

From: cochin <cochin@gac.com>

Sent: 06 October 2026 06:45

Subject: RE: Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Coastal Waters) Rules 2026

Thanks yours, please find attached notification issued by the Government of India, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways - notified as the **Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Coastal Waters) Rules, 2026**.

This Notification Supersedes the Earlier Notification “**Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Ports, Anchorages and Offshore Facilities) Rules, 2012**”

1. Applicability:

The rules, apply to –

All Indian Ships and Owners and Operators of foreign-flag vessels operating in or navigating through the coastal waters of India, whether or not such ships enter any Port, Anchorage, Offshore facility, or any other place within India.

These rules shall not apply to warships, naval auxiliary or other ships owned or operated by the Government of any foreign State and used for the time being only for non-commercial purposes.

2. Valid P&I Insurance Cover:

(A) The vessel shall maintain a valid Protection & Indemnity (P&I) Insurance Cover issued by:

A P&I Club which is a member of the International Group of P&I Clubs (IG Club) OR

Any other insurer/P&I provider recognised or authorised by the Government of India

(B) The P&I Certificate shall:

Be valid on the date of entry into Indian Coastal waters; and

Remain valid for a minimum period of **three (3) months from the date of entry**, or for the anticipated duration of the vessel's stay in Indian coastal waters, whichever is longer.

(C) Where the remaining validity of the P&I Certificate is less than three months due to the annual renewal cycle, the Owner/Operator may be required to provide a written undertaking confirming renewal prior to expiry and submit evidence of renewal to the Port Authority.

3. Class Certificate Requirement:

Every foreign-flag vessel meeting the age criteria specified below shall hold a valid Class Certificate issued by:

An IACS Member Classification Society; or A Recognised Organisation approved by the Government of India.

Applicable Age Criteria:

Oil Product Tankers, Chemical Tankers, General Cargo Vessels, Bulk Carriers, Offshore Support Vessels, Passenger Vessels, Other Cargo Ships and any other vessel types -
Over 10 years of age

LNG Carriers and LPG Carriers - **Over 15 years of age.**

The age of the vessel shall be calculated from the delivery date recorded in the Safety Construction Certificate.

4. Salvage Contract:

The vessel shall maintain a valid Salvage Contract with a salvor as required under applicable Indian maritime regulations. Evidence of such contract may be required by the Port Authority before permitting entry or granting clearance.

5. Marine Pollution Response Contract:

The vessel shall maintain a valid Marine Pollution Response Contract with an authorised marine pollution response provider, as required under applicable Indian regulations. Evidence of the contract may be required by the Port Authority before permitting entry or granting clearance.

6. Submission of Documents Prior to Arrival:

The Operator or Shipping Agent shall submit the required documents to the concerned Indian Port Authority at least **48 hours prior to the vessel entering port limits**.

Documents may include:

- Valid P&I Certificate
- Class Certificate
- Salvage Contract
- Marine Pollution Response Contract
- Declaration prescribed under the Rules
- Any additional documents required by the Port Authority.

7. Mandatory Declaration by Owner / Operator

A signed declaration shall be submitted through the Shipping Agent confirming:

- The Shipping Agent's appointment is valid for the entire duration of the vessel's stay in Indian coastal waters.
- The vessel maintains valid P&I Insurance.
- The vessel holds a valid Class Certificate.
- The vessel maintains valid Salvage and Marine Pollution Response Contracts.
- All documents and information submitted are true and correct.
- The signatory is duly authorised by the Owner or Operator.

8. Responsibilities of the Shipping Agent

- The Shipping Agent shall ensure compliance with all requirements under the Rules before seeking entry of the vessel into an Indian port.
- Submission of false, incorrect or misleading information may result in the Port Authority refusing to accept future declarations from the Shipping Agent until satisfactory corrective measures have been implemented.

9. Verification by Port Authorities

Prior to granting entry or port clearance, the Port Authority may verify:

- Validity of P&I Insurance.
- Validity of Class Certificate.
- Validity of Salvage Contract.
- Validity of Marine Pollution Response Contract.
- Verification may be carried out through:
 - Insurer's official website.
 - Written confirmation from the insurer or its correspondent.
 - Other verification methods prescribed by the Maritime Administration.

10. Penalties

- Any violation of the Rules may attract penalties under the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025.
- Where no specific penalty is prescribed, penalties may extend to: INR 50,000; and INR 5,000 per day for continuing Non-compliance



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