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# Unease or Untruth? – The Removal of Nakamura Koichiro
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不安か不誠実か－－中村幸一郎おろし

**By Matthew Penney**

Magazine Shukan Post has reported that energy bureaucrat Nakamura Koichiro of the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency was told to stand down from official press conferences after asserting on March 12, the day after the quake, that evidence pointed to a meltdown underway at the Fukushima Daiichi plant. The Shukan Post argues that key cabinet members including Prime Minister Kan Naoto and Cabinet Secretary Edano Yukio – who has been praised for his steady demeanor through the crisis – removed Nakamura from his position for "making the public feel uneasy".

In the weeks since the crisis began, Nakamura's original assertion has been vindicated and the Shukan Post editors argue that if his original claims were taken more seriously by the government, rushing the injection of seawater into the stricken reactors may have prevented hydrogen explosions and radiation leaks. Edano in particular is accused of "sealing off" Nakamura's position by contending instead that "We have no way to directly examine [the condition of] the reactor."

The Shukan Post editors point out that Edano has since acknowledged that a meltdown has taken place but has not yet accepted blame for his error or apologized for censuring Nakamura's opinions.

Magazines like Shukan Post often do not name sources, and no informants are named to back up the claim that the decision to remove Nakamura came directly from Kan and Edano. In addition, an unnamed "expert" is cited to support the contention that a faster response was possible and could have prevented the Fukushima Daiichi situation from deteriorating. While the chain of possibilities and alternatives is unclear, it is evident that the Japanese government had access to a more serious prognosis in the first two days of the crisis, but chose to prioritize "calm".

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