

Oldoinyo Lengai, NW Tanzania, erupted on September 4 at midnight and at 5 a.m., causing a significant ashcloud. Ash fallout was observed at Engare Sero village, 18 km North from Oldoinyo Lengai summit. Ashfall lasted for over 12 hours. The ash cloud was imaged by the ASTER satellite on morning of September 4. The cloud is observed to drift S-SW.

The NW, W and E flanks of Oldoinyo Lengai appears to have burned recently. These bush fires were probably caused by lava flows or incandescent material overtopping the crater rim. MODIS data, analysed with the MODLEN algorithm, recorded multiple and repeated thermal anomalies at and around Oldoinyo Lengai crater since August 21. Extended thermal anomalies were recorded on the flanks on August 31 and September 1.

This eruption presents a much more explosive character than the usual eruptive activity witnessed in the last 15 years and might resemble the silica-rich eruptions observed in 1966-67.

Source: Matthieu Kervyn, Mercator & Ortelius Research Center for Eruption Dynamics, Ghent University; Greg Vaughan, JPL; Thomas M. Holden, Nature Discovery; Fred Belton (<http://www.mtsu.edu/%7Efbelton/lengai.html>); The Guardian newspaper, Arusha."