

SITREP – 14, 1800 hrs on 05/06/2025

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

1. Incident Overview:

Refer to SITREP – 6

2. Response Actions Initiated:

Refer to SITREP – 6

3. Present Status:

The ETV Water Lily has commenced seabed mapping around the incident site, covering a radius of approximately 1 NM since the early hours of 05 June.

No fresh observations of oil sheen have been reported by Nand Saarthi or Offshore Warrior.

SEAMAC III arrived in Kochi port as scheduled and is being equipped with diving gear. Local divers (06 no's) are at Kochi, and the team from Mumbai (06 no's) is expected to join on 08th June, one day prior to the scheduled start of operations.

Air diving gases have been received and will be loaded onto SEAMAC III. A second decompression chamber is expected to arrive on 07 June to support operational readiness.

The ROV departed from South Africa on 04 June and is expected to arrive in India by 06/07 June via Mumbai for loading onto DSV. MSC and T&T have been told that no changes to the established 09 June diving commencement timeline are acceptable.

Onshore, MERC has delivered 44 containers to port, with salvage currently ongoing at 14 sites. Five additional challenging containers are under removal, with a further nine inaccessible units undergoing manual gas cutting. Drone teams have been deployed for shoreline monitoring in both Kollam and Trivandrum. In Kanyakumari,

120 volunteers continue pellet recovery under MERC supervision. Civil defence teams have been activated in Kollam with 95 personnel. MSC is coordinating closely on field-level asset deployment and has teams monitoring site activities in Trivandrum.

4. Situation Assessment:

The salvage operation remains on a tight schedule, with air diving operations due to begin on 09 June. While the timeline is being maintained, several dependencies remain critical. These include the successful onboard integration of the decompression chamber arriving on 07 June and the timely receipt and verification of the ROV through Mumbai. A short operational window is anticipated as weather conditions are expected to deteriorate around the mobilisation date.

Container recovery continues at pace, though the estimated count of 58–59 is under reconciliation, with possible duplication in cases of broken containers. The gas-cutting operation for inaccessible containers is progressing slowly due to the need to segment containers for safety and logistical handling.

Shoreline response efforts remain manpower-intensive, with high levels of deployment by state and local authorities. Drone surveys by the Tamil Nadu State Pollution Control Board across 42 coastal villages in Tamil Nadu indicate nurdle presence in 33 villages, spanning approximately 37.5 km. The pending SOP for coordinated local authority support, finalised earlier, is expected to be approved shortly.

The Indian Coast Guard has maintained aerial and vessel-based surveillance, with no reports of oil sheen or floating debris. ICG assets remain on observer status, ready to deploy in case of escalation. **The Directorate General of Shipping has instructed all agencies to strictly adhere to the operational timeline, with a specific directive for pre-emptive mobilisation if weather windows begin to narrow.**

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