

WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX JUNE 2021

WPI inflation eased to 12.1% in June 2021 from a series-high 12.9% in May 2021, led by minerals, and crude oil and natural gas

JULY 2021

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HIGHLIGHTS



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The WPI inflation moderated to 12.1% in June 2021 from 12.9% in May 2021

The core-WPI inflation hardened further to 10.4% in June 2021; expected to record a modest uptick in July 2021

We expect headline WPI inflation to continue to soften, while remaining in double-digits in Q2 FY2022

- Although it remained elevated, the year-on-year (YoY) WPI inflation moderated to 12.1% in June 2021 (-1.8% in June 2020; refer Exhibit 1 and 2, and Annexure) from last month's series-high 12.9% (-3.4% in May 2020), with a normalising base contributing to a sharp correction in the inflation for minerals, and crude oil and natural gas, despite a sequential rise in global commodity prices.
- The moderation in the YoY WPI inflation in June 2021 relative to May 2021, was relatively broad-based, with the inflation rising for only two categories, namely primary non-food articles, and non-food manufactured products ("core-WPI").
- The inflation for primary food articles eased to 3.1% in June 2021 from 4.3% in May 2021, despite a worrying 18.5% month-on-month (MoM) rise in the vegetable index, partly reflecting the heavy rains in the early part of the month. Additionally, the YoY inflation for manufactured food-products eased to 13.4% in June 2021 from 15.2% in May 2021. Consequently, the WPI-Food index eased to 6.7% in June 2021 from 8.1% in May 2021.
- While the core inflation hardened further to 10.4% in June 2021 from 10.0% in May 2021, the pace of the MoM uptick in this index eased to a four-month low 0.5%.
- Going forward, a revival in the monsoon rainfall, as well as a pickup in the pace of sowing will be critical to bolster the outlook for kharif yields. Given the high base, we expect the primary food articles inflation to moderate further in the current month.
- The depreciation in the INR will push up the landed cost of imports, adding to the inflationary pressures for the WPI in the immediate term. We forecast the YoY core inflation to record a further modest uptick in July 2021, before commencing a gradual downtrend from August 2021 onwards. Overall, the headline WPI inflation is projected to continue to soften, while remaining in double-digits in Q2 FY2022.
- While not a central driver, the continuing double-digit WPI inflation and its potential future spillovers into the CPI inflation, will inject uneasiness into the tone of monetary policy.



OVERVIEW

- As expected, the YoY WPI inflation softened to 12.1% in June 2021 (-1.8% in June 2020; refer Exhibit 1 and 2, and Annexure) from a series-high 12.9% in May 2021 (-3.4% in May 2020), with a normalising base contributing to a sharp correction in the inflation for minerals, and crude oil and natural gas, despite a rise in global commodity prices. The inflation print for June 2021 was modestly lower than our forecast (12.3%).
- The softening in the YoY WPI inflation in June 2021 relative to May 2021, was broad-based, led by crude petroleum and natural gas, minerals, fuel and power, manufactured food products and primary food articles. In contrast, the inflation for core-WPI, and primary non-food articles hardened in June 2021 relative to the previous month.
- The YoY inflation for the WPI-Food index moderated to 6.7% in June 2021 from a 16-month high 8.1% in May 2021, driven by a decline in the inflation for manufactured food-products (to +13.4% from +15.2%) and primary food articles (to +3.1% from +4.3%).
- The YoY inflation in primary food articles eased to 3.1% in June 2021 (+2.1% in June 2020) from the six-month high 4.3% in May 2021 (+1.7% in May 2020). This was led by a correction in th fruits (to +5.6% in June 2021 from +20.2% in May 2021), eggs, meat and fish (to +8.6% from +10.7%), pulses (to +11.5% from +12.1%), milk (to +1.6% from +2.5%) and other food articles (to +12.4% from +14.9%). Moreover, the disinflation in cereals widened to 2.7% in June 2021 from 2.5% in May 2021. On the other hand, the disinflation in vegetables eased considerably to 0.8% in June 2021 from 9.0% in May 2021, while the YoY inflation for condiments and spices increased to 3.8% from 1.6% during the same period. In MoM terms, the primary food articles sub-index rose by 0.3% in June 2021, lower than 1.5% rise recorded in June 2020, driven by perishables such as fruits (-13.0% in June 2021 vs. -0.9% in June 2020), eggs, meat and fish (+1.5% vs. +3.5%), etc. In contrast, there was a worrying 18.5% MoM rise in the vegetable index in June 2021 (+8.7% in June 2020), the highest MoM uptick recorded for this segment in the month of June in the current series, partly reflecting the heavy rains in the early part of the month.
- Similarly, the YoY inflation for manufactured food products eased to 13.4% in June 2021 (+5.1% in June 2020) from a series-high 15.2% in May 2021 (+4.8% in May 2020). This was led by a lower inflation print for manufacture of tea and coffee products, vegetable and animal oils and fats, sugar, molasses and honey, dairy products, etc. In MoM terms, the manufactured food items sub-index declined by 0.6% in June 2021, as opposed to the 1.0% rise recorded in June 2020, led by vegetable and animal oils and fats (-2.8% in June 2021 vs. +2.2% in June 2020), dairy products (-0.3% vs +0.6%), etc.
- The YoY inflation for crude petroleum and natural gas softened to 36.3% in June 2021 (-22.4% in June 2020) from 56.1% in May 2021 (-37.4% in May 2020). This was led by a sharp correction in the inflation for crude petroleum (to +62.6% from +102.5%) owing to the normalising base, even as the YoY disinflation narrowed mildly for natural gas to 17.3% from 17.4%, respectively. The initial level for the crude petroleum sub-index for June 2021 has been pegged at 91.4, 2.8% higher than the revised level for April 2021 (88.9). This is lower than the estimated increase of 13.8% in the price of the Indian crude oil basket in INR terms recorded between those two months; hence we expect the index for June 2021 to report an upward revision, going forward. In MoM terms, the crude petroleum sub-index increased by 2.8% in June 2021 (as compared to the sharp 28.0% rise in June 2020), and the natural gas sub-index rose by a mild 0.2% in June 2021 (+0.1% in June 2020).
- Moreover, the YoY inflation for minerals nearly halved to 11.9% in June 2021 (+8.4% in June 2020) from 22.1% in May 2021 (-1.6% in May 2020) led by the trend in metallic minerals (to +12.6% from +27.3%; led by copper concentrate, manganese ore, etc.). On the other hand, other minerals (to +9.7% from +7.0%; led by limestone and phosphorite), witnessed a higher



YoY inflation in June 2021 relative to May 2021. In MoM terms, the minerals sub-index increased by a mild 1.0% in June 2021 (as compared to the sharp 10.2% rise in June 2020), led by trend in metallic minerals (-0.5% vs. +12.5%).

- In addition, the YoY inflation for fuel and power (with a weight of 13.2% of the WPI) eased to 32.8% in June 2021 (-16.2% in June 2020) from a series-high 37.6% in May 2021 (-23.1% in May 2020), driven by trend in mineral oils (to +61.8% in June 2021 from +81.2% in May 2021). On the other hand, the YoY inflation for electricity increased to 10.0% in June 2021 from 5.8% in May 2021, while that for coal remained unchanged at a muted 0.7% in June 2021. In MoM terms, the fuel and power sub-index rose by 2.9% in June 2021, lower than the 6.6% rise recorded in June 2020, driven by the trend in mineral oils (+4.9% vs.+17.5%).
- In contrast, reflecting the continued uptrend in the international commodity prices amidst strengthening of global demand, the core-WPI inflation increased to a fresh series-high 10.4% on a YoY basis in June 2021 (-0.9% in June 2020) from 10.0% in May 2021 (-1.3% in May 2020). Despite this, the core-WPI inflation was lower than the headline WPI inflation in June 2021, for the fourth consecutive month. For 14 of the 21 sub-sectors (with a sizeable weight of 40.2% in the WPI), the YoY inflation rose in June 2021 relative to May 2021; this sub-set includes textiles, basic metals, furniture, tobacco products, wearing apparel, leather and related products, wood and of products of wood and cork, chemicals and chemical products, pharmaceuticals, medicinal chemical and botanical products, etc. (refer Exhibit 3). On the other hand, seven sub-groups (with a limited weight of 14.9% in the WPI) displayed a softening in their inflation print in June 2021 relative to May 2021; this sub-set includes beverages, paper and paper products, rubber and plastics products, electrical equipment, motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers, other transport equipment and other manufacturing. In MoM terms, the sub-index for the core-WPI rose by 0.5% in June 2021, higher than 0.2% rise recorded in June 2020. As many as nine of the 21 sub-indices (accounting for 25.9% of the WPI), such as textiles (+0.9%), wood and of products of wood and cork (+0.9%), printing and reproduction of recorded media (+0.6%), etc. registered a rise in MoM terms in June 2021. In contrast, there was a decline in MoM terms in June 2021 for nine of the 21 sub-indices (with a modest weight of 24.5% in the WPI), namely tobacco products (-1.0%), motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (-0.7%), paper and paper products, other transport equipment and other manufacturing.
- In addition, the YoY inflation in primary non-food articles increased to 18.9% in June 2021 (-2.8% in June 2020) from 18.4% in May 2021 (-3.9% in May 2020), driven by an uptrend in the inflation for fibres (to +21.9% from +14.5%), oil seeds (to +37.5% from +35.9%; reflecting global trend), and to a mild extent, other non-food articles (to +11.7% from +11.3%). In contrast, the YoY disinflation for floriculture deepened sharply to 30.8% from 20.7%, respectively. In MoM terms, the primary non-food articles sub-index rose by 2.6% in June 2021, higher than the 2.1% rise recorded in June 2020, led by fibres (+5.5% vs. -0.9%, respectively).
- The final WPI YoY inflation for April 2021 was revised upwards to 10.7% from the initial 10.5%, led by crude petroleum and natural gas (to +80.8% from +79.6%), minerals (to +20.6% from +19.6%), core-WPI (to +8.7% from +8.4%), manufactured food products (to +13.1% from +12.6%), and fuel and power (to +21.3% from +20.9%). However, the inflation for primary food articles (to +4.6% from +4.9%) witnessed a downward revision, while that for primary non-food articles was unchanged.
- With a steeper decline in the WPI inflation than the CPI inflation in June 2021 relative to May 2021, the wedge between the two has eased to 581 basis points (bps; +12.1% vs. +6.26%) from 664 basis points (bps; +12.9% vs. +6.30%), respectively.



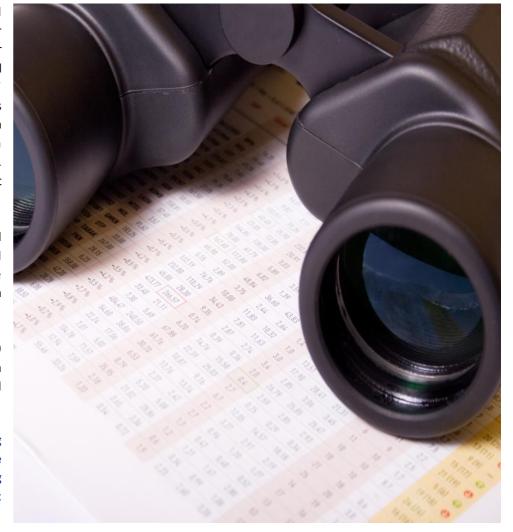
OUTLOOK

The early data released by the Department of Consumer Affairs for the month of July 2021 has revealed a sharp uptrend in the wholesale prices of vegetables such as tomatoes and onions, and to a smaller extent potatoes, as well as milk. However, the prices of most cereals have been flattish. Barring masoor dal, the average prices of all other pulses such as gram, tur, moong and urad dal have softened sequentially in July 2021, following the adoption of change in the import policy on pulses to "free" category from "limited" by the Government of India (Gol). Moreover, the prices of edible oils such as soya oil, sunflower oil and palm oil have declined sequentially in July 2021, on account of a reduction in the tariff value of such items by the Gol on June 17, 2021. Going forward, a revival in the monsoon rainfall, as well as a pickup in the pace of sowing will be critical to bolster the outlook for kharif yields. Given the high base, we expect the inflation for primary food articles to moderate further in the current month.

The average international crude oil price, in Indian basket terms, has risen by 3.4% to \$74.4/barrel during July 1-13, 2021 from \$72.0/barrel in June 2021, with volatility in the recent sessions surrounded by the uncertainty about OPEC+ supply policy after failing to reach a tentative deal to increase production amid improving demand dynamics. However, a normalising base is expected to push down the inflation for this segment further in July 2021.

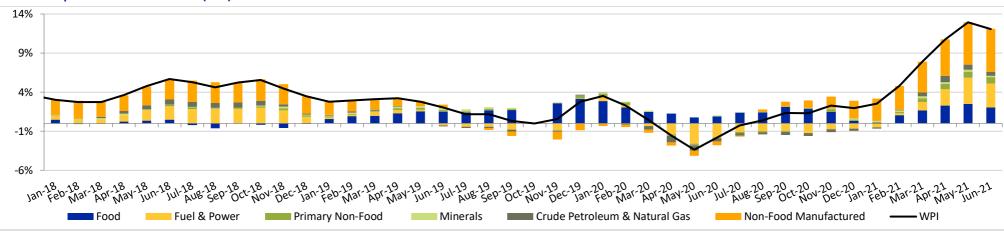
However, the USD/INR pair has risen from an average of ~73.56 in June 2021 to an average of ~74.59 during July 1-13, 2021, led by rising global crude oil prices as well as a stronger dollar on the back of a hawkish Fed, despite the robust inflows in domestic equity markets. The depreciation in the INR will push up the landed cost of imports, adding to the inflationary pressures in the immediate term.

We expect the YoY core inflation to record a further modest uptick in July 2021, before commencing a gradual downtrend from August 2021 onwards. The headline WPI inflation is expected to continue to soften, while remaining in double-digits in Q2 FY2022. While not a central driver, the continuing double-digit WPI inflation and its potential future spillovers into the CPI inflation, will inject uneasiness into the tone of monetary policy.









Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Gol; CEIC; ICRA research

Exhibit 2: Trend in Monthly WPI Inflation (YoY)

| | Weight | Weight YoY Inflation | | | | | Buildup^ | Contribution |
|-----------------------------------|--------|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|--------------|
| | | Apr-21 | Apr-21 | May-21 | June-21 | June-21 | June-21 | June-21 |
| | | Initial | Revised | Initial | Initial | Initial | Initial | Initial |
| WPI | 100.00 | 10.5% | 10.7% | 12.9% | 12.1% | 0.8% | 2.9% | 100.0% |
| Primary Articles | 22.62 | 10.2% | 9.9% | 9.6% | 7.7% | 0.9% | 3.0% | 17.1% |
| - Food | 15.26 | 4.9% | 4.6% | 4.3% | 3.1% | 0.3% | 2.4% | 5.1% |
| - Non-Food | 4.12 | 15.6% | 15.6% | 18.4% | 18.9% | 2.6% | 6.4% | 6.8% |
| - Minerals | 0.83 | 19.6% | 20.6% | 22.1% | 11.9% | 1.0% | -1.1% | 1.1% |
| - Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas | 2.41 | 79.6% | 80.8% | 56.1% | 36.3% | 2.3% | 3.0% | 4.1% |
| Fuel and Power | 13.15 | 20.9% | 21.3% | 37.6% | 32.8% | 2.9% | 4.1% | 25.7% |
| - Coal | 2.14 | 0.6% | 0.6% | 0.7% | 0.7% | 0.0% | 0.3% | 0.1% |
| - Minerals Oils | 7.95 | 45.3% | 46.0% | 81.2% | 61.8% | 4.9% | 7.0% | 23.4% |
| - Electricity | 3.06 | -2.5% | -2.5% | 5.8% | 10.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.1% |
| Manufactured Products | 64.23 | 9.0% | 9.4% | 10.8% | 10.9% | 0.4% | 2.8% | 57.5% |
| - Food | 9.12 | 12.6% | 13.1% | 15.2% | 13.4% | -0.6% | 4.1% | 11.7% |
| - Non-Food | 55.11 | 8.4% | 8.7% | 10.0% | 10.4% | 0.5% | 2.5% | 45.9% |

[^]Buildup with reference to March 2021; Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI; CEIC; ICRA research



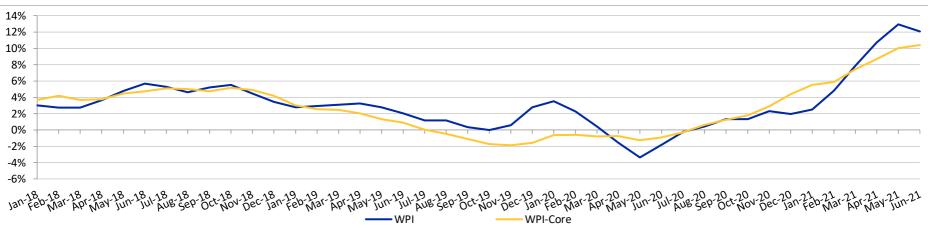
Exhibit 3: Trend in Monthly Inflation related to Non-Food Manufactured Products (YoY)

| | Weight | ight YoY Inflation | | | MoM | Buildup^ | Contribution | |
|---|--------|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|--------------|---------|
| | | Apr-21 | Apr-21 | May-21 | June-21 | June-21 | June-21 | June-21 |
| | | Initial | Revised | Initial | Initial | Initial | Initial | Initial |
| Non-Food Manufactured Products | 55.11 | 8.4% | 8.7% | 10.0% | 10.4% | 0.5% | 2.5% | 100.0% |
| Beverages | 0.91 | 0.4% | 0.6% | 0.6% | 0.4% | -0.1% | 1.1% | 0.1% |
| Tobacco Products | 0.51 | 2.5% | 2.5% | -0.8% | -0.6% | -1.0% | 2.1% | -0.1% |
| Textiles | 4.88 | 9.7% | 10.0% | 11.4% | 13.9% | 0.9% | 10.9% | 11.7% |
| Wearing Apparel | 0.81 | 0.6% | 1.0% | 1.2% | 1.9% | -0.1% | 1.1% | 0.3% |
| Leather and Related Products | 0.54 | 0.5% | 0.4% | 0.4% | 1.1% | 0.1% | 1.2% | 0.1% |
| Wood and Products of Wood and Cork | 0.77 | 4.2% | 4.4% | 3.2% | 3.4% | 0.9% | 4.4% | 0.5% |
| Paper and Paper Products | 1.11 | 10.7% | 10.1% | 10.7% | 10.3% | -0.7% | 10.3% | 2.1% |
| Printing and Reproduction of Recorded Media | 0.68 | 1.5% | 2.0% | 1.1% | 2.1% | 0.6% | 0.3% | 0.3% |
| Chemicals and Chemical Products | 6.47 | 10.2% | 11.1% | 10.6% | 10.7% | 0.2% | 10.9% | 12.1% |
| Pharmaceuticals, Medicinal Chemical and | 1.99 | 3.1% | 3.4% | 4.8% | 5.9% | 1.6% | 5.6% | 2.3% |
| Botanical Products | 1.99 | 3.1% | 5.4% | 4.6/0 | J.970 | 1.076 | 3.0% | 2.3% |
| Rubber and Plastics Products | 2.30 | 13.1% | 13.9% | 13.0% | 12.3% | -0.3% | 12.7% | 4.6% |
| Other Non-Metallic Mineral Products | 3.20 | 2.5% | 2.9% | 1.9% | 2.8% | 0.9% | 4.7% | 1.6% |
| Basic Metals | 9.65 | 19.3% | 20.2% | 27.6% | 28.9% | 1.5% | 26.2% | 43.7% |
| Fabricated Metal Products, Except Machinery and Equipment | 3.15 | 6.5% | 6.8% | 10.5% | 11.0% | 1.3% | 9.5% | 6.0% |
| Computer, Electronic and Optical Products | 2.01 | 1.8% | 1.5% | 1.9% | 2.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% | 0.7% |
| Electrical Equipment | 2.93 | 7.2% | 7.5% | 7.5% | 6.5% | -0.1% | 7.0% | 3.2% |
| Machinery and Equipment | 4.79 | 3.2% | 3.3% | 3.6% | 4.4% | 0.6% | 3.9% | 3.6% |
| Motor Vehicles, Trailers and Semi-Trailers | 4.97 | 4.4% | 3.6% | 3.5% | 2.2% | -0.7% | 3.5% | 2.0% |
| Other Transport Equipment | 1.65 | 7.0% | 6.9% | 4.6% | 4.3% | 0.0% | 7.8% | 1.3% |
| Furniture | 0.73 | 7.3% | 10.2% | 11.3% | 15.0% | 0.4% | 11.7% | 2.1% |
| Other Manufacturing | 1.06 | 11.4% | 11.6% | 14.8% | 8.3% | 0.0% | 15.5% | 1.7% |

ABuildup with reference to March 2021; Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI; CEIC; ICRA research

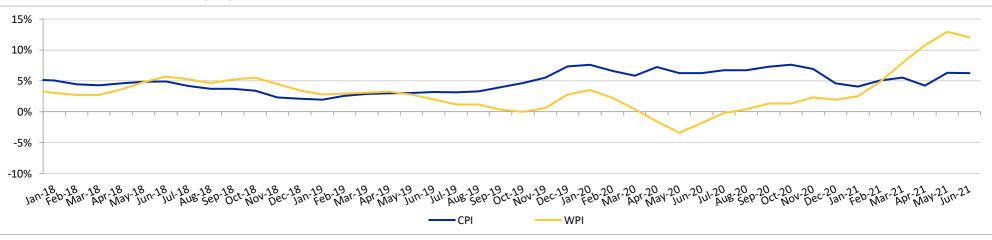






Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Gol; CEIC; ICRA research

Exhibit 5: WPI Inflation and CPI Inflation (YoY)



Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI; NSO; CEIC; ICRA research



Exhibit 6: Sub-sectors with highest contribution in WPI Inflation

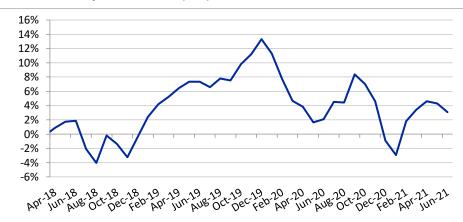
| Sub-Group Sub-Group | Item Description | Weight (%) |
|---------------------------------|--|------------|
| | Milk | 4.44 |
| Primary Food Articles | Paddy | 1.43 |
| | Wheat | 1.03 |
| | Industrial Wood | 0.89 |
| Primary Non-food Articles | Raw Cotton | 0.66 |
| | Fodder | 0.53 |
| | Copper Concentrate | 0.33 |
| Minerals | Iron Ore | 0.21 |
| | Phosphorite | 0.11 |
| Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas | Crude Petroleum | 1.95 |
| Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas | Natural Gas | 0.46 |
| | HSD | 3.10 |
| Fuel and Power | Electricity | 3.06 |
| | Petrol | 1.60 |
| | Vegetable and Animal Oils and Fats | 2.64 |
| Manufactured Food Products | Grain Mill Products | 2.01 |
| | Dairy Products | 1.17 |
| | Basic Metals | 9.65 |
| Non-Food Manufactured Products | Chemicals and Chemical Products | 6.47 |
| | Motor Vehicles, Trailers and Semi-Trailers | 4.97 |

Source: NSO; CEIC; ICRA research



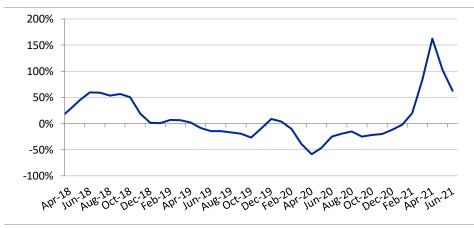
ANNEXURE

Exhibit 7: Primary Food Inflation (YoY)



Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Gol CEIC; ICRA research

Exhibit 9: Primary Crude Petroleum Inflation (YoY)



Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Gol CEIC; ICRA research

Exhibit 8: Primary Non-Food Inflation (YoY)

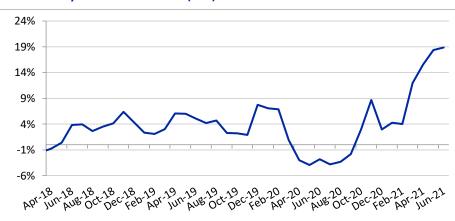


Exhibit 10: Primary Natural Gas Inflation (YoY)

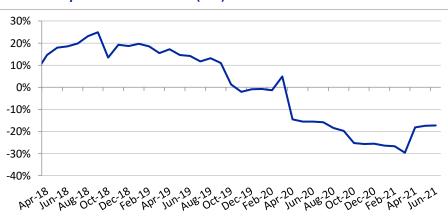
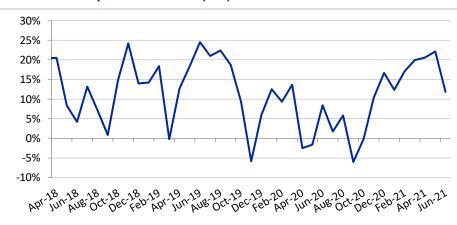


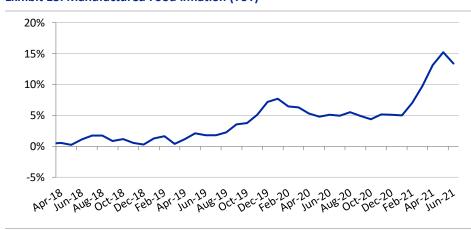


Exhibit 11: Primary Mineral Inflation (YoY)



Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Gol CEIC; ICRA research

Exhibit 13: Manufactured Food Inflation (YoY)



Source: Office of the Economic Advisor, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Gol CEIC; ICRA research

Exhibit 12: Fuel and Power Inflation (YoY)

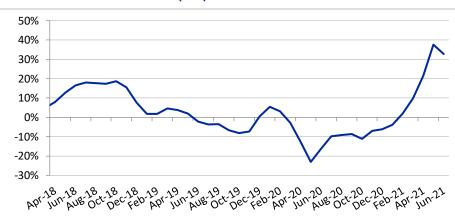
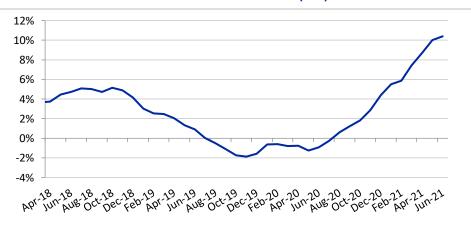


Exhibit 14: Manufactured Non-Food or Core-WPI Inflation (YoY)







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