



photo of the ill-fated mv Dona Cassandra,

Times Journal - Nov. 26, 1983

**ACTIVITY:** Sea disaster

**CASE:** [GSAF 1983.11.21](#)

**DATE:** Monday November 21, 1983

**LOCATION:** Off Mindanao in the Central Philippines

**SHIP:** The 487-ton inter-island passenger ferry MV *Doña Cassandra*, bound from Mindanao for Cebu.

**NAME:** Arturo Garces

**DESCRIPTION:** A 39-year-old male.

**NARRATIVE:** The MV *Doña Cassandra* capsized and sank in heavy seas spawned by Typhoon Orchid. Arturo Garces' leg was bitten by a small shark as he clung to a raft. Next day, when the raft sprang a leak, one of men panicked, jumped overboard, and was killed by a shark. Of the 387 documented passengers and crew on board, about 200 perished.

**SPECIES:** The shark that bit Garces was a half-metre in length.

**SOURCES:** The New York Times, November 24, 1983.

Lodi News-Sentinel, November 25, 1983 (next page)

The Montreal Gazette, Monday November 28, 1983, page C8 (at right).

## Sharks attacked ferry wreck survivors

**CEBU, Philippines (Reuter) --** A survivor from a ferry that sank in the central Philippines said Saturday sharks attacked several people who managed to scramble to a life raft.

Almost 400 passengers and crew were believed aboard the vessel when it sank last Monday shortly after putting to sea on a voyage from Mindanao to Cebu.

Officials say 219 people survived, but only the bodies of 13 of the missing have been recovered.

Arturo Garces, 39, said he managed to fight off and kill a half-metre-long baby shark that bit his leg as he was clinging to a raft.

But the next day, when the raft sprang a leak, two men panicked and jumped overboard.

Garces said he saw one of the men bitten in half by sharks while "the other simply vanished".

Of the 32 people on the raft, only 21 survived the 32-hour ordeal, he said.

# 156 still missing in ferry sinking

MANILA, Philippines (UPI) — The coast guard Thursday recovered eight more bodies of people killed in the sinking of a ferry during a typhoon, raising the death toll to 12. The ship's owner said 156 others were still missing.

The inter-island ferry capsized and sank Monday in shark-infested waters off the southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

Bob Go Thong, vice president of Go Thong Shipping lines, said coast guard authorities reported they picked up eight bodies Thursday. Four other deaths were confirmed earlier.

The 487-ton M.V. Dona Cassandra carried 387 passengers and crew when it ran into giant waves spawned by Typhoon Or-

chid Monday. It capsized and plunged beneath the surface off the coast of Surigao del Norte province, 550 miles south of Manila.

Go Thong said 219 survivors had been accounted for and that most were aboard a rescue vessel scheduled to arrive in Cebu City, 300 miles south of Manila, Friday morning.

He said several government and private vessels were still combing the area for 156 others.

"We have asked the Philippine Air Force to supply a helicopter to help search all these islands," Go Thong said.

Typhoon Orchid lashed the Philippines earlier this week with heavy rains and 87 mph winds, leaving at least 3 people dead and thousands homeless.

*Lodi News-Sentinel, November 25, 1983, page 11*