



The 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami: The Story of the Deadliest Natural Disaster of the 21st Century

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures

*Includes accounts of the tsunami written by survivors

*Includes a bibliography for further reading

“Whenever an earthquake or tsunami takes thousands of innocent lives, a shocked world talks of little else.” - Anne M. Mulcahy

In the Christian world, December 25 is a time of great rejoicing and celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. It is by far the most festive time of year, marked by parties, church services and giving gifts. It is also a popular vacation time, as families use the breaks given by offices and schools to travel, often to exotic destinations. That is why so many of those who witnessed the Great Tsunami of 2004 were not native to the areas struck but had traveled there to enjoy the sun during the dead of winter. Most of them slept soundly on Christmas night and woke up the following morning with plans to enjoy a fun day playing along white beaches or exploring dense jungles. For many, it was supposed to be the adventure of a lifetime, but for everyone in the region, it would instead become a fight for survival.

Around 8:00 a.m. on December 26, a massive earthquake registering a 9.1-9.3 on the Richter Scale struck off of Sumatra, Indonesia, making it the 3rd strongest earthquake ever recorded by seismographs. On top of that, the earthquake shook for nearly 10 minutes and generated incredibly strong tsunami waves, some of which topped out at over 100 feet tall as they crashed inland in places like Thailand, India, and Indonesia. Given the great distances traveled, some of the tsunami waves didn't reach shore until 7 hours after the earthquake, but thanks to the element of surprise, people in the region had virtually no warning of what was coming. With more energy than that generated by every weapon and bomb used during World War II combined, the tsunami waves pulverized entire towns and swept away hundreds of thousands of people across Southeast Asia, in addition to displacing more than a million people.

Given how calamitous the events were, a massive outpouring of humanitarian support was sent to the affected areas, and over \$10 billion was poured into relief efforts. Not surprisingly, a better tsunami detection system was also designed to prevent against any similar occurrence, even though it's believed that the last similar event in that region took place over 500 years earlier. The 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami: The Story of the Deadliest Natural Disaster of the 21st Century chronicles the incredibly powerful earthquake and the deadly tsunami waves it triggered in Southeast Asia. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about the 2004 earthquake and tsunami like never before, in no time at all.

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