

Transnet strike to hit production and exports, says Kumba Iron Ore

By Nelson Banya

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Kumba Iron Ore has said its production and exports will be hampered by the current strike at Transnet. The state-owned logistics company, which operates South Africa's freight rail network and all of the country's ports, declared force majeure at its ports last Thursday after some workers began a strike over wages.



A Transnet freight rail train is seen next to tons of coal mined from the nearby Khanye Colliery mine, at the Bronkhorstspuit station. 2022.

Source: Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

"As a result of the disruption to Transnet's rail and port services, the estimated impact on production is approximately 50,000 tonnes per day for the first seven days and thereafter approximately 90,000 tonnes per day. Export sales will be impacted by approximately 120,000 tonnes per day," Kumba said in a statement.

Kumba, which exports the bulk of its iron ore to China, Europe, Japan and South Korea, expects to produce and export between 38 million and 40 million tonnes of the mineral this year.

The company's production and exports were 40.9 million tonnes and 40.2 million tonnes respectively in 2021.



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The United National Transport Union (UNTU) and the South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union (Satawu), which together represent most Transnet workers, last week turned down Transnet's offer of a 3-4% wage increase, saying it was below South Africa's annual inflation rate, which was 7.6% in August.

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