

BUY
TP: Rs 10,105 | A 41%

**BAJAJ FINANCE** 

NBFC

29 January 2024

### Mixed quarter; maintain BUY

- Rural B2C business remains a sore point with overall credit costs climbing 15bps YoY in Q3 to 1.7%
- AUM growth robust at 35% YoY to Rs 3tn+; we expect BAF to surpass
   Rs 5tn by FY26
- Maintain BUY with new TP of Rs 10,105 (vs. Rs 9,605) on rolling valuations to FY26E with lower target P/ABV of 5.5x for standalone business

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Credit costs swell: BAF's credit costs climbed 48% YoY and 16% QoQ to Rs 12.5bn as against our estimate of Rs 11.6bn and formed 1.7% of average loans (+15bps YoY and +12bps QoQ), due to continued stress from the rural B2C segment. The urban B2C segment also showed stress in Q3. Though the company has slowed growth in rural B2C lending as a precautionary measure, we now raise our credit cost estimates to 165-190bps over FY24-FY26 – tracking management's guidance of 175-185bps (ex-management overlay). BAF's GNPA and NNPA remained robust at 1% and 0.4% respectively as of 9MFY24.

**NIM declines:** NIM (calc.) fell 40bps YoY to 10.3% due to a higher cost of funds and the regulatory increase in risk weights on bank loans to NBFCs. Though management intends to mitigate the impact by raising loan yields, this measure will be constrained by competitive pressures, especially from public sector banks. We cut our NIM estimate for FY25 by 16bps to 10.1% and introduce our FY26 forecast at 10%.

Strong growth: BAF delivered 35% YoY AUM growth to Rs 3.1tn at end-9MFY24. The mortgage business (31% of AUM) grew 31% YoY and urban B2C (20% share) was up 29%. SME lending (13% share) grew 39% to Rs 414bn. Two- and three-wheeler financing climbed 64% YoY, contributing 6.2% of AUM from 5.1% at end-9MFY23, as the company continues to finance non-Bajaj Auto products as well. The newer business is also progressing well. We expect a 29% CAGR in AUM over FY23-FY26 to Rs 5.3tn and a 24% PAT CAGR over the same period. Capital adequacy remained strong at 23.9% as of Dec'23 with tier-1 capital at 22.8%.

**Maintain BUY:** Although we remain bullish on BAF, we factor in the funding and credit cost pressures by reducing our target P/ABV multiple for the standalone business from 6.3x to 5.5x, bringing it on par with the stock's long-term mean. Baking in our revised estimates and target multiple, along with rollover of valuations to FY26E, we arrive at a fair value of Rs 9,488/sh for standalone operations (Rs 9,125 earlier). Adding Rs 617/sh for subsidiaries, we have a new SOTP-based TP of Rs 10,105 (Rs 9,605 earlier) for BAF that offers 41% upside. BUY.

### Key changes

Target	Rating	
	< ▶	

Ticker/Price	BAF IN/Rs 7,192
Market cap	US\$ 16.6bn
Free float	44%
3M ADV	US\$ 102.0mn
52wk high/low	Rs 8,192/Rs 5,486
Promoter/FPI/DII	56%/20%/13%

Source: NSE | Price as of 29 Jan 2024

### **Key financials**

Y/E 31 Mar	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
NII (Rs mn)	2,29,903	2,89,375	3,73,320
NII growth (%)	31.2	25.9	29.0
Adj. net profit (Rs mn)	1,15,077	1,40,431	1,78,464
EPS (Rs)	116.8	189.6	227.1
Consensus EPS (Rs)	116.8	241.0	298.0
P/E (x)	61.6	37.9	31.7
P/BV (x)	9.9	8.0	5.9
ROA (%)	4.7	4.3	4.2
ROE (%)	23.5	21.7	21.4

Source: Company, Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research | Consensus EPS is yet to factor in the impact of the recent capital raise.

# Stock performance

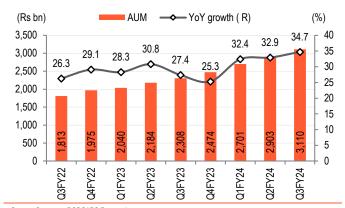


Source: NSE



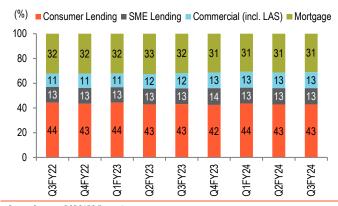


Fig 1 - Strong AUM growth



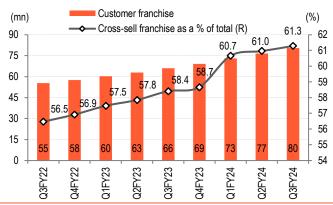
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 2 – AUM mix largely stable



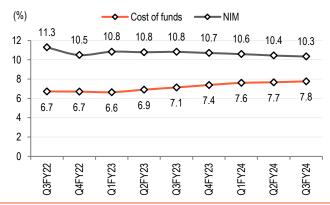
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 3 - Customer franchise strong



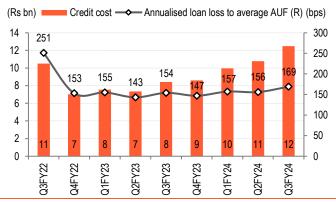
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 4 – NIM under pressure owing to higher cost of funds



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 5 - Credit cost swells



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research | AUF: Assets under Finance

Fig 6 - Asset quality strong

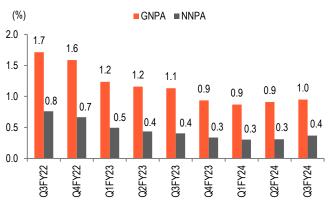
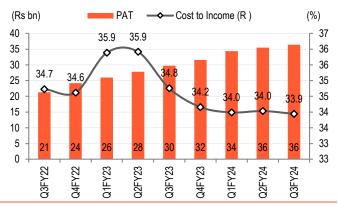


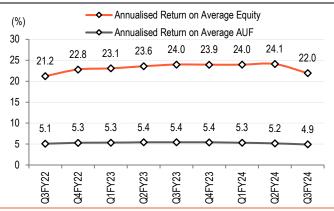


Fig 7 - PAT growth stable



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 8 - Return ratios dip



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 9 - Customer profile

Particulars	Unit	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	9MFY24
New loans booked	mn	10.1	15.3	23.5	27.4	16.9	24.7	29.6	28.3
New customer addition	mn	4.1	6.1	8.3	8.1	6.0	9.0	11.6	11.3
Co-branded credit cards sold	mn	0.03	0.39	0.81	1.12	0.70	1.36	1.92	1.50
Other financial products sold to existing customers	mn	0.06	0.08	0.19	0.27	0.67	2.23	2.36	1.92
AUM per cross-sell franchise	Rs	54,722	53,417	56,066	60,983	56,879	58,617	60,991	63,102
PAT per cross-sell franchise	Rs	1,670	1,618	1,933	2,182	1,644	2,145	2,837	2,156

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research Note: PAT per cross sell franchise not annualized for H1FY24

Fig 10 - High quality assets demonstrated by Stage-1 assets

Stage-1 (%)	Q1FY23	Q2FY23	Q3FY23	Q4FY23	Q1FY24	Q2FY24	Q3FY24
Consumer durable & lifestyle	99.7	99.6	99.6	99.6	99.6	99.5	99.4
Two & three-wheelers	86.0	89.3	91.7	93.3	94.3	94.7	94.7
Digital products	99.5	99.5	99.6	99.5	99.5	99.4	99.4
Urban B2C	98.6	98.8	98.7	98.8	98.7	98.7	98.6
Business & professional loans	99.0	99.1	99.1	99.3	99.3	99.3	99.1
Rural B2B	99.7	99.6	99.7	99.6	99.7	99.6	99.6
Rural B2C	98.1	97.9	98.0	98.1	98.0	98.2	98.0
Loans against property	98.4	98.6	98.8	98.8	98.9	99.1	99.1
Home loans	99.4	99.4	99.5	99.6	99.4	99.5	99.5

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 11 - Unsecured lending constitutes ~37% of AUM

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Particulars	Q1FY23	Q2FY23	Q3FY23	Q4FY23	Q1FY24	Q2FY24	Q3FY24
Unsecured Lending	8,09,170	8,34,970	8,76,690	9,19,950	10,30,050	10,75,650	11,37,820
As a % of total AUM	39.4	38.2	38.0	37.2	38.1	37.1	36.6
Urban Sales Finance	1,67,900	1,65,550	1,69,810	1,76,270	2,23,210	2,29,730	2,44,850
Urban B2C	4,19,700	4,50,010	4,78,150	5,01,080	5,48,450	5,81,780	6,17,050
Rural Sales Finance	42,490	40,330	44,150	48,030	55,670	55,340	61,660
Rural B2C	1,79,080	1,79,080	1,84,580	1,94,570	2,02,720	2,08,800	2,14,260



Fig 12 – Profit and loss account

Consolidated (Rs mn)	Q3FY24	Q3FY23	YoY (%)	Q2FY24	QoQ (%)	9MFY24	9MFY23	YoY (%)
P&L								
Interest Income	1,25,233	92,734	35.0	1,17,321	6.7	3,50,765	2,57,033	36.5
Interest Expense	48,680	33,505	45.3	45,371	7.3	1,35,076	89,673	50.6
Net Interest Income (NII)	76,553	59,229	29.2	71,951	6.4	2,15,689	1,67,360	28.9
Non-interest income	16,427	15,155	8.4	16,496	(0.4)	49,718	43,438	14.5
Fee Income	12,905	11,103	16.2	13,119	(1.6)	39,405	32,029	23.0
Sale of services	89	143	(37.8)	135	(34.0)	412	356	15.8
FV changes	684	1,190	(42.5)	711	(3.8)	2,299	2,492	(7.8)
Recovery from written off loans	2,585	2,629	(1.7)	2,526	2.4	7,360	8,434	(12.7)
Non-Interest Income	163	91	79.5	5	3,226.5	242	127	90.2
Total income	92,980	74,384	25.0	88,447	5.1	2,65,407	2,10,798	25.9
Employee Costs	16,618	12,886	29.0	15,875	4.7	47,463	37,141	25.9
Fees & commission expense	4,706	4,617	1.9	4,730	(0.5)	14,119	13,994	0.9
Depreciation	1,758	1,190	47.7	1,585	10.9	4,904	3,513	39.6
Other Expenses	8,477	7,163	18.3	7,910	7.2	23,716	20,181	17.5
Total Operating Expenses	31,557	25,855	22.1	30,100	4.8	90,201	74,829	20.5
PPOP	61,422	48,529	26.6	58,347	5.3	1,75,206	1,35,969	28.9
Loan loss provision	12,484	8,413	48.4	10,771	15.9	33,207	23,302	42.5
PBT	48,939	40,116	22.0	47,576	2.9	1,41,999	1,12,667	26.0
Share of profit/(loss) from associate	16.5	1	NA	2	1,000.0	46	1	NA
Taxes	12,566	10,387	21.0	12,070	4.1	35,779	29,168	22.7
PAT	36,390	29,730	22.4	35,508	2.5	1,06,266	83,499	27.3



# **Earnings call takeaways**

# Operational highlights

- BAF's AUM grew 35% YoY to Rs 3.1tn at end-9MFY24.
- Subsidiary BHFL's AUM increased 31% YoY to Rs 859bn at end-Q3. Of this, developer finance grew 74% YoY, albeit on a low base. Home loans, which form 50%+ of the total book, grew 19% YoY.
- The number of new loan accounts booked by BAF grew 26% YoY to 9.9mn in Q3FY24 vs. 7.8mn in Q3FY23. B2B disbursements increased 31% YoY to Rs 217bn.
- The opex-to-NII ratio improved to 33.9% from 34.8% in the year-ago quarter.
- Capital adequacy remained strong at 23.9% as of Dec'23 with tier-1 capital at 22.8%.
- BAF added 3.85mn new customers during the quarter and expects to add 13-14mn in all during FY24 for a total base of more than 83mn customers. The cross-sell customer franchise stood at 49.3mn.
- A total of 158 new locations and 9,500 distribution points were added during the quarter.
- Employee headcount stood at 54,281 as of Dec'23, including 3,181 additions in Q3. Annualised attrition in 9MFY24 was down to 13.8% from 19.1% in 9MFY23.
- Product per customer (PPC) increased from 5.81 at the end of FY23 to 6.02 at the end of Q3FY24, indicating that the company's relationships with its customers is growing. PPC is a business metric used to determine the average number of products or services (active or closed) that a customer has availed of over his/her lifetime with BAF and its subsidiaries.
- Public sector banks remain the company's main competition primarily because of their reach.

## **Asset quality**

- Q3 loan losses & provisions increased 48% YoY to Rs 12.5bn. The company holds a management & macroeconomic overlay of Rs 5.9bn as of Dec'23, after releasing Rs 1.5bn from the overlay during the quarter.
- The increase in loan loss provisions was primarily due to the rural B2C business. As a precautionary step, the company reined in AUM growth for the rural B2C category (excluding gold loans) from 26% in Mar'23 to 10% in Dec'23. Urban B2C loan losses were higher in Q3 due to lower collection efficiency.
- Annualised loan loss to average AUF (assets under finance), excluding management overlay, was 1.79% in 9MFY24. Management expects credit cost for to be maintained at 175-185bps.
- GNPA stood at 0.95% and NNPA at 0.4% as of December as against 1.1% and 0.4% a year-ago.



The ECL provisioning policy is to be finalised in Q4.

### **Margins**

- Given the increase in risk weights and higher incremental cost of funds, BAF has raised interest rates by 20-30bps across portfolios effective 1 January.
- NIM compression was also seen in the mortgage business.

### Regulatory scrutiny

- In November, the RBI instructed Bajaj Finance to stop issuing new loans through its 'eCOM' and 'Insta EMI Card' due to non-compliance with digital lending guidelines, particularly the non-issuance of key fact statements (KFS) to borrowers. This affected the company's EMI cards acquired, which saw an 11% YoY decline in Q3.
- Management indicated that it has conducted a comprehensive review of the digital lending and KFS guidelines and made an initial submission to the RBI, with the final response to be submitted shortly. The company has decided to come out with KFS in 20 languages for all its products (and not just the two under scrutiny).

#### **Credit cards**

- BAF has been able to renew its co-branded credit card partnership with RBL Bank only for a year as the RBI has noted certain deficiencies in operations.
- RBL Bank has tightened filters for credit cards as a prudent measure and hence reflected in credit cards sold during Q3.

### **Management changes**

- Anup Saha, who's been with the company for the last seven years, will move from Executive Director to Deputy Managing Director subject to shareholders' approval.
- To assist Anup, the company has created three new chief operating officer positions.
- Rajeev Jain, the current Managing Director, will continue to be actively involved in shaping the strategy of the company and its subsidiaries.
- Executive Director Rakesh Bhatt has resigned and will remain with the company till 30 Jun 2024.



# Valuation methodology

Q3FY24 was a mixed quarter for BAF with loan loss provisions moving up and the company suffering regulatory setbacks. Despite this, AUM growth was strong at 35% YoY, newer business gained traction and there is clarity on the growth path ahead. Succession planning has also held up well. Q3 AUM crossed the Rs 3tn mark and we introduce FY26 estimates wherein we expect the company to surpass Rs 5tn, clocking a three-year CAGR of 29%. We model for a 24% PAT CAGR over the same period.

We now raise credit cost estimates by 5-15bps for FY24-FY25 to 1.7%/1.8% (1.9% for FY26), considering RBI's alert on the systemic risk of delinquencies on unsecured loans. Our NIM estimates for both years have been pared 3-16bps in light of the central bank's 25% hike in risk weights on lending by banks to NBFCs (30% of BAF's total requirements are met through bank loans).

Over the last decade, the stock has traded at an average of 5.5x one-year forward ABV on a standalone basis and 4.7x on a consolidated basis. BAF has delivered solid growth in 9MFY24, but we lower our target P/ABV multiple from 6.3x to 5.5x (in line with the long-term mean) owing to (i) concerns about high systemic delinquency in the sub-Rs 50,000 personal loan segment, which can cascade to other segments as well (ii) higher cost of borrowings after RBI raised risk weights, and (iii) scope for adverse regulatory action on personal and unsecured loans.

On rolling valuations over to FY26E, we arrive at a new value of Rs 9,488/sh (Rs 9,125 earlier) for standalone operations. The addition of Rs 603/sh for housing arm BHFL (2x FY26E BV) and Rs 14/sh for securities subsidiary BFSL (15x FY26E EPS) – both largely unchanged valuations – makes for an SOTP-based TP of Rs 10,105 (Rs 9,605 earlier). We find current valuations compelling and maintain BUY for 41% upside from the current stock price.

Fig 13 - Revised estimates

(Do)		New			Old			Change (%)	
(Rs mn)	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
AUM	33,15,328	42,04,804	52,68,038	32,78,958	42,12,878	NA	1.1	(0.2)	NA
Loans	32,62,282	41,37,527	51,83,749	32,26,495	41,45,472	NA	1.1	(0.2)	NA
NIM	10.2	10.1	10.0	10.2	10.2	NA	(3bps)	(16bps)	NA
Total income	3,57,673	4,62,573	5,79,106	3,62,460	4,74,526	NA	(1.3)	(2.5)	NA
C/ I ratio (%)	34.4	34.0	34.3	33.9	33.2	NA	45bps	86bps	NA
PPOP	2,34,643	3,05,186	3,80,323	2,39,421	3,17,148	NA	(2.0)	(3.8)	NA
Credit costs (%)	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.6	1.7	NA	5bps	15bps	NA
PAT	1,40,431	1,78,464	2,18,245	1,45,282	1,91,734	NA	(3.3)	(6.9)	NA

Source: BOBCAPS Research

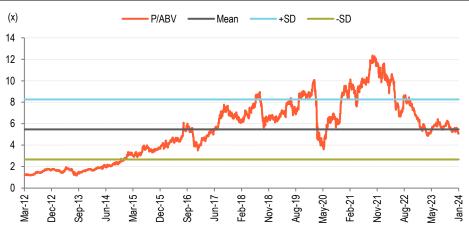


Fig 14 - SOTP valuation

FY26E	Stake (%)	(Rs bn)	(Rs/share)	Valuation basis
Value of Bajaj Finance (Standalone)	-	6,052	9,488	5.5x P/ABV FY26E
Subsidiaries valuation	-	312	617	-
Bajaj Housing Finance (BHFL)	100	305	603	2x P/BV FY26E
Bajaj Financial Securities (BFSL)	100	7	14	15x P/E FY26E
Value of Bajaj Finance (Consolidated)	-	6,364	10,105	-
Final value (Consolidated – Rounded off)	-		10,200	-
Current Market Price	-		7,192	-
Upside/(Downside) (%)	-		40.5	-

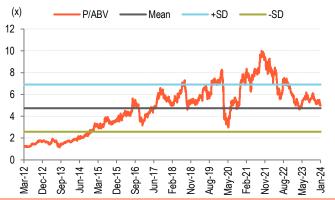
Source: BOBCAPS Research

Fig 15 - P/ABV 1Y fwd: Stock trading close to mean on standalone basis



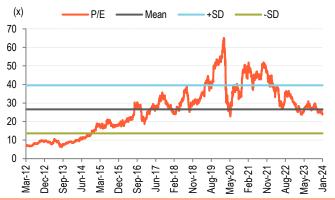
Source: Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 16 – P/ABV 1Y fwd: Stock trading around mean on consolidated basis



Source: Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 17 – P/E 1Y fwd: Stock trading close to mean on consolidated basis



Source: Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research



# **Key risks**

- Intensifying competition: Based on a wide product suite, solid execution capabilities, and robust demand for credit in its target industries, we expect BAF to achieve 20%+ loan growth in the medium term. However, above-expected competition, particularly from banks and other financial institutions, could weigh on performance, affecting our earnings, margin and valuation assumptions.
- Deteriorating asset quality: Between FY19 and FY23, BAF's GNPA and NNPA averaged just 1.5% and 0.6% respectively. Asset quality may decline as a result of slow economic growth or the recurrence of a pandemic (such as Covid).
- Higher delinquency in new segments: The company has announced plans to enter the higher risk microfinance and tractor financing markets in Q4FY24 and Q1FY25 respectively. These businesses could pose risks to asset quality.
- Regulatory headwinds: According to the RBI's scale-based NBFC framework published in 2022, BAF (along with 15 others) has been classed as an upper layer NBFC that must adhere to enhanced regulation. It cannot, for instance, lend more than 20% to one entity and more than 25% to a group of entities. In future, the RBI may even direct the company to transition from an NBFC into a bank, which would entail maintaining CRR, SLR and PSL strictures that NBFCs aren't subject to and which would impact profitability.

# Sector recommendation snapshot

Company	Ticker	Market Cap (US\$ bn)	Price (Rs)	Target (Rs)	Rating
Bajaj Finance	BAF IN	16.6	7,192	10,105	BUY
SBI Card	SBICARD IN	8.3	716	800	HOLD

Source: BOBCAPS Research, NSE | Price as of 29 Jan 2024

# **Glossary**

Glossary of	Glossary of Abbreviations						
AUF	Assets Under Finance	LRD	Lease Rental Discounting				
AUM	Assets Under Management	MDR	Merchant Discount Rate				
CIF	Cards in Force	MSME	Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises				
CRR	Cash Reserve Ratio	PSL	Priority Sector Lending				
ECL	Expected Credit Loss	SLR	Statutory Liquidity Ratio				
EMI	Equated Monthly Installment	UPI	Unified Payment Interface				



# **Financials**

Income Statement					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
Net interest income	1,75,235	2,29,903	2,89,375	3,73,320	4,66,064
NII growth (%)	26.2	31.2	25.9	29.0	24.8
Non-interest income	43,708	58,555	68,298	89,252	1,13,042
Total income	2,18,944	2,88,458	3,57,673	4,62,573	5,79,106
Operating expenses	75,872	1,01,300	1,23,031	1,57,387	1,98,783
PPOP	1,43,072	1,87,158	2,34,643	3,05,186	3,80,323
PPOP growth (%)	19.6	30.8	25.4	30.1	24.6
Provisions	48,034	31,897	46,901	66,598	88,552
PBT	95,038	1,55,262	1,87,742	2,38,588	2,91,771
Tax	24,756	40,202	47,311	60,124	73,526
Reported net profit	70,282	1,15,077	1,40,431	1,78,464	2,18,245
Adjustments	0	0	0	0	0
Adjusted net profit	70,282	1,15,077	1,40,431	1,78,464	2,18,245

Balance Sheet					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
Equity capital	1,207	1,209	89,209	1,01,209	1,01,209
Reserves & surplus	4,35,920	5,42,511	6,61,877	8,13,571	9,99,079
Net worth	4,37,127	5,43,720	7,51,086	9,14,780	11,00,288
Debt securities	7,62,231	8,68,452	11,73,531	14,88,380	18,64,735
Borrowings	8,90,089	12,98,453	17,54,586	22,25,328	27,88,028
Other liab. & provisions	35,618	41,662	58,486	73,816	83,476
Total liab. & equities	21,25,064	27,52,287	37,37,689	47,02,304	58,36,527
Cash & bank balance	36,803	43,045	1,00,609	93,068	65,776
Investments	1,22,455	2,27,518	3,04,916	3,86,723	4,84,510
Advances	19,14,233	24,22,689	32,62,282	41,37,527	51,83,749
Fixed & Other assets	51,573	59,034	69,881	84,986	1,02,492
Total assets	21,25,064	27,52,287	37,37,689	47,02,304	58,36,527
Total debt growth (%)	39.9	13.9	35.1	26.8	25.3
Advances growth (%)	30.5	26.6	34.7	26.8	25.3

Per Share					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs)	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
EPS	73.7	116.8	189.6	227.1	288.6
Dividend per share	10.0	20.0	30.0	34.1	43.3
Book value per share	615.4	726.6	895.7	1,214.8	1,479.5

Valuations Ratios						
Y/E 31 Mar (x)	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E	
P/E	97.6	61.6	37.9	31.7	24.9	
P/BV	11.7	9.9	8.0	5.9	4.9	
Dividend yield (%)	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	
DuBout Amakusia						
DuPont Analysis						
Y/E 31 Mar (%)	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E	
Net interest income	9.1	9.4	8.9	8.8	8.8	
Non-interest income	2.5	2.8	2.5	2.4	2.4	
Operating expenses	4.0	4.2	3.8	3.7	3.8	
Provisions	2.5	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.7	
ROA	3.7	4.7	4.3	4.2	4.1	
Leverage (x)	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.1	5.2	
ROF	17 4	23.5	21 7	21.4	21 7	

Ratio Analysis					
Y/E 31 Mar	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
YoY growth (%)					
Net interest income	26.2	31.2	25.9	29.0	24.8
Pre-provisioning profit	19.6	30.8	25.4	30.1	24.6
EPS	58.6	62.3	19.8	27.1	22.3
Profitability & Return rat	tios (%)				
Net interest margin	10.4	10.6	10.2	10.1	10.0
Fees / Avg. assets	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7
Cost-Income	34.7	35.1	34.4	34.0	34.3
ROE	17.4	23.5	21.7	21.4	21.7
ROA	3.7	4.7	4.3	4.2	4.1
Asset quality (%)					
GNPA	1.6	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.7
NNPA	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6
Slippage ratio	4.1	1.9	2.4	2.5	2.5
Credit cost	2.8	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.9
Provision coverage	58.0	64.0	65.1	62.6	62.7
Ratios (%)					
Loans to Total debt	115.5	111.5	111.1	111.1	111.1
CAR	27.2	25.0	23.1	22.0	22.3
Tier-1	24.8	23.2	21.2	20.2	20.6



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Note: Recommendation structure changed with effect from 21 June 2021

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