

# Activists call for end to nuclear power 58 years after Bikini incident

Sunday 18 March 2012, by [Kyodo News](#) (Date first published: 2 March 2012).

SHIZUOKA, Japan (Kyodo) — Antinuclear activists called for an end to reliance on nuclear power at a rally in Yaizu, Shizuoka Prefecture, on Thursday, the 58<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the exposure of a Japanese tuna fishing boat to radiation from a U.S. hydrogen bomb test at Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific in 1954.

About 1,800 people gathered at the rally, held in the home port of the ill-fated trawler Fukuryu Maru No. 5, organizers said. At the rally, they called for an end to reliance on nuclear power for electricity and for a switch to environmentally friendly energy.

“The government’s attitude hasn’t changed a bit since the Bikini incident, which occurred half a century ago,” said Matashichi Oishi, a 78-year-old former crew member of the trawler, at the rally, referring to the government’s handling of the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

“Nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants can never coexist with humans beings. Let’s join hands to eradicate them,” he said.

Another participant, Tokuo Hayakawa, a 72-year-old monk who was displaced from the town of Naraha, Fukushima Prefecture, in the aftermath of the disaster, which was triggered by the March 11 earthquake and tsunami last year, said, “We can never allow another catastrophe like the one in Fukushima to occur.”

The Fukuryu Maru was fishing for tuna about 160 kilometers east of Bikini Atoll when the United States tested the bomb, codenamed “Bravo,” which was 1,000 times more powerful than the atomic bomb it dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

Aikichi Kuboyama, the ship’s chief radio operator, died six months after the blast at the age of 40 and became a symbol of the incident.

**Kyodo Press**

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\* Kyodo Press, March 2, 2012

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