

December 7, 2022

Rate hike continues; commentary still not dovish...

Repo rate..... Hiked by 35 bps to 6.25%

CRR..... Unchanged at 4.5%

The RBI MPC was of the view that further calibrated monetary policy action is **warranted to keep inflation expectations anchored, break core inflation persistence and contain second round effects**. These actions are expected to strengthen the medium-term growth prospects of the Indian economy. Accordingly, the MPC decided to increase the policy repo rate by 35 basis points to 6.25% and remain focused on withdrawal of accommodation, while supporting growth. Consequently, the standing deposit facility (SDF) rate stands adjusted to 6.00% with the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the bank rate at 6.50%.

Over the next 12 months, inflation is expected to remain higher than the 4% target. System liquidity remains in surplus with average daily absorption under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) of ₹ 1.6 lakh crore in November 2022. Since then, it has gone up to ₹ 2.6 lakh crore as on December 5. The overall monetary and liquidity conditions remain accommodative.

Inflation is projected at 6.7% in 2022-23, with Q3 at 6.6% and Q4 at 5.9%, and risks evenly balanced. CPI inflation for Q1: 2023-24 is projected at 5.0% and for Q2 at 5.4%, on the assumption of a normal monsoon.

Real GDP growth for 2022-23 is projected at 6.8% (from 7%), with Q3 at 4.4% and Q4 at 4.2%. The risks are evenly balanced. Real GDP growth is projected at 7.1% for Q1: 2023-24 and at 5.9% for Q2. Even after this revision in our growth projection for 2022-23, India will still be among the fastest growing major economies in the world.

View

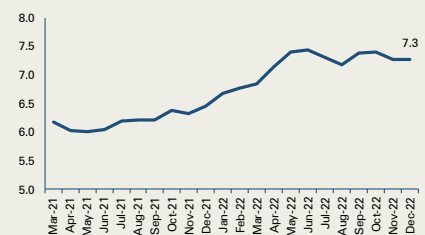
The initial bond market reaction to the policy meeting outcome was marginally negative with benchmark 10-year yield moving up around 5 bps to 7.30% from 7.25%. Short term yields moved up around 5-10bps.

While the hike was largely on expected lines, the debt market was expecting the commentary to be dovish with some guidance on the terminal repo rate. The market was pricing in the terminal repo rate at 6.5%, implying a cumulative rate hike of 60 bps in two meeting (including today's meeting). Effectively, since just one last hike of 25 bps is priced in, a dovish commentary with some guidance on the terminal repo rate was expected. Also, in the last two weeks, the 10-year G-Sec yield had moved down around 5 bps post dovish comments by US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell and in anticipation of a lower hike by the Fed.

Overall, the interest rate cycle is nearing its end. With H1FY24 CPI projected at 5.2%, repo rate at 6.5% offers real rate of 1.25%, which falls under RBI's target range of 1-2%. Rate hike and future guidance by the Fed in its December 14 meeting will be the key driver for both debt as well as equity markets in the near term.

After almost two years, the debt market outlook has started to look attractive with rate hikes being already done or discounted. Investors may start building their long term fixed income portfolio gradually starting with allocation into medium (two to five years) maturity funds like short-term debt funds or medium term debt funds. Duration funds may remain volatile in the near term just like the last few days on the back of a sharp movement in longer duration yields.

G-sec - 10 year



Research Analyst

Kajal Gandhi
kajal.gandhi@icicisecurities.com

Vishal Narnolia
vishal.narnoliai@icicisecurities.com

RBI development, regulatory measures – Key points

SLR holdings in HTM category – extension provided

RBI had increased the limits under held to maturity (HTM) category from 19.5% to 23% of net demand and time liabilities (NDTL) with respect to statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) eligible securities acquired on or after September 1, 2020, up to March 31, 2023. This dispensation of enhancement in HTM limit was made available up to March 31, 2023. With a view to enable banks to better manage their investment portfolios, it has been decided to extend the dispensation of enhanced HTM limit of 23% up to March 31, 2024 and allow banks to include securities acquired between September 1, 2020 and March 31, 2024 in the enhanced HTM limit. The HTM limits would be restored from 23% to 19.5% in a phased manner starting from the quarter ending June 30, 2024.

The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled for February 6-8, 2023.

RATING RATIONALE

ICICI Direct endeavours to provide objective opinions and recommendations. ICICI Direct assigns ratings to its stocks according to their notional target price vs. current market price and then categorizes them as Buy, Hold, Reduce and Sell. The performance horizon is two years unless specified and the notional target price is defined as the analysts' valuation for a stock

Buy: >15%

Hold: -5% to 15%;

Reduce: -15% to -5%;

Sell: <-15%



Pankaj Pandey

Head – Research

pankaj.pandey@icicisecurities.com

ICICI Direct Research Desk,
ICICI Securities Limited,
1st Floor, Akruiti Trade Centre,
Road No 7, MIDC,
Andheri (East)
Mumbai – 400 093
research@icicidirect.com

ANALYST CERTIFICATION

I/We, Kajal Gandhi, CA, Vishal Namolia, MBA Research Analysts, authors and the names subscribed to this report, hereby certify that all of the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect our views about the subject issuer(s) or securities. We also certify that no part of our compensation was, is, or will be directly or indirectly related to the specific recommendation(s) or view(s) in this report. It is also confirmed that above mentioned Analysts of this report have not received any compensation from the companies mentioned in the report in the preceding twelve months and do not serve as an officer, director or employee of the companies mentioned in the report.

Terms & conditions and other disclosures:

ICICI Securities Limited (ICICI Securities) is a full-service, integrated investment banking and is, inter alia, engaged in the business of stock brokering and distribution of financial products.

ICICI Securities is Sebi registered stock broker, merchant banker, investment adviser, portfolio manager and Research Analyst. ICICI Securities is registered with Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India Limited (IRDAI) as a composite corporate agent and with PFRDA as a Point of Presence. ICICI Securities Limited Research Analyst SEBI Registration Number – INH00000990. ICICI Securities Limited SEBI Registration is INZ000183631 for stock broker. ICICI Securities is a subsidiary of ICICI Bank which is India's largest private sector bank and has its various subsidiaries engaged in businesses of housing finance, asset management, life insurance, general insurance, venture capital fund management, etc. ("associates"), the details in respect of which are available on www.icicibank.com.

ICICI Securities is one of the leading merchant bankers/ underwriters of securities and participate in virtually all securities trading markets in India. We and our associates might have investment banking and other business relationship with a significant percentage of companies covered by our Investment Research Department. ICICI Securities and its analysts, persons reporting to analysts and their relatives are generally prohibited from maintaining a financial interest in the securities or derivatives of any companies that the analysts cover.

Recommendation in reports based on technical and derivative analysis centre on studying charts of a stock's price movement, outstanding positions, trading volume etc as opposed to focusing on a company's fundamentals and, as such, may not match with the recommendation in fundamental reports. Investors may visit icidirect.com to view the Fundamental and Technical Research Reports.

Our proprietary trading and investment businesses may make investment decisions that are inconsistent with the recommendations expressed herein.

ICICI Securities Limited has two independent equity research groups: Institutional Research and Retail Research. This report has been prepared by the Retail Research. The views and opinions expressed in this document may or may not match or may be contrary with the views, estimates, rating, and target price of the Institutional Research.

The information and opinions in this report have been prepared by ICICI Securities and are subject to change without any notice. The report and information contained herein is strictly confidential and meant solely for the selected recipient and may not be altered in any way, transmitted to, copied or distributed, in part or in whole, to any other person or to the media or reproduced in any form, without prior written consent of ICICI Securities. While we would endeavour to update the information herein on a reasonable basis, ICICI Securities is under no obligation to update or keep the information current. Also, there may be regulatory, compliance or other reasons that may prevent ICICI Securities from doing so. Non-rated securities indicate that rating on a particular security has been suspended temporarily and such suspension is in compliance with applicable regulations and/or ICICI Securities policies, in circumstances where ICICI Securities might be acting in an advisory capacity to this company, or in certain other circumstances.

This report is based on information obtained from public sources and sources believed to be reliable, but no independent verification has been made nor is its accuracy or completeness guaranteed. This report and information herein is solely for informational purpose and shall not be used or considered as an offer document or solicitation of offer to buy or sell or subscribe for securities or other financial instruments. Though disseminated to all the customers simultaneously, not all customers may receive this report at the same time. ICICI Securities will not treat recipients as customers by virtue of their receiving this report. Nothing in this report constitutes investment, legal, accounting and tax advice or a representation that any investment or strategy is suitable or appropriate to your specific circumstances. The securities discussed and opinions expressed in this report may not be suitable for all investors, who must make their own investment decisions, based on their own investment objectives, financial positions and needs of specific recipient. This may not be taken in substitution for the exercise of independent judgment by any recipient. The recipient should independently evaluate the investment risks. The value and return on investment may vary because of changes in interest rates, foreign exchange rates or any other reason. ICICI Securities accepts no liabilities whatsoever for any loss or damage of any kind arising out of the use of this report. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Investors are advised to see Risk Disclosure Document to understand the risks associated before investing in the securities markets. Actual results may differ materially from those set forth in projections. Forward-looking statements are not predictions and may be subject to change without notice.

ICICI Securities or its associates might have managed or co-managed public offering of securities for the subject company or might have been mandated by the subject company for any other assignment in the past twelve months.

ICICI Securities or its associates might have received any compensation from the companies mentioned in the report during the period preceding twelve months from the date of this report for services in respect of managing or co-managing public offerings, corporate finance, investment banking or merchant banking, brokerage services or other advisory service in a merger or specific transaction.

ICICI Securities or its associates might have received any compensation for products or services other than investment banking or merchant banking or brokerage services from the companies mentioned in the report in the past twelve months.

ICICI Securities encourages independence in research report preparation and strives to minimize conflict in preparation of research report. ICICI Securities or its associates or its analysts did not receive any compensation or other benefits from the companies mentioned in the report or third party in connection with preparation of the research report. Accordingly, neither ICICI Securities nor Research Analysts and their relatives have any material conflict of interest at the time of publication of this report.

Compensation of our Research Analysts is not based on any specific merchant banking, investment banking or brokerage service transactions.

ICICI Securities or its subsidiaries collectively or Research Analysts or their relatives do not own 1% or more of the equity securities of the Company mentioned in the report as of the last day of the month preceding the publication of the research report.

Since associates of ICICI Securities and ICICI Securities as a entity are engaged in various financial service businesses, they might have financial interests or actual/beneficial ownership of one percent or more or other material conflict of interest various companies including the subject company/companies mentioned in this report.

ICICI Securities may have issued other reports that are inconsistent with and reach different conclusion from the information presented in this report.

Neither the Research Analysts nor ICICI Securities have been engaged in market making activity for the companies mentioned in the report.

We submit that no material disciplinary action has been taken on ICICI Securities by any Regulatory Authority impacting Equity Research Analysis activities.

This report is not directed or intended for distribution to, or use by, any person or entity who is a citizen or resident of or located in any locality, state, country or other jurisdiction, where such distribution, publication, availability or use would be contrary to law, regulation or which would subject ICICI Securities and affiliates to any registration or licensing requirement within such jurisdiction. The securities described herein may or may not be eligible for sale in all jurisdictions or to certain category of investors. Persons in whose possession this document may come are required to inform themselves of and to observe such restriction.