

Southwestern Japanese volcano Erupts

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, March 14, 2011

The China Post 14 March 2011

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A volcano in southwestern Japan erupted Sunday after nearly two weeks of relative silence, sending ash and rocks up to four kilometers (two and a half miles) into the air, a local official said.

It was not immediately clear if the eruption was a direct result of the massive 8.9-magnitude earthquake that rocked northern areas Friday.

The 1,421-meter (4,689-feet) Shinmoedake volcano in the Kirishima range saw its first major eruption for 52 years in January. There had not been any major activity at the site since March 1.

Authorities have maintained a volcano warning at a level of three out of five, restricting access to the entire mountain.



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