

# Japan: a call for abolition of nuclear plants

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## **Speakers liken current policy to wartime tactics: NGOs, academics call for abolition of nuclear plants**

Antinuclear nongovernmental organizations and academics called for the complete abolition of nuclear power plants in Japan on Monday, the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II.

Drawing parallels between the nation's nuclear policy and the Imperial Japanese Army – both of which caused unwarranted grief to the public – University of Tokyo professor Tetsuya Takahashi urged the government to revise the nation's energy infrastructure.

“Having a group of people profit from the sacrifice of the public is wrong,” Takahashi said, stressing that the people in Fukushima have had their lives torn asunder since March 11.

During a gathering at the Japan Education Center in Tokyo's Chiyoda Ward, the expert on the contentious Yasukuni Shrine issue and Fukushima native accused the government of employing the same tactics to deceive people into supporting pronuclear policies as it did during the war to marshal support.

Some Cabinet members, he noted, heap praise on those working to cool the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant, much in “the spirit of Yasukuni Shrine,” built by the government to honor the war dead including Japanese soldiers.

“One's life, health, fortune, honor, hope . . . those rights should not be sacrificed” as they are today in Fukushima to benefit a small group of people, Takahashi said.

“Japan must seek a path that will not require such acts by the public,” he added.

Yoshinobu Koizumi, of the Tokyo-based People's Research Institute on Energy and Environment, also pointed out that Japan's nuclear energy policy was imposed undemocratically on the people.

Blueprints for safety measures in nuclear power plants were discussed by only a handful of people while inconvenient data were “kept hidden” from the public, as was the case during the war, Koizumi said.

Although some did voice their concern over the safety of nuclear energy Å in the same manner that some believed the war was wrong Å the government silenced them all, he added.

“I can sense a shadow of wartime dictatorship when I look at those pronuclear bureaucrats and politicians,” Koizumi said. “It gives me the chills.”

Monday marked the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War II and the first since the March 11 disaster.

By **JUN HONGO**, *Japan Times* Staff writer, August 15, 2011

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\* <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20110815x3.html>