

# Cement despatches at new high

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Mumbai, 9 February

The 240-million-tonne cement industry registered new high in despatches in January, due to robust demand from the cement consuming sectors.

The industry, with over 50 players, sold 18.19 million tonnes (mt) in January, surpassing its earlier high of 18.1 mt in March 2009. At the same time, the industry's despatch growth stood at 12.77 per cent on a year-on-year basis, the highest since August last year.

Sumit Banerjee, managing director, ACC, the country's largest cement maker, said, "We shall see more of cement consumption growth as the country gets its act together in infrastructure."

Propelled by significant demand rise in the northern, central and eastern regions of the country, the industry experts said that in the current quarter despatches will further rise on the back of consistent demand from infrastructure sector to end the current financial year with a despatch of close to 20 mt in March.

"Indian economy has been on a drive with special emphasis on infrastructure development. The newly set up capacities are now getting stabilised and the month-on-month increase in the production and despatches is reflecting the same," said Vinita Singhanina, president, Cement Manufacturers' Association.

Hari Mohan Bangur, CMD, Shree Cement, said, "Demand for cement is being felt from all corners. Individual house builders, infrastructure and real estate are the major drivers for growth. Moreover, demand from the developers in the mega cities, which was relatively numb in the earlier part of the current financial year, has picked up."