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Germany

Mobilisations against Nuclear Power Plants

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It was a sad coincidence: The German anti-nuclear movement had long been planning a huge mobilisation against the decision of the German government to extend considerably the life of the country's nuclear plants thus to cancel the law, introduced by the former Labour/Green government that they be decommissioned.

On Saturday, March 12, a giant human chain, 45 km long was formed between the nuclear plant at Neckarwestheim and the seat of the regional government of Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart. 60 000 people took part in the protest in the run up to regional elections. It was the day of the meltdown of the Fukushima-plant after the earthquake in Japan...

A majority against nuclear energy

For decades there has been a stable and absolute majority in the polls in Germany against the use of nuclear energy. And in the last year there was a new upturn of the movement with a new generation of young activists: The mobilisations of last year against the transports of nuclear waste had been the biggest for more than 15 years. But the ruling federal government of Conservatives and Liberals ignored the demonstrations and complaints.

The former government of the Social Democrats and Green Party some years ago passed a law, which limited the running time of the existing nuclear plants. But this was a foul compromise. The "exit" from nuclear energy was planned to be a long one, and, what was worse, this law was made in a way, that it was quite easy for the following government to change it.

So the present government argued, that the nuclear plants are needed in order to fight climate change and the industry now can count on billions of extra-profits from the plants, which are partly almost as old as the Japanese ones in Fukushima..

The movement is growing

The 60,000 on March 12 was a big success. It was also a surprise - not even the most optimistic expected this number of participants. The catastrophe of Fukushima has given the anti-nuclear movement new power. And nobody believes in the hastily made official statements of the government, that something like this cannot happen in Germany. Many people have very clearly in mind the lies about "no danger" in the first days after the Chernobyl-meltdown.

And there were other mobilisations: In several towns all over the country spontaneous manifestations and demonstrations took place on Saturday, organized by the radical left and local initiatives. For Monday 14th there is a call for nationwide vigils at 6 p.m., and there are already numerous announcements of activities for Monday in the map (<http://www.ausgestrahlt.de/mitmachen/fukushima.html>) of one of the biggest anti-nuclear websites, which shows the towns in which the movement is mobilizing - and the number doubled from Saturday to Sunday already.

Our solidarity is with the people of Japan, hit by the earthquake and the nuclear catastrophe. But the best way, to

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express it, is, to take part in the reemerging movement against Nuclear energy and to fight for the immediate shut-down of Nuclear power plants worldwide.