



WARNING: Fran in the danger zone

By Mike MacEacheran

reporters@dailyrecord.co.uk

TRAVIS star Fran Healy yesterday told how he was lucky to be alive after a charity convoy he wanted to join was ambushed in Sudan.

The singer said he and his fiance Nora could have been killed on a truck that was attacked last week in the war-torn Darfur region.

Two workers from Save The Children died in the ambush by militants.

The 31-year-old, who was on a fact-finding mission for Band Aid and the charity, was due to travel with the convoy but changed his mind after listening to warnings about the area.

Fran is among the stars on Band Aid 20's *Do They Know It's Christmas?*, which was confirmed yesterday as the festive No1.

Atrocities

He said: "They only had two vehicles in that area and it was in the area we had originally planned to visit.

"If we'd been there, it would have been a 50/50 chance that me and Nora would have been in that vehicle when the convoy got ambushed.

"That was one of the things that really brought it home."

The Glasgow-born frontman, whose hits include *Why Does It Always Rain On Me?* and *Sing*, also spoke of the atrocities he had witnessed on his visit to raise awareness about the famine in Sudan.

He said: "We met one little guy who had refused to do work as a slave. He had said, 'I'm

FRAN'S SUDAN AMBUSH ESCAPE African scare for star

not going to do your bidding'. They cut off his hand as punishment.

"His right hand was gone completely and on his left hand his thumb and fourth finger were missing. It was so sad.

"They hadn't done anything to deserve what happened to them."

The singer also headed to the remote village of Rumrol, a place where no other aid agencies had reached.

He said: "We met Veronica, who had already lost six of her eight children.

"She explained that the nearest water source was over three hours walking distance away. She was travel-

ling there, with two hours to queue and three hours back for a bucket of water which basically wasn't drinkable."

Scotland has been the most generous part of Britain in donating money to the Save The Children fund this year.

But Fran, now back home, is urging people to do more to raise funds and, despite the horrors and the dangers, he wants to return to Sudan next year.

The singer was speaking as the Sudan government pledged to halt all military operations in Darfur.

A United Nations spokesman said the country asked rebels to stop attacks.



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