

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways



Parliament Passes Two Landmark Maritime Bills in Single Day, a First for Shipping Ministry

“Modi Govt’s Push for India’s Modern Shipping Gets Double Endorsement from Parliament:” Shri Sarbananda Sonowal

India Updates Maritime Framework as Lok Sabha passed the ‘Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025’ for a modern & internationally aligned policy

Rajya Sabha Passes ‘Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025’ to help Ease of Doing Business and Future-Proof India's Shipping Sector

Posted On: 06 AUG 2025 6:16PM by PIB Delhi

In a historic development, Parliament on Wednesday passed two landmark maritime bills — a first for the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) — paving the way for a modern, efficient and globally aligned maritime policy framework in India. The Lok Sabha cleared the ‘Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025’, aimed at streamlining maritime governance with a modern and internationally compliant approach. Meanwhile, the Rajya Sabha passed the ‘Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025’, replacing a century-old colonial-era law with updated legislation designed to promote ease of doing business and make India’s shipping sector future-ready.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said, *“Today is a historic day for all of us at the Ministry. The parliament passed two important legislations — the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 and the Carriage of Goods Sea Bill, 2025 — effectively endorsing PM Shri Narendra Modi ji’s vision to modernise India’s maritime sector, both policy wise and action wise. Today, with the passage of the bills, the Modi government’s push for India’s modern shipping gets double endorsement from the Parliament.”*

The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 — a progressive, future-ready legislation that replaces the outdated Merchant Shipping Act of 1958. The Bill marks a significant step towards aligning India’s maritime legal framework with global standards and strengthening the country’s position as a trusted maritime trade

hub.

Introducing the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 in the Lok Sabha, the Union Minister, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said, *“This Bill represents a decisive step towards positioning India as a global leader in maritime trade and governance. It is a progressive and advanced legislation, up to date with international maritime conventions and informed by the best practices of leading maritime nations.”*

The Bill is part of a series of major legal reforms undertaken over the past 11 years under the leadership of PM Shri Narendra Modi, aimed at enabling robust growth in the shipping and maritime sectors. These reforms have significantly enhanced efficiency, transparency, and global competitiveness. Highlighting the need for an updated framework, the Minister noted that the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 had become bulky, fragmented, and outdated with 561 sections, failing to address contemporary maritime challenges or fully implement India’s obligations under several key International Maritime Organization (IMO) conventions.

“The Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025, with 16 Parts and 325 clauses, modernises India’s maritime legal framework by aligning with international conventions, enhancing safety at sea, improving emergency response, and ensuring environmental protection. It reduces compliance burdens, promotes Indian tonnage, and prioritises seafarer welfare and ship safety. The Bill aims to make India a globally respected maritime jurisdiction and unlock sustainable growth, investment, and innovation in the sector,” Shri Sarbananda Sonowal further said.

On the other hand, in Rajya Sabha, the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025, was passed that repealed a century-old Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925. The new legislation is part of the government’s broader effort to modernise India’s legal framework by eliminating outdated colonial-era laws and aligning with global best practices to improve ease of doing business.

The bill adopts the Hague-Visby Rules, a globally accepted maritime standard also followed by countries like the United Kingdom. By replacing complexity with clarity, the legislation is expected to simplify maritime trade laws, reduce litigation risks, and enhance transparency and commercial efficiency in cargo movement by sea. The bill was introduced by Shri Shantanu Thakur, the Union Minister of State for Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) in the Rajya Sabha.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister of State, Shri Shantanu Thakur said, *“The repeal of this pre-Constitution era legislation and its replacement with a new legislation is a part of the greater initiative of this Government to rid ourselves of all vestiges of colonial mindset and to ensure ease of understanding and ease of doing business through simple and rationalised laws. This Bill is not merely a statutory reform—it reflects a broader philosophy of governance led by our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji: to replace complexity with clarity, outdated norms with modern standards, and colonial remnants with forward-looking laws that serve the interests of a resurgent India.”*

The bill is a key step in making India’s maritime trade laws future-ready and compatible with international trade agreements, including the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the U.K. The legislation was passed by the Lok Sabha on March 28 this year. During the Rajya Sabha discussion, members raised issues including maritime security and smuggling risks, which the

government assured were being addressed through statutory and operational safeguards. The bill received broad bipartisan support in both Houses of Parliament.

SR/GDH/HK

(Release ID: 2153211)

Read this release in: Bengali-TR , Urdu , Hindi , Marathi , Assamese , Odia , Telugu