

|                 |             |              |                               |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Published Date: | 31 Mar 2025 | Publication: | Business Standard [New Delhi] |
| Journalist:     | Samie Modak | Page No:     | 10                            |
| Circulation:    | 11,438      |              |                               |

## 'Corrections help adjust stretched valuations'

Domestic wealth management is undergoing significant changes due to global uncertainty, market fluctuations, rising competition, and evolving client needs, says **OISHARYA DAS**, chief executive officer – private banking, Kotak Mahindra Bank. In an email interview with **Samie Modak**, Das discusses how these changes are influencing business strategies, client relationships, and investment approaches. Edited excerpts:

### How has the market fall impacted the business and client sentiment?

Certainly, business sentiment has been impacted by global uncertainties and a minor macro slowdown in India. However, we remain convinced about India's growth prospects. These kinds of corrections are necessary for healthy and sustainable growth. Equity valuations for a lot of companies were stretched, and these intermittent corrections help to adjust that. Moreover, clients, particularly ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNWIs), are patient investors and are not perturbed by market volatility, as they have gone through multiple market cycles.

### What asset classes look the most promising at this juncture?

We are in unprecedented times where geopolitical considerations are



**OISHARYA DAS**  
CEO – Private Banking,  
Kotak Mahindra Bank

superseding financial considerations of investments. The emergence of a multi-polar world calls for extreme caution, and currently, the benefit of diversification is immense as asset class correlations have broken down. Gold is

a natural hedge, and clients have allocated a portion of their portfolio to this asset class. As for equities, they have outperformed most of the other asset classes over a longer horizon and still remain one of the preferred asset classes for UHNWIs.

### How has the domestic wealth management ecosystem developed after the pandemic?

The wealth management industry in India is undergoing a significant transformation, with a notable increase in the wealth of HNWIs and mass affluent individuals, driving demand for wealth

management services. After the pandemic, there has been an increased focus on legacy preservation, with succession planning gaining centre stage in our discussions with clients. Holistic and proper planning, paired with a suitable structure, helps safeguard assets from risks and ensures smooth intergenerational transfer of wealth. The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital tools and platforms. Wealth management firms have invested heavily in technology to enhance client engagement and hyperpersonalisation through GenAI. The market has also seen the entry of financial technology (fintech) firms offering innovative solutions. Traditional wealth management firms are launching their technology platforms or partnering with or acquiring

fintech companies to stay competitive. Clients are looking beyond domestic markets for investment opportunities.

### How is the competitive landscape evolving?

A growing and diverse client base with higher expectations, technological advancements driving new ways of working, swift regulatory changes, and the emergence of new market entrants. The era of a one-size-fits-all is over. The wealth management industry must evolve alongside this transformation, offering sophisticated investment solutions and propositions that

appeal to a wide array of clients — from next-generation entrepreneurs to legacy family business owners.

### What are the key challenges for the industry?

With more players, both global and domestic, entering the market and enhancing their value propositions for UHNW clients, competition has intensified, leading to higher pressure on fees and services. Clients are more fee-conscious, and margins are shrinking. One of the most pressing challenges in the industry is the talent shortage.

### Which models do most wealth management firms follow — distribution or advisory?

As a firm, we have the appropriate infrastructure to offer both these models to our customer base.

*Disclosure: Entities controlled by the Kotak family have a significant holding in Business Standard Pvt Ltd*



## THE END OF ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL WEALTH MANAGEMENT

- Rising expectations from a diverse client base
- Technology driving innovation in wealth management
- Regulatory shifts requiring rapid adaptation
- New market entrants intensifying competition
- Tailored solutions for both young entrepreneurs and legacy business owners