



Japanese playwright Oriza Hirata, who serves as a special adviser to the Cabinet, claimed in a recent lecture given in Seoul that the dumping of low-level radioactive water into the Pacific Ocean followed a "strong request" from the United States, a person who attended the lecture said Wednesday.

Hirata's remarks, made Tuesday, that the release was not carried out based on Tokyo's independent judgment but rather on a request from Washington is likely to ignite a debate.

South Korea and other neighboring countries have protested the lack of prior notification of the discharge.

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