

Foreword

This book introduces an oral tradition passed down about the damages from a tsunami that occurred in Sri Lanka more than 2,000 years ago.

In Japan, Lafcadio Hearn, who adopted the Japanese name Yakumo Koizumi, recounted the Ansei Nankai Earthquake Tsunami of 1854 in his work “A Living God.” His description of the event, translated into Japanese, was included in pre-war elementary school textbooks in Japan and has also been made into a set of illustrated picture cards used for disaster prevention education. However, Koizumi’s work is not always a reliable description of the tsunami. The website of the Japan Meteorological Agency, which refers to “A Living God,” warns that, depending on the mechanism that causes a particular earthquake, a high tsunami wave may rush in without first retreat of sea water.

People all over the world saw television or Internet images of the disaster caused by the Great Indian Ocean Tsunami, which occurred in December, 2004. This tsunami was generated by the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake, but it also reached countries bordering the Indian Ocean that had felt no earthquake tremors, causing many fatalities. The aims of this book are to inform future generations about the damages that tsunamis caused and to spread accurate and scientific knowledge concerning these natural phenomena, to save as many lives as possible if a tsunami occurs.

The book consists of two parts. “Part I: How to Survive a Tsunami” describes the characteristics of tsunami and gives examples of damages caused by tsunami. “Part II: Tsunami Behavior and Forecasting” contains scientific descriptions of tsunami, for those who want more detailed knowledge.

The prologue section contains various questions about tsunami, which readers are invited to try their hand at answering.

Leading researchers in the fields of tsunami and disaster prevention served on the editorial committee and many researchers also contributed

to the articles. I am grateful to all of them for their cooperation in the preparation of this book.

Susumu Murata, Committee Chairman
TSUNAMI: To Survive from Tsunami Editorial and Publication Committee
Coastal Development Institute of Technology
October 2008

TSUNAMI: To Survive from Tsunami was written in the hope of saving as many lives as possible in the event of a tsunami.

The Great Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004, which hit Indonesia and many countries around the Indian Ocean, left over 300,000 people dead or missing. Most of the fatalities were tsunami victims.

Tsunami attacks after an earthquake, or even when no earthquake has been felt. In this part of the book, the authors aim to give readers a virtual tsunami experience by reporting the findings of numerous on-site surveys just after the disaster and giving detailed descriptions of various mechanisms related to tsunami, and the damage tsunami causes. They also desire to instruct how to prepare for and deal with tsunami.

The book composed of two parts was written by leading researchers in the fields of tsunami and disaster prevention. The first part describes the characteristics of tsunami and gives examples of damages caused by tsunami. The second part contains scientific descriptions of tsunami, for those who want more detailed information.

TSUNAMI: To Survive from Tsunami was written in the hope that readers will learn what they should do to survive in case of a tsunami.