

Vanuatu island to evacuate again as volcano erupts

April 13 2018



Last year's volcanic eruption in Vanuatu forced 11,000 people to evacuate Ambae Island

Villagers on the Vanuatu island of Ambae were facing their second evacuation in seven months Friday after a volcano rumbled back to life

and rained ash on their homes.

Authorities in the Pacific nation have declared a state of emergency on the northern island, where 11,000 [people](#) were forced to leave last September.

Many have only just returned home but the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department said the Manaro Vouï volcano was undergoing a level three eruption, the mid-point in a five-level scale.

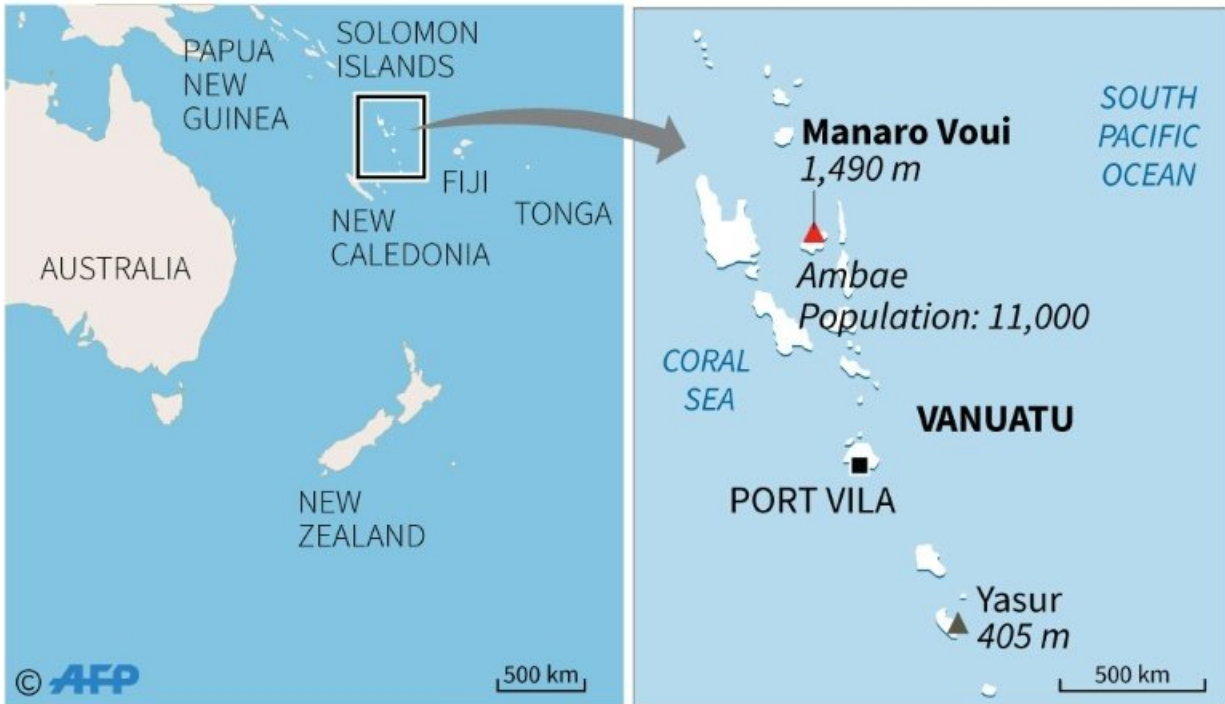
National disaster ministry director general Jesse Benjamin said any evacuation would be more orderly than the one carried out in September, when a flotilla of small vessels were pressed into service to rush people off the island.

"Last year's evacuation was conducted in haste, amidst fears of a [major eruption](#)," he told the Daily Post newspaper.

"There is some dissatisfaction about the way we moved people at the time. This time we will be evacuating people from the severely affected communities first, before the less affected.

"The government is worried about the safety of the people."

Vanuatu



Map of Vanuatu, locating the Manaro Voui volcano.

Vanuatu, which has a population of about 280,000 spread over 65 inhabited [islands](#), is regarded as one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world.

It sits on the so-called "Pacific Rim of Fire" making it vulnerable to strong earthquakes and [volcanic eruptions](#), while powerful cyclones also regularly lash the islands.

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