



**ACTIVITY:** Sea disaster

**CASE:** [GSAF 1981.03.08](#)

**DATE:** Sunday March 8, 1981

**LOCATION:** The accident took place in the Atlantic Ocean 90 to 100 nautical miles southeast of Bermuda.

*31.58°N, 62.55°W*

**NARRATIVE:** The 666-foot Israeli freighter *Mezada*, owned by the Zim Israel Navigation Company, was bound for Baltimore from Ashdod, Israel, with a cargo of potash when she encountered a brutal winter gale. The ship foundered and broke in two in rough weather with 25-foot seas and high winds. Eleven members of the 35-man crew were saved before the ship sank on Sunday afternoon. The bodies of nine Israeli sailors were found on Monday, including two dismembered bodies that taken from the jaws of sharks. The nine brought to 12 the number of known dead, and 12 were still missing when the search was called off. A Coast Guard spokesman said the search by Navy vessels, aircraft and merchant ships had covered thousands of square miles without finding any survivors.

**INJURY:** It is not known if the two people were bitten by sharks before death. They may have drowned and their bodies scavenged by sharks.

**SPECIES:** Not identified

**SOURCES:** Los Angeles Times, March 9, 1981; The News (Frederick, Maryland), Tuesday March 10, 1981; New York Times, March 13, 1981; Baltimore Sun, March 17, 1981

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