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India bans ships from ports if non authentic-valid P&I insurance cover

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- by Shipping Telegraph

India has tightened up its checks on shipping insurance making it mandatory to vessels entering and/or transiting Indian waters to hold a valid Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Insurance Certificate.

Specifically, any merchant vessel calling at an Indian port is required to maintain and furnish a valid P&I insurance certificate in accordance with the applicable national and international regulations.

The Directorate General of Shipping said there have been incidents where P&I insurers declined to compensate pollution claims due to vessels possessing invalid P&I Insurance Certificates, which have been declared invalid for reasons such as non-payment of premiums.

“This measure is in alignment to encompass liabilities and compensations arising out of international conventions and applies to all vessels that are subject to such conventions and call at Indian ports and/or transiting in Indian waters,” the Directorate General of Shipping noted in its merchant shipping notice No. 05 of 2025 dated May 7.

Shipowners and operators are strongly advised to meticulously review their P&I coverage to ensure it adequately meets their specific operational needs and complies with all relevant domestic and international regulations.

Vessel owners, operators, masters, or their authorised representatives shall ensure the validity of the P&I Insurance Certificates, including Blue Card and Certificate of Insurance or Other Financial Security (CiOFS), in original, certified, or electronic form, in accordance with the statutory requirements, which shall be verifiable online.

As it is reported, these documents shall be submitted to the respective port authorities directly or using the Maritime Single Window (MSW) Portal, prior to the vessel's expected arrival.

Any irregularities or suspicions concerning the authenticity or validity of the P&I Insurance Certificate, Blue Card, or CIOFS shall be reported to the Directorate General of Shipping without delay, and the concerned vessel shall not be permitted entry into Indian ports until such issue is resolved, the notice stated.

In the event that the vessel is already within Indian waters, it shall be directed to depart from the Indian waters without delay.

Under the Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Ports, Anchorages and Offshore facilities) rules, 2012, and MSN 02 of 2015 dated 04.03.2015, merchant vessels of 300 gross tons or more, intending to call at Indian ports, are required to comply and furnish a valid Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Insurance Certificates, as an evidence of insurance.

The Indian port authorities of all major / non-major ports and maritime boards are required to enforce specific measures, as defined in the merchant notice, for foreign-flagged vessels calling at its ports.

This measure shall come into force with immediate effect, in accordance with the Merchant Shipping notice titled "Mandatory Verification of Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Certificate by Indian Port Authorities."