

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. 176**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.03.2023

**Oil spills in Indian waters**

176. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the number of oil spills that have occurred in the country in the last three years;
- (b) whether Government aims to take concrete steps to ensure oil spills do not affect marine life and the fragile coastal ecology and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether oil spillage also affects mangroves and fishermen and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken to combat oil pollution in the coastal and marine environment in various maritime zones?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)**

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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**Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (d) of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 176 to be answered on Thursday, the 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 on “Oil spills in Indian waters” by Shri Tiruchi Siva.**

- (a) Only one oil spill incident occurred in the Maritime Zones of India in the last three years (since 2020) as per records available with Indian Coast Guard (ICG), the nodal agency for marine oil pollution. The incident occurred on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at west off Ratnagiri, Maharashtra by Motor Tanker Parth due to flooding and sinking.

(b) to (d)

The Indian Coast Guard has been designated as the Central Coordinating Agency for matters related to Marine Oil Pollution. For combating oil spill, the ICG is nodal agency in Maritime zones of India except for areas covered under port limits. The Ministry of Shipping is mandated to take steps for prevention & control of pollution arising from ships, shipwrecks, abandoned ships and combating oil spills in port limits, within 500 metres of off-shore exploration & production platforms, coastal refineries and associated facilities. A National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) is prepared for responding to Oil Spill accidents. The NOS-DCP is a comprehensive tool, which provides framework of co-ordination of integrated response by various governmental departments and agencies to protect the environment from the deleterious effects of pollution by oil spillage. NOS-DCP is revised periodically to reflect current international norms and best practices, key relevant national regulations, experience gained and inputs received from stakeholders.

An oil spill penetrating into areas manifested with mangroves and fishing grounds adversely affect them. The Mangroves undertake ecosystem support functions like desalination of seawater and provide shelter to biological communities' viz. fish, birds and mammals. The oil slicks get deposited on to the aerial roots and sediment surface of mangroves during oil spill, causing damage to mangroves. The fishing equipment, nets, boats, trawlers etc. also get contaminated during oil spill incidents. Oil spills result in loss of fishing opportunities causing temporary financial loss to fishermen.

The ICG has established Pollution Response Team (PRT) at Mumbai, Chennai, Port Blair and Vadinar (Gujarat) to combat oil spill incidents. Three pollution response vessels are also commissioned at Porbandar, Mumbai and Vizag to augment pollution response efforts. Apart from the above, other Coast Guard ships and aircrafts are also utilized during pollution response operation, surveillance and monitoring of maritime zones of India. The NOS-DCP obliges all ports, Oil handling agencies and Oil installations on-shore to maintain pollution response equipment for Tier-I response (i.e. Oil Spills up to 700 tons). The coastal State Administration are also required to be suitably equipped for undertaking shoreline clean-up in their area of responsibility and conducting regular training and national level pollution response exercise with active participation of stakeholders viz. Ports, Oil handling agencies.

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