



Welspun Steel gets environmental clearance

India's iron ore output surged 27% to 154.48 million tonnes during April-January of this fiscal following lifting of the mining ban. It stood at 122 mt in the same period of 2015-16, according to news agency PTI.

Mines secretary Arun Kumar said that "The country's iron ore production has increased significantly to 154.48 mt during April-January of 2016-17. The percentage increase is 26.63% while in value terms, the increase is 7.79%."

The total value of the ore produced during the 10 months stood at Rs19,417 crore. Iron ore output had nosedived with an average annual contraction of 9.4% in 2012-16 following the mining ban in the three largest iron-ore producing states Goa, Odisha and Karnataka which has since



been lifted. Mining player Vedanta had recently said the worst phase for the domestic iron ore industry was over and exuded confidence that its Goa arm was prepared to sustain the export momentum amid softening global prices and subdued demand.

A Fitch arm last month said the country's iron ore output is projected to grow to 185 mt in the next four years.

BMI Research, a unit of Fitch Group

said that "We forecast India's iron ore output to grow from 136 mt in 2017 to 185 mt in 2021."

Iron ore shipments handled by the country's 12 major ports had soared 169% to 38.61 mt in April-January of this fiscal.

These government-owned ports had handled 14.37 mt of the key steel-making raw material in the year-earlier period.

The Indian Ports Association which maintains data on cargo handled by these 12 ports, in its recent report said iron ore handling was higher by 168.59% in the first 10 months of the current fiscal.

According to IPA, iron ore handling at the Mormugao port during the 10 months went up to 11.18 mt, from 2.29 mt a year ago, while the Visakhapatnam port saw a handling of 9.17 mt as against 4.39 mt.

Steel exports surge by 78% to 6.6 mln tons, imports plunge



Steel exports surged almost 78% in the 11 months to February to 6.6 mln tons, while imports have plunged 39% to the same figure

India is set to become a net exporter of steel for the first time in four years, reversing a trend that saw domestic mills battling a flood of cheap imports, according to the Indian Steel Association. Shares of producers surged in Mumbai.

"This is a very positive development and it would indicate that the Indian steel industry is globally competitive in terms of quality and prices," Sanak Mishra, the association's secretary general said. The nation's production is forecast to top 100 mln metric tons in the fiscal year starting April as the big producers commission more capacity and look to boost exports, he

said. Lured by a rebound in global product prices, mills including JSW Steel Ltd. and Steel Authority of India Ltd. are relying on the export market to soak up excess inventories after boosting output in anticipation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's infrastructure push.

"India is exporting so much steel purely because of poor demand in the domestic markets" Goutam Chakraborty, an analyst at brokerage Emkay Global Financial Services Ltd., said. Indian companies are benefiting from some trade barriers against China, he said.

Exports surged almost 78% in the 11 months to February to 6.6 mln tons, while imports have plunged 39% to the same figure, according to Steel Ministry data. Output jumped 11% to 92 mln tons amid

consumption growth of 3.4% to 76.2 mln tons, it said. Top producer Sail aims to double exports next fiscal year, the company said. It exported 682,000 tons in the April-February period, with shipments last month climbing to the best in a decade. Exports from JSW Steel, the second-biggest mill, have been as much as 26% of sales in the July-December period, according to the Mumbai-based producer.

It's a sharp contrast to a year ago, when India was inundated with cheap supplies from China, the biggest producer and exporter, with the country importing a record 11.7 mln tons in 2015-16. The government initiated a number of trade measures such as a floor price on shipments, safeguard taxes and anti-dumping duties to stem the inflow.

The nation is expected to have balanced imports and exports this year, said Mishra. India remains a key steel consuming country and the local market, which is forecast to grow at 5% next year, will still be the main destination for its producers, he said. He didn't provide specific forecasts for 2017-18.

This section is a compilation from various company press releases, business dailies & trade publications.