

Malaysia detains tanker fleeing after collision



The Malaysian authorities have intercepted the VLCC Ceres I which went missing after it was involved in a collision and fire with the Hafnia Nile.

Marcus Hand | Jul 22, 2024

The *Ceres I* went dark and left the scene of the [collision](#) on 20 July and according to the Maritim Malaysia tried to escape. The Sao Tome and Principe-registered tanker was located 28 nm northeast of Tioman Island under tow from two tugboats.

The Malaysian authorities said the *Ceres I* was detected and intercepted at 01:20 hrs local time on 21 July. The Malaysian coast guard also arrested the two tugboats that had been towing the [VLCC](#).

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Maritim Malaysia and the Malaysian Marine Department will carry out further investigation into the incident following the detention of the *Ceres I*.

The 2001-built, 300,000 dwt *Ceres I* is part of the sanctions busting dark fleet and Reuters reported it as last carrying Iranian crude between March to April. According to the Equasis database the vessel has been owned and managed by a Chinese company called Shanghai Prosperity Management since 2019.

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The last reported port state inspection of the tanker was in December 2019 was in Yingkou in China when five deficiencies was found.

The *Ceres I* was involved in a collision with the Singapore-flagged product tanker *Hafnia Nile* 19 July around 55 km northeast of Pedra Branca off the coast of Malaysia on 19 July.

All 22 crew onboard the *Hafnia Nile* were rescued. Some 14 of the 40 crew onboard the *Ceres I* were rescued by Singapore-flagged supply vessel *Dolphin 1* and two seafarers were helicoptered to Singapore for medical treatment.

According to the Maritime & Port Authority (MPA) at the time the other 26 crew on the *Ceres I* remained on board for firefighting operations. The vessel later switched of its AIS tracking device going dark and went missing before it was detected and detained by the Malaysian authorities on 21 July.

The Malaysian authorities said they had found traces of an oil spill at the scene of the collision and further monitoring would be carried out.