

- (2) महानिदेशक, केंद्र सरकार को एक वार्षिक रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत करेगा जिसमें इस सिस्टम के प्रदर्शन, डाटा की गुणवत्ता, एकीकरण की स्थिति और सुधार के लिए सिफारिशों का सारांश होगा।
- (3) केंद्र सरकार समीक्षा कर सकती है और इस अधिनियम की धारा 9 के उद्देश्यों को पूरा करने में पोर्टल की प्रभावशीलता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए आवश्यक संशोधन के लिए निर्देशित कर सकती है।

[फा. सं. एसवाई-19014/182/2025-एमजी]

राजेश कुमार सिन्हा, विशेष सचिव

MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 19th December, 2025

G.S.R. 910(E).— The draft of the Coastal Shipping (Strategy and National Database) Rules 2026, which the Central Government proposes to make, in the exercise of the powers conferred by Sections 6, 8(2)(h), 8(4), 9(1) read with Sections 39(1), 39(2)(e), 39(2)(f), 39(2)(g), 39(2)(h) respectively and Section 39(2)(q) of the Coastal Shipping Act, 2025 (20 of 2025), is hereby published for the information of all persons likely to be affected thereby; and notice is hereby given that the said draft shall be taken into consideration after thirty days from the date on which the copies of this notification as published in the Official Gazette are made available to the public;

Objections or suggestions, if any, to these draft rules may be sent to the Under Secretary (ML), Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Transport Bhawan, 1-Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001, or by email at usml-psw@gov.in within the period specified above. The objections or suggestions which may be received from any person concerning the said draft rules, within the period so specified will be considered by the Central Government"

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

1. Short Title, Commencement and Application.

1. These rules may be called the *Coastal Shipping (Strategy and National Database) Rules, 2026*.
2. They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the official Gazette These rules shall apply to—
 - (a) every vessel, engaged or intending to engage in *coasting trade* within the territorial waters of India in accordance with section 3 of the Act;
 - (b) the licensee of such vessels;
 - (c) any relevant stakeholders involved in handling of vessels engaged in coasting trade or plying of vessels on coastal waters , for the purpose of verification or exchange of information about such vessels ; and
3. Nothing in these rules shall apply to—
 - (a) vessels of the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, or any other vessel employed for defense, customs, or sovereign purposes;
 - (b) vessels operating exclusively within inland waterways under licenses granted under any other law for the time being in force and not engaged in coasting trade, unless specifically directed otherwise by the Central Government.

2. Definitions

- (1) In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires,-

1.

a.

- a. “**Act**” means the *Coastal Shipping Act, 2025*;
- b. “**Form**” means a form appended to these rules or made available electronically on the *NDCS* portal for the purposes of the Act;

- c. **“Port”** means port as defined in Merchant Shipping Act 2025.
- d. **“Portal”** means the secure electronic platform hosted on a domain authorised by the Government of India for the operation of the *National Database of Coastal Shipping (NDCS)*, including all user interfaces, data entry modules, and verification systems associated therewith;
- e. **“Portal User”** means
 - b. Any one intending to access the data publicly made available on the NDCS portal in line with sub-section (2) of Section 9 of the Act; or
 - c. any person or entity authorised to use the *NDCS* portal, including licensees, and other stakeholders approved by the *Director-General*;
- f. **“Secretariat”** means Secretariat of the Committee formed as per Rule 11 of these rules;
- g. **“Stakeholder”** means any person, authority or entity that is required to provide, verify, use or exchange information for the purposes of creation, maintenance or updating of the National Database of Coastal Shipping (NDCS), and includes—
 - (a) port authorities;
 - (b) State Maritime Boards;
 - (d) maritime security and enforcement agencies;
 - (e) shipowners, vessel operators and their authorised representatives;
 - (f) seafarers, masters and crew members, to the extent relevant; and
 - (g) any other person or body authorised by the Director-General for the purposes of Section 9.
- h. **“Voyage Report”** means a report submitted through the *NDCS* portal as per section 6 of the Act and rule 9 of these rules, containing particulars of voyage commencement, completion, or quarterly operations;
- i. **“Service provided to the Vessel”** means any service provided to the Vessel for the **carriage of goods and/or** passengers by sea along the Indian coast between ports or terminals within India, including scheduling, operation, and provision of vessels, and associated port calls;
- j. **“Route”** means the designated path of a coastal voyage between specified ports or terminals, including intermediate port calls.

(2) Words and expressions used herein but not defined shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act.

CHAPTER II

Reporting Requirement

3. Voyage Reporting Requirements

1. Every vessel, including an Indian vessel engaged in coasting trade, shall, in accordance with section 6 of the Act, submit voyage information to the Director-General through the *National Database of Coastal Shipping (NDCS)* portal
2. The licensee of the vessel shall submit the following reports, namely:
 - a. a Voyage Commencement Report in Form V-A, not later than twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled departure of the vessel from each port of call;
 - b. a Voyage Completion Report in Form V-B, within twenty-four hours of arrival at the next port of call or completion of the voyage, whichever is earlier; and
3. Each report under sub-rule 2 shall include, inter alia, the following particulars, namely:-
 - (a) name, official number and port of registry of the vessel;
 - (b) name of the licensee;

- (c) ports or places of departure, intermediate calls and destination;
- (d) date and time of arrival and departure at each port or place;
- (e) description, quantity and nature of goods or passengers carried, indicating loading and discharge ports;
- (f) details of any offshore area, anchorage or lighterage point where the vessel operated or navigated;
- (g) particulars of any incident affecting safety of navigation, environment or cargo during the voyage, provided that such information has not been submitted under any other provisions of Merchant Shipping Act, 2025;
- (h) details of compliance with any direction issued under section 35 of the Act;
- (i) Details of services availed by the vessel engaged in the coastal trade; and
- (j) such other information as the Director-General may require under Clause (d) of Section 6 of the Act

3.

- 4. The licensee shall preserve copies of all reports and voyage documents submitted under the rule and shall produce the same for inspection when required by the Director-General or any other officer authorized by him in this behalf.
- 5. Where any report submitted under this rule is found to contain an error, omission or misstatement, whether discovered by the licensee or communicated by the Director-General, the licensee shall submit a revised or amended report, clearly indicating the corrections made, through the *NDCS* portal, within one week of discovery or communication, whichever is earlier.
- 6. No amendment shall be permitted after the expiry of thirty days from the date of original submission of the report, except with the prior written approval of the Director-General and for reasons to be recorded in writing.

4. Amendment of Voyage Commencement Report on Incident or Change of Route.

5. Where, after submission of a *Voyage Commencement Report* under this rule, there occurs-

- a. any incident affecting the safety of the vessel, persons, cargo or the marine environment; or
- b. any change to the authorized route or intended voyage, whether necessitated by weather, navigational safety, port closure, operational exigency or any other cause,

the licensee, master, owner or authorized agent shall forthwith amend the *Voyage Commencement Report* on the *NDCS* portal to reflect such incident or change and shall include, inter alia, the following particulars:

- i. nature and cause of the incident or the circumstances necessitating the change of route;
- ii. revised route, ports of call and estimated times of arrival and departure;
- iii. details of persons injured, lost or requiring assistance (if any), and particulars of cargo affected;
- iv. immediate measures taken on board and any assistance requested or rendered; and\
- v. such supporting documents or evidence as the *Director-General* may require.
- 2. where the incident or change of route occurs **prior to scheduled departure**, the amended *Voyage Commencement Report* shall be submitted **immediately** and, in any event, **before departure** from the port; and
- 3. where the incident or change of route occurs **after departure**, the amended report shall be submitted **as soon as practicable** and, in any event, **within Forty Eight hours** of the occurrence or discovery of such incident or change.
- 4. On submission of the amended report the licensee shall
 - a. notify without delay the *Director-General* and the relevant port authority, pilotage or coastal security agency through the *NDCS* portal or by such other means as the *Director-General* may direct; and
 - b. where immediate hazard to navigation or pollution is involved, follow the reporting and response procedures specified in rule
- 5. Every amendment made under this rule shall be digitally signed by the person making it and shall be accompanied by a certification that the information furnished is true and complete to the best of his knowledge and belief. Copies of all supporting documents shall be preserved for a period of **five years** and produced on demand.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL COASTAL AND INLAND SHIPPING STRATEGIC PLAN

5. Preparation, Publication and Revision of the Strategic Plan: -

The Central Government shall, in consultation with the Committee constituted under sub-section (3) of section 8 of the Act, prepare and publish, by notification in the Official Gazette, a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan within the period specified in sub-section (1) of section 8, and shall ensure that the same is reviewed and updated once in every two years thereafter.

6. Scope and purpose of Strategic Plan.

7. The Strategic Plan shall include the following information in addition to the information specified under sub-section (2) of the Section 8 of the Act.: —
 - a. (h) identification of bottlenecks affecting efficiency and competitiveness of coastal shipping operations;
 - i. framework for integration of digital and single-window platforms for coastal and inland shipping;
 - b. (j) long-term infrastructure development roadmap for coastal berths, terminals and multimodal connectivity;
 - c. (k) strategy for enhancing the participation of Indian-built, Indian-owned and Indian-operated vessels in the coasting trade;
 - d. (l) framework for promoting the use of alternative and low-emission fuels for coastal and inland shipping;
 - e. (m) mechanisms for coordination among Central and State maritime boards, port authorities, and other stakeholders; and
 - f. (n) development of performance indicators and measurable targets for monitoring the implementation of the Plan;
 - g. .

7. Nomination and Tenure of Committee members

8. The members referred to in clauses (f), (g) and (h) of sub-section 3 of Section 8 shall be nominated by the Central Government for a term of two years and shall be eligible for re-nomination for one further term.
9. A member nominated as per sub-rule (1) above, may resign his membership by writing under his hand addressed to the Chairperson, and such resignation shall take effect from the date of its acceptance.
10. The Central Government may, at any time, remove a member so nominated , referred to under sub-rule (1) above, if, in its opinion, such member—
 - a. has ceased to represent the category for which he was nominated; or
 - b. has absented himself from three consecutive meetings of the Committee without sufficient cause; or
 - c. is unable to discharge his functions effectively or has otherwise acted in a manner prejudicial to the objectives of the Committee.

8. Vacancies.

9. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the Committee by reason of death, resignation, removal or otherwise shall be filled by nomination in the same manner as the original appointment.
10. A member nominated to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the term of the member whose place he fills.

11. Time and Place of Meetings

12. The Committee shall meet at least twice in a calendar year, or at such intervals as the Chairperson may deem necessary, at Directorate General of Shipping or at such time and place as may be notified by the Chairperson. Meetings of the Committee may be held physically, virtually, or in hybrid mode, as the Chairperson may decide, having regard to administrative convenience and exigencies of time.
13. The Chairperson may, on his own motion or upon a written request made by not less than one-third of the total members, convene a special meeting of the Committee to consider any matter of urgency or special importance related to coastal shipping strategy or policy.
14. The notice of each meeting, containing, date, time and venue along with the agenda and background papers, shall be circulated by the Secretariat of the Committee at least fifteen days prior to the date fixed for the meeting:

Provided that, in cases of urgency, the Chairperson may permit a shorter notice period, which shall not be less than three days.

4. A member participating through video conferencing or other audio-visual means shall be deemed to be present for the purposes of quorum and voting, provided that the identity of such member and the ability to communicate and vote are duly verified by the Secretariat.
5. The Secretariat shall ensure that appropriate secure technology and record-keeping mechanisms are used for convening hybrid or virtual meetings, and that the minutes so recorded form part of the official records of the Committee.
6. **Quorum and Procedure**
7. The quorum for a meeting shall be not less than one-third of the total members including at least one representative each from
 - (a) the Inland Waterways Authority of India; and
 - (b) any State Maritime Board or port administration; and
 - (c) shipowners or seafarers.
2. The Chairperson shall preside at every meeting of the Committee.
3. In the absence of the Chairperson, a member nominated by Chairperson shall preside over the meeting.
4. In the absence of Chairperson and in case where Chairperson has not nominated any member, the members present shall elect from among themselves a member representing the Central Government or a statutory maritime authority to preside over the meeting.
5. The member so nominated or elected, as the case maybe shall, while presiding, exercise all the powers and perform all the functions of the Chairperson for that meeting.
6. Decisions of the Committee shall, as far as possible, be taken by consensus.
7. Where consensus is not possible, the decision of the majority of members present and voting shall prevail.
8. Where the votes on any matter are equally divided, the Chairperson, or the member presiding, shall, in addition to his ordinary vote, exercise a casting vote, and the matter shall be decided in accordance therewith.
9. The minutes of each meeting shall be prepared and recorded by the Secretariat of the Committee and circulated to all members within two days of the meeting.
10. The minutes shall be placed for confirmation at the subsequent meeting of the Committee and, upon confirmation, shall form part of the official record.
11. A copy of the confirmed minutes and the recommendations or observations of the Committee shall be submitted by the Secretariat to the Central Government for its consideration, approval and necessary action.
12. No act or proceeding of the Committee shall be invalid merely by reason of-
 - a. any vacancy or defect in the constitution of the Committee; or
 - b. any defect in the nomination of a member, if such act or proceeding has been done in good faith.
13. All proceedings of the shall be confidential unless otherwise decided by the Committee.
14. **Secretariat of the Committee**
15. The Directorate General of Shipping shall act as the Secretariat to the Committee and shall provide all administrative, technical and logistical assistance necessary for its functioning.
16. The Secretariat shall:-
 - a. maintain the records, minutes and correspondence of the Committee;
 - b. circulate the agenda, notices and minutes of meetings to all members;
 - c. coordinate with Ministries, Departments, and maritime agencies for inputs on the draft Strategic Plan; and
 - d. perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Chairperson or the Central Government.
12. **Publication and Public Access:**
13. Upon approval by the Central Government, the Strategic Plan shall be published on the official website of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and the National Database of Coastal Shipping portal.

14. The Strategic Plan shall remain available for public access and stakeholder reference, and the Central Government may invite comments or suggestions for its subsequent revision or review.
15. **Sub-Committees.**
16. The Committee may, with the approval of the Central Government, constitute one or more sub-committees from among its members or from outside experts for consideration of specific subjects related to the Strategic Plan, and may co-opt any person having special knowledge or experience in maritime affairs for such purpose.

CHAPTER IV

NATIONAL DATABASE OF COASTAL SHIPPING PORTAL (NDCS)

14. Short Title and purpose

15. The Portal created in accordance with section 9 shall be known as the National Database of Coastal Shipping Portal (hereinafter referred to as “the NDCS Portal”) for the purpose of managing activities relating to licensing, reporting, and data integration under the Act.
16. The NDCS Portal shall serve as the central digital repository and single-window interface for the implementation of provisions of the Act and the rules made thereunder.

17. Functional Requirements of the Portal

18. Licence Management

- (a) applications received for licence under section 4 of the Act;
- (b) licences granted under section 4 of the Act;
- (c) terms and conditions of the licences so granted;
- (e) requirement of applicants for grant of licences under section 4 of the Act;
- (f) expired and revoked licences under section 5 of the Act;
- (g) information reported to the Director-General under section 6 of the Act; and
- (h) such other information with respect to licensing as the Director-General may deem fit.

2. Voyage and Route Management

- a. submission of voyage commencement and completion reports under section 6;
- b. real-time tracking of vessel movements and offshore operations; and
- c. upload of cargo and passenger manifests in prescribed formats.

3. Maintaining data related to:

- a. cargo loaded and discharged at the port;
- b. vessel arrival and departure timings;
- c. type of cargo handled (bulk, container, liquid, or otherwise); and
- d. any delays, incidents, or operational disruptions affecting coastal shipping.

4. Data Repository, Dashboard, and Reports

- a. maintenance of historical data on routes, voyages, and services;
- b. vessel, crew certification, insurance, and safety compliance records;
- c. interactive dashboards to monitor trends in coastal trade and compliance alerts; and
- d. predictive analytics for port security, congestion management, berth allotment, and supply chain optimization.

16. Integration with other Administrative Systems

The NDCS Portal may be technically integrated with the following systems to enable data exchange for verification:-

- a. Port Clearance and Customs Interface, for synchronizing reporting of manifests and port movements; and

- b. Environmental Compliance Monitoring System, for tracking MARPOL compliance, fuel usage, and pollution control;
- 17. The Portal shall also be interoperable with central digital platforms such as Gati Shakti National Master Plan, National Logistics Portal (Marine), and relevant databases of State and local maritime authorities, research institutions, and other government systems, to ensure comprehensive data availability and utilisation.
- 18. The NDCS shall be interoperable and integrated with
 - a. the Sagarmala National Logistics Portal (Marine),
 - b. the National Single Window System (NSWS),
 - c. MIS/ERP systems of Major Port Authorities and State Maritime Boards, and such other systems as the Central Government may, by order, specify for ensuring seamless data exchange and coordination.
- 19. In case the data required to be reported on NDCS is already being recorded by the concerned stakeholder in any other system or portal, the same should be made available to NDCS by the concerned stakeholder so as to reduce redundant efforts of data entry.
- 20. If the data is not captured as mentioned in (4), it must be reported in the form and manner specified in 24(1), (2), (3), and (4).

21. Data Submission and Update Protocol.

- 1. Licencees and other stakeholders shall submit all required data through the NDCS Portal in such forms as shall be provisioned on the NDCS portal.
- 2. Data shall be updated on the portal:
 - a. automatically upon submission of reports or licence actions;
 - b. once every month by the Director General or other relevant Stakeholders specified by the Director General;
 - c. immediately upon any modification or revocation of licence.
- 3. The Director-General shall specify the frequency, format, and validation procedure for updating or verifying data on the Portal by other stakeholders.
- 4. For all other data related to voyages, routes, and services, updates should be made at least once a month.

22. Security, Integrity and Hosting

- 1. The NDCS Portal shall be maintained in compliance with with the following standards and laws , as may be applicable, namely: -
 - a. National Cyber Security Policy and related Government of India standards;
 - b. Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW);
 - c. Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023; and
- 2. All data stored in the Portal shall be encrypted, backed up regularly, and protected by secure access control mechanisms.
- 3. The Portal shall maintain a complete audit trail of all user activities, including submissions, approvals, and modifications.
- 4. The Portal shall be hosted on a Government of India empaneled cloud service provider in accordance with guidelines issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- 5. The Directorate General of Shipping shall conduct periodic security and performance audits of the Portal through authorized agencies.

23. Public Access and Transparency

- 1. The NDCS Portal shall display, for public access, data including:-
 - a. number of licences issued, active, or expired;
 - b. approved routes and service statistics; and
 - c. aggregate coastal traffic and trade volumes.

2. The Portal shall provide an online facility for applicants for licenses to be issued under this Act of their applications and print approved documents directly.

24. Oversight and Annual Review.

1. The Directorate General of Shipping shall be responsible for the operation, maintenance, and continuous improvement of the NDCS Portal.
2. The Director-General shall submit an annual report to the Central Government summarizing system performance, data quality, integration status, and recommendations for enhancement.
3. The Central Government may review and direct necessary modifications to ensure the Portal's effectiveness in meeting the objectives of section 9 of the Act.

[F. No. SY-19014/182/2025-MG]

RAJESH KUMAR SINHA, Special Secy.