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MFIs' redemption.
With Q1 bringing in
the much-needed
recovery, are
microfinance lenders
out of the woods yet?

BIG STORY P2



IPO Watch.
Vikram Solar's
₹2,079-crore initial
public offer opens on
August 19. Should
investors subscribe?

TAKING STOCK P5

Regd. TN/ARD/14/2012-2014, RNI No. 55320/94

Low FII holdings mask selective sector buys

THEME-DRIVEN. Within the Nifty-500 universe, FIIs increased their holdings in 9 out of 24 sectors year-on-year as of June quarter end

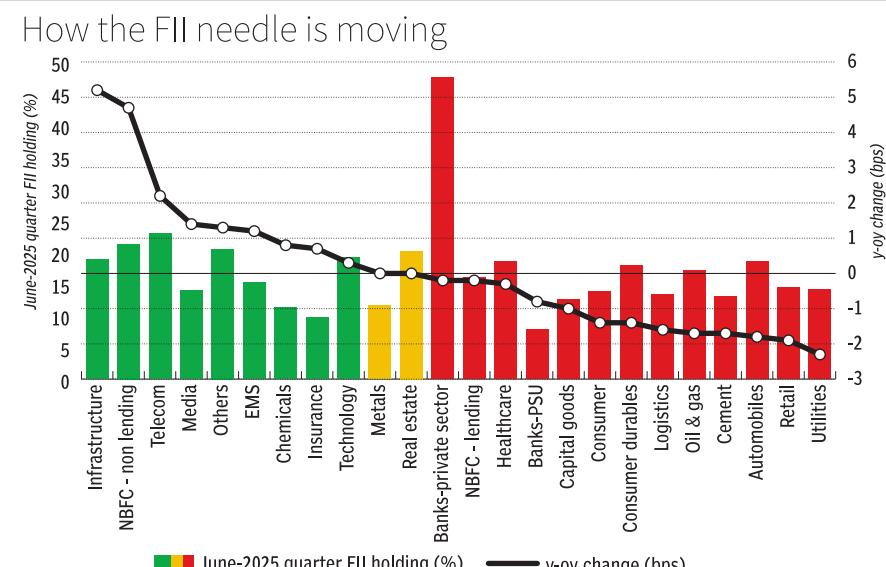
Kumar Shankar Roy
bl. research bureau

Foreign institutional investor (FII) ownership in Nifty-500 companies stood at 18.8 per cent in the June 2025 quarter, close to its multi-year lows.

On surface, the numbers suggest a continued retreat of foreign capital from Indian equities. But sector-level holding data show that the headline figure hides a very different story — selective accumulation in specific pockets.

Near bottom level FII stakes do not necessarily signal a uniformly bearish stance. Foreign investors seem to be shifting towards concentrated, theme-driven portfolios. Broad exposure is being trimmed in a market trading at around 22 times the FY26 estimated earnings (Nifty-50).

While FIIs don't invest as a bloc, Nifty-500 ownership data show overseas funds have the highest holding in private sector banks (47.6 per cent), followed by telecom (23 per cent), NBFC non-lending (21.3 per cent), real estate (20.2 per cent),



Source: Motilal Oswal Research

technology (19.1 per cent), automobiles (18.6 per cent) and healthcare (18.5 per cent). But high absolute stakes don't always mean fresh buying.

WHERE'S THE MONEY
Year-on-year changes show where FIIs are actually adding. Within the Nifty-500 universe, FIIs increased their holdings in just 9 out of 24 sectors. For instance, FIIs

year-on-year raised their stake in infrastructure (+520 basis points or bps), NBFC - non-lending (+470 bps), telecom (+220 bps), media (+140 bps), electronics manufacturing services or EMS (+120 bps), and chemicals (+80 bps) at the end of June-2025 quarter, per Motilal Oswal Research data. Amid a cautious stance, these are the sectors where the FIIs have sharply raised holdings, even

as they trimmed stake in most others.

One could very well argue this pattern stands in contrast to the broader FII behaviour. Yes, across the Nifty-500, foreign investors have been cutting holdings. Year-on-year, large declines have been witnessed in utilities (-230 bps), retail (-190 bps), automobiles (-180 bps), oil and gas (-170 bps), cement (-170 bps), logistics

Infra-related stocks stand

(-160 bps), consumer durables (-140 bps), capital goods (-100 bps), and PSU banks (-80 bps).

The selective approach adopted by foreign investors is evident at the stock level as well. In large-caps, which are the top 100 firms by market capitalisation, FIIs have 21.5 per cent, almost unchanged from a year earlier. In Nifty-50, FII holding on an aggregate basis fell 30 bps YoY in June quarter. But if you look closer, Bharti Airtel (+210 bps), Wipro (+150 bps), HDPC Bank (+140 bps) and Bharat Electronics (+110 bps) recorded year-on-year increases in FII stakes as foreigners pushed up holdings in just 10 firms of the popular index.

Many other index heavyweights saw falling foreign ownership during the same period. Examples include Axis Bank, Trent, IndusInd Bank and Dr Reddy's.

STRUCTURAL THEMES
The shift in sectoral allocation suggests FIIs are aligning with positioning for specific structural themes rather than maintaining broad market exposure.

to gain structure plays could benefit from the government's capital expenditure push and increased private sector participation in construction, logistics and allied services. In telecom, the largest pure play listed player Bharti Airtel continues to gain from Vodafone Idea's prolonged challenges which has been ongoing for over half a decade now. The sector is also buoyed by rising data use, 5G rollout and improving pricing power for incumbents.

Meanwhile, EMS and chemicals are tied to India's push for self-reliance in manufacturing and diversification of global supply chains (although recent tariff war is a speed bump). New production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes have spurred encouraged investments and growth in the sector, drawing FIIs attention.

All these show that foreign investors are reallocating capital to sectors with strong upside potential. Meanwhile, domestic institutional investors have steadily increased presence with their holdings in the Nifty-500 climbing to a record 19.4 per cent.

INVESTMENT FOCUS

KEC International — Buy

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

As an EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) company operating in India and several other countries, KEC International works in areas such as transmission and distribution, civil projects, and transportation (metros, railways, etc.).

At ₹777, the KEC stock trades at 20 times its likely per share earnings for FY26.

Since there are no strictly similar peers, comparison can be done with players that operate in some of the segments that KEC works on or other mid- to large-EPC players.

NBCC (India) at 50 times, ITD Cementation (more than 30 times), Afcons Infrastructure at over 25 times and the BSE Capital Goods Index at over 54 times are much more expensive.

WHY BUY

Investors can buy the shares of KEC International from a 3/5-year perspective. A solid order book, strong execution track record, extensive presence in India and overseas and steadily expanding margins are positive factors in the company's favour.

The company's EBITDA margin, which fell to a low of 4.8 per cent in FY23, has revived strongly and touched 7 per cent in FY25 and the management expects it to go up to 8 per cent or higher in FY26.

KEC has a healthy order book of nearly ₹34,400 crore and another ₹6,000 crore as L1 bidder in projects, totalling to over ₹40,000 crore, which is nearly 1.9x KEC's revenue for FY25.

E-com I-Day sales surge 14% led by Tier-3 cities

Inconclusive Trump-Putin talks leave India in limbo

Amiti Sen
New Delhi

China, as you know, is doing a lot... And if I did what's called a secondary sanction, or a secondary tariff, it would be very devastating from their standpoint. If I have to do it, I'll do it. Maybe I won't have to do it," Trump said on Friday talking to a TV channel before his meeting with Putin.

TOUGH FOR INDIA
The Ministry of External Affairs had made it clear earlier that it had no intention of being dictated to by others on its decision to purchase oil. Its decisions were guided by India's economic interest, it said.

In a statement, it had also highlighted that both the EU and the US were buying goods from Russia and targeting India was unjustified.

Earlier this week, Indian officials had expressed hope about 40 per cent of the oil.



NO DEAL. Russian President Vladimir Putin meets US President Donald Trump, in Alaska on Saturday @WHITEHOUSE

that a positive outcome from the Trump and Putin meeting could lead to the US withdrawing the penal tariff.

"It is disappointing that nothing positive emerged visibly yet for India from the meeting. Maybe in the coming days there would be more clarity on where India actu-

ally stands. The next negotiating round on the BTA (bilateral trade agreement) would be crucial for India," a person tracking the matter told *businessline*.

The Commerce Department is waiting for a confirmation from the US on the visit of its negotiating team to New Delhi on August 25 to take forward the BTA talks.

Putin claimed that his meeting with Trump had resulted in an agreement but the US President said that there was no deal yet although some headway had been made.

"There's no deal until

there's a deal," he said.

RESPITE FOR CHINA

The Trump-Putin meeting, however, brought some respite for China as Trump said that he did not have to think about imposing secondary tariffs on countries buying Russian oil right away as the discussions went well.

Although, logically this 'wait-and-watch' approach on reciprocal tariff should apply to India too, Trump did not mention that he was ready to suspend the 25 per cent penal tariffs on the country beyond August 27.

India appreciates the progress made in the summit. The way forward can only be through dialogue and diplomacy. The world wants to see an early end to the conflict in Ukraine," according to an official statement from the MEA.

Also read p12

Kerala goes all out to make State safe for women travellers

The State is also leveraging its green credentials to position itself as a wedding and MICE destination

Chitra Narayanan
New Delhi

God's own country wants to be the safest place for women travellers. Kerala is framing a bold new policy to make the State a "women-friendly" destination, Sikha Surendran, Director, Kerala Tourism, told *businessline* on the sidelines of Kerala Travel Mart's glitzy 3-day Wedding and MICE conclave, a first-of-its kind initiative by a State to attract high impact global events and big fat marriages.

Surendran said Kerala had just concluded a safety audit of 72 places in the State. Women volunteers were asked to walk the streets at night, book hotels late evening, take cabs and public transport, and share their experiences. "We wanted women to tell us what was lacking. We also



SAFE TRAILS. Sikha Surendran (centre), Director, Kerala Tourism, at the Wedding and MICE conclave

did consultations with hoteliers, drivers' associations and local bodies. We have marked all these destinations on how safe they are," said Surendran. "We are already talking to people in these destinations and telling them where they are lacking and what they need to work on."

The policy is being framed in collaboration with UN Women. "We will

be signing MoUs with hotels ensuring they adhere to the policy we are framing," she added.

MARRIAGE MART
Meanwhile, Kerala is also on a marketing blitzkrieg to attract a slice of the lucrative \$900-billion wedding and the \$1.2-trillion MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) markets. Currently, India

just has a 1.8 per cent share of the MICE market, though the country's wedding industry is estimated to be \$130 billion.

To woo this market, KTM Society, which organised the conclave jointly with the State Tourism Department, invited events companies, wedding planners, florists and tourism buyers. Over 675 buyers from within and outside the country participated in the event, while there were 75 local exhibitors, mainly big resorts and convention halls.

Participants at the conclave pointed out that from just 32 *saya* (auspicious for wedding) dates earlier, now there are 104, making it tough for conference planners as hotels get fully booked for weddings. The MICE business is suffering at the expense of weddings.

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As global investors turn cautious, FPI exit slows in Aug 14 week

Anupama Ghosh
Mumbai

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) withdrew \$348 million (\$3,048 crore) from Indian markets during the week ending August 14,

even as benchmark indices snapped a six-week losing streak with marginal gains.

The FPI outflow marked a significant moderation from the previous week's steep withdrawal of \$1.3 billion, signalling a shift towards cautious positioning by global investors.

Equity markets bore the brunt of the selling, with FPIs offloading ₹6,236.31 crore through exchanges while pumping in ₹1,125.17 crore via primary markets, resulting in net outflows of ₹5,111.14 crore (\$58.27 million).

The sustained selling came despite the Nifty closing at 24,631.30 and the Sensex at 80,597.66, both registering gains of nearly one per cent for the week.

"The deceleration in selling may indicate a shift towards a more cautious, wait-and-watch stance by global investors," said Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director-Manager Research at Morningstar Investment.

"The sustained outflows are being driven primarily by a confluence of global uncertainties."

Debt markets provided some respite with net inflows of ₹2,063.17 crore across various categories.

GLOBAL FACTORS
The week's FPI activity reflected broader concerns over US-India trade relations and tariff uncertainties. "Trump's harsh tariffs and the straining of relations between the US and India have impacted market sentiments and, consequently, shorts have

piled up pulling the market down," noted VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Ltd.

Global factors continued to weigh on investor sentiment, with the strengthening US dollar reducing the relative attractiveness of emerging market assets like India. "The recent strengthening of the US dollar tends to reduce the relative attractiveness of emerging market assets like India's," Srivastava explained.

Looking ahead, market participants will closely monitor upcoming domestic data including PMI readings and global cues from the US Federal Reserve meeting minutes. The sustainability of the market recovery will largely depend on FPI positioning changes and any developments on the trade front between India and the US.

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Out of woods, still under clouds

MFIs' REDEMPTION. Q1 FY26 marks the beginning of a gradual recovery for microfinance players, the sustenance of which remains to be seen

Nishanth Gopalakrishnan
bl. research bureau

Fiscal 2024-25 has been a year to forget for the microfinance (MFI) lenders, with many slipping into quarterly losses. Apart from over-leveraged borrowers, lenders pushing aggressively for growth also played its part. We had pointed this out in our earlier *Big Story* article in *bl.portfolio* edition dated January 12, 2025.

During FY25, delinquencies rose, loan losses ballooned and earnings dipped. Q3 and Q4 proved disastrous, with gross NPA ratio of some lenders hitting early teens and return on assets (RoA) plummeting to below -25 per cent, sending stock prices tumbling to 52-week lows. Reportedly, banks too are turning cautious lending to NBFC-MFIs (bank loans being the primary source of funds).

Broadly though, companies appear to be pulling their act together after reaching crisis levels. Q1FY26 results indicate improvement in the bottom line and credit cost sequentially, aided by stringent underwriting. Most stocks have run up from their 52-week lows, recovering about 20-40 per cent of the drop from 52-week highs. The market appears convinced the worst is over and is pricing in a sustained recovery in fundamentals back to pre-H2 FY25 levels. That said, should you bet on the industry's turnaround? Let's find out.

INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

As over-leveraging wreaked havoc, industry SRO (self regulatory organisation) MFIN issued stricter 'Guardrails 2.0' in November 2024, superseding its July framework. The rules limited total unsecured debt per borrower to ₹2 lakh and capped borrower associations (number of lenders from which a person can borrow) at three lenders. While the first rule was effected from January 1, the latter was deferred to April 1.

These actions and the overall stricter underwriting of loans meant that the industry's gross loan portfolio declined 17 per cent on a year-on-year basis, from ₹4.3 lakh crore in Q1 FY25 to ₹3.6 lakh crore as of Q1 FY26 (per CRIF High Mark's quarterly 'MicroLend' report). Even on a sequential basis, this is a decline of 5.8 per cent. Disbursements, too, are down 20 per cent on a quarter-on-quarter basis in Q1 FY26, versus a 12 per cent rise seen in Q4 FY25. Hence, the industry doesn't appear to be growing, as it consolidates its underwriting practices.

Consequently, the share of over-leveraged borrowers is on the decline. As prescribed under 'Guardrails 2.0', the share of loans borrowed by clients who are indebted to more than three lenders (by value) has come down significantly from 19.2 per cent as of Q1 FY25 to 10 per cent as of Q1 FY26 (chart 1). Further, the share of loans borrowed by clients who are indebted to more than ₹2 lakh has fallen from 7 per cent as of Q1 FY25 to 2.3 per cent as of Q1 FY26.

Delinquencies are easing too. Overdue accounts are put in various buckets of days overdue — PAR 1-30, 31-90, 91-180 and over 180. PAR stands for portfolio at risk. Simply put, PAR 1-30 represents the loans (by value as a percentage of loan base) that are overdue by more than a day, but not exceeding 30 days. It can be seen from chart 2 that across buckets, the stress, which peaked in Q3 and Q4 of FY25, has eased in Q1 FY26. However, stress in the PAR 180+ bucket remains elevated. Though this indicates challenging collections, there could also be the effect of diminishing base — the pace of late-stage delinquencies continuing without meaningful recoveries, while AUM declines. Also, stress in the earlier PAR 1-30 bucket seems to have rebounded slightly. All in all, there is a broad improvement in asset quality, though not thorough enough.

At the time of our *Big Story*, Karnataka had announced a law to curb coercive practices by unorganised micro-lenders, with Tamil Nadu following suit. The thought of the State having one's back encourages borrowers to default, even if they were regular, even if indebted to an organised lender. This partly explains why delinquencies could've spiked in Q3 and Q4 FY25, among other causes. Per MicroLend, the issue now seems isolated to Karnataka, which has the worst PAR 31-180 ratio at 12.5 per cent versus 5.5 per cent pan-India. Some listed lenders do have meaningful exposure to the State, though not to a large extent. Encouragingly, all other States show improved asset quality.

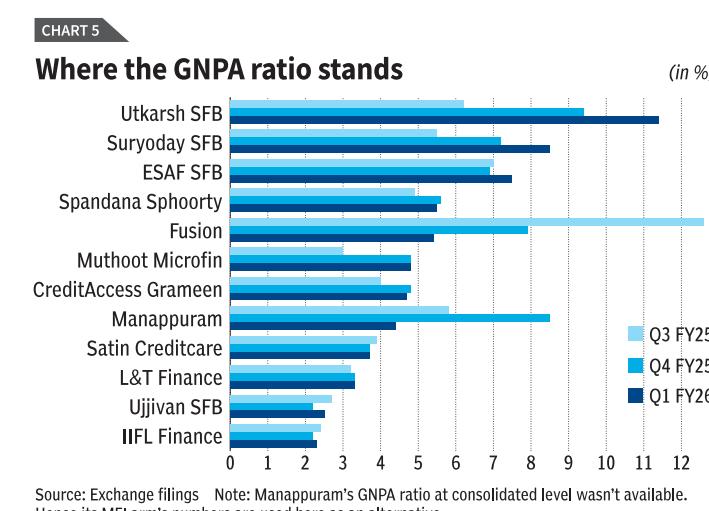
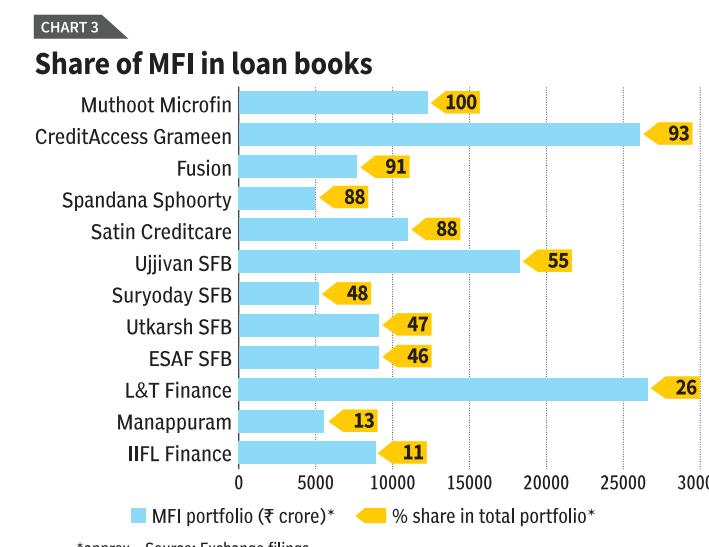
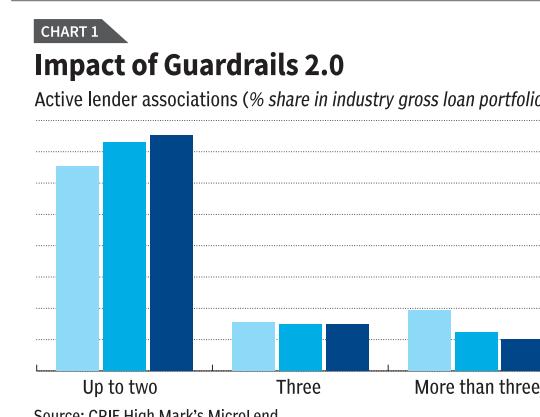


TABLE
Bottomline: Where they stand today

Stock	P/B multiple (x)			RoA (%)*		
	At 52-week high	On Jan 10, 2025 [#]	Current	Q1 FY25	Q4 FY25	Q1 FY26
CreditAccess Grameen	3.1	2.2	3.0	5.4	0.7	0.9
L&T Finance	2.1	1.4	2.0	2.7	2.2	2.4
Manappuram	1.9	1.2	1.8	4.5	-1.6	1.1
IIFL Finance	1.8	1.5	1.5	2.3	1.6	1.6
Ujjivan SFB	1.6	1.1	1.3	2.9	0.7	0.8
Fusion	1.1	0.7	1.2	-1.2	-7.5	-4.7
Muthoot Microfin	1.4	0.9	1.0	3.7	-13.0	0.2
Utkarsh SFB	1.8	1.1	0.8	2.3	0.0	-3.5
ESAF SFB	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.0	-2.7	-1.2
Spandana Sphoorty	1.2	0.8	0.7	1.7	-19.0	-19.0
Suryoday SFB	1.1	0.7	0.7	2.2	-0.9	0.9
Satin Creditcare	0.9	0.7	0.6	4.0	0.8	1.5

*Annualised. #The Friday preceding our earlier Big Story on MFIs
Source: Exchange filings, Capitaline, bl.portfolio calculations

Overall, there appears to be signs of broad-based recovery, though it might take longer to get back to levels seen in Q1 FY25, when pan-India PAR 31-180 ratio was just 2.7 per cent.

ANALYSIS OF LISTED PLAYERS
The listed players operating in the MFI segment — both NBFC-MFIs and NBFCs with significant exposure to MFI, bore the brunt as the industry deepened into a crisis. For our analysis here, be-

sides those in the above two categories, we have also considered top four SFBs (small finance banks) ranked by share of MFI book (chart 3). In total, 12 such stocks were taken up (referred to as universe).

Data from these companies reveal Q3 and Q4 of FY25 (also Q2 in few cases) were the worst in terms of asset quality, profitability and even growth. Analysis of performance in Q1 FY26 versus these two quarters gives away mixed sig-

WISE WORDS.

66 Bubbles are generated when investors drive valuations higher without simultaneously adjusting expectations for future returns lower

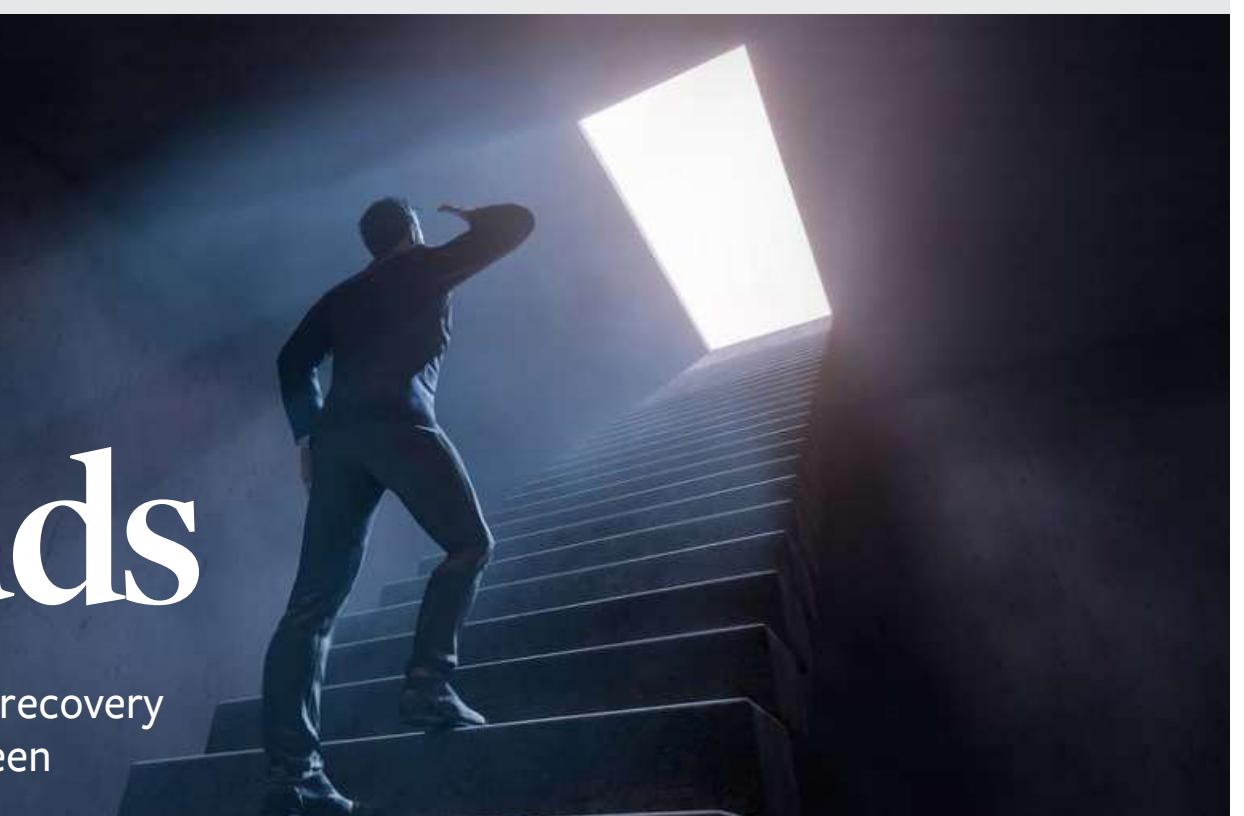
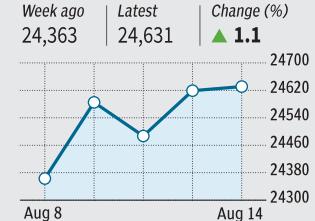
JOHN P HUSSMAN
President, Hussman Investment Trust

MARKET ACTION.

SENSEX



NIFTY



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Valuation and outlook

While fundamentals paint a mixed picture, the markets seem optimistic of the early signs in recovery, taking cues from declining credit cost, improving collection efficiencies and an expected rural economic recovery. The repo rate cuts could also aid cost of funds for some players. While all stocks (barring Satin and Utkarsh) have run up from their 52-week lows, some are even trading close to P/B multiples they had at their 52-week highs.

At this juncture, the quarterly RoA provides a good guide to take a valuation call, as it adequately factors in any improvement in loan growth, cost of funds and credit cost. Hence, RoA in Q1 FY25 can be used as a benchmark and compared with the recovery in RoA in Q1 FY26 — to see whether enough progress has been made to justify the current P/B ratio.

Of the lot, we view L&T Finance as trading at a fair valuation, given its progress in RoA and a diversified exposure apart from MFI. As for the rest, there isn't enough recovery in RoA yet, and their current valuations appear to be running ahead of fundamentals, basking in overoptimistic assumptions. Given that most of them are still down 20 to 60 per cent from their 52-week highs, investors need not treat them as value buys because, it seems to be a steep climb from here, back to the heydays of these stocks.

We had pointed out the underperformance of private bank IPOs since listing, against Nifty Bank index, in our earlier edition dated March 23, 2025. Similarly, the stocks in the universe too, have underperformed since listing versus Nifty Bank. Only three — IIFL Finance, CreditAccess and Satin have managed to beat the index, while the rest have failed. Until there is better conviction on the recovery in the industry, investors will be better served banking on the index, rather than bottom fishing.

Profitability

Besides slowing AUM growth and the resultant decline in interest income, the primary reason lenders slipped into losses or faced falling earnings was provisions or impairment of loan assets.

Provisions are best analysed as credit cost ratio, which is roughly calculated as provisions divided by the loan portfolio. Chart 6 collates entity level credit cost ratios. It can be seen that credit cost has largely eased in Q1 FY26 from peaks seen in Q3 or Q4 of FY25. While this is a positive sign, it remains to be seen in the quarters ahead, if this can be sustained. For example, IIFL, Utkarsh and Satin Creditcare have an upturn in credit cost in Q1 FY26, even though it eased in Q4 FY25.

The gains from reduced credit cost can be seen in the RoA metric (table). Except for IIFL, Utkarsh and Spandana Sphoorty, all others in the universe have improved their RoAs (quarterly annualised net profit divided by average assets) in Q1 FY26 over Q4 FY25.

Asset quality

Asset quality metrics are a mixed bag. GNPA ratio of some stocks have seen improvement in Q1 FY26 after the weak quarters, while that of others have seen a rebound or have risen continuously (chart 5). This could also be due to the diminishing base of loans, as mentioned earlier. MFI-specific GNPA ratios also were analysed. While most saw an improvement, L&T Finance, Muthoot, Spandana Sphoorty and the four SFBs saw MFI NPAs peak in the recent quarter.

Metrics such as the ratio of stage-2 accounts (31-90 days past due) which give early signals of rising gross NPAs and collection efficiencies show broad-based improvement. Further, newly originated loan accounts are behaving well, as they have been underwritten stringently.

Other key factors

We remind readers of a few qualitative points. Since banks have turned cautious lending to MFI firms, there could be liquidity concerns in the near term, which might impact cost of funds. Recently MFI SROs have appealed to the government to set up a credit guarantee fund. SFBs might face sticky cost of deposits, despite repo cuts. Utkarsh saw a rating downgrade on its subordinate debt from A+ (Negative) to A (Negative) by ICRA.

There have been resignations of key managerial personnel in Fusion Finance and Spandana Sphoorty. These firms have also raised capital via rights issue to strengthen the balance sheet.

CHART 2

Stress on asset quality: Worst may be behind in Q3 & Q4

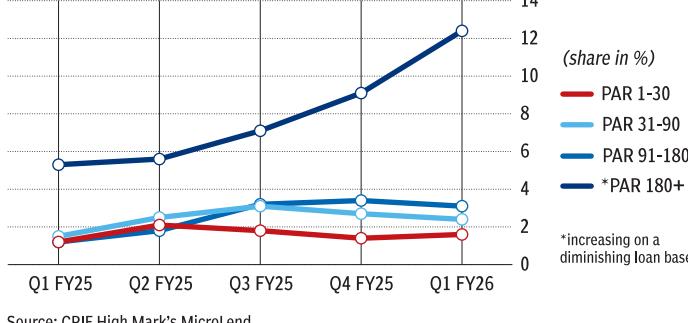
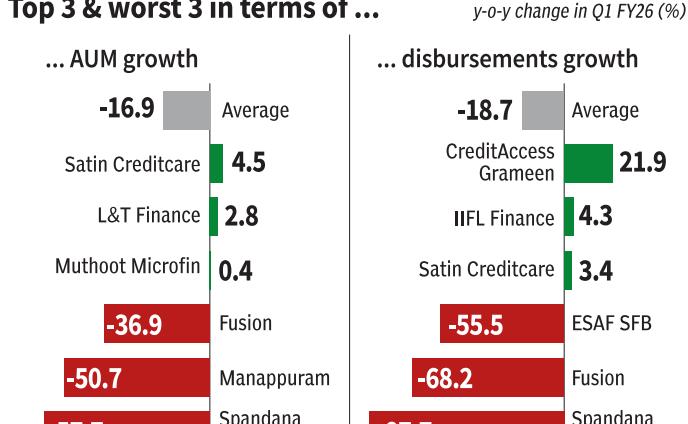


CHART 4

Top 3 & worst 3 in terms of ...



The art of decoding quarterly earnings

THE BOTTOMLINE. Investors must look past the headlines when it comes to analysing results and test them against a few basic parameters. Here's some help

Hari Viswanath

bl. research bureau

Earnings up, but stock down. Weak earnings, stock falls, but shoots up after earnings call. TCS reports a huge profit of ₹12,760 crore in Q1FY26, but the stock goes down post earnings. Suzlon reported a stellar 55 per cent/62 per cent year-on-year increase in revenue/EBITDA in Q1FY26, but stock reaction is negative.

Has this earnings season confused you as many in the past? If stocks do not react to earnings trend, what exactly is the purpose of following quarterly earnings? Are you missing something or is the market wrong? It could be either, or maybe it's par for the course.

To figure it out, you will have to test the quarterly earnings against a few basic parameters. Here's a guide to help you decode quarterly earnings of any company.

THE CHECKLIST

How it fared Vs expectations: Loss or profit, decline in revenue or increase, what matters first in assessing the quarterly earnings is how it fared versus expectations. Stocks are usually (although not always) priced based on expectations, ahead of earnings. Here, usually the expectation refers to sell-side consensus expectations. The consensus expectations reflect the mean of all major sell-side estimates collated by financial data providers like Bloomberg and LSEG.

These consensus estimates are collated for important metrics — revenue, profits, operating margins etc. It is important to know how these metrics fared vs consensus estimates. A beat versus consensus is viewed positively and vice-versa. So, whether the profit is huge or reported loss is massive, or growth is significant, if these are what was already expected and priced into the stock, then although these factors may

make the headlines the next day, it may not really matter much.

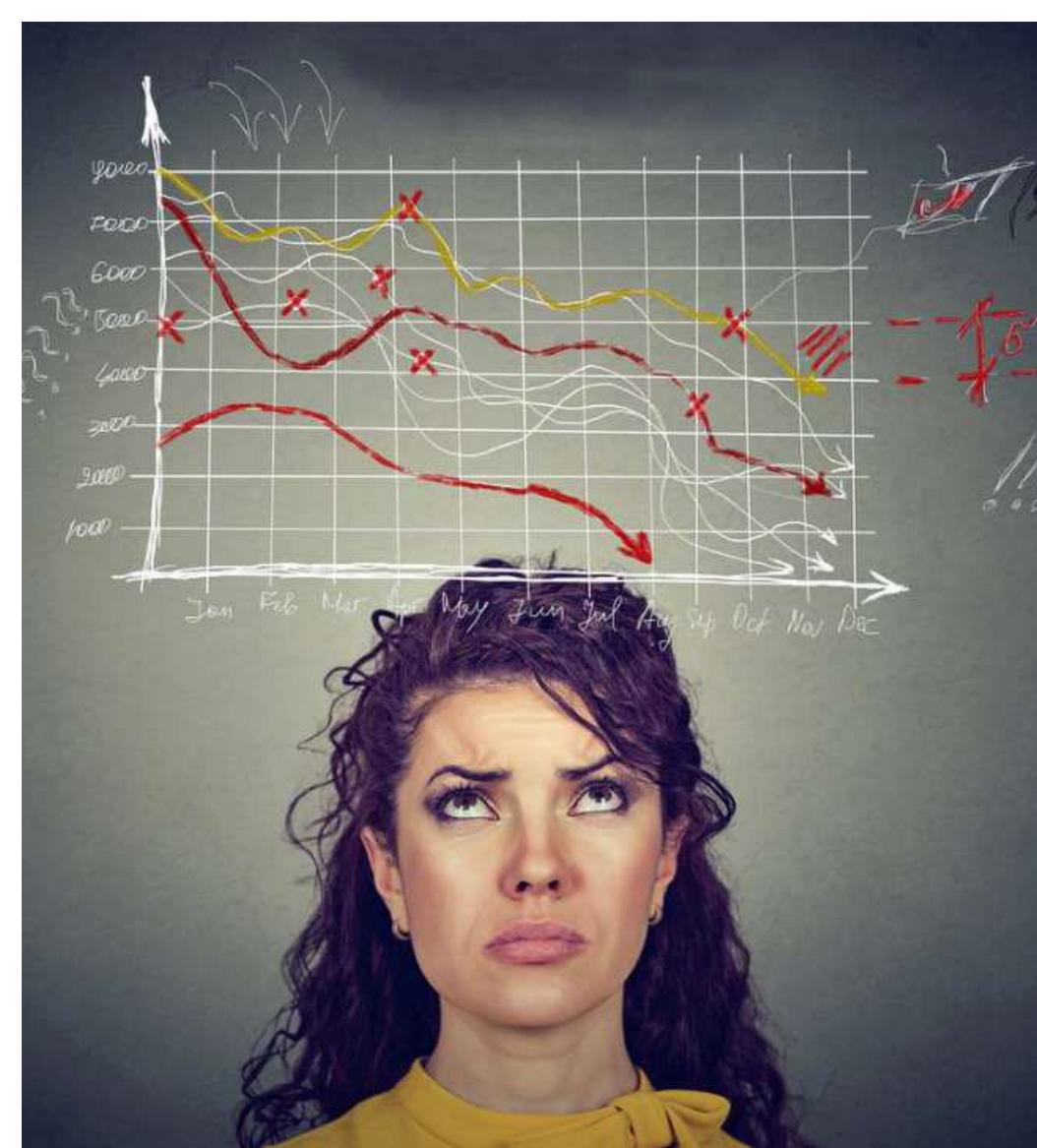
Focus on the operating metrics: A company could have beaten consensus profit estimates by over 50 per cent, but if this was driven by a non-operating item like profit from sale of non-core investments or land, forex gain, write back of provisions etc, then these are not material. So is the case when the same items are in the form of losses instead of gains. These are one-time items and not recurring.

What matters from an investor's perspective is what the recurring earnings potential is. For example, an FMCG company is not going to make profit from selling land every year, what matters is how its core business is doing. So, investors will tend to ignore these one-off/extraordinary items and focus on the operating profit. In analysing the earnings, you will have to weed out the impact of these and then compare with consensus estimates.

You will also have to figure out the important operating metrics across financial and non-financial parameters. Here, it will vary according to each sector. For example, in the IT services sector, constant currency revenue growth and EBIT margins are important financial operating metrics to track while geographic/vertical performance, billings and trends in large deals, client addition to large-sized buckets, employee attrition are important non-financial operating metrics to track.

In telecom, while revenue growth, EBITDA and PAT margins are important financial metrics, average revenue per user (ARPU) and net subscriber adds are crucial non-financial operating metrics to assess. As an investor, you need to go through quarterly earnings reports and presentations, and get a hang of such important metrics for each sector.

This apart, there will be times when a company may miss expectations on, say, some important



GETTY IMAGES

financial metrics but beat on the non-financial operating metrics. In such cases, investors need to make qualitative judgements on what's important for long-term business growth.

A good example here is Netflix. During its high growth phase between 2014 and 2018, Netflix used to consistently miss consensus expectations on free cash flows, but beat expectations on net subscriber adds. Market reac-

tion to this was unanimously positive through multiple quarters. The inference then was that it being a growth company, subscriber adds mattered more for long-term value creation and higher growth meant higher expenditure related to subscriber adds and building its content library, resulting in the miss in cash flows. Also importantly, the company had a healthy balance sheet to fund this growth phase. Factors

like these should be kept in mind and the relevance of what is important will depend on the phase the company is in — launch, growth, maturity or decline/renewal; how good its balance sheet is; confidence in its management team etc.

Outlook matters more: A company could report a bad quarter, but if the management is able to convince investors that the worst is behind and gives an out-

KEY TAKEAWAY

Repeated analysis of quarterly earnings and stock reactions over a few years will help an investor develop deep insights on a sector/company, its management, making assessment whether stock reaction is logical etc. One's analysis then will function similar to 'muscle memory'.

look that beats expectations, then investors will warm up to it. Reverse is the case where company reports stellar results, but guides for a weak outlook.

Beyond the outlook that is given in earnings filings, the tone and kind of commentary the management gives in its earnings conference call are also very important.

Hence, for a holistic judgment, earnings conference calls must also be analysed. For example, during the depth of the Covid-19 crisis in March/April of 2020, a comment from Meta CFO in the earnings call in April 2020 that 'after an initial steep decrease in ad revenue in March, we have seen signs of stability reflected in the first three weeks of April' was enough to give confidence to investors that the worst could be over and the stock rallied.

Similarly, if the management gives vague responses to questions on outlook, then investors may have to check if something is amiss.

Connecting the dots: Understanding and interpreting earnings is one thing, making use of it is another. For that, first and foremost, it is critical to be clear if you are a long-term investor or a trader. If you are a trader, what is of importance is how the stock reacts immediately post earnings — this will depend on factors mentioned above and the overall market sentiment.

If you are a long-term investor, factors such as valuation and inferences you can make on structural trends are key. For example, a company could report a solid report on all important factors like those mentioned above, but if the valuation is in bubble territory, then despite positive momentum you may have to get cautious. The stock for the time being could continue to rally, but are you comfortable holding it for the long term is the question to answer. Similarly, a weak quarter and the correction that ensues in a stock because of that could present an opportunity to enter for the long term.

From a valuation point of view, at least 90 per cent of the value of a stock depends on what is going to happen to the business from the second year from now till 10th year or longer. This is where wild reactions to quarterly results can provide opportunities.

In decoding the quarterly results, along-term investor must focus on what is happening to the structural trend in business.

In most cases, one will have to analyse multiple quarterly earnings to decode the structural trend in business. So most times, it will be boring work, but essential. At the same time, there will also be instances like a single quarter changing everything — like the Nvidia quarterly results reported in May 2023 that instantly triggered not only the near 500 per cent rally in stock but also the multi-trillion dollar AI stocks rally.

Repeated analysis of quarterly earnings and stock reactions over a few years will help an investor develop deep insights on a sector/company, its management, making assessment whether stock reaction is logical etc. One's analysis then will function similar to 'muscle memory'. While it's impossible to get it right all the time, as long as biases are acknowledged and kept at bay, one will end up being right more times than wrong.

Interest rates on home loans (%)

Institution	Loan amount		
	Under ₹30 lakh	₹30 to 75 lakh	Over ₹75 lakh
BANKS (Floating rates)			
Axis Bank	8.35-9.35	8.35-9.35	8.35-9.35
Bank of Baroda	7.45-9.20	7.45-9.20	7.45-9.20
Bank of India	7.35-10.10	7.35-10.10	7.35-10.10
Bank of Maharashtra	7.35-9.90	7.35-9.90	7.35-9.90
Canara Bank	7.30-10.25	7.30-10.25	7.30-10.25
Central Bank	7.35-8.90	7.35-8.90	7.35-8.90
DBS Bank	<=8.70	<=8.70	<=8.70
Dhanlaxmi Bank	8.60-9.75	8.60-9.75	8.60-9.75
Federal Bank	>=8.75	>=8.75	>=8.75
HDFC Bank	7.90-13.20	7.90-13.20	7.90-13.20
ICICI Bank	>=7.70	>=7.70	>=7.70
Indian Bank	7.40-8.80	7.40-8.80	7.40-8.80
IOB	7.35-8.45	7.35-8.45	7.35-8.45
IDBI Bank	7.55-12.15	7.55-12.15	7.55-12.15
J&K Bank	>= 8.0	>= 8.0	>= 8.0
Karnataka Bank	8.19-10.74	8.19-10.74	8.19-10.74
Karur Vysya Bank	7.95-10.90	7.95-10.90	7.95-10.90
Kotak Mahindra Bank	>=7.99	>=7.99	>=7.99
Punjab National Bank	7.55-9.20	7.50-9.20	7.50-9.10
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.55-10.75	7.55-10.75	7.55-10.75
RBL Bank	>= 9.0	>= 9.0	>= 9.0
State Bank of India	7.50-8.45	7.50-8.45	7.50-8.45
South Indian Bank	>=7.75	>=7.75	>=7.75
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.15-9.50	8.15-9.50	8.15-9.50
BANKS (Fixed rates)			
Indian Bank	9.45-9.65	9.45-9.65	9.45-9.65
Punjab National Bank	8.55-10.70	8.50-10.70	8.55-10.60
Canara Bank	8.75-11	8.75-11	8.75-11
ICICI Bank	8.65-11.80	8.65-11.80	8.65-11.80
HOUSING FINANCE COMPANIES (Floating rates)			
Tata Capital	>=7.75	>=7.75	>=7.75
PNB Housing	8.25-12.15	8.25-12.35	8.25-12.35
Central Bank Housing	10-12.85	10-12.85	10-12.35
Sammam Capital	>=8.75%	>=8.75%	>=8.75%
Aditya Birla Housing Fin	>=8.25	>=8.25	>=8.25
Bajaj Finserv	7.35-18.0	7.35-18.0	7.35-18.0
GIC Housing Finance	>=8.80	>=8.80	>=8.80
Sundaram Home Finance*	>=10	>=10	>=10
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance	>=9.50	>=9.50	>=9.50
IIFL Home Finance	>=8.75	>=8.75	>=8.75
LIC Housing Finance	7.50-9.70	7.50-9.90	7.50-10.0
HOUSING FINANCE COMPANIES (Fixed rates)			
LIC Housing Finance	10-10.25	10-10.25	10-10.25

Rates that vary with tenures or credit score within the specified loan amounts are indicated as a range. Fixed interest rates may be subject to a revision after a specified tenure. Rates may also apply only for a definite period and change to floating thereafter. Data taken from respective bank's website as on Aug 15, 2025. Contributed by BankBazaar.com. *Annual percentage rate

Towards a financially-free retirement

FINANCIAL PLANNING. Here's how a couple in their middle years planned for a peaceful life in their silver years

Sridevi V

Deenadaalaan wanted to plan his retirement. He is currently running an auto ancillary unit near Chennai.

He wanted to know how prepared he and his family were for his retirement. He wanted to ensure that his retirement income does not depend on his business.

He wanted to have a financially-independent life in the next 12 years, at his age of 65. He is planning to invest ₹60 lakh for the next 12 years in financial assets. He has listed his goals as below.

* Wanted to have a current expense of ₹1.5 lakh per month to be continued after retirement

* His business will be handed over to his son gradually and he will relinquish the control of day-to-day operations. He is planning to continue in an advisory role in the business after retirement.

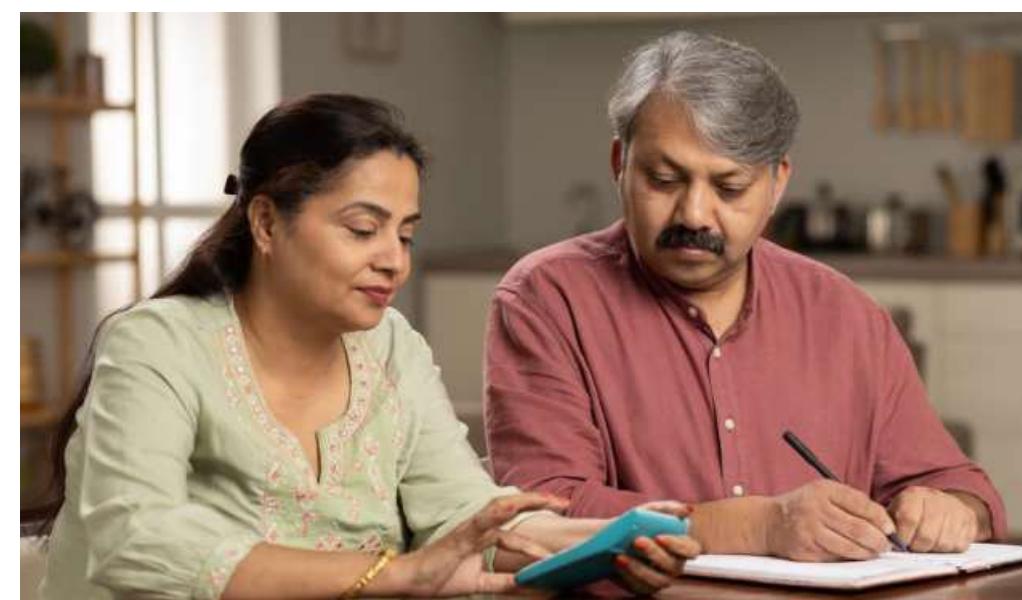
* Both his son and daughter will get married in the next three-five years. He has set aside adequate funds for the wedding expenses.

* His wife Maya wanted to have ₹5 lakh per annum towards her personal expenses from his retirement for 15 years, in addition to retirement expenses planned by Deenadaalaan.

Deenadaalaan and Maya have an aggressive risk profile aligning with their business interests over the past 25-plus years. As they are planning for their retirement, both of them agreed to build an aggressive investment portfolio — not exceeding 60 per cent into equity, including international exposure, 25 per cent into fixed income investments and 15 per cent into Gold/other assets. The investment portfolio has to be constructed with liquidity as high priority. Real estate is excluded from the proposed investment portfolio.

OUR REVIEW

* Their health insurance coverage was analysed, and necessary changes were recommended to suit their health status and financial position.



GETTY IMAGES

* It was recommended to invest the annual allocated amount in a growth portfolio for nine years with an expected return of 12 per cent CAGR.

* In the three years prior to retirement, the investment portfolio will be rebalanced to reduce the volatile assets and will be positioned to generate 9 per cent CAGR with consolidation of accumulated assets. This investment strategy will likely fetch them around ₹13.44 crore.

* As they wanted to maintain the same lifestyle, their retirement expenses will be ₹3 lakh at his retirement with an expected inflation of 6 per cent per annum. The family needs ₹9.28 crore for their retirement income

for the next 35 years from his age of 65.

* In addition, Maya needs ₹1.3 crore to fund her requirement of personal expenses.

* This leaves a surplus of ₹2.84 crore in the investment portfolio.

There was discussion on de-

tailed mathematical analysis to understand why this surplus is necessary and important.

There are many economic variables in the plan and an adequate surplus to weather the changes would help the family to have a peaceful retired life.

With the availability of a wide

range of options to invest and get withdrawals and/or interest payouts, the solution (for retirement living) is not as easy as one expects it to be. Right asset allocation and liquidity needs have to be ensured during both the accumulation and withdrawal phases.

Every decision that impacts the cash flow, needs to be reviewed thoroughly well in advance, to understand the impact it may have on the overall finances.

Hence, it is especially important to take enough care in building a corpus higher than what is needed and keep reviewing the strategy of withdrawals to ensure longevity too!

The author is a SEBI Registered Investment Adviser www.financialplanners.co.in

thehindu businessline. Classifieds

SITUATION VACANT

TECHNICAL

TKM Construction, Wanted : Civil Engineer,

Dhuraivel Gunasekaran

bl. research bureau

Children's funds represent a specialised category of mutual funds designed to help parents and guardians build financial security for their children's future milestones.

The HDFC Children's Fund has been a standout performer among the 12 funds in the segment.

A BALANCED APPROACH
HDFC Children's Fund employs the same investment approach as an aggressive hybrid fund, maintaining an equity allocation of 65-80 per cent with the remainder in debt instruments. Following SEBI's recategorisation norms seven years ago, the fund has maintained its equity portion consistently between 64-66 per cent, compared to its earlier allocation of approximately 75 per cent.

The fund's equity management focuses on companies demonstrating reasonable growth prospects across various market capitalisations.

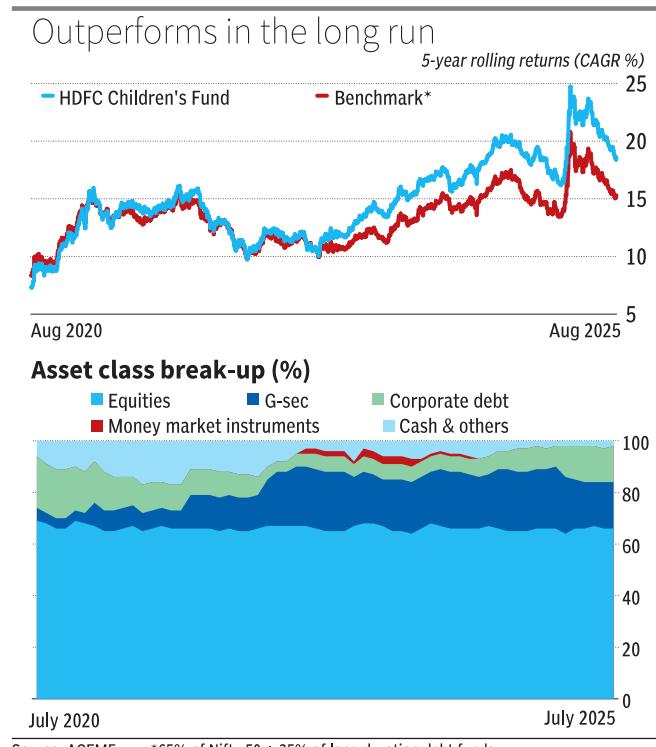
The equity allocation typically dedicates around 40 per cent to large-cap stocks, with the remaining 25 per cent distributed between mid-caps and small-caps. Recent periods have shown increased allocation to small-cap stocks, with July 2025 data indicating 21 per cent in small-caps and approximately 2 per cent in mid-caps. Unlike category peers that maintain higher banking sector exposure, HDFC Children's Fund has reduced banking allocations, instead focusing on sectors including cement, ferrous metals, industrial products, capital markets, and automotive.

The debt portion follows a duration strategy based on interest rate movements. The fund's portfolio average maturity has fluctuated, increasing from 3.6 years in September 2022 to a peak of 10 years in November 2024, currently at 8 years. The debt allocation comprises 18 per cent government securities and 14 per cent corporate bonds.

THE PERFORMANCE
The fund has delivered a compounded annual growth rate of 13 per cent over the last 10 years, outperforming pure equity children's funds from Tata and UTI that maintain approximately 80 per cent equity allocation (they clocked 11-12 per cent), as well as ICICI Prudential and LIC MF chil-

Saving for children's future

FUND CALL. HDFC Children's Fund boasts a compounded annual growth rate of 13% over 10 years



Source: ACEMF *65% of Nifty 50 + 35% of long duration debt funds

dren's funds with similar allocations (which delivered 8-12 per cent). A five-year rolling return analysis spanning the last 10 years reveals an average annualised return of 14.8 per cent, closely matching the Nifty 50's total return of 15.1 per cent.

During this period, the fund's returns ranged between 7 per cent and 25 per cent, demonstrating reasonable consistency.

Expense ratios for this category are generally high. The expense ratio for the regular plan

stood at 1.73 per cent, lower than the peer average of 2.1 per cent. For the direct plan, the ratio was 0.9 per cent below the category average of 1.2 per cent.

FUND STRUCTURE

Children's funds have several conditions attached to the investment, unlike hybrid equity funds which can also be used to meet child-related goals. These funds can only be opened in the name of a minor under 18 years of age at the time of investment.

WHY INVEST

- Standout performer among 12 funds in the segment
- Imposes long lock-in discipline to stay invested
- Hybrid approach allows market growth participation while controlling volatility

The application can be made by a parent or a court-appointed legal guardian. In some cases, asset management companies also permit trusts and corporate entities to invest on behalf of a child.

These funds have a lock-in period which lasts for five years or until the child turns 18, whichever comes first. For example, if the investment is made when the child is five years old, the lock-in will last until she turns 10. If the investment starts when the child is 16, the lock-in will last for just two years until she turns 18. Once the child turns 18, systematic investment plans (SIPs) or systematic transfer plans (STPs) in their name automatically stop, but the fund does not mature on its own. The invested amount can remain in the fund and continue to grow, but no new contributions are allowed in a minor's account after they become a major.

When making the initial investment, proof of the child's date of birth is required to confirm eligibility. Upon turning 18, the investor must complete the "minor-to-major" process, which includes updating the bank account details. Importantly, redemption proceeds are always credited directly to the child's account, regardless of whose account funded the investment originally. Early redemptions are typically restricted but may be permitted under exceptional circumstances such as the death of the contributor or beneficiary.

SHOULD YOU INVEST?

Children's funds compete with alternative investment products including Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, life insurance children's plans, and NPS Vatsalya, each offering different structural features, liquidity provisions, investment tenures, asset allocation strategies, and tax treatments. Though children's funds come with a lock-in of five years, they are not eligible for any tax deduction under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act.

You should go in for children's funds only if you feel you need the discipline of the long lock-in period to stay the course with your investment. Or else, hybrid categories such as aggressive hybrid or balanced advantage funds can very well serve the same purpose for goals that are 5-7 years away. If the goal is over 7 years away, you can consider pure equity funds too, from the flexcap or passive large and mid-cap menu.

ALERTS.**Edelweiss Multi Asset Omni Fund of Fund**

Edelweiss Mutual Fund has launched Edelweiss Multi Asset Omni Fund of Fund, an open-ended scheme investing in equity-oriented schemes, debt-oriented schemes and gold & silver ETFs. The NFO closes on August 26, 2025.

The exit load will be 1 per cent of the applicable NAV if the units are redeemed/switched out on or before 90 days from the date of allotment and nil if the units are redeemed/switched out after 90 days from the date of allotment.

The performance of the scheme will be benchmarked with 65 per cent Nifty500 TRI + 15 per cent Crisil Composite Bond Fund Index + 10 per cent domestic gold price + 10 per cent domestic silver price.

Mirae Asset Multi Factor Passive FOF

Mirae Asset Mutual Fund has launched Mirae Asset Multi Factor Passive FOF, an open-ended fund of fund scheme predominantly investing in units of factor-based domestic equity ETFs. The NFO closes on August 25. The exit load will be 0.05 per cent if redeemed or switched out within 5 calendar days from the date of allotment and nil if redeemed or switched out after 5 days from allotment.

The investment objective of the scheme is to provide long-term capital appreciation from a portfolio investing predominantly in units of factor-based domestic equity ETFs which are based on single or multiple strategies like alpha, momentum, low volatility, value, growth, equal weighting, quality and so on.

ETF movers

Top ETFs (Exchange Traded Funds) traded on NSE based on weekly change in price

ETF	NAV (₹)	Price (₹)	Weekly change in price (%)	Volume traded in the last week (in '000s)
	as on Aug 14			
Nippon Ind ETF Hang Seng	414.4	462.0	6.9	696
Kotak Nifty Midcap 150 ETF	21.3	22.2	5.1	118
Growth Nifty Internet ETF	10.6	10.6	4.5	952
Mirae Asset Internet ETF	14.3	14.3	4.5	288
Mirae Asset S&P 500 Top 50	54.1	64.9	4.2	1,782
ICICI Pru Nifty HC ETF	149.8	150.2	3.7	199
Axis Nifty Healthcare ETF	148.9	149.0	3.4	15
GOLD ETFs				
LIC MF Gold ETF	9031.3	9057.7	-0.9	18
UTI Gold ETF	84.2	84.3	-1.2	1,654
Union Gold ETF	98.6	98.5	-1.3	77

Source: Bloomberg. Returns as on Aug 14, 2025

Best NPS plans

Top pension funds in each category based on 5-year CAGR

Name of the fund	NAV (₹) as on Aug 14	Returns (% CAGR) 1-year	Returns (% CAGR) 3-year	Returns (% CAGR) 5-year	Assets (₹ cr)
TIER I: EQUITY PLANS					
UTI Pension Fund	71.6	1.2	16.0	20.1	4,677
ICICI Prudential Pension Fund	72.1	1.3	15.8	19.9	21,864
Kotak Pension Fund	67.4	3.3	16.2	19.8	3,220
TIER I: GOVERNMENT BOND PLANS					
ABSL Pension Scheme	18.8	6.9	8.6	6.3	1,940
LIC Pension Fund	30.2	6.7	8.5	6.1	7,542
SBI Pension Fund	40.4	6.7	8.5	6.0	24,837
TIER I: CORPORATE DEBT PLANS					
HDFC Pension Fund	29.2	9.7	8.4	7.2	26,577
ICICI Prudential Pension Fund	43.9	9.4	8.3	7.0	10,529
SBI Pension Fund	44.1	9.6	8.3	6.9	12,835
TIER I: ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS					
HDFC Pension Fund	21.7	14.2	9.4	9.7	430
UTI Pension Fund	19.8	22.0	10.3	9.2	24
SBI Pension Fund	22.3	14.9	8.4	9.2	126

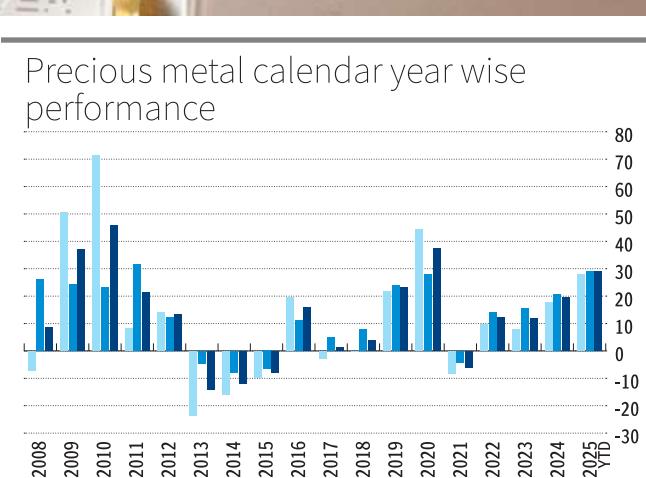
*Source: NPS Trust. Returns as on August 14, 2025

Top PMS schemes

Based on 5-year returns

AMC	Strategy	AUM (in ₹ cr)	Returns (% CAGR)		
			1-year	3-year	5-year
LARGE CAP					
Tulsian PMS	Tulsian PMS	NA	-11.1	22.3	34.3
Renaissance Investment Portfolio	Opportunities Portfolio	NA	-2.66	18.25	25.8
ICICI Pru	Largecap	825	-0.74	23.15	24.29
Standard Chartered Securities India	Long Term Value Compounder	NA	9.18	21.9	23.47
MULTI CAP					
Negen Capital Services	Special Situ Tech Fund	1,211	10.5	28.47	45.09
Renaissance Investment	Indianext Portfolio	NA	0.14	23.79	37.75
Invasset	Growth Pro Max	NA	-18.74	33.62	37.46
Bonanza Portfolio	Edge	NA	-10.65	27.51	37.18
Bonanza Portfolio	Multipac	NA	-6.49	28.1	37.16
Buoyant Capital	Opportunities	5,609	8.82	25.46	36.12
MID CAP					
NAFA Asset Managers	Emerging Bluechip	NA	-2.52	22.41	32.07
Master Portfolio Services	Master Trust India Growth	NA	4.75	22.46	31.46
Unifi Capital	APJ 20	NA	-0.36	22.31	30.02
Right Horizons	Super Value	NA	-2.45	20.88	28.93
SMALL CAP					
Counter Cyclical Investments	Diversified Long Term Value	773	3.16	35.37	70.79
Aequitas Invest. Consultancy	India Opportunities	3,453	8.74	40.24	47.16
Equitree Capital Advisors	Emerging Opportunities	841	0.71	38.42	47
Accuracap	Dynamo	NA	4.6	36.4	34.9

*Source: PMS Bazaar. Returns as on July 31, 2025

**Precious metal calendar year wise performance**

Kumar Shankar Roy
bl. research bureau

Kolkata-based Vikram Solar, one of India's largest pure-play manufacturers of solar photovoltaic (PV) modules and an EPC contractor for solar projects, will open its over ₹2,000-crore IPO on August 19. The offer comprises a fresh issue of ₹1,500 crore and an offer for sale of up to 1.75 crore shares worth ₹579 crore by promoter group shareholders. Post-issue, promoters will hold 63.12 per cent. The IPO has a price band of ₹315–₹332 per share.

As of FY25, 98.23 per cent of Vikram's operating revenue comes from solar PV modules, and the IPO proceeds will partly fund two major capacity projects at its subsidiary, VSL Green Power, in Gangaikondan, Tamil Nadu. Phase I will establish an integrated facility with 3 GW of solar cell and 3' GW of solar module capacity, costing ₹769.7 crore from IPO funds. Phase II will expand the module capacity at the same site from 3 GW to 6 GW, with ₹595.2 crore allocated. Together, these projects form the backbone of Vikram's plan to scale its module capacity from 4.5 GW to 20.5 GW by FY27, alongside 12 GW of solar cell capacity (backward integration edge) and up to 5 GWh of battery storage.

Vikram Solar is pricing the offer at 24.5x EV/EBITDA on FY25 earnings, versus 20–23x for larger listed peers, despite lower current EBITDA margin (14.4 per cent) and PAT margin (4.1 per cent). The IPO comes at a time when there is negative sentiment amid the US examining potential tariff circumvention on certain solar imports, though exports formed only about 1 per cent of Vikram's FY25 revenue.

A repeat of 2023's price slump, especially if US trade policy shifts reduce access to that market, could force Indian module makers to dump capacity domestically. That could trigger price wars and cast doubt over the payback timelines for aggressive expansions. Hence, investors may be better served by adopting a wait-and-watch approach for now.

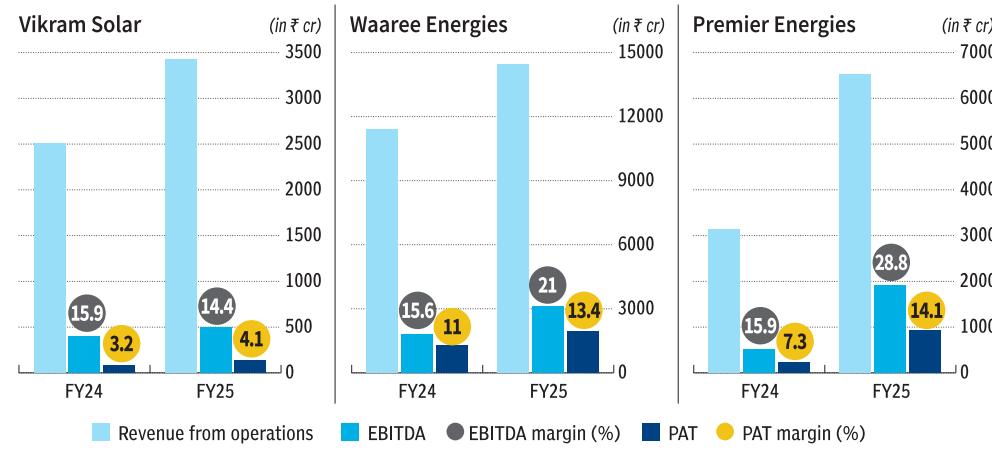
BUSINESS, INDUSTRY
India's fast-growing electricity demand and push to cut fossil fuel use make solar power central to its energy transition. Government policies such as the Approved List of Models and

Shadows in sunlit growth path

IPO WATCH. Vikram Solar's expansion and integration plans promise scale-led gains, but demand and pricing clouds loom



How it stacks up



Manufacturers (ALMM), basic customs duty (BCD) on imports and the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for high-efficiency PV modules have spurred large-scale domestic manufacturing.

Government projects can procure solar PV modules only from suppliers listed in the ALMM. From June 1, 2026, amendments made in December 2024 will require both solar PV cells and modules used in most projects, including government-backed and open access schemes, need to come from ALMM List II.

A safeguard duty introduced in July 2018 on imported solar cells remained until July 2021, after which it was replaced with a 25 per cent BCD from April 2022, reduced to 20 per cent from May 2025. The same 20 per

IPO rating

Vikram Solar

Business	★★★★★
Financials	★★★★★
Management	★★★★★
Valuation	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★

Rankings 1 to 5, 1 denoting lowest and 5 highest

Offer period Aug 19-21, 2025
Price band (₹/share) ₹315-332
Issue size ₹2,079 cr
Market cap ₹12,009 cr (upper end of the band)

cent BCD now applies to both solar cells and modules. These duties raise input costs unless in-house cell production becomes viable or purchases are sourced from competitive do-

mestic suppliers. Coupled with India's 2030 target of 500 GW non-fossil fuel capacity and rapid adoption of newer cell technologies, these measures have strengthened demand visibility and competitiveness for Indian modules.

Commencing operations in 2009, Vikram Solar is among India's largest pure-play module makers. While it also undertakes EPC contracts, manufacturing now dominates the revenue mix. Its products serve utility-scale, rooftop and off-grid markets, supplying Independent Power Producers (IPPs), developers and commercial clients in India and select overseas markets. The company operates two facilities, Falta SEZ (West Bengal) and Oragadam (Tamil Nadu).

The company's solar PV in-

stalled capacity of 4.5 GW is targeted to rise to 15.5 GW by FY26 and to 20.5 GW by FY27 (including a 3-GW upcoming facility in the US). Alongside, there will be 12 GW of solar cell capacity and a battery energy storage system (BESS) project of up to 5 GWh.

The BESS project will open a new revenue stream, enabling Vikram to offer integrated solar-plus-storage solutions. Crisil Intelligence estimates that the BESS market will reach \$USD 8-10 billion by fiscal 2030 at a CAGR of 18-19 per cent.

As of FY25, the company's order-book is 10.34 GW (2.3x its rated capacity). This compares with 25 GW of Waaree Energies and 5.3 GW of Premier Energies. Typically, Vikram converts 18-20 per cent of its order-book into annual module sales.

The company is also exploring the introduction of new product categories, such as inverters, cables and solar kits.

VALUATION, RISKS

The IPO values Vikram Solar at 24.5 times EV/EBITDA based on FY25 earnings, which is in-line with peers despite a lower margin profile. On a Price/Earnings basis, the asking price is stiff at over 80 times vs 35-45 times for Waaree Energies and Premier Energies, leaving little margin of safety.

As Vikram's higher capacities come on stream and backward integration is fleshed out, the greater scale should also help it boost revenue and push PAT margins near Waaree and Premier levels, both of which generate 13-14 per cent. But the planned capacity additions may need funding beyond the IPO proceeds. The bigger concern is whether overall demand will remain strong enough for new capacities to deliver returns.

A major risk is volatility in module pricing. Although solar PV module prices rose 22 per cent and 7 per cent in FY22 and FY23, there was a sharp drop in FY24 due to a supply glut in China and falling upstream costs. Prices have since stabilised, but renewed weakness could squeeze margins before integration benefits accrue.

Notably, in June 2024, the company raised funds via a private placement at ₹122 per share, well below the IPO price band. While such pre-IPO funding rounds are often struck at a discount, the management will need to demonstrate post-issue execution and earnings growth can justify the higher valuation.

businessline's editorial policy prohibits analysts from taking positions in the stocks they recommend. —Editor

GLOBAL BOARDROOM CHATTER.

What they say on their India plans

With India being the fastest growing large economy, 'what is your India plan?' is a common topic in boardrooms of most global corporations. One important source to distil their India plans is from their quarterly earnings calls. With the June quarter earnings season still in progress, we will bring to you what CXOs of global corporations are saying about India and their perspectives and plans in this column. Here are some from companies that reported their earnings last week.

Aimia Inc. (AIM, C\$289.6 million)

The Canada-based global investment holding company emphasised that tariffs do not diminish India's cost advantage:

"Even with significant tariffs, producing in India remains more cost-effective than the US, making it a strategic export base."

Deere & Company (DE, \$130.0 billion)

The American agricultural machinery manufacturer highlighted that favourable farm fundamentals are bolstering India's outlook:

"Steady crop acreage, rising support prices, better agricultural credit and favourable growing conditions are boosting the country's agriculture market."

LANXESS AG (LXS, €2.1 billion)

The German specialty chemicals company noted that India is outperforming its peers in Asia:

"We see good momentum in India with reasonable local production, while China faces pricing erosion."

PolyPeptide Group AG (PPGN, CHF 915.5 million)

The Switzerland-based CDMO, specialising in peptide development and manufacturing, is shifting key projects to India to free up capacity:

"We're making tactical investments at our India site, reallocating projects to India especially to increase support and expand capacity."

Gorilla Technology Group Inc. (GRRR, \$481.6 million)

The global provider of security intelligence solutions is expanding its technology capabilities in India:

"Our teams in Taiwan and India are building IoT and environmental monitoring solutions, with plans for a 750-2,000 person India operations centre."

Carlsberg A/S (CARLA, Dkr103.9 billion)

The Danish multinational brewer highlighted India's growth:

"We saw double-digit growth, mainly Tuborg in the mainstream segment, and new categories like soft drinks driving momentum. Despite heavy monsoons, strong volume growth is expected in H2."

Contributed by NAFA ASSET MANAGERS

WHO AM I?

Are you an avid investor? How well do you know corporate India?

Here's a challenge. Using the five clues below, identify the company that is being talked about here.

1 My founder made a surprise comeback to the same industry after retirement and built a multi-billion dollar business within 10 years.

2 I have lost almost half my market cap over the last three years amid consistent selling by the promoter.

3 While DIIs have more than quadrupled their ownership, I currently have fewer shareholders than a few years ago due to recent weakness in my stock performance.

4 Though I have more offices outside India across five continents, about 95 per cent of my employees work locally.

5 Despite receiving awards for being the best workplace for women, I have lower female representation than the industry standard in my team.

Send your answers by Wednesday 6 p.m. to who-am-i@thehindu.co.in, with your full name, postal address and phone number. A lucky winner in each week will get a book sponsored by UNIFI Capital as a reward.

Last week's stock: Marksans Pharma

Last week's winner: Praeven Hegde

Powering ahead on capex play

EPC. Healthy order-book, strong execution, wide global presence and expanding margins are positives for KEC International

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

In the infrastructure build-out during the immediate post-Covid years and even in the recent past when the government has reduced the pace of capex spends, some areas continue to receive healthy allocations. Areas such as power, urban infrastructure (metros etc.) and railways continue to get extensive attention.

Select companies operating in these segments have been beneficiaries over the years.

As an EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) that operates in India and with presence in 70-odd countries, KEC International has been able to gain from the thrust on infrastructure. The transmission & distribution (T&D) division – the company's largest segment, accounting for over 60 per cent of the revenues – has a robust execution track record in several countries.

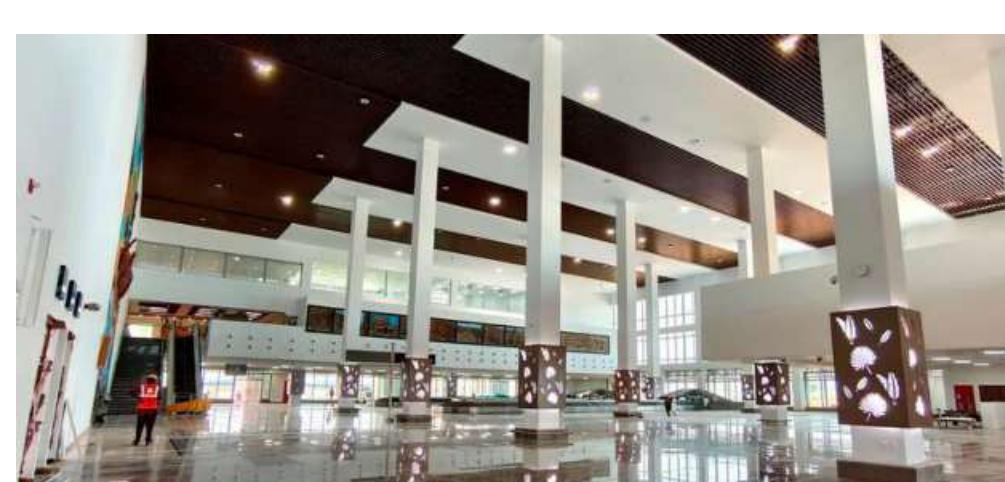
KEC also executes civil projects and provides turnkey solutions in transportation segments (metros, railways etc.), with these divisions being its other key revenue generators. The firm also works on oil & gas pipeline contracts, renewables, cables & conductors.

The shares of the firm are down over 36 per cent from their highs touched in December 2024, as the broader markets and especially the mid and small cap pack declined sharply.

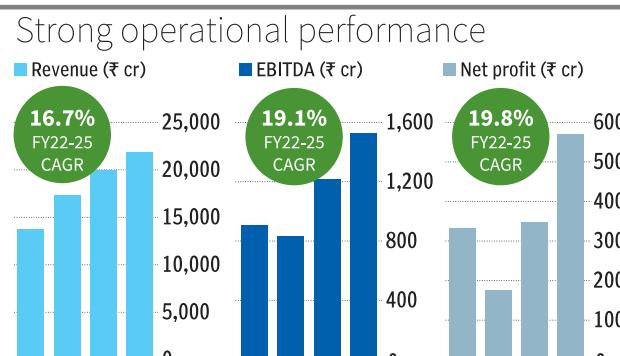
At ₹777, the KEC stock trades at 20 times its likely per share earnings for FY26.

Since there are no strictly similar players, comparison can be done with players that operate in some of the segments that KEC works on or other mid-to-large EPC players.

In this regard, NBCC (India) at 50 times, ITD Cementation (more than 30 times), Afcons Infrastructure at over 25 times and the BSE Capital Goods In-



Strong operational performance



dex at over 54 times are much more expensive.

Investors can buy the shares of KEC International from a three-five-year perspective.

A solid order-book, strong execution track record, extensive presence in India and overseas, and steadily expanding margins are positive factors.

Between FY22 and FY25, KEC's revenue grew at a compounded annual rate of 16.7 per cent to ₹21,847 crore in FY25, while EBITDA grew at a CAGR of 19.1 per cent to ₹1,528 crore over the same period. The company's EBITDA margin, which fell to a low of 4.8 per cent in FY23, has revived strongly and

touched 7 per cent in FY25; the management expects it to go up to 8 per cent or higher in FY26.

Net profits rose at 19.8 per cent CAGR in these three years to ₹51 crore in FY25.

In Q1FY26, its revenue grew 11 per cent year on year to ₹5,023 crore, while net profits rose 42 per cent to ₹125 crore.

The company's T&D division has grown comfortably at nearly twice the overall company's rate in FY25 as well as in Q1FY26.

Broadly, there is an India T&D sub-segment, international T&D and SAE Towers (a wholly-owned subsidiary in the Americas). The company has executed EPC projects in diverse geographies such as India, Brazil, Mexico, North Africa, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The T&D segment's revenue has grown comfortably at nearly twice the overall company's rate in FY25 as well as in Q1FY26.

As India plans to have an installed power capacity of over 777 GW by 2030, with a peak demand projected at 335 GW, the prospects for entrenched companies in the T&D space such as KEC remain attractive.

BUY

KEC International ₹777

WHY

- Healthy order book

- Strong traction in T&D segment

- Diversified geographic mix

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Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Nifty 50 (24,631) appreciated 1.1 per cent and Nifty Bank (55,342) was up 0.6 per cent last week. Here we analyse the derivatives data of both indices and also the chart of index futures.

NIFTY 50

Nifty futures (Aug) (24,685) rallied 1 per cent last week. During this period, the open interest of the contract saw a decline - it decreased from 172 lakh contracts on August 8 to 167 lakh contracts on August 14. This denotes exit of some short positions from the system.

With respect to options, the Put Call Ratio (PCR) of weekly and monthly expiries of Nifty options stood at 0.90 and 1 respectively. Broadly, the option positioning does not show a strong inclination on either side.

While the futures and options data show that the bears might be entering their weak zone, the chart shows Nifty futures remain below a key barrier at 24,800.

Only if the bulls can lift Nifty futures above 24,800, it can escape from the clutches of the bears. In case that occurs, the contract can quickly rise to 25,000. If this level is breached, the rally can extend to 25,400.

However, as long as the resistance at 24,800 holds, bears will have an edge over the bulls. In case the downtrend resumes, which is likely to happen in the short run, Nifty futures can drop to 24,000. This is a key support which can aid in reversing the trend.

Nevertheless, as it stands, Nifty futures has not fully shed the bearish inclination.

Strategy: Retain the short position on Nifty futures (Aug) initiated at 24,600.

Maintain stop-loss at 24,800. When the contract slips to



Bears linger

F&O TRACKER. Futures restrained by resistance

GETTY IMAGES

24,400, revise the stop-loss to 24,600. Book profits at 24,000.

Alternatively, traders can buy 24500-put option (₹128.85). Target and stop-loss can be ₹480 and ₹60 respectively.

NIFTY BANK

Nifty Bank futures (Aug) (55,504) gained 0.6 per cent last week. The open interest of this contract slightly dropped from 29 lakh contracts on August 8 to 28.5 lakh contracts on August 14. So, like in Nifty futures, there was some short covering over the past week.

The PCR of August monthly options stood at 0.7 at the end of last week. A ratio less than 1 is due to the relatively higher number of call option selling. Traders sell calls when they have bearish expectations.

Even the PCR of September contract, which is above 1, saw a drop. It fell from 1.31 on August 8

BROAD TREND

- Short covering on index futures
- Indices not out of the woods
- Traders can retain short positions

to 1.18 on August 14. The ratio declined as traders sold more call options compared to puts during this period.

While the derivatives data give a mixed tone, the chart of Nifty Bank futures, too, indicate indecisiveness among traders. Over the past two weeks, the contract has been charting a sideways trend. That is, it has been oscillating between 55,000 and 55,850.

Although the inclination will remain bearish as long as the res-

istance at 55,850 remains valid, the support at 55,000 can be a challenge for the bears.

In case 55,000 is breached, Nifty Bank futures can see a deeper fall to 54,000. On the other hand, if the contract surpasses the hurdle at 55,850, the outlook, at least for the near term, can become positive. In such a case, it can rise to 56,500, a barrier. Subsequent resistance is at 57,500.

Strategy: As the resistance at 55,850 holds, traders can retain the Nifty Bank futures (Aug) short trade initiated at 55,500. Maintain the stop-loss at ₹6,200. If the contract slips below 55,000, trail the stop-loss to ₹5,500. Book profits at ₹4,000.

Traders who bought 55,000-put (recommended to be bought at ₹370) instead of futures short can hold on to the trade. Retain the target and stop-loss at ₹900 and ₹180 respectively.

its moneyness. Finally, you must consider option's implied volatility to initiate positions. This is the volatility that is implied in the option price for a strike, given the spot price, time to expiry and risk-free rate. Implied volatility is important because higher (lower) implied volatility compared to the past indicates that an option is rich (cheap). When an underlying is introduced in the F&O segment, you will not have past implied volatility trends. So, initiating call or put positions could pose an issue.

OPTIONAL READING

You can set up volatility arbitrage trades for a given expiry. This involves going long on a strike with lower implied volatility and short on a strike with higher implied volatility for the same expiry. You only need to observe the relative implied volatility at the time of initiating the position, not how it was in the past. You must also analyse the overall trend from the underlying price (futures) chart for trading equity (index) options.

The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments

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That said, trading options may require a different strategy. Options cannot move one-to-one with the underlying because of time decay or theta. Also, you can use continuous price chart for futures by stitching together all one-month contract over time. That logic cannot work for options because the location of the strike in relation to the underlying price determines the moneyness of the option. For instance, 24200 strike may have been in-the-money last month but out-of-the-money this month, and the option price is determined by

Trading new contracts

MASTERING DERIVATIVES. Factors to be considered when a new underlying is introduced in F&O

Venkatesh Bangarawamy



QUICK POINT

A stock must have traded for at least 6 months to apply average daily delivery value rule to validate an underlying's entry in F&O segment

year or less may be an issue. Fortunately, you can trade futures on an underlying that has just been introduced in the F&O segment if it has a longer price history in the spot market. Why? Futures price moves one-to-one with the underlying. Therefore, while it is preferable to use futures chart to analyse trends, you

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FUTURES VS OPTIONS

It is difficult to trade a newly listed stock in the spot market based on technical analysis if you are a position trader. This is because you will not have enough data to analyse price trends on the chart. Is there a similar issue when an underlying is introduced in the F&O segment? Not necessarily.

A stock must have traded for at least six months to apply the average daily delivery value rule to validate an underlying's entry in the F&O segment. But a stock can be introduced in the F&O segment within one year of listing. Analysing trend on a daily chart based on data that is one

year or less may be an issue. Fortunately, you can trade futures on an underlying that has just been introduced in the F&O segment if it has a longer price history in the spot market. Why? Futures price moves one-to-one with the underlying. Therefore, while it is preferable to use futures chart to analyse trends, you

Boundaries intact

BULLION CUES. Traders can stay out

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Gold (\$3,336/ounce) was down 1.8 per cent and silver (\$38/ounce) lost 0.8 per cent last week. In the domestic market, gold futures (Oct) (₹99,838/10 gm) lost 1.9 per cent whereas silver futures (Sep) (₹1,13,943/kg) was down 0.8 per cent.

MCX-GOLD (₹99,838)

The October gold futures, which saw a decline last week, has a support ahead at ₹99,150. A recovery on the back of this can lift the contract to ₹1,01,500.

But in case the support at ₹99,150 is breached, gold futures can extend the downswing to ₹96,000.

That said, over the past three months, gold futures has been oscillating in the ₹96,000-1,01,500 range. Only a breach of either of these levels can lead to establishment of the next medium-term trend.

Support below ₹96,000 is at ₹93,000 whereas resistance above ₹1,01,500 is at ₹1,03,000.

Trade strategy: The risk-reward ratio is not ideal for both



long and short positions at the current juncture. So, we suggest staying out.

MX-SILVER (₹1,13,943)

Silver futures (Sep) has been facing a barrier at ₹1,15,000 over the past few weeks. While it has not broken out of this barrier, the contract has not seen a fall either.

There is a support ahead at ₹1,12,700. Subsequent support is at ₹1,10,000.

So, overall, as long as silver futures trade within the ₹1,10,000-1,15,000 range, the direction of the next leg of trend will remain uncertain.

Resistance above ₹67,600 is at ₹70,70 whereas support below ₹66 can be spotted at ₹63.

MX-CRUISE OIL (₹5,537)

Crude oil futures (Sep) is down 9.1 per cent so far in August. The support at ₹5,400 helped the

contract in stopping the down-trend, at least temporarily.

If there is a rebound on the back of this base, the crude oil futures will face a resistance at ₹5,750. Only a breakout of this can turn the outlook positive. In such a case the contract can rally to ₹6,100.

On the other hand, if the support at ₹5,400 is taken out, it can trigger another leg of down-trend, which can potentially drag crude oil futures to ₹5,000.

Broadly, as it stands, the trend remains uncertain as the contract is trading between the key levels of ₹5,400 and ₹5,750.

Trade strategy: Stay out for now. Short crude oil futures (Sep) if it slips below the support at ₹5,400. Target and stop-loss can be ₹5,000 and ₹5,600 respectively.

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Trade strategy:</b

Gurumurthy K
bl. research bureau

Nifty 50, Sensex and the Nifty Bank index got a breather last week. The benchmark indices recovered slightly after having fallen for six consecutive weeks. Nifty was up 1.1 per cent. Sensex and the Nifty Bank index rose 0.93 and 0.61 per cent respectively last week.

The Nifty Midcap 150 and the Nifty Smallcap 250 indices snapped their three-week fall. They were up 0.81 per cent and 0.69 per cent respectively last week.

However, the bounce last week is not giving any significant sign of a trend reversal. Key resistances are still ahead. The indices have to breach them and get a strong follow-through buying. Only that will give us a confirmation that the correction has ended. As such we will have to wait and watch the movement closely for the next one or two weeks to get more clarity.

FPIS SELL

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) continued to sell the Indian equities for the fifth consecutive week. The quantum of selling was low though. The equity segment saw a net outflow of about \$348 million last week. The FPIs have to turn net buyers in order to help the Sensex and Nifty to reverse the current downturn.

NIFTY 50 (24,631.30)

Short-term view: Immediate support is at 24,450. A rise above 24,700 can take the Nifty up to 24,800 and even 25,000-25,100 in a week or two.

Only a fall below 24,450 will bring the Nifty under pressure again. That will keep alive the chances of the fall to 24,000.

Ideally, Nifty must breach 25,100 and get a strong follow-through rise. That will confirm the trend reversal and open the doors for a rally to 25,600 and higher.

Medium-term view: The region between 24,000 and 23,500 will continue to remain as the strong support zone. As long as the Nifty stays above it, the broader trend will remain up. That will keep intact our view of seeing 28,000-28,500 over the medium term and 31,000 in the long term.

Hanging in there

INDEX OUTLOOK.

Nifty 50, Sensex and Nifty Bank index will need a strong follow-through rise for a trend reversal

Nifty 50 gets a breather

**KEY RESISTANCE**

- Nifty 50: 25,100
- Sensex: 81,300
- Nifty Bank: 56,200

medium term and 61,000 in the long term.

A fall below 53,500 is needed to negate this bullish view. If that happens, 52,300-52,000 and even lower levels can be seen.

SENSEX (80,597.66)

Short-term view: Immediate resistance is at 80,720. A break above it can take the Senex up to 81,200 or 81,300. A further break above 81,300 will then clear the way for a rise to 82,000 and even 83,000. That in turn will indicate a trend reversal.

But a turnaround either from 80,720 itself or 81,300 will keep the current downtrend intact. It will then keep the doors open to see 79,000 on the downside.

Medium-term view: Senex will remain bullish as long as it sustains above the 79,000-

This bullish view will go wrong only if the Nifty declines below 23,500. That will drag the index down to 22,000-21,700.

NIFTY BANK (55,341.85)

Short-term view: Nifty Bank index is stuck between 54,900 and 55,650 for more than a week. A break above 55,650 can take it up to 56,100-56,200. A decisive break above 56,200 will indicate a trend reversal and

trigger a rise to 57,500-58,000 in the short term.

Series of supports are there at 54,800, 54,000 and 53,500. So, the downside can be limited in case the index declines below 54,800.

Medium-term view: The big picture will remain bullish as long as the Nifty Bank index sustains above the 54,000-53,500 support zone. We retain our view of seeing 59,000 over the

medium term and 61,000 in the long term.

78,600 support zone. That will keep intact our view of seeing a rally to 88,000-89,000 over the medium term and 91,000-92,000 eventually over the long term.

A decisive break below 78,600 will negate the bullish view and drag the Sensex down to 77,000-76,000.

NIFTY MIDCAP 150 (21,017.05)

The bounce last week lacks strength. That still keeps the Nifty Midcap 150 index vulnerable to break 20,700 and fall to 20,400 or even 20,000.

The region around 20,000 is a very strong support. A bounce from there can see a rise to 21,500-22,000 again.

As mentioned last week, such a rise to 21,500-22,000 will indicate an inverted head and shoulder bullish pattern on the chart. A decisive break above 22,000 will confirm the same. Such a break can take the Nifty Midcap 150 index up to 23,000-23,500 over the medium term and 25,000-25,500 in the long term.

The index has to fall below 20,000 to negate this bullish view. If that happens, a fall to 19,300-19,000 can be seen.

NIFTY SMALLCAP 250 (16,656.75)

The Nifty Smallcap 250 index is managing to hold above the crucial support level of 16,400. Resistance in the 16,900-17,000 region has to be broken to ease the downside pressure and see a rise 17,200 and 17,350. That will keep alive the chances of an inverted head and shoulder pattern. It can then take the index up to 18,000-18,200 in the short term. A break above 18,200 will confirm the pattern and can take the Nifty Smallcap 250 index up to 21,000 over the long term.

A break below 16,400 will be bearish for a fall to 15,800-15,700 and will negate the aforementioned bullish view.

bl.portfolio video

Watch bl. Guru share the Nifty and Bank Nifty technical outlook for this week

TECH QUERY

GURUMURTHY K
bl. research bureau

I have bought Reliance Industries shares at ₹1,450. Can I hold it long-term?

Bolbin George

Reliance Industries (₹1,373.80): The long-term outlook is bullish. But in the short-term, there is room for a fall to ₹1,300 but not beyond that. A reversal from around ₹1,300 can take Reliance Industries share price up

to ₹1,900-2,000 over the next couple of years. Buy more at ₹1,320. Keep the stop-loss at ₹1,060. Revise the stop-loss up to ₹1,360 when the price goes up to ₹1,580. Move the stop-loss further up to ₹1,480 and ₹1,720 when the price touches ₹1,620 and ₹1,880 respectively. Exit the stock at ₹2,000. The bullish view will go wrong only if the stock declines below ₹1,100. But that looks unlikely at the moment as fresh buyers can come in around ₹1,300 itself and limit the downside.

I have shares of Hindustan Copper. Should I continue to hold or sell?

Pranesh Lazarus

Hindustan Copper (₹240): It is difficult to give a precise advice without knowing your purchase price. The stock is in a strong downtrend since May last year. Resistance is in the ₹270-300 region which is holding well for

now. There are good chances for the stock to fall towards ₹190-185 in the coming months. The downside can even extend up to ₹165-160. The region around ₹160 is a strong long-term support which can halt the fall. From a long-term perspective, a fresh rally from around ₹160 will have the potential to take Hindustan Copper share price up to ₹350-400 again. It is better to exit the stock now. You can consider buying the stock again when it falls to ₹185 and ₹160.

I have Federal Bank shares. My purchase price is ₹215. What is the short-term outlook?

Rajeev, Lucknow

Federal Bank (₹195.95): The stock is now range-bound between ₹170 and ₹220. Supports are at ₹185, ₹178 and ₹172-170. A bounce from any of these supports can take Federal Bank share price up to ₹220 over the next

three months. An eventual break above ₹220 can take the stock up to ₹245-250 thereafter. Failure to breach ₹220 can keep the stock in a range of ₹170-220. If you are playing for the short term, buy more at ₹188. Revise the stop-loss up to ₹190 when the price goes up to ₹205. Move the stop-loss further up to ₹200 and ₹220 when the share price touches ₹215 and ₹235 respectively. Exit the stock at ₹245.

What is the long-term outlook for Sun Pharmaceutical Industries? I have bought this stock at ₹1,550.

Amaira, Gaya

Sun Pharmaceutical Industries (₹1,643): The trend is down since October last year. Immediate support is at ₹1,550. A break below it can drag the stock down to ₹1,400-1,370 over the next three to six months. But, if it manages to

sustain above ₹1,550, a bounce to ₹1,750-1,800 is possible. However, a decisive break above ₹1,800 is needed to bring back the bullishness. Only then a rise to ₹2,000 and higher levels can happen. Looking at the structure on the chart, the danger of a fall to ₹1,400 is higher. Also, even if the stock sustains above ₹1,550, it might take a long time to breach ₹1,800. So, it is better to exit the stock and book some profit.

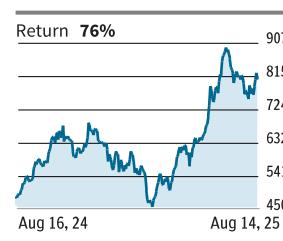
Send your queries to techtrail@thehindu.co.in

BANDU'S BLOCKBUSTERS.**MOVERS & SHAKERS**

AKHIL NALLAMUTHU bl. research bureau

MCX (₹8,148.75)

Likely to retest prior high



The stock of MCX (Multi Commodity Exchange of India) appreciated 5.6 per cent last week. It bounced off a support at ₹7,700 where a trendline coincides. Last week's rally hints that the stock has resumed the rally after witnessing a corrective decline. While there may not be a rally which can take the stock to fresh highs, the upswing is likely to retest the barrier at ₹9,100. Traders can go long on MCX now at ₹8,148 and accumulate at ₹8,900. Place stop-loss at ₹7,500. When the stock rallies to ₹8,800, alter the stop-loss to ₹8,500. On a rally to ₹8,950, revise the stop-loss to ₹8,800. Exit at ₹9,100.

MGL (₹1,315.60)

Further fall likely

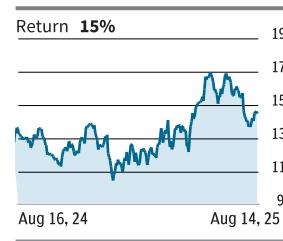


The stock of MGL (Mahanagar Gas Ltd) has been on a decline for over three weeks now. Two weeks back, it breached a support at ₹1,360 and slipped to mark a four-month low of ₹1,278 on August 7 before recovering to the current

level. However, the recent upswing is likely to be only a corrective rally. Going ahead, we expect the stock to depreciate towards ₹1,210. So, one can short MGL at ₹1,320 and place a stop-loss at ₹1,370. When the stock slips to ₹1,270, revise the stop-loss to ₹1,350. Trail the stop-loss to ₹1,280 when the price drops to ₹1,240. Exit the trade at ₹1,210.

UNION BANK OF INDIA (₹134.65)

Faces a barrier



The stock of Union Bank of India, which lost 14.7 per cent in July, rebounded from the support at ₹128 in early August. However, it is now facing a resistance at ₹137. The price action shows that the broader trend remains bearish and that the stock might soon

witness another leg of downturn. In the near term, we expect the stock to decline and retest the support at ₹128. Note that the price band of ₹126-128 is a good base. Hence, traders can go short on the stock at ₹135 and place a stop-loss at ₹138. When the price drops to ₹130, tighten the stop-loss to ₹134. Book profits at ₹128.

Indices hit record highs

US MARKET OUTLOOK.

Broader uptrend intact; there is room for rise

Gurumurthy K
bl. research bureau

The Dow Jones Industrial Average, S&P 500 and the NASDAQ Composite indices hit record highs last week. The indices rose well for the second consecutive week and are showing good strength.

The Dow Jones was up 1.74 per cent last week. The S&P 500 and NASDAQ Composite index rose 0.94 and 0.81 per cent respectively.

On the forefront, the dollar index and the US treasury yields are showing divergence. The US 10Yr Treasury Yield rose for the second consecutive week. The dollar index on the other hand is struggling to rise and fell last week.

Here is an analysis of how the US market will perform in the coming week:

DOW JONES (44,946.12)

The Dow Jones hit a record high of 45,203.52 and has come down from there. The bias remains bullish with good support at 44,440. A decisive break and close above 45,050 will be bullish to see 45,800-46,000 initially and then 46,500 eventually in the coming weeks. That will also keep our long-term bullish outlook intact to see 50,000 on the upside. However, a corrective fall from around 46,500 is a possibility before this rise happens.

In case, the Dow fails to rise above 45,000 from here and breaks below 44,440, a fall to 44,000-43,800 can be seen. That in turn will delay the rise to 46,500.

THE TREND

The dollar index looks vulnerable to break 97.50 and fall to 96.80

S&P 500 (6,449.80)

The S&P 500 broke its 6,175-6,430 range on the upside as expected. That keeps intact our broader bullish view. Immediate resistance is at 6,480. A break above it can take the S&P 500 index up to 6,530-6,550 this week. It will also keep the doors open for the S&P 500 to target 6,650-6,670 over the medium term and 6,800 in the long term.

Supports for the week are at 6,440 and 6,370. The index will come under pressure for a fall to 6,330 or 6,280 if it declines below 6,370. In that case, the aforementioned rise will get delayed.

NASDAQ COMPOSITE (21,622.98)

The NASDAQ Composite index rose to a new high of 21,803.75 and has come down from there. Supports are at 21,400 and 21,200 which can limit the downside. We can expect the index to reverse higher from either of these two supports. That leg of rise can take the NASDAQ Composite index up to 22,100-22,200 in the short term. That will also keep the broader uptrend intact to target 23,000 over the medium term and 26,000 in the long term.

The region around 21,000 is a key support. The index has to break below it to turn the short-

Designed for women

POLICY-WISE. Tata AIA Shubh Shakti term insurance plan has several interesting features and add-ons

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

After many women-focused health insurance plans rolled out by many companies, term plans, too, are being launched for female folks.

Tata AIA Life Insurance recently launched Shubh Shakti, a term insurance plan designed for women with several interesting features and add-ons.

From premium waivers for specific periods after childbirth, waiver of premium in case of husband's accidental death, children's education protection, discounts on premiums, single mother discounts, a host of outpatient benefits are made available for policyholders. Early payout and waiver of premium on terminal illness are add-ons.

As health and term insurance policies are the only two covers worth having, and in fact, are critical from a financial stability point of view for most of us, it is important to understand this new term insurance offering and decipher its merits.

The basic premise of a term insurance is that it covers your family's financial requirements

in your absence. That essence remains even in this policy. Some add-ons make it a tad more interesting.

Women policyholders who are pregnant can opt for pausing their premium payments for up to 12 months. However, the policy continues to be operative and offers continuity. When women take maternity leave and rejoin after 6-12 months of delivery, this waiver would be of some relief.

Next, if the policyholder's husband passes away in an accident during the premium payment term, all future premiums are waived. The coverage continues to remain active, thus covering future risks. This feature is especially useful in case of homemakers or those women who make small sums via side hustles.

One key interesting feature is the child education protection add-on. For a small addition in premium, your child would get a monthly payout of ₹5,000 or ₹10,000 till the age of 21 or 25 (depending on your choice), apart from the lumpsum amount upon death. This feature gives a reasonable cashflow that could take care of key ex-

IN BRIEF

- Covers family finances in your absence
- Pregnant women can pause premium payments for 12 months
- Child education protection add-on available

penses of your child when he/she is a student.

Under the Health Buddy Enhancement benefits, the term insurance offers a set of interesting OPD features. These include annual health checks: thyroid, cholesterol, complete blood count, and additional tests for anaemia, PCOS and so forth. In-clinic and tele-consultations are offered with neurologists, endocrinologists, urologists, diabetologists and cardiologists.

This premium includes all the add-ons (free and paid) available. The paid ones include extra payout on accidental disability (₹31), extra payout on accidental death (₹51), extra monthly income of ₹5,000 for the child (₹563) and waiver of premium on spouse's accidental death. OPD benefits of up to ₹64,100 per year are available to women policyholders according to Policybazaar data.

Discounts are available on lab tests and medicines, alongside counselling for IVF, PCOD and weight management.

There are limits on the number of times each of the afore-

said OPD are allowed for policyholders.

Shubh Shakti offers a 15 per cent discount on premiums for women compared to men for every year of the policy payment term. There is an additional 1 per cent discount on premiums offered to single women.

WHAT IT COSTS

For a non-smoking 30-year-old woman, a life cover of ₹1 crore till the age of 65 is available for a premium of ₹12,044 annually, according to data from Policybazaar for the Tata AIA Shubh Shakti term insurance Sampoorna Raksha Promise.

This premium includes all the add-ons (free and paid) available. The paid ones include extra payout on accidental disability (₹31), extra payout on accidental death (₹51), extra monthly income of ₹5,000 for the child (₹563) and waiver of premium on spouse's accidental death. OPD benefits of up to ₹64,100 per year are available to women policyholders according to Policybazaar data.

Discounts are available on lab tests and medicines, alongside counselling for IVF, PCOD and weight management.

There are limits on the number of times each of the afore-

men – both working and homemakers – it is critical to have term insurance to cover life risks.

With many interesting add-ons and several out-patient benefits such as expert consultations and period checkups, Tata AIA Shubh Shakti checks all the right boxes.

The premiums are reasonably priced. For the same ₹1 crore cover, Policybazaar data (for a 30-year-old non-smoking woman) shows a policy for 35 years would mean annual premiums of ₹12,900 to as high as ₹20,000 charged by most other insurers for the first year. From the second year, these insurers charge ₹14,500 to ₹22,000.

For the first year, Tata AIA Shubh Shakti charges ₹12,044. But from the second year, the annual premium goes up to ₹14,542 (with all the paid add-ons). Shubh Shakti is reasonably priced at the relatively lower end of the premium range compared to what peers offer.

The policy can be worthwhile for women looking for term covers.

Working women would especially find it attractive due to the add-ons and waivers.

SIMPLYPUT.

Market makers

Dhuraivel Gunasekaran
bl. research bureau

Nirmal: Hi Rahul. Last week, I read in the newspaper that ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund has replaced one of its existing market makers, Kotak Securities, for its Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) with Parwati Capital Market. This is something new to me, da.

Rahul: Oh, market makers? They act as intermediaries who ensure smooth transactions when you buy or sell ETF units on stock exchanges. They step in particularly when there's a liquidity issue in ETF trading.

Nirmal: But wait, ETFs are like equity shares traded on exchanges. Where exactly does the liquidity issue come in?

Rahul: That's a good question. Equity shares usually trade with natural liquidity because buyers and sellers directly transact based on the company's fundamentals, market news, and demand-supply forces. In the case of ETFs, however, they represent a basket of securities, so their liquidity depends on both the underlying assets and trading

activity in the secondary market.

Ideally, the traded price of an ETF should stay close to its indicative NAV (iNAV) — this is the real-time value of the ETF's overall holdings during market hours. But if trading activity is low or there are sudden changes in demand and supply, the traded price can drift too far from the iNAV. This is where market makers step in to bridge the gap.

Nirmal: Hmm, I get the idea, but it still sounds a bit complex. Can you explain citing an example?

Rahul: Sure. Let's say you want to buy an ETF with an iNAV of ₹100, but due to low liquidity, it's trading at ₹101. In such a situation, the market maker will obtain new ETF units from the AMC at ₹100 and sell them to you close to that price — say ₹100.1.

Similarly, if you want to sell when the iNAV is ₹100 but the ETF is trading at ₹99, the market maker might buy from you at ₹99.9 and then sell those units back to the AMC at ₹100. This process helps keep the market price aligned with the iNAV.

Nirmal: I see. But why is there that 10



basis points (bps) difference between their price and mine?

Rahul: The 10 bps difference in my example is only for illustration. It represents the spread that market makers maintain. This spread accounts for the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) on both buy and sell sides, other applicable charges, and a modest profit

margin to cover their capital and operational costs.

Nirmal: Got it. So, how exactly do market makers earn? Are there many of them in India?

Rahul: Regulations allow AMCs to incentivise market makers, but in practice, most AMCs don't pay them directly. Instead, market makers earn from these natural spreads in the market. The spreads remain competitive because ETF market making is not a high-margin business and requires expertise. In India, there are only a handful of active players; like Parwati Capital Market, Kotak Securities, East India Securities, Riddisiddhi Bullions, and Kanjalochana Finserve — serving multiple AMCs. Market makers in India handle only unit-level trades, while the AMC's fund management team buys and sells the ETF's underlying constituent stocks.

AMCs must disclose their appointed market makers in the scheme documents, and regulations require that each ETF has at least two market makers to ensure liquidity at all times.

Nirmal: Got it! Thanks, Rahul.

Health insurance premium tracker

For a 30-year-old male, non-smoker, sum insured of ₹10 lakh living in a metro city

Insurer	Plan name	Key features	Premium (₹)
ICICI Lombard	Elevate	OPD rider with no sub-limits. Single pvt AC Room. ₹2 lakh NCB. Unlimited Restoration of cover.	9,195
Care	Care Supreme	Guaranteed 7x increase over 5 years rider. No Room Rent Limit. ₹15 lakh Renewal Bonus; optional Unlimited Restoration of cover.	12,530
Niva Bupa Health	Health ReAssure	Unlimited claims up to the cover amount. No Room Rent Limit. ₹5 lakh NCB. Unlimited Restoration of cover.	14,199
Star Health	Super Star	Fully loaded plan with one-time unlimited claim. Unlimited bonus. Lock the age till 50. No Room Rent Limit. ₹5 lakh NCB.	8,852
Aditya Birla Health	Activ One	100% issuance offer guarantee. No Room Rent Limit. ₹10 lakh Renewal Bonus; optional Unlimited Restoration of cover	8,977
Tata AIG	Medicare Select	Special discount for young families and salaried customers. Single pvt AC Room. ₹5 lakh NCB. Unlimited Restoration of cover.	8,157
Reliance General	Health Gain	Additional 30% discount on premium & fully customisable plan. Single pvt AC Room. ₹3.33 lakh NCB. Restoration of cover once a year.	8,434

Term insurance premium tracker

For a 30-year-old male/female, non-smoker, living in a metro city, Sum assured ₹1 crore with coverage up to 70 yrs

Insurance company	Plan name	Max coverage up to (years)	Max policy term	Annual premium (₹) (inclusive of GST)		Claim settlement ratio (%)
				Male	Female	
Aditya Birla Capital	DigiShield Plan	85	55	15,859	13,367	98.4
Bajaj Allianz	eTouch II	85	55	13,100	11,384	99.3
Canara HSBC Life	Young Term Plan - Life Secure	99	69	13,387	11,183	99.2
HDFC Life	Click 2 Protect Super	85	55	15,863	13,484	99.7
ICICI Prudential	iProtect Smart	99	69	14,652	12,455	99.3
Axis Max Life	Smart Term Plan Plus	85	55	13,210	11,230	99.7
SBI Life	eShield Next	79	49	17,494	14,653	99.4
TATA AIA Life	Sampoorna Raksha Promise	100	70	13,243	11,238	99.4
Bandhan Life	iTerm Prime	70	40	14,282	11,756	99.7

Claim settlement ratio as per data provided by insurer

Source: www.policybazaar.com, Date: August 15, 2025

Bank FD interest rates (%)

Bank	<1 year	1 to 2 years	2 to 3 years	3 to 5 years	w.e.f
FOREIGN BANKS					
DBS Bank	6	6.55	6.4	6.4	Aug 13
Deutsche Bank	5	7	6.25	6.25	Jul 25
HSBC	4.1	5.5	5.35	5.5	Jul 17
Scotia Bank	3.7	3.9	4	4	Aug 01
Standard Chartered	5.75	6.6	6.5	6.5	Jul 05
INDIAN: PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS					
Bank of Maharashtra	5.25	6.7	6.2	6.1	Jun 27
Bank of Baroda	6	6.6	6.5	6.4	Jun 12
Bank of India	5.5	6.45	6.6	6.25	Aug 04
Canara Bank	5.75	6.5	6.25	6.25	Aug 07
Central Bank of India	5.5	6.7	6.7	6.5	Aug 10
Indian Bank	4.75	6.7	6.4	6.25	Aug 01
Indian Overseas Bank	5.5	6.75	6.5	6.2	Aug 14
Punjab National Bank	6	6.6	6.4	6.5	Aug 01
Punjab & Sind Bank	5	6.9	6.1	6.1	Jul 16
State Bank of India	5.9	6.45	6.45	6.3	Jul 15
UCO Bank	6.85	6.9	6.3	6.2	Jun 23
Union Bank	6.15	6.6	6.6	6.4	Jul 07
INDIAN: PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS					
Axis Bank	5.75	6.6	6.6	6.6	Aug 11
Bandhan Bank	4.20	7.3	7.3	7	Aug 09
CSB Bank	6.5	6.8	6.5	5.75	Aug 02
City Union Bank	6.25				

10 • bl • Star Track MF Ratings

CHENNAI
businessline.portfolio
SUNDAY - AUGUST 17 - 2025



bl.rating	Scheme Name	Latest NAV (₹)	Latest Corpus (₹ Cr)	Expense Ratio (%)	Regular	Direct	1 Year CAGR	3 Year CAGR	5 Year CAGR	10 Year CAGR	Sortino Ratio (%)
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EQUITY - LARGE CAP FUNDS

★★★★★ Canara Robeco Large Cap	62.4	16407	1.6	0.5	4.2	14.8	18.1	13.0	0.66	
★★★★★ ICICI Pru Large Cap	109.5	71788	1.4	0.9	4.0	17.7	21.6	13.7	0.83	
★★★★★ Nippon Ind Large Cap	90.1	44165	1.5	0.7	4.5	19.1	24.1	13.6	0.86	
★★★★★ Aditya Birla SL Large Cap	520.8	30235	1.6	1.0	2.7	14.8	19.5	11.9	0.70	
★★★★★ HDFC Large Cap	1122.9	38117	1.6	1.0	-0.4	15.6	20.9	12.4	0.76	
★★★★★ Kotak Large Cap	564.6	10342	1.7	0.6	2.5	14.3	18.9	12.1	0.67	
★★★★★ SBI Large Cap	91.1	53030	1.5	0.8	3.3	13.7	18.7	11.9	0.71	
★★★★★ Bandhan Large Cap	76.3	1917	2.0	0.9	2.9	15.3	18.0	12.1	0.61	
★★★★★ Baroda BNPPL Large Cap	216.9	2650	2.0	0.8	-2.0	15.2	18.5	11.9	0.64	
★★★★★ DSP Large Cap	466.3	6399	1.8	0.9	3.9	17.2	18.8	11.0	0.71	
★★★★★ Edelweiss Large Cap	82.6	1292	2.1	0.6	0.0	14.6	18.1	12.0	0.65	
★★★★★ Franklin Ind Large Cap	1017.0	7773	1.8	1.1	3.9	13.4	19.0	10.6	0.65	
★★★★★ Invesco India Largecap	68.0	1528	2.0	0.7	1.8	15.5	18.9	12.1	0.61	
★★★★★ Mirae Asset Large Cap	111.5	39975	1.5	0.5	3.5	12.2	17.0	12.6	0.62	
★★★★★ Tata Large Cap	488.2	2631	2.0	1.0	-1.7	13.5	18.8	11.0	0.67	
★★★★★ UTI Large Cap	269.8	12720	1.8	0.9	1.0	11.6	17.2	11.0	0.60	
★★★★★ HSBC Large Cap	469.1	1849	2.1	1.3	0.5	13.6	17.6	11.8	0.56	
★★★★★ JM Large Cap	150.3	511	2.4	0.8	-6.8	15.1	16.7	10.3	0.56	
★★★★★ LIC MF Large Cap	55.3	1459	2.1	1.0	0.7	11.1	15.7	9.8	0.52	
★★★★★ Union Largecap	23.2	453	2.5	1.5	0.8	11.9	17.0	- 0.57		
★ Axis Large Cap	60.0	33360	1.6	0.7	2.5	10.6	14.6	11.6	0.46	
★ Grownt Largecap	42.5	128	2.5	1.3	1.1	13.4	16.3	10.5	0.53	
★ PGIM India Large Cap	337.1	604	2.4	0.9	2.2	11.9	15.4	9.9	0.52	
- Mahi Manu Large Cap	22.7	709	2.3	0.7	-0.4	13.1	18.5	- 0.64		
- Taurus Large Cap	155.2	50	2.6	2.4	-0.9	13.4	17.1	9.0	0.52	

EQUITY - LARGE & MID CAP FUNDS

★★★★★ HDFC Large and Mid Cap	333.9	26406	1.6	0.9	1.0	19.8	25.6	13.8	0.86	
★★★★★ ICICI Pru Large & Mid Cap	977.0	23246	1.7	0.8	4.1	20.4	26.4	15.3	0.97	
★★★★★ Bandhan Large & Mid Cap	132.0	9997	1.7	0.6	2.1	23.5	25.6	15.2	0.86	
★★★★★ Nippon Ind Vision Large & Mid Cap	1437.8	6174	1.9	1.3	3.6	20.1	23.7	12.2	0.80	
★★★★★ SBI Large & Midcap	614.7	33348	1.6	0.8	5.1	17.4	23.5	14.2	0.88	
★★★★★ UTI Large & Mid Cap	175.7	4865	1.9	1.1	1.3	20.6	24.8	13.0	0.86	
★★★★★ Canara Robeco Large and Mid Cap	254.9	2551	1.6	0.6	3.7	16.2	21.4	15.0	0.77	
★★★★★ DSP Large & Mid Cap	602.8	15502	1.7	0.6	0.1	19.1	22.5	14.5	0.77	
★★★★★ Edelweiss Large & Mid Cap	85.2	4063	1.9	0.5	2.0	16.8	21.8	13.7	0.71	
★★★★★ Invesco India Large & Mid Cap	100.9	8007	1.8	0.6	12.9	24.9	24.5	15.2	0.72	
★★★★★ Kotak Large & Midcap	335.5	28084	1.6	0.5	1.4	18.3	22.3	14.5	0.75	
★★★★★ Mirae Asset Large & Midcap	147.1	40554	1.5	0.6	0.2	14.9	21.0	16.5	0.69	
★★★★★ Quant Large & Mid Cap	111.5	3651	1.9	0.7	-11.7	17.2	22.5	15.9	0.66	
★★★★★ Tata Large & Mid Cap	515.6	8773	1.7	0.6	-0.9	14.5	19.7	12.7	0.73	
★ BOI Large & Mid Cap Equity	85.5	410	2.3	1.1	-4.2	15.3	20.1	11.6	0.63	
★ Franklin Ind Large & Mid Cap	189.4	3579	2.0	1.3	4.5	15.6	22.0	11.3	0.73	
★ LIC MF Large & Midcap	37.9	3101	1.9	0.6	-1.0	15.1	20.6	13.7	0.68	
★ Sundaram Large and Mid Cap	83.9	6789	1.8	0.8	0.7	15.0	20.4	13.5	0.65	
★ Aditya Birla SL Large & Mid Cap	884.1	5736	1.9	1.1	-0.4	13.0	18.0	11.0	0.49	
★ Navi Large & Midcap	34.6	317	2.3	0.4	-1.5	12.2	19.6	- 0.64		
- Axis Large & Mid Cap	32.4	14805	1.7	0.6	3.4	16.1	21.8	- 0.66		
- HSBC Large & Mid Cap	26.4	4314	1.9	0.8	-0.4	19.0	22.4	- 0.57		

EQUITY - FLEXI CAP FUNDS

★★★★★ HDFC Flexi Cap	1970.9	80642	1.4	0.7	8.3	22.0	27.7	15.1	1.03	
★★★★★ Parag Parikh Flexi Cap	84.6	113281	1.3	0.6	10.4	20.2	22.9	17.4	0.92	
★★★★★ Franklin Ind Flexi Cap	1615.0	18988	1.7	0.9	1.7	18.5	24.4	13.3	0.81	
★★★★★ JM Flexicap	95.5	5957	1.8	0.5	-8.0	21.4	25.3	15.3	0.76	
★★★★★ PGM India Flexi Cap	36.1	6271	1.8	0.4	4.5	12.7	19.0	12.9	0.61	
★★★★★ Union Flexi Cap	50.2	2344	2.0	0.9	1.9	14.5	19.8	12.0	0.66	
★★★★★ Aditya Birla SL Flexi Cap	1765.4	23127	1.7	0.9	4.7	16.4	20.2	13.3	0.68	
★★★★★ Canara Robeco Flexi Cap	339.2	13389	1.7	0.5	4.7	14.9	19.1	13.0	0.66	
★★★★★ DSP Flexi Cap	99.8	11852	1.7	0.7	0.1	15.7	19.9	13.3	0.63	
★★★★★ Edelweiss Flexi Cap	37.4	2768	1.9	0.4	5.5	17.4	21.5	13.6	0.70	
★★★★★ HSBC Flexi Cap	216.1	5075	1.9	1.2	2.7	18.7	21.7	12.6	0.63	
★★★★★ Kotak Flexicap	83.8	53293	1.4	0.6	4.6	16.3	19.4	13.2	0.65	
★★★★★ Motilal Oswal Flexi Cap	60.7	1327	1.7	0.9	7.4	22.5	19.3	12.5	0.55	
★★★★★ Bandhan Flexi Cap	26.5	13084	2.0	0.7	5.5	13.4	17.1	- 0.51		
★★★★★ Franklin Flexi Cap	206.7	7447	1.9							

bl.rating	Scheme Name	Latest NAV (₹)	Latest Corpus (₹ Cr)	Expense Ratio (%)	Regular	Direct	1 Month Ann.	3 Month Ann.	6 Month Ann.	1 Year CAGR	AA & Below
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CASH FUNDS

LIQUID FUNDS

- 360 ONE Liquid	2024.0	976	0.3	0.2	5.2	5.9	6.4	6.8	-	
- Aditya Birla SL Liquid	423.7	51913	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.0	6.7	7.0	-	
- Axis Liquid	2928.3	36757	0.2	0.1	5.5	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- Bandhan Liquid	3176.2	14391	0.3	0.1	5.4	5.9	6.6	6.9	-	
- Baroda BNPP Liquid	3023.3	11836	0.3	0.2	5.4	5.9	6.6	6.9	-	
- BOI Liquid	3028.7	2002	0.1	0.1	5.5	6.1	6.7	7.1	-	
- Canara Robeco Liquid	3165.5	6577	0.2	0.1	5.4	6.0	6.7	7.0	-	
- DSP Liquidity	3754.6	22245	0.2	0.1	5.5	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- Edelweiss Liquid	3363.0	8232	0.1	0.1	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- Groww Liquid	2543.0	393	0.2	0.1	5.4	6.1	6.8	7.0	-	
- HDFC Liquid	5159.8	67354	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.0	6.7	7.0	-	
- HSBC Liquid	2622.2	19635	0.2	0.1	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- ICICI Pru Liquid	389.3	51593	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.0	6.7	7.0	-	
- Invesco India Liquid	3614.7	14240	0.2	0.2	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- ITI Liquid	1370.3	67	0.3	0.1	6.1	6.2	6.6	6.8	-	
- JM Liquid	71.8	3225	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.0	6.6	6.9	-	
- Kotak Liquid	5315.6	38176	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- LIC MF Liquid	4753.7	11199	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.0	6.6	6.9	-	
- Mahi Manu Liquid	1711.3	1011	0.3	0.1	5.5	6.1	6.6	7.0	-	
- Mirae Asset Liquid	2757.3	13634	0.2	0.1	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- Motilal Oswal Liquid	13.9	1203	0.4	0.2	5.1	5.6	6.1	6.5	-	
- Navi Liquid	28.6	79	0.2	0.2	5.2	5.8	6.1	6.6	-	
- Nippon Ind Liquid	6418.2	35388	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- Parag Parikh Liquid	1458.8	3853	0.2	0.1	5.3	5.9	6.4	6.6	-	
- PGIM India Liquid	342.4	513	0.2	0.1	5.4	6.0	6.7	7.0	-	
- Quant Liquid	41.6	1540	0.5	0.3	5.4	5.9	6.4	6.8	-	
- Quantum Liquid	35.2	533	0.3	0.2	5.1	5.7	6.2	6.6	-	
- SBI Liquid	4110.4	68443	0.3	0.2	5.3	6.0	6.6	6.9	-	
- Sundaram Liquid	2319.3	5853	0.3	0.1	5.3	5.9	6.6	6.9	-	
- Tata Liquid	4142.1	22951	0.3	0.2	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- Union Liquid	2530.4	4538	0.2	0.1	5.5	6.0	6.7	7.0	-	
- UTI Liquid	4314.4	29013	0.2	0.2	5.4	6.1	6.7	7.0	-	
- WhiteOak Capital Liquid	1414.2	584	0.3	0.2	5.3	5.9	6.6	6.9	-	

ARBITRAGE FUNDS

- Aditya Birla SL Arbitrage	26.8	22310	1.0	0.3	6.4	6.3	6.7	6.8	-	
- Axis Arbitrage	18.8	7069	1.0	0.3	6.3	6.1	6.6	6.7	-	
- Bandhan Arbitrage	32.7	8880	1.1	0.4	6.3	6.0	6.4	6.7	-	
- Baroda BNPP Arbitrage	16.2	1201	1.1	0.3	6.4	6.2	6.4	6.5	2.80	
- BOI Arbitrage	13.9	42	0.9	0.4	6.3	5.6	6.0	6.3	-	
- DSP Arbitrage	15.1	6168	1.0	0.4	6.3	6.1	6.3	6.6	-	
- Edelweiss Arbitrage	19.5	15550	1.1	0.4	6.5	6.2	6.5	6.8	-	
- HDFC Arbitrage	30.9	21352	0.9	0.4	7.0	6.2	6.5	6.8	-	
- HSBC Arbitrage	19.1	2511	0.9	0.3	6.4	6.0	6.3	6.5	-	
- ICICI PRU Equity-Arbitrage	34.6	31526	1.0	0.4	6.8	6.4	6.7	6.9	-	
- Invesco India Arbitrage	32.2	24205	1.1	0.4	7.0	6.4	6.6	6.8	-	
- ITI Arbitrage	13.1	49	0.9	0.2	6.3	6.4	6.7	6.8	-	
- JM Arbitrage	32.8	319	1.1	0.4	6.1	5.7	5.8	6.2	-	
- Kotak Arbitrage	37.8	71608	1.1	0.4	6.7	6.2	6.6	6.9	-	
- LIC MF Arbitrage	13.9	192	1.0	0.3	6.4	5.8	6.3	6.5	-	
- Mahi Manu Arbitrage	12.4	97	1.0	0.2	5.7	5.2	5.2	5.4	-	
- Mirae Asset Arbitrage	13.1	2998	0.9	0.1	6.1	6.0	6.1	6.5	-	
- Nippon Ind Arbitrage	26.7	15833	1.1	0.4	6.4	6.0	6.3	6.6	-	
- PGIM India Arbitrage	18.5	110	1.1	0.4	5.4	5.3	6.3	6.4	-	
- SBI Arbitrage Opport	34.1	39824	0.9	0.4	6.9	6.6	6.8	6.9	-	
- Sundaram Arbitrage	14.6	277	1.0	0.2	6.1	5.9	6.3	6.5	-	
- Tata Arbitrage	14.5	17291	1.1	0.3	6.8	6.4	6.7	6.8	-	
- Union Arbitrage	14.1	306	1.1	0.5	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.5	-	
- UTI Arbitrage	35.3	8512	0.9	0.3	6.4	6.3	6.8	6.9	-	

DEBT FUNDS

DEBT - ULTRA SHORT DURATION FUNDS

★★★★★ Aditya Birla SL Savings	553.4	20795	0.5	0.3	8.0	7.7	7.4	6.1	12.30	
★★★★★ Baroda BNPP Ultra Short Duration	1555.2	1396	0.5	0.3	7.5	7.4	7.3	5.9	1.08	
★★★★★ Nippon Ind Ultra Short Duration	4061.9	10252	1.1	0.4	7.3	7.1	6.9	6.7	16.00	
★★★★★ HDFC Ultra Short Term	15.3	17328	0.7	0.4	7.4	7.3	7.1	5.8	5.08	
★★★★★ HSBC Ultra Short Duration	1364.9	2924	0.4	0.2	7.5	7.3	7.1	5.7	-	
★★★★★ ICICI Pru Ultra Short Term	27.9	16382	0.8	0.4	7.5	7.4	7.1	5.9	9.36	
★★★★★ UTI Ultra Short Duration	4272.1	4337	1.0	0.4	7.2	7.1	6.8	6.1	5.16	
★★★★★ Axis Ultra Short Duration	14.9	6706	1.2	0.4	7.1	6.9	6.7	5.4	9.28	
★★★★★ Bandhan Ultra Short Duration	15.4	4353	0.5	0.3	7.5	7.3	7.1	5.6	-	
★★★★★ DSP Ultra Short	3432.2	3964	1.0	0.3	7.2	7.0	6.7	5.3	1.38	
★★★★★ Invesco India Ultra Short Duration	2719.3	1191	0.7	0.2	7.4	7.3	6.9	5.4	5.82	

E-com I-Day sales surge 14%; Tier-3 cities lead the charge: Unicommerce

FESTIVAL SHOPPING. Tier-2 cities, too, post solid growth in volumes; for metros it's electronics, home gear

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

The e-commerce sector kicked off the festival season on a high note, with a 14 per cent year-on-year growth in order volumes during the Independence Day Sale, according to data from Unicommerce. With over 35 million transactions processed on its Uniware platform between July 31 and August 14, the surge reflects the country's accelerating digital commerce penetration, especially in smaller towns and cities.

The gross merchandise value (GMV) also rose 12 per cent over last year, highlighting a steady move towards value-driven shopping during festivals.

Tier-3 cities emerged the undisputed growth engine,



SHOP DON'T DROP. Home decor and furniture were standout categories in these markets, with volumes soaring over 200 per cent

contributing nearly 14 million order items — almost double that of Tier-2 cities.

GROWTH ENGINES

Home decor and furniture were standout categories in these markets, with volumes soaring over 200 per cent. This marks a not-

able shift in aspirations as consumers in smaller cities increasingly seek lifestyle upgrades and aesthetic enhancements to their living spaces.

Tier-2 cities, too, registered a solid 26 per cent growth in order volumes, with significant upticks in

In Tier-1 cities and metros, traditional strongholds such as electronics and home appliances saw more than 100% growth

health and beauty categories. Nutraceuticals and supplements climbed 74 per cent while makeup products rose 57 per cent, reflecting growing health consciousness and personal grooming preferences among digitally savvy consumers.

In Tier-1 cities and metros, traditional lines such as electronics and home appliances saw more than 100 per cent growth in order volumes, with significant upticks in

sports and fitness products jumping 38 per cent.

PREMIUMISATION

Across the board, categories such as toys and baby products grew 25 per cent, and fashion accessories rose 19 per cent, signalling rising premiumisation and diversification in consumer taste.

"Festival sales are no longer just about discounts. They're a reflection of how India shops — as aspirations, access, and technology converge," said Kapil Makhija, MD and CEO of Unicommerce.

As the festival calendar progresses, these trends point to a more inclusive and dynamic retail ecosystem.

With small-town India driving growth and metro markets evolving, the stage is set for a robust and far-reaching e-commerce season.

Tollywood crisis: Strike halts film shoots as wage dispute continues

KV Kurmanath
Hyderabad

The crisis in Tollywood continues to hit film shootings, with workers and producers refusing to budge. The Telugu Film Industry Employees Federation, which is demanding a 30 per cent wage hike, has alleged that producers are avoiding discussions and imposing new conditions on the workers. The producers, however, stated that the unions are not taking any steps to upgrade the workers' skills, forcing them to rely on talent from outside.



After weeks of discussions failed to yield any result, the Federation called for a strike from August 4. It brought to a halt film shoots, including of a web series slated for Dasara release.

COST OF LIVING UP

"We are also asking them to change the shift timings to 9 am to 9 pm from the present 6 am to 6 pm. We will do everything to employ local workers, as it helps us save money. We request you to upgrade yourself," a Telugu Film Producer Council Executive said.

work was seasonal. Rejecting the claim by some producers that workers received salaries on a par with software employees, he said that film workers were given work for only two-three weeks. "They have been asking for a wage hike for over five months. They should have resolved this quite early," he said.

He defended the workers' right to ask for a hike. "We can arrive at a mutually agreeable number by holding discussions," he said.

GOVT CALLS MEET

With no headway in talks, Telangana Cinematography Minister Komati Reddy Venkata Reddy convened a meeting of the workers and the producers to convince them to resolve the issue amicably.

Stating that they are willing to discuss the wage hike issues, the producers want the unions to help them increase productive hours.

PM to inaugurate two NH projects worth ₹11,000 cr today in Delhi

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Sunday inaugurate two major National Highway projects with a combined worth of nearly ₹11,000 crore in Delhi.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, Modi will also address a public gathering on the occasion.

The projects — the Delhi section of the Dwarka Expressway and the Urban Extension Road-II (UER-II) — have been developed under the government's comprehensive plan to decongest the capital, with the objective of improving connectivity and cutting travel time in Delhi and its surrounding areas.

"These initiatives reflect Prime Minister Modi's vision of creating world-class infrastructure that enhances ease of living and ensures seamless mobility," the PMO said in an official communiqué.

Project-wise, the 10.1-km Delhi section of the Dwarka Expressway has been developed at a cost of around ₹5,360 crore.

INTERMODAL TRANSIT
The section will provide multi-modal connectivity to Yashobhoomi, the DMRC Blue Line and Orange Line, the upcoming Bijwasan railway station and the Dwarka Cluster Bus Depot.

The 19-km Haryana section of the Dwarka Express-



The projects — the Delhi section of the Dwarka Expressway and the Urban Extension Road-II (UER-II) — will be inaugurated on Sunday

way was earlier inaugurated by the Prime Minister in March 2024.

Besides, the Prime Minister will also inaugurate the Alipur-Dichaon Kalan stretch of the URBAN Extension Road-II (UER-II) along with new links to Bahadurgarh and Sonipat, built at a cost of around ₹5,580 crore.

"It will ease traffic on Delhi's Inner and Outer Ring Roads and busy points such as Mukarba Chowk, Daula Kuan, and NH-09," the PMO said.

"The new spurs will give direct access to Bahadurgarh and Sonipat, improve industrial connectivity, cut city traffic, and speed up goods movement in the NCR."

'Exports from Mexico ringfence JK Tyre from US tariff'

S Ronendra Singh
New Delhi

JK Tyre & Industries will not be impacted by the Trump tariffs as it will export to the US market from its manufacturing plants in Mexico.

The company generates a high single-digit percentage of its revenue from the US market and expects this growth to continue, said Anshuman Singhania, Managing Director.

"The Mexico plant does help [against high tariffs]. We are only producing truck bias category and passenger radial tyres... we are exporting them to the US. Since we also have a 90-day window, we are fully engaged with our customers in the US from

Mexico and are serving that market," Singhania told *businessline* on a recent call following the company's first quarter results.

On July 12, US President Donald Trump announced an additional 30 per cent tariff on imports from Mexico, effective August 1.

However, on July 31 — just one day before the tariffs were to take effect — the governments of Mexico and the US reached a bilateral agreement suspending the tariffs for 90 days.

MEXICO REVENUE
JK Tyre owns manufacturing plants in Mexico through JK Tornel S.A. de C.V., a brand it acquired in 2008. The company has



Anshuman Singhania,
Managing Director, JK Tyre & Industries

The company has stated that it is a significant contributor to the Mexican economy.

"We are looking for opportunities to increase sales from Mexico in this situation [to the US]. From Mexico, it is a high single-digit [in terms of revenue]," Singhania added.

Last week, JK Tyre reported a 22 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) decline in its Q1 consolidated net profit to ₹165.35 crore compared to ₹211.44 crore in the same period last year.

However, the consolidated revenue from operations grew more than 6 per cent y-o-y to ₹3,869 crore in Q1, up from ₹3,639 crore in the April-June quarter of the last financial year.

tegrate into its offerings.

Those Oracle customers will be able to pay for the Google AI technologies using the same system of Oracle cloud credits they use to pay for Oracle services. The two companies did not disclose what, if any, payments will flow between them as part of the deal.

For Oracle, the move advances the company's strategy of offering a menu of AI options to its customers rather than trying to push its own technology.

For Google, it represents another step in its effort to expand the reach of its cloud offerings and win corporate customers away from rivals such as Microsoft.

Oracle to sell Google's Gemini AI models

Reuters
San Francisco

The cloud computing units of Oracle and Alphabet have struck a deal to offer Google's Gemini artificial intelligence models through Oracle's cloud computing services and business applications. The deal, similar to the one that Oracle struck with Elon Musk's xAI in June, will let software developers tap Google's models to generate text, video, images and audio.

Businesses that use Oracle's various applications for corporate finance, human resource and supply chain planning will also be able to use

The deal, similar to one that Oracle struck with Elon Musk's xAI in June, will let software developers tap Google's models to generate text, video, images and audio

Google's models inside those apps. The deal is about distribution. The models themselves will run on Google's servers, but developers using Oracle's cloud will be able to access them through a Google product called Vertex AI, which Oracle will in-

tegrate into its offerings. Those Oracle customers will be able to pay for the Google AI technologies using the same system of Oracle cloud credits they use to pay for Oracle services. The two companies did not disclose what, if any, payments will flow between them as part of the deal.

For Oracle, the move advances the company's strategy of offering a menu of AI options to its customers rather than trying to push its own technology.

For Google, it represents another step in its effort to expand the reach of its cloud offerings and win corporate customers away from rivals such as Microsoft.

SPIC plans export facility for green ammonia at Thoothukudi

TE Raja Simhan
Chennai

Southern Petrochemical Industries Corporation Ltd (SPIC) plans to set up a green ammonia export facility in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu. SPIC Chairman Ashwin C Muthiah recently held discussions with Susanta Kumar Purohit, Chairperson, VO Chidambaran Port Authority, on setting up the facility and enhancing berth facilities to handle 4.5 million tonnes of green ammonia in the near future.

Purohit also shared upcoming port upgrades like dredging of channel and inner harbour to handle 15,50 m draft vessels, construction of Berth-10 for handling bulk cargo and converting Berth-7 into a multi-cargo facility.

No further information was shared on the green ammonia project.

SPIC Q1 NET UP A TAD
Meanwhile, SPIC reported a consolidated net profit of ₹67 crore for the first quarter



Ashwin C Muthiah,
Chairman, SPIC

ended June 30, 2025, against ₹63 crore in the corresponding quarter of last year. Revenue was ₹771 crore (₹751 crore). The results include the performance of two joint venture companies — Tamil Nadu Petroproducts Ltd and National Aromatics and Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd — and two associate companies — Tuticorin Alkali Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd and Greenam Energy Ltd.

During the quarter ended June 30, 2025, the production and sale of urea were 1.92 lakh tonnes and 1.86 lakh tonnes respectively, the company said.

Muthiah, in an announcement to the stock exchanges

Chinese Foreign Minister to visit for border talks from Monday

Reuters
Beijing

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will be in India from Monday to Wednesday for talks on a disputed border stretch, China's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

This is only the second such meeting since a deadly clash in 2020 between Indian and Chinese troops at the border.

Relations between the two Asian giants have been thawing since an agreement last October on patrolling their Himalayan border, easing a five-year standoff that had hurt trade, investments and air travel.

The high-growth momentum in fertilizer manufacturing is reinforced by government-backed initiatives aimed at enhancing productivity and reducing import dependency. These developments strengthen the foundation for sustainable agricultural growth, Muthiah said.

MODI'S CHINA VISIT
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to travel to China at the end of the month — his first visit in seven years — to attend the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a regional security bloc. Modi will meet Chinese President Xi Jinping.

IIT-M incubated Mindgrove Technologies expects commercial launch of Secure IoT chips in six months

Sanjana B
Bengaluru

As Mindgrove Technologies positions itself as India's first commercial player in the microcontroller and Vision SoC space, it says it has placed its first mass manufacturing order for Secure IoT chips with its foundry partner.

Co-founder and CEO Shashwat TR said that the IIT-M incubated fabless chip design start-up expects to receive the devices in about six months, with customers already lined up for shipments once production is complete.

FOR SMART DEVICES
The company claims that Secure IoT is India's first commercial-grade high-performance microcontroller System-on-Chip (SoC) taped out at 28nm. It is designed for electronic devices that are transforming into "smart" connected devices such as watches, meters, locks and access control units, and for powering devices such as printers and PoS machines.

"The first time you go to



Shashwat TR, CEO & Co-founder, Mindgrove Technologies

manufacturing, a certain amount of setup is required. We have already placed the order for this setup, which is a one-time, non-recurring expense, to enable mass production. It will take about six months before we get the mass-manufactured devices back, following which we will be able to ship to customers," the CEO shared.

DISLSCHEME
In September last year, Mindgrove received approval under the Government of India's semiconductor Design-Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme, amounting to ₹15 crore for developing a new chip, Vision SoC, meant for high-per-

formance edge computing and vision processing applications, such as CCTV cameras, dashcams, video recorders, ADAS, smart TVs and more.

ENHANCED CAPABILITY

This second family of chips, the V-series, is currently under development. In addition to everything the first chip does, the V-series of chips can control and connect to cameras.

"We are going after segments where an Indian entity is required to use an Indian chip. The government has directed CCTV vendors to meet certain security norms, and for data to be stored within India. While these mandates are not directly about the chip itself, meeting them requires chips resistant to tampering. We are supporting them with the development of a new SKU to meet these requirements, or a series of SKUs at different price points and deployment," Shashwat explained.

However, Vision SoC range of capabilities can extend beyond just CCTV cameras. In June, *businessline* had

reported that Mindgrove signed an MoU with Bosch Global Software Technologies (BGST) to explore go-to-market opportunities by integrating their respective products, services and solutions for potential customers.

Shashwat said that although the current engagement with Bosch is not automotive, the long-term goal is to target automotive applications.

"You can do everything from a battery management system (BMS), which is a different kind of chip, to the ones that handle radars and cameras in a vehicle. It's not a stretch to go from a camera chip for CCTVs to a camera chip for automotive, even if the requirements are not the same."

businessline.
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