

News and Current Events :: Cameroon boat survivor's ordeal

Cameroon boat survivor's ordeal - posted by Immanuel, on: 2007/2/9 3:21

Sunday Peter was one of the few survivors of a boat accident off the coast of Cameroon in which more than 40 people drowned. The 44-year-old Nigerian, who spent 10 hours in the water waiting to be rescued, told the BBC about his ordeal from his hospital bed.

The boat set out with about 60 passengers or more, then they loaded kola nuts on the way. The boat owner then carried on another 80 bags of crayfish.

Thirty minutes after we left that trading firm, water started flowing inside the boat and everybody was fighting for his life.

The waves were too much - and the boat started capsizing.

We carried the goods and threw them in the water, until there was nothing left - but despite that the boat sank.

Many children died, many people lost their lives - many, many.

I stayed in the water about 10 hours before fishermen come and removed me from the water.

In short it was a terrible thing.

I prayed to God and remembered verses from the Bible and after that I got courage - something just told me that I would not die.

I floated in the water holding on to two very short planks and all I know is that the almighty God saved me - saved us - we are about 20 who survived.

Burns

While I was in the water that night all I remember doing was praising God.

I sang this song: 'He delivered Paul and Silas. He delivered Paul Silas so. He delivered Paul and Silas. He will surely deliver me. Amen.'

I was delivered.

I have burns across my chest because I was swimming in petrol for all those hours.

The minute the boat capsized a jerry can of petrol was tipped into the water by my body.

I'm very sorry because I saw people dying.

There was one girl who was telling me that her father had drowned in December, I think.

She said she too she was going to die.

So I tried to give the girl courage.

"If there is anyone who has sinned against our Lord Jesus, confess - you'll be saved," I said.

But after that I didn't hear the voice of the girl, she must have given up.

'Save me!'

Just before we were rescued, we heard the noise of an engine boat.

I myself began shouting: "Save me! Save me! Save me! I'm dying inside the water!"

I kept shouting, shouting. Within about 10 minutes I saw the fisherman coming in their boat.

They picked me up and just dropped me into their boat.

The boat was very loaded which is why it got into trouble.

Before we set off, when they were loading the crayfish, I called the driver and I called the boat owner to tell them that the boat was overloaded.

But they said it was normal - so there was nothing we could do.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6344209.stm>