



भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
वित्त मंत्रालय MINISTRY OF FINANCE
राजस्व विभाग DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
केन्द्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर एवं सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड
CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES AND CUSTOMS
सीमा शुल्क (निवारक) आयुक्तका कार्यालय
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS (PREVENTIVE)
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फ़ाइल क्रमांक/ File No.: GEN/TECH/csdn/36/2023

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PUBLIC NOTICE NO.04/2026
सार्वजनिक सूचना संख्या 04/2026

विषय/Subject: Commencement of Gateway EXIM operations and mandatory compliance with SCMTR, 2018 at Vizhinjam International Seaport, Thiruvananthapuram– regarding.

1. Preamble & Statutory Framework

Attention of all importers, exporters, Customs Brokers, terminal operators, Shipping lines/Agents (authorized sea carriers/agents), logistics providers, and trade stakeholders is invited to the following statutory notifications already in force under the Customs Act, 1962:

- CBIC Notification No. 42/2024-Customs (NT) dated 12.06.2024 notifying Vizhinjam International Seaport as a Customs port under Section 7(1)(a) of the Customs Act 1962 for unloading of imported goods and loading of export goods or any class of such goods.
- Notification Nos. 02/2024–CCP Cochin dated 28.12.2024, 02/2025–CCP Cochin dated 23.07.2025, and 03/2025–CCP Cochin dated 27.11.2025 issued by the Commissioner of Customs (Preventive), Kochi approving the proper place for the loading and unloading of cargo, and specifying the limits of the Customs area under Section 8(a) and Section 8(b) of the Customs Act, 1962.
- Notification No.05/2025–CCP Cochin dated 29.08.2025, issued by the Commissioner of Customs (Preventive), Kochi appointing M/s Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited (AVPPL) as the Custodian under Section 45 of the Customs Act, 1962.

While Vizhinjam International Seaport, Thiruvananthapuram has hitherto functioned exclusively as an International Transshipment Hub under Section 54, Export-Import (EXIM) cargo operations shall commence with effect from **18.08.2026**.

The Customs regulation of EXIM cargo will be carried out with the assistance and seamless coordination of various Participating Government Agencies (PGAs) and facilitating agencies, including Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited (VISL), M/s AVPPL, Mercantile Marine Department (MMD), Port Health Organization (PHO), Bureau of Immigration (BoI), Coastal Police, Authorized Banks, and Port Security Agencies.

2. Operational Restrictions: Mandatory DPD & DPE only

As there is currently no Container Freight Station (CFS) attached or designated for this port, EXIM cargo handling shall be strictly regulated under the following conditions:

a) Imports (DPD only):

- Import operations are restricted strictly to Full Container Load (FCL) containers eligible for Direct Port Delivery (DPD).
- Containers must be evacuated from the port terminal directly to the importer's premises within 48 hours of landing.
- Prohibition: No Less-than-Container Load (LCL) cargo, loose cargo, or containers requiring de-stuffing/CFS examination will be allowed landing at this port until a designated CFS is made operational.

b) Exports (DPE only):

- Export operations are restricted strictly to Direct Port Entry (DPE) of factory-stuffed, self-sealed, or Customs-sealed FCL containers.
- Prohibition: Cargo requiring loose-stuffed examination or carting inside the port yard is strictly prohibited.

3. Permissibility of road transshipment

In addition to direct DPD/DPE container movement, transshipment of containerized cargo via road (Sea-to-Road and Road-to-Sea) between Vizhinjam International Seaport and other notified customs stations, including Inland Container Depots (ICDs), Container Freight Stations (CFSs) as and when operational, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) or Land Customs Stations (LCSs) shall also commence under Section 54 of the Customs Act, 1962.

All such inter-modal overland movements must be executed strictly by registered Authorized Transshippers / Authorized Carriers (ATP/ANC) in full compliance with Regulation 7, 8, and 9 of the SCMTR, 2018. Authorized carriers shall file the prescribed electronic Transshipment Manifest (Form-VIII/VIIIA) via ICEGATE prior to dispatch, execute the requisite Transshipment Bond, and fit all transshipment container trucks with mandatory high-security tamper-proof seals for verification at the destination port or inland location. SDM/SAM is to be filed at the gateway port.

4. Mandatory compliance with SCMTR, 2018

All operations at the port shall fully adhere to the Sea Cargo Manifest and Transshipment Regulations (SCMTR), 2018. All stakeholders must interact with Customs electronically via ICEGATE using SCMTR message formats:

1. **Entity Registration:** All Shipping Lines (Authorized Sea Carriers - ASC), Steamer Agents (Authorized Sea Agents - ASA), Transshippers (ATP), and Terminal Operators (TO) must possess valid SCMTR registration on ICEGATE linked to Location Code **INTRV1**.
2. **IGM/Sea Arrival Manifest (SAM):**

- The ASC/ASA shall submit the IGM/SAM electronically within the statutory window under Section 30 of the Customs Act, 1962 and Regulation 4 of SCMTR, 2018.
 - The SAM must generate valid Primary Cargo Identification Numbers (PCIN) and Master Cargo Identification Numbers (MCIN) prior to vessel arrival.
3. **EGM/Sea Departure Manifest (SDM):** The ASC/ASA shall electronically submit the EGM/SDM under Section 41 of the Customs Act, 1962 and Regulation 5 of SCMTR, 2018, prior to vessel departure, incorporating all LEO-granted Shipping Bills.

5. Regulatory Overview and Enforcement

1. All persons, vessels, conveyances, containers, equipment, and goods entering or operating within the designated Customs area are subject to the absolute control of Customs officers under the Customs Act, 1962, and are liable to physical checks and search at any time.
2. Customs will maintain strict surveillance over the movement of persons, cargo, and conveyances from an anti-smuggling perspective. All vehicles, equipment, and utility vans moving in and out of terminal gates shall be subject to security and Customs checks.
3. Whenever an export/import container is selected for detailed scanning/inspection/examination, clearance will be subject to completion of all formalities under Customs laws and procedures.
4. In accordance with Regulation 6 (1) (d) and 6 (1) (e) of Handling of Cargo in Customs Areas Regulations, 2009, the custodian (M/s AVPPL) must maintain distinct physical yards and system tags for unloading, loading, examination and storage of transshipment cargo and EXIM cargo.
5. It is the responsibility of the custodian (M/s AVPPL) to ensure that no container leaves the port boundary under the DPD mechanism without verifying that a valid, legitimate Customs Out of Charge (OOC) has been processed and logged in the system.
6. Transshipment operations will continue as per the current practice, and in accordance with SCMTR, 2018.

6. Helpdesk & Trade Facilitation

Any difficulties faced in the implementation of this Public Notice may be brought to the notice of the Additional/Joint Commissioner of Customs, (Preventive), Thiruvananthapuram.

For assistance, clarification, and information, stakeholders may reach out to the Help Desk at the Turant Suvidha Kendra (TSK) at Vizhinjam Port or visit the official departmental websites at <https://www.icegate.gov.in> and <https://www.cbic.gov.in>.

All stakeholders are requested to strictly ensure compliance with the aforementioned parameters and SCMTR filing protocols.

First-time importers are also advised to familiarize themselves with the provisions of Faceless Assessment and detailed advisories issued by

CBIC/ICEGATE. Detailed SOPs in respect to specific customs procedures will be issued in due course.

All previously issued Public Notices/Trade Notices/SOP by this office in relation to the Customs operations at the port continue in force, until further orders.

Hindi version follows.

डॉ. टी० टीजू० / (Dr. T. TIJU)
आयुक्त/COMMISSIONER

प्रतिलिपि प्रेषित/Copy Submitted to:

1. The Chief Commissioner of Central Tax, Central Excise and Customs, Thiruvananthapuram Zone

प्रतिलिपि प्रेषित/Copy to:

1. All officers, Commissionerate of Customs (Preventive), Kochi
2. Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited (VISL)
3. M/s Adani Vizhinjam Ports Pvt. Ltd. (Custodian)
4. All Shipping Lines / Steamer Agents / Custom Brokers (CBs)
5. Bureau of Immigration
6. Port Health Organisation (PHO)
7. Mercantile Marine Department (MMD)
8. Coastal Police / Port Security Agencies

Notice Board / Guard File / Systems Manager (for uploading on the website).