

## Some Facts About Tsunamis

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We have all recently been under immense shock on what has happened in some of the regions of Asia last December 26, 2004, just a day after a joyous Christmas Celebration on the paradise-like place of Phuket and on the island of Sri Lanka. It was a great tragedy with the toll of dead people reaching about 135,000 now and left many of people injured, homeless and struggling to survive.

Here are some of the facts that you may want to know about Tsunamis:

- Before the first wave of the tsunami hits, the shoreline recedes tremendously and it may even expose the sea or ocean floor and leave a bounty of fishes dry. If you happen to see this, never let your curiosity get the better of you and immediately run to higher ground.
- A tsunami can be a series of waves and mostly the first wave is the less intense of all.
- Tsunamis only affect shallow waters or coastal areas. When tsunamis hit the deep areas of water, it just comes off as an average big ocean wave. The Physics of tsunamis indicate that as it travels into shallow water, its height increases even reaching up to a hundred meters (100 m) in height in extreme cases.
- Earthquakes are not the only causes of Tsunami, Tsunamis can also be generated from meteorites falling on a large body of water, a volcanic eruption, landslide or from any occurrence that displaces a large amount of water.
- Animals domestic or wild can almost detect approaching tsunamis. As observed from the Tsunami that hit last Dec. 26, 2004, the statistics of animals that were affected by the Tsunami were very very small and even negligible compared to the human casualties. Scientist and animal experts attribute this to the keen, attuned and sensitive senses of animals as compared to humans.
- Tsunamis can also be earlier detected with a Tsunameter, a device that can detect an approaching Tidal Wave. Unfortunately, only a few countries could afford this device. Sri Lanka has considered of acquiring one but that project was not pushed through.

These are just a few facts that you may want to know about Tsunamis. Tsunamis are deadly and may cause destruction of lives, properties, and even an entire place. The best weapon against this kind of unprecedented and unstoppable occurrence is a well educated and well informed public so that even if properties may get washed away, lives may still be saved.