Business Line. Dt:- 11/03/25

India to have competitive advantage in electronics exports to US: Experts

IMPORTS DOWN. But in terms of imports from the US, growth rate and revenue have been low in the last 5 years

S Ronendra Singh
New Delhi

India's competitiveness in the electronic sector will increase in the event of the US imposing reciprocal tariffs on exporting countries. With around 20 per cent tariffs being implemented across the board for all products from China/Mexico (unlike in the past when these categories were exempted), a sustained ramp-up of smartphone exports from India is likely.

"Some of the leading players in India have already started taking steps to capitalise on this, including Samsung and Apple who are sourcing around 23 per cent-15 per cent of global production from India in FY25, while Motorola and Google have also started exporting meaningfully," global research firm Nomura said.

In terms of value, Nomura said India exported electronics worth $2,549 million in FY20, which has grown to $11,125 million in FY24 and is estimated to reach $11,454 million in the current financial year. But in terms of imports to India from the US, the growth rate as well as revenue are comparatively low in the last five years.

BIG NUMBERS. India exported electronics worth $2,549 m in FY20, and is estimated to reach $11,454 m in the current year

DIFFERENT DUTIES

India imported electronics worth $2,616 million in FY20 from the US, which grew to $3,057 million in FY24 and is estimated to close the current financial year at $4,116 million.

According to Nomura, currently, import of fully assembled mobile phones attract 15 per cent duty, while imports of wearables/hearables, televisions and airconditoiners attract 20 per cent duty.

This is compared to no import duty in the US. However, most subcomponents for printed circuit board assembly (PCBAs), cameras and displays have zero import duty in India. IT hardware has zero duty while components such as displays, PCBA and mechanics are at 10 per cent duty. Given that imports are largely components and hardly any fully assembled products (except laptops) are imported, the weighted effective import duty rate is quite low at three-four per cent for India, it said.

According to the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC), North America has emerged as the largest importer of India's electronic instruments, accounting for 30.57 per cent of sectoral exports, followed by Europe (23.26 per cent) and Singapore, Hong Kong and other South Asian countries (16.09 per cent).

SIGNIFICANT GROWTH

"The significant growth in exports highlights the effectiveness of our strategic initiatives and the dedication of our manufacturers. As we continue to strengthen our presence in key markets like North America, Europe and Singapore, we remain committed to supporting our exporters in navigating the global landscape," Sandeep Narula, Chairman of Global Outreach at ESC, said.

However, Faisal Kawoosa, Chief Analyst and Founder of Techarc, said that currently Indian exports of smartphones are led by Apple, so any kind of reciprocal tariff is going to hurt them more than any other brand.

"I think, if this gets implemented, the US will have an exclusion list and insulate Apple, Google (Pixel), Dell and HP, which are either already or planning to export out of India. This will, however, result in trade imbalance, giving a few brands an edge. In such likelihood, it would be in our interest to look into US demands and help all brands exporting or planning to export out of India by offering a level-playing field," he said.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS. Dt: 11/03/25

Broken rice exports to W Africa, Indonesia markets set to rise

SANDIP DAS
New Delhi, March 10

The govt recently lifted the ban on broken rice exports, which was imposed in September 2022

THE GOVERNMENT'S MOVE to lift the ban on broken rice exports—the last of the restrictions on the shipments of the grain—is likely to aid market expansion in west African countries, including Gambia, Benin and Senegal, and Indonesia in the next fiscal, according to exporters.

They said that prior to the ban, which was imposed in September 2022, India used to ship 1-2 million tonne (MT) annually. Since then, it had ceded the market to Vietnam, Thailand and Pakistan.

"We will be able to restore our export competitiveness in 100% broken rice exports over the next couple of months," BV Krishna Rao, president of Rice Exporters' Association, told *FE*.

The move to lift curbs on broken rice exports could help reduce central pool stocks in India, the world's biggest exporter, and enable African countries to secure the grain at lower prices as well as support Asian animal feed and ethanol producers.

The export curbs were imposed after the Russia-Ukraine conflict disrupted the global supply chain. However, the Centre allowed the shipments to needy countries on a request basis such as Gambia, Benin, Senegal and Indonesia.

In FY24, India exported broken rice valued at $ 194 million. The value of exports of broken rice was $983 million in 2022-23 and $1.13 billion in 2021-22.

Stating that the government has now lifted all the restrictions on rice exports, which would boost shipments, Ranjit Singh Jossan, MD at Jossan Grains, a Punjab-based exporter of rice, said the ban on shipments had led to a sharp decline in prices, severely impacting the industry.

In September last year, the Centre removed export duties and minimum export prices on non-basmati and basmati rice exports imposed in 2023.

At present, the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other agencies hold 36.9 MT of rice stocks, excluding 31 MT receivable from millers. The rice stock is against the buffer of 13.58 MT for April 1.

In FY24, India shipped rice worth $10.41 billion, a decline of 6.5% on year, as shipments were hampered because of restrictions that were imposed to improve domestic supplies.

Exporters say rice exports in entire FY25 may see an increase of 15% to cross a record $12 billion because of robust global demand.

Buisness Line Dt: 12/03/25.

Rice exports from TN, AP to EU have been aflatoxin-free for the past 5 years: Govt

Our Bureau
Mangaluru

The government has said that no aflatoxin has been detected in rice exported to the European Union (EU) by exporters from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh over the past five years.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, Jitin Prasada, Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, said the individual countries, including the EU as a region, set their own Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for pesticides, based on the risk assessment carried out by them.

In many cases, the MRLs set by the EU, which are based on the hazard-based approach, are lower (stricter) than the MRLs set by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

GATHERING STEAM. The volume of non-basmati rice exports to the EU have increased by 500% during 2019-23

A FEW DETECTIONS

There have been a few cases of aflatoxin detection in the form of Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) in rice consignments exported from India to the EU.

"However, no detections have been reported for rice consignments exported by exporters of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in the last five years," he said.

The comparative level of MRLs of aflatoxin set by the EU, the US and the FSSAI is 2 mg/kg, 20 mg/kg and 10 mg/kg respectively.

The reply in the Lok Sabha said the volume of rice exports from India to the EU had increased by 111 per cent between 2019 and 2023, while the volume of non-basmati rice exports had increased by 500 per cent during the same period, which is higher than the ASEAN countries.

To ensure that rice growers comply with the MRLs set by the EU and other importing nations, State agriculture departments and agriculture universities conduct capacity building and sensitisation programmes for growers to adopt good agricultural practices and to ensure judicious use of agro-chemicals, he said.

Business Line Dt:- 12/03/25

Edible oil imports in Feb down to lowest level since May 2020 on higher stocks

AJ Vinayak
Mangaluru

The total imports of edible oils during February reached the lowest monthly levels since the Covid-hit May 2020.

Data compiled by the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) showed that India imported 8.85 lakh tonnes (lt) of edible oil in February of the oil year 2024-25 (November-October) against 9.58 lt in the corresponding month of 2023-24, registering a decline of 7.64 per cent.

BV Mehta, Executive Director of SEA, said this is the lowest monthly import since May 2020, when imports fell to 7.20 lt due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In February 2025, the import of palm oil dropped to a four-month low.

India imported a total of 3.73 lt of palm oil (including crude palm oil and RBD palmolein) during February 2025 against 4.97 lt in February 2024, a decline of 24.94 per cent.

Disparity in refining forced Indian importers to move to soft oils, he said.

BELOW 2 MT

Total soft oils import of India increased to 5.12 lt in February 2025 against 4.70 lt in February 2024, a growth 8.94 per cent.

However, the total edible oil imports increased to 46.69 lt in the first four months of the oil year 2024-25 from 46.06 lt in the corresponding period of the previous oil year, recording a growth of 1.35 per cent.

He said the recent drop in imports had been cushioned by high stock levels accumulated in India up to November 2024, which have now dropped below 2 million tonnes.

The rapid depletion of stocks is expected to drive increased purchases, particularly of palm oil.

Over the past few weeks, crude palm oil (CPO) prices have strengthened slightly relative to landed costs in the Indian market. However, weak price competitiveness in the global market may limit Indian palm oil imports in the near term, he said.

Stating that the growth in oil consumption is expected to slow down in oil year 2024-25, Mehta said the high price premium on palm oil has reduced both imports and consumption in recent months, leading to a sharp increase in the combined consumption of soyabean oil and sunflower oil.

CRUDE VS SOFT OIL

India imported 5.88 lt of refined oil (RBD palmolein) during the first four months of the oil year 2024-25 against 7.92 lt in the corresponding period of the oil year 2023-24.

The total crude edible oil imports increased to 40.80 lt (38.13 lt). The ratio of refined oil decreased to 13 per cent from 17 per cent due to lesser import of RBD palmolein in January 2025 while the ratio of crude edible oils increased to 87 per cent from 83 per cent.

Business Line, Dt. 13/3/25

Coal imports fall for 6th straight month in Feb

Rishi Ranjan Kala
New Delhi

India's thermal coal imports fell for the sixth consecutive month on an annual basis in February 2025 due to rising domestic production of the critical commodity.

According to global real-time data and analytics provider Kpler, India's thermal coal imports, largely consumed by the power sector, fell by 18.5 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) and 6.4 per cent month-on-month (m-o-m) to 11.36 million tonnes (mt).

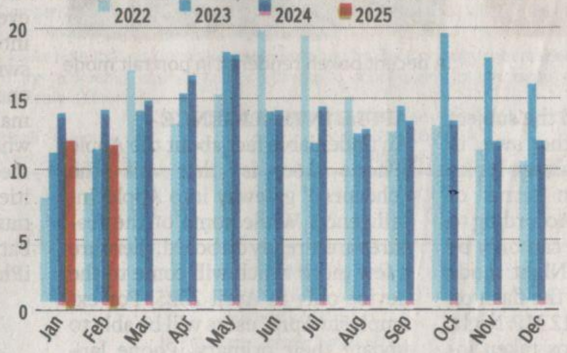
SEASONAL RECORD

Alexis Ellender, Senior Lead, Dry Bulks Insight at Kpler, pointed out that at 11.36 mt, February 2025 thermal coal imports were down by 2.58 mt y-o-y, a sixth consecutive month of annual decline.

"Coal-fired generation in India rose to a seasonal record in February on the back of robust economic activity; however, higher coal burn is not translating into higher seaborne imports due to the availability of domestic supplies, with combined stocks at power plants well above the year-ago level," he told *businessline*.

Changing landscape (million tonnes)

India's thermal coal imports see a decline as domestic supply meets power needs



Source: Kpler

As per the Coal Ministry, imports during April-December 2024 fell by 8.4 per cent y-o-y to 183.42 mt, resulting in foreign exchange savings of around $5.43 billion (₹42,315.7 crore).

Coal-based power generation grew by 3.53 per cent y-o-y during April-December 2024 with imports for blending by thermal power plants decreasing by 29.8 per cent. Coal production grew by 6.11 per cent y-o-y during the same period.

Kpler expects India's coal exports to grow during the peak power demand summer season.

"In a move intended to boost generation ahead of peak summer season, the government has extended a mandate requiring utilities burning imported coal to boost generation for a further two months until April 20. This will support seaborne demand, and we expect thermal coal imports to rise to close to 14 mt in March (2025) and remain strong through April-June," Ellender said.

India's coal production increased by 1.71 per cent y-o-y to 98.26 mt during February 2025. During the April to February period in FY25, the output rose by 5.45 per cent to 929.15 mt.

Business Line. Dt: 13/13/25

Soyameal exports down 19% in Oct-Feb on weak demand; production down 10%

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

Soyameal exports in the first five months of the oil year, starting October 2024, declined by about 19 per cent to 9.50 lakh tonnes as compared to 11.71 lakh tonnes (lt) a year ago on weak demand from overseas buyers.

Production of soyameal was down by about 10 per cent to 40.64 lt against 44.98 lt in the same period a year ago. The decline in production has been attributed to the weak demand from domestic and overseas markets.

The crushing has been sluggish due to the continuing subdued trend in the soyabean market, where prices of the oilseed continue to rule below the minimum support price (MSP) levels.

The market arrivals were lower at 66 lt for the October-February period — down 6 per cent from 70 lt a year ago.

Soyabean crushings during the period were also lower at 51.50 lt (57 lt).

FOOD DEMAND MUTED

Per the provisional estimates by trade body Soyabean Processors Association of India (SOPA), the domestic demand for the meal from the main consuming segment of livestock feed was also muted, witnessing a 6.7 per cent decline in offtake during the period at 27.50 lt (29.50 lt).

MIXED BAG. Demand from Europe continued to remain strong, while the offtake from Iran remained muted

The demand from the food segment also remains muted, with offtake estimated at 3.65 lt — down from 3.75 lt in the corresponding last year.

SOPA estimates the stocks with traders and crushing plants at 48.01 lt as of February-end. With the government agencies carrying out procurement at MSP, stocks with Nafed and NCCF are estimated around 20 lakh tonnes.

KEY IMPORTERS

Demand from European buyers, such as France and Germany, continued to remain strong during the period, while the offtake from countries such as Iran remain muted.

France was the largest buyer during this period with volumes exceeding 1.4 lt, followed by Germany at 1.34 lt and Nepal at over 1.03 lt.

Business Standard. Dt: 17/03/25

Oil imports fell 11% in Dec as supplies from Russia, Saudi fall

KEY SUPPLIERS

Crude oil imports in December

	Import ($ bn)	Y-o-Y chg (%)
Russia	3.19	-18.48
Iraq	2.26	6.76
UAE	1.55	59.83
Saudi Arabia	1.08	-43.18
Angola	0.53	183
US	0.43	5.20
Nigeria	0.31	65.28
Kuwait	0.23	-38.02
Total*	10.34	-10.60

*Total includes countries not mentioned here

Source : Commerce department

SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY

New Delhi, 16 March

Lower supplies from Russia and traditional West Asian suppliers such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait dragged down India's crude oil imports by 10.6 per cent in December 2024 to $10.34 billion from $11.57 billion in December 2023, according to official data.

Data released by the commerce department shows that imports were down 16.5 per cent sequentially from $12.4 billion of crude imported in November. The data is usually released with a lag of three months.

Importantly, imports from Russia fell for the first time in four months in December 2024.

This indicates crude supplies from Russia had begun to see a decline in value even before the latest spate of sanctions at Moscow was slapped by the United States in January.

Imports from Russia fell 18.48 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) to $3.19 billion in December 2024, down from $3.92 billion in December 2023.

But contracting imports were not only due to a fall in the price of crude oil, but also because of a 12.3 per cent decline in volume-wise imports from Russia, shows data.

International analysts had earlier said higher domestic demand in Russia had reduced outward flows, mostly due to Russian refineries resuming operations after scheduled maintenance. However, the falling incidence of discounts may also have played a part.

Among other major import sources, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait also sent 43.1 per cent and 38 per cent less oil, respectively. The volume of imports from the two countries was also down by 36.4 per cent and 33.6 per cent, respectively. This is due to falling overall oil exports by both the nations.

In early December, Saudi Arabia and its partners in the Opec+ group had decided to delay a planned easing of the ongoing production cuts. As a result, production cuts of 2.2 million barrels per day were postponed to April 2025. Refiners also cut back on Saudi crude owing to its flagship product Arab Light trading at a premium back then, at about $2.5 higher per barrel than the regional benchmark, making it costlier than alternative supplies, refinery officials said.

The December figures show that bulk of the demand for crude may have switched to other source nations from January, with more relative ease than had earlier been expected.