

BUY TP: Rs 210 | ▲ 17%

ASHOK LEYLAND

Automobiles

29 July 2023

# Healthy growth trajectory; maintain BUY

- Q1 revenue up 13% YoY despite weak seasonality, led by a mix of volume growth (+5%) and realisation gains (+8%)
- Gross margin up 570bps YoY to 26.4%; EBITDA margin at ~10% and quided to hold at this level
- FY24/FY25 EPS estimates raised ~4% each for a revised SOTP-based
   TP of Rs 210 (vs. Rs 199); maintain BUY

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**Healthy topline growth:** AL's Q1FY24 revenue grew 13% YoY to Rs 81.9bn in a traditionally weak quarter, contributed by volume growth of 5% to 41.3k units. Net realisation per vehicle (NRPV) grew at a strong 8% YoY to Rs 1,981k on the back of price hikes (2-4% across CVs) and a richer product mix. The company raised prices in March which bolstered realisations in Q1FY24.

Margin expansion on track: Raw material cost improved to 73.6% of net sales vs. 79.3% in Q1FY23 (75.4% in Q4FY23). Gross margin at 26.4% thus expanded 570bps YoY. Other expenses rose 9% YoY to Rs 7.9bn. EBITDA more than doubled to Rs 8.3bn from Rs 3.2bn in Q1FY23 with a 10% margin (+570bps YoY) due to better operating leverage. Management expects margins to hold at this level in FY24-25. Adj. PAT increased to Rs 4.1bn from Rs 550mn in Q1FY23.

Working capital days and leverage rise, cash generation to improve: AL's net working capital days rose by 11 days QoQ, causing net debt to increase from negative Rs 2.4bn in the year-ago quarter to Rs 14.6bn and operating working capital to rise to Rs 15.2bn. This is typical of the first quarter as demand picks up and dealer inventory is filled. Management expects the pressure to ease as demand peaks.

**EV mix, pipeline and capex:** AL's launch pipeline includes: (i) two Switch EV LCVs in H2FY24, (ii) an Ather bus variant, and (iii) a potential European model bus. The company will enter into pilot test programmes for EV trucks. AL infused Rs 4bn in Q1 through short-term loans and will incur another Rs 8bn of capex over FY24.

**Maintain BUY:** Though margins may be impacted by reversal of commodity softening trends in the short term, we now expect 150bps EBITDA margin expansion over FY23-FY25 to ~10% as we factor in AL's sustained beat over industry growth in the CV segment, continued leadership in the bus segment, new launches and entry into EVs. Export recovery will add comfort. We raise our FY24/FY25 EPS estimates by ~4% each for a revised SOTP-based TP of Rs 210 (vs. Rs 199), ascribing an unchanged 20x FY25E P/E multiple to the standalone business – in line with medium term average multiple. BUY.

# Key changes

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	Target	Rating	
	<b>A</b>	<b>∢</b> ▶	

Ticker/Price	AL IN/Rs 179
Market cap	US\$ 6.4bn
Free float	49%
3M ADV	US\$ 24.1mn
52wk high/low	Rs 187/Rs 133
Promoter/FPI/DII	52%/17%/15%

Source: NSE | Price as of 28 Jul 2023

#### **Key financials**

FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
3,61,441	4,31,673	5,13,036
29,307	40,155	49,472
12,955	22,281	28,551
4.7	7.6	9.7
4.7	7.1	9.1
15.4	21.6	22.2
38.1	23.6	18.4
18.9	13.5	10.0
4079.0	72.0	28.1
	3,61,441 29,307 12,955 4.7 4.7 15.4 38.1 18.9	3,61,441 4,31,673 29,307 40,155 12,955 22,281 4.7 7.6 4.7 7.1 15.4 21.6 38.1 23.6 18.9 13.5

Source: Company, Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research

### Stock performance



Source: NSE





Fig 1 – Earnings call highlights

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Parameter	Q1FY24	Q4FY23	Our view
Industry growth	Industry M&HCV growth was slightly muted at 3% YoY owing to pre-buying in Q4FY23. AL's domestic M&HCV volumes grew 7% YoY while bus PIV grew 39%. AL witnessed 93% YoY growth in the bus segment.	Management expects FY24 CV demand to surpass the previous peak of FY19, enabling the industry to grow 8-10% in FY24, with AL guided to beat industry growth.	New launches, contribution from subsidiary Switch Mobility, and further efforts to gain domestic share in the CV segment are collectively likely to bolster growth for AL.
	Management retained guidance of above- industry volume growth in FY24 and believes EV buses are well positioned for strong growth over the coming years.	Management expects 5-6% industry growth for LCVs and 30% for buses.	
Market share	Market share in the northern and eastern regions rose by 25% QoQ, taking overall share up to 25%. Bus market share at 28.1% was up 39.1% YoY. ICV bus market share also improved significantly to 15%.  Management continues to target 35% overall market share with a focus on the northern, eastern, and ICV bus markets.	FY23 market share in M&HCVs stood at 31.8%, up 470bps over FY22.  AL's focus is to expand market share in the northern and eastern regions to 30% in the first stage and to the mid-30s over the next few years.	A focus on tapping newer domestic and international regions has helped AL beat industry growth.
Exports	International operations remain week, declining 12% YoY due to a weak macroeconomic environment abroad.	AL's international market volumes grew by 2.5% in FY23, whereas other large players witnessed declines of 30-40%.	AL's focus to counter weaker regions by tapping new geographies will continue, aiding growth in the exports market.
	Management expects improvement as inflation softens in Europe.	The Middle East and Africa contributed in FY23. The SAARC market was down but is expected to recover in next two years.	manot.
Margins	EBITDA margin stood at 10% in Q1, down 85bps QoQ but up 570bps YoY.  Margins are guided to be around 10% in the next two years as cost reduction programmes yield significant benefits and volumes are expected to grow extensively.	AL undertook price hikes of 2% in Apr'23 (to cover costs and improve margins). Retention of price hikes is 80-90%.  Management expects steel prices to soften from Q2FY24 and expects a double-digit EBITDA margin in FY24 with a mid-teen target for the medium term.	AL appears to be on the right track to retaining ~10% EBITDA margin by improving efficiencies.
Launch pipeline	During the quarter, AL launched a ready-mix concrete tipper (AVTR 6x4 EDPTO); three trucks: eComet Star 1915, 28 20 G45 FPS, eComet Star 16/18t 24ft; the 4225 micro air vehicle (MAV); and a 13.5-meter bus with 19.5t gross weight.	The launch pipeline includes: (i) a low-floor 12metre bus and low-floor 9mtr bus for the Indian market; (ii) two new LCVs, electric Dost and electric Bada Dost; and (iii) a 12mtr E1 bus for Europe in Jan'24.	A strong launch pipeline will improve the product mix and protect/add to margins.
	The launch pipeline includes: (i) two Switch EV light commercial vehicles (LCV) in H2FY24, (ii) an Ather bus variant, and (iii) a potential European model bus.		
Other key points	Management is open to investments into	Long-term debt is at Rs 29bn.	The working capital impact is typical in
	Switch Mobility and incurred capex of Rs 910mn in Q1. Management expects to transition Switch into a lower tax regime.	Switch Mobility has an order book of 2,500 units	the seasonally weak first quarter as demand picks up and dealer inventory is filled. Management indicated that the
	Hinduja Leyland will reverse-merge by the end of FY24.		pressure will ease as demand peaks, boosting cash generation.
	Net working capital days have risen by 11 days QoQ, causing net debt to rise to Rs 14.6bn from -Rs 2.4bn and operating working capital to rise to Rs 15.2bn. Cash generation is guided to improve YoY as working capital levels likely decline in H2.		

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research



Fig 2 – Quarterly performance

(Rs mn)	Q1FY24	Q1FY23	YoY (%)	Q4FY23	QoQ (%)
Volume	41,329	39,372	5.0	46,824	(11.7)
Avg. Realisation per Vehicle	19,81,488	18,34,514	8.0	24,82,844	(20.2)
Net Revenues	81,893	72,229	13.4	1,16,257	(29.6)
Total Income (A)	81,893	72,229	13.4	1,16,257	(29.6)
Operating Expenses:					
Raw materials consumed	60,282	57,281	5.2	87,887	(31.4)
Employee Expenses	5,376	4,454	20.7	5,919	(9.2)
Other Expenses	7,938	7,291	8.9	9,693	(18.1)
Total Expenditure (B)	73,595	69,026	6.6	1,03,499	(28.9)
EBITDA (A-B)	8,298	3,203	159.1	12,757	(35.0)
Other Income	512	256	99.6	389	31.5
Depreciation	1,794	1,824	(1.7)	1,838	(2.4)
EBIT	7,016	1,635	329.0	11,308	(38.0)
Finance Costs	699	689	1.4	628	11.3
PBT before exceptional items	6,317	946	567.5	10,681	(40.9)
Exceptional items	(1,714)	(130)	-	(564)	-
PBT after exceptional items	4,603	1,077	327.6	11,245	(59.1)
Tax expense	457	396	15.4	3,731	(87.8)
Reported PAT	5,854	681	760.3	7,514	(22.1)
Adjusted PAT	4,140	550	652.2	6,950	(40.4)
Adj EPS (Rs)	1.4	0.2	652.2	2.4	(40.4)
Key ratios (%)			(bps)		(bps)
Gross Margin (%)	26.4	20.7	569	24.4	199
EBITDA Margin (%)	10.1	4.4	570	11.0	(84)
EBIT Margin (%)	8.6	2.3	630	9.7	(116)
PBT Margin (%)	7.7	1.3	640	9.2	(147)
Tax Rate (%)	9.9	36.8	(2,686)	33.2	(2325)
Adj PAT Margin (%)	5.1	0.8	429	6.0	(92)

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research



# Valuation methodology

Though AL's margins may be impacted by reversal of commodity softening trends in the short term, we now model for 150bps EBITDA margin expansion over FY23-FY25 to ~10% as we factor in AL's sustained beat over industry growth in the CV segment, continued leadership in the bus segment, new launches and entry into EVs. Export recovery will add comfort.

We raise our FY24/FY25 EPS estimates by ~4% each for a revised SOTP-based TP of Rs 210 (vs. Rs 199), ascribing an unchanged 20x FY25E P/E multiple to the standalone business (in line with medium term average) for a value of Rs 198/sh and adding in Rs 12/sh for Hinduja Leyland Finance. Maintain BUY.

Fig 3 - Revised estimates

(Pa mn)	New	ı	Old		Change	(%)
(Rs mn)	FY24E	FY25E	FY24E	FY25E	FY24E	FY25E
Revenue	4,31,673	5,13,036	4,20,824	4,99,400	2.6	2.7
EBITDA	40,155	49,472	38,497	48,728	4.3	1.5
Adj PAT	22,281	28,551	21,368	27,696	4.3	3.1
EPS (Rs)	7.6	9.7	7.3	9.4	4.0	3.5

Source: BOBCAPS Research

Fig 4 - Key assumptions

Parameter	FY23	FY24E	FY25E
M&HCV volumes (nos)	1,23,830	1,43,643	1,65,189
LCV volumes (nos)	48,042	50,925	52,962
Total volume sold (Nos)	1,71,872	1,94,567	2,18,151
M&HCV (%)	72.0	73.8	75.7
LCV (%)	28.0	26.2	24.3
Revenue per vehicle (Rs)	21,02,968	22,18,632	23,51,750
RMC per vehicle (Rs)	16,20,342	16,69,520	17,55,581
As a % of revenue	77.1	75.3	74.7
Gross margin per vehicle (Rs)	4,82,626	5,49,111	5,96,169
As a % of revenue	22.9	24.8	25.4
Staff cost per vehicle (Rs)	1,22,990	1,21,681	1,21,550
As a % of revenue	5.8	5.5	5.2
Other expense per vehicle (Rs)	1,89,119	2,26,300	2,52,813
As a % of revenue	9.0	10.2	10.8
EBITDA per vehicle (Rs)	1,70,516	2,01,129	2,21,805
As a % of revenue	8.1	9.1	9.4
Other Income (Rs mn)	1,292	1,333	1,484
Depreciation (Rs mn)	7,759	8,054	8,429
Interest (Rs mn)	3,009	3,325	3,682
PAT per vehicle (Rs)	75,376	1,14,514	1,30,878
As a % of revenue	3.6	5.2	5.6
Source: Company BOBCARS Research			

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research



Fig 5 - Valuation summary

Business	FY25E EPS (Rs)	Target P/E (x)	Value (Rs)
Standalone Business	9.7	20	198
Leyland Finance	-	-	12
Total	-	-	210

Source: BOBCAPS Research

Fig 6 - Peer comparison

Commony	Ticker	Datina	Target Price	EPS (Rs)		ROE (	(%)
Company	ricker	Rating	(Rs)	FY24E	FY25E	FY24E	FY25E
Ashok Leyland	AL IN	BUY	210	7.6	9.7	23.8	24.7
Mahindra & Mahindra	MM IN	BUY	1,665	73.3	81.3	18.8	18.0
Tata Motors	TTMT IN	NOT RATED	-	42.8	52.6	24.6	25.3

Source: BOBCAPS Research

# **Key risks**

Key downside risks to our estimates are:

- delays in planned launches in the M&HCV and bus segments,
- fierce competition implying pressure on margins, and
- slower revival in economic growth than expected.

# Sector recommendation snapshot

Company	Ticker	Market Cap (US\$ bn)	Price (Rs)	Target (Rs)	Rating
Ashok Leyland	AL IN	6.4	179	210	BUY
Bajaj Auto	BJAUT IN	17.2	4,893	4,188	HOLD
Eicher Motors	EIM IN	11.2	3,355	3,761	HOLD
Escorts	ESCORTS IN	4.1	2,537	1,749	SELL
Hero MotoCorp	HMCL IN	7.7	3,173	2,871	HOLD
Mahindra & Mahindra	MM IN	22.3	1,468	1,665	BUY
Maruti Suzuki	MSIL IN	35.5	9,670	9,858	HOLD
TVS Motor	TVSL IN	7.9	1,358	1,252	HOLD
VST Tillers Tractors	VSTT IN	0.3	3,048	3,218	BUY

Source: BOBCAPS Research, NSE | Price as of 28 Jul 2023



# **Financials**

Income Statement Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
Total revenue	1,55,984	2,16,883	3,61,441	4,31,673	5,13,036
EBITDA	5,351	9,945	29,307	40,155	49,472
Depreciation	7,477	7,528	7,320	8,054	8,429
EBIT	(931)	3,179	23,149	33,434	42,527
Net interest inc./(exp.)	(3,068)	(3,011)	(2,891)	(3,325)	(3,682)
Other inc./(exp.)	1,195	761	1,161	1,333	1,484
Exceptional items	(121)	5,108	846	0	.,
EBT	(4,119)	5,276	21,104	30,109	38,845
Income taxes	(983)	(142)	7,303	7,828	10,294
Extraordinary items	0	0	0	0	0,20
Min. int./Inc. from assoc.	0	0	0	0	0
Reported net profit	(3,136)	5,418	13,801	22,281	28,551
Adjustments	121	(5,108)	(846)	0	0
Adjusted net profit	(3,016)	310	12,955	22,281	28,551
,	(0,000)		,		,
Balance Sheet					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
Accounts payables	51,647	70,342	72,441	1,05,609	1,24,707
Other current liabilities	14,860	16,408	21,996	1,474	440
Provisions	6,545	6,705	10,377	11,216	12,338
Debt funds	37,163	35,071	31,801	33,084	35,422
Other liabilities	2,805	0	0	0	0
Equity capital	2,936	2,936	2,936	2,936	2,936
Reserves & surplus	66,837	70,433	81,322	1,00,070	1,25,385
Shareholders' fund	69,772	73,369	84,257	1,03,006	1,28,320
Total liab. and equities	1,82,792	2,01,894	2,20,873	2,54,389	3,01,228
Cash and cash eq.	8,230	10,470	5,013	40,066	46,299
Accounts receivables	28,160	31,111	40,627	54,403	62,548
Inventories	21,423	20,752	27,745	37,845	43,573
Other current assets	16,603	24,858	21,529	28,384	36,545
Investments	30,687	48,196	66,627	35,913	48,913
Net fixed assets	70,504	62,342	59,378	59,814	63,385
CWIP	3,719	1,111	490	3,000	5,000
Intangible assets	0	4,499	4,499	0	0
Deferred tax assets, net	(1,708)	(1,444)	(5,035)	(5,035)	(5,035)
Other assets	5,174	0	0	0	0
Total assets	1,82,792	2,01,895	2,20,872	2,54,389	3,01,228
Cash Flows					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
Cash flow from operations	6,443	28,126	18,994	11,219	31,600
Capital expenditures	(7,722)	(1,257)	(3,735)	(6,501)	(14,000)
Change in investments	(3,491)	(17,509)	(18,431)	30,714	(13,000)
Other investing cash flows	1,195	761	1,161	1,333	1,484
Cash flow from investing	(10,018)	(18,005)	(21,004)	25,546	(25,516)
Equities issued/Others	0	0	50	(50)	0
Debt raised/repaid	4,349	(2,092)	(3,270)	1,283	2,338
Interest expenses	(3,068)	(3,011)	(2,891)	(3,325)	(3,682)
Dividends paid	(1,761)	(2,936)	(7,632)	(5,871)	(5,871)
Other financing cash flows	(940)	157	3,669	(401)	Ó
Cash flow from financing	(1,421)	(7,881)	(10,075)	(8,364)	(7,215)
Chg in cash & cash eq.	(4,995)	2,240	(12,085)	28,402	(1,131)
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Per Share					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs)	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
Reported EPS	(1.0)	0.1	4.4	7.6	9.7
Adjusted EPS	(1.1)	1.8	4.7	7.6	9.7
Dividend per share	0.6	1.0	2.6	2.0	2.0
Book value per share	23.8	25.0	28.7	35.1	43.7
Valuations Ratios					
Y/E 31 Mar (x)	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
EV/Sales	3.4	2.5	1.5	1.3	1.0
EV/EBITDA	99.5	55.4	18.9	13.5	10.0
Adjusted P/E	(167.8)	97.1	38.1	23.6	18.4
P/BV	7.5	7.2	6.2	5.1	4.
DuPont Analysis					
Y/E 31 Mar (%)	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
Tax burden (Net profit/PBT)	73.2	5.9	61.4	74.0	73.
Interest burden (PBT/EBIT)	442.6	166.0	91.2	90.1	91.
EBIT margin (EBIT/Revenue)	(0.6)	1.5	6.4	7.7	8.
Asset turnover (Rev./Avg TA)	142.8	198.8	322.0	342.4	342.
Leverage (Avg TA/Avg Equity)	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.
Adjusted ROAE	(4.2)	0.4	16.4	23.8	24.
Ratio Analysis					
Y/E 31 Mar	FY21A	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E
YoY growth (%)					
Revenue	(12.8)	39.0	66.7	19.4	18.
EBITDA	(54.4)	85.8	194.7	37.0	23.
Adjusted EPS			4079.0	72.0	28.
Profitability & Return ratios (%)					
EBITDA margin	3.4	4.6	8.1	9.3	9.0
EBIT margin	(0.6)	1.5	6.4	7.7	8.
Adjusted profit margin	(1.9)	0.1	3.6	5.2	5.
Adjusted ROAE	(4.3)	0.4	15.4	21.6	22.
ROCE	(0.6)	3.0	13.5	19.6	20.
Working capital days (days)	. ,				
Receivables	47	50	36	40	4
Inventory	40	35	24	28	2
Payables	125	133	94	100	11
Ratios (x)					
Gross asset turnover	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.
0 1 1	4.0	0.0	^ ^		

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research | Note: TA = Total Assets

1.0

0.3

0.5

0.9

(1.1)

0.5

0.9

(0.8)

0.4

1.4

0.3

(10.1)

1.4

0.3

(11.5)

Current ratio

Net interest coverage ratio

Adjusted debt/equity



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BUY - Expected return >+15%

HOLD - Expected return from -6% to +15%

SELL - Expected return <-6%

Note: Recommendation structure changed with effect from 21 June 2021

Our recommendation scale does not factor in short-term stock price volatility related to market fluctuations. Thus, our recommendations may not always be strictly in line with the recommendation scale as shown above.

#### Ratings and Target Price (3-year history): ASHOK LEYLAND (AL IN)



 $B-Buy,\,H-Hold,\,S-Sell,\,A-Add,\,R-Reduce$ 

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