

# Massive shift

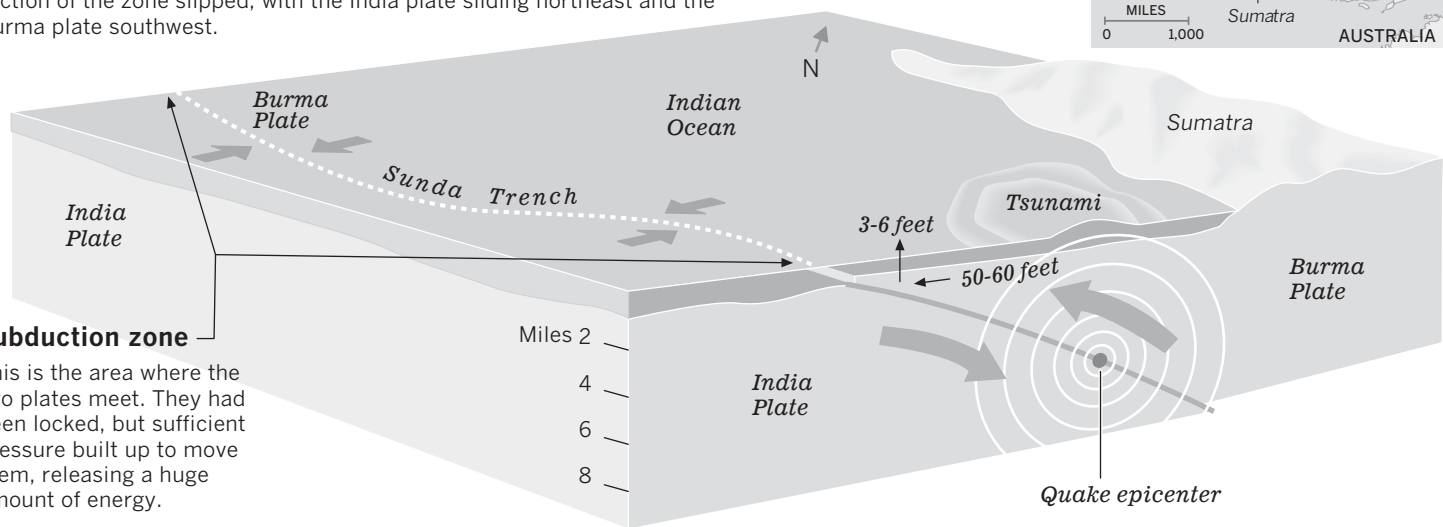
When Sunday's quake struck beneath the Indian ocean off northern Sumatra it moved the island and pushed up part of the ocean floor, displacing a very large column of water, creating a tsunami. Here's a look at how the earthquake happened:

## Stress reduction deep underground

The quake occurred along the subduction zone where the India tectonic plate slips beneath the Burma plate, a zone that begins near Myanmar and arcs around Sumatra almost to Western Australia. A 600-mile-long section of the zone slipped, with the India plate sliding northeast and the Burma plate southwest.

## Sumatra relocated

The quake caused the island of Sumatra to shift to the southwest.



## Subduction zone

This is the area where the two plates meet. They had been locked, but sufficient pressure built up to move them, releasing a huge amount of energy.