



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

F. No.: 16/5/2026-SD-DGS

Dated: 09.03.2026

DGS Circular No. 14 of 2026

Sub.: Advisory to Shipping Lines/Carriers/Agents regarding transparency in transaction costs and avoidance of predatory, non-transparent and opportunistic pricing in EXIM trade.

1. The Merchant shipping Act 1958 aims to foster the development and ensure the efficient maintenance of an Indian mercantile marine in a manner best suited to serve the national interests.
2. The Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act, 1993 primarily deals with the registration of Multimodal Transport Operators (MTOs).
3. The Directorate General of Shipping ('DGS') has received representations from various stakeholders in the EXIM trade regarding the levy of multiple ancillary charges by shipping lines/carriers and their agents. These charges are perceived to be non-transparent and opportunistic in nature, resulting in an escalation of transaction costs in the logistics chain and appearing to take undue advantage of the prevailing geopolitical tensions and war-like situation.
4. Earlier, vide DGS Circular No. 1 of 2016 dated 07.09.2016 read with clarification dated 26.12.16, this Directorate issued similar advisory to representatives of shipping lines and other stakeholders of shipping industry, advising not to levy certain charges and to ensure greater transparency in the levying of charges connected with the transportation of EXIM cargo, as a good industry practice.
5. Under the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 ('the Act') assented to by the President of India, section 317 provides for an enabling provision to ensure transparency in charges levied by service providers or agents in respect of vessels operating in relation to import, export or domestic transportation of goods. The provision empowers the Central Government to direct service providers or agents to specify all the charges in the Bill of Lading or any other transport document all charges to be paid by exporters, importers, consignors or consignees in India, including both fixed and conditional charges.

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6. In view of the above and in the interest of promoting transparency, fairness and predictability in the EXIM logistics ecosystem, all Shipping Lines, Carriers and their Agents are hereby advised to:

(i) Refrain from predatory, non-transparent and opportunistic pricing practices, including levy of exorbitant charges thereby taking undue advantage of prevailing geo-political issue.

(ii) Adhere to fair trade practices and avoid the levy of charges that may give rise to disputes within the EXIM trade.

(iii) Ensure that all applicable charges are communicated clearly and upfront to exporters, importers and other stakeholders.

7. The Directorate expects that all stakeholders in the maritime logistics chain will cooperate in maintaining transparency and fairness in commercial practices, in the larger interest of facilitating trade, reducing logistics costs and improving ease of doing business in India.

8. This issues with the approval of the Director General of Shipping & Additional Secretary to the Government of India.



(Shri Nebu Oommen)
Dy. Director General of Shipping/SD

To;

All Associations (As per mailing list)

Copy to:

1. PS to Hon'ble Minister (PSW)
2. PS to Hon'ble Minister of State (PSW)
3. The Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Govt. of India, [kind attn.:
Shri Venkatesapathy S., Joint Secretary, Ports]
4. The Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India
5. DG, DGFT
6. Chairman, CBIC