

Fukushima Cover Up Unravels: “The Government Can No Longer Pull the Wool Over the Public’s Eyes”

By [Washington's Blog](#)

Global Research, January 23, 2012

[Washiington's Blog](#) 23 January 2012

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [Environment](#), [Media Disinformation](#)

Too Much Radiation to Cover Up

As I've pointed out since day one, the Japanese government and Tepco have covered up the extent of the radiation released by Fukushima and its health effects on the Japanese and others. See [this](#) and [this](#).

The New York Times [notes](#):

The government inspectors declared Onami's rice safe for consumption after testing just two of its 154 rice farms.

Then ... more than a dozen [farmers] found unsafe levels of cesium. An ensuing panic forced the Japanese government to intervene, with promises to test more than 25,000 rice farms in eastern Fukushima Prefecture, where the plant is located.

The repeated failures have done more than raise concerns that some Japanese may have been exposed to unsafe levels of radiation in their food, as regrettable as that is. They have also had a corrosive effect on public confidence in the food-monitoring efforts, with a growing segment of the public and even many experts coming to believe that officials have understated or even covered up the true extent of the public health risk in order to limit both the economic damage and the size of potential compensation payments.

Critics say ... the government can no longer pull the wool over the public's eyes, as they contend it has done routinely in the past.

“Since the accident, the government has tried to continue its business-as-usual approach of understating the severity of the accident and insisting that it knows best,” said Mitsuhiro Fukao, an economics professor at Keio University in Tokyo who has written about the loss of trust in government. “But the people are learning from the blogs, Twitter and Facebook that the government's food-monitoring system is simply not credible.”

“No one trusts the national government's safety standards,” said Ichio Muto, 59, who farms organic mushrooms in Nihonmatsu, 25 miles northwest of the Fukushima Daiichi plant.

The Japan Times [reports](#):

The government buried a worst-case scenario for the Fukushima nuclear crisis that was drafted last March and kept it under wraps until the end of last year, sources in the administration said Saturday.

After the document was shown to a small, select group of senior government officials at the prime minister's office in late March, the administration of then Prime Minister Naoto Kan decided to quietly bury it, the sources said.

"When the document was presented (in March), a discussion ensued about keeping its existence secret," a government source said.

In order to deny its existence, the government treated it as a personal document of Japan Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Shunsuke Kondo, who authored it, until the end of December, the sources said.

It was only then that it was actually recognized as an official government document, they said.

"The content was so shocking that we decided to treat it as if it didn't exist," a senior government official said.

Major Japanese broadcaster NHK purportedly [stopped a reporter in mid-sentence](#) on March 12th as he was discussing the exposure of the nuclear fuel rods above the cooling pool, telling him:

They say you mustn't read this draft.

Finally, the [Economist](#) and [Boing Boing](#) note that a Canadian journalist was grilled about who he spoke with at Fukushima, and:

Held, threatened, and shaken down for bribes before being detained without counsel or a phone call. He says he was eventually deported, though not before being ordered to sign a falsified confession and being threatened by an official at gunpoint.

(Many journalists and nuclear experts are alleged to have been [monitored](#), [harassed](#) or [blocked](#) by the Japanese government.)

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