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TEPCO monitoring wastewater at No.2 reactor

Tokyo Electric Power Company says the level of radioactive water is increasing in a tunnel at the No.2 reactor at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

The large amount of contaminated water in basements and tunnels is hampering operations to restore the plant's cooling systems.

On Wednesday, TEPCO finished transferring some of the wastewater -- about 660 tons -- from the No.2 reactor tunnel to a condenser in a turbine building.

It says the water level in the tunnel dropped 8 centimeters after the transfer, but had returned to its previous level by Friday morning.

Earlier this month, TEPCO found highly radioactive water leaking into the sea from a pit near the No.2 reactor.

The utility suspects that plugging the leak has trapped radioactive water from the No.2 reactor in the tunnel.

TEPCO says there are at least 50,000 tons of contaminated water at the plant. It will use a waste-processing facility, makeshift storage tanks and a floating tank to store the radioactive water.

The company is also preparing for a possible shutdown of external power sources, as major aftershocks continue. It plans to finish moving emergency diesel power generators to higher ground on Friday to protect them from tsunami.

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