

New crack opens on Hawaii volcano

The Philippine Star · 14 May 2018 · 14

PAHOA (Reuters) — A new fissure roaring like jet engines and spewing magma opened on Hawaii's Kilauea volcano on Saturday, piling lava as high as a four-story building, as the area torn by the US volcano's eruption spread.

The crack in pasture land on Kilauea's east flank was the 16th recorded since the volcano, one of the world's most active, erupted eight days ago. Thousands of people have fled their homes on Hawaii's Big Island because of lava and toxic gases, and dozens of homes have been destroyed.

The new fissure opened up about 1.6 km east of the existing vent system that has devastated the island's Leilani Estates neighborhood, with a few homes on the edge of the field where the vent opened. The US Geological Survey warned that more outbreaks remained likely.

"It's right by my house, which is kind of scary," said Haley Clinton, 17, who walked to see the new crack with her father, Darryl, and sister Jolon, 15. "It's really cool."

From afar, the fissure gave off dull, thumping roars that sharpened on approach to a scream like a chorus of jet engines from venting steam and gas, mixed with the slapping sounds of liquid lava.

Within hours of opening, the fissure had piled reddish-black lava about 40 feet high and at least 150 feet in length. Chunks of magma were being spewed 100 feet (30 meters) in the air. The intense heat left onlookers drenched with sweat, and the air was filled with an acrid, burned scent. With billowing gas and smoke blowing in the opposite direction, there was no pungent smell of toxic sulfur dioxide in the air.