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The evacuation of the town of Pripyat began on 27 April, by which time residents had already begun to complain of sickness and feeling unwell. No reports or details regarding the accident were released until the third day after the reactor exploded.

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Remembering Chernobyl

August 18, 2017 • Roger Pool



Chernobyl nuclear power station is located around 80 miles (130km) north of Kiev, Ukraine, and around 12 miles (12km) south of the Belarusian border. Construction on the Chernobyl nuclear power plant began in 1970.

The station itself consisted of four reactors which, combined, produced around 10 percent of Ukraine's electricity at the time of the accident. The reactors were of the RMBK-1000 design, a type of graphite-moderated reactor made by the then Soviet Union.

Following the disaster in 1986, around 350,000 'liquidators' – made up of the army, plant staff, fire services and more – were initially involved in the clean-up operation after the accident, according to the World Health Organisation; around 240,000 of these workers received the highest radiation doses. The WHO further states that the number of registered liquidators later rose to 600,000.

The accident occurred during a test on the fourth reactor, which was conducted in order to find out whether the turbines could produce enough energy to keep the coolant pumps running if power was lost.

The accident released approximately 400 times more radioactive fallout than that of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima; Japan, in 1945, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

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