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# Indonesia's Marapi volcano eruption leaves 22 dead; one still missing

The 2,891-metre high volcano in West Sumatra erupted on Sunday, spewing gray clouds of ash as high as 3 kilometres into the sky

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REUTERS

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The death toll from Indonesia's Marapi volcano eruption jumped to 22 on December 5 as rescuers found more climbers who had perished near the crater, the head of the West Sumatra rescue agency said on Tuesday, up from 13 earlier in the day.



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About 200 rescuers will resume search operations on Wednesday for one further missing climber.

The 2,891-metre high volcano in West Sumatra erupted on Sunday, spewing gray clouds of ash as high as 3 kilometres (1.9 miles) into the sky.

"We are now evacuating the dead bodies from the peak of the volcano," said the head of the search and rescue team, Abdul Malik.

Marapi is one of the most active volcanoes on Sumatra island and last erupted in January and February this year.

Since 2011, Indonesia's volcanology agency has urged a local conservation agency and the Environment Ministry in monthly letters to close an area within 3 kilometres' radius of the summit to climbers, agency head Hendra Gunawan told *Reuters*.

Still, there were 75 climbers on the volcano when it erupted, rescuers said.

Ahmad Basuki, another official at the volcanology agency, said the body could only issue safety warnings, and that it was up to the environment ministry and local authorities to enforce them.

The Environment Ministry did not immediately respond to questions from *Reuters*.



after getting the green light from several local agencies, including the west Sumatra

provincial government and national disaster agency, as well the Padang search and rescue agency.

The search and rescue agency declined to comment. The national disaster agency did not immediately respond to a request for comment. West Sumatra's provincial government was not immediately reachable for comment.

Sunday's eruption of Mt. Marapi was the deadliest since 1979, when an eruption killed 60 people.

The volcano's eruptions have been relatively infrequent over the past decade, making it challenging to analyse, said Mr. Basuki of the volcanology agency.

"Because we cannot record any seismic activity, the volcano gives no clear sign if it is going to erupt," he said. "The character of this volcano is dangerous."

Indonesia, which straddles the so-called "Ring of Fire", is home to more than 100 active volcanoes.



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