

07 October 2025

India | Equity Research | Quarterly Results Preview

#### **Cement**

## A step back to leap forward

For Q2FY26, last year's low base (Q2FY25 marred by high competitive intensity) shall enable robust YoY EBITDA growth (up  $\sim$ 50% for our coverage universe) despite meek industry demand (pegged at  $\sim$ 3–4% YoY), and a resultant drop in prices (down  $\sim$ 1.5% QoQ). Also, the transition period under the reduced GST rate regime may keep cement prices flat for the next few months. Collectively, these could pose as downward risks to our FY26E earnings. However, in our view, this is 'a step back to leap forward' phase. We expect margin recovery to resume its momentum from FY27, riding on the benefits of potential demand improvement, reduced competitive intensity and efficiency enhancement measures by incumbents. We opine limited risk to our FY27E earnings; hence, our stance on the sector remains **positive**. UltraTech Cement in large-caps and JK Cement among mid-caps are our top sector picks.

#### Meek demand; yet robust YoY EBITDA growth

As per our industry channel-checks, cement demand continued to remain soft in Q2FY26 and is likely to have risen ~3–4% YoY. Demand was impacted by a combination of – severe and extended monsoons, inauspicious period for new construction (called 'Shraadh') and demand-deferral owing to GST rate cut (announced on 3 Sept'25, but effective 22 Sept'25). Cement prices were the obvious casualty, with pan-India prices believed to have slipped ~1.5% QoQ (though up ~5% YoY). Despite the industry-wide weakness, we estimate EBITDA for our coverage universe to surge ~50% YoY owing to a low base. While Q2FY25 too had experienced tepid industry demand, it was particularly marred by high competitive intensity (impacting pricing, which had tanked >8% YoY). Variable cost remains benign on a YoY basis (and flattish QoQ) due to easing fuel rates (though partially offset by INR's depreciation).

#### GST rate cut – a shot-in-the-arm

We view the recent GST rate cut (from 28% to 18%) as a 'shot-in-the-arm' for the cement sector, potentially inducing a demand uptick. While demand in H1FY26 is estimated to have improved just 2–4% (despite a low base – impacted by India's general elections last year), we expect strong recovery – in high single-digit – in H2FY26E. However, in the transition period – viz. the next few months – of the reduced GST rate regime, cement prices are likely to stay flat. Muted prices pose a downward risk to our FY26E earnings (our EBITDA estimates are ~8% ahead of Street's).

#### Margin recovery to resume momentum FY27E onwards

We continue to believe in our sector hypothesis of rising industry-wide consolidation leading to reduced competitive intensity (which led to sustained price hikes from Q3FY25 to Q1FY26). The envisaged price drop (of  $\sim$ 1.5% QoQ) in Q2FY26, and a flattish price trend ensuing in Q3FY26, is but a marginal blip. With a demand uptick likely taking shape (boosted by recent GST rate cut), benefits of reduced competitive intensity and gains from efficiency enhancement measures by incumbents, we see limited risk to our FY27E earnings. We maintain our **positive** stance on the cement sector. With Q2FY26 forecasted EBITDA growth of  $\sim$ 59% and 70% YoY, UltraTech Cement (in large-caps) and JK Cement (in mid-caps), respectively, are our top picks in the sector.

Navin Sahadeo

navin.sahadeo@icicisecurities.com +91 22 6807 7622

**Amit Gupta** 

amit.g@icicisecurities.com

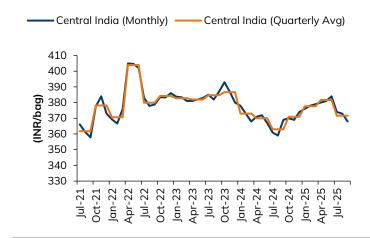


# Exhibit 1: Pan-India price trend



Source: I-Sec research

#### **Exhibit 2: Central India price trend**



Source: I-Sec research

### **Exhibit 3: North India price trend**



Source: I-Sec research

## **Exhibit 4: West India price trend**



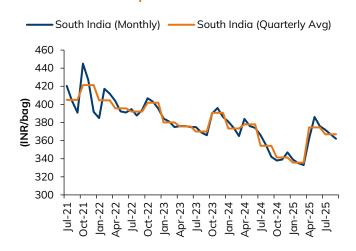
Source: I-Sec research

#### **Exhibit 5: East India price trend**



Source: I-Sec research

#### **Exhibit 6: South India price trend**

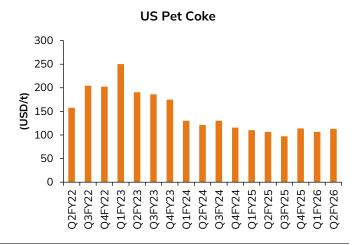


Source: I-Sec research

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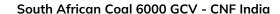


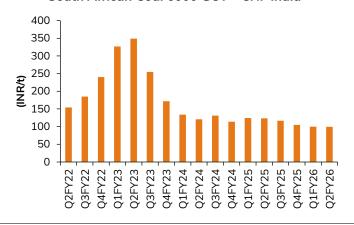
### Exhibit 7: US Pet coke cost stays benign



Source: I-Sec research, Company data

### **Exhibit 8: Imported coal cost stays benign**





Source: I-Sec research, Company data

### **Exhibit 9: Quarterly summary**

Company	Sales				EBITDA		PAT		
	IACIDEE*	% chg		IACIDEE*	% chg		IA CIDEE*	% chg	
(INR mn)	JAS'25E* —	(YoY)	(QoQ)	JAS'25E* —	(YoY)	(QoQ)	JAS'25E* —	(YoY)	(QoQ)
UltraTech Cement	1,87,264	17.3	-12.0	32,402	59.4	-26.5	14,031	99.6	-37
Shree Cement	42,765	14.7	-13.6	9,762	64.7	-20.6	4,350	367.1	-30
ACC	51,894	12.5	-14.7	5,251	20.3	-32.5	2,224	11.4	-41
Ambuja Cement	90,497	20.4	-12.0	14,698	32.2	-25.1	4,025	-11.7	-49
Ramco Cements	20,001	-1.9	-3.4	3,704	18.7	-6.8	680	165.7	-21
Nuvoco Vistas	24,378	7.5	-15.1	3,684	68.4	-29.0	378	-144.4	-72
JK Cement	27,363	14.4	-13.1	4,626	69.6	-31.3	2,028	348.7	-40
Star Cement	7,960	24.1	-12.7	1,732	81.2	-24.1	598	955.5	-39
Grasim Industries	95,263	25.0	3.3	3,257	0.1	-15.3	7,660	6.3	-748
Total (ex-Grasim)	4,52,121	15.4	-12.4	75,860	49.6	-25.6	28,315	96.2	-39

Source: I-Sec research, Company data, JAS'25E\* : Jul-Aug-Sep'25

Exhibit 10: Our current coverage recommendation and valuation matrix

Company	Rating	TP (INR/sh)	EV/EBITDA (x)			EV/t (USD)			RoE(%)		
			FY25	FY26E	FY27E	FY25	FY26E	FY27E	FY25	FY26E	FY27E
UltraTech Cement	BUY	14,600	29.9	18.8	15.8	232	214	197	9.2	13.9	15.6
Shree Cement	BUY	35,330	26.1	18.0	15.6	209	169	167	5.8	10.3	11.9
Ambuja Cement	ADD	631	24.9	18.6	15.6	190	156	148	9.1	5.3	5.7
Ramco Cements	HOLD	1,088	22.4	13.9	11.7	137	109	108	1.1	7.6	10.3
Nuvoco Vistas	HOLD	400	13.6	9.8	9.1	88	95	93	0.2	5.5	5.0
JK Cement	BUY	8,500	25.8	19.9	17.5	228	190	196	14.1	18.9	18.8
Star Cement	ADD	311	18.4	10.7	8.6	164	129	104	6.0	14.5	16.5
Grasim Industries	BUY	3,480	37.6	23.8	15.9	-	-	-	0.6	1.1	2.1

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

### Exhibit 11: I-Sec vs. Bloomberg Consensus

Exhibit 22.1 See 13. Bloomberg conscious										
	EBITDA (INR mn)									
Company		FY26E		FY27E						
	I-Sec	Bloomberg	Variance (%)	I-Sec	Bloomberg	Variance (%)				
UltraTech Cement	1,97,935	1,78,440	10.9	2,32,234	2,16,706	7.2				
Shree Cement	54,921	50,734	8.3	62,424	59,389	5.1				
Ambuja Cement	85,488	81,431	5.0	1,01,982	1,04,755	-2.6				
Ramco Cements	19,481	18,193	7.1	22,772	22,004	3.5				
Nuvoco Vistas	20,677	18,816	9.9	22,077	21,416	3.1				
JK Cement	26,735	26,346	1.5	31,481	31,773	-0.9				
Star Cement	9,906	8,468	17.0	12,031	9,958	20.8				
Grasim Industries	16,475	17,610	-6.4	25,250	27,928	-9.6				

Source: I-Sec research, Company data



Exhibit 12: Quarterly snapshot Q2FY26E – earnings preview

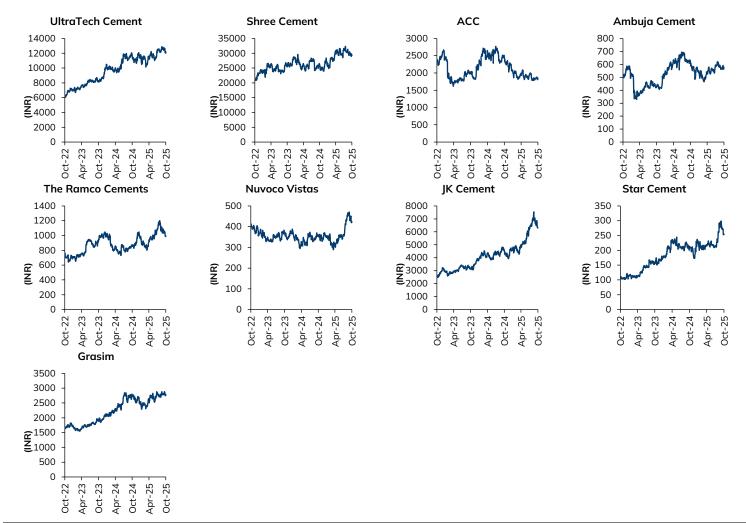
Exhibit 12: Quarterly snapsh	·								
Particulars (INR mn)	Q2FY26E	YoY (%)	QoQ (%)	Q2FY25	Q1FY26	Comments			
UltraTech Cement (Consol) incl. IC	EM + Kesoram								
Total volumes (mt)	32.5	10.7	(11.7)	29.40	36.8				
Grey cement realisation (INR/t)	5,051	3.3	(1.5)	4,887	5,128	UltraTech Cement (consol. entity; including			
Revenue, net	1,87,264	17.3	(12.0)	1,59,670	2,12,755	India Cements and Kesoram Ind.) is			
EBITDA	32,402	59.4	(26.5)	20,323	44,103	estimated to rise ~11% YoY. Realisation is			
PAT	14,031	99.6	(36.8)	7,030	22,209	estimated to slip ~1.5% QoQ (being up >3% YoY). Assuming variable cost staying			
EBITDA (INR/t)	996	44.1	(16.8)	691	1,197	broadly flat QoQ, we estimate blended			
EBITDA Margin (%)	17.3	458bps	-343bps	12.7	20.7	EBITDA/t to rise 44% YoY to INR 996 (though			
PAT Margin (%)	7.5	309bps	-295bps	4.4	10.4	, 3			
Shree Cement									
Total volumes (mt)	8.1	7.1	(9.1)	7.6	9.0				
Realisation (INR/t)	4,941	10.4	(1.2)	4,475	5,004				
Total revenue, net	42,765	14.7	(13.6)	37,270	49,480	We estimate volume for Shree Cement to			
Total EBITDA	9,762	64.7	(20.6)	5,925	12,291	rise ~7% YoY and realisation to slip ~1.5%			
Total PAT	4,350	367.1	(29.7)	931	6,185	QoQ. While a low base will likely enable a			
EBITDA (INR/t)	1,200	53.9	(12.6)	780	1,373	robust 54% YoY surge in EBITDA/t (at INR 1,200), it may witness a QoQ drop of ~13%			
EBITDA Margin (%)	22.8	693bps	-201bps	15.9	24.8	1,200), it flidy withess a QoQ drop or ~13%			
PAT Margin (%)	10.2	767bps	-233bps	2.5	12.5				
ACC		- 1							
Total volumes (mt))	10.0	7.0	(13.5)	9.3	11.5				
Realisation (INR/t)	5,215	5.1	(1.5)	4,961	5,293				
Revenue	51,894	12.5	(14.7)	46,135	60,872	ACC's volumes are expected to rise ~7% YoY			
EBITDA	5,251	20.3	(32.5)	4,364	7,780	while realisations may ease ~3% QoQ.			
PAT	2,224	11.4	(40.8)	1,997	3,754	l			
EBITDA (INR/t)	528	12.5	(22.0)	469	677	to INR 528 (though down ~22% QoQ)			
EBITDA Margin (%)	10.1	66bps	-266bps	9.5	12.8	, , ,			
PAT Margin (%)	4.3	-4bps	-188bps	4.3	6.2				
Ambuja Cement (Consol.)	1.5	1205	100000	1.5	0.2				
Total volumes (mt)	16.5	16.0	(10.5)	14.2	18.4				
Realisation (INR/t)	5,493	3.8	(1.8)	5,293	5,592				
Revenue	90,497	20.4	(12.0)	75,161	1,02,891	Ambuja Cements' (consol.) volumes are			
EBITDA	14,698	32.2	(25.1)	11,114	19,611	estimated to rise ~16% YoY while			
PAT	4,025	(11.7)	(48.9)	4,560	7,879	realisations may slip ~1.5% QoQ. We			
EBITDA (INR/t)	892	14.0	(16.3)	783	1,066	forecast a blended EBITDA/t of INR 892 (up			
EBITDA (INVO)	16.2	145bps	-282bps	14.8	19.1	~14% YoY but down ~16% QoQ)			
PAT Margin (%)	4.4	-162bps	-321bps	6.1	7.7				
The Ramco Cements	4.4	-102003	-521603	0.1	7.7				
Total volumes (mt)	4.0	(10.0)	(1.9)	4.5	4.1				
Realisation (INR/t)	4,952	9.0	(1.5)	4,541	5,027				
Revenue, net	20,001	(1.9)	(3.4)	20,382	20,701	V-l 100/ V-V			
EBITDA	3,704	18.7	(6.8)	3,121	3,976	Volumes are expected to decline ~10% YoY while realisation too may ease ~1.5% QoQ.			
PAT	680	165.7	(21.0)	256	860	We estimate EBITDA/t to resurge 32% YoY			
EBITDA (INR/t)	917	31.9	(5.0)	695	966	(though down ~5% QoQ) to INR 917			
EBITDA (INV)	18.5	321bps	-69bps	15.3	19.2	(anough do ) 0/0 404/ to ii ii 0 2/			
PAT Margin (%)	3.4	214bps	-76bps	1.3	4.2				
Nuvoco Vistas (Consol.)	3.4	214005	-70bps	1.5	4.2				
Total volumes (mt)	4.3	3.0	(14.7)	4.2	5.1				
Cement Realisation (INR/t)									
	5,084	4.2	(2.0)	4,878	5,188 28,727	We estimate Nuvoco Vistas' volumes to rise			
Revenue, net	24,378	7.5	(15.1)	22,686		a modest ~3% YoY while realisations too			
PAT EBITDA	3,684	68.4	(29.0)	2,188	5,186	may slip ~2% QoQ. EBITDA/t is expected to			
	378	(144.4)	(71.6)	(852)	1,332	rebound 65% YoY (on a low base) to INR 852			
EBITDA (INR/t)	852	63.5	(16.7)	521	1,023	(though down ~17% QoQ)			
EBITDA Margin (%)	15.1	547bps	-294bps	9.6	18.1				
PAT Margin (%)	1.6	530bps	-309bps	(3.8)	4.6				
JK Cement (Standalone)	4.00	110	(42.2)	4.00	F 40	We estimate IV Compatible			
Total volumes (mt)	4.69	11.6	(13.2)	4.20	5.40	, ,			
Revenue	27,363	14.4	(13.1)	23,917	31,498	volumes to jump $\sim$ 12% YoY even as realisations may slip $\sim$ 1% QoQ. For the white			
EBITDA	4,626	69.6	(31.3)	2,727	6,738	segment, we expect volumes to rise ~8%			
PAT	2,028	348.7	(39.6)	452	3,356	YoY. Estimate blended EBITDA/t to jump			
Blended EBITDA (INR/t)	986	52.0	(20.9)	649	1,247	52% YoY, on a low base, to INR 986 (down			
EBITDA Margin (%)	16.9	550bps	-449bps	11.4	21.4	~20% QoQ)			
PAT Margin (%)	7.4	552bps	-324bps	1.9	10.7				



Particulars (INR mn)	Q2FY26E	YoY (%)	QoQ (%)	Q2FY25	Q1FY26	Comments
Star Cement						
Total volumes (mt)	1.2	18.0	(11.0)	1.0	1.3	
Cement Realisation (INR/t)	6,427	3.9	(2.0)	6,188	6,559	Star Cement's volumes may surge ~18%
Revenue, net	7,960	24.1	(12.7)	6,415	9,120	YoY while realisations may fall ~2% QoQ.
EBITDA	1,732	81.2	(24.1)	956	2,282	
PAT	598	955.5	(39.0)	57	982	INR 1,503, even as it may come off ~15%
EBITDA (INR/t)	1,503	53.6	(14.7)	978	1,761	QoQ
EBITDA Margin (%)	21.8	686bps	-326bps	14.9	25.0	
PAT Margin (%)	7.5	663bps	-325bps	0.9	10.8	
Grasim - Standalone						
VSF Volumes (mt)	0.230	-	5.1	0.230	0.219	
Chemicals Volume (mt)	0.309	4.8	2.0	0.295	0.303	
VSF Realisation (INR/t)	1,82,766	2.0	(1.0)	1,79,270	1,84,612	likely to slip ~75-100bps, both on a QoQ and
Revenues	95,263	25.0	3.3	76,233	92,231	YoY basis. We estimate the revenue and EBITDA loss for the building materials
EBDITA	3,257	0.1	(15.3)	3,252	3,846	segment (i.e., paints and b2b e-commerce,
PAT Adj	7,660	6.3	NA	7,209	(1,182)	
EBITDA margins (%)	3.4	-85bps	-75bps	4.3	4.2	
PAT Margin (%)	8.0	-142bps	932bps	9.5	(1.3)	

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

#### **Price charts**



Source: Bloomberg



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Name of the Compliance officer (Research Analyst): Mr. Atul Agrawal, Contact number: 022-40701000, E-mail Address: complianceofficer@icicisecurities.com

For any queries or grievances: Mr. Jeetu Jawrani Email address: headservicequality@icicidirect.com Contact Number: 18601231122