The Guosheng Nuclear Power Plant in New Taipei City's Wanli District is pictured yesterday. **Photo courtesy of Taiwan Power Co**

The No. 2 reactor at the Guosheng Nuclear Power Plant which was restarted on Tuesday, tripped yesterday during testing, state-run Taiwan Power Co (Taipower, □□) said.

The plant in New Taipei City's Wanlin District (□□) was expected to output at full capacity by the end of the week, but a safety mechanism governing the reactor's steam valve that was set too sensitively triggered a shutdown yesterday afternoon, Taipower said.

The company said it would wait for approval from the Atomic Energy Council before restarting the reactor again.

The reactor had been shutdown since 2016 and underwent an overhaul late last year, with the company applying to the council on Feb. 5 to restart it after repairs were complete.

The restart obtained a preliminary approval from the council on March 5 and cleared a subsequent review by the Legislative Yuan on March 15.

Taipower restarted the reactor at 11:30am on Wednesday last week, allowing it to slowly build up heat and pressure in preparation for the generation of power on Tuesday at 12:55pm.

The council said an emergency shutdown was indicated yesterday at 1:25pm after a warning signal was given by the reactor's neutron detection system.

Taipower is investigating the incident and would issue a public report after it is able to fully confirm the cause of the shutdown, the council said.

The reactor is not to be restarted before the investigation is complete and the council inspects facilities in accordance with established laws and regulations, the company said.

Taipower said it had already run excess speed tests on the main steam generator, as well as two tests on the system's power generating equipment before the shutdown, adding that an initial investigation indicated that the sensitivity of a sensor on a steam valve was set too high.

Environmental groups responded to the news of the shutdown by calling for the reactor to remain suspended and for those in charge of approving its operation to be held responsible.

New Taipei City Nuclear Energy Safety Supervision Committee Chairman Lee Ssu-chuan (□□□) also condemned Taipower for the shutdown by a safety mechanism so soon after the reactor's restart.

"Although there was no radiation leak at the plant, the incident has already led to doubts about the facility among the public," Lee said.

Wild at Heart Legal Defense Association lawyer Tsai Ya-ying (□□□) said she hopes the incident would be properly investigated and that the results of investigation will be truthfully revealed to the public, adding that she hopes Taipower will see the restart is a mistake and abandon its plans to restart the reactor.

Green Consumers' Foundation chairman Jay Fang (□□) joked about the incident on Facebook, saying: "A machine that shuts down is a good thing. It is one that cannot shutdown that we

need to be worried about. If we face that, we will be done for.”

Fang said he believed there was no way the reactor, which had been inoperable for 670 days, could function normally.

The use of old nuclear equipment has already been the cause of a 20 percent increase in power costs, he said, adding that the plant’s age creates a risk of nuclear disaster.

Additional reporting by Ho Yu-hua and Yang Mien-chieh

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