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Trigger for PSUs

Quick Comment – PSUs to rally? We are mindful of the value trap in the shares of public sector (PSU) companies. The primary reason is the nature of their businesses; the second is their high level of government control. However, right now, three things favor PSU stocks. The first is the likely shift in investment style from growth to value – PSU shares dominate value screens. Indeed, as a group, they are trading at multi-year lows versus the narrow index (Exhibit 1). Most PSU companies operate in cyclical businesses, and we believe that cyclicals will outperform defensives in the coming months, given the likely recovery in growth.

The third reason, and the likely trigger for some rerating of these shares, is the government's proposal to create a PSU ETF. The government has invited bids from asset managers, and we believe the process will completed before the close of this financial year (i.e., end-March). An ETF would provide a low-cost, diversified and, hence, lower-risk investment option, especially to retail investors, allowing them to gain exposure to a number of stocks by paying a small amount. This would improve liquidity, trading and possibly the valuations of PSU stocks.

A close examination of the relative performance of PSUs to the market in 2003-04 and in 2009 is that these stocks led the recovery in the market (Exhibit 2). The commonality with these two periods is a shift in investment style from growth to value and the resumption of a growth cycle. Both conditions seem to be satisfied at this point. This could set the stage for an improvement in performance of PSUs, in our view.

PSU List: Below we have compiled a list of PSUs with market capitalization greater than US\$1 bn, excluding banks, across the consensus coverage and using the framework laid down in *The Quintessential Quest for "Quantamental" Alpha"* dated December 14, 2012, (see Exhibit 3).

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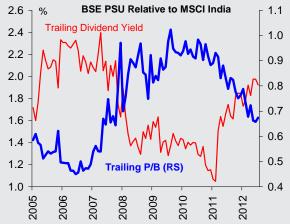
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Exhibit 1

PSU Relative Valuations Hit Multi-year Lows



Source: Bloomberg, RIMES, Morgan Stanley Research

Exhibit 2

PSU Relative Performance Back to 2002



Source: Bloomberg, RIMES, Morgan Stanley Research

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Exhibit 3

PSU List (excl. banks)

			Fundamental					Valuations		
Stock	Sector	12M Perf.	F12 ROE	F12-F14 EPS CAGR	5Y EPS Growth	Consensus 3M Earnings Revisions F14	ER Breadth as SD from Avg	F12 P/B	F12 DY	F12 PE
Bharat Petroleum Corp.	Energy	59%	5%	48%	-18%	-2.4%	0.3	1.7	1.5%	34.5
Coal India	Energy	11%	44%	12%	29%	-0.6%	-1.1	6.9	2.8%	15.6
GAIL (India)	Utilities	-6%	17%	6%	12%	-0.8%	-0.6	2.2	2.3%	12.9
Gujarat Mineral Development Corp.*	Materials	18%	24%	23%	39%	3.6%	0.0	3.2	1.5%	13.4
Indian Oil Corp.	Energy	11%	20%	++	-12%	++	0.0	1.1	1.8%	5.7
LIC Housing Finance	Financials	31%	17%	26%	24%	-3.3%	-1.4	2.6	1.2%	16.3
Neyveli Lignite Corp.*	Utilities	5%	12%	4%	20%	1.1%	0.6	1.2	3.4%	9.9
Oil & Natural Gas Corp.	Energy	7%	22%	6%	10%	0.4%	-0.9	2.1	3.4%	9.7
Oil India	Energy	7%	20%	++	13%	++	0.0	1.6	3.9%	8.3
Power Finance Corp.*	Financials	46%	13%	20%	20%	1.7%	1.4	1.2	2.8%	9.2
Power Grid Corp. of India	Utilities	14%	14%	18%	22%	0.9%	1.0	2.3	1.8%	16.3
Rural Electrification Corp.*	Financials	66%	22%	17%	28%	2.1%	0.7	2.0	2.8%	9.3

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Source: FactSet, IBES Estimates, Bloomberg

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