

**ACTIVITY:** Spearfishing

**CASE:** GSAF 1964.06.23

**DATE:** June 23, 1964

**LOCATION:** The incident took place off the village of Tovuu, Totoya Island, Fiji. 18°50'S

**NAME:** Isireli Mara

**DESCRIPTION:** The diver was a 23-year-old male from Tovuu. He was wearing khaki shorts.

**BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, June 25, 1964

**DISTANCE FROM BOAT:** 20 yards

**DEPTH OF WATER:** Six feet

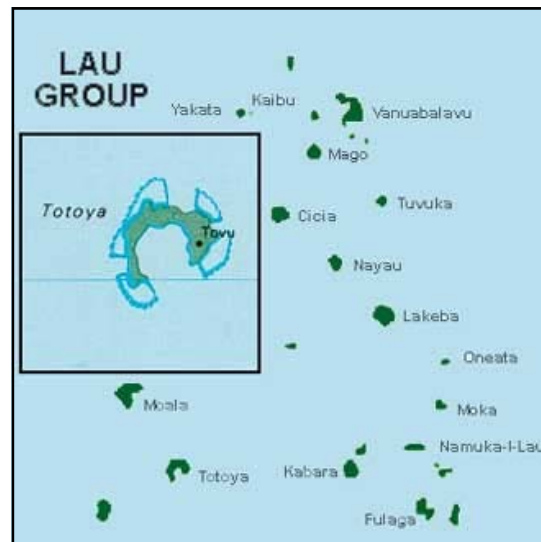
**NARRATIVE:** Isoa Ilaitia was manning the boat, and Isireli was in the water with two companions: Aisea Volau and Yaumica Tinivakaonosagavulu. Isireli was swimming on the surface when he felt a bump on his buttocks. "It took me by surprise, because I did not see it before the attack," he said. As he turned around he saw a large shark swimming away.

**INJURY:** His buttocks were bitten.

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** He was taken to the village where the resident staff nurse "gave an injection" and dressed his injuries. Communication was by radio with Suva and the RNZAF *Sunderland* promptly went to Totoya. Isireli was taken to CWM Hospital in Suva for further treatment.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Not identified

**SOURCE:** Fiji Times, June 26, 1964



# SHARK VICTIM TELLS ABOUT REEF ATTACK

Swimming along the seabed two years ago off his village of Tovu, Totoya, Lau, 23-year-old Isireli Mara was surprised when something bumped into him.

He turned round, with his spear poised ready to strike, just in time to see a large shark disappearing into deep water.

"That was my most frightening experience, but I think the shark was more surprised than I was", Isireli said yesterday.

"Otherwise it would have attacked", he added.

Isireli, a married man with three children, is a patient at the CWM Hospital suffering from injuries he received when another shark attacked him last Tuesday near the reef three miles from his village.

He was flown to Suva in an RNZAF Sunderland.

His condition yesterday was stated to be satisfactory.

## SURFACE ATTACK

He told a Fiji Times reporter that on Tuesday he was swimming on the surface when the shark attacked him.

"It took me by surprise, because I did not see it before the attack", Isireli said.

The shark bit Isireli on the buttocks, and to free himself he shook his body.

"I was lucky, because the

shark did not return for a second attack", he said.

## 20 YARDS FROM BOAT

Isireli was about 20 yards from a boat manned by Isoa Ilaitia, Aisea Volau and Yaumica Tinivakaonosagavulu.

His friends quickly went to his rescue when they heard his shout for help.

Spearfishing with him were Eremasi Bola and Joeli.

"I would have shot it with my speargun if I had seen it coming at me", Isireli said.

"I have seen many sharks while spearfishing, but this is the first time I have been deliberately attacked".

Isireli was taken to the village, where the resident staff nurse gave an injection and dressed his injuries.

Communication was made with Suva by radio and the RNZAF Sunderland promptly went to Totoya.