

Q4FY21 Preview

Margins to remain under pressure

We expect a mixed revenue performance from our auto universe in Q4FY21. Barring 2Ws, PVs and tractors all segments – CVs, 3Ws, and LCVs – have reported sequential volume growth. But the spike in prices of commodities, rubber and crude derivatives will put substantial pressure on margins and earnings for most players. Auto stocks have corrected from the peaks seen last month but continue to be richly valued – much ahead of their long-term P/E multiples. We remain negative on the sector.

OEMs: Although Maruti (MSIL) has posted a 1% QoQ decline in sales volume, we expect a 3% QoQ increase in Q4 revenue on the back of recent price hikes. However, the sharp upswing in commodity prices makes us skeptical on margins. 2W volumes are down 15% QoQ for Hero (HMCL), 12% for Bajaj Auto (BJAUT) and 7% for TVS Motor (TVSL), while Eicher Motors (EIM – RE) reported 3% QoQ improvement in Q4 dispatches. 2W EBITDA margins and PAT are forecast to decline sharply QoQ due to the rising commodity prices.

In the CV segment, while MHCV sales have improved sequentially alongside improving economic activity, resurgence of the pandemic could delay recovery. We expect Ashok Leyland (AL) to report >40% QoQ revenue growth in Q4 but the spike in metal and tyre costs and its inability to take corresponding price hikes could erode margins going forward.

Tractors & Tillers: Tractors growth moderated in Q4. Volumes have fallen 8% QoQ for M&M (MM) while growing 3% for Escorts (ESC). Swaraj Engines (SWE) is expected to post positive growth while volumes for VST tillers were flattish QoQ. Margins for all these agri-related players are projected to decline QoQ given the impact of higher raw material costs, both steel and rubber.

Tyres: OEMs have posted sequential growth in MHCV tyre sales. Our channel checks suggest that replacement demand for truck tyres (radials) remains steady. The farm subsegment (tractors) has clocked flattish growth. We expect steady capacity utilisation in bias tyres and project an overall revenue decline of ~2% QoQ for the tyre pack. The sharp jump in rubber prices (from ~Rs 125/kg to Rs 160/kg) and crude derivative costs (+15% QoQ) is expected to shave 350-400bps off Q4 gross margins. We maintain SELL on our entire tyre coverage – CEAT, Apollo Tyres (APTY), MRF, Balkrishna Industries (BIL), TVS Srichakra (TVSS) and JK Tyre (JKI).

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RECOMMENDATION SNAPSHOT

Ticker	Price	Target	Rating
AL IN	123	60	SELL
BJAUT IN	3,650	2,800	SELL
EIM IN	2,553	2,200	SELL
ESC IN	1,271	1,150	SELL
HMCL IN	2,928	2,900	SELL
MSIL IN	6,827	6,900	SELL
MM IN	795	630	SELL
TVSL IN	564	350	SELL
VSTT IN	1,843	2,300	BUY
APTY IN	224	140	SELL
BIL IN	1,680	1,340	SELL
CEAT IN	1,540	780	SELL
GNA IN	378	450	BUY
JKI IN	120	70	SELL
MDAIN	102	110	ADD
MRF IN	82,983	67,000	SELL
SWE IN	1,351	1,300	SELL
SRTY IN	1,816	1,200	SELL
-			

Price & Target in Rupees | Price as of 8 Apr 2021





Company-wise expectations

FIG 1 – QUARTERLY PREVIEW

Company (Rs mn)	Q4FY21E	Q4FY20	Y₀Y (%)	Q3FY21	QºQ (%)	Remarks
Ashok Leyland						
Sales	68,007	38,385	77.2	48,135	41.3	 Volumes surged 73% YoY/32% QoQ in Q4. MHCVs grew at a strong 58% QoQ, contributing a larger share of the sales mix
EBITDA	3,648	1,830	99.3	2,538	43.7	vs. previous quarters. This should aid better ASPs and revenue
Adj PAT	1,140	(573)	NA	(194)	NA	growth of 41% QoQ. Operating efficiencies are likely to partly
EBITDA margin (%)	5.4	4.8	-	5.3	-	offset RM cost inflation, driving 44% QoQ EBITDA growth;
PAT margin (%)	1.7	(1.5)	-	(0.4)	-	margin is forecast at 5.4% and adj. PAT at Rs 1.1bn.
Maruti Suzuki						Led by flattish QoQ volumes and a 4% rise in ASP from price
Sales	242,564	181,987	33.3	234,578	3.4	 Led by natural QOQ volumes and a 4% rise in ASP from price hikes, we expect 3% QoQ revenue growth. Operating margin is
EBITDA	22,050	15,464	42.6	22,261	(0.9)	forecast to contract 40bps QoQ given RM cost pressure. We
Adj PAT	16,319	12,917	26.3	19,414	(15.9)	model for further deterioration in adj. PAT by 16% QoQ to
EBITDA margin (%)	9.1	8.5	-	9.5	-	Rs 16.3bn. Key monitorable: inventory levels, RM price trend
PAT margin (%)	6.7	7.1	-	8.3	-	and new launch timelines.
Bajaj Auto						Volumos foll 10% O_{10} $O_$
Sales	81,517	68,159	19.6	89,099	(8.5)	Volumes fell 10% QoQ in Q4; 3Ws were up 8% while 2Ws declined 12%. We expect ASP to improve ~2% QoQ,
EBITDA	13,625	12,528	8.8	17,296	(21.2)	restricting the revenue decline to 8%. Operating margin is
Adj PAT	12,558	13,103	(4.2)	15,563	(19.3)	projected to contract on higher RM costs, partly offset by
EBITDA margin (%)	16.7	18.4	-	19.4	-	better efficiencies. Key monitorable: export demand, inventory
PAT margin (%)	15.4	19.2	_	17.5	-	levels, 3W recovery timeline and any new launch timelines.
Eicher Motors						
Sales	30,887	23,257	32.8	29,282	5.4	RE volumes inched up 3% QoQ in Q4 while timely price hikes should help ASPs improve 2%, aiding revenue growth of 5%.
EBITDA	6,392	4,533	41.0	6,580	(2.9)	Gross margin is likely to contract 90bps QoQ, leading to an
Adj PAT	5,000	3,462	44.4	4,885	2.4	EBITDA decline of 3% and 180bps QoQ lower operating margin.
EBITDA margin (%)	20.7	19.5	_	22.5	-	We estimate that adj. PAT will rise to Rs 5bn. Key monitorable:
PAT margin (%)	16.2	14.9	_	16.7	-	new launch timelines, inventory levels, studio store performance.
Hero MotoCorp						
Sales	85,014	62,384	36.3	97,758	(13.0)	 We expect ASP to rise 2% QoQ given recent price hikes while volumes have fallen 15%, prompting an estimated 13% QoQ fall
EBITDA	10,508	6,599	59.2	14,136	(25.7)	in revenue. Gross margin is forecast to contract sequentially,
Adj PAT	7,566	6,207	21.9	10,845	(30.2)	weighing on EBITDA margin (-210bps QoQ to 12.4%). Key
EBITDA margin (%)	12.4	10.6	_	14.5	-	monitorable: inventory levels, new launches and any vendor-
PAT margin (%)	8.9	9.9	_	11.1	-	side supply challenges.
TVS Motor						
Sales	51,689	34,814	48.5	53,914	(4.1)	 Revenues are forecast to fall 4% QoQ to Rs 51.7bn (volumes – 6% YoY, ASPs +2%) as 3Ws continue to struggle. RM cost
EBITDA	4,430	2,449	80.9	5,111	(13.3)	pressure would likely compress EBITDA margin to 8.6%
Adj PAT	2,249	1,062	111.8	2,656	(15.3)	(–90bps QoQ). Adj. PAT is projected to fall 15% QoQ to
EBITDA margin (%)	8.6	7.0	_	9.5	-	Rs 2.2bn. Key monitorables: 3W demand situation, export
PAT margin (%)	4.4	3.1	_	4.9	_	market performance and cost-cutting initiatives.
Mahindra&Mahindra (MM+MVML)						
Sales	127,230	90,047	41.3	140,565	(9.5)	Auto volumes have declined 11% QoQ while tractor sales fell
EBITDA	18,125	12,275	47.7	23,856	(24.0)	 8% in Q4. Higher revenue share from the auto segment and sequential RM cost inflation could lower operating margin to
Adj PAT	10,380	3,226	221.8	17,448	(40.5)	14.2% (-280bps QoQ), translating to an EBITDA decline of
EBITDA margin (%)	14.2	13.6	_	17.0	_	24% QoQ. Adj. PAT is likely to drop 40% QoQ to Rs 10.4bn.
	8.2	3.6		12.4		



Company (Rs mn)	Q4FY21E	Q4FY20	YoY (%)	Q3FY21	Q₀Q (%)	Remarks
Escorts						Tractor volumes increased marginally by 3% QoQ in Q4 and
Sales	21,541	14,085	52.9	20,647	4.3	ASPs are expected to inch 1%, which should support 4% QoQ
EBITDA	3,449	1,944	77.4	3,641	(5.3)	growth in revenue to Rs 21.5bn. EBITDA margin is forecast to
Adj PAT	2,604	1,404	85.5	2,807	(7.2)	decline 160bps QoQ whereas adj. PAT could move down 7%
EBITDA margin (%)	16.0	13.8	-	17.6	-	QoQ to Rs 2.6bn. Key monitorable: supply chain situation and
PAT margin (%)	12.1	10.0	-	13.6	_	updates on the Kubota deal.
Swaraj Engines						
Sales	3,164	1,751	80.7	2,724	16.2	We expect revenue growth of 16% QoQ to Rs 3.2bn led by
EBITDA	407	234	73.9	366	11.2	volumes (+16% QoQ). Gross margin decline and steady other
Adj PAT	286	158	81.0	250	14.4	expenses could compress EBITDA margins sequentially
EBITDA margin (%)	12.9	13.4	-	13.4	-	- (-50bps QoQ). Adj. PAT is expected at Rs 286mn. Key
PAT margin (%)	9.0	9.0	-	9.2	-	- monitorable: demand outlook and market share gains.
VST Tillers						
Sales	2,015	1,198	68.2	2,029	(0.7)	 Since the restrictions on tiller imports from China, the company has witnessed a sharp jump in tiller demand. However,
EBITDA	236	(65)	(463.1)	299	(21.1)	 company has witnessed a sharp jump in tiller demand. However, moderate demand in tractors led to flattish sequential volume
Adj PAT	193	(34)	(667.6)	308	(37.3)	growth. Revenues are expected to dip 1% QoQ while gross
EBITDA margin (%)	11.7	(5.4)		14.7	-	margin decline is likely to cause EBITDA margin contraction of
PAT margin (%)	9.6	(2.8)	_	15.2	_	300bps QoQ. Adj. PAT is estimated at Rs 193mn.
Apollo Tyres	,	(,				
Sales	47,177	36,101	30.7	51,538	(8.5)	With a strong base in Q3FY21, revenues are estimated to
EBITDA	6,713	4,750	41.3	9,894	(32.2)	moderate sequentially, falling 8% QoQ to Rs 47bn. With the
Adj PAT	1,846	779	137.0	4,438	(58.4)	 sharp jump in crude and rubber prices over the last few months, we expect gross margin to deteriorate QoQ for most tyre
EBITDA margin (%)	14.2	13.2	-	19.2	-	companies, while a higher share of revenue from OEMs would
PAT margin (%)	3.9	2.2		8.6		further weigh on margins.
Balkrishna Industries	5.7	2.2		0.0		
Sales	14,888	13,573	9.7	15,046	(1.1)	We assume tonnage volumes will decline 2% QoQ (+1% YoY)
EBITDA	4,084	3,725	9.6	4,764	(14.3)	with ASP improving by 1% QoQ, resulting in flattish revenues.
Adj PAT	2,311	2,573	(10.2)	3,219	(28.2)	 Operating margin is expected to plummet 430bps QoQ as
EBITDA margin (%)	27.4	27.4	-	31.7	-	- RM costs have spiked. Adj. PAT is projected at Rs 2.3bn (-10%
PAT margin (%)	15.5	19.0		21.4		- YoY, -28% QoQ).
CEAT	15.5	17.0		21.4		
Sales	21,166	15,326	38.1	22,125	(4.3)	With weaker 2W OEM sales QoQ, CEAT faces a potential dip
EBITDA	2,360	1,899	24.3	3,258	(4.3)	in revenues along with higher RM costs, leading to a 360bps
Adj PAT	838	558	50.2	1,276	(34.3)	QoQ fall in EBITDA margin and a 28% QoQ decline in
EBITDA margin (%)	11.1	12.4		14.7	(34.3)	EBITDA. Adj. PAT is estimated at Rs 838mn (+50% YoY, - 34% QoQ). Key monitorable: management's view on
PAT margin (%)	4.0	3.6		5.8		demand, direction of RM prices and any hike in product prices.
JK Tyre	4.0	5.0		5.0		
Sales	20 772	17 0 / 9	60.2	27 602	3.9	We have factored in healthy sequential CV OEM demand
EBITDA	28,773	17,948	60.3 91.8	27,693		growth and steady growth in the replacement market to arrive
	3,978	2,074		5,004	(20.5)	at our Q4 revenue estimate of Rs 28.8bn. As higher RM costs
Adj PAT	1,303	(470)	(377.2)	2,307	(43.5)	would act as a headwind, we expect operating margin to fall
EBITDA margin (%)	13.8	(2.6)	-	18.1	-	430bps QoQ. Key monitorable: further plans of debt reduction, CV demand outlook and capacity utilisation levels.
PAT margin (%)	4.5	(2.6)	-	8.3	-	reduction, C videmand outlook and capacity utilisation levels.
MRF	47.050	24 25 2	20 1	15 4 4 0	~ -	Revenue is expected to grow 4% QoQ to Rs 47.4bn given
Sales	47,359	36,252	30.6	45,668	3.7	$_{\rm -}$ positive growth across CVs and stable demand in the
EBITDA	6,740	5,699	18.3	9,632	(30.0)	replacement segment. RM cost inflation would impact
Adj PAT	2,567	6,695	(61.7)	5,117	(49.8)	operating margin. MRF is expected to post PAT of Rs 2.6bn.
EBITDA margin (%)	14.2	15.7	-	21.1	-	Key monitorable: capacity expansion plans, RM cost trend and
PAT margin (%)	5.4	18.5	-	11.2	-	demand in the replacement market.



Company (Rs mn)	Q4FY21E	Q4FY20	YoY (%)	Q3FY21	QºQ (%)	Remarks
TVS Srichakra						Given full exposure to 2W tyres, we expect volumes to replicate
Sales	5,412	4,171	29.8	5,533	(2.2)	the sequential decline in 2W sales, leading to a revenue fall of
EBITDA	604	328	84.1	774	(22.0)	2% QoQ to Rs 5.4bn despite steady replacement demand.
Adj PAT	213	245	(13.1)	329	(35.3)	Estimated gross margin shrinkage of 460bps QoQ could lead
EBITDA margin (%)	11.2	7.9	-	14.0	-	to an EBITDA decline of 22% QoQ to Rs 604mn. Adj. PAT is
PAT margin (%)	3.9	5.9	-	5.9	-	projected to fall 35% QoQ to Rs 213mn.
Minda Corp						
Sales	7,901	6,979	13.2	7,398	6.8	We expect healthy growth of 7% QoQ in quarterly revenues to
EBITDA	830	385	115.6	818	1.5	Rs 7.9bn. With higher operating efficiencies partially offset by
Adj PAT	428	(2,998)	(114.3)	499	(14.2)	RM cost headwinds, we model for EBITDA margin of 10.5%
EBITDA margin (%)	10.5	5.5	-	11.1	-	 (lossmaking plastic division hived off) while EBITDA improves marginally by 2% QoQ. Adj. PAT is projected at Rs 428mn.
PAT margin (%)	5.4	(43.0)	-	6.7	-	
GNA Axles						
Sales	2,818	1,807	55.9	2,760	2.1	Healthy sequential CV sales should support 2% QoQ revenue
EBITDA	431	189	128.0	482	(10.6)	growth at Rs 2.8bn (+56% YoY). EBITDA margin is however
Adj PAT	219	47	366.0	266	(17.7)	expected to be affected by weaker gross margins, causing
EBITDA margin (%)	15.3	10.5	-	17.5	-	 EBITDA to fall 11% QoQ to Rs 431mn. Adj. PAT is projected at Rs 219mn (-18% QoQ).
PAT margin (%)	7.8	2.6	-	9.6	-	-rs 2171111(-10% Q0Q).

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Quarterly commodity and currency trends

FIG 2 – COMMODITY AND CURRENCY TREND

Particulars	Q1FY19	Q2FY19	Q3FY19	Q4FY19	Q1FY20	Q2FY20	Q3FY20	Q4FY20	Q1FY21	Q2FY21	Q3FY21	Q4FY21
Key Commodities												
Aluminium (USD)	2,264	2,054	1,966	1,862	1,794	1,765	1,756	1,691	1,501	1,704	1,916	2,096
QoQ (%)	18.8	(9.3)	(4.3)	(5.3)	(3.7)	(1.6)	(0.5)	(3.7)	(11.2)	13.5	12.3	9.3
Lead (USD)	2,384	2,097	1,966	2,034	1,883	2,029	2,042	1,843	1,679	1,875	1,902	2,011
QoQ (%)	10.6	(12.0)	(6.2)	3.5	(7.4)	7.7	0.6	(9.8)	(8.9)	11.7	1.6	5.7
Brent oil (USD)	75	75	68	63	69	62	63	51	31	43	44	61
QoQ (%)	48.7	1.0	(10.1)	(6.8)	8.5	(9.7)	1.2	(19.2)	(37.9)	35.8	4.5	36.0
Rubber (RS4) (Rs)	12,382	13,071	12,357	12,565	13,899	14,265	12,749	13,423	12,066	13,088	15,219	15,841
QoQ (%)	(5.4)	5.6	(5.5)	1.7	10.6	2.6	(10.6)	5.3	(10.1)	8.5	16.2	4.1
Hot rolled steel (CNY)	4,168	4,300	3,926	3,802	3,949	3,793	3,720	3,602	3,550	3,928	4,182	4,782
QoQ (%)	28.7	3.2	(8.7)	(3.2)	3.8	(3.9)	(1.9)	(3.2)	(1.4)	10.6	6.5	14.4
Cold rolled steel (CNY)	4,606	4,788	4,535	4,313	4,326	4,292	4,307	4,257	3,947	4,480	5,095	5,575
QoQ (%)	21.4	4.0	(5.3)	(4.9)	0.3	(0.8)	0.4	(1.2)	(7.3)	13.5	13.6	9.4
Key Currencies												
INR/USD	67.1	70.1	72.1	70.5	69.6	70.3	71.2	72.4	75.9	74.4	73.8	72.9
QoQ (%)	4.0	4.5	2.9	(2.2)	(1.3)	1.1	1.3	1.6	4.9	(2.0)	(0.8)	(1.2)
INR/EUR	79.9	81.5	82.3	80.1	78.2	78.2	78.9	79.9	83.6	86.9	88.1	87.9
QoQ (%)	12.4	2.1	0.9	(2.6)	(2.4)	0.1	0.9	1.2	4.7	3.9	1.3	(0.2)
INR/GBP	91.2	91.4	92.8	91.7	89.4	86.7	91.7	92.7	94.2	96.1	97.5	100.5
QoQ (%)	10.5	0.2	1.5	(1.1)	(2.5)	(3.0)	5.7	1.1	1.6	1.9	1.5	3.1
INR/JPY	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
QoQ (%)	5.8	2.4	1.6	0.1	(1.1)	3.7	(0.1)	1.5	6.1	(0.7)	0.9	(2.6)
USD/EUR	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2
Q.Q (%)	8.2	(2.4)	(1.9)	(0.4)	(1.1)	(1.0)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.1)	6.1	5.5	1.0
USD/GBP	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4
QoQ (%)	6.3	(4.2)	(1.3)	1.3	(1.3)	(4.1)	4.5	(0.6)	(3.0)	4.1	2.3	4.3

Source: Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research



FIG 3 - LEAD PRICE TREND

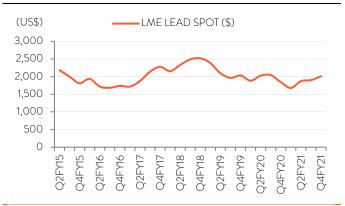
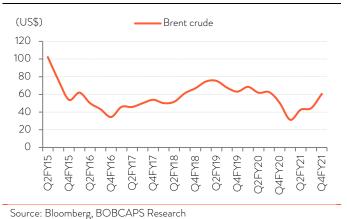


FIG 4 – BRENT CRUDE PRICE TREND



Source: Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research

FIG 5 – CHINESE HOT ROLLED STEEL PRICE TREND

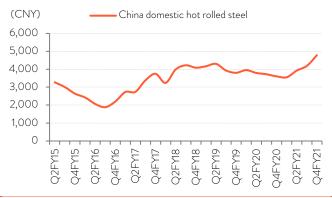
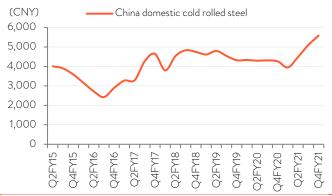


FIG 6 – CHINESE COLD ROLLED STEEL PRICE TREND



Source: Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research

Source: Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research

Quarterly volume trends

FIG 7 – Q4FY21 VOLUME SNAPSHOT

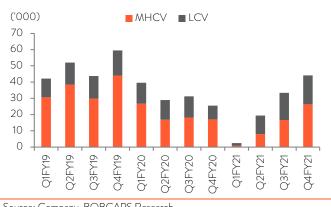
Company	Q4FY21	Q4FY20	YoY (%)	Q3FY21	QºQ (%)
Ashok Leyland	44,060	25,504	72.8	33,410	31.9
HCVs	26,277	16,953	55.0	16,586	58.4
LCVs	17,783	8,551	108.0	16,824	5.7
Atul Auto	4,993	7,741	(35)	5,640	(11.5)
Three-Wheelers	4,993	7,741	(35.5)	5,640	(11.5)
Bajaj Auto	1,169,664	991,961	17.9	1,306,810	(10.5)
Motorcycles	1,047,632	853,540	22.7	1,193,867	(12.2)
3Ws	122,032	138,421	(11.8)	112,943	8.0
Exports (of above)	635,545	513,801	23.7	687,111	(7.5)
Eicher Motors	204,604	162,870	25.6	199,668	2.5
RE	187,081	146,864	27.4	181,465	3.1
VECV	17,523	16,006	9.5	18,203	(3.7)
Escorts	32,588	20,108	62.1	31,562	3.3
Hero MotoCorp	1,568,313	1,334,511	17.5	1,845,314	(15.0)
Mahindra & Mahindra	202,223	150,996	33.9	223,978	(9.7)
Auto	108,329	91,706	18.1	122,277	(11.4)
Tractors	93,894	59,290	58.4	101,701	(7.7)



Company	Q4FY21	Q4FY20	YoY (%)	Q3FY21	Q₀Q (%)
Maruti Suzuki	492,235	385,025	27.8	495,897	(0.7)
Domestic	456,707	360,428	26.7	467,369	(2.3)
Exports	35,528	24,597	44.4	28,528	24.5
TVS Motor	927,479	632,922	46.5	989,517	(6.3)
2Ws	886,514	590,320	50.2	951,879	(6.9)
3Ws	40,965	42,602	(3.8)	495,897	(0.7)

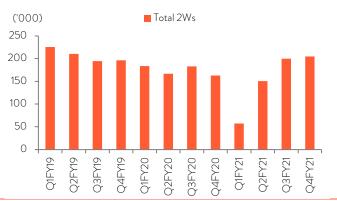
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

FIG 8 - ASHOK LEYLAND



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

FIG 10 - ROYAL ENFIELD



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

FIG 12 - HERO MOTOCORP



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

FIG 9 - BAJAJ AUTO



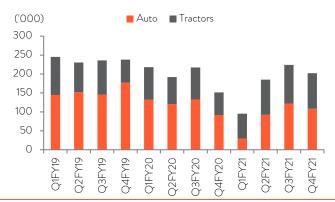
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

FIG 11 - ESCORTS



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

FIG 13 – MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research



FIG 14 – MARUTI SUZUKI

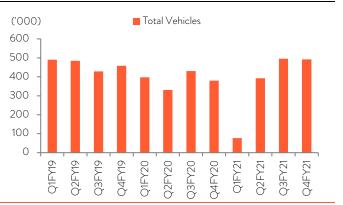


FIG 15 – TVS MOTOR



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

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Disclaimer

Recommendation scale: Recommendations and Absolute returns (%) over 12 months

BUY - Expected return >+15%

ADD – Expected return from >+5% to +15%

REDUCE – Expected return from -5% to +5%

SELL – Expected return <-5%

Note: Recommendation structure changed with effect from 1 January 2018 (Hold rating discontinued and replaced by Add / Reduce)

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