

716,5
million tons

China is the world's largest producer of crude steel by

a large margin, according to World Steel Association figures. It produced **716,5 Mt of steel in 2012**. The next largest producers were Japan with 107,2 Mt and the US with 88,7 Mt. ArcelorMittal, which produced 93,6 Mt is the biggest producing company. South Korea had the highest steel use per capita in 2012 with 1114,1 kg.

90,4
points

The SA Chamber of Commerce & Industry's business

confidence index dropped by 1,9 points to 90,4 in May. It is yet another indication of the depressed business climate. Sacchi says socio-political events, like **militant labour action**, have a harmful impact on the business mood as well as on commercial and industrial activity levels. It says it also distorts financial market performance.

50,4
points

The Kagiso **purchasing managers' index**, an indication of

the health of the manufacturing sector, remained unchanged at 50,4 index points in May. For 2013 thus far, the average PMI is 50,5 points, which suggests that the sector is struggling to gain traction in a weak global economic environment. The business activity and new sales orders indices both lost ground, a sign of weak demand.

15
billion rand

SA's trade deficit worsened to R15bn in April, compared with a deficit of

R8,3bn previously, according to the SA Revenue Service. The drop was caused by sharply higher imports, particularly of oil and machinery & equipment. April's trade balance represents SA's **sixteenth consecutive monthly deficit**, Stanlib economist Kevin Lings says. The value of exports rose 3%, while imports were up 12,1%.