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Japan's incoming pro-nuclear PM "to review Fukushima"

Posted: 23 December 2012 19:45 hrs

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TOKYO: Japan's incoming pro-nuclear premier Shinzo Abe said on Sunday his government will again investigate the Fukushima atomic crisis, after which the country's reactors could be restarted, reports said.

His comments will add to speculation that plans to ditch atomic power in disaster-scarred Japan will be shelved by his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) when it takes power after scoring a landslide election win last week.

"We have yet to completely clarify what went wrong (in Fukushima)," he told a political show on Fuji TV on Sunday.

"As a government, we want to once again analyse why Fukushima Daiichi failed," he said. He gave no further details and did not set out a timeframe for a probe.

"After that, I wish to think of next steps, including the restart of reactors," he said on the programme, according to broadcaster NHK.

"Could it have been avoided? Was it a man-made disaster? As a government, we must study that," said Abe, according to Jiji Press.

He has previously derided the zero-nuclear goal of the ousted Democratic Party of Japan as unrealistic.

All but two of Japan's 50 reactors remain switched off after the worst atomic accident in a generation and anti-nuclear sentiment has run high, but that failed to translate into support at the polls for anti-atomic parties.

Several probes have already been conducted into the accident in March last year, which saw the Fukushima plant suffer meltdowns and explosions after being hit by an earthquake-triggered tsunami.

A damning parliamentary report in July concluded that the Fukushima accident was a man-made disaster caused by Japan's culture of "reflexive obedience" and not just the tsunami that hit the plant.

Shares in Fukushima operator TEPCO have soared since Abe's election win.

- AFP/xq



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A journalist checks the radiation level with her dosimeter at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant in February 2012. (AFP/File - Yoshikazu Tsuno)

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