
Another suspect arrested in Dalny Vostok trawler wreck case



During an investigation in the sinking of the Dalny Vostok trawler the Investigative Committee has detained another suspect first deputy CEO of OOO Magellan Alexey Vasin. Today following a request filed by the investigators, a court has ruled to put him in custody pending trial. In addition, deputy CEO of Magellan Alexander Kudritsky and captain Anatoly Borisov, who sailed the ship out to the sea and then passed it over to Alexander Pritotsky are under house arrest. All three suspects have already been charged with a crime under part 3 of article 263 of the RF Penal Code (violation of safety rules of marine transport traffic and operation entailing death of two or more people). CEO of Magellan Yegor Gashchenko is wanted to be charged.

To compensate for the damage to the victims and relatives of the dead, the investigators have arrested assets and bank accounts of Magellan worth over 13 million rubles and two ships the Andromeda and Mlechny Put (Milky Way) worth over 4 million US dollars. Part of the funds was released from the arrest to make the company capable of paying compensations.

According to the main version of the investigators, the tragedy resulted from the loss of stability, that is the ship's ability to balance, and violation of the leadership of the ship owning company of use terms of the trawler. Investigators have information that the ship had a minimum reserve of fuel – about 50 tonnes, so it had to be either refueled or water had to be added in the tanks to make the ship keep its balance. Naturally, the captain was aware of that as he was aboard the ship. The ship owner also knew about it as he received daily reports from the ship. However, neither of them did anything. Apparently, they didn't want to interrupt their profitable fishing business, because if they had enough time to fill refrigerators with fish, about a thousand tonnes, they could have been able to get about 1.5 million US dollars for it. But if they had stopped the process, what they had had to do under the instruction, and wait for the tanker to get refueled or poured water in the tanks, they would have lost precious hours meaning for them losing some serious money. As a result their pathological greed ended up in losing the ship and dozens of deaths.

As for the number of life jackets: the trawler had 110 of those. When the trawler had left the port of Vladivostok it had 68 people aboard. But we have verified information that when it was in the open sea, it received aboard at least 64 more people from a Korean ship, most of them were from Myanmar. So after that there were not enough life jackets. The Myanmar citizens represented unqualified work force. According to the investigators, a Korean firm supplied them for Russian ship owners. They worked for very low salary and of course were not registered. But another very important detail is that nobody of the anglers, let alone foreign citizens, had ever had a safety briefing. This way, when emergency situation came up the people, who had no idea what to do in such situations, and had not enough life jackets were left to their own resources. Those who had the chance survived, those who didn't were doomed. It is obvious that the death of those people is in cause-and-effect relation with the actions of the ship owner and the captain of the ship. They were the ones who had let violations in the ship's operation. This is why we are prosecuting the leadership of Magellan. I haven't mentioned another important reason yet, which contributes to this one and other similar crimes. Of course I am talking about actions or omission of certain officials of control bodies. And in this particular case the investigators have information that the officials of at least one such body responsible for the controlling of operation of the Dalny Vostok trawler, had failed to take adequate measures to eliminate the violations revealed and had not prohibited to operate the trawler until they were fully eliminated.

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