

August 23, 2023

KEC International Ltd.						
No. of shares (m)	257.1					
Mkt cap (Rscrs/\$m)	17062/2054.0					
Current price (Rs/\$)	664/8.0					
Price target (Rs/\$)	602/7.2					
52 W H/L (Rs.)	699/398					
Book Value (Rs/\$)	134/1.6					
Beta	0.7					
Daily NSE volume (avg. monthly)	1038710					
P/BV (FY24e/25e)	4.6/4.0					
EV/EBITDA(FY24e/25e)	15.5/12.7					
P/E (FY24e/25e)	43.2/26.5					
EPS growth (FY23/24e/25e)	-53.1/128.7/63.2					
OPM (FY23/24e/25e)	5.5/6.3/6.7					
ROE (FY23/24e/25e)	5.2/11.0/16.1					
ROCE (FY23/24e/25e)	12.4/13.6/16.5					
D/E ratio (FY23/24e/25e)	1.0/0.8/0.7					
BSE Code	532714					
NSE Code	KEC					
Bloomberg	KECI IN					
Reuters	KECL.NS					

Shareholding Pattern%					
Promoters	51.9				
MFs / Banks /FIs	26.6				
Foreign Portfolio Investors	11.6				
Govt. Holding	-				
Public& Others	9.9				
Total	100.0				

As on June 30, 2023

Recommendation

HOLD

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Quarterly Highlights

- Supported by healthy execution in T&D business that accounted for nearly 51% of the overall top-line, KEC International clocked in revenue from operation of Rs 4243.59 crs in Q1FY24, a growth of almost 28% year-on-year. The primarily drivers of this growth were the T&D and civil segments, which witnessed a growth of around 33% and 60% respectively, compared to the corresponding period in the prior year. With the help of active discussion with multilateral funding agencies, KEC was able to realize Rs 260 crs from Afghanistan projects till date.
- As commodity price and logistic cost stabilized accompanied by significant improvements in revenue and margin of UAE subsidiaries, KEC consolidated operating profit grew by 45.1% in Q1FY24. Consequently, OPMs for the quarter stood at 5.8% as against 5.1% in Q1FY23. However, standalone operating margin has been impacted owing to execution of legacy projects, sharp increase in supplies to Dubai subsidiaries and high interest rates (OPM 4.6% in Q1FY24 Vs 8.2% in Q1FY23).
- SAE has turned PBT positive last quarter due to completion of projects in Brazil. Refinancing of loans on favourable terms could aid earnings growth in quarters to come. Due to high interest rate environment interest expense jumped 58.7% in Q1FY24 to Rs 158.70 as (Interest as % of sales 3.7% in Q1FY24 Vs 3.0% in Q1FY23) crs as against the previous period. The company has achieved highest ever order book (including L1 value) for T&D business at around Rs 18,000 crore.
- The stock currently trades at 43.2x FY24e EPS of Rs 15.37 and 26.5x FY25e EPS of Rs 25.08. Growth opportunities in domestic T&D sector along with plethora of progressive steps taken by the GOI to encourage investments in domestic T&D sector bodes well for KEC. Earnings are estimated to rebound sharply next fiscal on the back of revival in margins and base effect. Given this uptick in earnings, ROE is pegged at 11.0% in FY24e and 16.1% in FY25e. Tender under evaluation and in pipeline of Rs 125,000 crs give sufficient revenue visibility over the next few years, though this by itself does not imply anything about project execution. Ability to profitably execute projects and undertake complex projects hold the key for exhibiting competitive advantage of any meaningful sort. Balancing odds, we maintain 'hold' rating on the stock with target price of Rs 602 (previous target Rs 374) based on 24x FY25e EPS.

Consolidated (Rs crs)	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24e	FY25e
Income from operations	13114.20	13742.26	17281.71	20226.81	23029.29
Other Income	29.92	13.43	31.32	27.23	26.78
EBITDA (other income included)	1268.92	969.81	978.21	1293.82	1580.16
Consolidated Net Profit (Adjusted)	547.39	368.20	172.70	395.04	644.88
EPS(Rs)	21.29	14.32	6.72	15.37	25.08
EPS growth (%)	-3.3	-32.7	-53.1	128.7	63.2

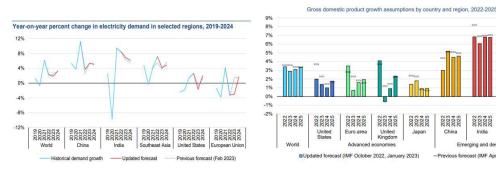


Industry Outlook

Power T&D Industry

As global demand for electricity is continuously increasing, the T&D sector faces significant opportunities and challenges. Rapid urbanization, industrialization, and the integration of renewable energy sources are driving the need for modernization and expansion of existing infrastructure. Furthermore, the global T&D industry has witnessed a shift towards renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power. The integration of these clean and sustainable energy sources into the grid requires planning and upgrading of transmission and distribution networks to accommodate the nature of renewable energy generation. Moreover, the increasing focus on energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions is driving investments in upgrading aging infrastructure with modern, more efficient systems.

Despite robust growth in emerging economies as well as record electric vehicle sales (which is leading to rising electrification rates in transports), economic slowdown in various regions and particularly pronounced decline in electricity demand in advanced economies will lead to subdued growth in demand for electricity. As per IEA's July'23 Electricity Market Report, global electricity demand, after growing 2.6% in 2022 is expected to slow down to 1.9% in 2023.



Source: IEA Source: IEA

According to report published by Ministry of Power, India electricity generation capacity will reach 820 GW by 2030 from 410 GW in December 2022. This significant jump in the power generation will require around additional 50,890 ckm of transmission line and more substation infrastructure. With India focusing on becoming a USD 5 trillion economy, building industries to drive manufacturing- led growth and goals on sustainable energy will ensure investment in power sector. Additionally, the region is experiencing a growing need for strengthening the inter-regional grid capacity and cross-border interconnections with SAARC countries to ensure seamless flow of power.

Civil Construction

The civil construction business in India is witnessing robust growth with several sectors experiencing significant demand for construction projects. These sectors include large industrial factories and process plants, residential buildings, public spaces, water pipelines and water treatment plants, defense infrastructure, data centers, warehouses, and metro rail projects. Government has taken certain initiatives such as 'Make in India' and the product linked incentives (PLI) scheme aimed at incentivizing manufacturing in various sectors, including electronics, chemical, pharmaceutical, and textiles. The scheme is designed to attract investment and manufacturing by providing financial incentives to companies for production of goods domestically and promoting foreign direct investment. The Government is also keen in to expand metro service in various cities as it plans to commence 820 km of metro rail in thirteen cities and has also lined up over two dozen projects. Central government capex is likely to grow in future, which is significant boost the civil capex for EPC sector.



Railways

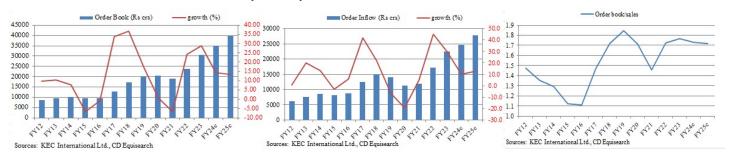
During the last few years, Indian rail network has been at the centre of GOI policies. It aims to drive investment in upgrading and expanding rail network in bid to meet the growing transport requirements. In Union Budget 2023-24, Indian Railways has received an all-time high budgetary allocation of Rs. 2.40 lakh crore, which is 71% higher over the prior fiscal. The Government plans to develop 100 PM GatiShakti Cargo terminals aimed at providing multimodal connectivity infrastructure to various economic zones and also plans 400 new- generation Vande Bharat trains over the next three years. It continues its thrust on developing world-class railway infrastructure in the country, which augurs well for the entire railway value chain. Overall Indian Railways is preparing to create massive infrastructure for the next few decades, which is expected to keep the annual capex elevated for at least 8-10 years. This is positive for EPC majors as capex story is expected to sustain healthy order flow in the areas of electrification, power supply systems, track laying, signaling & telecommunication.



Source: Fortune India

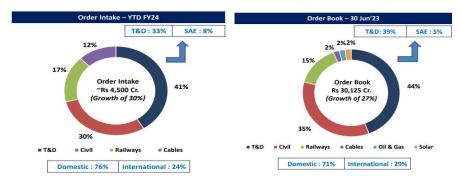
Order Book

KEC order book stood at Rs 30,125 crs as on June 30, 2023 (excluding L1 positions of over Rs 4875 crore) diversified across businesses, with domestic market contributing 71% to overall mix. Order intake for Q1FY24 was Rs 4,500 crs exhibiting a growth of 29.6% year-on-year with 76% secured from domestic markets. Civil and T&D segment were among the largest contributors (71% of the total order intake) followed by railways and cables.



Civil business secured orders worth over Rs 1,300 crs in industrial, residential, mechanical, electrical and data center segments primarily driven by gradual revival in the private capex in the industrial and the reality sector, contributing 30% to the overall order intake in Q1FY24. T&D business secured new orders worth Rs 1,800 crore across India, Africa and America, including orders like 400 kV transmission line and GIS Substation order in India from a PSU in renewable power generation; and 400/220 kV AIS substation from a leading private developer. The uptick in order intake has significantly enhanced the order book (including L1) of the T&D segment to stand at an all-time high of over Rs. 18,000 crs. It has also expanded its railway business in the international market with S&T order in Bangladesh.





Source: KEC International Ltd

Source: KEC International Ltd.

KEC during the quarter has started focusing on solar business owing to government focus on green hydrogen and renewables. It has started the execution of a 500 MW solar project in Karnataka. In the cables segment, the company along with a global management consultant has started out a program to improve profitability and ramp up the PVC plant for better cost advantage and control of supply chain. Oil & Gas segment saw an order book of over Rs 1,000 crs for pipeline and composite works for an oil terminal station.

Financials & Valuation

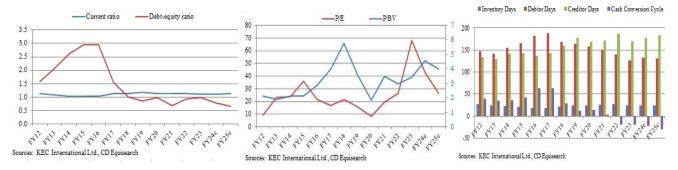
On the back of robust growth in order book and healthy execution in T&D and civil business, KEC clocked in revenue of Rs 17281.71 crs in FY23 as against Rs 13742.26 crs in FY22 exhibiting a growth of 25.8%. Though OPM fell around 180 bps to 5.5% in FY2023 owning to reasons such as adverse commodity prices, high freight cost and elevated interest cost. Working capital requirement over the past few quarters has been elevated mainly due to fixed priced contracts and some delay in collection of receivables related to railways projects. But in Q1FY24 net working capital fell on the back of softening of input prices and improvement in SAE business. KEC has incurred around Rs 175 crs ascapexin FY23 and could incur some Rs 250 crs in the current fiscal with amajor portion to be directed towards civil business.



The next leg of growth for the company will be driven by civil and T&D (mainly domestic) business. Civil segment will see major boom in business, which currently contribute 35% to overall order book as against a mere 13% in FY20. The segment has secured some contracts in data centers, urban infrastructure and metal mining space on the back of uptick in private and industrial capex. In fact, water segment will be major contributor of this segment primarily due to Har Ghar Nal scheme announced by GOI to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India. The civil projects have better payment terms and cash flows, with a comparatively reduced working capital cycle. So as the mix of civil in order book increases, working capital requirements would eventually come down.



In Q1FY24 company was able to recover Rs 220 crs from Afghanistan projects and is in continuous dialogues with international funding agencies to recover the remaining portion. Furthermore, delay in receiving payment from railway projects of EPC nature where the billing is linked to execution (completion of certain large milestones)can cause stress in margins and working capital. T&D international business is seeing strong traction on the back drop of high capex by Saudi Arabia and also due to economic challenges in Turkey which has boosted order inflow for tower supplies to India from US.



The stock currently trades at 43.2x FY24e EPS of Rs 15.37 and 26.5x FY25e EPS of Rs 25.08. Strong order book in T&D and civil business with government continuous thrust on infrastructure is expected to boost revenue by over 17.0% and 13.9% in current fiscal and next. Yet any unexpected political unrest in India or overseas where KEC is operational (as witnessed in MENA in FY11) needs to be tracked. Debt will remain subdued due to softening of commodity prices and better order book mix which in turn will also help in improving working capital days. Yet friction in order execution due to external factors coupled with little specialization in execution of complex orders in railways may constrict margins. Balancing odds, we maintain 'hold' rating on the stock with target price of Rs 602 (previous target Rs 374) based on 24x FY25e EPS. For more information, refer to our August 2022 report.





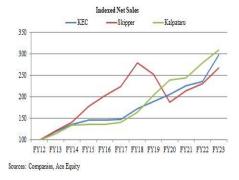
Cross Sectional Analysis

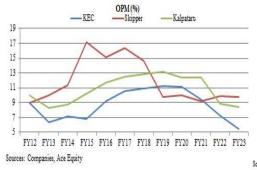
Company	Equity*	CMP	MCAP*	Sales*	Profit*	OPM (%)	NPM (%)	IntCov	ROE (%)	Mcap/Sales	P/BV	P/E
KEC	51	664	17062	18207	184	5.6	1.0	1.2	5.4	0.9	4.9	92.7
Skipper	10	201	2061	2119	52	10.2	2.2	1.6	7.0	1.0	2.7	39.3
Kalpataru	32	634	10306	16925	410	9.4	2.3	1.9	9.6	0.6	2.3	25.2

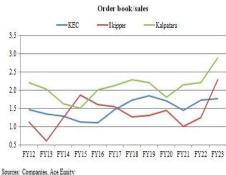
^{*}figures in crores; consolidated or standalone data as available on June 30th, 2023

Skipper achieved highest ever first quarter revenue, exhibiting strong revenue performance across major business; overall Q1FY24 topline grew by 33.3% to Rs 554.58 crs as against Rs 416.09 crs in corresponding quarter of prior fiscal. Polymer business achieved highest ever first quarter revenue at Rs 128.22 crs growing by 45.9% Y-o-Y on back strong volume growth (volume almost doubled to 8,880 mt over previous year quarter). Operating profit grew by 67.8% to Rs 60.14 crs in Q1FY24 Vs Rs 35.83 crs in Q1FY23. Operating profit margin improved by 223 bps to 10.8% in Q1FY24 on the back of lower commodity prices, favourable terms of contract, increased share of engineering export business and parting away with majority of legacy contracts. Skipper secured it highest ever Q1 order inflow of around Rs 1215 crs. Presently, the company is actively pursuing bidding pipeline of 12,550 crs; international comprising of Rs 6000 crs and Rs 6550 crs in domestic.

Driven by strong execution in T&D, water, B&F (building & factories) and railways business, Kalpataru Projects reported revenue growth of 15.3% (year-on-year) to Rs 4241 crs in Q1FY24. On back of robust executionand softening of commodity prices operating profit grew by 21.3% to Rs 382 crs in Q1FY24 as against Rs 315 crs in Q1FY23; OPM stood at 9.0%. KPTL order inflows in Q1FY24 stood at Rs 7383 crs with most of orders coming from T&D and B&F segment. Furthermore, company has acquired balance of 49% in Fasttel (Brazil) which will help in entering new markets in Europe and Latin America; it will further increase its presence in international market.







Note: Graphs on standalone or consolidated data as applicable



Financials Consolidated Quarterly Results

Consolidated Quarterly Results	Figur	es in Rs crs				
	Q1FY24	Q1FY23	% chg	FY23	FY22	% chg
Income From Operations (Net)	4243.59	3318.08	27.9	17281.71	13742.26	25.8
Other Income	2.83	7.95	-64.4	31.32	13.43	133.2
Total Income	4246.42	3326.03	27.7	17313.03	13755.69	25.9
Total Expenditure	3999.23	3149.65	27.0	16334.82	12785.88	27.8
EBITDA (other income included)	247.19	176.38	40.1	978.21	969.81	0.9
Interest	158.70	99.98	58.7	655.75	412.52	59.0
Depreciation	41.79	39.29	6.4	161.48	157.86	2.3
PBT	46.70	37.11	25.8	160.98	399.43	-59.7
Tax	4.37	6.09	-28.2	-15.05	67.35	-
PAT	42.33	31.02	36.5	176.03	332.08	-47.0
Extraordinary Item	-	-	-	3.33	-36.12	-
Adjusted Net Profit	42.33	31.02	36.5	172.70	368.20	-53.1
EPS(Rs)	1.65	1.21	36.5	6.72	14.32	-53.1

Consolidated Income StatementFigures in Rs crs

	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24e	FY25e
Income From Operations (Net)	13114.20	13742.26	17281.71	20226.81	23029.29
Growth (%)	9.6	4.8	25.8	17.0	13.9
Other Income	29.92	13.43	31.32	27.23	26.78
Total Income	13144.12	13755.69	17313.03	20254.05	23056.07
Total Expenditure	11875.20	12785.88	16334.82	18960.22	21475.91
EBITDA (other income included)	1268.92	969.81	978.21	1293.82	1580.16
Interest	360.48	412.52	655.75	636.73	602.96
Depreciation	152.53	157.86	161.48	175.34	190.76
PBT	755.91	399.43	160.98	481.75	786.44
Tax	203.19	67.35	-15.05	86.72	141.56
PAT	552.72	332.08	176.03	395.04	644.88
Extraordinary Item	5.33	-36.12	3.33	-	-
Adjusted Net Profit	547.39	368.20	172.70	395.04	644.88
EPS (Rs)	21.29	14.32	6.72	15.37	25.08



Consolidated Balance Sheet				Figures in R	s crs
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24e	FY25e
Sources of Funds					
Share Capital	51.42	51.42	51.42	51.42	51.42
Reserves & Surplus	3308.27	3568.51	3720.00	4037.91	4592.80
Total Shareholders' Funds	3359.69	3619.93	3771.42	4089.33	4644.22
Long Term Debt	331.77	560.70	656.33	806.33	986.33
Total Liabilities	3691.46	4180.63	4427.75	4895.66	5630.55
Application of Funds					
Gross Block	2446.02	2742.96	2911.44	3157.89	3457.89
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	1048.51	1205.31	1328.63	1503.97	1694.73
Net Block	1397.51	1537.65	1582.81	1653.92	1763.16
Capital Work in Progress	17.90	2.46	11.45	15.00	15.00
Investments	1.06	12.64	0.00	0.00	0.00
Current Assets, Loans & Advances					
Inventory	842.20	1066.48	1137.16	1314.74	1496.90
Trade Receivables	5384.69	5106.10	6896.06	7686.19	8751.13
Cash and Bank	249.17	261.94	344.16	376.12	397.97
Other current assets	5405.24	7242.62	7448.19	8511.40	9408.63
Total CA & LA	11881.30	13677.14	15825.57	17888.45	20054.63
Current Liabilities	10217.72	12015.33	14114.58	15843.81	17415.82
Provisions-Short term	68.57	87.80	94.44	99.06	105.71
Total Current Liabilities	10286.29	12103.13	14209.02	15942.86	17521.53
Net Current Assets	1595.01	1574.01	1616.55	1945.59	2533.10
Net Deferred Tax	6.78	170.33	320.10	380.81	380.81
Net long term assets	673.20	883.54	896.84	900.34	938.48
Total Assets	3691.46	4180.63	4427.75	4895.66	5630.55



Key Financial Ratios

Key Financial Ratios					
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24e	FY25e
Growth Ratios (%)					
Revenue	9.6	4.8	25.8	17.0	13.9
EBITDA	-5.9	-19.7	-3.8	32.7	22.1
Net Profit	-3.3	-32.7	-53.1	128.7	63.2
EPS	-3.3	-32.7	-53.1	128.7	63.2
Margins (%)					
Operating Profit Margin	9.5	7.3	5.5	6.3	6.7
Gross profit Margin	6.9	4.4	1.8	3.2	4.2
Net Profit Margin	4.2	2.7	1.0	2.0	2.8
Return (%)					
ROCE	15.9	12.4	12.4	13.6	16.5
ROE	19.5	11.7	5.2	11.0	16.1
Valuations					
Market Cap/ Sales	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7
EV/EBITDA	9.8	12.4	15.2	15.5	12.7
P/E	19.3	26.5	67.9	43.2	26.5
P/BV	3.5	3.0	3.4	4.6	4.0
Other Ratios					
Interest Coverage	3.1	2.1	1.2	1.8	2.3
Debt Equity	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.7
Current Ratio	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Turnover Ratios					
Fixed Asset Turnover	11.3	11.1	13.3	15.0	16.0
Total Asset Turnover	4.2	3.8	4.4	4.7	4.7
Debtors Turnover	2.4	2.6	2.9	2.8	2.8
Inventory Turnover	14.7	13.4	14.8	15.5	15.3
Creditor Turnover	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0
WC Ratios					
Debtor Days	150.4	139.3	126.7	131.6	130.3
Inventory Days	24.9	27.3	24.6	23.6	23.9
Creditor Days	171.8	186.5	170.2	178.1	183.8
Cash Conversion Cycle	3.5	-19.8	-18.9	-22.9	-29.6



Cumulative Financial Data

Cumulative Finalicial Data			
Rs crs	FY17-19	FY20-22	FY23-25e
Income from operations	29638	38822	60538
Operating profit	3243	3571	3768
EBIT	2957	3158	3321
PBT	1909	1982	1426
PAT	1259	1481	1213
Dividends	207	311	270
Sales growth (%)	-	31.0	55.9
PAT growth (%)	-	17.6	-18.1
OPM (%)	10.9	9.2	6.2
GPM (%)	7.6	6.3	3.2
NPM (%)	4.2	3.8	2.0
Interest coverage	2.8	2.7	1.8
ROE (%)	25.9	18.2	10.7
ROCE (%)	15.7	15.4	14.2
Debt-Equity ratio*	0.9	0.9	0.7
Fixed asset turnover	10.0	11.4	14.5
Total asset turnover	4.5	4.0	4.4
Debtors turnover	2.1	2.6	2.9
Creditors turnover	2.3	2.0	2.1
Inventory turnover	17.6	13.8	14.8
Debtor days	176.1	140.8	125.3
Creditor days	158.1	180.9	177.1
Inventory days	20.8	26.5	24.7
Cash conversion cycle	38.8	-13.6	-27.0
Dividend payout ratio (%)	16.6	21.4	22.2

FY 17-19 implies three year period ending FY19;*as on terminal year

A robust increase in order book by two-thirdsto Rs 39605 crs (over three year ending FY25) will support revenue as it will grow by pleasing 55.9% to Rs 60538 crs in FY23-25e over the preceding three years. The velocity in revenue will further supported by thrust in government capex and increased traction in international T&D business. Due to hit in earnings in FY23 – thanks to high input prices and interest rates- operating profit in FY23-25e period would grow merely by 5.5% to Rs 3768 crs (vs Rs 3571 crs in FY20-22).OPMs, on the other hand, would exhibit a decline of about 300 bps to 6.2%. High interest cost in FY23 would further stymie earnings as cumulative PAT would decline by some 18% in the projected period where interest coverage ratio would fall to 1.8 (vs. 2.7 in FY20-22).



Financial Summary- US Dollar denominated

million \$	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24e	FY25e
Equity capital	7.0	6.8	6.3	6.2	6.2
Shareholders' funds	413.8	431.0	416.7	449.1	514.4
Total debt	281.0	404.3	411.5	355.9	341.5
Net fixed assets (including CWIP)	163.3	170.2	161.3	168.6	181.7
Investments	0.1	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net current assets	203.0	194.1	187.2	223.4	292.6
Total assets	458.9	505.0	496.5	546.2	633.1
Revenues	1767.4	1844.3	2149.6	2435.0	2772.4
EBITDA	170.0	136.0	121.3	155.8	190.2
EBDT	121.4	80.6	39.7	79.1	117.6
PBT	100.9	59.4	19.6	58.0	94.7
PAT	73.8	49.4	21.5	47.6	77.6
EPS(\$)	0.29	0.19	0.08	0.18	0.30
Book value (\$)	1.61	1.68	1.62	1.75	2.00

Income statement figures translated at average rates; balance sheet at year end rates; projections at current rates (Rs 83.07/\$). All dollar denominated figures are adjusted for extraordinary items.



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buy: >20% accumulate: >10% to ≤20% hold: ≥-10% to ≤10% reduce: ≥-20% to <-10% sell: <-20%

Exchange Rates Used- Indicative

Rs/\$	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Average	70.88	74.20	74.51	80.39
Year end	75.39	73.50	75.81	82.22

All \$ values mentioned in the write-up translated at the average rate of the respective quarter/ year as applicable. Projections converted at current exchange rate. Cumulative dollar figure is the sum of respective yearly dollar value.