

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
DEPARTMENT FOR PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNAL TRADE**

RAJYA SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1981.
TO BE ANSWERED ON FRIDAY, THE 17TH MARCH, 2023.**

DROP IN DOMESTIC PRODUCTION OF COPPER

1981 SHRI NARANBHAI J. RATHWA:

Will the Minister of **Commerce and Industry** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that with the closure of Tuticorin Copper Smelter plant, there is steep drop in domestic production of copper;
- (b) if so, the details of decline in production of refined copper in India and its imports during the last three years, year-wise; and
- (c) the annual production capacity of Tuticorin Copper Smelter Plant and whether its closure is linked to some unscrupulous NGOs and if so, steps taken or proposed to be taken to re-commence the Tuticorin Copper Plant, in consultations with stake holders?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(SHRI SOM PARKASH)**

- (a) to (c):** The closure of the Tuticorin smelter plant of Vedanta in Tamil Nadu has decreased the domestic production of refined copper from an earlier production of 8.4 (lakh tonnes) in 2017-18. The details of production and import of refined copper for last 3 years are as under:

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Refined Copper Production (in lakh tone)	4.08	3.63	4.85
Import of refined copper (in lakh tone)	1.5490	1.5672	1.3918

The consented production capacity of the unit of M/s. Vedanta Limited, Copper Smelter Plant, SIPCOT Industrial Complex, Meelavittan Village, Thoothukudi Taluk and Thoothukudi District plant is Copper Anode - 1200 Tonnes/Day.

Given the non-compliance of conditions imposed in the consent orders issued to the unit, the groundwater contamination and air pollution caused due to the operation of the unit, it was closed, and the power supply was disconnected by Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board on 23.05.2018. It was closed and sealed by the District administration, Tuticorin, as per the orders of the Tamil Nadu Government on 28.05.2018.

Against the closure order, the unit filed Writ petition before the Hon'ble High Court of Madras in W.P. No. 5756 of 2019 and batch cases. Hon'ble High Court of Madras in its order dated 18.08.2020 dismissed the writ petitions filed by the unit and directed that the industry would remain closed. Against this order, the unit filed SLP vide Nos.10159 to 10168/2020 before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.
