

Govt issues draft 'Coastal Shipping Bill, 2020' for public consultation

By TIOL News Service

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THE Ministry of Shipping has issued the draft of Coastal Shipping Bill, 2020 for suggestions from the stakeholders and general public.

As the shipping sector grows and evolves in the country, a need was felt to have a separate legislation on coastal shipping, which considers it an integral part of the transport chain and recognizes the policy priorities of the sector to meet the demands of the Indian shipping industry. While drafting this Bill, the global best practices have also been considered.

The Ministry of Shipping has drafted a Coastal Shipping Bill, 2020 in lieu of part XIV of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958. Some of the highlights of the Bill are as under:

- The definition of coastal shipping and coastal waters has been expanded.
- It is proposed to do away with the requirement of trading licence for Indian flag vessels for coastal trade.
- The Bill seeks to create a competitive environment and reduce transportation costs, while encouraging Indian vessels to increase their share in coastal shipping.
- The Bill also proposes integration of coastal maritime transport with inland waterways.
- There is a provision for a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan.

The draft bill is uploaded on the Ministry of Shipping's website. Citizens can submit their suggestions and opinions regarding the draft bill to coastalshipping2020@gmail.com latest by 06.11.2020.