

Indonesian volcano eruption forces people to flee

Last Updated: Monday, August 30, 2010 / 1:29 PM ET



An Indonesian volcano that has been dormant for hundreds of years erupted for a second straight day on Monday, forcing thousands of people out of their homes.

Mount Sinabung in North Sumatra has long been considered inactive because it last erupted more than 400 years ago.

It erupted for the first time over the weekend and erupted again early Monday, spewing clouds of soot and ash into the air, the Indonesian meteorology agency said.



As many as 30,000 people who live near the mountain have fled their homes, freelance journalist Michel Maas reported.

Maas said villagers living along the slopes have packed their belongings and headed to emergency shelters, mosques and churches.

"Nobody is sure how long this is going to last," Maas told CBC News in an interview from Indonesia. He said local residents are trying to move livestock to safety because they are not sure how long they will have to stay in emergency shelters.

Health officials have been distributing thousands of face masks to help people protect themselves from the ash and smoke billowing into the air.

While two people have died — a 64-year-old woman from respiratory problems and a 52-year-old man from a heart attack — it was too early to say if the volcano was to blame, said Priyadi Kardono of the National Disaster Management Agency.



Children at a North Sumatra shelter are entertained by a band while Mount Sinabung spews ash and soot. (Beawiharta/Reuters)

Sinabung last erupted in 1600, so observers don't know its eruption pattern and admitted over the weekend that they had not been monitoring it closely before it started rumbling days ago in the lead-up to Sunday's first, less-powerful blast.

"We really have no idea what to expect," Surono, a government volcanologist who uses only one name, said after the mountain's alert was raised to the highest level.

"We don't know what set it off, how long it will continue or whether we should expect ... more powerful eruptions."

Indonesia is spread across 17,500 islands and is prone to volcanic eruptions and earthquakes because of its location within the so-called "Ring of Fire" — a series of fault lines stretching from the Western Hemisphere through Japan and Southeast Asia.

With files from The Associated Press

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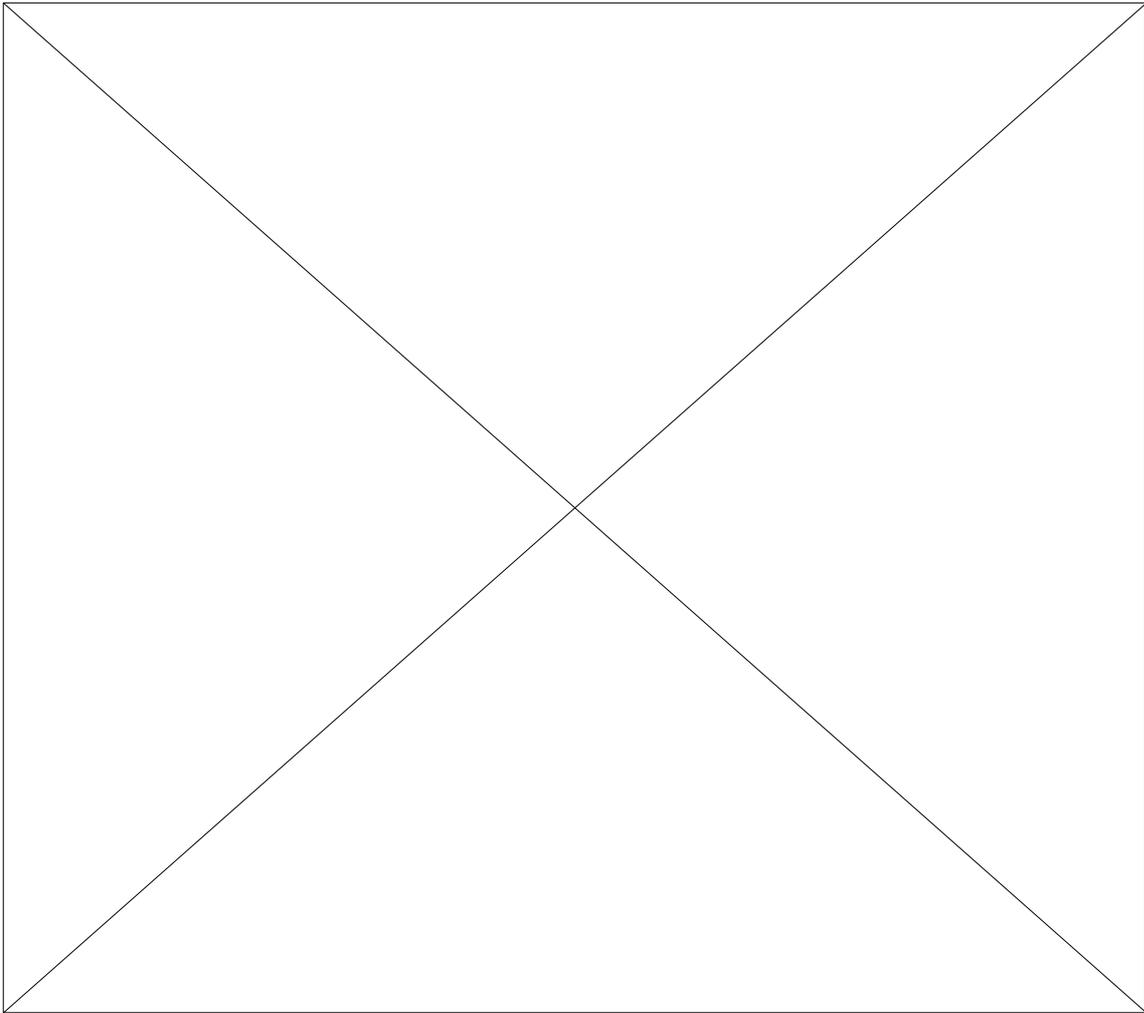
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[CBC News](#)



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With files from The Associated Press

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[robscott3366](#) wrote: Posted 2010/08/30

at 3:00 PM ET What gives me pause is this volcano's location in regards to the "Toba" Super Volcano.

(Too close)

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[Otto Bahn](#) wrote: Posted 2010/08/30

at 2:06 PM ET Volcanos erupt. Who knew?

What's interesting to me is the massive increase in awareness. Now if knowledge would start catching up that would be good.

Our technology has meant that almost every person becomes aware of a great deal more than previous generations. We'll see what that does in a few more generations.

There was an article a while ago called the end of history. The point was that if dozens of people are snapping pictures and movies of the events as they happen the control of the optics by governments becomes reduced and in some cases meaningless.

In previous generations the government also said they were winning the war when they weren't. That was put paid when the information minister of Iraq was denying the Americans had landed while US tanks could be seen in the background and explosions were clearly audible.

Same thing when the pictures of mass graves flash around the world before that government issues a statement that there aren't any.

We'll see what all this does.

- [1](#)
- [1](#)

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[TheBigW](#) wrote:Posted 2010/08/30
at 2:00 PM ETawesomenorth wrote...
"Funny how people disagree with actual facts."

It's a condition as old as humanity, my friend,
it's what happens when facts don't agree with arrogant people's prejudices.

The greater a person's arrogance, the less likely they are to gain new knowledge.

- [9](#)
- [0](#)

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[dsinanan](#) wrote:Posted 2010/08/30
at 1:46 PM ETHope everybody keeps safe! I wish there were more pictures because Volcano's are awesome! Great reminders that despite the hardest efforts, humanity will never be able to control and capitalize "everything".

- [10](#)
- [0](#)

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[chelsadoq](#) wrote:Posted 2010/08/30
at 1:39 PM ETkevda wrote:Posted 2010/08/30
at 1:16 PM ETThis eruption is a warning to the worlds muslims to take heed. Stop using Allah as your excuse for silly terrorist acts. The day of reckoning is coming.

Can you be more ignorant??? Don't answer that.... I think the answer would be "yes".....

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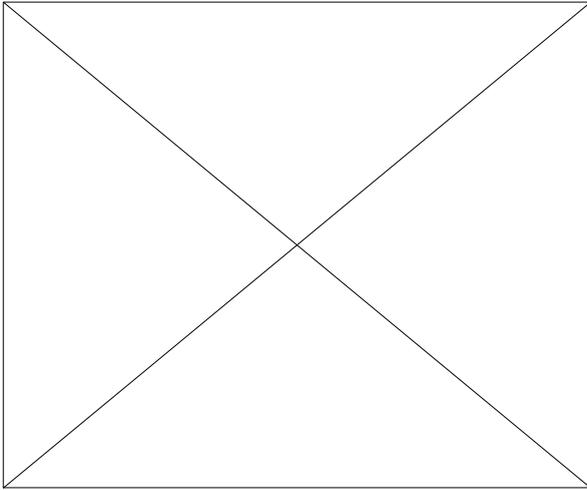
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