

Japan-Nuke: Over 500 Fukushima residents to file damage suit against gov't, TEPCO

Friday 8 February 2013, by [Bloomberg](#), [Japan Times](#), [Mainichi Shimbun](#) (Date first published: 28 January 2013).

Contents

- [Tepco settles over nuke \(...\)](#)
- [Eight U.S. sailors sue Tepco](#)

More than 500 Fukushima Prefecture residents are poised to file a damage suit against the government and Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), the operator of the crippled Fukushima No. 1 Nuclear Power Plant, over health concerns and discrimination they suffered on the heels of the nuclear disaster.

The class action suit, to be filed mainly by residents of the city of Iwaki and other areas outside the nuclear evacuation zones, is the largest suit ever over the nuclear crisis in terms of the number of plaintiffs. They are set to file the case with the Iwaki branch of the Fukushima District Court on March 11.

On Jan. 27, some 200 residents attended a ceremony in Iwaki marking the forming of the plaintiffs' group. In the lawsuit, the plaintiffs are demanding 250,000 yen each in damages for their mental distress over the one-month period following the outbreak of the nuclear disaster in March 2011, as well as 80,000 yen per month for children and pregnant women until the decommissioning of reactors at the troubled Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant is completed. Additional demands will be made for the actual expenses the plaintiffs had to pay for their evacuation. There were 512 residents who submitted their proxies to the plaintiffs' group as of Jan. 27.

Although there are many voluntary evacuees with small children and residents with health concerns in areas outside the evacuation zones, the amount of compensation they receive is smaller than that for residents within the evacuation zones. Thus far, compensation for voluntary evacuees who were under 18 or pregnant stood at 720,000 yen each across the board.

For inquiries, call Hiroshi Yoshida at the secretariat of the plaintiffs' group at: 080-1815-5089 (in Japanese).

* *Mainichi Shimbun*, January 28, 2013

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130128p2a00m0na012000c.html>

Tepco settles over nuke evacuee death — Utility to pay \14.7 million, won't say

how woman died

FUKUSHIMA - Tokyo Electric Power Co. has settled with the family of a woman from Minamisoma, Fukushima Prefecture, who died as a result of the meltdown calamity at the utility's stricken nuclear plant, sources said.

This is the first time Tepco has admitted a causal link between the death of an evacuee and the nuclear disaster at its Fukushima No. 1 plant. In all, 183 settlement cases have been made public by a government-run nuclear accident dispute settlement center.

According to the sources, the woman, who was hospitalized in the Odaka district of Minamisoma, died in April last year after she was forced to evacuate at the start of the crisis, the worst such incident since the 1987 Chernobyl disaster.

Through mediation by the center, Tepco has agreed to pay ¥14.65 million to the family, including ¥12 million for her death, the sources said.

The Odaka district is located within 20 km of the plant and was designated as an exclusion area soon after the disaster started.

Tepco declined comment on the woman's case, citing its policy not to discuss individual cases.

Tepco's acceptance of a causal link between the disaster and evacuee deaths may open the way for more compensation demands and inevitably add to the financial burden already felt by the embattled utility as it tries to decommission the Fukushima plant over the coming decades.

* **Jiji Press, Kyodo Press**, December 22, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121222a3.html>

Eight U.S. sailors sue Tepco for millions for falsely downplaying Fukushima radiation exposure

Tokyo Electric Power Co. is being sued for tens of millions of dollars by eight U.S. Navy sailors who claim that they were unwittingly exposed to radiation from the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant meltdowns and that Tepco lied about the dangers.

The sailors aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan were involved in the Operation Tomodachi disaster relief operations following the March 11, 2011, earthquake and tsunami that devastated the Tohoku region and led to the nuclear catastrophe, according to their complaint filed in U.S. federal court in San Diego on Dec. 21.

Tepco and the Japanese government conspired to create the false impression that radiation leaking from the Fukushima No. 1 plant didn't pose a threat to the sailors, according to the complaint. As a result, the plaintiffs rushed to areas that were unsafe and too close to the facility, exposing them to radiation, their lawyers said.

The Japanese government was "lying through their teeth about the reactor meltdown" crisis, as it

reassured the USS Reagan crew that “everything is under control,” the plaintiffs’ lawyers said in the complaint. “The plaintiffs must now endure a lifetime of radiation poisoning and suffering.”

The sailors are each seeking \$10 million in damages, \$30 million in punitive damages and a judgment requiring the creation of a \$100 million fund to pay for their medical monitoring and treatments.

“We can’t comment as we have not received the complaint document yet,” Yusuke Kunikage, a Tepco spokesman, said Thursday. “We will consider a response after examining the claim.”

In July, the Nuclear Damage Liability Facilitation Fund took control of Tepco in return for a \1 trillion capital injection after the disaster left the utility on the brink of bankruptcy. The utility received \1.4 trillion in state funds to compensate those affected by the disaster.

* **Bloomberg**, December 28, 2012

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20121228a3.html>
