



Directorate General of Shipping

SITREP – 21, 1800 hrs on 12/06/2025

Sinking of MSC ELSA 3 (IMO no. 9123221, Flag Liberia) South West of Kochi

The contents of this SITREP are based on both written and verbal inputs received from the stakeholders.

1. Incident Overview:

Refer to SITREP – 6

2. Response Actions Initiated:

Refer to SITREP – 6

3. Present Status:

The offshore operations continue under close coordination. Patrol operations are being maintained by Nand Saarthi around the vicinity of the DSV, with no oil sheen observed during the latest operations. The air diving operations have progressed to completion of the primary capping of identified leak points. Secondary plugging of non-critical tanks, which were previously empty, is ongoing. Recovery of the Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) is scheduled, and efforts to retrieve the vessel nameplate at the forecastle will proceed subject to sea conditions. The saturation diving equipment is in the process of final mobilisation, with remaining packages expected to arrive by the end of the day and necessary customs clearances underway. Air diving personnel have been scaled up to 24 divers onboard, and preparations for saturation diving readiness continue, including arrangements for a secondary dive life support system positioned at Kochi. The exact details and schedule of the saturation diving equipment and personnel for operational deployment remain uncertain.

Onshore operations under MERC supervision have seen further container recovery. Fifty-eight containers have been delivered to the port, with one remaining container to be delivered within 24 hours. Cleanup operations continue across Kollam, Trivandrum, and Kanyakumari. At Trivandrum, 191 volunteers were deployed, though the SOP-mandated volunteer strength is being worked upon with district authorities. At Kollam, 96 volunteers were actively engaged, and at Kanyakumari, 120 volunteers remain

involved. Nurdle cleanup has also commenced at Rameshwaram with additional teams mobilised. Discussions are ongoing for temporary storage sites for the recovered nurdles both at Kollam Port and Kanyakumari, pending alignment with Customs and Pollution Control Boards. The collected nurdles remain classified as bonded material, subject to final disposal approvals.

4. Situation Assessment:

The major capping works have temporarily stabilised the oil seepage from the wreck, with no active leaks currently reported. However, full risk mitigation remains contingent on the commencement of saturation diving to extract the trapped fuel oil. Delays in the mobilisation of equipment and personnel continue to push the operational timelines beyond what was initially indicated, despite repeated directions from authorities. The vessel's structural position indicates that portions of the starboard tanks are buried, complicating access for hot tapping. Salvors have been instructed to submit a firm and detailed oil recovery plan within 24 hours, including clear timelines for commencement and completion of extraction. The Directorate General of Shipping has reiterated the urgency, highlighting that non-compliance will lead to the escalation of enforcement action. While container recovery and beach cleaning operations have shown steady progress, the volume of nurdles collected remains significant, requiring continued, sustained efforts by the State authorities, MERC, ITOPF, and Pollution Control Boards. All agencies remain engaged under the daily coordinated leadership of DGS to ensure continuous operational oversight.

5. Environmental Risks:

Refer to SITREP – 6, 1800 hrs on 28/05/2024

6. Coordination Measures

Refer to SITREP – 6 for the overall coordination measures being undertaken

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**Directorate General of Shipping, 9th Floor Beta Building, i-Think Techno
Campus, Kanjurmarg (East), Mumbai - 400 042 (India)**