

Singapore Market Focus

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DBS Group Research . Equity

27 May 2022

Tactical bounce for rate hike casualties

- Tactical low around mid-June as rate hike fears peak
- Positive 1Q22 earnings revision places support at STI 3142
- Bargain hunt rate hike casualties, stay positive on reopening
- Consumer staples and telcos are a stagflation hedge

Forming a near-term base. We see a base building month ahead with June marking a peak in rate hike worries. Similarly, our rates strategist keeps his view for inflation fears to peak in 2Q and improve thereafter. We see support at STI 3142 as valuation is inexpensive at 12.2x (-1SD) 12-mth forward PE. A base in June followed by a July recovery is in line with STI's seasonal trend that had guided us to expect a weak May.

Positive 1Q22 earnings revision. The recent results season saw earnings revision of +2.6% for FY22 and +3.1% for FY23 for companies under our coverage. STI's EPS growth forecast stands at a double-digit rate of 11.3% in FY22F and 15.9% for FY23F. SIA has almost single handedly lifted the earnings revision for the industrial sector that helped offset modest downward revisions for banks - UOB and OCBC. Higher CPO prices buoyed a 17% lift in FY22F earnings for consumer staples led by First Resources and Bumitama Agri.

Rate hike casualties approaching a tactical low. We seek bargain hunting opportunities post the market sell-off in May. Technology and REITs, which have underperformed YTD, should stabilize and attempt a recovery as rate hike fears peak. Our technology picks are AEM and Venture Corp. Leveraging off our recent REITs report titled [Bank the winners](#), our picks are MINT, FLT and KREIT.

Reopening remains in favour. We stay positive on the reopening theme. Pent-up travel demand among locals and inbound tourists will make up for some of the slag from China's zero-COVID policy that is likely to remain through 3Q22 at least. Our picks are SATS, SIA, ART, CDL HT and Genting for reopening of air borders; FCT, LREIT, CICT and ComfortDelgro for easing domestic restrictions.

Grocers and telcos are a stagflation hedge. Our base view is for the Singapore economy to grow by 3.5% y-o-y for 2022. While stagflation risk is low in Singapore, worries about a global economic slowdown or even recession has risen. There are few winners in an economic recession or worse, stagflation. For investors who seek a hedge against such a scenario, unlikely at this juncture, consumer staples such as grocery retail, Sheng Siong, and telco SingTel are outperformers.

STI : 3,209.18

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Key Indices

	Current	% Chng
FS STI Index	3,209.18	0.0%
FS Small Cap Index	302.27	0.0%
SGD Curncy	1.38	0.0%
Daily Volume (m)	1,780	
Daily Turnover (S\$m)	1,167	
Daily Turnover (US\$m)	1,610	

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P.

Market Key Data

(%)	EPS Gth	Div Yield
2021	59.7	3.9
2022F	11.8	4.0
2023F	14.4	4.4
(x)	PER	EV/EBITDA
2021	15.8	16.2
2022F	14.1	15.1
2023FF	12.3	13.1

STOCKS

	Price S\$	Mkt Cap US\$m	12-mth Target S\$	Performance (%)		
				3 mth	12 mth	Rating
AEM Holdings Ltd	4.29	964	6.04	6.5	20.5	BUY
Venture Corporatio	17.19	3,631	22.70	(0.1)	(8.1)	BUY
Mapletree Industrial Trust	2.41	4,661	3.05	(5.1)	(14.3)	BUY
Singapore Airlines	5.49	11,842	6.20	11.1	13.0	BUY
SATS Ltd	4.56	3,719	4.90	14.9	21.6	BUY
Ascott Residence Trust	1.12	2,673	1.40	8.7	16.1	BUY
CDL Hospitality Trusts	1.24	1,110	1.55	8.8	5.1	BUY
Frasers Centrepoint Trust	2.28	2,819	2.90	0.9	(0.4)	BUY
Keppel REIT	1.15	3,104	1.40	2.7	(1.7)	BUY
Sheng Siong Group	1.54	1,683	1.76	3.4	(4.9)	BUY

Source: DBS Bank, Bloomberg Finance L.P.
Closing price as of 26 May 2022



Watchlist the stock on Insights Direct to receive prompt updates

ed: JS/ sa: AS, PY, CS



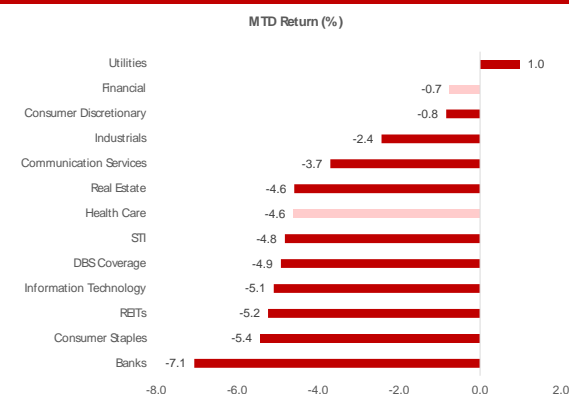
Live more, Bank less

June Market Outlook

Sell in May and go away?

- STI fell 4.8% MTD on recession woes and China lockdown
- Banks (UOB, OCBC) plunged 7.1% as worries of slower loan growth outweighed the positives of rising yields
- Consumer staples underperformed following Wilmar's trading ex-dividend and Chinese associate Yihai Kerry Arawana potentially affected by China's COVID lockdown
- Financials outperformed although the sector still recorded a negative return. SGX was flat as the Group arguably benefited from market volatility volumes
- Thai Beverage supported the outperformance of consumer discretionary as positivity over Thailand and Vietnam's reopening mitigated the negative macro sentiment

FTSE ST Indices' relative performance for May



Source: DBS Bank

Another 50bps hike in the offing

- MAS Quarterly Survey of Professional Forecasters
 - Previous survey sought views on Singapore's economy from 26 economists and analysts
- US Federal Reserve Meeting
 - US Fed Chairman has sounded increasingly hawkish, pledging to continue tightening until inflation eases
 - Market is pricing in another 50bps hike at the June meeting

June event calendar

Date	Event	Comments
8 June	MAS Quarterly Survey of Professional Forecasters	Survey to reveal expected economic health of Singapore
14 June	US Federal Reserve Meeting	US Fed expected to raise rates by another 0.5%

Source: Various news sources, DBS Bank

Are inflation fears peaking?

- US April CPI +8.3% y-o-y, higher than expectations of +8.1% but lower than prior month's +8.5%
- Our interest rates strategist maintains his view that 2Q22 will mark peak inflation fears
 - Deteriorating financial conditions → not easy for the FED to sound much more hawkish than it already is
 - Watching for signs of peaking inflationary pressures in coming few months
- US 10-yr yield eased off the 3.126% high in early May, currently at 2.77% as economic recession worries edge up
- Watch this space as REITs and technology should recover if inflation fears peak and yields retreat

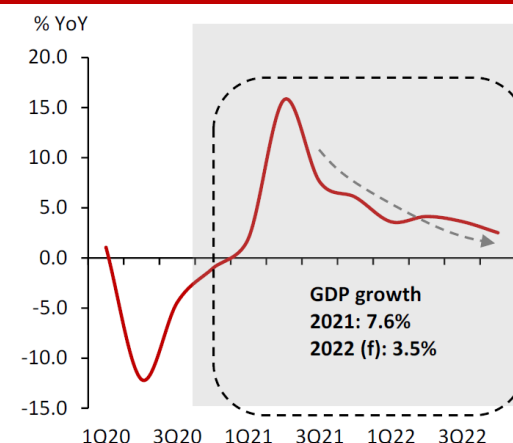
US 10-yr yields (Daily)



Ministry of Trade and Industry: Stronger outlook for reopening and electronics even as external demand weakens

- Singapore 2022 GDP forecast is likely to come at the lower half of the +3-5% y-o-y range given the weaker external demand outlook, according to MTI
- Ukraine war, faster-than-expected FED rate hikes, China slowdown and supply chain disruptions were risks cited
- Bright spots are aviation, tourism and consumer-facing industries as well as electronics amid global demand for semiconductors, cloud services and data centres
- Weaker outlook for chemicals, wholesale trade and water transport
- Trade agency Enterprise Singapore upgrades 2022 NODX growth forecast to +3% to +5% (prev. 0 to +2%)

DBS forecast for GDP growth trajectory



Source: DBS Bank

A balanced quarter of results

- 49 companies reported in line results, 11 companies beating and 12 companies underperforming expectations
- Consumer staples outperformed as **First Resources** and **Bumitama Agri** benefited from soaring CPO prices
- Information Technology delivered a mixed performance
 - **Venture** beat expectations amid robust demand across most of its domains and a good response to its new product launches
 - **AEM's** outperformance came on the back of strong demand for its new generation equipment and tools.
 - But **Aztech Global** and **Frencken's** earnings were below expectations as inflation pressures and supply chain bottlenecks compressed margins. Frencken's results was also impacted by its investment in new growth pillars
- Higher financing costs dented performance of some REITs
 - **EC World REIT** was impacted by higher financing costs and pre-termination of the Fu Zhuo Industrial lease
 - **ARA US Hospitality** saw lower than expected corporate demand for travel although forward bookings were encouraging

Earnings relative to expectations

	Above	Below	In Line	Total
Banks	1	1	1	3
Comm Services	1		2	3
Consumer Disc.			3	3
Consumer Staples	3	1	1	5
Financial		1		1
Health Care		1	1	2
Industrials	1	1	5	7
Info Technology	3	2	3	8
Real Estate			6	6
REITs	2	5	26	33
Utilities			1	1
DBS Coverage	11	12	49	72

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P., DBS Bank

Positive earnings revision led by industrials and consumer staples

- Earnings revision of +2.6% for FY22 and +3.1% for FY23 for companies under our coverage
- Banks: Moderate downward revision due to higher staff cost and lower non-interest income for **UOB**, potential headwinds for **OCBC**
- Industrials: higher sector earnings of 25.3% for FY22 and 16.5% for FY23 largely due to **Singapore Airlines'** return to profitability in FY22F on expectations of strong travel demand
- Consumer staples: Higher CPO prices buoyed a 17% change in FY22F earnings led by **First Resources** and **Bumitama Agri**
- Financial: **iFast Corporation's** earnings cut amid high operating costs from spending on new initiatives
- Health care: Slightly lower earnings expectations due to higher operating costs for **Riverstone**

Earnings diverge for COVID beneficiaries and casualties

- Banks: Maintain double digit EPS growth despite latest earnings cut
- Consumer discretionary: Earnings recovery for **Genting Singapore's** earnings as tourists return
- Healthcare: Change in fortunes for COVID-19 beneficiaries such as **Riverstone** as demand for their products normalize
- Industrials: 122.1% earnings growth for FY22 mostly due to **SIA**, followed by **ComfortDelGro**
- Information Technology: Despite supply chain woes affecting stocks such as **Frencken**, overall sector is lifted by strong demand for **Venture's** and **AEM's** products
- Real Estate: Earnings contraction for **HKL** and **CLI**, offset by growth for local developers **UOL** and **CityDev**

Forming a near-term base

- STI's 4.8% drop in May is [within our expectation](#) for the STI to start its seasonally weak period that should stretch several months
- Our [updated view](#) on 13 May for the STI to rebound off 3142 towards 3250 also panned out as expected
- We see June to be a month of base building with the 3142-support level staying valid
 - 50bps hike at the June-July FED meeting well anticipated
 - Market expectation for the number of FED rate hikes this year (another 175bps) has stopped rising in recent weeks
 - Our rates strategist maintains his view that inflation fears should peak in 2Q and improve beyond that
 - Inexpensive valuation at 12.2x (-1SD) 12-mth fwd PE at STI 3142

Earnings revision by sector (q-o-q)

Current vs Previous Earnings Change (%)		
Sector	FY22 Chng	FY23 Chng
Banks	-1.2%	3.2%
Communication Services	0.0%	0.0%
Consumer Discretionary	-1.3%	-1.1%
Consumer Staples	17.5%	1.9%
Financial	-2.0%	-2.3%
Health Care	-2.1%	-2.1%
Industrials	25.5%	16.7%
Information Technology	-2%	-2%
Real Estate	0.1%	0.1%
REITs	0.2%	0.7%
Grand Total	2.6%	3.1%

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P., DBS Bank

Sector earnings and valuation

	Earnings Growth (%)		PER (x)		Div Yld (%)	
	22F	23F	22F	23F	22F	23F
Banks	10.6	16.2	10.4	9.0	4.4	4.8
Comm Svcs	5.1	11.8	21.2	19.0	3.6	3.9
Cons Disc.	22.6	16.4	17.6	15.1	3.2	3.6
Con Staples	5.6	7.7	11.1	10.3	3.7	3.9
Financial	-4.3	14.8	25.9	22.6	3.0	3.1
Health Care	-34.2	7.0	28.7	26.8	1.4	1.4
Industrials	122.1	37.4	18.8	13.7	2.7	3.3
Info Tech	17.5	11.4	13.3	12.0	3.3	3.5
Real Estate	-10.4	12.1	15.5	13.9	3.1	3.1
REITs	8.0	6.0	17.0	16.1	5.8	5.9
Grand Total	11.0	14.8	14.3	12.4	4.0	4.3
Ex Property	14.0	15.1	14.1	12.3	4.1	4.4
STI DBS forecast	11.3	15.9	13.2	11.4	3.4	3.6

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P., DBS Bank

Straits Times Index (Daily)

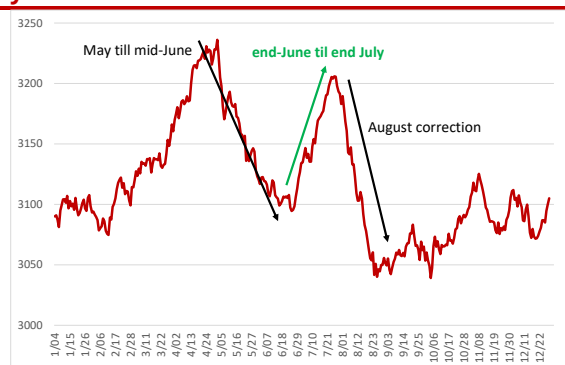


Source: DBS Bank

Stocks to bargain hunt post May sell-down

We seek bargain hunting opportunities post May market sell-off. STI's seasonality trend during non-crisis years from 2010 to 2019 reveals a decline from May to mid-June followed by a recovery or rebound that stretches till end-July. While it's not possible to pinpoint the exact reversal date, we think this year should be no exception.

STI seasonality trend between non-crisis years from 2010 to 2019



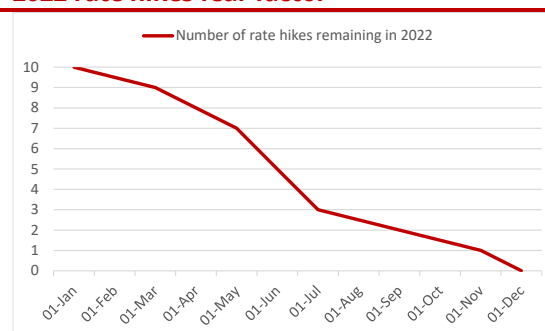
Source: DBS Bank

FED rate hikes schedule is well anticipated. The FED is seen front loading rate increases by delivering 50bps hikes each at the May, June and July FOMC meetings and 25bps beyond that. Market expects a total of 10 x 25bps hikes this year. There are 5 more hikes after the June FOMC meeting and 3 after the July meeting.

With these observations, we think the rate hike fear factor this year should peak at around the 15 June FOMC meeting. Our rates strategist maintains his view that **inflation fears should peak in 2Q** and improve beyond that.

Furthermore, **STI's valuation is inexpensive at the recent low of 3165** that coincides closely with 12.2x (-1SD) 12-mth forward PE.

2022 rate hikes fear factor



Source: DBS Bank

Sell-off on rate hike casualties ending soon

Technology and **REITs**, which underperformed YTD, should stabilize, and attempt a recovery as rate hike fears peak and subside.

Our technology picks are **AEM** and **Venture Corp.** Both stocks reported 1Q earnings that were above expectations.

AEM is well positioned to benefit from the strong industry outlook for semiconductors and strong systems level testing demand. It has mitigated supply chain disruptions with proactive inventory management. Inventories increased by 25% to \$256.2m in 1Q22. AEM now has higher inventory levels of 3-6 months (prev. 2-3 months).

Venture Corp offers strong growth momentum, supportive PE valuation and attractive yield. VMS has been able to build on its capabilities to attract quality customers and recent new product launches have been well received. The stock price trades at c.14.5x fwd PE that is just modestly above its 13.5x (-1SD) 4-yr fwd PE valuation despite expectations of 11% EPS growth this year. Yield is at 4.4%.

Leveraging off our latest REITs report titled [Bank the winners](#), our REITs picks are **MINT**, **FLT** and **KREIT**.

We like **MINT** for its resilience and steady growth profile amid the current market volatility. MINT now derives c.51% of its AUM from datacentres and will continue to add strategically in this space. The recent correction has brought P/NAV down to 1.3x with forward yields of about 5.8%, close to average levels.

FLT has the lowest gearing among peers and a debt headroom c.S\$1.3bn before gearing reaches 40%. A large cash balance of c.S\$300m lets it fund an acquisition and drive further accretion to earnings. It also has a large ROFR pipeline valued at >S\$5.0bn.

KREIT's best-in-class office portfolio is well positioned to ride on the rising office market in Singapore. Given the recent

commercial S-REITs merger between CapitaLand Mall Trust and CapitaLand Commercial Trust to form CapitaLand Integrated Commercial Trust (CICT), KREIT is the last remaining office pure play which we believe investors will eventually favour and assign a premium to its unique attribute. Valuation remains attractive at c.5% FY22F yield and 0.9x P/NAV.

Stock picks among 'rate hike casualties'

Company	Price 23 May 2022 (S\$)	Target Price S\$) (12 mth)	Target Return	Mkt Cap (S\$m)	Rcmd	PER 22 (x)	PER 23 (x)	EPS Growth 22 (%)	Div Yield 22 (%)	Net Debt / Equity 22	P/BV 21 (x)
AEM	4.37	6.04	38%	1,351	BUY	10.9	9.8	34.5	2.3	cash	3.3
Venture Corp	17.36	22.7	31%	5,044	BUY	14.5	13.6	11.4	4.3	cash	1.9
MINT	2.44	3.05	25%	6,493	BUY	18.3	17.2	-20.9	5.7	0.4	1.2
KREIT	1.14	1.4	23%	4,233	BUY	26.5	24.6	6.1	5.3	0.4	0.9
FLT	1.34	1.75	30%	4,946	BUY	20.1	20	81.1	5.7	0.3	1.1

Source: DBS Bank

Reopening remains in favour

We stay positive on the reopening theme. Pent-up travel demand among locals and inbound tourists will make up for some of the slag from China's zero-COVID policy that is likely to remain through 3Q22 at least.

Our picks are **SATS**, **SIA**, **ART**, **CDL HT** and **Genting** for air borders reopening; **FCT**, **LREIT**, **CICT** and **ComfortDelgro** for domestic restrictions easing.

Reopening stock picks

Company	Price 23 May 2022	Target Price (S\$)	Target Return	Mkt Cap (S\$m)	Rcmd	PER 22 (x)	PER 23 (x)	EPS Growth 22 (%)	Div Yield 22 (%)	Net Debt / Equity 22	P/BV 21 (x)
SIA	5.48	6.2	13%	16,262	BUY	24.8	14.9	nm	1.2	cash	1.6
SATS	4.55	4.9	8%	5,106	BUY	42.6	21.1	158.5	1.3	cash	3.2
Genting SP	0.79	1	27%	9,537	BUY	31.2	17.9	67.1	2.5	cash	1.2
ART	1.12	1.4	25%	3,678	BUY	25.3	20.3	nm	5.1	0.3	0.9
CDL HT	1.26	1.55	23%	1,551	BUY	44.9	27.8	42.7	4.3	0.4	0.9
ComfortDelgro	1.47	1.95	32%	3,185	BUY	19.2	14.3	27.4	3.4	cash	1.2
CICT	2.24	2.7	21%	14,832	BUY	22.1	20.2	-18.4	4.8	0.4	1.1
FCT	2.31	2.9	26%	3,930	BUY	19.2	18.2	0.5	5.5	0.3	1
LREIT	0.8	1.06	32%	953	BUY	19.1	17.4	66.3	6	0.4	1

Source: DBS Bank

Consumer staples and telcos are a hedge against stagflation risk

Our base view remains for the Singapore economy to grow by 3.5% y-o-y for 2022. MTI's toned-down Singapore 2022 GDP forecast at the lower half of the +3 to 5% y-o-y range is in line with our economist's current view for +3.5% GDP growth. While stagflation risk is low here in Singapore, worries about a global economic slowdown or even recession has risen. This is reflected in the pullback in US 10-yr yield in recent weeks amid a flight to safety. Market expectation for number of FED rate hikes has also stopped at 10 since early May.

US 10-yr yield eased from 3.19% high since 9 May



Source: DBS Bank

There are few winners in an economic recession or worse, stagflation. For investors who seek a hedge against such a scenario, unlikely as it is currently, consumer staples such as grocers **Sheng Siong** and telco **SingTel** are likely outperformers.

For **Sheng Siong**, demand normalization from the easing of Singapore domestic COVID restrictions is offset by organic growth from higher store count. Further upside for the company could also come in the form of changing consumer patterns, where consumers opt to eat at home as the cost of eating out rises.

SingTel is our preferred pick among the 2 listed telcos. A 9% annual earnings growth over FY22-24F is seen driven by associate Bharti Airtel. It's also a value unlocking play through asset divestments. Our analyst thinks Singtel is exploring a partial sale of its fibre assets in Australia that should fund Australia Tower Network's recent purchase of Axicom for A\$3.58bil.

Besides grocers and telcos, investors may also look to build a recession resilient portfolio through semiconductor/technology and reopening themes. Our stock picks are highlighted in the prior section.

Stocks to edge against recession and stagflation risks

Company	Price 23 May 2022 (\$)	Target Price (\$)	Target Return	Mkt Cap (\$m)	Rcmd	PER 22 (x)	PER 23 (x)	EPS Growth 22 (%)	EPS Growth 23 (%)	Div Yield 22 (%)	Net Debt / Equity 22	P/BV 21 (x)
Sheng Siong	1.52	1.76	16%	2,285	BUY	18.2	17.2	-5.3	5.5	3.9	cash	5.5
SingTel	2.67	3.13	17%	44,076	BUY	19.5	18	20.3	8.7	3.6	0.4	1.6

Source: DBS Bank

DBS Bank recommendations are based on an Absolute Total Return* Rating system, defined as follows:

STRONG BUY (>20% total return over the next 3 months, with identifiable share price catalysts within this time frame)

BUY (>15% total return over the next 12 months for small caps, >10% for large caps)

HOLD (-10% to +15% total return over the next 12 months for small caps, -10% to +10% for large caps)

FULLY VALUED (negative total return, i.e., > -10% over the next 12 months)

SELL (negative total return of > -20% over the next 3 months, with identifiable share price catalysts within this time frame)

*Share price appreciation + dividends

Completed Date: 27 May 2022 06:45:52 (SGT)

Dissemination Date: 27 May 2022 08:31:49 (SGT)

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