

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2974

ANSWERED ON:30.07.2014

OIL SPILLS IN THE COASTS

Venkatesh Babu Shri T.G.

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the recent incidents of tar balls forming in the western shores of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the environmental impact of tar balls and oil spills on the marine ecology; and
- (d) the efforts taken to address the issue?

Answer

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

(a) & (b). Yes Sir. The deposition of tar balls has been observed between the Central-west Coast (Goa) to the North-west Coast (Gujarat) during South west monsoon season.

National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) had carried out studies related to "Analysis and Source Apportionment of Tar Balls Deposited on the Coast of Goa". It was found that the major source of tar balls was crude oil. 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.

(c) Tar balls are the weathered products of oil spills which can affect marine living resources and perhaps the food chain.

(d) 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) Further, it has been reported by the Goa Government that their Tourism Department engages 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.