

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY  
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 44**  
ANSWERED ON 02/02/2024

**GAP BETWEEN IMPORT AND EXPORT OF COPPER**

44. SHRI NARANBHAI J. RATHWA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that due to the closure of Sterlite Copper Plant, the gap between copper imports and exports have widened;
- (b) if so, the details of import of copper since the closure of copper plant in Tamil Nadu, year-wise; and
- (c) whether in view of global demand, Government would intervene proactively to find a solution for re-operating of copper plant in the interest of the nation's economy and if not, reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)

(a) to (c) The closure of the Tuticorin smelter plant of Vedanta in Tamil Nadu has affected the domestic production of refined copper. The spurt in imports in last two years is due to increased demand in copper refining reflecting a post pandemic recovery, especially the growth in user sectors such as infrastructure, construction, telecom, electrical, renewable energy and electric vehicles. The details of import of copper products since 2018-19 is as under:

PRINCIPAL COMMODITY GROUP	TRADE	VALUE (IN MILLION USD)						
		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2022-23(APR-NOV)	2023-24(APR-NOV)
COPPER AND PRODUCTS MADE OF COPPER	EXPORT	1067.262	919.0532	1444.122	2429.562	1848.544	1081.243	1602.121
	IMPORT	5346.726	5147.08	4665.364	7114.087	7688.396	4990.697	6415.729

Source: DGCI&S, Kolkata

Due to environmental concerns and public safety risks, the Tamil Nadu Government ordered the plant's closure in May 2018. The matter is presently sub-judice in Hon'ble Supreme Court.

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