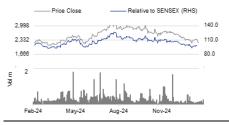


India

REDUCE (no change)

Consensus ratings*: Buy 10	Hold 5 Sell 5
Current price:	Rs1,913
Target price:	Rs1,432
Previous target:	Rs1,514
Up/downside:	-25.1%
InCred Research / Consensus:	-36.6%
Reuters:	DPNT.NS
Bloomberg:	DN IN
Market cap:	US\$3,001m
	Rs260,899m
Average daily turnover:	US\$10.1m
	Rs877.8m
Current shares o/s:	136.4m
Free float:	50.8%
*Source: Bloomberg	



		Source: E	Bloomberg
Price performance	1M	ЗМ	12M
Absolute (%)	(18.9)	(28.4)	(16.2)
Relative (%)	(18.2)	(26.8)	(19.7)

Major shareholders	% held
Promoter & Promoter Group	49.2
LIC India	9.5
Franklin India	2.4

Deepak Nitrite Ltd

Earnings growth is difficult to come by

- Deepak Nitrite's upcoming capex drive, which includes MIBK and MIBC, may not significantly boost its earnings. EPS CAGR to be 10% over FY25F-27F.
- Consensus earnings projections for the company appear overly optimistic, with limited profit contribution expected from MIBK and MIBC in FY26F & FY27F.
- Return ratios will fall; however, the valuation remains sky high. We reiterate REDUCE rating on the stock with a 12-month target price of Rs1,432.

Earnings growth to remain muted but consensus over-optimistic

Deepak Nitrite is undertaking a significant capital expenditure (capex) drive to expand its product portfolio, including the manufacturing of MIBK, MIBC, and polycarbonate. The new MIBK and MIBC capacities are set to be operational by 2HFY26F, while polycarbonate production is planned for end-2027F. Deepak Nitrite's MIBK and MIBC production is set to begin in 2HFY26F, with potential gross profit contribution of Rs2bn in FY26F, assuming 100% capacity utilization (in 2HFY26F) and historical mean gross spreads. Deepak Nitrite is also facing headwinds as falling acetone prices and spread squeeze between acetone and isopropyl alcohol (IPA) is hurting the profitability. Please note that IPA production through propylene is still more profitable & hence, IPA spreads over acetone can get even more squeezed. Despite all the headwinds and apparent lack of new products (apart from MIBK and MIBC) consensus is projecting a 27% EPS CAGR, which is unlikely, in our view.

Our optimistic assumptions project 10% EPS CAGR over FY25F-27F

Our approach is based on projecting gross profit and, therefore, we have analyzed data of all molecules' spreads over their raw materials over the last eight years and using that we have projected gross profit for Deepak Nitrite in the coming years. In essence, our approach to earnings projections is optimistic, as we have assumed: 1)There will be a 40% recovery in spot (Jan 2025) phenol spreads to 2Q levels. 2) We have assumed 20kt of MIBK and MIBC sales each in FY26F and 40kt each in FY27F. 3) The polycarbonate project will come up in FY29F; hence, while there will be cash outflow as the company incurs capex, there won't be any revenue contribution in FY26F or FY27F. 4) We have assumed that MIBC and MIBK spreads will recover to their historical mean, which means that for MIBC it will be 50% higher than current levels .5) DASDA spreads will also rise by Rs70/kg or 233% from current levels. 6) Our numbers bake in 3QFY25 spreads of IPA over acetone, which is equal to the historical average.

Valuations are sky high, and consensus projections over-optimistic

RoE and RoCE are likely to decline going ahead. Unless the company raises equity capital, it will become indebted to incur capex. As of now, its stock trades at 34x one-year forward EPS against the historical average of 23.4. Also, P/BV is 4.3 against the historical average of 4.3; however, RoE next year is set to decline to 13% against last eight years' average of 23%. We have valued the stock at 23.4x FY27F EPS to arrive at our new target price of Rs1,432 (Rs1,514 earlier). We maintain our REDUCE rating on it.

Financial Summary	Mar-23A	Mar-24A	Mar-25F	Mar-26F	Mar-27F
Revenue (Rsm)	79,721	76,818	83,000	91,667	105,000
Operating EBITDA (Rsm)	12,894	11,233	10,509	12,306	15,044
Net Profit (Rsm)	8,520	8,109	6,839	7,405	8,349
Core EPS (Rs)	62.5	55.1	50.1	54.3	61.2
Core EPS Growth	(20.1%)	(11.7%)	(9.1%)	8.3%	12.7%
FD Core P/E (x)	30.62	32.18	38.15	35.23	31.25
DPS (Rs)	7.0	7.0	4.9	4.9	4.9
Dividend Yield	0.44%	0.44%	0.31%	0.31%	0.31%
EV/EBITDA (x)	19.95	22.90	24.78	21.38	18.63
P/FCFE (x)	214.58	256.45	(134.13)	24.01	177.53
Net Gearing	(8.9%)	(7.6%)	(0.8%)	3.6%	28.3%
P/BV (x)	6.38	5.41	4.81	4.29	3.81
ROE	22.9%	16.9%	13.3%	12.9%	12.9%
% Change In Core EPS Estimates			(10.04%)	(8.44%)	
InCred Research/Consensus EPS (x)					

SOURCES: INCRED RESEARCH, COMPANY REPORTS

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Earnings growth is difficult to come by

Deepak Nitrite is embarking on a new capex drive to manufacture MIBK, MIBC, polycarbonate, and other chemicals. The MIBK and MIBC capacities are expected to be commissioned by 2HFY26F, while the polycarbonate capacity is scheduled for completion by the end of 2027F. Notably, MIBC and MIBK will consume acetone, potentially reducing IPA sales. As of now, Deepak Nitrite is planning a 40kt capacity each for MIBK and MIBC, which will collectively consume 75kt of acetone. This could lead to acetone scarcity and higher IPA prices in the country. At current market prices of MIBK and MIBC, these products are unlikely to contribute significantly to Deepak Nitrite's earnings, and the company will primarily remain a phenol and DASDA player. Bloomberg's earnings estimates appear overly optimistic and are likely to fall short of actual earnings. We retain our **REDUCE** rating on the stock.

MIBK and MIBC are unlikely to save Bloomberg consensus estimates in FY26F and FY27F

While the global oversupply of phenol is well known, and it is widely acknowledged that DASDA has not contributed significantly to the company's EBITDA, the consensus bullishness may stem from the upcoming commissioning of MIBK and MIBC capacities. However, our analysis suggests that this optimism is misplaced. MIBK and MIBC will add minimal value to earnings, and Deepak Nitrite may find itself in a **Catch-22** situation—producing these chemicals will reduce acetone availability, potentially leading to higher acetone and IPA prices. This could offset any expected gains from new capacities.

MIBK is primarily used as an industrial solvent ➤

Methyl isobutyl ketone (MIBK) is a versatile solvent with applications across various industries. Its primary uses include:

1. Industrial solvent

- A. **Paints, coatings, and inks**: Used as a solvent in automotive coatings, industrial paints, and printing inks due to its good solvency and evaporation rate.
- B. Resins and adhesives: Helps dissolve resins in adhesives and sealants.
- C. Extraction solvent: Used in the extraction of metals like uranium and rare earth elements.

2. Chemical intermediate

- A. **Rubber processing**: Acts as an intermediate in rubber and tyre manufacturing.
- B. **Plasticizers and lubricants**: Used in the production of plastic additives and synthetic lubricants.
- **3. Pharmaceuticals:** Used in drug synthesis and as a solvent for pharmaceutical formulations.

4. Specialty applications

- A. **Electronics industry**: Used as a cleaning solvent for electronic components.
- B. Flavour and fragrance industry: Occasionally used in regulated amounts.



MIBK is manufactured using acetone and hydrogen >

Methyl isobutyl ketone (MIBK) is primarily manufactured through a three-step catalytic process using acetone and hydrogen. The process involves:

Acetone condensation (self-condensation of acetone)

- A. Acetone undergoes an aldol condensation in the presence of an alkaline catalyst (e.g., NaOH, Ba(OH)₂) or an acidic catalyst (e.g., ion-exchange resins).
- B. This forms 4-hydroxy-4-methylpentan-2-one (HMP, or diacetone alcohol, DAA) as an intermediate.
- C. 2CH3COCH3→CH3COCH2CH(OH)CH32.

Dehydration to mesityl oxide (MO)

- A. The HMP undergoes dehydration (removal of water) to form mesityl oxide (MO). This is typically catalysed by acidic catalysts like alumina or sulfuric acid.
- B. CH3COCH2CH(OH)CH3→CH3COCH=CHCH3+H2O.

Hydrogenation to MIBK

A. MO is hydrogenated in the presence of hydrogen (H₂) and a metal catalyst (Ni, Pd, or Pt-based catalysts) under moderate pressure and temperature.

MIBK is manufactured using acetone and hydrogen.

MIBK spreads over raw materials have come off after the post-Covid rally ➤

MIBK (methyl isobutyl ketone) spreads over raw materials—primarily acetone and hydrogen—have come off significantly from the post-Covid rally.

Key trends in MIBK spreads:

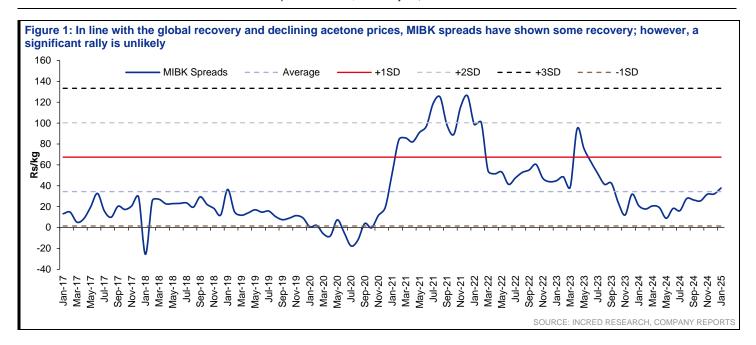
1. Post-Covid rally & peak spreads (2021-2022)

- MIBK prices surged due to supply chain disruptions, higher shipping costs, and strong downstream demand (especially in coatings, adhesives, and industrial solvents).
- Acetone prices also rose but at a slower pace, leading to high MIBK spreads.
- Hydrogen costs were less of a factor compared to the volatility in acetone.

2. Decline in spreads (2023-present)

- Weak acetone prices: With acetone supply normalizing (from both phenol-based and standalone plants), the cost of production for MIBK fell, reducing producer margins.
- Sluggish demand: Key end-user markets (automotive coatings, rubber chemicals, and adhesives) saw weak demand, particularly in China and Europe.
- Increased competition: More MIBK supply from Asia (China, South Korea) added to the downward pressure on prices.
- Declining freight costs: The logistics premium that existed post-Covid has faded, narrowing regional arbitrage opportunities.





Assuming average gross spreads and 50% capacity utilization, MIBK can add Rs700m to gross profit▶

Deepak Nitrite plans to commission MIBK capacity in 2HFY26F. Average gross spreads over raw material for MIBK have been Rs34/kg. In FY26F, the company can, at best, operate MIBK capacity at 50% of its capacity; hence, gross profit from MIBK in FY26F can be ~ Rs700m, and in FY27F, it can increase to Rs1,400m.

MIBC is used in various industrial processes▶

Methyl isobutyl carbinol (MIBC) has various industrial applications:

Mineral flotation: Primarily used as a frother in mineral flotation processes. This application is crucial for separating valuable minerals from ore, especially in the mining of copper, molybdenum, and coal, where it helps increase both production and the quality of mineral concentrates.

Lubricant oil additives: MIBC serves as a chemical intermediate in the production of additives for lubricating oils, such as zinc dialkyldithiophosphate, enhancing anti-wear and corrosion inhibition properties.

Solvents: It is utilized as a solvent in coatings, for dissolving dyes, oils, gums, resins, waxes, nitrocellulose, and ethyl cellulose, particularly in industrial manufacturing processes like paints and lacquers.

Organic synthesis: MIBC plays a role in organic synthesis due to its solubility characteristics and reactivity.

Brake fluids: It's used in the manufacture of brake fluids, contributing to the formulation's performance.

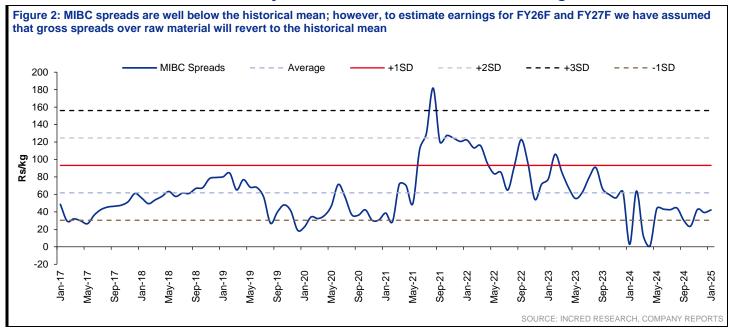
Plasticizers precursor: MIBC acts as a precursor to certain plasticizers, which are used to improve the flexibility and durability of plastics in various applications like flooring, wall coverings, and automotive interiors.

Hydraulic fluids: It can be used as a diluting agent in hydraulic fluids to adjust viscosity and other performance attributes.

Electronics manufacturing: There's a mention of its use in electronics manufacturing, although the specifics are less detailed in the available information.



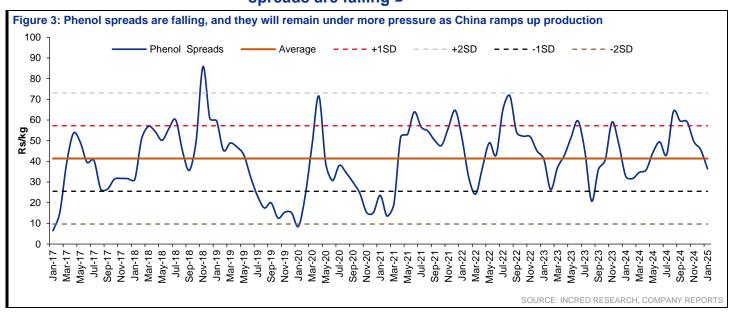
The spreads of MIBC have been coming down; however, they may stabilize around the historical average level ➤



MIBC can add Rs1,200m in gross profit in FY26F and Rs2,400m in FY27F▶

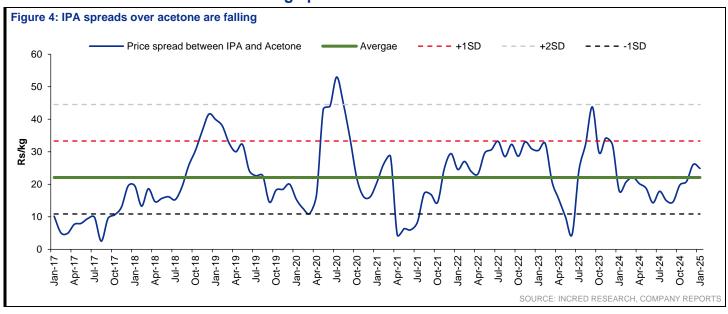
Given that MIBC capacity is likely to be commissioned in 2HFY26F, it is not possible for the plant to operate at more than 50% of the rated annual capacity. The gross profit per kg of MIBC (seven-year historical average) has been around Rs62/kg. Assuming the spreads rise by 50% from the current levels to reach the historical average by 2HFY26F, we believe FY26F gross profit will be ~Rs1,200 m, and FY27F gross profit from MIBC will be ~Rs2,400m.

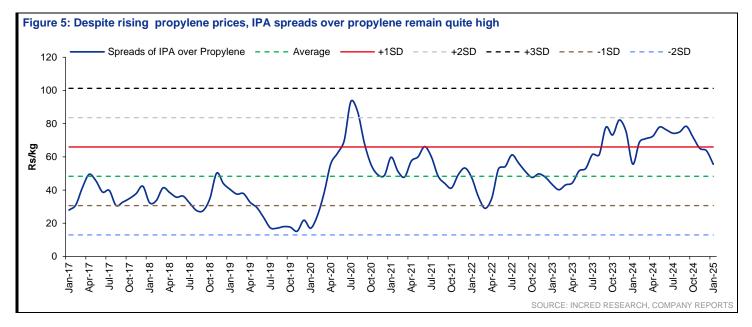
Phenol is a classic commodity and it's not surprising that its spreads are falling >





However, the major problem for Deepak Nitrite has been the falling spreads of IPA over acetone ➤





Demand slowdown is hitting DASDA as well; however, a likely recovery in textiles can lead to marginal recovery in spreads ➤

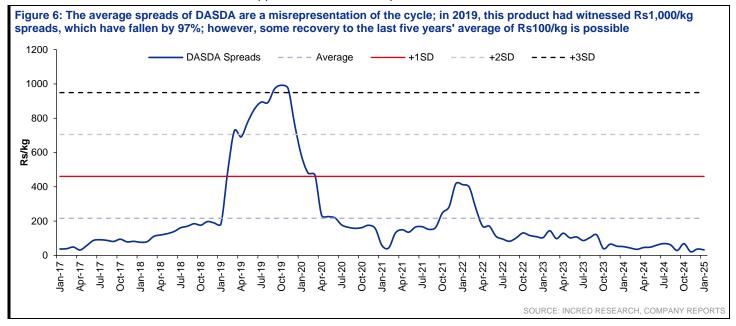
Diamino stilbene disulfonic acid (DASDA) is a key compound used primarily as an optical brightening agent (OBA) or fluorescent whitening agent. Here are its main

- Textile industry: DASDA is widely used in the textile industry as an optical brightener. It is added to fabrics during the dyeing and finishing process to enhance their whiteness and brightness by absorbing ultraviolet or UV light and re-emitting it as visible blue light. This gives the fabric a whiter appearance.
- Paper industry: Similar to textiles, DASDA is used in the paper industry to improve the brightness of paper products. It enhances the whiteness of paper by reflecting more light.
- 3. Detergents and laundry products: DASDA is incorporated into laundry detergents and other cleaning products to improve the visual appeal of washed fabrics by making them appear brighter and whiter. It is particularly effective in preventing yellowing and enhancing the brightness of whites.



- 4. **Plastics:** It is sometimes used in the plastics industry as an optical brightener to make plastic products look whiter.
- Cosmetics and personal care: DASDA can be used in certain cosmetic products where whitening or brightening effects are desired, such as in skincare formulations.
- 6. **Photographic materials:** DASDA can also be used in certain photographic products to enhance whiteness.

The compound is highly effective due to its ability to absorb UV light and re-emit it as visible light, which is why it's used in these industries to improve the appearance of the final product.



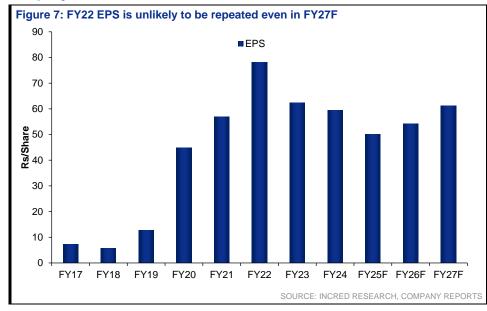
Earnings and valuation

As our approach is based on projecting gross profit and we have analyzed data of all molecules' spreads over raw materials over the last eight years, we have projected gross profits for the company in the coming years. In essence, our approach to earnings projections is realistic, as we have assumed:

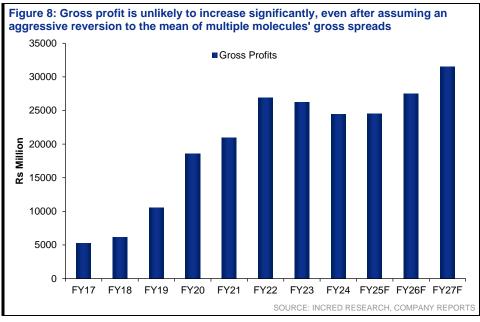
- 1. There will be some recovery in phenol spreads to 2Q levels.
- We have assumed 20kt of MIBK and MIBC sales each in FY26F and 40kt each in FY27F.
- 3. The polycarbonate project will come in FY29F; hence, while there will be cash outflow as the company invests in capex, there won't be any revenue contribution in FY26F or FY27F.
- 4. We have assumed that MIBC and MIBK spreads will recover to their historical mean, which is 50% higher than current levels.
- 5. DASDA spreads will also rise by Rs70/kg or 233% from current levels.



We project EPS to remain flattish... ➤

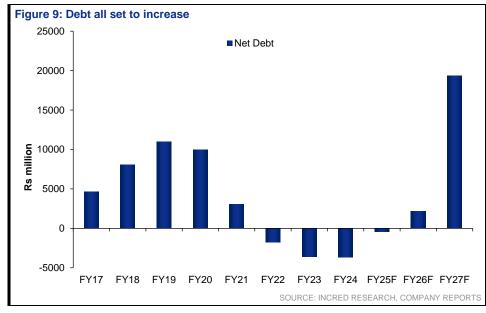


...as there won't be any significant increase in gross profit >

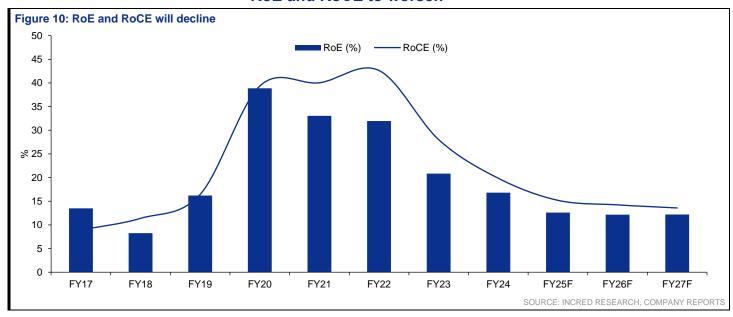




Debt will go up as the company embarks on its aggressive capex plan ➤



RoE and RoCE to worsen ➤





However, the valuation is still high ➤





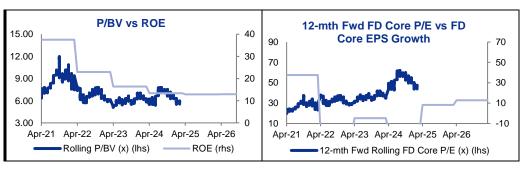
Reiterate REDUCE rating with a new target price of Rs1,432 ➤

We value the stock at a historical mean P/E of 23.4 to arrive at our new target price of Rs1,432.

Figure 13: We valued the stock at its historical mean valuation of 23.4x one-year forward P/E to arrive at our new target price of Rs1,432					
Valuation					
FY26F EPS (Rs)	54.29				
FY27F EPS (Rs)	61.21				
P/E multiple (x)	23.40				
Target price (Rs)	1,432				
	SOURCE: INCRED RESEARCH, COMPANY REPORTS				



BY THE NUMBERS



Profit & Loss					
(Rs mn)	Mar-23A	Mar-24A	Mar-25F	Mar-26F	Mar-27F
Total Net Revenues	79,721	76,818	83,000	91,667	105,000
Gross Profit	26,246	24,457	24,500	27,500	31,500
Operating EBITDA	12,894	11,233	10,509	12,306	15,044
Depreciation And Amortisation	(1,663)	(1,657)	(1,920)	(2,447)	(2,843)
Operating EBIT	11,231	9,576	8,589	9,859	12,201
Financial Income/(Expense)	(248)	(118)	(207)	(720)	(1,800)
Pretax Income/(Loss) from Assoc.					
Non-Operating Income/(Expense)	476	761	761	761	761
Profit Before Tax (pre-EI)	11,459	10,219	9,143	9,900	11,162
Exceptional Items		798			
Pre-tax Profit	11,459	11,017	9,143	9,900	11,162
Taxation	(2,939)	(2,908)	(2,304)	(2,495)	(2,813)
Exceptional Income - post-tax					
Profit After Tax	8,520	8,109	6,839	7,405	8,349
Minority Interests					
Preferred Dividends					
FX Gain/(Loss) - post tax					
Other Adjustments - post-tax					
Net Profit	8,520	8,109	6,839	7,405	8,349
Recurring Net Profit	8,520	7,521	6,839	7,405	8,349
Fully Diluted Recurring Net Profit	8,520	7,521	6,839	7,405	8,349

Cash Flow					
(Rs mn)	Mar-23A	Mar-24A	Mar-25F	Mar-26F	Mar-27F
EBITDA	12,894	11,233	10,509	12,306	15,044
Cash Flow from Invt. & Assoc.					
Change In Working Capital	(9,286)	(6,049)	(1,188)	(1,665)	(2,562)
(Incr)/Decr in Total Provisions					
Other Non-Cash (Income)/Expense	(246)	(627)			
Other Operating Cashflow	784	1,678	414	1,440	3,600
Net Interest (Paid)/Received	(248)	(118)	(207)	(720)	(1,800)
Tax Paid	2,600	2,665	(2,304)	(2,495)	(2,813)
Cashflow From Operations	6,499	8,781	7,224	8,866	11,469
Capex	(3,581)	(7,424)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(25,000)
Disposals Of FAs/subsidiaries	9	33			
Acq. Of Subsidiaries/investments	822	2,887			
Other Investing Cashflow	(10)	(2,714)			
Cash Flow From Investing	(2,761)	(7,218)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(25,000)
Debt Raised/(repaid)	(2,523)	(545)	831	12,000	15,000
Proceeds From Issue Of Shares					
Shares Repurchased					
Dividends Paid	(955)	(1,023)	(800)	(800)	(800)
Preferred Dividends					
Other Financing Cashflow	(113)	2,003			
Cash Flow From Financing	(3,591)	435	31	11,200	14,200
Total Cash Generated	148	1,998	(2,745)	10,067	670
Free Cashflow To Equity	1,216	1,017	(1,945)	10,867	1,470
Free Cashflow To Firm	3,987	1,681	(2,569)	(413)	(11,730)

SOURCES: INCRED RESEARCH, COMPANY REPORTS

Chemicals - Overall | India Deepak Nitrite Ltd | February 19, 2025

BY THE NUMBERS...cont'd

Balance Sheet					
(Rs mn)	Mar-23A	Mar-24A	Mar-25F	Mar-26F	Mar-27F
Total Cash And Equivalents	4,168	5,846	3,448	12,836	10,665
Total Debtors	13,095	12,984	14,028	15,493	17,747
Inventories	8,931	7,599	8,211	9,068	10,387
Total Other Current Assets	1,197	1,987	1,987	1,987	1,987
Total Current Assets	27,391	28,416	27,674	39,384	40,786
Fixed Assets	22,424	30,662	38,742	46,295	68,452
Total Investments	25	27	27	27	27
Intangible Assets					
Total Other Non-Current Assets	1,448	1,857	1,857	1,857	1,857
Total Non-current Assets	23,897	32,546	40,626	48,179	70,336
Short-term Debt	115				
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt					
Total Creditors	6,618	5,823	6,291	6,948	7,959
Other Current Liabilities	1,205	2,028	2,028	2,028	2,028
Total Current Liabilities	7,938	7,851	8,319	8,976	9,987
Total Long-term Debt	430	2,170	3,000	15,000	30,000
Hybrid Debt - Debt Component					
Total Other Non-Current Liabilities	154	623	623	623	623
Total Non-current Liabilities	584	2,792	3,623	15,623	30,623
Total Provisions	1,866	2,093	2,093	2,093	2,093
Total Liabilities	10,388	12,735	14,034	26,691	42,702
Shareholders Equity	40,900	48,227	54,266	60,871	68,420
Minority Interests					
Total Equity	40,900	48,227	54,266	60,871	68,420

Key Ratios					
	Mar-23A	Mar-24A	Mar-25F	Mar-26F	Mar-27F
Revenue Growth	17.2%	(3.6%)	8.0%	10.4%	14.5%
Operating EBITDA Growth	(19.6%)	(12.9%)	(6.4%)	17.1%	22.2%
Operating EBITDA Margin	16.2%	14.6%	12.7%	13.4%	14.3%
Net Cash Per Share (Rs)	26.56	26.96	3.28	(15.87)	(141.75)
BVPS (Rs)	299.85	353.57	397.84	446.27	501.61
Gross Interest Cover	45.32	80.95	41.54	13.69	6.78
Effective Tax Rate	25.6%	26.4%	25.2%	25.2%	25.2%
Net Dividend Payout Ratio	13.4%	15.7%	11.7%	10.8%	9.6%
Accounts Receivables Days	55.83	61.96	59.39	58.77	57.77
Inventory Days	50.43	57.61	49.32	49.14	48.31
Accounts Payables Days	40.05	43.36	37.79	37.65	37.01
ROIC (%)	25.2%	17.9%	13.6%	13.1%	13.9%
ROCE (%)	27.9%	20.1%	15.5%	14.4%	13.7%
Return On Average Assets	18.2%	13.2%	10.8%	10.2%	9.8%

SOURCES: INCRED RESEARCH, COMPANY REPORTS



Chemicals - Overall | India Deepak Nitrite Ltd | February 19, 2025

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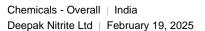
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Deepak Nitrite Ltd | February 19, 2025

Recommendation Framework

Stock Ratings Definition:

Add The stock's total return is expected to exceed 10% over the next 12 months.

Hold The stock's total return is expected to be between 0% and positive 10% over the next 12 months.

Reduce The stock's total return is expected to fall below 0% or more over the next 12 months.

The total expected return of a stock is defined as the sum of the: (i) percentage difference between the target price and the current price and (ii) the forward net

dividend yields of the stock. Stock price targets have an investment horizon of 12 months.

Sector Ratings Definition:

Overweight An Overweight rating means stocks in the sector have, on a market cap-weighted basis, a positive absolute recommendation.

Neutral A Neutral rating means stocks in the sector have, on a market cap-weighted basis, a neutral absolute recommendation.

Underweight An Underweight rating means stocks in the sector have, on a market cap-weighted basis, a negative absolute recommendation.

Country Ratings Definition:

Overweight An Overweight rating means investors should be positioned with an above-market weight in this country relative to benchmark.

Neutral A Neutral rating means investors should be positioned with a neutral weight in this country relative to benchmark.

Underweight An Underweight rating means investors should be positioned with a below-market weight in this country relative to benchmark.