

India can meet 300 mtpa steel production target by 2030'

But tech, raw material challenges have to be addressed, say experts

CHRS SARMA

Visakhapatnam, August 10

India has the potential to treble crude steel production by 2030 from the present level of roughly 100 million tonnes per annum (mtpa), but that alone will not be sufficient to make it a dominant player in the global market, according to experts.

They were speaking here on Friday at the inaugural of a two-day conference on steel-making organised by the magazine *Steel and Metallurgy*.

P Raychaudhury, Chairman and Managing Director, Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, said the target of 300 mtpa of crude steel by 2030 is "certainly daunting, but not unattainable". There should not be any worry about domestic steel demand, as the government had taken up massive infrastructure projects, he added.

Y Sivasagara Rao, former CMD of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, said moderate growth will be witnessed in the steel sector in the next few years.

Sustaining production

The Indian economy is growing at a pace that can sustain the level of steel production and consumption, as envisaged in the Steel Policy, 2017, and there should not be any undue concerns on domestic steel demand, he added.

AK Rath, CEO of Durgapur Steel Plant (SAIL), said retrofitting of the old steel plants should be taken up seriously as



Visakhapatnam Steel Plant CMD
P Ray Chaudhury CV SUBRAHMANYAM

it is rather difficult to set up greenfield plants due to issues such as land acquisition.

AS Phiroj, an economist, said the domestic steel demand will be roughly 227 mtpa by 2030, and the rest (73 mtpa) will be available for export. Steel capacity, at present roughly 137 mtpa, will go up to about 155 mtpa in two years and 145 mtpa will have to be added by 2030 to achieve the target, he observed. Subrata Mitra, JMD of MN Dastur Co Ltd, said special steels would have to be produced in the country on a sufficient scale and "we are still importing them".

M Venkataraman, CTO of Saarloha Advanced Materials Pvt Ltd, said technology management and raw material challenges have to be addressed.

"We have plenty of iron ore in the country, but unfortunately it is low-grade ore and we have to import coking coal from Australia and other countries," he said.