भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
समुद्रीय प्रशासन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF MARITIME ADMINISTRATION, MUMBAI

DGMA Circular No. 69 of 2026

File No.: 25-104/57/2025-NT-DGS (Comp. No.: 37653) **Dated: 14.10.2026**

Subject: Exemption from immediate compliance to requirements under the Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Coastal Waters) Rules, 2026, revised requirements for ships entering or operating in Indian coastal waters, reg.

The Government of India has notified the Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Coastal Waters) Rules, 2026 ("**the 2026 Rules**") vide G.S.R. 815(E) dated 16 September 2026, under the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 (24 of 2025) ("**the Act**"). The 2026 Rules supersede the Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Ports, Anchorages and Offshore Facilities) Rules, 2012 ("**the Port Entry Rules, 2012**"). A copy of the revised 2026 Rules is available on the DGMA website.

2. The 2026 Rules apply to all Indian ships and to every ship other than an Indian ship that operates in or navigates through Indian coastal waters, whether or not it enters an Indian port, anchorage or offshore facility.

3. A ship other than an Indian ship entering or operating in Indian coastal waters, whose age exceeds the threshold given under Rule 5 of the 2026 Rules, shall hold a valid certificate of class issued by a classification society which is a member of International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) or by a Recognised Organisation.

4. Further, as per Rule 6 of the 2026 Rules, every ship other than an Indian ship which enters, remains in or sails out of an Indian port, seeking port facilities, or transits or operates within Indian coastal waters shall be required to maintain **a valid Salvage Contract and Marine Pollution Response Contract with an entity approved under the Act**. This specific requirement given under Clause 6(1)(c) of the 2026 Rules is intended to ensure that salvage and pollution response support is available to a ship in the event of a casualty, pollution incident or other emergency.

5. The Administration has initiated the process of empanelment of salvors and marine pollution response operators in accordance with the checklists specified under the Merchant Shipping (Wreck and Salvage) Rules, 2026. The Merchant Shipping (Wreck and Salvage) Rules 2026 will be notified shortly. After notification of the said Rules, the procedure for finalisation of retention of salvors and marine pollution response operators in accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Wreck and Salvage) Rules, 2026 is expected to take some time. For the said reason, the requirement at Clause 6(1)(c) of the 2026 Rules cannot be complied with until the approved salvors and marine pollution response operators have been notified. Hence, there is a need to provide a sufficient window period to allow ship owners and operators to enter into the requisite contracts stated under the 2026 Rules.

14/10/26

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6. Therefore, to allow an orderly transition from the Port Entry Rules 2012, in exercise of the power conferred by Rule 11 of the 2026 Rules, ships already operating in, or otherwise permitted entry into Indian coastal waters are allowed a period of six months up to 01st April 2027, to comply with the additional requirements introduced by the 2026 Rules. By the end of this period, owners and operators shall ensure compliance with the revised classification requirements and to maintain Salvage and marine pollution response contracts.

7. All ship owners, managers, operators, shipping agents and Port Authorities are advised to review their existing arrangements and ensure full compliance with the 2026 Rules latest by 01st April 2027.

This issues with the approval of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.

14/01/26

Capt. Vikram Singh Manhas
Dy Nautical Advisor-cum-Senior DDG (T)

To,

1. All ship owners, ship managers and operators
2. All shipping agents
3. All Major Port Authorities and the Indian Ports Association
4. All State Maritime Boards and State Governments having non major ports
5. All classification societies which are members of IACS and Recognised Organisations
6. Indian Coast Guard
7. All Mercantile Marine Departments and District Offices
8. INSA, ICCSA, MASSA and the Shipping Agents' associations