



Directorate General of Shipping

SITREP – 31, 1800 Hrs on 14/07/2025

Explosion on WAN HAI 503 (IMO no – 9294862, Flag Singapore) West of Kerala

The contents of this SITREP are based on both written and verbal inputs received from the stakeholders

1. Incident Overview:

Refer to SITREP – 2, 2200 hrs on 09/06/2025

2. Response Actions Initiated:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

3. Present Status:

As of 1800 hours on 14 July 2025, the casualty vessel *Wan Hai 503* remained under tow by Offshore Warrior and maintained her position outside the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) at 07°39.84'N, 074°50.57'E, heading 290° at a speed of 1.4 knots.

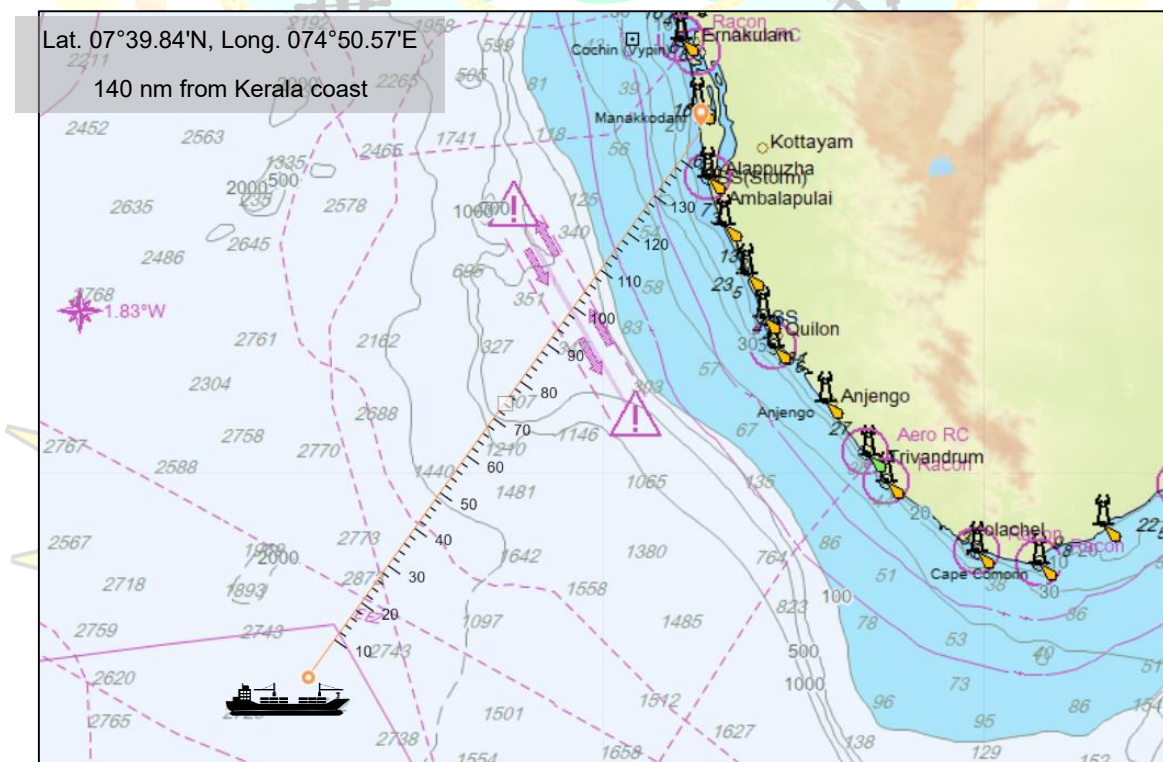


Figure 1: Position of the vessel on 14.07.2025 1800 hrs

Weather conditions remain challenging, with wind gusts recorded up to 62 knots and swell heights between 2.0 to 2.5 meters, leading to rough sea conditions.

Light grey smoke continued to be observed from cargo bay numbers 33 to 37. The condition is reported as stable, with no visible escalation. However, the onboard salvage team also reported a strong ammonia smell emanating from Hold No. 7, which may be attributed to rotting organic cargo. Preliminary indications suggest the possible presence of hydrogen sulphide (H₂S), presenting hazardous enclosed space conditions. Formal chemical assessment and safe chemical neutralization procedures are being explored.

As on 1500 hrs, six salvage personnel remain onboard *Wan Hai 503*. Adverse sea conditions prevented the full team from boarding. Multiple boarding attempts throughout the day had to be aborted, and two personnel sustained injuries during one of the attempts, highlighting the inherent risks of personnel transfer operations under current sea conditions.

4. Additional Support:

Nand Saarthi arrived on site at 1236 hrs to support salvage operations and commenced material transfer to Offshore Warrior and Advantis Virgo. While the tug is operational, the salvors have requested continued deployment of ETV *Water Lily* to maintain reliable and safe personnel transfer capability, citing its proven role and experienced crew. *Water Lily* also completed partial personnel transfer from Offshore Warrior to *Wan Hai 503* but could not complete the operation due to the deteriorating sea state.

Advantis Virgo and *Saksham* remained on standby for firefighting and boundary cooling operations. However, given the rough sea conditions, active intervention has been limited to essential support. SCI Panna has been demobilized and will not be replaced at this stage, as the existing complement of support vessels is considered adequate by the salvors for the current phase of operations.

The salvage team is currently exploring alternate means of supplying food and essential provisions to the onboard crew, given that evacuation is presently not possible due to weather and sea state.

5. Situation Assessment

The condition onboard *Wan Hai 503* is stable but continues to require sustained support. Hold No. 6 is reportedly being dewatered, and preparations are ongoing to control and monitor other affected holds. The ingress of water into cargo holds is also a result of boundary cooling operations in deck hatch gaskets, as observed in other similar incidents. Due to water in the engine room, dewatering must be carried out with portable pumps on a hold-by-hold basis.



Figure 2: Condition of the vessel

The salvage team emphasized that firefighting is currently limited to containment rather than full extinguishment, and complete suppression will likely require the vessel to be alongside in a Port of Refuge. A comprehensive Port of Refuge proposal has been compiled and is under review authorities. Phase II planning, including debunkering, hazardous cargo handling, and final fire suppression, will be initiated

once approval is granted. DNV-ERS is coordinating stability and structural integrity verification, which are preconditions for approval.

Given the prevailing monsoon conditions and rough seas, relocation of the vessel is not currently advised. However, a cautious shift 50 NM southward of the current position may be considered if conditions necessitate.

In summary, the response has transitioned into a controlled salvage operation with careful risk mitigation. The safety of onboard personnel, environmental protection, and vessel stabilization remain top priorities. Active firefighting readiness is in place with Virgo and Saarthi, and continued presence of *Water Lily* has been requested to ensure safe personnel transfer capability until conditions improve.

6. Navigational Hazards:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

7. Coordination Measures:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

8. Cargo Assessment:

Refer to SITREP – 3, 2200 hrs on 10/06/2025

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