

## Petronas Chemicals (PCHEM MK)

# Declining product ASPs amid waning risk premiums

### D/G to SELL; TP lowered to MYR3.92

As both O&D and F&M ASPs are normalising, we note that PCHEM's potentially strong 2Q26 print may be unsustainable. We cut our FY26E EPS by -31% to account for: i) lower O&D segment UR; ii) lower EBITDA margin assumptions due to operating leverage as PCHEM will be going through a major plant turnaround in Kertih - resulting in lower sales volumes; and iii) lower urea prices. As such, we D/G PCHEM to SELL with a lower TP of MYR3.92 (from MYR5.62) - pegged to an unchanged PER of 15x on FY26E EPS.

### ASPs peaked in April-May 2026

As we believe that both O&D and F&M ASP peaks are in our rear-view mirror, implying ASP normalisation in coming quarters - due to demand compression and easing supply chain issues. Also, based on our understanding, China is still on track to continue building new petrochemical capacities, albeit at a slower pace post-Middle East tensions. As such, we believe this petrochemical cycle is waning, and PCHEM may not be able to repeat its FY26E performance in FY27-28E - rendering a possible de-rating as growth tapers off.

### Disposal of 50% stake in PPC could be an upside risk

Recently, PETRONAS announced that it will be taking over Saudi Aramco's stake in PRefChem ([link](#)). Post-transaction (expected to be completed in 2H26), PRC will be 100% owned by PETRONAS (from 50:50 PETRONAS:Aramco) while PPC will be 50:50 PETRONAS:PCHEM (from 50:50 Aramco:PCHEM). While the question on whether PETRONAS would acquire PCHEM's remaining 50% stake in PPC remains, we highlight that this development could effectively remove PCHEM's single largest source of earnings drag and pose an upside risk to our SELL recommendation. On a full-year basis, if PCHEM is successful in its disposal of PPC, this could boost PCHEM's annual profits by about MYR1b.

### Declining profit profile over FY26-28E

In view of the tapering off of the event-driven supercycle and further normalisation of product spreads going into FY27-28E due to easing supply chain issues & continued petrochemical capacity newbuilds from China, we believe that PCHEM could register declining profits in FY26-28E. As such, we D/G PCHEM to SELL.

FYE Dec (MYR m)	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Revenue	30,671	27,480	30,171	27,928	25,988
EBITDA	4,345	946	5,878	4,651	3,935
Core net profit	1,145	(534)	2,090	985	440
Core EPS (sen)	14.3	(6.7)	26.1	12.3	5.5
Core EPS growth (%)	(32.8)	nm	nm	(52.9)	(55.3)
Net DPS (sen)	13.0	7.0	13.1	6.2	2.8
Core P/E (x)	36.1	nm	16.3	34.7	77.6
P/BV (x)	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
Net dividend yield (%)	2.5	1.9	3.1	1.4	0.6
ROAE (%)	3.0	(5.7)	5.7	2.6	1.2
ROAA (%)	1.9	(0.9)	3.6	1.7	0.7
EV/EBITDA (x)	8.3	25.6	4.7	5.7	6.5
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash
Consensus net profit	-	-	1,928	1,113	1,313
MIBG vs. Consensus (%)	-	-	8.4	(11.5)	(66.4)

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# SELL

[Prior:HOLD]

Share Price MYR 4.27  
 12m Price Target MYR 3.92 (-8%)  
 Previous Price Target MYR 5.62

### Company Description

Petronas Chemicals Group Bhd manufactures, markets and sells petrochemicals.

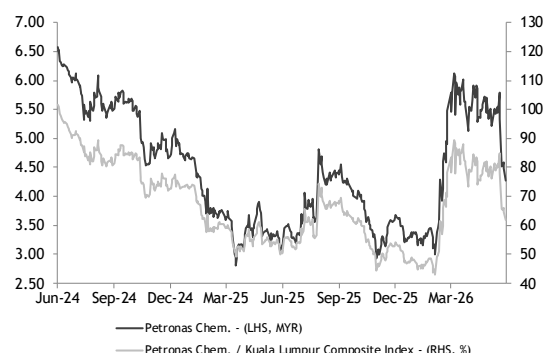
### Statistics

52w high/low (MYR) 6.13/2.92  
 3m avg turnover (USDm) 21.5  
 Free float (%) 21.8  
 Issued shares (m) 8,000  
 Market capitalisation MYR34.2B  
 USD8.2B

### Major shareholders:

Government of Malaysia 64.4%  
 Employees Provident Fund 13.2%  
 Permodalan Nasional Bhd. 5.1%

### Price Performance



	-1M	-3M	-12M
Absolute (%)	(25)	(22)	40
Relative to index (%)	(25)	(22)	23

Source: FactSet

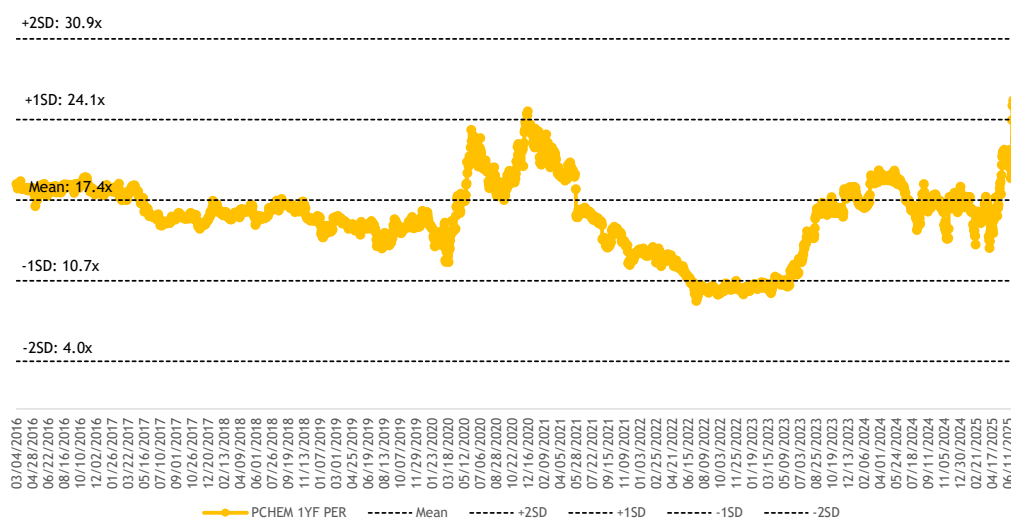
Fig 1: Earnings changes

	FY26E (Old)	FY26E (New)	Change	FY27E	FY28E
HDPE	USD1,400	USD1,400	0%	USD1,100	USD1,000
Urea	USD600	USD550	-8%	USD500	USD500
Methanol	USD400	USD400	0%	USD400	USD300
O&D EBITDA margins	25%	20%	-5 ppt	12%	9%
O&D utilisation rate	95%	88%	-7 ppt	95%	95%
F&M EBITDA margins	32%	32%	0%	32%	32%
F&M utilisation rate	95%	95%	0%	95%	95%
<b>CNP (MYRm)</b>	<b>2,999</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>-31%</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>440</b>
PER (x)	15	15			
<b>TP (MYR/share)</b>	<b>5.62</b>	<b>3.92</b>			

Source: Maybank IBG Research

PCHEM’s FY26E scheduled maintenance includes: i) Kertih IPC; ii) ASEAN Bintulu Fertiliser; iii) PC Methanol Plant 2; and iv) PC Fertiliser Sabah. The reduction in O&D utilisation rate assumptions is mainly due to the plant turnaround in Kertih IPC, where the maintenance involves multiple production facilities.

Fig 2: PCHEM’s historical forward PER band chart (normalised, pre-losses)

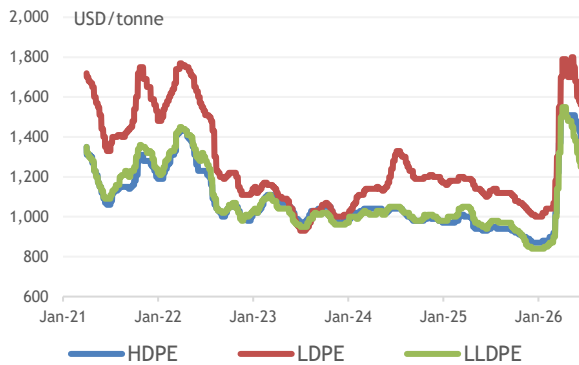


Source: Maybank IBG Research

## Value Proposition

- Petronas Chemicals Group (PCHEM) is Malaysia’s largest integrated petrochemical producer.
- Its portfolio spans olefins, derivatives, fertilisers, methanol and the downstream Pengerang Petrochemical Complex.
- The group benefits from integrated feedstock and strong upstream linkages but faces cyclical margin pressures, especially in naphtha-based assets.
- Earnings volatility has increased post-PPC consolidation, with recent quarters affected by weak product spreads and plant downtime.
- Near-term earnings remain constrained by the petrochemical downcycle.

### Chart Header

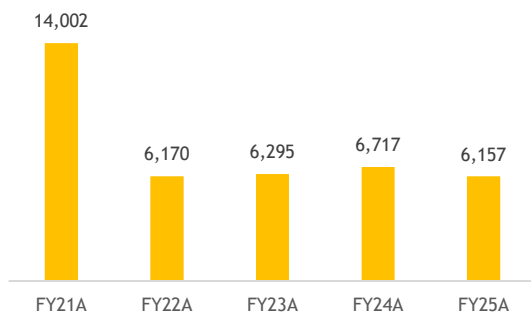


Source: Company

## Financial Metrics

- Product spreads, margins and plant uptime are key drivers for PCHEM’s profitability.
- Polymer prices are currently in a prolonged downcycle, crimping margins.
- PPC is a naphtha-based petrochemical complex - which adds volatility to earnings.
- PCHEM has always been in a net cash position.

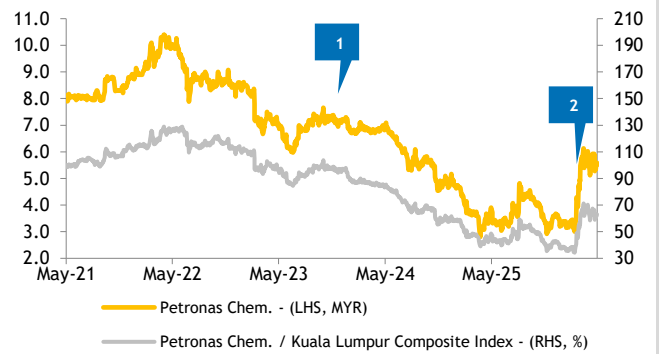
### Net cash balance



Source: Company, Maybank IBG Research

## Price Drivers

### Historical share price trend



Source: Company, Maybank IBG Research

1. De-rating of share price was mainly due to downtrending earnings profile - caused by the petrochemical sector downcycle
2. Middle East tensions induced a short-term petrochemical supercycle.

## Swing Factors

### Upside

- Uptick in olefin / urea prices.
- Petrochemical industry consolidation given prolonged downcycle and losses.
- PRC subsidising PPC via “special discounts” - which will narrow losses or help PPC become profitable.

### Downside

- Weakening of olefin / urea prices.
- Unplanned shutdowns, disruption in feedstock.
- Rise in naphtha prices.



FYE 31 Dec	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
<b>Key Metrics</b>					
P/E (reported) (x)	41.6	nm	16.3	34.7	77.6
Core P/E (x)	36.1	nm	16.3	34.7	77.6
P/BV (x)	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
P/NTA (x)	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
Net dividend yield (%)	2.5	1.9	3.1	1.4	0.6
FCF yield (%)	5.3	3.7	8.9	4.7	3.3
EV/EBITDA (x)	8.3	25.6	4.7	5.7	6.5
EV/EBIT (x)	17.5	nm	8.4	12.8	18.7

**INCOME STATEMENT (MYR m)**

Revenue	30,671.0	27,480.0	30,171.2	27,927.8	25,987.9
EBITDA	4,345.0	946.0	5,877.7	4,650.8	3,935.2
Depreciation	(2,288.0)	(2,318.0)	(2,612.8)	(2,588.2)	(2,564.7)
Amortisation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
EBIT	2,057.0	(1,372.0)	3,265.0	2,062.6	1,370.5
Net interest income / (exp)	(260.0)	(346.0)	(473.2)	(488.2)	(503.2)
Associates & JV	(107.0)	(174.0)	(136.8)	(136.8)	(34.0)
Exceptionals	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other pretax income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pretax profit	1,690.0	(1,892.0)	2,655.0	1,437.6	833.3
Income tax	(401.0)	(158.0)	(473.1)	(360.7)	(300.9)
Minorities	(114.0)	(92.0)	(92.0)	(92.0)	(92.0)
Discontinued operations	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reported net profit	1,175.0	(2,142.0)	2,089.9	984.9	440.4
Core net profit	1,145.0	(534.0)	2,089.9	984.9	440.4

**BALANCE SHEET (MYR m)**

Cash & Short Term Investments	9,931.0	9,621.0	11,920.7	13,330.4	14,541.3
Accounts receivable	4,705.0	3,655.0	3,815.7	3,532.0	3,532.0
Inventory	4,086.0	3,993.0	4,168.6	3,858.6	3,858.6
Reinsurance assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Property, Plant & Equip (net)	29,338.0	28,106.0	27,493.2	26,905.0	26,340.3
Intangible assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Investment in Associates & JVs	1,339.0	1,114.0	977.2	840.4	806.4
Other assets	10,621.0	11,201.0	11,201.0	11,201.0	11,201.0
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>60,020.0</b>	<b>57,690.0</b>	<b>59,576.4</b>	<b>59,667.4</b>	<b>60,279.6</b>
ST interest bearing debt	795.0	1,460.0	1,610.0	1,760.0	1,910.0
Accounts payable	10,054.0	10,222.0	10,671.5	9,878.0	9,878.0
Insurance contract liabilities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
LT interest bearing debt	2,419.0	2,004.0	2,154.0	2,304.0	2,454.0
Other liabilities	6,773.0	6,624.0	6,624.0	6,624.0	6,624.0
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>20,041.0</b>	<b>20,310.0</b>	<b>21,059.5</b>	<b>20,566.0</b>	<b>20,866.0</b>
Shareholders Equity	38,557.0	36,015.0	37,059.9	37,552.4	37,772.6
Minority Interest	1,422.0	1,365.0	1,457.0	1,549.0	1,641.0
<b>Total shareholder equity</b>	<b>39,979.0</b>	<b>37,380.0</b>	<b>38,516.9</b>	<b>39,101.4</b>	<b>39,413.6</b>
<b>Total liabilities and equity</b>	<b>60,020.0</b>	<b>57,690.0</b>	<b>59,576.4</b>	<b>59,667.4</b>	<b>60,279.6</b>

**CASH FLOW (MYR m)**

Pretax profit	1,690.0	(1,892.0)	2,655.0	1,437.6	833.3
Depreciation & amortisation	2,288.0	2,318.0	2,612.8	2,588.2	2,564.7
Adj net interest (income)/exp	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Change in working capital	993.0	878.0	113.2	(199.8)	0.0
Cash taxes paid	(303.0)	(367.0)	(473.1)	(360.7)	(300.9)
Other operating cash flow	(456.0)	1,819.0	136.8	136.8	34.0
Cash flow from operations	4,626.0	3,147.0	5,044.6	3,602.1	3,131.1
Capex	(2,452.0)	(2,082.0)	(2,000.0)	(2,000.0)	(2,000.0)
Free cash flow	2,174.0	1,065.0	3,044.6	1,602.1	1,131.1
Dividends paid	(1,234.0)	(483.0)	(1,044.9)	(492.4)	(220.2)
Equity raised / (purchased)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Change in Debt	4,158.0	(13.0)	300.0	300.0	300.0
Other invest/financing cash flow	(4,233.0)	(305.0)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Effect of exch rate changes	(207.0)	(569.0)	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Net cash flow</b>	<b>658.0</b>	<b>(305.0)</b>	<b>2,299.7</b>	<b>1,409.7</b>	<b>1,210.9</b>

FYE 31 Dec	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
<b>Key Ratios</b>					
<b>Growth ratios (%)</b>					
Revenue growth	7.0	(10.4)	9.8	(7.4)	(6.9)
EBITDA growth	5.1	(78.2)	521.3	(20.9)	(15.4)
EBIT growth	(4.6)	nm	nm	(36.8)	(33.6)
Pretax growth	(19.9)	nm	nm	(45.9)	(42.0)
Reported net profit growth	(30.7)	nm	nm	(52.9)	(55.3)
Core net profit growth	(32.8)	nm	nm	(52.9)	(55.3)
<b>Profitability ratios (%)</b>					
EBITDA margin	14.2	3.4	19.5	16.7	15.1
EBIT margin	6.7	nm	10.8	7.4	5.3
Pretax profit margin	5.5	nm	8.8	5.1	3.2
Payout ratio	88.5	nm	50.0	50.0	50.0
<b>DuPont analysis</b>					
Net profit margin (%)	3.8	nm	6.9	3.5	1.7
Revenue/Assets (x)	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4
Assets/Equity (x)	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
ROAE (%)	3.0	(5.7)	5.7	2.6	1.2
ROAA (%)	1.9	(0.9)	3.6	1.7	0.7
<b>Liquidity &amp; Efficiency</b>					
Cash conversion cycle	(20.8)	(34.7)	(57.5)	(58.7)	(60.2)
Days receivable outstanding	50.2	54.8	44.6	47.4	48.9
Days inventory outstanding	54.4	59.2	65.4	68.0	70.0
Days payables outstanding	125.4	148.7	167.5	174.0	179.2
Dividend cover (x)	1.1	(3.8)	2.0	2.0	2.0
Current ratio (x)	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.8
<b>Leverage &amp; Expense Analysis</b>					
Asset/Liability (x)	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash
Net gearing (%) (excl. perps)	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash
Net interest cover (x)	7.9	na	6.9	4.2	2.7
Debt/EBITDA (x)	0.7	3.7	0.6	0.9	1.1
Capex/revenue (%)	8.0	7.6	6.6	7.2	7.7
Net debt/ (net cash)	(6,717.0)	(6,157.0)	(8,156.7)	(9,266.4)	(10,177.3)

Source: Company; Maybank IBG Research

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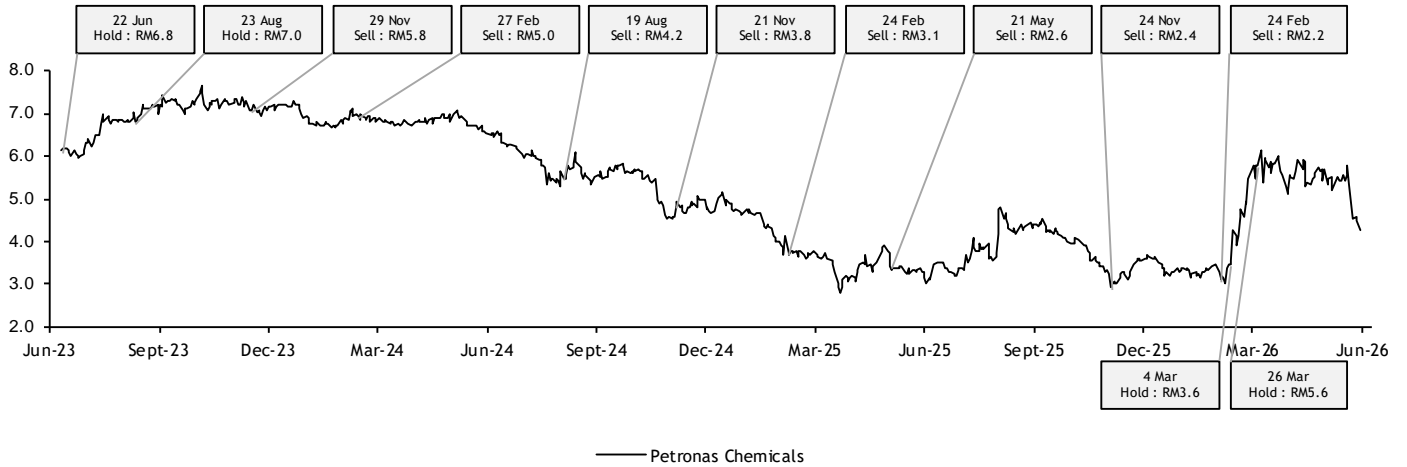
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