



Directorate General of Shipping

SITREP – 23, 2200 hrs on 15/06/2025

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:

Salvage operations remain ongoing under the supervision of the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS), with continuous coordination involving Indian Coast Guard, State Disaster Management Authorities, shipowners, salvors (T&T), P&I Club, MERC, ITOFF, and other stakeholders. The SEAMAC III is currently undergoing conversion for saturation diving operations while air diving equipment is being demobilised. Vessel has been shifted from Berth Q1 to Q7 inside Kochi Port to comply with hot work safety protocols. Firefighting safety equipment from Mumbai is awaited for final commissioning. SEAMAC III is scheduled for readiness by 17 June 2025.

T&T has submitted the updated Oil Recovery Plan (Revision 4.1) which outlines an estimated 24–26 days for oil extraction, subject to weather conditions. Saturation diving team mobilisation is nearly complete, with divers already onboard or en route, excluding divers earlier planned from South Africa. Control Centre at Kochi continues monitoring SEAMAC III's readiness, operational coordination, and compliance documentation. The Nand Saarthi remains sheltered at Kochi port due to prevailing adverse sea conditions and will redeploy offshore once conditions improve.

Onshore, MERC has delivered 61 containers to port with 4 more pending recovery. Daily container inspections continue, with minor container fragments recovered and secured. Approximately 65 tons of nurdles have been collected across affected

shorelines. Volunteer deployment remains strong with 190 personnel at Trivandrum, 120 at Kanyakumari, and 22 at Rameshwaram. ITOPF reported ongoing replenishment of nurdles due to fresh strandings, requiring sustained cleanup efforts. Trials for beach cleaning equipment were unsuccessful and equipment modifications are being arranged. New disposal sites for collected nurdles have been identified in coordination with Customs and Pollution Control Board.

In a separate development, MERC teams secured a hazardous barrel marked as HNO₃ (nitric acid) which washed ashore at Alappad, Kollam. The barrel, suspected to belong to the Wan Hai 503 incident, was safely isolated with support from local police. ITOPF has been requested to provide detailed safety handling procedures. Clarifications are being sought regarding any permissions needed from Customs for its storage at Kollam Port.



Figure 1: Hazardous barrels recovered onshore

The offshore weather continues to present challenges. As per the latest weather forecast dated 15 June 2025, winds of 20–25 knots from the southwest persist over the southeast Arabian Sea, with visibility classified as very poor (2-3 NM) over the next 3–5 days. DGS has directed the salvors to submit both optimistic and realistic timelines accounting for prevailing monsoon conditions.

The weather forecast over southeast Arabian Sea off Kochi – Thiruvananthapuram coast

Dated: 15th June 2025

| | Day 1: 15-Jun-2025 | | | | Day 2: 16-June-2025 | | | | Day 3: 17-June-2025 | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 00 UTC | 06 UTC | 12 UTC | 18 UTC | 00 UTC | 06 UTC | 12 UTC | 18 UTC | 00 UTC | 06 UTC | 12 UTC | 18 UTC |
| Wind speed (kt) | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 |
| Wind direction | WSW | WSW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW |
| Weather | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS |
| Visibility | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR |

| | Day 4: 18-June-2025 | | | | Day 5: 19-June-2025 | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 00 UTC | 06 UTC | 12 UTC | 18 UTC | 00 UTC | 06 UTC | 12 UTC | 18 UTC |
| Wind speed (kt) | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 | 20-25 |
| Wind direction | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW | SW |
| Weather | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS | WS |
| Visibility | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR | VERY POOR |

Weather:- Dry: No Rain; Isol: Isolated; Sct: Scattered; FWS: Fairly Widespread ; WS: Wide Spread.

Visibility:- Very Poor : 3-2 nm; Poor: < 4-3 nm; Mod: 6-4 nm; Good: 8-6 nm; Fair: 10-8 nm.
(nm: nautical miles)

Wind direction:- WNW: westnorthwesterly; NW: northwesterly.

Wind speed:- kt: nautical mile per hour.

Figure 2: Source IMD



4. Situation Assessment:

While significant progress has been made in capping the fuel oil tanks and stabilizing the wreck, the critical oil extraction phase remains pending and highly weather dependent. Any further delays in mobilisation or operational readiness could push the

extraction timeline dangerously close to the peak monsoon season, increasing environmental risks and limiting salvage windows. The saturation diving operation carries significant operational risks due to prevailing rough sea conditions, and DGS has reinforced the requirement for full team competency and adequate planning.

The continuous replenishment of nurdles along shorelines also presents an ongoing environmental concern. While cleanup operations are proceeding effectively, daily deposits necessitate sustained manpower to prevent secondary pollution. The situation remains under close supervision by DGS through daily review meetings with full inter-agency coordination. A claims desk remains operational under the supervision of P&I Club in coordination with DGS and State Authorities to address compensation for affected coastal communities and stakeholders.

Authorities remain focused on ensuring full operational readiness for oil extraction within the limited operational weather window available. All agencies are maintaining their respective roles with DGS closely monitoring compliance, timelines, and performance to prevent escalation of legal and financial liabilities.

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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