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## Earthquakes strike off the coast of Indonesia, tsunami warning issued

**Two earthquakes of substantial magnitude hits the same region struck by the 2004 quake that sent massive tsunami waves across the Indian Ocean.**

By **Reuters**

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On Wednesday, two earthquakes of 8.7 and 8.6 magnitude struck off the coast of Indonesia, sending residents there and in India dashing out of their homes and offices in fear. A tsunami warning was issued for the whole Indian Ocean.

The first quake struck 308 miles (500 km) southwest of the city of Banda Aceh, on the northern tip of Sumatra island, at a depth of 20.5 miles (33 km), the U.S. Geological survey said.

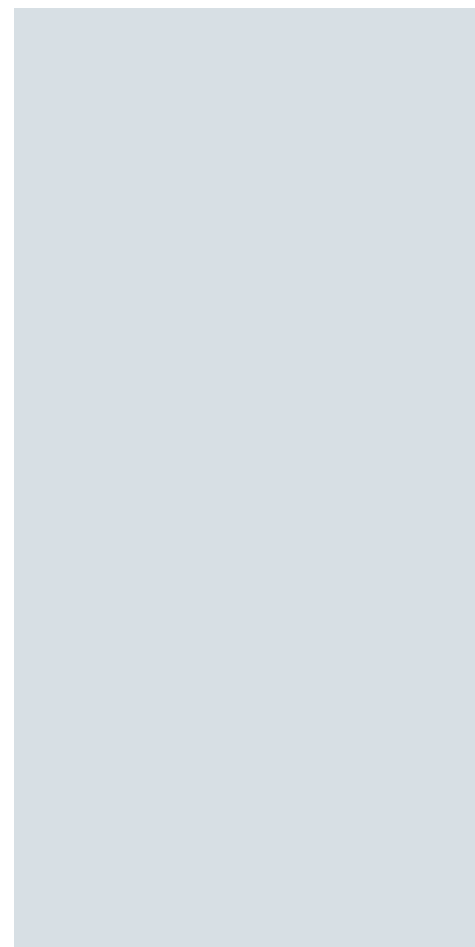


A satellite image of Banda Aceh taken after the tsunami in 2004.

Photo by: AP

The second earthquake, a magnitude of 8.6, struck off of the Indonesian coast at a depth of 6.2 miles.

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Tsunami watch lifted in Indian Ocean following powerful earthquakes

The quake was felt as far away as the Thai capital, Bangkok, and in southern India, residents said. Hundreds of office workers in the Indian city of Bangalore left their buildings, according to workers there.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii lifted a tsunami watch for most areas of the Indian Ocean about four hours after the first quake. It was still in effect for Indonesia, India, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and the island territory of Diego Garcia.

Both Kenya and Tanzania issued Tsunami warnings along their Indian Ocean coastlines on Wednesday.

The quake was in roughly in the same area as a Dec. 26, 2004, quake of 9.1 magnitude, which sent huge tsunami waves crashing into Sumatra, where 170,000 people were killed, and across the Indian Ocean.

In all, the 2004 tsunami killed about 230,000 people in 13 Indian Ocean countries, including Thailand, Sri Lanka and India.

The 2004 quake was at a depth of 18 miles (30 km) along a fault line running under the Indian Ocean, off western Indonesia and up into the Bay of Bengal.

The quake was also felt in Sri Lanka and the southern Thai holiday island of Phuket, both of which were hit hard by the 2004 tsunami.

Thai Meteorological Department deputy chief Somchai Baimoung said there was no tsunami warning yet in Thailand. Provincial officials along the Andaman Sea coast were preparing for possible evacuation if necessary.

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