

Fire-hit chipmaker Renesas plans full capacity by May

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It is not yet clear exactly what caused the fire, which struck in March

Japanese chipmaker Renesas Electronics said Monday it was on track to restore full capacity by May after a plant fire, as manufacturers around

the world battle to secure semiconductor supplies.

By the end of this week, the company hopes to bring production at the blaze-hit factory near Tokyo to 30 percent of previous capacity, before fully restoring it in May, Renesas chief Hidetoshi Shibata told reporters in an online briefing.

"We remain committed to our plan to achieve 100 percent in May," he said.

"We have received help not just domestically but from foreign suppliers. And they have been extremely generous.

"With help from all sorts of outside groups, we miraculously have been able to come this far."

The news came as car makers battle [semiconductor](#) supply problems in part because of increased demand for chips from manufacturers of laptops, tablets and gaming devices.

Renesas is a key supplier of automotive semiconductors.

It is not yet clear exactly what caused the March fire, which burnt 600 square metres (8,500 square feet) of factory floor.

Japan's government and some of Renesas's own customers, including auto giant Toyota, have offered help.

Shibata did not discuss which firms assisted in restoring the damaged factory and kept mum about which customers would get early supplies of semiconductors.

During a summit on Friday in Washington, Prime Minister Yoshihide

Suga and President Joe Biden agreed to "partner on sensitive supply chains, including on semiconductors, promoting and protecting the critical technologies that are essential to our security and prosperity", according to a joint statement.

Renesas closed up 4.30 percent to 1,335 yen on Monday, doing far better than the headline Nikkei average that ended up 0.01 percent.

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