

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4442
ANSWERED ON:21.04.2015
POLLUTION BY TAR BALLS
Sawaikar Shri Advocate Narendra Keshav

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

- (a) whether the dumping of oil in mid-sea by ships has resulted in concentration of tar-balls onshore;
- (b) whether Government is aware that ocean researchers have warned that prompt cleaning of the beaches needs to be done to avoid long term impact of tar-balls; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a)&(b) A seasonal phenomenon of tar ball deposition in the coastal beaches located along the West Coast, from Gujarat to Karnataka, has been reported since 1977 by the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), Goa. National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) had also carried out studies related to 'Analysis and Source Apportionment of Tar Balls Deposited on the Coast of Goa'. The findings also revealed that the source of the tar balls could be oil-exploration activities from offshore oil installations, natural phenomenon from the sea-bed or from sea going vessels passing through the area. Some isolated research papers suggest that prompt cleaning of beaches needs to be done.

(c) The efforts made by Government inter-alia include the following:

(i) The Indian Coast Guard has been designated as nodal agency for combating oil spills in Indian waters and undertaking oil spill prevention and control. The Coast Guard has drawn National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) for oil spill response in the maritime zones of India.

(ii) India is a signatory to MARPOL, an International Convention for the prevention of pollution from Ships. The provisions of MARPOL are incorporated in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 administered by the Directorate General of Shipping.

(iii) As per the Tourism Department, Government of Goa, they engage the services of private contractors for lifting and disposing of tar balls/oily substance and garbage generated by shacks on the beach stretches of Goa.