

Here's how to keep up with the latest on Mt Agung, the Bali volcano

Written by Sarah Keenihan, Section Editor: Science + Technology, The Conversation

Mount Agung on the island of Bali has been in [continuous eruption](#) since Saturday November 25, 2017. But it's hard to know what will happen next.

Mt Agung has been spewing ash since Saturday. Video thanks to Australian Academy of Science.

A large plume of volcanic ash is visibly spewing from the volcano.

"The eruption is ongoing with the plume reaching between 2.5 and 3 km," said Christina Magill, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Sciences at Macquarie University.

"The ash cloud has now travelled approximately 400 km southwest of Agung, and is moving towards Tropical Cyclone Cempaka that is currently sitting just south of Java."

It also appears that molten rock is coming to the surface of the volcano.

"Last night the [NASA Modis satellite](#) detected a thermal anomaly in the crater of Mount Agung, suggesting a significant volume of magma has been brought to the surface."

Magma is a mixture of molten and semi-molten rock found under the surface of the Earth - when it reaches the surface it is known as lava.

There are continuous tremors in the area, and the alert level has been raised to the highest level of 4 around Mt Agung.

A 10km evacuation zone has been established around the crater, and [officials say](#) 22 villages and about 90,000 to 100,000 people are directly affected.

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“Although a larger eruption is possible, it is difficult to estimate the likely intensity of future activity,” Magill said.

The closure of Bali’s I Gusti Ngurah Rai International Airport is [now extended](#) to 7am on the 29th of November, with evaluations continuing to be made by the airport authorities.

“[Darwin Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre](#) has a current aviation alert for Agung volcano covering the area southwest of the volcano including Bali and southeast Java” said Magill.

“There are reports of ash on the runway at Denpasar airport.”

Denpasar is the main urban centre on Bali.

For the latest news, Associate Professor Heather Handley from Macquarie University recommends keeping an eye on twitter updates from the Indonesian Centre for Volconology ([@ID_magma](#)) and Sutopo Purwo Nugroho ([@sutopo_BNPB](#)), a representative of the Indonesian National Disaster Management Authority.

The last major eruption of Mount Agung was in 1963. [Around 1,000 people died](#) due to that event, Handley wrote in [an analysis](#) for The Conversation last month.

Since then, there have been two known periods of activity at the volcano site without an ensuing eruption.

On the neighbouring island of Java, the explosive [2010 eruption of Mount Merapi](#) saw more than 400,000 people evacuated and 367 killed. This was preceded by increased earthquake

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activity over a period of about two months. It was the volcano's largest eruption since 1872.

In 2010, the [Indonesian Centre of Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation](#) issued timely forecasts of the size of the eruption phases at Merapi, saving an [estimated 10,000–20,000 lives](#).

“The Indonesian authorities are doing an incredible job of co-ordinating people on the ground, and keeping everyone up to date on the latest activity and hazards of Agung,” [said](#) Handley.

The Conversation will continue to provide scientific analysis over coming days.

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