

# Japan volcano erupts

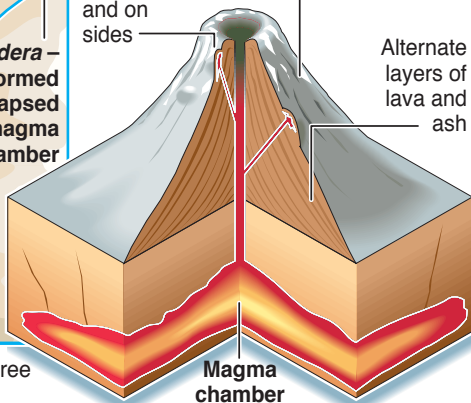
Japan's Mount Usu volcano erupted on Friday, spewing hot rocks, gas and ash over the snowy countryside of Hokkaido island. Experts monitoring seismic activity of the volcano had predicted the eruption and already evacuated more than 13,000 nearby residents

**Mount Usu – a “stratovolcano”**  
**Steep-sided cone formed by piling up of lava, too viscous to flow away.**  
Previous activity resulted in lava eruptions and pyroclastic flows – fast moving super-heated gas, ash and rocks

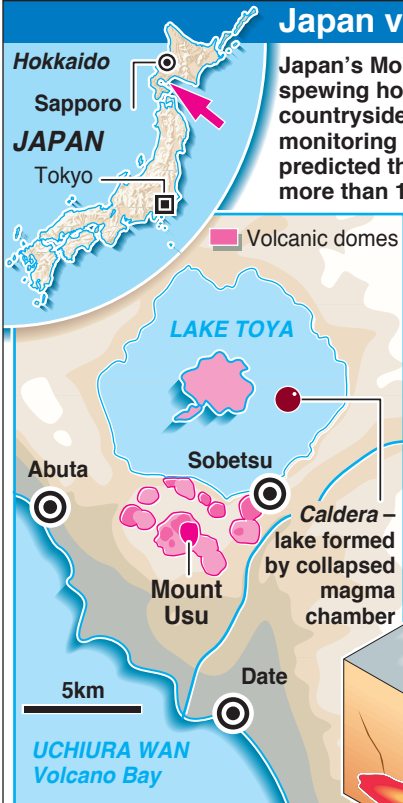
**Lava domes** At summit and on sides  
**Main vent** Now erupting  
100m cracks on northwest flank still growing

Alternate layers of lava and ash

**Caldera** – lake formed by collapsed magma chamber



Expansion of magma causes pressure build-up



Toya region sits at point where three tectonic plates collide – bringing molten magma to surface