

Tokyo Electric Power's Fukushima No.1 Nuclear Power Plant (this section has been quoted from President Komaba's message.)

Thanks to the assistance of a certain person, on April 13th I was provided with the opportunity to visit and observe the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant, which received enormous damage from the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake.

This helped me realize the discrepancies between what the general public believe based on limited information and what is actually happening.

For example, that the decontamination work is moving ahead steadily and the approximately 5,000 workers currently involved in this are wearing normal clothes, and that my Geiger counter during my two-hour visit registered only 0.01msv (approximately the same level as an X-ray at the dentist), etc. I was also deeply moved by the explanation, which started with an apology, and the unassuming yet passionate words of the people working for Tokyo Electric Power, as well as seeing the diligent way that were moving ahead the extremely difficult path of decommissioning the plant over the course of several decades without any thought of gain.

Without knowing the actual situation within the reactors, I got the feeling that they were placing the priority on safety by using robots and remote controlled devices to gather data from the areas where high levels of radiation prevent access by workers, turning this data into virtual reality and using it to create full-scale models and simulations of the interior so that they could move against the clock one step at a time.

The research that goes into developing the technologies required for this is truly amazing, and I came away with the conviction that if this is combined together with the research into AI technologies (self-drive technologies) being carried out on automobiles in the future, then there is no doubt that we will become a world leader.

And lastly, I was deeply impressed by the canteen, research center and various other measures adopted within the No.1 Nuclear Power Plant ground to improve the working environment and motivate workers, including the workers from collaborative companies, as well as the initiatives being taken to be the first to build company housing and meal centers for employees in the areas from which evacuation orders had been rescinded.

I will continue to be opposed to Nuclear Power Plants, but I take my hat off to the hard work that Tokyo Electric Power is engaging itself in.

Automotive area (Realization of EPS for large vehicles)

A Co., Ltd., which recorded a world-leading share of approximately 27% of the electric power steering (EPS) market in 2016, has set its sights on achieving EPS for large sports utility vehicles (SUVs) and pickup trucks.

Hydraulic power steering is the common style of power steering for large vehicles that require high output, but the company has developed an auxiliary electric system for supplementing the output of the EPS to match this. Mass-production is scheduled to start at the beginning of 2020, and they have already started marketing the system to manufacturers of completed vehicles.

The development of self-drive vehicles, for which a need also exists in large vehicles, also results in both promotional effects and improved mileage for vehicles by converting them to have electric drive capabilities.

A Co., Ltd. has developed a lithium ion capacitor with superior levels of heat resistance. The newly-developed capacitor can operate within a temperature range of -40 degrees Celsius through to +85 degrees Celsius. Extending heat resistance to a maximum of 125 degrees Celsius is planned for the future.

The auxiliary power source system combining two of these systems is known as “rack parallel”, and it will be mounted on EPSs designed for high output. The conventional maximum limit of around 720 watts of EPS output will be raised to around 1,040 watts, and it will be compatible with nearly all vehicles. The high levels of heat resistance mean that there is no need for a cooling system, and there is plenty of leeway for the location in which it is to be mounted.

The world’s automobile manufacturers no longer need to compete fiercely over the development of leading-edge driving systems and self-drive vehicles and research into having even large vehicles drive in convoy along expressways, but problems still exist with applying self-drive technology to vehicles with hydraulic power steering, and there are also problems with EPS output. Mounting this auxiliary power system onto EPSs will help solve the output issue.

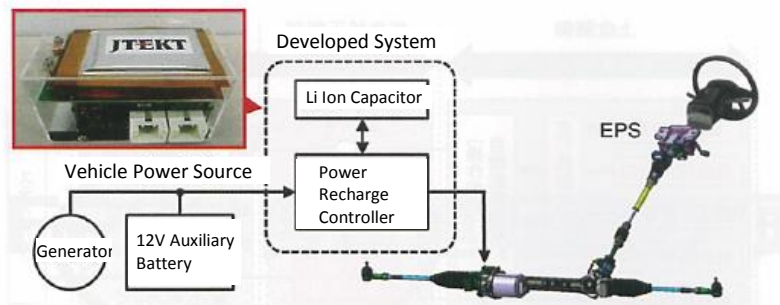


Fig.1. Auxiliary Power System for EPS

(Source: Article - Nikkan Kogyo Shimbun)

Keihin Seimitsu Kogyo (NKI personnel changeovers, expansion of the female production line in the Hokkaido Plant)

Personnel changes have taken place in our NKI (Nusa Keihin Indonesia) overseas affiliated company, with President Commissioner Djangkep Budi Santoso and chief foreman Anton Silaban transferred elsewhere.

Djangkep was appointed President Director of NKI in 2007.

With an excellent sense of balance and broad point of view that enabled him to get along with everyone, he developed and worked hard on strengthening a wonderful relationship between NKI/AOP and KSK built on mutual trust.

Anton joined NKI in 1997 when the company was first established, and he contributed greatly to the growth of NKI with his bright personality, ceaseless effort and leadership.

I sincerely wish them both success and much happiness in the future.

The single production line for female workers in the No.5 (New) Plant in Hokkaido, which was opened last year, as one of the models under our “Age-Free Company, Barrier-Free Factory” slogan, which is aimed at alleviating the low birthrate issue in Japan, has been expanded to three lines.

Post-editorial Notes: (Songs create friends...)

Representatives from a company in Germany visited us during the second half of April, and I had the opportunity of dining with them.

The meal commenced at 18:30 in a restaurant at the foot of Tokyo Tower known for its wonderful views and delicious cuisine.

The drinks flowed freely as we ate seasonal vegetables and fresh seafood.

As we drank more and more and the party got into full swing, one of the Germans asked how we able to sing karaoke without embarrassment, which turned the conversation to the unexpected topic of Japan’s karaoke culture, which resulted in the party heating up with various comments such as “I’ve never been to karaoke before” and “I don’t know how people can sing in places like that”, which in turn encouraged replies like “Right (whatever “right” means), seeing is believing!” and “Everything must be judged on fact-finding missions!” Anyway, the outcome of all this was that we immediately hurried off to a karaoke room located in a different hotel nearby.

Having arrived at the karaoke room, the author opened his mouth with a v(///o///) ♪ and gave a rendition of the Beach Boy's Kokomo, and suddenly realized that a backlog of songs were being registered.

Following this, the guy who said that it was his first time and wondered if he would be able to sing suddenly burst into song while dancing on the spot, before immediately moving onto the next song! Not to be outdone, several others also began singing and dancing together. It made me realize just how much energy German people have (not mentioning me, of course).

Everybody joined together to sing We Are The World with our arms linked around each other's shoulders, and I got the delightful feeling that we had all known each other for several decades. We were all roaring drunk by the time we reached the final song after midnight, and the party ended with an up-tempo song, to which we all danced.

When we arrived back at the hotel, somebody suggested a nightcap.

My only reaction was, "Huh?!?"

I was intending to counter-suggest that we all just went to bed... but... the words that left my mouth were, "Great idea! Let's go!"

We adjourned to a cigar bar in the basement of the hotel, and having sat down we ordered gin and tonics, gins on the rocks, double bourbons and Moscow mules.

I have no recollection of what we spoke about. I sat back and relaxed, and before I knew it, it was two o'clock in the morning!

We all finally agreed that it was time to go to bed, and the final action of the day was a bout of hugging (instead of handshakes)...

We had only known each other for three days, but I was delighted that in that time all of our inhibitions had been swept away...

But, the other patrons of the bar probably thought it a little strange to see a bunch of men hugging each other.

I would like to take this opportunity to confirm that.... None of us are gay!

... I'm pretty sure of that W(^O^)W