

Key countries set to put pen to paper on Hong Kong Convention

Top maritime officials from Japan and India expect to accede to the ship recycling this year, moves described as pivotal to its unlocking.

March 6th, 2019 03:18 GMT by Jonathan Boonzaier

Japan, one of the world's largest shipowning nations, and India, one of its largest ship recyclers, could both accede to the Hong Kong Convention (HKC) on ship recycling within the next few months, government officials from both nations told the TradeWinds Ship Recycling Forum today.

Santinder Pal Singh, joint secretary of India's Ministry of Shipping said that the Indian parliament could sign off on a bill that would see India accede when a new parliament sits for its monsoon session in July.

India, he said, expressed its desire to sign up to the convention several years ago but the process has been a long and drawn out one that has required both public and industry consultation.

The Indian ship recycling industry has been governed since 2013 by a shipbreaking code that mirrors the HKC and 77 of the 120 plots at Alang have already become HKC certified.

Kazuya Nakao, deputy director for international affairs at the Maritime Bureau of Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism revealed that Japan could accede to the HKC convention within the next two months.

These moves by Japan and India are seen as positive steps towards the HKC coming into force. The criteria requires 15 countries representing 40 percent of the gross tonnage of the world's merchant fleet, as well as enough recycling capacity to cover three percent of the gross tonnage of the contracting parties.

At present eight countries representing 21.4% of the fleet have signed on.

India, which handles approximately 30% of global ship recycling, currently represents 2.4% of that recycling capacity while Turkey, which recently acceded to the HKC, adds another 0.3% to that figure.

Dr. Nikos Mikelis, who played an instrumental role in drawing up the HKC, described Japan and India's joining the HKC as making its coming into force inevitable. He describes India as being the key to unlocking the ship recycling part.

Also speaking at the conference today was A K M Shamsul Areefin, the additional secretary for recycling at Bangladesh's Ministry of Industries.

Areefin said that Bangladesh is committed to signing up to the HKC, and expects to do so within the next four years. Describing the HKC as an excellent tool for ensuring a sustainable ship recycling industry, he noted that the Bangladesh government and industry stakeholders are actively working with foreign partners to raise the country's ship recycling standards so that it will be able to conform to HKC requirements.



</p>