

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2083
ANSWERED ON 01.08.2025

THREATS FROM ABANDONED SHIPS

2083. DR. SHASHI THAROOR:

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

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन एवं जलमार्ग मंत्रालय

- (a) whether the ministry is aware of the recent sinking of the MSC ELSA 3 off the Kerala coast and the potential environmental and economic risks posed by abandoned vessels;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, including any investigations launched into the incident and accountability measures in place;
- (c) whether the Government has identified any other abandoned or derelict vessels in Indian waters posing similar threats to coastal safety, environment or shipping routes;
- (d) whether the Government has taken any measures to enhance maritime monitoring and ensure the prompt removal or safe anchorage of abandoned ships in Indian territorial waters; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) The Government of India is aware of the maritime incident involving the foreign-flagged vessel MSC ELSA 3. Due to proactive measures taken by the Indian Coast Guard, Directorate General of Shipping, and the Salvors appointed by the ship owners, Oil spill from the sunken vessel was prevented. All the fuel tank openings have been sealed by the divers. Directorate General of Shipping has been monitoring developments closely and coordinating the salvage operations and has also issued necessary directions to ensure appropriate response actions, including wreck removal for MSC Elsa 3 and containment of potential pollution.

A statutory inquiry and investigation into the incident, under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, is presently being undertaken by the Mercantile Marine Department (MMD), Kochi, to ascertain the causal factors leading to the incident. Further, the Central Government has ordered to conduct formal investigation into the incident in accordance with Section 360 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1958.

The details of other abandoned or derelict vessels in Indian waters in 2025 are as follows:

Sr.No.	Ship Name	Incident category / Month - Year	Location
1	Wan Hai 503	Fire and Explosion / June - 2025	44 Nautical Miles off Azhikkal, Kerala Coast.
2	Essar Tug VIII	Grounded / June - 2025	Off Kasaragod, Kerala.
3	MV Interasia Tenacity	Fire onboard/ June - 2025	50 miles west of Kochi, Kerala
4	Chemical Tanker Fulda	Explosion / July -2025	Off Kandla Port

The Government of India, through Directorate General of Shipping issued notices under the Merchant Shipping Act to the owners and the Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Clubs of the vessels for removal of wrecks and abandoned vessels. The Government ensures that such abandoned vessels / wrecks are removed from the location in accordance the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act.

A Maritime Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), Vol 10/2024 dated 24.02.2024 on 'Handling of Derelict Vessels in/near Indian Waters' has also been formulated.
