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Press Note Released at the Press Conference held on 17.03.2011

India Should Use Renewable Resources for Power Generation Shun Nuclear Power Plants

While expressing solidarity with the people of Japan at the devastation caused by Tsunami and Earthquake, Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (IDPD) has demanded that India should shun the pursuit for nuclear power plants and instead look forward to utilize renewable energy resources like, wind power, bio-waste, micro-hydel and solar which are in plenty in our country.

We demand the government to immediately put moratorium on all ongoing nuclear activity.

Events in Japan are very shocking and vindicate the stand of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and IDPD that nuclear

power plants are a potential threat of radiation. The cost of producing electricity from nuclear power is fraught with dangers and is 2-3 times more expensive than from conventional sources like coal and gas. There cannot be any comparison with the renewable resources which are totally non hazardous.

It is pertinent to note that US has not built any nuclear power plant since the 3 Mile Island incident and France which pioneered the nuclear technology and nuclear power plants have not built one in the last 25 years. The nuclear plant can never be dismantled as the half life of Uranium in the reactor is 24000 years that means the danger is reduced to half 24000 years and they have to be kept for an eternity, literally, before the spent fuel (the used Uranium from reactors) for it to become safe completely.

More over the cost of dismantling is much more than the cost of installation. The track record of safety in the nuclear facilities in India is far from satisfactory. According to reports an estimate 300 incidents of serious nature have occurred



causing radiation leaks and physical damage to the workers. But these have remained official secrets so far. During Tsunami water had entered the Kalpakkam Nuclear Plant in Tamil Nadu. The people around Uranium mines in Jadugoda are total unprotected. As per the reports the technology being used by the French company, Areva, which is building the world's largest nuclear power plant in beautiful coastline of Ratnagiri (Jaitapur Town), India has not been completely tested.

The world still remembers the Chernobyl nuclear accident where about 93000 people are reported to have died. Health of liquidators (cleanup workers) engaged in the job of cleaning the area is a matter of serious concern even today. An accident in a nuclear power plant is almost like an atomic explosion with serious consequences on flora & fauna and ecology. We demand that the Indian government should review its nuclear power policy and use other safe renewable options for power generation which are available in abundance in our country. Japan has the best disaster management capacity but in contrast our country's track record in disaster management is extremely dismal.

The explanation by some of our nuclear lobbyists that our country falls in the low seismic zone is unfounded and ignoring the reality as next time the disaster may not be due to earthquake but due to terrorism, climate change, technology failure, proliferation of plutonium or human error.

IDPD is writing a letter to Prime Minister and all MPs in this regard. Those who addressed the press conference include Dr.L.S.Chawla, Dr Arun Mitra, Dr.Karamveer Goyal, Dr.Bharti Uppal, Dr.N.S.Bawa, Dr.Narjit Kaur, Maj. Sher Singh Aulakh, Dr.Kulwant Singh, Dr.Deepak Prashar, Dr.S.K.Prabhakar, Dr.D.P.Singh Arora and Dr.J.A.S.Gill.

Dr Arun Mitra
General Secretary