



खनिज समाचार

KHANIJ SAMACHAR

Vol. 6, No-5

(As appeared in National/Local Newspapers Received in Central Library, IBM, Nagpur)

The Central Library, IBM, Nagpur is providing the Classified Mineral News Service since many years on monthly basis in print form. To expand this service to the IBM Offices all over India i.e. H.Q., Zonal & Regional Offices and to take a call of time, the Controller General, IBM desired to make this service online on fortnightly basis. The library officials made sincere efforts to make it successful. This is the 5th issue of **Volume-6** for the service named **Khanij Samachar** for the period from **1- 15 March 2022**. The previous issue of Khanij Samachar **Vol. 6, No.4 , 16th -28th Feb, 2022** is already uploaded on IBM Website www.ibm.gov.in.

In continuation of this it is requested that the mineral related news appeared in the Local News Papers of different areas can be sent to Central Library via email ibmcentrallibrary@gmail.com (scanned copy) so that it can be incorporated in the future issues to give the maximum coverage of mining and mineral related information on Pan India basis.

All are requested to give wide publicity to it and it will be highly appreciated if the valuable feedback is reciprocated to above email.

Mrs. R. S. Wakode
Assistant Library & Information Officer
Central Library
ibmcentrallibrary@gmail.com
0712-2562847
Ext. 1210 , 1206



खनिज समाचार

KHANIJ SAMACHAR



A FORTNIGHTLY NEWS CLIPPING SERVICE
FROM
CENTRAL LIBRARY
INDIAN BUREAU OF MINES
VOL. 6, NO - 5 , 1st – 15th MARCH 2022

हर दिन 33500 टन कोयले की जरूरत कोराड़ी प्लांट में मात्र 2 दिन का कोयला



भास्कर संवाददाता | नागपुर

औष्णिक विद्युत केंद्र कोराड़ी में फिलहाल 4 यूनिट में बिजली का उत्पादन हो रहा है। इसमें 210 मेगावॉट का एक और 660 मेगावॉट की 3 यूनिट हैं। हर दिन करीब 33500 टन कोयले की जरूरत होती है। जानकारी के अनुसार, 660 मेगावॉट वाली 3 यूनिट के लिए मात्र दो दिन का ही कोयला बचा हुआ

है। समय पर कोयले की आपूर्ति नहीं हुई तो बिजली उत्पादन प्रभावित हो सकता है।

गर्मी के दिनों में बिजली की मांग बढ़ जाती है। राज्य में महावितरण के माध्यम से वर्तमान में 21 हजार मेगावॉट बिजली का कंजप्शन हो रहा है। गर्मी बढ़ने के साथ ही इसमें और इजाफा हो सकता है। कृषि उपभोक्ताओं पर 45 हजार करोड़ से ज्यादा का बिल बकाया है। कृषि बिल की वसूली में हो रही देरी के कारण महावितरण की आर्थिक स्थिति खराब हो रही है। कोराड़ी केंद्र में वेकोलि, एसईसीएल व एमसीएल से कोयले की आपूर्ति होती है। कोयले की मांग का पत्र मुख्यालय के मार्फत संबंधित एजेंसी को भेजा गया है।

ऊर्जा मंत्री जता चुके हैं आशंका

ऊर्जा मंत्री डा. नितीन राऊत ने कृषि बिल की बकाया राशि की वसूली नहीं होने पर कोयले का संकट खड़ा होने की आशंका जताई है। उन्होंने कहा कि कोयले की खरीदारी के लिए पैसे चाहिए और कृषि बिल की वसूली नहीं होने से बिजली कंपनी आर्थिक संकट में है। आर्थिक संकट जारी रहा तो कोयला खरीदना मुश्किल हो सकता है और इसका असर बिजली वितरण पर हो सकता है। उन्होंने स्वीकार किया कि कोयले का स्टॉक काफी कम है। बिजली का संकट खड़ा न हो, इसलिए कृषि बिल भरने का आह्वान किया।



कोयले की डिमांड भेज दी है : औष्णिक विद्युत केंद्र कोराड़ी के सूत्रों ने बताया कि यहां बस उतना ही कोयला बचा है, जो 660 मेगावॉट के यूनिटों में 2 दिन व 210 मेगावॉट के यूनिट में 4-5 दिन तक चल सकेगा। इस प्लांट में हर दिन करीब 33500 टन कोयले की जरूरत होती है। कोयले की डिमांड का पत्र संबंधित एजेंसी को भेज दिया गया है। अभी तक तो नियमित रूप से कोयले की आपूर्ति हुई। आगे क्या होगा, इस बारे में नहीं कहा जा सकता। कोयले के बगैर काम नहीं चल सकेगा।

युद्धाच्या ठिणगीने स्टीलही महागले!

किरकोळमध्ये ६५-६६ रुपये भाव : दरवाढीची शक्यता

लोकमत न्यूज नेटवर्क

नागपूर : रशिया-युक्रेनमधील युद्धाचा थेट परिणाम स्टीलच्या आयात-निर्यातीवर झाला आहे. शिवाय कच्च्या मालाच्या भावात मोठी वाढ झाली आहे. युद्धाच्या ठिणगीने स्टील महागले आहे. यातच उत्पादन कमी आणि मागणीत वाढ झाल्यामुळे बांधकामासाठी लागणाऱ्या सळईचा भाव वाढला आहे. स्टीलचे भाव चार दिवसातच तीन हजारांनी वाढले आहेत. मागील आठवड्यात सळईचे किरकोळमध्ये ५९ ते ६० हजार रुपये प्रतिटन भाव होते. तर सोमवारी हे भाव ६५ ते ६६ हजारांवर पोहोचले. यावर १८ टक्के वेगळा जीएसटी आकारला जातो.

युक्रेन हा मॅन्गनीज आणि लोहखनिजाचा मोठा निर्यातदार असून, युद्धामुळे ही वाहतूक ठप्प झाली आहे. याचा फटका भारतातील स्टील उद्योगांना बसला आहे. येत्या काळात कच्च्या मालाच्या मंदावलेल्या आयातीमुळे स्टील उद्योगात महागाई वाढण्याचे संकेत आहेत.



३ हजारांची दरवाढ

युद्धामुळे सोमवारपर्यंत स्टीलचे (सळई) भाव प्रति टन ३ हजार रुपयांनी वाढून ठोकमध्ये ५९ हजारांवर पोहोचले तर किरकोळमध्ये हेच भाव ६५ ते ६६ रुपयांवर गेले आहेत. दीड वर्षांपूर्वी कोविड काळात सळईचे ठोक बाजारातील दर ३८ ते ४० रुपये किलो होते. त्यानंतर हळूहळू भाव वाढायला सुरुवात होऊन चार दिवसांपूर्वी भाव ५४ ते ५५ रुपये किलोवर आले आणि नंतर युद्धामुळे चार दिवसातच ३ हजारांची वाढ झाल्यामुळे व्यावसायिक संकटात आले आहेत.

कशामुळे झाली वाढ

कच्च्या मालासाठी विदेशावर अवलंबून

व्यावसायिक राजेश सारडा म्हणाले की, देशांतर्गत कोळसा आणि भंगाराची उपलब्धता मागणीच्या तुलनेत कमी आहे. देशातील मोठ्या कंपन्या तयार मालाचा पुरवठा देशांतर्गत न करता विदेशात करीत आहेत. त्याचाही फटका भाववाढीवर झाला आहे. रशिया-युक्रेनमधील युद्धामुळे मालवाहतूक सेवा विस्कळीत झाली असून, कच्चा माल मिळणे कठीण झाले आहे.

जवळपास एक महिन्यांपासून रशिया आणि युक्रेनमधून कच्च्या मालाची आयात बंद व कोळशाचा पुरवठा कमी असल्यामुळे निर्मिती प्रकल्पांना तुटवडा निर्माण झाला आहे. मागणीच्या तुलनेत पुरवठा कमी असल्यामुळे स्टीलचे दर वाढले आहेत. सध्या दर विक्रीची पातळीवर आहेत. यापुढे दरवाढीची शक्यता कमीच आहे.

- राजेश सारडा, अध्यक्ष, स्टील असोसिएशन.

दरवाढीचा परिणाम कशावर होणार?

युद्धामुळे वाढलेल्या स्टीलच्या दराचा सर्वाधिक परिणाम बांधकाम क्षेत्रावर होणार आहे. सळई आणि अँगलचा बांधकामात सर्वाधिक उपयोग होतो. कोविडनंतर बांधकाम क्षेत्रात अनेक नवीन प्रकल्प सुरू झाले आहेत. याशिवाय पुलाचे बांधकाम आणि मोठ्या प्रकल्पाच्या किमती स्टीलमुळे वाढणार आहेत. एक वर्ष दर कमी होण्याची काहीही चिन्हे नाहीत.

स्टीलच्या दरवाढीची अनेक कारणे आहेत. मुख्य कारण युद्ध आहे. शिवाय कच्च्या तेलाच्या वाढलेल्या किमती, कोळशाचा अपुरा पुरवठा, मालवाहतुकीचे वाढलेले दरसुद्धा कारणे आहेत. कोविडनंतर स्टीलला मागणी वाढली; त्या तुलनेत पुरवठा कमी आहे. किरकोळमध्ये जास्त भावात सळई खरेदी करावी लागते.

- संजय अग्रवाल, उपाध्यक्ष, स्टील असोसिएशन.

NAVBHARAT DATE : 2/3/2022 P.N.7

खनिज पर NMDC ने किया सम्मेलन



■ हैदराबाद, एजेंसियां. भारत के सबसे बड़े लौह अयस्क उत्पादक एवं खान मंत्री, ओडिशा तथा राष्ट्रीय खनिज विकास निगम लिमिटेड (एनएमडीसी) ने इस्पात मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार की मेजबानी में कोणार्क में 2 दिवसीय सम्मेलन एवं चर्चा सत्र का आयोजन किया. खनिज समृद्ध राज्यों को वर्तमान तथा नई खनन परियोजनाओं के खनन पट्टों एवं पर्यावरणीय मंजूरी से संबंधित मामलों पर विचार करने का एक अवसर प्रदान करना था. इस्पात मंत्री रामचंद्र प्रसाद सिंह ने उद्घाटन किया. फगन सिंह कुलस्ते इस्पात राज्य मंत्री, प्रफुल्ल कुमार मलिक इस्पात एवं खान मंत्री, ओडिशा तथा राजवर्धन सिंह की प्रमुख उपस्थिति रही. सिंह की अध्यक्षता में हुई बैठक में कंपनियों के प्रतिनिधियों ने उद्योग की चिंताओं को सामने रखा जिसमें मुख्य रूप से वित्त, लॉजिस्टिक, पर्यावरण, लघु उद्योगों को सहायता के संबंधित थी. उन्होंने विकास के क्षेत्र में अनेक प्रयासों के लिए ओडिशा की सरकार तथा जनता की प्रशंसा की. कार्यक्रम के सफल आयोजन के लिए अध्यक्ष-सह-प्रबंध निदेशक सुमित देब ने सभी का आभार माना.

Coal India output rises 4% to 64 MT in February

NEW DELHI, Mar 1 (PTI)

STATE-OWNED CIL produced 64.3 million tonnes of coal in February, registering a growth of nearly 4 per cent compared to the year-ago period.

Coal India Ltd (CIL) had produced 61.9 MT of coal in the corresponding month of previous fiscal. In a statement on Tuesday, the company said that stepping up its output tempo, it produced 64.3 MT of coal in February.

On a month-on-month basis, CIL's average production increased to 2.3 MT per day in February. So, despite being three days lesser than January, the sequential production in February was at par with the previous month. CIL's all out efforts are focused on ending FY'22 in the realm of 630 MT, according to the statement. CIL's production at 542.4 MT during April-February period of FY'22 was a historic high for this period. Coal output surged ahead 27.3 MT in absolute terms on a year-on-year

comparison. "The company expects to post the highest ever production by the closure of FY'22, going past the previous high of 607 MT recorded in FY'19," the company said.

CIL's off-take in February has scored a strong 12 per cent double-digit growth at 57.4 MT against same month last year.

The gain in absolute terms was 6.2 MT. Till February of the current fiscal, CIL's total off-take was nearly 600 MT. Only once earlier, the off-take crossed that mark when the company despatched 608 MT in FY'19, which is the highest to the date.

With a sizeable volume increase of 85.8 MT over 514 MT of the same period last year, CIL's off-take growth during April-February was 16.7 per cent.

CIL's subsidiaries are pushing hard to scale up the production and off-take. MCL in a first has reached 150 MT production mark on February 27. The pace is moving into a higher pitch with the past records being outdone.

Metal cos to see squeeze in profit margin

SURESH P IYENGAR

Mumbai, March 1

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is all set to push up the operational cost of domestic metal companies and impact the bottomline as any attempt to pass on the incremental cost will suppress the demand further.

Constraints in the global energy supply chain has already led to a spike in the international crude and gas prices.

This will indirectly lead to rise in key raw material prices and inflate the cost of production across the economy. However, expectation of spike in benchmark global metal prices was a sentiment booster and led to BSE Metal index gaining five per cent

on value buying across sectors.

Input costs to spike

Most metal companies are dependent on imports for sourcing raw materials including coking coke, nickel, molybdenum, manganese, titanium, boron and cobalt. Russia produces about 6 per cent of the world's aluminium and accounts for about 7 per cent of global nickel mine supplies.

Vinit Bolinjar, Head of Research, Ventura Securities, told *BusinessLine* that the

freight cost for steel companies has already increased due to higher oil and gas prices. Now the key raw material prices including coking coal are expected to witness a sharp rise.

Global steel demand

The war has delayed the pandemic battered global economy, which has not only impacted the global steel demand but also

reduced the possibility of higher input cost being passed on to consumers. It was a double-whammy on profitability, he said.

Rajnath Yadav, Research Analyst, Choice Broking, said Russia is also one of the key players in the global market of nickel, aluminium, copper, palladium and platinum. Any restrictions on trade will act as a positive trigger on metal prices with nickel already trading with positive bias since the start of the conflict, he added.

However, he said if the consumer demand lags it will be difficult for metal producers to pass on the cost. Most of the key consuming sectors have already taken series of price hike in the last three months. If the crisis does not get resolved in next one month, then it will have a cascading impact on the global economy, he said.



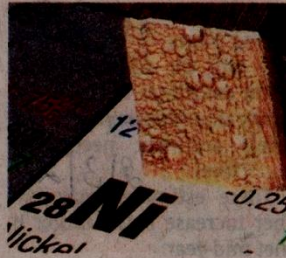
Bet short in MCX nickel at current levels

AKHIL NALLAMUTHU

BL Research Bureau

The continuous contract of nickel on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), which broke out of ₹1,780 before a couple of weeks, rallied and hit a fresh high of ₹1,958.7 last Thursday. On the same day, the contract gave away all the gains, ending the day on a flat note. This resulted in the candlestick forming a gravestone doji pattern, hinting at a price correction. The relative strength index (RSI) on the daily chart shows a negative divergence. So, although the overall trend is bullish, there can be a temporary price moderation in MCX-Nickel futures.

Also, the cumulative open interest (OI) has dropped to 2,282 contracts as on Monday from 2,644 contracts a couple of weeks back. In addition, ₹1,900 is a strong resistance and the contract should close above



this level, at least on a daily basis, to negate the weakness. So, the above factors show that the probability of the futures price dropping outweighs the probability of it scaling new heights.

Traders can risk initiating fresh short positions at current level of ₹1,850. One can also consider adding shorts if price rallies to ₹1,900. Place initial stop-loss at ₹1,965 and revise it to ₹1,900 if price falls below ₹1,780. Exit the shorts at ₹1,670 – a strong support.

JSW Steel, JSPL, Balco, Others Put in 26 Bids for 11 Coal Mines

PTI

New Delhi: JSW Steel, Jindal Steel & Power and Bharat Aluminium Company were among the 21 firms that put in bids in the latest auction of coal mines, the government said on Wednesday. In all, 26 bids were received for the auction of coal mines under the fourth tranche of sale of coal, the coal ministry said in a statement.

Five of the 11 coal mines put on

auction received single bids.

The Gare Palma IV/6 mine in Chhattisgarh received a maximum of eight bids.

The mine was originally allotted jointly to Jindal Steel & Power (JSPL) and Malwa Sponge Iron in January 2006 to meet the coal requirement of their respective sponge iron plants in nearby Raigarh and Taramal districts, respectively.

However, the allocations, along with others, were cancelled by

the Supreme Court 2014.

Utkal B1 & B2 mines in Odisha received six bids, while Chinora in Maharashtra got four and three bids came in for Rabodih OCP in Jharkhand.

"The process of 4th tranche of the auction of coal mines for sale of coal was launched on December 16, 2021. The last date of submission of the technical bid was February 28, 2022,"

the statement said, adding the bids were opened on Wednesday. It said a total of 26 bids have been received against 11 coal mines. "Two or more bids have been received for 5 coal mines."

JSW Steel, JSPL, Shyman Metals & Energy, Mahanadi Mines and Minerals and Sarda Mines bid for two mines each, while Balco, BS Ispat, Sarda Energy & Mineral and Rungta Sons were among the firms that put in single bids.

Metal Stocks Sizzle as Fighting Rages

Markets expect prices to stay firm on supply disruptions; stocks of leading Indian players rally

Rajesh Mascarenhas
@timesgoup.com

Mumbai: Metal stocks ran up in a weak market on Wednesday as traders bet on a further run-up in commodity prices on expectations that supply disruptions from Russia following economic sanctions from Western powers will choke supplies. Russia and Ukraine are some of the largest suppliers of non-ferrous metals globally.

The BSE Metal index gained nearly 5% on Wednesday after jumping 5.91% on Monday. Financial markets were closed on Tuesday.

Hindustan Zinc and Tata Metals gained more than 12%, while Tata Steel and Jindal Steel jumped over 5%. Hindalco and Nalco rose over 4% each.

**RUSSIA
AT
WAR**

"If Russian exports are curtailed, coupled with the ongoing maintenance activities in Far East Mills and China focusing on reducing steel exports, we are likely to see Indian steel mills such as JSW Steel and Tata Steel gaining in the export market," said Amit Dixit, analyst, Edelweiss Securities.

"Uptick in LME aluminium prices will aid Hindalco the most, as its integration would limit the cost increase while Jindal Stainless will likely gain from higher nickel prices."

The BSE Metal index has surged nearly 17% in the last four trading sessions. Vedanta and Hindalco hit their respective 52-week highs on Wednesday.

Russia is a leading player in the commodities market, accounting for 35% of global palladium and 10% of platinum production. The

Gains Hot Up

Stock	LTP (₹)	% Chg	5-Day Chg (%)
Hindalco Industries	600.10	4.59	16.25
Coal India	184.80	8.99	15.57
Hindustan Zinc	351.75	12.76	13.76
Tata Steel	1,289.35	5.62	13.23
Vedanta	387.30	1.84	10.63
Jindal Steel & Power	444.15	4.54	9.28
National Aluminium	125.95	3.83	9.05
NMDC	151.10	5.55	7.89
SAIL	99.35	3.11	6.54
Hindustan Copper	119.90	1.91	4.22



country accounts for 6% of world-wide aluminium and 5% of nickel supplies.

"Given the high exposure of Russia and Ukraine in the global steel export, international prices

are rising to benefit the steel industry players," said Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services.

Diamond Traders Fear Job Losses Even as Russia Assures Supply

Russian mining firm Alrosa accounts for 30% of global diamond output

Sutanuka Ghosal
@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: The Russia-Ukraine conflict may lead to job losses in Surat, India's diamond-cutting and polishing hub, because the global sanctions on Moscow could affect sourcing of rough diamonds for processing. The European Union, US, UK and their allies have excluded Russia from the Swift international payment system. Diamond exporters said if the payment issue was not sorted out immediately for rough diamonds sourced from Russia's partially state-owned mining company Alrosa, there would be a scarcity in their supply, forcing the cut and polishing units in Surat to scale down production and manpo-



wer. For now, Alrosa has assured supplies and informed the industry that its settlements with foreign partners using currencies like the dollar and euro had not been affected, but the local units are unsure how long it would continue.

The diamond industry in Surat employs nearly 800,000 people and is said to have processed 14 out every 15 diamonds available in the world. "India's diamond industry is 100% import-dependent, and any shortage in rough diamond would have a severe impact on manufacturing activity and employment in the sector," Colin Shah, chairman of the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council, told ET. "This will also have a huge impact on total gem & jewellery exports from the country as cut and polished diamonds constitute a significant portion of these exports."

Alrosa accounts for about 30% of the global diamond output. India directly imports around 10% of Alrosa's total rough diamond production.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES DATE : 3/3/2022 P.N.2

Steelmakers Feel The Heat, Find Alternatives

Our Bureau

Mumbai: India's secondary and scrap-based steelmakers are feeling the heat amid a short supply of scrap from Russia due to the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

"After the second wave of Covid-19, there was a short supply of scrap and many small and medium steel businesses in India had to shut down. The current Russia-Ukraine crisis is a double whammy," said a scrap-based steelmaker from Gujarat who did not wish to be quoted.

Prices of scrap have gone up by at least 30-40% since the start of the crisis, and will only go up from here, the person quoted above said.

However, some steelmakers said that the alternatives are easier to find as the quantity imported is minimal. "We used to import scrap from Russia. But we shifted to the US last year. There is a slight difference in the cost, but given the present situation, we are glad that we shifted," said yet another secondary steelmaker from Gujarat.

Steel scrap is used as the primary input into steelmaking through the electric arc furnace and the induction furnace routes, while iron ore is the primary source for making steel through blast furnaces.

As of 2021, around 45-50% of India's crude steel production is produced through secondary steelmakers.

Russia is the largest exporter of steel globally and around 10% of scrap exports are from Russia.

"We are looking for alternative sources," said a secondary steelmaker based out of Haryana.

Some of India's primary steelmakers are keeping a close watch on the supply of coal from Ukraine and Russia. "We have alternative sources, yet the supply from Russia is significant," a top steelmaker told ET.

"We are not facing any issues with respect to coal. However, for the long term, we need to keep a close watch."



Russia is the largest exporter of steel globally and also ships around 10% of scrap

COMMODITY CALL

Buy MCX zinc at ₹320, add longs on drop in prices



AKHIL NALLAMUTHU

BL Research Bureau, March 2

The continuous contract of zinc on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) which declined during October-November last year, has found support at ₹260 and started moving up.

Although there were minor corrections, the overall direction remains to the upside. The contract broke out of ₹310 last week, opening the door for further rally.

Substantiating the upside, the relative strength index (RSI) and the moving average convergence divergence (MACD) on the daily chart are showing fresh uptick and both indicators lie in their respective bullish territory.

Also, the cumulative open interest (OI) of zinc futures on the MCX went up to 2,006 contracts on Tuesday compared to 1,611 a week ago – a rally along with an increase in OI is an indication of long build-ups.

Therefore, a rally from the current levels are high, wherein the contract can touch ₹335. A breach of this level can lift it to ₹350. However, the contract might decline to ₹308 before rallying to ₹335. Also, until the price stays above ₹300, the near-term trend will be bullish.

Hence, consider buying zinc futures at the current level of ₹320 and accumulate longs when price drops to ₹308. Place the initial stop-loss at ₹295. When it touches ₹335, revise the stop-loss upwards to ₹320. Exit the longs at ₹348.

21 companies vie for 11 coal mines

So far, 42 coal mines have been bidden out under commercial auctions

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, March 2

The government has received 26 bids for the auction of 11 coal mines with 21 companies including JSW Steel, Jindal Steel & Power and Bharat Aluminium Company evincing interest.

Gare Palma IV/6, Utkal B1 & B2 as well as Chinora coal mines received the highest number of bids, Coal Ministry said on Wednesday.

The process of the fourth tranche of auction of coal mines for sale of coal was launched by the Ministry on December 16, 2021.

"The last date of submission of technical bids was February 28 and these, on-line and offline bids, were opened on March 2 in the presence of the bidders,"

it said in a statement. The entire process was displayed on the screen for the bidders. A total of 26 bids were received including two or more bids for five coal mines, it added.

Encouraging transparency

The ministry's view is that a coal mine auction for the sale of coal would create a marketplace for the dry fuel with multiple producers to drive competition and adopt best practices in mining as well as environment management.

Auction of coal mines for sale of coal in a transparent manner is expected to encourage transparent pricing of coal, based on market forces.

While Gare Palma IV/6 received eight bids, Utkal B1 & B2 mines got six bids

and Chinora (Chandrapur, Maharashtra) four. Under the commercial coal mining auction process, a total of 42 coal mines have been successfully auctioned till date with a total cumulative peak rate capacity of 86.40 million tonnes per annum.

Demand-supply gap

Demand for coal is higher than the current level of domestic supply of coal in the country.

In the current fiscal year, against the pro-rated demand of 439.37 mt by the Central Electricity Authority, up to January 26, CIL has supplied 432.90 mt of coal.

The government has fixed a target of all India coal production target of 1.2 billion tonnes up to 2023-24.

Coal India (CIL) has envisaged a coal production programme of 1 billion tonnes.

आसमान पर कोयला, जिंक, कॉपर, एल्युमिनियम की कीमतें

चीजें महंगी होने से बिगड़ेगा बजट

■ दिल्ली, नवभारत न्यूज नेटवर्क. यूक्रेन क्राइसिस का हल निकालने की कोशिशें हो रही हैं. रूस-यूक्रेन में कई दौर की बातचीत हो चुकी है लेकिन अब तक बातचीत बेनतीजा रही है. उधर इस क्राइसिस का व्यापक असर दिखने लगा है. कूड ऑयल की कीमतें 118 डॉलर प्रति बैरल को पार कर गई हैं. कोयला,

15

फीसदी तक आई तेजी

58%

तक बढ़ा एल्युमीनियम का भाव



कोयले का पयूचर्स बढ़कर 260 डॉलर प्रति टन पर पहुंचा

जिंक, एल्युमिनियम, कॉपर सहित सभी प्रमुख मेटल में जबर्दस्त उछाल है. इस क्राइसिस के जल्द सॉल्व नहीं होने पर महंगाई बहुत बढ़ जाने का

खतरा है. इसका सीधा असर पड़ेगा. रोजमर्रा की चीजें काफी महंगी हो जाएंगी. बेस मेटल्स की कीमतों में बड़ा उछाल देखने को मिला. फरवरी

में एल्युमीनियम, कॉपर, जिंक, लेड जैसे प्रमुख मेटल की कीमतों में 3.6 से 15 फीसदी की तेजी आई है. सबसे ज्यादा तेजी एल्युमीनियम में आई. पिछले एक साल में एल्युमीनियम का भाव 58 फीसदी से ज्यादा चढ़ चुका है. यह कई साल की ऊंचाई पर है. इसका असर मैन्युफैक्चर्ड गुड्स की कीमतों पर पड़ना तय है.

Gas, aluminium hit fresh records; oil, wheat soar

War-led supply turmoil roils markets

REUTERS
LONDON/SINGAPORE

Commodity prices surged still higher as Russia's invasion of Ukraine disrupted global raw material flows, sending gas, coal and aluminium to record peaks while crude oil and wheat scaled multi-year highs.

Russia's stature as a top supplier in oil, gas, metals and grain has meant that harsh sanctions applied to Russian entities has derailed critical resource supply chains. "Supply chains are ceasing to work, which means we have dislocations all over the place," said Ole Hansen, head of commodity strategy at Saxo Bank in Copenhagen.



invasion, Dutch gas prices have more than doubled, Newcastle coal has surged by 85% and Brent crude oil has climbed by a fifth.

In grains, Russia and Ukraine were projected to account for 28.5% of global wheat exports in 2021, as per the U.S. Department of Agriculture, so global wheat prices have jolted higher to accommodate a big drop in supplies from both

Jewellers See 15% Fall in Sales as Gold Prices Cross ₹51,000 amid Russia-Ukraine Crisis

Jayashree.Bhosale
@timesgroup.com

Pune: Jewellers across the country expect a year-on-year fall of more than 15% in retail sales in March, as gold prices have crossed ₹51,000 per 10 gram due to Russia-Ukraine crisis. Normally, sales are good due to the festival of Gudi Padwa. Bullion trade and imports are also subdued due to the global uncertainty about gold prices.

However, sales in rural areas were only marginally affected compared to the metro cities.

"Jump of more than 8% in gold prices within a month from ₹47,000 per 10 grams to ₹51,000 per 10 gram is discouraging buyers from immediate purchases. Jewellery sales have declined in the past 15-20 days as buyers are in wait and watch mode. There is about



15% to 20% decline in month-on-month and year-on-year jewellery sales," said Suvankar Sen, executive director, Senco Gold & Diamonds, which has presence across the country.

The trend of subdued demand was confirmed by Ashish Pethe, chairman, All India Gem and Jewellery Domes-

tic Council (GJC). "Normally, gold sales are good in the months of March due to buying for Gudi Padwa. However, this month, we expect a fall of close to 20% in the March sales over the previous year. Consumers are preferring to liquidate old Gold as rates have increased," said Pethe.

Jewellers across the country observed that the jewellery sales in rural areas are comparatively less affected when compared to the metros.

They have reported good business in the rural areas in February, especially in the southern parts of the state. Nitin Khandelwal, co-owner of

Khandelwal Jewellers from Akola in Maharashtra said, "Jewellery sales in rural areas are good because consumers think that the prices may continue to rise due to the geopolitical reasons."

January and February are traditionally months of marriage season in south India. GV Shreedhar, past chairman, All India Gems and Jewellery Federation said, "Wedding buying was good in south India during the auspicious month of Magh. However, consumers are buying jewellery only for the bride, while purchases made for gifting are on the hold."

चालू वित्त वर्ष के अंत तक और बढ़ेगा CIL के पास 4.3 करोड़ टन कोयला

मुंबई, नवभारत न्यूज नेटवर्क. सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की कंपनी कोल इंडिया लिमिटेड (सीआईएल) ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि उसकी खदानों के पास अभी 4.3 करोड़ टन कोयला भंडार है जो चालू वित्त वर्ष के अंत तक और बढ़ जाएगा. इससे कंपनी गर्मियों में कोयले की मांग को पूरा करने के लिए कमर कस सकेगी. कोयले के कुल घरेलू उत्पादन में 80 फीसदी से अधिक योगदान कोल



इंडिया लिमिटेड का रहता है. कंपनी ने एक बयान में कहा सीआईएल की खदानों के पास अभी 4.3 करोड़ टन कोयला भंडार है जो चालू वित्त वर्ष

के अंत तक और बढ़ जाएगा. सीआईएल की ओर से ऊर्जा क्षेत्र को ईंधन की आपूर्ति को चालू वित्त वर्ष में 49.3 करोड़ टन के ऐतिहासिक उच्च स्तर पर पहुंच गई. इससे पहले आपूर्ति का सर्वाधिक 49.15 करोड़ टन का स्तर 2018-19 में था. कोयला कंपनी ने एक बयान में कहा कि चालू वित्त वर्ष समाप्त होने में अभी कई दिन बाकी हैं. ऐसे में वह इस लक्ष्य को हासिल कर सकती है.

CIL's pithead coal stock may rise by end FY22

NEW DELHI

State-owned CIL on Friday said the current coal stock of 43 million tonnes (MT) at its pithead is likely to increase further by the end of the current financial year and this will help the company gear up for meeting the coal demand of summer which is on the advent. "The current coal stock of 43 MT at CIL's pitheads is expected to increase further by FY22-end," the state-owned company said. PTI

Steel prices rise as war hits supply chains

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Domestic steel makers have raised the prices of hot-rolled coil (HRC) and TMT bars by up to ₹5,000 per tonne as supply chains are being impacted amid the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.

According to industry sources, prices have been increased in the past few days and are expected to go up further in the coming weeks with the conflict intensifying. After the price revision, a tonne of HRC would cost about ₹66,000, while buyers would get TMT bars for about ₹65,000 per tonne.

An industry executive said the increase was of about 20% compared with the rates a few weeks ago.

Russian sanctions: Steel-makers hike prices

Supplies expected to be hit globally; hot-rolled coils hit record ₹65,000/tonne

SURESH P IYENGAR

Mumbai, March 4

Steel companies have raised prices by ₹5,000-8,000 a tonne across products, including hot and cold rolled coils, TMT bars and wire rods.

Prices of hot-rolled coils have hit a record high ₹65,000 a tonne as steel

companies passed on the sharp increase in raw material prices, said a steel company official. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent economic sanction on the former have pushed up input costs, including that of fuels.

Shivam Bajaj, CEO, Avenor Capital, said Russia is one of

the largest exporters of steel and the sanctions imposed on it will result in a short-supply, globally. Post clarity on the Russia-Ukraine situation, steel prices may cool, he added.

In contrast, the steel demand across sectors remains weak as many end-users have cut down on purchases. Dealers are also stocking up cautiously though they do not expect steel prices to crash immediately after the war.

While the economic growth prospects of India may not have a high linkage with the emerging geopolitical risks, the sanctions on Russia by many developed nations can disrupt the global commodity markets and supply-chains of many key raw materials, putting indirect pressure on the supply side and exerting inflationary pressure across the sector, said SK Gaikward, CEO, Smart Steel Distributors.

It may take several months for the supply chain to be reinstated fully and till then prices are likely to re-



Steel demand remains weak as many end-users cut down purchases; dealers are stocking cautiously

main elevated, said a report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services. Sea freight and insurance, too, are likely to shoot up, while disruption in nickel supply could keep both nickel and stainless steel prices on a high, it added.

Weak demand

Demand for finished steel in India slipped 9 per cent month-on-month to 9.2 million tonnes in February while production dropped 4 per cent to 9.5 mt, according

to latest Steel Ministry data. However, steel exports rose 42 per cent m-o-m to 1.16 mt, the highest since last September, on higher demand from European markets with China on a week-long Lunar New Year holiday.

Crude steel production by integrated steel producers — SAIL, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, JSPL, RINL and AMNS India — during April-February accounted for 62 per cent of the total output, and their finished steel output for 57 per cent.

JNARDDC spearheading 'Circular Economy' of non-ferrous metal sector

■ Business Bureau

JNARDDC in association with the Ministry of Mines under the aegis of country's think tank NITI Aayog is working on circular economy in non-ferrous metal sectors. This is an economic approach aimed at eliminating waste and the continual use of resources mimicking nature where the life cycle of biological products does not produce harmful wastes and do not harm the environment. The circular economy concept also brings cradle to cradle thinking and industrial symbiosis.

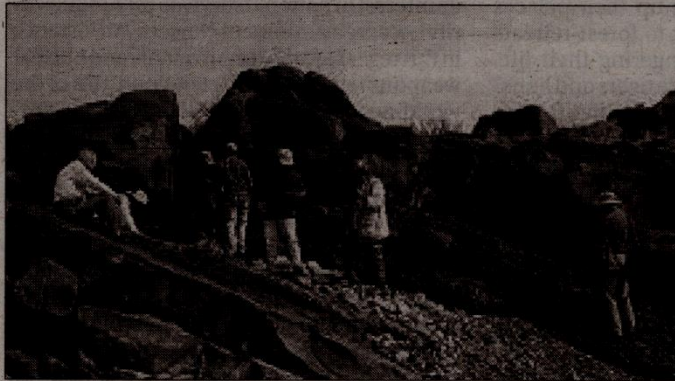
The country's think tank "NITI Aayog" is spearheading the idea of sustainable manufacturing in the metal sector and the Ministry of Steel is conferred with the responsibility of circular economy in the non-ferrous metal sector in the country. After several consultations with the stakeholders, the Ministry of Steel has

compiled the report on "Circular Economy in the Metal Sector" providing base information and recommendations for various metals including steel, aluminium, copper and zinc.

Based on recommendations of the report key agenda has been demarcated by NITI Aayog including regulatory actions, institutional actions, non-monitorable actions and several cross-cutting issues and responsibilities are assigned to relevant ministries and bodies.

Regarding the Circular Economy agenda, Director Anupam Agnihotri said that the Administrative Ministry "Ministry of Mines" has entrusted the city-based Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Development and Design Centre (JNARDDC) to carry out the important groundwork in relation to the country's agenda on circular economy in the non-ferrous metal sector.

Geological Survey DG calls for officers to work tirelessly for making India self-reliant in minerals



NEW DELHI, Mar 5 (PTI)

GEOLOGICAL Survey of India Director-General Rajendra Singh Garkhal has called for young officers to make use of the modern technologies for carrying out explorations and other geo-scientific activities and work tirelessly to make the nation self-reliant in the mineral sector.

Garkhal underlined the strides made by the Geological Survey

of India (GSI) during the past 172 years and stressed the need to sustain the same through various initiatives that the organisation has taken up under its missions.

He pointed out that GSI has been instrumental in identifying mineral blocks and augmenting vast mineral resources of the nation, the mines ministry said in a statement.

Garkhal highlighted that GSI

recently handed over more than 150 G2 and G3 mineral blocks as well as 152 G4 mineral blocks to various state Governments for auctioning.

GSI, the country's premier geological organisation, celebrated its 172nd Foundation Day across all the offices with great enthusiasm. The main function was held at the Central Headquarters of GSI, Kolkata on Friday, where Garkhal inaugurated the celebrations.

The organisation was set up in 1851 primarily to find coal deposits for the Railways. Over the years, GSI has not only grown into a repository of geo-science information required in various fields in the country but has also attained the status of a geo-scientific organisation of international repute.

Its main functions relate to creating and updating national geo-scientific information and mineral resource assessment.

Ministry of Mines recognises Nagpur-based JNARDDC as MRA

■ Staff Reporter

JAWAHARLAL Nehru Aluminium Research - Development and Design Centre (JNARDDC), Nagpur has been recognised as Metal Recycling Authority (MRA) by Ministry of Mines for Aluminium, Copper, Lead and Zinc recently.

Ministry of Mines has entrusted JNARDDC to carry out the important groundwork in relation to the country's agenda on Circular economy in the non-ferrous metal sector.

JNARDDC is doing groundwork on zero waste policy in the non-ferrous metal sector, utilisation of red mud and spent pot-lines in the cement industry, SoPs for Zinc dust recycling, extended producers' responsibility for wastes and scraps, awareness programmes on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency, exchange programmes with international bodies etc. Also, a series of stakeholder meetings is being organised to

get the views and inputs from the stakeholders to prepare the draft guidelines. All these activities are timebound and the Ministry of Mines and NITI Aayog are earnestly following the progress.



Circular economy is an economic approach aimed at eliminating waste and the continual use of resources mimicking nature where the life cycle of biological products does not produce harmful

wastes and do not harm the environment. The circular economy concept also brings cradle to cradle thinking and industrial symbiosis. Ministry of Mines has sanctioned two important research projects to JNARDDC under the circular economy theme -- undiluted recycling of cast aluminium alloys jointly with BML Munjal University, Gurugram and Ramakrishna Engineering College Coimbatore, and Solid-state recycling of aluminium swarfs in association with TATA Advanced Systems Ltd. (An Aerostructure Manufacturing Company).

Uptrend strengthens

Gold and silver breach key hurdles

AKHIL NALLAMUTHU

BL Research Bureau

Gold and silver continued to rise on the back of safe-haven demand. As the talks between Russia and Ukraine is not making progress, the market was kept on its toes and there has been considerable volatility. The international spot price of gold and silver appreciated by 4.3 and 6.1 per cent to end the week at \$1,968.5 and \$25.67 per ounce, respectively. Similarly, gold and silver futures on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) appreciated 4.7 and 6.6 per cent to end the week at ₹52,559 (per 10 grams) and ₹69,160 (per kg), respectively.

On the fundamental front, there are mixed signals. The demand for gold ETFs (Exchange Traded Funds) continue to improve whereas the latest data by the World Gold Council (WGC) shows that the central banks dumped the yellow metal in January this year. The data shows that ETFs has seen net inflows of about 77 tonnes this year till February 25 whereas the global gold reserves fell by 12 tonnes in the first month of this year.

MCX-Gold (₹52,559)

The April futures of gold on the MCX appreciated and closed above the key resistance of ₹52,500 last week. Thus, the bulls are clearly in the driving seat and so, further increase in price is highly likely. On the upside, the nearest notable resistance is seen at ₹56,000. A breakout of ₹56,000 can lift the price to ₹60,000. On the other hand, if the trend reverses, ₹52,500 will offer good support for the contract. Subsequent support is the price band of ₹50,000-50,500.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Given that the trend is up and that the resistance at ₹52,500 is breached, traders can be bullish. We have been carrying the long positions for the past couple of weeks. The stop-loss of those longs are at ₹49,500 with a target at ₹56,000. One can continue to hold these positions. Fresh buys can also be initiated with above-mentioned stop-loss and target levels.

MCX-Silver (₹69,160)

The May silver futures gained last week and ended above the key resistance at ₹68,500. Also, it moved above the 200-day moving average (DMA) last week. While ₹70,000 can be a barrier, given the current upward momentum, the contract will most probably ease past this level and touch the price band of ₹73,000-73,500. Subsequent resistance is at ₹76,500. On the downside, the contract finds support at 200-DMA, which is currently at ₹66,350. Below this, ₹65,000 is a considerable support.

Traders can now consider fresh longs. That is, buy at current level and on a dip to ₹66,350 with initial stop-loss at ₹64,700. When the contract reaches ₹73,500, revise the stop-loss to ₹69,500. Liquidate the longs when price touches ₹76,000.

Coal India cannot retain loss-making mines: official

Aim is to remain competitive, says Jain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA

Mining behemoth Coal India will not have the luxury to retain its loss-making mines with its aim to remain competitive in the wake of privatisation of coal blocks, a senior government official said on Monday.

It is also expected that India will have a surplus of coal for thermal power plants by next year even though electricity demand grows by 6%, he said.

"Reforms will make the coal sector more vibrant for consumers of the dry fuel but there will be a churn in mining activities. I think



Coal India will not have the luxury to drag on loss-making mines and continue with financially-inefficient mines," Coal Secretary A. K. Jain said while addressing a conference organised by Mjunction.

Last year, the PSU had announced that it would close down 23 unviable mines.

100,000 TONNES SHORT POSITIONS Chinese Tycoon Loses Billions in Nickel Shorts

Bloomberg

A Chinese tycoon who built a massive short position in nickel futures is facing billions of dollars in mark-to-market losses after the metal surged more than 170% in two days, according to people familiar with the matter.

Xiang Guangda -- who controls the world's largest nickel producer, Tsingshan Holding Group Co., and is known as "Big Shot" in Chinese commodity circles -- has closed out part of his company's short position and is considering whether to exit the wager altogether, the people said. Nickel rocketed to a record high above \$100,000 a ton on Tuesday, driven in part by Tsingshan and its brokers' activity, before trading was suspended.



While the exact scale of Xiang's losses is unclear, Tsingshan's short position on the LME is in the region of 100,000 tons of nickel, people familiar with the matter said. It could be even larger than that when positions taken through intermediaries are taken into account, people separately said. That means it would have suffered well over \$2 billion of daily losses at the most extreme point of nickel's surge on Monday.

War, demand to ensure steel prices keep rising: SteelMint

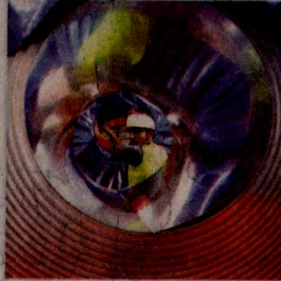
Govt.'s large infra plan to boost local steel demand: ICRA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The price of steel will continue to move upwards on 'good demand' and as the supply chain remains affected amid the Ukraine-Russia conflict, according to industry consultancy SteelMint.

The prices in the international market have risen by about \$135 a tonne and are moving up since the conflict started in the last week of February, SteelMint founder and CEO Dhruv Goel told PTI on Tuesday.

"In the domestic market, prices of hot-rolled coil (HRC) in the first week of March were in the range of ₹68,000-69,000 a tonne against ₹65,500-66,500 a



tonne in the previous week; while for cold-rolled coil, at ₹73,000-74,000 a tonne compared with ₹71,000-72,000 a tonne in the preceding week," Mr. Goel said.

"The conflict has impacted the movement of raw materials as well as goods. There is a good demand for steel. We anticipate these two factors will further im-

prove the prices," he said.

According to industry figures, before the conflict between Russia and Ukraine began, oil prices stood at \$90 a barrel. Crude is now trading near \$120 a barrel and there is a projection that it would reach \$180 a barrel in a few days.

As oil prices have gone up, freight rates of cargo ships, which currently stand at \$20,000 a day, are likely to reach \$30,000 per day.

As per ICRA, domestic steel demand is expected to grow at 7-8% in FY2023 on the back of an estimated growth of 11-12% in FY2022, supported by the government's large infrastructure spending plans.

India's diamond industry may lose sheen on conflict

Russia's diamond miner Alrosa is a critical source for India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA

Sanctions imposed by the United States and European nations on Russia in the wake of its aggression on Ukraine is likely to have a direct impact on the Indian diamond industry at a time when it is on a recovery mode after the pandemic and is aiming at \$24 billion revenue in FY'22.

Russia's biggest diamond miner Alrosa supplies about 30% of the rough diamonds globally and is a critical source for India. India imports, cuts and polishes 80-90% of the world's rough diamonds.

There is no major impact as of now though there are problems in fund transfer with some banks. We are



keeping our fingers crossed and monitoring the situation as Alrosa is a critical source," Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) ED Sabyasachi Roy told PTI.

He said orders for the next two months were placed before the war broke out and sanctions were imposed. "As of now we know Alrosa as a company is not

under sanctions."

Rating agency Crisil in a note said sanctions will have a bearing on growth of the diamond industry.

"The sanctions have severed Russia's central bank and two major banks from the SWIFT system. While they do not prohibit business with Alrosa, trade settlement has become difficult, which could lead to supply disruptions," it said.

The Indian diamond industry, which is almost entirely export-oriented, is likely to clock revenues of \$24 billion this fiscal.

"If the trade disruption is protracted, next quarter's sales will be down by 25-30% shaving off about \$2-2.5 billion," Crisil Ratings director Rahul Guha said.

युद्ध का खामियाजा : फरवरी के आखिरी हफ्ते से अब तक कॉपर, जिंक, निकल, लेड और एल्युमिनियम के दाम बढ़ गए हैं

13 दिन में तीन गुना तक महंगे हुए बेस मेटल्स ईवी, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, व्हाइट गुड्स, बर्तन तक असर

बिजनेस संवाददाता | नई दिल्ली

रूस-यूक्रेन युद्ध के चलते बीते माह के आखिरी हफ्ते से अब तक कॉपर, जिंक, निकल, लेड और एल्युमिनियम के दाम घरेलू बाजार में 201% तक महंगे हो गए हैं। अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार में तो इनकी कीमतों में 300% से भी ज्यादा उछाल आ चुका है। इसके चलते इलेक्ट्रिक वाहन, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, व्हाइट गुड्स और बर्तन समेत वे तमाम चीजें महंगी हो जाएंगी, जिनमें बेस मेटल्स इस्तेमाल होते हैं। जबकि इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों में इन सभी बेस मेटल्स का इस्तेमाल होता है। अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार में 24 फरवरी से अब तक सबसे ज्यादा करीब 302% फीसदी कीमत निकल की बढ़ी है। इसका सबसे ज्यादा इस्तेमाल स्टेनलेस स्टील और बैटरी इंडस्ट्री में होता है। घरेलू बाजार में भी यह बेस मेटल 201% महंगा हो गया है। इसका सीधा मतलब है कि स्टेनलेस स्टील से तैयार होने वाले बर्तन और मेटल उपकरण जैसी आम जरूरत की सभी चीजें महंगी हो जाएंगी। निकल के अलावा कॉपर, जिंक, लेड (सीसा) और एल्युमिनियम की कीमतें बढ़ने से भी बिजली से चलने वाले उपकरण और अन्य सामान महंगे हो जाएंगे।



घरेलू बाजार में मेटल्स

बेस मेटल्स	24 फरवरी	8 मार्च	तेजी
निकल	1865	5617	201%
जिंक	303	377	24%
कॉपर	774	873	13%
एल्युमिनियम	275	311	13%
लेड	185	191	3.5%

सभी आंकड़े रुपए प्रति किलो, स्रोत: केडिया एडवाइजरी

बेस मेटल्स का इस्तेमाल

कमोडिटी	इनमें बढ़ रहा इस्तेमाल	पारंपरिक इस्तेमाल
निकल	वाहनों की बैटरी	स्टेनलेस स्टील
जिंक	बैटरी, इलेक्ट्रिक उपकरण	पेंट, रबर, कॉन्सर्टेक्स, दवा
कॉपर	इलेक्ट्रिक कार, अक्षय ऊर्जा	इलेक्ट्रिक केबल्स
एल्युमिनियम	कारों के उपकरण	केन, कंस्ट्रक्शन मैटेरियल
लेड	कार बैटरी, रेडिएशन प्रोटेक्शन	क्रिस्टल ग्लास, इंडस्ट्रियल यूज

ईवी के लिए बढ़ेगी मुश्किलें

बेस मेटल्स के दाम बढ़ने से इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों की कीमतों में सबसे ज्यादा बढ़ोतरी होगी। ऑटोमोबाइल इंडस्ट्री के एक्सपर्ट्स का कहना है कि पेट्रोल-डीजल महंगा होने के बाद कुछ लोग इलेक्ट्रिक व्हीकल (ईवी) का रुख कर रहे थे। अब बेस मेटल्स के दाम बढ़ने से ईवी की मैन्युफैक्चरिंग लागत भी बढ़ गई है। ऐसे में यह विकल्प भी आकर्षक नहीं रह जाएगा। ईवी पहले से पेट्रोल-डीजल गाड़ियों के मुकाबले महंगे थे। अब इनके दाम और बढ़ जाएंगे।

लंदन मेटल एक्सचेंज पर निकल की ट्रेडिंग बंद: सिर्फ दो दिन में निकल के दाम 250% तक बढ़ जाने के चलते लंदन मेटल एक्सचेंज (एलएमई) ने मंगलवार को निकल की ट्रेडिंग रोक दी है। बेतहाशा तेजी की वजह से ब्लॉकचैन को मार्जिन कॉल्लेस का भुगतान करने में काफी दिक्कत आ रही थी।

■ बेस मेटल्स की बढ़ती कीमतों से जल्द राहत मिलने की संभावना नहीं है। यह तेजी रूस-यूक्रेन युद्ध की वजह से है। युद्ध जारी रहने से तेजी बनी रहेगी। युद्ध खत्म हो जाने के बाद भी हालात सामान्य होने में 3-6 महीने लग जाएंगे।
- अजय केडिया, डायरेक्टर, केडिया एडवाइजरी

■ रूस बेस मेटल्स का बड़ा निर्यातक है। वह पूरी दुनिया को करीब 6% एल्युमिनियम और लगभग 7% निकल की सप्लाई करता है। इसीलिए रूस पर लगाए गए प्रतिबंधों का सीधा असर बेस मेटल्स के दाम पर नजर आ रहा है।
- जय प्रकाश गुप्ता, संस्थापक, धन

Consider fresh longs in MCX copper



AKHIL NALLAMUTHU
BL Research Bureau

The uptrend in continuous futures contract of copper on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) began after it hit a low of ₹336 in March 2020. The bull trend lost momentum after price reached ₹810 in May 2021. Since then, the futures has been tracing a broad sideways trend i.e., it has been oscillating between ₹685 and ₹810.

But last week, it broke out of the resistance and closed at ₹840.3. This has significantly increased the chances of the contract appreciating further. While it hit a fresh high of ₹886 on Monday, it is currently hovering around ₹850. Going forward, the contract could decline and retest the resistance-turned-support level of ₹810 before rallying past ₹886 and touch ₹900.

The contract could even rally to ₹935. But note that a break below ₹810 can weaken the bulls which could lead to a possible price correction to ₹760.

Major trend

Nevertheless, given that the major trend is bullish and the contract has seen a breakout of late, one can consider fresh buys on MCX copper futures.

Traders can go long at current level of ₹850 and accumulate more when the price drops to ₹810. Keep stop-loss at ₹780. When the contract drops to ₹810 and moves up or starts rallying without a dip, one can shift the stop-loss to ₹840 when the contract decisively breaches ₹886. Liquidate the longs when price touches ₹935.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES DATE : 10/3/2022 P.N.9

Cabinet OKs MMDR Act Update to Fix Royalty Rates of Minerals

It ensures auction of certain mineral blocks & thereby cuts imports

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to amend the Second Schedule to the MMDR Act to specify the royalty rates of certain minerals, including potash, emerald and platinum group of metals. The approval would ensure auction of mineral blocks in respect of glauconite, potash, emerald, platinum group of metals, andalusite and molybdenum thereby reducing imports of these minerals, an

official release said.

"Cabinet has approved proposal for amendment of Second Schedule of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, for specifying the rate of royalty in respect of Glauconite, Potash, Emerald, Platinum Group of Metals (PGM), Andalusite, Sillimanite and Molybdenum," it said.

The approval will help generating empowerment opportunity in the mining sector as well as the manufacturing sector which will further help in ensuring inclusive growth of a large section of the so-

ciety, the release said.

The Mines Ministry had proposed reasonable rates of royalty in order to encourage better participation in the auction of mines.

Without sharing any figure, it said the rates have been fixed after extensive consultations with the state governments and various ministries/ department of the central government.

The Ministry of Mines will provide methodology for calculation of average sale price of these minerals required for enabling auction of these mineral blocks.

BAN ON RUSSIAN OIL

Gold Slips from 19-Mth High as Risk View Eases

Bloomberg

Gold fell from near a 19-month high as risk sentiment improved, despite ongoing concerns that the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine will further fuel inflation and hurt economies.

European stocks and US futures climbed on Wednesday, the day after the S&P 500 tumbled to a nine-month low on worries that energy prices may extend gains as the US bans imports of Russian crude. Benchmark Treasury yields also rose as havens retreated, putting pressure on non-interest bearing gold.

Spot gold fell as much as 2.4% in London, moving back toward \$2,000 an ounce.



Bullion is still up about 10% this year as investors seek a hedge against the threat of an inflationary shock to the global economy. Holdings in gold-backed exchange-traded funds have reached the highest since March 2021, with inflows of about 152 tons this year, according to initial data compiled by Bloomberg.

The impact of the war in Ukraine and sanctions on Russia have reverberated across the globe, driving commodities higher on supply woes. The latest move by the US to ban Russian oil and the UK to phase out Russian crude imports by year-end has stoked further fears of stagflation, where prices rise while economic growth stutters.

"The ban on Russian oil by the US is causing more inflation jitters," said Howie Lee, an economist at Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp. "We all saw that coming, but still, it feels like a roller-coaster drop moment. With this ban, oil is easily expected to trade at new records. By that correlation, it is not difficult to see why gold may also be trading at a new record high soon."

Spot gold was down 2.3% at \$2,004.07 an ounce by 1:18 p.m. in London. Prices touched \$2,070.44 on Tuesday just \$5

BUSINESS LINES DATE : 10/3/2022 P.N.10

Indian steel makers tap export options

ABHISHEK LAW

New Delhi, March 9

There is a 152 per cent jump in iron and steel exports, in value terms, from India in April-Jan 2021-22 over the same 10-month period in 2013-14, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said in a tweet as he hailed the country's emergence as a key player in the global steel market.

The Union Commerce Minister said iron and steel exports for the April to January 2021-22 period stood at \$19,245 million, and compared it against \$7,638 million in the April-Jan 2013-14 period.

India is the world's second largest producer of steel.

"The immediate focus is to achieve exports to the tune of \$400-500 billion," VR Sharma, MD, Jindal Steel & Power Ltd (JSPL), told *BusinessLine*.

According to data available on the Union Ministry of Steel's website, 11.142 million tonnes of finished steel was exported in the 10-month period of FY22, an increase of 26 per cent y-o-y from 8.84 million tonnes in April-Jan of FY21.

"Trends suggest India should be able to close FY22 at around 15 million tonnes of export," an industry insider said, adding that currently the quartet of JSW - JSPL - Tata Steel - Arcelor Mittal account for close to 80 per cent of exports.

Geopolitical tensions

Markets are expecting the Russian invasion of Ukraine and subsequent sanctions on the former to benefit Indian exports through opening up of new markets, primarily Europe. The global steel trade stood at 237 million in CY20, of which Russia exported 29 million tonnes and 9 million tonnes of this went to Europe.

"Post-sanctions on Russia, we expect steel shortage in Europe to emerge that should result in escalation of prices until alternative sourcing is arranged. This will take time given the quota system on steel imports in Europe," said Motilal Oswal in a recent report.

Indian mills stepping in

Interestingly, Indian steel mills are stepping in to fill the supply gap.

"There is a shortage of steel in Europe and the Middle East and Africa region and that supply will be bridged partly by India and partly by China," JSPL's Sharma said, adding, "We are seeing good orders from these places in the last week or so, with some buyers asking for immediate delivery for shipment in March and April."

Some of the Indian steel makers executed orders to Europe at \$1,200-1,300 per tonne for plates and hot-rolled coil products; while long product prices (per tonne) were around \$1,000-1,100, say sources.

Scaling challenges

According to ratings agency ICRA, while new export markets will open up, Indian steel-makers could experience input cost pressures in the near term as Russia remains a key supplier of "many steel-making materials" like iron ore pellets.

Indian mills reportedly are already operating at 80 per cent of their capacities and larger players have announced large capacity expansion to a tune of 40 million tonnes per annum, expected to be commissioned by FY26.

Cumulative capex — driven by the larger players — is expected to run to ₹600,000 crore by 2027, say industry insiders.

Mining and minerals are important for society and nation: Radhakrishnan B

■ He was speaking at the 75th Foundation Day function of IBM

■ Staff Reporter

MUNICIPAL Commissioner, Radhakrishnan, B highlighted the paramount utility of mining and mineral industry to the development of the nation and praised the work done by Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM).

He said, IBM plays a paramount advisory role to the Ministry of Mines Government of India on mining and matters of mineral industry. Radhakrishnan was speaking during the 75th Foundation Day function of Indian Bureau of Mines celebrated as 'Khanij Divas' under

the guidance of Sanjay Lohiya, Additional Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Mines and Controller General, Indian Bureau of Mines.

Radhakrishnan B was the chief guest. Hemaraj Suryavanshi, ADG (I/c), HoD Central Region and Head National Mission-II was guest of honour.

Peeyush Narayan Sharma, Chief Controller of Mines (I/c), IBM was President of the function. Dr Dillip R Kanungo, Director (Ore Dressing) (in-charge) was Convener of the program. The programme was conducted by Mineral Processing Division on-line mode because of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

Dr D R Kanungo gave welcome speech. L B Toal, Ore Dressing Officer proposed a vote of thanks.

BUSINESS LINE DATE : 10/3/2022 P.N.3

Mining of new minerals opened up to reduce import dependence

OUR BUREAU

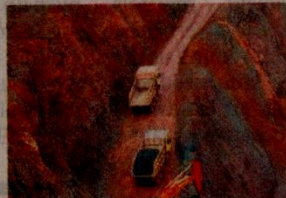
New Delhi, March 9

The Cabinet on Wednesday opened up mining of a new group of minerals as part of its strategy to boost domestic mining and to reduce import dependence.

The move comes at a time when India hopes to attain self-sufficiency as the Russian invasion of Ukraine affects mineral imports, and is expected to increase fertiliser and food subsidies allocated in the Budget.

Cabinet approval

The Cabinet approved an amendment to the second schedule of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, specifying the rate of royalty of certain minerals that include glauconite, potash, emerald, the platinum group of metals



Amendment will generate opportunities for mining sector

(PGM), andalusite, sillimanite and molybdenum. The rate of royalty for andalusite, sillimanite and kyanite have been kept at the same level.

The amendment will lead to the auction of these mineral blocks for the first time in India, and is expected to generate opportunities for the mining and manufacturing sector. It is also expected to reduce imports of potash fertilisers and other minerals, and ensure availability of minerals for downstream industries

and support agriculture.

"The approval will lead to import substitution of many important minerals, thereby saving valuable forex reserves. It will reduce the country's foreign dependence through the local production of minerals," a government statement said.

The statement added that the country is totally dependent on imports to meet its requirements in case of these minerals.

BUSINESS LINE

DATE : 10/3/2022 P.N.8

Wait for a correction in zinc futures



AKHIL NALLAMUTHU

BL Research Bureau

On March 1, the continuous futures contract of zinc on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) broke out of resistance at ₹310. The price spiked and hit a fresh high of ₹376.65 on Tuesday. However, the price softened and closed at ₹333 yesterday. Notably, ₹325 is a good support.

Although the major trend is bullish, the volatility in the past couple of days triggered long unwinding. Thus, the rally is being capitalised for profit booking. So, going ahead, bulls need to regain traction and build fresh longs. Until then, the contract could stay sideways or might even witness a price correction.

Noteworthy support is at ₹310, where the 21-day moving average coincides. And there is a rising trendline which can provide a dynamic support. On the upside, a daily close above ₹350 can bring back buying interest.

Given the above factors, traders can stay out of zinc futures now. Consider fresh longs at ₹310 and ₹300 with stop-loss at ₹285. When the contract touches ₹350, book one-third of the longs and alter the stop-loss to ₹305. Liquidate the remaining if

Vedanta, Welspun Among 29 Bidders in Fray for Mittal Corp

HIGH INTEREST Several other cos have requested more time to submit EoI for the distressed co

In the Hunt

Overwhelming response due to hopes demand for steel consumption would rise

Mittal Corp has verified claims of ₹1,587 cr

Mittal Corp among 15 shortlisted cos to be transferred to a bad bank

Bidders expect sale of co to be fast-tracked after loans are consolidated at bad bank

Sangita.Mehta
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Anil Agarwal-promoted Vedanta, Welspun Corp, OP Jindal-led Jindal Stainless and Ares SSG Capital-backed Assets Care & Reconstruction Enterprises are among 29 applicants to have shown interest in acquiring distressed steel company Mittal Corp, which is undergoing insolvency proceedings, said two people aware about the development.

UK-based PE fund Synergy Metals & Mining Fund, founded by former ArcelorMittal executive Sudhir Maheshwari; tobacco maker Bommidala Enterprises; Jhawar family-promoted JICS Logistic; air cargo service provider GSEC; Prudent Asset Reconstruction Company's RKG Fund and road developer Kalyan Toll Infrastructure also submitted expressions of interest (EoIs), the people said.

Several other companies have requested an extension of time to submit EoIs, a third person said. To increase participation, the resolution professional may either invite EoIs again or extend the deadline, the person said.

Several mid-sized steel manufacturers, including Shyam SEL & Power, Rimjhim Ispat, KL Rathi Steels, SKM Steels, GR Sponge & Power, Sharp Ferro Alloys, Shree Yash Stainless and Jaideep Ispat & Alloys in partnership with Rajratan Global

Wire, have also submitted EoIs.

In 2016, lenders had attempted to sell the company to a strategic buyer by converting its debt into 51% equity under the then prevailing strategic debt restructuring scheme approved by the Reserve Bank of India. However, the account deteriorated since lenders were unable to find any buyer. It was subsequently admitted to NCLT following a petition from Punjab National Bank.

Sintex Inds' RP Extends Voting Date to Mar 18

MUMBAI: The resolution professional of Sintex Industries has extended the voting date to March 18 for the four resolution plans after many lenders sought time to seek their approval from their respective boards, said two people aware about the matter. All four plans – Reliance Industries, Assets Care & Reconstruction Company (Acre) team; Himatsingka Ventures, Welspun and GFCL – were put to vote on March 3, the people said. The voting was originally scheduled to end on March 10, people said. – **Our Bureau**

THE HINDU DATE : 11/3/2022 P.N.13

'Coal imports from Russia may be highest in 2 years in March'

'Russia may offer more competitive rates to Indian buyers'

REUTERS
NEW DELHI

India's coal imports from Russia in March could be the highest in more than two years, data showed, as Indian buyers continue buying the fuel from a market that is now increasingly isolated by sanctions.

Vessels carrying at least 1.06 million tonnes of coking coal, mainly used for steel-making, and thermal coal, used primarily for electricity generation, are set to deliver the fuel at Indian ports in March, the highest since January 2020, data from consultancy Kpler showed.

Russia, usually India's sixth-largest supplier of coking and thermal coal, could



start offering more competitive prices to Chinese and Indian buyers as European and other customers spurn Russia because of sanctions, traders said, adding that the trade could also be boosted by a rouble-rupee trading arrangement. About 8,70,000 tonnes of Russian coal have already been delivered or

are expected to be delivered at Indian shores until March 20, the highest since April 2020, Indian consultancy Coalmint said.

The number would be higher if more coal was loaded at Russian ports since mid-February, as it typically takes about a month for Russian vessels to deliver to India, said Aditi Tiwari, coal market head at Coalmint.

"Indian buyers have taken a back seat after the... sanctions on Russia. They are looking out for alternatives."

But at least three vessels carrying coal set sail to India from Russia after its invasion of Ukraine, according to Re-finitiv vessel tracking data and an industry source.

Aluminium futures: Use dips to buy

AKHIL NALLAMUTHU

BL Research Bureau

After breaking out of a crucial resistance at ₹255 in early February, the continuous contract of aluminium on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) rallied sharply to hit a fresh high of ₹325.4 on Monday. But then, the contract fell sharply and is currently trading around ₹270, largely due to profit-book-

ing. The cumulative open interest (OI) of aluminium futures



dropped to 2,682 contracts compared with 4,565 contracts last weekend.

Notably, the price level of ₹265 is a considerable support. A break below this level can drag the contract to ₹255. A breach of this level is less likely as this is a significant support. Moreover, the major trend is bullish. Also, there is a rising trendline, which can act as a dynamic support.

Therefore, the contract can be expected to gain traction and move up either from current level ₹270 or could fall to ₹255 and then resume the upward movement. It is likely to rise to ₹310 in the short-term. A breach of this level can lift the contract to ₹325. However, if the support at ₹255 is invalidated, we might see a decline to ₹236, its nearest support.

Since the overall trend is up and the contract is trading above key supports, one can consider fresh longs. That is, buy at current level of ₹270 and add more longs if price drops to ₹255. Place initial stop-loss at ₹245. When the contract moves above ₹290, tighten the stop-loss to ₹270. Liquidate the longs at ₹310.

CIL e-auction: 100% coal lapped up

5.2 lt of coal offered under single-window enabled better price discovery

OUR BUREAU

Kolkata, March 10

Coal India's first ever offer of nearly 5.2 lakh tonnes of coal under the recently revamped single-window e-auction saw the entire quantity booked.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs had, in the last week of February, allowed sale of non-linkage coal through a single e-auction window, thereby merging earlier multiple auction windows into one outlet. Following this, only the spot e-auction will serve all types of coal consumers now.

Consumers from regulated,

non-regulated sectors and traders will bid for coal under one common window. CIL conducted the first ever e-auction under the revamped system in two of its subsidiaries on March 3, 2022. The entire quantity of 3.2 lt offered by Northern Coalfields Ltd and over 1.98 lt by Eastern Coalfields Ltd got totally ordered, the company said in a press statement.

Preferential mode

CIL's offer of e-auction coal is now mode-agnostic, which means the company will not specifically mention transportation mode of coal, ex-colliery.

Earlier, the mode for coal booked under different auctions used to be specified. With rail as default mode, customers, however, have the op-



The Union Cabinet gave its nod to common e-auction window for coal companies

tion to choose their preferred mode — rail or road. "The upshot is discovery of true market price for coal with removal of the segmentation. Previously, same coal used to fetch different prices in different e-auction windows. Another point in favour of the new system is increased transparency, with all the offered coal placed in a single basket. Hitherto,

coal companies had the discretion of separate offers for different windows," the statement said.

Level playing field

Further, there will be a level playing field for all consumers with same price structure. Other benefits include elimination of cartelisation due to wider base of participants. As all e-auction coal will be placed in the same basket, the bidder will have more choice and, as a result, bookings are likely to increase. Speaking to *BusinessLine*, Rupesh Sankhe, analyst at Elara Capital India, said the revamped auction system will help CIL and other coal companies earn better premiums as they will get to know the exact demand at aggregate level, and their average realisation will go up.

High aluminium prices to benefit Indian producers

Domestic firms source most of their raw materials locally

OUR BUREAU

Mumbai, March 10

Indian aluminium producers are expected to benefit from high global prices as most of their inputs are domestically sourced even as low coal supply to non-power sector by Coal India remains a concern.

Global aluminium prices increased 18 per cent from January-end fuelled by rising geo-political risks amid the ongoing Russia-

Ukraine war. Further, aluminium prices have touched an all-time high of \$3,875 a tonne in the first week of March and currently trading at \$3,320 a tonne, indicating tightness in the global supply.

Rising energy costs

Aluminium prices are expected to remain at the elevated levels due to low inventory worldwide and if any sanction on Russian aluminium exports will squeeze out the supply further.

Russia contributes almost 12 per cent to global trade in aluminium with exports primarily diverted



Russia contributes almost 12% to global trade in aluminium

to Europe. Further the sharp rise in energy cost in European countries will push up aluminium prices.

The energy exchange rates have increased by almost three times in Europe since September 2021 and resulted in significant smelting cost pressures.

At the current tariff, cost of power to produce a tonne of aluminium is higher than the current LME spot aluminium prices. Consequently, almost 0.7 mtpa of capacity (15 per cent of installed capacity in Europe) has already been shut down since December 2021. Any restriction on gas supply from Russia to Europe could aggravate energy crisis.

Given the elevated power costs, aluminium production in Europe will remain severely impacted, which is also reflected in month-on-month decline in aluminium production. Fur-

ther, disruption in alumina supplies from Ukraine, faced by the leading Russian producer Rusal and reduction of 2 million tonne of aluminium capacity by China last year are expected to keep aluminium prices higher in the near term.

Jayanta Roy, Senior Vice-President, ICRA said domestic primary aluminium producers are better placed as their energy requirements are met primarily through coal-based captive power plants and over two-thirds of their coal requirement is met through captive mines and linkage coal from Coal India.

Prices of industrial raw materials soar

From crude oil to coal to steel, rates have increased sharply since February 24

SUBRAMANI RA MANCOMBU

Chennai, March 10

Industrial raw material prices have surged sharply since the Russian troops entered Ukraine on February 24, with commodities ranging from crude oil to coal, steel, tin and soldering material lead, among others, soaring.

The deepening of the Russia-Ukraine crisis has seen the US, Europe, Japan and others imposing economic sanctions on the Kremlin. Fears over the impact of the sanctions have led to prices of a whole lot of commodities surging.

Besides, the suspension of operations at Port of Odessa in Ukraine, bringing shipments of all cargoes to halt have aided the uptick in prices of various raw materials, including for food and feed purposes.

Fair indication

In particular, prices of commodities such as crude oil, nickel, palladium, aluminium,



Fears over the impact of sanctions have led to a surge in prices

wheat, sunflower oil and corn have skyrocketed to record highs since Russia — a key exporter of metals and wheat — and Ukraine — which has a significant share in exports of sunflower oil, wheat and corn — are major suppliers in some of these commodities in global markets.

A fair indication of the spike in raw materials prices is the rise in the London Metal Exchange (LME) index - comprising aluminium, copper, nickel, lead, zinc and tin - by nearly 10 per cent last week. It had touched a record high of 5,505 on March 7 before easing.

Similarly, the CRB index consisting of 19 commodities, including aluminium, copper, cocoa, coffee, sugar, soyabean, wheat, nickel, gold and crude oil, gained over 10 per cent in

the past week to 328.76. The index is up 25 per cent year-to-date.

S&P GSCI index, which measures returns in the commodity sector and includes 24 commodities across the energy sector, industrial metals, precious metals, agricultural produce and livestock products, has increased by almost 17 per cent in the past week. Year-to-date (YTD), the index is up nearly 36 per cent.

Analysts say prices of commodities have soared mainly as some buyers have panicked. For example, in the case of wheat, buyers have queued up to buy the foodgrain from the US, Argentina, Canada and Australia. Also, in Asia, some of the buyers are looking at India and Pakistan, resulting in prices rising sharply.

Among other raw materials that have surged are coal, both thermal and metallurgical, and iron ore. Metallurgical coal prices have increased by over 50 per cent since the geopolitical crisis deepened.

Currently, benchmark Newcastle coal price on the Intercontinental Exchange is quoted at \$385 a tonne. Spot coal from Australia is quoted about \$500, according to reports.

THE HITAVADA DATE : 12/3/2022 P.N.6

Coal shortage haunts consumers despite WCL's record production

■ According to a senior officer in Western Coalfields Limited (WCL), the company has so far dispatched 60 million tonnes of coal in 2021-22, which is a new high for the miner



■ By Niraj Chinchkhede

EVEN as coal production in the region is at its record high in the current fiscal, consumers cutting across the industries are facing severe shortages of the commodity and the prices are trading at new highs.

According to a senior officer in Western Coalfields Limited (WCL), the company has so far dispatched 60 million tonnes of coal in 2021-22, which is a new

high for the miner. The company is likely to complete dispatches of 64 million tonne of coal by March 31 against the dispatch of 50.27 million tonne in the previous financial year (2020-21).

However, General Secretary of the Central India Coal Dealers Association Rajendra Bansal said that the commodity is in short supply. "Post pandemic, coal is enjoying big demand from the industrial category consumers but its supply is not up to the

mark. This demand and supply mismatch is pushing up prices in the domestic markets," he said, highlighting that thermal coal has witnessed a price range of Rs 9,000 to Rs 12,500 per tonne (including royalty, cess and GST) in the e-auction conducted by WCL in February. In a similar e-auction held in October 2021, coal was sold between the price range of Rs 5,000 and Rs 5,500 per tonne.

Consumers other than power

generators, for whom WCL conducts e-auctions, alleged that the sharp rise in the price was only because of short supply of coal. The non-power category consumers of the region need more than 10 lakh tonne coal per month but the company offers less than half of the quantity in the auction.

Following the trend, WCL is set to conduct a spot auction of 2.58 lakh tonne of coal on March 14, a quantity which is much less than the actual requirement. Experts said that less availability of coal will further take up the prices. It is important to note that the WCL has recently cut the coal allotment quota of the non-power consumers saying fulfilling the requirement of power generators is its top priority.

On the other hand, power generators are also making hue and cry over coal scarcity.

When asked, another senior

officer in WCL on the condition of anonymity said that the overall demand for coal has gone up considerably in the last 5-6 months. "Though our production is at a record high, it is not in line with the market demand," he said. Further stressing on the other global factors playing crucial role in the coal sector, the sources said, "Imported coal prices are trading at all time high because of which most of its consumers in the regions are buying the commodity from the domestic markets. This has created additional demand for coal. In addition, the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia is also pushing up the coal prices in the international markets and its effect in domestic markets cannot be ruled out," they observed. In the meanwhile, the soaring price of coal is giving sleepless nights to steel, coal and other industries.

NMDC's iron ore output grows 13% in Jan-Feb '22

New Delhi: State-owned mining giant National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has produced 8.87 million tonnes (MT) of iron ore during January-February 2022, a year-on-year rise of about 13%.

According to company data, NMDC had produced 7.72 MT of iron ore during the first two months of 2021.

During the period under review, the country's largest iron ore miner saw its sales growing 17% to 8.21

million tonnes, from 6.99 million tonnes in January-February 2021.

Hyderabad-headquartered NMDC, under the Ministry of Steel, is the country's largest iron ore mining company with mines in states including Karnataka and Chhattisgarh. Iron ore is a key steel making raw material.

The NMDC is also involved in the exploration of a wide range of minerals like copper, rock phosphate, limestone, dolomite and gypsum. AGENCIES

MCL is largest coal producing company in India

SAMBALPUR (ODISHA), Mar 14 (PTI)

THE Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), a unit of the CIL, has crossed 157 million tonne (MT) in coal production in the financial year of 2021-22, to become the leading coal producing company in the country, a release said.

On March 12, 2022, the company produced 7.62 lakh tonne of dry fuel which is the highest in a day during the current financial year reaching 157.7 MT with a growth of around 16 per cent over the last financial year, the company release said.

Chairman-cum-Managing Director of the company, OP Singh congratulated all officers, staff, employees of contracted companies and other stakeholders for their contribution in making MCL the leading coal producing company in country.

"MCL has to play a bigger role in ensuring energy security to the nation," CMD said in his congratulatory message to all the employees. Surpassing all the previous records, the company has despatched over 166 MT dry fuel to consumers.

Nickel prices stabilise, likely to rule firm

Rates down to \$48,000 from over \$100,000/t; supplies may be affected

SUBRAMANI RA MANCOMBU

Chennai, March 14

After having run amok to over \$100,000 a tonne last week, nickel prices have stabilised around \$48,000 currently with analysts projecting prices to rule at elevated levels for the remainder of the year and even beyond.

Nickel, which hit a record high of \$101,365 a tonne on March 8, was quoted at \$48,226 a tonne on Monday. Prices of the metal, used in making stainless steel, other alloys, batteries, electronics and medical devices, have doubled in the past month and trebled in the past year.

Panic in market

Nickel prices have soared after the commencement of Russia-Ukraine conflict, leading to a geopolitical crisis. The market panicked since Russia accounted for 9.5 per cent of global mine production and 20 per cent of refined nickel.

While Russia has banned exports of nickel, the metal's trading was affected due to sanctions announced by the US, Europe and their allies against Kremlin. "We believe that prices could remain very high in the near and medium-term, in excess of previous historical highs, due to the prospect of greater sanctions from the West and firms preemptively self-sanctioning," said Fitch Solutions Country Risk and Industry Research (FSCRIR), a Fitch group unit. "Nickel prices would remain elevated in 2022 due to structural issues in the market. These issues are an important vector behind the current crisis," said ING Think, a financial and economic analysis wing of Dutch multinational financial services firm ING.

Crisis over short positions

The nickel market is also facing a crisis over short positions taken by Chinese Tsing-



While Russia has banned nickel exports, trading was hit due to sanctions by the US, Europe and their allies against Kremlin

shan Holding Group founder Xiang Guangda with the LME toying with the idea of giving the Chinese more time to settle the issue. Also, at least three global banks, led by JP Morgan Chase and Co, are trying to come to an agreement to tide over the crisis.

Fitch Solutions said, an end to the crisis and withdrawal of sanctions against Russia would still leave nickel prices above its previous estimates for the medium term at least. "We expect Russian production to be impacted and Western firms to remain hesitant about re-engaging with a risky market and developing trade ties," FSCRIR said. ING Think

said though the fundamentals support the strong prices, they do not justify the "frenzy" witnessed on March 8. "Strong demand has continued this year with the battery sector remaining firm, while stainless steel was in a seasonal lull but expected to pick up in the coming months," it said.

Low inventories

Fitch said the surge in prices last week turned out to be "more dramatic" by low inventories of nickel forcing consumers to scramble for other supplies since importers had turned their back on Russian producers. "Depleted inventories will be an important

factor in the coming weeks as demand chases restricted supply," the research agency said.

According to ING Think, 81 per cent of nickel ores and concentrates of Europe's imports come from Russia. Specifically, the European Union gets 30 per cent of its nickel imports from Russia. Exchange tradeable and deliverable nickel is only 25 per cent of the nickel that can be sold globally.

"But the supply growth is increasingly dominated by non-exchange deliverable nickel. This suggests that the underlyings behind the exchange nickel are increasingly decoupling from the real market. What we are seeing right now is only part of the impact as the nickel industry is constantly evolving," it said.

Fitch Solutions said the disruptions in supplies are likely to prolong with the Russia's mine output being affected in the short and long term. Production in Norilsk Nickel, which made up 64 per cent of Russia's nickel production in 2020, could be affected due to financial and export issues.

Gold set for correction once war ends

COMMENTARY

G CHANDRASHEKHAR

Gold has got a new lease of life in 2022. Its haven status has been boosted by geopolitical developments (Russia-Ukraine war). Raging inflation too has drawn attention to gold as a good inflation-hedge. Additionally, huge inflow of speculative capital and risk of reduced supply from Russia (about 9 per cent) have combined to propel gold prices higher.

The metal has witnessed a rally of approximately 10 per cent and breached the psychological \$2,000 a troy ounce mark recently. War has created a risk-off environment that's positive for gold. Until war tensions continue

and inflation stays high, the yellow metal will remain well supported. So, in the short-term it could trade in \$1,900 to \$2,100 range.

However, war will ease sooner rather than later. In the event, gold will face an imminent sharp correction. Tightening liquidity, firm dollar and likely stock market rebound will combine to make gold less attractive.

That's the time, less-committed speculative capital will exit gold. First a big correction of \$100-150 an ounce and then smaller corrections towards \$1800/oz should surprise no one.

Under normal geopolitical situation, the base case is that gold will trade closer to \$1,800/oz by June and then move gradually down to \$1,750/oz by the last quarter



of 2022. Indian prices will generally reflect global trends. The domestic prices have the potential to decline by anything between ₹4,000 and ₹5,000 per 10 grams from the current levels.

Rupee the surprise

The rupee could be the surprise factor. The currency is likely to weaken towards 77-79 to the dollar levels in the months ahead. So, the benefit of the fall in dollar price of gold may not be fully avail-

able to the Indian consumers. It is safe to assume Indian tax rates on gold will not change.

India is unlikely to see any marked expansion of gold jewellery demand. Inflation continues to erode the purchasing power even as consumers continue to demonstrate a cautious approach.

If anything, at the current high prices, scrap sales will increase. Gold demand is price and income elastic. At higher prices there will inevitably be demand destruction.

(Excerpts of the author's speech at the recently concluded India International Bullion Summit 2022 in Mumbai. The author is a policy commentator and commodities market specialist. Views are personal)

+++++