India’s New Maritime Bills

Mains: GS II – *Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation*

Why in News?

Recently, the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2025 and the Carriage of Goods Sea Bill, 2025 were passed by the parliament to modernise India’s shipping laws.

What is the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2024?

- **Need** – The, Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 had become bulky, fragmented, and outdated.
  - With its 561 Sections it failed to address contemporary maritime challenges.
  - It fell short to fully implement India’s obligations under several key International Maritime Organization (IMO) conventions.
- **Structure of the new bill** – 16 Parts and 325 clauses
- India’s maritime legal framework by aligning with international conventions
- **Features** – The Bill aims to make India a globally respected maritime jurisdiction and unlock sustainable growth, investment, and innovation in the sector by
  - Enhancing safety at sea
  - Improving emergency response
  - Ensuring environmental protection
  - Reducing compliance burdens
  - Promotes Indian tonnage
  - Prioritises seafarer welfare
  - Increasing ship safety.

What is The Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2025?

- **Repealed** – The Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act, 1925.
- **Significant principle** – The Hague-Visby Rules

The Hague-Visby Rules *is a globally accepted maritime standard also followed by countries like the United Kingdom.*

- **Features** – The legislation is expected to
  - Simplify maritime trade
  - Reduce litigation risks

- Enhance transparency
- Improve commercial efficiency in cargo movement by sea.

What are the significances of the two bills?

- **International compatibility** – The bills was made to be Well-suited with international trade agreements like *the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the U.K.*
- **Promoting ease of doing business** – It promotes ease of doing business in the maritime sector by *removing the hardships in litigations and compliances.*
- **Supports maritime security** – It provisions India's maritime security architecture through better legal and regulatory frameworks.
- **Encourages green initiatives** – It Creates opportunities for green maritime initiatives and sustainable coastal development.
- **Generates employment** – It increases the employment opportunity especially *in coastal regions*.
- **Enhances capability –** It boost India's capability to compete with global maritime powers such as Singapore, China, and the UAE.

What lies ahead?

- This Bill represents a decisive step that could position *India as a global leader in maritime trade and governance.*
- It is a progressive and advanced legislation, that *could align with international maritime conventions* and informed by the best practices of leading maritime nations.

Reference

The Hindu| New Maritime Bill of India

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering