



## **Directorate General of Shipping**

**SITREP – 42, 1800 hrs on 21/07/2025**

### **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:**

Preparations for the next phase of salvage operations on the sunken MSC ELSA 3 have intensified with final mobilisation activities underway in Singapore. The DP2 Diving Support Vessel (DSV), equipped with a saturation diving system, is scheduled to depart on 24 July 2025 and will proceed directly to the wreck site. The project team intends to operate the vessel entirely offshore, without entering port, and will begin diving operations immediately upon arrival.

In the meantime, Canara Megh continues caretaking duties at the wreck site but had returned to Kollam over the weekend due to rough weather offshore. Redeployment is contingent on weather improvement. Kollam Port has emerged as the preferred logistical hub for the upcoming diving operation owing to its proximity, adequate draft (7 meters), and historical support to the salvage team. Immigration clearance is being arranged through the FRRO at Trivandrum, with full backing from the port and state maritime authorities.

Onshore, MERC continues daily cleanup and logistics operations. As of 18 July, 557 metric tons of nurdles have been collected from the affected shoreline areas, of which 266 MT have been transferred to the Kollam warehouse. Segregation of the remaining quantity is ongoing.

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

The mobilisation of *Southern Nova* signals a critical transition into deep-sea fuel extraction and high-risk underwater operations requiring uninterrupted logistical and regulatory coordination. The strategy to operate directly offshore has been planned for this phase. However, immigration protocols and project crew access require clearances that are being actively pursued with the FRRO in Trivandrum and support from DG Shipping. A formal request has been raised for DG Shipping to issue a letter facilitating immigration and port pass arrangements through Kollam.

Kollam has been reaffirmed as the optimal base for project coordination, offering efficient turnaround times (approximately 4.5 hours to the site) and administrative ease compared to Kochi. Previous similar operations from Kollam reinforce its suitability, especially with robust institutional support from Kerala Maritime Board and Kollam Port Authority. The involvement of Pollution Control Boards and district administrations in Kanyakumari and Kollam continues to ensure regular oversight.

Additionally, MERC has reiterated the need for updated guidance from Tamil Nadu authorities concerning the disposal of stored nurdles in Kanyakumari, as no final directive has yet been received.

As the response transitions into technically intensive salvage and waste management phases, institutional coordination, regulatory facilitation, and state-level cooperation will be crucial in maintaining momentum and achieving operational closure.

#### **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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