

Market snapshot



Today's top research idea

Financials | Banks: Earnings downgrade picking up pace but recovery in sight

- ❖ BFSI consensus earnings estimates have been significantly downgraded in recent months, owing to margin pressure, weak loan growth and elevated credit costs (especially in unsecured segments). Consensus earnings estimates for private banks were lowered by 5%-14% for FY26 and 1%-6% for FY27, while PSU banks saw milder revisions for the same periods. The steepest cuts were witnessed in mid-size private banks with exposure to the microfinance sector like Bandhan, Equitas, IDFCB, and RBK, with a 41%- 95% decline in their consensus earnings estimates.
- ❖ Large diversified banks like ICICIB, HDFCB, and SBIN showed significant resilience in earnings, with modest cuts. MOFSL's FY26/FY27 earnings growth estimates are broadly in line with consensus (+1%/-3%), though more optimistic for select mid-tier banks like RBK, DCB, and IDFCB (+4%-17%) and PSBs like Canara, BOB, and PNB (+6%- 16%) due to margin stability and gains from subsidiary sale.
- ❖ Consensus estimates point to muted earnings growth of ~2% in FY26 and a rebound of ~16% in FY27, likely led by deposit repricing, CRR cuts and improving credit costs. MOFSL forecasts 17% EPS CAGR over FY26-28E. Top ideas: ICICI, HDFCB & SBIN. Among mid-sized banks, we prefer AUBANK.



Research covered

Cos/Sector	Key Highlights
Financials - Banks	Earnings downgrade picking up pace but recovery in sight
Oil & Gas	Beyond barrels: Seismic shifts in the O&G landscape!
Capital Goods	Transmission pipeline remains strong
Healthcare Monthly	IPM growth at 8.1% in Aug'25; MNCs and chronic therapies lead outperformance
Metals Monthly	Aug'25 – Metal prices remain stable MoM
EcoScope	Aug'25 inflation stands at 2.1%, remaining in a comfortable zone
	WPI inflation rebounds to 0.5% in Aug'25 from 0.6% contraction in Jul'25

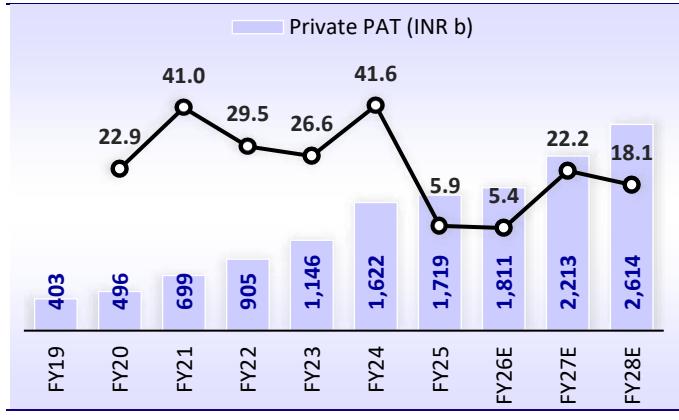
Note: Flows, MTD includes provisional numbers.

*Average



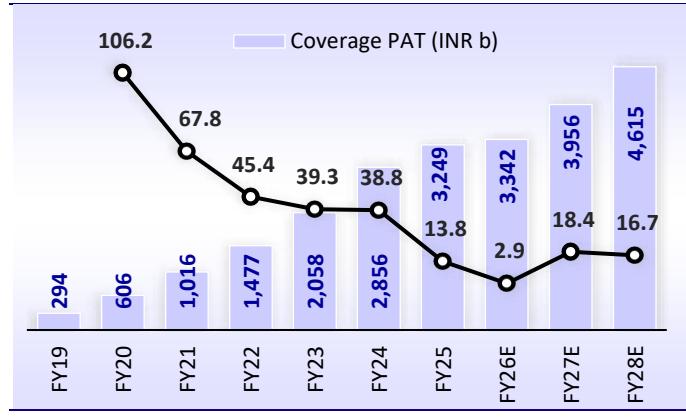
Chart of the Day: Financials | Banks (Earnings downgrade picking up pace but recovery in sight)

Private banks' earnings growth to recover to ~22% in FY27E (~5% in FY26E)



Source: Company, MOFSL

Banking earnings deceleration cycle to bottom out in FY26E



Source: Company, MOFSL

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Investors are advised to refer through important disclosures made at the last page of the Research Report.

Motilal Oswal research is available on www.motilaloswal.com/Institutional-Equities, Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters, Factset and S&P Capital.



Kindly click on textbox for the detailed news link

1

AHPI asks Star Health to restore cashless services at hospitals

The Association of Healthcare Providers of India (AHPI) has voiced concerns regarding Star Health Insurance's suspension of cashless treatment at various hospitals, including Care Hospitals and Manipal.

2

Car sales skid for 4th month in a row ahead of tax gifts

Car sales in India experienced a decline for the fourth consecutive month in August, primarily due to automakers adjusting dispatches in anticipation of revised GST rates.

3

Investor interest in stressed green power assets grows

Investor confidence in renewable energy is surging, driving up the value of distressed assets.

4

UCO Bank gets approval to work with sanctioned refiner Nayara

UCO Bank, an Indian lender, has received government approval to facilitate trade payments for Nayara Energy, which was sanctioned by the EU.

5

Chip companies grapple with import curbs on raw materials

The industry has proposed a 10-year, zero-duty import regime for these critical raw materials under the IGCR (Import of Goods at Concessional Rate of Duty) framework to enhance cost competitiveness, reduce supply chain dependencies on imports and attract investments from supply chain firms.

6

Novo Holdings in talks to buy into Surya Hospitals

Novo Holdings is in exclusive discussions to acquire a 49% stake in Surya Hospitals, valuing the Mumbai-based chain at ₹1,000 crore.

7

Pass on GST relief to policyholders: Govt tells insurers

The government has instructed insurance companies to fully pass on the GST exemption benefits to policyholders, aiming to make insurance more affordable.

Financials: Banks

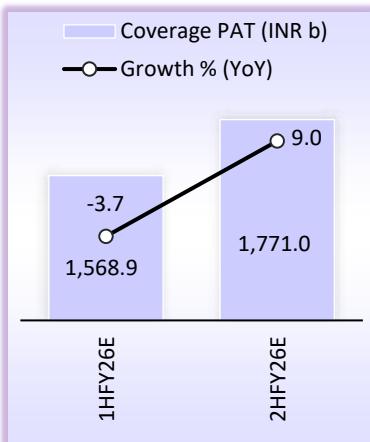
MOFSL PAT growth estimates (%)			
	Private	PSU	Coverage
FY25	5.9	24.0	13.8
FY26E	5.4	0.1	2.9
FY27E	22.2	13.8	18.4
FY28E	18.1	14.8	16.7

Earnings downgrade picking up pace but recovery in sight!

Benchmarking earnings to consensus; MOFSL estimates 17% EPS CAGR over FY26-28

- BFSI consensus earnings estimates have been significantly downgraded in recent months, owing to margin pressure, weak loan growth and elevated credit costs (especially in unsecured segments).
- Consensus earnings estimates for private banks were lowered by 5%-14% for FY26 and 1%-6% for FY27, while PSU banks saw milder revisions for the same periods.
- The steepest cuts were witnessed in mid-size private banks with exposure to the microfinance sector like Bandhan, Equitas, IDFCB, and RBK, with a 41%-95% decline in their consensus earnings estimates. Large diversified banks like ICICIBC, HDFCB, and SBIN showed significant resilience in earnings, with modest cuts.
- MOFSL's FY26/FY27 earnings growth estimates are broadly in line with consensus (+1%/-3%), though more optimistic for select mid-tier banks like RBK, DCB, and IDFCB (+4%-17%) and PSBs like Canara, BOB, and PNB (+6%-16%) due to margin stability and gains from subsidiary sale.
- Consensus estimates point to muted earnings growth of ~2% in FY26 and a rebound of ~16% in FY27, likely led by deposit repricing, CRR cuts and improving credit costs. MOFSL forecasts 17% EPS CAGR over FY26-28E.
- Top ideas: ICICI, HDFCB & SBIN. Among mid-sized banks, we prefer AUBANK.

Earnings growth to bottom out in 1HFY26E; expect trend to improve from 2H



Sector earnings seeing declining trends: Is a turnaround in sight?

- Sector earnings have slipped into the declining territory, owing to margin pressure from high funding costs and slower loan growth. Banks are grappling with the transmission of rate cuts, while asset quality stress in unsecured segments like MSME and CV continues to weigh on near-term profitability.
- Despite these headwinds, signs of stabilization are emerging. Deposit repricing is underway, and the phased CRR cut is expected to ease liquidity constraints. Early improvements in unsecured retail stress, coupled with moderating credit costs, are beginning to support the outlook for a gradual recovery in margins and earnings.
- A turnaround appears within reach, as 3QFY26 is likely to mark the end of the current earnings deceleration cycle with earnings growth compared to a decline in 1Q and 2Q. Banks with strong liability profiles, robust balance sheets, and prudent risk management are best positioned to navigate near-term challenges.

Broad-based cuts in earnings estimates

Consensus earnings estimates for FY26-27 have witnessed broad-based downgrades over the past 3 and 12 months, with private sector lenders witnessing sharper cuts. Over the past 3 months/12 months, private banks' aggregate FY26E PAT has been lowered by 4%/14% vs. milder earnings cuts of 1%/8% for PSU banks. Likewise, the FY27E aggregate earnings for private banks have been reduced by 1%/9% vs. a cut of 1%/6% for PSU banks.

Pace of earnings cuts has accelerated on loan repricing and high credit costs

The pace of earnings downgrades for FY26-27 has accelerated in recent months, as macro factors turned less favorable vs. the benign trends in earlier years. Besides, contrary to earlier expectations of a gradual easing cycle, the RBI has implemented a sharp 100bp repo rate cut in a front-ended manner, which dented banks' margins. This, along with a rise in credit costs and slower loan growth, has resulted in broad-based downgrades in earnings estimates for the banking sector, with several mid-size names seeing EPS cuts of more than 10% within the last three months. However, the moderation in deposit costs and CRR-driven liquidity support should aid margins from 2HFY26 onward. This is reflected in lower cuts in FY27E earnings for the sector in the past three months.

Mid-size private banks have witnessed sharper earnings cuts

Biggest earnings downgrades have been concentrated among mid-size private banks with higher exposure to unsecured retail and MFI segments, whereas larger and more diversified banks proved more resilient. **Bandhan Bank, Equitas, IDFCB and RBK witnessed a sharp 41-95% cut in FY26E earnings over the past one year.** In contrast, larger banks witnessed relatively modest downgrades. ICICIBC's FY26E earnings saw an upgrade of 1% over the past 12 months vs. a decline of 9% for HDFCB. Among PSBs, Indian Bank has seen an upgrade of ~3% for FY26E, while BOB/SBI/Union/PNB have seen a cut of ~15%/11%/8%/8% in the past 12 months. The broad-based earnings cuts, however, do underscore heightened caution around retail stress, margin compression, credit cost uptick, and slower-than-expected loan growth.

Treasury gains have cushioned the blow, mainly for PSBs

After witnessing a steady trend in FY22-24, NII has moderated steadily over the recent period, reflecting the full impact of upward deposit repricing and the subsequent transmission of a reduction in repo rates. For our coverage companies, NII declined 1% YoY in 1QFY26 (vs. 16% growth in FY24).

Amid this revenue crunch, treasury gains have emerged as a key offsetting lever, driven by the rally in G-sec bonds after a sharp reduction in repo rates/G-sec yields. Private banks in our coverage reported total treasury gains of INR59.7b in 1QFY26 vs. INR17.5b in 4QFY25. PSBs, on the other hand, reported aggregate treasury gains of INR132.3b vs. INR115.9b in 4QFY25 (up ~14% QoQ).

MFI, unsecured lenders have big divergence in earnings estimates

Banks with higher exposure to unsecured retail loans have faced sharper earnings downgrades, as elevated delinquencies in MFI and other unsecured products have increased their credit costs. FY26E earnings cuts over the past 12 months were particularly severe for unsecured-focused lenders: IDFCB (~41%), IndusInd Bank (73%), BANDHAN (46%), RBK (43%), Equitas SFB (95%) and SBI Cards (~31%). The consensus estimates for such MFI lenders vary in the range of 23-50%. In contrast, banks with secured loan dominance, diversified portfolios, and conservative underwriting, such as HDFCB and ICICIBC, maintained relative earnings stability.

MOFSL vs. Consensus: Where do we stand vs. peers?

We have compared MOFSL earnings estimates with consensus estimates and found that, at an aggregate level, our estimates are broadly in line with the Street, with a deviation of +1%/-3% in aggregate FY26E/FY27E earnings. However, stock-level variations do exist, with MOFSL being slightly more positive than consensus for some mid-tier banks like RBK (+17%), DCB (+13%) and IDFCB (+4%) for FY27E, driven by our expectation of credit cost normalization and NIM stability. For PSBs like Canara, BOB and PNB, our earnings estimates stand higher than consensus by 3-9%.

BFSI earnings to rebound at 17% CAGR over FY26-28E (Consensus: 15%)

Consensus estimates suggest FY26 will be a muted year for bank earnings, with sector PAT expected to rise by a tepid ~2% YoY to INR3.3t, the weakest growth in past many years (40% earnings CAGR over FY20-25). This reflects pressure from margin compression, elevated credit costs and moderation in loan growth. However, the sector earnings are likely to gain momentum from 2HFY26, with consensus estimated earnings growth of ~18% YoY growth for FY27, breaking the trend of a multi-year earnings deceleration cycle. **For our banking universe, we estimate an earnings CAGR of 17% over FY26-28 vs. the consensus estimates of 15% CAGR.** This recovery in earnings momentum, along with improved loan growth (aided by GST, direct tax rate cuts and lower borrowing costs) will help to drive better sector performance over the medium term. **Top picks:** ICICIB, HDFC, SBIN, and AUBANK.

Risk factors: What keeps us watchful on potential earnings trajectory?

- Despite signs of recovery, several risks keep us watchful on the potential earnings trajectory. Prolonged funding cost pressures, slower deposit repricing, or a rise in wholesale borrowing could delay margin improvement and constrain profitability, especially if banks are unable to pass through the benefits from rate cuts efficiently.
- Asset quality risks persist, particularly in unsecured retail, microfinance, and cyclical segments like commercial vehicles. Any macroeconomic slowdown or rising defaults could prolong elevated credit costs, offsetting improvements from better liquidity or repricing efforts and further impacting near-term earnings.
- Additionally, the probability of more rate cuts adds to uncertainty. If the rate cut cycle is extended, banks may see further impact on their lending yields and the lag in transmission could dent margins. Regulatory changes and an uncertain global environment (tariffs) could further dampen the pace of recovery across the sector.

Oil & Gas

Our latest O&G updates

Beyond barrels: Seismic shifts in the O&G landscape!

In our [previous note](#), we highlighted that valuations across the O&G sector were no longer inexpensive, with the sector trading at a one-year fwd. P/E of 16.8x (LT avg. of 13x). Since then, OMCs/CGDs/upstream stocks have corrected 5%-8%/2%-12%/5%-13%, and the sector now trades at 15.7x one-year fwd. P/E. In this brief update, we highlight that 1) China's oil demand is weakening, signaling a structural shift and pushing global oil demand growth below 1mb/d for the first time in the last decade outside of crisis years; 2) the International Energy Agency (IEA) projects strong supply growth of 2.7/2.1 mb/d in CY25/26, raising the risk of oversupply; 3) petchem, rather than gasoline or gasoil, is emerging as the main driver of oil demand; and 4) auto-fuel marketing margins are likely to remain strong, while CGDs could see an expansion in their EBITDA margins. A substantial weakening of the oil price outlook could extend the super-normal marketing margin cycle and simultaneously reduce input gas costs for CGD players. HPCL, MAHGL, and PLNG remain our preferred plays in the sector.

Structural shifts could keep oil demand lower for longer

- **Oil demand growth might fall ~30% short of the past decade's average in CY26-27:** Global oil markets are undergoing a structural shift as Chinese demand is losing momentum, a sharp contrast to the previous decade, when the country contributed 60% of the global increase in oil demand. With Chinese oil demand set to peak this decade amid EV adoption, LNG trucking, rail expansion, and economic rebalancing, IEA projects annual global demand growth of ~0.6-0.7 mb/d over CY25-CY27, below the ~1 mb/d average of the past decade.
- **Emerging economies to drive oil demand growth entirely:** IEA projects that incremental gains in oil demand will be entirely non-OECD-led, dominated by Asia Pacific contributing ~1mb/d over CY25-27, but still far behind China's earlier surge. Consumption in North America and Europe is set to decline ~0.5mb/d during CY25-27, led by structural weakness in gasoline and gasoil. This marks a decisive shift toward slower, emerging market-driven demand growth.

Amid slower demand, oil production set to reach record highs in CY25/26

- **IEA now estimates global oil supply to exceed demand by ~2/1.4 mb/d in CY25/26:** Global oil supply is set to increase by 2.7/2.1 mb/d in CY25/26, as non-OPEC+ supply growth remains strong, with the US, Brazil, Canada, Guyana, and Argentina producing at or near record highs. Non-OPEC+ output is projected to rise by 1.4/1 mb/d in CY25/26, broadly matched by OPEC+, which is expected to add 1.3/1 mb/d, respectively.
- **Upstream has remained our least preferred sector since Jun'24:** We recently downgraded [ONGC](#) and [Oil India](#) to Neutral as 1) possibilities of earnings cuts exist amid a weak crude price outlook, 2) benefits of increased new well gas proportion will be mostly offset by subdued gas realization amid a weaker crude oil price outlook, 3) the companies have struggled to increase production, and 4) rising exploration expenses resulting in higher well write-offs could dent earnings.

- We reiterate that the risks of crude oil prices falling below the USD65/bbl mark are mounting as OPEC+ strategy shifts from “managing” oil prices to “protecting market share”. We note that while OPEC+’s surplus crude oil production capacity has declined over the past year from a 30-month high of 6.3mb/d in Sep’24, it still remains high at ~4 mb/d. While we assume a crude oil price of USD65/bbl for FY26/FY27, the risk to this assumption remains elevated on the downside. Every USD1/bbl decline in crude oil price results in a 2%-4% cut in our FY27 SA PAT estimates for ONGC and OINL.

Structural shifts in the global oil market

- **Oil demand is increasingly decoupling from GDP** as substitution in transport and power offsets economic growth. Per capita fuel use has been trending lower across the OECD and several non-OECD economies despite rising incomes, reflecting efficiency gains and a shift toward less oil-intensive sectors. According to the IEA, vehicle miles traveled per capita in the US in CY24 remained nearly 5% lower than pre-GFC levels, even though GDP per capita rose by about 25% in real terms.
- **Chinese oil demand wanes as EV penetration increases:** As per IEA, Chinese fuel demand growth is slowing sharply as EV penetration, LNG trucking, and rapid rail expansion displace oil, avoiding ~1.2 mb/d since 2019 with a further ~2.5 mb/d expected by CY30.
- **Remote work alters gasoline demand trajectory:** Behavioral changes post-pandemic, notably work-from-home in the US, have permanently displaced ~1.2 mb/d of road fuel demand. After peaking at 60% during the 2020 lockdowns (vs. <10% pre-Covid), WFH has stabilized in the US at ~25–30% of paid workdays since 2022. Record-high office vacancy rates of 13.9% (up from 9.3% in 2019) further underscore this structural shift. Further, Japan and Korea face structural declines from aging demographics and efficient transport systems.
- **Petchem emerging as a key oil demand driver:** The increasing use of oil products as feedstock for plastics and synthetic fibers has reinforced petrochemicals’ position as the primary driver of oil demand growth in CY24, contributing nearly three-quarters of net growth. The IEA expects this trend to persist throughout the rest of the decade and beyond, with the share of petrochemical feedstocks in total oil consumption projected to rise to 17.4% by CY30 from 15.8% in CY23.
- Feedstock demand is set to reach 18.4 mb/d in CY30, up 2.1 mb/d from CY24 levels – comprising 10.2 mb/d of naphtha (+1.1 mb/d) and 8.2 mb/d of LPG/ethane (+990 kb/d). The surge in LPG and ethane processing, particularly in the United States, has been supported by abundant NGL supply.

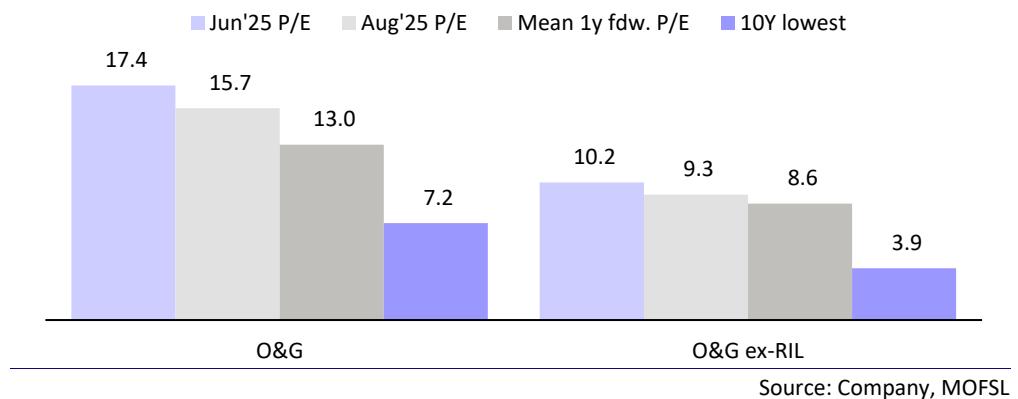
Era of margin expansion for OMCs and CGDs

- **OMCs:** A USD5/bbl decline in crude oil prices translates into a change of ~INR4/lit in marketing margins. While part of this benefit may be shared with the government (through excise duty hikes) or with consumers (via retail price cuts), MS/HSD marketing margins are likely to remain strong and well above the INR3.3/lit assumption, which we are building in.
- **CGDs:** As highlighted in our recent note ([Twin emerging tailwinds for CGDs](#)), we expect that a soft crude price outlook, coupled with a lower pricing slope for natural gas amid the upcoming LNG oversupply, will reduce gas costs. This should also ease concerns around the APM deallocation affecting margins.

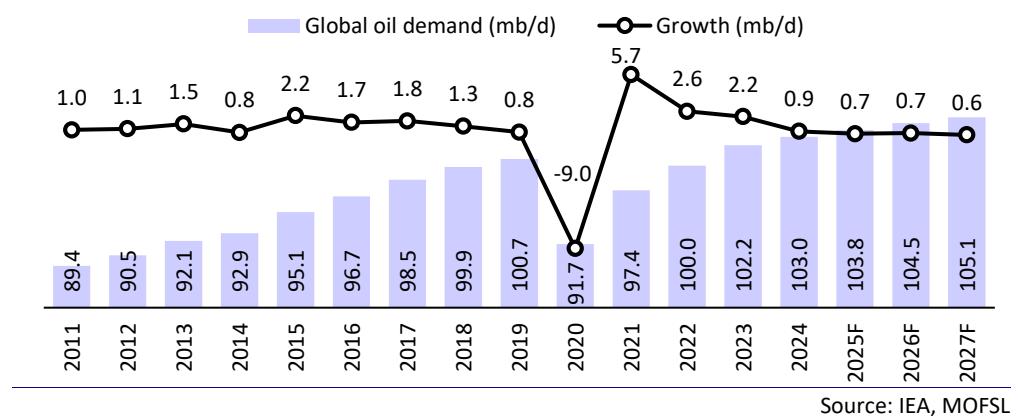
Valuation and view

- **PLNG's valuations imply the stock is at a point of maximum pessimism:** PLNG trades at ~9x FY27E EPS compared to its historical one-year forward P/E of 10.4x. Our DCF-based TP (WACC: 10.5%, TG = 2%) assumes a 10% tariff cut in FY28, followed by a 4% increase for both the terminals. While we have incorporated the full capex for the petchem plant, we value it conservatively at 0.5x FY29E P/B and discount this back to FY27E. In an extreme bear-case DCF scenario, we assume 0% terminal growth and no tariff hike after a 20% cut in FY28, implying a valuation of INR274/sh. At ~9x FY27E P/E and a ~4.3% dividend yield, we believe valuations are at the rock bottom. Reiterate BUY with a DCF-based TP of INR410.
- **MAHGL & HPCL:** We view HPCL and MAHGL as momentum plays and PLNG as a value play while we await better buying opportunities in the sector. **HPCL** remains our preferred pick among the three OMCs given its leverage towards marketing. We model a marketing margin of INR3.3/lit for both MS and HSD in FY26/27, while the current MS and HSD marketing margins are ~INR9.7/lit per liter. We view the following as key catalysts for the stock: 1) the de-merger and potential listing of the lubricant business, 2) the commissioning of its bottom upgrade unit in 2QFY26'end, and 3) the start of its Rajasthan refinery in FY26. **MAHGL:** We expect a 9% CAGR in volume over FY25-27, driven by multiple initiatives implemented by the company, such as collaborating with OEMs to drive conversions of commercial CNG vehicles and providing guaranteed price discounts to new I/C-PNG customers.

O&G sector's 1-year fwd. P/E valuation



Oil demand growth might fall ~30% short of the past decade average in CY26-27





Capital Goods

Financials Snapshot (INR b) - KPI			
Y/E MARCH	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Net Sales	228.8	269.4	304.7
EBITDA	20.4	25.1	28.3
PAT	9.7	12.8	14.9
EPS (INR)	57.0	74.9	87.0
GR. (%)	44.8	31.6	16.1
BV/Sh (INR)	471.0	539.3	619.6
Ratios			
ROE (%)	12.8	14.8	15.0
RoCE (%)	11.3	13.0	13.4
Valuations			
P/E (X)	22.8	17.4	15.0
P/BV (X)	2.8	2.4	2.1
EV/EBITDA (X)	11.6	9.4	8.1
Div Yield (%)	0.5	0.5	0.5

Financials Snapshot (INR b) - KEC			
Y/E MARCH	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Net Sales	254.7	299.3	354.7
EBITDA	20.6	24.3	28.7
PAT	9.3	11.8	14.3
EPS (INR)	34.9	44.2	53.6
GR. (%)	62.6	26.9	21.1
BV/Sh (INR)	229.2	266.0	311.6
Ratios			
ROE (%)	16.2	17.9	18.6
RoCE (%)	15.0	16.1	16.8
Valuations			
P/E (X)	25.3	20.0	16.5
P/BV (X)	3.9	3.3	2.8
EV/EBITDA (X)	12.9	11.1	9.6
Div Yield (%)	0.7	0.8	0.9

Transmission pipeline remains strong

The Central Electricity Authority's (CEA) ordering pipeline has started building up from the last few months after witnessing some moderation during the initial months of FY26. Our interactions with KEC International (KEC) and Kalpataru Projects International (KPI) also suggest that the transmission ordering pipeline remains strong for next few years. Moreover, these companies are targeting HVDC projects, international opportunities, and other non-T&D opportunities to grow. Commodity prices are comfortable and hence, margins should improve from FY26 onward. We maintain our estimates and expect T&D segment to remain a dominant segment for both KEC and KPI. We maintain BUY on KPI (TP: INR1,450) and Neutral on KEC (TP: INR950).

CEA's pipeline building up over last few months

CEA's pipeline has been building up over the last few months and projects worth nearly INR700b have been recommended by NCT to the Ministry of Power in the last six months. Our discussions with key transmission companies also indicate that the addressable market for transmission projects stands at INR1-1.5t over the next 1-1.5 years, driven by 45 ISTS-TBCB projects awarded last year, which have a capex potential of INR1.5t. With execution timelines of 24-54 months, these projects will support a healthy order pipeline and improved revenue visibility for transmission companies. PGCIL aims to have a market share of 50-60% in overall TBCB tendering. PGCIL has also outlined a capex of INR280b for FY26. Competition from other private players is also increasing, with players like Adani Energy Solutions, Resonia (formerly Sterlite Power), and Tata Power already in fray, and new entrants over last two years include Reliance Industries, D.R. Agarwal Infracon, KCC Buildcon and Torrent Power, which are also bidding for TBCB projects. Players like KPI and KEC work with both PGCIL and private players and thus have a strong addressable market over the next few years.

Two HVDC projects finalized in FY25; two more can be finalized in FY26

During FY25, 45 ISTS-TBCB schemes were awarded, including two HVDC schemes. Going ahead for FY26, apart from transmission projects, few HVDC projects, such as KPS III HVDC Transmission (Khavda-South Olepad HVDC) and Leh-Ladakh HVDC project, are likely to be finalized.

KPI: Healthy visibility on execution of strong order book

KPI has benefited from strong traction in its transmission segment and has received order inflows worth INR102b/INR112b/INR145b in FY23/FY24/FY25, constituting 40%/37%/57% of total order inflows. The share of T&D and non-T&D revenue has improved in favor of T&D and stood at 42%/47%/53% in FY23/FY24/FY25. B&F segment revenue has also remained fairly strong for the company as KPI works with marquee developers such as Prestige, Purvankara, DLF, etc. The company is also well positioned to capitalize on the expanding pipeline of metro systems, elevated corridors, and tunneling infrastructure and is gaining from the scale-up in execution of large oil and gas projects in the Middle East. We maintain our estimates for KPI and expect a CAGR of 13%/17% in order inflows/revenue over FY25-28.

KEC: T&D to continue to benefit from strong domestic and international opportunities

KEC's T&D segment remains its primary growth engine, with order inflows continuing to dominate the overall mix. Management sees sustained revenue momentum, supported by strong domestic demand, international opportunities, and a healthy backlog, ensuring visibility for the next 18-24 months. KEC's T&D segment inflows stood at INR90b/INR101b/INR156b in FY23/FY24/FY25, constituting 40%/56%/63% of total order inflows. The share of T&D revenue stood at 50%/53%/59% in FY23/FY24/FY25. KEC is planning to expand its civil segment into B&F and will keep railways and water as low-priority areas. We maintain our estimates for KEC and expect a CAGR of 21%/18% in order inflows/revenue over FY25-28.

Margins for transmission EPC players to inch up on strong T&D margins and stable RM prices

In recent months, aluminum/zinc/primary rebar prices have eased by 2%/4%/11% vs. Mar'25 levels, while copper has been flat YTD. A sustained decline in commodity prices is likely to improve margins for transmission EPC players in the future. T&D margins are already in double digits now for KEC and KPI. For KPI, beyond transmission, B&F and oil and gas are also high-growth and high-margin segments, while KEC's T&D margins are already around 10%. Other segments such as water and railways have lower margins; hence, both companies are cautiously bidding for such projects.

Financial outlook

KPI: We expect KPI to report a CAGR of 17%/30% in revenue/PAT over FY25-28, with margins expected to improve 90bp to 9.3%.

KEC: We expect a CAGR of 18%/36% in revenue/PAT over FY25-28, with margin expansion of 120bp to 8.1%

Valuation and view

KPI is currently trading at 22.8x/17.4x/15.0x on FY26E/FY27E/FY28E EPS. **Reiterate BUY** with our SoTP-based **TP of INR1,450**, based on 18x P/E for the core business.

KEC is currently trading at 25.3x/20.0x/16.5x on FY26E/FY27E/FY28E EPS. We **reiterate Neutral** rating with a **TP of INR950**, based on 21x Sep'27E EPS.

Key risks and concerns

Slowdown in execution, lower-than-expected order inflows, sharp rise in commodity prices, an increase in receivables and working capital, increase in promoter pledge are some of the key concerns that can weigh on financials and valuations.

Performance of top companies in Aug'25

Company	MAT growth (%)	Aug'25 (%)
IPM	7.7	8.1
Abbott*	8.3	5.8
Ajanta	10.3	12.2
Alembic	-0.9	1.6
Alkem*	6.5	7.3
Cipla	7.3	8.1
Dr Reddys	9.2	11.0
Emcure*	5.5	3.4
Eris	3.7	4.7
Glaxo	1.6	4.2
Glenmark	11.2	10.5
Intas	10.0	8.9
Ipca	10.5	11.4
Jb Chemical*	12.4	9.6
Lupin	6.5	8.4
Macleods	5.7	14.5
Mankind	6.8	7.2
Sanofi	2.0	14.4
Sun*	10.1	7.9
Torrent	8.0	7.1
Zydus*	8.6	7.0

IPM growth at 8.1% in Aug'25; MNCs and chronic therapies lead outperformance

- The Indian pharma market (IPM) grew 8.1% YoY in Aug'25 (vs. 8% in Aug'24 and 7.3% in Jul'25).
- The growth was driven by strong outperformance in Antineoplast/Respiratory therapies, which outperformed IPM by 14.4%/10.6% in Aug'25.
- Acute therapy continued to show muted growth at 6% (vs. 7% in Aug'24/5% in Jul'25) owing to seasonality.
- For the 12 months ending in Aug'25, IPM growth was led by price/new launches/volume growth of 4.2%/2.3%/1.2% YoY.
- Mounjaro remains the highest-growth brand with Aug'25 sales of INR1.2b, according to IMS. This was followed by Augmentin, which recorded YoY growth of 17%.
- In Aug'25, Mixtard/Liv-52 witnessed the maximum YoY decline of 13%, according to IMS.

Macleods/Sanofi/Ajanta/IPCA outperform in Aug'25

- Among the top 20 pharma companies, Macleods (up 14.5% YoY), Sanofi (up 14.4% YoY), Ajanta (up 12.2% YoY), and IPCA (up 11.4% YoY) recorded higher growth rates vs. IPM.
- Alembic/Glaxo were the major laggards in Aug'25 (down 0.9%/up 1.6% YoY).
- Macleods outperformed IPM, led by strong double-digit growth across all key therapies, with the highest growth seen in the respiratory and hormones segments.
- Ajanta outperformed IPM, led by robust growth in Anti-diabetic/Derma/Ophthal/Respiratory.
- Dr. Reddy outperformed IPM, led by double-digit growth in the respiratory and pain segments.
- Glenmark reported industry-leading price growth of 6.2% YoY on a MAT basis. JB reported the highest volume growth of 5.4% YoY on a MAT basis. Corona Remedies posted the highest growth in new launches (up 5.3% YoY).

Cardiac and Neuro lead YoY growth on a MAT basis

- On a MAT basis, the industry reported 7.7% growth YoY.
- Chronic therapies posted 12% YoY growth, while acute therapies recorded 6% YoY growth in Aug'25.
- Cardiac/Neuro/Anti-diabetic grew by 11.7%/8.7%/8.4%. VMN/ Derma grew largely in line with IPM. AI/Gynae underperformed IPM by 370bp/330bp YoY for 12 months ending Aug'25.
- The acute segment's share in overall IPM stood at 60.6% for MAT Aug'25, with YoY growth of 6%.

MNCs outperform domestic companies in Aug'25

- As of Aug 25, Indian pharma companies held a majority share of 84% in IPM, while the remaining is held by multi-national pharma companies (MNCs).
- Indian companies grew 7.5%, while MNCs grew 11.4% YoY.

Indian companies valuation

	Price (INR)	EV/ EBITDA (x)		P/B (x)	
		FY26E	FY27E	FY26E	FY27E
Steel					
Tata	169	8.7	7.5	2.4	2.2
JSW	1,101	10.2	8.0	3.0	2.5
JSP	1,046	9.9	6.7	2.0	1.7
SAIL	133	7.6	6.0	0.9	0.8
Non-ferrous					
Vedanta	454	4.7	4.2	3.7	3.0
Hindalco	754	6.3	5.9	1.5	1.3
Nalco	217	6.3	5.2	1.9	1.7
Mining					
Coal	395	4.2	3.5	2.1	1.8
HZL	460	10.9	11.1	5.7	15.0
NMDC	76	5.8	4.9	1.9	1.7

Global companies valuation

Company	M. Cap USD b	EV/EBITDA (x)		P/B (x)	
		CY25/ FY26E	CY25/ FY27E	CY25/ FY26E	CY25/ FY27E
Steel					
AM	30	4.8	4.5	0.5	
SSAB	6	3.6	4.0	0.7	
Nucor	32	7.1	5.9	1.4	
POSCO	17	5.4	5.0	0.4	
JFE	8	7.3	6.0	0.5	
Aluminum					
Norsk Hydro	13	5.1	4.6	1.2	
Alcoa	9	5.4	4.4	1.3	
Zinc					
Teck	20	6.4	6.4	1.1	
Korea Zinc	15	16.5	15.7	2.5	
Iron ore					
Vale	48	4.1	4.0	1.0	
Diversified					
BHP	137	6.1	6.3	2.6	
Rio	107	5.5	5.2	1.6	

Aug'25 – Metal prices remain stable MoM

- The domestic steel market remained stable in Aug'25, where Domestic HRC prices stood flat MoM at INR49,700/t and rebar at INR48,000/t, driven by a monsoon-led slowdown in construction activities and demand.
- According to the Joint Plant Committee (JPC), crude steel production remained flat MoM (+11% YoY) at 13.8mt in Aug'25, while finished steel production stood at 13.4mt (flat MoM and +11% YoY).
- In Aug'25, India's steel imports dipped 31% YoY to 0.7mt, led by the implementation of trade protection measures (safeguard duty and anti-dumping duties on Vietnamese HRC), which significantly curbed inflows. Additionally, stricter BIS regulations further contributed to lower imports. Meanwhile, exports rose 9% MoM and 54% YoY to 0.53mt, driven by the resumption of export offers to the Middle East.
- Channel checks indicate that leading domestic steel producers are likely to raise HRC/CRC prices in Sep'25, supported by the receding monsoon. Moreover, India's export HRC prices rose to USD505/t (+USD10/t) in Aug'25, supported by improved sentiments globally. Average Chinese flat steel prices for Aug'25 stood at USD483/t (vs. USD466/t in Jul'25), driven by demand recovery, production cut, and rising input costs. Additionally, rebar prices have likely bottomed out, with a price recovery expected in the near term.
- Non-ferrous commodity prices remained stable MoM in Aug'25, with Copper/Aluminum/Zinc prices standing flat MoM at USD9,650/t, USD2,600/t, and USD2,780/t, respectively. Meanwhile, lead price declined 3% MoM to USD1,945/t during the same period.
- Alumina/Nickel prices were flat at USD370/t and USD15,000/t, respectively, remaining capped by global oversupply.

Input costs continue to remain stable in Aug'25

- NMDC implemented a hike of INR400/t for lumps and fines in Aug'25, supported by domestic steel and global iron ore price recovery.
- Premium hard coking coal prices (CNF Paradip, India) remained range-bound at USD180-200/t, driven by weak demand globally. Average coking coal prices stood at USD203/t (+5% MoM) in Aug'25.
- Domestic coal production rose 12% YoY to ~70mt in Aug'25 (achieved ~95% of the monthly target), while Coal India's production increased 9% YoY to 50.4mt during the same period. Domestic coal dispatches rose 9% YoY to 77.4mt, supported by an 8% YoY increase in dispatches to the power sector, which reached 62.4mt in Aug'25.

Aug'25 inflation stands at 2.1%, remaining in a comfortable zone

Led by broad-based easing in food inflation

- CPI eased further in Aug'25, providing continued relief primarily due to food prices. The food price index remained in deflation for the third consecutive month, with sequential weakness highlighting a strengthening disinflationary trend. The key contributors to this relief were lower vegetable and pulse prices.
- CPI inflation stood at 2.1% YoY in Aug'25, broadly in line with our estimate of 2.4% and down from 3.7% a year ago. This print is particularly reassuring as the decline was achieved despite the absence of a favorable base effect this month. (Exhibit 1).
- The food index stayed in deflation for the third consecutive month, declining 0.7% YoY in Aug'25 compared to a sharp rise of 5.7% a year earlier. Within food, five of the 10 broad categories recorded disinflation, while three categories—vegetables, pulses, and spices, together carrying a weight of 10.9% in the CPI basket—remained in deflation. Notably, momentum losses were visible in fruits, pulses, and related products. The near-term outlook for food inflation appears favorable, with supply-side conditions supportive. Improved sowing in cereals and pulses should further ease price pressures, aided by better production prospects. (Exhibit 2).
- Core CPI (ex-food and fuel) held steady at 4.1% YoY in Aug'25. Broad-based disinflation was evident across sub-components, with education easing markedly, and clothing and footwear also softening. The sequential trend reinforced this moderation. However, personal care and effects stood out, recording a steep 16.6% YoY rise and a sequential uptick of 0.5%, driven by higher international gold prices (+0.8% MoM in Aug'25). Going ahead, this component is likely to remain volatile, reflecting safe-haven demand for gold and frontloaded festive-season buying. Excluding pan, tobacco, and gold, core inflation was notably lower at 3.1% in Aug'25. We expect core inflation to soften further, aided by the recent pruning of GST rates on several items within the core basket—our assessment suggests that these cuts will have a greater impact on core inflation than on the food basket.
- Fuel and Light inflation stood at 2.4% YoY in Aug'25, with a sequential pickup driven by a slight uptick in kerosene prices, albeit at a softer pace.
- Other details suggest that: 1) Service inflation reduced to a 14-month low of 3.3% YoY in Aug'25, while goods inflation rose slightly to a three-month high of 1.7% in Aug'25 (Exhibit 4); 2) Imported inflation increased to a 31-month high of 7.6% in Aug'25, while domestically generated inflation stood at 1.3% (Exhibit 3).
- Headline CPI is drawing sustained comfort from benign food inflation. Looking ahead, improved sowing of rice and pulses, an above-normal monsoon, and comfortable reservoir levels are expected to keep food inflation subdued. In addition, the shift of a large share of food, beverage, and core items into lower GST brackets should further ease inflation. At this stage, we believe that risks to inflation are skewed to the downside, with disinflationary pressures likely to strengthen. A favorable statistical base in 3Q, coinciding with the fresh harvest, will provide an additional cushion to the inflation trajectory.

Exhibit 1: Retail inflation stood at 2.1% in Aug'25

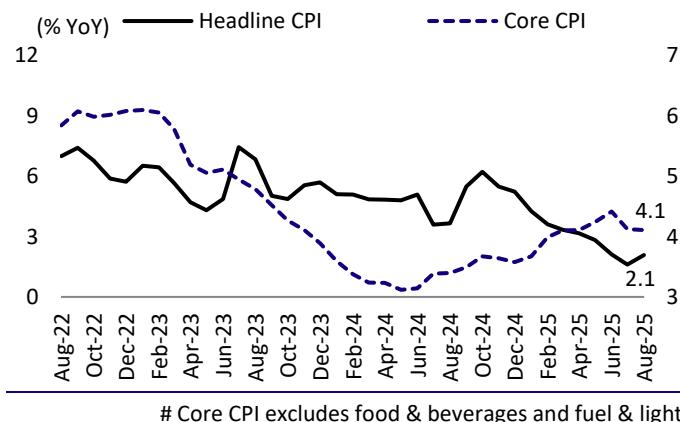


Exhibit 2: Food inflation contracted 0.7% in Aug'25

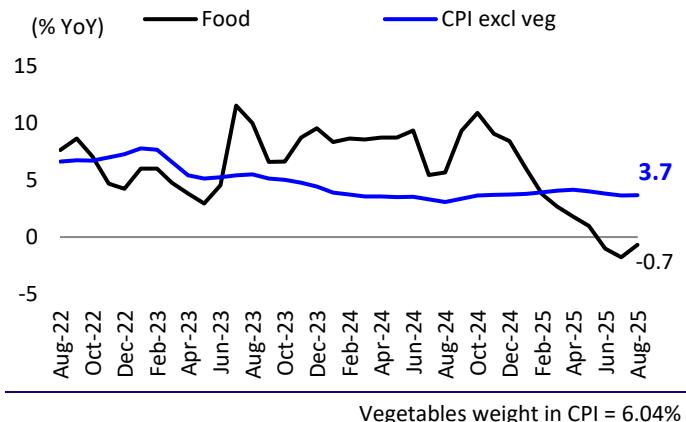


Exhibit 3: Imported inflation increased to 7.6% in Aug'25 vs. 6.8% in Jul'25

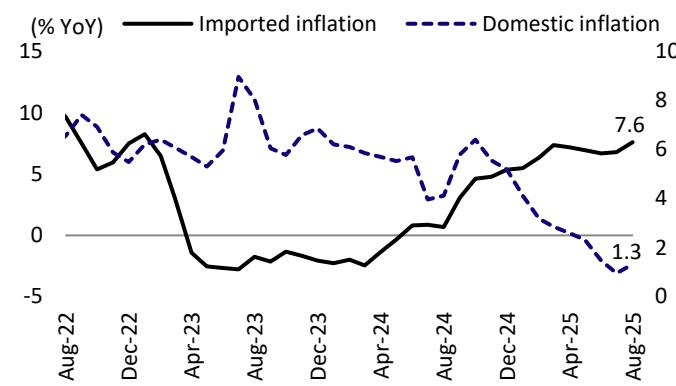
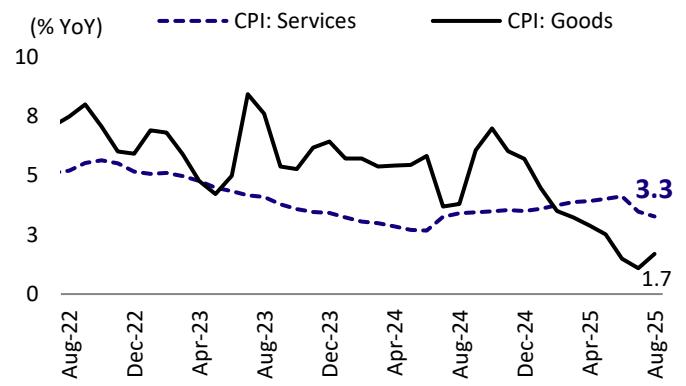


Exhibit 4: Service inflation reduced to a 14-month low of 3.3% in Aug'25



Based on 299 items

Exhibit 5: CPI and its key components

	FY25#	FY26#	Aug'24	Apr'25	Jul'25	Aug'25
Overall CPI	4.4	2.4	3.7	2.1	1.6	2.1
Food and beverages	6.9	0.5	5.3	-0.2	-0.8	0.04
Cereal and products	8.3	3.9	7.3	3.7	3.0	2.7
Pulses and products	15.7	-10.7	13.6	-11.8	-13.8	-14.5
Meat and fish	6.2	-0.3	4.3	-1.6	-0.6	1.5
Milk and products	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6
Vegetables	20.4	-16.0	10.7	-18.9	-20.7	-15.9
Pan, tobacco, and intoxicants	3.0	2.4	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.5
Fuel and light	-4.4	2.7	-5.3	2.6	2.7	2.4
Housing	2.7	3.1	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.1
Clothing and footwear	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.3
Miscellaneous	3.6	5.1	3.9	5.5	5.0	5.0
Transport and communication	1.7	3.1	2.7	3.9	2.1	1.9
Core CPI*	3.3	4.2	3.4	4.4	4.1	4.1

*Excluding food & beverages and fuel & light; # Apr-Aug period

Source: Central Statistics Office (CSO), MOFSL

WPI inflation rebounds to 0.5% in Aug'25 from 0.6% contraction in Jul'25

Led by an increase in core WPI

- WPI inflation stood at 0.5% YoY in Aug'25, easing from 1.2% in Aug'24 but rebounding from a sequential contraction of 0.6% in Jul'25. The YoY moderation was led by softer food and fuel & power prices, while manufactured product inflation moved higher. Core WPI also edged up, rising to 1.6% in Aug'25 from 0.9% a year earlier (*Exhibit 1*).
- Food inflation decelerated sharply to 0.2% in Aug'25 from 3.2% in Aug'24 (*Exhibit 2*). The vegetable index fell for the seventh consecutive month, plunging by 14.2% vs. 9.9% drop a year ago, due to declines in prices of potato, onion, cabbage, cucumber, and bitter gourd. Spices & condiments (-15.7% vs. -5.9%) and fruits (-4.9% vs. +16.8%) also registered sharp declines. Milk inflation eased to 2.6% from 3.5%, while eggs, meat & fish edged up to 0.1% (vs. -0.7%). Food grains continued to soften, with the index down 2.2% in Aug'25 compared with a 10.5% rise last year, driven by pulses (-14.8% vs. +18.3%) and cereals, particularly paddy (-0.8% vs. +9.6%).
- Deflation in the fuel & power segment deepened to 3.2% YoY in Aug'25, compared with a contraction of 0.5% in Aug'24 and 2.4% in Jul'25. The decline was driven by a sharper fall in the mineral oils index (-4.7% vs. -0.4% last year) and a faster pace of deflation in electricity (-1.1% vs. -0.2%). In contrast, coal prices edged up by 0.5% after a 1.5% drop a year earlier. Internationally, Brent crude fell by 14.7% YoY in Aug'25 vs. a 17.1% fall in Aug'24. Domestically, most mineral oil products (except bitumen, petroleum coke, and lubricants) saw declines, with LPG and kerosene registering the steepest drops.
- Core inflation edged up to 1.6% YoY in Aug'25 from 0.5% in Aug'24, and was higher than 1.1% in Jul'25. Manufactured product inflation also strengthened, rising to 2.5% from 1% a year earlier and 2% in Jul'25. Out of 22 manufacturing sub-indices, 13 recorded faster growth YoY, led by other manufacturing, non-metallic mineral products, transport equipment (other than motor vehicles), basic metals, furniture, leather, and fabricated metal products.
- Agro prices contracted 1.6% in Aug'25 vs. a 4.7% contraction in Jul'25. At the same time, agro-input prices increased 0.8% YoY in Aug'25, similar to Jul'25. Consequently, the agricultural terms of trade contracted 2.4% in Jul'25 (vs. a contraction of 5.4% in Jul'25; *Exhibit 4*). Prices of imported items increased 0.5% in Aug'25 (-0.2% in Jul'25). Additionally, non-agro domestic inflation stood at 2% YoY in Aug'25 (vs. +1.9% in Jul'25; *Exhibit 3*).
- Going forward, international commodity prices will remain a concern, given tight supplies, increased demand and tariff-related impact.

Exhibit 1: WPI stood at 0.5% in Aug'25 vs. -0.6% in Jul'25

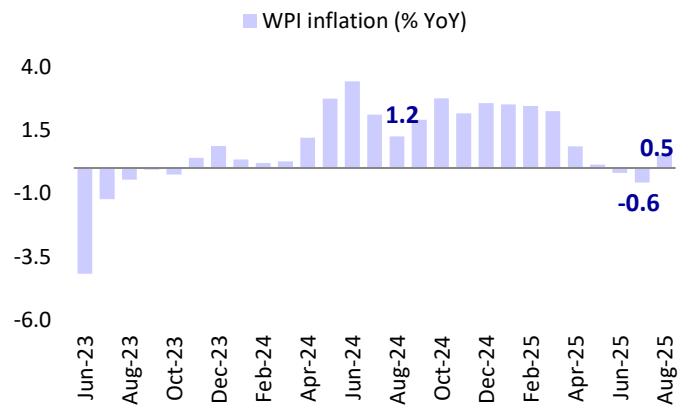


Exhibit 2: WPI less food stood at 0.7% in Aug'25

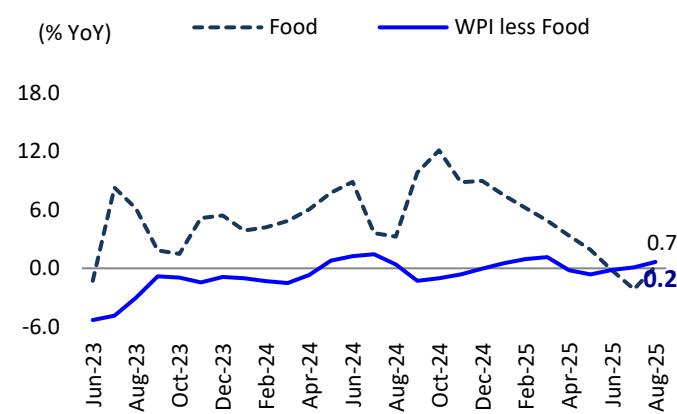
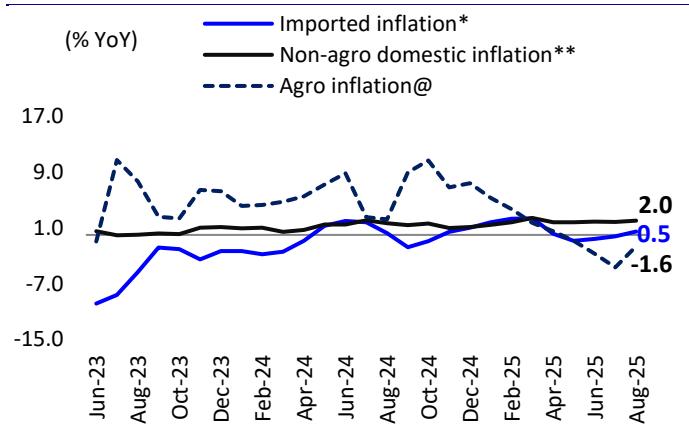


Exhibit 3: Agro prices contracted 1.6% in Aug'25

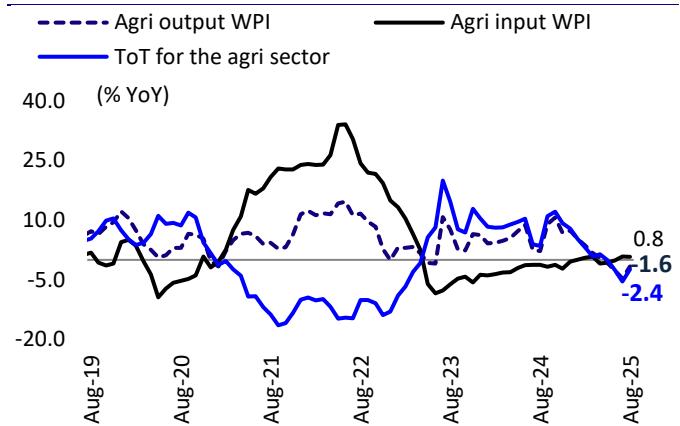


*Constituting ~41.8% weightage in the WPI basket

**Constituting ~38.8% weightage in the WPI basket

@Constituting ~19.4% weightage in the WPI basket

Exhibit 4: Terms of trade for the agri sector contracted 2.4% in Aug'25



Source: Office of Economic Adviser, MOFSL



KRBL: Allegations By Independent Director Who Resigned Are False; Anil Kumar Mittal, CMD

- KRBL rejects allegations, terms them false; external reputed reviewer to be appointed.
- Reviewer to be named within 30 days; findings to be deliberated by committees before board decision.
- Company claims systems already in place; process initiated to appoint new independent director.

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Akzo Nobel: Expect More Clarity To Emerge On Strategy & Synergies By November-December; Rajiv Rajgopal, MD

- Will run separately for 2–3 years; synergy roadmap after CCI clearance, updates likely by Nov–Dec.
- FY26 guidance at high single-digit; stronger Q3–Q4 expected as repaint cycles normalize post-monsoon.
- Targeting no. 3 slot (7–12% share) via brand push, mass/economy entry, waterproofing/chemicals, and wider distribution.
- No paint rate cut (still 18%), but positive for consumption as higher disposable income supports discretionary spend.

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Aarti Drugs: The New Plant In Gujarat Can Generate ₹200 Cr Revenue At 100% Utilisation; Adhish Patil, CFO

- Tarapur update: MPCB-directed voluntary closure of chlorosulfonation at T-150 after minor HCl leak; no injuries, other operations normal.
- Captive PTSCL needs covered with ~1 month inventory; alternate sourcing/temporary shift possible to avoid disruption.
- Process restart expected in ~10 days; fixes minor, low-cost; third-party sourcing as backup.
- New Gujarat plant commercialized (Sep 4), targeting 50% utilization by Q4; full ramp can add ~₹200cr revenue via backward integration.

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Patanjali Foods: GST Reforms Will Give An Overall Boost To Consumption In Coming Months; Sanjeev Asthana, CEO

- Portfolio shift to 5% slab; ~300–400 bps FY26 revenue uplift expected once transition stabilizes.
- New MRPs/grammage out by Sep 22; trade communication active, minimal ad spend needed.
- Oils at 2–4%, HPC ~18% on ₹2,800–2,900cr revenue, staples at 8–10%.
- Edible oil to grow ~2–3% inline with industry; GST-led grammage value to aid broader offtake.

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SELL	< - 10%
NEUTRAL	> - 10 % to 15%
UNDER REVIEW	Rating may undergo a change
NOT RATED	We have forward looking estimates for the stock but we refrain from assigning recommendation

*In case the recommendation given by the Research Analyst is inconsistent with the investment rating legend for a continuous period of 30 days, the Research Analyst shall within following 30 days take appropriate measures to make the recommendation consistent with the investment rating legend.

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