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# Diamond Exports Soar 19%, Belgian Demand Strong

By The Moscow Times

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Russia exported nearly 20 percent more diamonds in the first half of 2013 than during the same period last year, the Finance Ministry said Wednesday.

The country sold 18,309,000 carats of raw diamonds in January-June worth a total of $2.32 billion, a rise of 18.6 percent year on year, the ministry said.

The main buyers of Russian raw diamonds in the first half of 2013 were Belgium, India, the United Arab Emirates and Israel, the ministry said. Belgium alone purchased 11,880,000 carats worth $1.49 billion.

According to the Finance Ministry, Russia's raw diamond output dropped 0.6 percent in 2012 from the year before to 34,900,000 carats, while exports of raw diamonds decreased by 7.9 percent to 29,805,000 carats worth about $3.9 billion.

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