

Some Key Current Info-Bits at Random (March 1 – March 14)

- March 1, 2014 President Pranab Mukherjee signed the **Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Bill** for bifurcating the state.
 - The Bill was passed by Parliament on February 20 amid protests to carve out Telangana from Andhra Pradesh.
 - There will be 13 districts in the residuary Andhra Pradesh while Telangana will have 10 districts, including Hyderabad.
 - On March 7, 2014 Supreme Court sought the Centre response to about 20 PILs filed by former Andhra Pradesh CM Kiran Reddy and others challenging the creation of Telangana.
- On March 1, 2014 defeating Tomas Berdych, Roger Federer won **Dubai Championships** for a record sixth time .. his 78th career title.
- On March 1, 2014 South Africa defeated Pakistan to lift the **ICC U-19 World Cup** in Dubai.
- On March 1, 2014 at Fatullah, Afghanistan (254) claimed their first victory over a Test-playing nation with a 32-run win over Bangladesh in **Asia Cup**.
 - On March 4, 2014 at Mirpur, **Shahid Afridi** with his a 25-ball 5 against Bangladesh scripted highest ever run chase (327) for Pakistan to set up an Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka.
 - On March 5, 2014 at Mirpur, five-time champions India ended their Asia Cup campaign with a consolation win over debutants Afghanistan (159 in 45.2 overs).
 - On March 8, 2014 at Dhaka, opener Lahiru Thirimanne hit a century to help Sri Lanka defeat Pakistan (260) by five wickets to **regain the Asia Cup title** in Dhaka.
 - It was **fifth Asia Cup title** for Sri Lanka.
 - For Sri Lanka it was their fifth Asia Cup title, equaling India's five title wins.
 - The last time Sri Lanka won the title was in 2008.
- On March 2, 2014 at PGIMER, while delivering a lecture on 'Doing science in India', **Prof CNR Rao**, a Bharat Ratna awardee, said In India, the quality of research is a cause of worry... around 60-70 pc had citations of US-based researches.
 - Merely one per cent of the journals had citations of Indian researches . . .even Chinese researches found five per cent citations.
- Prof Rao is the founder president of the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bangalore
- He is currently the chairman of Scientific Advisory Council to PM.
- On March 2, 2014 Pakistan High Commissioner-designate to India **Abdul Basit** reached New Delhi to take charge of his assignment. ..Basit replaced Salman Bashir.

- On March 2, 2014 **Arvind Bhat** reached a new high in his badminton career when he defeated Danish Hans-Kristian Vittinghus to clinch the men singles title of the \$120,000 German Open Grand Prix Gold
 - This is the first time an Indian has won a German Open title in any category.
- On March 4, 2014 in a joint declaration issued at the end of their day-long summit, leaders of BIMSTEC countries called for expediting the ratification for entry into force of the **BIMSTEC** Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organised Crimes and Illicit Drug Trafficking and also for the early signing of the BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.
 - The member countries signed three MoUs on the establishment of:
 - the BIMSTEC permanent secretariat at Dhaka,
 - the BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate at Noida and
 - the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission (BCIC) and the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory in Bhutan.
 - **BIMSTEC** is Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.
 - The BIMSTEC comprises Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- On March 4, 2014 an Egyptian court banned all activities of the Palestinian militant group **Hamas**, an offshoot of the now-banned Muslim Brotherhood, as the army-backed regime tightened its grip on the Islamist organisation ahead of the crucial polls.
 - The relationship between Hamas, which has ruled the Gaza Strip since 2006, and authorities in Egypt soured since the army toppled Morsi in July 2013 amid massive protests against his one-year turbulent rule.
- On March 4, 2014 Mahindra Defence Naval Systems (MDNS) inaugurated its new underwater systems and naval applications manufacturing facility near Pune.
 - MDNS is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mahindra Defence Systems and part of \$16.7 billion Mahindra Group,
- The recent Forbes list has placed US again leading the world with 492 billionaires, followed by China (152) and Russia (111). . with six Indian billionaires.
 - The list has placed **Bill Gates** as the richest tech billionaire with a net worth of \$76 billion, followed by Larry Ellison who retained the second spot with a fortune of \$48 billion.
 - Facebook's **Mark Zuckerberg** jumped \$15.2 billion to \$28.5 billion and emerged as year's biggest dollar gainer.
 - **Mukesh Ambani** has retained his title as richest person of India for 7th year in a row, but his place among the worlds richest people dropped to 49th lowest in eight years.
 - **Wipro's Azim Premji** was ranked 61 in the global list with a net worth of \$15.3 billion.

- Seven women made it to the **Fortune India's** first "40 Under 40" compilation that lists individuals who have managed to grow an idea into a profitable business.
 - **Kavita Iyer Rodrigues**, Director & COO of Theramyt Novobiologics and who co-founded the first biotech startup in venture capital firm Accel Partners' stable in 2007 got featured in the list.
- On March 3, 2014 RBI extended the date for **exchanging all bank notes** that were issued prior to 2005 to January 1, 2015.
- On March 3, 2014 **India and the UAE** discussed ways to expedite the resolution of pending issues related to investments by Etisalat, DP World and Emaar.
 - It was discussed during the second meeting of high-level India-UAE Joint Task Force on Investments in Mumbai.
 - The meeting was co-chaired by Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma and chairman of Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Court Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.
- At Los Angeles, the slavery drama "12 Years a Slave" won the Academy Award for best picture, making history as the first movie from a black director to win the film industry highest honour in 86 years of the Oscars.
 - "12 Years a Slave," prevailed over Space thriller "Gravity" came from Mexican filmmaker Alfonso Cuarón.
 - Academy honours
 - Best Picture - '12 Years a Slave'
 - Best Director - Alfonso Cuarón ('Gravity')
 - Best Actor - Matthew McConaughey ('Dallas Buyers Club')
 - Best Actress - Cate Blanchett ('Blue Jasmine')
 - Best supporting actor - Jared Leto ('Dallas Buyers Club')
 - Best animated feature film - 'Frozen'
 - Best visual effects - 'Gravity'
 - Best cinematography - 'Gravity'
- On March 5, 2014 US First Lady Michelle Obama felicitated Indian acid attack victim **Laxmi** after she won the International Women of Courage Award for successfully leading the campaign against acid attacks on women in India.
- Recently, the Centre for Entrepreneurs and due diligence platform DueDil shared that Indians are among the most enterprising of migrant communities in Britain.
- The report titled '**Migrant Entrepreneurs: Building Our Businesses, Creating Our Jobs**', found that migrant entrepreneurs are behind one in seven of all UK companies and that Irish, Indian, German, American and Chinese make up the top performing nationalities.
 - As many as 456,073 migrants have launched a small or medium-sized business in Britain.
 - Ireland leads the charge with 48,854 founders running their own businesses across the UK, followed by India with 32,593 and Germany with 30,755.

- On March 5, 2014 Google **launched indoor maps in India** that will help users browse through and locate specific locations inside venues like malls and museums.
- On March 5, 2014 Gol approved payment of **8.75pc rate of interest on PF** deposits in 2013-14) from 8.5% paid in 2012-13) for over five crore subscribers of retirement fund body EPFO.
 - EPFO's apex decision making body, the Central Board of Trustees (CBT) headed by Labour Minister.
- On March 5, 2014 China announced its **defence budget** for the year 2014 allocating \$ 131.57 billion, 12.2 per cent more than the \$117 billion allocation for 2013.
 - This is collectively more than the defence budgets of Japan and India, Asia's second and third largest economies, respectively.
 - China is the biggest economy of Asia.
 - The two countries collectively have a budget of \$ 81.86 billion, US \$ 50 billion less than China and both face threats.
 - Japan has announced its budget for 2104 at \$ 45.86 billion and India's budget hike, eroded by the rising rupee-dollar exchange rates, now stands at \$ 36.3 billion for the fiscal commencing April 1, 2014 and ending March 31, 2015.
 - Both India and Japan have territorial disputes with China.
 - India has an alignment of 3,488-km-long line of actual control (LAC) with China.
 - Japan has a dispute over control of Senkaku islands in the East China Sea.
 - China's widening strategic arch includes a running dispute with six countries in the hydro-carbon rich South China Sea (SCS). Beijing claims 90 per cent of this sea, while The Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have overlapping claims.
 - China, like Japan, follows the calendar year as the financial year.
 - India follows an April to March fiscal.
- On March 5, 2014 **Election Commissioner** announced nine phases between April 7 and May 12 Election for 16th Lok Sabha. . counting of votes in all 543 constituencies slated for May 16 and newLok Sabha to be constituted by May 31.
 - 81.45 crore eligible voters across 9.30 lakh polling stations.
 - The number of voters almost **10 crore more** than the 2009 Lok Sabha election.
 - **Over 2.3 crore** enlisted voters in the 18-19 age group.
 - The biggest phase on April 17 when 122 constituencies across 13 states go to the polls.
 - With the exception of Jammu and Kashmir, states in North India poll in separate yet single phases.
 - Andhra Pradesh for both Lok Sabha and Assembly polls as an undivided state and candidates elected will automatically become legislators of their respective states after Telangana comes into being on June 2.
 - The nine-phase polling and the entire process over in 72 days, three days less than the previous election.

- Polls in **Naxal-hit** areas in Central India in one go.
- Uttar Pradesh, with the **maximum of 80 seats**, poll on six days on April 10, 17, 24, 30 and May 7 and 12.
- The Election Commission gave voters another option to get enlisted on March 9.
- Recently, Indian soldiers once again bagged top honours in the **CISM Day Run** organised by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) under the aegis of the Conseil International du Sport Militaire (CISM) or International Military Sports Council.
 - CISM is one of the largest multidisciplinary organisations in the world with 133 countries as its members.
 - **India has been contributing an infantry** battalion group with about 1,000 foot soldiers and support elements from other arms to the UNIFIL since 1998 and at present the 26th Battalion of the Punjab Regiment is deployed there.
 - The UNIFIL comprises about 10,000 troops, observers and support elements drawn from 46 countries.
- On March 6, 2014 India hosted the 3rd National Security Adviser-level dialogue on maritime security cooperation with Sri Lanka and Maldives
 - The a forum has been set up by New Delhi to counter Chinas bid to spread its strategic footprint in Indian Ocean region.
 - The **forum aims** to counter piracy, terrorism, drug trafficking and human trafficking and strengthen security cooperation between the navies of the three nations.
 - Representatives of **Mauritius and Seychelles** also participated in the meeting as observers.
 - The first meeting of the forum was held in Maldives in October 2011 while the second took place in Lanka in July 2013.
- On March 6, 2014 **Arvind Mishra**, Assist professor at Graphic Era University (Dehradun), entered the Guinness Book in the “longest non-stop lecture” category by beating the previous record (121hr) held by Errol Tapiwa Muzawazi.
 - The Polish law student had lectured for 121 hours at a stretch at the Jagiellonian University of Poland in 2009.
- At the recent meeting of the India-Pakistan joint working group (JWG) on cross-LoC confidence building measures (CBMs), India proposed to Pakistan a bus service between **Kargil and Skardu** and a multiple entry booklet to facilitate movement of people of JK.
 - Two countries have also resumed talks for purchase of 500 MW of electricity by Pakistan from India.
- On March 7, 2014 World champion **Pankaj Advani (PSPB)** won his sixth national snooker title with a commanding 6-3 win over Kamal Chawla of Railways in the 81st Manish National Snooker championship.
 - In women category, Vidya Pillai of Karnataka defeated Chitra M 4-3 to clinch the title.

- Recently, **Jamie Edwards**, 13, a student at Penwortham Priory Academy, in Lancashire has become the youngest person in the world to build a nuclear fusion reactor.
 - The record was held by a US student Taylor Wilson, who was 14, when he built it in 2008.
- On March 8, 2014 Subhash Chander Pandey, Principal Accountant General, dubbed the **Roshini Act** to be the biggest scam in JK .
 - He detected irregularities worth over Rs 25,000 crore.
 - The Roshini Act, also called the J&K State Lands (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) Act, 2001 was enacted during the regime of the then Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah.
- On March 8, 2014 Mumbai Police launched a **free SMS service** for ensuring safety of women travelling alone or in odd hours.
 - Under '**Travel Safe When Alone**' initiative, any women before taking an auto rickshaw or taxi could message registration number of the vehicle to a dedicated helpline number 9969777888.
- On March 8, 2014 in Egypt, interim president **Adly Mansour** issued a much anticipated decree that governs upcoming presidential election, clearing the way for the vote that many expect the military chief to take part in and win.
- On March 8, 2014 at the 16th Asian Youth Weightlifting **Championships at Bangsaen** in Thailand, Indian lifters booked two quota places among boys and one among girls for the Youth Olympic Games to be held in China.
 - The Championship was the continental qualification event for the second Youth Olympic Games to be held in August in Nanjing, China.
- On March 10, 2014 Supreme Court set a one-year deadline for courts to complete the trial of MPs and MLAs involved in corruption cases. .. part of an initiative to cleanse politics of criminal elements.
- On March 10, 2014 "**Hearts and Minds: Women of India Speak**", an initiative of UN Women to share "lived experiences" of women and girls across five Indian states - Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, MP, Odisha and Rajasthan was released.
 - The event also saw the launch of a new European Union (EU) film, "Women who Inspire", which comprised a series of interviews with Indian women who are "inspiring change".
- On March 10, 2014 at Kuwait City, ace shooter **Heena Sidhu** produced some excellent shooting to clinch the air pistol women gold medal while Chain Singh bagged Gold in men air rifle event at the 7th Asian Championship.

- On March 10, 2014 benchmark Sensex briefly breached the **22,000-mark** for the first time and then managed to end at a new record close with modest gain of 15 points.
- On March 12, 2014 inaugurating the five-day India Aviation 2014 at **Begumpet airport**, Civil Aviation Minister said India is set to become the worlds third largest aviation market by 2020, with an enhanced airport system that can handle 336 million domestic and 41 million international passengers.
 - India currently stands at the ninth position globally.
- On March 13, 2014 Indian archers won two gold and one silver in team events in the ongoing **1st Asian Grand Prix** Archery Championships at Bangkok.
- On March 13, 2014 Infosys co-founder and chief of UPA government's flagship 'Aadhaar' programme, **Nandan Nilekani** resigned as Chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India.
- ON Ukraine crises, on March 3, 2014US President Barack Obama said Russia had violated international law in its military intervention in Ukraine.
 - On March 4, 2014 Secretary of State **John Kerry** flew to Kiev to show US support for the fledgling Ukraine government, and the Obama administration announced with his arrival a \$1 billion energy subsidy package.
 - On March 6, 2014 **Crimean Parliament** voted to join Russia and its Moscow-backed government set a referendum within 10 days on the decision in a dramatic escalation of the crisis over the Ukrainian Black Sea peninsula.
- On March 14, 2014 **Russia vetoed a UN Security Council** resolution drafted by the US declaring the referendum in Crimea invalid, even as close ally China abstained, isolating Moscow further on the Ukraine crisis.

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