## **India I Equities**

# Cement Company Update

24 May 2020

# **Birla Corporation**

Good operating show; high leverage to persist; retaining a Buy

Despite eight days production lost, Birla Corp's EBITDA/PAT grew 11%/52% y/y on higher realisation, operational and tax savings. The Kundanganj expansion has been postponed; the Yavatmal and Chanderia expansions will continue, keeping leverage high. The strong brand focus, cost-saving measures (WHRS/solar plant/railway siding at Kundanganj) and rising blended/trade sales will aid. We retain our Buy rating, and raise our target to ₹650 (earlier ₹588).

**Lockdown hit volume.** Running at 91% capacity, on the 13% y/y volume decline (due to the lockdown), revenue dipped ~10% y/y in Q4 FY20. The company has ramped up production to over 80% utilisation (except the Raebareli and Durgapur GUs). With lost business in April and an expected weak Q2 FY21 (monsoon, labour and logistics issues), we expect volumes to dip 8.6% y/y in FY21 and grow 7% y/y in FY22.

Focus on brand building, premiumisation. On higher realisations (4.3% y/y), lower fuel costs and cost savings efforts, EBITDA grew 11% to ₹3.4bn and EBITDA/ton rose 27% y/y to ₹1,028. We believe that the company will benefit from its strong brand focus, higher blended cement/trade sales and investment in WHRS/CPP. We expect EBITDA/ton of ₹851 and ₹983 in FY21 and FY22 (vs. ₹965 in FY20)

Major capex to continue. It postponed the ₹2.5bn Kundanganj project. However the capacity expansion at Yavatmal (₹24.5bn capex) and Chanderia (₹1.5bn capex) is going on. It spent ₹10.8bn till FY20; the remaining ₹15.2bn will be expended in FY21/22, which, we believe, will keep leverage high.

Valuation. We raised FY21e/22e PAT 31%/17% on expected savings on tax expense on adoption of the new tax regime (Sec. 115 BAA of the IT Act, 1961) by three subsidiaries. We retain our Buy rating, raising our target to ₹650, valuing it at 7x FY22e EV/EBITDA and an EV/ton of \$55. Risks: High pet-coke and diesel prices, extension of the lockdown.

Key financials (YE Mar)	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21e	FY22e
Sales (₹ m)	57,300	65,487	69,157	64,217	70,404
Net profit (₹ m)	1,664	2,557	5,052	2,447	3,416
EPS (₹)	21.6	33.2	65.6	31.8	44.4
PE (x)	33.0	15.8	6.3	12.8	9.1
EV / EBITDA (x)	11.6	8.3	5.2	6.8	5.6
EV / ton (\$)(Cement)	59.9	50.8	45.6	50.0	42.2
RoE (%)	4.4	5.8	10.9	5.0	6.6
RoCE (%)-after tax	5.1	5.1	7.3	4.5	5.3
Dividend yield (%)	0.9	1.4	1.8	1.6	1.6
Net debt / equity (x)	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8

Rating: **Buy**Target Price: ₹650
Share Price: ₹406

Key data	BCORP IN / BRLC.BO
52-week high / low	₹808 / 372
Sensex / Nifty	30673 / 9039
3-m average volume	\$0.9m
Market cap	₹31bn / \$412.1m
Shares outstanding	77m

Shareholding pattern (%)	Mar'20	Dec'19	Sept'19
Promoters	62.9	62.9	62.9
- of which, Pledged			
Free float	37.1	37.1	37.1
- Foreign institutions	4.2	3.9	2.6
- Domestic institutions	15.3	15.5	16.5
- Public	17.6	17.8	18.0

Estimates revision (%)	FY21e	FY22e
Sales	(0.7)	(0.6)
EBITDA	(1.1)	(0.2)
PAT	30.9	17.1



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Anand Rathi Research India Equities

# **Quick Glance - Financials and Valuations**

Fig 1 – Income staten	nent (₹ m	1)			
Year-end: Mar	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21e	FY22e
Sales volume	12.39	13.60	13.60	12.43	13.32
Net revenues (₹ m)	57,300	65,487	69,157	64,217	70,404
Growth (%)	31.8	14.3	5.6	-7.1	9.6
Direct costs	37,422	42,746	41,801	40,005	42,205
SG&A	11,797	13,255	13,997	13,402	14,813
EBITDA	8,081	9,486	13,360	10,810	13,386
EBITDA margins (%)	14.1	14.5	19.3	16.8	19.0
- Depreciation	3,322	3,391	3,519	3,954	4,851
Other income	740	785	851	771	845
Interest expenses	3,776	3,705	3,877	4,130	4,500
PBT	1,723	3,174	6,815	3,496	4,880
Effective tax rate (%)	3.7	19.4	25.9	30.0	30.0
+ Associates / (Minorities)					
Net income	1,540	2,557	5,052	2,447	3,416
Adjusted income	1,664	2,557	5,052	2,447	3,416
WANS	77	77	77	77	77
FDEPS (₹ / sh)	21.6	33.2	65.6	31.8	44.4
FDEPS growth (%)	-26.5	53.6	97.6	-51.6	39.6

Fig 2 – Balance she	et (₹ m)				
Year-end: Mar	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21e	FY22e
Share capital	770	770	770	770	770
Net worth	42,798	44,952	48,061	50,008	52,923
Debt	45,300	45,300	46,342	50,842	55,042
Minority interest	0				
DTL / (Assets)	7,449	7,422	8,568	8,568	8,568
Capital employed	95,547	97,674	1,02,971	1,09,417	1,16,533
Net tangible assets	63,737	62,941	63,742	71,127	88,691
Net intangible assets	9,949	9,701	9,513	9,513	9,513
Good will	2	0	0	0	0
CWIP (tang. & intang.)	7,623	9,141	16,039	15,000	2,000
Investments (strategic)	2,500	2,764	1,600	1,600	1,600
Investments (financial)	4,222	6,003	6,762	6,762	6,762
Current assets (ex cash)	20,515	21,376	21,540	21,002	22,954
Cash	2,198	1,390	2,558	2,129	4,389
Current liabilities	15,198	15,642	18,784	17,715	19,376
Working capital	5,317	5,734	2,757	3,287	3,577
Capital deployed	95,547	97,675	1,02,971	1,09,417	1,16,533
Contingent liabilities	4,263	4,241	-	-	-

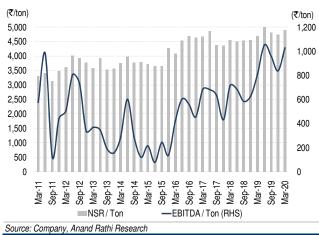
Fig 3 – Cash-flow state	•	•			
Year-end: Mar	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21e	FY22e
PBT	1723	3174	6815	3496	4880
+ Non-cash items	3322	3391	3519	3954	4851
Oper. prof. before WC	5045	6566	10334	7450	9731
- Incr. / (decr.) in WC	1628	417	-2977	530	290
Others incl. taxes	238	640	570	849	1464
Operating cash-flow	3179	5509	12742	6071	7976
- Capex (tang. + intang.)	12949	3864	11030	10300	9415
Free cash-flow	-9770	1645	1711	-4229	-1439
Acquisitions					
- Div.(incl. buyback & taxes)	603	696	696	501	501
+ Equity raised	0	0	0	0	0
+ Debt raised	-331	-1	1042	4500	4200
- Fin investments	1080	2046	-406	0	0
- Misc. (CFI + CFF)	-10858	-290	1294	200	0
Net cash-flow	-926	-808	1168	-429	2261
Source: Company, Anand Rathi Res	search				

Fig 4 – Ratio analysis					
Year-end: Mar	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21e	FY22e
P/E (x)	33.0	15.8	6.3	12.8	9.1
EV / EBITDA (x)	11.6	8.3	5.2	6.8	5.6
EV / Sales (x)	1.6	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.1
P/B (x)	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.6
RoE (%)	4.4	5.8	10.9	5.0	6.6
RoCE (%) - after tax	5.1	5.1	7.3	4.5	5.3
DPS (₹ / sh)	6.5	7.5	7.5	6.5	6.5
Dividend payout (%) - incl. DDT	39.2	27.2	13.8	20.5	14.7
Net debt / equity (x)	0.9	0.8	0.7	8.0	0.8
WC days	28.7	30.8	22.4	17.2	17.8
EV / ton (\$)(Cement)	59.9	50.8	45.6	50.0	42.2
NSR / ton (₹)	4543	4571	4840	4920	5040
EBITDA / ton (₹)	621	683	965	851	983
Volumes (m tons)	12.4	13.6	13.6	12.4	13.3
CFO: PAT (%)	191.0	215.4	252.2	248.1	233.5
Source: Company, Anand Rathi Resea	rch				

Fig 5 –	Price	movement
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Fig 6 – Quarterly per-ton NSR and EBITDA trends



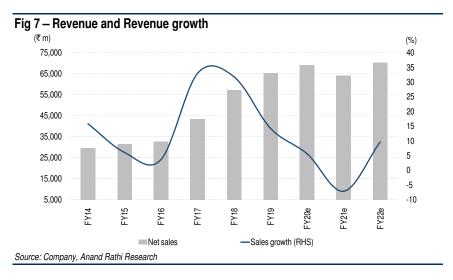
# **Key highlights**

Birla Corp's Q4 revenue declined 9.8% y/y to `16.9bn because of the 13% y/y drop in volumes (to 3.3m tons) from the eight days production lost in Mar'20.

The judicious geographic- and product-mix aimed at increasing the share of blended and premium cement in its portfolio and firm cement prices led to better realizations in key markets (up 4.32% y/y) to ₹4,889/ton.

Capacity utilisation declined to 93%, from 98% a year ago mainly due to volumes lost since 22 March due to the situation arising out of Covid-19. For FY20, capacity utilisation was 91% (vs. 89% in FY19).

Currently all plants, except the grinding units at Raebareli and Durgapur are operating at 80-100% of their production capacity as the company has seen a gradual pick-up in demand since the lockdown was relaxed, beginning May.



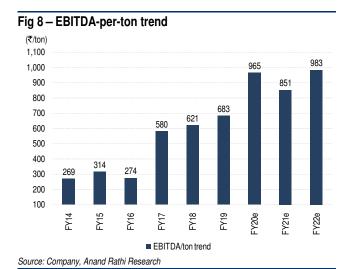
EBITDA/ton for the quarter increased 27% y/y, to ₹1,028 on lower fuel cost and sustained investments in improving efficiency and cost rationalisation (cost-control measures such as steps toward improving logistics efficiency, savings from a railway sliding, the automated loading facility at Kundanganj and the WHRS).

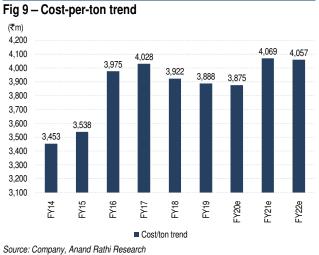
Backed by the strong operating performance, PAT for the quarter increased 52% y/y to ₹1947mn, partially offset by the increase in interest and depreciation expenses by 1.5% and 7.8% y/y respectively.

## The jute division

Despite eight days production lost leading to a 4% dip in production, the jute division reported EBITDA of ₹233.7m, up 15.7% y/y in FY20. The continuous thrust on value-added products (higher export contribution) aided in sustaining profitability amid mounting cost pressures.

Manufacturing operations at Birla Jute Mills, Birlapur, West Bengal were disrupted by Super Cyclone Amphan, which struck on 20<sup>th</sup> May'20. The production shed was severely damaged by the cyclone. The company expects normal production to be restored in three months.





# **Project Update**

- Mukutban: The factory with clinker capacity of 2.64m tons and cement capacity of 3.9m tons with its own railway siding is expected to be commissioned by Jun'21. The proposed unit is to have a 40MW power plant and a 9MW WHRS. Of ₹24.5bn, the company spent ₹10.85bn on the project till FY20.
- Kundanganj: The company has decided to keep its ₹2.5bn expansion of its Kundanganj unit on hold for now to restrict debt and conserve liquidity.
- Chanderia: Birla Corporation is expanding the kiln capacity of its Chanderia unit in Rajasthan and is expected to complete it by end-FY21, when capacity will be augmented by around 400,000 tons. Of ₹1.5bn, it has spent ₹700m till FY20
- In FY20, the company concluded the following projects:
  - > 11MW WHRS at Maihar
  - Railway siding at Kundangani
  - ➤ Installation of solar power plants with aggregate generation capacity of 12MW at Maihar, Satna and Chanderia.

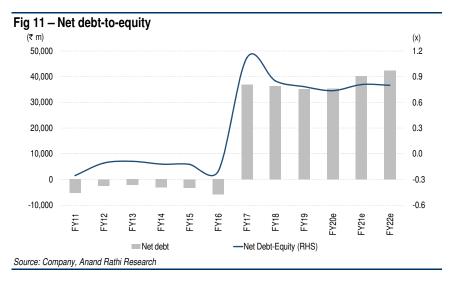
# **Other updates**

■ Focus on branding and premiumisation continues

During the year, the company consolidated its share of key markets by continuing to focus on premium and blended cement. Sales of its premium slag brand, MP Birla Cement Unique (sold in eastern India), grew 18% y/y. Of the new launches, the super-premium Ultimate Ultra brand with water repellent properties has made its mark in MP, while Samrat Advanced (a premium variant of the company's heritage MP Birla Cement Samrat brand) gained significant ground in key markets of eastern UP.

Fig 10 – Operational Details				
Particulars (%)	Q4 FY20	Q4 FY19	FY20	FY19
Blended Cement	92	92	93	89
Trade Channel	80	83	81	81
Premium Cement(% of Trade sales)	43	39	41	37
Capacity Utilisation	93	98	91	89
Source: Company				

- Tax. Three subsidiaries (RCCPL, Birla Jute Supply, Lok Cements) of seven shifted to the new tax regime (Section 115 BAA of the IT Act, 1961), recognised tax expense for FY20 and re-measured deferred tax assets/liabilities at the reduced rate prescribed in the Section. Birla Corp has decided to continue under the old tax regime.
- The BoD approved the issue of Secured/Unsecured Redeemable Non-Convertible Debentures (including Bonds) of up to ₹3bn on a private placement basis in one or more tranches, within the overall borrowing limits, as approved by members from time to time, within a one year.
- Other material development. In May, a two-judge division Bench of the Calcutta High Court passed a verdict allowing Birla Corporation to declare the results of polls taken at its annual general meeting last year. The verdict, quashing an interim order of a single judge of the Calcutta High Court, was within a week upheld by the Supreme Court. Following the removal of restraints imposed on declaration of the results of the polling, the company has given effect to all resolutions passed at the last annual general meeting and has started the process of paying dividend to its shareholders for 2018-19.
- **Debt.** The gross term debt in Mar'20 was ₹42.26bn compared with ₹40.49bn the previous year. Net debt at end-FY20 was less than ₹35bn (2.5x 2019-20 EBITDA) including bank loans of ₹5.4bn for the underconstruction cement plant at Mukutban in Maharashtra. The company has not taken the moratorium offered by The Reserve Bank of India in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic on repayment of term loans and interest. The Board at its meeting on 22 May passed an enabling resolution for premature redemption/buyback of secured NCDs to bring down borrowing costs, if such opportunity prevails in the market.



# **Result Highlights**

Fig 12 – Quarterl	y Trend					•	•				•		
(₹ m)	Q2 FY18	Q3 FY18	Q4 FY18	Q1 FY19	Q2 FY19	Q3 FY19	Q4 FY19	Q1 FY20	Q2 FY20	Q3 FY20	Q4 FY20	% Y/Y	% Q/Q
Sales	12,340	13,893	16,506	16,545	14,646	15,569	18,728	18,838	16,269	17,151	16,900	-10%	-1%
EBITDA	1,771	1,387	2,507	2,464	1,856	2,071	3,095	3,847	3,121	2,946	3,446	11%	17%
EBITDA margin (%)	14.4	10.0	15.2	14.9	12.7	13.3	16.5	20.4	19.2	17.2	20.4	386bps	322bps
EBITDA per ton (₹)	637	432	715	684	586	629	807	1,053	957	839	1,028	27%	23%
Interest	1,053	958	829	952	935	922	896	960	1,030	977	909	2%	-7%
Depreciation	831	823	836	857	870	836	829	862	879	884	894	8%	1%
Other income	116	141	334	232	203	106	244	169	199	203	281	15%	38%
PBT	3	(252)	1,177	887	254	419	1,615	2,192	1,411	1,289	1,924	19%	49%
Tax	(12)	(34)	(135)	48	91	146	333	786	527	474	(24)	-107%	-105%
PAT	15	(218)	1,311	839	163	274	1,282	1,406	883	815	1,947	52%	139%
Source: Company, Anano	d Rathi Resea	rch											

(₹ m)	Q2 FY18	Q3 FY18	Q4 FY18	Q1 FY19	Q2 FY19	Q3 FY19	Q4 FY19	Q1 FY20	Q2 FY20	Q3 FY20	Q4 FY20	% Y/Y	% Q/Q
Revenue													
-Jute	743	657	968	722	717	956	918	801	877	887	768	-16.4%	-13.5%
-Cement	11,599	13,227	15,528	15,822	13,923	14,616	17,807	18,033	15,391	16,268	16,133	-9.4%	-0.8%
-Others	15	15	11	15	17	20	15	16	20	31	15	-2.0%	-52.7%
Total	12,357	13,899	16,507	16,558	14,657	15,592	18,741	18,850	16,289	17,186	16,915	-9.7%	-1.6%
Less: Inter-segment revenue	17	5	2	13	11	23	13	11	20	35	16	18.3%	-56.2%
Net sales	12,340	13,893	16,506	16,545	14,645	15,569	18,728	18,838	16,269	17,151	16,900	-9.8%	-1.5%
PBIT													
-Jute	57	53	48	32	36	29	9	31	34	44	28	204.3%	-35.9%
% of revenue	7.7	8.1	4.9	4.4	5.0	3.0	1.0	3.8	3.8	4.9	3.6	265bps	-128bps
-Cement	1,005	664	1,723	1,858	1,300	1,157	2,395	3,116	2,360	2,170	2,815	17.5%	29.7%
% of revenue	8.7	5.0	11.1	11.7	9.3	7.9	13.4	17.3	15.3	13.3	17.4	400bps	411bps
-Others	(7)	(8)	(10)	(5)	(9)	(8)	(10)	(5)	(8)	(7)	(7)	NA	NA
% of revenue	(43.9)	(55.2)	(83.3)	(33.6)	(51.1)	(39.9)	(66.2)	(31.7)	(40.2)	(21.4)	(48.0)	NA	NA
Total	1,056	709	1,761	1,885	1,327	1,178	2,394	3,142	2,385	2,207	2,836	18.4%	28.5%
Less: Interest	1,053	958	829	952	935	922	896	960	1,030	977	909	1.5%	-6.9%
Less: Other unalloc. exp. net of unalloc. inc.	(0)	4	(245)	46	139	(164)	(116)	(10)	(55)	(59)	3	NA	NA
PBT (before extraord.)	3	(252)	1,177	887	253	419	1,615	2,192	1,411	1,289	1,924	19.1%	49.3%

# **Valuations**

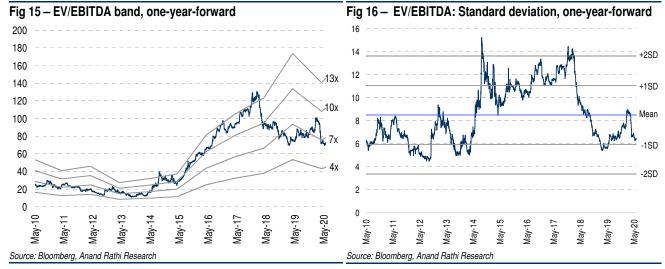
A judicious geographic- and product-mix aimed at increasing the share of blended and premium cement within its portfolio are positives. Birla Corp's strong brand focus, various cost saving initiatives (WHRS/solar plant/railway siding at Kundanganj) would help, operationally. The company postponed the Kundanganj expansion; however, the Yavatmal and Chanderia expansions will keep leverage high. The adoption of the new tax regime (Section 115 BAA of The IT Act, 1961) by three subsidiaries (RCCPL, Birla Jute Supply, Lok Cements) of seven will bring some tax savings.

# **Change in estimates**

We have broadly maintained our revenue and EBITDA estimates. However, we raise FY21e/22e PAT 31%/17% on expected tax savings on the adoption of the new tax regime (Sec. 115 BAA of The IT Act, 1961) by three subsidiaries.

Fig 14 – Change in estimates								
	New		Old		Variance			
(₹ m)	FY21e	FY22e	FY21e	FY22e	% chg	% chg		
Sales	64,217	70,404	64,680	70,830	(0.7)	(0.6)		
EBITDA	10,810	13,386	10,927	13,412	(1.1)	(0.2)		
PAT	2,447	3,416	1,870	2,918	30.9	17.1		
Source: Anand Ra	athi Research							

We maintain our Buy rating on the stock, while raising our target price to ₹650, (earlier ₹588), valuing it at 7x FY22e EV/EBITDA, and an EV/ton of \$55, based on the current market price and the company's high leverage



# Risk

- Extension of the lockdown
- Rise in pet-coke and diesel prices.

Fig 16 – Peer comparison - Valuations							
	CMP P/E (x)		)	EV / EBITDA (x)		EV / ton (\$)	
	(₹)	FY21e	FY22e	FY21e	FY22e	FY21e	FY22e
Birla Corp.	406	12.8	9.1	6.8	5.6	50	42
Dalmia Bharat	489	NA	225.9	7.4	5.9	67	61
Deccan Cement	228	11.5	6.2	5.2	3.0	16	14
Heidelberg Cement	153	17.8	12.9	8.9	6.8	69	63
India Cement	132	NA	29.6	13.0	9.8	61	63
JK Cement	1,111	26.9	18.1	12.7	9.8	92	88
JK Lakshmi	209	35.1	10.4	8.5	4.7	39	33
Mangalam Cement	157	12.5	6.4	6.4	4.4	33	30
NCL Indus	64	9.7	5.1	4.9	3.3	24	20
Orient Cement	40	80.9	15.7	7.6	6.2	34	36
Prism Johnson	33	NA	21.8	9.5	6.8	42	40
Ramco Cement	570	32.9	22.7	17.3	12.8	100	96
Sanghi Indus	17	NA	10.1	11.5	7.4	33	34
Source: Anand Rathi Resea	rch						

## **Appendix**

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Ratings Guide (12 months)				
	Buy	Hold	Sell	
Large Caps (>US\$1bn)	>15%	5-15%	<5%	
Mid/Small Caps ( <us\$1bn)< td=""><td>&gt;25%</td><td>5-25%</td><td>&lt;5%</td><td></td></us\$1bn)<>	>25%	5-25%	<5%	

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