

Canary Islands: Lava from erupting volcano destroys homes

A volcano eruption on La Palma in the Spanish Canary Islands has destroyed houses and forced about 5,500 residents to evacuate.

Lava from the Cumbre Vieja volcano has been pouring downhill since Sunday's eruption, devastating everything in its path.

Local officials said about 100 houses have been destroyed so far.

The Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez flew to La Palma on Sunday to oversee rescue efforts.

Mr Sanchez said authorities are closely monitoring fires that may start from the burning lava. The military and civil guard has been deployed to help.

"The lava left absolutely nothing in its path," local mayor Sergio Rodriguez told Spanish broadcaster TVE, adding that residents would not be returning home for a while.

No casualties have so far been reported. There were mandatory evacuation orders for four villages and temporary shelters were set up. Further evacuations are unlikely to be necessary, Canary Islands President Angel Victor Torres said on Monday.

Regional airline Binter was forced to cancel four flights on Sunday due to the eruption but Spain's civil aviation authority has emphasised that the airspace above the islands remains open. Around 500 tourists have also been evacuated by authorities.

Regional leader Ángel Víctor Torres said the volcano is expected to be active for



© BBC News

the next few days, and the lava flow is predicted to reach the coast at around 20:00 local time (19:00 GMT).

Spain's Tourism Minister, Reyes Maroto, faced criticism after telling Canal Sur radio that the eruption was an opportunity to attract visitors to the island.

"The island is open. If your hotel is affected, we will find you another one," she said. "We can make the most of this opportunity. For the many tourists who want to enjoy what nature has brought to La Palma, they can do so in the coming weeks and months."

The volcano last erupted 50 years ago. It lies in the south of La Palma island, which is home to around 80,000 people.

The eruption started around 15:00 local time (14:00 GMT) on Sunday and sent lava flowing down the hillside toward villages.

Jonas Perez, a local tour guide, said he could still feel tremors from the eruption.

"But now the most amazing thing, which I've never experienced, is that the noise coming from the volcano, it sounds like... 20 fighter jets taking off and it's extremely loud, it's amazing," he added.

The prime minister delayed his departure for the UN General Assembly in New York to meet the Canary Islands' president to discuss the emergency services' response to the eruption.

"Everything is going according to plan, and therefore the priority is to guarantee the safety of the citizens of La Palma who could be affected as a consequence of this eruption," Mr Sánchez said on Sunday.

La Palma had been on high alert after more than 22,000 tremors were recorded in one week around the volcano.

The Canaries, an archipelago of seven islands off north-west Africa, last recorded a volcanic eruption in 2011, undersea off El Hierro island.

Cumbre Vieja last erupted in 1971 and in 1949.

Wally the wandering walrus is spotted in Iceland



The walrus, seen here when he was in Ireland this year, had not been spotted for more than three weeks!

A walrus previously spotted in Ireland, France, Spain and the UK has turned up in Iceland, marine experts have said.

The 800kg (125st) Arctic walrus, known as Wally, had not been seen for more than three weeks, with spotters saying they were “starting to lose hope” of ever seeing him again.

However, Seal Rescue Ireland said he had been seen in Iceland on Sunday after 22 days of no sightings.

He was identified from scars on both his front flippers, the group said.

The wandering walrus was thought to have travelled 4,000km (2,485 miles) before reaching Ireland, with the new sighting in Iceland meaning he had swum more than 900km (560 miles) from his last known location in Cork.



Wally had a pontoon made for him in the Isles of Scilly after he damaged boats!

Who will it be?

Who is your money on?

There's been a lot of speculation as to who could step into the shoes of Piers Morgan who recently departing ITV's popular TV show, Good Morning Britain.

Speculation is growing that DIY SOS presenter Nick Knowles could be the next Good Morning Britain star!

Nick, who lives just outside Cirencester, has been hotly-tipped as the next GMB by people debating the job on social media.



Good Morning Britain

**FIND OUT WHO!
ALL IS REVEALED IN THE
NEXT EDITION!**

Syndenham House
Quote of the Day

**Every day may
not be good...
but there's
something
good in every
day!**