
AFTER CONTAINER SHIP FIRE, SRI LANKA FACES ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHE

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Sri Lanka is staring at an environmental catastrophe.

On May 20, a fire erupted on a container ship, MV X-Press Pearl, anchored at a distance of around 9 nautical miles northwest of Colombo. The Singapore-flagged vessel was loaded with 1,486 containers carrying 25 tons of nitric acid and other chemicals as well as raw materials to manufacture plastic bags. The ship was also carrying 300 tons of fuel in its tanks.

The fire, which raged for a fortnight, has been doused. An attempt by salvage experts to tow the ship into deeper waters to contain the damage to the coastline failed when the ship began sinking on June 2.

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