

AN OVERVIEW OF STEEL SECTOR¹

1. Introduction

Global Scenario

- In 2024, the world crude steel production reached 1,884.6 million tonnes (MT) as per provisional data released by World Steel Association. World Steel Association in its Short-Range Outlook, October 2024 forecasts that steel demand will grow by 1.2% year-on-year in 2025 and reach 1,771.5 MT after contracting 0.9% y-o-y in 2024 to 1750.9 MT.
- India is the second largest producer of crude steel. China was world's largest crude steel producer in 2024 (1,005.1MT) followed by India (149.4 MT), Japan (84.0 MT) and the USA (79.5 MT). (*Source: World Steel Association and the data is provisional*)
- Per capita finished steel consumption in 2023 was 221 kg for world and 635 kg for China as per provisional data released by World Steel Association. The same for India was 108 kg in 2024-25 (Source: JPC, data is provisional).

Domestic Scenario

- Steel is a de-regulated sector. The Government's role is that of a facilitator which lays down the policy guidelines and establishes the institutional mechanism/structure for creating conducive environment for improving efficiency and performance of the steel sector.
- In this role, the Government has released the National Steel Policy 2017, which has laid down the broad roadmap for encouraging long term growth for the Indian steel industry, both on demand and supply sides, by 2030-31.
- Government of India is implementing a Production-linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Specialty Steel. It is expected that the specialty steel production will reach 42 MT by the end of 2026-27.
- India's crude steel capacity was 200.3 mt (provisional) in 2024-25.

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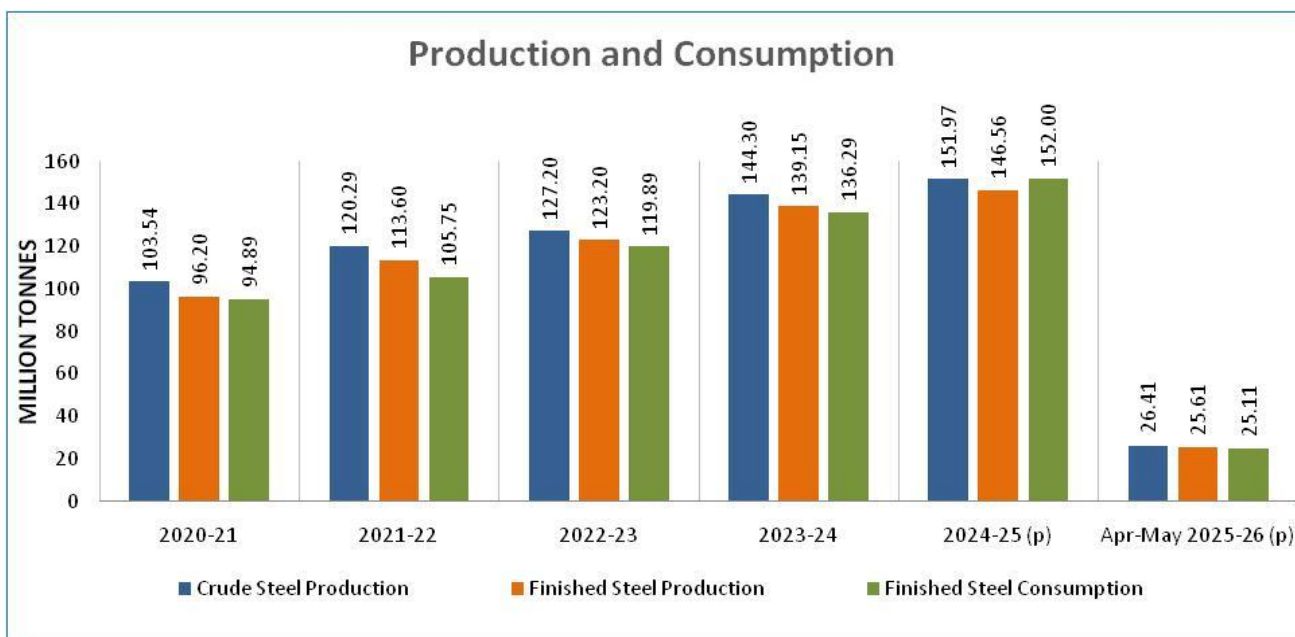
2. Performance of Steel sector

- Production of pig iron, sponge iron and total finished steel (alloy/stainless + non-alloy) are given in table below for last five years and current year:

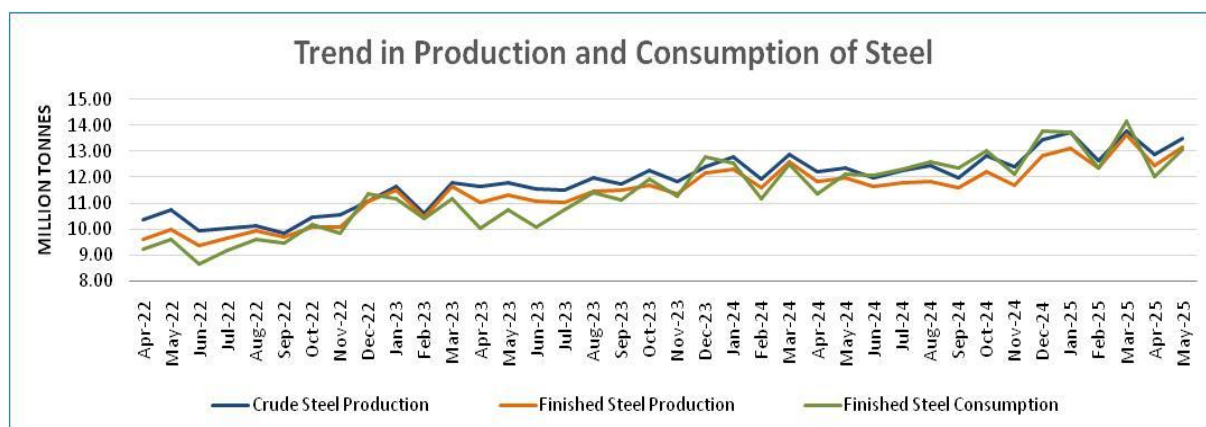
Table 1: Indian steel industry: Production (in Million Tonnes)						
Category	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25*	Apr-May 2025-26*
Pig Iron	4.88	6.26	5.86	7.36	8.33	1.519
Sponge Iron	34.38	39.20	43.62	51.56	55.65	4.941**
Total Finished Steel	96.20	113.60	123.20	139.15	146.56	25.613
Source: Joint Plant Committee; *Provisional; **for April 2025 period						

- Performance of Steel sector during 2024-25 has been the best ever of any fiscal year. Cumulative production and consumption of steel during the last five financial years and the current year are given in the following table and graph below:

Table 2: Production and consumption (in Million Tonnes)						
Category	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25*	Apr-May 2025-26
Crude production	103.54	120.29	127.20	144.30	151.97	26.41
Finished Steel production	96.20	113.60	123.20	139.15	146.56	25.61
Consumption	94.89	105.75	119.89	136.29	152.00	25.11
Source: Joint Plant Committee; *Provisional						

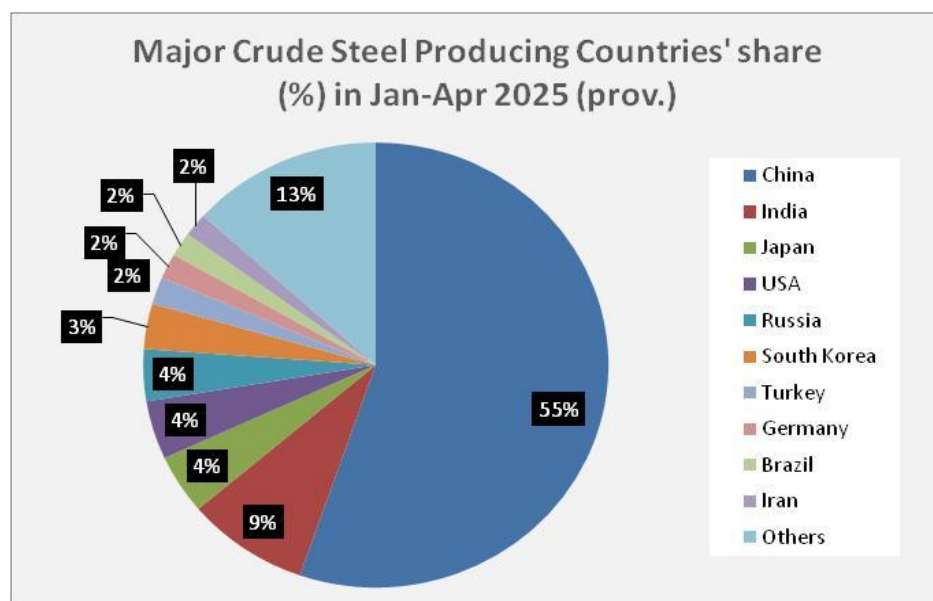


- The month-wise production and consumption indicates month-on-month fluctuations. Broadly speaking it has shown an increasing trend after 2020-21, during which production and consumption was adversely affected by Covid-19 pandemic. The production of crude Steel, finished steel and consumption since April, 2022 may be seen from Graph Below:



- The global production of crude steel declined by 0.4% year-on-year to 624.38 MT in January-April 2025 (provisional) against 626.66 MT in January-April 2024. Among the top 10 countries, only China and India reported growth in output. The remaining countries - Japan, Russia, South Korea, Turkey, Germany, Brazil and Iran reported fall in crude steel production in the first four months of this year. The USA, however, maintained status quo in production during the period.

India reported a 6.9% growth in production while China registered a marginal 0.4% rise in output. Germany reported a massive 11.9% fall in production while Iran's output fell by 8%. Country wise share of crude steel production in January-April 2025 may be seen from the following graph:



3. International Trade of Steel

- India was a net exporter of total finished steel from 2020-21 to 2022-23, but the country became net importer of finished steel in 2023-24 and 2024-25. In April-May of 2025-26 also, India was net importer of finished steel, according to provisional data from JPC. The table below contains the details:

Table 3: Exports and Imports (Th. Tonnes)						
Item	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25*	Apr-May 2025-26*
Export	10784	13494	6716	7487	4858	766
Imports	4752	4669	6021	8320	9551	947
Net Exports/Imports	6031	8824	695	833	4693	181
Source: JPC, *provisional						

- Month-wise data for 2024-25 and the current year(provisional) indicate that India has been a net importer throughout 2024-25 and the current year. The table and graph below contain the details.

Table 4: Month-wise Imports & Exports of Finished Steel in Th. Tonnes

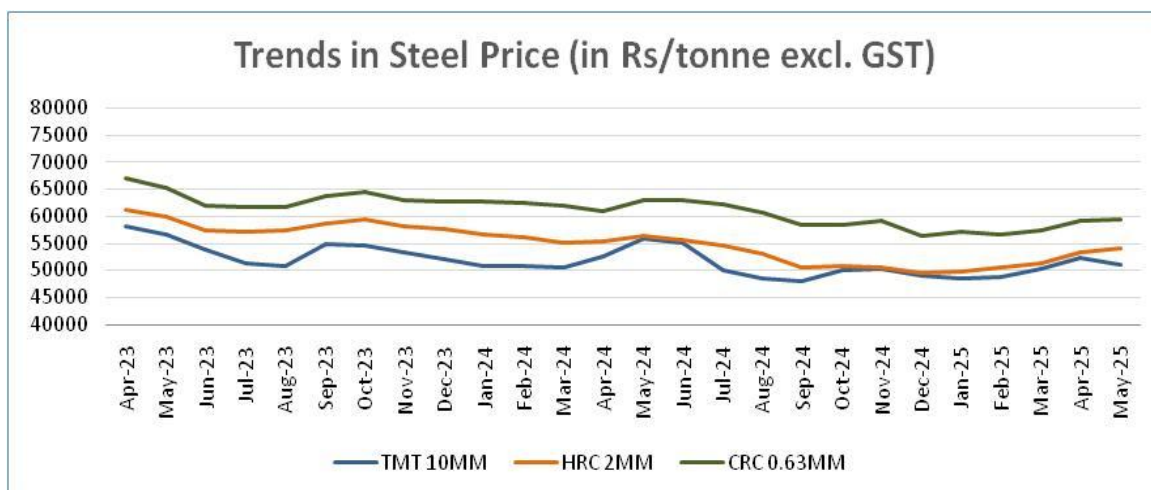
Item	Apr 24	May 24	Jun 24	Jul 24	Aug 24	Sep 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25*	May 25*
Imports	585	722	636	812	962	1017	1033	814	842	944	606	575	519	428
Exports	505	430	343	295	343	396	442	400	446	395	410	453	375	391
Net Import s/ Exports	80	292	294	517	620	621	591	414	396	549	197	122	144	37

Source: JPC, *data is provisional

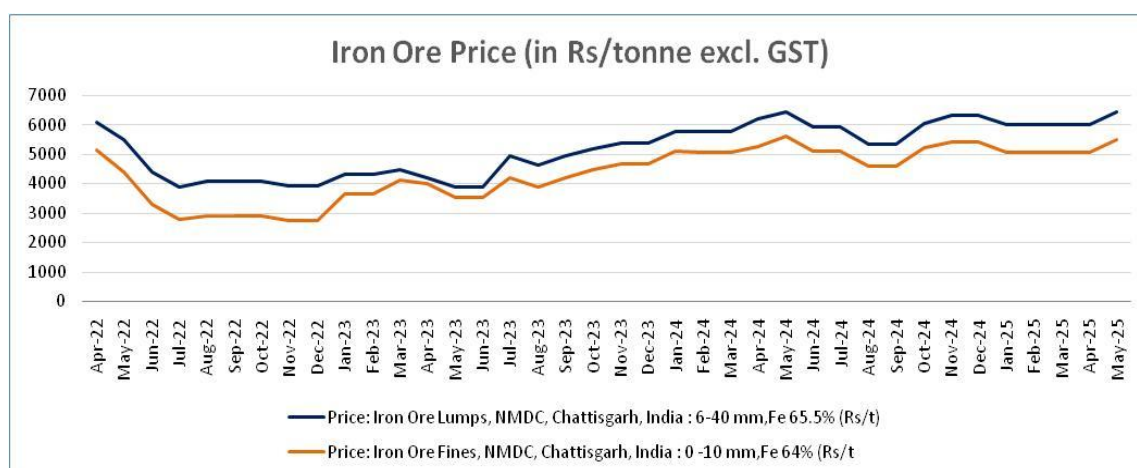


4. Steel Prices

- Price regulation of iron & steel was abolished on 16.1.1992. Since then, domestic steel prices are determined by the interplay of market forces.
- Domestic steel prices are influenced by trends in raw material prices, demand – supply conditions in the market, international price trends among others.
- As a facilitator, the Government monitors the steel market conditions and adopts fiscal and other policy measures based on its assessment.
- The fluctuations in retail prices of steel (TMT, HRC and CRC) may be seen from the following graph:



- Iron ore prices showed wide fluctuations during the last two years. Prices showed a declining trend between April 2022 and December 2022, followed by an upward move till May 2024. Iron ore prices again witnessed a declining trend since June 2024 to September 2024, following by an upward move till December 2024. Thereafter prices dipped at the start of 2025 as maybe seen from the graph below:



5. Important Policies and initiatives of Government of India

Steel is a de-regulated sector, Government acts as a facilitator, by creating conclusive policy environment for development of the steel sector. Government of India has notified National Steel Policy, 2017 which envisages development of a technologically advanced and globally competitive steel industry that provides environment for attaining self-sufficiency in steel production by providing policy support and guidance to steel producers. National Steel Policy covers all aspects

of steel sector such as steel demand, steel capacity, raw material security, infrastructure and logistics, Research & Development (R&D) and energy efficiency. Overall projections of domestic crude steel capacity, production and per capita finished steel consumption value envisaged in the National Steel Policy (NSP) 2017 are shown below: -

S. No.	Parameter	Projections (2030-31)
1	Total Crude Steel Capacity	300 mt
2	Total Crude Steel demand/Production	255 mt
3	Per Capita Finished Steel Consumption	158 kg
Sources: National Steel Policy (NSP) 2017		mt: Million Tonnes

- **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** for Specialty Steel was launched by the Union Cabinet on 29.07.2021, with financial outlay of Rs. 6,322 crore to promote the manufacturing of 'Specialty Steel' within the country by attracting capital investment, generate employment and promote technology up-gradation in the steel sector. At present the scheme has 44 active projects with committed investment of about Rs. 27,100 Crore and downstream capacity addition of 23.8 million tonnes. Second round of Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Specialty Steel (PLI 1.1) was launched on January 6th 2025 with a tenure from 2025-26 to 2029-30. 42 Memorandum of Understanding were signed with selected companies under the PLI Scheme 1.1.
- **Steel Quality Control Order (QCO):** Ministry of Steel has introduced Steel Quality Control Order (QCO) thereby banning sub-standard/ defective steel products both from domestic & imports to ensure the availability of quality steel to the industry, users and public at large. As per the Order, it is ensured that only quality steel conforming to the relevant BIS standards are made available to the end users. As on date 151 Indian Standards stands notified under the Quality Control Order covering carbon steel, alloy steel and stainless steel have been notified under the QCO. Ministry of Steel has identified 23 additional BIS Standards in the QCO in consultation with BIS. Further discussion with BIS on identification of more BIS standards in the QCO are in progress.
- **Research & Development (R&D):** Ministry of Steel is providing

financial assistance for pursuing Research & Development to address the technological challenges faced by the Iron & Steel sector. The thrust areas for providing financial assistance under the R&D Scheme, are development of new alternate processes & technologies to address the issues faced by the Iron & Steel Sector such as addressing climate change, waste utilization, resource efficiency, etc. The yearly budget allocated for the scheme is around Rs 5-10 crore per year. Out of the 35 R&D projects completed under the scheme so far, Process/ Knowhow developed have been adopted by the Industry in six projects and Process/ Knowhow Developed at lab scale in 23 projects. In six projects the outcome was not successful. Presently 35 R&D projects are in progress which are in various stages of completion.

- In 2025-26, Ministry of Steel has sought R&D Project proposals in joint collaborative mode from reputed Academic Institutions, Research Laboratories and Steel Companies for pursuing R&D projects on the identified thrust areas, for providing financial assistance under the R&D Scheme. The guidelines have been uploaded in the website of Ministry of Steel.

- **Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS)**

SIMS, introduced in 2019, provides detailed data related to imports of steel in India. Based on industry feedback, the Ministry has revamped the portal to develop a more effective SIMS 2.0. It is a significant step forward in monitoring steel imports and promoting the growth of the domestic steel industry. Availability of such detailed data not only provides input for policy making but also signals areas for production and growth to the domestic steel industry.

SIMS 2.0 features API integration with multiple government portals, enhancing quality control and streamlining processes for improved efficiency and effectiveness. The portal boasts a robust data entry system, ensuring consistent and authentic data, which promotes transparency and accountability. Integration of various databases enable stakeholders to locate areas of risk and, thereby, permit better risk management. Accurate monitoring of steel imports through SIMS is expected to help in taking informed

policy decisions to counter surge in steel imports, driving growth, and attracting sustained investment in India's steel industry.
