

7 dead as volcano erupts as in western Indonesia

23/05/2016 21:27 by admin

Gamber: The death toll in the eruption of a volcano in western Indonesia rose to seven on Sunday, with two other people in critical condition, as an official warned of more eruptions.

Eruption of Mt. Sinabung

Mount Sinabung in North Sumatra province blasted volcanic ash as high as 3 kilometers (2 miles) into the sky on Saturday, said National Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Sutopo Purwo Nugroho. He said ash tumbled down the slopes as far as 4.5 kilometers (3 miles) westward into a river.

All the victims of the eruption were working on their farms in the village of Gamber, about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) away from the slope or within the danger area.

Photos taken on Sunday showed evidence of pyroclastic flows – a fast-moving cloud of hot volcanic gases, rocks and ash – in the village. Dead and injured animals were lying on the ground, around them scorched homes and smoky vegetation. Soldiers were setting up roadblocks and people were carrying their belongings and leading farm animals to safety.

Nata Nail, an official at the local Disaster Management Agency, said a man died Sunday at a hospital, leaving two other people in critical condition. The bodies of six other victims have been found near the mountain.

Rescuers including soldiers, police, and personnel from disaster combating agencies, as well as volunteers and villagers, halted search operations around the area after they found there were no more victims or villagers inside the danger zone, Nail said.

Earlier on Sunday, security personnel blocked some villagers who wanted to enter the village to take their abandoned belongings.

Nugroho warned of more potential eruptions, with volcanic activity still high at the mountain.

Mount Sinabung had been dormant for four centuries before reviving in 2010, killing two people. An eruption in 2014 killed 16 people.

Sinabung is among more than 120 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.

- PTI