

DAILY NEWS DIGEST BY BESI BOARD

20 March 2026



ECONOMY

Global trade to slow to 1.9% in 2026, may drop to 1.4% if West Asia crisis persists, says WTO: Global merchandise trade growth is projected to slow sharply to 1.9 percent in 2026 from 4.6 percent in 2025, according to the latest outlook released by the World Trade Organization, as the impact of a surge in AI-related products and frontloading of imports to avoid new tariffs fades. World merchandise trade volume is then projected to grow by 2.6 percent in 2027 under a baseline growth scenario. Overall trade in goods and services is expected to grow 2.7 percent in 2026, down from 4.7 percent in 2025, while global GDP growth is projected to moderate slightly to 2.8 percent. If both crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices remain elevated throughout 2026, merchandise trade volumes would grow even slower at 1.4 percent and services at 4.1 percent, according to the WTO's latest outlook released on March 19.

(Moneycontrol)

IMF raises alarm amid Iran war: 'Inflation could rise by 2%, output may contract by 1%': The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has flagged rising risks to global inflation and economic output as tensions linked to the Iran war intensify, cautioning that sustained energy price shocks could ripple across economies. The warning comes as energy markets react sharply to escalating hostilities in the Middle East. Oil prices jumped 10 percent after Qatar reported "extensive" damage to a major liquefied natural gas facility following Iranian strikes, heightening fears about supply disruptions. European gas prices also surged by more than a third after attacks on the Ras Laffan facility.

(Moneycontrol)

Govt rolls out Rs 497-cr relief as Hormuz curb disrupts shipments to Gulf: The government on Wednesday unveiled a Rs 497 crore export support package as disruptions linked to the Iran conflict and shipping constraints around the Strait of Hormuz begin to affect trade flows to the Middle East. Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said the crisis has started to impact the trade environment, with exporters facing delays and uncertainty in shipments. "Due to the crisis, there has been some impact on the trade environment in India," he said, noting that "exporters to the Middle East [are] facing challenges" and "exports haven't reached destinations, future exports getting impacted."

(Business Today)

BANKING & FINANCE



SBI Mutual Fund files DRHP for ₹13,000 crore IPO: India's largest asset management company, SBI Mutual Fund, has filed its Draft Red Herring Prospectus to raise about ₹13,000 crore. The fund house is a joint venture between the State Bank of India and France-based Amundi. While SBI will offload 128,334,397 equity shares, Amundi India Holding will sell 75,374,842 equity shares in the IPO, as per the DRHP filed with the SEBI. Currently, SBI owns 61.98 per cent in SBI MF, while Amundi has a 36.40 per cent stake.

(Business Line)

No material concerns on record as regards HDFC Bank's conduct or governance: RBI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday said there are no material concerns on record as regards HDFC Bank's conduct or governance. This statement comes in the backdrop of the resignation of Atanu Chakraborty as the Part-time Chairman and Independent Director of the bank with immediate effect. Chakraborty cited "certain happenings and practices within the bank, that I have observed over the last two years, are not in congruence with my personal values and ethics" as the basis for his decision to step down.

(Business Line)

HDFC Bank firefights after chairman Atanu Chakraborty's abrupt exit: The dark clouds that had gathered over India's largest private lender, HDFC Bank, on late Wednesday as its part-time chairman Atanu Chakraborty resigned with immediate effect citing 'ethics', had blown over by Thursday noon with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) coming out strongly in its support to stress there were no governance or conduct issues at the bank. Chakraborty, a former bureaucrat who had sought to be relieved from his post immediately, had attributed the decision to certain happenings and practices within the bank over the last two years and those were not in congruence with his personal "values and ethics". Following his decision, four HDFC Bank board members met RBI officials, including two deputy governors, on Wednesday, seeking its nod to appoint board member Keki Mistry as interim part time chairman. The regulator quickly approved. HDFC Bank began firefighting even before the stock markets opened with an early investor call addressed by six of its 12 current board members, including Mistry and MD & CEO Sashidhar Jagdishan. "I would not have taken on this responsibility at the age of 71 if it did not align with my principles and my level of integrity that I would expect from the bank," Mistry told analysts.

(Business Standard)

HSBC considers 20,000 job cuts as AI drives overhaul of operations: HSBC Holdings Plc is weighing deep job cuts over the coming years as Chief Executive Officer Georges Elhedery bets on AI to shrink its middle and back offices, one of the first signs of how the technology could reshape Wall Street workforces. Non-client facing roles in global service centres are among those expected to be most impacted although the assessment is at an early stage, according to people familiar with the matter, who asked not to be identified discussing preliminary deliberations. The changes could ultimately impact around 20,000 roles or about 10 per cent of its total workforce, one of the people said.

(Business Standard)

US Fed proposes easing bank capital rules to free funds for lending: Wall Street lending giants would get relaxed capital requirements under proposals unveiled by the Federal Reserve on Thursday, in a move that could potentially unleash billions of dollars for lending, share buybacks and dividends. "These changes would strengthen our overall capital framework, which would remain robust under the new regime," Fed

Vice Chair for Supervision Michelle Bowman said in a statement. The package of proposals, which are subject to a 90-day public consultation before they can be finalized, were crafted by officials at the Fed, in addition to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

(Business Standard)

INDUSTRY OUTLOOK



Valuation 'attractive' for FPIs to invest in India, says Sebi WTM Varshney:

Valuation of the Indian equity market has become “quite attractive” following recent corrections, making it a good opportunity for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to invest in India, said Kamlesh Chandra Varshney, whole-time member (WTM) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), on Wednesday. “There is a tremendous opportunity to invest in Indian equity markets with the kind of correction, which has taken place now in the last few months, particularly after the war broke out,” said Varshney, addressing an official programme of the Russia-India Forum at the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE).

(Business Standard)

Odisha tops India's mining economy, eastern region drives growth: Report:

Odisha has emerged as the largest contributor to India’s mining economy, accounting for around 14 per cent of the country’s mining gross value added (GVA) in FY2025, according to a report released during the India Mines and Minerals Conclave 2026 in Bhubaneswar. The report, jointly prepared by Assocham and credit rating agency ICRA Ltd, with data sourced from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), ranked Gujarat second with a share of 12.9 per cent, followed by Maharashtra with 12.1 per cent, Rajasthan with 9.6 per cent and Madhya Pradesh with 8.6 per cent. These five states together contributed over 57 per cent of the national mining GVA, reflecting a high concentration of mineral-driven economic activity.

(Business Standard)

Traces of gold, diamond and ruby deposits detected: Odisha minister: Odisha is likely on the cusp of adding precious minerals to its rich mining portfolio. Known for its vast reserves of iron ore, bauxite and chromite, the state has now reported the presence of diamonds, rubies and gold-bearing formations across several districts. Replying to questions in the Assembly on Thursday, Steel and Mines Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena said diamond-bearing stones have been identified in the Kalmidadar area of Nuapada district. He said detailed technical and economic assessments are underway to determine the volume and viability of the discovery.

(Business Standard)



REGULATION & DEVELOPMENT

Misuse of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code by loan defaulters has tendency to badly impact economy: HC: The Bombay High Court has strongly condemned loan defaulters and guarantors for exploiting the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. This practice allows them to seek immunity by triggering a moratorium, thereby stalling recovery efforts by secured creditors. The court highlighted that such actions frustrate the IBC's core objectives and negatively affect the nation's economy.

(Economic Times)

Rs. 10,000 crore container scheme under appraisal: Sarbananda Sonowal: The government's recently announced container manufacturing scheme is currently being appraised, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal informed Parliament on Thursday. "The Government in Budget Speech 2026-27 has announced a scheme for container manufacturing in India with a budget outlay of Rs 10,000 crore aimed at creating a globally competitive container manufacturing ecosystem in the country through financial incentives to support establishment and expansion of container manufacturing units. The Ministry has initiated the process of appraisal of the scheme," the minister said.

(Business Standard)

Sebi may allow netting of funds for FPIs in March 23 board meeting: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) may approve the framework for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to net funds across cash market transactions executed on the same day in its upcoming board meeting scheduled for March 23, sources aware of the developments said. The move is expected to ease liquidity pressure and lower funding costs for FPIs, especially during high-volume trading sessions such as index rebalancing days. With the approval, FPIs will be able to use the proceeds from sale transactions in the cash market on a particular day to fund purchase transactions on the same day — requiring them to only fulfil the net fund obligation. However, netting may not be permitted if the FPI buys and sells the same stock or security on the same day or settlement cycle.

(Business Standard)



FINANCIAL TERMINOLOGY

WASH SALE

- A wash sale is a transaction in which an investor sells or trades a security at a loss and purchases a substantially similar one "30 days before or after the sale." The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) enforces the wash sale rule to prevent investors from using capital losses to their advantage at tax time.
- The IRS instituted the wash sale rule to prevent taxpayers from using the practice to reduce their tax liability.



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 : 92.4514
INR / 1 GBP : 123.6371
INR / 1 EUR : 106.7616
INR /100 JPY: 58.2900

EQUITY MARKET

Sensex: 74207.24 (-2496.89)
NIFTY: 23002.15 (-775.85)
Bnk NIFTY: 53451.00 (-1875.05)

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TEAM BFSIB

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

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