

DR LAL PATHLABS

RESULT UPDATE

KEY DATA

Rating	BUY
Sector relative	Outperformer
Price (INR)	3,151
12 month price target (INR)	3,660
52 Week High/Low	3,654/2,294
Market cap (INR bn/USD bn)	264/3.0
Free float (%)	46.2
Avg. daily value traded (INR mn)	424.2

SHAREHOLDING PATTERN

	Jun-25	Mar-25	Dec-24
Promoter	53.79%	53.91%	53.92%
FII	21.68%	23.91%	26.82%
DII	17.97%	16.08%	12.89%
Pledge	0%	0%	0%

FINANCIALS

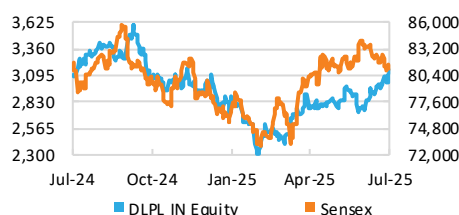
(INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
Revenue	22,266	24,614	27,463	30,844
EBITDA	6,093	6,955	7,688	8,596
Adjusted profit	3,630	4,463	5,142	5,868
Diluted EPS (INR)	43.5	53.4	61.6	70.3
EPS growth (%)	51.7	23.0	15.2	14.1
RoAE (%)	20.3	24.2	22.2	22.2
P/E (x)	72.5	58.9	51.2	44.8
EV/EBITDA (x)	41.9	36.3	32.3	28.5
Dividend yield (%)	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9

CHANGE IN ESTIMATES

	Revised estimates		% Revision	
Year to March	FY26E	FY27E	FY26E	FY27E
Revenue	27,463	30,844	-0.3%	-0.5%
EBITDA	7,688	8,596	0.1%	-0.2%
Adjusted profit	5,142	5,868	3.8%	2.6%
Diluted EPS (INR)	61.6	70.3	3.8%	2.6%

PRICE PERFORMANCE



On a steady footing

Dr Lal (DLPL) beat Q1FY26E consensus EBITDA/PAT by 2%/6%. Revenue grew 11% YoY (in-line) driven by 10.8% YoY sample growth. Gross margin is at an all-time high of 80.8% aided by higher Swasthfit contribution. EBITDA margin is healthy at 28.7% (+47bp YoY).

DLPL expects to deliver 27%-plus EBITDA margin for FY26E while maintaining its 11–12% revenue growth guidance. Its core Delhi NCR market continues to grow in double-digit and Swasthfit acceptance is on the rise—evident from 27% contribution (+200bp YoY) to revenue. That said, we await for Suburban recovery post-integration and potential M&A action given a strong balance sheet. Retain ‘BUY’ with a TP of INR3,660 (earlier INR3,440) on a rollover to Q1FY28E (~50x PE).

Q1FY26: Steady revenue growth; all-time high gross margin

Revenue clocked 11% YoY growth driven by sample growth (+10.8% YoY) while realisation per sample remained flat. Number of patients stood at 7.6mn (+5% YoY), whereas realisation per patient came in at INR884 (+6% YoY), largely led by test mix and bundled testing. Swasthfit revenue grew 20% YoY and contributed 27% to revenue versus 25% in Q1FY25. Gross margin is at an all-time high at 80.8% (aided by higher Swasthfit contribution), and EBITDA margin too expanded 47bp YoY to 28.7% driven by a healthy gross margin and operating leverage.

Volume-led growth strategy intact; Swasthfit gaining acceptance

DLPL is confident of growing at 11–12% (mainly volume-led) with an improved margin outlook due to: i) network expansion plan across geographies—added 18 labs in FY25 and plans to continue this for next two years (i.e. ~20% addition) before going slow, and support growth via franchisee centres; ii) rising Swasthfit contribution, which is gaining acceptance across urban and rural markets, as well as in prescription channel; iii) the focus on high-end tests such as genomics and autoimmune (added 58 tests in Q1FY26); and iv) Suburban recovery post-integration. We note DLPL’s pilot projects in advanced radiology, if successful, could add another growth lever.

Riding on industry tailwinds, eyeing M&A; retain ‘BUY’

A relatively stable competitive landscape with sector tailwinds such as rising chronic ailments (hypertension, obesity), growth in geriatric population and industry consolidation are positives. We reckon revenue/PAT CAGR of 12%/15% over FY25–27E and healthy RoICs of ~50%, with network expansion bearing fruit and higher Swasthfit contribution. We will watch out for Suburban recovery and M&A potentially in south India. We have increased FY26/27E EPS by 4%/3% factoring in a lower tax rate. Retain ‘BUY’ with TP of INR3,660 (implied 34x FY27E EV/EBITDA).

Financials

Year to March	Q1FY26	Q1FY25	% Change	Q4FY25	% Change
Net Revenue	6,698	6,019	11.3	6,026	11.2
EBITDA	1,923	1,700	13.1	1,690	13.8
Adjusted Profit	1,324	1,064	24.4	1,140	16.1
Diluted EPS (INR)	15.8	12.7	24.0	13.6	15.9

Financial Statements

Income Statement (INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
Total operating income	22,266	24,614	27,463	30,844
Gross profit	17,752	19,799	22,135	24,861
Employee costs	4,245	4,824	5,499	6,214
Other expenses	3,130	3,417	3,813	4,282
EBITDA	6,093	6,955	7,688	8,596
Depreciation	1,436	1,419	1,440	1,532
Less: Interest expense	294	223	226	226
Add: Other income	692	934	999	1,173
Profit before tax	5,055	6,247	7,021	8,012
Prov for tax	1,432	1,325	1,825	2,083
Less: Other adj	0	0	0	0
Reported profit	3,577	4,871	5,142	5,868
Less: Excp.item (net)	0	0	0	0
Adjusted profit	3,630	4,463	5,142	5,868
Diluted shares o/s	84	84	84	84
Adjusted diluted EPS	43.5	53.4	61.6	70.3
DPS (INR)	24.0	24.0	26.4	29.0
Tax rate (%)	28.3	21.2	26.0	26.0

Important Ratios (%)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
Gross margin	79.7	80.4	80.6	80.6
Net debt/EBITDA	(1.4)	(1.7)	(2.0)	(2.2)
OCF as a % of sales	24.0	23.1	25.0	25.0
EBITDA margin (%)	27.4	28.3	28.0	27.9
Net profit margin (%)	16.3	18.1	18.7	19.0
Revenue growth (% YoY)	10.4	10.5	11.6	12.3
EBITDA growth (% YoY)	24.4	14.1	10.5	11.8
Adj. profit growth (%)	51.9	23.0	15.2	14.1

Assumptions (%)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
GDP (YoY %)	6.5	6.3	6.5	6.5
Repo rate (%)	6.5	5.3	5.3	5.3
USD/INR (average)	84.0	82.0	81.0	81.0
Number of patients (mn)	27.6	28.7	30.2	32.0
Realisation/ Patient	806.7	859.1	908.4	963.4
Non-covid growth - Dr. Lal (%)	12.1	10.6	11.5	12.1
Fees to franchisees (% of sales)	14.1	13.9	13.9	13.9

Valuation Metrics

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
Diluted P/E (x)	72.5	58.9	51.2	44.8
Price/BV (x)	14.2	12.1	10.7	9.4
EV/EBITDA (x)	41.9	36.3	32.3	28.5
Dividend yield (%)	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9

Source: Company and Nuvama estimates

Balance Sheet (INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
Share capital	835	836	836	836
Reserves	17,658	20,891	23,828	27,271
Shareholders funds	18,493	21,727	24,664	28,107
Minority interest	361	338	284	223
Borrowings	833	0	0	0
Trade payables	1,866	1,988	2,132	2,395
Other liabs & prov	1,961	2,070	2,070	2,070
Total liabilities	24,560	27,168	30,196	33,840
Net block	1,994	2,001	2,125	2,235
Intangible assets	8,525	7,992	7,416	6,803
Capital WIP	40	35	35	35
Total fixed assets	10,559	10,028	9,576	9,073
Non current inv	0	0	0	0
Cash/cash equivalent	9,441	11,654	15,389	18,660
Sundry debtors	774	881	923	1,037
Loans & advances	800	1,327	802	1,462
Other assets	1,018	1,451	1,496	1,546
Total assets	24,560	27,168	30,196	33,840

Free Cash Flow (INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
Reported profit	4,587	5,625	6,967	7,951
Add: Depreciation	1,436	1,419	1,440	1,532
Interest (net of tax)	294	223	226	226
Others	0	0	0	0
Less: Changes in WC	357	60	57	99
Operating cash flow	5,354	5,688	6,864	7,724
Less: Capex	(570)	(532)	(700)	(600)
Free cash flow	4,784	5,156	6,164	7,124

Key Ratios

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
RoE (%)	20.3	24.2	22.2	22.2
RoCE (%)	24.3	23.8	23.6	23.4
Inventory days	29	28	26	26
Receivable days	12	12	12	12
Payable days	139	146	141	138
Working cap (% sales)	(7.5)	(5.0)	(6.6)	(4.1)
Gross debt/equity (x)	0	0	0	0
Net debt/equity (x)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.6)	(0.7)
Interest coverage (x)	0	0	0	0

Valuation Drivers

Year to March	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E
EPS growth (%)	51.7	23.0	15.2	14.1
RoE (%)	20.3	24.2	22.2	22.2
EBITDA growth (%)	24.4	14.1	10.5	11.8
Payout ratio (%)	56.0	41.1	42.9	41.3

Q1FY26 conference call highlights

Industry

- Digital transformation and shift towards tech-based healthcare delivery being seen in India. There is ample room for growth from here too.
- India has a shortfall of 2.4mn beds when it comes to hospitals alone as per global benchmarks. This is getting addressed by major hospital chains adding capacity by up to 30% by FY27E.
- The central government's flagship initiatives are propping up public and private investments in the sector.
- AI integration in healthcare services is increasing and the Indian AI healthcare market is expected to have a size of USD1.6bn by end of CY25. The impact of telemedicine and digital health records is being felt given enhanced access in rural and semi-urban regions.
- The prevalence in chronic and lifestyle diseases is only increasing in India. India is the topmost country with incidence of diabetes with 100mn patients afflicted. 30% of adults have elevated BP as per reports. Obesity is surging in young adults and children and this is linked to increased consumption of processed food and general inactivity. This is coming up in rural cities as well. Delayed diagnostics there is also an exacerbating factor.
- Entry of a new e-commerce player in the arena. Foray of hospital and pharma players in diagnostics continues to accelerate the shift from unorganised to organised. At an overall level, the listed space is seeing better revenue and volume growth and this can imply that shift from unorganised to organised is getting accelerated.
- **Genomics** – Market size data is not available as of now. But the segment is getting more acceptability from clinicians. The oncology area, which is getting more focus, also uses genomic testing. Affordability is improving day by day. It is a combination of more volumes and tech improvement and improving testing costs.

Business highlights – regional

- Added 18 labs in FY25 and this rate is expected to sustain in FY26.
- The Delhi region grew at double digits in Q1FY26. There is slightly benign competition from online players, which has helped a bit. But steps taken by DLPL have also aided growth.
- In the West region, there has been some impact due to IT change. This quarter was better than previous quarter, but still the levels have not reached the level that existed a few quarters ago.
- West India for DLPL is Gujarat, Goa, Maharashtra, MP and Chhattisgarh. Within this, Mumbai, Pune and Goa have a dual-brand strategy. The core hubs are Mumbai and Pune, wherein DLPL wants to build a strong base. In other areas in west India, DLPL has a strong brand at many places already. Expansion in west India will see lab additions too in three–five years, but in Mumbai and Pune, the lab setup is largely already in place.

- Clients in a geography get their reports faster as the lab is local now compared to being sent to Delhi earlier, for example. Only opening of reference lab is not enough and the impact is seen on a longer time frame.
- Non-core geographies has slower turnaround w.r.t. organic growth. Focus will be on expanding test network and then going on ground to promote services to the prescribing community.

Business highlights – others

- Added 58 new tests in Q1FY26. DLPL has strengthened genomics portfolio and introduced component resolved diagnostics for allergy testing. Launched in-house smart culture reporting algorithm.
- Positive trend being seen in Swasthfit. The Illness segment test menu is being improved.
- DLPL continues to hold its test prices stable.
- The volume growth is like-for-like YoY and does not have too much of favourable impact from unseasonal rains.
- Q2 is generally the better quarter due to seasonality. Hence, there is no expectation that this time, it will be even higher than what it normally is in Q2.
- DLPL doesn't have a target for test/patient. Swasthfit acceptability and growth is being seen in both urban areas and in smaller towns. Some traction is coming from the prescription channel as well. Prescribing habits of clinicians of more tests per Rx than before being prescribed is being seen.
- Test menu expansion, speed to market, and brand salience are factors apart from infrastructure upgradation that lead to revenue growth.
- The 385 test panel number doesn't change that frequently.
- Radiology – Basic radiology is being done by DLPL in some markets, but it is a low contributor. High-end radiology pilot projects are continuing.

Financial highlights

- Gross margins were high because of higher Swasthfit contribution.
- Revenue growth guidance of 11-12% remains unchanged.
- H1 generally has higher margin as most investments are in H2. Q1FY26 margin is not representative of the full year. FY26 EBITDA margin could be slightly better than what was previously projected (27%).
- M&A – Right now, nothing can be shared but the search is going on. DLPL doesn't want to acquire just for the sake of turnover addition and it has to be a strategic acquisition.
- ETR at 25%-26% is the normal tax rate that can be expected.
- Net cash of INR13.89bn as of 30-Jun-2025.
- Interim dividend of INR6/share announced.

Suburban

- Challenges – Change in structure from own collection network to franchise model took longer than expected due to slowdown of existing franchise network

post Covid reduction. There were parts of the business that DLPL felt were non-core.

- There are still some geographies, wherein transition will continue. DLPL doesn't want to do everything in one shot and believes it has to be done carefully in a running business.
- The IT stack change was done recently because, before that, other changes were to be done w.r.t. people and processes.
- INR500mn/year or INR125mn/quarter amortisation will continue for some time.

Exhibit 1: Actuals versus estimates (INR mn)

Year to March	Q1FY26	Q1FY25	YoY (%)	Q4FY25	QoQ (%)	Nuvama estimates	Deviation from Actual (%)	Consensus	Deviation from Actual (%)
Net sales	6,698	6,019	11.3	6,026	11.2	6,672	0.4	6,696	0.0
Cost of revenue	1,289	1,194	8	1,178	9	1,328	(2.9)		
Gross profit	5,409	4,825	12	4,848	12	5,345	1.2		
Gross margins (%)	80.8	80.2	59	80.5	30	80.1	65.5		
Employee cost	1,323	1,166	13.5	1,154	14.6	1,288	2.7		
Other expenses	2,163	1,959	10.4	2,004	7.9	2,195	(1.5)		
EBITDA	1,923	1,700	13.1	1,690	13.8	1,861	3.3	1,887	1.9
EBITDA margin (%)	28.7	28.2	47	28.0	66	27.9	82	28.2	
Depreciation	346	347	(0.3)	364	(4.9)	370	(6.5)		
Interest	47	60	(21.7)	50	(6.0)	240	(80.4)		
Other income	281	206	36.4	258	8.9	1,676	(83.2)		
PBT	1,811	1,499	20.8	1,534	18.1	1,676	8.1		
Income tax	471	421		(21)		452			
Reported PAT	1,324	1,064	24.4	1,548	(14.5)	1,215	8.9	1,248	6.1
Adjusted PAT	1,324	1,064	24.4	1,140	16.1	1,215	8.9	1,248	6.1

Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 2: Volume and realisation

Year to March	Q1FY26	Q1FY25	YoY (%)	Q4FY25	QoQ (%)	Nuvama estimates	Deviation from Actual (%)
No. of patients (mn)	7.6	7.2	5.3	6.8	12.3	7.6	0.3
Realisation per patient	884	836	5.7	893	(1.0)	883	0.1
No of samples (mn)	23.4	21.1	10.8	20.9	11.8	23.2	0.9
Realisation per sample	287	285	0.5	288	(0.6)	288	(0.5)
Test/patient	3.08	2.93	5.2	3.10	(0.4)	3.06	0.6

Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 3: Quarterly snapshot (INR mn)

Year to March	Q1FY26	Q1FY25	% change	Q4FY25	% change	FY25	FY26E	FY27E
Net Revenue	6,698	6,019	11.3	6,026	11.2	24,614	27,463	30,844
Cost of revenue	1,289	1,194	8.0	1,178	9.4	4,815	5,328	5,984
Gross profit	5,409	4,825	12.1	4,848	11.6	19,799	22,135	24,861
Employee cost	1,323	1,166	13.5	1,154	14.6	4,824	5,499	6,214
Other expenses	2,163	1,959	10.4	2,004	7.9	8,020	8,948	10,050
EBITDA	1,923	1,700	13.1	1,690	13.8	6,955	7,688	8,596
EBITDA margin (%)	29	28		28		28.3	28.0	27.9
Depreciation	346	347	(0.3)	364	(4.9)	1,419	1,440	1,532
EBIT	1,577	1,353	16.6	1,326	18.9	5,536	6,248	7,065
Less: Interest Expense	47	60	(21.7)	50	(6.0)	223	226	226
Add: Other income	281	206	36.4	258	8.9	934	999	1,173
Add: Exceptional items	0	0		0				
Profit before tax	1,811	1,499	20.8	1,534	18.1	6,247	7,021	8,012
Less: Provision for Tax	471	421	11.9	-21		1,325	1,825	2,083
Less: Minority Interest	16	14		7		-51	-54	-61
Add: Share of profit from associates								
Less: Profit from Discontinued Operations								
Reported Profit	1,324	1,064	24.4	1,548	(14.5)	4,871	5,142	5,868
Adjusted Profit	1,324	1,064	24.4	1,140	16.1	4,463	5,142	5,868
No. of Diluted shares outstanding	84	84		84		84	84	84
Adjusted Diluted EPS	16	12.74		14		53	62	70
as % of revenues								
Cost of revenue	19	20		20		20	19	19
Employee cost	20	19		19		20	20	20
Total operating expenses	71	72		72		72	72	72
Gross profit	81	80		80		80	81	81
Operating profit	29	28		28		28	28	28
Net profit	20	18		26		20	19	19
Tax rate	26	28		(1)		21	26	26

Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Company Description

Started in 1949, Dr Lal is a provider of diagnostic and related healthcare tests and services in India. Through its integrated and nation-wide network, the company offers patients and healthcare providers a broad range of diagnostic and related healthcare tests and services for use in core testing, patients' diagnosis and prevention, monitoring and treatment of disease and other health conditions. Its customers include individual patients, hospitals and other healthcare providers and corporate customers. Dr Lal's country-wide network comprises a national reference laboratory in New Delhi, supported by 298 clinical laboratories, ~6600 patient service centres and over ~12300 pickup points. The company has an exhaustive catalogue of tests and it keeps adding newer and more effective tests over time. The company employs over 4,000 personnel work with >55% of the staff engaged in laboratory functions.

Investment Theme

Dr Lal has a B2C heavy business and is well-positioned to benefit from favourable sector dynamics. Having established a strong presence in Delhi NCR, it is now gearing to drive next phase of growth by going deeper in core markets of North India and expanding footprint in South and West India. The offtake of Swasthfit is particularly impressive and likely to remain a key growth driver in medium term. The sustained uptick in volumes and stable competitive scenario bodes well for DLPL.

Key Risks

- Unable to scale up Suburban and expand in non-core geographies; execution risks from acquisitions.
- Rising investments may dent margin.
- Inability to gain share or be successful in new geographic markets within India, or tier 2–4 cities in existing markets.
- Prices of diagnostic services could be subject to recommended or maximum fees set by the government or other authorities.
- Intense competition from standalone centres and re-energising of online players could put pressure, and large players may be forced to reduce prices.
- Regulatory intervention in price control.

Additional Data

Management

Chairman	(Hony) Brig. Dr. Arvind Lal
Managing Director	Dr. Om Prakash Manchanda
Executive Director	Dr. Vandana Lal
CEO	Shankha Banerjee
Auditor	Deloitte Haskins & Sells LLP

Holdings – Top 10*

	% Holding		% Holding
Invesco	3.92	Vanguard	1.74
HDFC AMC	3.74	SBI Funds	1.70
UTI AMC	2.46	LIC	1.47
Nippon Life	2.12	Brown Capital	1.37
Capital Group	1.77	Sundaram AMC	1.12

*Latest public data

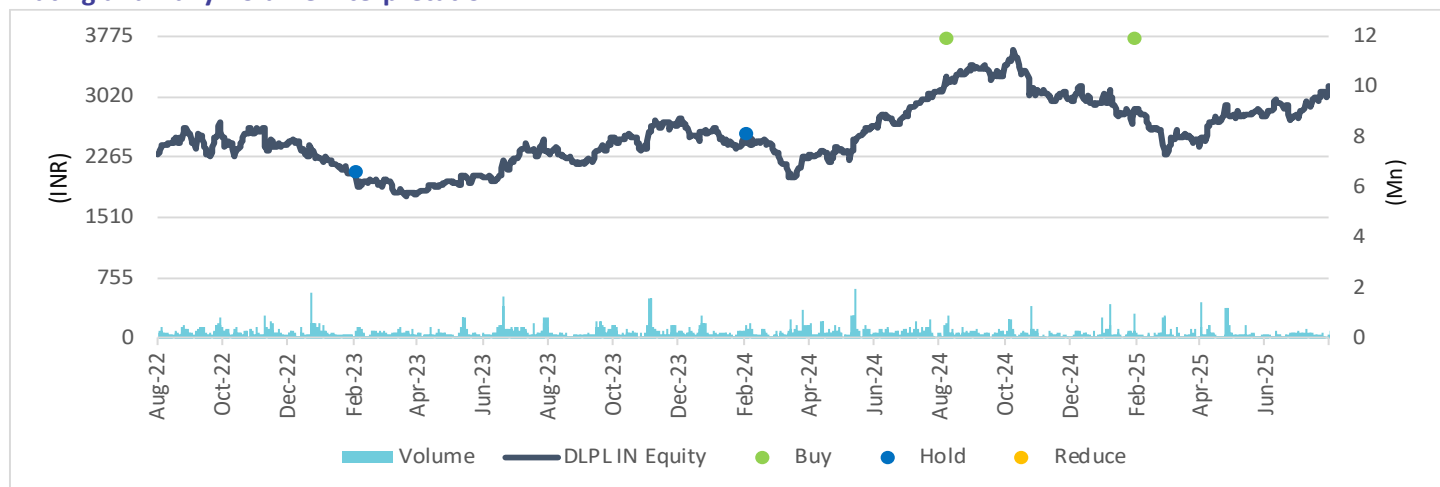
Recent Company Research

Date	Title	Price	Reco
24-Jun-25	Resilient and rising; <i>Company Update</i>	2,733	Buy
25-Apr-25	Stable growth trajectory; <i>Result Update</i>	2,911	Buy
30-Jan-25	Results in-line; investing in metros/tie; <i>Result Update</i>	2,761	Buy

Recent Sector Research

Date	Name of Co./Sector	Title
28-Jul-25	VIJAYA DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE	Growth rebounds; expansion on track; <i>Result Update</i>
08-Jul-25	Metropolis Healthcare	Rationalised, reintegrated, ready to sca; <i>Company Update</i>
04-Jul-25	Healthcare	Recovery in the offing after sluggish Q4; <i>Sector Update</i>

Rating and Daily Volume Interpretation



Source: Bloomberg, Nuvama research

Rating Rationale & Distribution: Nuvama Research

Rating	Expected absolute returns over 12 months	Rating Distribution
Buy	15%	202
Hold	<15% and >-5%	66
Reduce	<-5%	36

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