

13 March 2018

# Malaysia

## January's Industrial Activity Flat Amid Slower Manufacturing

Malaysia's industrial activities sustained at 3% in January, barely improving IPI and manufacturing from 2.9% in Dec 2017, which was the slowest pace in 20 months. A rebound in mining and a pick-up in electricity output mitigated the drag from slower manufacturing. We were surprised by the slowdown in manufacturing output amidst a jump in exports in the same month. This was as exporters rush to ship their goods ahead of the shorter working days in February due to the festivities. Overall, we expect the economic activities to slow to 5.4% for 1Q18, from 5.9% in the previous quarter. Looking forward, we expect the country's real GDP to chart a more moderate growth of 5.2% in 2018 (2017: +5.9%). This is on the back of slower export growth after a surge in 2017 and a slowdown in public spending, in line with the Government's fiscal consolidation drive. However, real GDP growth would remain supported by resilient domestic demand, backed by relatively stronger consumer spending and private investments during the year.

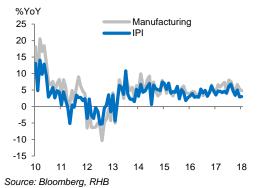
Manufacturing activities slowed in January. A slowdown in growth recorded by the manufacture of food, beverages & tobacco (F&B) segment, petroleum, chemicals, rubber & plastics industries, textiles and wood products pushed manufacturing activities lower.

Mining activities output bounced back with both crude oil and natural gas staging rebounds during the month.

Electricity output picked up pace during the month.

Manufacturing sales, in stark contrast with output numbers, posted stronger growth during the month.

Factories accelerated their hiring of workers while salaries & wages jumped strongly with employee headcount in the sector climbing steadily. As a result, the manufacturing sector's productivity improved to 8% YoY in January, from +6.8 % in December.



#### Manufacturing sales and wages



Source: Bloombera, RHB

#### Industrial production and manufacturing sales indicators

			•					
% YoY	2015	2016	2017	Sep 2017	Oct 2017	Nov 2017	Dec 2017	Jan 2018
Industrial	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Production	4.7	3.8	4.5	4.7	3.4	5.0	2.9	3.0
Manufacturing	4.8	4.3	6.1	5.7	4.2	6.7	5.3	4.8
Electricity	2.4	8.5	2.6	2.2	4.6	3.9	3.9	4.3
Mining Manufacturing	4.1	2.7	0.4	2.1	0.8	0.2	-4.1	1.5
Sales	1.2	1.3	13.7	10.6	11.0	10.9	9.4	10.8
Sales/Worker	1.3	1.4	11.2	7.9	8.5	8.4	6.8	8.0
Salaries/Worker	5.9	6.3	6.1	7.3	7.1	6.7	6.7	10.5

Source :Department of Statistics (DOS), RHB

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13 March 2018

## Sales Of Manufacturing Products Remain Brisk

### Slower real GDP growth expected for 1Q18

**The Industrial Production Index (IPI) sustained at 3% YoY in January,** hovering near its slowest pace in 20 months of +2.9% in Dec 2017. This is compared to +5% in Nov 2017. A rebound in mining and a pick-up in electricity output mitigated the drag from slower manufacturing. This came despite a jump in exports in the same month.

Overall, we expect the economic activities to slow to 5.4% for 1Q18, from 5.9% in the previous quarter. Looking forward, we expect the country's real GDP to chart a more moderate growth of 5.2% in 2018 (2017: +5.9%). This is on the back of:

- i. Slower export growth amid base effects after a surge in 2017;
- ii. Slowdown in public spending, in line with the Government's fiscal consolidation drive.

However, real GDP growth would remain supported by resilient domestic demand, backed by relatively strong consumer spending and private investments during the year.

#### % YoY % YoY 30 IPI (monthly) [LHS] 20 GDP (quarterly) [RHS] 15 20 10 10 5 0 0 (10)(5)(20)(10)(30) (15)97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

Figure 1: Economic activities to moderate in 1Q18

Source: Bloomberg, RHB

As it stands, manufacturing activities (68.3% revised weight of the IPI) eased to 4.8% YoY in January, from the 5.3% in the preceding month, the second straight month of slowdown after expanding at +6.7% in Nov 2017.

A slowdown in growth recorded by the manufacture of food, beverages & tobacco (F&B) segment, petroleum, chemicals, rubber & plastics industries, textiles and wood products pushed manufacturing activities lower. Meanwhile, production of electrical & electronics (E&E) was sustained. However, a surge in the manufacture of basic & fabricated metals and transport equipment provided some mitigation.

**On the contrary, mining output bounced back** with an expansion of 1.5% YoY in January, after falling 4.1% in Dec 2017 with both crude oil and natural gas staging rebounds during the month.

**Meanwhile, electricity output picked up pace to** 4.3% YoY in January, from +3.9% in the preceding month.

In stark contrast with output numbers, manufacturing sales posted a stronger growth of 10.8% YoY during the month, from +9.4% in Dec 2017 and compared to +10.9% in Nov 2017 (Figure 3). As a result, factories accelerated their pace of hiring as employee headcount in the sector climbed steadily to 2.5% YoY in January, from +2.4% in the preceding month. Meanwhile, salaries & wages paid to workers jumped 13.3% YoY, from 9.2% in Nov-Dec 2017.

As a result, growth in wages per employee surged to 10.5% YoY during the month, from +6.7% in Nov-Dec 2017. As manufacturing sales outpaced the pick-up in worker headcount, the manufacturing sector's productivity (as measured by the sales value of manufactured products per employee) improved to 8% YoY in January, from +6.8 % in Dec 2017.



## **Economic Update**

### 13 March 2018

Figure	2: Indust	rial Produc	tion Index	(IPI) (2010 = 1	00)
		Total	Mfg	Electricity	Mining
			(%	yoY)	
2015		4.7	4.8	2.4	4.1
2016		3.8	4.3	8.5	2.7
0047	00	4.0		1.0	0.0
2017	Q2	4.3	6.2	1.0	-0.6
	Q3	5.9	7.1	4.4	2.5
	Q4	3.7	5.4	4.1	-1.1
2017	Nov	5.0	6.7	3.9	0.2
	Dec	2.9	5.3	3.9	-4.1
2018	Jan	3.0	4.8	4.3	1.5
2017	Jan	3.5	4.6	1.0	1.1
2018	Jan	3.0	4.8	4.3	1.5
Source:	DOS RHB				

Source: DOS, RHB

### Figure 3: Monthly change in IPI (2010 = 100)

			%	МоМ	
	_	Total IPI	Total Mfg	Electricity	Mining
2017	Nov	-1.4	-1.7	-4.2	0.2
	Dec	2.2	2.2	1.7	2.4
2018	Jan	-4.5	-5.8	-1.6	2.4

				(9	Seasonally	Adjuste	ed)		
			%	МоМ			%	YoY	
		IPI	Mfg.	Electri city	Mining	IPI	Mfg.	Electri city	Mining
2017	Nov	0.2	-0.2	-1.9	1.3	4.3	5.9	3.6	0.3
	Dec	-0.2	0.7	0.2	-2.1	3.5	6.7	4.1	-5.4
2018	Jan	-1.0	-1.4	-0.7	2.3	2.8	4.3	4.4	1.6

Source: DOS, RHB

### Figure 4: Manufacturing sales

		Total	Sales	Sale Wor		Salaries/ Worker			
	_	MYRbn	% YoY	MYR'000	% YoY	MYR	% YoY		
	2015	664.3	1.2	646.1	1.3	35,329	5.9		
	2016	673.2	1.3	655.4	1.4	37,549	6.3		
2017	Nov	66.6	10.9	63.2	8.4	3,347	6.7		
	Dec	67.3	9.4	63.6	6.8	3,569	6.7		
2018	Jan								
2017	Jan	61.2	10.7	58.6	9.2	3,160	0.1		
2018	Jan	67.8	10.8	63.3	8.0	3,494	10.5		

Source: DOS, RHB

### Figure 5: Monthly change in manufacturing sales

		То	tal Sales		% M Sale: Emplo	s/		Wages/ Employe	
2017	Nov		0.5		0.4			-0.5	
	Dec		0.9		0.7			6.6	
2018	Jan		0.7		-0.5	5		-2.1	
				(Se	asonally	Adjuste	d)		
		Total Sales	% MoM Sales/ Emp.	Wages/ Emp.	-	-	Total Sales	% YoY Sales/ Emp.	Wages/ Emp.
2017	Nov	2.9	2.8	-0.4	2017	Nov	10.7	8.2	6.5
	Dec	-0.1	-0.4	0.3		Dec	9.7	7.1	7.1
2018	Jan	1.3	0.1	0.2	2018	Jan	10.8	8.0	10.5

Source: DOS, RHB



13 March 2018

### Figure 6: Regional economic indicators

						ASEAN &		соломі		TORS						
Country		GDP gr	owth (%)			Inflati	ion (%)		Policy rate (end period,%)				Exchange rate (end period, vs. USD)			
	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015 2016 2017 2018F				2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F
Indonesia	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.3	6.4	3.5	3.8	3.6	6.25	4.75	4.25	4.25	13856	13540	13588	13700
Malaysia	5.0	4.2	5.9	5.2	2.1	2.1	3.7	3.0	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.25	4.29	4.49	4.06	3.95
Philippines	5.9	6.8	6.7	6.5	1.4	1.8	3.2	3.3	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.25	46.86	49.62	49.83	49.79
Singapore	2.0	2.4	3.6	3.0	-0.5	-0.5	0.6	1.6	-	-	-	-	1.42	1.45	1.34	1.32
Thailand	2.8	3.2	3.9	4.2	-1.2	0.2	0.7	1.2	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	36.02	35.85	32.57	32.10
Vietnam*	6.7	6.2	6.8	6.3	0.6	2.7	3.5	3.4	6.50	6.50	6.00	6.00	22485	22770	22709	22700
China**	6.9	6.7	6.9	6.4	1.4	2.0	1.5	2.3	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	6.49	6.95	6.51	6.70

\*prime rate; \*\*1-yr lending rate

Country		Exports g	growth (%	)		Imports growth (%)				rial Produ	ction gro	wth (%)	Unemployment rate (% labour force)			
	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F
Indonesia	-14.6	-3.9	16.2	10.0	-19.9	-4.9	15.6	11.0	4.6	5.0	5.1	5.3	6.2	5.6	5.5	5.4
Malaysia	1.8	1.1	18.9	6.5	0.4	1.9	19.9	6.2	4.5	3.8	5.2	4.5	3.2	3.5	3.4	3.3
Philippines	-5.3	-2.4	9.5	8.0	8.7	18.3	10.2	9.0	-4.4	6.4	6.2	6.2	6.3	5.5	5.7	5.6
Singapore	-7.3	-4.4	8.5	6.7	-12.1	-4.2	10.6	10.9	-5.1	3.7	10.1	7.6	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.0
Thailand	-5.8	0.5	9.9	7.0	-10.7	-3.9	14.7	8.6	0.3	1.6	1.6	2.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9
Vietnam	7.7	9.2	21.4	9.5	10.7	5.6	21.4	8.7	9.8	6.9	10.0	8.1	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.6
China	-2.8	1.8	6.8	5.2	-14.1	3.8	7.3	5.6	6.1	6.1	6.5	5.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1

Country	Fi	scal Bala	nce (% GI	OP)	(	Current A	cc. (% GD	P)	Fo	rex Reser	ves (USD	bn)	External Debt (USD bn)				
	2015	2016	2017F	2018F	2015	2016	2017F	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017F	2018F	
Indonesia	-2.5	-2.5	-2.6	-2.7	-2.0	-1.8	-1.6	-1.8	106	116	130	147	311	319	335	348	
Malaysia	-3.2	-3.1	-3.0	-2.8	3.0	2.4	3.0	2.7	95	95	102	114	194	201	213	222	
Philippines	-0.9	-2.4	-2.7	-2.8	2.6	0.2	0.3	0.6	81	81	82	90	77	75	73	71	
Singapore	-1.0	1.3	0.5	0.8	19.7	19.0	18.8	17.8	248	247	280	265	-	-	-	-	
Thailand	-2.4	-2.6	-1.8	-2.9	8.0	11.4	9.6	8.4	157	172	203	208	147	152	155	159	
Vietnam	-5.3	-5.0	-5.3	-5.2	1.4	2.7	1.9	2.1	28	43	40	45	72	76	79	83	
China	-3.4	-3.5	-3.6	-3.3	2.8	1.8	1.3	1.1	3330	3010	3140	3000	1416	1400	1450	1400	

Country		Deposit (	Growth (%	<b>b</b> )		Loan Growth (%)				L/D Ra	tio (%)		Money Supply* (%)				
	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F	2015	2016	2017	2018F	
Indonesia	8.0	9.6	11.0	11.9	10.1	7.8	10.0	12.8	94.2	92.7	91.9	94.3	9.0	10.0	11.0	12.4	
Malaysia	1.8	1.5	5.7	4.6	7.9	5.3	4.1	5.2	88.7	89.8	90.5	90.9	2.6	3.0	4.7	5.0	
Philippines	8.0	14.3	11.9	11.8	12.7	16.1	18.1	18.0	69.0	70.7	74.1	74.1	9.4	12.8	11.9	10.0	
Singapore	0.2	2.7	3.2	5.4	00	0.5	8.0	5.8	108.5	107.9	104.5	104.9	4.1	8.1	4.1	6.2	
Thailand	4.2	3.8	4.1	5.3	5.5	3.6	4.1	5.1	93.5	93.3	93.1	92.9	4.4	4.2	5.2	5.3	
Vietnam	13.6	15.0	10.0	11.2	17.2	18.0	15.0	13.5	78.1	79.6	81.0	83.0	13.6	16.0	17.0	18.0	
China	12.4	11.0	10.7	9.6	14.3	13.5	12.0	10.3	69.2	70.8	71.7	72.2	13.3	11.3	11.0	10.6	

Note: As at 01 Mar 2018

Note 2: \*M2 is used for all countries except for Thailand M1 is used and Philippines M3 is used instead. Note 3: \*\*Starting 3 Jun 2016, the Philippines' policy rate was changed to purely Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' overnight reverse repurchase (RRP) facility at 3% Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF), Oxford Economics, Various central banks, RHB



### 13 March 2018

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### 13 March 2018

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### 13 March 2018

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## **Economic Update**

## 13 March 2018

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