

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 312
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22ND JULY, 2025

Financial Assistance to Fishing Communities in Kerala

312. Shri Hibi Eden:
Adv. Dean Kuriakose:
Shri Kodikunnil Suresh:

Will the Minister of **FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING** be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the disruption to fishing activities caused to fisherfolk following the sinking of MSC Elsa 3 and the fire on MV Wan Hai 503 off the Kerala coast, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the Government proposes to provide financial supports/reliefs and compensation for fishermen and fisherfolk in light of such incidents, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government has received any representation from the State Government of Kerala to provide compensation to the fishermen who lost their livelihood due to the incidents;

(d) whether the Government is coordinating with experts to assess the long-term impact of such incidents on the quality and safety of edible marine species and the ecological sustainability of traditional fishing grounds, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government has conducted or supported any scientific assessment of the impact of plastic nurdle contamination, hazardous cargo leakage or ecosystem degradation on fish stocks, breeding grounds and livelihood of coastal fishing communities, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether the Government has conducted a study in this regard, if so, the details thereof and key finds of such study;

(g) whether the Government proposes any restoration measures in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(h) whether the Ministry is coordinating with the M/o Shipping and Environment to ensure accountability, clean-up and long term marine biodiversity protection in affected zones?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING (SHRI GEORGE KURIAN)

(a): The cargo vessel MSC ELSA 3 shipwreck carrying 643 containers occurred on 24-25 May 2025, approximately 39 nautical miles (Nm) south off Kochi, Kerala whereas the incident of MV Wan Hai 503 happened on 09th June 2025 at around 130 Nm North West of Kochi, Kerala. The Government of Kerala has informed that, in connection with MSC ELSA 3, the fishermen especially those of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Alappuzha and Ernakulum districts were effected during 25th May to 1st June, 2025.

(b): The Government of Kerala has informed that in response to MSC ELSA 3 interim relief has already been provided to the affected fishermen with financial assistance @Rs.1000/- per family to 1,05,518 marine fishermen families (including 78,498 marine fishermen families and 24,020 allied fishermen families) from the SDRF, along with 6 kg of rice per family for compensating for their livelihood loss that occurred due to the mishap.

(c): Yes, Sir.

(d) to (f): The Government of Kerala has informed that, in connection with MSC ELSA 3, as an immediate response, the Disaster Management Department of Kerala State had issued advisories to the fishermen on 25th May, 2025, instructing fishermen not to venture within a 20 nautical mile radius of the sunken vessel. The Government of Kerala informed that high-level meeting was convened with the scientists of ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) and representatives of fishermen on 28th May, 2025 to discuss the possible ecological impact and necessary actions to be taken for protection of fishery resources and livelihood of fishermen. Accordingly, on 19.06.2025, a Joint Coordination Committee was constituted by the State Government of Kerala with representatives from KUFOS, CMFRI, CIFT, State Pollution Control Board, Food Safety, National Health Mission, and Coastal Police to review the scenario and to conduct necessary sampling, testing of water, and fish in accordance with the standard protocols. The test reports revealed that the fish samples were all in good condition, and no objectionable smell or flavour was observed, and the pH, salinity and the conductivity of water samples were within the normal range. The preliminary analysis of water and fish samples revealed that there were no trace or the presence of oil content, no direct evidence to prove the presence of hazardous chemicals, and that the fish samples from the coasts of Ernakulam, Alappuzha, and Kollam, etc. were safe for consumption. It is also been informed that the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) has been entrusted through the Environment Department of Kerala to undertake multi-sectoral loss assessment and impact study both short term and long term.

(g) & (h): The Department of Fisheries, Government of India has approved the projects worth of Rs.13.02 crore for installation of artificial reefs along the Kerala coast for rejuvenation and restoration of fish stocks. Government of India is committed for long-term sustainability and biodiversity protection with coordinated efforts of related Ministries.