

## Iranian Steel Company Exports more than Double



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran's Khouzestan Steel Company (KSC) has exported over 450 thousand tons of steel ingots in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), indicating a growth of 215 percent compared with the same period last year, an official said.

A report by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) quoted KSC Chief Abdol-Majid Sharifi as saying that 450,600 tons of steel ingots were exported to a number of regional countries. "In the four-month period, the company's products were sent through Imam Khomeini Port to the target markets of Bangladesh, Abu Dhabi, Pakistan, Turkey, Thailand, Oman, Egypt, Sudan, and other regional clients," Sharifi added.

He further noted that the company has

produced 1,160,000 tons of steel during the period, which is 5 percent more compared with the output in the same period last year.

Iran produced 1.4 million tons of crude steel in June 2015, up by 1.5 percent compared with June 2014, superseding France as the 13th largest steel producer in the World Steel Association's crude steel production report of 65 countries. According to the report, Iran's steel production output in the first six months of 2015 has increased by 4.5 percent from 8.015 million tons in the corresponding period last year.

## Turkey Considering Appeal with WTO Over U.S. Steel Pipe Duties

Turkey is considering lodging an appeal with the World Trade Organization (WTO) against a U.S. move to slap anti-dumping duties on imports of Turkish steel pipes, an industry group said.

"We firmly believe that the Turkish Ministry of Economy will take the case to the WTO," Namik Ekinci, the president of the Turkish Steel Exporters' Association (CIB), said.

"The ministry must consider several factors before making a final decision, but there is a strong indication and we expect the decision to be taken at the earliest."

A spokesman for the U.S. Trade Representative said the agency does not comment on potential WTO litigation as a matter of policy.

In a big win for U.S. steel pipe makers, the U.S. International Trade Commission ruled last year that imports of 'oil country tubular goods' (OCTG) from South Korea, India, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine and Vietnam would be subject to duties of up to 118 percent.

But foreign producers appealed, winning a small victory earlier when the U.S. Court of International Trade (USCIT) called for a recalculation of the sums used to determine duties on imports from South Korea.

U.S. OCTG imports from the Asian nation totalled \$818 million in 2013, more than the combined totals of the other countries. South Korea lodged a WTO appeal against the duties last December.

Kimberly Leppold, senior analyst, said Turkey had a strong case to take to the WTO.



The CIB said Turkey's OCTG exports to the United States in 2014 accounted for just 1.7 percent of total arrivals. It declined to say how much they were worth but an industry source said the dollar value of the trade was 'significant'.

U.S. trade officials are working their way through several disputes involving various steel products, but the OCTG case has been the biggest in terms of trade volumes affected.

The CIB said a U.S. finding that Turkey's largest industrial conglomerate, Erdemir, is a government entity that provides subsidised steel coils to Turkish pipe makers was incorrect.

"Erdemir was privatized almost 10 years ago. It is publicly traded, most of their shareholders are pension funds from the U.S.," said Ekinci. He added that Canadian authorities had ruled in a similar case that Erdemir is a private company, and therefore not providing government subsidies.

Steel pipes are high-margin products used in the energy sector and had been a bright spot in the sluggish steel sector, benefiting in 2013 from a boom in the U.S. shale oil and gas industry, which has since faded as oil prices plummeted.

Struggling steel pipe makers including United States Steel Corp, Tenaris SA subsidiary Maverick Tube Corporation, JMC Steel Group Inc's Energex Tube, Russia's TMK IPSCO and France's Vallourec Star filed the case in 2013, saying OCTG imports had been sold cheaply to the United States using government subsidies.

They stand to lose market share to foreign steelmakers if the duties are lowered or removed.

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