**Report dated - Monday 29th September 2014**

**Mount Ontake volcano erupts in Japan**

**Mount Ontake in Japan erupted on Saturday, sending a large plume of ash into the sky, hundreds were caught up in the natural disaster.**

Local government officials have warned climbers to avoid the area until further notice.They have warned that debris and ash from the volcano could fall up to four kilometres (2.5 miles) away.

The volcano, about 200km (125 miles) west of Tokyo, erupted without warning on Saturday, spewing ash and rocks into the surrounding countryside.

About 250 people were trapped on the slopes of the popular beauty spot, but luckily most got down safely but told terrifying stories of how suddenly the sky went dark and a beautiful day turned into a nightmare.

Saturday's eruption forced many of those on the mountain to make emergency descents through clouds of volcanic ash and falling rocks.

"The volcanic rocks fell like hailstones," one man said. "We couldn't breathe so we covered our mouths with towels. We couldn't open our eyes either."

Another survivor told reporters: "The volcanic ash was hurtling so fast I couldn't run away. I'm worried about people still on the mountain."

Almost 50 terrified people were thought to be trapped and forced to stay on the mountain in hikers huts on Saturday night, as the conditions were too dangerous for them to climb down.

Rescue efforts will continue on Monday after a search on Sunday was called off because of deadly toxic volcanic gases in the area.

It is understood 45 people are still listed as missing or confirmed dead - including those found near the crater of the volcano. There are fears that other missing hikers could still be buried under volcanic ash.

