

Mumbai ship collision: MSC Chitra owners told to pay up NDTV Correspondent, Updated: August 18, 2010 12:45 IST



Mumbai: The owners of MSC Chitra, which collided with another cargo ship resulting in an oil slick off the Mumbai coast, have been asked to pay full compensation for the August 7 collision.

Port authorities have sent notices to the merchant vessel's owners, the Mediterranean Shipping Company, asking them to pay full compensation since they have been identified as "polluters". This compensation will run into crores of rupees.

It was Chitra's tanks that caused the oil spill and the falling tankers caused both Mumbai Port and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) to shut down.

The two ports have also expressed unhappiness over the salvage work and have warned Chitra's company to accelerate the process.

So far both the ports haven't put any blame on MV Khalijia, the other ship, for footing the compensation. If investigations by DG Shipping show that MV Khalijia was responsible, then MSC can claim it from Khalijia, but currently the "polluter" is MSC and it is hence liable to pay.

CASE OF THE MISSING CONTAINERS

More than a week since two ships collided off the coast of Mumbai, the worries still remain. A hundred of the 250 odd containers that had drifted from the vessel MSC Chitra, have gone missing. Two of these containers are carrying hazardous chemical substances. Efforts are still on to locate the missing containers.

The Navy is conducting a survey of the sea using sonar equipment to try and trace the containers with the help of a salvage team called in from Singapore. The containers, the Navy team says, could be stuck on the ocean bed.

The MSC Chitra had collided with MV Khalijia on August 7 and has been grounded in the Arabian Sea since then off the Mumbai coast. The ship tilted precariously from the impact of the collision. While oil poured out into the sea through a leak, some containers too detached from the ship.

The oil leak was only plugged after hundreds of tonnes of crude oil were already spilt. As a result of this, both Mumbai Port and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) were shut for many days.

NDTV reported on the environmental damage due to the spill. The state government confirmed that marine life had been contaminated.

When the MSC Chitra collided with the Khalijia, it had a cargo of 1219 containers. The cargo contained 2662 tonnes of fuel, 283 tonnes of diesel and 88040 litres of lubricant oil. Thirty-one containers held chemical substances.