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Systematic Investment Plans of MFs on a record setting spree

RISE AND RISE. As the assets under management soar, SIPs giving bank deposits a run for their money

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

The humble SIP (systematic investment plan) in mutual funds is setting many interesting records, and not just its sheer size, which came in at ₹18,838 crore this January.

As of January, the mutual fund industry recorded many new highs. Assets under management (AUM) stood at ₹52.74-lakh crore, an increase of 33.1 per cent year-on-year.

But the AUM of SIP investments rose 52 per cent over the same period to ₹10.27-lakh crore.

So much so, SIP assets accounted for 19.5 per cent of the mutual fund industry, up from 17 per cent in January.

Another record in January was the registration of as many as 51.84 lakh new SIPs — a 129 per cent rise YoY — taking the total number outstanding ac-

SIP facts			
	Jan 2024	Jan 2023	Rise (%)
MF industry AUM (₹ lakh crore)	52.74	39.62	33.1
SIP AUM (₹ lakh crore)	10.27	6.74	52.4
SIP Accounts (crore)	7.92	6.22	27.3
SIP AUM to MF Industry AUM (%)	19.50	17.00	-
SIP AUM 5-year CAGR	34.00	27.00	-
Bank deposits 5-year CAGR	11.00	10.00	-
MF AUM to Bank Deposits (%)	26.30	22.40	-
New SIP accounts registered (lakh)	51.84	22.65	129.0
Discontinued SIP accounts (lakh)	23.79	13.45	77.0
Discontinued SIP as % of Registered SIPs	46.00	59.00	-

Source: Franklin Templeton Monthly Dashboard, RBI, AMFI

counts to a whopping 7.92 crore. SIP inflows and the mutual fund industry are outpacing the growth of bank deposits in terms of asset under management (AUM) expansion.

While the number of discontinued SIPs has increased significantly, the proportion relative to total registered SIPs declined sharply in the year past.

Nonetheless, the average investment size in mutual funds remains relatively

modest. Here's more on the above trends pertaining to mutual fund SIPs.

MFs RACE AHEAD

Though mutual funds and deposits are not comparable products, and the latter is still the key fixed income avenue for many investors, it may be worthwhile to note how rapidly the scenario is changing on the AUM front.

Relatively low interest rates from deposits and ral-

lying equity markets post-Covid have pushed more investors towards market-linked products.

Data from Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund Industry Dashboard, the RBI and trade body AMFI indicate that SIP AUM has grown at 34 per cent compounded annually over the past five years as of January. But bank deposits have grown at only 11 per cent annually or one-third the rate of rise of SIP AUM over the same period.

Mutual fund AUM to bank deposits stands at 26.3 per cent as of January, up from 22.4 per cent in January 2023. The overall mutual fund industry's AUM grew at 18 per cent annually over the past five years.

With markets buoyant the past few years and optimism prevailing for the future, AMFI's goal of reaching ₹100-lakh crore by 2030 appears within reach, fuelled by growing SIP investments.

SIP STOPPAGES RISE

Discontinued or completed SIPs rose sharply by 77 per cent in January to 23.79 lakh, up from 13.45 lakh in January 2023.

In fact, over April 2023 to January 2024, the total number of discontinued SIPs was 179.7 lakh, higher than the entire FY23 figure of 143.15 lakh.

But when stopped SIPs are taken as a proportion of registered SIPs, the proportion has fallen sharply from 59 per cent in January 2023 to 46 per cent in January 2024.

It appears that investors are quickly stopping SIPs when they see the market turning volatile or sensing a better opportunity in going directly to equities, both of which can result in unwelcome outcomes.

SIPs work best when investors choose a suitable consistent fund and stick to it for many years, preferably earmarked to specific goals.

SEBI 'will soon unveil cybersecurity and resilience framework for capital markets'

KR Srivats
New Delhi

Capital markets regulator is working on a Cybersecurity and Resilience Framework that it intends to roll out on receiving industry feedback, SEBI Whole-Time Member Kamlesh Varshney said on Saturday.

"SEBI has prepared a cybersecurity framework. It is ready and already with the Industry Standards Forum for Brokers for comments. They will come back by month end and then we will take it forward," Varshney said at the ANMI-organised 13th International Convention 2024 in the capital.

He urged the broking fraternity to adopt that framework (once it is unveiled), noting that it would help them to be safe from cyber attacks.

Varshney, who assumed charge as WTM in September 2023, later said it would be difficult to give an exact timeline for the roll-out of the framework, but added that it would be mandatory for all market intermediaries and players in the ecosystem.

Varshney's remarks are significant as with the increasing digitisation of financial systems, cybersecurity has emerged a significant concern in equity markets.

Only last week, there was reportedly a ransomware attack on leading brokerage house Motilal Oswal Financial Services. The firm, however, said its operations were unaffected following a cyber incident this month.

Equity markets are attractive targets for cyberattacks due to the large volumes of financial transactions and sensitive information handled. Varshney urged the broking fraternity to keep a close watch on technology developments across the world and see how they can be integrated within their businesses.

"Those who understand new technology and incorporate it in their business will survive. Others may fall by the wayside," he said. He highlighted that now Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other new technologies are changing the world.

Varshney later said on the sidelines of the event that SEBI was already using AI for investigations, besides other things.

BROKER MANIPULATIONS

Varshney cautioned the brokers to be wary of certain bad elements in their fraternity indulging in manipulations. "You have to keep an eye. If you notice manipulation, try to stop it yourself. Be our eyes and ears and bring it to notice of SEBI."

Varshney highlighted that resource mobilisation through equity markets has doubled in last four years. "We are on track. If we (capital market ecosystem) are growing like this, we are contributing our bit in making India a Vriksh Bharat in 2047. We will continue to grow," he said.

"You can have good tech and cybersecurity, but everything will fail if there is no trust of investors. In my opinion, trust of investor is a critical part for capital markets."

The total number of demat accounts in the country has grown to 14 crore as of end December with the count having doubled in the last two and half years. The number of unique demat accounts has doubled in the last four year at 9.5 crores as of December 31.

INVESTMENT FOCUS

Tata Multi Asset Opportunities fund – Invest

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

As equity indices make fresh highs amidst valuation concerns, new and existing investors who are conservative may be concerned about committing fresh capital. An asset allocation approach with diversification across equity, fixed income, gold and other commodities would insulate the portfolio from adverse market movements.



Tata Multi Asset Opportunities fund can be considered by investors with a five-year perspective towards specific goals.

The scheme consistently achieved over 10 per cent two-year rolling returns in over 95 per cent of the periods from March 2020 to February 2024.

During this time, it surpassed 12 per cent returns in over 79 per cent of the periods and exceeded 15 per cent in nearly half of them. Since its inception, the fund has averaged an annual compounded return of 17.4 per cent over two-year rolling periods. A systematic investment plan (SIP) over the past three years would have yielded an XIRR of close to 19 per cent.

WHY INVEST?

The scheme maintains a fairly consistent asset allocation pattern across most market cycles. Usually, 65 per cent or more of the portfolio is invested in equities and equity derivatives. The fund takes the arbitrage (futures) route to hedge the equity portion of the portfolio.

Tata Multi Asset takes exposure to a variety of commodities which could go to 18-20 per cent of the portfolio.

Government securities, repo and non-convertible debentures form the debt portion of the fund's holdings.

FIRST HAND, WITH THE PEOPLE



FRIENDLY CONVERSATION. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman surprised Mumbaiites by taking a ride with them from Ghatkopar to Kalyan on Saturday. The Minister interacted with passengers during the train ride and many commuters braved the tight security to click pictures with the Minister. The commute created a buzz in the social media NIRMALA

SITHARAMAN OFFICE X

+ Co-ops can turn ordinary systems into industry-scale model, says PM

Shishir Sinha
New Delhi

Co-operatives can convert an ordinary system related to daily life into a huge industry system, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday. He also launched the world's largest grain storage plan in the co-operative sector with an investment of over ₹1.25-lakh crore.

In an event to launch multiple initiatives for the co-operative sector, the Prime Minister explained that a large task can be accomplished if smaller resources are put together and said that this model was followed in the ancient system of villages in India. "Co-operatives were the foundations of India's Atmanirbhar society. It is not just any system, but a belief, a spirit," Modi said.

Details p12

SMEs race to complete IPOs by March 31 deadline

Suresh P. Iyengar
Mumbai

The spate of initial public offerings on the SME exchange is set to gather pace over the next few weeks, with 30-35 companies in this segment planning to hit the market to raise ₹1,200-1,500 crore before the financial year ends.

Companies that have received regulatory approval have to tap the market before the March-end deadline, or they will have to submit their financial year-end balance-sheets.

In all, 12 companies have raised ₹1,133 crore so far this year at the rate of about two IPOs per week.

Ashok Holani, Director, Holani Consultants, said the coming days would be the busiest for the SME IPO market, as companies rush to beat the March-



THE BIG RUSH.

30-35 SME companies are slated to raise ₹1,200-1,500 crore via IPOs before the financial year ends

end deadline.

The SME IPO market is getting riskier and only investors with a high risk appetite should venture into this space, as one wrong bet can wipe out the entire savings of investors, he added.

alone, he added. Rudra Gas Enterprise, which entered the primary market to raise ₹14.16 crore this month, attracted subscriptions of ₹350 crore.

The shares, which were issued at ₹63 per share, listed at ₹126, and are now trading at ₹168.

Similarly, Shree Maruthi Tubes, which is raising ₹14 crore, saw subscription worth ₹640 crore.

Madhusudan Saha, an independent market analyst, said investors in SMEs are only looking at listing gains and are not worried about the fundamentals of the companies.

The primary SME market is getting riskier and only investors with a high risk appetite should venture into this space, as one wrong bet can wipe out the entire savings of investors, he added.

BLAST FROM THE PAST
The recent ₹56-crore IPO

of Atmastco, a turnkey/EPC contractor in the ferrous and non-ferrous sectors, received subscriptions for ₹940 crore, with HNI subscriptions of ₹399 crore, and retail investors pumping in ₹487 crore.

In fact, last year's frenzy continued unabated on the back of a bumper listing.

The 164 IPOs that were completed last year to raise ₹4,425 crore cumulatively, received bids worth ₹2.8-lakh crore.

Interestingly, the overall market capitalisation of listed SMEs crossed ₹1-lakh crore recently.

Last year's first IPO of Chaman Metallics to raise ₹24 crore got bids worth about ₹4,800 crore, while Accent Microcell, which planned to raise ₹78 crore through its IPO, ended up getting bids for nearly ₹20,000 crore.

The ₹9-crore IPO of Srivari Spices garnered interest of ₹3,000 crore.

Out of the FATF grey list, UAE investments into India, especially NBFCs, set to surge

Ashley Coutinho
Mumbai

The United Arab Emirates' coming out of the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force on Friday, nearly two years after its inclusion, will ease the road for the country's investors seeking to acquire significant influence in Indian NBFCs.

A 2021 RBI circular had stated that investments in NBFCs from FATF non-compliant jurisdictions would not be treated at par with that from compliant jurisdictions.

Investors from non-compliant FATF jurisdictions, whether in existing NBFCs or companies seeking Registration Certification, were restricted from gaining 'significant influence' directly or indirectly. Additionally, new investors were prohibited from holding more than 20 per cent voting power.

"India has seen an increase in investment from the UAE in the recent past, including private equity and sovereign wealth funds. The UAE's removal from the grey list will only help bolster such investments, especially into regulated sectors such as NBFCs," said Parul Jain, Head of Fund Formation Practice at Nishith Desai Associates.

CURBS EASED
In 2020, the RBI had rejected several applications for greenfield investments or acquisitions in NBFCs routed through private equity and venture capital funds (PE/VC) domiciled in Mauritius after the latter was put on the FATF's greylist.

"The restrictions imposed on UAE investors looking to invest in India-based PE/VC funds and the financial services sector are now eased. Similarly, India-based PE/VC funds that want to invest in portfolio companies located in the UAE can now do so with fewer obstacles. This could potentially lead to an increase in cross-border investments and collaborations between the two countries," said Yashesh Ashar, Partner, Illume Advisory.

The UAE's exit from the grey list may ease KYC requirements for FPIs from the region, boost inflows and catapult the UAE to the list of top 10 regions for FPI flows into India over the next two years, according to experts.

Top FPI regions for India</

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Sugar not sweet in short term

FUEL FACTOR. For Indian sugar producers, FY24 and first half of FY25 may be muted if the cap on ethanol diversion continues



Nalinakanti V
bl. research bureau

Since our last Big Story on sugar in July 2022 (<http://tinyurl.com/Sugar-sweet-spot-PF-July-22>), sugar stocks have managed a bitter-sweet performance.

Triveni Engineering and Industries has been the best performer with up to 47 per cent gains till date, while others such as Balrampur Chini Mills, EID Parry and Bannari Amman saw their stock price rise by 6-20 per cent since July 2022. The broader market, however, measured by Nifty 50 performance, has been on a new high, raking in gains of over 40 per cent. Relative underperformance of the sector to the broad market has been due to a combination of global sugar scenario and adverse policy moves.

FALLING PRODUCTION

In sugar year 2021-22 (October-September), India produced a record 39.4 million tonnes, overtaking Brazil (32 million tonnes) to become the world's largest sugar producer. Strong demand from global market, coupled with lower output from Brazil, helped India set a new record in exports as well. India exported 10.9 million tonnes that year, which was over 57 per cent higher than in 2020-21. Record production alongside firm sugar prices globally helped Indian sugar makers' stock performance in FY23. About 3.6 million tonnes of sugar was diverted for ethanol production.

But is the knee-jerk reaction to fall in estimated production warranted, despite the opening stock being comfortable at 5.6 million tonnes and consumption estimate at 28.5 million tonnes? While on the face of it, the move to apply brakes on ethanol diversion may seem unnecessary, it is important given that the margins in ethanol are much more stable and attractive as compared to sugar.

To deter the industry from profiteering from the ethanol opportunity at the cost of sugar availability, and ensure the price equilibrium for sugar is maintained, the government possibly intervened well ahead of time.

market for raw sugar, which is mainly exported.

BRAKES ON ETHANOL

Maharashtra accounts for almost half the country's exports. Lower production in Maharashtra, as also government's concerns over availability for local consumption, led to an unprecedented policy move in early December 2023 — banning of sugar diversion for ethanol, and also use of B-heavy molasses and cane juice for ethanol production. Expectation of lower sugar output and rising demand led the government to play it cautiously, given that sugar, an essential commodity, can have a snowballing effect on food and beverage sector.

However, the government soon reversed its ban on diversion of cane juice and B-heavy molasses but has capped the diversion of overall sugar for ethanol at 1.7 million tonnes for now. This is half of the total sugar available for ethanol in sugar year 2022-23. Industry sources expect the government to review the situation over the next few months and accordingly modify the current cap.

While on the face of it, the move to apply brakes on ethanol diversion may seem unnecessary, it is important given that the margins in ethanol are much more stable and attractive as compared to sugar.

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IMPACT ON PRODUCERS

What will be the impact on sugar producers? Clearly the effect will be negative since margins on distillery segment are significantly higher for sugar makers. With the sugar available for ethanol being cut by more than half, it spells revenue and profit cut for sugar and ethanol producers.

For instance, Triveni Engineering's distillery segment margins have been upwards of 20 per cent even in years when sugar segment reported losses. Though it is possible that cane cost (raw material) is captured fully in sugar segment and hence distillery margins are higher, sugar on sugar availability for ethanol will affect distillery segment, and overall profitability.

Also, from end-product price perspective, the realisation on ethanol is much higher than sugar. While minimum support price is fixed at ₹31 a kg, ethanol

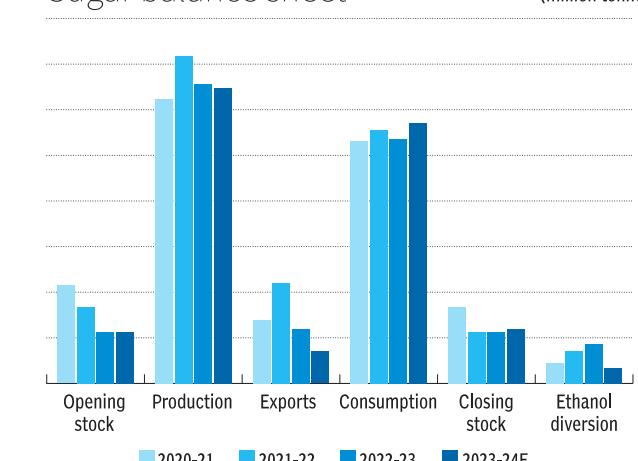
Triveni, the sole star performer

Stock	Jul-22 (₹)	Current price (₹)	Returns since July 2022 (%)	TTM PE (times)
Balrampur Chini Mills	361	382.75	6	13.2
Triveni Engineering	230	347.35	51	18
EID Parry	526	625.3	19	13
Bannari Amman	2,166	2,700	25	18.9
Shree Renuka	45.7	49	7	NA
Dhampur Sugar	212.45	250	18	11.60

Growth drivers

Company	Revenue growth in FY23 (%)			Operating profit growth in FY23 (%)		
	Sugar	Distillery	Power	Sugar	Distillery	Power
Balrampur Chini Mills	2	16	-20	-32		
Triveni Engineering	26	74	22	-21	42	19
EID Parry	28	31	55	-113	-26	
Bannari Amman	27	299	32	345	888	
Dhampur	33	40	2	14	16	-1

Sugar balance sheet*



Global sugar prices



from C-heavy molasses fetches ₹49.41 a litre, while C-heavy molasses and sugar juice-based ethanol will be procured by oil marketing companies at ₹60.73 and ₹65.61 a litre respectively.

However, companies that operate dual feed plants, such as Balrampur Chini and Triveni, have the flexibility to switch between feedstocks depending on availability. But even for these distilleries, the challenge remains with respect to availability and pricing of alternate feed

such as corn, rice and other feedstocks. For instance, maize MSP went up from ₹19 to ₹25 a kg last quarter, while the same has not been fully priced into the end-product price, leading to lower margins.

That said, the importance of sugarcane-based ethanol cannot be undermined as molasses-based ethanol accounts for almost two-thirds of the country's total ethanol capacity, while the rest comes from grain-based distilleries.

As of November 2023, the

What's in store for sugar stocks?

While 2023/24 has been a stellar year for the equity market broadly, sugar stocks have delivered 6-46 per cent returns over the last 18 months, being underperformers on a relative basis, barring Triveni Engineering, which gained about 46 per cent.

On the revenue and profit front too, the growth has remained subdued. Raw material price increase in the sugar business has put pressure on the margins. Sample this — Triveni's sugar segment margin declined from 11 per cent in FY22 to 7 per cent in FY23. Similarly, on the distillery front too, operating profit margin declined from 14 per cent to 11 per cent. This was on account of lower recovery on cane, higher cane costs and

higher cost of grains/other feedstock. Raw material cost as a proportion of revenue rose from 67 per cent in FY22 to 73 per cent in FY23. Similarly, for Balrampur Chini also, the overall operating margin declined from 15 per cent in FY22 to 11 per cent in FY23. Raw material as a percentage of revenue rose to 73 per cent versus 71 per cent in FY22.

Interestingly, companies that have a higher skew towards cogeneration power, such as Bannari Amman Sugars, have fared well in FY23. From 11 per cent in FY22, operating margins have expanded to 12 per cent in FY23. Strong demand for power and attractive pricing helped the 40 per cent jump in operating profit. We believe that the power segment will continue to grow at a healthy

pace and sugar producers, while taking advantage of the ethanol opportunity, are also looking beyond sugar and ethanol. Balrampur Chini Mills has announced foray into bio plastics with an investment of ₹2,000 crore over the next few years, for setting up a green field manufacturing plant close to its current facilities, in UP. These products have potential to replace the single-use plastic market, which is being phased out in India.

While the government is expected to work out a favourable strategy for ethanol in the medium term, companies are also de-risking their business by focusing on other value-added products — which could go a long way in lending stability and sustainability to their existing business models.

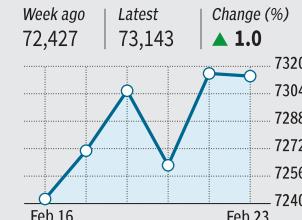
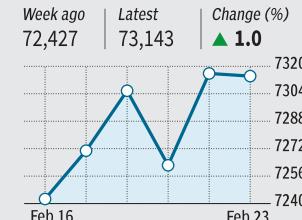
WISE WORDS.

“I really don't care about the mistake I made three seconds ago in the market. What I care about is what I am going to do from the next moment on.”

PAUL TUDOR JONES
Billionaire Hedge Fund Manager

MARKET ACTION.

SENSEX



How sectoral indices moved

	Feb 16	Feb 23	Movement	% change
REALTY	6,971	7,255	▲	4.1
CONSUMER DURABLES	50,432	51,438	▲	2.0
FMCG	19,308	19,607	▲	1.5
POWER	6,519	6,613	▲	1.4
CAPITAL GOODS	55,999	56,732	▲	1.3
BANKEX	52,628	53,195	▲	1.1
AUTO	46,993	47,451	▲	1.0
HC	35,494	35,752	▲	0.7
TECK	17,160	17,051	▼	-0.6
PSU	18,842	18,711	▼	-0.7
METALS	27,621	27,397	▼	-0.8
IT	39,041	38,628	▼	-1.1
OIL&GAS	28,915	28,360	▼	-1.9

How other indices moved

	Price ₹	Movement	% change	
Feb 16				
Feb 23				
M&M	1,836	1,930	▲	5.2
ICICI Bank	1,023	1,061	▲	3.8
Nestle India	2,488	2,581	▲	3.7
Sun Pharma	1,510	1,561	▲	3.4
Power Grid	275	282	▲	2.7
Axis Bank	1,069	1,098	▲	2.6
Bajaj Finserv	1,576	1,617	▲	2.6
Reliance Industries	2,921	2,986	▲	2.2
Tata Steel	142	146	▲	2.2
ITC	405	412	▲	1.7
Maruti Suzuki	11,368	11,539	▲	1.5
Tech Mahindra	1,303	1,322	▲	1.4
Bajaj Finance	6,621	6,698	▲	1.2
Titan	3,657	3,693	▲	1.0
UltraTech Cement	9,915	10,006	▲	0.9
HUL	2,375	2,394	▲	0.8
SBI	755	759	▲	0.6
Bharti Airtel	1,120	1,127	▲	0.6
HDFC Bank	1,420	1,421	▲	0.1
JSW Steel	821	821	▲	0.1
L&T	3,389	3,390	▲	0.02

'Opportunities in mid-caps are in ₹10,000-25,000 cr market cap slot'

MEET THE MANAGER. Madanagopal Ramu, of Sundaram Alternate Assets, on the sweet spot in market

Parvatha Vardhini C
bl. research bureau

bl.portfolio caught up with Madanagopal Ramu, Fund Manager and Head – Equity, Sundaram Alternate Assets, at his office in Chennai. The firm manages ₹8,000+ crore of AUM, with offerings across PMS and AIFs catering to high net-worth individuals (HNIs). Madanagopal Ramu talked of his investment framework and stock selection process, among other things. Excerpts from the interview:

You have a strong focus on mid and small-caps in your funds. Why do you think the smaller-market-cap segments have an edge? According to me, India is a 6/6.5 per cent growth story — neither an 8-9 per cent, nor a 3-4 per cent. With 4-5 per cent inflation, you are looking at the economy which is growing at 10-11 per cent in nominal terms. While this is not a flourishing growth story, it is a pretty decent one.

This forms the backdrop for my investment framework. Take the manufacturing portion of the GDP — while I don't know whether India will become the manufacturing hub of the world in future, I can say that the next 10 years will be better than the last 10 years.

And, we do see smaller players in manufacturing who are doing higher margin businesses being driven by the private capex when that happens.

Agriculture always depends on the monsoons and this will continue to grow 3-4 per cent. Services has always been our bedrock of support. Though the IT sector here may see 1-2 years of slow growth, given the AI momentum globally, it can make a comeback to a 10 per cent growth.

When these things come together for the economy, the sweet spot will be in the mid-cap space.

I would say large-caps will do well when the growth is

slightly lower (ie lower than 6/6.5 per cent) and small-caps will do extremely well when the growth is something like 8/9 per cent as many small companies start growing.

You will get opportunities there also as there are various sectors in India which are very small in size.

I am saying all this from a 5-year/10-year perspective. Net-net, the opportunities in this space are generally in the ₹10,000 – 25,000 crore market cap segment. A lot of companies that have done well for us have started from that size.

Private consumption is also a big contributor to the GDP. This has not been doing well lately, though..... When the country is growing at 10-11 per cent nominal growth, you cannot ignore consumer discretionary because, for one, household income of urban set will always be substantially growing compared to the rural household.

This will spill over to spends on education, health, entertainment, retail. In the last year or so, while the sector as a whole may not have done that well, we were lucky to be present in stocks such as Trent, Titan, Zomato.

Our other holding — Sapphire Foods — was impacted due to issues such as inflation/slowdown in urban consumption. But what is surprising is that in stocks such as Zomato, user growth should not have been there if there were inflation issues. But that was not the case.

So, I think in job growth, there is bit more struggle than what we are seeing on the face of it as per the Naukri job index which we monitor, and this is having some impact on certain pockets of consumption. And these are high-paid jobs. If high-paid jobs grow, they have a multiplier impact on consumption.

What are the other sectors where you find promise? When the nominal GDP is

PROFILE

Madanagopal Ramu has over 15 years of experience in the Indian Financial Markets. He currently manages AUM of around ₹3,400 crore in the Sundaram India Secular Opportunities Portfolio (SISOP), Sundaram Emerging Leadership Fund (S.E.L.F.) and Voyager PMS strategies.



growing 10 to 11 per cent, financials have to grow. If you look at retail credit penetration in India, household debt divided by total GDP is substantially lower in India than any other country in the world — about 15 per cent.

It can go much higher because, for one, not many households are still bankable and even if they are bankable, they are being sourced by unorganised lenders.

We are seeing the early signs of it already and we have picked up Home First Finance, the affordable housing player, from this space. Five-star Business Finance is another. These can be a five-year growth story easily. The other sector is internet companies.

In India, internet penetration levels are low, and it will only grow. My sense is that you will have a lot of operating efficiency kicking into these domestic internet companies because of the AI investments that they will do.

Corporates globally are starting to look at AI. So, this year, IT spending broadly might be stable but within that, digital spending will be starting to grow. However, one needs to be selective.

What are the filters you use to choose stocks in your preferred segments? When I look at sectors I prefer,

I need minimum 20 per cent growth. Then, I do not touch anything with ROCE less than 17/18 per cent.

In a sector where there is growth opportunity, if the management is not able to generate close to 20 per cent ROCE, I don't think there is a need for an equity investment except when there is a favourable cycle at play.

Along with the above parameters, if the company is generating good cash flow and the company is reinvesting that cash flow also back into the business, having a clear roadmap for the next five years or so, and the stock is fairly valued (neither cheap nor expensive), then there is compounding effect of 17-18 per cent possible (in the portfolio) even if one or two picks go wrong.

With the markets rallying sharply, high-tear returns seem a given. How do you convince investors 17-18 per cent CAGR is a good number to look at?

A 15 per cent CAGR return can be good but today people are questioning whether 15 per cent makes sense because they are looking at a 5-year rolling return of 16/16.5 per cent for the Nifty and whenever it touched this, it has fallen from there; the lowest point of Nifty 5-year rolling return is 8 per cent.

And in this, if you choose the right companies, you will make good money, is what I feel.

For mid-caps, the 5-year rolling return peak is 23 per cent, which happened in 2017 and 2008 and also now. The low point for mid-caps is a negative 7 per cent.

So, while we know what direction the market can head, what will trigger this correction, I am not sure. The flows have been phenomenal. We also underestimated the capability of domestic flows to sustain for such a long time.

But when normalisation happens it can be much sharper — you might actually see two/three years of no return/slow returns and then the 5-year CAGR rolling return coming down to 12-13 per cent. When Nifty Midcap normalises, you can see two/three years of decline.

So, what I am telling investors is that there are years like 2023 where our thought process is being challenged with mid-cap stocks having a great run. But if you look at it from a long-term perspective, a 17-18 per cent compounding growth compared to 12 per cent Nifty growth is a reasonable spread for them.

The December quarter is seeing better top line growth than the last two quarters. Is demand making a comeback?

Broader growth looks difficult. If rural recovery happens, you can do better.

So, I feel the demand scenario will be so-so only. You cannot have one point where everything is doing well. There will be pockets which will do well. All retail is not doing well, but jewellery, for example, is.

Consumer discretionary companies, last year, saw a good growth because of the Covid recovery.

This year, they are struggling on the back of it. FMCG companies are growing in only low to mid-single digits. India growth is still 6-7 per cent.

And in this, if you choose the right companies, you will make good money, is what I feel.

TAX QUERY



SUDHAKAR SETHURAMAN

My friend and I bought Apollo Hospitals shares, by contributing ₹125 each (total ₹250) during a public issue a few decades ago. It was in joint name, and I was the first holder. We were allotted 25 shares with face value of ₹10 each and later on it became 50 shares with face value of ₹5 each.

We recently converted the shares from physical to electronic mode, via demat account. Since both of us are senior citizens, we want to sell the shares during our time. I request you to kindly clarify the following:

- 1) When we sell the shares now at a prevailing price of ₹5,540 approximately, the value of which will be around ₹2.77 lakh against purchase value of ₹250, what will be the tax implication when we sell the shares and divide the profit?
- 2) Both of us are income-tax assessees. The amount, when sold, shall be credited to my bank account, since I'm the first holder. How do we divide it and declare in our annual returns when we file this year?
- 3) Do I have to pay the total tax, being first holder when I receive the full amount in my account after selling, and recover my friend's part from him later?

Details	With indexation	Without indexation
Sale consideration (A)	Price per share* number of shares sold	Price per share* number of shares sold
Less: Expenses at the time of transfer (B)	As applicable	As applicable
Less: cost of acquisition (C)	Indexed cost of acquisition	Actual cost of acquisition
Capital gains (D) = (A) – (B) – (C)	Capital gains	Capital gains
Less: Exemption under Section 112A (E)	Not applicable	₹1,00,000
Taxable capital gains (F) = (D) – (E)	Long term capital gains less ₹1,00,000 (referred above)	Long term capital gains less ₹1,00,000 (referred above)
Tax rate (G)	20% plus applicable surcharge plus 4% cess	10% plus applicable surcharge plus 4% cess
Tax on capital gains (H) = (F) * (G)		

Sekar CR

In general, gains are taxed in the hands of the first holder. However, with the advent of PAN-based tracking and data collation, it is possible that these transactions are reported in the AIS (Annual Information Summary) of both joint holders. Hence, it is advisable to offer the gains to tax in the ratio in which each joint holder had contributed to the acquisition in the first place.

Capital gains will need to be computed as per the provisions of the Income-tax Act, 1961. Cost of acquisition can be indexed and the resulting gains (if any) would be taxable at 20 per cent (plus applicable surcharge and cess). Alternatively, if indexation benefit is not used, then the capital gains will be taxable at 10 per cent (plus applicable surcharge and cess) after exemption of ₹1 lakh.

The writer is Partner, Deloitte India
• Send your queries to taxtalk@thehindu.co.in

A question of timing

SAVE SMART. Should you invest in small-caps now and can long-term SIPs in equities be started any time?

Manuj Jain

Retail participation has grown multifold in the last 3-4 years, reflected in monthly new demat accounts and mutual fund SIP flows. About 45 per cent of the total net inflow within actively managed equity mutual fund schemes came in the small-cap funds and mid-cap funds category alone from April to December 2023.

The small-cap segment has outperformed the large-cap segment by a considerable margin in the last one year as Nifty Smallcap 250 TRI has delivered a 64 per cent return compared to a 27 per cent return by Nifty 100 TRI as on January 31, 2024. The question is whether you can invest in this segment now or wait for corrections. Secondly, with market itself at a high, should SIP investors wait for correction? Here's answering these two questions.

SMALL-CAP INVESTING

If we closely analyse the historical data, we find that whenever the small-cap segment's contribution to the total market cap is at a significant premium compared to its last 5-year average, the following 3-year returns from Nifty Smallcap 250 TRI are usually disappointing. For example, in December 2017, the Small-Cap segment's contribution to total market cap was trading at a 30 per cent premium to its last 5 years' average ratio; over the next three years, Nifty Smallcap 250 TRI delivered -3 per cent CAGR.

In contrast, if somebody would make an investment whenever the Small Cap segment's contribution to total market cap trades at a discount over the last 5 years' average ratio, usually the next 3 years' re-

How small-caps perform

As of	% to total market capitalisation	Premium/discount over long period average % (Current vs Last 5 years)		Nifty Smallcap 250 TRI (% CAGR)		
		Small-cap 251st stock onwards	Next 1 year	Next 2 years	Next 3 years	
Dec-17	16.3	30	-26	-17	-5	
Dec-18	13.1	-1	-7	8	24	
Dec-19	10.5	-21	26	44	26	
Dec-20	10.9	-15	63	26	33	
Dec-21	14.6	14	-3	20		
Dec-22	14.6	14	49			
Dec-23	18.3	38				
Jan-24	18.9	42				

SIP at market peak vs bottom

SIP start month	S&P BSE Sensex TRI	Market correction (%)	SIP period (years)	Amount Invested (in ₹ lakhs)	Value as on Dec 29, 2023 (in ₹ lakhs)	SIP XIRR (%)
Sep'96	3,563	-21%	27.3	32.8	368.0	14.7
Dec'96	2,803		27.0	32.5	354.5	14.7
Aug'97	4,617	-37%	26.4	31.7	331.9	14.9
Nov'98	2,888		25.1	30.2	286.7	15.1
Feb'00	6,313	-54%	23.9	28.7	244.6	15.3
Sep'01	2,874		22.3	26.8	198.3	15.5
Jan'04	7,168	-27%	20.0	24.0	116.9	14.0
May'04	5,229		19.6	23.6	110.7	14.0
May'06	15,186	-29%	17.6	21.2	77.6	13.3
Jun'06	10,790		17.5	21.1	76.7	13.3
Jan'08	25,756	-60%	16.0	19.2	64.3	13.8
Mar'09	10,216		14.8	17.8	54.8	14.0
Nov'10	26,968	-27%	13.1	15.8	43.3	14

Juggling asset classes for stable returns

FUND CALL. Tata Multi Asset Opportunities fund balances investments smartly and delivers fine risk-adjusted performance



GETTY IMAGES

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

The markets have been on a frenzy for much of 2023 and the current year as well. Benchmark indices are making fresh life-time highs in recent weeks amidst occasional volatility. Even the bond markets have rallied after a difficult 2022 and a largely sideways 2023. After massive increases in interest rates during 2022 and early-2023, resulting in a mixed run for bonds, central banks have finally hit the pause button on further hikes for many months now.

For investors, the heavy action across markets and asset classes brings the question of allocation to the fore. Asset allocation should anchor much of your investment decisions based on your goals, timelines, risk appetites, available surpluses and so on.

As a retail investor, juggling various asset classes to get the best returns from each avenue by timing your moves, becomes extremely challenging.

For optimal risk-adjusted returns over the long term, asset-allocation funds could be a reasonable mode of buying different assets via a single product.

For retail investors with a moderate risk appetite, multi-asset funds, which invest in a blend of equity, debt and gold, could be well-suited investment avenues.

In this regard, Tata Multi Asset Opportunities Fund may be a good choice for investors. The category itself is relatively new and this fund has a track record of a little under four years. But over this period, it has delivered steady returns with a fair degree of consistency.

INVESTING ACROSS ASSETS
In the present elevated markets, limiting risks to the portfolio is important. Diversification is important, but works best when the constituents of a portfolio do not move in tandem. Their price movement dynamics must be fundamentally different.

Now, Equity, debt and gold move based on various factors and thrive in different type of market conditions. These three asset classes have very little correlation to each other's moves across timelines.

Over 10-20-year periods, equity-debt, gold-debt and equity-gold have negative or very low correlation coefficients. Adding them to your portfolio would ensure that your portfolio is protected on the downside and is able to generate optimal risk-adjusted returns.

In a multi-asset fund, the allocation to equity, debt and gold is based on market conditions and therefore such a scheme makes it easier for investors, especially fresh entrants, to deal with market gyrations.

Equity is the wealth creator of a portfolio as generates strong returns over the long term and

WHY INVEST

- Invests in a healthy mix of stocks, bonds, gold, silver and other commodities
- Contains downsides and ensures market participation
- Takes derivative exposure for hedging

helps reach most financial goals. Debt is for generating regular income and is expected to provide steady low-risk returns.

Gold acts as an inflation hedge, though it has also beaten equities in many years, and insulates a portfolio during volatile markets.

FUND'S PERFORMANCE

Tata Multi Asset Fund was rolled out in March 2020 and has since juggled investments well to generate healthy returns.

When two-year rolling periods since the launch of the scheme are taken, the fund has delivered 17.4 per cent returns compounded annually, on an average.

A systematic investment plan (SIP) in the scheme made over the past three years would have delivered an XIRR of nearly 19 per cent.

Tata Multi Asset has delivered two-year rolling returns of more than 10 per cent over 95 per cent of the time from March 2020 to

February 2024. Over the same timeframe, the scheme has delivered more than 12 per cent over 79 per cent of the time and in excess of 15 per cent nearly half the time.

The scheme maintains a fairly consistent asset-allocation pattern across most market cycles. Usually, 65 per cent or more of the portfolio is invested in equities and equity derivatives. Though large-caps dominate, with over 50 per cent of equity exposure to such stocks, broader market exposures via mid- and small-caps are also prominent. The fund takes the arbitrage (futures) route to hedge the equity portion of the portfolio.

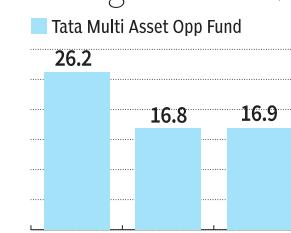
Tata Multi Asset takes exposure to a variety of commodities such as gold, silver, crude oil, copper and aluminium via commodity and derivative markets. This could go to 18-20 per cent of the portfolio.

Government securities, repo and non-convertible debentures that are highly safe form the debt portion of the fund's holdings.

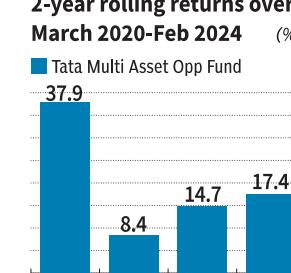
With a downside capture ratio of 36, the scheme falls much lower than its benchmark. Its upside capture ratio is 72, suggesting that it may not rise as much as the benchmark during rallies. Thus, it is able to contain downsides and provide stable returns.

Investors can consider SIPs in Tata Multi Asset Opportunities fund with a five-year perspective.

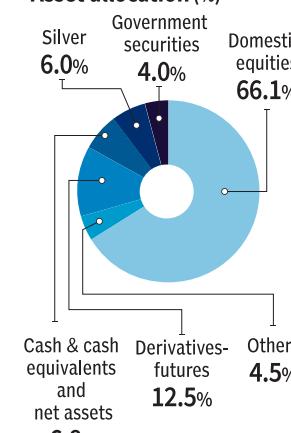
Steady and above-average returns (%)



2-year rolling returns over March 2020-Feb 2024 (%)



Asset allocation (%)



MF ratings update

Dear readers, bl.portfolio Star Track Mutual Fund ratings have been updated. Ratings for all funds are now based on data as on Dec 31, 2023. Check them out by turning to pages 10 and 11.

ALERTS.

Union MF launches Business cycle fund

Union Mutual Fund has announced the launch of Union Business Cycle Fund, an open-ended active equity scheme following business-cycles based investing theme. Benchmarked against the Nifty 500 Total Return Index (TRI), the fund aims to take active aggressive allocation between sectors outperforming and underperforming the broader market, based on the stage of the business cycle in the economy.

The NFO is open for subscription till February 27. Investors can invest with a minimum investment of ₹1,000 per plan/option and in multiples of ₹1 thereafter.

Two MFs launch multi-asset allocation funds

Quantum Mutual Fund and Mahindra Manulife Mutual Fund have announced the launch of their multi-asset allocation schemes. The NFO for Quantum and Mahindra Manulife funds are open for subscription till March 1 and 5, respectively. These funds shall be investing their corpus across asset classes such as Indian equities, fixed-income securities, gold, and silver. Investors can invest a minimum of ₹500 and ₹1,000 per plan/option in Quantum and Mahindra Manulife funds, respectively.

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 Feb 23			
Nippon ETF Hang Seng B	245.1	251.6	3.8	2,114.5
Nippon ETF Nifty India	109.3	109.4	1.6	226.7
Kotak Nifty 50 Value 20 ETF	140.2	141.2	1.3	96.1
Nippon ETF Nifty Infra	846.9	848.5	1.2	54.8
UTI Nifty Next 50 ETF	62.6	62.7	1.2	104.4
Tata Nifty Private Bank ETF	239.3	240.1	1.2	9.5
SBI ETF Nifty Next 50	622.2	623.2	1.1	115.3
GOLD ETFs				
HDFC Gold ETF	54.0	54.0	0.3	1,154.6
Invesco India Gold ETF	5,489.9	5,494.9	0.3	0.4
Quantum Gold Fund	52.2	52.2	0.2	271.2

Source: Bloomberg. Returns as on February 23, 2024

Best NPS plans

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

Name of the fund	NAV (₹) as on Feb 23	Returns (5-year CAGR)	Assets (₹ cr)
TIER I: EQUITY PLANS			
Kotak Pension Fund	58.0	32.4	18.1
ICICI Prud Pension Fund	63.4	36.6	18.0
HDFC Pension Fund	46.5	31.4	32,644
TIER I: GOVERNMENT BOND PLANS			
LIC Pension Fund	27.1	10.1	6.7
HDFC Pension Fund	25.1	10.4	8.6
ABSL Pension Scheme	16.8	10.5	8.6
TIER I: CORPORATE DEBT PLANS			
HDFC Pension Fund	25.5	8.5	8.6
ABSL Pension Scheme	17.2	8.6	8.4
LIC Pension Fund	25.0	8.3	8.4
TIER I: ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS			
SBI Pension Fund	18.5	10.8	7.1
HDFC Pension Fund	18.2	9.9	9.2
Kotak Pension Fund	16.3	10.7	7.9

*Source: NPS Trust. Returns as on February 23, 2024

Top PMS schemes

Based on 5-year returns

AMC	Strategy	AUM (in ₹ cr)	Returns (% CAGR)		
			1-year	3-year	5-year
LARGE CAP					
Agreya Capital Advisors	Momentum	NA	52.6	23.7	21.8
ICICI Pru	Largecap	152	38.0	25.9	20.1
Motilal Oswal	Value Migration	2,095	51.2	22.3	19.1
Renaissance	Opportunities Portfolio	NA	37.6	25.9	18.9
MULTI CAP					
Bonanza	Edge	NA	78.5	51.5	36.2
Negen Capital	Special Situ. & Technology	798	66.3	40.8	33.7
Sameeksha Capital	India Equity Fund	1,163	58.1	32.1	33.3
Estee Advisors	Long Alpha	NA	78.1	36.4	32.9
Globe Capital Market	Value	654	62.1	34.8	32.4
Stallion Asset	Core Fund	1,203	74.4	28.8	31.2
MID-CAP					
Unifi Capital	APJ 20	NA	55.6	32.3	32.8
Asit C Mehta Invest. Intermediates	Ace Midcap	NA	91.7	43.2	29.9
Master Portfolio Services	Master Trust India Growth	NA	53.4	35.1	28.3
Right Horizons	Super Value	NA	40.6	38.8	27.9
SMALL CAP					
Equirus Wealth	Long Horizon	961	52.6	27.3	31.4
Aequitas Invest. Consultancy	India Opportunities	3,322	103.2	61.8	30.5
Nine Rivers Capital	Aurum Small Cap	NA	65.9	40.9	29.7
Valantis Advisors	Rising Star Opportunity	NA	49.6	42.2	28.3

*Source: PMS Bazaar. Returns as on January 31, 2024

Exiting Treasuries to welcome growth

GLOBAL VIEW. US economy's resilience forces investors to rethink bets on interest-rate cuts



NFO REVIEW. Bandhan US Treasury Bond NFO is a risky yield play

A picture of health, overall

IPO WATCH. Investors can go for GPT Healthcare's offer but keep an eye on the company's earnings growth

Sai Prabhakar Yadavalli
bl. research bureau

GPT Healthcare is a hospital operator with four mid-sized, full-service hospitals in its portfolio. It operates under the ILS Hospitals brand from Kolkata (three locations) and Tripura, Agartala (one location). The group has an East and North-East focus, and future expansion is also planned in that region.

The IPO is fairly valued at 32 times annualised H1FY24 earnings, which can be supported by its growth plans in existing and new ventures. But the steep discount to peer group valuation, which stands at 59 times FY24 EPS, may not contract anytime soon owing to the lower operating metrics. We recommend that investors subscribe to the issue with an eye on earnings growth.

The IPO plans to raise ₹40 crore in fresh issue and ₹485 crore in offer for sale through which investor BanyanTree LLC will completely exit.

SCALING UP OPERATIONS

GPT Healthcare can drive growth from existing and new hospitals (yet to be constructed). As can be seen in the table, the occupancy rates of the Howrah and Agartala units are below those of the other two units. Howrah was commercialised in 2019, and with Covid impact in the following two years, the unit has reported lower occupancies. From 39 per cent occupancy in FY23, the unit has already reported 45 per cent occupancy by H1FY24, which can be expected to keep increasing.

Agartala, though commercialised in 2011, had a higher share of renal and kidney transplant procedures, which increased the average length of stay (ALOS) and pressured the occupancy rates. The company indicated an increasing mix of short-term procedures to improve the metrics, which has resulted in an improvement from 45 per cent in FY23 to 52 per cent.

Despite Salt Lake being the oldest facility (established in



2000), a recent restructuring in the unit lowered occupancy rate to below 70 per cent, and management indicated that the recovery had occurred in Q3FY24 itself. Dum Dum (established in 2013) is the gold standard for group operations, reporting 80 per cent occupancy levels.

An improvement in consolidated occupancy rates to a reasonable 64 per cent by FY25, from 60 per cent in H1FY24, along with pricing growth of 6-7 per cent per year, can support 12-15 per cent revenue CAGR and 20-25 per cent EPS CAGR in FY23-25 for GPT Healthcare.

NEW FACILITIES

GPT Healthcare has lined up Raipur and Ranchi for the next phase of expansion with a 140/150-bed facility, respectively, expected to be operational by FY25-26. It will lease the completed facility (under construc-

IPO rating

GPT Healthcare

Business	★★★★★
Financials	★★★★★
Management	★★★★★
Valuation	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★
Rankings 1 to 5, 1 denoting lowest and 5 highest	
Offer period	Feb 22 - 26, 2024
Price band	₹177-186
Market cap	₹1,452 cr to ₹1,526 cr

tion) from the private lessors in exchange for lease payments. At full utilisation, expected in 2-3 years from commercialisation, the facilities should add 15-20 per cent to revenues.

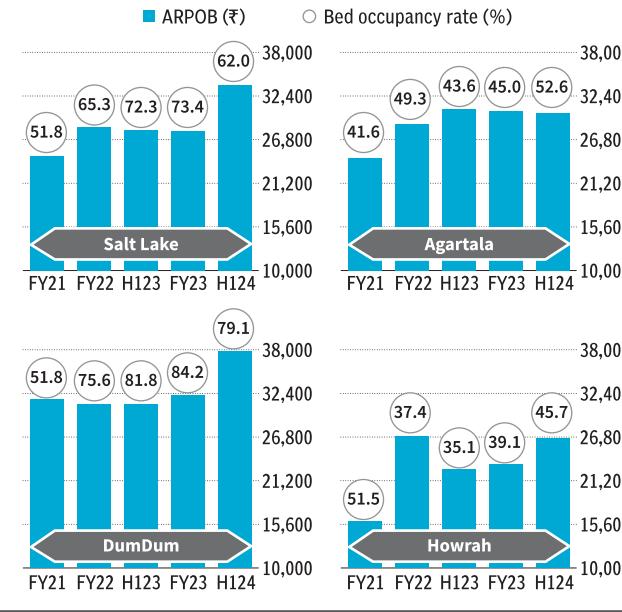
With their being mid-sized facilities in which GPT Healthcare has a strong experience in quick

How they fare

	FY24 PE*	Bed occupancy(%)	ARPOB (₹)
GPT Healthcare	33	60	32,979
Global Health	80	62	62,011
Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences	55	73	31,406
Jupiter Life Line	65	62	53,075
Yatharth Hospital	38	54	27,833

*PE based on annualised figures for quarterly data

ARPOB: Average revenue per operating bed per day



turnaround, bottom line acceleration may also follow. The company will look to expand in similar centres in the East and North-Eastern regions.

FINANCIALS, VALUATIONS

GPT Healthcare reported a revenue growth of 22 per cent CAGR in FY21-23 to ₹360 crore. In the period, EBITDA margins remained stable in the 21 per cent range. The company has a net debt to EBITDA ratio of 0.55 times as of H1FY24, which will further decline with repayments from the IPO proceeds.

Compared to peers (see table), GPT Healthcare is listed at a discount. Industry growth from new unit addition and strong pricing growth is common to all hospital stocks, including GPT Healthcare. But industry valuation seems to be riding on either a high occupancy ratio (KIMS) or a high AR-

POB (Global Health and Jupiter).

With GPT Healthcare at the lower end of both metrics, similar to Yatharth, the lower valuation range may be sustained.

ARPOB (average revenue per operating bed), being a function of brand positioning and marketplace dynamics, will limit further growth. Occupancy ratios have demonstrated 70-80 per cent in Dum Dum, but to consistently deliver across the four mature hospitals is still some time away. For a higher occupancy, the average length of stay must also be reduced from the current four days, and the product mix must incorporate a higher proportion of short-stay procedures.

Investors can subscribe to the IPO in view of GPT Healthcare's earnings growth potential, despite the limited headroom in metrics expansion.

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

REALITY CHECK.

Nvidia and its parabolic growth

Hari Viswanath
bl. research bureau

Never have so many depended so much on so few or rather on just one company – Nvidia! Goldman Sachs' trading desk termed it 'the most important stock on planet earth' before its earnings release last Wednesday. Options pricing data implied expectations of greater than 11 per cent or around \$200 billion of market cap move in the stock on either direction. And linked to it was the fate of the entire AI rally that's driving global markets since last May. It would be worth recollecting that it was not the release of ChatGPT in CY2022, but Nvidia quarterly results reported in May 2023 that ignited the massive AI rally, which has continued unabated till date.

As investors and traders awaited with bated breath, Nvidia did what it has been doing quarter after quarter in recent times – delivering a beat and raise quarter, triggering a fresh round of trillions of dollars of market cap getting added across the world, sending major indices in Japan, India, Germany and the US to all-time highs last Thursday.

Nvidia on its own added \$277 billion, creating a record for the largest market cap addition by a company in a single day, beating the record Meta Platforms had created only couple of weeks back in early February. What is driving this frenzy around Nvidia?

To begin with, the company's fundamentals are so strong it is hard to identify when in history a company has had it so good. As we explained in our Big Story in bl.portfolio edition dated February 11, 2024, at present it is estimated that Nvidia has anywhere between 70 and 90 per cent share in the GPU chips used for AI training and inferencing. While eventually its market share will decline over the medium term, for now its moats are very strong, given huge first-mover advantage in making AI chips, and also importantly by its proprietary computing platform CUDA that runs on all its AI chips.



With customers building their AI training and inferencing models on Nvidia hardware and software, while competitors will eventually come out with competing GPUs, they may still depend on Nvidia for the software part as customers are spending millions of dollars to build their applications on this, making migration to any competing software ecosystem challenging.

According one analyst at foreign brokerage Susquehanna – 'it will take half a decade to put a real dent in Nvidia monopoly'. This appears to be a view shared by many other analysts as well. According to Nvidia, coming to this stage in chip development was a 10-year process starting with re-orienting its approach to chip design a decade back.

These fundamentals are well reflected in its FY24 (ended January) and Q4 results released last week. In Q4, it reported revenue of \$22.1 billion, a 265 per cent increase versus Q4 FY23. More specifically, its Data Center (AI GPUs) segment revenue zoomed a staggering 409 per cent to \$18.4 billion. Operating profit was at \$13.65 billion and net profit at \$12.28 billion, up by 983 and 765 per cent respectively Y-o-Y. It's next to impossible to see such high growth for companies with revenue and profit in the billions. Equally rare are the profit margins reported by Nvidia – with operating profit margin at 61.7 per cent and net profit margin at 55.5 per cent!

Post an unprecedented full year FY24 (ended January) in which revenue grew 126 per cent to \$60.9 billion and net profit grew 582 per cent to \$29.7 billion, consensus estimates now project further revenue growth of 74 per cent and earnings growth of 97 per cent for the current FY.

To put it simply, without any exaggeration, these are mind-blowing numbers. After all these, the stock trades at one-year forward PE of 32.7 times. Appears inexpensive? Well, here are the two sides of the coin.

CYCICALITY

Semiconductors is a notoriously cyclical industry, repeatedly going through boom and bust. As recently as CY2020, there was massive chip shortage as smartphones, PC, tablets and gaming products saw a huge spurt in demand during lockdowns/work from home, which turned out into a supply glut by the year 2022. In fact, Nvidia itself faced the brunt of this glut when its shares crashed by 65 per cent in 2022, and it was the AI wave that brought about a paradigm shift.

The bears point to this and believe the Nvidia 'hype' might dissipate. They also point out how Intel was in Nvidia's current position during dotcom boom, a time when Intel dominated the personal computing chip business (a huge beneficiary of the nascent internet boom then), but the stock has never since crossed its peak levels reached in the year 2000.

However, as things stand now, in the case of Nvidia, the bulls may have a stronger case than the bears. Nvidia's recent growth far exceeds anything Intel delivered then. As compared to Nvidia's growth in just one year mentioned above, Intel took five years to double its revenue between 1995 and 2000. Its net income margin was at 35 per cent, compared to Nvidia's 55 per cent. Nvidia's superior margins reflects stronger moat, and its superior growth reflects stronger demand. Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang highlights a robust demand scenario driven by existing base of data centres across the world transitioning to GPU-based computing, as well as demand from new AI focused data centres.

It appears more than demand and competition, the aspect to debate is what is the right valuation to buy Nvidia. Investors can keep it on their radar and consider it when broader market-driven corrections present better entry points.

Wait for some fresh charge

FMEG. New positions need not be considered at this juncture in the stock of Havells

Madhav Suresh
bl. research bureau

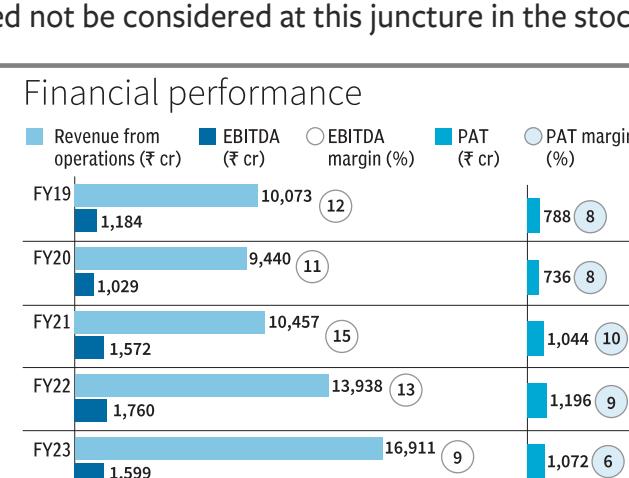
The Indian Fast Moving Electrical Goods (FMEG) industry has experienced steady growth, propelled by ongoing infrastructure development, rising disposable incomes, government initiatives such as Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, and technological advancements such as smart home automation and energy-efficient solutions.

As a diversified FMEG company and a constituent of the BSE Consumer Durable Index, Havells is levered to benefit from the "Make in India" theme.

However, with the stock currently trading at a one-year forward P/E of 56 times, around 8 per cent premium to its historical five-year average P/E of 52 times, this appears to factor the structural long-term growth prospects it is levered to. Also, multiple expansion is less likely till growth accelerates. In the last five years, ie. FY19-24E (including consensus estimate for Q4FY24), the revenue and PAT CAGR of Havells is around 13.2 and 9.5 per cent respectively. Hence, given the balanced risk-reward, while existing investors can continue to hold the stock, fresh positions need not be considered at this juncture.

BUSINESS
Havells India operates as a manufacturer and seller of electrical goods, consumer durables, and power distribution equipment. Its operations encompass six distinct brands – namely, Havells, Lloyds, Crabtree, Standard, REO, and Havells Studio. Its business primarily comprises six segments – switchgear (12 per cent of 9MFY24 revenue), cables & wires (34 per cent), lighting and fixtures (9 per cent), electrical consumer durables (ECD, 20 per cent), Lloyd consumer (19 per cent), and others (6 per cent).

Within the switchgear segment, Havells produces domestic and industrial switchgear, electrical wiring accessories, and capacitors. The cables & wires (C&W) segment includes do-



mestic cables and industrial underground cables. The lighting & fixtures segment caters to both consumer and professional lighting needs, selling LED lamps, luminaires, outdoor lighting fixtures, and specialty lighting items. Under the ECD segment, Havells sells fans, water heaters, and other domestic appliances. The Lloyd Consumer business includes consumer durables products such as ACs, TVs, and washing machines. Furthermore, Havells has extended its presence into the solar energy sector, offering on-grid and off-grid rooftop solutions and on-grid inverters catering to consumers and industries. Additionally, the company produces industrial motors, consumer pumps, water purifiers, and personal grooming items such as trimmers, and hair stylers, all of which fall under the "Others" segment.



The company, over the years, has been able to diversify segment-wise through organic and inorganic ways. For instance, in 2017, it acquired Lloyds to gain a foothold in the consumer durables business. While Havells is exploring new territories such as venturing into Electronics Manufacturing Service and evaluating expansion plans, including the commencement of a new AC manufacturing plant in Andhra Pradesh and the formation of a new subsidiary, Havells International LLC, to explore opportunities in the US market.

The C&W segment's operating income margin for 9MFY24 stood at 11.1 per cent. On the other hand, Lloyds has posted operating losses since FY22 due to increased expenses aimed at enhancing its brand visibility. As of FY23, Lloyds has a domestic market share of 12 per cent in the Indian room air conditioners (RAC) market, per Frost & Sullivan report, placing it in the top three in the Indian market.

While Havells' underground cables have reached max capacity utilisation, the new plant in Karnataka is expected to be operational by March 2024. Similarly, Lloyds has also been undertaking expansion plans, including the commencement of a new AC manufacturing plant in Andhra Pradesh and the formation of a new subsidiary, Havells International LLC, to explore opportunities in the US market.

Sensex, Nifty 50: Cautiously bullish

INDEX OUTLOOK. There is room to rise from here, but there are resistances too to watch out for

Gurumurthy K
bl. research bureau

Sensex and Nifty 50 managed to break and rise above their key resistances last week. Although they sustained higher, a strong follow-through rise was not seen. Similarly, the Nifty Bank index broke its resistance but failed to sustain. The price action on the short-term charts are relatively more positive. That keeps the door open for the Indian benchmark indices to move further up from here. Indeed, the Sensex is looking much stronger among the three on the charts. Though there is room to rise from there, we prefer to stay cautious rather than becoming overly bullish at the momentum.

Among the sectors, the BSE Realty index outperformed last week by surging 4 per cent. The BSE Oil & Gas and BSE IT fell the most. The indices were down 1.92 per cent and 1.06 per cent respectively.

FPI ACTION

The foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) were net buyers of Indian equities last week. They bought \$404 million in the equity segment. If the FPIs increase their quantum of buying in the coming weeks, then that could support the Sensex and Nifty to move further higher.

NIFTY 50 (22,212.70)

Nifty broke crucial resistance level of 22,150 last week. However, a strong follow-through rise was not seen thereafter. Nifty made a new high of 22,297.50 on Friday before closing the week at 22,212.70, up 0.78 per cent.

Short-term view: Lack of strong follow-through rise above 22,150 last week leaves the near-term outlook mixed. However, the weekly chart is looking relatively more positive than the daily chart. Supports are at 22,150, 22,000 and then at 21,800. If the Nifty manages to sustain above 22,000, a rise to 22,600-22,700 can be seen this week.

The price action, thereafter, will need a close watch. A reversal from around 22,700 can drag the Nifty down to 22,200 and 22,000. On the other hand, a break above 22,700 can take the Nifty up to 23,000 and higher, going forward.

To reduce the chances of a rise to 22,600-22,700, Nifty has to decline below 22,000 from



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

Nifty 50: Room to rise



SHORT-TERM TARGETS

- Nifty 50: 22,600-22,700
- Sensex: 73,800-73,900
- Nifty Bank: 47,500

47,500 will be bullish. Such a break can take the Nifty Bank index up to 49,000-49,500 in the coming weeks. But a reversal from around 47,500 can drag the index down to 46,000 and lower again.

The rise to 47,500 mentioned above will get negated if the index remains below 47,100 and breaks below 45,900 from here itself. In that case, a fall to 45,000-44,500 can be seen.

Medium-term view: As seen from the monthly candles, 44,400-48,650 has been the trading range since December last year. This sideways consolidation can continue for some more time with some chances of seeing an extended rise up to 49,000-49,500. A fall thereafter will be limited to 44,500 for now.

From a long-term perspective, the region around 44,000 is a very strong support. So, any fall below 45,000 will be a very good buying opportunity. As long as the Nifty Bank index sustains above 44,000, the outlook is bullish to see a rise to 53,000. However, this rise might happen a little later, maybe after some more consolidation.

SENSEX (73,142.80)
Sensex has risen breaking above the resistance at 72,750 last

here itself. In that case, 21,800 can be tested this week.

A break below 21,800 will turn the short-term outlook negative. Such a break can drag the Nifty down to 21,500-21,400 and even 21,000 in the coming weeks.

Medium-term view: As mentioned last week, there is not much room left on the upside. Key resistances are at 22,700 and then around 23,500-23,700. We expect the current rally to halt at any of these levels. A reversal from there can trigger a strong corrective fall.

That can drag the Nifty down to 21,200-21,000 and in the worst case even down to 20,000 in the coming months. So, we reiterate that as the Nifty moves up from here, more caution is needed rather than becoming overly bullish.

A strong bounce from any of the above-mentioned supports can take the Nifty Bank index up to 47,100 again. A break above 47,100 can take the index up to 47,500. The price action, thereafter, will need a close watch.

A sustained break above

week. Although a strong follow-through rise was not seen, the index managed well to sustain higher. Sensex closed at 73,142.80, up 0.99 per cent.

Short-term view: The outlook is positive. Supports are at 72,600 and then in the 72,000-71,800 region. Resistance is in the 73,800-73,900 region which can be tested this week. A strong break above 73,900 will be very bullish. Such a break can take the Sensex up to 75,000-76,000 in the short term.

The outlook will turn negative only if the Sensex declines below 71,800. In that case, a fall to 71,000 and even 70,000 can be seen.

Medium-term view: From a big picture perspective, Sensex will gain bullish momentum if it manages to surpass 74,000 decisively. If that happens now, then there is room for the Sensex to touch 78,000 on the upside.

Strong support is in the 70,000-69,000 region. Sensex has to decline below 69,000 in order to become bearish. That looks less likely at the moment.

DOW JONES (39,131.53)

The rise to 39,300 that we have been expecting for some time almost happened last week. After staying stable in the first half of the week, the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose to a high of 39,282.28 on Friday. It has closed the week at 39,131.53, up 1.3 per cent.

Outlook: The Dow Jones is now poised at a very crucial juncture. The region around 39,400 is an important resistance. Whether the index breaks above this resistance or not will decide the next move.

A break above 39,400 will take the Dow Jones up to 40,400. On the other hand, a reversal from around 39,400 could trigger a strong corrective fall to 37,000 or even lower.

Broadly, we see that the Dow Jones is ripe for a correction. But whether that fall is going to happen from 39,400 itself or after an extended rise to 40,400 will have to be seen.

bl.portfolio video

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



TECH QUERY



GURUMURTHY K, bl.research bureau

What is the technical outlook for Asian Paints?

Kaushik

Asian Paints (₹2,984.80): The stock has been in a prolonged consolidation phase for more than two years now. The overall trend is up. The current consolidation is happening in the form of a pennant formation. Important support is around ₹2,900. Below that, the region around ₹2,700 is a very strong support. We expect the stock to sustain above ₹2,900 itself. As such, the chances are high for Asian Paints share price to go up to



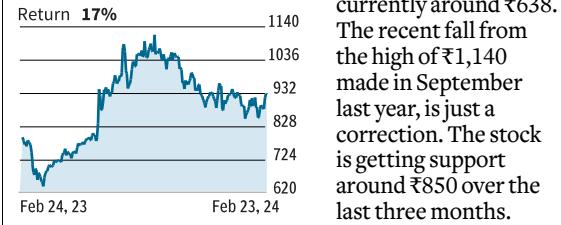
₹3,500-3,600 over the next couple of quarters. A decisive break above ₹3,600 will be very bullish from a long-term perspective. Such a break will take Asian Paints share price upto ₹4,700-4,800 over the next couple of years. Long-term investors with a minimum time-frame of two years can buy Asian Paints now.

Accumulate if a dip to ₹2,800 is seen. Keep a stop-loss at ₹2,320. Trail the stop-loss up to ₹3,300 as soon as the stock moves up to ₹3,850. Move the stop-loss further up to ₹4,100 when the price touches ₹4,400. Exit the stock at ₹4,700. The bullish view could go wrong if the stock declines below ₹2,700. In that case, a fall to ₹2,400 is possible.

What is the outlook for Piramal Enterprises? Can this stock be bought at current levels? I am a long-term investor. I can hold the stock for a minimum of five years.

Pooja Sharma, Delhi

Piramal Enterprises (₹932.70): The long-term outlook is bullish. The bounce from the low of ₹630.20 made in March 2023 is very significant. It has happened from just above the 200-month moving average, which is currently around ₹638.



The recent fall from the high of ₹1,140 made in September last year, is just a correction. The stock is getting support around ₹850 over the last three months. Below that, the region

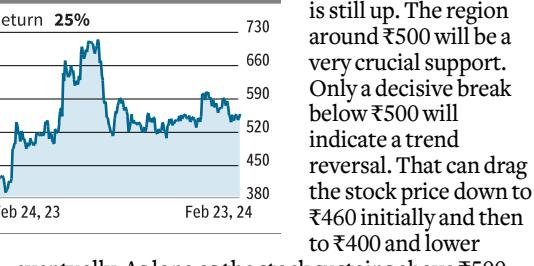
around ₹730 is a very strong support. Resistance is at ₹1,140. A strong break above it can take Piramal Enterprises share price up to ₹1,530 or ₹1,650 over the next couple of years. If the stock moves up from here itself and breaks above ₹1,140, then that would form an inverted head and shoulder pattern on the charts. This will strengthen the bullish case.

Long-term investors can buy Piramal Enterprises now. Accumulate on dips at ₹780. Keep a stop-loss at ₹570. Trail the stop-loss up to ₹1,120 as soon as the stock moves up to ₹1,260. Move the stop-loss further up to ₹1,310 when the price touches ₹1,380. Exit the shares at ₹1,450.

What is the three-month outlook for Shivalik Bimetal Controls?

Ashish

Shivalik Bimetal Controls (₹555.30): The stock price surged to a high of ₹730 in July last year and then witnessed a sharp fall. The price has been oscillating between ₹500 and ₹600 since August last year. The overall trend is still up. The region around ₹500 will be a very crucial support.



Only a decisive break below ₹500 will indicate a trend reversal. That can drag the stock price down to ₹460 initially and then to ₹400 and lower eventually. As long as the stock sustains above ₹500, the trend will remain up. Resistance is around ₹630. A decisive break above ₹630 will open the doors for Shivalik Bimetal Controls share price to target ₹950 on the upside from a long-term perspective. If you want to play this stock for a three-month period, then wait for dips and buy at ₹520 and ₹510. Keep a stop-loss at ₹480. Trail the stop-loss up to ₹540 when the price moves up to ₹565. Revise the stop-loss further up to ₹570 when the price touches ₹590. Exit at ₹610.

Send your queries to techtrail@thehindu.co.in

MOVERS & SHAKERS

AKHIL NALLAMUTHU, bl. research bureau

Astral (₹2,075.3)

Hits record high



accumulate if the price dips to ₹1,920. Place stop-loss at ₹1,750. When the stock rallies past ₹2,300, alter the stop-loss to ₹2,200. When the price rises to ₹2,400, tighten the stop-loss to ₹2,360. Exit at ₹2,500.

Colgate Palmolive (India) (₹2,547.2)

Sharp rally expected



accumulate at ₹2,500. Place stop-loss at ₹2,400 initially. Revise this to ₹2,580 when the stock touches ₹2,650. Raise the stop-loss further up to ₹2,620 when the share price goes up to ₹2,700. Book profits at ₹2,750.

Dhanuka Agritech (₹1,165.4)

Uptrend resumes



Place stop-loss at ₹990 initially. When the stock surpasses ₹1,300, modify the stop-loss to ₹1,230. When the stock touches ₹1,400, raise the stop-loss further to ₹1,350. Liquidate the longs at ₹1,450.

Dollar: Upmove loses steam

CURRENCY OUTLOOK. INR can strengthen on weak greenback

Gurumurthy K
bl. research bureau

The upmove in the US dollar index that was in place since the beginning of this year seems to have lost steam. It faced strong resistance near 105 last month and has been coming down since then. The index fell to a low of 103.43 before closing at 103.94, down 0.33 per cent for the week. The US 10Yr Treasury yield, on the other hand, remained stable and range bound last week.

DATA WATCH
The coming week has a few important data releases that will need a close watch. The US GDP numbers will be released on Wednesday. This will be followed by the release of Personal Consumption Expenditure (PCE), the US Federal Reserve's inflation gauge, on Thursday.

The outcome of this data can influence the yields movement. Finally, the jobs number and the unemployment rate data will be out on Friday.

DOLLAR: BEARISH
The near-term outlook is negative for the dollar index (103.94). Strong resistances are at 104.50 and then around 105.

The index can fall to 103 and 102.50 in the coming weeks. A subsequent break below 102.50 will see the dollar index falling towards 101 in a month or two.

A strong break above 105 is needed to turn the outlook positive. Only in that case, the dollar index can rise to 104.5-105 per cent in the coming weeks. Thereafter, a fresh fall is possible.

EURO: RISE MORE
The euro (EURUSD: 1.0821) rose to a high of 1.0888 and then has come down from there. Strong support is there in the 1.08-1.0780 region. The

near-term outlook is bullish to see a rise to 1.09 – an immediate resistance. A break above 1.09 can boost the momentum. Such a break will take the euro up to 1.10-1.11 in the short term.

The outlook will turn negative only if the euro declines below 1.0780. In that case, the currency can fall to 1.07 and lower.

CRUCIAL RESISTANCE

The Indian Rupee (USDINR: 82.95) is showing some signs of a gradual recovery. The domestic currency touched a high of 82.84 before closing the week at 82.95. On the offshore segment, the rupee has closed higher at 82.86.

There is room for the rupee to strengthen in the short term. Immediate resistance is at 82.75. A break above it can take the rupee up to 82.70-82.65 this week. The chances of the rupee strengthening beyond 82.

Valuation Radar: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly

The Benchmark indices, Sensex and Nifty 50 gained 1.0 and 0.8 per cent respectively last week. BSE Realty gained the most by 4.1 per cent followed by BSE Consumer Durables 2 per cent and BSE FMCG 1.5 per cent. BSE Oil and Gas and BSE IT declined 1.9 and 1.1 per cent respectively

	Nifty 50	Sensex	Auto	Bankex	Capital Goods	Consumer Durables	FMCG	Healthcare	IT	Metal	Oil & Gas	Power	PSU	Realty	Teck
P/E	22.9	25.0	29.7	16.1	47.0	85.7	41.6	44.5	33.4	18.9	8.7	26.5	11.4	61.8	38.6
P/BV	3.9	3.7	5.7	2.3	7.5	11.0	9.2	5.4	8.5	2.2	1.8	4.0	2.0	5.9	8.4
Dividend Yield	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.4	1.7	0.5	1.6	4.3	2.7	1.4	2.3	0.2	1.5
Weekly Return (%)	0.8 ▲	1.0 ▲	1.0 ▲	1.1 ▲	1.3 ▲	2.0 ▲	1.5 ▲	0.7 ▲	-1.1 ▼	-0.8 ▼	-1.9 ▼	1.4 ▲	-0.7 ▼	4.1 ▲	-0.6 ▼
Monthly Return (%)	3.5 ▲	2.9 ▲	11.5 ▲	4.2 ▲	0.1 ▲	1.9 ▲	-2.6 ▼	7.4 ▲	2.6 ▲	5.4 ▲	14.4 ▲	9.8 ▲	13.4 ▲	12.3 ▲	1.3 ▲
Annual Return (%)	26.8 ▲	22.7 ▲	59.2 ▲	17.4 ▲	65.1 ▲	37.1 ▲	19.6 ▲	62.9 ▲	27.4 ▲	35.6 ▲	65.3 ▲	100.5 ▲	100.2 ▲	136.3 ▲	23.8 ▲

The sector indices are disseminated by S&P BSE.

Company	CMP	EPS	PE	PB	Year End	Sales	Profit	Sales	Profit	Wkly	Rtn	ROCE	DER	Yr/High	Yr/Low
3M India	30398.1	484.9	62.7	18.6	202312	1.3	8.4	7.9	28.2	-1.6	30.7	0.0	39809.7	721614.5	
A B B [2]	5389.6	58.9	19.5	19.2	202312	13.3	12.8	20.0	61.9	19.2	22.9	0.0	5523.1	3056.0	
Aarti Drugs	530.5	19.7	27.3	4.1	202312	-8.7	0.0	-0.6	8.8	0.3	15.3	0.5	645.0	310.8	
AAVAS Financiers	1466.9	6.0	24.4	3.3	202312	23.5	9.0	26.1	13.6	3.2	9.5	3.0	1935.8	1335.0	
Abbott India	28866.2	531.1	53.2	19.3	202312	6.5	29.0	24.6	9.3	2.8	39.9	0.0	29628.2	21990.7	
ACC	2678.1	89.2	30.0	3.4	202312	8.3	212.8	11.0	131.1	-1.6	9.7	0.0	2760.0	1593.5	
Aditya Engg. Sol	108.1	1.0	10.4	1.0	202312	10.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.1	1.0	0.0	108.1	108.1	
Adani Energy [1]	3266.2	1.8	38.4	10.2	202312	6.5	10.3	1.7	84.2	1.3	9.1	1.7	3118.8	1030.5	
Adani Greens [1]	1923.5	10.4	185.1	38.4	202312	13.3	17.0	42.3	16.3	0.7	10.8	1916.6	439.4		
Adani Ports [2]	1320.1	40.9	32.3	5.9	202312	44.6	67.9	33.4	68.0	1.9	9.4	1.2	1332.0	533.7	
Adani Power	559.3	6.0	9.3	2.3	202312	67.3	3111.9	20.7	130.4	-0.2	13.8	1.9	589.3	132.6	
Adani Total Gas [1]	1029.4	21.4	20.6	5.2	202312	4.6	17.6	3.4	12.8	2.3	20.7	0.5	1259.9	210.7	
Aditya Birla [5]	495.4	24.6	20.2	5.2	202312	8.7	25.9	2.5	14.2	3.3	20.7	0.5	495.4	20.7	
Aditya Birla Cfg	1872.2	10.4	18.0	2.0	202312	25.6	8.4	2.6	10.3	0.6	17.7	0.6	1872.2	177.0	
Aegis Logistics [1]	443.4	14.6	30.3	4.3	202312	-10.2	3.8	1.1	24.3	1.1	17.1	0.5	471.2	280.0	
Aether Industri	864.8	9.5	90.3	5.2	202312	-7.0	-7.0	8.1	6.1	0.1	18.5	0.2	1210.8	778.0	
Affle India [2]	1136.0	19.4	58.5	6.4	202312	32.6	11.4	15.5	8.6	2.2	25.3	1.8	0.0	39.2	546.6
Alia Engineering [2]	3750.3	12.1	30.8	5.2	202312	-5.2	-0.7	4.9	16.4	2.1	25.3	0.1	4642.5	261.0	
Ajanta Pharma [2]	2126.0	58.4	36.7	7.7	202312	13.7	56.1	8.2	19.2	-1.2	22.2	0.0	2355.1	1136.8	
Alka [2]	104.0	1.0	10.4	1.0	202312	1.7	6.9	0.3	1.0	0.1	1.0	0.0	104.0	104.0	
Alembic Pharma [2]	1046.0	30.0	34.9	6.6	202312	8.1	48.0	6.1	17.3	4.6	20.3	0.0	1046.0	307.8	
Alkem Lab [2]	5419.6	14.1	38.3	6.6	202312	9.3	20.2	1.6	12.7	0.1	13.0	0.2	5519.1	283.1	
Alky Amides [1]	281.1	31.1	70.1	9.3	202312	-17.1	-2.6	-11.8	-29.7	-1.2	27.3	0.1	2794.6	211.9	
Alka Industries [1]	29.6	-1.9	-0.4	-0.2	202312	-27.0	-24.3	-5.2	-1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.6	-26.8	
Almarai Fmcs [1]	854.6	49.5	17.2	3.0	202312	15.4	10.7	29.4	-1.0	18.5	0.0	922.0	546.6		
Amra Jaya Envir [1]	101.1	1.0	10.4	1.0	202312	-27.0	-24.3	-5.2	-1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	101.1	-20.6	
Amul Embers [1]	388.2	37.4	102.6	14.3	202312	17.3	71.1	18.6	3.7	4.1	20.1	0.0	4203.0	329.7	
Analysys [2]	109.7	83.6	13.1	2.3	202312	26.4	4.9	3.2	25.2	2.6	0.0	0.0	1151.5	814.3	
B															
B H E [1]	229.8	-0.3	3.1	0.0	202312	6.8	-45.1	4.3	-115.4	1.7	2.4	0.2	243.3	66.3	
B P C [1]	87.0	1.0	10.4	1.0	202312	1.3	-2.7	-0.2	-2.4	0.1	1.0	0.0	87.0	-2.7	
Bajaj Auto [2]	840.1	14.4	32.3	8.1	202312	31.4	38.0	1.5	31.3	2.5	26.5	0.0	8650.0	362.5	
Bajaj Finance [2]	6698.3	23.0	30.0	6.0	202312	32.1	24.2	3.0	28.0	1.2	18.8	0.0	7800.0	547.3	
Bajaj Holdings [2]	8750.8	5.0	16.5	2.3	202312	9.8	27.9	12.2	8.1	2.2	12.7	0.3	8900.0	579.1	
Balaji Amines [2]	2234.3	56.9	39.4	4.5	202312	-34.6	-21.1	-3.6	-52.4	-1.3	30.0	0.1	2736.4	897.7	
Balkrishna Inds [2]	2332.4	64.4	36.2	5.5	202312	50.1	18.8	-8.3	6.1	-0.3	14.4	0.2	2793.7	1912.3	
Bamiprakash Chini [1]	306.9	29.0	13.1	1.3	202312	25.4	97.3	11.9	15.9	2.2	16.4	0.0	485.5	349.5	
Bandhan Bank [2]	2689.4	36.6	23.8	7.4	202312	21.0	11.2	3.5	23.5	2.4	20.0	0.0	2689.4	154.0	
Bank of Baroda [2]	6269.8	36.6	23.8	7.4	202312	21.0	11.2	3.5	23.5	2.4	20.0	0.0	6269.8	154.0	
Bank of India [2]	136.8	14.1	9.7	1.0	202312	19.7	11.0	3.8	10.6	-5.1	0.0	0.0	156.4	66.1	
Bank of Maha [2]	61.0	5.2	11.7												

Parv Shah

bl. research bureau

Having a solid credit history and a great credit score are essential for one's financial stability—and access to favourable lending options. Credit score typically ranges at 300-900 and indicates an individual's creditworthiness, which is used by banks and other financial institutions to assess one's ability to repay loans on time. A good credit score can open doors to higher credit limits and favourable interest rates. Here are the ways to build your credit score and improve it.

APPLY FOR CREDIT CARD

To build a credit history, one can either apply for credit card or take a loan. However, for a start, secured credit card is typically a preferred way to build a credit history. A secured credit card is one wherein the cardholder is required to make a one-time refundable deposit which can act as a collateral when she can't make the payment online.

Further, a credit card, when used properly, can help you with a good score while applying for home loan. However, do note, one should never withdraw cash with credit card as this can entail substantial interest charges, typically 2.5-3 per cent per month, varying from bank to bank.

KEEP CUR IN CHECK

Credit utilisation ratio (CUR) is also one of the most influential factors impacting your credit score. CUR is basically the ratio of the amount of money you owe on all your credit cards and loans compared to the total credit you are allowed.

The higher you spend using credit, the higher is your CUR, which negatively impacts your credit score. Typically, having a

**THINGS TO DO**

- Pay your dues promptly
- Maintain low credit utilisation ratio
- Review credit report regularly

CUR lower than 30 per cent is suggested. Exceeding this limit may harm your credit score, reducing your eligibility for borrowing from lenders.

If you find your CUR approaching or exceeding 30 per cent, consider requesting a credit limit increase from your card issuer or utilising alternative payment methods, such as a debit card, to maintain your credit score.

PAY EMIS, BILLS PROMPTLY
Timely payment of dues consistently is essential to maintain and improve a good credit score. Any defaults or delays in EMI pay-

ments can lead to a negative impact on your credit score. Further, while payment of minimum amount (typically, 5 per cent of the amount) can spare you late payment charges, it is always better to pay more than minimum dues on your credit card.

Paying only the minimum due amount can lead you into a debt trap which, in turn, can affect your credit score adversely.

MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

One might be very much tempted to make applications for credit cards and loan in order to establish a credit history. However, do note that each such application can lead to credit inquiries by banks or other financial institutions into your credit report.

There can be two types of credit inquiries — soft and hard. While a soft inquiry is kind of a routine one not linked to any loan application and can't impact credit score, a hard inquiry can be directly linked with a loan applica-

tion and can lower your credit score in the near term. Multiple such applications at the same time would mean a credit-hungry behaviour and hence, there should be a gap of a few months while making a new application.

MONITOR CREDIT REPORT

Reviewing your credit report periodically is an important part of your financial and credit journey. A credit report consists of a summary of all your credit accounts and helps you understand the factors affecting your score — such as CUR, credit history (in years) and credit mix i.e. mortgages, loans, credit cards, etc.

In India, credit reports are prepared by four credit information companies (CIC) governed by RBI, namely TransUnion CIBIL, Experian, Equifax and CRIF High Mark.

One can obtain credit reports from these entities. Further, one can also check whether there is any discrepancy in the reports and can rectify errors, if any.

SIMPLYPUT.**Broker ratings**

Hari Viswanath

bl. research bureau

Veena: Why are you having that confused look on your face?

Ram: I just got this report on a stock from a broker. The rating is overweight, but there is not much upside to their target price from current levels. What's the point?

Veena: Ha! You should patiently go through the report fully and not read just the first few pages. Then you will get it. In later pages in their reports, they explain what their ratings mean. As such, there is no standardised format for sell side reports. Each use their own ratings methodology. For example, you can be positive on an absolute basis, or on a relative basis on a stock and the ratings can be Overweight/Buy/Strong Buy/Outperform etc, but they can have different meanings.

Ram: I am more confused now!

Veena: Lol! Let me explain. If you see a few JP Morgan reports, their top rating for stocks — Overweight — is defined as expectation that the stock will outperform the average total return of stocks in the analyst's coverage universe. And this, within a time frame of 6-12 months, Barclays'

Overweight rating too is similar, though the benchmark here is the industry coverage universe and over a 12-month horizon. So, if you see in these cases, it is more of a relative rating methodology.

On the other hand, brokerages such as Jefferies and Deutsche Bank or Dolat have an absolute rating system. Jefferies defines its buy rating as an expectation that the stock will provide a total return of 12 per cent or more within a 12-month period. Hold implies expectation that total stock returns (including dividends) are likely to be in the 10-15 per cent range, while in the case of underperform rating the stock is expected to decline by 10 per cent or more over the next one year. For each brokerage with absolute return ratings, the percentage may vary and you need to check in the report.

Ram: Hmm...

Veena: Yes! If you go through numerous sell side reports, there will also be cases where the target price is way above current levels, but the analyst may have hold rating. It could be due to relative ranking methodology, or some brokerages might also factor stock volatility or certain risk elements into their ratings.

Ram: Ok, I understand it better now.

Veena: Understand what?

Ram: Read the fine print like we should in anything!

Veena: Read thoroughly before making your investing decision and don't just go with the headlines.

INSURANCE QUERY.

SARBVIR SINGH

I am a little bit confused about some of the health insurance add-ons — top-up, super top-up and unlimited restoration. How and when are these useful? Please explain in detail.

Sukhwinder

I am happy to see this question being asked because despite the rising awareness about health insurance, there are many features of health policies that remain relatively less understood. So let me try to make a clear distinction between the three.

First up, a Top Up plan is an add-on cover to go with a health insurance policy. It offers additional protection, over and above the sum insured under your basic health insurance plan.

Let's say you have a health cover of ₹10 lakh with a Top Up plan of an additional ₹90 lakh; your effective cover would be ₹1 crore.

However, the condition is that you can use the Top Up cover when your medical bills exceed ₹10 lakh (the threshold limit or the deductible amount). For instance, if you undergo medical treatment and the total bill amounts to ₹20 lakh, you are covered for ₹20 lakh because the first ₹10 lakh would be covered by your base health insurance plan, and the rest with the Top Up plan.

This is a great feature for those who are otherwise healthy but encounter an unexpected illness and incur a huge medical bill. However, the condition is that you can make a claim only once during policy term above the deductible limit. If you get medical treatments multiple times a year with each claim amounting to less than ₹10 lakh, it will not get triggered.

This is where the Super Top Up Plan comes into the picture. Similar to a Top Up plan, this feature gives you the additional benefit of cumulating all your claims in a year to determine if the threshold limit is exceeded. In the above example, if you make four claims of ₹5 lakh each in a year, a Top Up plan



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would not be helpful since the threshold limit of ₹10 lakh is not exceeded in any of the claims individually. So your first two claims (₹10 lakh in total) would be paid by your base plan, the other two claims would not be covered at all. On the other hand, if you have a Super Top Up Plan, it would be triggered after the second claim as the threshold amount is hit when you combine the first two claims. So the third and fourth claims would be covered by the Super Top Up.

Now, enters the third option — Unlimited Restoration benefit. Under the most modern version of this add-on feature, every time a claim is made, the sum insured is restored in its entirety and can be used again for any subsequent hospitalisation. So, if you have a floater policy of ₹10 lakh with Unlimited Restoration benefit, and you make a claim of ₹10 lakh, then no need to worry. During the same policy year, the sum insured would be replenished unlimited number of times for same illness as well as an unrelated illness, and for all the family members (in case of a family-floater plan). Thus, in case other family member requires to make a claim of another ₹10 lakh, it will be payable.

The unlimited restoration feature protects you against multiple claims in a single year, but with each claim paid till ₹10 lakh only. As a final thought, it's important to underline that all these features have their own benefits but none of them is a substitute for a higher sum insured. It is always advisable to go for that. And then you can boost your protection by suitable add-on from among these.

The writer is Joint Group CEO, PBFinTech
Send your queries to
insurancequeries@thehindu.co.in

Bond yields**10-year benchmark G-Sec yield (%)**

Latest 7.08 | Month-ago 7.18 | Year-ago 7.37

**Corporate bond yields (%)**

1-year

3-year

5-year

AAA

AA

A

AAA

AA+

AA

NBFC bond yields (%)

1-year

3-year

5-year

AAA

AA

A

AAA

AA+

AA

Yields on government securities of different maturities (%)

91-day Treasury Bill

7.05

364-day Treasury Bill

7.09

3-year G-Sec

7.07

5-year G-Sec

7.09

Feb 24, 2023

Feb 23, 2024

Source: Bloomberg (FIMMDA data)

Note: All data as on February 23, 2024 or latest available

Safe Investing • bl • 9**ALERTS.****Family protection plan 'Legacy Plus' launched**

Edelweiss Tokio Life Insurance has introduced Legacy Plus, a family protection plan designed to provide life cover for two generations while ensuring income stability for three generations. It offers optional Accrual of Survival Benefit, allowing policyholders to choose between withdrawing or accumulating income. The plan also allows for partial withdrawals from accumulated corpus to address the financial requirements of the policyholder or their family. Additionally, it offers Early Income option, providing a source of income to policyholder from the end of first year of policy term.

PNB MetLife launches small-cap fund

PNB MetLife India Insurance Company has unveiled the PMLI Small Cap Fund, an addition to its Unit Linked Insurance Plan (ULIP) segment, which will invest in small-cap companies. The NFO subscription will be available until February 29. Interested investors can engage with this new fund through a selection of ULIPs, including the PNB MetLife Smart Platinum Plan, PNB MetLife Goal Ensuring Multiplier Plan, and PNB MetLife Mera Wealth Plan.

In partnership to enhance rural accessibility**Small Savings Schemes - Interest rates**

Small Savings Scheme	Interest rate (%)		
	Oct 1 - Dec 31, 2023	Jan 1 - Mar 31, 2024	Compounding frequency
Post Office Savings Deposit	4.0	4.0	Annually
1 year	6.9	6.9	Quarterly
2 year	7.0	7.0	Quarterly
3 year	7.0	7.1	Quarterly
5 year	7.5	7.5	Quarterly
Post Office Recurring Deposit (5 year)	6.7	6.7	Quarterly
Senior Citizen Savings Scheme	8.2	8.2	Quarterly and paid
Post Office Monthly Income Scheme	7.4	7.4	Monthly and paid
National Savings Certificate	7.7	7.7	Annually
Public Provident Fund	7.1	7.1	Annually
Kisan Vikas Patra	7.5*	7.5*	Annually
Sukanya Samridh Yojana	8.0	8.2	Annually

Note: Small savings rate have been revised in the latest quarterly reset on December 29, 2023 #Will mature in 115 months Source: Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, GoI

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	7.5	7	6.5	Dec 11
Deutsche Bank	7	8	8	7.5	Jan 03
HSBC	4.5	6.25	7.25	7	Sep 07



bl.rating	Scheme Name	Latest NAV (₹)	Latest Corpus (₹ Cr)	Expense Ratio (%)	Trailing Returns (%)	Sortino Ratio (%)	
		Regular	Direct	1 Year CAGR	3 Year CAGR	5 Year CAGR	10 Year CAGR
★★★★★	Nippon Ind Small Cap	144.4	45894	1.5	0.7 58.4 36.9 31.6 28.3 0.52		
★★★★★	Quant Small Cap	243.9	15664	1.7	0.8 74.0 45.7 38.6 20.9 0.60		
★★★★★	AxIS Small Cap	89.5	19531	1.6	0.5 43.1 28.7 28.1 24.6 0.53		
★★★★★	Kotak Small Cap	222.0	14426	1.7	0.4 37.6 25.3 27.9 23.2 0.48		
★★★★★	DSP Small Cap	165.6	13859	1.7	0.8 49.0 29.4 27.1 24.6 0.48		
★★★★★	HDFC Small Cap	122.1	28607	1.6	0.6 52.7 32.8 24.9 22.1 0.42		
★★★★★	SBI Small Cap	151.1	24862	1.6	0.7 37.4 25.4 25.9 26.9 0.51		

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		Regular	Direct	1 Year CAGR	3 Year CAGR	5 Year CAGR	10 Year CAGR
★★★★★	Baroda BNP Paribas Multi Cap	239.8	2195	2.1	1.1 41.6 22.7 21.4 16.7 0.41		
-	ICICI Pru Multicap	676.9	10775	1.8	0.9 47.5 23.2 20.0 18.3 0.36		
-	Invesco India Multicap	109.4	3132	1.9	0.7 42.1 20.6 20.0 19.1 0.37		
-	Nippon Ind Multi Cap	241.4	25723	1.7	0.9 47.8 29.6 21.5 18.1 0.36		
-	Quant Active	630.0	8143	1.8	0.8 50.8 30.6 30.3 24.6 0.54		
-	Sundaram Multi Cap	324.5	2399	2.0	0.9 40.3 22.0 19.7 18.2 0.36		

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		Regular	Direct	1 Year CAGR	3 Year CAGR	5 Year CAGR	10 Year CAGR
★★★★★	Baroda BNP Paribas Mid Cap	54.2	9962	1.7	0.4 27.9 21.1 26.8 18.3 0.49		
★★★★★	Quant Mid Cap	211.1	4858	1.9	0.8 63.0 39.0 31.9 20.3 0.60		
★★★★★	AxIS Midcap	89.8	24534	1.6	0.5 36.6 19.0 21.3 21.0 0.45		
★★★★★	Edelweiss Mid Cap	77.5	4915	1.5	0.4 51.2 25.9 25.9 23.3 0.47		
★★★★★	Motilal Oswal Midcap	78.0	7972	1.8	0.6 56.9 34.5 27.7 - 0.46		
★★★★★	Nippon Ind Growth	3299.8	24366	1.7	0.9 56.5 28.8 26.4 21.4 0.49		
★★★★★	Baroda BNP Paribas Mid Cap	85.8	1746	2.1	0.6 47.3 23.8 24.1 20.8 0.46		
★★★★★	HDFC Mid-Cap Oppo	158.5	59027	1.5	0.8 57.8 30.2 25.8 22.5 0.47		
★★★★★	Invesco India Midcap	129.7	4169	1.9	0.6 49.5 23.6 23.5 21.8 0.45		
★★★★★	Kotak Emerging Equity	103.3	39027	1.5	0.4 37.0 22.8 24.1 23.2 0.43		
★★★★★	SBI Magnum Midcap	202.0	15957	1.7	0.8 39.9 24.4 24.4 20.2 0.44		
★★★★★	Tata Mid Cap Growth	365.6	3224	1.9	0.8 51.3 24.1 23.5 21.7 0.45		
★★★★★	Taurus Mid Cap	112.9	119	2.6	2.2 51.4 23.9 23.3 21.0 0.45		
★★★★★	UTI Mid Cap	255.4	10072	1.7	0.8 39.4 21.2 22.4 20.5 0.42		
★★★★★	DSP Midcap	119.8	16556	1.7	0.7 42.4 17.0 19.1 19.8 0.38		
★★★★★	Franklin Ind Prima	219.7	40081	1.8	0.7 47.4 20.8 19.8 20.2 0.36		
★★★★★	HSBC Midcap	314.8	9467	1.8	0.7 53.7 23.1 20.5 21.7 0.37		
★★★★★	ICICI Pru Midcap	242.1	5419	1.0	0.5 21.1 25.1 22.4 20.6 0.40		
★★★★★	Aditya Birla SL Midcap	64.0	4991	1.9	1.1 45.2 23.8 19.7 18.7 0.36		
★	Sundaram Mid Cap	1105.5	10112	1.8	1.0 52.9 24.6 20.9 20.4 0.36		
-	LIC MF Midcap	23.6	239	2.5	1.6 47.1 18.7 18.4 - 0.32		

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★★★★★	Nippon Ind Growth	3299.8	24366	1.7	0.9 56.5 28.8 26.4 21.4 0.49		
★★★★★	Baroda BNP Paribas Mid Cap						

bl.rating	Scheme Name	Latest NAV (₹)	Latest Corpus (₹Cr)	Expense Ratio (%)		Trailing Returns (%)					AA & Below
				Regular	Direct	1 Month Absolute	3 Month Absolute	6 Month Absolute	1 Year CAGR		
★★★★★	ICICI Pru Short Term	54.0	18691	1.1	0.5	7.7	6.4	5.8	7.2	9.82	-
★★★★★	UTI Short Duration	28.6	2379.0	1.0	0.3	7.6	5.8	7.0	5.2	4.82	-
★★★★★	Aditya Birla SL Short Term	42.7	6778.0	0.9	0.3	7.4	5.9	5.6	7.0	5.06	-
★★★★★	Axis Short Term	27.7	7541.0	0.9	0.3	7.3	5.6	5.2	6.8	1.52	-
★★★★★	HDFC Short Term Debt	28.6	14373.0	0.7	0.4	7.7	5.8	5.5	7.0	8.08	-
★★★★★	Bandhan Bond - Short Term	51.2	8554.0	0.8	0.3	7.4	5.1	4.9	6.4	-	-
★★★★★	Baroda BNP Paribas Short Duration	26.3	226.0	1.1	0.4	7.6	5.3	5.0	6.0	4.38	-
★★★★★	DSP Short Term	41.9	3036.0	1.0	0.3	7.2	5.1	4.7	6.2	-	-
★★★★★	Kotak Bond Short Term	46.9	13635.0	1.2	0.4	7.2	5.1	4.9	6.4	-	-
★★★★★	Nippon Ind Short Term	47.3	5968.0	0.9	0.4	7.4	5.3	5.4	6.6	3.10	-
★★★★★	SBI Short Term Debt	28.8	12881.0	0.9	0.4	7.2	5.4	5.0	6.4	4.26	-
★★★★★	Sundaram Short Duration	39.8	199.0	0.8	0.3	7.3	5.5	5.3	4.4	-	-
★★★★★	Mirae Asset Short Duration	23.8	3331.0	0.8	0.3	7.3	5.0	4.7	6.2	-	-
★★★★★	Tata Short Term Bond	43.3	2250.0	1.2	0.3	7.3	5.1	4.7	6.2	-	-
★★★★★	Canara Robeco Short Duration	23.0	427.0	1.0	0.4	6.7	4.9	4.5	5.8	-	-
★★★★★	Invesco India Short Duration	321.0	443.0	1.2	0.4	7.3	4.9	4.6	6.1	-	-
★★★★★	Bank of India Short Term Income	23.8	88.0	1.1	0.5	6.5	16.4	11.9	3.6	-	-
★★★★★	Franklin Ind Short Term Income	5149.4	13.0	0.0	0.0	5.2	7.8	9.5	5.5	-	-
★★★★★	Growth Short Duration	1885.2	38.0	1.6	0.4	5.8	4.2	3.8	4.3	-	-

CASH FUNDS

LIQUID FUNDS

- Aditya Birla SL Liquid	382.7	38638	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.2	7.1	7.2	-
- Axis Liquid	2643.4	25538	0.2	0.2	7.3	7.2	7.1	7.2	-
- HDFC Liquid	4661.7	50906	0.3	0.2	7.3	7.2	7.0	7.1	-
- HSBK Liquid	2368.5	20475	0.2	0.1	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.2	-
- ICICI Pru Liquid	351.7	45939	0.3	0.2	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	0.20
- Kotak Liquid	4803.1	29657	0.3	0.2	7.2	7.2	7.0	7.1	-
- Nippon Ind Liquid	5798.7	25877	0.3	0.2	7.3	7.2	7.0	7.1	-
- SBI Liquid	3717.1	64615	0.3	0.2	7.2	7.2	7.0	7.1	-
- Tata Liquid	3742.0	24373	0.3	0.2	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	-
- UTI Liquid	3897.0	22272	0.3	0.2	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.2	-

OVERNIGHT FUNDS

- HDFC Overnight	3499.3	10721	0.2	0.1	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.6	-
- SBI Overnight	3823.8	16587	0.2	0.1	6.4	6.6	6.6	6.6	-
- UTI Overnight	3222.8	7044	0.1	0.1	6.5	6.7	6.7	6.7	-

ARBITRAGE FUNDS

- Aditya Birla SL Arbitrage	24.2	9798	1.0	0.4	6.8	8.1	7.6	7.5	-
- Bandhan Arbitrage	29.6	5374	1.1	0.4	6.7	8.2	7.6	7.5	-
- Edelweiss Arbitrage	17.7	8135	1.1	0.4	8.2	8.6	7.8	7.6	-
- HDFC Arbitrage	27.9	10219	1.0	0.5	7.1	8.3	7.6	7.5	-
- ICICI Pru Equity-Arbitrage	31.2	16307	0.9	0.3	6.6	8.1	7.6	7.5	-
- Invesco India Arbitrage	29.1	12849	1.1	0.4	7.0	8.3	7.7	7.6	0.10
- Kotak Equity Arbitrage	34.1	35998	1.0	0.4	7.5	8.6	7.9	7.8	-
- Nippon Ind Arbitrage	24.2	13073	1.1	0.4	7.0	8.3	7.6	7.4	-
- SBI Arbitrage Opport	30.8	26630	1.0	0.4	6.9	8.1	7.6	7.7	-
- UTI Arbitrage	31.9	4472	0.9	0.4	6.9	8.2	7.7	7.5	-

bl.rating	Scheme Name	Latest NAV (₹)	Latest Corpus (₹Cr)	Expense Ratio (%)		Trailing Returns (%)					AA & Below
				Regular	Direct	1 Year CAGR	2 Year CAGR	3 Year CAGR	5 Year CAGR	10 Year CAGR (%)	
★★★★★	ICICI Pru Ultra Short Duration	3660.7	5319	1.2	0.4	6.9	5.9	6.6	4.9	5.97	-
★★★★★	UTI Ultra Short Duration	3855.3	1815	1.0	0.4	6.9	5.8	5.9	5.1	8.71	-
★★★★★	Aditya Birla SL Savings	494.4	12852	0.6	0.3	7.4	6.2	5.5	6.2	4.83	-
★★★★★	ICICI Pru Ultra Short Term	25.1	13854	0.8	0.4	7.1	6.0	5.4	6.1	8.42	-
★★★★★	PGM India Ultra Short Duration	31.1	293	0.9	0.3	6.7	5.7	4.9	6.6	-	-
★★★★★	Axis Ultra Short Term	13.4	4582	1.1	0.3	6.7	5.6	4.8	5.3	9.68	-
★★★★★	Bandhan Ultra Short Term	13.8	3704	0.4	0.3	7.2	6.0	5.1	5.6	-	-
★★★★★	Baroda BNP Paribas Ultra Short Duration	1397.2	1435	0.5	0.3	7.3	6.3	5.5	5.7	2.29	-
★★★★★	HDFC Ultra Short Term	13.7	12397	0.7	0.4	7.1	6.0	5.2	5.8	-	-
★★★★★	Invesco India Ultra Short Duration	2450.3	638	0.9	0.2	7.1	5.8	4.9	5.3	4.06	-
★★★★★	Kotak Savings	39.0	12414	0.8	0.4	7.0	5.9	5.1	5.6	0.90	-
★★★★★	SBI Magnum Ultra Short Duration	5417.0	10861	0.5	0.3	7.1	6.0	5.2	5.7	-	-
★★★★★	BOI Ultra Short Duration	2898.9	136	1.2	0.8	6.3	5.5	4.8	5.2	-	-
★★★★★	Canara Robeco Ultra Short Term	3468.0	487	1.0	0.4	6.5	5.4	4.5	4.8	-	-
★★★★★	DSP Ultra Short	3100.6	2629	1.0	0.3	6.8	5.6	4.8	5.1	-	-
★★★★★	Motilal Oswal Ultra Short Term										

Co-operatives can turn ordinary systems into industry-scale models: PM

CAPACITY CREATION. As part of world's largest grain storage plan, inaugurates 11 godowns in PACs

Shishir Sinha
New Delhi

Co-operatives can convert an ordinary system related to daily life into a huge industry system, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday. He also launched the world's largest grain storage plan in the co-operative sector with an investment of over ₹1.25 lakh crore.

In an event to launch multiple initiatives for the co-operative sector, the Prime Minister explained that a large task can be accomplished if smaller resources are put together and said that this model was followed in the ancient system of villages in India. "Co-operatives were the foundations of India's *Atmanirbhar* society. It is not just any system, but a belief, a spirit," Modi said, highlighting that this spirit of co-operatives is beyond the boundaries of systems and resources and produces exceptional results.

"It has the potential to convert an ordinary system related to daily life

into a huge industrial system, and a proven result of the changing face of the rural and agricultural economy," Modi said.

As part of a pilot project for the 'World's largest grain storage plan in the co-operative sector', the PM inaugurated 11 godowns in primary agricultural credit societies (PACS) in as many States. Under the programme, 700 lakh tonnes of storage capacity will be created over the next five years in the cooperative sector. He also laid the foundation for godowns and other agri infrastruc-



ture in 500 more PACS. "Today, we have launched the world's largest storage scheme for our farmers. Under this, thousands of warehouses and godowns will be constructed across the country," he said.

TRANSPARENCY IN POLLS

Modi also emphasised the importance of transparency in the election system in co-operatives, saying this would encourage more participation of people in the co-operative movement. The Prime Minister talked about various initiatives taken by the

government in the last 10 years for the growth of the co-operative sector as part of its vision of 'Sahakar se Samridhi', and highlighted the creation of a specific ministry for the sector.

Modi said the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act has been amended and PACS are being computerised. The Prime Minister also inaugurated a project for computerisation of 18,000 PACS across the country.

Referring to farmer producer organisations (FPOs), Modi said small farmers are becoming entrepreneurs and even exporting. "We had set a target of establishing 10,000 FPOs. We have already set up 8,000. Their success is being discussed at the global level now. Fishery and animal husbandry sectors are also benefiting from the co-operatives," he said.

Earlier, Cooperation Minister Amit Shah said the world's largest grain storage scheme would help create capacities for storing 100 per cent of India's production. He said the computerisation of 30,000 more PACS would be completed before the general elections.

After 'biased' reply on PM, Google says Gemini AI not reliable on politics

S Ronendra Singh
New Delhi

Tech giant Google on Saturday said that it has worked 'quickly' to address the issue of the Gemini AI tool, which earned the ire of the Indian government for its allegedly "biased" response to a question about Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"We've worked quickly to address this issue. Gemini is built as a creativity and productivity tool and may not always be reliable, especially when it comes to responding to some prompts about current events, political topics, or evolving news. This is something that we're constantly working on improving," a Google spokesperson said.

The company said Gemini is built in line with its AI principles, and has safeguards to anticipate and test for a wide range of safety risks. Google also prioritises identifying and preventing harmful or policy-violating responses from showing in Gemini, it said.

On Friday, a post on social



Google said Gemini is built in line with its AI principles, and has safeguards to anticipate a wide range of safety risks

media platform X triggered a debate on the programming of chatbots. The Centre also indicated it would take action against the company.

Asked whether Prime Minister Modi was a fascist, the AI tool said he was "accused of implementing policies some experts have characterised as fascist." The AI tool also added that "these accusations are based on a number of factors, including the BJP's Hindu nationalist ideology, its crackdown on dissent and its use of violence against religious

minorities." By contrast, when a similar question was asked about former US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, it gave no clear answer.

DIRECT VIOLATION

Reacting to a post by a verified account of a journalist, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State for Electronics and IT, took cognisance of the issue that alleged bias in Google Gemini. "These are direct violations of Rule 3(1)(b) of Intermediary Rules (IT rules) of the IT act and violations of several provisions of the Criminal code," he said on social media platform X tagging Google AI, Google India and the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY).

On Saturday again, Chandrasekhar made it clear to Google that explanations about unreliability of AI models do not absolve or exempt platforms from laws, and warned that India's digital *nagraks* "are not to be experimented on" with unreliable platforms and algorithms.

3 new criminal laws to come into effect from July 1; hit-and-run provision on hold

Dalip Singh
New Delhi

The government has notified that the three criminal laws — Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Sanhita (BSS) — will come into effect from July 1. However, it has withheld from enforcing a provision on causing death by rash and negligent driving due to widespread protests from truckers against it.

The three amended Acts, which replaced the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Evidence Act, respectively, got Presidential assent on December 25.

On Friday, the Union Home Ministry issued three notifications to announce that each of the new Acts

seeking reform in the criminal justice system will come into force on July 1. The BNS, however, will come into effect "except the provision of sub-section (2) of Section 106" of the Act that deals with hit-and-run-cases.

IN TALKS WITH TRUCKERS

The reason for keeping that Section in abeyance is that the Ministry is in talks with the truckers association to address their grievance on the provision of rash and negligent driving leading to death. Some two months ago, the truckers had gone on a strike over the stringent punishment and fine in hit-and-run cases under the new law.

The government had increased the punishment under Section 106 of the BNS up to a maximum of 10 years and a fine to deter growing

rash and negligent driving leading to fatalities topping global charts.

Under the Indian Penal Code's Section 304A, such acts attracted a limited punishment of up to two years imprisonment or a fine.

Home Minister Amit Shah who had piloted the Bills in Parliament had stated that by December all Union Territories will have necessary infrastructure, fully computerised courts to implement the three new criminal justice laws. For rest of the country, it will take more time.

Reacting to the debate in the Rajya Sabha, Shah had said that the three Bills were 'made by India', 'made for India' and passed by the Indian Parliament. The focus of the amended Acts, the Union Minister had said, was to provide justice instead of punishment.

'Permanent solution to public food stock holding at WTO, a must'

Amiti Sen
New Delhi

Farmers' groups have urged the Centre to insist on a permanent solution to food security at the WTO's 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13) as the country's use of the peace clause to exceed the prescribed MSP subsidy limits has faced harsh questioning at the World Trade Organisation, leaving it vulnerable to disputes.

Moreover, the peace clause, which was negotiated as a temporary solution at the Bali Ministerial Conference in 2013, has restricted use as it applies only to programmes existing prior to 2013 and also has onerous conditions attached, they argue.

"Attempts by agricultural export powerhouses to first allow only onerous peace clause and then challenge the application of the peace clause highlight the



BUGBEAR. The existing Agreement on Agriculture places a cap on public stockholding programmes of developing nations, including MSP, at 10 per cent of the value of production of particular crops

need for a permanent solution. Amending the Agreement on Agriculture (allowing subsidies for food security under the Green Box without any limit) would provide greater legal certainty and address the limitations of the current clause," the Indian Coordination Committee of Farmers Movements (ICCFM) said in a letter addressed to Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

CAP ON SCHEMES

Goyal will represent India at WTO MC13 in Abu Dhabi where many developed members, led by the US, want to further post-

pone a permanent solution to public stockholding (PSH) programmes.

The existing Agreement on Agriculture places a cap on public stockholding programmes of developing nations, including minimum support price (MSP), at 10 per cent of the value of production of particular crops. This limits the ability of developing countries to fund food security programmes for millions of their poor and vulnerable populations. "The peace clause has burdensome notification requirements and this significantly limits India's policy options for farmer protection and leaves it vulnerable to disputes. Similar concerns exist for other developing countries," the letter noted.

India has invoked the 'peace clause' twice for exceeding MSP limits for rice but faced relentless questioning at the WTO by other members.

With RBI, govt support, Indian fintechs can go global: NPCI chief Dilip Asbe

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

With backing from the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), fintech companies in India can expand their global footprint said Dilip Asbe, MD and CEO of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

"Creating and acquiring footprint, creating value-added services over that, I think it is very logical for fintechs in India. I would be really surprised if we lose that game. With the clear thinking of the government and the RBI, Indian fintechs will go global, as simple as that," he said at Razorpay's annual event in Bengaluru.

He noted that Indian fintech companies must spearhead the task of elucidating the country's payment standards to the global market before exporting them.

developing products that regulators have not explicitly authorised. He emphasised that if a particular activity or product has not been explicitly approved, the default stance should be to abstain from pursuing it.

"Whatever is not written in regulation means a no... When we are part of managing other people's money, we should be responsible. Compliance is good and risks become higher with size, if fintech founders are here to build long-term, I don't see it without compliance," said Asbe.

NPCI has also been pushing the lever on international expansion of UPI payments. The domestic service is currently live in countries including the United Arab Emirates and Mauritius.

Asbe cautioned fintech founders on regulatory compliance, advising them to refrain from

A 'designated carrier', Akasa can fly overseas

Shishir Sinha
New Delhi

The Finance Ministry has recognised Akasa Air as a 'designated Indian carrier', facilitating international flights.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (5) of Section 5 of the Central Sales Tax Act, 1956, the Central Government hereby specifies SNV Aviation Private Limited (Akasa Air)... as a 'designated Indian carrier'..." the Ministry said in a notification.

The sub-section says that if any designated Indian carrier purchases aviation turbine fuel for its international flights, such purchase will be deemed to take place in the course of the export of goods out of the territory of India. In other words, no tax is payable on the fuel for international flights to ensure no tax is exported.

Last week, Akasa Air announced international operations with Doha as the first overseas destination in its rapidly expanding network.



GOING GLOBAL. Last week, Akasa Air announced international operations with Doha as the first overseas destination in its rapidly expanding network

Starting March 28, Akasa Air will operate four non-stop flights a week, connecting Mumbai with Doha.

IN RECORD TIME

According to Akasa Air, it has become the first Indian airline to fly overseas in a record period of 19 months since inception.

Commenting on the announcement, Vinay Dube, Founder and CEO, Akasa Air, said, "The introduc-

tion of flights to Qatar marks the next phase of growth as the airline continues its journey towards becoming one of the world's top 30 airlines by the turn of this decade."

Since its launch in August 2022, Akasa Air has served over 77 lakh passengers, connecting 21 Indian cities. The airline has 22 Boeing 737 Max aircraft. Besides Qatar, it has been granted traffic rights to fly to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Lenders are also seeking clarity on the plans of bidders to settle their claims.

"There seem to be a lot of conditions regarding creditor payments in the plan. Banks will take further steps based on evaluation," the executive said.

While Ajay Singh has teamed up with EaseMyTrip founder Nishant Pitti's firm Busy Bee Airways, Sharjah-headquartered aviation firm Sky One has bid separately.

The separate bids offer a ray of hope for the Wadia group-owned airline that suspended operations last May due to a cash crunch resulting from Pratt & Whitney engine woes. The airline has lost most of its workforce and is battling lessors to save 49 of its 54 Airbus aircraft from seizure. A source said the grounded airline has creditor claims of more than ₹15,000 crore including nearly ₹3,800 crore due to banks.

"Our bid for launching the airline remains confidential... guarded by the CoC until a successful bidder is announced. With a clear objective in mind, we are poised to commence operations swiftly, ensuring Go First reaches the skies without delay," said Nishant Pitti.

businessline

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New 150 MLD desal plant near Chennai to supply water for 9 lakh residents

G Balachandar
Chennai

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Saturday inaugurated a desalination plant at Nemmeli near Chennai. The new plant worth ₹1,517 crore, with a capacity of 150 MLD (million litres per day), is expected to serve the drinking water needs of about 9 lakh residents in Chennai.

The desalination plant has been implemented under the AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation scheme) project and with financial assistance from KfW (German Development Bank). There are no perennial water sources for Chennai and the city's water sources are dependent on monsoon. Further, urbanisation of the surrounding areas

and the rapid growth of the industries have led to a drastic increase in demand for water, exerting pressure on scarce water resources. Hence, as a part of drought-proofing measures and to ensure water security in the city over the long term, the successive State Government has invested in desalination plants.

The first desalination plant with a capacity of 100 MLD was commissioned at Minjur in 2010. It has been serving the drinking water needs of about 10 lakh residents in the northern part of Chennai.

The State government is also implementing one of the largest desalination projects in South-East Asia — a 400 MLD (million litres/day) desalination plant at Perur, also near Chennai.

The annual defence production is expected to touch ₹3-lakh crore from ₹16,000 crore now, and defence exports to ₹50,000 crore by 2028-29, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Saturday while insisting that the new-found thrust is a result of the government's focus on long-term gains to make India a developed nation by 2047.

Head of the general elections, Singh enumerated the reforms in the defence sector in the last few years for long-term gains, including creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff and setting up of the Department of Military Affairs for enhancing jointness, synergy and smooth coordination among the three Services. Now, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force no longer operate in silos, he said per the Ministry.

"Earlier, India was known to be

an arms importer. But today, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, we have come out of our comfort zone and found a place in the list of top-25 arms exporting nations, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said.

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was quoted as having said by the Ministry.

CAPITAL ACQUISITION

Singh said that in FY24, capital acquisition of more than ₹4,35,000 crore has been given in-principle approval till now. The Ministry was allocated ₹6,21 lakh crore in the 2024-25 Budget, which is the highest among the Ministries, he stated.



IN THE ELITE CLUB. From an arms importer, today, we have come out of our comfort zone and found a place in the list of top-25 arms exporting nations, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said.

was quoted as having said by the Ministry.

Elaborating on the major steps taken in the field of defence manufacturing, Singh said the Ministry has notified five positive indigenisation lists of the Services, comprising over 500 items, and four other lists, with over 4,600 items for DPSUs, to ensure that the soldiers use Made-in-India weapons and platforms. He also pointed to the decision to earmark 75 per cent of the capital acquisition budget for procurement from local companies.

The Minister referred to the recent meeting of the Defence Acquisition Council, in which he said effective steps were taken to promote start-ups. For procurement from start-ups, costing, payment terms, eligibility, etc., have been liberalised, the Minister said.

He said the government overlooked views of some who felt that indigenous weapons won't be world class and set store in the capabilities of the domestic industry to consistently