



New Normal.
Stock-picking
norms have
changed. Check
what matters
BIG STORY P7



Index Outlook.
The direction is
still unclear for
Sensex and
Nifty 50
CHART GAZING P7

BENGALURU - CHENNAI - COIMBATORE - HUBBALLI - HYDERABAD - KOCHI - KOLKATA - MADURAI - MALAPPURAM - MANGALURU - MUMBAI - NOIDA - THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - TIRUCHIRAPPALLI - TIRUPATI - VIJAYAWADA - VISAKHAPATNAM

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

High ROE, low returns conundrum

SUB-OPTIMAL METRIC? In last 5- and 1-year periods, low Return On Equity stocks in Nifty 100 outdid high ROE stocks

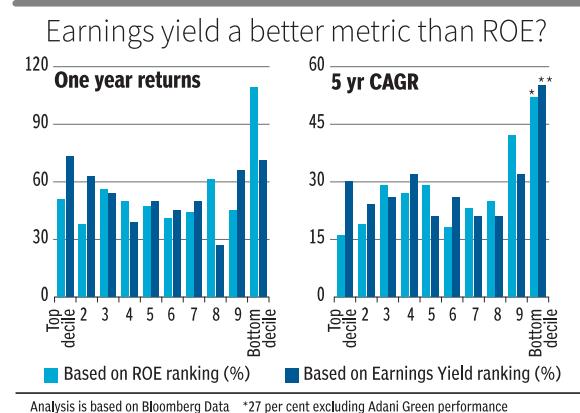
Hari Viswanath
bl. research bureau

In the world of investing, Return on Equity, or ROE, is a buzzword for fund managers, analysts, managements, et al. A high ROE is used to build a favourable investment case for a stock. Have you wondered how and why it matters, and is it really a defining metric to pick winners in the stock market?

Here is some food for thought. An analysis of returns of Nifty 100 stocks in the last five years indicates that stocks ranked higher based on their ROE five years back (FY19 ROE), under-performed those ranked lower.

The average return of the bottom 10 stocks (in terms of ROE) in the last five years at a CAGR of 52 per cent, significantly outperformed the top 10 stocks that gave average returns of a mere 16 per cent CAGR.

On a one-year basis too, ROE failed as a metric to pick better performing stocks. While top decile ROE (FY23 ROE) stocks, returned 51 per cent, the bottom decile returned more than double that at 109 per cent. The top 50 per



Analysis is based on Bloomberg Data - *7 per cent excluding Adani Green performance

**35 per cent excluding Adani Green performance

cent of the stocks returned 48 per cent, lower than the bottom 50 that gave total returns of 59 per cent.

WHAT'S AMISS? Basing decisions by giving high weightage to a single metric is like holding onto one end of a rope without checking whether the other end is tied strongly or neatly, or whether it is tied at all.

The other end of the rope here is Price/Book. ROE is nothing but net profits/book value. It indicates the annual returns generated on the book value of a company. So, if a high ROE stock trades at a high price to book, then it is already

priced into the stock and there may not be much value left for investors to capture.

This has played out in some of the high ROE stocks of 5 years ago. For example, stocks like Hindustan Unilever, P&G, Godrej Consumers Products, Marico and Britannia which were in the top decile, have underperformed Nifty 100 in the last five years. They were trading at high price to book in 2019, implying the high ROE was largely already priced into the stock. The key thing to note here is that, if you buy a stock with a high ROE of say 50 per cent, at 10 times Price/Book, your ROE (that is, the return on price you paid)

comes down to a mere 5 per cent.

Thus assessing ROE against Price/Book (that is, ROE/(P/B)) or in other words, assessing the stocks based on the earnings yield (which is nothing but the inverse of PE) has turned out to be a relatively better metric to pick stocks. For example, close competitors in the IT space – Infosys and HCLTech had the same ROE in 2019, but HCLTech with earnings yield of 7 per cent then as against Infosys' 5 per cent, has outperformed by a wide margin.

When the Nifty 100 stocks were ranked according to their earnings yield, the top decile stocks fared better with 5-year CAGR returns of 30 per cent as against 16 per cent when picked based on ROE. Of course, here too the bottom decile outperformed, but not by as much a margin as when picked purely on ROE. Nearly all high earnings yield stocks in the top decile which includes Tata Steel, Tata Power, Hindalco, Coal India, Hindustan Aeronautics have outperformed Nifty 100 by a wide margin.

When ranked based on earnings yield, the divergence in performance in stocks

across deciles was lower too (see charts).

The other point to note is that the presence of stocks such as Adani Green in the bottom decile of rankings both on ROE and earnings yield makes the data look better. Excluding Adani Green, results in ROE ranked returns of just 27 per cent CAGR for the bottom decile, but still much better than the top decile.

MAKING GOOD USE

ROE is a useful metric that helps screen for businesses with high capital efficiency.

However, on needs to check how strongly the other end of the rope is tied. Successful investing covers multiple factors and ROE may be a factor, but overstressing on it may yield sub-optimal returns.

Beyond this, investors also need to factor for accounting related impacts to book value and ROE. For example, the ROE of HUL has crashed from 80 per cent in FY19 to 27 per cent in FY23. Accounting adjustments to its book value due to acquisition of GSK Consumer has increased its book value and reduced ROE although its profits have continued to compound in the last five years.

Small/mid-cap rout shaves off 2-5% of MF investor wealth in March

Suresh P. Iyengar
Mumbai

The rout in small- and mid-cap stocks so far this month has shaved off 2-5 per cent of investor wealth in mutual fund schemes.

Small-cap stocks have been under pressure ever since market regulator SEBI expressed concern about froth in the space, as the steady inflows in mutual fund schemes chased a few select stocks, pumping up their valuations.

While all the small-cap schemes are in the red so far this month, DSP Small Cap Fund's return was down 5 per cent and that of Axis MF, HSBC MF, Canara Robeco MF and LIC MF schemes dipped 4 per cent each.

However, over the one-year period, these funds have delivered a return of 61 per cent to 37 per cent even as investors continue to book profits regularly.

Mid-cap mutual fund schemes were down by about 3 per cent to 1 per cent this month. Mirae Asset Midcap Fund and DSP Midcap Fund were down 3 per cent each.

Mid-cap funds have given a return of 60 per cent to 37 per cent on the back of strong inflows.

BROADER MARKET The BSE Small-Cap index has crashed 3,210 points so far this month to 42,322 points. The BSE Mid-Cap index is down 1,044 points at 38,652.

cap is down 433 points to 5,687 points (6,071 points) in the same period. The BSE Mid-Cap index is down 1,044 points at 38,652 against 39,696 amid huge volatility.

Bellwether Sensex was down 913 points in the same period at 72,832 against 73,745 on March 1.

STRESS TEST

Concerned over unrelenting inflows, especially from retail investors, SEBI had directed AMFI to conduct a stress test on these funds. This results showed that a few small-cap funds with large assets under management can take 10-60 days to sell 25 per cent and 50 per cent of their asset in case of any large redemption.

Nirav Karkera, Head of Research, Fisdom, said that at a headline level and from a time-series perspective, valuations in the segments, especially small-caps, may appear to be on the higher side. However, he said investors should take into account the earnings growth potential against the current valuation before neglecting all these stocks, he said.

"We believe there are still pockets of opportunities where either more value will be unlocked or growth will be delivered in the medium to long-term," he added.

INVESTMENT FOCUS

TeamLease Services:
Accumulate

Vaikam Kumar
bl. research bureau

As a market leader with over 20 years of consistent track record in the formal flexi-staffing industry, TeamLease Services is at the forefront of a structural shift in the way India employs.

With the rapid evolution of technology, the demand for immediately deployable, skilled labour has been on the rise across key economic sectors such as manufacturing, BFSI, IT, and telecom.

Asset-light and focussed on efficient working capital management, TeamLease has de-

livered superior cash conversion and return ratios. The stock is down ~13 per cent YTD and is currently trading at 28x the next 12-month earnings, a moderate discount to its three-year average of 30x.

Market multiples could be under pressure in the near term due to fluctuations in key sectors such as IT. Given the good long-term fundamental and structural trends, consistent operational performance, and expected future earnings growth, we recommend that investors accumulate the stock at dips.

TERROR IN MOSCOW



LETHAL ATTACK. After a deadly attack at the Crocus City Hall concert venue, outside Moscow, by Islamic State that left over 130 dead, members of the Russian Emergencies Ministry clear the rubble on Saturday. The IS' Afghanistan branch claimed responsibility for the Friday attack in a statement posted on affiliated social media channels. The Russian authorities said they had arrested four foreign nationals for opening fire at the people and setting the hall on fire. The deadliest attack in Russia in years came just days after President Vladimir Putin cemented his grip on power and as the Ukraine war drags on. REUTERS

Safely escorted 150 lakh tonnes of commodities to India in last 100 days: Navy chief

Dalip Singh
New Delhi

The Indian Navy has safely escorted about 150 lakh tonnes of critical commodities such as crude oil and fertiliser to Indian shores from the Red Sea and west of Gulf of Aden in the last 100 days since its first intervention on December 14, when MV Ruen was hijacked by Somalian pirates, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar has said.

Regular requests are coming from Commerce and Shipping Ministries for protection of commodities coming through the troubled maritime zone, Admiral Kumar said.

Details p12

IRDAI clears new norms to boost governance

KR Srivats
New Delhi

In a significant regulatory revamp, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) has approved the eight principle-based consolidated regulations to enhance clarity and coherence in the regulatory landscape.

The regulations encompass pivotal domains such as safeguarding of policyholder interest, rural and social sector responsibilities, electronic insurance marketplace (Bima Sugam), insurance products and operation of foreign reinsurance branches, as well as aspects of registration, actuarial, finance, investment and corporate governance.

For the first time, governance aspects under the existing guidelines have been notified in the form of regulations. This highlights the importance of governance in the functioning



urement of these statutory obligations have been revised where the unit of measurement under the rural obligations will now be gram panchayat.

The scope of social sector has been extended to cover cardholders and beneficiaries under various schemes. Under the motor third party obligations, the unit of measurement will be renewal of insurance coverage to goods carrying and passenger carrying vehicles as also tractors.

The most talked about regulations related to Bima Sugam and the ones on product regulations (primarily changes in surrender value norms). The much anticipated granular changes made to the surrender value regulations are, however, yet to be disclosed.

BIMA SUGAM Bima Sugam will be an insurance electronic marketplace that aims to achieve

universalisation and democratisation of insurance to empower and safeguard policyholders' interests so as to achieve the vision of 'Insurance for all by 2047'. This marketplace would serve as a one-stop solution for all insurance stakeholders, including customers, insurers, intermediaries, and agents, thereby, promoting transparency, efficiency, and collaboration across the entire insurance value chain.

Sumit Bohra, President of Insurance Brokers Association of India (IBAI), said: "Notification of Bima Sugam will accelerate the retail platform, which was long overdue, and this will help the customer with better choice."

"Although customers would definitely need an advisor to select the right product since products like Health and Life are a longer term product and needs to be selected carefully looking into the future."

India achieves 'historic' one-billion-tonne coal & lignite production: Pralhad Joshi

Rishi Ranjan Kala
New Delhi

India, the world's second largest coal consumer, on Friday surpassed the milestone of producing one billion tonnes of coal and lignite.

The world's No 2 producer, after China, also surpassed FY23's coal and lignite production of 937.22 million tonnes (mt), 25 days ahead of the time taken the previous fiscal year.

Terming it as a "historical high", Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said the achievement of 1 billion tonnes in coal and lignite production will ensure that lights are on in people's homes as the coal sector continues to power up the economy.

"Mission 1 Billion Tonne was a milestone we had put in action a few years ago considering the burgeoning electricity requirements of our nation. This is a historic milestone in India's quest for energy security under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

"The achievement of 1 billion tonnes in coal and lignite production

will ensure the lights are on in citizens' houses even as the coal sector continues to power up the economy," he added.

INCREASING OUTPUT

On March 6, India's coal production not just surged past the milestone 900 mt, but also surpassed the FY23 output of 893.19 mt, 27 days ahead of the time taken last year. It also achieved the output of 700 mt on February 6 — 30 days in advance compared to the last fiscal year.

The country's monthly coal production exceeded 100 mt for the first time in March, totalling 107 mt, so far. In

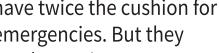
January, the monthly output had hit 99.73 mt.

The Ministry's focus on increasing production, particularly from captive and commercial mines, is to meet the growing demand for coal from the power and industrial sectors. India's power demand is expected to grow at 6-7 per cent per annum and the dry fuel accounts for around 70 per cent of the electricity generated.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), in its December coal report, said that India will be the driving force for the global coal demand till 2026, even if the global trend is decided in China.

SUFFICIENT STOCKS

India currently boasts of a substantial coal stockpile, with around 96 mt available with coal companies. The coal stocks as on March 21 at thermal plants stood at 49.2 mt, which is sufficient for 21 days. Stocks with Coal India (CIL), as on March 22, was 82.3 mt. The Ministry said it has made ample preparations to supply coal to power plants even during the peak summer season.



https://tinyurl.com/blQoMDinkCouples



bl.portfolio

Stock picking— then & now

NEW NORMAL.

Today, investors must take note of valuation shifts, the rise of smaller stocks and risk-return contrasts within a sector

Sai Prabhakar Yadavalli
bl. research bureau

Only a couple of years back, stock-picking would have implied buying a large-cap stock trading at 15 times one-year forward PE from any one of the sectors in an upswing.

In the current environment, valuations have marched on from the humble 15-16 times, and risk-return metrics are not uniform even for stocks within same sector. Also, investors are actively seeking opportunities from a broader universe that includes small- and mid-cap stocks, too, leading to the regulator expressing concerns of a froth.

Today, following the bull run post-Covid, the framework for stock picking has undergone a shift. Investors have to reconcile with shifts in valuation, shift from top-down to bottom-up picking as well as variations in risk-return aspects within the same sector. Here's more on the shifts and likely implications investors have to take note of, in an evolved marketplace of Indian equities.

RISING VALUATIONS

The price of equity as an asset has grown linearly and steadily in the last two decades. Measured as average of last five years' one-year forward price to earnings ratio, the Nifty-50 PE has risen from 12.6 times in March-2009 to 19.2 times in March 2024. This implies that investors are shelling out more to buy stocks now compared to earlier periods. While earnings growth over the last two decades has risen (2004-09), dropped and stayed flat (2009-19) and has again looked up in the recent five years (2019-24), the valuations, meanwhile, have steadily increased.

settled at a lower 12 times in the last three five-year periods after contracting from 20 times in 2009.

Japan has traded close to 18 times consistently in the past two decades and here, one could attribute a low interest rate regime to the higher equity valuations. As cost of money falls, speculative assets such as equities can experience a higher valuation. The fact that the US and Europe also gravitated towards a zero-interest rate regime in much of the last decade, which coincided with the expansion of PE multiple, reinforces this. But as interest rates have risen in the last two years in these regions, a reversal in PE expansion can be expected.

Takeaway for investors: Investors have to reconcile with the higher valuations as the new normal today, but must keep in mind that there is little room for error at these levels. An equity valuation at 18 times can be justified at a point in time provided the risk-free rate (ie. 10-year G-Sec yields) is 7 per cent and earnings growth rate for risk assets ie equities is 12 per cent y-o-y. (applying the average of last 20 years' earnings growth).

While the earnings outlook for the next one year suggests an early to mid-teens growth, when we look over longer timeframes, there will be periods of slower earnings growth. A strong credit cycle, as the one India is in the midst of, will lead to rapid capital formation initially and overheating in elongated cycles. Consolidation and correction will follow. This is apart from any global/geo-political risks, which could impact India in future, even though it has shown resilience in the past.

Investors should factor for eventualities in earnings growth slowing down, which implies that valuations could compress.

GREATER SHARE OF SMALL-CAPS

Small and mid-cap stocks are increasingly being viewed as viable core portfolio options. By applying a little more rigour in research compared to a large-cap investment, investors are willingly turning m-capagnotic.

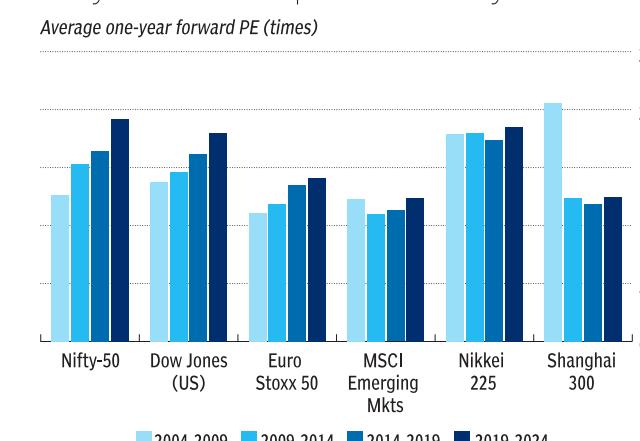
This approach has opened a plethora of risk/return opportunities focussed on niche markets as investors go beyond the normative approach of the past — 'a small small-cap exposure'.

Factors led by increased size of 'small-cap' and niche markets they operate in are making for greater faith in the small-cap universe. The small-cap universe is not exactly small anymore. As per AMFI, the small-cap segment today starts from stocks with m-cap of ₹24,000 crore. The average m-cap in this universe is now ₹13,000 crore. The average market capitalisation of BSE stocks ranked 251 to 500 now accounts for 11 per cent of India's GDP in 2024. In 2004, the same metric stood at a mere 2 per cent.

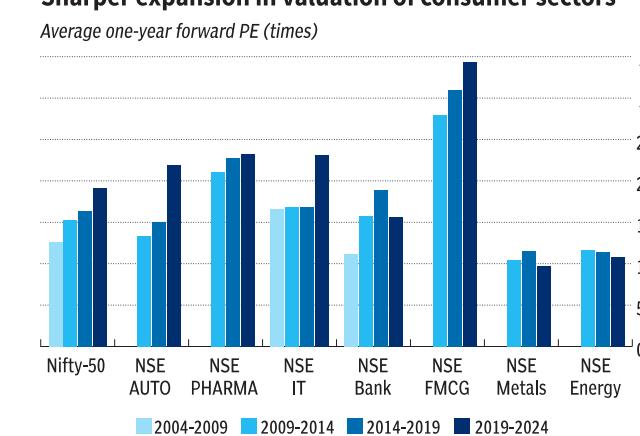
Even within overall BSE-500, the small-cap m-cap (BSE251-500) now accounts for 9 per cent compared to 2 per cent in 2004, pointing to an increasing bottom-heavy focus of investors.

How does the expansion in multiples in India compare globally? Globally, Dow Jones has shown a similar trend, going from 13.8 times in 2009 to 18 times in 2024. European index (SXSE) has shown a similar trajectory, but a lower magnitude of expansion. But MSCI EM index, which represents emerging economies, has been range-bound. China, on the other hand, has

Nifty valuation expands steadily



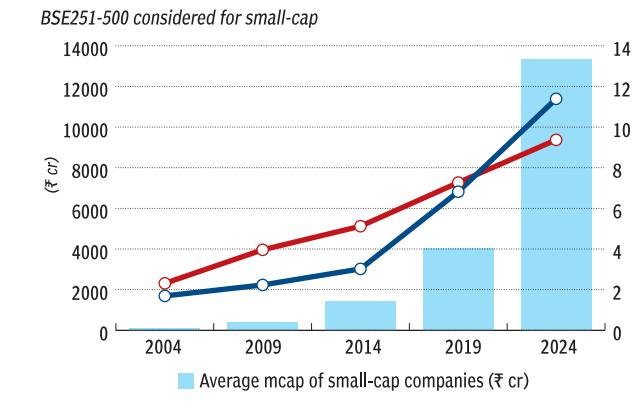
Sharper expansion in valuation of consumer sectors



Valuation expansion vs fundamentals

	2004-2009	2009-2014	2014-2019	2019-2024
Nifty-50 average one-year forward PE (times)	12.6	15.3	16.4	19.2
Average 10-year bond yield (%)	7.24	7.95	7.54	6.72
Earnings growth (Calendar year CAGR %)	25.86	5.14	5.82	12.45
Index returns (y-o-y CAGR %)	8.45	19.06	11.77	14.49

Rising heft of small-caps



companies have clear implications for capital formation, both human and financial. A small-cap company can attract just as much personnel talent as a large-cap, not only on its payroll but also in the form of investment oversight.

For example, this year alone, several small-cap IPOs or even micro-cap (less than ₹3,000 crore m-cap) IPOs have witnessed monetisation by professional investor bodies, including private equity, wealth funds or family offices. Medi Assist, Entero, Jana Small Finance, Capital Small Finance and EPACK are some examples.

The much-talked-about unorganised to organised shift seems to be reflected in the management and ownership level of the industries as well. The scale of operations is attracting professional talent addressing the primary concern

traditionally attached with the small-cap universe. Several small and mid-cap stocks are big fish in a small pond, which makes them a large-cap in their own right. They are industry bellwethers in niche spaces, command a significant market share and are able to withstand or pass on industry cyclical pressures just as efficiently as a large-cap company would.

Leaders in stationery sales, pharma distribution, clinical laboratories, speciality chemicals with niche portfolios, regional healthcare or small finance banks are some examples. The small size of end market dictates the size of the company rather than being a small player in a large market.

Takeaway for investors: With smaller stocks today becoming an integral part of the

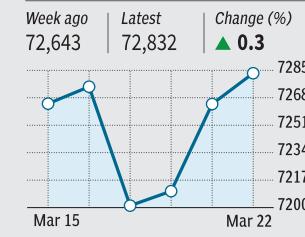
WISE WORDS.

“Often, there is no correlation between success of a company and success of its stocks over a few months or even few years. In the long term, there is a 100 per cent correlation. This disparity is the key to making money.

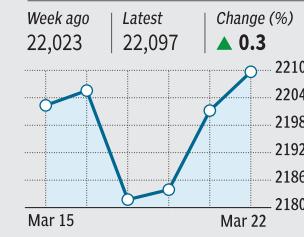
PETER LYNCH
Legendary Fund Manager

MARKET ACTION.

SENSEX



NIFTY



How sectoral indices moved

	Mar 15	Mar 22	Movement	% change
REALTY	6,561	6,906	▲	5.3
METALS	26,536	27,839	▲	4.9
AUTO	46,320	48,250	▲	4.2
CAPITAL GOODS	56,820	58,726	▲	3.4
POWER	6,373	6,536	▲	2.6
PSU	17,555	17,990	▲	2.5
HC	33,910	34,489	▲	1.7
OIL&GAS	26,886	27,165	▲	1.0
CONSUMER DURABLES	50,559	51,004	▲	0.9
BANKEX	52,833	53,106	▲	0.5
FMCG	19,384	19,293	▼	-0.5
TECK	17,026	16,207	▼	-4.8
IT	37,927	35,825	▼	-5.5

How other indices moved

	Mar 15	Mar 22	Movement	% change
NIFTY NEXT 50	58,059	59,189	▲	1.9
NIFTY 500	19,825	19,995	▲	0.9
NIFTY 200	12,081	12,169	▲	0.7
NIFTY 100	22,495	22,634	▲	0.6
BANK NIFTY	46,594	46,864	▲	0.6

Sensex ups & downs

	Price ₹	Movement	% change
Maruti Suzuki	11,478	12,336	▲ 7.5
Tata Steel	142	152	▲ 7.3
JSW Steel	781	826	▲ 5.8
M&M	1,802	1,879	▲ 4.3
Sun Pharma	1,548	1,608	▲ 3.9
Bajaj Finance	6,513	6,763	▲ 3.8
Power Grid	266	276	▲ 3.8
Tata Motors	946	980	▲ 3.6
NTPC	316	325	▲ 2.8
Reliance Industries	2,837	2,910	▲ 2.6
L&T	3,535	3,620	▲ 2.4
ITC	420	428	▲ 2.1
Titan	3,633	3,709	▲ 2.1
Kotak Mahindra Bank	1,739	1,775	▲ 2.1
SBI	732	746	▲ 2.0
IndusInd Bank	1,484	1,509	▲ 1.7
Bhart			

How to 'Excel' in stock market analysis

MARKET METRICS. Here's a lowdown on using Microsoft Excel, the spreadsheet software, in investing research

Madhav Suresh
bl. research bureau

Our Big Story titled 'Statistical tools to take stock of markets' in *bl.portfolio* dated March 3, 2024 (<https://tinyurl.com/statistical-tool-for-investing>), explained how statistical measures can be used to navigate the stock market and make informed investment decisions.

Following up on that, of course, calculating statistical measures such as standard deviation and correlation manually can be cumbersome. Instead, you can harness the power of sophisticated yet user-friendly software — spreadsheets.

Microsoft Excel, the widely used spreadsheet software, can be helpful for statistical analysis of stocks, with its built-in functions and free add-in tools.

While using formulas is straightforward, the "Data Analysis" add-in goes beyond, enabling you to perform various analytical tasks — from computing basic descriptive measures such as mean and standard deviation to finding correlation between various asset classes or sectors, without requiring you to install any external software.

Here's a lowdown on how to use the data analysis tool to compute the statistical measures for investing.

DESCRIPTIVE MEASURES

Before we begin, it is essential to activate the analysis tool pack, which can be done by following the steps below:

"File" > "Options" > "Add-Ins" > "Excel Add-ins" > "Go" and then checking the "Analysis ToolPak" box.

Let us keep things simple by using the examples mentioned in the Big Story. We had highlighted with an example how using three sigma rule would have helped identify peaks as well as good entry points in Infosys shares. The three-sigma rule can aid in investment strategies, such as contrarian investing. For contrarian investors, buying stocks when they are trading at prices below two/three standard deviations from the mean may present buying opportunities, assuming that the market has overreacted to negative news.

So for example, consider plotting the three-sigma bands for the monthly Price-to-Earnings (P/E) ratio of Infosys from January 2004 to December 2023. Before you dive into calculating the average and standard deviation to set up the three-sigma bands, make sure your data (monthly PE ratio) is neatly organised in Excel. Each data point should be clearly

Infosys PE	
Mean	24.39808333
Standard Error	0.448393769
Median	22.655
Mode	25.11
Standard Deviation	6.9464864
Sample Variance	48.2536733
Kurtosis	-0.720306529
Skewness	0.504240754
Range	28.74
Minimum	12.75
Maximum	41.49
Sum	5855.54
Count	240

Summary Statistics

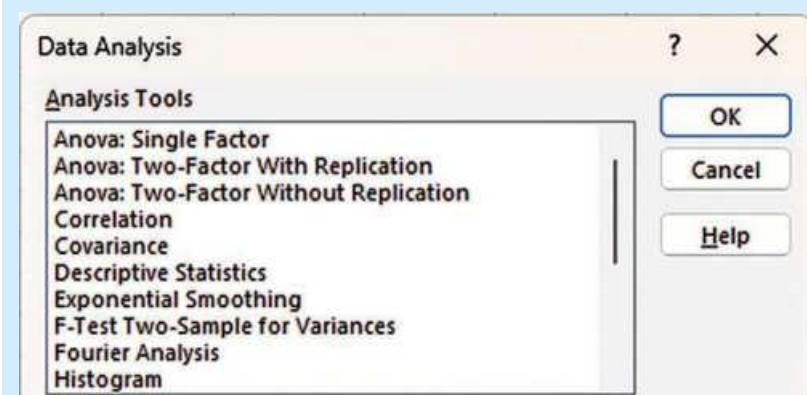
labelled in either rows or columns. Moving on, head over to the "Data" tab on your Excel toolbar, and you'll spot a button labelled "Data Analysis". Give it a click, and a "Data Analysis" dialog box pops up (see screenshot 1). Scroll through the options until you find "Descriptive Statistics," then hit "OK."

In the dialog box (see screenshot 2), simply specify the range of data, in our case the Infosys P/E, and make sure to check the box for "Summary statistics". Once you have got everything set up, just click "OK," and Excel will quickly crunch the numbers, giving the mean (24.4), standard deviation (6.9), and other useful statistical metrics for our dataset (see screenshot 3).

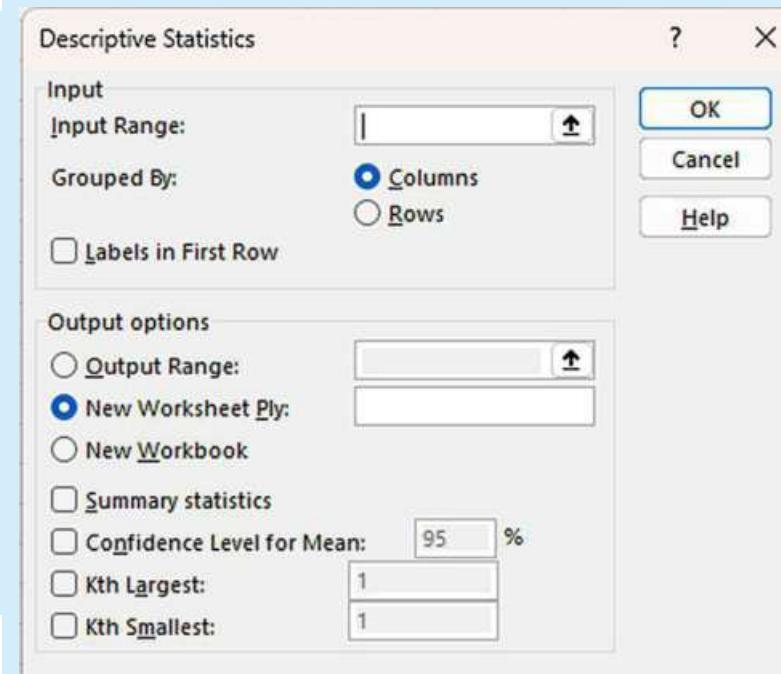
CORRELATION

In a similar manner, correlation can also be computed from the Data Analysis tool. Alternatively, CORREL function can be a quick way to calculate the correlation coefficient. However, the function can only handle two data sets at a time whereas the correlation function in the Data Analysis tool pack can be used to find pairwise correlation for more than two data sets.

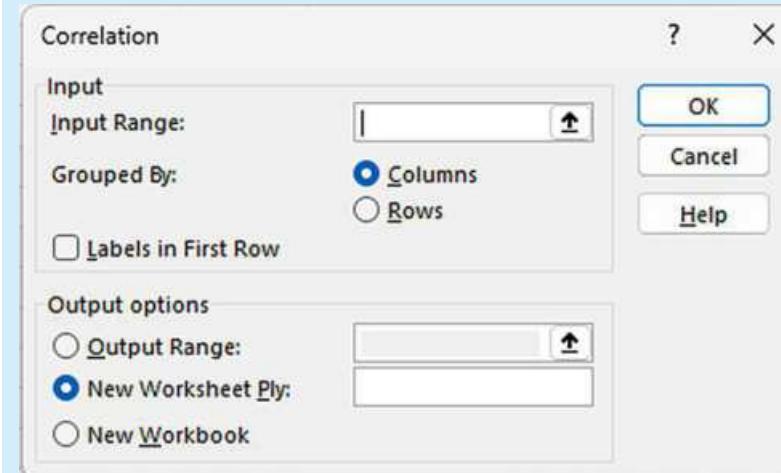
Let us consider the yearly prices of two popular asset classes, namely MCX gold future for gold and Nifty 50 for equities from 2004 to 2023. Gold Exchange Traded Funds can be considered as proxy in case the gold futures prices aren't available. When analysing the relationship between gold and equity, it's often more insightful to compute the correlation between their returns rather than



Data Analysis dialog box



Descriptive Statistics dialog box



Correlation dialog box

their prices because returns allow for a comparison of the relative performance of gold and equity regardless of their absolute price levels.

Once the annual return of gold and Nifty 50 is calculated, select "Correlation" from the Analysis Tools menu, and the correlation dialog box will pop up (see screenshot 4).

In the "Input Range" field, select the annual returns of both gold and Nifty 50 from the past 20 years, then hit "OK". This will return a correlation matrix, dis-

playing correlation coefficients for all possible pairs of datasets, in our case Gold and Nifty 50 returns with a correlation of -0.08.

By including low or negatively correlated assets in a portfolio, investors can achieve a more balanced risk-return profile. While one asset class may underperform in a particular market scenario, another may thrive, contributing positively to the overall portfolio returns. This diversification allows investors to generate optimal portfolio returns.

Here are 7 to-dos before March 31

DE-TAX. Individual taxpayers can gain maximum tax benefits by following these strategies

Vishwas Panjari

Financial and Tax Year 2023-24 is ending soon, therefore it is time to pay attention to various items/strategies to be executed before March 31, 2024, to gain maximum benefits/advantages available under the tax laws.

For ease of understanding, such calls for actions have been bifurcated into certain categories:

MARCH PAYABLES FOR CASH SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTING

This typically applies to individual taxpayers engaged in business/profession as, unlike corporates, they have the liberty to choose method of accounting.

1. For regular payments such as salary, rent, etc, for the month of March (which you may be used to paying in the succeeding month), it is advisable that such payments are made within March so that tax deduction of the said expenses is available within this financial year.

2. One may be planning to buy an asset (machinery, car, etc) to be used for business purpose in the month of April/May. Such investment decisions should be evaluated and, if possible, advanced in March itself.

This is because, under the tax laws, depreciation on such assets (at half rate) will be available even if the said asset is put to use in March 2024.

For instance, 7.5 per cent depreciation will be available under income tax laws on plant and machinery even if the same is put to use on March 31, 2024, itself.



INVESTMENT IN CAPITAL ASSET (NOT BUSINESS ASSETS)

This is typically applicable to individual taxpayers actively looking to park their surplus funds.

3. Under tax laws, inflation indexation of cost is available in case of transfer of a long term capital asset. The inflation index is prescribed for an entire year as opposed to the month or date on which the investment is made. For example, an investor who bought a security in March 2024 will be eligible for the same indexation base as an investor who had bought security in April 2023, as the inflation index for FY 2023-24 would be same for both the investors. Accordingly, if an individual is considering making a long-term investment into a capital asset, he/she

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Repayment of principal component of home loan (up to unutilised portion) can be made before March 31, 2024, and claimed as a deduction under section 80C.

should do it by March 31, to get incremental indexation benefit.

4. Separately, by virtue of a recent amendment in tax laws, in addition to above-mentioned indexation benefit, a lower long term capital gain tax rate of 20 per cent is available in case of sale of long-term mutual funds that have equity investment of above 35 per cent but below 65 per cent. An individual looking

to invest in mutual funds should invest before end of March in such funds that meet the above criteria so as to be able to get the twin benefits.

5. Besides the above, now is the right time to evaluate and implement strategies such as 'tax-loss harvesting' before the end of the year. You can write off losses in stocks that have been non-performers in your portfolio against capital gains (long-term loss can be set off only against long-term gain) and increase post-tax returns on equity investments.

OTHER ASPECTS

This is typically applicable generally to all individual taxpayers.

6. Investment-linked deductions: Income tax laws allow various investment-linked

deductions (under the old scheme) of prescribed amount, such as section 80C, 80D, etc, where deduction under the Act is allowed if the investment/expenditure have actually been made by the taxpayer before the close of financial year.

To explain, it is not enough that the insurance premium is due within the fiscal year, what is relevant is the insurance premium that is paid during the fiscal to avail the benefit. If the prescribed limits remain unutilised, planning can be done to ensure maximum deduction is taken within the limits. For example: repayment of principal component of home loan (up to the unutilised portion) can be made before March 31, 2024, and claimed as a deduction under section 80C.

7. Stopping the interest meter: 100 per cent of the estimated taxes should be paid as advance tax (along with applicable interests, if any) before end of March to save on interest liability, which accrues automatically with each passing day. For example, interest for the entire month of April would apply even if payment of tax is delayed by just one day and paid on April 1. Further, in addition to qualifying for tax credits, interest is receivable at rate of 6 per cent on excess advance taxes deposited.

The above points are most general to-dos for individual taxpayers and should be completed before the close of financial year to take full advantage of tax laws and also to save on potential interest liability.

The writer is Partner Nangia Andersen LLP.

With inputs from Shubham Jain, Associate Director and Mitali Luthra, Analyst.

Interest rates on home loans (%)

Institution	Loan amount		
	Under ₹30 lakh	₹30 to 75 lakh	Over ₹75 lakh
BANKS (Floating rates)			
Axis Bank	8.75-9.65	8.75-9.65	8.75-9.65
Bank of Baroda	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60
Bank of India	8.30-10.75	8.30-10.75	8.30-10.75
Bank of Maharashtra	8.35-10.90	8.35-10.90	8.35-10.90
Canara Bank	8.50-11.25	8.45-11.25	8.40-11.15
Central Bank	8.35-9.50	8.35-9.50	8.35-9.50
DBS Bank	<=9.40	<=9.40	<=9.40
Federal Bank	>=8.80	>=8.80	>=8.80
HDFC Bank	8.70-9.80	8.70-9.80	8.70-9.80
ICICI Bank	9.9-80	9.9-85	9-10.05
Indian Bank	8.40-9.80	8.40-9.80	8.40-9.80
Indian Overseas Bank	>=8.40	>=8.40	>=8.40
IDBI Bank	8.40-12.25	8.40-12.25	8.40-12.25
J&K Bank	8.75-9.85	8.75-9.85	8.75-9.85
Karnataka Bank	8.60-10.60	8.60-10.60	8.60-10.60
Karur Vysya Bank	9.0-11.05	9.0-11.05	9.0-11.05
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.70-8.95	8.70-8.95	8.70-8.95
Punjab National Bank	8.45-10.10	8.40-10.10	8.40-10.0
Punjab & Sind Bank	8.50-10.0	8.50-10.0	8.50-10.0
State Bank of India	8.40-9.75	8.40-9.75	8.40-9.65
South Indian Bank	9.84-11.24	9.84-11.24	9.84-11.69
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95
UCO Bank	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30
Union Bank of India	8.35-10.75	8.35-10.75	8.35-10.75
BANKS (Fixed rates)			
Axis Bank	14.00	14.00	14.00
IDBI bank	10.90-12.0	10.90-12.0	10.90-12.0
Union Bank of India	11.4	11.4-12.4	12.4-12.65
HOUSING FINANCE COMPANIES (Floating rates)			
Tata Capital	>=8.70	>=8.70	>=8.70
Piramal Cap & Housing Fin	>=9.50	>=9.50	>=9.50
PNB Housing	8.50-11.25	8.50-11.45	8.50-11.45
Central Bank Housing	9.95-11.15	9.95-11.15	9.95-11.15
Indiabulls Housing Fin	>=9.30	>=9.30	>=9.30
Aditya Birla Housing Fin	8.80-14.75	8.80-14.75	8.80-14.75
Bajaj Finserv	8.50-15.00	8.50-15.00	8.50-15.00
GIC Housing Finance	>=8.80	>=8.80	>=8.80
Sundaram Home Finance*	>=10	>=10	>=10
HOUSING FINANCE COMPANIES (Fixed rates)			
LIC Housing Finance Ltd	10-10.25	10-10.25	10-10.25

*Data as on respective banks' website on Mar 22, 2024; For each year range, the maximum offered interest rate is considered; interest rate is for a normal fixed deposit amount below ₹1 crore. Compiled by BankBazaar.com *Annual percentage rate

TAX QUERY.



Managing risks smartly for better returns

FUND CALL. Mahindra Manulife Equity Savings Fund mixes stocks, bonds and derivatives deftly for optimal risk-adjusted returns

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

After a relentless rally over the past few months, markets have turned volatile in recent weeks.

The broader markets are especially raising concerns relating to elevated valuations. Market regulator SEBI's push to mutual funds towards declaring stress test results on their holdings is also keeping investors on tenterhooks. With elections also set to commence from next month till June first week, markets may continue to be volatile for the foreseeable future.

In this regard, hybrid funds may be suitable for investors, especially as this category lends itself to lump-sum investing as investment timing becomes less relevant due to the fund manager's shuffling of the portfolio based on specific market conditions.

Equity Savings funds are hybrid schemes that invest in a blend of equity and related instruments, debt and derivatives.

As equity investments – that are usually hedged in this case – need to account for at least 65 per cent of the portfolio, these funds enjoy equity taxation.

Mahindra Manulife Equity Savings Fund is a quality performer in the category and has delivered returns consistently since its inception in February 2017. With above-average,

WHY INVEST

- Hedges stock exposure effectively with derivatives
- Suitable for lumpsum as well as SIP investments for the medium term
- Invests in safe debt instruments without taking any credit risks in the portfolio

double-digit returns over the years, the fund can be a good diversifier for a conservative investor's portfolio, especially in the current environment.

Investors can consider parking lump-sums in the fund with a three-five year perspective. Those without lump-sums to spare can consider SIPs.

DELIVERING RELIABLY

The fund has been consistent in being among the best in its category. On a point-to-point basis, Mahindra Manulife Equity Savings has delivered more than 12 per cent over the medium to long term. In the last one year, it has given an excess of 20 per cent.

When three-year rolling returns are taken from February 2017 to March 2024, the fund has delivered a mean of 11.5 per cent, higher than most peers.

If three-year rolling returns are taken over the above-men-

tioned period, the fund has given more than 10 per cent returns nearly 74 per cent of the time.

With the same timeframe and rolling period criteria, Mahindra Manulife Equity Savings has delivered more than 12 per cent over 60 per cent of the time.

When SIP returns (XIRR) are considered for the past seven years, the scheme has given 12.3 per cent.

Clearly, the fund has been quite consistent over the past seven-odd years.

DEFT PORTFOLIO MOVES
Mahindra Manulife Equity Savings invests in a blend of equities, bonds and derivatives.

The equity portion of the portfolio is generally kept 65 per cent or a bit more. For most part, the stocks are large-caps from the Nifty 100 basket. These large-caps account for over 80 per cent of the equity holdings across most market conditions, with mid- and small-caps making up for the remaining part.

Financial services dominate the equity holdings across cycles. The other holdings are shuffled around a bit based in market conditions.

For example, the IT sector was among the top holdings in early 2022, but has been trimmed subsequently as the segment faces business headwinds.

Construction materials stocks have seen stakes being

hiked in the last couple of years as the economy went into healthy growth mode. Surprisingly, the fund has FMCG among its key holdings in its recent portfolio even as weak rural volume growth has seen the sector underperform.

In the debt portion, corporate bonds form a key part and the holdings are restricted to AAA-rated securities, with a few AA-rated ones as well in the case of reputed conglomerates.

Real estate investment trusts (REITs) also find a small space within the portfolio. Government bonds and Treasury Bills are other key fixed-income holdings for the fund. The scheme takes no credit risk in its debt portion.

Mahindra Manulife Equity Savings also takes derivative positions to the tune of 20-30 per cent of the assets.

This helps keep a good part of the equity portion hedged and also opens the possibility of accruals to the portfolio via pay-offs.

For conservative investors, this fund can be a part of their satellite portfolio as a diversifier. A lump-sum investment with a time horizon of five years can be rewarding for investors.

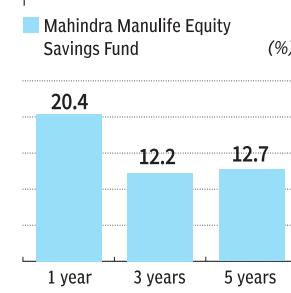
The equity taxation for such funds ensures that the risk-adjusted returns are healthy as any gains higher than ₹1 lakh made on a holding period of more than one year are taxed at 10 per cent.

Construction materials stocks have seen stakes being

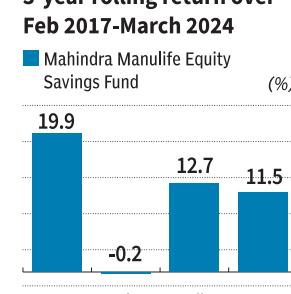


GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

Above-average performance



3-year rolling return over Feb 2017-March 2024



Allocation (%)
Domestic equities 64.5
Cash & cash equivalents 35.5
Treasury Bills 10.4
Corporate debt 10.4
Government securities 4.9
Rights 0.9
REITs & InvITs 0.6
Derivatives-futures -2.7

Source: ACE MF; Feb 2024 data

ALERTS

ABSL MF launches AI-based search engine

Aditya Birla Sun Life Mutual Fund has announced the launch of MyMutualFundGPT, an AI-based information tool to enhance the investor experience on its digital platforms. This tool utilises advanced algorithms to understand the context of investor queries and provides relevant responses. It assists investors in obtaining information about the company's products, services, top-performing funds, and fund managers. It also simplifies decision-making by offering clear explanations from product and service brochures on the company's website.

ASK launches Lighthouse Portfolio PMS

ASK Investment Managers has announced the launch of ASK Lighthouse Portfolio, which follows a satellite-based investment approach. This approach will predominantly invest in a few focused themes or sectors at a time. Themes may be conceived on a top-down or bottom-up basis, while a selection of the businesses would be on a bottom-up basis. The current focus areas for this scheme include Infrastructure & Engineering, Energy/Energy transition, Defence, Manufacturing, Railways, Capital goods, and allied sectors. The portfolio is benchmarked against the BSE 500 Total Return Index (TRI).

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)
ABSL Nifty Next 50 ETF	61.1	61.3	3.7	59.0
CPSE ETF	78.6	78.8	3.2	21,951.0
MO Nasdaq 100 ETF	149.8	149.0	2.7	968.7
Bharat 22 ETF	99.2	99.5	2.2	5,517.4
SBI ETF Nifty Next 50	622.8	624.2	2.0	131.8
Nippon ETF Nifty Next	629.2	628.5	1.7	732.6
Nippon ETF Nifty Infra	843.6	843.8	1.7	55.6

Source: Bloomberg. Returns as on March 22, 2024

Best NPS plans

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

Name of the fund	NAV (₹) as on Mar 22	Returns (% CAGR)	Assets (₹ cr)	
		1-year	3-year	5-year
TIER I: EQUITY PLANS				
ICICI Pru Pension Fund	62.8	38.1	18.1	16.2
Kotak Pension Fund	57.3	34.3	17.6	16.1
HDFC Pension Fund	46.1	33.3	16.8	16.0
TIER I: GOVERNMENT BOND PLANS				
LIC Pension Fund	27.2	9.9	6.5	8.6
ABSL Pension Scheme	16.9	10.1	6.7	8.4
HDFC Pension Fund	25.2	9.9	6.4	8.4
TIER I: CORPORATE DEBT PLANS				
HDFC Pension Fund	25.7	8.7	6.7	8.4
ABSL Pension Scheme	17.3	8.7	6.5	8.2
LIC Pension Fund	25.2	8.3	6.3	8.1
TIER I: ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS				
SBI Pension Fund	18.6	12.9	7.8	9.4
HDFC Pension Fund	18.3	10.9	8.8	8.8
Kotak Pension Fund	16.5	12.8	6.3	7.8

*Source: NPS Trust. Returns as on March 22, 2024

Top PMS schemes

Based on 5-year returns

AMC	Strategy	AUM (in ₹ cr)	Returns (% CAGR)	
		1-year	3-year	5-year
LARGE CAP				
ICICI Pru	Largecap	188	48.0	24.7
Nippon Life India	Absolute Freedom	NA	48.4	21.8
Renaissance Investment	Opportunities Portfolio	NA	39.6	21.7
Standard Chartered Securities	Long Term Value Compounder	283	37.3	18.6
MULTI CAP				
Bonanza Portfolio	Edge	NA	90.5	42.3
Sameeksha Capital	Equity Fund	1,198	65.5	31.7
Negen Capital	Special Situ. & Technology	770	74.4	32.0
Estee Advisors	Long Alpha	NA	78.5	33.0
Bonanza Portfolio	Multiplicap	NA	95.6	45.1
Globe Capital	Value	696	67.0	41.1
MID-CAP				
Unifi Capital	APJ 20	NA	52.3	26.1
Asit C Mehta Invest. Intermediates	Ace Midcap	NA	95.7	46.9
Right Horizons	Super Value	NA	51.3	26.0
Master Portfolio Services	Master Trust India Growth	NA	44.6	25.3
SMALL CAP				
Equiris Wealth	Long Horizon	901	53.7	19.7
Aequitas Invest. Consultancy	India Opportunities	3,203	92.6	55.0
Nine Rivers Capital	Aurum Small Cap	NA	64.9	33.7
Valentis Advisors	Rising Star Opportunity	NA	48.4	24.6

*Source: PMS Bazaar. Returns as on February 29, 2024

companies are part of the index. And selling those shares would mean the funds' performance would no longer mimic the index.

Spokespeople for BlackRock, Amundi and LGIM declined to comment. A spokesperson for DWS said the asset manager's goal is to reconcile its fiduciary duties and net zero commitment "as closely as possible," given the complexities entailed. UBS said it was looking into providing a comment.

FUND METHODOLOGIES</b

Vaikam Kumar S
bl. research bureau

While unemployment numbers grab headlines, a recent employment trend that has largely gone unnoticed is the rise of flexi-staffing in India.

The Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) reported that the percentage of contract labour in manufacturing has been increasing, with 98.4 per cent of the organised factories surveyed employing contract workers in FY20, compared to just 28.3 per cent in FY12.

With the rapid evolution of technology, the demand for highly skilled labour, which can be immediately deployed in any specific technical project, has also been on the rise. India has been slowly but steadily catching up with developed countries on the idea of having a more dynamic and flexible workforce. According to the Indian Staffing Federation (ISF), the number of flexi or formal contractual workers in India, employed by staffing companies, is expected to reach 10 million by 2030 from 5.5 million at present, reflecting the huge demand for such workforce.

TeamLease Services is at the forefront of this structural shift in the Indian employment scene. It is a market leader with over 20 years of consistent track record in the formal flexi-staffing industry. It has a well-diversified client base across key sectors such as manufacturing, BFSI, IT, telecom, etc. Its national presence and operational efficiency are critical in achieving the economies of scale imperative in the low-margin staffing business.

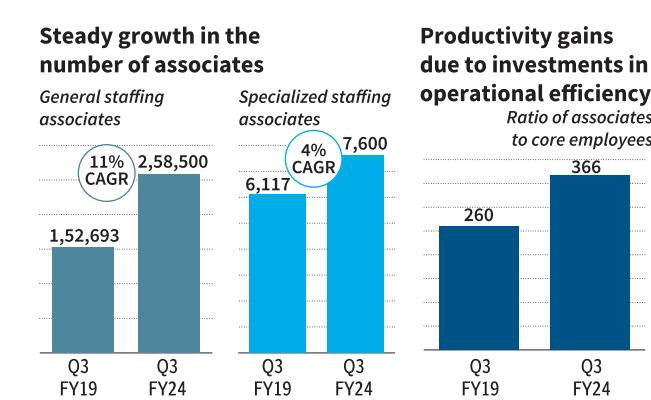
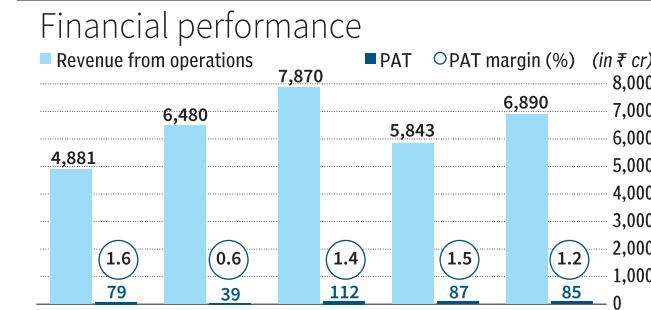
Being an asset-light business with focus on efficient working capital management has enabled superior cash conversion and return ratios. The stock is down around 13 per cent YTD and offers investors the opportunity to start accumulating on dips at reasonable valuations. It is currently trading at 28x next 12-month earnings (Bloomberg consensus), a moderate discount to its three-year average of 30x.

SOLID TRACK RECORD

While the staffing services industry is highly fragmented with many regional firms catering to low-skilled labour requirements, Teamlease has emerged as a market leader (around 6 per cent share) with a national presence (7,500+ locations across 28 States) in the organised staffing space. Founded in 2001, it currently employs 3+ lakh associates and trainees, providing skilled labour to over 3,600 clients in various industries.

Riding the 'hire as you desire' trend

STAFFING. Why the recent correction in TeamLease Services spells a good investment opportunity



The company gets a commission from the salary paid to associates placed with clients based on the contract terms. It has three broad segments: 1) general staffing comprising staffing, temporary recruitment, payroll and apprenticeship (around 91 per cent of FY23 revenue) 2) specialised staffing comprising IT and telecom staffing (~7 per cent) and 3) other HR services comprising regulatory compliance, training, job portal, education technology and SAAS-based compliance (~2 per cent).

ECONOMIES OF SCALE

The company has managed to build an ecosystem around its core business to create a steady supply of employable resources. The investments in IT infrastructure have helped improve productivity, reflected in the rising number of associates working with the clients who are managed by single-core employee of Teamlease. It stood at 366 in Q3FY24, up from 260 five years ago in Q3FY19. This translates to better margins in what is typically a low-margin industry. Economies of scale is a crucial point of difference for TeamLease since there are very few companies in the staffing business who can leverage operational efficiency.

GROWTH EXPECTATION

Because of the significantly high revenue contribution from the



fied portfolio.

● ACCUMULATE

TeamLease Services ₹2,841.25

WHY

- Strong fundamentals
- Consistent operational performance
- Future earnings growth

general staffing business, the company's revenue growth is largely determined by the growth in the number of associates and trainees. As of Q3FY24, TeamLease had over 2.58 lakh general staffing associates (5-year CAGR of 11 per cent) and 43,150 trainees (5-year CAGR of negative 4 per cent). The company was able to recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic to post double-digit CAGR in associates because of its well-diversified client portfolio across sectors. In addition to the pandemic, the withdrawal of the National Employment Enhancement Mission (NEEM) scheme in December 2022 impacted the number of trainees significantly.

Although IT hiring is expected to remain softer in FY24, hiring by global capability centres (GCC) is expected to offset some of the negative impact. Given the robust economic outlook for India over the next decade, the long-term demand for skilled labour is expected to remain strong. TeamLease's historical track record of double-digit associate growth is expected to continue despite seasonal fluctuations in certain sectors, due to its long-standing client relationships and well-diversified

FINANCIALS, VALUATION

TeamLease reported revenue from operations of ₹7,870 crore in FY23, 21 per cent YoY growth and a five-year CAGR of 12 per cent. In FY21, when the impact of the Covid pandemic and slowdown in the overall economy was at its peak, revenue declined 5 per cent YoY. Apart from that, the company has delivered consistent topline growth with a ten-year CAGR of 18 per cent. In 9MFY24, it reported revenue of ₹6,890 crore, 18 per cent YoY growth and is expected to end FY24 with around 20 per cent growth at around ₹9,310 crore.

Given the nature of the staffing business, margins are typically muted compared to other industries. Overall PAT margin for TeamLease is usually in the range of 1-2 per cent.

Because of its consistent financial performance, TeamLease has historically traded at a premium to its peers, Quess (19x next 12-month earnings) and SIS limited (16x). TeamLease is currently trading at 28x, a moderate discount to its three-year average of 30x. Street estimates indicate high double-digit revenue and earnings growth to continue over the next two years. Market multiples could be under pressure in the near term due to fluctuations in key sectors such as IT, which could offer the opportunity for new investors to start buying at lower valuations.

Given the strong fundamentals, consistent operational performance, and expected future earnings growth, we recommend that investors accumulate the stock on dips.

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

REALITY CHECK.

Accenture results: Will it stall the hope rally in Indian IT?

Hari Viswanath
bl. research bureau

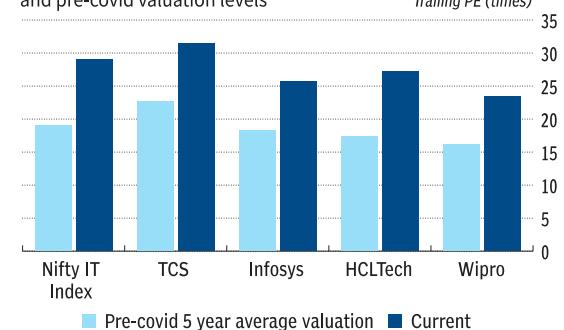
"Unfortunately, however, stocks can't outperform businesses indefinitely." That was the sound investment advice from Warren Buffett in his annual shareholder letter nearly four decades back in 1986. This investment logic has largely held firm across decades and market cycles, although it does get tested pretty often. The rally in IT services stocks over the last year is one such example and the results from Accenture on Thursday are a wake-up call for investors riding this rally wherein stock prices and fundamentals have got decoupled.

In our *bl.portfolio* edition dated January 15, 2024 (IT stocks rally may be on wobbly legs) we had explained risks to their elevated valuations. The rally, which had been in play for nearly a year, gained further steam post Q3 results of IT majors in early January. The confounding thing, though was that there was hardly anything positive fundamentally in those results that warranted that rerating. Modestly better than expected margins and lower attrition, both of which actually play out during IT downturns as managements cut costs and employees are more careful in shifting jobs, was in some twisted way deemed to be a sign of improving underlying fundamentals or atleast that's what the rallying share prices indicated.

We had highlighted why this was misleading and that one of the key indicators of underlying fundamentals was headcount trend. Q3 results of major IT companies indicated decreasing headcount. The decoupling that was worth taking note of then was that while Y-o-Y change in headcount was at its lowest ebb in last 15-16 years, the valuation levels were close to historical highs.

Valuation gap

Fundamental value lies in between current and pre-covid valuation levels



SOMETHING HAS TO GIVE!

While the stock of Accenture declined nearly 10 per cent on Thursday in what was its worst single day performance in recent years, the top 5 Indian IT stocks too corrected on Friday, but by a lesser extent in the range of 1.5 to 3 per cent. Deeper cuts at the start of the day were followed by some recovery in the second half. Will these valuations hold? Appears unlikely.

Accenture management's commentary in the post earning conference call appears to indicate that sluggishness in the IT services space may last well through the whole of 2024, implying FY25 may not be the year in which Indian IT companies' business rebounds. The negative revision in Accenture's FY24 revenue guidance, from 3-5 per cent given in December 2023 to 1-3 per cent now, reflects increased clarity that the management got from January onwards on clients' 2024 IT spending budgets. Accenture CEO event notes how a banker remarked that 'corporates have put themselves on a diet, given the macro (uncertainty)'.

Amidst such uncertainty, one question that investors need to mull on is what explains the valuation premium that they are awarding to IT companies today as compared to pre-Covid valuations? Is growth accelerating? No. Is AI going to boost their growth rate in the long term? Plausible, but there is no evidence of that for now. It would be worth noting that technological waves have played out in the last few decades, including the digital/cloud revolution in the last 10 years, but the growth in last 10 years was, in fact, lower than the previous 10 years for major IT companies. As investors answer these questions, IT stocks will settle down at their fundamental valuation levels.

WHO AM I?

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

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

1 I was founded in the 1960s as a joint venture with two industry leaders from India and the UK. With over half a century history of being a listed company, I have always been highly respected for maintaining outstanding corporate governance standards.

2 Due to several spin-offs (one company has become three separately listed) and name changes, my balance sheet and corporate identity have evolved over the last 15 years.

3 The complex capital and business restructuring I underwent has created enormous shareholder wealth, both through stock appreciation and handsome dividends.

4 One of the businesses I spun off in favour of an American leader was recently acquired by a 100-year-old German giant. It's currently valued almost double of my market cap.

5 One of my subsidiaries is one of the top 3 players nationally in a large industry with global aspirations. I was elated when its market capitalisation crossed ₹1 lakh crore.

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

Contributed by
UNIFI CAPITAL

Last week's stock:
Sula Vineyards
Last week's winner:
M. Kishore Babu

Too many elements of speculation

CHEMICALS. Tata Sons stake held by Tata Chemicals should not distract from valuing the core business

Sai Prabhakar Yadavalli
bl. research bureau

Speculation on likely listing of Tata Sons has undergone several rounds in the last one month, each time impacting the stock price of Tata Chemicals differently. After assessing the new implications and the core business of the company, we recommend that investors book profits from the stock of Tata Chemicals.

The story started with surmise about Tata Sons IPO listing, owing to regulation associated with 'upper layer NBFC'. Tata Chemicals, which owns 3 per cent stake in Tata Sons (potentially valued at ₹7-8 lakh crore), suddenly found an equity holding (worth ₹20,000 crore), which implies a 75 per cent addition to its market capitalisation. The stock soared 40 per cent from February 29 to March 3 on the newfound crown jewels.

As news spread that Tata Sons may look to avoid an IPO, the stock relinquished 15 per cent of its gains by March 19. Since then, the stock gave up 7.5 per cent, till March 22, as Tata Sons' recent stake sale in TCS further strengthened the non-IPO route.

As Tata Sons has not commented on the reason for the stake sale (0.6 per cent from its 73 per cent holding), speculation can range from overvaluations in IT sector, Tata Sons' foray into capital-intensive semiconductor and green energy ventures, or to reduce its debt and avoid an IPO.

In most likelihood, it could be a combination of all three. But overall, it strongly deflates the hopes of an IPO.

Tata Sons has a net debt of ₹20,642 crore as of March 2023 and the recent transaction has armed it with cash of close to half



that amount at ₹9,300 crore. Over the last month and through its ups and downs, Tata Chemicals' stock is still 12 per cent above February 29 levels. Now that the cat is out of the bag, investors, in all likelihood, have to assign a value to the Tata Sons stake whether the parent goes for an IPO or not.

MONETISATION PLAN KEY

But, we recommend that unless a clear path of monetisation of the stake is chalked out, the stake in

Tata Sons should not warrant a high valuation and the recent rally should not distract from the valuation of Tata Chemicals' core business. If the stake in Tata Sons residing with Tata Chemicals can be compared with cash, investors must acknowledge that the cash component generally gets a discount in company valuations. Cash component can rise to as much as 80 per cent of a company's value in certain cases as investors discount its value significantly and only the core busi-

speculation, monetisation plans should be even more discounted.

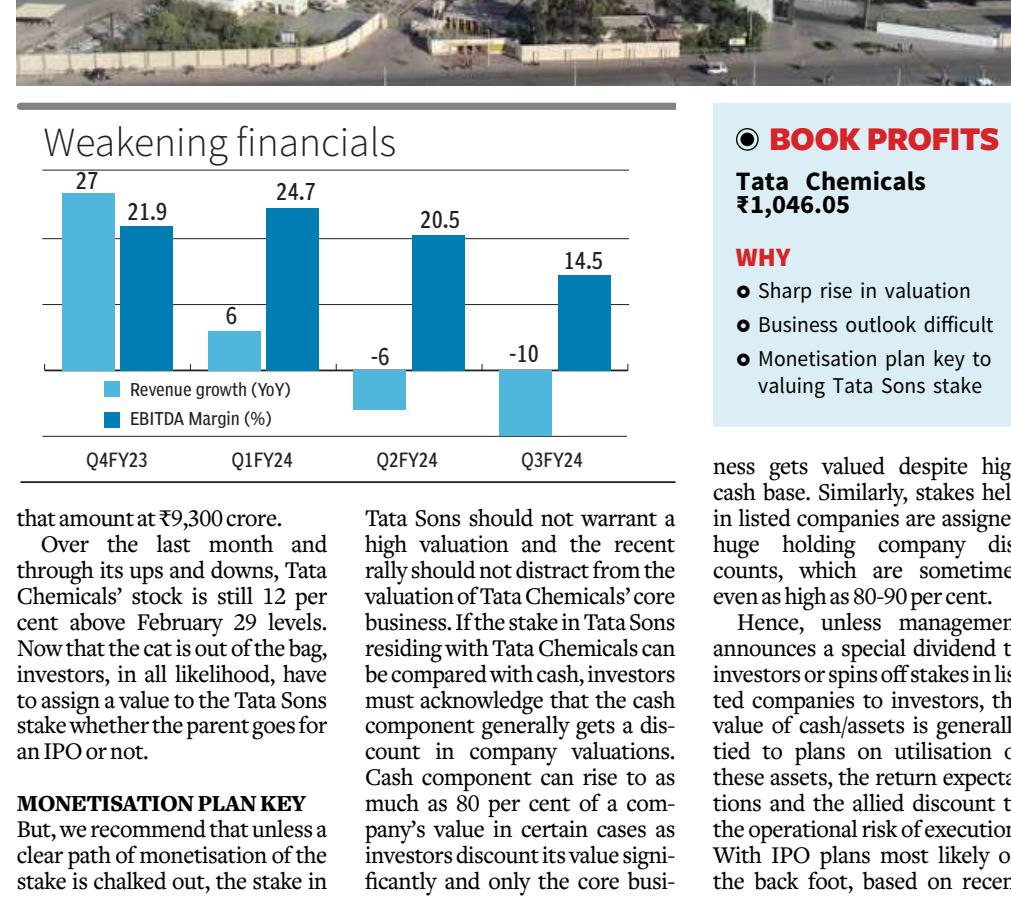
VALUE OF CORE BUSINESS

Tata Chemicals has expanded its capacity in the recent past and is facing slowdown in demand currently and may not be likely to propose a new phase of investment. The management, in its recent 3QFY24 results, reported a 10 per cent y-o-y revenue decline and a 54 per cent y-o-y PAT decline.

The management indicated a 12-18 month slowdown in demand as the US and Europe are facing a slowdown. The excess Chinese production has also pressured prices, exacerbating the impact. The situation is akin to commentary coming from wider speciality chemical companies and the impact on base chemicals manufacturers such as Tata Chemicals (soda ash manufacturing) will be more pronounced.

Two years back, in our *bl.portfolio* edition dated February 20, 2022, we had recommended that investors accumulate the stock when it was trading at ₹886. Considering the sharp rise in valuations currently after the recent rally and the difficult business outlook, investors can book profits from the stock. Compared to the past five-year average of 13 times of one-year forward earnings, the stock is trading at 25 times due to speculation on the value of its stake in Tata Sons.

With a lot of uncertainty on listing of Tata Sons and lack of clarity on how and whether it will be monetised, staying invested in the stock based on speculated value appears risky. With the core business also facing headwinds, we recommend that investors book profits from the stock.



● BOOK PROFITS

Tata Chemicals ₹1,046.05

WHY

- Sharp rise in valuation
- Business outlook difficult
- Monetisation plan key to valuing Tata Sons stake

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Nifty 50 (22,097) and Bank Nifty (46,864) wrapped up last week with minor gains of 0.3 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively. Below is an analysis of derivatives data of both indices.

NIFTY 50

Nifty futures (April contract) was up 0.2 per cent last week as it ended at 22,335 on Friday. While the futures contracts made small gains, there was not much movement in the cumulative Open Interest (OI), on a weekly basis.

The movement in futures price and OI over the past week shows that there was a short build-up in the first half. In the second half, the bears made an exit, which was captured by a decline in OI towards the end of the week.

Nevertheless, the chart of Nifty April futures denotes that there is a resistance between 22,360 and 22,400. A breakout of 22,400 can lift the contract to 22,520, another barrier. Subsequent resistance is at 22,650.

The nearest support for Nifty futures (April) from the current level is at 22,170, followed by 21,980. Note that there is a good chance for the contract to oscillate within 21,980 and 22,400 in the near term. We can predict the next leg of trend based on the direction of the break of the 21,980-22,400 range.

According to the March expiry options chain, support levels are at 22,000 and 21,800. Similarly, the immediate resistance points are at 22,500 and 22,800.

Since Nifty futures is trading

An important barrier under test

F&O TRACKER. A breakout can lead to an upswing in Nifty and Bank Nifty

near a resistance, traders can consider futures short or put option longs. Exit these positions when the contract touches 22,000. On the other hand, if Nifty futures break out of 22,400, exit the futures short and put longs, and consider initiating fresh futures long and call option longs.

BANKNIFTY

Bank Nifty futures (April series) (47,324) reflected a similar behaviour to Nifty futures – the contract witnessed arrival of fresh shorts until Wednesday last week and then exit of the same towards the end of the week. That said, Bank Nifty futures outperformed Nifty futures

DERIVATIVE OUTLOOK

- Bank Nifty futures outperformed Nifty futures
- Options of both indices show positive bias
- But index futures are at a crucial resistance

by gaining 0.6 per cent. Another similarity is that Bank Nifty futures is now hovering around a resistance at 47,500. If this level is breached, the contract can move towards the next resistance at 48,000. Sub-

sequent barrier is at 48,600. On the other hand, Bank Nifty futures has a support at 46,850 and 46,450. Below this, the nearest demand levels are at 46,150 and 45,600. The next swing in price will depend on which direction the contract moves out of the 46,450-47,500 price band.

As per the option chain, 46,500 and 46,000 are the key supports. At the other end, the potential barriers are at 47,500 and 48,000.

Participants can consider futures short or put longs now since Bank Nifty futures is trading near a resistance at 47,500. But if this is invalidated, liquidate futures short and put longs and then go for futures long or call longs.

Dividend capture using futures

MASTERING DERIVATIVES. You will gain if the futures discount is lower than the dividend amount

Venkatesh Bangaruwamy

A long futures position will not entitle you to dividends on the underlying stock unless you could take delivery of the stock under the futures contract when the ex-dividend date is after contract expiry. This week, we discuss if it is possible to capture dividends when the ex-dividend date on the stock is before contract expiry.

DIVIDEND CAPTURE

Most traders do not prefer dividends, as tax on dividends is higher than the tax on trading gains. Note that trading gains from futures and options are taxed as business income, not short-term capital gains as is the case with delivery trades in the spot market.

Let us suppose you want to capture dividends. The issue occurs when you are long on futures and the ex-dividend date on the stock is before contract expiry. You must buy and hold the shares to be eligible to receive the dividends. The proceeds can come from closing your long futures position before the stock turns ex-dividend.

If dividends account for more than 2 per cent of the market



value of the stock, NSE will adjust the futures price to the extent of the dividend. Take NMDC, which recently declared a dividend of 5.75 per share. This stock went ex-dividend on February 27. Suppose the futures price was 240 prior to the last cum-dividend date. Then, adjusted futures price the next day will be 234.25. This means you do not capture any benefit holding the futures, as dividends are backed out of the futures price. But if you want to capture the dividends, you should switch from a long futures position to a long stock po-

● TAKE NOTE

If dividends account for more than 2 per cent of the market value of the stock, NSE will adjust the futures price to the extent of the dividend

sition. You must do this on the last day the stock trades cum-dividend. Because the NSE will adjust the futures price the next day, the futures price will be trading at a discount to the spot price

when you sell the contract. That discount is likely to be close to the dividend amount.

So, what is the advantage of buying futures over buying the stock in the first place? Leverage. You will not use large trading capital to buy the stock till the last cum-dividend date. As futures contract requires only initial margin and mark-to-market margin, you can gain exposure to the number of shares defined by the permitted lot size for a fraction of the capital required to buy the same quantity of shares in the spot market. This allows you to use the capital to initiate other positions in the derivatives market till such time.

OPTIONAL READING

The closer the last cum-dividend date is to the expiry of the futures contract, the closer the futures discount (relative to the underlying) will be to the dividend amount. Note that it may not be optimal to switch from futures to the stock if the futures discount is greater than the dividend amount. On the other hand, you will gain if the discount is lower than the dividend amount.

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

Heighten the vigil

BULLION CUES. There could be a correction

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Gold managed to gain last week, but silver ended up posting a loss. The former was up 0.4 per cent and the latter down 2 per cent to end at \$2,164.2 and \$24.7 per ounce, respectively.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold futures gained 0.5 per cent to end at ₹65,858 (per 10 gram), whereas silver futures lost 1.1 per cent to close at ₹74,787 (per kg).

MCX-GOLD (\$65,858)

Gold futures (April contract) rallied and hit a record high of ₹66,943 before moderating to end the week at ₹65,858 on Friday.

The chart indicates that the contract could see a corrective decline from here, possibly to ₹64,000. Note that ₹65,200 is a support.

For gold futures to see a fresh leg of rally, it ought to decisively break out of ₹66,500. Nevertheless, there is a potential for the contract to hit ₹70,000 within next few months as the broader trend is up.

Trade strategy: We suggested buying gold futures at ₹66,000. Hold this position. But revise the stop-loss up to ₹65,000 from the current



₹63,900. If the contract goes past ₹67,000, raise the stop-loss to ₹65,800. Liquidate the longs at ₹68,000.

MCX-SILVER (\$74,787) Silver futures (May series) registered an intraweek high of ₹78,323 on Thursday before ending the week at ₹74,787.

While it managed to close above the 200-day moving average, it could see a dip in price to ₹73,800, which could extend to ₹72,500.

But if silver futures see a daily close above ₹76,000, it can establish a rally to ₹79,000. Note that the price band of ₹79,000-80,000 is a potential barrier.

Trade strategy: Stay away for now. Buy silver futures if it breaks out of ₹76,000. Place initial stop-loss at ₹74,400. When the contract touches ₹78,000, tighten the stop-loss to ₹76,500. Book profits ₹79,000.

Bull trend holds

CRUDE CHECK. Retain the long positions

Akhil Nallamuthu
bl. research bureau

Crude oil advanced in the first half of last week. But then it made a U-turn on Wednesday and declined. However, it managed to end the week higher.

Brent crude oil futures on the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) was up 0.4 per cent by closing at \$85.6 per barrel. Crude oil futures on the MCX was up 1 per cent by ending the week at ₹6,746 a barrel.

BRENT FUTURES (\$85.6)

Brent futures marked a five-month high of \$87.70 last Tuesday before scaling lower to \$85.60. Yet, the broader trend is bullish, and it will remain so until \$81-84 support band stays valid.

If the rally resumes, Brent futures can hit \$90, a resistance, soon. Above this, \$93 and \$100 are the hurdles.

But if the contract slips below the support at \$81, it can fall to \$77 or even to \$75.

MCX-CRUISE OIL (\$6,746) The April crude oil futures registered a high of ₹6,897 last Tuesday and then dropped. But the uptrend is intact, and the contract stays above few important supports.

There is a strong support at ₹6,600, where the 20-day moving average coincides. Below this, ₹6,500 and ₹6,420 can provide support if there is a fall in price. Only a break below ₹6,420 will turn the bias bearish.

In the near term, we expect crude oil futures rallying to ₹7,000, from where there could be a correction in price, possibly to ₹6,500. But if ₹7,000 is invalidated, expect an upswing towards ₹8,000 over the medium term.

Trade strategy: Last week, we recommended rolling over the longs from March futures (initiated at ₹6,720) to April contract at ₹6,680.

Since the price crossed over ₹6,800 mid-week, the revised stop-loss would now be at ₹6,650.

Retain this trade. Liquidate the longs at ₹6,950.

F & O QUERY



AKHIL NALLAMUTHU, bl. research bureau

I'm holding one lot of HDFC Bank 1460CE (March expiry). I bought it for ₹21.15. My target is ₹35. Should I hold it till the end of expiry or exit?

Sandesh Karande

HDFC Bank (₹1,442.9): The stock is now stuck between the resistance at ₹1,470 and the support at ₹1,435. Since the stock is now trading above a support, there is a good chance for a rebound in price. But that could be capped at ₹1,470. If the bulls can lift the price above ₹1,470, we can see a rally to ₹1,500.

While a rally to ₹1,500 cannot be ruled out, it is uncertain whether that will occur before the March contract expires. That said, 1460-CE closed at ₹4.55. There is not much premium left. So, in case you have not exited until now, you may keep it until the expiry. But the moment the stock hits ₹1,470, consider exiting the option.

I have bought Coforge March futures at ₹6,012.80. Should I hold or exit or average?

Palani Shanmugam

Coforge (₹5,540.1): The stock of Coforge has been on a steady decline over the past month. It fell off the resistance at ₹6,800. Consequently, the Coforge March futures dropped, and it closed at ₹5,549.2 last week.

While there is no strong evidence of a bullish reversal at this juncture, the underlying stock is just above the 200-day moving average support. So, for Coforge futures, there is a strong support at ₹5,500. However, this does not mean that Coforge futures can recover from here. To rally back to ₹6,000, it has to surpass an intermediate resistance at ₹5,750.

Given the prevailing conditions, you can hold Coforge futures. But we suggest exiting the trade once the contract hits ₹6,000, as there is a good chance for the contract to resume the downturn after moving up to ₹6,000. Place a stop-loss at ₹5,480 to be prepared if the contract declines from here.

Send your queries to derivatives@thehindu.co.in.

Change in Open Interest (OI)

Scrip	FII		Retail	
	As on Mar 22	Weekly change %	As on Mar 22	Weekly change %
Future Index Long	81266	-6	489481	0
Future Index Short	153645	7	399386	-2
Net Futures	-72379	26	90095	13
Index Call options Long	886921	-19	3628654	-22
Index Call options Short	866446	-18	3771454	-17
Net Call options	20475	-58	-142800	-323
Index Put options Long	997496	-8	4146407	22
Index Put options Short	912792	-7	4303109	15
Net Put Options	84704	-22	-156702	-52

FII's increased net short on index futures and also cut down net long on call options. These are bearish indications.

Stocks that witnessed major change in OI

Company	Price (₹)	Weekly price change %	OI (in lakh)	Weekly OI change %
RISE (as on Mar 22)				
MARUTI	12,337.70	7.5	74.9	49.9
TCS	3,910.90	-7.3	340.8	48.0
COFORGE	5,540.10	-9.4	41.1	47.0
IPCALAB	1,196.05	2.6	46.4	38.9
MRF	1,31,302.95	-7.1	1.1	35.5</

Valuation Radar: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly

The Benchmark indices, Sensex and Nifty 50 gained 0.3 per cent each respectively last week. BSE Realty gained the most by 5.3 per cent followed by BSE Metal 4.9 per cent and BSE Auto 4.2 per cent. BSE IT, BSE Teck and BSE FMCG declined 5.5 per cent, 4.8 per cent and 0.5 per cent each.

	Nifty 50	Sensex	Auto	Bankex	Capital Goods	Consumer Durables	FMCG	Healthcare	IT	Metal	Oil & Gas	Power	PSU	Realty	Tec
P/E	22.8	24.8	30.2	16.1	48.1	84.1	40.9	42.8	31.6	19.1	8.4	26.1	10.9	57.7	36.6
P/BV	3.9	3.7	5.8	2.3	7.7	10.6	9.1	5.2	8.0	2.2	1.7	3.9	1.9	5.5	7.9
Dividend Yield	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.4	1.7	0.6	1.7	4.3	2.7	1.4	2.4	0.2	1.5
Weekly Return (%)	0.3 ▲	0.3 ▲	4.2 ▲	0.5 ▲	3.4 ▲	0.9 ▲	-0.5 ▼	1.7 ▲	-5.5 ▼	4.9 ▲	1.0 ▲	2.6 ▲	2.5 ▲	5.3 ▲	-4.8 ▼
Monthly Return (%)	0.2 ▲	0.3 ▲	3.6 ▲	-0.5 ▼	6.6 ▲	0.1 ▲	-0.7 ▼	-3.1 ▼	-5.7 ▼	2.6 ▲	-4.9 ▼	0.3 ▲	-3.5 ▼	-3.3 ▼	-3.7 ▼
Annual Return (%)	29.4 ▲	25.7 ▲	71.6 ▲	18.3 ▲	70.8 ▲	34.3 ▲	18.7 ▲	59.3 ▲	28.8 ▲	45.5 ▲	54.1 ▲	77.9 ▲	90.8 ▲	121.5 ▲	27.3 ▲

The sector indices are disseminated by S&P BSE.

Company	CMP	EPS	PE	PB	Year End	Sales Qty	Profit Qty	Sales TTM	Profit TTM	Wkly Rtn	ROCE	DER	Yr.High	Yr.Low	
360 ONE [1]	666.7	20.0	33.3	7.3	202312	25.3	12.0	16.5	7.4	-4.1	13.4	2.0	789.0	396.6	
3M India	30745.0	484.9	63.4	18.8	202312	1.3	8.4	7.9	28.2	3.8	30.7	0.0	3980.9	72174.00	
A															
A B B [2]	5965.4	59.8	10.3	21.3	202312	13.3	12.8	22.0	6.9	2.9	0.0	6021.0	2143.2		
Aarti Drugs [5]	4555.5	19.6	23.2	3.5	202312	8.7	0.0	6.6	0.5	645.0	332.2				
AAVAS Financiers	1356.0	6.00	22.6	3.1	202312	23.5	9.0	26.1	13.6	-0.9	5.3	3.0	1831.9	1321.1	
Abbott India	20778.6	539.1	50.5	18.5	202312	8.7	26.0	9.4	23.3	-4.7	39.9	0.0	29628.2	22059.3	
ACC	2441.3	89.2	27.4	3.4	202312	8.3	21.8	11.0	13.1	-2.5	7.9	2.0	1590.5		
Adani Energy [A]	1014.7	9.4	97.3	9.5	202312	16.7	-3.16	16.8	6.3	-2.3	10.2	3.0	1250.0	686.9	
Adani Enterprises [1]	3105.9	33.2	93.5	9.3	202312	6.5	13.0	17.5	8.9	-0.9	1.1	0.0	1250.0	686.9	
Adani Green [2]	1650.9	1.9	31.1	5.0	202312	44.6	7.7	334.0	68.0	-0.1	9.4	1.2	1356.5	571.4	
Adani Ports [2]	1281.0	4.9	31.4	5.2	202312	44.6	7.7	334.0	68.0	-0.1	9.4	1.2	1356.5	571.4	
Adani Power	531.0	6.05	8.8	5.1	202312	67.3	3111.9	20.7	130.4	-0.1	13.8	1.9	589.3	166.3	
Adani Total Gas [1]	939.2	5.4	172.2	31.9	202312	4.6	17.6	3.4	12.8	-0.2	20.7	0.5	1259.9	522.0	
Aditya Aman [5]	455.5	24.6	18.5	4.5	202312	8.7	25.9	2.5	14.2	-0.9	33.1	0.0	354.0	307.9	
Aditya Birla Fin. [2]	2055.6	-6.2	66.6	20.2	202312	16.1	-59.3	13.9	-0.9	0.0	17	265.5	184.4		
Aditya Birla Finserv [2]	175.5	16.0	16.9	1.7	202312	28.4	30.3	20.4	18.1	-0.1	20.4	0.0	1250.0	686.9	
Agile Logistics [1]	3087.7	3.4	26.6	3.8	202312	10.2	3.8	23.3	2.2	1.1	0.5	471.2	187.3		
Aether Industri. [2]	801.7	9.5	84.2	5.2	202312	-7.0	-37.0	8.1	6.1	-0.6	18.5	0.2	1210.8	778.0	
Afife India [2]	1088.5	19.4	56.1	6.5	202312	32.6	11.4	15.5	8.6	6.4	18.9	1.1	1363.5	875.3	
AIA Engineering [2]	378.7	12.1	31.8	5.8	202312	-5.2	-20.7	4.9	4.6	2.5	17.3	0.0	4624.5	2610.0	
Ajanta Pharma [2]	2148.7	58.4	36.8	7.8	202312	13.7	56.1	8.2	19.2	1.3	22.2	0.0	2355.1	1136.8	
Akzo Nobel [2]	2455.7	90.8	27.4	8.2	202312	4.7	16.8	6.0	32.1	2.5	32.3	0.1	3076.4	2212.4	
Alchem Pharma [2]	936.8	3.0	36.1	4.2	202312	4.8	17.9	0.5	18.4	0.2	18.0	0.0	1250.0	686.9	
Alkem Labs [2]	4793.4	15.5	33.9	5.2	202312	9.2	40.2	1.0	24.7	0.4	19.3	0.0	5519.1	4651.1	
Alkyl Amines [2]	839.8	31.0	55.5	2.5	202312	-16.9	-2.3	16.6	7.1	0.0	1250.0	686.9			
Alok Industries [1]	27.4	-1.9	-0.7	-0.2	202312	-27.0	-19.2	-24.3	-5.2	-0.4	0.0	39.2	10.6		
Alstom [2]	365.7	49.5	15.7	2.4	202312	15.4	10.7	29.4	1.9	0.5	18.5	0.0	922.0	553.7	
Amara Rajah Ener. [1]	777.6	49.5	15.7	2.4	202312	15.4	10.7	29.4	1.9	0.5	18.5	0.0	922.0	553.7	
Amber Enterp. [2]	3552.4	42.2	84.2	6.1	202312	-4.0	-10.4	18.2	28.7	6.4	10.5	0.7	4615.2	1762.3	
Ambrico Cement [2]	589.2	15.4	38.3	3.0	202312	13.8	56.0	4.8	6.1	-2.0	17.7	0.0	624.5	354.2	
Angel One [2]	2662.6	12.5	23.3	8.6	202312	41.5	14.2	30.9	21.1	1.3	24.4	0.0	3949.4	2345.0	
Anglo American [2]	564.4	23.7	23.8	3.2	202312	29.2	4.4	16.6	1.6	0.0	810.0	0.0	1250.0	686.9	
Anyo Auto Indus [2]	5083.8	12.7	20.4	1.1	202312	32.1	22.4	24.0	1.8	0.0	1250.0	686.9			
Apex Indus. [2]	6364.4	30.7	34.7	4.4	202312	2.9	18.1	16.6	7.4	0.0	1250.0	686.9			
API Apollo Tubes [2]	1515.8	27.5	55.1	12.8	202312	3.6	-2.2	11.4	26.7	2.7	26.0	0.5	1806.6	1042.4	
Apollo Hospitals [5]	6370.3	54.8	116.2	14.1	202312	13.8	59.1	6.1	1.0	6.2	17.7	0.0	2143.5	1710.9	
Applova Techs [1]	468.1	18.4	26.5	2.3	202312	2.7	73.6	1.1	13.2	-1.1	28.1	0.0	1250.0	686.9	
Apputo Value Hous. [2]	316.6	11.7	21.5	4.1	202312	22.5	25.7	1.1	13.2	-0.1	28.1	0.0	1250.0	686.9	
Arca Health [2]	687.7	26.1	34.7	5.0	202312	31.1	59.5	3.1	17.3	0.0	1250.0	686.9			
Arca Health [2]	1673.2	20.7	30.4	1.1	202312	32.1	22.4	24.0	1.8	0.0	12				

Venkatasubramanian K
bl. research bureau

There are expectations of a new 'UPI (Unified Payment Interface) moment' in the insurance segment.

Last year, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) had mooted the Bima Sugam portal as a one-stop shop for all insurance stakeholders. Last month, the IRDAI released an exposure draft on the regulatory framework for the proposed portal relating to its establishment, functioning and governance.

What's more, all types of insurance policies — general (motor, travel, health, fire, etc.) and life — would be available for customers and all others in the industry ecosystem.

For lay customers, the whole idea may be a bit daunting at first sight. But it isn't that complex.

Read on for more about the proposed Bima Sugam portal, its benefits and the recent IRDAI exposure draft, to make the most of the marketplace when it becomes functional by the end of this year or a tad later.

EASE OF TRANSACTION

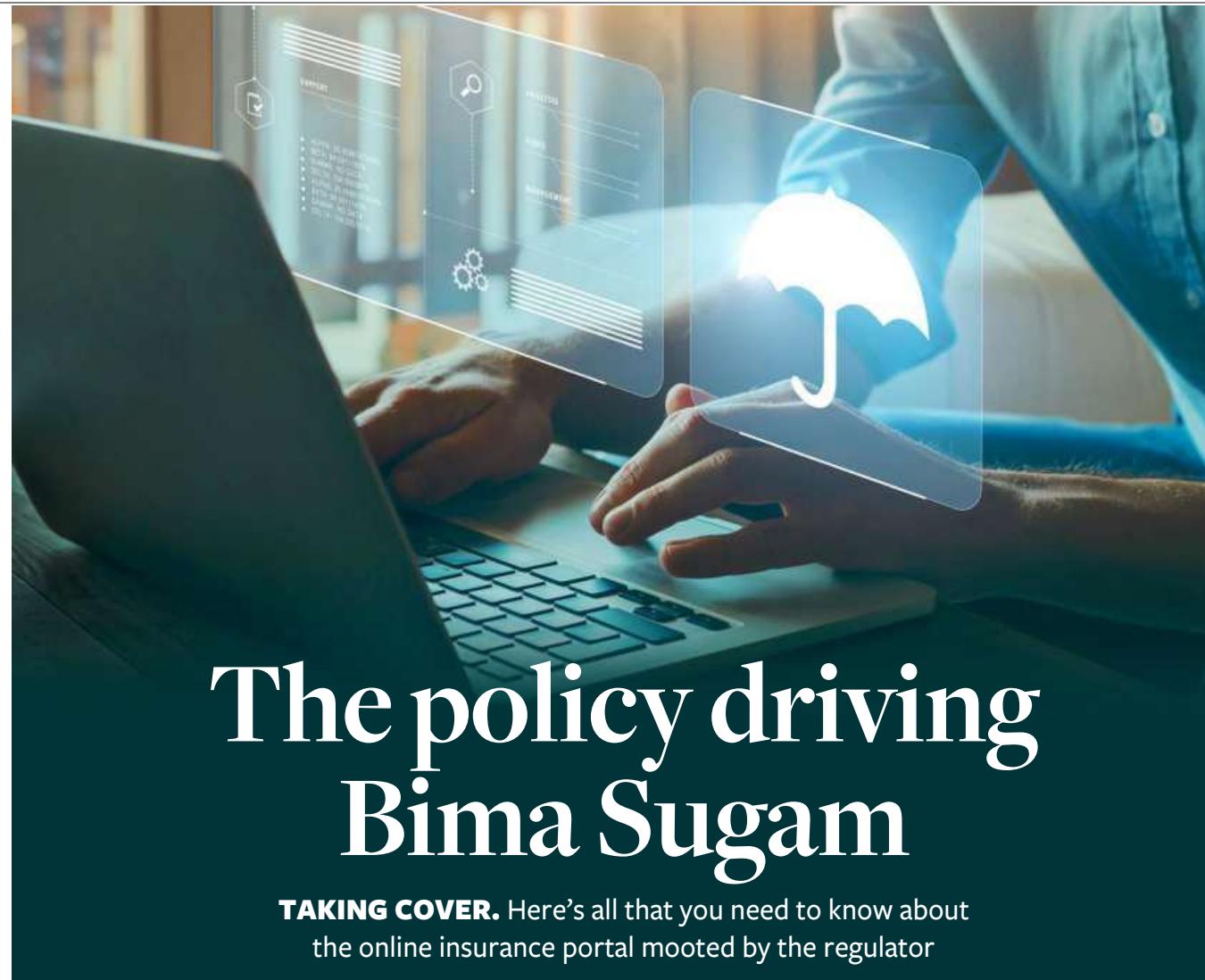
Bima Sugam is conceived to be an e-marketplace of sorts for insurance. Therefore, all stakeholders would form a part of it. So, policyholders, insurance firms, agents, existing online aggregators offering products, third party administrators, etc., are all included in the digital ecosystem.

There would be no charges to be paid by policyholders for using the portal. All insurance companies would be part of the portal and offer their products to policyholders.

Customers can buy all types of insurance products from those offering it, by choosing from among the variety available.

And, as mentioned earlier, it would be a one-stop shop for all types of insurance requirements, including term, health, motor, travel, fire, home, and ULIPs (unit-linked insurance plans). Policyholders can buy products directly from insurance companies.

However, insurance agents and intermediaries can also make use of Bima Sugam. They would also be onboarded in the Bima Sugam portal. So, these agents can service their clients



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

The policy driving Bima Sugam

TAKING COVER. Here's all that you need to know about the online insurance portal mooted by the regulator

online by enrolling them in the portal.

Registration of claims too can be done on the portal with the respective insurer or third-party administrator.

Filing of complaints or disputes would also be facilitated via the portal.

Thus, a single-point marketplace quite like an online e-commerce digital system is sought to be built, hence buying of policies, paying of premiums, registering of claims, etc., are expected to be smooth processes.

THE DIGITAL INFRA

Now, the IRDAI has released a new draft on the nuances of the portal itself and has asked for comments from all stakeholders.

Specifically, the regulator wants the portal to be run as a non-for-profit company under section 8 of the Companies Act. The portal anyway would be free to use for all consumers.

Some of the other proposals made in the exposure draft are:

The company running Bima

PLUS FACTORS

- Services to be free of charge
- Customer consent-based digital architecture
- Will bring all insurance ecosystem players onboard

Sugam should be widely held by all insurance companies spread across life, health and general segments. No single entity would have a controlling stake.

There would be two directors from the IRDAI's side. The company would have a Chairperson and CEO.

A robust risk management committee is to be formed for monitoring all types of risks to make it safe for customers.

Most importantly, the IRDAI has proposed a consent-based architecture for the services provided. Costs (premiums) also could come down significantly in some cases as the physical layer would be cut and servicing

portal or insurance companies towards issuing policies, servicing claims, etc.

That is, customer consent would be at the heart of all acceptance to data given or taken, with high degree of confidentiality being maintained.

MAKING BEST USE

Though not strictly comparable, there are parallels to widely owned marketplaces in the mutual fund industry — MF Utilities that is owned by all fund houses, MFCentral that is owned by KFin and CAMS, etc.

But it remains to be seen how successful they become over the years.

Bima Sugam is no doubt a great initiative to smoothen insurance purchases and settlement of claims and so on.

And taking all processes online would ensure greater transparency and quicken matters for customers and other stakeholders.

Costs (premiums) also could come down significantly in some cases as the physical layer would be cut and servicing

would be smoother.

But as with all financial products, customers should be careful about what policies they buy. For most investors, a term cover and health insurance policy would suffice. A few others may want ULIPs and other products for their goals.

TAKING EXPERT AID

In all cases, unless you are well-equipped to make informed decisions on product selection, you would be better off taking help.

Use the services of an agent if required and ask for detailed product explanation.

Or take the help of a registered investment advisor on where insurance fits into your financial plan.

By going online, both the agent and the customer should ideally be on the same page about the product being bought or sold.

The portal is just a means and not an end in itself for the customer.

INSURANCE QUERY.



SARBVIR SINGH

I work as an IT professional in Bengaluru. I fall under the 30 per cent tax bracket and have a family floater health insurance policy that covers my wife and 5-year-old child. Additionally, I have a senior citizen health plan for my mother. Last year, I invested in a child investment plan from a reputed insurer. How can I claim tax benefits for my insurance and investment? Please explain.

Dhruv

You can claim up to ₹25,000 for self, spouse, dependent children, or parents. For premium paid towards parents who are senior citizens (60 years and above), the limit extends to ₹50,000.

I would also recommend that you have an adequate sum insured for a more comprehensive coverage. Bearing significant medical expenses out of pocket can potentially drain one's savings. For your family floater plan, you should have at least ₹50 lakh to ₹1 crore insured. Also, do consider important health insurance riders, such as consumables cover, critical illness cover, and personal accident cover, if you don't already have them.

TAX BENEFITS UNDER SECTION 80C AND 10(10D) OF I-T ACT

In totality, you claim up to ₹1.5 lakh under Section 80C, let me explain how.

Child plans

For your investment in a child plan, you are eligible for tax exemption under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act, as per the old regime. The premium paid towards Child Plans qualifies for a deduction of up to ₹1.5 lakh from your total taxable income.

Education inflation is almost twice the inflation rate. So, I would urge all the parents reading this to consider investing in a Child Plan for their children; it's one of the most effective ways to combat the rising costs of



completely free from any tax liability.

Unit Linked Insurance Plan (ULIP)

If you want to maximise your savings under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act, you can also consider ULIPs. ULIPs are becoming increasingly popular amongst Indians who want the security of an insurance product and also seek high market returns on their investment.

These products are a unique mix of insurance and investment with a minimum lock-in period of 5 years. Premiums paid by you are allocated between life insurance and equity investments. ULIPs help you future-proof your long-term financial goals such as retirement, paying off loans, or buying a house.

The Waiver of Premium feature (WOP)

(WOP) has also added to the allure of ULIPs and contributed to their growing popularity. Under this feature, the insurer continues to pay your premiums in the unfortunate event of the policyholder's demise. This ensures that the investment goals aren't affected. It's important to note that this feature is not built-in, and you have to opt for it.

You can save on taxes under Sections 80C and 10(10D) of the Income Tax Act, and the fund value upon policy exit or maturity after five years is entirely tax-free.

The writer is Joint Group CEO, PB Fintech

Send your queries to insurancequeries@thehindu.co.in

education in India.

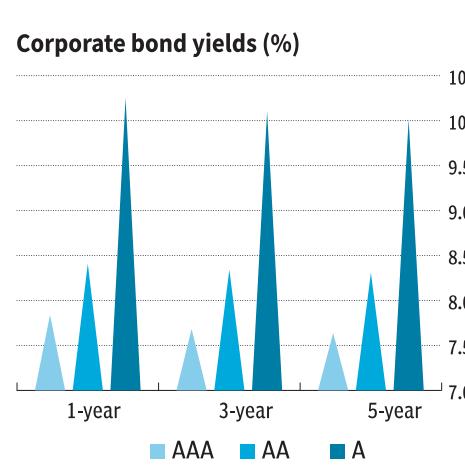
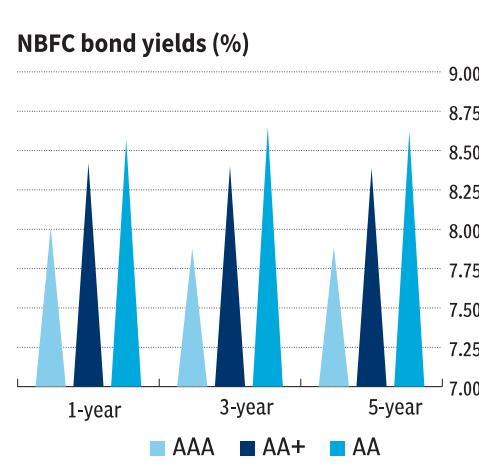
Term insurance

Term Insurance is one protection tool that everyone should consider, especially in a country such as India where the mortality protection gap stands at around 91 per cent. Term insurance provides coverage for a predetermined period, such as 10, 20, or 30 years. If the insured dies within this period, the policy pays out a death benefit to the designated beneficiaries. Under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act of 1961, taxpayers can avail of a maximum exemption of up to ₹1.5 lakh annually. The sum assured received by dependents is also

Bond yields

10-year benchmark G-Sec yield (%)

Latest 7.09 | Month-ago 7.07 | Year-ago 7.33

**Corporate bond yields (%)****NBFC bond yields (%)****Yields on government securities of different maturities (%)**

» 91-day Treasury Bill 7.05 » 364-day Treasury Bill 7.09 » 3-year G-Sec 7.10 » 5-year G-Sec 7.11

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
Scotiabank	3.7	3.9	4	4	Feb 01
Standard Chartered	6.5	7.5	7.5	7.1	Feb 01
INDIAN: PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS					
Bank of Maharashtra	7	6.75	6.25	6	Feb 28
Bank of Baroda	7.1	7.15	7.25	6.5	Jan 15
Bank of India	5.75	7.25	6.75	6.5	Nov 01
Canara Bank	6.25	7.25	6.85	6.8	Nov 16
Central Bank of India	6.25	7.1	7	6.5	Jan 10
Indian Bank	7.05	7.25	6.7	6.25	Mar 04
Indian Overseas Bank	5.75	7.3	6.8	6.5	Feb 10
Punjab National Bank	7.05	7.25	7	6.5	Feb 01
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.15	7.4	6.3	6	Feb 01
State Bank of India	6	7.1	7	6.75	Dec 27
UCO Bank	5.5	6.5	6.3	6.2	Oct 01
Union Bank	5.75	7.25	6.5	6.5	Jan 19
INDIAN: PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS					
Axis Bank	6	7.2	7.1	7.1	Mar 06
Bandhan Bank	4.5	7.85	7.25	7.25	NA
Catholic Syrian	7.25	7.75	7.1	5.75	Dec 01
City Union Bank	6.5	7	6.5	6.25	Mar 20
DCB Bank	7.25	7.85	8	7.9	Dec 13
Dhanlaxmi Bank	6.5	7.25	6.5	6.6	Feb 01
Federal Bank	6	7.5	7.05	7	Feb 06
HDFC Bank	6	7.25	7.15	7.2	Feb 09
ICICI Bank	6	7.2	7	7	Feb 17
IDBI Bank	7.05	7.25	7	6.5	Feb 15
IDFC First Bank	5.75	8	7.25	7	Mar 21
IndusInd Bank	6.5	7.75	7.25	7.25	Feb 06
J & K Bank	6	7.1	7	6.5	Jan 11
Karnataka Bank	7.1	7.4	6.5	6.5	Feb 01
Kotak Bank	7	7.4	7.15	7	Feb 27
Karur Vysya Bank	7.4	7.5	7	7	Feb



bl.rating	Scheme Name	Latest NAV (₹)	Latest Corpus (₹ Cr)	Expense Ratio (%)	Regular	Direct	Trailing Returns (%)	Sortino Ratio (%)
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EQUITY FUNDS

EQUITY - LARGE CAP FUNDS

★★★★★ Baroda BNP Paribas Large Cap	194.8	1806	2.1	0.9	40.1	18.2	17.7	16.1	0.39
★★★★★ Canara Robeco Bluechip Equity	53.3	12185	1.7	0.5	32.4	15.0	16.9	15.3	0.37
★★★★★ ICICI Prudential Bluechip	94.9	51554	1.5	0.9	41.4	20.7	17.8	16.3	0.36
★★★★★ Edelweiss Large Cap	73.4	771	2.3	0.8	34.2	16.9	16.1	15.2	0.33
★★★★★ HDFC Top 100	1015.9	31653	1.7	1.1	39.2	20.5	15.6	15.4	0.32
★★★★★ Kotak Bluechip	486.3	7679	1.8	0.6	32.2	15.7	16.1	15.1	0.33
★★★★★ Nippon Ind Large Cap	77.0	22767	1.7	0.8	43.6	23.6	17.3	17.2	0.33
★★★★★ Axis Bluechip	53.5	32646	1.6	0.7	30.2	11.4	13.9	14.4	0.30
★★★★★ Bandhan Large Cap	65.1	1357	2.1	0.9	38.2	16.1	15.2	13.1	0.32
★★★★★ HSBC Large Cap	415.8	1743	2.2	1.2	35.5	15.2	15.1	13.8	0.32
★★★★★ Invesco India Largecap	57.9	983	2.2	0.8	39.3	17.9	15.3	14.8	0.31
★★★★★ Mirae Asset Large Cap	95.6	37676	1.5	0.5	25.7	13.4	13.6	16.2	0.28
★★★★★ SBI Blue Chip	78.7	43355	1.6	0.9	28.3	14.9	15.4	15.5	0.31
★★★★★ Tata Large Cap	437.8	1968	2.1	1.1	34.1	17.0	15.2	13.9	0.31
★★★★★ UTI Large Cap	237.9	12147	1.8	0.9	29.1	14.0	14.5	14.2	0.30
★★★★★ Aditya Birla SL Frontline Equity	446.2	26480	1.7	1.0	32.9	16.6	14.9	14.8	0.31
★★★★★ Franklin Ind Bluechip	870.6	7602	1.9	1.1	30.9	13.3	13.4	13.2	0.27
★★★★★ LIC MF Large Cap	48.3	1377	2.1	0.8	26.6	12.7	13.3	12.6	0.28
★★★★★ PGM India Large Cap	302.1	545	2.4	0.9	26.0	12.5	12.9	13.2	0.26
★ DSP Top 100 Equity	386.1	3505	2.0	1.2	36.4	15.5	13.8	12.9	0.26
★ Groww Largecap	38.3	116	2.3	1.1	35.3	15.6	12.8	13.0	0.26
- JM Large Cap	141.7	100	2.4	0.9	44.9	19.5	16.5	14.2	0.55
- Taurus Large Cap	140.1	44	2.6	2.5	42.4	17.0	13.8	12.3	0.28

EQUITY - LARGE & MID CAP FUNDS

★★★★★ Mirae Asset Large & Midcap	127.4	33711	1.6	0.6	38.6	17.8	19.4	22.7	0.40
★★★★★ Quant Large & Mid Cap	109.1	1884	2.0	0.8	59.4	27.9	24.6	22.8	0.53
★★★★★ Edelweiss Large & Mid Cap	71.3	2797	1.9	0.5	39.5	18.6	18.3	16.5	0.38
★★★★★ HDFC Large and Mid Cap	283.6	16757	1.7	0.8	48.0	24.6	20.1	14.8	0.40
★★★★★ ICICI Prudential Large & Mid Cap	818.5	11333	1.7	0.8	44.6	25.5	20.7	16.6	0.41
★★★★★ SBI Large & Midcap	509.0	20633	1.7	0.8	33.6	21.0	18.5	17.6	0.36
★★★★★ Bandhan Core Equity	107.2	3884	1.9	0.7	51.4	23.8	19.2	16.5	0.37
★★★★★ Canara Robeco Emerging Equities	206.8	20325	1.6	0.6	34.5	17.0	17.5	21.4	0.35
★★★★★ DSP Equity Opport	494.7	10917	1.8	0.8	41.6	19.3	17.7	17.6	0.37
★★★★★ Invesco India Large & Mid Cap	73.9	4933	1.9	0.7	47.9	19.3	17.0	16.6	0.34
★★★★★ Kotak Equity Opport	282.3	19092	1.6	0.5	39.8	20.5	19.0	18.0	0.38
★★★★★ Sundaram Large and Mid Cap	71.7	6118	1.8	0.7	37.4	17.9	16.2	17.1	0.31
★★★★★ Tata Large & Mid Cap	458.1	6620	1.8	0.8	33.2	18.1	18.3	16.6	0.38
★★★★★ UTI Large & Mid Cap	143.4	2643	2.0	1.2	45.7	22.0	18.3	15.3	0.36
★★★★★ BOI Large & Mid Cap Equity	77.1	290	2.5	1.4	42.1	21.1	18.5	14.4	0.38
★★★★★ LIC MF Large & Midcap	30.9	2550	1.9	0.5	37.1	17.1	16.3	-	0.34
★★★★★ Navi Large & Midcap	29.4	277	2.3	0.3	24.4	15.6	14.2	-	0.28
★★★★★ Nippon Ind Vision	1183.9	4238	2.0	1.6	45.2	20.9	18.3	15.4	0.35
★ Aditya Birla SL Equity Advantage	764.3	5526	1.9	1.1	34.4	12.4	14.1	15.5	0.26
★ Franklin Ind Equity Advantage	154.1	3167	2.0	1.4	33.6	16.0	14.1	14.6	0.27

EQUITY - FLEXI CAP FUNDS

★★★★★ JM Flexicap	83.9	1657	2.0	0.2	56.3	25.6	22.2	19.6	0.48
★★★★★ Parag Parikh Flexi Cap	69.4	5891	1.3	0.6	40.3	21.9	22.8	19.6	0.51
★★★★★ Canara Robeco Flexi Cap	285.2	11875	1.7	0.6	33.1	16.0	16.6	15.5	0.36
★★★★★ HDFC Flexi Cap	1593.1	49657	1.5	0.8	43.3	25.4	19.1	17.5	0.37
★★★★★ PGM India Flexi Cap	30.7	5945	1.8	0.4	26.0	14.8	18.5	-	0.38
★★★★★ Union Flexi Cap	44.7	1983	2.1	0.9	39.3	18.7	18.4	14.1	0.38
★★★★★ DSP Flexi Cap	83.1	10018	1.8	0.7	34.6	15.1	16.8	16.6	0.34
★★★★★ Edelweiss Flexi Cap	31.5	1644	2.0	0.5	39.9	19.1	16.9	-	0.35
★★★★★ Franklin Ind Flexi Cap	1377.7	14471	1.8	1.0	43.0	21.3	18.3	17.3	0.37
★★★★★ Kotak Flexicap	70.5	45112	1.5	0.6	34.1	16.3	15.1	17.0	0.30
★★★★★ SBI Flexicap	95.5	20097	1.7	0.9	29.9	15.0	14.8	16.8	0.30
★★★★★ UTI Flexi Cap	266.9	24684	1.7	0.9	21.9	8.0	13.6	14.4	0.27
★★★★★ Aditya Birla SL Flexi Cap	1475.9	19767	1.7	0.9	36.4	16.6	15.5	17.0	0.30
★★★★★ Bandhan Flexi Cap	175.8	6754	1.9	1.2	36.0	16.3	13.8	14.5	0.27
★★★★★ HSBC Flexi Cap	180.2	4200	2.0	1.2	42.6	19.1	15.8	15.4	0.31
★★★★★ LIC MF Flexi Cap	84.8	940	2.3	1.3	34.3	14.4	13.1	11.1	0.28
★ Motilal Oswal Flexi Cap	47.0	9424	1.8	0.9	50.8	14.0	12.9	-	0.25
★ Taurus Flexi Cap	202.7	334	2.6	2.6	42.6	17.4	12.8	12.1	0.25
- Quant Flexi Cap	91.6	4155	1.9	0.7	56.6	31.5	29.0	23.9	0.57

EQUITY - MULTI CAP FUNDS

- Baroda BNP Paribas Multi Cap	237.8	2247	2.1	1.1	44.1	21.8	19.8
<td

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		
★★★★★	Aditya Birla SL Liquid	384.8	43962	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	-	
★★★★★	Axis Liquid	2658.1	33841	0.2	0.2	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.2	-	
★★★★★	HDFC Liquid	4687.4	62569	0.2	0.2	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.1	-	
★★★★★	HSBC Liquid	2381.3	19885	0.2	0.1	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	-	
★★★★★	ICICI Pru Liquid	353.6	52980	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-	
★★★★★	Kotak Liquid	4829.3	36628	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-	
★★★★★	Nippon Ind Liquid	5830.6	35419	0.3	0.2	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.1	-	
★★★★★	SBI Liquid	3737.4	69299	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-	
★★★★★	Tata Liquid	3762.3	29639	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-	
★★★★★	UTI Liquid	3918.2	26477	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	-	

CASH FUNDS

LIQUID FUNDS

- Aditya Birla SL Liquid	384.8	43962	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	-
- Axis Liquid	2658.1	33841	0.2	0.2	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.2	-
- HDFC Liquid	4687.4	62569	0.2	0.2	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.1	-
- HSBC Liquid	2381.3	19885	0.2	0.1	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	-
- ICICI Pru Liquid	353.6	52980	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-
- Kotak Liquid	4829.3	36628	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-
- Nippon Ind Liquid	5830.6	35419	0.3	0.2	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.1	-
- SBI Liquid	3737.4	69299	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-
- Tata Liquid	3762.3	29639	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.1	-
- UTI Liquid	3918.2	26477	0.3	0.2	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	-

OVERNIGHT FUNDS

- HDFC Overnight	3516.7	9602	0.1	0.1	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.6	-
- SBI Overnight	3842.6	14903	0.2	0.1	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	-
- UTI Overnight	3238.8	5570	0.1	0.1	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.7	-

ARBITRAGE FUNDS

- Aditya Birla SL Arbitrage	24.3	10668	1.0	0.3	6.7	7.9	7.4	7.5	-
- Bandhan Arbitrage	29.7	5768	1.1	0.4	6.5	7.9	7.3	7.5	-
- Edelweiss Arbitrage	17.7	8768	1.0	0.4	7.0	8.3	7.5	7.7	-
- HDFC Arbitrage	28.0	10994	0.9	0.4	6.5	7.9	7.3	7.5	-
- ICICI Pru Equity-Arbitrage	31.4	17500	0.9	0.3	6.7	8.0	7.3	7.6	-
- Invesco India Arbitrage	29.2	14593	1.1	0.4	6.7	8.0	7.5	7.7	0.10
- Kotak Equity Arbitrage	34.2	39099	1.0	0.4	7.0	8.5	7.7	7.9	-
- Nippon Ind Arbitrage	24.3	13854	1.1	0.4	6.3	7.9	7.3	7.5	-
- SBI Arbitrage Opport	30.9	27798	1.0	0.4	6.7	7.9	7.3	7.7	-
- UTI Arbitrage	32.0	4677	0.9	0.4	6.6	8.1	7.4	7.6	-

bl.rating	Scheme Name	Latest NAV (₹)	Latest Corpus (₹ Cr)	Expense Ratio (%)		Trailing Returns (%)					AA
				Regular	Direct	1 Year CAGR	2 Year CAGR	3 Year CAGR	5 Year CAGR	& Below	
★★★★★	Nippon Ind Ultra Short Duration	3681.5	5478	1.2	0.4	6.9	6.0	6.6	4.9	10.69	-
★★★★★	UTI Ultra Short Duration	3876.7	2197	1.0	0.4	7.0	5.9	6.0	5.1	11.23	-
★★★★★	Aditya Birla SL Savings	497.4	12705	0.6	0.3	7.4	6.4	5.7	6.2	10.60	-
★★★★★	ICICI Pru Ultra Short Term	25.3	13883	0.8	0.4	7.2	6.2	5.5	6.1	7.97	-
★★★★★	PGIM India Ultra Short Duration	31.3	274	0.9	0.3	6.7	5.8	5.0	6.6	10.64	-
★★★★★	Axis Ultra Short Term	13.5	4453	1.2	0.3	6.8	5.8	4.9	5.3	10.64	-
★★★★★	Bandhan Ultra Short Term	13.9	3958	0.5	0.3	7.2	6.1	5.3	5.6	-	-
★★★★★	Baroda NNP Paribas Ultra Short Durat	1405.4	1431	0.5	0.3	7.4	6.5	5.6	5.7	2.29	-
★★★★★	HDFC Ultra Short Term	13.8	12661	0.6	0.4	7.2	6.1	5.3	5.8	-	-
★★★★★	Invesco India Ultra Short Duration	2463.5	630	0.9	0.2	7.1	5.9	5.0	5.3	8.09	-
★★★★★	Kotak Savings	39.2	12814	0.8	0.4	7.0	6.1	5.2	5.6	2.44	-
★★★★★	SBI Magnum Ultra Short Duration	5448.0	9213	0.5	0.3	7.2	6.1	5.3	5.7	-	-
★★★★★	BOI Ultra Short Duration	2904.1	144	1.2	0.9	6.3	5.6	4.9	5.2	-	-
★★★★★	Canara Robeco Ultra Short Term	3485.7	543	1.0	0.4	6.5	5.6	4.6	4.8	-	-
★★★★★	DSP Ultra Short	3117.1	2771	1.0	0.3	6.9	5.8	4.9	5.1	-	-
★★★★★	Motilal Oswal Ultra Short Term	15.3	166	1.1	0.6	6.0	5.1	4.2	4.4	-	-
★★★★★	Sundaram Ultra Short Duration	2477.4	1839	1.2	0.2	6.3	5.3	4.5	4.6	-	-
★★★★★	Aditya Birla SL Savings	286.5	12705	0.3	0.3	7.4	6.3	5.5	6.3	10.60	-

DEBT FUNDS

DEBT - ULTRA SHORT DURATION FUNDS

★★★★★ Nippon Ind Ultra Short Duration	3681.5	5478	1.2	0.4	6.9	6.0	6.6	4.9	10.69
★★★★★ UTI Ultra Short Duration	3876.7	2197	1.0	0.4	7.0	5.9	6.0	5.1	11.23
★★★★★ Adity									

Safely escorted 150 lt of commodities to India in last 100 days: Navy chief

SAFE PASSAGE. Navy has deployed 10 ships, helicopters, surveillance aircraft and drones to patrol Red Sea area

Dalip Singh
New Delhi

The Indian Navy has safely escorted about 150 lakh tonnes of critical commodities such as crude oil and fertilizer to Indian shores from the Red Sea and west of Gulf of Aden in the last 100 days since its first intervention on December 14, when MV Ruen was hijacked by Somali pirates, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar has said.

Regular requests are coming from Commerce and Shipping Ministries for protection of commodities coming through the troubled maritime zone, Admiral Kumar said. As many as 10-15 ships pass daily through Red Sea and go west of Gulf of Aden. They contact the naval warships deployed in that region, which is as far as 2,600 km from Indian shores, for safe transport of commodities, a senior Indian Navy officer in charge of operations told *businessline*.

In his address to the media on 100 days of successful maritime operations, the Navy Chief said, "This is the

Indian Ocean, named after us, and if we don't take action, then who will? Bhartiya Nau Sena will take affirmative action to ensure there is safety and security in the Indian Ocean".

DROP IN TRADE

Maritime trade dropped nearly 50 per cent post the Houthi rebel attacks and increased piracy since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas conflict last October, the Navy Chief pointed out while reiterating that none of Indian-flagged maritime vessels has been attacked either by Somalian pirates or Houthi rebels. "They have done to vessels that carried flags of Israel or were bound for their port or of the US and the UK, but our interest is because many of them have Indian crew," Kumar said.

About 40-50 per cent of the ships have started re-routing around the Cape of Good Hope leading to increase in freight and insurance charges, he stated. "The effect will be felt by you and me. The cost will have to be borne by customers. Therefore, we are taking proactive steps, such as escorting ships



Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar at a press conference on the 100 days of the Indian Navy's operations in the Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea and Red Sea ANI

that pass via the Red Sea," he said.

The Admiral said that piracy has re-surfaced as an 'industry' to gain from the 'disorder in the region' after the conflict between Israel and Hamas broke out and vowed intervention by the Indian Navy to secure shipping assets on high seas.

PIRACIES ON THE RISE

In the last 100 days, there were 90

drone and missile attacks on vessels and piracy attempts in the Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, Arabian Sea, and East of Somalia, according to the Indian Navy. Under Operation Sankalp, which has been ongoing since 2019 but saw intensified efforts by the Indian Navy particularly since December 23, over 5,000 personnel were deployed for more than 450 ship days. Additionally, more than 21 ships were mobilised, and maritime surveillance aircraft conducted 900 hours of flying to counter threats.

A major operation was the rescue of MV Ruen that Somalian pirates were using as mothership since hijacking it on December 14. On March 14, in a major mission 35 Somalian pirates were disarmed and 17 hostages rescued.

The Navy has deployed 10 warships, helicopters, P8I surveillance aircraft and drones to patrol the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, North Arabian Sea and Gulf of Somalia. The Navy has also been able to save over 110 lives, including 45 Indian seafarers, and seized over 3,000 kg of narcotics.

No SC relief to Birlas; admits appeal against ruling allowing Harsh Vardhan Lodha remain MP Birla Group Chairman

Mithun Dasgupta
Kolkata

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to grant any interim relief to the Birlas even as it admitted their appeal against a Calcutta High

Court verdict that defined the powers of administrators over the estate of the late Priyamvada Devi Birla, according to a media statement issued by Fox & Mandal, counsel for Lodhas.

Granting relief to the Lodhas on December 14, 2023, a Division Bench of the High Court restricted the role of administrators in MP Birla Group companies, as the Bench observed that a testamentary court cannot decide issues of title conclusively.

"...such power lies purely within the domain of civil courts. However, while deciding an application under Section 247 of the Indian



The Birlas moved the Supreme Court against the Division Bench verdict. The apex court admitted their appeal for hearing. It, however, did not grant any interim relief.

"By declining to grant any interim relief, the apex court has cleared the deck for Harsh Vardhan Lodha, chairman of the MP Birla Group, to initiate legal proceedings to correct all wrongs that started with a section of administrators of Priyamvada Birla's estate attempting to seize control of all entities of the Group on the strength of a controversial verdict of a single judge of the Calcutta High Court

passed on September 18, 2020," Fox & Mandal said in its statement.

Notably, passing an order on September 18, 2020, Justice Sahidullah Munshi of the Calcutta High Court had restrained Harsh Vardhan Lodha from holding any office in any of the entities of MP Birla Group during pendency of the (Testamentary) Suit.

Lodhas alleged that even though the verdict was modified by the Division Bench, it was used as a handle to disrupt the operations of several trusts, societies and companies of the MP Birla Group, and led to proliferation of court cases.

Our Bureau

Chennai



Venu Srinivasan

castings/machined castings for OEMs and the after-market

Further, he also agreed not to compete for a defined period, including in the business of agricultural machinery such as tractors and self-propelled farm equipment.

Mallika Srinivasan and Lakshmi Venu have agreed that they and the people controlled by them will not use certain trademarks (including TVS) in relation to certain businesses, including two-wheeler and three-wheeler vehicles, financial services, and real-estate business, and they have also agreed to not to engage in certain businesses, including two- and three-wheeler vehicles, parts and/or accessories for any such vehicles, for a defined period.

The company is not a party to the MoU signed by the family members. Also, the MoU doesn't in any way impact the business of TVS Holdings Ltd, and its ability to continue its business as currently conducted today is not impacted, it added.

Bonus notified for postal, rural postal life insurance schemes for FY25

Shishir Sinha
New Delhi

assured. In case of convertible whole life assurance (CWLA), whole life bonus rate would be applicable, but on conversion, the endowment assurance bonus rate will be applicable. Rate of terminal bonus will be ₹20 per sum assured of ₹10,000, subject to maximum of ₹1,000 for WLA and EA policies with terms of 20 years or more.

According to a notification, under the Postal Life Insurance Scheme, the rate of bonus will be ₹76 per thousand of sum assured for whole life assurance (WLA). Similarly, for endowment assurance (EA) (including joint life and children policies), it will be ₹52 per thousand of sum assured. Anticipated endowment assurance (AEA) will fetch ₹48 per thousand of sum

lakh and under the Rural Postal Life Insurance Rural scheme, the number of subscribers was over 57.81 lakh. Another notification gave bonus rate for Rural Postal Life Insurance. According to the notification, the rate for WLA will be ₹60 per thousand of sum assured. Similarly, for EA (including children policy), rate will be ₹48 per thousand of sum assured.

It will be ₹45 per thousand for AEA (including gram priva policies). In case of CWLA, whole life bonus rate would be applicable, but on conversion, EA bonus rate will be applicable. Similarly, terminal bonus of ₹20 per sum assured of ₹10,000, subject to maximum of ₹1,000 for WLA and EA policies with term of 20 years or more.

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