

Hong Kong Convention

November 29, 2019

International Convention for Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships(Hong Kong Convention)

Source: *PIB & International Maritime Organization*

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister has approved the proposal for enactment of Recycling of Ships Bill, 2019 and accession to the Hong Kong International Convention for Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009.

About Hong Kong Convention

- The Hong Kong Convention was adopted at a Diplomatic Conference held in Hong Kong, China, in May 2009 and was developed with input from IMO Member States and non governmental organizations, and in co-operation with the International Labour Organization and the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.
- The Convention is aimed at ensuring that ships when being recycled after reaching the end of their operational lives, do not pose any unnecessary risks to human health, safety and to the environment.
- The Convention intends to address all the issues around ship recycling, including the fact that ships sold for scrapping may contain environmentally hazardous substances such as asbestos, heavy metals, hydrocarbons, ozone-depleting substances, and others. It also addresses concerns raised about the working and environmental conditions at many of the world's ship recycling locations.

Salient features of the Bill:

- The proposed Bill restricts and prohibits the use or

installation of hazardous material, which applies irrespective of whether a ship is meant for recycling or not. For new ships, such restriction or prohibition on the use of hazardous material will be immediate, that is, from the date the legislation comes into force, while existing ships shall have a period of five years for compliance.

- Restriction or prohibition on the use of hazardous material would not be applied to warships and non-commercial ships operated by Government. Ships shall be surveyed and certified on the inventory of hazardous material used in ships.
- Under the Bill, ship recycling facilities are required to be authorized and ships shall be recycled only in such authorized ship recycling facilities
- The Bill also provides that ships shall be recycled in accordance with a ship-specific recycling plan. Ships to be recycled in India shall be required to obtain a Ready for Recycling Certificate in accordance with the HKC
- When the Hong Kong International Convention for Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009 comes into force, its provisions will be implemented under the provisions of the Recycling of Ships Bill, 2019 and rules and regulations framed thereunder.

Background:

- India is the leader in the global ship recycling industry, with a share of over 30% of the market. As per UNCTAD report on Review of Maritime Transport, 2018, India had demolished 6323 tonnes in 2017, of known ship scrapping across the world.
- The ship-recycling industry is a labour-intensive sector, but it is susceptible to concerns on environmental safety.