there?" The answer will be simply: To make a pretense of business as usual, as if the Fukushima nuclear catastrophe has not occurred at all; to evade the liability; to show the nuclear power is "safe" and also to make massive profit from nuclear power plant export. The JR Companies are the core of greedy Japanese business circle.

The level of radiation around Tatsuta Station is 0.44 $\mu\text{Sv/h}$ to 1.70 $\mu\text{Sv/h}$. The drivers are ordered to carry a dosimeter with them on duty but they are equipped with no counter-measure against high doses of radiation exposure whatsoever. The management arrogantly instructed at a negotiation table, "(when the dosimeter shows high radiation) Run the train to Tatsuta and go back from there; the train cannot run backward." Even women conductors who fear harmful effects for future reproduction were forced to work on this rail truck; "if you are anxious, a supervisor will accompany you on your train." A rail worker already died from leukemia. Loss of a colleague made the workplace full of grief, chagrin and anger. The struggle continues. Your message from around the world would greatly encourage the workers who fight for safety on rail.

The Japanese government and electric companies are moving to carry out its plan to restart nuclear plants, all of which remain shut down after the Fukushima nuclear accident except operation of two reactors of Ohi Nuclear Power Plant from July 2012 to September 2013, saying, "It is for the livelihood of people living in the areas where nuclear power plants are located". Although they strive to justify the restart of nuclear plants, it is becoming more and more obvious that the government's policy of restarting nuclear plants is not only to abandon people but to rob their lives. The "evacuation plan" of the government is absolutely disgraceful. It's no exaggeration to say that the government is not ashamed of anticipating another serious accident.

The [Hamaoka Nuclear Power Plant](#) in Omaezaki, Shizuoka Prefecture, deemed as the most dangerous atomic energy plant in Japan because of its location, is now set for restart. The Hamaoka Nuclear Plant, operated by Chubu Electric Power Co., is believed to be located within the high-potential area of the Nankai Trough mega-quake, which is

expected to strike within 30 years and could affect boundless areas from the Kanto region to Okinawa.

According to the evacuation simulation conducted by Omaezaki City, it would take between 32 and 46 hours for all residents in the area to evacuate without taking into consideration of traffic jams, leaving portions of residents to be exposed to radiation. Under such circumstances, hospital patients and nursing home elderly residents would be forced to remain in "indoor evacuation" but left uncared-for. At the time of the March 11 in Fukushima, the patients were forced to leave hospital with nothing but a blanket and a lot of them died in cars.

Restarting nuclear plants in the full knowledge of the reckless evacuation plan that puts peoples' lives at risk—this is indeed the "restart of nuclear power plant".

In April this year, TEPCO reported that it moved into the black in fiscal 2013 for the first time since 2011, the year of the disastrous nuclear accident. The company's net profit is over 438.6 billion yen!

TEPCO raised electric rate by 8.46% and made the money-losing reactor decommissioning department wholly owned subsidiary in order to eliminate deficits, while forcing evacuees to return home hiding the truth about internal exposure in order to slash compensation spending. And now TEPCO launches to make massive profits by restarting nuclear plants and exporting nuclear facilities. We can never accept such an impudent evil deed!

The strike of Doro-Mito led the Fukushima people to unleash their anger, became connected with the anger of nuclear plant workers and gave courage to those who are living in the areas of nuclear power plant siting.

A labor union should be united to protect the lives and security of its own members and community people. A labor union should stand up to fight from its workplaces. It is the dignity of labor unions to carry through such principles, all of which are the universal power that the workers of the whole world share.

Let us fight against neoliberalism from our workplaces and revive labor unions!

Let all workers be united into one and fight together to totally abolish nukes and wars!

You can find the archive of Doro-Chiba Quake Report here: <http://dorchibanewsletter.wordpress.com/>
