DAILY MARKET INSIGHTS.

Monday, 23 March 2026

MARKET COMMENTARY

System Liquidity

System liquidity opened today a surplus of ₦8.15 trillion, reflecting a decrease of ₦91.12 billion from the previous session. The slight decline was primarily driven by a net outflow in primary market activities, with ₦691.86 billion in primary market sales (e.g., NTBs/FGN Bonds) partly offset by ₦579.00 billion in primary market repayments, alongside a modest reduction in opening balances of banks/discount houses. Despite this, Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) balances rose by ₦113.78 billion to ₦8.18 trillion, supporting overall robust liquidity levels.

The average funding cost edged up by 3bps to 22.14%, as the Open Repo Rate (OPR) remained unchanged at 22.00%, while the Overnight Rate (OVN) increased by 6bps to close at 22.27%.

Outlook: *Barring any significant funding activities, we expect funding cost to ease slightly amid robust system liquidity.*

SYS. LIQ. (₦'BN)		Diff.
23-Mar-26	8,149.17	(91.12)
20-Mar-26	8,240.30	

Source: CBN, AIICO Capital

Eurobonds

The Nigerian Sovereign Eurobond market traded on a mixed note as investors remained cautious amid persistent global uncertainties. Sentiment was influenced by volatile oil prices, with Brent crude experiencing sharp fluctuations around recent geopolitical escalations in the Middle East involving U.S.-Iran tensions and disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz.

However, the firmer U.S. dollar and lingering geopolitical tensions continued to sustain a cautious risk-off tone across global markets. At the same time, the latest U.S. labour market data showed initial jobless claims falling to 205,000, reflecting ongoing labour market resilience and helping to stabilize broader sentiment, causing the average benchmark yield edged up slightly by 1bp to 7.29%.

Outlook: *We expect the market to trade mixed tomorrow amidst recent yield uptick and update on the Middle-East tension.*

BENCHMARK FGN EUROBOND YIELDS	23-Mar-26	20-Mar-26	Change in Yield (%)
5 YRS: NGERIA 8.375% 03/24/29	6.02%	6.02%	-
10 YRS: NGERIA 7.375% 09/29/33	7.41%	7.39%	0.02
15 YRS: NGERIA 7.696% 23/02/38	7.90%	7.89%	0.01
30 YRS: NGERIA 8.25% 09/29/51	8.43%	8.43%	-
8.75% ETI 06/17/31*	4.93%	4.16%	0.08

Source: FirstBank UK, AIICO Capital

Treasury Bills

The NTB secondary market traded on a mixed note as investors remained cautious following recent primary market outcomes. Activity showed selective repricing, with notable upward adjustments in shorter-to-mid tenors such as the 08-Oct-26 bill which rose 49bps to 16.49% and the 05-Nov-26 bill up 38bps to 16.45%, while some longer maturities like the 03-Sep-26 bill eased 13bps to 16.25% and the new 04-Mar-27 bill closed lower at 16.27%.

Secondary market demand stayed measured amid ample system liquidity, though mild selling pressure appeared in select papers. The average benchmark rate rose 9.5bps to 16.20%.

Outlook: *We expect market to trade in line with the available system liquidity.*

BENCHMARK T-BILLS DISCOUNT RATES			
	23-Mar-26	20-Mar-26	Change in Yield (%)
45 DAYS	15.66%	15.66%	-
136 DAYS	16.10%	16.06%	0.04
318 DAYS	16.62%	16.62%	-

Source: FMDQ, AIICO Capital

FGN Bonds

The FGN bond secondary market traded on a mildly bearish note, with investors maintaining a cautious stance amid lingering effects from recent primary market dynamics and ample system liquidity.

Activity remained subdued across the curve, though selective repricing occurred. Short-tenor bonds saw mixed movements, with the 20-Mar-27 quoted sharply lower (anomalous repricing) while the 23-Feb-28 edged up 1bp to 16.18% and the 20-Mar-28 eased 3bps to 15.86%. Mid-tenor papers displayed modest upward pressure, led by the 15-May-33 rising 5bps to 16.14% and the 27-Apr-32 up 1bp to 16.07%, while nearby maturities like 21-Feb-31 and 17-Apr-29 dipped slightly by 1bp each. Long-tenor bonds remained largely stable, with no changes observed across the 2034–2053 segment, reflecting limited demand at current levels.

Overall, the average benchmark yield dipped 2bps to 15.58%

Outlook: *In the near term, we expect the market to retain a cautious tone.*

BENCHMARK FGN BOND YIELDS			
	23-Mar-26	20-Mar-26	Change in Yield (%)
3 YRS: 14.55% 26-APR-2029	15.96%	15.95%	0.01
10 YRS: 12.40% 18-MAR-2036	15.71%	15.71%	-
18 YRS: 13.00% 21-JAN-2042	14.96%	14.96%	-
27 YRS: 15.70% 21-JUN-2053	14.46%	14.46%	-

Source: FMDQ, AIICO Capital

Nigerian Equities

The Nigerian equity market opened the week on a bearish note, as the All-Share Index (ASI) declined by 1.07%, driven largely by profit-taking activities in major large-cap stocks, mirroring the cautious tone often observed in prior sessions. However, market breadth closed positive, reflecting stronger buying interest across several mid- and small-cap counters. The ASI fell by 2,142.83 points to close at 199,014.02, while Market Capitalization decreased by ₦1.38 trillion to settle at ₦127.75 trillion.

Trading activity weakened significantly, as Total Volume and Total Value of transactions dropped by 86.00% and 58.99%, respectively. A total of 848.84 million units valued at ₦53.34 billion were traded across 139,458 deals. In terms of volume, UBA led activity (13.87%), followed by WEMABANK, ACCESSCORP, ZENITHBANK, and GTCO. On the value chart, MTNN accounted for 32.88%, making it the most traded by value. Market sentiment was supported by strong performances among gainers, with PRESCO (+10.00%), ZICHIS (+9.91%), JOHNHOLT (+9.70%), PREMPAINTS (+9.62%), and FTGINSURE (+9.45%) leading the advancers. In contrast, CONHALLPLC (-9.64%) topped the laggards, followed by DEAPCAP, GTCO, INTENEGINS, NB, and GUINEAINS. In total, 43 stocks gained, while 22 declined, reinforcing the positive breadth.

Sectoral performance was mixed but leaned negative, as three of the five major sectors declined. The Banking sector led the downturn (-2.02%), followed by Consumer Goods (-1.13%) and Insurance (-0.16%). Conversely, the Oil & Gas (+0.31%) and Industrial Goods (+0.17%) sectors recorded modest gains.

Outlook: *We expect sustained mixed market sentiment tomorrow amid profit-taking and repositioning.*

	D-o-D	W-o-W	MTD	YTD
NGX ASI	-1.07%	-1.22%	3.21%	27.89%
NSE BANKING INDEX	-2.02%	0.01%	1.39%	26.55%
NSE INSURANCE INDEX	-0.16%	-0.14%	-6.92%	6.43%
NSE INDUSTRIAL GOODS INDEX	0.17%	5.11%	20.68%	55.50%
NSE CONSUMER GOODS INDEX	-1.13%	-1.26%	-0.69%	9.17%
NSE OIL & GAS INDEX	0.31%	-4.41%	6.08%	61.33%

Source: NGX, AIICO Capital

TOP 5 EQUITY ADVANCERS			
NAME (SYMBOL)	CLOSING PRICE	GAIN(N)	% CHANGE
PRESCO	1871.20	170.10	10.00%
ZICHIS	9.43	0.85	9.91%
JOHNHOLT	13.00	1.15	9.70%
PREMPAINTS	25.65	2.25	9.62%
FTGINSURE	1.39	0.12	9.45%

Source: NGX, AIICO Capital

TOP 5 EQUITY DECLINERS			
NAME (SYMBOL)	CLOSING PRICE	LOSS(N)	% CHANGE
CONHALLPLC	4.50	-0.48	-9.64%
DEAPCAP	5.91	-0.54	-8.37%
GTCO	105.00	-9.35	-8.18%
INTENEGINS	2.77	-0.23	-7.67%
NB	70.00	-5.50	-7.28%

Source: NGX, AIICO Capital

Foreign Exchange

The Naira at the Nigerian Foreign Exchange Market (NFEM) depreciated sharply by 2.55% (₦34.48) against the U.S. Dollar.

The pressure stemmed from sustained demand outweighing available supply at the opening, though some recovery emerged toward session close. The Naira traded in a wider range before settling at ₦1,388.38/$.

Meanwhile, gross external reserves stood at $49.79 billion as of 18-Mar-2026, reflecting a marginal drawdown of $43.61 million from the previous day's level but still up +9.42% year-to-date.

Outlook: *We expect the Naira to remain under pressure in the near term barring improved FX inflows.*

NFEM RATE ($/₦)		Diff.
23-Mar-26	1,388.3841	34.4823
20-Mar-26	1,353.9018	

Source: CBN, AIICO Capital

Commodities

Global Oil prices dipped by nearly 10% on Monday as market prices out worst-case supply disruption after global de-escalation signal. This followed the U.S postponement of planned strikes on Iran's energy infrastructure. Brent crude fell by a significant 7.02% or $7.47, hovering around $98.94 per barrel, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) lost 10.41% to around $88.00 per barrel.

Similarly, acute volatility in gold prices is set to persist in the short term as investors cut risk, with the Iran war boosting inflation fears, curbing bets on interest rate cuts, and weighing on the outlook for global growth, analysts said. Spot gold price lost 8.47%, to around $4,410.77/oz, while U.S. gold futures dipped by 9.99%, hovering around $4,440.09/oz.

Outlook: *Tomorrow, we expect oil to trade at lower levels as global tensions ease amid talks. We expected sustained downward pressure on gold, as global risk-off sentiment resurfaces.*

Macro Indicators	
GDP (Q4 2025)	+4.07% (Q3: 2025 +3.98% y/y)
Inflation (February 2026)	15.06% (Jan'26: 15.10%)
External Reserve (US$'billion)	49.79 (+9.42% YTD as of 18-Mar-26)
Monetary Policy Rate (Feb'2026)	26.50%
Cash Reserve Requirement (CRR)	45.00%
Brent Crude Price US$/bbl	*98.94 (-7.47 d/d)

Source: NBS,CBN, Bloomberg, AIICO Capital

Important Disclaimers

This document has been issued and approved by AIICO Capital and is based on information from various sources that we believe are reliable. However, no representation is made that it is accurate or complete. While reasonable care has been taken in preparing this document, no responsibility or liability is accepted for errors or fact or for any opinion expressed herein. This document is for information purposes only. It does not constitute any offer or solicitation to any person to enter into any trading transaction. Investments discussed in this report may not be suitable for all investors. This report is provided solely for the information of AIICO Capital clients who are then expected to make their own investment decisions. AIICO Capital conducts designated investment business with market counter parties and customers, and this document is directed only to such persons. AIICO Capital accepts no liability whatsoever for any direct or consequential loss arising from any use of this report or its contents. This report is for private circulation only and may not be reproduced, distributed or published by any recipient for any purpose without prior express consent of AIICO Capital. Users of this report should bear in mind that investments can fluctuate in price and value. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. AIICO Capital is regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission and is licensed to provide fund and portfolio management services in Nigeria.