Varun Beverages I BUY

Growth drivers intact; recent correction overdone

Varun Beverages has corrected c.30% from its peak – a function of weak demand and rise in competitive intensity with aggression from Campa on pricing, channel margins, media visibility and distribution expansion. As per our checks: a) Campa is targeting states with higher salience of mass-end consumer/regional brands, b) within carbonated beverages, Campa has seen traction in INR 10 SKU (OOH consumption); while in large packs (in-home consumption), PepsiCo/Coca-Cola remain preferred brands, c) impact is likely to be higher in mass/mid segment packaged water/soda segment where regional brands have higher play and consumer pricing/product availability is more important than brand, & d) driving profitability in INR 10 PET remains a challenge. In CSD, brand equity, taste/flavours and availability are key elements for success. The latter part, especially, requires a strong manufacturing and distribution capability that further strengthens the brand, and VBL has built the same over a decade. Hence, Campa's execution on these parameters needs to be monitored. Overall, India remains a key 'Anchor market' for Pepsico Inc. We believe VBL has many levers for growth in the domestic business (capacity/distribution/portfolio expansion), and the Africa opportunity is large and well intact. Moreover, a strong summer augurs (link) well for both the segment and VBL. Hence, we believe the recent correction is overdone and the prevailing market pessimism should be used as an opportunity to Add.

- Competitive landscape of India beverage market: The Indian beverage market with a size of c.2.4bn cases is largely a duopoly with Coca-Cola/PepsiCo having market share of c.50-55%/30-35% and regional brands accounting for the balance c.15%. Competitive intensity in the domestic market has been increasing with the re-launch of Campa by Reliance Consumer Products in Mar'23. RIL, in its 3QFY25 concall, indicated that the brand is expected to cross INR 10bn in sales in FY25, which translates to c.60mn-70mn cases and low-single-digit market share as per our estimate.
- Campa pushing hard at mass end: Campa has focussed on certain states like Tamil Nadu, AP, Telangana, UP and West Bengal the strategy is to target the mass-end consumer who is price sensitive and less brand loyal through aggressive pricing INR 10 PET bottle (Campa CSD range on per ml basis is priced at c.30-40% discount vs. Coke/PepsiCo). Also, some of these states have a high salience of regional brands for e.g., Tamil Nadu has regional players like Podaran and Kalimark who operate at mass price point and provide a wide portfolio of flavours. While, visibility wise, Campa has gained grounds in these markets, our checks suggest offtake is largely in smaller SKUs (OOH consumption where consumer is price sensitive, not brand loyal & where Pepsico/Coca-Cola didn't have offering); in the large SKUs (750ml/2.25ltr), which are predominantly for home consumption, PepsiCo/Coca-Cola remain strong. Also, in our view, the impact at the mass end could be higher in packaged water (where pricing/shelf availability is important vs. brand) and soda (where local flavours/pricing is important).
- Incumbents responding through tactical promotions & remain strong in large SKUs: Both PepsiCo and Coca-Cola have responded through promotional offers (RGB sold at INR 10,

Financial Summary					(INR mn)
Y/E March	CY22A	CY23A	CY24A	CY25E	CY26E
Net Sales	129,246	155,903	195,327	249,331	288,369
Sales Growth (%)	49.5	20.6	25.3	27.6	15.7
EBITDA	27,881	36,095	47,111	57,907	65,978
EBITDA Margin (%)	21.2	22.5	23.5	22.8	22.5
Adjusted Net Profit	14,974	20,559	25,946	35,590	41,116
Diluted EPS (INR)	4.6	6.3	7.7	10.5	12.2
Diluted EPS Growth (%)	115.8	37.3	21.2	37.2	15.5
ROIC (%)	21.0	22.0	20.3	19.8	20.7
ROE (%)	32.6	34.2	22.0	19.6	19.1
P/E (x)	105.8	77.1	63.6	46.4	40.1
P/B (x)	31.1	22.9	9.9	8.4	7.1
EV/EBITDA (x)	58.1	45.3	33.7	27.2	23.5
Dividend Yield (%)	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3

Source: Company data, JM Financial. Note: Valuations as of 13/Mar/2025



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Recommendation and Price Target	
Current Reco.	BUY
Previous Reco.	BUY
Current Price Target (12M)	675
Upside/(Downside)	38.3%
Previous Price Target	675
Change	0.0%

Key Data – VBL IN	
Current Market Price	INR488
Market cap (bn)	INR1,650.8/US\$19.0
Free Float	38%
Shares in issue (mn)	3,248.0
Diluted share (mn)	3,381.5
3-mon avg daily val (mn)	INR4,392.2/US\$50.5
52-week range	683/419
Sensex/Nifty	73,829/22,397
INR/US\$	87.0

Price Performance	114	<u>A</u>	1214
%	1M	6M	12M
Absolute	-0.1	-24.5	-14.9
Relative*	2.9	-15.1	-16.3

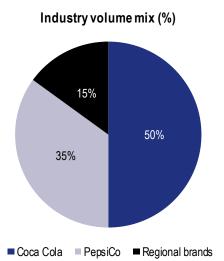
* To the BSE Sensex

JM Financial Research is also available on: Bloomberg - JMFR <GO>, Thomson Publisher & Reuters, S&P Capital IQ, FactSet and Visible Alpha

Please see Appendix I at the end of this report for Important Disclosures and Disclaimers and Research Analyst Certification. 400ml (250ml+150ml free) SKU at INR 20 launched by both Pepsico/Coke, likely launch of Zero sugar variants at INR 10 price point), which is the right thing to do especially during upcoming summer season. Having said that, tactical promotions have been there in past also. Moreover, as per our checks, both Pepsico & Coca-Cola have higher saliences in 750ml/2,25ltr (we est. it to be c.60-70% of their domestic cola-carbonate volumes) and offtakes here remain intact considering the liking for the taste and higher brand loyalty.

- India remains a key growth engine for Pepsico & Coca-Cola, VBL will continue to focus on capacity, distribution & portfolio expansion to drive domestic growth: Both Coca-cola (SLMG Beverages Pvt Ltd, Coca-Cola's biggest independent bottler in India said that it will invest up to \$1 bn by 2030 for expanding the production facility in UP and Bihar) and Pepsico (India is a key 'anchor market' for Pepsico where it sees next five to seven years of incremental growth coming for PepsiCo globally) remain optimistic & will continue to invest behind domestic business. We believe VBL has levers in terms of portfolio expansion (Sting, sports drink, likely launch of jeera soda) and capacity/distribution expansion (targeting to add 300k-400k retail outlets and 0.1mn visi-coolers per annum, capex of INR 20bn in CY25 for setting up facilities at Prayagraj, Damtal, Buxar & Meghalaya) to drive growth in domestic business.
- Africa remains a large opportunity: Africa is a large beverage market, and Coca-Cola enjoys a formidable position in many markets in the region. As per our analysis, Coca-Cola's Africa unit clocked volumes of c.2.5bn cases in CY23 (c.7.5% of overall Coca-Cola's volumes). Within Africa, Coca-Cola Beverages Africa (one of the largest bottlers) does volumes of c.1bn cases (c.40% of Coca-Cola's Africa volumes). We believe Varun Beverages, with estimated volumes of c.0.4bn in CY25E, has enough headroom to grow sales (through capacity/distribution expansion in existing territories and also by acquiring rights for other African markets (for e.g. Nigeria)) as well as expand margins (through improving mix and backward integration). This apart, Africa offers opportunities in the food business (c. USD 800mn TAM in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Morocco) where VBL is building capacities (over CY25-1HCY26) and targeting USD 100mn sales (not built into our estimates).
- Risk-reward favourable, recent pessimism provides an entry point for long-term investors: We are currently building in low-double-digit sales CAGR for the domestic business and 42% CAGR (LTL c.30%) for the international business over CY24-26E. In the bear case, if we assume competition weighs on both volumes and margins in India - which means India business sales growth of 8% (vs. management guidance of double-digit volume growth) all led by volumes, margin compression of c.100bps over CY24-26E (factoring in higher brand investments) and a 38% CAGR in international business sales, we see c.5-7% cut in our existing earnings estimate. At CMP, this will translate to valuation of c.42x on CY26E, which is still attractive considering the company's growth profile (c.22% CAGR over CY24-26E), which is much better vs. FMCG peers. We maintain our positive stance on the name - superior execution, large opportunity size & net debt free status provides confidence on the earnings growth (CAGR of 26% over CY24-26E). Maintain BUY rating with TP of INR 675 (55x CY26E EPS).

Exhibit 1. India beverage industry volume mix – (%)



Source: JM Financial estimate

Exhibit 2. Price comparison for Cola Carbonate drink (Amount in INR)								
PET bottle size	Campa cola	Coca Cola	Thumsup	Pepsi				
200ML	10	NA	NA	NA				
250ML	NA	20	20	20				
500ML	20	NA	NA	NA				
750ML	NA	40	40	40				
2L	80	99	99	99				
2.5L	NA	100	100	100				

Source: Jio Mart, Blinkit, Time of India, Company, JM Financial.

Exhibit 3. VBL's has built a strong infrastructure in India over a decade					
Key parameters	CY16	CY24			
No. of states in India	17	26			
No. of production facilities	21	48			
Owned depots	71	130+			
Owned Vehicles	2,024	2,600+			
Primary distributors	1,186	2,800+			
Distribution reach	<1mn	4 mn+			
Visi-Coolers	458,000	11,50,000+			

Source: Annual Report, Company, JM Financial



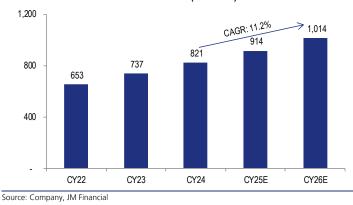
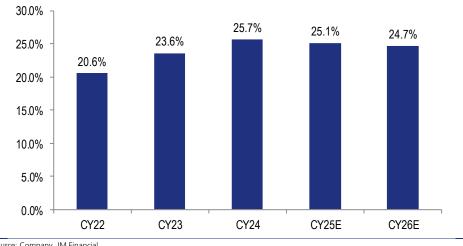


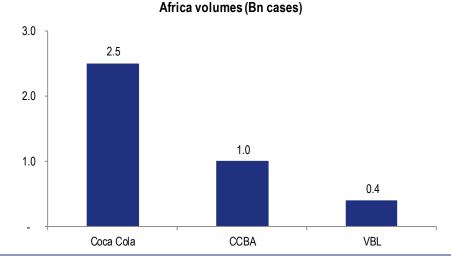


Exhibit 6. India business EBITDA margin healthy despite factoring moderation over CY24-26E India business - EBITDA margin (%)



Source: Company, JM Financial





Source: Company, *Coca-Cola (Africa unit) /CCBA volumes are for 2023, VBL** for CY25E, JM Financial



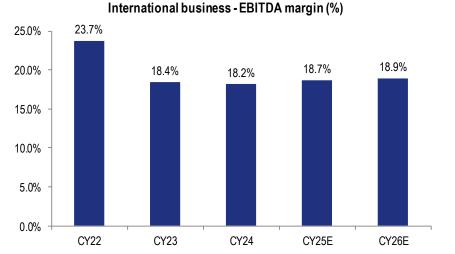
Exhibit 9. ...driving healthy sales growth





Source: Company, JM Financial

Exhibit 10. International business EBITDA margin to see steady improvement with better mix and backward integration



Source: Company, JM Financial

Exhibit 11. Key assumption table								
Key parameters	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25E	CY26E			
India volumes (mn cases)	653	737	821	914	1,014			
уоу	43.6%	12.9%	11.4%	11.4%	11.0%			
International volumes (mn cases)	149	176	304	493	585			
уоу	30.3%	18.1%	72.2%	62.1%	18.7%			
Overall realisation/per case (INR)	164	176	178	181	184			
уоу	5.9%	7.0%	1.3%	1.6%	1.6%			
Gross Margin (%)	52.5%	53.8%	55.5%	55.6%	55.5%			
EBITDA Margin (%)	21.2%	22.5%	23.5%	22.8%	22.5%			

Source: Company, JM Financial

Company	СМР	M. Cap	Sales CAGR (%)	Sales CAGR (%) EPS CAGR (%)	PE	E (x)	EV/EBI	TDA (x)
Company	(INR)	(INR bn)	FY25-27E	FY25-FY27E	FY26E	FY27E	FY26E	FY27E
Staples								
HUL	2,176	5,110	7.7%	6.3%	45.5	41.6	31.1	28.3
Colgate	2,411	656	8.6%	8.5%	42.2	38.5	29.4	26.8
Dabur	501	888	8.9%	11.7%	43.7	39.8	30.4	27.6
Marico	607	785	10.8%	11.7%	43.5	38.9	31.5	27.7
GCPL	1,029	1,049	10.4%	21.7%	42.9	36.7	30.0	26.0
F&B Players								
Nestle	2,190	2,113	9.6%	14.0%	59.0	52.1	38.7	34.5
Britannia	4,725	1,139	9.7%	12.4%	47.9	42.4	32.7	29.3
TCPL	946	936	9.6%	22.5%	56.3	47.4	32.5	28.8
Bikaji	673	168	17.3%	31.2%	65.0	49.2	41.8	32.7
VBL*	488	1,651	21.5%	25.9%	45.9	40.1	28.3	24.5

Source: Bloomberg, Company, JM Financial. *VBL data is for FY year ending Dec



Mar-25

Financial Tables (Consolidated)

Income Statement					(INR mn)
Y/E March	CY22A	CY23A	CY24A	CY25E	CY26
Net Sales	129,246	155,903	195,327	249,331	288,369
Sales Growth	49.5%	20.6%	25.3%	27.6%	15.7%
Other Operating Income	2,486	4,523	4,749	4,987	5,236
Total Revenue	131,731	160,426	200,077	254,318	293,605
Cost of Goods Sold/Op. Exp	62,612	74,049	89,047	112,858	130,744
Personnel Cost	12,166	14,466	18,850	24,823	28,835
Other Expenses	29,072	35,816	45,068	58,730	68,047
EBITDA	27,881	36,095	47,111	57,907	65,978
EBITDA Margin	21.2%	22.5%	23.5%	22.8%	22.5%
EBITDA Growth	68.5%	29.5%	30.5%	22.9%	13.9%
Depn. & Amort.	6,172	6,809	9,474	11,864	13,314
EBIT	21,709	29,286	37,637	46,043	52,663
Other Income	388	794	1,213	2,050	2,374
Finance Cost	1,861	2,681	4,504	1,007	700
PBT before Excep. & Forex	20,236	27,398	34,346	47,086	54,337
Excep. & Forex Inc./Loss(-)	0	0	0	0	C
PBT	20,236	27,398	34,346	47,086	54,337
Taxes	4,735	6,375	7,988	11,065	12,769
Extraordinary Inc./Loss(-)	0	0	0	0	C
Assoc. Profit/Min. Int.(-)	527	454	382	402	422
Reported Net Profit	14,974	20,559	25,946	35,590	41,116
Adjusted Net Profit	14,974	20,559	25,946	35,590	41,116
Net Margin	11.4%	12.8%	13.0%	14.0%	14.0%
Diluted Share Cap. (mn)	3,248.0	3,248.0	3,381.5	3,381.5	3,381.5
Diluted EPS (INR)	4.6	6.3	7.7	10.5	12.2
Diluted EPS Growth	115.8%	37.3%	21.2%	37.2%	15.5%
Total Dividend + Tax	1,624	2,273	3,248	4,206	4,596
Dividend Per Share (INR)	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.4

Balance Sheet					(INR mn)
Y/E March	CY22A	CY23A	CY24A	CY25E	CY268
Shareholders' Fund	51,024	69,365	166,098	197,482	234,003
Share Capital	6,496	6,496	6,763	6,763	6,763
Reserves & Surplus	44,528	62,869	159,335	190,719	227,240
Preference Share Capital	0	0	0	0	(
Minority Interest	1,131	1,482	1,298	1,714	2,152
Total Loans	36,948	51,944	23,643	10,236	(
Def. Tax Liab. / Assets (-)	3,368	3,430	4,879	4,879	4,879
Total - Equity & Liab.	92,471	126,221	195,918	214,312	241,034
Net Fixed Assets	75,389	103,314	145,641	163,777	168,462
Gross Fixed Assets	87,525	106,021	153,963	183,963	201,96
Intangible Assets	6,795	6,799	16,912	16,912	16,91
Less: Depn. & Amort.	34,153	39,075	50,489	61,667	74,38
Capital WIP	15,221	29,569	25,255	24,569	23,96
Investments	0	211	595	4,895	4,89
Current Assets	40,794	48,347	85,203	87,041	113,99
Inventories	19,939	21,505	27,912	35,480	40,96
Sundry Debtors	2,993	3,594	8,458	10,451	12,06
Cash & Bank Balances	2,853	4,599	24,501	14,746	32,38
Loans & Advances	8,742	13,281	18,756	20,533	22,48
Other Current Assets	6,267	5,368	5,576	5,832	6,10
Current Liab. & Prov.	23,711	25,651	35,521	41,401	46,31
Current Liabilities	10,139	10,020	20,271	24,511	27,58
Provisions & Others	13,572	15,631	15,250	16,890	18,73
Net Current Assets	17,083	22,696	49,682	45,640	67,67
Total – Assets	92,471	126,221	195,918	214,312	241,03

Source: Company, JM Financial

Source: Company, JM Financial

Cash Flow Statement					(INR mn)
Y/E March	CY22A	CY23A	CY24A	CY25E	CY26E
Profit before Tax	20,236	27,394	34,331	47,071	54,323
Depn. & Amort.	6,172	6,809	9,474	11,864	13,314
Net Interest Exp. / Inc. (-)	1,473	1,887	3,291	-1,044	-1,674
Inc (-) / Dec in WCap.	-5,852	-6,735	-6,694	-10,013	-4,401
Others	-395	1,232	685	0	0
Taxes Paid	-3,733	-6,679	-7,276	-11,065	-12,769
Operating Cash Flow	17,900	23,908	33,811	36,814	48,793
Capex	-17,499	-31,939	-43,822	-30,000	-18,000
Free Cash Flow	401	-8,031	-10,011	6,814	30,793
Inc (-) / Dec in Investments	221	-1,180	22	0	0
Others	232	220	631	2,050	2,374
Investing Cash Flow	-17,046	-32,899	-43,168	-27,950	-15,626
Inc / Dec (-) in Capital	0	48	75,119	0	0
Dividend + Tax thereon	-1,624	-2,273	-3,248	-4,206	-4,596
Inc / Dec (-) in Loans	3,161	14,769	-37,075	-13,407	-10,236
Others	-1,717	-2,694	-4,650	-1,007	-700
Financing Cash Flow	-179	9,849	30,146	-18,620	-15,531
Inc / Dec (-) in Cash	675	858	20,790	-9,755	17,636
Opening Cash Balance	2,178	3,741	4,322	24,501	14,746
Closing Cash Balance	2,853	4,599	25,112	14,746	32,381

Dupont Analysis Y/E March CY22A CY23A CY24A CY25E CY26E Net Margin 13.0% 11.4% 12.8% 14.0% 14.0% Asset Turnover (x) 1.2 1.2 1.0 1.0 1.1 1.6 Leverage Factor (x) 2.3 2.2 1.3 1.3 RoE 32.6% 34.2% 22.0% 19.6% 19.1%

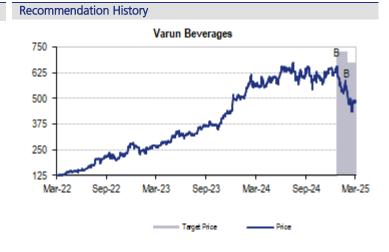
Y/E March	CY22A	CY23A	CY24A	CY25E	CY26E
	CTZZA	CIZSA	CT24A	CTZSE	CTZOE
BV/Share (INR)	15.7	21.4	49.1	58.4	69.2
ROIC	21.0%	22.0%	20.3%	19.8%	20.7%
ROE	32.6%	34.2%	22.0%	19.6%	19.1%
Net Debt/Equity (x)	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	-0.2
P/E (x)	105.8	77.1	63.6	46.4	40.1
P/B (x)	31.1	22.9	9.9	8.4	7.1
EV/EBITDA (x)	58.1	45.3	33.7	27.2	23.5
EV/Sales (x)	12.3	10.2	7.9	6.2	5.3
Debtor days	8	8	15	15	15
Inventory days	55	49	51	51	51
Creditor days	29	22	37	37	37

Source: Company, JM Financial

Source: Company, JM Financial

Varun Beverages

History of Recommendation and Target Price			
Date	Recommendation	Target Price	% Chg.
2-Jan-25	Buy	725	
10-Feb-25	Buy	675	-6.9



JM Financial Institutional Securities Limited

APPENDIX I

JM Financial Institutional Securities Limited

Corporate Identity Number: U67100MH2017PLC296081

Member of BSE Ltd. and National Stock Exchange of India Ltd.

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Definition of ratings		
Rating	Meaning	
Buy	Total expected returns of more than 10% for stocks with market capitalisation in excess of INR 200 billion and REITs* and more than 15% for all other stocks, over the next twelve months. Total expected return includes dividend yields.	
Hold	Price expected to move in the range of 10% downside to 10% upside from the current market price for stocks with market capitalisation in excess of INR 200 billion and REITs* and in the range of 10% downside to 15% upside from the current market price for all other stocks, over the next twelve months.	
Sell	Price expected to move downwards by more than 10% from the current market price over the next twelve months.	

* REITs refers to Real Estate Investment Trusts.

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The Research Analyst(s), with respect to each issuer and its securities covered by them in this research report, certify that:

All of the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect his or her or their personal views about all of the issuers and their securities; and

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