

Paper

Higher paper prices enabled the sector to fare well during the March 2003 quarter. Ballarpur Industries, JK Paper and West Coast Paper Mills, three of the largest paper companies in the country, posted good results. Ballarpur Industries reported a 3.5 per cent rise in net profits to Rs.18 crore on a 1.6 per cent rise in sales to Rs.352.9 crore. On a 15.3 per cent rise in sales to Rs.148.2 crore, JK Paper reported a 113.6 per cent rise in net profits to Rs.9.7 crore in the March 2003 quarter. West Coast Paper Mills reported a 6.7 per cent rise in sales to Rs.115.4 crore and a 19.2 per cent rise in net profits to Rs.7.9 crore in the March 2003 quarter. Profit margins were also higher. Paper companies had hiked prices by Rs.1,000–2,000 per tonne in March 2003.

Production data also reflects the improvement in demand. Paper production rose by 4.2 per cent to 47.2 lakh tonnes during April–February 2002–03, after rising by 2.5 per cent in the corresponding period of 2001–02. Higher demand also led to a rise in imports. Paper imports rose by 25.3 per cent to 87,353 tonnes during April–November 2002. As opposed to this, paper imports had declined by 1.1 per cent to 69,696 tonnes during the same period of 2001. During April–November 2002, paper pulp imports were 10.5 lakh tonnes, 15 per cent higher than the quantity imported in the same period of 2001. Paper pulp imports had risen by 38.5 per cent during April–November 2001.

Paper exports have also fared well. Exports rose by 43.2 per cent during April–November 2002 as compared to a rise of 6.2 per cent in the same period of 2001. Their share in total production rose to 4.7 per cent from 3.4 per cent during April–November 2001.

Newsprint production has improved since October 2002 and has been over 52,000 tonnes per month as compared to 42,000–49,000 tonnes per month during April–September 2002. During April–February 2002–03, production was 5.6 lakh tonnes as compared to 5.7 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period of 2001–02. Imports constitute a significant part of newsprint supply. Newsprint imports rose by 24.6 per cent to 3.7 lakh tonnes during April–November 2002, as against a 1.9 per cent decline in the same period of 2001. Their share in total supply rose to 49.2 per cent from 42.2 per cent during April–November 2001.

Paper: Apr–Feb

	Tonnes	% chg.
Production		
2001–02	4526755	2.48
2002–03	4717189	4.21

Paper: Apr–Nov

	Tonnes	% chg.
Production		
2001–02	3250976	-0.50
2002–03	3373039	3.44
Imports		
2001–02	69696	-1.05
2002–03	87353	25.34
Total Supply		
2001–02	3330672	-0.52
2002–03	3460392	3.89
Exports		
2001–02	111635	6.22
2002–03	159857	43.20
Domestic Consumption		
2001–02	3219036	-0.73
2002–03	3300535	2.53

Newsprint: Apr–Feb

	Tonnes	% chg.
Production		
2001–02	565424	-1.37
2002–03	561438	-0.70

Paper Pulp Imports: Apr–Nov

Value	Rs.crore	% chg.
2001–02	885.23	-0.43
2002–03	1099.85	24.24
Volume	'000 tonnes	% chg.
2001–02	909.85	38.53
2002–03	1046.41	15.01
Imports Cost	Rs./Kg	% chg.
2001–02	9.73	-28.13
2002–03	10.51	8.03

Newsprint Imports: Apr–Nov

Value	Rs.crore	% chg.
2001–02	839.69	10.90
2002–03	796.68	-5.12
Volume	'000 tonnes	% chg.
2001–02	300.36	-1.87
2002–03	374.14	24.57
Imports Cost	Rs./Kg	% chg.
2001–02	27.96	13.02
2002–03	21.29	-23.83