

Fear of radiation may be exaggerated

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Scientists who examined the meltdown 20 years ago of a Soviet nuclear reactor say the danger of radiation to human health may be significantly exaggerated.

A documentary scheduled to air on the BBC Thursday will present a theory suggesting there is a threshold below which any amount of radiation exposure is probably safe, the Times of London reports.

The scientists appearing on the program examined the Chernobyl disaster, which people incorrectly equate with the atomic bombing of Japan during World War II.

Initially predicted to cause hundreds of thousands of casualties, the death toll from the meltdown at Chernobyl stands at 56 today, the Times said.

As for wildlife, a U.S. researcher from Texas Tech University found mammals exposed to the equivalent of 8,000 chest X-rays per day, showed none of the genetic damage his team expected.

The BBC documentary is being presented during a week in which the government's energy review is expected to back a new generation of atomic plants for Britain.

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