



# The Economy Observer

# Inflation and IIP growth below expectations

## No rate hike expected in Jun'23

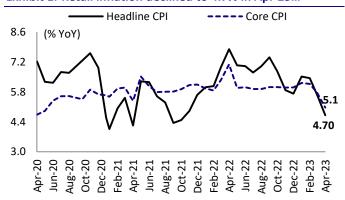
- Headline CPI inflation eased to an 18-month low of 4.7% YoY in Apr'23 v/s 5.7% in Mar'23. This is lower than the Bloomberg consensus of 4.8% YoY and our forecast of 5.0%.
- The deceleration in headline inflation was led by lower food inflation of 3.8% in Apr'23 v/s 4.7% in Mar'23. Within food items, oils & fats (-12.33% in Apr'23 v/s -7.91% in Mar'23), fruits & vegetables (-3.65% in Apr'23 v/s -3.47% in Mar'23) and meat & fish (-1.23% in Apr'23 v/s -1.42% in Mar'23) mainly contributed to lower inflation.
- Core CPI (excluding food & beverages and fuel & light) grew 5.1% in Apr'23 v/s 5.8% in Mar'23, the lowest in 35 months. Within core, clothing & footwear (7.47% in Apr'23 v/s 8.18% in Mar'23), transport & communication (1.17% in Apr'23 v/s 3.99% in Mar'23) and household goods and services (6.46% in Apr'23 v/s 7.0% in Mar'23) contributed to the deceleration.
- Other details suggest that the fall in headline inflation was not broad-based, although it is highly welcome. 1) Deflation in imported items helped pull down inflation. Imported inflation (weight 9.8%) eased sharply to -2.68% YoY in Mar'23 (lowest since Apr'15). Domestically generated inflation too was at a four-month low of 5.7% YoY in Apr'23. 2) CPI ex veggies was at a 37-month low of 5.4% in Mar'23. 3) Standard core inflation (ex food & energy, weight = 51.8%) was up 5.8%, the lowest in 11 months. 4) Services inflation was at an 11-month low of 4.8%, with core services inflation (exhousing) at a 3-year low. 5) Goods inflation grew 4.8% in Apr'23 v/s 5.7% in Mar'23, the lowest in 18 months. However, core goods inflation (excluding food and energy) remained elevated at 6.9% in Apr'23 v/s 7.2% in the previous month. 6) Details of 299 sub-components suggest that 49.3% of CPI basket still posted 6%+ inflation in Apr'23 v/s 51.9% in Mar'23.
- At the same time, IIP growth in Mar'23 softened to 1.1% YoY v/s 5.8% in Feb'23 (revised upward from 5.6%). The number is sharply lower than the Bloomberg consensus of 3.6% and our forecast of 3.8%.
- Manufacturing growth slowed to 0.5% YoY in Mar'23 (v/s 5.6% in Feb'23). The slowdown in manufacturing can be attributed to a 14% YoY contraction in exports in Mar'23. Our analysis shows that 56.6% of the items within manufacturing grew slower compared to last year (v/s 50.9% in Feb'23) and 34.3% of the items reported contraction in Mar'23 (v/s 18.9% in Feb'23).
- According to the use-based classification, all the components showed deceleration in Mar'23. Consumer non-durables production contracted by 3.1% YoY in Mar'23 (v/s +12.1% in Feb'23). Consumer durables contracted too (-8.4% YoY in Mar'23 v/s -4.1% in Feb'23).
- Overall, we continue to expect inflation to ease toward 4.5% in coming months and 4% by Sep-Oct'23, much lower than the RBI and market consensus (of >5%). At the same time, we believe that growth concerns will start emerging in FY24. Consequently, there is no reason to expect a rate hike by the RBI next month or beyond that.
  - CPI inflation at an 18-month low in Apr'23: Headline CPI-inflation eased to an 18-month low of 4.7% YoY in Apr'23 v/s 5.7% in Mar'23 (Exhibit 1). The number is lower than the Bloomberg consensus of 4.8% YoY and our forecast of 5.0%. Lower-than-expected food inflation led to this surprise, as core inflation was largely in line with our expectation.
  - Lower food inflation: An analysis of details suggests that the deceleration in headline inflation was led by lower food inflation of 3.8% in Apr'23 v/s 4.7% in Mar'23. Within food, oils & fats (-12.33% in Apr'23 v/s -7.91% in Mar'23), fruits & vegetables (-3.65% in Apr'23 v/s -3.47% in Mar'23) and meat & fish (-1.23% in Apr'23 v/s -1.42% in Mar'23) mainly contributed to the deceleration. On the other hand, inflation in cereals, pulses, milk products and spices remained firm. Energy inflation too came in lower at 2.3% in Apr'23 v/s 6.8% in Mar'23. CPI ex food & energy (standard core inflation, weight=51.8%) grew 5.8% in Apr'23 v/s 6.2% in Mar'23, the lowest in 11 months (Exhibit 2).

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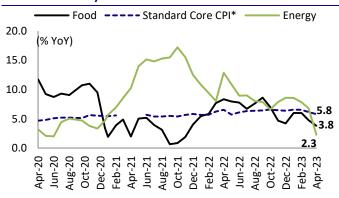
- Core inflation came in at 5.1%, lowest in 35 months: Core CPI (excluding food & beverages and fuel & light) grew 5.1% in Apr'23 v/s 5.8% in Mar'23, the lowest in 35 months. Within core, clothing & footwear (7.47% in Apr'23 v/s 8.18% in Mar'23), transport & communication (1.17% in Apr'23 v/s 3.99% in Mar'23) and household goods and services (6.46% in Apr'23 v/s 7.0% in Mar'23) contributed to the decline.
- Other details suggest that the fall in headline inflation was not broad-based, although it is highly welcome. 1) Deflation in imported items helped pull down inflation. Imported inflation (weight 9.8%) eased sharply to -2.68% YoY in Mar'23 (lowest since Apr'15). Domestically generated inflation too was at a four-month low of 5.7% YoY in Apr'23 (Exhibit 3). 2) CPI ex veggies was at a 37-month low of 5.4% in Mar'23. 3) Standard core inflation (ex food & energy, weight = 51.8%) was up 5.8%, lowest in 11 months. 4) Services inflation was at 11-month low of 4.8%, with core services inflation (ex-housing) at 3-year low. 5) Goods inflation grew 4.8% in Apr'23 v/s 5.7% in Mar'23, lowest in 18 months. However, core goods inflation (excluding food and energy) still remains elevated at 6.9% in Apr'23 v/s 7.2% in the previous month. 6) Details of 299 subcomponents suggest that 49.3% of CPI basket still posted 6%+ inflation v/s 51.9% in Mar'23 (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 1: Retail inflation declined to 4.7% in Apr'23...



# Excluding food & beverages and fuel & light

Exhibit 2: ..led by lower food inflation



\* Excluding food & energy

Exhibit 3: Deflation in imported items helped pull down headline inflation

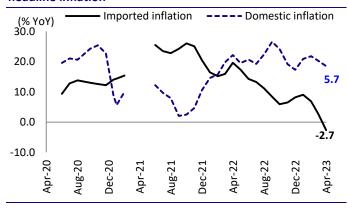
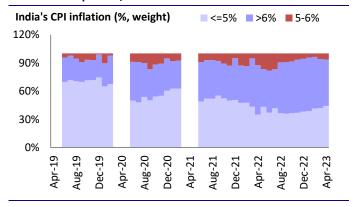


Exhibit 4: 49.3% of CPI basket posted more than 6%+ inflation in Apr'23 v/s 51.9% in Mar'23



Based on 299 items

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**Exhibit 5: CPI and key components** 

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	Apr-22	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23
Overall CPI	4.8	6.2	5.5	6.7	7.8	6.4	5.7	4.7
Food and beverages	6.0	7.3	4.2	6.7	8.1	6.2	5.1	4.2
Cereal and products	2.8	3.8	0.5	11.0	6.0	16.7	15.3	13.7
Pulses and products	9.9	16.4	6.0	2.4	1.9	4.1	4.4	5.3
Meat and fish	9.3	15.4	7.9	4.2	7.0	3.3	15.3	-1.2
Milk and products	2.9	5.4	2.8	7.4	5.5	9.6	9.3	8.8
Fruits and vegetables	14.5	4.8	-3.4	3.5	11.7	-6.1	-3.5	-3.6
Pan, tobacco, and intoxicants	4.2	9.9	4.5	2.2	2.7	3.2	3.0	3.5
Fuel and light	1.3	2.7	11.3	10.3	10.7	9.9	8.8	5.5
Housing	4.5	3.3	3.7	4.3	3.5	4.8	5.0	4.9
Clothing and footwear	1.6	3.4	7.2	9.5	9.9	8.8	8.2	7.5
Miscellaneous	4.4	6.6	6.7	6.3	8.1	6.2	5.8	4.9
Transport and communication	2.4	9.9	10.1	5.9	10.9	4.5	4.0	1.2
Core CPI*	4.1	5.5	6.0	6.1	7.1	6.2	5.8	5.1

<sup>\*</sup>Excluding food & beverages and fuel & light

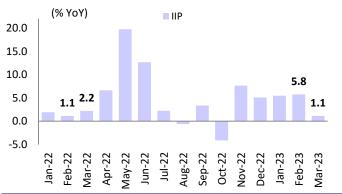
Source: Central Statistics Office (CSO), MOFSL

## II. IIP growth decelerated sharply in Mar'23

- IIP growth declined in Mar'23: IIP growth in Mar'23 declined to 1.1% YoY v/s 5.8% in Feb'23 (revised upward from 5.6%). The number is sharply lower than the Bloomberg consensus of 3.6% YoY and our forecast of 3.8% YoY. Notably, IIP data for Dec'22/Feb'23 has been revised upward to 5.1%/5.8% from 4.6%/5.6% YoY (Exhibit 6). IIP grew by 5.1% in FY23 v/s 11.4% in FY22 (Exhibit 6).
- Slowdown in manufacturing and electricity sectors: Manufacturing growth slowed to 0.5% YoY in Mar'23 v/s 5.6% in Feb'23 (Exhibit 7). The slowdown in manufacturing can be attributed to a 14% YoY contraction in exports in Mar'23. Within manufacturing, food products, textiles, wearing apparel, pharmaceuticals and computer, electronic & optical products witnessed a sharp contraction. Our analysis shows that 56.6% of the items within manufacturing grew slower compared to last year (v/s 50.9% in Feb'23) and 34.3% of the items reported contraction in Mar'23 v/s 18.9% in Feb'23 (Exhibit 9). It grew by 4.5% in FY23 v/s 11.7% in FY22. At the same time, electricity output contracted by 1.6 % in Mar'23 from a growth of 8.2% in Feb'23. On the other hand, mining activity showed acceleration in Mar'23, printing at 6.8% YoY (4.8% in Feb'23) on the back of higher coal production (12.2% in Mar'23 v/s 8.5% in Feb'23).
- Consumer goods in contraction: According to the use-based classification, all the components have shown deceleration in Mar'23. Capital goods output maintained traction, printing at 8.1% in Mar'23 (v/s 10.5% in Feb'23). Infrastructure activity grew by 5.4% YoY in Mar'23 v/s 8.4% in Feb'23. On the other hand, consumer non-durables production contracted by 3.1% YoY in Mar'23 (v/s 12.1% in Feb'23). Consumer durables contracted too (-8.4% YoY in Mar'23 v/s -4.1% in Feb'23). Primary goods too showed a deceleration during the month. (Exhibit 8)
- Lower inflation and weak IIP = No rate hike in Jun'23: Overall, we continue to expect inflation to ease toward 4.5% in coming months and 4% by Sep-Oct'23, much lower than the RBI and market consensus (of >5%). At the same time, IIP growth came in at just 1.1% YoY in Mar'23, much weaker than the market (and our) forecast of ~3.8%, putting some downward pressure on 4QFY23 GDP. Consequently, there is no reason to expect a rate hike by the RBI next month or beyond that.

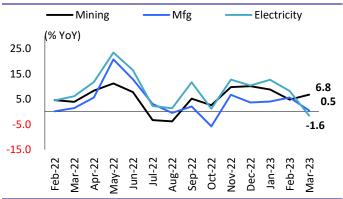
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Exhibit 6: IIP growth weakened unexpectedly to 1.1% YoY in Mar'23...



Source: CSO, MOFSL

Exhibit 7: ...due to slower growth in manufacturing sector



Source: CSO, MOFSL

Exhibit 8: Production of consumer goods declined sharply in Mar'23...

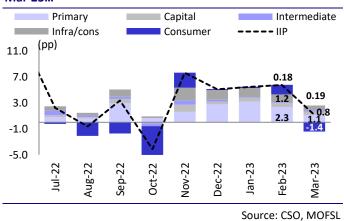
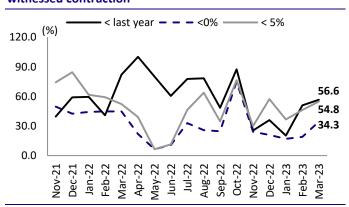


Exhibit 9: ...and about 34.3% of the manufacturing basket witnessed contraction



Source: CSO, MOFSL

**Exhibit 10: Key components of IIP** 

		FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	44621	44927	44958	44986
Industry-based classification									
Mining	14.4	1.6	-7.8	12.2	5.8	3.9	8.8	4.8	6.8
Manufacturing	77.6	-1.4	-9.6	11.7	4.5	1.4	4.0	5.6	0.5
Electricity	8.0	0.9	-0.5	8.0	8.9	6.1	12.7	8.2	-1.6
IIP	100.0	-0.8	-8.5	11.4	5.1	2.2	5.5	5.8	1.1
Use-based classification									
Primary goods	34.0	0.7	-7.0	9.6	7.4	5.7	9.6	6.9	3.3
Capital Goods	8.2	-14.0	-18.7	17.0	12.7	2.4	10.7	10.5	8.1
Intermediate Goods	17.2	9.1	-9.4	15.4	3.7	1.8	0.5	0.7	1.0
Infrastructure/Construction	12.3	-3.6	-8.7	18.8	8.0	6.7	9.8	8.4	5.4
Consumer Goods	28.2	-3.8	-7.3	6.6	0.5	-3.8	0.7	5.5	-5.3
Durable Goods	12.8	-8.8	-14.9	12.4	0.6	-3.1	-8.2	-4.1	-8.4
Non-Durable Goods	15.3	-0.1	-2.1	3.2	0.5	-4.4	6.3	12.1	-3.1

Source: CSO, MOFSL

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