

Fault lines should nix reactor proposal: group

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National Taiwan University Department of Geosciences professor Chen Wen-shan, left, accompanied by Democratic Progressive Party Legislator Lin Shu-fen, speaks at a news conference in Taipei yesterday.

Photo: Chien Jung-fong, Taipei Times

The nation's Fourth Nuclear Power Plant should not be activated, because a geological survey has confirmed that it sits close to active fault lines, activists said yesterday.

The survey shows that there are five active faults near the mothballed power plant in New Taipei City's Gongliao District (公寮), which has never been put into operation, National Taiwan University Department of Geosciences professor Chen Wen-shan (陳文善) said at a news conference.

For safety reasons, the plant should not be activated as recommended by Kaohsiung Mayor and Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) presidential candidate Han Kuo-yu (韓國瑜), as well as some advocates of nuclear energy, Chen added.

If the government ultimately decides to proceed with the project, the plant would be incapable of withstanding a strong earthquake because it is not designed to do so, he said.

However, the survey that was carried out by the Ministry of Economic Affairs' Central Geological Survey (CGS) has not been made public, he said.

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In 2011, soon after a powerful earthquake and tsunami triggered the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant disaster in Japan, the government instructed state-run Taiwan Power Co (Taipower) to task the CGS with conducting a survey of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant area, Chen said.

For three years, Taipower put off having the survey done and, in 2014, the then-KMT administration halted construction of the plant amid safety concerns, he said.

Earlier this year, Taipower finally asked the CGS to conduct the survey and in two internal meetings, the unit confirmed the presence of the fault lines near the power plant, Chen added.

Taipower and the CGS should immediately release the findings of the survey, Democratic Progressive Party Legislator Lin Shu-fen (林淑芬) said at the news conference.

Green Action Alliance deputy secretary-general Hung Shen-han (洪申瀚) told reporters that the survey proved that it is too dangerous to start up the plant.

The news conference was held to push back against Han's plan to operate the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant if elected president, assuming it is safe to do so and he has the public's consent.

Meanwhile, Atomic Energy Council Minister Hsieh Shou-shing (許士瑩) yesterday told lawmakers that there is "zero possibility" of the plant being activated, as it does not meet safety standards.

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