2027F



# **Strategy**

August 19, 2025

### On GST and narratives

The market's mechanical response to the government's plan to rationalize the GST structure shows the (1) powerful hold of narratives on the investment community and (2) low amount of skepticism about a new narrative, despite the rather poor track record of narratives in the past 2-3 years. The basis for such optimism (flows, group think and relative performance) is quite flimsy.

### GST: Market has assumed positive profitability and volume impact

The sharp up-move in stock prices of automobiles, cement, consumer durable and staples, lenders and retailers (see Exhibit 1-2) suggest that the market is quite confident that (1) the GST rates on most, if not all, of the above-mentioned items will move to lower GST slabs of 5% and 18% from 12% and 28%, respectively, (2) companies will retain part, most or all of the tax cuts, leading to higher margins and profitability and (3) volumes will increase (without price cuts?), benefiting both direct and derivative (lenders and retailers) plays.

## GST rationalization: A large number of variables at play

We note that there are several variables that will determine the earnings impact of potential GST rate changes—(1) GST rates for various products that will depend on the fiscal math of central and state governments, (2) government action, if any, with respect to monitoring of retail prices to check companies' profiteering, (3) industry dynamics, including nature of markets (level of competition) and products (brand or commodity) and (4) companies' strategies to gain or retain market share, including that of agile regional players. The outcome of indirect tax cuts in competitive markets would logically be (1) lower retail prices commensurate to tax cuts and (2) related volume growth, which is presumably the objective of the government's GST rationalization exercise.

### Flows as an investment tool—uselessness exposed (again)

The fact that most stock prices of the 'beneficiary' companies jumped at the opening tick (see Exhibit 3 for a few cases) on August 18 shows the uselessness of 'flows' as any sort of investment 'indicator'. It is obvious that hardly any buying or selling took place in the first few seconds of trading on August 18—all the volume activity (buying, selling, short covering and long whatever) took place later. The fact that DIIs have invested US\$87 bn in the secondary market in the past 12 months, with hardly any returns in the market (see Exhibits 4-6) should provide a reality check for investors using retail flows into domestic MFs as an investment tool. We will revisit this fun fact later in another note.

### Past narratives-pathetic track record

We note that the market has been in the thrall of narratives for a while, with a new narrative catching the fancy of the market every few weeks, only for it to disappear quietly later. Exhibit 7 is a list of past narratives and the outcomes of the narratives. In our view, market participants may benefit more from focusing on potential disruption risks in most sectors and companies rather than believing (or even worse, generating) dubious narratives.

,		
	2025	2026E
Nifty estimates		

Earnings growth (%)	6.5	9.5	17.6
Nifty EPS (Rs)	1,014	1,095	1,299
Nifty P/E (X)	24.3	22.5	19.0
Macro data			
Real GDP (%)	6.5	6.2	6.5
Avg CPI inflation (%)	4.6	2.6	4.5

Source: CEIC, Kotak Institutional Equities estimates

#### **Quick Numbers**

Key estimates

US\$87 bn of secondary market purchases by DIIs in the past 12 months

Nifty-50 Index is up 2%, Nifty Midcap 100 Index is down 1% and Nifty 100 Smallcap Index is down 5% in the past 12 months

Nifty-50 Index is trading at 22.5X FY2026E 'EPS' and 19X FY2027E 'EPS'

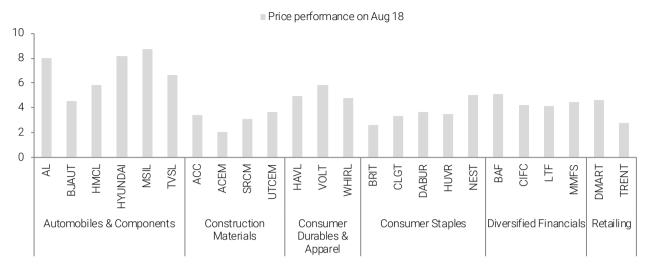
### **Related Research**

→ Strategy: Can the government supplement the

Full sector coverage on KINSITE

# Sharp rally in select sectors on government's plan for rationalization of GST

Exhibit 1: One-day price change of select sectors, August 18, 2025



Source: Bloomberg, Kotak Institutional Equities

## Large increase in the market cap. of select sectors on government's plan for rationalization of GST



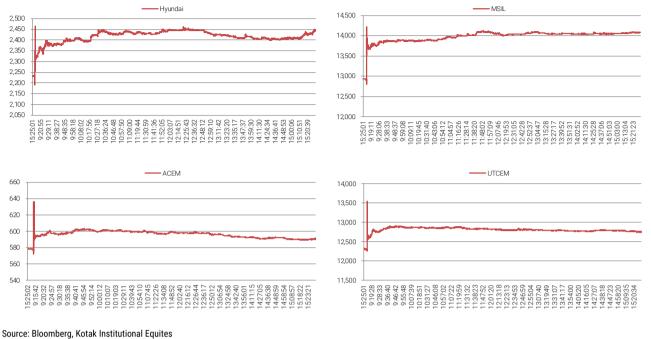


Source: Bloomberg, Kotak Institutional Equities



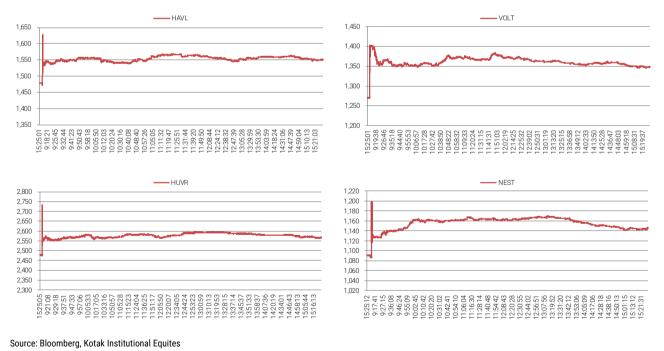
### Stock prices of 'beneficiary' companies moved sharply in the first few seconds of trading on August 18, 2025

Exhibit 3: Bid price of select stocks in automobiles, construction material, consumer durables, consumer staples, diversified financials and retailing sectors on Aug 14 and Aug 18 (contd)



### Stock prices of 'beneficiary' companies moved sharply in the first few seconds of trading on August 18, 2025

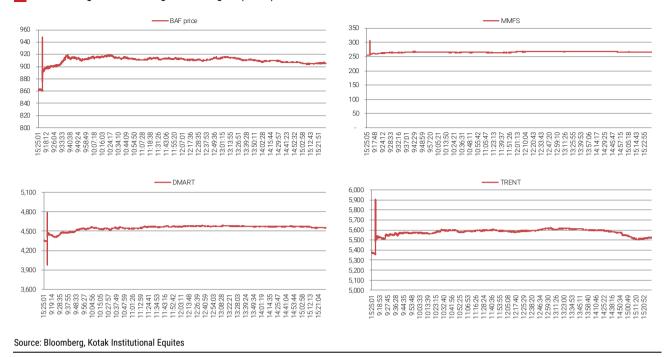
Exhibit 3: Bid price of select stocks in automobiles, construction material, consumer durables, consumer staples, diversified financials and retailing sectors on Aug 14 and Aug 18 (contd)



# KOTAK INSTITUTIONAL EQUITIES

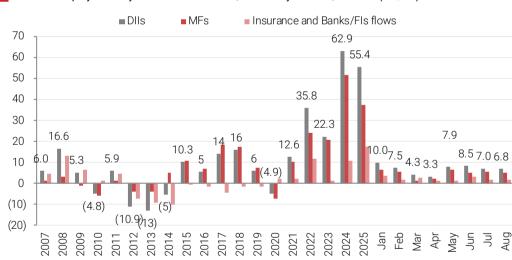
### Stock prices of 'beneficiary' companies moved sharply in the first few seconds of trading on August 18, 2025

Exhibit 3: Bid price of select stocks in automobiles, construction material, consumer durables, consumer staples, diversified financials and retailing sectors on Aug 14 and Aug 18 (contd)



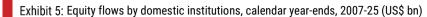
# DIIs have invested US\$55 bn so far in CY2025

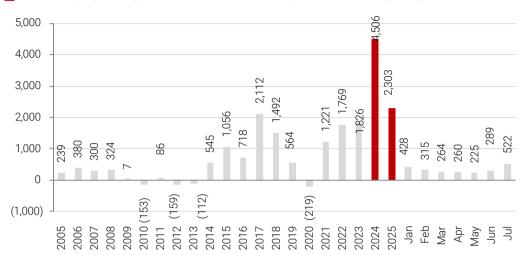
Exhibit 4: Equity flows by domestic institutions, Calendar year-ends, 2007-25 (US\$ bn)



Source: Bloomberg, Kotak Institutional Equities

### MFs have seen equity inflows of Rs2.3 tn so far in CY2025

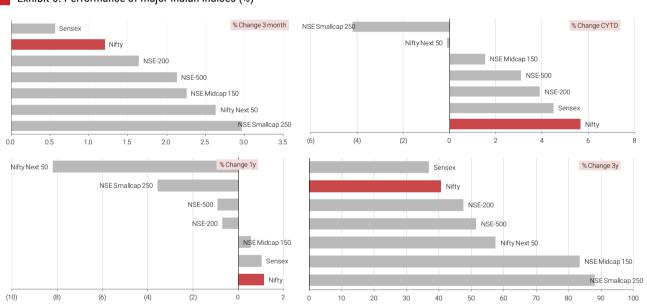




Source: AMFI, Kotak Institutional Equities

# Low returns over the past one year, but strong returns over the past three years

# Exhibit 6: Performance of major Indian indices (%)



Source: Bloomberg, Kotak Institutional Equities



# Easy come, easy go!

# Exhibit 7: List of major narratives that dominated Indian equity markets in the past few quarters

Sector	Narrative	Period of narrative	Comment/outcome
Government reforms			
Public sector	Privatization	2024	No progress despite a lot of hope before and after 2024 general elections
Public sector	Market prices of retail automobile fuels	Periodic	No progress
General elections			
Economy	100-day agenda	2024	No announcement after general elections
Judiciary	Judicial reforms	2024	Limited progress
Investment/Manufacturing/China +	1		
Manufacturing	Shift in manufacturing to India due to China+1	2021-25	EMS is the only noteworthy success; limited progress in autos, capital goods, chemicals, etc. so far
Manufacturing	Exports hub for listed MNCs	2021-25	Limited progress
Economy	India to relatively benefit from US reciprocal tariffs and will get favorable trade deal	Apr-25	Reciprocal import tariffs at 25% for Indian exports to the US are higher than those of competing countries
Economy	Private sector capex to recover	2021-25	Private sector GFCF/GDP broadly flat over the past few years (around 11% over FY2020-24)
Market			
Markets	Earnings recovery	2024-25	Steady cut in EPS for the past 5-6 quarters
Sectors			
Automobiles	Automobiles-electrification	2021-25	Pace of electrification has been weak
Capital goods	Elevated EBITDA margins of capital goods to sustain	2024-25	Profitability peaked in FY2024; margins down significantly since then
Capital goods-defence	Strong order inflow, indigenization in defense sector	2023-25	Steady progress in indigenization; disappointment in IAC-2 order
Construction materials	Cement companies will see improved profitability from consolidation	Ongoing	Companies have struggled to maintain profitability
Commodity chemicals	Competition unlikely to disrupt the moat of paints companies	2022-25	Loss of market share, deterioration in margins of incumbents
Consumer durables	Sharp increase in durables demand due to hot summer	2025	Summer saw weak demand due to unseasonal rains; broad volume weakness
Consumer staples	Green-shoots of recovery in demand for consumer staples	2023-25	Continued disappointment, despite positive commentary by select companies after every quarter
Electric utilities	Electricity deficit on strong electricity demand	2023-25	3% increase in electricity demand in FY2025 (5.4% CAGR over FY2023-25); 1% yoy increase in 1QFY26
IT services	IT sector demand recovery	2024-25	Demand slowdown has continued for the 4-5 quarters
QSR	QSR to see strong growth with no impact from food delivery	2023-current	SSSG has been quite weak
Telecom	Relief on AGR dues	2024	No progress despite periodic excitement/expectation in market

Source: Media reports, Kotak Institutional Equities

"Each of the analysts named below hereby certifies that, with respect to each subject company and its securities for which the analyst is responsible in this report, (1) all of the views expressed in this report accurately reflect his or her personal views about the subject companies and securities, and (2) no part of his or her compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendations or views expressed in this report: Sanjeev Prasad, Anindya Bhowmik, Sunita Baldawa."

## Ratings and other definitions/identifiers

### **Definitions of ratings**

BUY. We expect this stock to deliver more than 15% returns over the next 12 months.

ADD. We expect this stock to deliver 5-15% returns over the next 12 months.

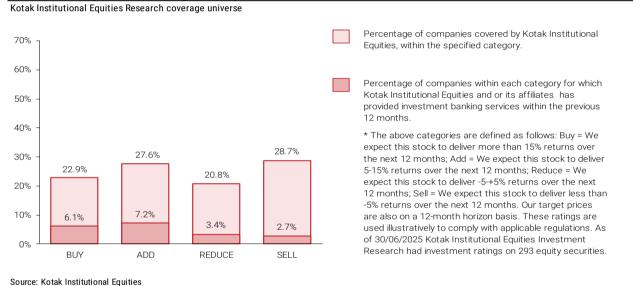
**REDUCE.** We expect this stock to deliver -5-+5% returns over the next 12 months.

**SELL.** We expect this stock to deliver <-5% returns over the next 12 months.

Our Fair Value estimates are also on a 12-month horizon basis.

Our Ratings System does not take into account short-term volatility in stock prices related to movements in the market. Hence, a particular Rating may not strictly be in accordance with the Rating System at all times.

### Distribution of ratings/investment banking relationships



As of June 30, 2025

# Coverage view

The coverage view represents each analyst's overall fundamental outlook on the Sector. The coverage view will consist of one of the following designations: Attractive, Neutral, Cautious.

## Other ratings/identifiers

NR = Not Rated. The investment rating and fair value, if any, have been suspended temporarily. Such suspension is in compliance with applicable regulation(s) and/or Kotak Securities policies in circumstances when Kotak Securities or its affiliates is acting in an advisory capacity in a merger or strategic transaction involving this company and in certain other circumstances.

CS = Coverage Suspended. Kotak Securities has suspended coverage of this company.

NC = Not Covered. Kotak Securities does not cover this company.

RS = Rating Suspended. Kotak Securities Research has suspended the investment rating and fair value, if any, for this stock, because there is not a sufficient fundamental basis for determining an investment rating or fair value. The previous investment rating and fair value, if any, are no longer in effect for this stock and should not be relied upon.

NA = Not Available or Not Applicable. The information is not available for display or is not applicable.

NM = Not Meaningful. The information is not meaningful and is therefore excluded.

#### Corporate Office

Kotak Securities Ltd. 27 BKC, Plot No. C-27, "G Block" Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E) Mumbai 400 051, India Tel: +91-22-43360000

### Overseas Affiliates

Kotak Mahindra (UK) Ltd 8th Floor, Portsoken House 155-157 Minories, London EC3N 1LS Tel: +44-20-7977-6900

Kotak Mahindra Inc. PENN 1,1 Pennsylvania Plaza, Suite 1720, New York, NY 10119, USA Tel: +1-212-600-8858

Copyright 2025 Kotak Institutional Equities (Kotak Securities Limited). All rights reserved.

The Kotak Institutional Equities research report is solely a product of Kotak Securities Limited and may be used for general information only. The legal entity preparing this research report is not registered as a broker-dealer in the United States and, therefore, is not subject to US rules regarding the preparation of research reports and/or the independence of research analysts.

- 1. Note that the research analysts contributing to this report are residents outside the United States and are not associates, employees, registered or qualified as research analysts with FINRA or a US-regulated broker dealer; and
- 2. Such research analysts may not be associated persons of Kotak Mahindra Inc. and therefore, may not be subject to FINRA Rule 2241 restrictions on communications with a subject company, public appearances and trading securities held by a research analyst.
- 3. Kotak Mahindra Inc. does not accept or receive any compensation of any kind directly from US institutional investors for the dissemination of the Kotak Securities Limited research reports. However, Kotak Securities Limited has entered into an agreement with Kotak Mahindra Inc. which includes payment for sourcing new major US institutional investors and service existing clients based out of the US.

- into an agreement with Kotak Mahindra Inc. which includes payment for sourcing new major US institutional investors and service existing clients based out of the US.

  4. In the United States, this research report is available solely for distribution to major US institutional investors, as defined in Rule 15a 6 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. This research report is distributed in the United States by Kotak Mahindra Inc., a US-registered broker and dealer and a member of FINRA. Kotak Mahindra Inc., a US-registered broker-dealer, accepts responsibility for this research report and its dissemination in the United States.

  5. This Kotak Securities Limited research report is not intended for any other persons in the United States. All major US institutional investors or persons outside the United States, having received this Kotak Securities Limited research report shall neither distribute the original nor a copy to any other person in the United States. Any US recipient of the research who wishes to effect a transaction in any security covered by the report should do so with or through Kotak Mahindra Inc., PENDN, NY 1011P. Direct + 1212, New York, NY 1011P. Direct + 1212 600 8858, gijo; joseph@kotak.com.

  6. This document does not constitute an offer of, or an invitation by or on behalf of Kotak Securities Limited or its affiliates or any other company to any person, to buy or sell any security. The information contained herein has been obtained from published information and other sources, which Kotak Securities Limited or its affiliates consider to be reliable. None of Kotak Securities Limited accepts any liability or responsibility whatsoever for the accuracy or completeness of any such information. All estimates, expressions of opinion and other subjective judgments of the securities and the subject to risks significantly linger than more established markets. In particular, the political and economic environment, company practices and market prices and volumes may be subject to significant variatio

This report is distributed in Singapore by Kotak Mahindra (UK) Limited (Singapore Branch) to institutional investors, accredited investors or expert investors only as defined under the Securities and Futures Act. Recipients of this analysis /report are to contact Kotak Mahindra (UK) Limited (Singapore Branch) (16 Raffles Quay, #35-02/03, Hong Leong Building, Singapore 048581) in respect of any matters arising from, or in connection with, this analysis/report. Kotak Mahindra (UK) Limited (Singapore Branch) is regulated by the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

(UK) Limited (singapore Branch) is regulated by the Monetary Authority of singapore. Kotak Securities Limited and its affiliates are a full-service, integrated investment banking, investment management, brokerage and financing group. We along with our affiliates are leading underwriter of securities and participants in virtually all securities trading markets in India. We and our affiliates have investment banking and other business relationships with a significant percentage of the companies covered by our Investment Banking and other business relationships with a significant percentage of the companies covered by our Investment Banking or other business from the company or companies that are the subject of this material. Our research professionals are going in part based on the profitability of Kotak Securities Limited, which includes earnings from investment banking and other businesses. Kotak Securities Limited generally prohibits its analysts, persons reporting to analysts, and members of their households from maintaining a financial interest in the securities or derivatives of any companies that the analysts cover. Additionally, Kotak Securities Limited generally prohibits its analysts and persons reporting to analysts from serving as an officer, director, or advisory board member of any companies that the analysts cover. Our salespepole, traders, and other professionals may provide oral or written market commentary or trading strategies to our clients that reflect opinions that are inconsistent with the recommendations expressed herein.

In reviewing these materials, you should be aware that any or all of the foregoing, among other things, may give rise to real or potential conflicts of interest. Additionally, other important information regarding our relationships with the company or companies that are the subject of this material is provided herein.

or companies that are the subject of this material is provided herein.

This material should not be construed as an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any security in any jurisdiction where such an offer or solicitation would be illegal. We are not soliciting any action based on this material. It is for the general information of clients of Kotak Securities Limited. It does not constitute a personal recommendation or take into account the particular investment objectives, financial situations, or needs of individual clients. Before acting on any advice or recommendation in this material, clients should consider whether it is suitable for their particular circumstances and, if necessary, seek professional advice. The price and value of the investments referred to in this material and the income from them may go down as well as up, and investors may realize losses on any investments. Past performance is not a guide for future performance, future returns are not guaranteed and a loss of original capital may occur. Kotak Securities Limited does not provide tax advise to its clients, and all investors are strongly advised to consult with their tax advises regarding any potential investment. Certain transactions – including those involving futures, options, and other derivatives as well as non-investment-grade securities – give rise to substantial risk and are not suitable for all investors. The material is based on information that we consider reliable, but we do not represent that it is accurate or complete, and it should not be relied on as such. Opinions expressed are our current opinions as of the date appearing on this material only. We endeavor to update on a reasonable basis the information discussed in this material, but regulatory, compliance, or other reasons may prevent us from doing so. We and our affiliates, officers, and employees, including persons involved in the preparation or issuance of this material, may from time to time have "long" or "short" positions in, act as principal in,

Kotak Securities Limited established in 1994, is a subsidiary of Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited.

Kotak Securities Limited is a corporate trading and clearing member of BSE Limited (BSE), National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE), Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Limited (MSE), National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) and Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). Our businesses include stock broking, services rendered in connection with distribution of primary market issues and financial products like mutual funds and fixed deposits, depository services and portfolio management.

Kotak Securities Limited is also a Depository Participant with National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) and Central Depository Services (India) Limited (CDSL). Kotak Securities Limited is also registered with Insurance Regulatory Development Authority and having composite license acts as Corporate Agent of Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance Company Limited and Zurich Kotak General Insurance Company (India) Limited (Formerly known as Kotak Mahindra Gen Insurance Company Limited) and is also a Mutual Fund Advisor registered with Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). Kotak Securities Limited is registered as a Research Analyst under SEBI (Research Analyst) Regulations, 2014.

We hereby declare that our activities were neither suspended nor we have defaulted with any stock exchange authority with whom we are registered in last five years. However, SEBI, Exchanges and Depositories have conducted the routine inspection and based on their observations have issued advise letters or levied minor penalty on KSL for certain operational deviations. We have not been debarred from doing business by any stock exchange/SEBI or any other authorities, nor has our certificate of registration been cancelled by SEBI at any point of time.

We offer our research services to primarily institutional investors and their employees, directors, fund managers, advisors who are registered with us. Details of Associates are available on website, i.e. www.kotak.com and https://www.kotak.com/en/investor-relations/governance/subsidiaries.html.

Research Analyst has served as an officer, director or employee of subject company(ies): No.

We or our associates may have received compensation from the subject company(ies) in the past 12 months.

We or our associates have managed or co-managed public offering of securities for the subject company(ies) or acted as a market maker in the financial instruments of the subject company/company (ies) discussed herein in the past 12

we of our associates may have received compensation for investment banking or brokerage services from the subject company(ies) in the past 12 months. We or our associates may have received compensation for investment banking or brokerage services from the subject company(ies) in the past 12 months. We or our associates may have received compensation for investment banking or brokerage services from the subject company(ies) in the past 12 months. We or our associates may have received compensation or other benefits from the subject company(ies) or third party in connection with the research report.

Our associates may have financial interest in the subject company(jes)

Research Analyst or his/her relative's financial interest in the subject company(jes): No

Kotak Securities Limited has financial interest in the subject company(ies) at the end of the week immediately preceding the date of publication of Research Report: YES. Nature of Financial interest: Holding equity shares or derivatives of the subject company

Our associates may have actual/beneficial ownership of 1% or more securities of the subject company(ies) at the end of the month immediately preceding the date of publication of Research Report.

Research Analyst or his/her relatives have actual/beneficial ownership of 1% or more securities of the subject company(jes) at the end of the month immediately preceding the date of publication of Research Report: No.

Kotak Securities Limited has actual/beneficial ownership of 1% or more securities of the subject company(ies) at the end of the month immediately preceding the date of publication of Research Report: No

Subject company(ies) may have been client during twelve months preceding the date of distribution of the research report.

A graph of daily closing prices of securities is available at https://www.moneycontrol.com/india/stockpricequote/ and http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/stock-quotes. (Choose a company from the list on the browser and select the "three years" icon in the price chart).

First Cut notes published on this site are for information purposes only. They represent early notations and responses by analysts to recent events. Data in the notes may not have been verified by us and investors should not act upon any data or views in these notes. Most First Cut notes, but not necessarily all, will be followed by final research reports on the subject.

There could be variance between the First Cut note and the final research note on any subject, in which case the contents of the final research note would prevail. We accept no liability of the First Cut Notes.

The analyst(s) authoring this research report hereby certifies that the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect such research analyst's personal views about the subject securities and issuers and that no part of his or her compensation was, is, or will be directly or indirectly related to the specific recommendations or views contained in the research report.

This report or any portion hereof may not be reprinted, sold or redistributed without the written consent of Firm. Firm Research is disseminated and available primarily electronically, and, in some cases, in printed form. Additional information on recommended securities is available on request.

Our research should not be considered as an advertisement or advice, professional or otherwise. The investor is requested to take into consideration all the risk factors including their financial condition, suitability to risk return profile and the like and take professional advice before investing.

Investments in securities market are subject to market risks. Read all the related documents carefully before investing.

Registration granted by SEBI and certification from NISM in no way guarantee performance of the intermediary or provide any assurance of returns to investors.

For more information related to investments in the securities market, please visit the SEBI Investor Website https://investor.sebi.gov.in/ and the SEBI Saa\*thi Mobile App.

Derivatives are a sophisticated investment device. The investor is requested to take into consideration all the risk factors before actually trading in derivative contracts. Compliance Officer Details: Mr. Hiren Thakkar. Call: 022 - 4285 8484, or Email: ks.compliance@kotak.com

Kotak Securities Limited. Registered Office: 27 BKC, C 27, G Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai 400051. CIN: U9999MH1994PLC134051, Telephone No.: +22 43360000, Fax No.: +22 67132430. Website: www.kotak.com / www.kotaksecurities.com. Correspondence Address: Infinity IT Park, Bldg. No 21, Opp. Film City Road, A K Vaidya Marg, Malad (East), Mumbai 400097. Telephone No: 42856825. SEBI Registration No: INZ000200137(Member of NSE, BSE, MSE, MCX & NCDEX), AMFI ARN 0164, PMS INP000000258 and Research Analyst INH000000586. NSDL/CDSL: IN-DP-629-2021. Compliance Officer Details: Mr. Hiren Thakkar. Call: 022 - 4285 8484, or Email: ks.compliance@kotak.com

,				
Details of	Contact Person	Address	Contact No.	Email ID
Customer Care/ Complaints	Mr. Ritesh Shah	Kotak Towers, 8th Floor, Building No.21, Infinity Park, Off Western	18002099393	ks.escalation@kotak.com
Head of Customer Care	Mr. Tabrez Anwar	Express Highway, Malad (East), Mumbai, Maharashtra - 400097	022-42858208	ks.servicehead@kotak.com
Compliance Officer	Mr. Hiren Thakkar		022-42858484	ks.compliance@kotak.com
CEO	Mr. Shripal Shah		022-42858301	ceo.ks@kotak.com
Principal Officer (For the purpose of	Mr. Kawaljeet Saluja	Kotak Securities Limited, 27BKC, 8th Floor, Plot No. C-27, G Block,	022-62664011	ks.po@kotak.com

In absence of response/complaint not addressed to your satisfaction, you may lodge a complaint with SEBI at SEBI, NSE, BSE, Investor Service Center | NCDEX, MCX. Please quote your Service Ticket/Complaint Ref No. while raising your complaint at SEBI SCORES/Exchange portal at <a href="https://scores.sebi.gov.in">https://scores.sebi.gov.in</a>. Kindly refer <a href="https://www.kotaksecurities.com/contact-us/">https://scores.sebi.gov.in</a>. Kindly refer <a href="https://www.kotaksecurities.com/contact-us/">https://scores.sebi.gov.in</a>. Kindly refer <a href="https://www.kotaksecurities.com/contact-us/">https://scores.sebi.gov.in</a>. Kindly refer <a href="https://www.kotaksecurities.com/contact-us/">https://www.kotaksecurities.com/contact-us/</a> and for online dispute Resolution platform - <a href="https://scores.sebi.gov.in">Smart ODR</a>

Our Investor Charter is your trusted companion, offering essential guidelines to navigate the investment landscape. Discover principles for informed decision-making, risk management, and ethical investing by visiting

Please refer link for regulatory disclosure and terms and conditions as applicable to Research Analyst under SEBI norms. Disclosure of minimum mandatory terms and conditions to clients