



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई  
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Incident Involving Oil Tanker MT SAFESEA VISHNU Near Basra, Iraq**

Mumbai- 12 March 2026

The Government of India has received information regarding an incident involving the oil tanker MT SAFESEA VISHNU near Basra, Iraq, on 11 March 2026, during ship-to-ship (STS) cargo loading operations off Khor Al Zubair Port.

At approximately 2100 hrs UTC on 11 March 2026, the tanker MT SAFESEA VISHNU (Flag: Marshall Islands; IMO No. 9327009), which was carrying around 48,000 metric tonnes of naphtha, was struck by an unidentified object. Preliminary reports indicate that a white-coloured unmanned speedboat carrying explosives approached the vessel from the starboard side and rammed into it, resulting in a major fire onboard.

Following the incident, all crew members abandoned the vessel and entered the water to ensure their safety. They were subsequently rescued by an STS tug operating in the vicinity. The Iraqi Coast Guard evacuated all 28 crew members, including 16 Indian nationals and 12 Filipino nationals, and transported them safely towards the Port of Basra. Firefighting tugs remain deployed at the site and are working to contain the blaze.

It is with deep regret that the Directorate General of Shipping, Ministry of Port, Shipping and Waterways confirms the demise of one Indian seafarer.

Among the rescued personnel, 15 are Indian nationals, including the vessel's Master. All rescued seafarers are reported to be safe and are currently located on a small island near Basra.

The Embassy of India in Baghdad is in close coordination with Iraqi authorities to ensure the welfare of the Indian nationals involved and to facilitate necessary assistance.

The Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai expresses its deepest condolences to the family of the deceased seafarer. The incident highlights the evolving security challenges faced by commercial shipping in the region, and the Government continues to closely monitor developments in coordination with relevant authorities.

Further updates will be shared as more information becomes available.

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9वीं मंज़िल, बीटा बिल्डिंग, आई थिंक टेक्नो कैम्पस, कांजुर गाँव रोड, कांजुरमार्ग (पूर्व) मुंबई- 400042

9th Floor, BETA Building, I-Think Techno Campus, Kanjur Village Road, Kanjurmarg (E), Mumbai-400042

फ़ोन/Tel No.: +91-22-2575 2040/1/2/3 फ़ैक्स/Fax.: +91-22-2575 2029/35 ई-मेल/Email: dgship-dgs@nic.in वेबसाइट/Website: www.dgshipping.gov.in