Mayon Volcano Bulletin
24 February 2000
3:00 AM

At 10:06 PM yesterday, the seismic network around Mayon detected an explosion-type earthquake which coincided with minor ejection of lava fragments from the summit and accompanied by rumbling. This earthquake was followed shortly by bright incandescence, and indicated that lava emission and ejection have intensified. Low-frequency type volcanic earthquakes then occurred beginning at 10:17 PM until about 11:26 PM when the seismographs around the volcano began to record harmonic tremors. The tremors became pronounced at about 00:34 AM of 24 February until the present and was accompanied by minor lava fountaining that reached to about fifty (50) meters above the summit lava dome.

The monitoring of other characteristics of the volcano also indicated the apparent increase in activity. The SO_2 emission rate increased from yesterday's reading of 4,070 tons per day (t/d) to about 5,700 t/d and shows active degassing of magma that is only likely to occur with a steady supply of magma from depth. In addition, ground deformation measurements showed the volcano edifice swelled significantly in the past two days, consistent with the active growth of the lava dome on the summit.

At this stage, Mayon Volcano has entered a mild eruptive phase, following the growth of a lava dome in the past seven days and extrusion of a short lava flow on 23 February. The latest activity involving ejection of ash and lava and earthquakes associated with explosions heralds a change in the nature of Mayon's activity from a dominantly effusive character to the start of more vigorous lava emission and fountaining with or without brief episodes of explosive ejection of lava and ash. PHIVOLCS, however, anticipates that more explosive eruptions will occur and that pyroclastic flows will be generated when more gas-rich magma begins to be tapped within the volcano.

In view of escalating activity at Mayon, PHIVOLCS now assigns Alert Level 4 over Mayon Volcano. This means that hazardous eruptions are now imminent (possible within days) due to the intense unrest brought by active lava extrusion, lava fountaining and ejection of ballistic lava fragments. At this notice, NO ADDITIONAL EVACUATION IS RECOMMENDED but people residing within eight (8) kilometers from the summit such as in Banadero, Bonga, Buyuan, Mabinit, Matanag (Legazpi) and Budiao (Daraga) are now advised to prepare for evacuation.

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