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DGFT prohibits export of Lithium-Ion Battery Black Mass to strengthen domestic recycling

CHENNAI – 12 Nov, 2026 DGFT prohibits export of Lithium-Ion Battery Black Mass to strengthen domestic recycling and critical mineral recovery.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Department of Commerce, has prohibited the export of Lithium-Ion Battery Black Mass falling under ITC(HS) Code 85491400. Vide Notification No. 49/2026-27 dated 10 November 2026, the export policy of the item has been amended from ‘Free’ to ‘Prohibited’ with immediate effect and until further orders. The transitional arrangements under Para 1.05 of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP), 2023, will apply.

ITC(HS) Code 85491400 covers waste and scrap of primary cells, primary batteries and electric accumulators, as well as spent cells, batteries and accumulators, which are unsorted and do not contain lead, cadmium or mercury. The Notification specifically describes the item as Lithium-Ion Battery Black Mass. Black Mass is the powdery material obtained from shredding end-of-life lithium-ion batteries and battery manufacturing waste. It contains recoverable quantities of critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt, nickel and manganese.

Critical minerals are essential inputs for electric mobility, advanced chemistry cell batteries, energy storage, electronics and renewable energy. India depends substantially on imports for several of these minerals. Recycling battery waste is among the quickest and most sustainable ways of developing a domestic supply of these resources. While the country's capacity to recycle battery waste and refine critical minerals from it has grown considerably, it is not being fully utilised due to inadequate feedstock availability. Exports of Black Mass generated in India divert this valuable secondary resource abroad, while domestic recyclers have, in some cases, had to import material to meet their requirements.

The export prohibition is intended to ensure that Black Mass generated in India is recycled and refined within the country. The measure is expected to assure feedstock availability for domestic recycling and refining units, improve their capacity utilisation and encourage further investment and employment in the sector. It will increase domestic recovery of lithium, cobalt, nickel and other critical minerals, thereby reducing import dependence and the associated foreign exchange outgo. It will also strengthen supply chains for battery manufacturing, electric vehicles, energy storage and clean-energy technologies, in line with the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Further, the measure will advance the circular economy and ‘urban mining’, reducing reliance on primary mining, while supporting environmentally sound recycling of this hazardous material within the country in accordance with applicable environmental regulations.