



Lightning and fire: Japan on alert after volcano's biggest eruption in 50 years

By Daily Mail Reporter
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A one-mile cordon has been established around a volcano on Mount Kirishima after it erupted scattering rocks and ash across southern Japan and sending smoke billowing 5,000ft into the air.

The Meteorological Agency raised the volcanic alert to level 3 as ash today continued to spew from Shinmoedake on Japan's southernmost main island of Kyushu, and residents have been banned from going within a mile of the volcano following its worst eruption in 50 years.



Force of nature: Lightning strikes as Shinmoedake erupts, scattering ash and rocks across a wide swathe of southern Japan



Ash and smoke continued to billow 5,000ft above Shinmoedake today as residents were banned from going within a mile of the volcano

Agency volcanologist Sei Iijima said the eruption did not pose a threat to nearby cities, and a major eruption was not imminent. But he added: "You can never say never with a volcano, although the lack of magma movement beneath the surface leads us to believe that this activity won't lead to a large-scale eruption," he told ABC News.

The volcano, one of 20 inside Mount Kirishima, began erupting around 7.30am yesterday morning and by 3pm heavy smoke had risen to nearly 5,000ft, prompting the meteorological agency to raise the alert level.

Volcanic activity is often reported at Kirishima, but this is the largest eruption recorded there since 1959.



Volcanic activity is often reported in the Kirishima range, but Shinmoedake's is the largest eruption since 1959



Under a cloud: A man takes a picture of erupting Shinmoedake from Takaharu, where an evacuation centre has been established

Air space above the mountain remained open today but a number of domestic flights because of the haze and the buildup of ash on train tracks forced Japan Rail to close several lines. Roads were also shut because of poor visibility.

A small evacuation center was set up overnight in the town of Takaharu, seven miles east of Kirishima, and the town's general affairs manager Yuji Nakashima said: "People told us their windows were rattling and they heard roaring sounds coming from the mountain."

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Awesome photos, especially the long distance one. There has been a marked increase in seismic and volcanic activity around the globe for months now. A volcanic eruption spews many times more greenhouse gases than an untold number of motor vehicles, coal-fired power generation plants, etc. IF global warming is man-made, then it is due to all of the unnatural materials we have created from natural products to create the concrete we use to build roads, buildings, bridges, etc. and the same applies to the millions upon millions of miles of asphalt roads.

- Steven Lodahl, Helena MT U.S.A., 28/1/2011 01:45

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I agree with Dan D. in Kansas City, USA. My understanding is that the apocalypse will be held on Dec. 21st, 2012 at noon (Mayan time) when the Yellowstone caldera explodes killing 2/3's of the US population and creating a nuclear winter that will spread across the globe lasting for months or possibly centuries, leaving only 10% of the human race to cannibalize each other while repopulating the planet. Anyone who doubts this is definitely a sheeple.

- Emily, NYC, USA, 28/1/2011 01:41

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Read Luke chapter 21 (Holy Bible). Stay tuned for more divine signs in the heavens and on earth. Read the whole chapter...

- Donovan Edwards, Villa Rica, GA.....USA, 28/1/2011 01:40

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Why is it that every article Drudge links to is littered with ignorant comments? This is an article about a volcano. If you want to post about religion, global warming, or politics....find a news article that is related to the subject!!!

- Tim, Chicago, USA, 28/1/2011 01:30

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It's the cycle of the Earth. When did we all turn the corner and have to have some radical/biblical/worldy explanation for each and every weather phenomenon?? I am pretty sure volcanos have been erupting for centuries, blizzards have been happening for centuries, heat waves and drought have been happening for centuries. Just enjoy mother nature, relax, and realize NOT EVERYTHING is the coming of the apocolypse. God Bless.

- Dan D, Kansas City, USA, 28/1/2011 00:16

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Do you think any news agency will mention when showing these photographs that an eruption like this emits more carbon into the atmosphere than humans have since the Industrial Revolution? Cap and Trade is the biggest boondoggle in man's history - will make Madoff's scheme look like a zit on an elephant's rear, all in the name of "saving" the planet.

- Sam, Sag Harbor, NY USA, 28/1/2011 00:13

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