

More gases erupt from rumbling Indonesian volcano

November 25 2013, by Binsar Bakkara



In this late Sunday, Nov. 24, 2013 photo, Mount Sinabung spews volcanic ash into the air as seen from Tiga Pancur, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Authorities raised the alert status for one of the country's most active volcanoes to the highest level Sunday after the mountain repeatedly sent hot clouds of gas down its slope following a series of eruptions in recent days. (AP Photo/Binsar Bakkara)

Powerful bursts of hot ash and gravel erupted from a rumbling volcano in western Indonesia early Monday, sending panicked villagers streaming

down the sides of the mountain.

Six new eruptions in the morning sent lava and searing gas tumbling up to 1.5 kilometers (.9 miles) down the slopes of Mount Sinabung in North Sumatra province. Volcanic material spewed as high as 2,000 meters (6,500 feet) into the air a day after authorities had raised the volcano's alert status to the highest level.

About 15,000 people have been evacuated from 17 villages in the danger zone 5 kilometers (3 miles) around the crater, National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said. The evacuation zone was expanded from 3 kilometers.

Thick, gray ash covered villages, farms and trees as far as 70 kilometers (43 miles) north of Mount Sinabung's crater, hitting the towns of Binjai and Langkat.

"Everything turned hot surrounding us," said Jatah Surbakti, a 45-year-old farmer who fled with his wife and four children to a shelter on trucks provided by the local disaster agency, along with hundreds other villagers.

"We were running in panic under the rain of ash and gravel. ... I heard many women and children screaming and crying," he said, adding that his fruit and vegetable farms were destroyed by the ash and his children's schools were disrupted.



In this photo taken using a long exposure, star trails are seen over Mount Sinabung as it spews volcanic ash into the air as seen from Tiga Pancur, North Sumatra, Indonesia, early Monday, Nov. 25, 2013. Authorities raised the alert status for one of the country's most active volcanoes to the highest level Sunday after the mountain repeatedly sent hot clouds of gas down its slope following a series of eruptions in recent days. (AP Photo/Binsar Bakkara)

The 2,600-meter (8,530-foot) Mount Sinabung has sporadically erupted since September. An eruption in 2010 killed two people and caught scientists off guard because the [volcano](#) had been quiet for four centuries.



In this Sunday, Nov. 24, 2013 photo, Mount Sinabung spews volcanic ash into the air as seen from Ujung, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Authorities raised the alert status for one of the country's most active volcanoes to the highest level Sunday after the mountain repeatedly sent hot clouds of gas down its slope following a series of eruptions in recent days. (AP Photo/Binsar Bakkara)

Transportation Ministry spokesman Bambang Ervan said airlines had been notified to avoid routes near the mountain.

Mount Sinabung is among around 129 active volcanoes in Indonesia, which is prone to seismic upheaval due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines encircling the Pacific Basin.

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