

## **SITREP – 18, 1800 hrs on 09/06/2025**

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

#### **1. Incident Overview:**

Refer to SITREP – 8

#### **2. Response Actions Initiated:**

Refer to SITREP – 6

#### **3. Present Status:**

Offshore operations have progressed with SEAMAC III departing Kochi port at 0642 hours and expected to commence diving and capping activities upon reaching the wreck site by 1400 hours. The vessel is fully mobilised with 12 divers onboard, a live air dive station active, and two decompression chambers integrated for operational support.



Salvors are maintaining oil spill response activities with Water Lily, Nand Saarthi, and Offshore Warrior conducting coordinated patrols and propeller wash across a 10 NM × 3 NM grid south-east of the wreck site. The preliminary multibeam survey data covering a 1 NM radius around the wreck has been circulated; final report processing is underway.

Onshore, MERC reports that 53 containers have been delivered to port, with two more in transit. Beach cleanup continued with 171 volunteers active in Trivandrum and 105 in Kanyakumari. No volunteers were deployed in Kollam on 09 June due to a temporary lapse in local coordination, which is being followed up with the District Collector. At Trivandrum sites—Veli, Perumathura, and Kovalam—volunteer deployment was successfully completed by 1500 hrs. Payment to volunteers is ongoing and facilitated daily through the Trivandrum Fire Station. A vacuum-assisted cleaning solution is being assessed locally and is currently under review by ITOPF.

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

With SEAMAC III now fully mobilised offshore, operational focus has shifted toward initiation of diving operations, particularly inspection and capping. All equipment onboard has been installed, and the vessel is positioned for stabilised operations. Air cargo shipments for additional salvage gear are en route; three ROV-related consignments have cleared, and two more are expected shortly. The planned saturation diving phase remains scheduled for 12 June, with two team representatives already coordinating customs and technical setup.

Oil sheen presence remains within the earlier-reported range of approximately 1000m × 50m and is being monitored by on-site patrols. No new sheens have been detected by aerial sorties conducted by the Indian Coast Guard at 0930 hours. The ICG has committed to sharing sortie logs and observation data with ITOPF to support documentation.

Discussions are underway regarding nurdle disposal logistics. While temporary storage at KEIL is ongoing, an alternative interim facility has been identified and will be inspected jointly by MERC, ITOPF, and the Ministry of Commerce. Final disposal

remains contingent on clearance from Customs and coordination with PCB. In Kanyakumari, nurdle segregation and storage continue under PCB oversight, and a visit by the ITOPF team is scheduled to help finalise the disposal plan.

Lastly, a survey vessel from the National Hydrographic Office is being deployed from Kochi to chart the wreck and surrounding hazards. Coordination is planned via VHF between the NHO team and the salvage master onboard SEAMAC III. However, given the limited operational space during diving operations, a deferral of the hydrographic survey may be considered in consultation with the salvage team and DGS.

## **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