

The MDN on Kindle: Your handy English news source.



# The Mainichi Daily News

Get MDN news through Kindle. More info ▶



Weather

[National](#) | [International](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Odds & Ends](#)

## News

### Over 10,000 deaths feared in quake-tsunami, nuclear crisis continues

TOKYO (Kyodo) -- The death toll from Friday's devastating earthquake and tsunami that hit northeastern and eastern Japan will likely surpass 10,000, the Miyagi police chief said Sunday as Japan grapples with widespread damage and a crisis at one of two affected nuclear plants.



A school building, which was submerged as a result of a tsunami on March 11, stands in an area of Yamamoto, Miyagi Prefecture. (Mainichi)

Japanese authorities scrambled to control overheating reactors at the quake-hit Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, and some 80,000 people joined more than 450,000 other evacuees from quake- and tsunami-affected regions by moving out of a 20-kilometer radius from the plant a day after one of its reactors partially melted Saturday.

The magnitude of the country's biggest recorded quake was revised upward the same day from 8.8 to 9.0, making it one of the largest in history, the Japan Meteorological Agency said, adding that a major aftershock is still quite likely while removing its tsunami alert for the archipelago.

"This is the toughest crisis in Japan's 65 years of postwar history," Prime Minister Naoto Kan told an evening press conference, adding, however, "I'm convinced that we can overcome the crisis."

"We have no choice but to deal with the situation on the premise that it (the death toll) will undoubtedly be numbered in the ten thousands," Naoto Takeuchi, head of the Miyagi prefectural police, said in a local disaster task force meeting.



The Fukushima No. 1 Nuclear Power Plant in Okuma, Fukushima Prefecture is pictured in this August 2003 file photo. (Mainichi)

The death toll confirmed by police topped 1,000 in Miyagi and other areas in the evening, excluding more than 600 bodies that have been found in Miyagi and Iwate prefectures on the Pacific coast.

Also, local governments have been unable to contact tens of thousands of people, and at least 20,820 buildings have been fully or partially damaged in quake-hit areas.

Kan issued an instruction early Sunday to boost the number of Self-Defense Force personnel sent to quake-hit areas to 100,000, one of the largest for an SDF operation, saying, "We will do everything to rescue stranded people."

The SDF had dispatched 65,000 personnel by Saturday night, but will increase the number to 100,000 in one or two days, Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa told reporters.

At the Fukushima nuclear plant, the radiation level exceeded the legal limit at one point, but Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano dismissed concerns that the level would affect human health and said trouble with the No. 3 reactor there has not led to a

## Photo Journal



Desperate search

## In Focus



[Japan's deadly earthquake in pictures](#)



[Photos: ANA 'Appearance Leaders' show how it's done](#)

## Videos



[Snow aglow at Nikko hot spring resort](#)

## Most Read Today

1. [Japan's devastating earthquake in pictures](#)
2. [Explosion did not occur at reactor, new cooling operation begins](#)
3. [Japan must concentrate on recovering, learning from quake](#)
4. [10-meter tsunami observed in Sendai port in Miyagi Pref.](#)
5. [Mainichi photographer describes devastation of massive Japan quake](#)



[Book hotels in Tokyo](#)  
[Book Flights + Hotels](#)

## Market & Exchange Rates

<b>Nikkei</b>	2011/03/11 15:28
<b>10254.43(-179.95)</b>	
<b>Yen/Dollar</b>	2011/03/10
<b>82.98 yen</b>	
<b>Yen/Euro</b>	2011/03/10
<b>114.49 yen</b>	

[Wireless reading devices discussed in MDN advisory panel meeting](#)

[MDN information on RSS and Twitter](#)

created using **BCL easyPDF Printer Driver**

[Click here to purchase a license to remove this image](#)

"meltdown," a critical situation where fuel rods have melted.

A combined 37 people have been exposed to radiation near the plant, however, and 160 more are feared to join them, according to the Fukushima prefectural government and the national government's nuclear safety and disaster management agencies.

In Miyagi, about 200 more bodies were found in the city of Higashimatsushima, and about 10,000 people in Minamisanriku, over half the town's population, remain unaccounted for, police said.

About 4,400 people remained isolated as of Saturday night in the tsunami-swamped town of Onagawa and neighboring Ishinomaki city, in schools, hospitals, inns and the Onagawa nuclear plant where they had been evacuated to, Miyagi officials said.

In Iwate Prefecture, north of Miyagi, many bodies were found Sunday morning under the rubble in Rikuzentakata, and the U.S. military in Japan is poised to airlift about 640 isolated residents there by eight helicopters, the police and the Defense Agency said.



Flames engulf buildings in an industrial complex in Sendai, northern Japan, Saturday, March 12, 2011. (AP Photo/Itsuo Inouye)

About 5,000 houses in the city had been submerged by quake-triggered tsunami, and the city office has confirmed that only 5,900 of its population of about 23,000 had taken shelter.

The Iwate government also said it has been unable to communicate with the mayor and officials in Otsuchi after the town office was swept away by a tsunami while the mayor and town officials were apparently inside the building. A nursing home accommodating 30 elderly people was also washed away in Ofunato city.

The Fukushima prefectural government said it was still unable to contact 1,167 residents, including 918 in the town of Namie, boosting the tally of those unaccounted for in its latest data.

Helicopters from the Maritime Self-Defense Force sent to check the extent of damage spotted bush fires at seven places in Miyako city early Sunday, the Defense Agency said.

Communication failures were also found to have extended further. Nippon Telegraph and Telephone East Corp. said 475,400 fiber-optic services were disconnected as of 6 a.m., up 76,500 from 8 p.m. Saturday, in addition to 879,500 subscribed phone lines that remained out of service in areas centering on Iwate and Miyagi.

A total of 11,400 base stations of major cellphone operators NTT Docomo Inc., KDDI Corp. and Softbank Mobile Corp. stayed inoperative as of 7:30 a.m., disrupting phone calls and emails via mobile phones across wide areas, the Internal Affairs and Communications Ministry said.

Areas in Iwate, Miyagi and seven other prefectures remained unable to receive TV signals as of 10 a.m., it also said.

Rescue workers including Japanese troops and teams from abroad, meanwhile, have managed to save some 12,000 people, Kan said, apparently including about 5,800 people the Defense Agency said were rescued by ground troops in the Miyagi town of Kesenuma and its vicinity.

An increasing number of search and rescue teams were arriving in Japan, with a total of 69 governments and five international institutions having offered assistance, the Foreign Ministry said.

In the evening the weather agency lifted the tsunami advisory that remained for the Pacific coast stretching from Hokkaido to Kyushu after downgrading its tsunami warning to an advisory in the morning for the Pacific side of the Tohoku region in

	Subscribe to the Mainichi Shimbun	▶▶
	Subscribe to the Mainichi Weekly	▶▶
	Use images from the Mainichi Photo Bank	▶▶

northeastern Japan.

The government adopted a decree late Saturday designating the quake a serious disaster eligible for increased state subsidies for reconstruction.

(Mainichi Japan) March 13, 2011

Share       Print 

Text Size   

#### Latest News

- [Over 10,000 deaths feared in quake-tsunami, nuclear crisis continues](#)
- [Water injected into troubled nuclear power plant to avert disaster](#)
- [Anxiety, fatigue grow among evacuated citizens near nuclear plant](#)
- [Japan offices to provide quake info for foreigners](#)
- [Australia seeks 'urgent briefings' from Japan on nuclear crisis](#)
- [False information spreads through e-mails, Internet](#)
- [Man rescued in sea off Japan's quake-hit coast](#)
- [Kan asks for public efforts to overcome 'worst crisis' in postwar Japan](#)
- [Overseas rescue teams arriving in Japan, U.S. squad flies in](#)
- [Thailand cancels plan to dispatch search-and-rescue team to Japan](#)