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54 Anil Sharma, GMS

President and chief executive is a driving force in improving standards, and the image, of the ship recycling industry

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by Lloyd's List |

The world's largest buyer of ships for recycling is taking the opportunity to expand its shipowning division, Lila Global, as the recycling sector takes a downturn



SHARMA: PREPARING FOR A VERY BUSY 2023 IN TERMS OF RECYCLING.

Source: GMS

ANIL Sharma, president and chief executive of Global Marketing Systems, has been a driving force in pushing forward the responsible recycling agenda to the benefit of both those that work within the industry and shipowners.

With ship demolition falling to decade lows during the second half of 2022, due to a lack of tonnage and currency restrictions at major recycling centres, Dr Sharma anticipates a booming ship recycling market in 2023.

"GMS is preparing for a very busy 2023, with new emissions regulations coming in from January, the container sector expected to have a clear-out of older tonnage, and the dry cargo market taking a downturn," he said.

"Regulations are going to play a big part in a ship-recycling upturn next year, not just freight market corrections."

As ship recycling appears to be on something of a hiatus, Dr Sharma has put more focus on GMS's shipowning subsidiary, Lila Global.

It has a budget of up to \$250m to expand its 33-strong vessel fleet to 50 by 2025. Some 70% of the fleet comprises bulk carriers, with the remainder being tankers.

"We may get back into containerships, provided there is a charter attached. We previously had six ships on hire to MSC, but then Covid happened," said Dr Sharma.

Lila Global's focus is on optimising the operation of ships of 15 years or older.

Dr Sharma is particularly proud of GMS's Sustainable Ship and Offshore Recycling Programme, which is the first and only compliance-monitoring system that has been verified and validated by Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance.

SSORP has helped educate the shipping industry about the numerous risks of recycling ships and provides GMS's team of experts to shipowners for monitoring the entire recycling process.

Dr Sharma is an enthusiastic advocate of the Hong Kong Convention on improving the lives of those working in the ship recycling industry, though he is less than enthusiastic about the European Union's Ship Recycling Regulation.

"The EU started with a good thought process through a law — but it got hijacked by NGOs [non-governmental organisations]," he said.

"This ended up with the EU regulation becoming an impractical solution and it turned EU shipowners, needing to scrap ships, effectively into criminals.

"That put the fear of God into the owners and now a lot of European owners don't want to deal with recycling; the EU has not helped the industry get cleaner."

Dr Sharma also appeared in the Top 100 in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.

