

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1111
ANSWERED ON 29.07.2025

SINKING OF MSC ELSA 3 OFF KERALA COAST

1111. SHRI A. D. SINGH:

Will the Minister of PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a Liberian-flagged cargo ship MSC ELSA 3 sunk off the Kerala coast, which was carrying 640 containers, including 13 with hazardous materials, and substantial quantities of diesel and furnace oil;
- (b) what immediate measures are taken to contain the oil spill and hazardous material leakage to mitigate environmental damage;
- (c) the long-term plans to prevent such incidents, including stricter regulations for vessels carrying hazardous cargo and improved emergency response protocols; and
- (d) the details of inter-agency coordination, public advisories issued, and steps taken to support affected coastal communities?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)

- (a) Yes, the Liberian-flagged container vessel *MSC ELSA 3* sank approximately 13 nautical miles off the Alappuzha coast on 25th May 2025. The vessel was carrying about 643 containers which included 13 containers containing hazardous materials, along with 367 tonnes of Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) & 64 tonnes of Diesel Oil.
- (b) Immediate and coordinated actions were undertaken by the Directorate General of Shipping, a subordinate office under Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, the Indian Coast Guard and the Salvors appointed by the ship owners to mitigate environmental damage. All fuel tank openings were sealed by professional divers, and the light oil sheen observed on the sea surface was dispersed promptly by the standby vessel deployed at the site.

(c) To strengthen regulatory oversight for foreign- and Indian-flagged vessels, especially those carrying hazardous materials, Directorate General of Shipping has ensured strict compliance with international safety conventions such as International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), and the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code.

(d) The Directorate General of Shipping has been in constant coordination with key agencies, including the Indian Coast Guard, the Indian Navy, and the State Governments of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, to ensure a unified and effective response to the incident involving *MSC ELSA 3*.
