

Iran and China disagree over cause of Sanchi disaster, report shows

Although an investigation report has finally been submitted to the International Maritime Organization, China and Iran both blamed the vessel owned by the other side for being the main culprit

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A final report has been delivered to London while disagreement on the incident cause remains, said China's Ministry of Transport



SANCHI COLLIDED WITH CHINESE BULK CARRIER CF CRYSTAL ON JANUARY 6 AT A POSITION SOME 300 KM OFF SHANGHAI.

AN INVESTIGATION report about the sunken oil tanker *Sanchi* has been delivered to the International Maritime Organization, with China and Iran disagreeing on the real cause of the incident.

The report, signed by several parties that were involved including China, Iran, Panama and Hong Kong, was submitted on May 11, according to a statement put out by China's Ministry of Transport.

Iranian-owned, Panama-flagged *Sanchi* collided with Chinese bulk carrier *CF Crystal* [on January 6](#), some 300 km off Shanghai.

The ship caught fire and spent more than a week both ablaze and adrift, finally sinking in the Japanese exclusive economic zone on January 14, leaving the entire crew — 30 Iranians and two Bangladeshis — presumed dead.

The report reaches a consensus that both vessels failed to “maintain a proper look-out” and “make a correct judgement on the collision risk”, as stipulated in the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972.

However, Beijing and Tehran disagree on the direct cause of the collision, the MoT said.

The view of the investigators from China and Hong Kong is that *Sanchi*, as the give-way vessel in the case, did not take early keep-clear action when it was entering into a crossing situation with *CF Crystal*.

Meanwhile, their counterparts from Iran and Panama see the veering to the right by the *CF Crystal* as the cause of the tragedy.

Nader Pasandeh, Iran's representative on the investigating committee, earlier told local media that the dispute over the main cause of the incident would likely be taken to court.

Sanchi was carrying about 11,500 tonnes of condensate, a form of ultra-light crude, plus nearly 2,000 tonnes of its own bunker fuel, to South Korea, state-run Islamic Republic News Agency earlier quoted Iranian rescue team spokesperson Mohammad Rastad as saying.

The collision is said to have resulted in the worst tanker spill in a few decades and will lead the [marine insurers](#) to count the cost.