

Defence exports rocket to ₹21,000 crore in FY24

ATMANIRBHAR. Up 32% over FY23 on policy reforms: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

Dalip Singh
New Delhi



NEW HEIGHTS. India exports defence products to over 85 countries, with over 100 firms shipping arms and systems

India's defence exports have scaled "unprecedented heights", topping ₹21,000 crore in FY24 for the first time since independence, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday. He said defence exports reached ₹21,083 crore in 2023-24, which is a "spectacular growth of 32.5 per cent over the previous fiscal..."

Although India is still the world's largest arms importer, a strong push on Atmanirbharta in the last decade has brought the country to a position wherein over 100 private and public sector undertakings (PSUs) are now exporting defence equipment and systems to more than 85 countries.

According to comparative data shared by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) of two decades — from 2004-05 to 2013-14 and 2014-15 to 2023-24 — there has been a growth of 21 times in defence exports. Defence exports during 2004-05 to 2013-14 totalled ₹4,312 crore, and this has soared to ₹88,319 crore in the 2014-15 to 2023-24 period. The Defence Ministry said the

figures indicate that the defence exports have grown by 31 times in the last 10 years 2013-14.

The Ministry believes that this "remarkable growth has been achieved due to the policy reforms and 'Ease of Doing Business' initiatives of the government, in addition to the digital solutions provided to the Indian industries for promoting defence exports."

KEY EXPORT ITEMS

India's main exports include Akash missile systems, Dornier 228 aircraft, Advanced Light Helicopter, Brahmos supersonic missiles, patrol vessels,

unmanned systems, radars, simulators, explosives, avionics, surveillance systems, bullet-proof jackets, armoured vehicles and body-spares parts for aircraft and copters.

The major export destinations are Italy, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Russia, France, Nepal, Mauritius, Israel, Egypt, the UAE, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Guyana, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, Poland, Spain, Chile, the US, Armenia and Brazil.

Now, India has got queries from Nigeria and Argentina for its Light Combat Aircraft Tejas, and 155 mm Advanced Towed Artillery Guns. India is simultaneously eyeing the South

American market. It recently extended a Line of Credit of \$23.37 million to Guyana, allowing it to procure two Dornier 228 aircraft from Hindustan Aeronautics.

"The increased defence exports are also an indication of coming of age of the Indian industry," Rajinder Singh Bhatia, President of Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers, told *businessline*.

HAL's FY24 revenues soar to ₹29,810 crore

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

Defence PSU Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) has recorded its highest-ever revenue from operations at ₹29,810 crore, registering a growth of 11 per cent against ₹26,928 crore in the corresponding period last year.

"As on March 31, the company's order-book stands in excess of ₹94,000 crore with additional major orders expected during FY25," said CBAnanthakrishnan, CMD, HAL.

Business Line Dt 02/04/24.

Silk goods exports jumped 20% to ₹1,534 cr during April-Jan 2023-24

Our Bureau

Bengaluru

Exports of silk products from the country have risen by about a fifth during the April-January period of financial year 2023-24 on rise in overseas demand for fabrics, made-ups and readymade garments from markets such as the US and Europe.

Silk goods exports stood at ₹1,534 crore during April-January period of 2023-24 compared with ₹1,269 crore during the same period a year ago. In dollar terms, the exports were up around 16 per cent at \$185.42 million over \$159 million the same period a year ago, as per the provisional official data.

Exports of silk readymade garments were up 16.27 per cent at ₹648.55 crore (from ₹557.79 crore in the same period last year). The shipments of fabrics and made ups were up 9 per cent at ₹492.81



GOOD GOING. Silk readymade garment exports were up 16.27% at ₹648.55 crore from ₹557.79 crore in the same period last year

crore (from ₹451.63 crore).

The exports of silk wastes registered an increase of 85 per cent at ₹275.93 crore (from ₹149.27 crore), while the demand for silk carpets was a tad higher at ₹79.03 crore (from ₹76.37 crore).

MAJOR GROWTH

Raw silk exports registered a major growth at ₹8.35 crore (from ₹0.60 crore). However, the exports of silk yarn saw a decline of around 11 per cent

during the period at ₹29.67 crore (from ₹33.23 crore).

Meanwhile, the imports of raw silk into the country has reduced by about a third during the April-January period of the financial year 2023-24 at 2,348 tonnes over same period last year's 3,474 tonnes.

The value of raw silk imported into the country fell 30 per cent to \$134.13 million during April-Jan 2023-24 from \$192.26 million in the same period last year.

New auto mission plan to focus on growth, exports

ROHIT VAID

New Delhi, April 1

AS PART OF its 'Vision 2047', the government has started consultations with the industry to frame a national automotive plan, or a long-term vision document, to promote the sector and new technologies such as electric mobility.

The document will highlight policies, incentives and future trends in the industry, sources told FE. It will look at ways to further develop the sector and promote exports. The Ministry of Heavy Industries has urged industry bodies such as SIAM and ACMA to participate in the process.

The government had earlier framed Automotive Mission Plan (AMP) 1, which lasted from 2006 to 2016, and AMP 2, from 2016 to 2026.

The first AMP, among other things, dealt with establishment of testing agencies like ICAT while the second AMP focused on new technologies such as electric.

The third AMP, which is of a longer duration than 10 years, is expected to look into various

aspects required for the sustainable growth of the industry, keeping in mind emission targets.

"It is proposed to make a new AMP now," sources told FE. "A committee will be formed with representation from the industry to look into each component of the auto sector."

"Terms of reference" for the new policy will be decided after taking stakeholders' views. Input would be sought from industry representatives on whether or not to include internal combustion engine (ICE)-powered vehicles in the policy. "We need to decide whether or not to include ICE or any other powertrain vehicles. As of now, EVs seem to be the main trend that the document will focus on," a source said.

The need and scope of incentive-based schemes will also be considered. At present, the ministry runs schemes like as Auto-PLI, ACC-PLI, EMPS and the E-Vehicle Policy.

"Non-fiscal initiatives for the industry to support the adoption of new technologies, such as handholding or collaboration, would also be considered while framing the document," sources said.



LONG-TERM VISION

- Aims to promote the sector and new technologies such as electric mobility
- 'Terms of reference' for the new policy will be decided after taking stakeholders' views
- Need and scope of incentive-based schemes will also be considered

Business Live. Dt: 03/04/24

Coffee exports topped ₹10,000 crore in FY24

DEARER BEANS. Robusta prices soar on supply shortage in Brazil, Vietnam; shipment volumes drop marginally

Vishwanath Kulkarni
Bengaluru

Thanks to the surging trend in global Robusta prices, India's coffee exports for the financial year ending March 2024 touched a new high in value terms.

Despite a marginal decline in the volumes shipments were at a new record. In fact, financial year 2023-24 was the third consecutive year during which Indian coffee shipments registered a new record.

In dollar terms, Indian coffee shipments registered an increase of 12.5 per cent to \$1.26 billion over \$1.12 billion in the 2022-23 fiscal. Similarly in the rupee terms, exports were up 16 per cent at ₹10,491 crore over ₹9,033 crore.

SUPPLY ISSUES

In quantity terms, the exports saw a marginal decline of 2.5 per cent at 3.88 lakh tonnes over 3.98 lakh



FAVOURABLE FACTORS. Global robusta prices are at a three-decade high on supply issues in the top producing countries. This has worked to the advantage of the Indian coffee sector, where robusta is the most widely-produced variety

tonnes in 2022-23. The global robusta prices are at a three-decade high on supply issues in the top producing countries. This has worked to the advantage of the Indian coffee sector, where robusta is the most widely-produced variety.

As a result of high robusta prices, the per unit realisation for Indian exporters went up by about a fifth to ₹2.7 lakh per tonne during 2023-24 compared with ₹2.26 lakh in the previous financial year. "A combination of factors such as the good market prices for Indian coffee, supply side disruptions in Brazil and Vietnam have helped push up the exports," said K G Jagadeesha, Secretary and CEO, Coffee Board. "Our export quantity in the last three years has increased principally from instant coffee," he

A new high

	FY23-24	FY22-23
Volume (in tonnes)	388,048	3,98,574
Volume (US\$ million)	1,267	1,126
Value (€ crore)	10,491.57	9,033.38
Unit Value (€/tonne)	2,70,375	2,26,415

Source: Coffee Board

said.

India exports over about two-thirds of the around 3.5 lakh tonnes of coffee produced in the country. It also imports cheaper robusta coffee to re-export them after value addition.

Ramesh Rajah, President, Coffee Exporters Association, said, most of the increase in export value during financial year 2023-24 has come from the robustas. The demand is good and the shipments during the last two quarters of the financial year have been better than the earlier quarters.

FARMGATE PRICES

Farmgate prices of robustas in India have overtaken the

arabicas in the recent weeks, tracking the global uptrend. Robusta parchment prices are ruling at ₹14,000-14,500 per 50 kg bag, while the robusta cherry, the widely-produced coffee variety in the country, is ruling at ₹8,500-8,950.

Arabica cherry coffee is hovering around ₹8,000-8,300 per bag, while Arabica parchment is ruling at around ₹13,900-14,500.

In fact, Indian robusta parchment AB is commanding a premium of \$700-750 a tonne over the London terminal prices, while the premiums for robusta cherry is hovering around \$350-400 per tonne.

Italy, Germany, Russia and UAE are among the major destinations for the Indian coffees. For the crop year 2023-24 starting October, the Coffee Board, in its post-blossom estimates, has projected a crop size of 3.74 lakh tonnes over the previous year's final estimates of 3.52 lakh tonnes.

Business Line. Dt: 04/04/24

Centre allows export of another 10,000 tonnes of onion to UAE

Our Bureau
New Delhi

The government has allowed the export of an additional 10,000 tonnes of onion to the UAE through the National Cooperative Exports Ltd (NCEL), beyond the 14,400 tonnes permitted on March 1. As much as 79,150 tonnes of onions have been approved for export since the ban on shipments was announced on December 8, 2023.

The government had justified the export ban during FY2023-24 citing the global supply scenario and the dry spell under El Niño, which reduced onion output in India. Before the ban, the government had first levied 40 per cent export duty on onion in



UNCLEAR. The Centre had said earlier that only 3,500 tonnes will be allowed for exports to UAE per quarter. But the April 1 notification does not specify if there is any cap for the current quarter

August 2023 and then introduced a minimum export price (MEP) in October to ensure domestic availability.

It has since allowed export of 550 tonnes to Bhutan, 3,000 tonnes to Bahrain, 1,200 tonnes

to Mauritius, 50,000 tonnes to Bangladesh, and 24,400 tonnes to the UAE.

TIME-BOUND OR NOT? Traders, meanwhile, pointed out that while there was a ceiling

of 3,600 tonnes of onion exports per quarter to UAE in the March 1 notification, the April 2 notification has no such stipulation, leaving it unclear whether the additional 10,000 tonnes can be exported anytime beyond the quarter.

Recently, the Centre announced it would buy 5 lakh tonnes (1t) of onion directly from farmers to cushion the export ban. Rabi onion production is set to dip 18 per cent to 193 lt in 2023-24 (July-June) from 236 lt a year ago. Rabi onion contributes 72-75 per cent of the country's annual production, making it crucial for year-round availability, especially since it has better shelf-life compared to kharif onion and can be stored until December.

Business Line. Dt: 04/04/24

Govt allows export of 1,000 tonnes of *Kala Namak* rice; UP farmers to gain

Our Bureau

New Delhi

The Centre has allowed export of 1,000 tonnes of *Kala Namak* raw rice, a premium non-basmati variety from Uttar Pradesh, through any of six select destinations, including ports, without duty, after certification by the State government. Currently, export of parboiled rice alone is allowed at a 20 per cent rate of duty, while shipment of all other non-basmati rice varieties is prohibited.

A Finance Ministry notification issued on April 2 said the export of *Kala Namak* rice will be permitted through customs stations in Varanasi Air Cargo, Jawaharlal Nehru Custom House (JNCH) at Nhava Sheva (Raigad, Maharashtra), Customs House Kandla (Gujarat), Land Customs Station (LCS) Nepal-



ganj in Bahraich district (UP), LCS Sonauli at Mahara-gganj district (UP) or LCS Barhni in Siddharthnagar district (UP).

CUSTOMS STATIONS

The exporter has to furnish "a certificate to the Deputy Commissioner of Customs or the Assistant Commissioner of Customs, as the case may be, from the Director, Agriculture Marketing & Foreign Trade, Lucknow, Uttar Pra-

desh, certifying the item and quantity of *Kala Namak* rice to be exported." Sources said it was planned to allow export through some ports in Chennai, but later on it was changed to use LCS in Uttar Pradesh, which delayed the notification.

As reported earlier, there is no distinction made between evolved varieties (dwarf plants) and traditional varieties (greater height of plant) in the current notification and both types are allowed.

"Government should come up with standards for other GI varieties and specialty varieties. Instead of classifying rice as basmati rice and non-basmati rice, the labelling of rice as specialty, aromatic, premium and common could increase export realisation and in turn boost farm income," said S Chandrasekaran, a foreign trade policy expert.

ROBUST GROWTH LIKELY IN MARCH

Merchandise exports may contract in FY24

SHREYA NANDI

New Delhi, 3 April

Merchandise exports from India for the financial year 2023-24 (FY24) may show a contraction of around 1-1.5 per cent after two consecutive years of growth, even as March is likely to witness robust double-digit growth, according to initial trade data estimates. The final data is still being compiled and will be released by the commerce department on April 15.

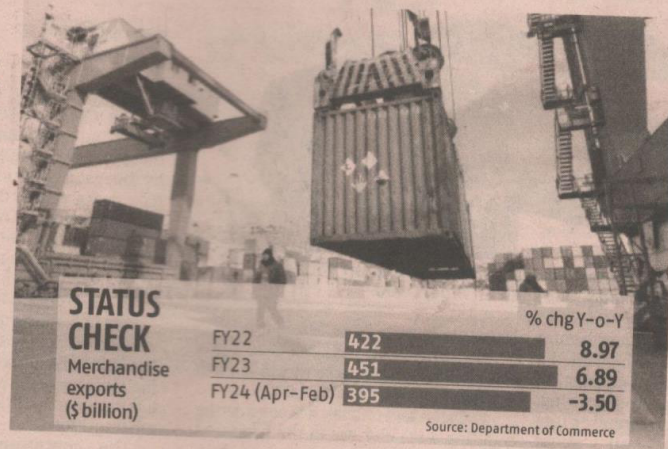
"During FY23, India exported goods worth \$451 billion and FY24 is expected to see a small dip on a cumulative basis. The demand for Indian goods, in terms of volumes, is expected to grow. The contraction can be attributed mainly to the falling commodity prices," an official told *Business Standard*.

On a cumulative basis, during the April-February 2023-24 period, merchandise exports stood at \$395 billion, which is 3.5 per cent lower than during the same period a year earlier. During the 11 months — April to February — six months saw contraction and exports largely hovered around \$33-\$34 billion. The sustained uptick started only in December onwards.

India's merchandise exports grew at the fastest pace in 20 months at 11.9 per cent in February, despite the disruption due to the Red Sea crisis. Goods worth \$41.4 billion were exported. The momentum is expected to continue in March, said the person cited above.

"...We have surpassed all predictions. March figures should also be very good. It shows resilience in the export sector. The 2024-25 financial year will also be very good," commerce secretary Sunil Barthwal told reporters in a briefing last month.

A 1-1.5 per cent contraction in merchandise exports will mean that outbound shipments will hover around \$50 billion in March, surpassing the FY22 figure of nearly \$45 billion. If overall exports — goods



and services — are taken into account for FY23, the growth is expected to be positive. During the April-February period, services exports stood at \$314.82 billion, as compared to \$294.89 billion during the same period a year earlier.

Last week, commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said in FY24, India's exports are expected to be 'flat or a little bit on the positive side', despite the Israel-Hamas war and the Red Sea-related disruptions. "Goods and services together will continue to be positive despite two wars and the Red Sea crisis. We will be doing \$2 trillion of exports by 2030 and I have no doubt in my mind," Goyal said at the Business Standard Manthan event.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad), international trade is expected to rebound in the calendar year 2024, reversing last year's downturn, amid lingering geopolitical uncertainties. However, it warned that the logistical challenges such as shipping disruptions in the

Govt eyes \$12 bn seafood exports in next two years

The government is aiming to expand its seafood exports to around \$12 billion in the next two years from \$8 billion currently, mainly by focusing on high-end markets including the United States and Europe, two government officials said on Wednesday. India has emerged as the biggest supplier of seafood, particularly frozen shrimps, to the United States, with exports doubling over eight years to \$2.6 billion in FY23, one of the officials at the Commerce Ministry told a small group of reporters.

PTI

Red Sea, Black Sea, and Panama Canal cast shadows over the optimistic outlook, and can raise costs and disrupt supply chains.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS. Dt: 04/04/24

India targets ₹1-trn marine exports

MUKESH JAGOTA
New Delhi, April 3

INDIA IS AIMING to reach ₹1 trillion in marine product exports in the next two years by increasing its processing capacity and a shift to higher value added products, a senior official said on Wednesday.

India's exports of marine products were \$8.09 billion (₹63,969 crore) in 2022-23 and in the April-February period, it fell 7.5% on year to \$6.8 billion. The decline in demand is from the US and Europe, which are the key markets. Among marine products, shrimp exports have a 67% share. The US is the single biggest market, taking in \$2.4 billion out of \$5.6 billion worth of



shrimp that left Indian shores.

The US imported 275,662 tonne of frozen shrimp, followed by China at 145,743 tonne. The overall export of frozen shrimps during 2022-23 was pegged at 711,099 tonne.

Indian shrimp has 40% share of the US market. A big chunk of Indian shrimp that makes its way to the US gets processed in Ecuador. India wants to do that processing locally to capture the higher value of exports.

There are around 100,000 shrimp farms in India, most of which are in Andhra Pradesh. A recent media report in the US had alleged poor working conditions and food safety standards in the shrimp farms of India. A similar report on Thailand's shrimp industry in 2015 killed the dominance of Thai exports in the US market. Now, the target is India.

An official of the Marine Products Exports Development Authority (MPEDA) denounced the recent study

report by the Chicago-based Corporate Accountability Lab and *Associated Press* as baseless and driven by vested interests aimed at maligning the reputation of India's aquaculture sector and its products in global markets.

The official said that all the shrimp farms that are involved in exports adhere to the standards which have been accepted by importers in the US.

"The production and processing systems are regularly monitored by regulatory agencies in India and are subjected to audits by inspectors of the US FDA (Food and Drug Administration), European Commission, GAC of China, Export Inspection Agency, MPEDA, and scores of private and certification audits," he added.

tary or department for promotion of industry and internal trade, told *Bloomberg* in an interview on Thursday.

"We will help them out in terms of giving them the contacts at state level," Singh said. "There have been contacts made at that level with state governments and the central government. VinFast has already announced and we expect a few others."

Vietnamese automaker VinFast recently broke ground on an EV manufacturing facility in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu.

Tesla is planning to send a team of people to scout for locations in India this month for a proposed \$2 billion to \$3 billion electric car plant, the *Financial Times* reported earlier this week, citing people familiar with the matter that it didn't identify. Tesla would also look to increase purchases of auto parts from the nation to as much as \$15 billion, *Bloomberg* reported in November. Musk's carmaker has for years been making a case for cutting import taxes before it commits to any significant investment in one of the world's biggest automobile markets.

To get tax concessions, companies will have to invest at least ₹41.5 billion (\$500 million) and start producing EVs from a local plant within three

Business Standard DT: 05/06/24

Tesla begins car production in Germany for export to India

REUTERS

New Delhi/Berlin, 4-April

Tesla has begun production of right-hand drive cars at its plant in Germany for export to India later this year, three people aware of the company's plans told Reuters, as it moves ahead with a possible entry into the world's third-largest car market.

A team from Tesla is expected to visit India later this month to look at sites for a local car manufacturing plant that would require an investment of about \$2 billion, said two of the three people, who declined to be named because the plans are not public yet.

India last month slashed the import tax rate on certain electric vehicles if their makers invest at least \$500 million in the country and start production there within three years. The move is a win for Tesla, which had lobbied for months for lower taxes, but faced resistance from local carmakers.

"The right-hand drive cars which will be allocated

Telangana courts EV giant

The Telangana government is holding discussions with Tesla by putting in all efforts to establish their plant in the state, Industries Minister D

Sridhar Babu said on Thursday. In a message on X Sridhar

Babu said since December 2023 the state government has been actively focusing on major investment opportunities by

global giants, and as part of its focus, Tesla's planned investment initiatives in India are also being tracked.

"We have been studying and tracking Tesla's planned investment initiatives in India. We have been making all out efforts to bring Tesla to Telangana for some time..." he said.

to India, they have started building them," one of the people said, with some cars due to be shipped to India by the end of the year.

It was not immediately clear which model Tesla plans to export to India. It currently produces only the Model Y at its factory near Berlin. Under the new Indian policy, companies can import up to 8,000 cars a year at the lower tax rate.

Tesla did not respond to an email seeking comment outside US office hours.

The plans for shipments to India are the first

indication of right-hand drive (RHD) cars being produced in Berlin. Tesla's Shanghai plant, its primary export hub located nearer to right-hand-drive markets, such as Australia and Japan, has so far handled

production of such vehicles. Tesla imported RHD Model Y vehicles for its launch in the UK from China and has not said whether it has shifted to importing from Berlin. The carmaker has eyed the Indian market for years and its officials visited the country several times over the past year.

Indian merchandise exports have European silver lining

Shipments to Europe saw 2% growth in 2023 against 4.8% decline overall

SHREYA NANDI
New Delhi, 7 April

Despite tough economic conditions, Europe provided a modest boost to Indian merchandise exports during the calendar year 2023, even as overall shipments from the country contracted.

Exports to Europe, comprising 27 European Union (EU) countries, four European Free Trade Association (EFTA) nations, and seven other countries, witnessed 2 per cent growth year-on-year (Y-o-Y) at \$98 billion during 2023, while merchandise exports saw a 4.8 per cent contraction in the year.

The increase, even though modest, came even as the region was nearly hit by recession and recorded tepid economic growth. "Indian exporters shouldn't shy away from exporting goods to Europe, which is India's largest export market region-wise," a government official told *Business Standard*.

Exports to the EU saw 2.05 per cent Y-o-Y growth at \$75.18 billion in 2023, while those to the EFTA came in at \$1.88 billion, up 2.8 per cent.

Other European countries, including large markets such as the United Kingdom (UK), Turkey, and five other countries, imported goods worth \$21.56 billion from India, up 0.59 per cent.

The increase in exports to the following countries was robust: The United Kingdom (10.72 per cent), Switzerland (3.09 per cent), the Netherlands (24.57 per cent), Romania (116.85 per cent), the Czech Republic (25.51 per cent), Austria (4.43 per cent), Hungary (0.43 per cent), Norway (1.87 per cent), among others.

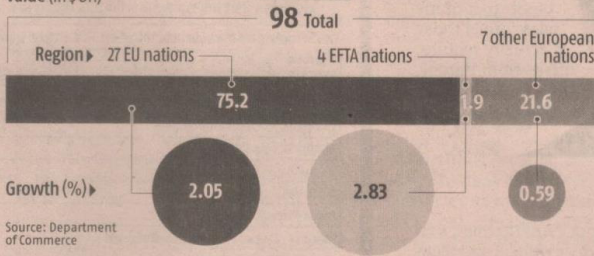
This was driven by demand for products such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, petroleum products, engineering products, machinery, as well as chemicals, the government data showed.

The jump was the sharpest in the case of the Netherlands. Exports grew by a fourth to \$23.11 billion. The UK also saw growth of almost 11 per cent to \$12.42 bil-



EXPORTS TO EUROPE IN 2023

Value (in \$ bn)



lion. Ajay Sahai, director-general (DG) and chief executive officer (CEO), Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), said one of the reasons that drove the growth was the ongoing free-trade agreement (FTA) talks with the EU and UK.

"Because of the FTA talks, exporters are keen to look into the EU and the UK market. In the hope of the UK FTA, exporters have started building trade relationships with businesses in these countries and even started exporting. Secondly, we have been able to increase our petroleum exports to Europe in 2023. Otherwise, many economies are in depression. Considering that, growth has

been encouraging," Sahai.

However, India's otherwise big markets in the EU, such as Belgium, France, Germany, and Spain witnessed a contraction, indicating that growth was uneven.

The contraction can be attributed to the overall trend in most of the advanced economies of tepid demand largely due to inflation triggered by high interest rates. Exports to Belgium contracted 18.13 per cent at \$7.97 billion, while those to Germany fell 7.58 per cent to \$9.67 billion. In the case of France, the dip was 10.8 per cent at \$7.12 billion, with a contraction in exports to Spain at 3.88 per cent at \$4.62 billion.

Laptop imports dip after curbs, China's share surges

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
AND RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
New Delhi, April 7

IN JANUARY, NEARLY 90% of the laptops and personal computers (PCs) imported by India came from China. In the month before that, Beijing's share was well over 89% and, in November, the figure was 83%. In all, until January in FY24, nearly eight out of 10 laptops sold in India came from China, shows an analysis of the commerce ministry's import-export data bank.

This rising trend was despite New Delhi's attempts to discourage laptop and PC imports from China. These efforts included a short-lived notification by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) in August 2023, which placed the import of these goods under the restricted category, and the government sweetening its IT hardware manufacturing incentive policy to kickstart domestic production. And yet, India's total laptop imports went up by 5% in FY24 (until January) compared to FY23, and China increased such exports to India by 6%, according to the data. China's total exports of laptops to India increased to 6.49 million units compared to 6.12 million units earlier. The latest data for this category (HSN: 84713010) available with the ministry are until January 2024.

The data show the immediate reaction to the DGFT's licence curbs and their almost immediate postponement was companies quickly stocking up their inventories. And after October, when the government revoked the import licence requirement, total imports fell (due to stocks being full) but China's share in the overall pie grew considerably.

These developments come even as the US, aiming to protect American companies such as Apple, Dell and HP, stepped up efforts to discourage the Indian government from imposing strict restrictions on laptop imports.

CHINA'S RISING SHARE IN LAPTOP IMPORTS



5% Rise in overall laptop imports from FY23 to FY24

6% Rise in Chinese laptop exports from FY23 to FY24

*Licensing regime imposed in Aug, almost immediately deferred till Oct
Source: Commerce & Industry Ministry

In August, when the import restriction notification was issued and postponed a day later by the DGFT, around 1.04 million laptops and PCs were imported to India. Of these, China accounted for 670,000, or roughly 64%. This was a rare decline in China's share of total laptop imports to India. In the same month, imports from Singapore saw a bump as it exported close to 256,000 units to India.

Industry executives explained that the reason behind the spike in Singapore's numbers came because in the moment of uncertainty that accompanied the DGFT notification, companies moved some of the billing and exports to the island nation, which is a global trading hub for a number of electronics manufacturers.

At the time, it had been reported that companies such as Apple and Samsung had frozen imports from China until there was further clarity and that the government put off the curbs by three months to October 31 amid intense pushback and lobbying from the industry.

Meanwhile, companies shored up their inventory, with laptop imports showing a big spike in September. A total of around 1.5 million units made their way into the country that month and China accounted

for more than 1.1 million units — close to a 74% share.

Similarly, in October, China accounted for around 71% of India's total laptop imports, exporting over 900,000 pieces of the total 1.3 million. September and October also preceded the festival of Diwali, when typically consumers purchase laptops and PCs.

By the time the government removed the licence restriction and introduced the import management system on October 20, companies had stocked up their inventory to the brim. As a result, overall laptop imports saw a sharp decline in November, with around 330,000 units coming to India. China's share of the total, however, jumped to nearly 83% as it accounted for

272,000 pieces — a trend that solidified in the next two months.

In December, India imported around 520,000 laptops (worth around \$276 million) and China commanded a lion's share of these at 89%, or 467,000 units. In January, China's share grew even further: India imported 690,000 laptops of which 620,000, roughly 90%, came from China. China's share was 92% in January 2023 as well, but that was not preceded by government efforts to discourage Chinese imports.

The trend comes at a time the government's production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for IT hardware is understood to be moving in the slow lane, despite the Union information technology ministry modifying the plan to increase budgetary outlay last May, and clearing 27 entities, including Acer, Asus, Dell, HP and Lenovo, under the scheme.

"The government had asked companies to come back with production targets under the scheme but they are yet to receive detailed projections by them despite repeated efforts," an industry source aware of the discussions said, requesting anonymity.

The import management system brought in place of the licensing requirement, manufacturers are required to disclose data related to the quantum of their imports and countries from which they import, among other things.

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA, Premises & Estate Department,
3rd Floor, LHO, Hoshangabad Road, Bhopal-462011

NOTICE OF INVITATION OF DESIGN COMPETITION PROPOSALS FOR ENGAGING PRINCIPAL PROJECT ARCHITECT CUM PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

State Bank of India (SBI) invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed and experienced Architectural Firms/Individual for participating in the Design Competition for selection and engagement of Principal Project Architect cum Project Management Consultant to render Architectural Consultancy Services for the Proposed construction of residential flats/ quarters on Bank's own plots at Chetana, Scheme No.78, Vijay Nagar, Indore.

The prequalification/eligibility criteria, scope of the services to be rendered, terms and conditions of appointment and prescribed formats for submission of application can be downloaded from Bank's website www.sbi.co.in "SBI in the news" under "Procurement News" (<https://sbi.co.in/web/sbi-in-the-news/procurement-news>) from 8th April, 2024 to 7th May, 2024 up to 3.00 PM.

Interested Architectural Firms complying prescribed eligibility criteria should ensure submission of their applications in the prescribed format with supporting documents at this office latest by 3.00 pm on 7th May, 2024. Applications received after due date and time will not be entertained. The SBI reserves its rights to accept any or to reject all the applications without assigning reasons therefor and no correspondence shall be entertained in this regard.

54/-
ASST. GENERAL MANAGER (Premises & Estate)