



Trends October 2018

As the 2nd largest crude steel producer globally, India continued to be one of the driving force behind global production during January-September 2018.

Moreover, as the latest edition of worldsteel SRO projected, if current momentum in steel consumption is maintained, India is all poised to emerge as the 2nd largest finished steel consumer in the world in 2019 itself.

WORLD ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

- October 2018 saw the J.P.Morgan Global Manufacturing PMI fall to its lowest level in almost two years, with the index reaching 52.1 in October 2018, also down from 52.2 of September 2018, as per reports from Markit Economics.
- The reports indicate that developed nations (on average) continued to outperform emerging markets during the month, riding high on a robust 55.7 PMI of the USA, a record five-month high and Japan (52.9) where the PMI stood at a a four-month high in October 2018. Euro area, in contrast, saw its October 2018 rates of growth slide to its lowest since August 2016. At 50.1 in October 2018, the China PMI remained close to the stagnation mark but India and Brazil reported strong growth rates during the month. India stood out as the only nation in the larger emerging ones, where PMI reading was above the world average.
- The Markit reports indicate that output growth was constrained by weak growth in new business, including new export orders. Global manufacturing employment rose markedly but input cost inflation reported slow growth in October 2018 as per the reports.

Key Economic Figures			
Country	GDP Q2 2018: %change*	Manufacturing PMI	
		September 2018	October 2018
India	8.2	52.2	53.1
China	6.7	50.0	50.1
Japan	1.0	52.5	52.9
USA	2.9	55.6	55.7
EU 28	2.2	53.2	52.0
Brazil	1.0	50.9	51.1
Russia	1.8	50.0	51.3
South Korea	2.8	51.3	51.0
Germany	2.0	53.7	52.2
Turkey	5.2	42.7	44.3
Italy	1.2	50.0	49.2

Source:GDP: official releases; PMI- Markit Economics, *provisional

GLOBAL CRUDE STEEL PRODUCTION

World Steel Association data shows that world crude steel production for September 2018 was 151.71 million tonnes (mt), up by 4.4 per cent year-on-year (yoy) i.e. over September 2017 and stood at 1347 mt during January-September 2018, up by 4.7 per cent yoy.

World Crude Steel Production: January-September 2018 (p)			
Rank	Country	Qty (mt)	per cent yoy change
1	China	699.42	6.1
2	India	79.66	6.1
3	Japan	78.61	0.4
4	USA	64.17	4.5
5	Russia	54.29	1.7
6	South Korea	54.19	2.0
7	Germany	34.03	3.5
8	Turkey	27.98	0.9
9	Brazil	26.09	2.5
10	Iran	18.52	20.0
	Top 10	1136.90	5.1
	World	1347.00	4.7
Source: worldsteel; p= provisional; mt=million tonnes			

- China produced 80.84 mt of crude steel in September 2018, up by 7.5 per cent over September 2017 and production during January-September 2018 stood at 699.42 mt, up by 6.1 per cent yoy. China remained the largest crude steel producer in the world, fuelling world production, which, excluding China, was up by 3 per cent. China accounted for 74 per cent of Asian and 52 per cent of world crude steel production during this period.
- With a 6 per cent share in total world production and a 6.1 per cent rise in production over same period of last year, Indian crude steel production during January-September 2018 (79.66 mt) was few notches above Japan and the country remained the 2nd largest producer during this period.
- September 2018 Japanese crude steel production (8.42 mt) was down by 2.4 per cent yoy and production during January-September 2018 stood at 78.61 mt, up by 0.4 per cent yoy. The country was the 3rd largest crude steel producer in the world in 2018 so far.
- Crude steel production in the EU (28) countries during September 2018 was at 13.94 mt, up by 0.2 per cent yoy and production during January-September 2018 stood at 128.02 mt, up by 1.3 per cent yoy.
- At 107.84 mt, Asian crude steel production was up by 5.9 per cent in September 2018 and production during January-September 2018 stood at 946.82 mt, up by 5.5 per cent yoy. Asia accounted for 70 per cent of world crude steel production during this period.
- The top 10 countries accounted for 84.4 per cent of total world crude steel production in January-September 2018 and saw production go up by 5.1 per cent yoy during this

period. Russia emerged as the 5th largest crude steel producing nation during this period, replacing South Korea from the said spot. Iran joined the top ten league during this period, emerging as the 10th largest producer, replacing Italy.

NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

THE AMERICAS

- US Steel has restarted the second blast furnace at its 2.8 mtpa Granite City works in Illinois.
- The US Department of Commerce (USDOC) has preliminarily determined in an administrative review of the CVD order on imports of OCTG from Turkey that Borusan Mannesmann received countervailable subsidies during the period of review.
- The USDOC has preliminarily determined that South Korea's Nexteel Co. and SeAH Steel sold certain OCTG in the US at prices below normal value during a period of review. It has also found that Mexican steel producer Deacero has been circumventing an existing anti-dumping duty on wire rod, according to a preliminary ruling.
- The Canadian government said it will introduce a provisional 25% tariff on certain steel imports beginning October 25, 2018 in an effort to prevent the diversion of cheap foreign steel imports into the country.
- Following an expiry review, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal has decided to maintain the antidumping duty order on imports of welded pipe from five countries, Taiwan, India, Oman, South Korea and the UAE.

ASIA

- China's finished steel exports rebounded in September 2018 to 5.95 million tonnes (mt), up 1.3% over August 2018 and by 15.8% yoy. For January-September 2018, such exports were 53.08 mt, down 10.7% yoy.
- In the Guye district of Tangshan, steel mills have been ordered to observe a 50% production cut ahead of the winter heating season to help curb air pollution.
- China's steel production is likely to peak in 2018 (886 mt, up 4.2%) while for the same year, steel consumption is expected to grow (810 mt, up 2.8%) and its iron ore imports (106 mt, down 1.5%) set to decrease according to Australian government's Resources And Energy Quarterly report.
- China will lower import tariffs on several metals, including steel, to 8.4% from the current 11.5%, w.e.f. November 1, 2018.
- China's steel PMI dropped to 52 points in September 2018 from 53.4 points in August 2018, according to Steel Logistics Professional Committee (CSLPC).
- Henan province has outlined its three-year blue sky plan for the period of 2018-2020, according to which it will not carry out capacity replacements or new capacity additions within the province for steel, cement, electrolytic aluminum and glass sectors.
- JSW Steel, the flagship business of the \$13-billion JSW Group, has been awarded the Deming Prize for its Vijayanagar Works manufacturing unit.
- India's Supreme Court has ruled that ArcelorMittal and Numetal can submit bids for bankrupt Essar Steel after both companies clear outstanding dues in two weeks.

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- Local traders in Vietnam have welcomed the government's investigation into potential anti-dumping measures on imports of color coated steel products from China (25.5%) and South Korea (19.25%).
 - Malaysia's Ann Joo Integrated Steel has been awarded additional damages totaling about MR25.21 million (\$6.09 million) from China's Tangshan Iron & Steel International Engineering Technology, due to the late start-up of PCI during October 2011 and March 2012, which led to production losses.

RUSSIA, MID-EAST, AFRICA, AUSTRALIA

- Mobarakeh Steel, the largest steelmaker in the Middle East-North Africa region, does not expect the new US tariffs to affect its production, financial activities and exports.
- Tenaris, part of Techint Group, has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire from a private group, 47.79% of the shares of Saudi Steel Pipe Co. for an aggregate price of \$144 million.
- Ukrainian pipe and railway wheel producer Interpipe will add 40,000 railway wheel/year capacity in 2019 when it commissions a new line for production of wheels for passenger trains, locomotives, freight and heavy-haul vehicles.
- Evraz is looking to invest \$490 million in a new flat steel production line at its West-Siberian Metallurgical Plant, the company said.

EU AND OTHER EUROPE

- ArcelorMittal, the world's biggest steelmaker has received a binding offer from Liberty House Group for the acquisition of four of ArcelorMittal's European steelmaking plants: ArcelorMittal Ostrava (Czech Republic) and ArcelorMittal Galati (Romania), which are both integrated steelmaking plants and rolling mills, ArcelorMittal Skopje (Macedonia) and ArcelorMittal Piombino (Italy).
- Voestalpine has restarted blast furnace 'A' at its Linz site following completion of a major reline.
- Spain's Grupo Gallardo Balboa will close its 0.4 mtpa galvanizing line in Jerez de los Caballeros, Extremadura, around October 8, 2018.
- Competition regulators in the European Union have opened an in-depth investigation into the 50:50 European flat steel joint venture between ThyssenKrupp and Tata Steel Europe.
- The European Commission has continued definitive antidumping duties on seamless pipe and tube imports from Russia and Ukraine following an expiry review.
- Turkey will begin to introduce quotas on steel imports as of October 17, 2018 with an additional 25% duty on any imports above the quotas.
- Hybrit Development, a Swedish joint venture pioneering a carbon-free steel-making process, has contracted Tenova to supply hydrogen-based DRI equipment for a pilot plant in Lulea, Sweden.

[Source Credit: Metal Bulletin, Platts, leading news papers (India news)]

Q3 2018 continued to witness the global steel market sink deeper into the cusp of a global trade war. The week-long Chinese festivities were over but the nation continued to see fresh actions to curtail its production / capacity levels and rein in environmental pollution. Demand conditions remained overall stable and positive but impacted nonetheless, by global going-ons as protectionism continued to rule. Iron ore prices bounced back, giving fresh impetus to steel prices but more important was the slow shifting of preference to low grade ores and high quality. Steel prices moved in tandem with supply-demand issues, of finished product and raw materials, impacted to varied extent by the goings-on in the overall macroeconomic setup.

Long Product

- Prices for US domestic rebar remained flat in October 2018 owing to lukewarm market activity. Transactions, as per Metal Bulletin reports, were quoted around \$700-720/ st at month-end.
- October 2018 rebar prices remained near-static what with demand remaining dull. Transactions, as per Metal Bulletin reports, were quoted around €520-545/t (\$596-625) in Southern Europe and around €550-570/t (\$631-654) in Northern Europe.
- Rebar prices edged up in China in end-October 2018 as markets resumed their activity after their week-long holiday. Transactions, as per Metal Bulletin reports, were quoted around 4,650-4,680 yuan/t (\$669-674) in Shanghai and around 4,410-4,450 yuan/t in Beijing.
- Russian October 2018 rebar prices edged down following a seasonal decline in demand. Metal Bulletin's assessment of the domestic price for Russian 12mm A500C rebar, including 18% VAT, stood at 40,500 roubles/t (\$619) cpt Moscow.

Flat Product

- US HRC prices remained stable in October 2018 and even showed an upward move as imports remained in check. Transactions, as per Metal Bulletin reports, were quoted around \$820-830/t at month-end.
- EU HRC prices dipped in October 2018 in view of dull demand conditions. Transactions, as per Metal Bulletin reports, were quoted around €550-565/t (\$628-645) in Northern Europe and around €500-540/t in Southern Europe at month-end.
- Chinese HRC prices slipped in October 2018 as end-use market conditions remained lacklustre. Transactions, as per Metal Bulletin reports, were quoted around 4,170-4,180 yuan/t (\$600-602) in Shanghai and around 4,080-4,100 yuan/t in Tianjin.
- Russian HRC prices slipped in October 2018 as market demand remained low and export market remained down. Metal Bulletin's assessment for Russia-origin 4mm HR sheet was 42,970-43,000 roubles/t (\$656-657) cpt Moscow including 18% VAT.

[Source Credit: Metal Bulletin]

SPECIAL FOCUS

worldsteel forecasts stable global steel consumption, points to India's enhanced ranking

Supported by recovery in investment activities in developed economies and improved performance of emerging economies, worldsteel projects that global steel demand will reach 1,657.9 million tonnes (mt) in 2018, an increase of 3.9% over 2017 and will reach 1,681.2 mt in 2019, up by 1.4%. At the same time, however, it points to rising trade tensions, volatile currency movements, normalisation of monetary policies in the US and EU as factors with potential downside risks. Some highlights:

- The SRO expects Chinese steel demand growth to decelerate in the absence of stimulus measures and in view of continued economic rebalancing efforts/ toughening environmental regulations. Further, downside risks remain from the ongoing trade friction with the US and a decelerating global economy. However, at the same time, the SRO points out that if China can use the stimulus measures to contain the potential slowdown of its economy in the face of a deteriorating economic environment, steel demand in 2019 will be boosted.
- Elsewhere, steel demand in the developed world is expected to show a moderate growth, rising by 1% in 2018 and by 1.2% in 2019, as per the SRO.
- The SRO points out that though the US steel demand grew strongly in 2017 and is likely to maintain the momentum in 2018 as well, growth in 2019 is expected to slow as auto manufacturing and construction activity is expected to see modest growth.

Worldsteel Short Range Outlook, October 2018						
Region	ASU (mt)			Growth Rate (%)		
	2017	2018(f)	2019(f)	2017	2018(f)	2019(f)
EU28	163.0	166.6	169.4	3.4	2.2	1.7
Other Europe	42.6	41.9	42.5	4.6	-1.6	1.5
CIS	54	54.8	55.3	6.1	1.4	0.9
NAFTA	140.8	143.2	144.7	6.3	1.7	1.0
Central/South America	41.8	43.2	45.1	4.6	3.4	4.3
Africa	34.9	36.0	37.3	-7.2	3.1	3.7
Middle East	53.3	54.5	55.1	0.4	2.1	1.2
Asia and Oceania	1065	1 117.8	1 131.9	5.7	5.0	1 1.3
World	1595.4	1657.9	1681.2	5.0	3.9	1.4
Source: worldsteel						

- On the other hand, the broadening recovery of EU steel demand is expected to continue, though at a reduced pace, mainly driven by domestic demand, as per the SRO, which goes on to add that though the economic fundamentals of the EU remain relatively healthy, steel demand in 2019 will show some deceleration over the growth seen in 2017-18, partly due to uncertainties resulting from global trade tensions.
- Steel demand in Japan, as per the SRO, is expected to remain stable due to supportive factors on investment while that of Korea will contract further in 2018 given that all its major steel using sectors are struggling. Recovery in 2019 is only expected to be minor.
- Steel demand in the emerging economies excluding China is expected to grow 3.2%

and 3.9% in 2018 and 2019 respectively.

For India, worldsteel's Short Range Outlook, October 2018 has interesting and important indications regarding growth in the country's steel consumption:

- The forecasts indicate India as the leading driver of global steel consumption with the country's steel consumption forecast to grow by 7.5% in 2018 and by 7.3% in 2019. For both these years, these are the highest rates of growth among the top ten steel consuming nations.
- Corresponding growth rates for China are forecast at 6% for 2018 and a nil rate of growth in 2019 while global consumption is projected to grow by 3.9% in 2018 and by 1.4% in 2019.
- **But most significantly, the forecasts for 2019 indicate that India is poised to emerge as the 2nd largest steel consuming nation globally during the year, edging past USA (by a small margin). This, if materialises, would be a major milestone for India as it gears up to meet the emerging steel needs of a growing economy.**
- **At the same time, in terms of percentage shares in global total in 2018 and 2019, India is the only country to register an increase, from 5.8% in 2018 to 6.1% in 2019.** In contrast, Chinese share is seen to decline in both these years while those of the remaining eight countries in the top ten list is found to remain static in both these years.

Top 10 Steel Using Countries - worldsteel Short Range Outlook, October 2018						
Region	ASU (mt)			YoY Growth Rate (%)		
	2017	2018(f)	2019(f)	2017	2018(f)	2019(f)
China	736.8	781.0	781.0	8.2	6.0	0.0
USA	97.7	99.9	101.2	6.4	2.3	1.3
India	88.7	95.4	102.3	6.0	7.5	7.3
Japan	64.4	64.5	64.8	3.6	0.2	0.5
South Korea	56.4	54.1	54.7	-1.2	-4.1	1.1
Germany	41.0	41.2	41.9	1.4	0.5	1.7
Russia	40.6	41.1	41.2	5.1	1.1	0.3
Turkey	36.1	35.2	35.8	5.8	-2.3	1.5
Mexico	26.4	25.9	26.2	3.7	-1.9	1.2
Italy	24.6	25.6	25.9	3.9	3.8	1.0

Source: worldsteel

INDIAN STEEL MARKET ROUND-UP

Performance of Indian Steel Industry: April-September 2018

The following is a status report on the performance of Indian steel industry during April - September 2018, based on provisional data released by JPC. It is to be noted that total finished steel includes both non-alloy and alloy (including stainless steel) and all comparisons are made with regard to same period of last year.

Item	Indian steel scene (million tonnes)		
	April - September 2018 (prov)	April – September 2017 (final)	%change (prov)
Crude Steel Production	52.257	49.320	6.0
Hot Metal Production	35.398	32.793	7.9
Pig Iron Production	2.968	2.726	8.9
Sponge Iron Production	14.849	14.734	0.8
Total Finished Steel (alloy + non-alloy)			
Production	64.002	61.332	4.4
Import	4.001	4.318	-7.3
Export	3.141	4.849	-35.2
Consumption	47.691	44.228	7.8
Source: JPC			

I. Crude Steel:

- During April - September 2018, crude steel production was 52.257 million tonnes (mt), a growth of 6 per cent over same period of last year.
- SAIL, RINL, TSL, Essar, JSWL & JSPL together produced 31.262 mt during April - September 2018 which was a growth of 10.1 per cent compared to same period of last year.
- The rest 40 per cent i.e. 20.995 mt came from the Other Producers, which was a growth of 0.3 per cent over same period of last year.

II. Hot Metal:

- During April - September 2018, hot metal production was 35.398 million tonnes (mt), a growth of 7.9 per cent over same period of last year.
- SAIL, RINL, TSL, Essar, JSWL & JSPL together produced 29.633 mt during April - September 2018 which was a growth of 9.6 per cent over same period of last year.
- The rest 84 per cent i.e. 5.765 mt came from the Other Producers, which was a growth of 0.3 per cent over same period of last year.

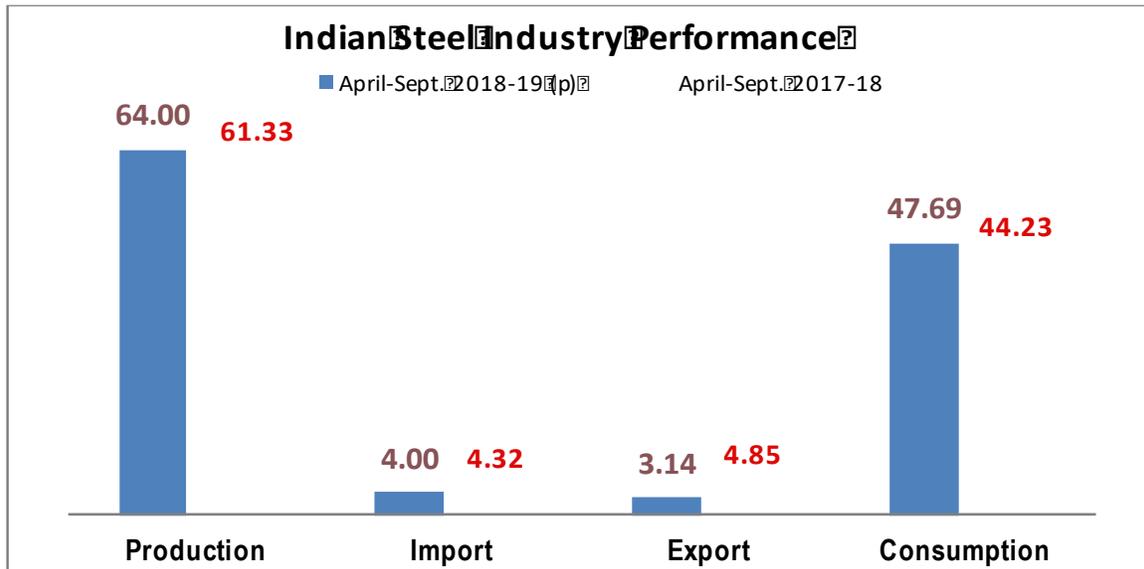
III. Pig Iron:

- During April - September 2018, pig iron production was 2.968 mt, up by 8.9 per cent over same period of last year.
- SAIL, RINL, TSL, Essar, JSWL & JSPL together produced 0.431 mt during April - September 2018 which was a growth of 29.8 per cent over same period of last year.
- The rest 85 per cent i.e. 2.537 mt came from the Other Producers, which was a growth of 6 per cent over same period of last year.

IV. Sponge Iron:

- During April - September 2018, sponge iron production was 14.849 mt, up by 0.8 per cent over same period of last year.
- The Other Producers (10.522 mt) accounted for 71 per cent of total production, a decline of 3.5 per cent over same period of last year.

V. Total Finished Steel:



A. Gross Production

- During April-September 2018, gross production (or simply production) stood at 64.002 mt, a growth of 4.4 per cent compared to last year, in which contribution of the non-alloy steel segment stood at 58.594 mt (up by 2.7 per cent), while the rest was the contribution of the alloy steel segment (including stainless steel) where production was up by 26.4 per cent.
- Analyzing by broad divisions, in the total production of finished non-alloy steel, contribution of the non-flat segment stood at 23.172 mt (up by 9.5 per cent) while that of the flat segment stood at 35.422 mt (down by 1.3 per cent).
- In the non-alloy, non-flat segment, in volume terms, major contributor to production was bars & rods (18.44 mt, up by 8.1 per cent) while growth in the non-alloy, flat segment was led by HRC (18.36 mt, down by 0.2 per cent).

B. Exports

- Exports stood at 3.141 mt during April-September 2018, a decline of 35.2 per cent compared to last year, in which contribution of the non-alloy steel segment stood at 2.878 mt (decline of 34 per cent), while the rest was the share of the alloy steel segment (including stainless steel) where exports were down by 46.4 per cent.
- In the total export of finished non-alloy steel, export of non-flat was at 0.265 mt (down by 79 per cent) and that of flat steel was at 2.613 mt (down by 16 per cent).
- In the non-alloy, non-flat segment, in volume terms, major contributor to export was bars & rods (0.2 mt, down by 82.5 per cent) while growth in exports in the non-alloy, flat segment was led by HRC (1.36 mt, up by 16.5 per cent).

C. Imports

- Imports stood at 4.001 mt during April-September 2018, a decline of 7.3 per cent compared to last year, in which contribution of the non-alloy steel segment stood at 3.055 mt (decline of 5.9 per cent), while the rest was the share of the alloy steel segment (including stainless steel) where imports were down by 11.7 per cent.
- In the import of total finished non-alloy steel, non-flat imports were at 0.222 mt (up by 16 per cent) and flat imports were at 2.833 mt (down by 7.3 per cent).
- In the non-alloy, non-flat segment, major contributor to import was bars & rods (0.17 mt, up by 2.9 per cent) while for the flat segment, import was led by HRC (1.07 mt; down by 2.4 per cent).
- Such trends in export-import implied that for total finished steel, India was a net importer in April-September 2018.

D. Consumption

- During April-September 2018, consumption of total finished steel stood at 47.691 mt, a growth of 7.8 per cent over same period of last year, in which contribution of the non-alloy steel segment stood at 42.525 mt (growth of 6.3 per cent), while the rest was the share of the alloy steel segment (including stainless steel) where consumption was up by 22.6 per cent.
- In the consumption of total finished non-alloy steel, that of non-flat steel was at 22.53 mt (up by 9.7 per cent) and that of flat steel was at 19.99 mt (up by 2.7 per cent).
- In the non-alloy, non-flat segment, the major contributor to consumption was bars & rods (17.95 mt; up by 11 per cent) whereas for the flat segment, consumption was led by HRC (7.27 mt, up by 5.1 per cent).

III. JPC Market Prices (Retail)

Delhi market prices: Compared to September 2017, average (retail) market prices in Delhi market in September 2018 increased for both long products (represented by TMT 10 mm) and flat products (represented by HRC 2 mm), largely in response to domestic demand-supply conditions and global influences. The trend was similar when compared to August 2018 for both TMT and HRC. The situation in September 2018 with regard to September 2017 is shown in the table below for TMT 10 mm and HRC 2.0 mm for retail market prices in the Delhi market.

Trends in JPC market price (retail) in Delhi market in September 2018		
Item	Delhi market prices (Rs/t)	%change over September 2017
TMT, 10 mm	51,245	31.1
HRC, 2.0 mm	55,115	24.4

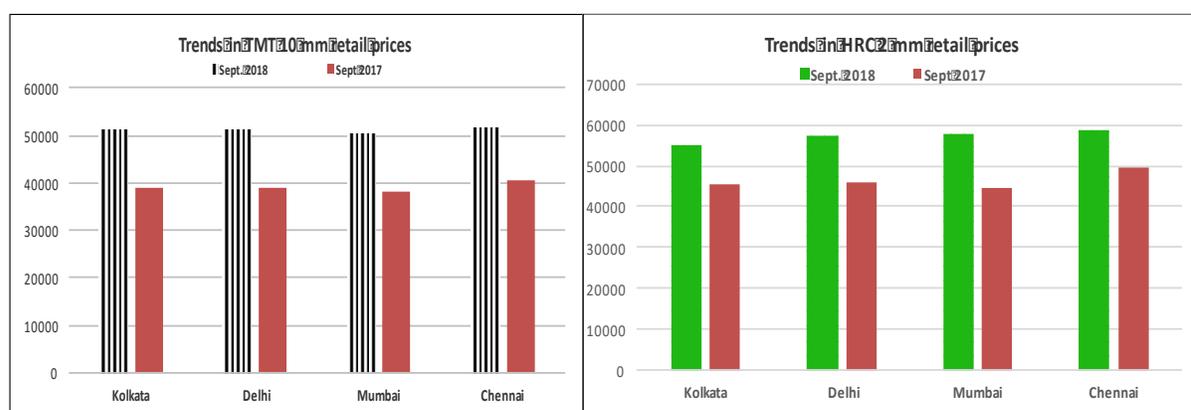
Source: JPC

All markets: Compared to September 2017, average (retail) market prices in September 2018 increased for both long products (represented by TMT 10 mm) and flat products (represented by HRC 2 mm), in response to domestic demand-supply conditions and partly global influence. The trend was similar when compared to August 2018 for both TMT and HRC across all markets. The

situation in September 2018 with regard to September 2017 is shown in the table below for TMT 10 mm and HRC 2.0 mm for all the four markets.

Trends in JPC (retail) market price: %change in September 2018 over September 2017				
Item	Kolkata	Delhi	Mumbai	Chennai
TMT 10mm	31.0	31.1	32.2	26.8
HR Coils 2.00mm	20.9	24.4	30.4	18.4
Source: JPC				

TMT prices were highest in the Chennai market (Rs 51,579/t) and lowest in the Mumbai market (Rs 50,362/t) while HRC prices were highest in the Chennai market (Rs. 58,449/t) and lowest in Kolkata market (Rs. 55,115/t) during September 2018.



INDIAN ECONOMY – HIGHLIGHTS OF PERFORMANCE

GDP: The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the first quarter (April-June) Q1, of 2018-19, both at constant (2011-12) and current prices. GDP at constant (2011-12) prices in Q1 of 2018-19 is estimated at Rs. 33.74 lakh crore, as against Rs.31.18 lakh crore in Q1 of 2017-18, showing a growth rate of 8.2 per cent. Quarterly GVA at basic price at constant (2011-2012) prices for Q1 of 2018-19 is estimated at Rs.31.63 lakh crore, as against Rs.29.29 lakh crore in Q1 of 2017-18, showing a growth rate of 8 per cent over the corresponding quarter of previous year. The economic activities which registered growth of over 7 per cent in Q1 of 2018-19 over Q1 of 2017 18 are 'manufacturing, 'electricity, gas, water supply & other utility services', 'construction' and 'public administration, defence and other services'. The growth in the 'agriculture, forestry and fishing', 'mining and quarrying', 'Trade, hotels, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting' and financial, real estate and professional services is estimated to be 5.3 per cent, 0.1 per cent, 6.7 per cent, and 6.5 per cent respectively during this period.

Industrial Production: Provisional CSO data show that the growth rate of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) was up by 5.2 per cent during April-August 2018 (prov.), encouraged by stable growth in Electricity (5.8 per cent), Manufacturing (5.4 per cent) and Mining (3.9 per cent). The

Use-Based scenario of the Index recorded a growth in all the leading steel-related end-use sectors during this period with Consumer Durables (8.6 per cent) reporting the highest and Intermediate Goods, the lowest (1.1 per cent).

Infrastructure Growth: Provisional data released by the CSO indicate that the growth rate of the Eight Core Infrastructure Industries was up by 5.5 per cent during April-August 2018 (prov.), encouraged by growth in most sectors, specially Coal (10.3 per cent) and Cement (14.7 per cent) but pulled down by decline in growth rate in case of Crude Oil (- 3.3 per cent) and Natural Gas (- 0.6 per cent).

Inflation: The annual rate of inflation, based on monthly WPI, stood at 5.13 per cent in September 2018 (prov.) while the all India CPI inflation rate (combined) stood at 3.77 per cent in September 2018 (prov.). Both the parameters registered an upturn during the month as compared to the preceding month.

Trade: Provisional figures from DGCI&S show that during April-September 2018, in dollar terms, overall exports were up by 12.54 per cent while overall imports were up by 16.16 per cent, both on yoy basis. During the same period, oil imports were valued at US\$ 69.73 billion which was 50.05 per cent higher yoy while non-oil imports were valued at US\$ 188.63 billion which was 7.21 per cent higher yoy. The overall trade deficit for April-September 2018-19 is estimated at US\$ 6.01 billion as compared to US \$ 43.07 billion in April-September 2017-18.

Prepared by: Joint Plant Committee