

The Economy Observer

Decoding consumption trends: Consumption demand decelerating

Likely to dwindle further in the coming months

- An analysis of 12 rural consumption indicators suggests that rural spending rose 5.3% YoY in 9MFY23 v/s 0.6% YoY growth in 9MFY22. However, consumption grew at a three-quarter low of 4.6% YoY in 3QFY23 v/s 6.5%/5.6% YoY rise in 1Q/2QFY23.
- The slowdown was primarily led by: a) four-quarter low growth in real agriculture GVA, b) continued fall in non-agricultural wages, c) sharp slowdown (nine-quarter low growth) in two-wheeler sales, d) continued decline in farmers' terms of trade (negative for eight quarters now), e) drop in real farm exports (first decline in 10 quarters) and f) three-quarter low growth in real farm credit in 3QFY23.
- An analysis of nine urban consumption indicators suggests that the sector grew slowly by 11.5% YoY in 9MFY23, following a 12.4% YoY growth in 9MFY22. It is estimated to have increased 6.6 % YoY in 3QFY23 v/s 18 %/10.9% YoY rise in 1Q/ 2QFY23. Three among the nine indicators real non-farm consumer imports, real non-farm GVA and IIP for consumer durable goods witnessed a slowdown. Others such as real salaries of BSE500 employees, domestic PV sales, real personal credit and petrol consumption posted higher growth.
- A close look at the farm sector suggests a mixed bag. While rainfall, wages of farm/non-farm workers and farmers' terms of trade continue to lag, fiscal spending, Rabi sowing and water reservoir level appear to be performing well.
- Overall, consumption demand has started its southward journey. Both rural and urban consumption grew at a three-quarter low in 3QFY23. Going ahead, though the central government continues to focus on the rural sector, weak income growth combined with higher interest rates could bring down overall consumption demand further. Data released from the CSO also reveals collapse in total consumption to 2.1% YoY in 3QFY23.

Rural consumption was strong in 9MFY23...: An analysis of 12 proxy indicators¹ suggests that rural spending grew 5.3% YoY in 9MFY23 v/s 0.6% YoY in 9MFY22 and an average growth of 4.9% YoY over 9MFY17-9MFY19 (*Exhibit 1*). A faster growth in six out of 12 indicators resulted in the quicker 9MFY23 growth. Real agriculture GVA, tractor sales, two-wheeler and fertilizer sales as well as real fiscal rural spending reported higher growth. While the former two grew at a slightly faster pace, the latter three exhibited strong growth in 9MFY23 (v/s contractions visible in 9MFY22; *Exhibit 2*).

Exhibit 1: Rural consumption spiked 5.3% YoY in 9MFY23 as against 0.6% YoY in 9MFY22...

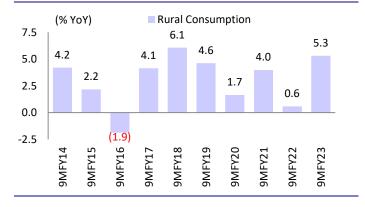
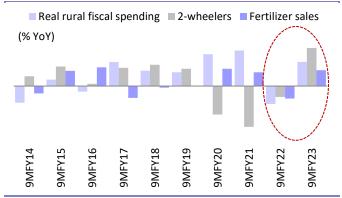


Exhibit 2: ...fueled by growth in real fiscal spending, twowheelers and fertilizer sales v/s contractions in 9MFY22



Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

¹Including: 1) Real agri wages, 2) Real non-agri wages, 3) Two-wheeler sales, 4) Farm terms of trade, 5) Tractor sales, 6) Real agri exports, 7) Fertilizer sales, 8) Real agri credit, 9) IIP food products, 10) Reservoir levels, 11) Fiscal real rural spending, and 12) Real farm GVA

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...because of decent growth in 1Q/2QFY23 while 3QFY23 consumption decelerated: Rural consumption grew only 4.6% YoY in 3QFY23 after rising 6.5%/5.5% YoY in 1Q/2QFY23, respectively (Exhibit 3). The slowdown in the last quarter was in contrast to three-quarter high growth in real farm GVA during the quarter (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 3: Rural consumption grew at a three-quarter low in 3QFY23...

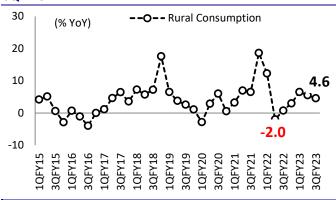
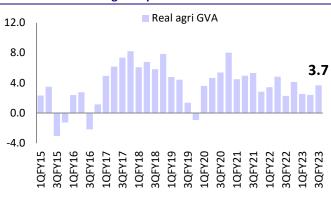


Exhibit 4: ...in contrast to a three-quarter high growth in real farm GVA during the quarter



Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

The slowdown in 3QFY23 was primarily led by: a) four-quarter low growth in real agriculture GVA, b) continued fall in non-agricultural wages, c) sharp slowdown (nine-quarter low growth) in two-wheeler sales, d) continued decline in farmers' terms of trade (negative for eight quarters now), e) drop in real farm exports (first decline in 10 quarters) and f) three-quarter low growth in real farm credit in 3QFY23 (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: Rural consumption rose decently in 9MFY23 fueled by strong growth in 1Q/2QFY23 while 3QFY23 decelerated

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Rural consumption indicators	3QFY22	4QFY22	1QFY23	2QFY23	3QFY23	9MFY19	9MFY20	9MFY21	9MFY22	9MFY23
Nom agri GVA	2.3	4.1	2.5	2.4	3.7	3.2	4.6	5.0	3.3	3.0
Real agri wages	2.0	(0.6)	(0.4)	(0.6)	0.8	2.8	(2.3)	(0.4)	1.0	(0.1)
Real non-agri wages	1.2	(1.0)	(1.3)	(1.4)	(0.7)	2.2	(2.5)	0.4	(0.2)	(1.1)
Two-wheelers	(24.8)	(23.0)	54.4	13.6	7.2	9.6	(15.8)	(22.6)	(6.1)	21.0
Terms of trade	(13.2)	(9.8)	(13.7)	(11.7)	(12.6)	(6.5)	6.2	8.1	(11.6)	(12.7)
Tractors sales	(9.5)	(21.6)	17.4	4.0	7.2	14.4	(9.9)	15.9	5.6	9.6
Agri exports	17.7	3.3	15.0	2.6	(13.0)	(2.3)	(14.2)	3.0	20.8	1.3
Fertilizer sales	(11.9)	24.6	6.8	4.3	14.8	0.1	9.5	7.6	(6.9)	8.7
Agri credit	9.0	3.6	6.1	5.3	4.9	6.9	(2.0)	5.3	9.0	4.9
IIP: food products	1.0	2.7	6.2	0.9	2.8	11.8	5.7	(5.2)	7.3	3.3
Reservoir	(2.7)	5.0	2.2	21.4	9.3	5.9	22.9	11.1	(5.1)	12.5
Fiscal Spending	37.9	48.4	(17.5)	25.4	30.5	7.6	17.6	19.7	(9.9)	13.4
Rural Consumption*	0.7	3.0	6.5	5.5	4.6	4.6	1.7	4.0	0.6	5.3

*Simple average of indicators

Nominal data deflated by CPI for agricultural workers (CPI-AW)

Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL



Urban consumption grew slowly in 9MFY23...: Urban consumption² – compiled by using nine proxy indicators – grew 11.5% YoY in 9MFY23 v/s a 12.4% YoY growth in 9MFY22 (*Exhibit 6*). Three among the nine indicators – real non-farm consumer imports, real non-farm GVA and IIP for consumer durable goods – witnessed a slowdown (*Exhibit 7*). Others such as real salaries of BSE500 employees, domestic PV sales, real personal credit and petrol consumption posted higher growth. While CPI for non-food inflation remained flat at a high level (of 6.7% YoY), real house prices contracted at a slower pace in 9MFY23.

Exhibit 6: Urban consumption grew slower in 1HFY23 v/s a sharp growth in 1HFY22...

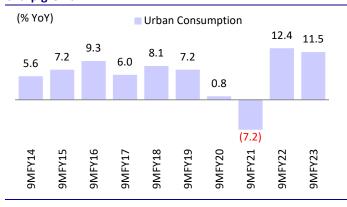
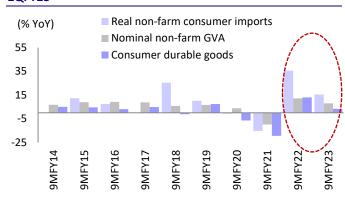


Exhibit 7: ...primarily on account of slower growth in 2OFY23



Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

...due to major slowdown in 3QFY23: After growing strongly by 18%/10.9% YoY in 1Q/2QFY23, urban consumption rose only 6.6% YoY in 3QFY23 leading to a slower growth in 9MFY23 (v/s 9MFY22 level). Six out of nine indicators disappointed in 3QFY23; these were – Real non-farm GVA, domestic PV sales, IIP for consumer durable goods, petrol consumption, real house prices and real non-farm consumer imports (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8: Consumption grew 6.6% YoY in 3Q after 18%/10.9% YoY rise in 1Q/2QFY23, leading to slower growth in 9MFY23

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Urban consumption indicators	3QFY22	4QFY22	1QFY23	2QFY23	3QFY23	9MFY19	9MFY20	9MFY21	9MFY22	9MFY23
Non-farm GVA	5.3	3.8	13.8	5.9	4.8	6.7	3.8	(9.9)	12.2	8.0
Real S&W	(3.0)	5.3	6.5	11.4	18.3	13.9	7.6	1.5	6.3	12.0
CPI non-food inflation	6.9	6.4	6.8	6.7	6.7	5.9	3.4	5.0	6.8	6.7
Domestic: PV sales	(20.2)	(6.1)	33.9	34.4	21.4	4.4	(20.0)	(19.1)	15.9	29.7
Personal credit	8.9	6.9	11.2	12.3	13.9	11.1	13.1	5.6	8.9	13.9
IIP: Consumer durable goods	(3.5)	(5.7)	27.2	(2.7)	(8.4)	7.4	(6.5)	(19.4)	13.0	3.5
Petrol consumption	2.4	1.5	29.4	9.1	7.7	7.6	8.4	(11.9)	13.8	14.6
Real house prices	(0.5)	(1.7)	(0.2)	0.4	(1.8)	(2.0)	(1.5)	(1.3)	(1.2)	(0.5)
Non-farm consumer imports: ytd	25.9	38.2	33.5	21.1	(3.2)	10.1	(0.8)	(15.2)	35.5	15.4
Urban consumption*	2.5	5.4	18.0	10.9	6.6	7.2	0.8	(7.2)	12.4	11.5

^{*}Simple average of indicators

Nominal data deflated by CPI-for industrial workers (CPI-IW) Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

²Compiled using nine indicators: 1) Real S&W of BSE500 companies, 2) CPI non-food inflation, 3) Real personal real credit, 4) IIP Consumer Durable Goods, 5) Petrol consumption and 6) Real house prices, and 7) Real non-farm consumer imports, 8) PV sales, and 9) Real non-farm GVA

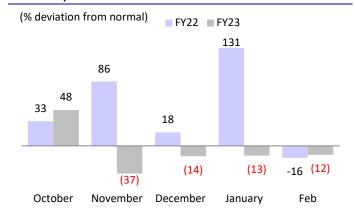


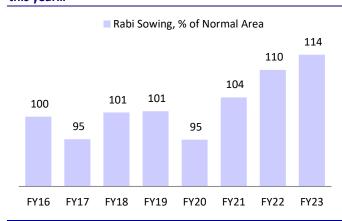
After our discussion on the overall rural and urban consumption, we now analyze a few factors that affect the farm sector adversely within the rural sector as well as a few metrics that indicate the health of the overall rural sector.

According to data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), winter
rainfall that is useful during the Rabi season appears to have been weak this
year. Except Oct'22, all the other months up to Jan'23 have had lower rainfall
compared to the normal range as well as last year level (refer Exhibit 9). Despite
that Rabi sowing has increased this year supported by comfortable water
reservoir levels (refer Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 9: After a surplus southwest monsoon, winter rainfall has been poor in FY23...

Exhibit 10: ...but Rabi sowing trends have still been good this year...





Up to 3rd February for all years Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

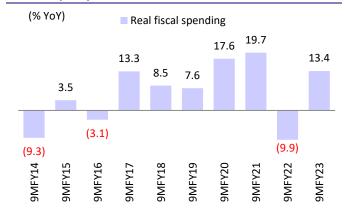
- 2. Excluding FY20, average reservoir level has been at 52% of live storage capacity during FY10-19. It stood at 65% in FY23, similar to the levels seen in the last two years. This is probably why there have been no issues with Rabi sowing despite poor winter rainfall in the country (refer Exhibit 11).
- 3. After declining 9.9% YoY in 9MFY22, government's real spending towards the rural sector has once again risen by a sharp 13.4% YoY in 9MFY23. We include spending by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare, Department of Fertilizers, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, and Ministry of Rural Development for our analysis (refer Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 11: ...due to decent water reservoir levels in FY23 compared to previous years

Water reservoir levels (% of live storage) 86 67 64 66 65 62 52 48 42 43 42 38 FY13 FY14 FY15 FY16 FY17 FY18 FY19 FY20

Up to first week of February for all years

Exhibit 12: Fiscal real rural spending grew strongly in 9MFY23, partly on account of a low base



Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

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- 4. One of the bright spots in 3QFY23 data was ~1% YoY growth in real farm wages, which came after three quarters of consecutive declines. We compile real farm wages using five activities ploughing and tilling; sowing; harvesting, winnowing and threshing; picking; and animal husbandry (Exhibit 13).
- 5. We also compile non-farm rural wages using another set of five professions carpenter, blacksmith, mason, tractor driver, and sweeper. Data suggests that the situation of real non-farm wages continues to remain a worry (Exhibit 14).

Exhibit 13: Real rural farm wages actually grew in 3QFY23 after three quarters of consecutive decline...

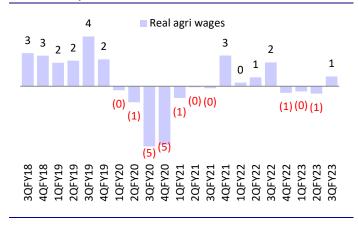
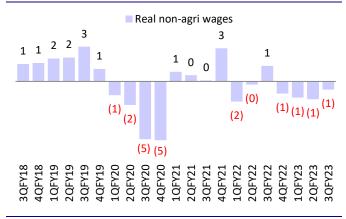


Exhibit 14: ...but real non-farm wages continued their downward trend for the fourth consecutive quarter



Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

6. Finally, the 'terms of trade' for the farm sector too have not improved. Based on five items (high-speed diesel, electricity, fertilizers, pesticides, and agricultural machinery & implements), we estimate that farm input prices grew ~24% YoY over Apr'22-Jan'23 v/s a growth of only ~9% YoY in farm output prices during the corresponding period (refer Exhibits 15 and 16). This highlights the continued stress in farmers' income. However, a ray of hope emerged with 2.8% YoY growth in output prices in Jan'23 (v/s -0.3% YoY in Dec'22). This was in contrast to a 21-month low growth of 13.2% YoY in input prices in Jan'23.

Exhibit 15: Farmers' terms of trade continue to be unfavorable over Apr'22-Jan'23...

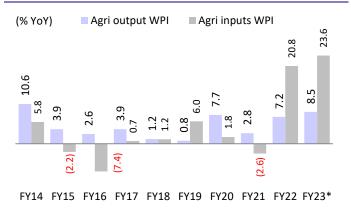
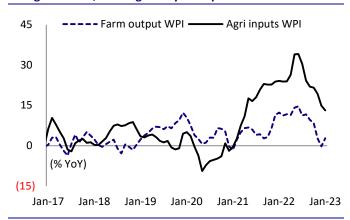


Exhibit 16: ...with the gap between input and output prices being still wide, although a ray of hope was visible in Jan'23



Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL

*Apr'22-Jan'23



Conclusion: Consumption demand has started ebbing

Overall, consumption demand has started its southward journey. Both rural and urban consumption grew at a three-quarter low of 4.6% and 6.6% YoY, respectively, in 3QFY23 (Exhibit 17). Going ahead, though the central government continues to focus on the rural sector, weak income growth combined with higher interest rates could bring down overall consumption demand further. Data released from the CSO also reveals collapse in total consumption to 2.1% YoY in 3QFY23 (Exhibit 18).

Exhibit 17: Both rural as well as urban consumption decelerated in 3QFY23...

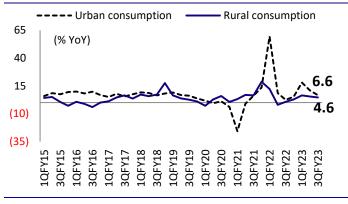
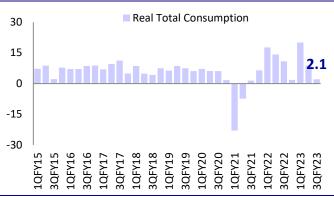


Exhibit 18: ...as was also indicated in our in-house estimate of total consumption during the quarter



Source: Various national sources, CEIC, MOFSL



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