



Nuclear experts have thrown doubt on the accuracy of official information issued about the Fukushima nuclear accident, saying that it followed a pattern of secrecy and cover-ups employed in other nuclear accidents. "It's impossible to get any radiation readings," said John Large, an independent nuclear engineer who has worked for the UK government and been commissioned to report on the accident for Greenpeace International.

"The actions of the Japanese government are completely contrary to their words. They have evacuated 180,000 people but say there is no radiation. They are certain to have readings but we are being told nothing."

He said a radiation release was suspected "but at the moment it is impossible to know. It was the same at Chernobyl, where they said there was a bit of a problem and only later did the full extent emerge."

According to some reports, 17 helicopter crewmen helping in rescue efforts were contaminated with low-level radiation, but Japanese officials declined to comment.

The country's government has previously been accused of covering up nuclear accidents and hampering the development of alternative energy.

In a newly released diplomatic cable obtained by WikiLeaks, politician Taro Kono, a high-profile member of Japan's lower house, tells U.S. diplomats that the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry – the Japanese government department responsible for nuclear energy – has been "covering up nuclear accidents and obscuring the true costs and problems associated with the nuclear industry."

[More...](#)