

## **DAILY NEWS DIGEST BY BESI BOARD**

06 March 2026



### **ECONOMY**

**IMF warns prolonged Middle East conflict risks global stability:** International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has cautioned that the escalating conflict in the Middle East could undermine global economic stability if it becomes prolonged, flagging risks to energy markets, inflation trends and investor sentiment. Addressing delegates at the Asia in 2050 Conference in Bangkok this morning, Georgieva said an extended war would likely transmit shocks across economies by lifting energy prices and clouding growth prospects. At a time when many countries are still navigating fragile recoveries and tight financial conditions, she warned, policymakers could face renewed strain.

***(Business Today)***

**Iran's olive branch sparks Sensex surge; index reclaims 80,000:** Equity benchmarks staged a sharp recovery on Thursday, snapping a three-session losing streak, after reports that Iran had conditionally offered to abandon its nuclear programme raised hopes of de-escalation in the ongoing US-Israel-Iran conflict. The BSE Sensex surged 899.71 points, or 1.14 per cent, to close at 80,015.90, while the Nifty 50 gained 285.40 points, or 1.17 per cent, to settle at 24,765.90. Earlier in the session, both indices had given up a portion of their intra-day gains after an initial surge. The catalyst for the rally was a combination of geopolitical and trade-related developments. The US announced security and insurance guarantees for commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, including the possibility of military escorts for oil tankers, easing fears of disruption to global energy supplies.

***(Business Line)***

## **BANKING & FINANCE**



**South Indian Bank launches digitally integrated loan against MF products:** South Indian Bank has launched a digitally integrated Loan Against Mutual Funds (LAMF) product in partnership with fintech firm smallcase. The offering allows investors to access secured credit against their mutual fund holdings through a fully digital process. Starting at 9.99 per cent per annum, the facility will be available to the bank's customers as well as users of digital wealth platforms integrated through its Lending Service Provider ecosystem.

***(Business Line)***

**CD ratio at 82.5%, banks step up short-term borrowings:** Banks are lending a higher proportion of their deposits, further thinning liquidity buffers and increasing the reliance on short-term financing instruments, the latest central bank data showed. The credit-deposit (CD) ratio rose to a record 82.5% in the fortnight ended February 15, as credit growth outpaced deposit growth by 281 basis points.

***(Economic Times)***

**IIFL Finance looks at options to exit microfin arm Samasta:** IIFL Finance is exploring options to exit its microfinance subsidiary IIFL Samasta Finance, and has started discussions with multiple interested suitors, two people aware of the development said. Piramal Finance is one of the interested parties and negotiations with it have progressed a bit, they said, adding that the discussions are at a preliminary stage.

***(Economic Times)***

**Life insurers sharpen focus on annuity and pension products:** Life insurers are sharpening their focus on annuity and pension products, betting on an ageing population to drive long-term growth. Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance is launching index-guaranteed annuity plan, while SBI Life Insurance and HDFC Life Insurance are planning deferred and variable annuity offerings. The change comes with rising longevity, limited social security coverage and growing awareness around the need for

stable post-retirement income. Pension and annuity segments together consist of 18.87% of the total life insurance industry, as of March 2025. This segment is growing faster than the industry for most insurance companies.

***(Economic Times)***

## INDUSTRY OUTLOOK



**Women startup founders get just ₹4 for every ₹100 raised by men: Report:** India has seen a 1.7x increase in girls enrolled in high school STEM between 2013 and 2024, a 2x increase in women registering for JEE between 2015 and 20225, and women today account for a significant share of STEM graduates. But when it comes to raising funds, women entrepreneurs receive a disproportionately small share. A new report released by Kalaari CXXO initiative, titled 'The ₹4 Problem: Women Founders and the Market Gap Hiding in Plain Sight', said that for every ₹100 raised by founders coming from India's powerful startup networks, only ₹4 goes to women. The findings of the report highlight that even as women enter STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) and competitive exams in historic numbers, they remain just 0.6 times as likely to emerge as founders.

***(Business Standard)***

**Additional war-risk insurance lifts Gulf airfares three to four times:** Additional war-risk insurance premiums of around ₹30-40 lakh for a narrow-body flight and ₹90 lakh-₹1 crore for a wide-body flight on legs such as Delhi-Dubai-Delhi are a key reason why spot airfares between India and the Middle East have shot up three to four times their usual levels. They are likely to remain elevated as long as the regional conflict continues, aviation industry executives told Business Standard. Besides the steep insurance costs, airlines are also grappling with rising aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices and operational disruptions that are pushing up fares. Executives said ATF prices have already increased significantly and are expected to rise by about 30 per cent as fuel

shipments from the Middle East have been disrupted due to the conflict. ATF accounts for roughly 40 per cent of an Indian carrier's total operating expenses.

**(Business Standard)**



## REGULATION & DEVELOPMENT

**RBI data suggest end of repo rate cut transmission into lending rates:** The transmission of repo rate cuts into lending and deposit rates may be over, as interest rates on fresh loans went up even as interest rates on fresh deposits barely came down, going by RBI data for January 2026. This development comes amid deposit growth (at 12.42 per cent year-on-year) lagging credit growth (14.40 per cent) as on January 31, 2026. That transmission of the repo rate cuts into lending rates may have concluded can be gauged from the fact that the weighted average lending rate (WALR) on fresh rupee loans of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) rose 39 bps to 8.67 per cent in January 2026 from 8.28 per cent in December 2025. WALR in December 2025 had declined by 43 bps from 8.71 per cent in November 2025.

**(Business Line)**

**SWIFT: Global banks to roll out new norms to speed up cross-border payments:** SWIFT, on Thursday said banks across the world, including major Indian banks like SBI, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Axis Bank, will begin rolling out a new framework aimed at making cross-border retail payments faster, more predictable and cheaper for consumers and small businesses. India will be amongst the first countries to benefit, as one of the top remittance-receiving nations globally. "Consumers and small businesses receiving payments in a range of countries, including five of the world's largest remittance markets, will be among the first to benefit as Swift and banks globally roll out a pioneering new framework to bring next-generation speed and new levels of affordability and predictability to cross-border retail payments,"

**(Business Standard)**

**NPCI signals identity reboot: Looks to build brand recall beyond platforms:** The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the organisation that runs India’s key digital payment rails, is planning a major branding exercise as it seeks to reposition itself as a technology-led infrastructure provider and strengthen its profile in India and overseas. According to people familiar with the development, the apex payments body is reviewing its brand architecture across the NPCI Group, including its subsidiaries, to bring greater harmonisation to its identity.

***(Business Standard)***



### **TRICK WORDING**

- Deliberate use of confusing or vague language like confusing wording, double negatives, or other similar tricks, in order to misguide or misdirect a user from taking desired action or leading consumer to take a specific response or action..
- For example; Using confusing double negatives to trick users into opting for promotional emails or additional services, e.g., a checkbox that says, “Uncheck this box if you do not want to receive offers”



### **RBI KEY RATES**

Repo Rate: 5.25%  
SDF: 5.00%  
MSF & Bank Rate: 5.50%  
CRR: 3.00%  
SLR: 18.00%  
Fixed Reverse Repo: 3.35%

### **FOREX (FBIL 1.30 PM)**

INR / 1 USD : 91.6275  
INR / 1 GBP : 122.0460  
INR / 1 EUR : 106.2635  
INR /100 JPY: 58.3100

### **EQUITY MARKET**

Sensex: 80015.90 (+899.71)  
NIFTY: 24765.90 (+285.40)  
Bnk NIFTY: 59055.85 (+300.60)

### **Courses conducted by BFSI Board**

- ❖ Certificate Course on Concurrent Audit of Banks
- ❖ Certificate Course on Credit Management of Banks
- ❖ Certificate Course on Investment Management
- ❖ Certificate Course on General Insurance
- ❖ Advance Certificate Course on FinTech
- ❖ Certificate Course on Project Financing
- ❖ Certificate Course on Cost Control Strategies in the Banking Sector
- ❖ Certificate Course on Treasury, Foreign Exchange and International Banking

**For details please visit BFSIB portal of the ICMAI website.**

### **Publications by BFSI Board**

- ❖ Handbook on Aide Memoire on Infrastructure Financing (3rd enlarged revised edition).
- ❖ Aide Memoire on lending to MSME Sector (including restructuring of MSME Credit).
- ❖ Guidance Note on the Internal Audit of General Insurance Companies.
- ❖ BFSI Chronicle (quarterly issue of BFSIB)
- ❖ Handbook on Stock & Book Debts Audit (Revised and Enlarged 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)
- ❖ Handbook on Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)
- ❖ Monograph on Climate Risk and Green Finance-Banking Sector-International Practices and Indian Perspective (2nd Series)
- ❖ Guidance Note on Cost Control Strategies in the Banking Sector

## **TEAM BFSIB**

### **Banking, Financial Services & Insurance Board The Institute of Cost Accountants of India (ICMAI)**

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