GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF MARITIME AFFAIRS
(PORTS & SHIPPING WING)
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No.8(1)/2026-CNS/DGPS/INQUIRY/AL-HAMDAN YAQOOB/2026

Karachi, the 10th August, 2026

MARINE CASUALTY INQUIRY REPORT
INQUIRY INTO THE SINKING OF THE TOGO-FLAGGED DHOW "AL HAMDAN YAQOOB" (REG. NO. TG 00398L) ON 09 JULY 2026

1. PREAMBLE

1.1 Upon receipt of a formal request from the Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP), forwarded by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, this office initiated a formal investigation into the sinking of the Togo-flagged dhow, AL HAMDAN YAQOOB.

1.2 The inquiry was conducted under the authority vested in the Directorate General of Pakistan Shipping in compliance with MSO 2001 . The investigating board was headed by the Chief Nautical Surveyor, Capt. Rafaqat Hussain, assisted by Deputy Chief Nautical Surveyor, Capt. Syed Ali Raza, and Nautical Surveyor (Exams), Capt. Arif Javed.

1.3 The investigation reviewed all submitted documentary evidence and conducted physical interviews with seven (7) crew members, including the Captain (Nakhuda), at the DGPS Headquarters in Karachi.

2. VESSEL PARTICULARS

Particular	Details
Name of Vessel	AL HAMDAN YAQOOB
Type of Vessel	Wooden Cargo Dhow
Flag State	TOGO
Port of Registry	LOME
Registration Number	TG 00398L
Call Sign	5VBX5

Particular	Details
Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT)	974 Tons
Net Registered Tonnage (NRT)	720.356 Tons
Length Overall (LOA)	47.00 Meters
Breadth	14.40 Meters
Depth	5.85 Meters
Year Built	2007
Place of Build	Kutch, India
Last Dry Dock	Dubai, August 2025
Owners	Mr. Usman Ghani (Pakistani National)
Engine Particulars	Two Engines (Caterpillar USA & Mitsubishi Japan)

3. VOYAGE AND CARGO PARTICULARS

3.1 Voyage: The dhow was on a voyage from Karachi Port, Pakistan to Chabahar, Iran.

3.2 Cargo: The vessel was laden with approximately 1,300 Metric Tonnes (Net) of Pakistani rice, shipped by White Pearl Rice Mills Limited and booked through agents M/s. Al Faizan International.

3.3 Crew: The vessel had a total complement of 20 crew members, all Pakistani nationals.

3.4 Departure: The vessel departed Karachi on 08 July 2026 //Time : 0800 PST.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT

4.1 On 09 July 2026, at approximately 0500 hours (UAE Time, GMT+4), the AL HAMDAN YAQOOB was transiting South east of Ormara, Balochistan, at a position of 25°09'N, 065°17'E.

4.2 At this time, the Engine Driver (Chief Engineer) reported to the Captain that the engine room was experiencing severe and uncontrollable flooding. All available pumps (nine in total) were activated, but the rate of ingress exceeded the pumping capacity. The flooding was too rapid to manage.

4.3 The Captain ordered an alteration of course towards Ormara Port and attempted to make a distress call on VHF Channel 16, but received no response.

4.4 The Captain then used a Thuraya satellite phone to contact his brother and the vessel owner ashore, relaying the severity of the situation and requesting immediate assistance. The shore contacts subsequently alerted the Pakistan Navy ,Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) and the Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre (JMICC).

4.5 Despite the crew's efforts to control the flooding, the engine room was fully flooded within 30 minutes, leading to the failure of both main engines.

4.6 With the vessel sinking rapidly, the Captain gave the order to abandon ship. All 20 crew members successfully boarded the vessel's life raft.

4.7 Approximately 1.5 hours after the dhow sank, a local fishing boat arrived at the location, established VHF communication with the life raft crew, and relayed their position and status to the Pakistan Navy.

4.8 A coordinated search and rescue (SAR) operation was launched by the Pakistan Navy and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA). PNS HUNAIN and aerial assets were diverted to the scene. In a professional and swift operation, all 20 crew members were rescued safely and provided with necessary medical attention.

5. WHAT WENT WRONG?

The investigation has identified the following factors that contributed to, or were associated with, the incident:

5.1 Primary Cause: Rapid Engine Room Flooding

5.1.1 The direct cause of the sinking was catastrophic and rapid flooding of the engine room. The rate of water ingress exceeded the capacity of all installed pumps, rendering damage control efforts ineffective and leading to the loss of propulsion and the eventual sinking of the vessel within approximately one hour.

5.1.2 Delayed Detection of Flooding: The investigation found that the exact time and location of the hull breach could not be determined. Crew statements indicate that while hourly rounds were conducted, the engine room environment (fuel vapors, heat, eye irritation) prevented personnel from maintaining continuous watch. It is highly probable that the flooding commenced during a period when the engine room was unattended, preventing early detection and any attempt to isolate or stem the ingress of water.

5.2 Contributory Factors

5.2.1 Cargo Loading Discrepancy:
The MMD-approved Cargo Loading Plan dated 30 June 2026 allowed for 1295 Metric Tonnes.
The Export General Manifest and other loading documents indicate that 1300 Metric Tonnes (Net) were loaded.
Finding: The vessel was loaded with cargo exceeding the approved plan by 5 Metric Tonnes. This overloading likely compromised the vessel's stability and seaworthiness, making it more susceptible to the prevailing heavy weather conditions. Furthermore, cargo was loaded and shipping bills were issued prior to obtaining MMD plan approval, indicating a procedural breach by the agents however the owner remains fully responsible for negligence.

5.2.2 Crew List Inconsistencies:
The crew list submitted to the MMD and Customs prior to departure listed 18 crew members.
The final departure list, stamped by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), listed 20 crew members. Two individuals (Mr. Rafiq Abdullah and Mr. Umair Ali) were added at the last moment. The stated reason was "last moment home emergencies."
Finding: This discrepancy is a regulatory non-compliance. While the final crew compliment was documented for immigration purposes, the delay in updating the official maritime documents (for MMD and Customs) creates a significant administrative oversight.

5.2.3 Adverse Weather Conditions:
The meteorological report for the area on 09 July 2026 (Forecast Area No. 1 - North Arabian Sea) predicted wind speeds of 15-20 knots (gusting to 30 knots) and a sea state of "Moderate/Rough, occasionally very rough."
Finding: The vessel was operating in heavy weather conditions associated with the South West Monsoon. The wooden hull, compounded by a potential overloading of cargo, was subjected to severe pounding, rolling, and pitching. This likely resulted in the displacement of a "Lambi" (a traditional sealant made of rope and putty) or the structural failure of a wooden plank in the engine room area, creating the opening for severe and rapid flooding.

5.2.4 Lack of Certification for Crew and Vessel:
The vessel's crew, while experienced on this particular vessel, did not hold formal certification from a recognized maritime administration as required by the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW).
Finding: The lack of formal training and certification raises questions about the crew's preparedness to handle a complex maritime emergency like rapid flooding

in heavy weather. This is a common and high-risk practice for vessels operating under a "Flag of Convenience" (FOC) like Togo.

5.2.5 Lack of Photo, Audio, Video Evidence):
The vessel Crew could not preserve any Photo graphic, Video evidence for E/room Flooding and Last moment Sinking of Cargo Launch , However as per Captain statement the Launch Sunk by Astern First and Stem /Bow at the Last.
Finding: This prevented the inquiry from obtaining critical, objective data regarding the sequence of events, the actions taken by the crew, and the location and timing of the hull failure.

5.2.6 Engine Room Watchkeeping and Delayed Detection of Flooding
The Inquiry Board noted that although the crew maintained routine engine room inspections at approximately hourly intervals, continuous attendance inside the engine room was not practicable due to excessive heat, machinery noise, fuel oil vapours, poor ventilation and irritation to the eyes. Consequently, the exact commencement of flooding could not be detected.
The Board considers that had personnel been present at the precise moment when flooding commenced, the point of water ingress might have been identified and temporary damage control measures such as plugging, shoring or reducing the ingress could possibly be done. However, due to the flooding originating below the engine room floor planks and below the waterline, the exact location of hull failure remained unknown throughout the emergency.

5.2.7 Possible Structural Failure of Wooden Hull
Based upon the prevailing sea conditions, witness statements and technical assessment, the Inquiry Board considers the following possible causes of rapid flooding:
i. Structural failure or displacement of one or more wooden hull planks due to repeated pounding and slamming during heavy weather.
ii. Failure or displacement of traditional wooden sealing material ("Lambi"/rope and putty caulking) between hull planks resulting from excessive rolling, pitching and hull flexing.
iii. Failure or loosening of wooden maintenance plugs fitted below the engine room bilges due to continuous hull vibration and pounding.
As the vessel sank rapidly and no underwater survey could be conducted, the precise cause of hull failure could not be conclusively established.

5.2.8 Flooding Below Waterline
The Inquiry established that the flooding originated below the engine room floor and below the vessel's waterline. Consequently, the crew were unable to gain physical access to the source of flooding for emergency repairs.
This significantly reduced the effectiveness of onboard damage control measures

and resulted in uncontrollable progressive flooding despite the operation of all available bilge pumps on board.

5.2.9 Absence of Audio and Video Evidence
The Inquiry Board observed that the vessel Crew could was not perserve any photo or video of E/room Flooding and Lost moments of Sinking Launch Accordingly, there was no objective audio, video or electronic evidence available regarding:

commencement of flooding;
crew response;
engine parameters;
bridge communications;
vessel manoeuvres; or
exact timeline of events.
The investigation therefore relied primarily upon witness statements and documentary evidence.

5.2.10 Insurance Documentation
The Inquiry noted that no documentary evidence was produced regarding:

Hull and Machinery Insurance;
Regional Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Insurance; if any
Cargo Insurance;
Any incident inspection survey reports,
Consequently, the Inquiry Board was unable to verify the extent of insurance coverage applicable to the vessel or the cargo.

5.2.11 Previous Voyage Experience
Crew interviews confirmed that most officers and crew possessed more than eleven years' experience serving onboard the same vessel.
The vessel had previously completed long international voyages, including voyages to Berbera (Somalia), carrying cargoes about of 1500 metric tonnes. However, the Inquiry established that this was the first voyage undertaken by the present Master and crew during the South-West Monsoon season from Karachi to Chabahar. Accordingly, the crew had limited operational experience in navigating heavily laden wooden vessels under SW monsoon sea conditions.

6. WHAT WENT RIGHT?

6.1 The inquiry acknowledges the timely and effective actions that prevented a major loss of life:

6.1.1 Effective Communication: The use of the Thuraya satellite phone by the Captain to contact shore authorities was the primary reason for the timely launch of the rescue operation.

6.1.2 On-Scene Coordination: The coordination between the life raft occupants and the local fishing vessel was crucial in relaying the survivors' exact position and status to the Pakistan Navy.

6.1.3 Professional SAR Operation: The response by the Pakistan Navy and PMSA was swift, professional, and ultimately successful. PNS HUNAIN and the naval aviation assets conducted the rescue in challenging sea conditions with exceptional skill.

6.1.4 Life-Saving Appliances: The vessel's life raft was in good working condition, was launched successfully, and provided vital survival support for all 20 crew members until rescue.

6.1.5 No Loss of Life: Due to the successful SAR operation, there were no casualties, injuries, or missing persons.

6.1.6 Navigation Warning: The Pakistan Navy Hydrographic Office (NHO) efficiently issued a Navigational Warning (NAVAREA IX 235/26) to alert other mariners about the new wreck.

6.1.7 The vessel's abandonment procedures were executed in an orderly manner. All crew members remained together in the life raft, facilitating rescue operations and enabling accurate numbers of all personnel.

6.1.8 Pakistan Navy promptly deployed helicopter surveillance assets which quickly located the life raft, enabling rescue planning before recovery by helicopter and PNS Hunain.

6.1.9 Continuous coordination between Pakistan Navy, PMSA, Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre (JMICC) and the local fishing vessel demonstrated an effective national Search and Rescue (SAR) capability consistent with Pakistan's obligations under the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this investigation, the following recommendations are made:

7.1 Regulatory Compliance (Cargo & Crew):
a. The MMD must enforce strict adherence to the approved Cargo Loading Plan. No vessel should be permitted to load cargo exceeding the approved plan.

Penalties should be considered for repeated breaches by agents and owners.
b. The MMD must ensure that the final crew list, as per the document endorsed by Customs and FIA, is mandatorily submitted to the Mercantile Marine Department before departure for record-keeping and emergency contact purposes.

7.2 Operational Procedures (Safety):
a. The crew should be provided with and maintain a deck- or engine-room logbook. This would allow for a more accurate timeline of events to be recorded.
b. Vessels operating on coastal routes during the South West Monsoon should have a specific operational procedure requiring them to proceed with caution and potentially alter course to seek shelter if conditions deteriorate beyond the vessel's safe capability.
c. There is a need for a comprehensive analysis of the vessel's stability and structural integrity, with a particular focus on the capabilities of older wooden vessels operating in SW monsoon conditions.

7.3 Crew Training & Certification:
a. The issue of un-certified crew operating on foreign-flagged vessels must be addressed. The MMD should work with relevant authorities to ensure that all crew, regardless of the vessel's flag, possess at least the basic mandatory STCW certification, especially in areas of emergency response, damage control, and survival at sea.
b. Owners and agents must be directed to provide specific heavy-weather and damage-control training for crews before undertaking voyages during the monsoon season.

7.4 Technical and Investigative Requirements:
The MMD should mandate the use of at least a minimum of two handheld VHF radios on all coastal vessels to ensure constant communication between the bridge, the crew, and shore authorities.
7.5 Wooden Vessel Structural Safety
All wooden cargo vessels engaged in international voyages should undergo enhanced structural inspections before commencement of the South-West Monsoon season, with particular attention to hull planking, caulking ("Lambi"), keel joints and through-hull fittings.

7.6 Engine Room Watchkeeping
Owners should establish continuous engine room monitoring arrangements during adverse weather, including shorter watch intervals, adequate relief arrangements and improved ventilation to permit effective machinery space monitoring.

7.7 Coastal Navigation During Monsoon
Wooden cargo vessels operating during the South-West Monsoon should,

whenever practicable, remain within a safe coastal distance and avoid deep offshore routes where weather conditions are forecast to exceed the vessel's operational limitations.

7.8 Mandatory Insurance Verification
Prior to departure, documentary evidence of valid Hull & Machinery Insurance, Regional Protection & Indemnity Insurance and Cargo Insurance should be verified by the appropriate authorities for vessels engaged in international commercial trade.

8. CONCLUSION

The Inquiry Board concludes that the sinking of the Togo-flagged wooden cargo dhow AL HAMDAN YAQOOB on 09 July 2026 was primarily caused by catastrophic and uncontrollable flooding of the engine room following a probable structural failure of the wooden hull below the waterline. Based on the available documentary evidence, witness statements, prevailing weather reports and technical assessment, the Board considers that the hull failure was most likely due to the severe sea conditions experienced during the South-West Monsoon, which subjected the vessel to continuous pounding, rolling and pitching. The possibility of displacement of wooden hull planking, failure of traditional caulking ("Lambi"), or loosening of hull maintenance plugs cannot be ruled out. The rapid rate of water ingress exceeded the pumping capacity of all available bilge pumps, resulting in complete flooding of the engine room, loss of propulsion, and the eventual sinking of the Launch.

The Inquiry further determined that several contributory factors adversely affected the casualty, including delayed detection of flooding due to the operating environment within the machinery space, the inability of the crew to locate and access the exact point of water ingress below the waterline, cargo loading in excess of the quantity approved under the Mercantile Marine Department Cargo Loading Plan, deficiencies in cargo loading procedures and crew documentation, the absence of electronic evidences , like photos and videos , and inadequate preparedness for operating a heavily laden wooden vessel under adverse SW monsoon conditions. While these factors may not individually have caused the casualty, collectively they reduced the vessel's overall safety margin and complicated the emergency response.

Notwithstanding the total loss of the vessel and its cargo, the Inquiry Board records its appreciation of the calm and professional conduct displayed by the Master and crew during the emergency. The timely transmission of the distress message through the Thuraya satellite communication system, the effective coordination by shore authorities, and the prompt response of the Pakistan Navy,

Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA), Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre (JMICC), together with the valuable assistance provided by a local fishing vessel, resulted in the successful rescue of all twenty crew members without loss of life or serious injury. The subsequent issuance of Navigational Warning NAVAREA IX by the Pakistan Navy Hydrographic Office further ensured the safety of navigation in the affected area following the creation of a new wreck hazard.

This casualty highlights the continuing risks associated with the operation of ageing wooden cargo vessels engaged in international trade during the South- West Monsoon season and emphasizes the need for enhanced regulatory oversight, strict compliance with approved cargo loading plans, improved structural inspections, strengthened crew certification and training, effective heavy weather operating procedures, and the introduction of suitable electronic recording systems to support future marine casualty investigations and enhance maritime safety.

A review of following supporting documents and physical interviews of 7 crew members (including the Captain) conducted at DGPS, the materials examined comprise:

9. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED / INDEX

(1) The inquiry request email from REAP (Rice Export Association of Pakistan);
(2) Al Hamdan Yaqoob registry certificate; ‘
(3) The cargo loading plan requested by Agent Al Faizan and approved by MMD;
(4) The cargo manifest;
(5) Cargo wharfage issued by KPT;
(6) The crew list upon departure and the crew list submitted to MMD and Customs;
(7) Captain and crew statements (7 in total, in Urdu language only);
(8) The initial incident report prepared by White Pearl Rice Owners (format copied from the Dubai Maritime Research database);
(9) Geo News coverage;
(10) Supporting photos;
(11) The weather report issued by the Pakistan Meteorological Department.
(12) Navigation Warning Issued by NHO
(13) Undertaking from Agent Al Faizan International Loaded Cargo (1300 MT).
(14) Undertaking from Captain Cargo Loaded asp his plan 1300 MT.
(15) History of Similar Cargo Loading Plan 01-Jan-2025 Loaded

END OF REPORT

This report is issued with Approval of competent Authority in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Ordinance, 2001 and the IMO Casualty Investigation Code (Resolution MSC.255(84)).

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