

QUICKLY.

HDFC Bank raises \$300 m via sustainable bonds



Mumbai: HDFC Bank has raised \$300 million through its first ever sustainable finance bond issue. The fund raise is part of an overall raise of \$750 million through Regulation S Bonds. The proceeds of the issue will be utilised for funding green and social loans, and towards financing general banking activities. **OUR BUREAU**

Meesho launches logistics marketplace Valmo



Bengaluru: Meesho has announced the launch of Valmo, which stands for VALue+MOvement. Through Valmo, Meesho aims to redefine India's supply chain by leveraging its strong technology capabilities and tapping into a vast logistics entrepreneur network to deliver shipments at the lowest cost, the company said. **OUR BUREAU**

'Open architecture' concept mooted for insurance agents

UMBRELLA COVER. Proposed by House Panel, it would allow deeper reach of products

KR Srivats
New Delhi

Standing Committee on Finance headed by BJP MP Jayant Sinha has recommended the introduction of an 'open architecture' concept for insurance agents so as to facilitate a larger outreach of insurance products and a stronger distribution infrastructure in the country.

This recommendation, if and when accepted by government and consequent legal amendments are introduced, would pave the way for insurance agents to associate with multiple insurance companies.

Currently, under the Insurance Act 1938, an insurance agent can associate with one life, one non-life and one health insurance company for distribution of insurance products.

An 'open architecture' for agents would result in higher insurance penetration while accelerating financial inclusion and lower distribution costs, the Parliamentary Panel said in a report titled 'Performance Review and Regulation of Insurance Sector'. It will also



LIMITED OPTIONS. Currently, under the Insurance Act 1938, an insurance agent can associate with one life, one non-life and one health insurance company for distribution of products

provide an equitable footing for the insurance agents vis-à-vis the insurance intermediaries, it added.

Also, customers would have access to more options at a competitive price. However, the Committee recommended extensive industry consultations on this matter to ensure that policies provide a level-playing field to all players and do not unduly disadvantage incumbents. Additionally, any changes should be implemented over a period of time to enable all participants to prepare for these major changes, the

report added. Insurance regulator IRDAI, had, in 2022, widened the open architecture for bancassurance by allowing a bank to distribute products of 9 insurers (earlier 3) in each of life, general and health segments.

LOW PENETRATION

Although the insurance industry in India has shown dynamic growth in recent years, with total insurance premiums increasing rapidly, the penetration and density of Indian insurance products are still low, reflecting the under development of the sector. Comprising around 2 per cent

of the global insurance market in 2020, the Indian insurance sector has a long way to go compared with the insurance sectors in advanced economies, the Parliamentary Panel report said.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Parliamentary Panel has also recommended that insurance companies may be permitted to provide risk management and other value-added services that are ancillary to the insurance business.

The Standing Committee highlighted that insurance is not just about the underwriting of risk but also the management of risk and value-added services.

"Preventive risk mitigation activities on a standalone basis would not only help in the popularisation and penetration of insurance but would also help to reduce the incidence of losses, thereby resulting in better-priced products and lower overall risk for the nation. Further, insurers would be able to provide a comprehensive risk mitigation solution to customers," the Panel report added.

IRDAI plans changes in rural, social norms

G Naga Sridhar
Hyderabad

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is planning to change norms in rural, social sector and motor third-party obligations for the insurers.

In an Exposure Draft on IRDAI (Rural, Social Sector and Motor Third Party Obligations) Regulations, 2024, the insurance regulator proposed to keep gram panchayat as the unit for measurement of rural sector obligations.

For life insurers, number of lives under individual policies and under group policies will be considered while for general insurers, number of individual dwellings under fire segment and number of vehicles under motor insurance segment will be counted.

OBJECTIVE

As per the proposed norms, the minimum number of lives to be covered by all life insurers in all gram panchayats in the country shall be 30 per cent, subject to a minimum of 25,000 gram panchayats, as driven by the lead insurer in the first year.

This increases to 40 per cent lives, subject to a min-

The IRDAI said that the aim is to enhance the ease of doing business and also reduce compliance burden for stakeholders

imum 50,000 gram panchayats and 50 per cent lives, subject to a minimum of 75,000 gram panchayats in year 2 and 3 respectively.

For general insurance, the minimum number of dwellings under fire insurance and vehicles under motor (Comprehensive and TP) insurance to be covered by all general insurers in all gram panchayats in the country will be 30 per cent, subject to a minimum of 25,000 gram panchayats, as driven by lead insurer in the first year.

Explaining the rationale behind proposed changes, IRDAI said the aim is to "enhance the ease of doing business and also reduce compliance burden for stakeholders while also ensuring that interests of policyholders continue to be protected".

"It was viewed that a new strategy is necessary to achieve the objective of 'Insurance For All' by 2047," the IRDAI said.

Green-lights Axis Bank's ₹1,612-crore infusion into Max Life

KR Srivats
New Delhi

Max Financial Services Limited (MFSL) has announced that insurance regulator IRDAI has approved the capital infusion of ₹1,612 crore by Axis Bank into the company's material subsidiary, Max Life Insurance.

For this transaction, Max Life Insurance proposes to issue 14.25 crore shares to Axis Bank, which will take the latter's shareholding in the life insurer to 19 per cent from the existing 13 per cent.

Axis Bank proposes to acquire an additional 6 per cent stake in Max Life Insurance at ₹113 per share.

Pension regulator PFRDA has already approved the proposed change in Max Life's shareholding pattern pertaining to the infusion of capital by Axis Bank.

The transaction is, however, awaiting the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approval.

MFSL said this capital infusion would help support Max Life's future growth ambitions, augment its capital position and improve solvency margins.

Chola MS posts ₹100-crore profit in Q3

G Balachandrar
Chennai

Cholamandalam MS General Insurance Company Ltd, a 60:40 joint venture between Murugappa Group and Japan's Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance Group (Japan), has posted a net profit of ₹100 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2023, compared with ₹43 crore in the year-ago period, amid the impact of catastrophic events in incurred claims.

The profit before tax zoomed to ₹134 crore from ₹58 crore. The company's gross written premium (including reinsurance inward) grew to ₹1,875 crore in December 2023 against ₹1,637 crore in the December 2022 quarter, an increase of 14 per cent. This is higher than the industry growth of 11 per cent.

However, the solvency ratio slightly declined from 2.06 per cent to 1.79 per cent, in-

dicating a need for careful risk management.

In terms of segmental performance, the motor segment remained the largest contributor with gross written premium (GWP) from the segment growing to ₹1,261 crore when compared with ₹1,202 crore in Q3FY23. The fire segment also recorded growth with GWP growing from ₹139 crore to ₹155 crore. The personal accident segment's GWP grew to ₹86 crore from ₹80 crore.

In the total business mix, the motor segment accounts for about 64 per cent, while commercial and health account for 12.6 per cent and 10.2 per cent respectively. With its re-entry, crop segment accounted for 7 per cent.

"The industry is growing at 14-15 per cent and we would want to grow at 24-25 per cent. We are on course to record our highest-ever annual profit in this fiscal," V Suryanarayanan, MD of the company.

RBI conducts 2 VRRR auctions for the second day in a row

K Ram Kumar
Mumbai

With overnight money market rates softening substantially, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) conducted one-day variable rate reverse repo (VRRR) auction twice for the second day in succession on Wednesday to suck out liquidity from the banking system and push up the rates above the repo rate. In a surprise move, the central bank had conducted two one-day VRRR auctions on Tuesday. This was probably the first instance of two such auctions being conducted on a single day.

In the first VRRR auction, the RBI received offers from banks for deploying funds aggregating ₹96,093 crore for a day against the notified amount of ₹50,000 crore. The central bank absorbed ₹50,019 crore at a weighted average rate (WAR) of 6.49

OBJECTIVE

The aim was to suck out liquidity from the banking system and push up the rates above the repo rate

per cent. In the second one-day VRRR auction, banks made offers to park funds aggregating ₹11,829 crore against the notified amount of ₹50,000 crore. The RBI accepted the funds at the same WAR as the first auction.

POLICY STANCE

Though the WAR in the overnight money market was higher at 6.41 per cent against previous day's 6.35 per cent (per CCIL data), it had dipped to an intraday low of 6.25 per cent in the case of TREPS (Treasury Bills Repurchase) and 6.20 per cent in the case of REPO segments. Market play-

ers are of the view that by conducting two VRRR auctions, the central bank is trying to guide the overnight rate above the repo rate (6.50 per cent), in sync with its 'withdrawal of accommodation' monetary policy stance.

"By end January (as on 28-January), the general government cash surplus stood at a high of ₹4.2 lakh crore... However, the recent week has seen liquidity deficit easing to sub-₹1.5-lakh crore, with TREPS below SDF (standing deposit facility: 6.25 per cent), while the RBI is now doing mild VRRRs to keep overnight rates above the repo rate. We understand that the RBI would be biased to keep overnight rates more aligned towards the repo rate than MSP (marginal standing facility: 6.75 per cent) SDF ahead. A part of this would be naturally achieved ahead," said Madhavi Arora, Lead Economist, Emkay Global Financial Services.

Voda Idea opposes Jio's proposal for sunset date for 2G networks

Our Bureau
Mumbai

Vodafone Idea has countered Reliance Jio's request to the telecommunications regulator for a sunset date or timeline for shutting down 2G networks. Reliance Jio, which entered into the telecommunications with 4G has a purely 4G and 5G network, unlike Vodafone Idea and Airtel who have subscribers on their 2G network predating the 4G era.

Responding to a consultation paper floated by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Reliance Jio had said that the government should come out with a policy for closing down the 2G and 3G networks completely so that unnecessary network costs could be avoided, and all customers can be migrated to 4G and 5G services. According to Reliance Jio, this will also give great impetus to developing ecosystem to 5G use cases.

'INCREASE IN DIGITAL DIVIDE'

In counter comments for the same consultation paper, Vi characterised these comments by Jio to be rhetoric in nature that ignore the significant impact on existing customers from the network shutdown. "Any forceful shutdown through regulatory mandate, will lead to low income and marginal consumers being forced out of accessing the basic telecom services, thus increasing the digital divide," Vi said in its counter comments.

According to Vi, the market itself is deciding the optimum course of the rate at which older network technologies are shut down. Vi added that regulatory mandate to transition out of old network technologies will have an adverse impact on the IoT ecosystem as well.



ZUARI AGRO CHEMICALS LIMITED

Regd. Office: Jai Kisaan Bhawan, Zuarinagar, Goa - 403 726, CIN-L65910GA2009PLC006177

Extract of Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months Ended December 31, 2023

Sr. No.	Particulars	STANDALONE						CONSOLIDATED					
		3 Months ended 31/12/2023	3 Months ended 30/09/2023	3 Months ended 31/12/2022	9 Months ended 31/12/2023	9 Months ended 31/12/2022	Year ended 31/03/2023	3 Months ended 31/12/2023	3 Months ended 30/09/2023	3 Months ended 31/12/2022	9 Months ended 31/12/2023	9 Months ended 31/12/2022	Year ended 31/03/2023
		(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
1	Total income from operations	13.61	38.22	48.25	101.84	138.24	237.61	855.86	1,672.10	1,428.73	3,748.42	3,242.55	4,647.27
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items) from Continuing Operation	(27.12)	(16.51)	(27.97)	(62.31)	(85.80)	(56.76)	14.65	83.66	68.98	157.65	20.30	142.01
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items) from Continuing Operation	(27.12)	(16.51)	(27.97)	(62.31)	1,056.59	386.66	45.45	105.64	119.41	176.38	1,256.02	683.36
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items) from Discontinued Operation	-	-	-	-	(15.22)	(15.22)	-	-	-	-	(15.22)	(15.22)
5	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional Items)	(27.12)	(16.51)	(21.29)	(62.31)	792.40	293.85	28.55	66.61	104.23	93.57	965.73	539.03
6	Total Comprehensive Income / (Loss) for the period [comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income / (Loss) (after tax)]	(27.12)	(16.54)	(19.73)	(60.65)	793.23	321.22	28.17	67.01	105.64	94.80	966.74	566.33
7	Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face Value of Rs. 10/- each)	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06	42.06
8	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing operation) (not annualised)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)
9	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (for discontinued operation) (not annualised)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)
	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (for Continuing and discontinued operation) (not annualised)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)	(a) Basic (Rs)	(b) Diluted (Rs)

NOTES:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of the financial results for the quarter and nine months ended 31st December 2023, filed with the Stock Exchanges on 07th February 2024 under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31st December 2023 are available on the Company's website www.zuari.in and on the website of the Stock Exchanges www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com.
- The results have been prepared in accordance with the Indian Accounting Standards ("Ind AS") as prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rules issued thereunder.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors
Zuari Agro Chemicals Limited

Sd/-
Nitin M Kantak
Executive Director
DIN: 08029847

Place : Bengaluru
Date : February 07, 2024

