



MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

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MARINA TEAM TO PROBE VIETNAM BOAT-SINKING, DEATH OF FILIPINO CREW

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) on Thursday (Jan. 8, 2015) sent a two-man team to Vietnam to conduct a maritime investigation on the sinking of the 'all-Filipino crew' of Bahamas cargo ship MV "Bulk Jupiter" off the coast of Vung Tau City, Vietnam last Jan. 2, 2015, leaving the captain and third officer dead, 16 missing, and only one survivor, as reported so far.

Dr. Maximo Q. Mejia, Jr. (PhD), MARINA administrator, said that upon instruction of Department of Transportation and communication (DOTC) Secretary Joseph Emilio 'Jun' Aguinaldo Abaya, and in coordination with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Albert del Rosario, together with DFA Office of Migrant Workers Affairs (OMWAO) head Undersecretary Jesus I. Yabes. the probe team is composed of lawyer Hershel F. Magracia, OIC of MARINA law enforcement service, and Mr. Samuel L. Batalla, the chief of the agency' standards of training, certification, and watchkeepin g (STCW) service.

Magracia and Batalla were tasked to complete the probe by Tuesday (Jan. 13). Confirmed dead by manning agent Magsaysay Maritime Corp. (MMC) president lawyer Marlon R. Roño were Capt. Ronel Aquiza Andrin, master of the ill-fated MV 'Bulk Jupiter'; and his third officer (third mate) Jerome Maquilang Dinoy, while the lone survivor, so far, as Angelito Capindo Rojas, chief cook. Rojas has returned to the country, as search and rescue (SAR) operations by Vietnamese, Japanese and Singaporean SAR teams continued to recover the 16 missing crew.

Based on information from the ship's registered owner, the Gearbulk Norway, A/S, "The nine-year old , 56,009 DWT MV 'Bulk Jupiter', departed Kuantan, Malaysia at around 10 pm (local time) last Dec. 30. 2014, and was enroute to China with all the 19 Filipino crew members on board. The vessel was loaded with some 46,000 metric tons of Bauxite oil , which were all stowed in all of the ship's five cargo holds. It issued distress signals at around 10:54 pm PH time, last New Year, Jan. 1, 2015, at lat. 9", 01:00 N, long. 109", 15"26 E. The shipowner also reported that repeated attempts to contact the ship on all communications were unsuccessful, and confirmed that the cargo vessel capsized and sank at around '150 nautical miles off the Vietnamese coast'.

The Japanese Coast Guard (JCG) which was first to receive the distress alert, immediately initiated the SAR operations. The passing MV Zim Asia spotted an empty life boat and life raft in the accident area. Likewise, the tugboat MV OLNG Muttrah picked up Rojas and recovered the bodies of Andrin and Dinoy. On the other hand, Singapore through its maritime coordinating center, likewise launched its SAR operations, which, augmenting Japanese and Vietnamese SAR groups.

Roño informed Mejia that it has activated its emergency response team, and has in fact, notified, visited and attended to the needs of victims' relatives. Aside from MARINA, the MMC has also informed DFA, DOLE, POEA, AMOSUP and other concerned agencies of the sea mishap, adding they be regularly provided with updates.

As of presstime, object of continued SAR operations by Vietnamese, Japanese and Singaporean teams were the 16 missing crew members, from the Deck Department identified as: 1. Chief Officer Renner Karl Resos Abogadie, 2. Second Officer Gibbson Ladica Ranara, 3. Junior Third Officer Alexis Thomas Piala Bacalla, 4. Able-Bodied Seaman Wynfred Peñaranda Balazo, 5. Able-Bodied Seaman Renato Flores Toribio II, 6. Bosun Jonnifer Darapite Aleta, 7. Ordinary Seaman Edgar Tabanao Melecio II, and 8. Ordinary Seaman George Barbaso Espiliguera, Jr.; From the Engine Department: 1. Chief Engineer Joseph Bantolino Damasén, 2. Second Engineer Lot Olavides Correos, 3. Third Engineer Reydante Santos Mendoza, 4. Electrician Ricky Arangorin Gapasin, 5. Fitter Edwin Deriada Acebo, 6. Wiper Gilbert Feliciano Flora, 7. Motorman Rosilo Navarro Sansolis, and from the Steward Department: 1. Galley Boy Mark Timothy Denosia Causarin.

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The Maritime Industry Authority is an attached agency of the Department of Transportation and Communications tasked to accelerate the integrated development of the maritime industry in the country. It has been implementing reforms and programs to transform the country's domestic shipping industry to global competitiveness and the MARINA into a premiere maritime administration in Southeast Asia. For more information, visit marina.gov.ph.

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