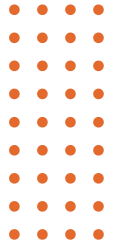


MARCH 2026

NEWSLETTER



CoinDCX
India Ka Crypto Coach



**Crypto
Currents**


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Crypto Currents


Your Monthly Web3 & Crypto Policy Snapshot




The SEC and CFTC issued a landmark joint interpretation under Project Crypto, defining a five-category token taxonomy and excluding staking, mining, and airdrops from securities laws.




Tokenized equities went mainstream: Nasdaq partnered with Kraken on a tokenized gateway, while the SEC approved trading of tokenized Russell 1000 stocks - signalling it's a matter of when, not if, for on-chain markets.



The ECB approved DLT-based assets as Eurosystem collateral (effective 30 March), as ESMA tightened MiCA enforcement ahead of the July 2026 deadline.



Mastercard acquired BVNK for up to \$1.8B - the largest stablecoin infrastructure deal yet - while Visa expanded its stablecoin-linked cards to 100+ countries.



Hong Kong issued its first stablecoin licences (HSBC, Standard Chartered/Animoca, OSL), while South Korea saw stablecoin balances drop 55% amid sweeping reforms.



Here's a round up of everything that happened last month

Key Story : SEC & CFTC Issue Joint Interpretation: Taxonomy, Separation, and Safe Harbors

March 2026 brought a pivotal shift in regulatory oversight as the SEC and CFTC jointly issued a comprehensive interpretation of how Federal securities laws apply to digital assets. Fulfilling the next phase of Project Crypto, this release decisively pivots away from a decade of "regulation by enforcement". The agencies have provided a much-needed structural framework that categorizes tokens, redefines the boundaries of the Howey test, and outlines clear compliance pathways for network participants.

A Coherent Token Taxonomy: Defining the Asset Classes - The Commission formally established five distinct categories based on an asset's underlying characteristics and functions. Under this newly adopted framework, Digital Commodities, Digital Collectibles, and Digital Tools are inherently classified as non-securities. Digital Securities remain under strict financial regulations, while payment stablecoins issued by permitted entities under the GENIUS Act are explicitly excluded from the definition of a security.

The Howey Test Evolution: Pathways to Separation - Addressing long-standing industry friction, the guidance details how a non-security asset can become tied to an investment contract, and crucially, how it can separate from it. When an issuer fully delivers on their developmental promises, or publicly abandons the initiative, buyers no longer have a reasonable expectation of profit derived from essential managerial efforts, meaning the asset ceases to be subject to an investment contract.

Network Operations Excluded: Staking, Mining, and Airdrops - The interpretation delivers substantial operational relief by clarifying that core functions like protocol mining (PoW) and protocol staking (PoS) are administrative duties rather than securities offerings. Furthermore, wrapping a non-security asset and distributing tokens via certain "airdrops" - where the recipient provides no consideration, services, or payment - do not trigger the "investment of money" requirement under the Howey test.

Key Takeaway - The regulatory landscape has shifted decisively from ambiguity to structured, rule-based clarity. By establishing a definitive token taxonomy and explicitly excluding essential network operations from securities laws, the SEC and CFTC are actively laying the groundwork for compliant capital formation, robust innovation, and operational certainty within the United States crypto sector.



Market Pulse

Now, before we go deeper into the regulatory updates from across the world, lets get an update on some key technical & financial indicators from the markets

Metric	Value	MoM Change
Total Crypto Market Cap	<u>\$2.37T</u>	-2.47%
Total Active Crypto Addresses	<u>345M</u>	-0.58%
Total Value Locked in DeFi	<u>\$93.28 B</u>	-3.8%
DEXs Volume (March)	<u>\$213.21B</u>	-33.8%
Stablecoin Float (total m-cap)	<u>\$299.47B</u>	+0.08%
Total Tokenized Market Cap	<u>\$6.53B</u>	+0.61%

Top Crypto Assets and their Markets

Coins	Price (EoM)	Avg. Price	MoM Jump
BTC	\$66,328.75	\$70,000	-2.78%
ETH	\$1,991	\$2,100	-4.55%
XRP	\$1.32	\$1.40	-6.67%
SOL	\$81.52	\$87	-5.43%

Market Updates

Visa expanded its stablecoin-linked card programme with Stripe-owned Bridge to over 100 countries, while also opening its Visa Direct cross-border real-time payments network to enable stablecoin-funded instant payouts into wallets. Visa's stablecoin settlement volumes continued to grow on an annualised run rate that had reached \$4.5 billion by January, reinforcing the "card networks plugging into stablecoin rails" direction from both major incumbents simultaneously.

Nasdaq partnered with Kraken (Payward) to develop an "equities transformation gateway" enabling tokenized equities to move between Nasdaq's regulated exchange environment and broader digital asset ecosystems, expanding global 24/7 distribution for U.S. issuers. The partnership followed the SEC's approval of Nasdaq's rule change to trade tokenized Russell 1000 stocks and index ETFs, with tokenized shares carrying the same rights, tickers, and protections as traditional shares.

Ondo Finance partnered with Franklin Templeton (\$1.7T AUM) to bring exposure to Franklin Templeton-managed investment products on-chain through Ondo Global Markets, and together launched a 24/7 tradable tokenized ETF product - reinforcing Ondo's position as the leading tokenized equities platform with over 61% market share. Separately, Invesco took over Superstate's \$900 million tokenized Treasury fund USTB, joining BlackRock and Franklin Templeton in the rapidly growing \$12 billion tokenized U.S. Treasury market.

Solana Foundation launched the Solana Developer Platform, a new enterprise-oriented infrastructure product designed to accelerate the building of financial products on Solana - with Mastercard, Western Union, and Worldpay among early collaborators. The platform bundles 20+ infrastructure providers into AI-ready APIs, enabling companies to create stablecoins, RWAs, or orchestrate payments in weeks instead of months.

Mastercard announced its acquisition of BVNK for up to \$1.8 billion - the largest stablecoin infrastructure deal in history - to plug on-chain stablecoin settlement rails into its global payments network across 130+ countries, with BVNK having processed over \$30 billion in stablecoin payments in 2025. In parallel, Mastercard launched the **Crypto Partner Program**, a global initiative uniting 85+ crypto-native companies, payments providers, and financial institutions to collaborate on the next phase of on-chain payments infrastructure.

Coinbase launched stock perpetual futures for eligible non-U.S. retail traders and institutions, offering round-the-clock synthetic exposure to U.S. equities and ETFs as cash-settled contracts denominated in USDC - part of its broader international derivatives expansion and reinforcing the "tokenized brokerage" direction for crypto-native platforms.



Key Global Regulatory Moves

United States

The **SEC and CFTC** signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding on March 11 and launched the Joint Harmonization Initiative - replacing a narrow 2018 coordination pact with a comprehensive framework covering joint rulemaking, shared data access, coordinated examinations, and unified crypto oversight. The Initiative is co-led by Robert Teply (SEC) and Meghan Tente (CFTC), and explicitly lists a "fit-for-purpose" crypto regulatory framework as a core priority.

The **OCC** issued its proposed rulemaking on March 2 covering licensing, reserves, and operational standards for stablecoin issuers under the GENIUS Act framework. The rule establishes requirements for permitted payment stablecoin issuers including 1:1 reserve backing with high-quality liquid assets, monthly reserve disclosures, and AML/BSA compliance. The public comment period closes May 1, 2026.

The **SEC's Investor Advisory Committee** issued a formal recommendation on March 12 backing limited exemptions for blockchain-based securities trading - signalling growing internal institutional support within the Commission for accommodating on-chain market infrastructure alongside traditional settlement systems.

California's Digital Financial Assets Law (DFAL) moved into its registration phase, with digital asset businesses required to register with the DFPI starting March 9, ahead of the law's full enforcement date of July 1, 2026. The DFAL makes California the second state (after New York) with comprehensive digital asset licensing, covering exchanges, transfers, custody, and stablecoin issuance for firms serving California residents.

The **House** Financial Services Committee held its most significant congressional hearing on tokenization on March 25, titled "Tokenization and the Future of Securities: Modernizing Our Capital Markets." Witnesses included SIFMA President Kenneth Bentsen Jr. and Nasdaq's John Zecca, with both parties acknowledging on the record that tokenized securities are not a question of "whether" but "when" - and that the current regulatory framework does not yet adequately accommodate them



Europe & UK

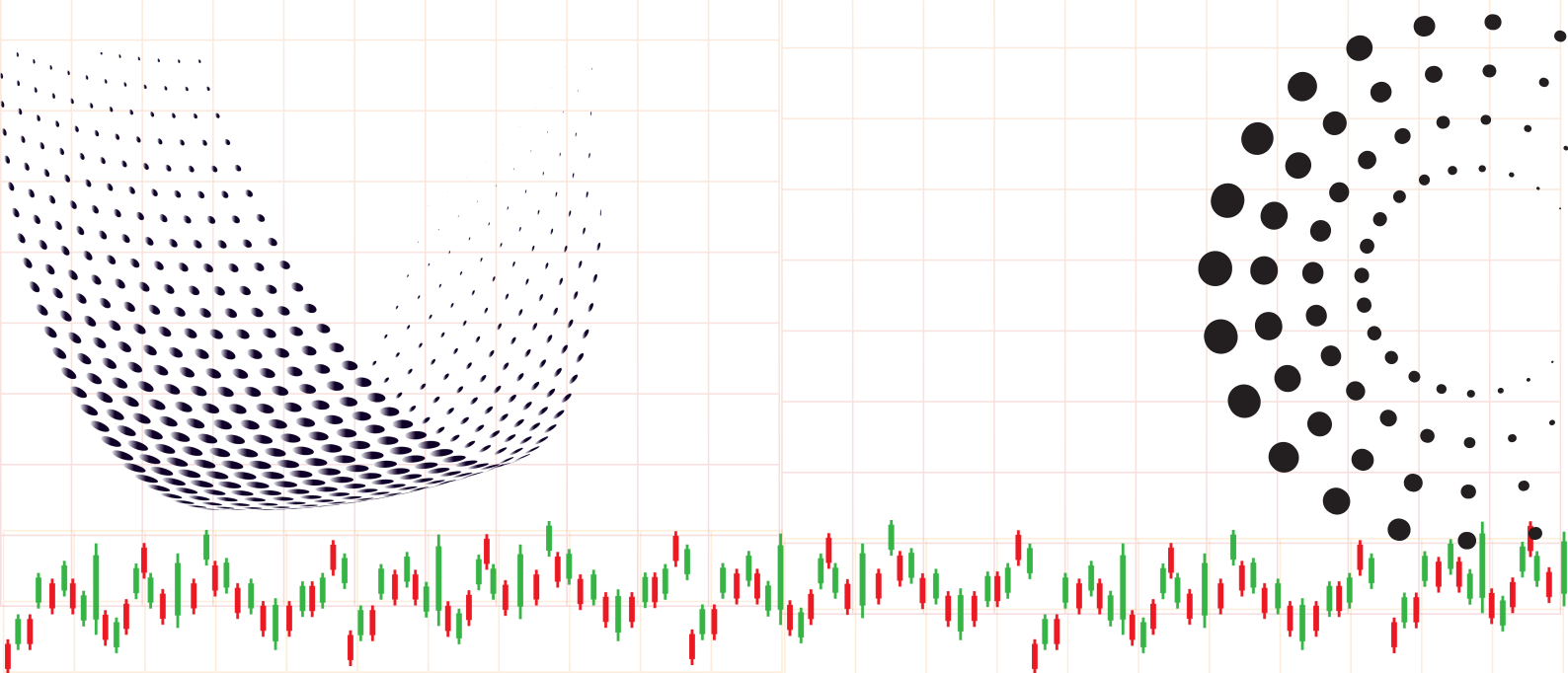
◆ The **FCA's CP26/4** consultation on cross-cutting standards for crypto firms - covering the Consumer Duty, dispute resolution (Financial Ombudsman Service jurisdiction), custody safeguarding (CASS 17), and the Senior Managers & Certification Regime - closed on 12 March, completing the final major public input phase of the UK's comprehensive cryptoasset regulatory framework.

◆ ESMA published two significant sets of guidelines on 5 March: one on supervisory practices to prevent and detect market abuse under **MiCA**, and another on the conditions and criteria for qualifying crypto assets as financial instruments - providing national regulators with a sharpened operational toolkit as the July 2026 MiCA deadline approaches.

◆ **SwissBorg** secured a MiCA licence and announced plans to shift European operations to a newly authorised French entity, while Gemini exited the EU entirely - illustrating how MiCA's higher regulatory and operational standards are thinning the field toward fewer but more resilient players. SwissBorg's COO noted that global exchanges reducing EU presence "opens space for other European players to strengthen their positioning."

◆ **ECB** DLT-Based Assets Accepted as Eurosystem Collateral (30 March 2026) - Effective 30 March 2026, the European Central Bank (ECB) now accepts marketable assets held in central securities depositories using Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) as eligible collateral for Eurosystem credit operations. This represents a pivotal step toward integrating tokenised assets into European monetary infrastructure.

- ◆ **Hong Kong's HKMA** issued its first batch of stablecoin issuer licences in March to HSBC, Anchorpoint (a Standard Chartered/Animoca Brands/HKT joint venture), and OSL Group, following a review of 36 applications under the Stablecoins Ordinance.
- ◆ **Hong Kong** Financial Secretary Paul Chan confirmed in his 2026-27 budget speech (late February, operational through March) that the government will table a new bill this year establishing licensing regimes for digital asset dealers and custodian service providers - extending the regulatory perimeter well beyond trading platforms and stablecoins, and also enabling blockchain-based debenture holder registers and electronic signatures for tokenised bond issuance.
- ◆ **Vietnam** moved to finalise its crypto regulatory framework ahead of a March 2026 deadline, with the first licensed local exchanges preparing for a supervised pilot programme - a notable shift from the country's previously cautious stance toward digital assets.
- ◆ **South Korea's** crypto market experienced significant structural shifts in March, with stablecoin balances on domestic exchanges plummeting 55% amid monopoly reforms - as the FSC continued work on competing stablecoin bills and the broader Digital Asset Basic Act framework for licensing stablecoin issuers.
- ◆ In early March 2026, **Türkiye** introduced a draft law proposing a **10% withholding tax on crypto gains alongside a 0.03% transaction levy on service providers**. The framework also mandates taxation of off-platform transactions through annual declarations, signaling a move toward formal integration of crypto into the tax system.



Middle East and Africa

- ◆ **Dubai's** Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (VARA) issued a formal cease-and-desist notice on 5 March 2026 against KuCoin and related entities - including Phoenixfin Pte Ltd, MEK Global Limited, Peken Global Limited, and KuCoin Exchange EU GmbH - for allegedly offering virtual asset services to Dubai residents without required licences. VARA confirmed that only Binance, Crypto.com, and OKX hold full VARA licences, underscoring its aggressive enforcement posture.
- ◆ **South Africa** put the OECD Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework (CARF) into effect on 1 March 2026, requiring crypto-asset service providers to begin collecting reportable information. **SARS** then issued CARF FAQs on 5 March 2026 to clarify practical and technical questions, and later published 20 March 2026 Budget 2026 CARF FAQs, signalling that the new reporting regime is still being refined in implementation.
- ◆ The **DFSA's** updated AML/CTF/sanctions and Glossary modules came into force in the DIFC, aligning the local rulebook with the UAE's late-2025 federal AML reforms. The DFSA also published FAQs to guide firms on governance, risk assessments, digital onboarding, outsourcing and internal audit expectations, which is relevant for firms conducting crypto business in or from the DIFC.

Latin America

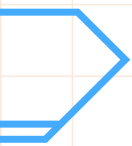
- ◆ On 3 March 2026, the BCB's **Instrução Normativa 713** laid down the procedures for remitting information on virtual-asset services to the central bank. That is a strong signal that Brazil is turning its virtual-asset regime into a more data-driven supervisory model.
- ◆ **Brazil's** new finance minister planned to postpone controversial tax consultations, including the one on crypto taxation, and likely push the issue into a new presidential term in 2027. That suggests the regulatory momentum remains, but fiscal tightening on crypto has been delayed.



- On 5 March 2026, **DIAN** published Concepto 003546 int. 314, which refers to PSAVs (provenedores/prestadores de servicios de activos virtuales). Colombia's broader doctrine also continues to treat bitcoin as not legal tender and outside the country's official payment framework, so the regulatory tone remains tax-and-compliance oriented rather than permissive.
- In **Peru**, the BCRP reiterated that a crypto-only wallet is not recognized in its regulation and does not form part of the national payments system. That is an important perimeter clarification for anyone reading Peru as a potential digital-asset market.

Australia

- The Treasury** reaffirmed that digital asset platforms will be folded into the AFSL framework. In a 16 March 2026 address, Treasury said the reform would bring digital asset platforms and tokenised asset platforms into a familiar Australian Financial Services Licence (AFSL) structure. The policy message was that Australia wants tighter consumer protection and regulatory certainty without shutting down innovation
- AUSTRAC's** new virtual-asset registration regime opens on 31 March 2026. AUSTRAC confirmed that enrollment opens on 31 March 2026 for newly regulated industries, including virtual asset service providers. From that date, firms providing virtual-asset-related designated services must enrol and register before they can operate, marking a major AML/CTF compliance shift for the sector.



Key Upcoming Events and Dates(April 2026)

DATE	Event	Why it matters
15th–16th April	Paris Blockchain Week (Carrousel du Louvre, Paris)	Europe's institutional power forum – 10,000+ decision-makers covering Bitcoin treasury strategy, stablecoin payments, tokenized assets, and regulatory alignment post-MiCA.
27th–28th April	HODL Summit 2026 (Dubai Marina, UAE)	A high-conviction investor gathering in Dubai – strong for tracking institutional positioning, exchange infrastructure, and MENA regulatory signals ahead of TOKEN2049.
27th–29th April	Bitcoin 2026 (Las Vegas, Nevada)	The premier global Bitcoin gathering: keynotes from regulators including CFTC Chairman Selig, deep dives on mining, AI compute convergence, and Bitcoin treasury strategy.

Annexure - Key Terminologies

Howey Test - The U.S. Supreme Court framework for determining whether an asset is a security, requiring an investment of money in a common enterprise with an expectation of profit from others' managerial efforts.

Airdrop - The distribution of crypto tokens to wallet addresses at no cost to recipients; where no consideration, services, or payment is provided by the recipient, the SEC confirms it does not constitute a securities offering.

Staking - The act of locking crypto tokens to support a Proof of Stake network's security and transaction validation in exchange for rewards - confirmed by the SEC as a non-securities activity

 **CRYPTO ASSETS**
500+

 **QTRLY TRADING VOL.**
₹2.44L Cr+

 **REGISTERED USERS**
₹2 Cr+

 **F.I.U. REGISTERED**

 **ISO/IEC 27001:2022**

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