

More than 2,100 people are evacuated as an Indonesian volcano spews clouds of ash

April 20 2024, by GRACEY WAKARY and EDNA TARIGAN



This photo provided by the Indonesian National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS) shows a view of an eruption of Mount Ruang in the Sulawesi island, Indonesia, Friday, April 19, 2024. More people living near the erupting volcano on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island were evacuated on Friday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. Credit: National Search and Rescue Agency via AP

More than 2,100 people living near an erupting volcano on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island were evacuated Friday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami.

Indonesia's Center for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation recorded at least three eruptions since Friday afternoon, with the maximum height of the eruption column reaching 1,200 meters (3,900 feet).

An international airport in Manado city, less than 100 kilometers (60 miles) from the erupting Mount Ruang, is still temporarily closed as volcanic ash was spewed into the air.

Satellite imagery from the Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency shows the ash has spread to the west, northwest, northeast and southeast, covering Manado and North Minahasa, according to a statement from Indonesia's Transportation Ministry.

"We are still monitoring developments in the eruption of Mount Ruang and coordinating with relevant stakeholders ... to anticipate the necessary actions to ensure flight safety, security and comfort," said Ambar Suryoko, head of the regional airport authority.

More than [11,000 people were told to leave their homes](#) that were located in the affected area. A joint team from the [local authorities](#) combed the villages surrounding the volcano and evacuated residents to safer areas by boat.



This photo provided by the Indonesian Transportation Ministry shows the closed Sam Ratulangi Airport in Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia, Friday, April 19, 2024. Indonesian authorities closed the airport and residents left homes near an erupting volcano Thursday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. Credit: Indonesian Transportation Ministry via AP



In this photo provided by the Indonesian Transportation Ministry, people inquire about their flight change at the closed Sam Ratulangi Airport in Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia, Friday, April 19, 2024. Indonesian authorities closed the airport and residents left homes near an erupting volcano Thursday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. Credit: Indonesian Transportation Ministry via AP



Mount Ruang volcano is seen during the eruption from Tagulandang island, Indonesia, Thursday, April 18, 2024. Indonesian authorities closed an airport and residents left homes near an erupting volcano Thursday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. Credit: AP Photo/ Hendra Ambalao



In this photo released by Sitaro Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD Sitaro), hot molten lava glows at the crater of Mount Ruang as it erupts in Sanguine Islands, Indonesia, Wednesday, April 17, 2024. Indonesian authorities issued a tsunami alert Wednesday after eruptions at Ruang mountain sent ash thousands of feet high. Officials ordered more than 11,000 people to leave the area. Credit: BPBD Sitaro via AP



This photo provided by the Indonesian National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS) shows a part of a village on Tagulandang island covered by ash from eruptions of Mountt Ruang in the Sulawesi island, Indonesia, Friday, April 19, 2024. More people living near an erupting volcano on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island were evacuated on Friday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. Credit: National

Search and Rescue Agency via AP



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This photo released by the Indonesian National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS) shows Mount Ruang spewing smoke in the Sulawesi island, Indonesia, Friday, April 19, 2024. More people living near the erupting volcano were evacuated on Friday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. Credit: National Search and Rescue Agency via AP



This photo released by the Indonesian National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS) shows a view of an eruption of Mount Ruang in the Sulawesi island, Indonesia, Friday, April 19, 2024. More people living near an erupting volcano on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island were evacuated on Friday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. Credit: National Search and Rescue Agency via AP

Officials worry that part of the volcano could collapse into the sea and cause a tsunami, as happened in an eruption there in 1871.

Houses, roads and other buildings were covered by gray [volcanic ash](#), and many roofs were broken by debris spewed from the eruption.

Mount Ruang saw at least five large eruptions Wednesday, causing the

Center for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation to issue its highest level of alert. People were ordered to stay at least 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from the 725-meter (2,378-foot) mountain.

The observation from the agency on Friday said white smoke was rising from the main crater with medium to thick intensity.

East of the volcano, Tagulandang Island could be at risk if a collapse occurred. Its residents were among those being told to evacuate. Indonesia's National Disaster Mitigation Agency said residents would be relocated to Manado, a journey of 6 hours by boat.

Indonesia, an archipelago of 270 million people, has 120 [active volcanoes](#). It is prone to volcanic activity because it sits along the "Ring of Fire," a horseshoe-shaped series of seismic fault lines around the Pacific Ocean.

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Citation: More than 2,100 people are evacuated as an Indonesian volcano spews clouds of ash (2024, April 20) retrieved 22 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-04-people-evacuated-indonesian-volcano-spews.html>

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