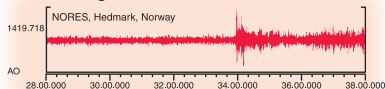


Russian sorrow turns to anger

The chain of events since the catastrophic accident that sent Russia's nuclear submarine *Kursk* to the bottom of the Barents Sea, with the loss of all 118 crew on board, raises difficult questions for President Vladimir Putin



Saturday, Aug 12: During Russian navy exercises U.S. ships and seismological stations in Norway detect two explosions 135 seconds apart, the second measuring 3.5 on the Richter scale



Submarine *Kursk* fails to make scheduled radio contact

Sunday, 3:21am: Sonar aboard cruiser *Pyotr Veliky* – flagship of the Northern Fleet – detects “abnormality” 108m (355 ft) down on the seabed

10am: First rescue ships arrive, start attempts to evaluate damage to *Kursk*

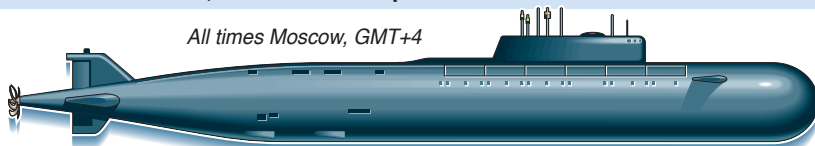
Monday: First Russian reports that *Kursk* has sunk. Navy downplays seriousness, claiming they have radio contact and crew has plenty of oxygen. Reports suggest sub may have collided with foreign vessel or hit WWII mine.

Officials later say accident happened on Sunday and admit there is no radio or sonar-telephone contact

Monday night: Britain and U.S. offer to help. British *LR5* deep submersible rescue vehicle (DSRV) placed on standby



All times Moscow, GMT+4

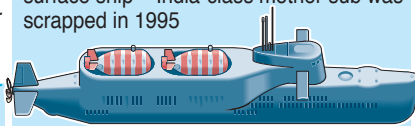
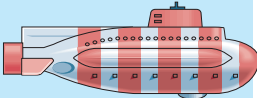


Tuesday: Officials admit accident occurred on Saturday and damage is serious but say crew has been heard tapping on hull. Navy says it has DSRVs and divers and does not need foreign help. Diving bell sent down but raging storm forces abandonment of rescue attempt



Tuesday night: Russian military officials in Brussels talk to NATO counterparts to discuss possible help

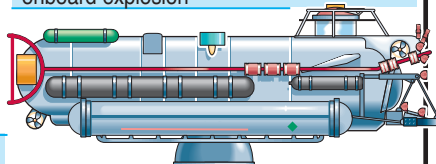
Wednesday: Second and third rescue missions, using *Bester* mini-sub, fail – later it is revealed that cash-strapped navy had disbanded its teams of deep-sea divers. Without divers strong currents stop *Bester* docking with *Kursk*. *Bester* has to be deployed from surface ship – India-class mother sub was scrapped in 1995



President Vladimir Putin, on holiday in southern Russia, describes situation as critical. **Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov** formally asks Britain and Norway for help – *LR5* mini-sub is flown to Trondheim, Norway, en route to Barents Sea

Thursday: Six new Russian attempts to reach *Kursk* fail

Friday: Further attempts abandoned – Russians say aft escape hatch is badly damaged. Commander of Northern Fleet admits *Kursk* was ripped apart by an onboard explosion



Saturday: British rescue sub and Norwegian divers arrive at scene

Sunday: Norwegian divers examine sub and contradict Russian reports about damage to outer aft hatch – complaining Russian bureaucracy delaying rescue work

Monday: Norwegian divers succeed in opening outer hatch and find that the airlock is flooded. Klebanov says British *LR5* will not now be deployed

Norwegian divers open inner aft hatch and find submarine completely flooded. The rescue operation is terminated – Norway is asked to assist in the recovery of victims

Crucial questions:

- When was President Putin told?
- Why did the Navy claim to have adequate resources when they did not?
- Why was international help refused for five days?