

New volcanic explosions prompt more evacuations in Guatemala



Guatemala City, June 6 (RHC)-- A new explosion at Guatemala's Fuego volcano prompted emergency services to order evacuations from the surrounding areas on Tuesday, as the death toll from the eruption rose further.

National disaster agency Conred ordered the evacuations and said that hot gas and molten rock were descending from the volcano. More than 70 deaths have been reported since the volcano -- whose name means 'fire' in Spanish -- erupted on Sunday, according to a Reuters report.

National Route 14 has been closed as a preventive measure, according to Conred, and people are being evacuated to the municipal stadium of Escuintla.

The National Institute of Seismology, Volcanology, Meteorology and Hydrology (Insivumeh) said the descent of the pyroclastic flow was recorded at 14:25 local time, by the Las Lahas and Jute canyon, and warned that the flow could soon reach the Palin-Escuintla highway.

As of Tuesday, more than 1,700,000 people had been affected, with 3,271 forced to evacuate. According to Conred, 70 people have so far been killed and 46 injured.

The initial eruptions on Sunday and Monday were the worst by El Fuego in four decades. The fast-

moving flows with temperatures as high as 700 degrees Celsius and hot ash and volcanic gases that can cause rapid asphyxiation caught many off guard.

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