

# भारतीय ट्रेड यूनियन केन्द्र

## CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

K. HEMALATA  
President

TAPAN SEN, Ex-M.P.  
General Secretary

14<sup>th</sup> October 2025

To  
The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India,  
South Block, New Delhi – 110011.

**Subject: Request for Intervention Regarding DGS Order No. 06 of 2023 and its Adverse Impact on Seafarers and trade of India.**

Dear Sir,

I would like to bring to your kind attention the direly adverse implication of the Director General of Shipping (DGS) Order no 6 of 2023 regarding scrapping of Indian Vessels after usage for 15 years to 20 years, on the Indian Foreign Trade and also employment of seafarers with an ardent request for expeditious corrective review. As such this order of DGS is discriminatory against the Indian Vessels also in view of the fact that foreign vessels including those in western countries are allowed much longer operational period. The Forward Seamen's Union of India (FSUI), an affiliate of Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), Water Transport Workers Federation of India (WTWFI), and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), representing a large section of Indian seafarers and port workers, has already drawn the attention of the Hon'ble Minister of Shipping in the matter demanding a change on such scrapping provision of Indian Vessels vide their letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

The concerned DGS Order no 6 of 2023 was not pressed upon by the concerned authority in the ministry during 2023-24 owing to strong opposition not only by the Unions but also by almost all stakeholders. But after the meeting of all stakeholders convened by Directorate General of Shipping on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025, wherein implementation of the 2023 Order no 6 has been pressed upon with immediate effect by the DGS, the Seafarers' Union felt the urgency of seeking your kind corrective intervention in the matter of the DGS Order no 6 of 2023.

In the said meeting of Stakeholders called by DGS on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025, following issues were raised by the Forward Seamen's Union of India (FSUI), strongly demanding the withdrawal of the said order of scrapping Indian Vessels after operation of 15 to 20 years, despite running in good-health:

1. **On DGS Order No. 06 of 2023 and IMO Compliance:** We sought clarification on the strategic rationale and long-term implications on economic, environmental, and operational of implementing vessel age norms and qualitative parameters under this order. Specifically, we requested the DGS to clarify whether the order addressed any identified gaps in India's compliance with IMO conventions such as SOLAS, MARPOL, or STCW because at the same time, we wish to highlight a serious concern regarding discriminatory treatment in ship age and scrapping norms vis-à-vis the foreign vessels. While countries such as Greece and other major foreign-flag states operate vessels for much longer service periods, often well beyond their respective age limits which is much higher than the DGS-stipulation in India, the premature scrapping of Indian-flagged ships under this order will not only erode domestic fleet capacity but also place Indian operators and seafarers at an unjust disadvantage in the global maritime sector. There appears to be no rationale why Indian-flag vessels should face such self-imposed disadvantage international fleets continue to function efficiently and safely for much longer extended durations under proper maintenance regimes.

B.T. Ranadive Bhawan, 13-A, Rouse Avenue, New Delhi-110 002

Tel# +91 11 2322 1288 / 2322 1306 Fax# +91 11 2322 1284

Website : [www.citucentre.org](http://www.citucentre.org) E-mail : [citubtr@gmail.com](mailto:citubtr@gmail.com)





# भारतीय ट्रेड यूनियन केन्द्र CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

K. HEMALATA  
President

TAPAN SEN, Ex-M.P.  
General Secretary

2. **On Seafarer Job Impacts:** As representatives of seafarers' welfare and rights, we urged the Directorate to furnish an estimate of the number of Indian seafarers likely to face job loss or career disruption due to the vessel retirement provisions under this order. Further, we sought information on any mitigation or retraining programs being planned to support affected personnel and dependent communities. Additionally, it is critical to recognize that a reduction in the number of operational Indian ships will inevitably lead to a reduction in trade volumes, directly affecting India's coastal and EXIM trade. This decline would not only impact seafarers' employment but also weaken national trade competitiveness and maritime self-reliance. Such a contraction in Indian shipping activity will, in fact, prove advantageous for rival and foreign shipping companies, who will gain larger share of trade that should rightfully belong to the Indian merchant fleet. Hence, it becomes imperative that Indian seafarers are provided with employment opportunities in a job-perspective and sustainable manner, ensuring their continued participation in the nation's maritime growth.

During the stakeholders' meeting, the DGS office stated that this order followed consultations with industry participants and agencies. This position was also reiterated by the Hon'ble Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways in response to Question No. 3179 dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023. However, it may be noted that almost all the stakeholders and agencies, opposed the order except two private shipping companies,

This raises a critical question: If due process and consensus-building were claimed, why do the majority of stakeholders continue to express strong reservations against the particular DGS Order?

We therefore urge the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India to kindly review the matter with the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and the Directorate General of Shipping, to ensure that national employment interests and seafarer's welfare are not compromised under the pretext of so called self-imposed discriminatory reform.

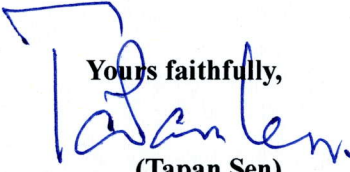
CITU stands committed to dialogue and constructive engagement. However, we wish to reiterate that the risk of large-scale unemployment, together with negative impact in Indian Foreign trade arising from this order demands, immediate policy review and corrective intervention.

We are enclosing herewith a copy of the letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025 addressed to The Directorate General of Shipping, by the Forward Seamen's Union of India (FSUI) for your reference and consideration.

We urge upon you to please appreciate the gravity of the issue and expeditiously intervene to get the DGS Order no 6 of 2023 withdrawn in the interest of fairness and propriety.

With regards,

Encl: As Above

Yours faithfully,  
  
(Tapan Sen)  
General Secretary

B.T. Ranadive Bhawan, 13-A, Rouse Avenue, New Delhi-110 002

Tel# +91 11 2322 1288 / 2322 1306 Fax# +91 11 2322 1284

Website : [www.citucentre.org](http://www.citucentre.org) E-mail : [citubtr@gmail.com](mailto:citubtr@gmail.com)