



Damaged school buildings affected by the Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki **volcano** eruption are seen in Flores Timur, Indonesia, Nov. 4, 2024. At least 10 people, including a Catholic nun, have been killed in the volcanic eruption on Indonesia's predominantly Catholic Flores Island. (OSV News photo/Pemulet Paul, Antara Foto via Reuters)

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At least 10 people, including a Catholic nun, have been killed in a volcanic eruption on Indonesia's predominantly Catholic Flores Island.

Mount Lewotobi Laki Laki in the Wulanggitang subdistrict in East Flores Regency spewed ash and lava Nov. 3, peppering the surrounding areas with fireballs.

Sr. Nikolin Padjo of the Servants of the Holy Spirit congregation died when her convent in Boru collapsed during the eruption.

Her colleague, Sr. Sinta Eren, said that Padjo, head of the monastery in Boru, was found dead.

"It's so sad, she was happy last night," Eren said, referring to the recreational activities Padjo participated in with her colleagues before the fatal incident.

San Domingo Hokeng Middle Seminary in the Wulanggitang district was among the damaged buildings.

Several seminarians were injured.

Some church institutions, including the Society of Divine Word's Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Commission, are mobilizing funds to help the victims.

Government authorities have evacuated several villages and hiked the alert level in a four-tiered system to the highest.

The National Disaster Management Agency said nine bodies have been identified.

Boru resident Yoseph Stanis, 70, said he was sleeping when the volcano erupted, followed by an earthquake. "The sudden power outage and the pouring sand made us panic," he said.

Non Wolor, a 19-year-old Boru resident, said his family used two motorbikes to escape. "My father panicked because he had to save my grandmother," he said.

Wolor said since the roads were filled with sand, many met with minor accidents.

In January, the mountain experienced several significant eruptions, prompting authorities to raise the alert status to the highest and evacuate at least 2,000 residents.

Indonesia, a vast archipelago nation, experiences frequent volcanic eruptions due to its position on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an area of intense volcanic and seismic activity.

In December 2023, an eruption at one of the country's most active volcanoes, Mount Marapi in West Sumatra, killed at least 24 climbers, most of them university students.

And in May, more than 60 people died after heavy rains washed volcanic materials from the Marapi into residential areas, sweeping away homes.

In the same month, Mount Ruang in North Sulawesi province erupted more than half a dozen times, forcing thousands to flee.