

Date	Headline	Publication	Edition	Page	Source
Oct 29, 2024	PNB profit more than doubles	The Times of India	5 Editions	21	Bureau

PNB profit more than doubles

New Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Monday reported more than two-fold jump in profit to Rs 4,306 crore in second quarter ended Sept 2024. The state-owned lender had earned a net profit of Rs 1,756 crore in the same quarter in last financial year. Total income increased to Rs 34,447 crore during the quarter under review against Rs 29,383 crore in the same quarter last year. AGENCIES

Date	Headline	Publication	Edition	Page	Source
Oct 29, 2024	PNB's profit jumps 145% to Rs 4,306 cr	Mint	7 Editions	9	Bureau

PNB's profit jumps 145% to ₹4,306 cr

Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Monday reported more than twofold jump in its profit at ₹4,306 crore in the second quarter ended September 2024 on the back of improvement in interest income and robust recovery. The state-owned lender had earned a net profit of ₹1,756 crore in the same quarter in the previous financial year.

Total income rose to ₹34,447 crore during the quarter under review against ₹29,383 crore in the year-ago period, PNB said in a regulatory filing. The bank reported an interest income of ₹29,875 crore during the quarter, higher than ₹26,355 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

Announcing the quarterly numbers, PNB managing director Atul Kumar Goel said, the combination of factors including growth improvement in business, net interest income recovery and containment in slippages led to 145% jump in profit.

PTI

Date	Headline	Publication	Edition	Page	Source
Oct 29, 2024	'We may lend to a telco if it gets AAA rating'	Business Standard	6 Editions	9	Bureau

ECONOMY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS P8

'We may lend to a telco if it gets AAA rating'

State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) will consider lending to a telecom company only if it gets AAA rating, says its MD & CEO **ATUL KUMAR GOEL** in an online interview to Harsh Kumar



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Oct 29, 2024	'We may lend to a telco if it gets AAA rating'	Business Standard	6 Editions	9	Bureau

'We may lend to a telco if it gets AAA rating'

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has said it would consider lending to a telecom company only if it gets AAA rating. PNB Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer **ATUL KUMAR GOEL** said this in an online interview to Harsh Kumar while responding to a question on Vodafone Idea's request for a fundraise. As of now, PNB has refused lending to the telco, Goel said. Edited excerpts:

What kind of effort is PNB making to increase deposits?

There are not many challenges in deposit growth for Punjab National Bank as we have more than 10,000 branches and have added almost 6 million customers in the first part of this financial year. As we open accounts, money will come into them. Additionally, the PNB One app is helping us increase account openings by making the process very easy. Currently, raising bulk deposits would be costly for us, so we are avoiding that. We have also specifically launched an app targeting our corporate users, which is helping us gain more current accounts. Within a month, we have opened almost 19,000 accounts through it.

Have Vi and MTNL approached you for fresh lending? Will PNB lend to them?

We have very little exposure to MTNL — less than ₹500 crore so far. For Vi, we have received a request from them, but we have not approved it yet. However, if any telecommunications

company receives an AAA rating, we may consider lending to them. As of now, we have received some requests from Vi in writing, which we have denied.

How much recovery has PNB made so far in Q2, and what's the way ahead?

We have made recoveries of ₹8,000 crore out of our total target of ₹18,000 crore for FY25. We expect to recover the remaining ₹1,000 crore this year. In Q2FY25, our cash recovery was ₹1,508 crore, with ₹1,407 crore coming from upgrades. Our total recovery for this quarter was almost ₹4,891 crore. We also made recoveries of ₹964 crore from the agriculture sector, ₹1,116 crore from MSMEs, ₹585 crore from retail, and ₹2,027 crore from other sectors.

Additionally, we achieved a major recovery of ₹1,000 crore through the NCLT, as two significant corporate accounts in the energy sector have been resolved.

What is your FY25 outlook?

We are expecting credit growth of 12 per cent for FY25. We hope to open 150 more



branches this financial year. We have increased our net profit by 145 per cent to ₹4,303 crore in Q2FY25, compared to ₹1,756 crore in Q2FY24. Our return on assets (RoA) improved to 1.02 per cent in Q2FY25 from 0.46 per cent in Q2FY24. The return on equity (RoE) improved to 19.91 per cent in Q2FY25 from 10.15 per cent in Q2FY24.

Since you are the sponsor of nine RRBs, how are you looking at them for IPOs?

Three of our RRBs — Prathama UP Gramin Bank, Punjab Gramin Bank, and Sarva Haryana Gramin Bank — are doing well. However, it will take time; investors need to be comfortable for IPOs. Though I see possibilities of IPO in Prathama looking at its business portfolios, yet it will take some time.



ATUL KUMAR GOEL

MD & CEO, Punjab National Bank

Date	Headline	Publication	Edition	Page	Source
Oct 30, 2024	PNB bets on Phygital strategy to drive business	The Hindu Business Line	10Editions	1	Bureau

IT MUST BE PHYGITAL.

Digital or physical branches alone will not serve the purpose. It has to be a mix, says PNB MD & CEO Atul Kumar Goel **p6**



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Oct 30, 2024	PNB bets on Phygital strategy to drive business	The Hindu Business Line	10Editions	1	Bureau

PNB bets on phygital strategy to drive business

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KR Srivats
New Delhi

Atul Kumar Goel, the MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank (PNB), will demit office by December end.

He spoke to *businessline* on PNB's Q2 performance and the bank's major transformation during his nearly three-year stint at the helm of the country's second largest public sector bank.

Excerpts:

How do you see your tenure as MD and CEO since February 2022?

It was a wonderful experience. PNB is a solid bank. If you look at the past results, especially the last 2.5 years, there has been a lot of transformation – HR and Digital. The asset quality has improved considerably — how Gross NPA moved from 12-13 per cent couple of years back to 4.48 per cent now. There has been a complete transformation of the bank across the board.

What do you count as your main achievements in your tenure?

The biggest achievement is the change in the perception about the bank in the last few years. Market capitalisation, which reflects investor confidence, has grown to over ₹ 1 lakh crore as of December 2023. You can judge the confidence of investors in us from the recent QIP issue. We had gone to the market for a QIP of ₹5,000 crore, but we received bids worth ₹41,000 crore.

Any other significant achievements?

Yes, I would count digital and HR transformation — both are completed — as significant achievements. The improved asset quality is also noteworthy. We have reached a milestone of a business mix of ₹25 lakh crore. The credit for all this goes to PNB employees. I don't want to take any credit.

How much has PNB grown in recent years?

Initially, we saw an ₹11,000 crore increase in business in a year (FY 20-21), then



See the size of the country (140 crore people). If you think only digital or physical branch will serve the purpose, it will not. It has to be a mix of both

ATUL KUMAR GOEL
MD & CEO, PNB



₹40,000-50,000 crore (FY 21-22). Today, we are adding more than ₹80,000- 83,000 crore in a quarter.

In the first quarter after I took charge, the profit was around ₹400 crore. Today, it is ₹4,300 crore per quarter. NPA used to be around 12 per cent. We were at the bottom – in terms of GNPA and NNPA. The GNPA is at 4.48 per cent now. It is a satisfaction for me that we are not at the bottom in terms of NPA today. The Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) is 97 per cent.

Which is a bigger achievement — focus on Digital Mantra and HR transformation or focus on recoveries?

My team. It is the effort of my 1 lakh employees. They are the facilitators. If we are bringing in HR transformation, they are the enablers. But if you are not in a position to take the team along with you, then what will happen? They only have to do the digital transformation. Now, entire workforce is in sync with me, and they give their best shot.

For a bank your size, is there any unfinished agenda that you feel can be taken up?

Now we have to utilise the branch network. In other words, how we can leverage 10,000-branch network for better business. We can increase the business mix (from current ₹25 lakh crore) by 20 or 30 per cent within the existing branch network set up.

What about branch expansion plans?

We plan to add 150 more branches this fiscal, majorly in South. If you see last year, we opened 90 branches, of

If you look at PNB's history, the maximum acquisitions/mergers were with this bank.

New Bank of India, OBC and United Bank of India were merged with PNB. There is no issue in terms of cultural and IT integration. Yes, we are nowhere in the top 100 right now. But there is potential to keep growing.

So, how do you plan to scale up?

It will be through a phygital strategy. We will do both — physical expansion and be a digital player. See the size of the country (140 crore people). If you think only digital or physical branch will serve the purpose, it will not. It has to be a mix of both.

How confident are you

on sustaining financial performance of bank?

The results of the last 12 quarters are with you. Every quarter has seen business growth, operating parameters - whether it is the operating or net profit, even reduction of the NPA.

How do you see PNB playing a role in the Viksit Bharat goal?

Driving financial inclusion through loans to MSMEs and other government schemes is a part of Viksit Bharat.

Do you see PNB playing a catalytic role for Viksit Bharat?

Yes. The future is bright.

Is there a strategy paper at the board level?

Yes, that is very much there.

which 40 were in South. So, the number of 150 is important and so is geography.

Do you see PNB now ready to do more acquisitions? You still don't feature in the global 100?

Date	Headline	Publication	Edition	Page	Source
Oct 29, 2024	'We have cherry picked-MSME clients'	The Financial Express	10 Editions	6	Bureau

● ATUL KUMAR GOEL, MD & CEO, PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK

'We have cherry-picked MSME clients'

Punjab National Bank is planning to launch a wealth management arm to serve high net worth individuals, Atul Kumar Goel, MD and CEO, tells Anupreksha Jain in an interview. Excerpts:

With the interest rate cycle expected to turn soon, are you concerned about the bank's margins moving forward?

As of date, around 48% of the book is linked to either the repo or the T-bill. If there is a rate cut, this book will be immediately repriced. There will be pressure on the margin because deposits will not be repriced immediately. If I reduce the yield on advances, why should I not think to reduce the interest rate on the deposit side also? At the same time, savings deposits are much bigger than the book linked to repo. This gives me the flexibility to maintain margins.

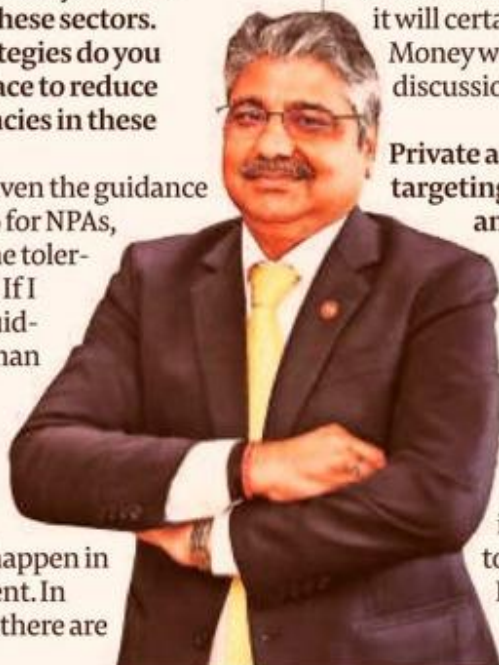
There has been a significant fall in new provisions and contingencies. What is the reason?
We have sanctioned ₹9 lakh crore in the last 51 months, out of which

₹8.19 lakh crore has been disbursed. Currently, the outstanding is ₹6.31 lakh crore and the NPA is only ₹2,374 crore, or 0.29%. In new underwriting, we have taken very few risks and worked on how to improve the collection efficiency.



Agri and MSMEs represent the largest share of SMA accounts, with slip-pages mostly concentrated in these sectors. What strategies do you have in place to reduce delinquencies in these areas?

We have given the guidance for the 1% for NPAs, which is the tolerance limit. If I give the guidance less than 1%, I am not being fair because 1% is bound to happen in this segment. In corporate, there are no NPAs.



Our MSME exposure is around ₹1.5 lakh crore. The maximum portion is in the AAA category. We do cherry-picking to whom we are giving as our money should come back.

In September, PNB declared MTNL an NPA. Does that have any impact on margins? Are there any talks going on with the government?

If an account has become an NPA, it will certainly impact margins. Money will come and it is under discussion.

Private and foreign banks are targeting affluent individuals and HNIs with specialised products. Do you have any plans to tap this segment?
Yes, we have plans to enter the wealth management business. Currently, we are giving some facilities in the mobile app and to our corporate clients. But we plan to have a separate arm for this as well.