

LDP likely to restart N-reactors

The Yomiuri Shimbun

The Liberal Democratic Party and its likely coalition partner New Komeito will approve the restart of nuclear reactors as long as safety requirements are met, The Yomiuri Shimbun learned Friday.

The plan was revealed in the final draft of policy accords for formation of a coalition government that will be signed by LDP President Shinzo Abe and Komeito leader Natsuo Yamaguchi on Tuesday.

According to its draft statement on nuclear power and energy policy, "restarting will be based on the expert judgment of the Nuclear Regulation Authority, which pursues the safety-first principle in line with international standards."

The final draft reflects the LDP's campaign platform for Sunday's general election in which the party pledged it would aim to draw a conclusion on whether to approve restart of nuclear reactors within three years.

In its manifesto, Komeito pledged not to approve construction of new nuclear power stations. Taking this into consideration, the draft incorporated the wording of "reducing reliance on nuclear power generation as much as possible."

In addition to nuclear power and energy, the final draft lists policy accords on the following seven other items: reconstruction from last year's disasters and preventive measures; economic and pump-priming measures; comprehensive reform of social security and tax systems; revitalization of education; diplomacy and security; the Constitution; and administrative, political and government employee system reforms.

Regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade framework, the draft said it was possible that Japan would take part in the ongoing negotiations, saying that the country "will explore the best way of serving national interest."

In its campaign pledge, the LDP said it "opposes taking part in the talks as long as TPP is premised on abolishing tariffs without exceptions." In the final draft of its policy accords, however, the LDP seems to have changed its position. "There is a possibility that TPP participation will be in Japan's national interest," a top LDP lawmaker said.

In connection with the comprehensive reform of social security and tax systems, the draft clearly states that the planned coalition government will surely carry out measures for low-income earners such as setting multiple tax rates when the rate for daily

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necessities is lowered.

Regarding stimulus and economic measures, the draft calls for implementing drastic monetary easing steps such as "setting a 2 percent inflation target" to lift Japan out of deflation.

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