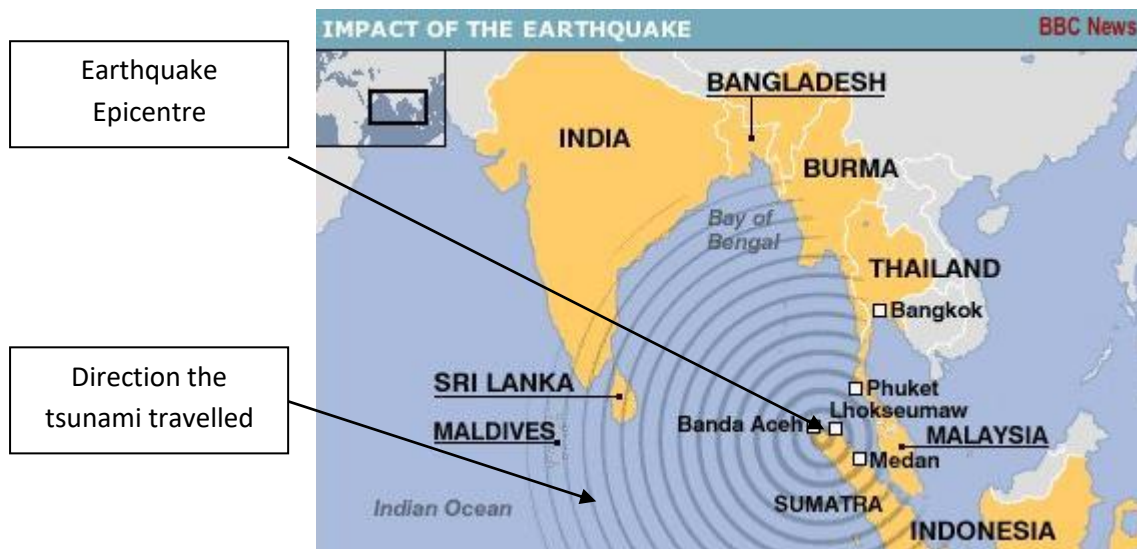


Indian Ocean Tsunami – Resource 1

The tsunami on 26 December 2004 caused massive destruction and tragic loss of life, with an enormous humanitarian, social and economic impact throughout the region, with political implications on a global scale. The short, medium and long-term consequences of this horrendous natural disaster across Asia and Africa are far-reaching.



11 Facts about the Tsunami

1. The December 26, 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was caused by an earthquake that is thought to have had the energy of 23,000 atomic bombs.
2. The epicenter of the 9.0 magnitude quake was under the Indian Ocean near the west coast of the Indonesian island of Sumatra.
3. The violent movement of sections of the Earth's crusts known as tectonic plates displaced an enormous amount of water, sending powerful shock waves in every direction.
4. The tectonic plates in this area had been pushing against each other, building pressure for thousands of years – they continue to do so and will likely cause underwater earthquakes and tsunamis in the future.
5. The shifting of the earth's plates in the Indian Ocean on December 26, 2004 caused a rupture more than 600 miles long, displacing the seafloor above the rupture by perhaps 10 yards horizontally and several yards vertically. That doesn't sound like much, but the trillions of tons of rock that were moved along hundreds of miles caused the planet to shudder with the largest magnitude earthquake in 40 years.
6. Within hours of the earthquake, killer waves radiating from the epicenter slammed into the coastline of 11 Indian Ocean countries, damaging countries from east Africa to Thailand.
7. Despite a lag of up to several hours between the earthquake and the impact of the tsunami, nearly all of the victims were taken completely by surprise because there

were no tsunami warning systems in the Indian Ocean to detect tsunamis or to warn the general populace living around the ocean.

8. By the end of the day of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, it had already killed 150,000 people. The final death toll was 283,000.
9. The Indian Ocean tsunami traveled as far as 3,000 miles to Africa and still arrived with sufficient force to kill people and destroy property.
10. Many people in Indonesian reported that they saw animals fleeing for high ground minutes before the tsunami arrived – very few animal bodies were found afterward.
11. The risk of famine and epidemic diseases was extremely high immediately following the tsunami – bodies rotting in the tropical heat contaminated food and water sources.