

MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
New Delhi, the 12th December, 2025

G.S.R. XX — In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (3) and (4) of section 13, sub-section (1) and clause (c) and (d) of sub-section (2) of section 319 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 (24 of 2025), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules, namely:

CHAPTER I
PRELIMINARY

1. Short Title, Commencement, and Application

- (1) **Short Title.** - These Rules may be called the Bureau of Port Security Rules, 2026.
- (2) **Commencement.** - They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.
- (3) **Application.** - These Rules shall apply to the functioning and operations of the Bureau of Port Security in relation to the security of the following —
 - (a) Indian vessels and other vessels registered in India under the Act, being ships within the meaning of clause (59) of section 3 of the Act, which are engaged on international voyages, and shall include—
 - (i) passenger ships, including high-speed passenger craft;
 - (ii) cargo ships, including high-speed craft, of five hundred gross tonnage and upwards; and
 - (iii) mobile offshore drilling units, but shall not include sailing vessels, fishing vessels, or vessels of less than fifteen tonnage engaged solely in the coasting trade of India, subject to the proviso to section 261 of the Act;
 - (b) vessels other than Indian vessels, being ships as referred to in clause (a), when such vessels are engaged on international voyages and are within India, including its coastal waters;
 - (c) Port facilities; and
 - (d) Company.

2. Definitions

- (1) In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires—
- (a) “Act” means the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 (24 of 2025);
 - (b) “Bureau” means the Bureau of Port Security constituted under sub-section (1) of section 13 of the Act;
 - (c) “ISPS Code” means the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code adopted by the International Maritime Organization under the Safety Convention, as amended from time to time;
 - (d) “Port Facility” means a port facility as defined in sub-section (39) of section 3 of the Act;
 - (e) “Vessel” means a ship, boat or other crafts, as defined in sub-section (70) of section 3 of the Act;
 - (i) “Security Plan” means a Port Facility Security Plan (PFSP) or a Ship Security Plan (SSP), consistent with the ISPS Code and the Merchant Shipping (Ships and Port Facility Security) Rules, 2026;
 - (j) “Security Incident” means any act, omission or circumstance that threatens, or is likely to threaten, the security of a vessel, port facility or offshore installation;
 - (k) “Training Facility” means any institution approved by the Bureau for imparting port security training under these rules; and
 - (l) “Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies (MLEAs)” means the Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy, Customs, Coastal Police or any other agency as may be notified by the Central Government;
- (2) Words and expressions used but not defined herein shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act, the ISPS Code or the Safety Convention.

CHAPTER II

FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE BUREAU

3. Functions of the Bureau

- (1) The Bureau shall perform regulatory and oversight functions relating to security of vessels and port-facilities, in accordance with section 13 of the Act.
- (2) Subject to regulatory and oversight functions of the Bureau under sub-rule (1), the ship-specific responsibilities under the ISPS Code, and certification

and audit of vessels and compliance functions relating to vessel security shall be exercised in accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Ships and Port Facility Security) Rules, 2026.

- (3) Without prejudice to sub-rules (1) and (2), the Bureau shall—
- (a) formulate, implement and administer a regulatory framework security of vessels and port-facilities, including coordination on matters at the vessel–port interface.
 - (b) collect, analyse and disseminate security-related information, alerts and risk assessments to relevant authorities and agencies;
 - (c) coordinate with the Central Government, State Governments, Port Authorities, Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies (MLEAs) and other stakeholders for implementation of security measures as provided under the ISPS Code read with the Merchant Shipping (Ships and Port Facility Security) Rules, 2026;
 - (d) monitor, supervise and review the implementation of security measures provided under the Merchant Shipping (Ships and Port Facility Security) Rules, 2026 and these rules by Ship Security Officers, Port Facility Security Officers, Company Security Officers or other authorised personnel of the port facility;
 - (e) regulate the deployment of armed security guards on board vessels, based on specific security threats or upon a request made by the company;
 - (f) regulate the private security agencies engaged by the port facilities for security services;
 - (g) constitute committees or sub-committees to advise or assist the Bureau in the discharge of its functions under Section 13 of the Act.

4. Regulatory Framework for security of vessels and port facilities

The Bureau shall establish and maintain a regulatory framework for the security of vessels and port facilities, including but not limited to;

- (1) standards, guidelines and procedures for port-facility security;
- (2) mechanisms for risk-based categorisation of port facilities considering threat environment, operational characteristics and vessel-movement patterns relevant to port-facility security;

- (3) procedures for the review and monitoring of Security Plans, and coordination with the authority authorised under section 129 of the Act on matters affecting port-side aspects of the vessel–port interface;
- (4) minimum requirements relating to security equipment, personnel and infrastructure necessary for the effective implementation of port-facility security measures; and
- (5) protocols for inspections, audits and operational monitoring for verifying compliance with the regulatory framework established under these rules.

5. Timely Collection and Exchange of Security-Related Information

- (1) The Bureau shall ensure the timely collection, collation and exchange of security-related information with regard to port facilities and vessels.
- (2) For the purposes of information collection and exchange, the Bureau shall -
 - (a) establish communication mechanisms with Central and State Governments, Port Authorities, and Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies;
 - (b) maintain records, reports and assessments relating to threats, incidents and vulnerabilities affecting port-facility security operations;
 - (c) disseminate relevant security information to the concerned authorities in a timely manner to facilitate prevention, mitigation or response to security threats;
 - (d) ensure that all information handling, storage and dissemination are in accordance with applicable laws relating to confidentiality, data protection and operational security; and
 - (e) coordinate with authorised intelligence and maritime security agencies for obtaining and providing updates on relevant threats or vulnerabilities.

6. Coordination with Central, State, and Port Authorities

- (1) The Bureau shall coordinate and maintain liaison with Central and State Governments, Port Authorities, Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies, Port Facility Security Officers, companies, and other stakeholders for the effective implementation of security measures relating to vessels and port facilities.
- (2) For the purposes of coordination, the Bureau shall—
 - (a) coordinate with Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies, including the Director-General, and such other agencies notified by the Central Government;

- (b) engage with State Maritime Boards, Port Authorities and other committees for Port Facility Security to promote uniform application of prescribed security standards and procedures;
- (c) collaborate with Port Facility Security Officers and Ship Security Officers for review and monitoring of Security Plans and, where necessary, coordinate with Company Security Officers in relation to security measures provided under the Merchant Shipping (Ships and Port Facility Security) Rules, 2026;
- (d) act as a point of contact for inter-agency security coordination, including the exchange of information and threat-related reports;
- (e) facilitate joint inspections, assessments and reviews relating to the security of vessels and port facilities in coordination with the relevant authorities; and
- (f) provide technical and advisory support to authorities and stakeholders for strengthening security preparedness and compliance.

7. Formulation of Security Standards and Guidelines

- (1) The Bureau shall formulate, issue and periodically update security standards, guidelines and procedures relating to security of vessels and port facilities, consistent with the regulatory framework established under these rules and the provisions of the Act.
- (2) The standards and guidelines issued by the Bureau for security of vessels and port facilities may include—
 - (a) specifications for access control, surveillance, monitoring, screening, patrolling, and other applicable security measures;
 - (b) guidance on technology, cybersecurity measures and emergency-response arrangements;
 - (c) methodologies for security risk assessment, drills and exercises, and audit and review procedures; and
 - (d) any additional measures required for securing vessels and port facilities, consistent with national security requirements and directives issued by the Central Government.
- (3) Security standards and guidelines issued by the Bureau shall be notified or communicated to relevant authorities and stakeholders, as may be appropriate.

8. Security Training and Capacity Building

- (1) The Bureau shall design, implement, and oversee training programmes to enhance the skills and awareness of personnel engaged in security of vessels and port facility, within the scope of its mandate under the Act.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Bureau shall perform the following functions with respect to security of vessels and port facilities—
 - (a) establish or approve training facilities for imparting training;
 - (b) conduct capacity-building programmes, workshops, and exercises for port authorities, Port Facility Security Officers, Company Security Officers and Ship Security Officers;
 - (c) develop training curricula, modules, and materials reflecting national security requirements, emerging threats, and best practices;
 - (d) maintain records of training, certifications, and evaluations of personnel for ensuring continuous improvement; and
 - (e) provide technical guidance and advisory support to port authorities and Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies (MLEAs) for improving operational preparedness.
- (3) The Bureau may collaborate with national and international agencies, educational institutions, and professional organisations to ensure that training standards remain current, effective, and aligned with evolving port-security challenges.

CHAPTER III **OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK**

9. Preparation of Security Manuals, SOPs and Protocols

- (1) The Bureau shall, within its regulatory and oversight mandate, prepare, maintain, and update security manuals, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and operational protocols for vessels and port facilities.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Bureau shall—
 - (a) develop security manuals and SOPs covering access control, surveillance, screening, patrolling, and emergency response within port facilities;
 - (b) issue protocols for coordination, reporting, and communication among port authorities, Port Facility Security Officers (PFSOs), Company Security Officers (CSOs), Ship Security Officers (SSOs), Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies (MLEAs), and other relevant stakeholders;

- (c) establish procedures for vessels & port-facility audits, drills, exercises, and incident-reporting to ensure operational readiness of port-facility security systems;
 - (d) maintain records of all manuals, SOPs, and protocols for periodic review and updating.
- (3) All manuals, SOPs, and protocols prepared by the Bureau shall—
- (a) be consistent with the Act, maritime conventions and aligned with national maritime-security objectives;
 - (b) be disseminated to concerned authorities and stakeholders for implementation;
 - (c) serve as guidance for risk mitigation, incident management, and operational security.
- (4) The Bureau may review and revise manuals, SOPs, and protocols periodically, or in response to emerging threats, technological developments, or lessons learned from audits and exercises.

10. Audit, Review and Reporting Procedures

- (1) The Bureau shall establish and maintain audit and review mechanisms to monitor the implementation of vessels and port-facility security measures within its mandate under the Act.
- (2) Without prejudice to the foregoing, the Bureau shall—
 - (a) conduct periodic audits and inspections to verify compliance with security standards, SOPs, and directives issued by the Bureau;
Explanation.— For the purposes of this sub-rule, “periodic audits” means audits conducted at intervals specified by the Bureau through orders or standard operating procedures approved by the Central Government.
 - (b) review security plans, operational procedures, and incident reports including security plans submitted by Port Authorities and Port Facility Security Officers;
 - (c) assess the effectiveness of implemented security measures and identify necessary corrective actions; and
 - (d) maintain records of all audits, reviews, findings, and recommendations for official reporting and follow-up.
- (3) The Bureau shall establish reporting procedures to ensure timely submission of audit findings, assessments, and recommendations to—

- (a) the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways;
 - (b) the Director General of Maritime Administration; and
 - (c) Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies (MLEAs), where necessary for port-facility security coordination.
- (4) The Bureau shall coordinate with Port Authorities, Port Facility Security Officers, Director General of Maritime Administration and Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies during audits and reviews.
- (5) Audit findings, reviews, and recommendations shall be used to—
- (a) inform updates to risk assessments and operational improvements;
 - (b) guide training, capacity-building, and preparedness initiatives; and
 - (c) support issuance of directions under Rule 13 to address identified security gaps.

11. Security Levels and Response Mechanisms

- (1) The Bureau shall establish and maintain response mechanisms corresponding to security levels declared by the Central Government or the person authorised under Section 129 of the Act, in respect of vessel and port facilities. For this purpose, the Bureau shall—
- (a) specify vessel and port-facility response measures appropriate to each declared security level, based on threat assessments and operational requirements;
 - (b) prescribe procedures for escalating or de-escalating port-side security responses upon receipt of intelligence inputs, directives, or incident reports;
 - (c) coordinate with Port Authorities, Port Facility Security Officers (PFSOs), Director General of Maritime Administration and Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies (MLEAs) for the implementation of response measures; and
 - (d) monitor the effectiveness of the response measures and provide guidance for required improvements.
- (2) The Bureau may conduct exercises, drills, and simulations to assess preparedness and response capabilities of port facilities,
- (3) The Bureau shall maintain records of declared security levels (as notified under Section 129), corresponding response actions taken at port facilities, and lessons learned, which shall inform future audits, risk assessments, and operational directives.

12. Delineation of Jurisdiction

- (1) The Bureau shall function under the administrative control of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and shall follow the directions given by the Ministry from time to time.
- (2) The Bureau shall function in alignment with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, all other maritime conventions and the ISPS Code, as implemented through the rules made under Section 130 of the Act.

13. Savings and Transitional Provision

Any plans, procedures or measures, relating to the security of vessels and port facilities, in force immediately before the commencement of these rules shall continue to operate until modified or superseded in accordance with these rules.
