सत्यमेव जयते

भारत सरकार / **GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

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भारत 2023 INDIA
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GLOBAL MARITIME
INDIA SUMMIT 2023
17th-19th October | Pragati Maidan, New Delhi
CONNECT COLLABORATE CREATE

F. No.25-19011/6/2020-NT-DGS   Date:26.12.2023

Casualty Circular – 10 of 2021

Sub: Sinking of Inland Vessel cargo barge resulting loss of five lives

Summary of Incident:

A single cargo hold, Inland Vessel bound for Goa, India, departed Jaigard, India on 30.11.2021 with a cargo of about 2,445 Mt of Iron Ore lumps. Vessel had onboard total of 10 crew members including master. From 01.12.2021 PM hrs the vessel started experiencing following seas and swell and head winds, due to rough weather conditions, which may have caused vessel to poop and pitch excessively, thereby making the propeller and rudder response ineffective, resulting in difficulty in steering the ship. Thereafter, it also began to rain heavily, since the vessel was designed and built without steel weather tight hatch covers, and nor the vessel was using waterproof tarpaulin to cover the hatches for protection from rain, the rain and sea water may have accumulated in the cargo hold, resulting in overloading and shifting of cargo. As the vessel became very sluggish to rudder and propeller, at around 02:00 hrs on 02.12.2023 the master altered course to East heading for the coast which was about 8 nm. Master anticipating danger had raised emergency alarm on board and all crew were mustered on bridge with their lifejackets on. The barge was continuously getting trimmed by astern, all crew were moved to muster station, expect for Chief Officer and duty AB who remained on bridge for conduct of the vessel. Soon thereafter there was a loud cracking sound from the forward of the vessel, then master instructed all crew to jump in water for abandoning the vessel. Thereafter, when barge was found to be overdue for arrival at Goa, owners informed MRCC, which conducted Search and Rescue operation, and rescued five crew members, while body of one crew member was found, remaining four were lost at sea. The survivors have stated that the vessel had submerged within minutes after jumping in the water and may have broken into two.

Causal Factors:

1. Vessel was an inland vessel, with single cargo hold without hatch cover, hence was not designed to endure rough seas.

2. Vessel was required to use waterproof tarpaulin to cover hatch, but same was not used.

3. Adequate trimming of cargo was not carried out at load port.

4. Master did not check the weather report nor there was any port of refuge considered in time, considering the nature of vessel and weather conditions.

5. Distress alert was not raised, therefore search and rescue authorities were not aware of the condition of the vessel.

6. Delay in abandoning the vessel, therefore the crew could not use the life rafts on board for evacuating the vessel.

Action Taken:

1. All crew was mustered on bridge.

2. Vessel's course was altered to East to proceed towards shore and shallow waters.

3. MRCC was informed by owners once vessel was overdue to arrive at Goa.

4. MRCC conducted search and rescue operation using aircrafts and vessels.

Lessons Learnt:

1. It is required that inland vessel does not sail beyond the inshore transit corridor, all inland vessels should follow the statutory requirement.

2. Owners should ensure that port of refuge are identified well in advance for master to divert the vessel in case required.

3. Cargo of iron ore should be trimmed as per procedures.

4. All inland vessels should use waterproof tarpaulin to cover hatches.

5. Weather should be monitored closely and mitigating measures including taking shelter in nearby ports should be taken without delay.

6. In case of distress situation distress alert should be raised in time

7. Abandon ship should also be done in time so that there is adequate time to use lifesaving appliances such as life rafts, lifeboats, etc.

26/12/23

(Capt. Vikram Singh Manhas)
Dy. Nautical Adviser cum Sr. DDG (Tech.)

To,
All stakeholders through DGS website.