

A Volcano In Ethiopia Spews Ash Across Asia

By LYNSEY CHUTEL

A volcano that erupted in Ethiopia spewed an ash cloud that drifted deep into Asia on Tuesday, prompting delays and cancellations of flights in India.

The volcano, Hayli Gubbi, erupted on Sunday morning in a sparsely populated area of northeastern Ethiopia, sending the cloud into the atmosphere, according to Copernicus, the European Union's Earth-observation program. Satellite images published by the program showed the ash cloud blowing east over the Arabian Sea into the Indian subcontinent.

Multiple flights were rerouted or delayed as a precaution, India's Ministry of Civil Aviation said on social media. Air India, one of the country's largest airline companies, canceled nearly a dozen flights on Monday and Tuesday passing through the Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai airports.

The ash cloud continued to move farther east on Tuesday, passing over Myanmar and into southern China, according to advisories published by the Toulouse Volcanic Ash Advisory Center, which is operated by France's meteorological agency.

The Ethiopian authorities reported no casualties from the eruption, which online reports initially suggested could be the first recorded volcanic event on Hayli Gubbi in 12,000 years.

The Smithsonian Institution's Global Volcanism Program has no historic data of any eruptions at Hayli Gubbi in the Holocene, the current geographic epoch that began about 11,700 years ago with the most recent melting of the ice sheets. The Large Magnitude Explosive Volcanic Eruptions database, an international monitor that records eruptions from be-



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The volcano Hayli Gubbi in Ethiopia. Some reports indicated the eruption could be its first recorded volcanic event in 12,000 years.

fore 12,000 years ago, also has no record of an eruption of Hayli Gubbi.

But not having recorded data does not mean that the volcano has not erupted in millennia, said Juliet Biggs, a director of the Center for the Observation and Modeling of Earthquakes, Vol-

canos and Tectonics in Britain, which also works with researchers in Ethiopia. She noted that in remote regions, eruptions frequently aren't documented.

The center has satellite imagery from before the eruption on Tuesday that showed "fresh-looking lava flows that are probably

less than a few hundred years old," Ms. Biggs added. That points to an eruption that may have taken place in the past few centuries.

The volcano sits on the Afar Rift, a tectonic region where Africa is very slowly splitting, resulting in earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The rift has seen multi-

ple episodes of volcanic eruption in recent months.

The closest volcano to Hayli Gubbi, Erta Ale, which is about seven miles away, erupted in July. Since then, scientists have observed plumes of white smoke from the long-dormant volcano, leading up to its eruption.