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([NYDailyNews.com](http://www.nydailynews.com)) - At least four people were dead and more than 50 were injured after a South Korean passenger ship with about 470 people aboard sank off the country's southwestern coast early Wednesday.



About 325 of those aboard the ferry were high school students headed to the resort island of Jeju for a four-day trip. About 160 people, including some students and teachers, had been rescued, but nearly 300 were still missing after an hours-long rescue operation that included dozens of ships and helicopters.

The ship overturned completely during the terrifying ordeal before it sank completely.

Frantic passengers were reportedly jumping overboard to escape the sinking vessel as at least 87 ships and 18 aircraft helped pluck the victims from the chilling waters.

"As the ship was shaking and tilting, we all tripped and bumped into each other," student Lim Hyung-min told TV station YTN once he was rescued and taken ashore. Others were bleeding as the student jumped in the ocean, which "was so cold .. I was hurrying, thinking that I wanted to live." One person dead was a woman identified as Park Ji-yeong, the Associated Press reported. The others had yet to be identified.

The water in the area is 55 degrees Fahrenheit, which humans can survive in for about two hours.