

05 May 2025

India | Equity Research | Results Update

RailTel Corporation of India

Telecom

Project segment revenue beat; EBIT margin lower than estimated

Railtel Corporation of India's (Railtel) Q4FY25 net profit grew 46.3% YoY; Q4, in general, exhibits lumpiness. Railtel delivered profit growth of 27.6% in FY25, in line with the guidance of 25–30%. The company has reiterated its guidance of revenue/profit growth of 25–30% for FY26 on strong order book (OB) addition of INR 31.5bn in FY25; however, telecom revenue run-rate is slower than expected. Railtel expects its projects business' EBIT margin at 4–5% and consolidated margin at 11–12%, which is slightly lower than expected. Railtel envisages a pick-up in its data centre business from FY26. We cut our FY26–27E EPS by 3–4% on slower telecom services revenue and lower projects EBIT margin; TP lowered to INR 270 (from INR 280) with a P/E multiple to 20x FY27E (unchanged). Retain **SELL**.

EBITDA grew 54.1% YoY/ 48.3% QoQ

Railtel's revenue rose 57.1% YoY/70.4% QoQ to INR 13bn. Telecom services' revenue grew 6.6% YoY to INR 3.6bn, which is disappointing considering guidance of 9–10% growth. Projects business' revenue rose 91.3% YoY/121% QoQ to INR 9.5bn, as generally Q4 is heavy on execution. Employee cost dipped 3.6% YoY/22.1% QoQ to INR 439mn. Other expenses were down 19.5% YoY/13.5% QoQ to INR 110mn. Access charges have reduced 1.7% YoY/up 10.2% QoQ. Other income was up 6.8% YoY to INR 204mn. ECL provisioning reversal, as an exceptional item, was INR 119mn. Net profit grew 46.3% YoY/74.4% QoQ to INR 1.1bn.

Telecom revenue rose 6.6% YoY to INR 3.6bn

Telecom revenue was impacted due to higher competition in Railwire, wherein the company saw muted growth; Q4-exit ARPU dipped to INR 479 (~INR 500 in FY24). Railtel is now competing aggressively in the market against smaller ISPs, and large telcos to grab more subs, particularly in its stronghold of rural areas. The company still maintains its aspiration to grow telecom revenues by 9–10% p.a. Within telecom, NLD revenue stood at INR 1.6bn, up 7.2% YoY; ISP was at INR 1.1bn, dipping 2.7% YoY; and IP-1 stood at INR 840mn, up 16.7%. IP-1 revenue growth was driven by data centre. Railtel is now increasingly focusing on growing faster in the cyber-security business. Telecom segment's EBIT was up 11.5% YoY/20.9% QoQ to INR 843mn, and EBIT margin stood at 23.5% (gained 100bp QoQ/290bp in Q3FY25).

Financial Summary

| Y/E March (INR mn) | FY24A | FY25A | FY26E | FY27E |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Net Revenue | 25,678 | 34,775 | 40,101 | 46,547 |
| EBITDA | 4,372 | 5,335 | 6,040 | 6,890 |
| EBITDA Margin (%) | 17.0 | 15.3 | 15.1 | 14.8 |
| Net Profit | 2,462 | 2,781 | 3,685 | 4,305 |
| EPS (INR) | 7.7 | 9.3 | 11.5 | 13.4 |
| EPS % Chg YoY | 30.2 | 21.8 | 22.9 | 16.8 |
| P/E (x) | 42.1 | 34.6 | 28.1 | 24.1 |
| EV/EBITDA (x) | 21.4 | 18.4 | 16.8 | 14.8 |
| RoCE (%) | 12.1 | 13.8 | 14.5 | 15.0 |
| RoE (%) | 14.2 | 14.5 | 17.2 | 17.5 |

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Market Data

| Market Cap (INR) | 104bn |
|---------------------|------------|
| Market Cap (USD) | 1,229mn |
| Bloomberg Code | RAILTEL IN |
| Reuters Code | RAIT BO |
| 52-week Range (INR) | 618 /265 |
| Free Float (%) | 27.0 |
| ADTV-3M (mn) (USD) | 12.9 |
| | |

| Price Performance (%) | 3m | 6m | 12m |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Absolute | (9.9) | (21.0) | (18.2) |
| Relative to Sensex | (13.1) | (22.7) | (27.5) |

| ESG Score | 2023 | 2024 | Change |
|-------------|------|------|--------|
| ESG score | 59.7 | NA | NA |
| Environment | 32.2 | NA | NA |
| Social | 59.9 | NA | NA |
| Governance | 71.9 | NA | NA |

Note - Score ranges from 0 - 100 with a higher score indicating higher ESG disclosures.

Source: SES ESG, I-sec research

| Earnings Revisions (%) | FY26E | FY27E |
|------------------------|-------|-------|
| Revenue | 11.9 | 12.2 |
| EBITDA | (1.5) | (3.1) |
| EPS | (2.5) | (4.3) |

Previous Reports

29-01-2025: <u>Q3FY25 results review</u> 03-11-2024: <u>Q2FY25 results review</u>



Projects' orderbook at INR 60bn, up 27% YoY

Projects' revenue rose 91.3% YoY/ 121% QoQ to INR 9.5bn in Q4FY25; and generally, Q4 has lumpy execution. Railtel has an OB worth INR 60bn (vs. INR 52.8bn in Q3FY25), of which railway-related projects are 29.7%, and the remaining ~70.3% are non-railway projects. Order inflow for FY25 was INR 31.46bn (vs. INR 25.8bn in FY24), which points to a good outlook for the projects business. Project under execution for FY26 is INR 26bn, which suggests growth of over 20% even in FY26 on a high base. However, Railtel anticipates EBIT margin to be in the range of 4–5%. Out of the OB, deals coming through the nomination route is 38%, and the remaining is from tender at 62%.

Projects' EBIT jumped 4x YoY/123% QoQ to INR 466mn; and EBIT margin was 4.9% (5.4%/4.9% in FY24/Q3FY25).

Railtel has signed an MoU with Quadrant Future Tek Ltd. for the implementation of technology on Kavach (anti-collision avoidance system), which is developed by Quadrant. Quadrant's Kavach technology is now established; which has helped Railtel participate in Kavach. It has won its first Kavach contract of INR 2.44bn, and is likely to start execution from Q3FY26. Kavach execution is also dependent on approval of Version 4.0 products where no player has yet received approval. The company does not anticipate any hardware bottleneck for its Kavach equipment, as Quadrant has an exclusive supply agreement with Railtel.

It appears Railway has delayed the implementation of LTE network, as they are evaluating the deployment of 5G on the 700MHz spectrum band. Immediately, Railway would be using UHF technology for running Kavach system.

Edge data centre project to start booking revenues from FY26

Railtel has completed tendering for the first phase of an edge data centre, wherein the company plans to rollout 102 edge data centres. The tender is won by Techno Electric & Engineering Company. Railtel mentioned that it is very close to commissioning two edge data centre and is likely to commission 7–8 edge data centres in FY26. Total revenue expected is INR 100mn from the data centre segment and Railtel would make this part of it, as the remaining revenue shall be shared to partner who has put capex to set-up data centres. Railtel is marketing the data centre, and implementing network connectivity and security layer.

Other highlights

1) Company guidance for FY26: Revenue growth remains unchanged at 25-30%; EBIT margin expected to be 11-12%. Revenue growth will likely be significantly higher in projects segment. 2) Railtel is expecting order inflow of INR 40bn during FY26. 3) Company aims to drive faster revenue in telecom services aided by NLD, where it is strengthening network; and pick up in data centre business. 4) Capex in FY25 stood at INR 3.2bn, of which data centre was INR 0.86bn.

Risks

1) Higher-than-expected revenue and margin from Indian Railways' LTE and Kavach projects; and 2) consistently higher growth in telecom revenue.



Exhibit 1: Railtel (consolidated) financials

| INR mn | Q4FY24 | Q1FY25 | Q2FY25 | Q3FY25 | Q4FY25 | QoQ (%) | YoY (%) |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| Revenue | 8,327 | 5,581 | 8,435 | 7,676 | 13,083 | 70.4 | 57.1 |
| | | | | | | | |
| Expenses on projects | 4,843 | 2,208 | 4,884 | 4,088 | 9,030 | 120.9 | 86.5 |
| Access charges | 1,514 | 1,470 | 1,390 | 1,351 | 1,489 | 10.2 | (1.7) |
| Licence fees | 213 | 212 | 229 | 335 | 219 | (34.6) | 2.8 |
| Admin & other exp | 136 | 96 | 107 | 127 | 110 | (13.5) | (19.5) |
| Employee costs | 456 | 561 | 532 | 564 | 439 | (22.1) | (3.6) |
| Total expenses | 7,162 | 4,547 | 7,142 | 6,465 | 11,287 | 74.6 | 57.6 |
| EBITDA | 1,166 | 1,034 | 1,293 | 1,212 | 1,796 | 48.3 | 54.1 |
| EBITDA (%) | 14.0 | 18.5 | 15.3 | 15.8 | 13.7 | 10.0 | 5-11-2 |
| Depreciation | 426 | 376 | 399 | 432 | 598 | 38.2 | 40.3 |
| EBIT | 739 | 658 | 894 | 779 | 1,199 | 53.8 | 62.1 |
| Finance cost | 35 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 83.9 | (70.7) |
| Other income | 191 | 195 | 190 | 147 | 204 | 39.1 | 6.8 |
| PBT | 895 | 843 | 1,079 | 920 | 1,393 | 51.3 | 55.5 |
| Exceptional items | 124 | (175) | (138) | (24) | 119 | | |
| Tax expenses | 244 | 181 | 215 | 246 | 377 | 53.2 | 54.7 |
| ETR (%) | 27.3 | 21.5 | 19.9 | 26.8 | 27.1 | | |
| PAT | 775 | 487 | 726 | 651 | 1,135 | 74.4 | 46.3 |
| Adj PAT | 682 | 618 | 830 | 668 | 1,045 | 56.4 | 53.1 |
| EPS (INR) | 2.8 | 2.1 | 2.7 | 2.1 | 3.2 | 50.6 | 12.9 |

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

Exhibit 2: Railtel segmental performance

| INR mn | Q4FY24 | Q1FY25 | Q2FY25 | Q3FY25 | Q4FY25 | QoQ (%) | YoY (%) |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| Telecom services | | | | | | | |
| Revenue | 3,365 | 3,278 | 3,381 | 3,379 | 3,588 | 6.2 | 6.6 |
| EBIT | 756 | 658 | 831 | 697 | 843 | 20.9 | 11.5 |
| EBIT (%) | 22.5 | 20.1 | 24.6 | 20.6 | 23.5 | | |
| Projects | | | | | | | |
| Revenue | 4,963 | 2,303 | 5,054 | 4,297 | 9,495 | 121.0 | 91.3 |
| EBIT | 120 | 96 | 170 | 209 | 466 | 122.9 | 289.3 |
| EBIT (%) | 2.4 | 4.2 | 3.4 | 4.9 | 4.9 | | |

Source: I-Sec research, Company data

Exhibit 3: Orderbook grew 26.7% YoY

| INR mn | Q4FY24 | Q1FY25 | Q2FY25 | Q3FY25 | Q4FY25 | QoQ (%) | YoY (%) |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| Orderbook | 47,500 | 48,000 | 52,540 | 52,800 | 60,160 | 13.9 | 26.7 |
| Telecom revenue break-up | | | | | | | |
| NLD | 1,520 | 1,500 | 1,590 | 1,500 | 1,630 | 8.7 | 7.2 |
| ISP | 1,100 | 1,080 | 1,110 | 1,110 | 1,070 | (3.6) | (2.7) |
| IP-1 | 720 | 690 | 640 | 750 | 840 | 12.0 | 16.7 |
| Total | 3,365 | 3,278 | 3,381 | 3,379 | 3,588 | 6.2 | 6.6 |

Source: I-Sec research, Company data



Exhibit 4: Earnings revision

| | Revise | d | 0 | ld | Chang | ge (%) |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| INR mn | FY26E | FY27E | FY26E | FY27E | FY26E | FY27E |
| Revenue | 40,101 | 46,547 | 35,830 | 41,486 | 11.9 | 12.2 |
| EBITDA | 6,040 | 6,890 | 6,130 | 7,112 | (1.5) | (3.1) |
| EBITDA (%) | 15.1 | 14.8 | 17.1 | 17.1 | | |
| PAT | 3,685 | 4,305 | 3,781 | 4,499 | (2.5) | (4.3) |
| EPS (INR) | 11.5 | 13.4 | 11.8 | 14.0 | (2.5) | (4.3) |

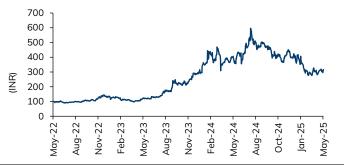
Source: I-Sec research, Company data

Exhibit 5: Shareholding pattern

| % | Sep '24 | Dec '24 | Mar'25 |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|--------|
| Promoters | 72.8 | 72.8 | 72.8 |
| Institutional investors | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.8 |
| MFs and other | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Banks/Fls | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Insurance Cos. | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| FIIs | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| Others | 23.5 | 23.5 | 23.4 |

Source: Bloomberg, I-Sec research

Exhibit 6: Price chart



Source: Bloomberg, I-Sec research



Financial Summary

Exhibit 7: Profit & Loss

(INR mn, year ending March)

| | FY24A | FY25A | FY26E | FY27E |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Net Sales | 25,678 | 34,775 | 40,101 | 46,547 |
| Operating Expenses | 21,307 | 29,440 | 34,061 | 39,657 |
| EBITDA | 4,372 | 5,335 | 6,040 | 6,890 |
| EBITDA Margin (%) | 17.0 | 15.3 | 15.1 | 14.8 |
| Depreciation & Amortization | 1,577 | 1,804 | 1,876 | 1,961 |
| EBIT | 2,795 | 3,531 | 4,163 | 4,929 |
| Interest expenditure | 57 | 31 | 31 | 31 |
| Other Non-operating Income | 563 | 735 | 794 | 858 |
| Recurring PBT | 3,281 | 4,235 | 4,926 | 5,755 |
| Profit / (Loss) from Associates | - | - | - | - |
| Less: Taxes | 819 | 1,020 | 1,241 | 1,450 |
| PAT | 2,462 | 2,998 | 3,685 | 4,305 |
| Less: Minority Interest | - | - | - | - |
| Extraordinaries (Net) | - | - | - | - |
| Net Income (Reported) | 2,462 | 2,998 | 3,685 | 4,305 |
| Net Income (Adjusted) | 2,462 | 2,781 | 3,685 | 4,305 |

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 8: Balance sheet

(INR mn, year ending March)

| | FY24A | FY25A | FY26E | FY27E |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Total Current Assets | 23,632 | 37,472 | 42,919 | 49,428 |
| of which cash & cash eqv. | 4,852 | 5,264 | 2,026 | 1,525 |
| Total Current Liabilities & | 15.476 | 22 10E | 26.629 | 20 00E |
| Provisions | 15,476 | 23,105 | 20,029 | 30,895 |
| Net Current Assets | 8,156 | 14,367 | 16,290 | 18,533 |
| Investments | 5,229 | 392 | 392 | 392 |
| Net Fixed Assets | 8,759 | 10,356 | 12,054 | 14,025 |
| ROU Assets | 1,670 | 1,690 | 1,690 | 1,690 |
| Capital Work-in-Progress | 1,296 | 1,237 | 1,237 | 1,237 |
| Total Intangible Assets | 60 | 133 | - | - |
| Other assets | 753 | 1,041 | 1,200 | 1,393 |
| Deferred Tax Assets | 453 | 662 | 662 | 662 |
| Total Assets | 40,496 | 51,612 | 58,917 | 67,590 |
| Liabilities | | | | |
| Borrowings | 5,463 | 6,290 | 6,852 | 7,488 |
| Deferred Tax Liability | - | - | - | - |
| Provisions | - | - | - | - |
| Other Liabilities | 931 | 1,868 | 2,155 | 2,501 |
| Equity Share Capital | 3,209 | 3,209 | 3,209 | 3,209 |
| Reserves & Surplus | 15,063 | 16,787 | 19,719 | 23,144 |
| Total Net Worth | 18,272 | 19,996 | 22,928 | 26,354 |
| Minority Interest | - | - | - | - |
| Total Liabilities | 40,496 | 51,612 | 58,917 | 67,590 |

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 9: Quarterly trend

(INR mn, year ending March)

| | Jun-24 | Sep-24 | Dec-24 | Mar-25 |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Net Sales | 5,581 | 8,435 | 7,676 | 13,083 |
| % growth (YOY) | 19.4 | 40.8 | 14.9 | 57.1 |
| EBITDA | 1,034 | 1,293 | 1,212 | 1,796 |
| Margin % | 18.5 | 15.3 | 15.8 | 13.7 |
| Other Income | 195 | 190 | 147 | 204 |
| Extraordinaries | (175) | (138) | (24) | 119 |
| Adjusted Net Profit | 618 | 830 | 668 | 1,045 |

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 10: Cashflow statement

(INR mn, year ending March)

| | FY24A | FY25A | FY26E | FY27E |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Operating Cashflow | 3,645 | 4,315 | 4,798 | 5,440 |
| Working Capital Changes | 1,919 | (4,342) | (4,472) | (1,955) |
| Capital Commitments | (2,097) | (3,191) | (3,575) | (3,932) |
| Free Cashflow | 3,467 | (3,218) | (3,248) | (448) |
| Other investing cashflow | 333 | 735 | 794 | 858 |
| Cashflow from Investing Activities | (2,094) | 5,572 | 794 | 858 |
| Issue of Share Capital | - | - | - | - |
| Interest Cost | - | (31) | (31) | (31) |
| Inc (Dec) in Borrowings | (116) | - | - | - |
| Dividend paid | (658) | (642) | (753) | (880) |
| Others | - | - | - | - |
| Cash flow from Financing Activities | (774) | (673) | (784) | (911) |
| Chg. in Cash & Bank balance | 599 | 1,681 | (3,238) | (501) |
| Closing cash & balance | 2,477 | 6,532 | 2,026 | 1,525 |

Source Company data, I-Sec research

Exhibit 11: Key ratios

(Year ending March)

| | FY24A | FY25A | FY26E | FY27E |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Per Share Data (INR) | | | | |
| Reported EPS | 7.7 | 9.3 | 11.5 | 13.4 |
| Adjusted EPS (Diluted) | 7.7 | 9.3 | 11.5 | 13.4 |
| Cash EPS | 12.6 | 15.0 | 17.3 | 19.5 |
| Dividend per share (DPS) | 2.8 | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.7 |
| Book Value per share (BV) | 56.9 | 62.3 | 71.4 | 82.1 |
| Dividend Payout (%) | 37.2 | 21.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 |
| Growth (%) | | | | |
| Net Sales | 30.8 | 35.4 | 15.3 | 16.1 |
| EBITDA | 16.1 | 22.0 | 13.2 | 14.1 |
| EPS (INR) | 30.2 | 21.8 | 22.9 | 16.8 |
| Valuation Ratios (x) | | | | |
| P/E | 42.1 | 34.6 | 28.1 | 24.1 |
| P/CEPS | 25.7 | 21.6 | 18.6 | 16.5 |
| P/BV | 5.7 | 5.2 | 4.5 | 3.9 |
| EV / EBITDA | 21.4 | 18.4 | 16.8 | 14.8 |
| EV / Sales | 364.3 | 281.7 | 252.4 | 218.5 |
| Dividend Yield (%) | 0.9 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 0.8 |
| Operating Ratios | | | | |
| Gross Profit Margins (%) | - | - | - | - |
| EBITDA Margins (%) | 17.0 | 15.3 | 15.1 | 14.8 |
| Effective Tax Rate (%) | 25.0 | 25.4 | 25.2 | 25.2 |
| Net Profit Margins (%) | 9.6 | 8.0 | 9.2 | 9.2 |
| NWC / Total Assets (%) | 20.1 | 27.8 | 27.6 | 27.4 |
| Net Debt / Equity (x) | (0.6) | (0.3) | (0.1) | (0.1) |
| Net Debt / EBITDA (x) | (2.3) | (1.1) | (0.4) | (0.3) |
| Profitability Ratios | | | | |
| RoCE (%) | 12.1 | 13.8 | 14.5 | 15.0 |
| RoE (%) | 14.2 | 14.5 | 17.2 | 17.5 |
| RoIC (%) | 25.9 | 31.3 | 23.9 | 21.9 |
| Fixed Asset Turnover (x) | 1.1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.4 |
| Inventory Turnover Days | - | - | - | - |
| Receivables Days | 180.2 | 166.0 | 200.1 | 203.6 |
| Payables Days | 109.5 | 150.1 | 150.1 | 150.1 |
| Source Company data I-Sec resec | ırch | | | |

Source Company data, I-Sec research



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