

# Japan's PM harangued by Fukushima evacuees

Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan has visited evacuees from the area around the Fukushima nuclear plant, more than a month after the tsunami-wrecked facility started to leak radiation

Mr. Kan, low in the polls before the disasters hit, is under fire from all sides for his handling of the crisis. At an evacuation centre he once again faced criticism from a frustrated evacuee, "Step forward Prime Minister and take the lead, exercise more leadership and end this situation as soon as possible, please! I ask you from the bottom of my heart," said one evacuee.

Mr. Kan's Government has announced a new law making it illegal to enter a 20-kilometre zone around the stricken plant. Most fled the area following the March 11th earthquake/tsunami but it is



Residents speak to police officers as they leave for Yamagata prefecture

believed some 60 families are still living there. The 80,000 residents will be allowed back in briefly to pick up belongings. Anyone else will be liable to a fine. The Gov-

ernment looks set to offer financial help to the Tokyo Electric Power Co, the operator of the crippled power plant. It plans to set up a fund to buy preferred shares in the

company, which will help Tepco pay compensation to those hit by the crisis. Tepco says it may take the rest of the year or longer to bring the plant under control.

## BP sues Transocean for \$40bn

**BP is suing Transocean, the owner of the oil rig that exploded in the Gulf of Mexico last year, for \$40bn in damages**

BP said safety systems on Transocean's Deepwater Horizon rig had failed. BP also sued the maker of the rig's blowout preventer, alleging the device failed to stop the huge oil spill that followed the explosion. Both lawsuits were filed on the first anniversary of the explosion, which killed 11 workers. Overnight on April 20th, 2010, Transocean's Deepwater Horizon burst into flames while drilling a well for BP.

In the months that followed, more than 780m litres of oil flowed in the Gulf of Mexico from the well, soiling hundreds of miles of coastline in the worst US oil spill in recent history. In federal court in New Orleans, BP said Swiss-based Transocean and Cameron International, the Houston company that supplied the blowout preventer, should help it pay for tens of billions of Dollars in liabilities resulting from the spill, which include clean-up and compensation costs. BP also wants the court to declare that Cameron caused or contributed to the disaster.

## London gears up for wedding with dogs, dolls and dancing princes



Police officers carry out security checks on drains and lamp posts

**Police in London say discussions are ongoing over whether to allow demonstrations at locations close to royal wedding**

They have turned down a request by a Muslim campaign group to protest outside Westminster Abbey. Amid a security operation police describe as massive, they are checking every inch of the route Prince William and Kate Middleton will take. Sniffer dogs, capable of smelling explosives up to 100m away, have been practising in a small church for the bigger job in the cavernous Abbey nearer the time. "On big events like the royal wedding we will search all the routes leading up to specific places, like the Abbey," said police handler Alan Tucker, in charge of a dog called Rowan. "What he does is he self targets, places like bins and lamp posts and drains."

A police air support unit will play a vital role in security on the day, using high definition cameras from a helicopter to help forces on the ground. Other preparations vary from the slightly ridiculous to the completely ridiculous. A book called *Knit Your Own Royal Wedding* has sold ten times its initial print run, after author Fiona Goble's knitted dolls appeared on the Internet.

But the big marketing scoop so far with nearly six million online hits comes from mobile phone operator T-Mobile. Its TV ad in the UK has a spoof wedding starring look-alikes of the royal couple and other royal family members. They dance — and in William's case, leapfrog — down the aisle to *House of Love* by 1990s boy band *East 17*. The real distinguished guests are expected to behave in more sober fashion.

## Doubts over financing as Chernobyl conference closes

**A conference on the on-going problems of Chernobyl nuclear plant ends**

On the final day of the conference, there were fears the money pledged by world powers to contain the gutted nuclear reactor would fall short of what was required. Despite guarantees of more than half a billion Euros following four days of talks in Kiev, the sum was some 200m Euros

below what Ukraine had hoped.

Euvgenia Stepanova, a medical professor and the Head of Ukraine's Academy for Paediatric Medicine said, "We've become the most experienced country in the world in dealing with the consequences of such nuclear disasters. But we don't have enough resources. We have the know how, but we don't have the means."

It is exactly 25 years since the reactor at Chernobyl blew, but the recent events in Japan and the risks of nuclear power have cast a deep shadow over the conference. Actually, it's possible to admit that we're all in the same boat. Ukraine, as well as Belarus and Russia, cannot solve the health and ecological problems caused by the Chernobyl accident alone.

## China Mobile operator surpasses 600m subscribers

**China Mobile, the world's largest mobile operator, has surpassed 600m subscribers after increasing its number of customers in rural areas**

The company added 16.8m users between January and March, it said its profits climbed 5.4 percent to 26.9bn Yuans (\$4.1bn) in the quarter, compared with the same period a year earlier. Chinese telecom companies are trying to increase revenue per user by selling more third generation mobile services.

China Mobile and its competitors have seen a decline in revenue per user because of their expanding user-base in rural parts of China. Rural customers tend to spend less on their monthly phone bills. China Mobile said its average revenue per user fell to 67 Yuans per month in the three months ending in March, from 76 Yuans per month at the end of December.

"We know 50 percent of the new mobile subscribers for China Mobile are from the rural areas, which is contributing less to the average



A woman uses her phone during the Automobile Industry Exhibition

revenue per user," said Victor Yip from UOB Kay Hian in Hong Kong. China Mobile has said it aims to battle this decline by adding users of 3G mobile services, which offer faster data speeds at a higher price. The company plans to invest in its

network and add wireless hotspots to attract customers to smartphones.

China Mobile has the largest number of 3G users compared with its rivals China Telecom and China Unicom.