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## Empty railway rake movement at Gopalpur and Gangavaram ports

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B reported that the mismatch between imports and exports in two of the east coast ports is forcing East Coast Railway serving these ports to move empty rakes at a cost.

According to informed sources, ECoR is now moving one rake of iron ore daily to Gopalpur port in Orissa. However there being no matching traffic available at the port for back loading, the rake has to return empty. Gopalpur port started handling iron ore exports recently. Last year, it handled for two months. This year, the ore has already started arriving at the port for exports though the shipment is yet to start.

Gangavaram port in Andhra Pradesh, also served by ECoR presents just the opposite picture. ECoR has to move every day at least two empty rakes into the port to load imported coal, both non-coking and coking, for transportation to various power houses and steel plants respectively. This is because the number of inward rakes into the port is not enough for back loading.

Three rakes a day on an average move into the port with iron ore for exports whereas the cargo inducement for outward movement is adequate for five rakes. ECoR, therefore, has to move two empty rakes into the port to clear the import mainly coal.

Normally, this is the season when wagon demand generally picks up.

However as ECoR sources point out, the empty rakes moving into Gangavaram port are required to cover a small distance as these rakes are sourced from the neighboring Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, also served by ECoR, only a few km away. So, the cost of empty movement to Gangavaram is negligible.

In the case of Gopalpur port, the empty movement takes place over a longer distance as the rakes, on unloading iron ore at the port, are generally required to return to Talcher mines located more than 100 km away.

(Sourced from Business Line)

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