# **Federal Bank**



# Aims entering top-banks club, with focus on quality, RoA

BFSI - Banks > Analyst Meet Update > February 23, 2025

CMP (Rs): 180 | TP (Rs): 240

After the course correction in 3Q, Federal Bank hosted an analyst meet to unveil its long-term (next 3-5 years) business strategy (Plan 4.0) under the aegis of new MD & CEO KVS Manian (ex-Kotak), per which it plans to strengthen its core and tweak its asset/liability profile toward delivering sustained RoA of over 1.4% from 1.2% now. We list its key strategies that aim at levering Federal Bank to the top league of banks, in terms of quality and profitability.

Strengthen core, build a true universal bank to be part of the 'top banks' club Over the years, Federal—under the aegis of erstwhile MD Shyam Srinivasan—has built a healthy phygital franchisee, NR deposit base, diversified asset portfolio with good asset quality, stable and credible internal leadership, and a partnership model (on both, the asset/liability fronts), thereby crossing the hurdle of only 1% RoA. With new MD Manian hired from one of the top league banks (Kotak), Federal made quick necessary corrections in 3Q, including calibrating growth amid rising liquidity/asset quality challenges, accelerated provisions, shored-up LCR being otherwise at major risk per new LCR norms, and shifting new auto loans to fixed rate from floating. Under its Plan 4.0, Federal aspires joining the top league of banks, including ICICIB, HDFCB, Kotak Mah Bank, Axis Bank, and IIB, in terms of quality (vs quantity) and profitability (RoA at over 1.4-2.3%) over the next 3-5Y. Notably, Yes Bank attempted to enter the top banks league albeit in vain; on the other hand, Federal with an already strong platform, credible management, and tweaks in asset/liability and strategy is better placed to propel itself into the top league.

#### Re-orienting credit, liability portfolio, to deliver superior risk-adjusted NIMs

Unlike mid-cap peers, sub-par margin (3.1% vs 3.5-5%) has always been the key drag for RoA. To improve the margin, the bank, in the past few years, has attempted to diversify its retail portfolio toward unsecured loans; but with the external credit environment turning stressed, it pulled back on growth. Under the new and experienced management, the bank has plans to attempt a measured aggression in the unsecured retail book once the credit environment improves, while also introducing/scaling-up a few products, including used CV/Car, AFH, Micro-LAP, Tractor, Business/SME financing, mid-market corporate lending, and real-estate financing, and thereby improving the share of medium-yielding assets to 34% from 31% and of high-yielding assets to 5% from 3%. However, heavy lifting initially, in terms of margin improvement, will be through re-orienting liabilities. Thus, the bank plans to improving CASA ratio to 36% from 30% by FY28E, with the CA portfolio expanding to 10% from 6% and SA to 26% from 24%. To achieve this, the bank plans to reorient its branch strategy (expansion in Tier 2 & below locations + 'Free the Branch' initiative), focus on the Non-Resident deposit base beyond Kerala/GCC, launch wealth management/affluent banking services, and most importantly accelerate transactional banking fees to drive up current deposit flow/fees.

High on aspirations; but better execution could lead to rerating in the long run Notwithstanding the near-term consolidation phase due to calibrated growth, margin pressure amid rate cut cycle, and prudent provisioning leading to some moderation in RoA, we believe Federal—under the new leadership and some tweaks in its already strong asset/liability platform—is well positioned to deliver better RoA from FY27E and thus see a re-rating. We appreciate the new MD's strategy to undertake swift course correction in 3Q within a short span after joining the bank and unveiling the long-term vision (the next 3-5Y; though indicating a broader range instead of hardcoded targets amid the uncertain environment), unlike Kotak Mah Bank. We continue to prefer Federal Bank among SMID banks given its aspiration to enter the top league of banks, and thus retain BUY on the stock with TP of Rs240 (based on 1.4x Dec-26E ABV and subs at Rs14/share).

Federal Bank: Finan	cial Snapsl	hot (Standa	alone)		
Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY23	FY24	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Net profit	30,106	37,206	39,791	44,786	55,043
Loan growth (%)	20.4	20.0	12.6	13.1	15.1
NII growth (%)	21.3	14.7	15.0	12.0	18.0
NIM (%)	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2
PPOP growth (%)	27.6	7.9	21.3	13.9	22.7
Adj. EPS (Rs)	14.2	15.3	16.2	18.2	22.4
Adj. EPS growth (%)	58.3	7.4	6.1	12.6	22.9
Adj. BV (INR)	96.3	114.4	131.3	147.2	167.2
Adj. BVPS growth (%)	16.6	18.7	14.8	12.2	13.6
RoA (%)	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3
RoE (%)	15.2	14.9	12.9	12.7	13.9
P/E (x)	11.8	11.0	10.3	9.2	7.5
P/ABV (x)	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.1	1.0

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Target Price – 12M	Dec-25
Change in TP (%)	(11.1)
Current Reco.	BUY
Previous Reco.	BUY
Upside/(Downside) (%)	33.3

Stock Data	FB IN
52-week High (Rs)	217
52-week Low (Rs)	140
Shares outstanding (mn)	2,454.4
Market-cap (Rs bn)	441
Market-cap (USD mn)	5,091
Net-debt, FY25E (Rs mn)	NA
ADTV-3M (mn shares)	10
ADTV-3M (Rs mn)	1,687.7
ADTV-3M (USD mn)	19.5
Free float (%)	99.5
Nifty-50	22,795.9
INR/USD	86.7
Shareholding, Dec-24	
Promoters (%)	0.0
FPIs/MFs (%)	26.1/48.4

Price Performa	ance		
(%)	1M	3M	12M
Absolute	(6.5)	(14.7)	17.0
Rel. to Nifty	(5.6)	(12.6)	13.2

## 1-Year share price trend (Rs)



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# **Key Takeaways**

#### Macro-environment turning stressed calls for calibrated growth

- Rising macro-economic disruptions including liquidity constraints and asset quality are clouding the near-term growth outlook for the banking industry, as also for the Federal.
- The bank has already adopted a calibrated credit growth approach and accelerated provisions from the beginning-O3FY25 which is expected to continue in the near term.

#### Long term goal under Plan 4.0 – Join the top boys banking club!

- Under the leadership of the new MD Manian, Federal Bank aims to position itself among the top PVBs over the next 3-5 years, in terms of portfolio quality and profitability (RoA of over 1.4-2.3%), but not quantity.
- The bank plans to double its balance sheet and evolve into a true universal bank.
- As part of Plan 4.0, the bank has identified key 12 themes/focus areas, including expanding product portfolio, enhancing fees via transaction/para banking; expanding branches in Tier 2 cities & beyond; branch transformation free the branch from operational load to do sourcing and value-added business; brand transformation positioning Federal as a national bank; renewed digital distribution; re-orienting people and culture; cost optimization in the long run (in the near term, it will go up); strengthening assurance functions and thus taking a step toward becoming a universal bank in the true sense; and moving beyond its current plain vanilla banking services.

#### Key strategies and the roadmap

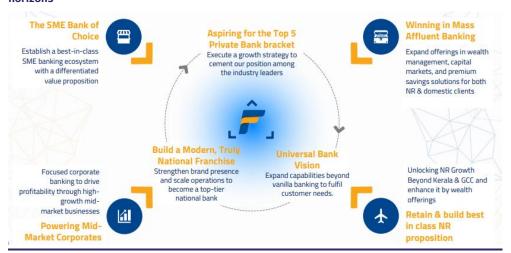
- Strengthening its position as an SME bank of choice Federal Bank aims to become the preferred bank for SMEs, offering the entire gamut of products including trade and forex, CMS, and other banking services. This should help it generate better margins, transactional banking fees, and float/CA deposits.
- Play to its strength in mid-corporate banking The bank plans to enhance corporate banking profitability by focusing on mid-market corporates, rather than competing in the large corporate segment.
- Expand retail product portfolio The bank plans to introduce/scale-up products including LAP, SME, CV, real estate finance, MFI, and AHS, either organically or inorganically. It also plans to cross-sell EMI-based unsecured business loans to existing customers, while maintaining asset quality.
- **Expand affluent banking** NR business is a moat for the bank where it has 7% market share on the deposit front, with an even higher share on the NRE front. The bank plans to strengthen thus further and expand this beyond Kerala and GCC, while enhancing it through wealth offerings.
- Focus on the otherwise sub-par NIM improvement The bank aims to improve its NIM over the next 3-5 years with heavy lifting to be done via liability re-orientation and partly by asset re-orientation. The bank plans to improve CASA ratio, from 30% to 36%, by FY28E, with the CA expanding to 10% from 6% and SA to 26% from 24%. To achieve this, the bank plans to reorient its branch strategy (expansion in Tier 2 & below locations + 'Free the Branch' initiative), focus on the Non-Resident deposit base beyond Kerala/GCC, launch wealth management/affluent banking services, and most importantly accelerate transactional banking fees to drive up current deposit flow/fees.
- Enhance fee income; a difficult task The bank aims to boost its fee income from trade and forex, wealth management, bancassurance, CMS, credit cards, and cross-selling segment-specific offerings for mass affluents, NR, SME, and mid-market clients. The bank recognizes that improving fee in the near term will be challenging, but will be one of the important pillars for driving up RoA in the long run.
- **Branch expansion and transformation** The bank plans to add 400-450 branches till FY28, at a gradual pace, and aims to "free the branch" from overburdened operational load and thus sweat the branches to source business and improve overall efficiency.

### Other highlights

- While the bank is cautious about the unsecured space, it finds the credit card business to be more attractive than PL, within the given boundaries.
- Given the competitive nature of the home loan market, where pricing is the primary lever, the Federal Bank plans to cross-sell to savings account (SA) customers. This is because 85% of the bank's home loan customers also have savings accounts with the bank, and they typically maintain higher balances to manage their EMIs, thus benefiting the bank.
- The bank has MFI loans outstanding of up to Rs41bn (~2% of the overall book) as of Dec-24, serving 1.35mn customers (female: 98%; rural areas: 66%). Despite MFI loans being a high-yielding portfolio, the bank does not intend (to grow this) to make this a sizable part of its balance sheet.
- The bank will prioritize improving RoE, driven by enhanced RoA. It aims to achieve RoA within the 1.4-2.2% range (aligned with top-performing banks), up from the current 1.2%. This improvement will be fueled by better margins and fees, partially offset by a modest increase in operational costs.

# **Story in Charts**

Exhibit 1: The bank, charting its future, by strengthening its foundation and expanding its horizons

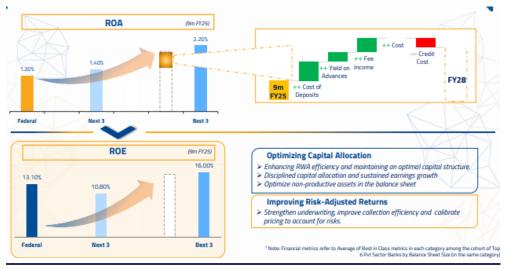


Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 2: Further, breakthrough will be achievable via key themes

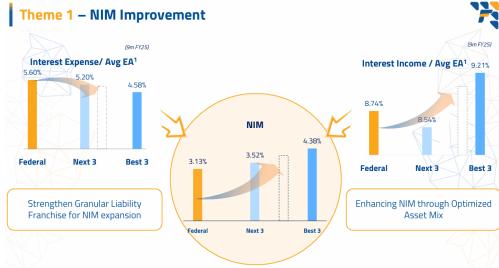


Exhibit 3: ROA improvement will be led by liability franchise, followed by fee income and yields, and offset by credit costs



Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 4: NIM improvement to be the key focus area



Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 5: NIM improvement mainly driven by liability franchise...



Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 6: ...as well as reshaping its advance mix

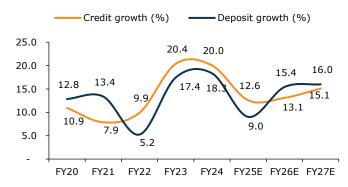


Exhibit 7: The bank, reshaping its credit portfolio, by focusing on scaling-up/introducing medium- and high-yielding products



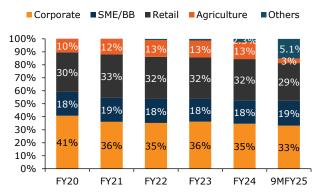
Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 8: The bank is expected to increase its advances by 1.5x of nominal GDP growth, while it focuses more on garnering deposits, especially the current account



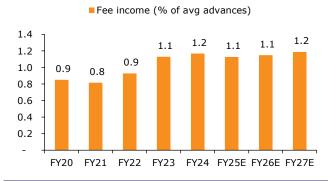
Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 9: The bank's loan mix changed, with focus remaining on retail loans while the corporate share moderates



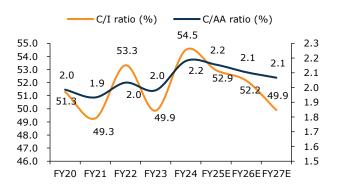
Source: Company, Emkay Research; Note: For 9MFY25, 'other' denotes gold loans, as the bank has carved out its gold loan from agri/retail loans and report separately as gold loans

Exhibit 10: The bank aims to enhance its fee income by exploring new opportunities through product co-origination and cross-selling

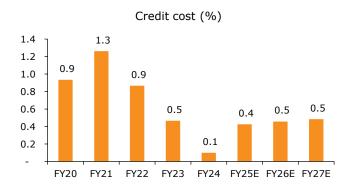


Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 11: C/I ratio to moderate with focus on cost optimization

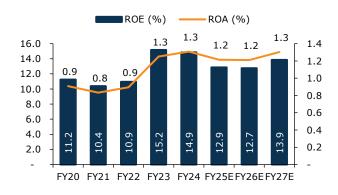


**Exhibit 12: Credit cost to be contained** 



Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 13: We expect RoA/RoE to stay healthy, aided by a better fee-to-cost ratio and contained credit cost



## **Federal Bank: Standalone Financials and Valuations**

Profit & Loss					
Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY23	FY24	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Interest Income	168,036	221,883	266,388	288,491	317,260
Interest Expense	95,715	138,948	170,981	181.640	191,182
Net interest income	72,322	82,935	95,407	106,851	126,078
NII growth (%)	21.3	14.7	15.0	12.0	18.0
Other income	23,300	30,793	37,956	42,497	48,88
Total Income	95,622	113,728	133,364	149,348	174,96
Operating expenses	47,678	61,983	70,616	77,895	87,30
PPOP	47,944	51,745	62,748	71,453	87,659
PPOP growth (%)	27.6	7.9	21.3	13.9	22.
Core PPOP	47,647	48,989	56,135	64,179	79,657
Provisions & contingencies	7,499	1,961	9,587	11,579	14,07
PBT	40,445	49,784	53,160	59,874	73,587
Extraordinary items	0	0	0	0	(
Tax expense	10,339	12,578	13,370	15,088	18,54
Minority interest	0	0	0	0	(
Income from JV/Associates	-	-	-	-	
Reported PAT	30,106	37,206	39,791	44,786	55,043
PAT growth (%)	59.3	23.6	6.9	12.6	22.9
Adjusted PAT	30,106	37,206	39,791	44,786	55,043
Diluted EPS (Rs)	14.2	15.3	16.2	18.2	22.4
Diluted EPS growth (%)	58.3	7.4	6.1	12.6	22.9
DPS (Rs)	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.8
Dividend payout (%)	7.0	7.9	8.6	8.8	8.0
Effective tax rate (%)	25.6	25.3	25.2	25.2	25.2
Net interest margins (%)	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2
Cost-income ratio (%)	49.9	54.5	52.9	52.2	49.9
Shares outstanding (mn)	2,116.2	2,435.4	2,455.0	2,455.0	2,455.0

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Asset quality and oth	er metrics				
Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY23	FY24	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Asset quality					
Gross NPLs	41,837	45,288	47,202	52,069	57,665
Net NPLs	12,050	12,553	11,801	14,059	16,146
GNPA ratio (%)	2.4	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9
NNPA ratio (%)	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
Provision coverage (%)	71.2	72.3	75.0	73.0	72.0
Gross slippages	17,191	17,415	19,141	24,333	27,983
Gross slippage ratio (%)	1.2	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.9
LLP ratio (%)	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.5
NNPA to networth (%)	5.3	4.2	3.4	3.6	3.7
Capital adequacy					
Total CAR (%)	14.8	16.1	16.2	16.0	15.7
Tier-1 (%)	13.0	14.6	14.9	14.8	14.7
CET-1 (%)	13.0	14.6	14.9	14.8	14.7
RWA-to-Total Assets (%)	60.3	61.5	62.0	62.0	62.0
Miscellaneous					
Total income growth (%)	21.5	32.1	20.4	8.8	10.6
Opex growth (%)	11.1	30.0	13.9	10.3	12.1
Core PPOP growth (%)	37.9	2.8	14.6	14.3	24.1
PPOP margin (%)	25.1	20.5	20.6	21.6	23.9
PAT/PPOP (%)	62.8	71.9	63.4	62.7	62.8
LLP-to-Core PPOP (%)	15.7	4.0	17.1	18.0	17.7
Yield on advances (%)	8.5	9.3	9.6	9.3	8.9

4.5

5.5

6.0

5.7

5.2

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Cost of funds (%)

Balance Sheet					
Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY23	FY24	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Share capital	4,232	4,871	4,910	4,910	4,910
Reserves & surplus	208,714	283,151	326,226	367,083	417,708
Net worth	212,946	288,022	331,136	371,993	422,618
Deposits	2,133,860	2,525,340	2,753,186	3,177,293	3,685,115
Borrowings	193,193	180,264	236,374	225,553	215,273
Interest bearing liab.	2,327,053	2,705,604	2,989,560	3,402,846	3,900,388
Other liabilities & prov.	63,419	89,492	149,241	159,667	191,471
Total liabilities & equity	2,603,418	3,083,118	3,469,937	3,934,506	4,514,477
Net advances	1,744,469	2,094,033	2,357,213	2,665,644	3,067,683
Investments	489,833	608,595	675,592	770,184	884,793
Cash, other balances	176,887	189,629	209,269	238,199	273,027
Interest earning assets	2,411,189	2,892,258	3,242,074	3,674,027	4,225,503
Fixed assets	9,340	10,201	11,123	12,208	13,421
Other assets	182,889	180,660	216,740	248,271	275,552
Total assets	2,603,418	3,083,118	3,469,936	3,934,506	4,514,477
BVPS (Rs)	100.6	118.2	134.9	151.5	172.1
Adj. BVPS (INR)	96.3	114.4	131.3	147.2	167.2
Gross advances	1,774,256	2,126,768	2,392,614	2,703,654	3,109,202
Credit to deposit (%)	81.8	82.9	85.6	83.9	83.2
CASA ratio (%)	32.9	29.6	29.6	29.8	31.0
Cost of deposits (%)	4.4	5.5	6.0	5.7	5.2
Loans-to-Assets (%)	67.0	67.9	67.9	67.8	68.0
Loans-to-Assets (%) Net advances growth (%)	67.0 20.4	67.9 20.0	67.9 12.6	67.8 13.1	68.0 15.1

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Valuations and key	Ratios				
Y/E Mar	FY23	FY24	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
P/E (x)	11.8	11.0	10.3	9.2	7.5
P/B (x)	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.0
P/ABV (x)	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.1	1.0
P/PPOP (x)	7.9	8.5	7.0	6.2	5.0
Dividend yield (%)	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0
DuPont-RoE split (%)					
NII/avg assets	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0
Other income	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2
Fee income	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9
Opex	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1
PPOP	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.1
Core PPOP	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.9
Provisions	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3
Tax expense	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
RoA (%)	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3
Leverage ratio (x)	12.1	11.4	10.6	10.5	10.6
RoE (%)	15.2	14.9	12.9	12.7	13.9
Quarterly data					
Rs mn, Y/E Mar	Q4FY24	Q1FY25	Q2FY25	Q3FY25	Q4FY25E
NII	21,951	22,920	23,672	24,313	24,502
NIM (%)	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1
PPOP	11,104	15,009	15,653	15,695	16,391
PAT	9,067	10,095	10,567	9,554	9,574
EPS (Rs)	14.9	16.5	17.2	15.6	15.6

#### **RECOMMENDATION HISTORY - DETAILS**

Date	Closing Price (Rs)	TP (Rs)	Rating	Analyst
29-Jan-25	186	240	Buy	Anand Dama
09-Dec-24	214	270	Buy	Anand Dama
29-Oct-24	201	250	Buy	Anand Dama
24-Jul-24	201	250	Buy	Anand Dama
02-May-24	168	200	Buy	Anand Dama
19-Feb-24	163	180	Buy	Anand Dama
17-Jan-24	146	180	Buy	Anand Dama
30-Nov-23	147	182	Buy	Anand Dama
17-Oct-23	148	182	Buy	Anand Dama
13-Jul-23	127	165	Buy	Anand Dama
06-May-23	128	180	Buy	Anand Dama
09-Mar-23	134	185	Buy	Anand Dama
01-Mar-23	134	185	Buy	Anand Dama

Source: Company, Emkay Research

#### **RECOMMENDATION HISTORY - TREND**



Source: Company, Bloomberg, Emkay Research

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