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Title: The Minister of State in the Ministry of Shipping made a statement regarding actions taken in the aftermath of ship collision which took place off Kamarajar Harbour.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI PON RADHAKRISHNAN): Hon. Speaker Madam, with your permission, I rise to make a statement on the actions taken in the aftermath of ship collision which took place off Kamarajar harbour.

Two vessels namely, M.T. BW MAPLE and M.T. DAWN KANCHIPURAM while crossing each other collided at 3.45 A.M. on 28 January, 2017 off the Kamarajar harbour. The vessel M.T. DAWN KANCHIPURAM, which was carrying 32813 Tonnes of POL, suffered a rupture which led to oil spill. There was no casualty or injury to the crew members. I visited the collision site on 30.01.2017 and inspected the area where the vessels were anchored and gave appropriate directions to the Kamarajar Port officers.

Kamarajar Port deployed oil boom around the vessel to contain seepage. After examination, the damaged vessel was towed safely and berthed at Kamarajar Port on 30 January 2017. This vessel has already discharged 30013 Tonnes of POL and the remaining quantity is expected to be discharged today. This major step has prevented any further possibility of oil spill.

A massive cleanup operation was launched in Tiruvallur, Chennai and Kancheepuram Districts by engaging more than 2000 persons at various sites including Ernavur, Chennai Fishing Harbour, Marina Beach, Besant Nagar, Kottivakkam, Palavakkam, Neelankarai and Injambakkam beaches.

The Coast Guard has been co-ordinating the cleaning operations jointly with Chennai Port, Kamarajar Port, the State Government and its agencies, Indian Oil Corporation, NGOs, Cadet Trainees from maritime educational institutions and fishermen. A team of senior officers from Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and D.G. Shipping were sent for an on-the-spot inspection of the affected areas to co-ordinate and review the cleaning operations. They also met the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu who has also held review meetings and is regularly monitoring the remedial measures being taken. The District Administration is actively involved in the clean-up operations. The Chennai Port and Kamarajar Port have set up Control Rooms.

At Ernavur, which had the maximum drift of the sludge, booms have been deployed along the shoreline to contain the oil spread. More than 1,000 people were deployed here with portable pollution cleaning equipment for shoreline cleaning. The required logistics and equipment support has been provided by the Chennai and Kamarajar Ports. Sufficient gum boots, gloves, buckets, mugs, liquid hand wash, and drums have been provided to facilitate manual cleaning. In addition, three Super Suckers and submersible pumps have also been deployed to remove the oil spill. Coast Guard has also sprayed Oil Spill Dispersants for removal of oil slick.

The total quantity of sludge which has been removed till today is 65 tonnes. In addition, Super Suckers have removed 54 tonnes which contain 70 per cent water. More than 80 per cent of the work has been completed and most of the residual work is expected to be completed within two to three days. The Indian Oil Corporation has provided special bio-remediation material for treatment of the collected oil sludge for its safe disposal.

The Coast Guard ship and helicopters are carrying out regular sorties for continuous monitoring of oil slick. If oil spillage accumulation is spotted anywhere, manpower and material under the overall supervision of Coast Guard will be deployed.

Directorate General of Shipping has instituted an inquiry under the Merchant Shipping Act to ascertain the cause and contributory factors that led to the accident. The Government is taking all the measures to manage the situation. I will also be visiting the affected area again to take stock of the situation.

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