

Officials reveal more details about nuclear accident

MOSCOW (AP) — A chemical explosion probably caused the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, and evacuation was delayed 36 hours because the plant staff did not realize how serious the accident was, Soviet officials said Tuesday.

They brushed off Western complaints about slow reporting of limited information on the April 26 accident at the Ukrainian plant, which spewed an invisible cloud of radiation over Europe.

None of the officials said whether the fire has been extinguished in the graphite reactor core. A report in the Communist Party daily Pravda

earlier Tuesday suggested it was still burning or smoldering.

The six men, including the top nuclear energy official and the head of a government investigation, spoke at the first official news conference on the disaster.

Little new information was offered at the session, which was carefully controlled, beyond the probable cause and the revelation about delayed evacuation.

The cloud of radioactivity still hung over Europe on Tuesday and radiation was detected in the western United States, Canada and Japan. China said

its monitors had found nothing abnormal.

None of the radiation was described as life-threatening, but many precautions still are in effect.

In Bonn, West German Interior Ministry sources said Soviet officials had asked to buy or rent remote-controlled earthmoving machines for use in cleanup work at the Chernobyl plant 80 miles north of Kiev, a city of 2.4 million people that is capital of the Ukraine.

Soviet authorities publicly acknowledged the accident two days after it happened, following reports of abnormally high

radiation levels in Scandinavia.

According to figures given at the news conference, 204 people were hospitalized, a slight increase from previous official reports of 197. The government said last week that two people were killed and 49 of those hospitalized had been

discharged.

Of the initial casualties, 100 were flown to Moscow from the accident site, the officials said Tuesday. One worker died after being burned over 80 percent of his body and another died after being hit by a falling object, they said.

Summit concludes on high note

TOKYO (AP) — Leaders of the industrialized democracies ended a "smooth summit" Tuesday, voicing satisfaction that they confronted terrorism while moving toward new trade talks and a revamped world monetary policy — two principal goals of the economic conference.

Although the United States, Britain, Canada, France, Japan, Italy and West Germany failed to come to grips with the divisive and volatile issue of farm export subsidies, they did agree to a host of other initiatives, including coordinated efforts to improve nuclear safety in the wake of the Chernobyl reactor accident in the Soviet Union.

But for world leaders newly committed to fighting terrorism, the summit closed on the same raucous note that marred its opening: Japanese radicals seeking to sabotage the proceedings descended on subway and train stations with smoke bombs packed with firecrackers, crippling rush-hour traffic, but claiming no casualties, in a city turning weary under a welter of unprecedented security restrictions.

And for President Reagan, there came a threat from Palestinian radical Abul Abbas, in a broadcast report, to target America for terrorist attacks.

"Let him try," Reagan declared, responding to reporters' questions.

The president's top aides declared that the Reagan administration had come away from the summit with much of what it had sought, including a statement of unity against terrorism, which singled out Moammar Khadafy's Libya "in particular."

Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher declared "mission accomplished." U.S. Treasury Secretary James Baker said, "It was a smooth summit." West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl proclaimed: "We were able to achieve good results." And Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi said he came away from the summit gathering "with full satisfaction."

In saying the summit was a success for Reagan, the president's top aides cited acceptance of Baker's plan to try to stabilize currency exchange rates through a system of economic checks and balances and an agreement by the other summit partners to back preliminary talks in September aimed at lowering barriers that restrict U.S. sales abroad.

Officials revealed that as a follow-up to the talks here, Reagan will send several of his top aides across Asia to report to other governments on his economic talks here.

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Two arrested in bombing

BERLIN (AP) — Police said today they have arrested two Jordanian-born men in connection with a March bombing in Berlin, and were trying to determine whether the men were involved in the fatal bombing of the La Belle discotheque.

The Reagan administration cited the La Belle bombing, in which an American soldier and a Turkish woman died, as a reason for the U.S. bombing of Libya on April 15. U.S. officials said Libya was behind the disco attack.

A police statement identified

the two arrested men Farouk Salameh and Fayez Sahawneh, and said both were arrested Thursday. The statement said both are suspected of taking part in the March 29 bombing of the German-Arab Society building in West Berlin.

Investigators are "also checking to determine if the two men are connected with the April 5 La Belle discotheque bombing," the police statement said.

Another man, Ahmed Nawaf Mansur Hasi, was arrested in connection with the La Belle bombing on April 18.



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