

## ***CONVENER REPORT***

***Committee for International Trade 2024-2025 At 2nd M.C Committee Meeting to be held at Patna on 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025.***

I extend my sincere gratitude to our esteemed President Mehul Mehta for nominating me for this esteemed position.

Our committee consists of following members:

**Shri Shekhar Chandak (Mentor) ,Chennai**

**Shri Yashaswi Patel, Pune**

**Shri Piyush Jain, Delhi**

**Shri Sanjeev Kumar Baldwa, Hyderabad**

Current prices are around for Feb 2025: -

<b>1. Hard Wood Pulp</b>	<b>- 620 + USD</b>
<b>2. Soft Wood Pulp</b>	<b>- 850 + USD</b>
<b>3. Wood Free Paper</b>	<b>- 710 USD (Reels)</b>
<b>4. Coated Paper and Board – China</b>	<b>- 730 USD</b>
<b>5. Hi Bulk FBB</b>	<b>- 650 USD China</b>
<b>6. Coated Korea / Indonesia</b>	<b>- 820 USD</b>
<b>7. News Print (European)</b>	<b>-580 to 600 USD</b>

**\*All indicative prices**

### **Market Trends & Challenges**

The Indian market has witnessed sluggish demand since September 2024, putting downward pressure on prices. Despite the depreciation of the Indian Rupee (INR) against the US Dollar (now at 88 INR/USD) and rising pulp prices, the market operating prices (MOP) across various paper segments have not increased.

## **Virgin Grade Packaging Board**

- There remains a supply-demand mismatch, particularly in China.
- Excess supply from Chinese manufacturers and April Fine (Indonesia) is contributing to price pressures.
- Domestic mills are attempting price hikes due to rising pulp and input costs, but market conditions remain unfavorable.

## **Anti-Dumping Investigation**

- An ongoing Anti-Dumping investigation against multi-layered packaging boards from China & Chile is expected to conclude by September 2025.
- Five domestic mills have petitioned the government to impose Anti-Dumping duties, citing injury from excessive imports.

## **Government Regulations & BIS Certification**

- The Government of India has issued a public notice inviting comments on the draft Quality Control Order for writing & printing paper, as well as coated paper & boards (BIS standards).
- FPTA actively participated in discussions and submitted formal recommendations.
- Implementation of BIS certification is expected in the second half of 2025, potentially impacting the import supply chain.

## **Segment-Wise Analysis**

### **C2S (Coated Two-Side Paper) Market**

- Prices have been under pressure since September 2024.
- Despite machine shutdowns by Chenming (China), demand remains weak.
- The C2S market appears to be shrinking post-COVID, keeping price recovery uncertain.

### **Kraft & Woodfree Paper Prices**

- Virgin Kraft (USA): Prices range between \$600-\$650/MT.
- A-Grade Woodfree Paper: Prices remain stable.
- Recycled & Agro-Based Paper (Maplitho & Cream Wove):
- Prices are steady, with mills struggling to implement price hikes due to weak demand.

### **Industry Outlook & Key Takeaways**

1. The global paper market is experiencing volatility, with rapid fluctuations in demand and pricing.
2. The depreciation of the INR (by 3-4%) has increased the cost of raw materials and finished goods imports.
3. Pulp prices continue to rise, further straining paper manufacturers.
4. Traders must stay vigilant, informed, and cautious about market trends.
5. It is essential to verify market information from credible sources and not rely on unverified social media rumors.

## **International Trip to Indonesia**

I am pleased to announce that April Group has given us approval to visit their new board plant in Indonesia.

- The dates and complete travel package will be announced soon.
- The permission is only for 50 people. We look forward to good participation from all the Associations.

## **Conclusion**

The current scenario demands strategic planning and prompt decision-making to navigate market uncertainties. We remain committed to adapting to changes, advocating industry interests, and fostering international trade collaborations.

Best Wishes,

**Hiren J. Karia**

**Convener, International Trade Committee**

