



## **Directorate General of Shipping**

**SITREP – 28, 1800 hrs on 20/06/2025**

### **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:**

Patrol and surveillance operations at the wreck site continue through Tug Nand Saarthi, which has resumed offshore duties after a temporary port call for crew rotation and supplies. The vessel is maintaining observation on-site. Weather remains a significant constraint, and temporary visibility of oil sheen has been attributed to residual pollutants from machinery spaces and structural crevices.

SEAMEC III has departed from Kochi Port on the morning of 20 June 2025 and is en route to Mumbai for demobilisation. All diving-related equipment is being offloaded. The Heliox gas cylinders have been secured and stored by MSC at a designated yard for use in future diving operations by the incoming contractor.

Canara Megh, the identified replacement tug, has completed bunkering as of late evening on 19 June at Mumbai anchorage. Weather permitting, the vessel will depart shortly for Kochi. Upon arrival, it will embark oil spill response equipment and take over patrolling duties from Nand Saarthi.

Onshore, container recovery operations are progressing at Kollam, where MERC has deployed dive teams to extract submerged containers. One container is currently being retrieved. Simultaneously, beach cleanup and nurdle collection efforts are underway across affected districts. At Trivandrum, 190 volunteers have been deployed with assurances from the District Collector to increase this number to 300–350 from

21 June. Similar operations continue at Kanyakumari and Rameshwaram. Approximately 75 tonnes of nurdles have been collected and are being prepared for relocation to Kollam Port for storage and customs processing. An agreement for temporary warehousing is being finalised to enable smooth logistical handover and further disposal planning.

#### **4. Situation Assessment:**

The wreck remains stable on the seabed, with no structural deformations observed that would indicate large-scale fuel breaches (assessment done during air dive operations). The visible oil sheen is considered to be the result of residual machinery oil and other pollutants naturally seeping from onboard equipment and fixtures, not from the fuel tanks, all of which were capped during earlier diving operations. These sheens are light, not recoverable, and expected to dissipate through natural weathering processes. Daily surveillance is being undertaken by Nand Saarthi, and additional aerial sorties are being conducted by the Indian Coast Guard. No major oil slicks have been reported.

The operational transition from T&T Salvage to a new contractor is underway. Brand Marine Consultants, overseeing the transition, have confirmed that contracting with SMIT Salvage is in its final stages. The formal oil removal plan and timelines will be communicated once the contract is signed. Tentatively, commencement of saturation diving operations for oil extraction will be indicated upon signing of contract which again will be subject to weather and readiness of resources.

The Directorate General of Shipping continues to coordinate all activities with Indian Coast Guard, State Authorities, Shipowners, Salvors, MERC, P&I Club and other stakeholders through daily monitoring and inter-agency meetings. All environmental protection and pollution mitigation measures are being prioritised. Updates on recovery efforts and beachside contamination continue to be compiled for tracking and regulatory purposes.

The situation remains under active monitoring, and the readiness for escalation of operational measures continues in parallel with stakeholder engagement. Further updates will follow.

**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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