

Economy

External Sector

July 15, 2024

Goods trade deficit remains elevated

Goods trade deficit in June remained relatively elevated at US\$21 bn, though lower than US\$24 bn in May. The softening was mostly led by lower oil trade deficit. Services trade surplus was steady around the US\$13 bn mark. We maintain our FY2025 CAD/GDP estimate at 1.1% (0.7% in FY2024), given firmer domestic growth relative to global growth. We retain our call for USD-INR in the 83.25-83.75 range over the near term.

Non-oil exports remain steady in June compared with May levels

Exports in June grew 2.6% yoy to US\$35.2 bn (May: US\$38.1 bn) (Exhibits 1-2). Oil exports registered a sharp drop over June 2023 and May 2024 levels, while non-oil exports were marginally lower than May levels (Exhibits 3-5). Non-oil exports growth in 1QFY25 was driven by engineering goods and electronic goods, while gems and jewelry declined (Exhibit 6-7).

Oil imports led to narrowing of trade deficit from May highs

Imports in June increased 5% yoy to US\$56.2 bn (May: US\$61.9 bn) (Exhibits 1-2). Oil imports registered a sharp decline from May levels, while non-oil imports saw a more muted decline (Exhibits 3-5). Non-oil import growth in 1QFY25 was led by electronic goods and machinery, while pulled down by gold (Exhibit 6-7). The trade deficit narrowed to US\$21 bn in June and US\$64 bn in 1QFY25.

Services trade surplus continues to hold steady; softening bias

Services trade surplus in June was at US\$13 bn, in line with surplus of US\$13 bn in May (Exhibit 8). The recent trend suggests moderation in service trade surplus to an average monthly run-rate of US\$13 bn in 1QFY25 compared with the 4QCY23 average of US\$15 bn. We continue to pencil in a modest increase in services surplus in FY2025, until some clarity emerges on the extent of a global slowdown.

Maintain our FY2025 CAD/GDP estimate at 1.1%

We maintain our FY2025 CAD/GDP estimate at 1.1% (US\$43 bn), with the assumption of imports outpacing exports, given a relatively stronger domestic demand relative to global demand (Exhibit 9). Furthermore, we continue to expect a steady capital account surplus in FY2025E at US\$68 bn (healthy FPI flows), resulting in a balance of payments surplus of around US\$25 bn. While we expect the external sector balance to be comfortable, concerns will remain due to (1) volatile commodity prices, (2) the re-emergence of geopolitical tensions and (3) an asynchronous global monetary policy cycle, which is already underway. The Fed remaining on pause should aid USD strength, while some nascent signs of growth weakness would keep FX markets volatile. We continue to expect USD-INR to trade in the range of 83.25-83.75.

Summary of key macro metrics for India

	2023	2024	2025E	2026E
Real economy				
Real GDP growth (%)	7.0	8.2	6.9	6.7
Nominal GDP growth (%)	14.2	9.6	11.3	11.2
CPI Inflation (avg., %)	6.7	5.4	4.5	4.2
Public finance				
Center's GFD/GDP (%)	6.4	5.6	5.0	4.5
Monetary policy				
Repo Rate (%, eop)	6.50	6.50	6.00	5.50
SDF Rate (%, eop)	6.25	6.25	5.75	5.25
CRR (%, eop)	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
External sector				
Current Account Balance (% of GDP)	(2.0)	(0.7)	(1.1)	(1.2)
Brent crude oil price (avg., USD/bbl)	95.4	82.9	85.0	80.0
USD/INR (avg.)	80.3	82.8	83.4	84.3

Source: CEIC, Bloomberg, RBI, Kotak Economics Research estimates

Quick Numbers

June goods exports at US\$35 bn (growth of 2.6% yoy), June goods imports at US\$56 bn (growth of 5% yoy) and June goods trade deficit at US\$21 bn

June services trade surplus at US\$13 bn

Maintain FY2025 CAD/GDP estimate at 1.1%

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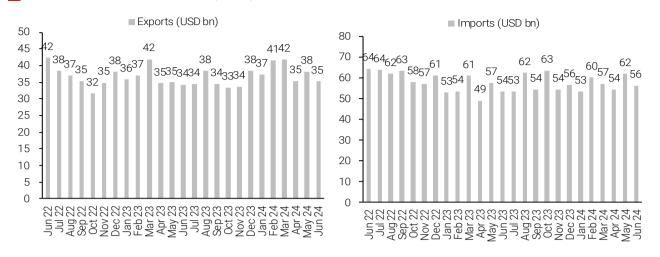
- → India's external balance remains strong
- → Trade deficit widens to a seven-month high
- → Imports held up better than exports in April

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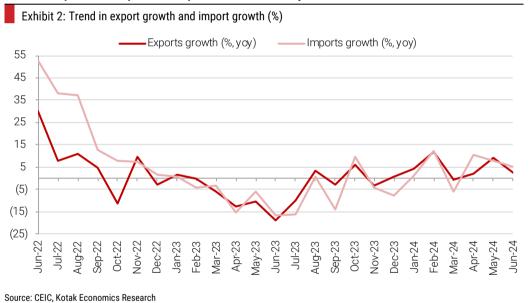
Exports and imports were around usual levels in June

Exhibit 1: Trend in imports and exports (US\$ bn)



Source: CEIC, Kotak Economics Research

Moderate expansion in exports and imports in June over last year

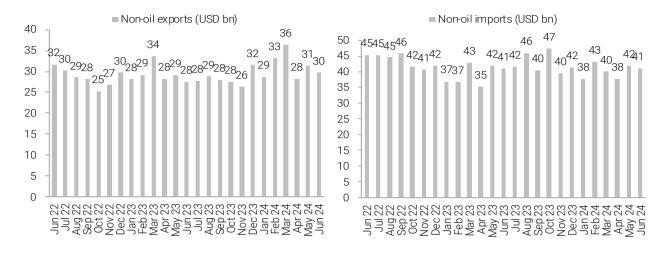


Economy



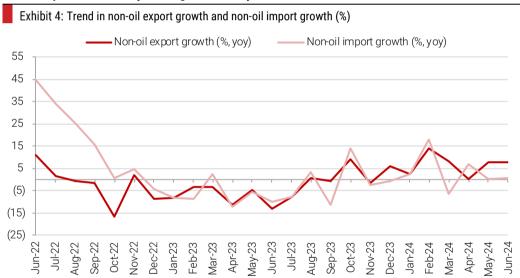
Both non-oil exports and imports declined marginally in June from May levels

Exhibit 3: Trend in non-oil imports and non-oil exports (US\$ bn)



Source: CEIC, Kotak Economics Research

Non-oil imports were broadly unchanged from last year's levels



Source: CEIC, Kotak Economics Research



Oil-led moderation in trade deficit in June from May levels

Exhibit 5: Trend in exports, imports and trade balance (US\$ bn)

				Jun-24 /	Jun-24 /
	Jun-24	Jun-23	May-24	Jun-23 (%)	May-24 (%)
Exports	35.2	34.3	38.1	2.6	(7.7)
Imports	56.2	53.5	61.9	5.0	(9.3)
Trade balance	(21.0)	(19.2)	(23.8)		
Oil exports	5.5	6.8	6.8	(18.2)	(18)
Oil imports	15.1	12.6	19.9	20	(25)
Oil trade balance	(9.5)	(5.8)	(13.2)		
Non-oil exports	29.7	27.6	31.4	7.7	(5.4)
Non-oil imports	41.1	40.9	42.0	0.5	(2.0)
Non-oil trade balance	(11.5)	(13.4)	(10.6)		
Non-oil non-electronics exports	26.9	25.2	28.4	6.8	(5.4)
Non-oil non-electronics imports	33.4	34.3	34.8	(2.5)	(4.0)
Non-oil non-electronics trade balance	(6.6)	(9.1)	(6.4)		
Non-oil non-gems & jewelry exports	27.4	25.3	28.6	8.5	(4.1)
Non-oil non-gems & jewelry imports	36.0	33.7	36.6	7.1	(1.5)
Non-oil non-gems & jewelry trade balance	(8.6)	(8.4)	(8.0)		

Source: CEIC, Kotak Economics Research

Non-oil exports higher in June over last year's level; non-oil imports broadly unchanged

Exhibit 6: Comparison of exports and imports (US\$ bn)

				Jun-24 /	Jun-24 /					Jun-24 /	Jun-24 /
	Jun-24	May-24	Jun-23	Jun-23 (%)	May-24 (%)		Jun-24	May-24	Jun-23	Jun-23 (%)	May-24 (%)
Exports	35.2	38.1	34.3	2.6	(7.7)	Imports	56.2	61.9	53.5	5.0	(9.3)
Oil exports	5.5	6.8	6.8	(18.2)	(18.5)	Oil imports	15.1	19.9	12.6	20	(25)
Non-oil exports	29.7	31.4	27.6	7.7	(5.4)	Non-oil imports	41.1	42.0	40.9	0.5	(2.0)
Engineering goods	9.4	10.0	8.5	10.3	(6.0)	Electronic goods	7.7	7.1	6.6	15.9	7.6
Electronic goods	2.8	3.0	2.4	16.9	(4.9)	Machinery	4.1	4.1	3.7	10.6	(1.5)
Organic and inorganic chemicals	2.3	2.3	2.2	3.3	(0.7)	Gold	3.1	3.3	5.0	(39)	(8.1)
Drugs and pharmaceuticals	2.5	2.3	2.2	9.9	7.2	Coal, coke, and briquettes	2.9	3.3	3.5	(16.7)	(10.8)
Gems and jewelry	2.2	2.8	2.3	(1.4)	(18.6)	Organic and inorganic chemicals	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.3	(2.6)
RMG of all textiles	1.3	1.4	1.2	3.7	(4.7)	Transport equipment	2.0	3.1	2.1	(5.5)	(35)
Rice	0.9	1.0	0.8	1.0	(15.2)	Non ferrous metals	2.3	2.1	1.6	48	11.7
Cotton yarn, fabrics,etc.	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	(5.0)	Artificial resins, plastic materials, etc.	1.9	1.9	1.7	14.5	1.1
Plastic and linoleum	0.7	0.8	0.6	9.9	(8.4)	Pearls, precious/semi-precious stones	1.8	1.9	2.2	(18.9)	(5.1)
Marine products	0.6	0.6	0.6	(7.7)	(3.0)	Iron and steel	1.8	1.7	1.6	12.6	5.8
Others	6.1	6.3	5.6	8.6	(3.6)	Others	11.0	10.8	10.4	5.7	2

Source: CEIC, Kotak Economics Research

Goods trade deficit wider in 1QFY25 compared with 1QFY24

Exhibit 7: Comparison of exports and imports (US\$ bn)

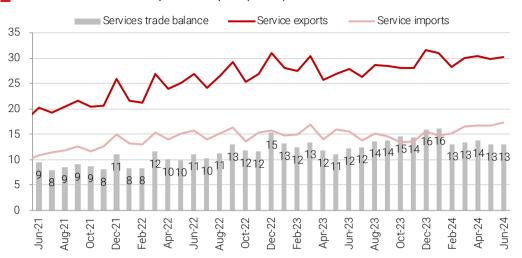
	10FY25	1QFY24	FYTD25/ FYTD24 (%)		10FY25	1QFY24	FYTD25/ FYTD24 (%)
Exports	108.7	103.9	4.6	Imports	172.4	160.0	7.7
Petroleum products	19.4	19.0	1.8	Petroleum crude and products	51.5	41.8	23
Non-oil exports	89.3	84.9	5.2	Non-oil imports	120.9	118.2	2.3
Engineering Goods	28.0	26.8	4.8	Electronic Goods	21.9	19.8	10.8
Gems and jewelry	7.3	7.5	(3.5)	Machinery	12.0	11.8	2.2
Organic and Inorganic Chemicals	7.1	6.6	7.6	Gold	9.5	9.7	(1.9)
Electronic Goods	8.4	6.9	22	Coal, coke, and briquettes	9.3	11.5	(19.0)
Drugs and Pharmaceuticals	7.2	6.6	9.2	Organic and Inorganic Chemicals	7.2	7.3	(1.4)
RMG of all textiles	3.8	3.7	4.2	Pearls, precious/semi-precious stones	5.4	6.2	(13.4)
Cotton yarn, fabrics,etc.	2.9	2.8	5.7	Iron and Steel	5.1	5.1	(1.2)
Rice	2.8	2.8	(0.5)	Transport Equipment	7.2	6.6	9.5
Plastic and Linoleum	2.1	1.9	9.9	Artificial resins, plastic materials, etc.	5.5	5.5	0.9
Marine Products	1.6	1.8	(8.1)	Non Ferrous Metals	6.2	5.4	14.5
Others	17.9	17.5	2.6	Others	31.5	29.3	7.5

Source: CEIC, Kotak Economics Research



Services surplus stagnating around US\$13 bn monthly rate

Exhibit 8: Trend in services exports and imports (US\$ bn)



Source: CEIC, Kotak Economics Research



We expect CAD/GDP at around 1% in FY2025E

Exhibit 9: India's balance of payments, March fiscal year-ends, 2019-25E (US\$ bn)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025E
Current account balance	(57.3)	(24.7)	23.9	(38.8)	(67.1)	(23.3)	(43.1)
GDP	2,705	2,835	2,674	3,167	3,352	3,567	3,943
CAB/GDP (%)	(2.1)	(0.9)	0.9	(1.2)	(2.0)	(0.7)	(1.1)
Trade balance	(180)	(158)	(102)	(189)	(265)	(242)	(263)
Trade balance/GDP (%)	(6.7)	(5.6)	(3.8)	(6.0)	(7.9)	(6.8)	(6.7)
- Exports	337	320	296	429	456	441	441
- oil exports	24	24	24	24	24	24	90
- non-oil exports	314	297	273	406	433	418	351
- Imports	518	478	398	619	721	684	704
- oil imports	141	131	83	162	209	180	193
- non-oil imports	377	347	316	457	512	504	510
- gold imports	33	28	35	46	35	46	51
Invisibles (net)	123	133	126	151	198	219	220
- Services	82	85	89	108	143	163	165
- software	78	85	90	110	131	142	143
- non-software	4	_	(1)	(2)	12	21	22
- Transfers	70	75	73	80	101	106	107
- Income (net)	(29)	(27)	(36)	(37)	(46)	(50)	(52)
Capital account	54	83	64	86	59	86	68
Capital account/GDP (%)	2.0	2.9	2.4	2.7	1.8	2.4	1.7
Foreign investment	30	44	80	22	23	54	49
- FDI	31	43	44	39	28	10	14
- FPI	(1)	1	36	(17)	(5)	44	35
- Equities	3	(0)	39	(16)	(6)	32	10
- Debt	(4)	1	(0)	2	1	13	25
Banking capital	7	(5)	(21)	7	21	41	15
- NRI deposits	10	9	7	3	9	15	10
Short-term credit	2	(1)	(4)	20	7	(6)	_
ECBs	10	23	(0.1)	8	(4)	_	2
External assistance	3	4	11	5	6	7	2
Other capital account items	1	18	(2)	24	7	(10)	_
E&O	(0)	1	(0)	_	(1)	1	_
Overall balance	(3.3)	59.5	87.3	47.5	(9.1)	63.7	24.9
Memo items							
Average USD/INR	69.9	70.9	74.2	74.5	80.3	82.8	83.4
Average Brent (US\$/bbl)	70.0	60.9	44.8	80.0	95.4	82.9	85.0

Source: RBI, Kotak Economics Research estimates

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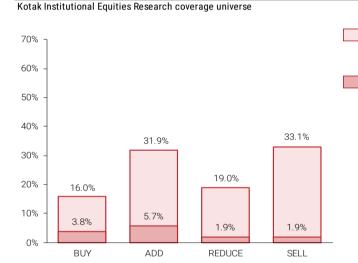
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