

PAKISTAN

Saturday Sep 09 2017



Ebad Ahmed



'Oil slick' on Karachi beach: Here's what the experts say



360 VR VIDEO: Use mouse to drag the video or move your phone around to see new angles.

Celebrations turned 'sticky' on the third day of Eid when more than a four-kilometre stretch of Clifton Beach was covered by an 'oil slick.'

According to WWF Pakistan, the substance bears the characteristics of oil which is "shiny and sticky". On the other hand, National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) experts maintain their reservations over this conclusion. In fact, they have questioned whether the substance is actually oil, at all.

"When we visited the site, our very first observation was that this was not an oil spill," Dr Samina Kidwai from the Department of Biological Oceanography at NIO explained to Geo.tv.

"The colour of the water gives the impression that it is oil, but on closer inspection we determined that the colour was the only similarity to make it appear as an oil spill. Whenever there is oil, there is a shine at the surface and stickiness in the water, which is missing in this case."

The sight reminds us of the MV Tasman Spirit, which spilled over 33,000 tons of oil over a 16-kilometre stretch of Karachi's coastline.

The medical complications that followed for nearby residents from severe nausea, headaches, and throat infections forced them to evacuate their homes and move further inland.

Upon observing samples of water under a microscopic lens, NIO's initial deduction was reaffirmed.

"People were comfortably swimming here and our colleagues who went to take water samples had no oil stains on their dresses and the substance has no smell."




People at the Karachi beach on Eidul Azha.—Photo: ONLINE


Further supporting NIO's claim, Dr Kidwai said, "The substance was found within a three kilometre area and could be seen till off shore, had it (substance) been oil there would have been [an] oil line on the high watermark. Also, an oil spill cannot occur in such a limited area."


An oil-line on the beach would be formed as the water would deposit it by pushing it on shore.


Latest

VIEW ALL

- 

PAKISTAN | one minute ago
Security officials deployed for polls to take oath: ECP
- 

PAKISTAN | 46 minutes ago
Accountability court gets six weeks to conclude Nawaz, Dar's corruption cases
- 

BLOG - SPORT | 50 minutes ago
St Petersburg: White nights and football fever
- 

PAKISTAN | an hour ago
Pakistan's second cardinal Joseph Coutts returns to warm welcome

NIO's Dr Nuzhat Khan suggested an alternate theory. "The best possible explanation of the substance's presence is that it is a chemical put by the local administration of the area to unblock the choked storm water drains."

However, Muhammad Moazzam Khan, who is a technical adviser for WWF-Pakistan, is not convinced.

"This is nothing less than a 'small oil spill,' he said firmly, adding, "If I go by this (NIO's) logic, then it would require as many as 1,000 tankers carrying the contaminated water to change the properties of sea water."



Oil slick on Karachi beach spreads panic and fear

According to Khan, all that remains to be seen is whether this spill was an accident or done deliberately.

Confirmation for either theory will now have to wait until NIO's tests are complete and reports made public.

[Save to Facebook](#)

MORE FROM PAKISTAN:



Security officials deployed for polls to take oath: ECP

Updated 6 minutes ago



Pakistan's second cardinal Joseph Coutts returns to warm welcome

Updated an hour ago



Pakistan to receive new spell of monsoon showers

Updated 2 hours ago



Two PTI workers, PML-N UK leader arrested after clashes outside Nawaz's Avenfield...

Updated 2 hours ago



Naqeebullah murder: ATC to announce verdict on Anwar's bail petition today

Updated 2 hours ago



Accountability court gets six weeks to conclude Nawaz, Dar's corruption cases

Updated 46 minutes ago



Nawaz, Maryam to be directly moved to Adiala jail from Lahore: sources

Updated 11 hours ago



Sindh's condition is worse than Balochistan: Imran

Updated 12 hours ago



Bilawal says South Punjab province need of the country

Updated 12 hours ago