

No. SW-15011/2/2016-MG(e-322614)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways  
(Marine Development Section)

Transport Bhawan, 1, Parliament Street  
New Delhi-110001

Dated 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2026

**General Order No. 1 of 2026**

**Subject: Revocation of General Orders No. 1 of 2018, 2 of 2018, and 3 of 2018**

WHEREAS General Orders No. 1 of 2018 dated 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018, No. 2 of 2018 dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018, and No. 3 of 2018 dated 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018 were issued under sub-section (1) of Section 407 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 to facilitate the coastal movement of EXIM transshipment containers, empty containers, agricultural and horticultural products, and fertilizers on foreign flag vessels;

2. AND WHEREAS these Orders were aimed at achieving objectives in the public and national interest, including reducing the transshipment of Indian EXIM cargo through foreign ports, lowering freight costs, increasing container availability, and creating a competitive ecosystem for Indian trade and logistics;

3. AND WHEREAS despite the intent of the said Orders, representations have been received from stakeholders highlighting that the objectives have not been achieved, with issues such as increased freight costs, shortage of containers, predatory practices by foreign carriers, and stagnation in the Indian-flagged container fleet persisting;

4. AND WHEREAS Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has conducted a detailed review of these Orders, including feedback obtained through public consultations, detailed report of DG Shipping and trade inputs, and has observed the following:

- i. Transshipment of Indian containerized cargo through foreign ports has not decreased, nor has the cost for Indian exporters and importers been significantly reduced.
- ii. The anticipated increase in feeder capacity and availability of empty containers has not materialized.
- iii. The Indian container fleet has stagnated, with little to no growth in tonnage or fleet size, discouraging investment in the sector.
- iv. Indian trade remains heavily reliant on foreign flag vessels, making the country's exports vulnerable to external market forces.

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*Signature* 21/01/2026

- v. The continued lack of a substantial Indian container fleet has hindered India's ability to reduce dependency on foreign carriers, impacting efforts to retain foreign exchange and promote domestic shipping.

5. AND WHEREAS the Ministry recognizes the need to promote Indian shipping tonnage and ensure seamless transport of cargo along the Indian coast and internationally to achieve India's \$1 trillion goods export target by 2030;

6. NOW, THEREFORE in the exercise of the powers conferred under sub-section (3) of Section 407 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, the Central Government hereby revokes the following General Orders:

- i. General Order No. 1 of 2018 dated 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018.
- ii. General Order No. 2 of 2018 dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018.
- iii. General Order No. 3 of 2018 dated 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018.

7. Continuation of Notifications:

The following Notifications issued by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (then Ministry of Shipping) shall remain in force, until further orders:

- i. MoS Notification dated 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018.
- ii. MoS Notification dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018.

8. Applicability of Section 406 and 407 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958:

The provisions of Sections 406 and 407 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, along with extant rules, regulations, and guidelines, shall continue to apply to vessels engaged in the transportation of containerized cargo, subject to the relaxations provided under the notifications mentioned in para 7 above.

9. Monitoring and Compliance:

All Indian law enforcement agencies, inter alia, Port Authorities and Indian Customs, are authorized to board and inspect vessels to ensure compliance with this Order and all other directives issued by the Central Government.

10. Online Portal for issuance of license

The chartering permission and issuance of license for foreign vessels are provided through end-to-end digital platform "<https://esamudra.dgshipping.gov.in>".

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*Issued by 21/01/2026*

11. Effective Date:

This revocation shall take effect from 3 months from the issuance of this order, allowing stakeholders to transition and adapt to the revised regulatory framework.

12. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

*Sanjay Kumar*  
21/01/2026  
(Sanjay Kumar)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

Email id. ussm1-psw@gov.in

Tel No. 011-23714715

To:

Director General of Shipping  
Directorate General of Shipping, Beta Building,  
9th Floor I-Think Techno Campus  
Kanjur Marg, Mumbai 400042

Copy to:

1. MD, Indian Port Association
2. Chairperson, All Major Ports
3. CEOs, State Maritime Boards
4. Captain of Ports, Goa