

Thousands displaced by Democratic Republic of Congo volcano

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Goma, May 30 (RHC)-- Thousands of people have fled Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo after a volcanic eruption. Many say they lack shelter, food and drinking water.

Mount Nyiragongo erupted on May 22, sending lava streaming down a hillside, which left a trail of destruction and killed dozens of people. Nearly 400,000 people in Goma, the capital of North-Kivu province in the eastern DRC, have had to flee.

While many fled to Rutshuru in the north, and Minova in South-Kivu province, up to a quarter of them headed to Sake, about 30km (18 miles) to the northwest.

Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres, or MSF) told the AFP news agency that between 100,000 and 180,000 people had taken refuge in Sake, adding to the area's 70,000 population, and said cholera was a risk as the area struggled to absorb the impact.

President Felix Tshisekedi said on Saturday the situation in Goma is "serious but under control." He advised those who fled them not to return yet, after a week of rolling aftershocks. "There is an underground lava flow that can arise anytime anywhere in the city," Tshisekedi warned.

"The lava is no longer in the crater, but the volcano remains active, so we have to be wary and that's why we don't want to rush things by bringing back the populations," said the DRC president.

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