

Einladung zum Vortrag

Tales of my aunts: How the people of Fukushima are living under nuclear accidents

Kazuyuki Watanabe
(Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan)

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Geo-Campus Lankwitz
Malteserstr. 74-100, 12249 Berlin
Building G, room G 110

This presentation aims to reflect on how people have been facing troubles from the March 2011 nuclear disaster in Fukushima Daiichi power plant. The lecture is based on the experiences of my aunts, and my grandmother living in Fukushima Prefecture. My grandmother and two of my aunts are living in Kouriyama city, about 60 km, my third aunt in Minami-Souma city, in 20-30 km distance from the power plant respectively. I visited Kouriyama three times, and Minami-Souma once after the accident.

In March 2011, the Japanese government declared the area within 20 km around the power plant a 'no-entry zone'. In April, the area was expected to be affected by radiation more than 20 mSv per year, and declared a 'scheduled evacuation zone'. While Minami-Souma is designated a 'stay within the house zone', both Kouriyama and Minami-Souma, are expected to be affected by 5 to 10 mSv per year. This means that radiation in Kouriyama and Minami-Souma is below the government's standard for evacuation (20 mSv), and thus, beyond the government's prohibited area. It is also true, however, that radiation of 5 to 10mSv per year is more than 10 times above the level in Tokyo and other Japanese counties respectively. So, I wonder whether my aunts live in safe area or not.

In my presentation, I will present insights of interviews with my relatives: How does their everyday life under "low", but still much higher than normal radiation look like? From that point of departure, I would like to discuss how we can assess implications of the fact that they live outside the evacuation area. Does it mean that the area is safe enough? Finally, I would like to learn from German experiences with the Chernobyl accident.