

## **14 dead, 3 injured as Mt Sinabung erupts**

**At least 14 people were killed, while three others were severely injured die to pyroclastic clouds emitted by Mount Sinabung in Karo regency, North Sumatra, on Saturday.As of Saturday evening, the bodies of the 14 fatalities had all been transported from a number of areas in Suka Meriah village, which is located within a 3-kilometer radius of the volcano, while three others had yet to be found, Mt. Sinabung Eruption Media Center head Jhonson Tarigan told The Jakarta Post.Rescuers, he added, had to stop the evacuation process due to fears of more eruptions. Currently, the evacuation zone is between 5 and 7 km on the southeast slope of the volcano.**

**Among the fatalities identified were Alexander Sembiring, student; Daud Surbakti, 17, student; David, 17, student; Dipa Nusantara, 17, student; Mahal Sembiring, 25, elementary school teacher; Rizal Sahputera, 23, journalist; Santun Siregar, 25, university student; Teken Sembiring, 47; Daniel Siagian, student; Julpiandi Mori, 21, student; Tomas Lakae, 27.**

**The injured residents were Sehat Sembiring, 48; Surya Sembiring, 21; and Doni Milala, 60. The three were believed to have been visiting a family grave and their abandoned homes when the volcano erupted.**

**Before the Saturday incident, the ongoing eruptions had already claimed the lives of 31 evacuees, as a result of various illnesses such as breathing difficulties, depression, asthma and hypertension.**

**Jhonson said the remains of several fatalities were transported from the area at around 4 p.m. before being taken to Kabanjahe General Hospital for identification, while the three wounded residents were rushed to Evarina Etatham Hospital in Kabanjahe to receive treatment for severe burns. "The bodies of the dead victims were completely burned when we found them," Jhonson said, adding that he still had no idea why the victims were in the area on Saturday.**

**According to some residents, some of the fatalities are believed to be students from Medan who were conducting a survey of the area around the volcano.Alvian Ginting, 43, a resident of Suka Meriah village, said that the bodies of four people were discovered by a villager around 400 meters from the village. Residents immediately reported the incident to officers at a nearby mitigation post in Kabanjahe.**

**Mt. Sinabung, which has been erupting since September 2013, erupted three times on Saturday, the National Disaster Mitigation Board (BNPB) reported. BNPB spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said the first eruption occurred at 10:30 a.m. and lasted for eight-and-a-half-minutes, spewing ash and thick clouds to the south. The second eruption took place at 10:38 a.m. for just over four minutes, followed by another eruption at 11:27 a.m. for 84 seconds.**

**Sutopo said that 16 villages had to be evacuated following the ongoing eruptions."Residents of the 16 villages are not allowed to visit their homes for any reason because the areas are considered dangerous," Sutopo said.The recent incident has most likely forced the government to withdraw its plan to send home 13,828 evacuees whose homes lie beyond a 5 km radius of the volcano.**