

Japans Tsunami apocalypse

By Daily Mail Reporter
16th March 2011

With millions of people without electricity, thousands missing and warnings of an imminent second earthquake, the task for Japanese authorities is too daunting to imagine.

Some 3,000 people have now been confirmed dead since last week's earthquake and subsequent tsunami but officials believe the death toll could rise into the tens of thousands, with a further 2,000 bodies washing up on the shores of north-east Japan yesterday.

Bodies wrapped in blue tarpaulins were laid on military stretchers and lined up for collection while panic-buying has begun in Japan amid fears of a second quake and growing concern about nuclear leaks.

And tonight there were fresh fears over the possibility of a full-scale nuclear disaster as the operator of stricken Fukushima Dai-Ichi nuclear power plant said a fire has broken out again at its No. 4 reactor



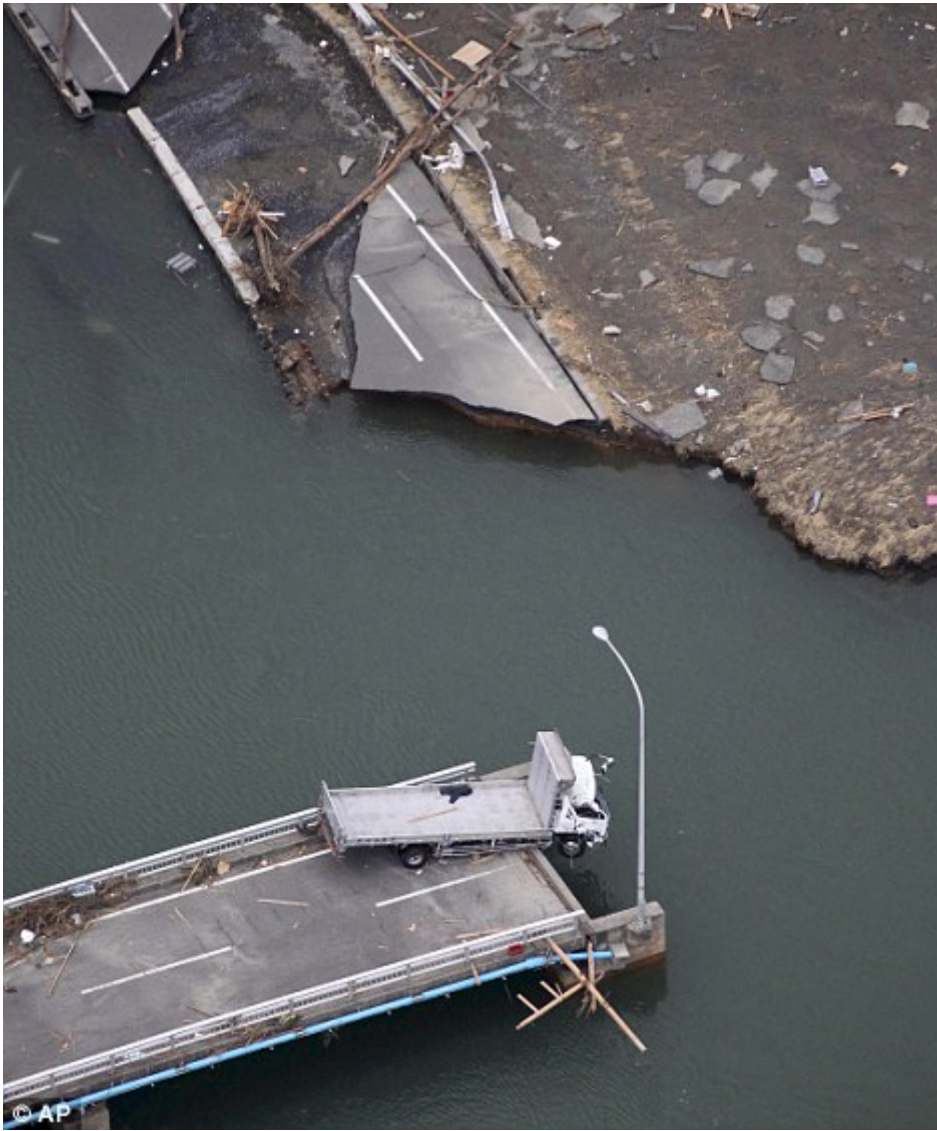
Rescue workers are dwarfed by the scale of the rubble as they pick their way through the shattered city of Otsuchi



The bodies of victims at a village destroyed by the tsunami in Rikuzentakata



Ships try to extinguish a blaze at oil refinery tanks in Ichihara, Chiba Prefecture, which has been burning since Friday's earthquake and tsunami



a truck dangles from a collapsed bridge in Ishinomaki, northern Japan



A house perches on top of a bridge in Ishinomaki after being swept away by the tsunami

Tokyo Electric Power Co. spokesman Hajimi Motujuku says the blaze erupted early Wednesday in the outer housing of the reactor's containment vessel.

The bad news came as survivors continue to struggle to find food and water as supplies run low. There have been major power outages since the double disaster, many planned to preserve resources.

As the stock market plunges and the government warns it is receiving just a fraction of the emergency aid it needs, it is unclear how Japan can even begin to tackle the destruction.

The level of desolation is on an epic-scale with many towns completely destroyed. A shattered infrastructure makes it almost impossible to move heavy lifting equipment and rescue crews have struggled to reach the worst hit areas.

The death toll from last week's earthquake and tsunami jumped today as police confirmed the number killed had topped 3,300, although that grim news was overshadowed by a deepening nuclear crisis. Officials have said previously that at least 10,000 people may have died in Miyagi province alone.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has confirmed that radiation had been released into the atmosphere after yet another explosion at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant, inside Number 2 reactor.



Cars drive along one of the few passable roads in the devastated Minamisanriku where 10,000 people are feared dead



© AFP/GETTY IMAGES

A boat dumped in the street in Hishinomaki, Miyagi, after being swept inshore by the tsunami



© AP

survivors of Friday's tsunami walk under umbrellas through the leveled city of Minamisanriku



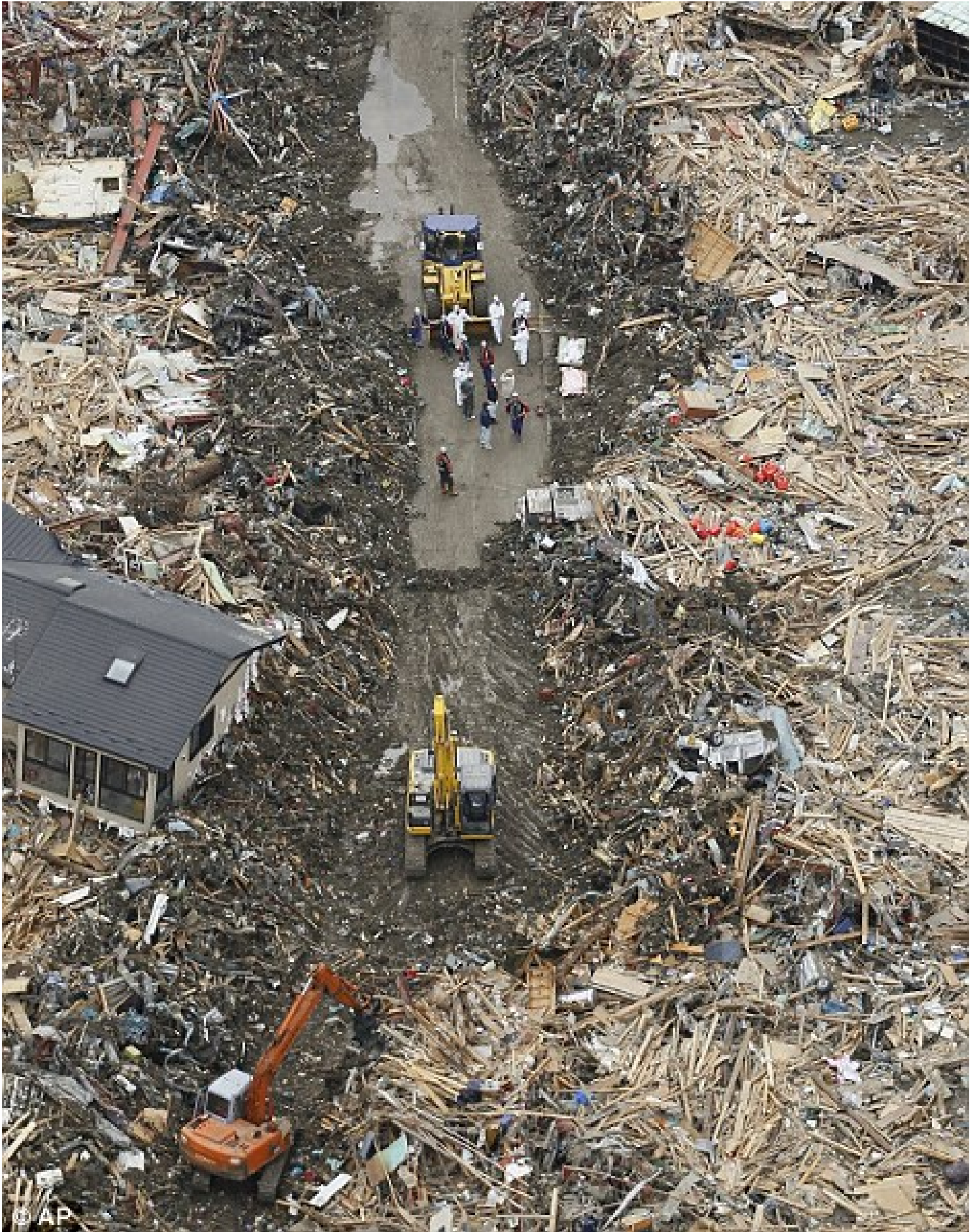
© EPA

view of the tsunami-devastated town of Rikuzentakata shows the full scale of the damage

THE DISASTER AREA



© Independent



Heavy machines crawl through the rubble in Rikuzentakata



© AP

a rescue crew surveys the damage in Ofunato, northeastern Japan



A ship is seen perched on top of a house in the tsunami devastated remains of Otsuchi



© Reuters

the river at a devastated area hit by earthquake and tsunami in Kesenuma



© Reuters News Agency

A once thriving industrial town off the coast in northeast Japan



Japanese army search for bodies in Higashimatsushima City, in Miyagi



a hillside today into a coastal town in northeast Japan