

INFORMission Weekly



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Welcome to the Fourteenth Issue of INFORMission Weekly

The objective of this newsletter is to try and capture informative, interesting and relevant happenings from around our world and country across the week, without a focus on crime and sensationalism. The concept is that anyone can tune in on a weekly basis into a couple of pages and stay informed and updated. INFORMission Weekly will evolve in design, format medium and content as we go along. If you have any comments or feedback, do write into informission.weekly@gmail.com.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST THIS WEEK

The Rupee Slipping & Sliding



Google GLASS What And Why



Riots, Rampage And Return of The Tyrant



Manning Gets 35 Years



IAF Lands A Super-Hercules on the **World's Highest Airstrip**



CIA Admits to the **'Great Irani Mistake'**



Shipping Through the Arctic



Meet The **Olinguito** Earth's Newest Mammal

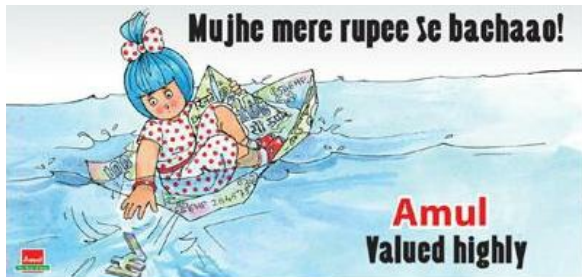


Leader to Know Barrack Obama



The Rupee: Slipping & Sliding

So the leading story this last week, or last month, has been “The Rupee” – I’m not even kidding – its “oh no - crisis, disaster, catastrophe” every-



where. And therefore, for once, we are opening with an economic cover story – **no complex market theory here though – simple layman’s logic.** For the past couple of months, **the value of a rupee, as compared to a dollar (exchange rate), has been falling.** This means that one dollar, which you would have **exchanged/bought for Rs 58 a few months ago, will now cost Rs 65** – which is a lot. This means dollars are very expensive, and so is anything coming from abroad – and more importantly, that **the true “value” of a rupee, i.e., how much stuff it can buy, is decreasing.** Such a phenomenon is called **depreciation**, and is happening mainly because of **2 reasons.**

One is **inflation** – rise in the price of commodities or items in the market (a bad thing) – which **decreases amount of items one rupee can buy**, or depreciates it – but the inflation has not been so bad as in the last month. The other major reason is rise in demand for dollars in India recently – **like your local subzi mundi – the currency exchange is also a market** – if people want a vegetable badly (if it’s in demand) its price goes up – and right now, **the dollar is the most wanted subzi.**

And now, **how does this affect you?** Well **not so much and not only negatively** as the local papers would lead you to believe – the grocery bill is not about to double – but it still does **impact you in the following ways –**

Trips Abroad: BAD:	You might just find that plane ticket 1.5 times more expensive than it was a month ago
Foreign Studies: EVEN WORSE:	Paying the same fees in \$ will cost many more rupees
Exports: VERY GOOD:	Your products are much cheaper in \$ - more demand abroad
Imported Goods: BAD:	No more ordering from Amazon unfortunately
Oil Prices: TERRIBLE:	India's oil is bought abroad - prices skyrocket
Private Hospitals: GOOD:	For foreigners, price of treatment becomes low in India - business for hospitals
BPOs & IT: VERY GOOD:	You are suddenly paid more for your services by your foreign employers
Tourism: GOOD:	India is cheaper for foreign tourists

www.google.com/glass

Google GLASS: What And Why

You’ve all probably heard of it – but **what is this new thing from Google**, the world’s premier innovators. Due to **release sometime next year**, it is **their most publicised project**, even more than the “Google Balloons”, which we covered last month. So – what is it? **The concept, as Sergei Brin** (co-founder of Google) **explains** on TED Talks, is **to end that pose (see picture) – which has**

ourselves by looking at our phones all the time – like a nervous tick every few minutes – **in our online so-called “social” lives, we miss the real world and society around us.** Also, he explains that **Google does not believe this is the final/ultimate pose of humanity**, through which we share/learn information, and **interact with others.** Therefore, **Google Glass (stylized as GLASS).** It is an amazing “wearable computer”, or better described as **a small piece of glass** on the right hand corner of your vision, which does everything your phone normally would. It gives **directions and information without you even asking**, tells you about anything you ask, **translates your voice** into any other language when you want it to, and then there’s the camera. No need



for phones, cameras, or anything – you can **take a picture** of what you’re seeing **by just asking**, and **record life as you live it – all hands free.** You can video call while skydiving - they will see a live feed of you flying through the air – its revolutionary. Your still **connected to the social network** – tell it to send messages, posts, tweets through voice control, and share pictures and videos of what you’re experiencing while experiencing it. Its like nothing we’ve ever seen before – **another revolutionary technology** from the geniuses at Silicon Valley. This video below is a must see – <http://www.youtube.com/TEDTalks/SergeiBrin/WhyGoogleGlass>



Ben Margot/AP

become the staple of our generation – **of looking down at your phone all the time.** According to Google, we seclude and isolate

Riots, Rampage And The Return of The Tyrant

I know you're kind of bored of Egypt – but its important – so I'll keep it short. **1,000 people dead in the last week in clashes and riots between pro-Brotherhood and anti-Brotherhood supporters** as Egypt slides further into **the vortex of civil war**. As The Economist explains brilliantly, Egypt is usually

divided into **3 political groups** – the **Islamist extremists**, led

by the Muslim Brotherhood; **the “state”** (bureaucracy, army, judiciary, police – Mubarak's old gang); and **the “people”** – non-bureaucratic, non-Islamist **liberals who get out on the streets from time to time and voice the public opinion**. This last group is the **largest and the most disorganised**, meaning the state or the Islamists are normally the ones who take power – by allying themselves with the “people”. **In 2011, the Islamists did this and removed the tyrant Hosni Mubarak (a “state” guy) from power with help of Egypt's people during the Arab spring – but then they misused the power**. So, in 2013, the state (in the form of



the army, police and later judiciary) **retaliated, using the people's discontent to instigate another revolution, in which they returned to power**. But that's when things took a turn for the worse, **as the army's rash actions last week (Issue 13), and their release of the terrible dictator Hosni Mubarak – free of charge – this week, have turned public opinion, which was with them, against**

them. Now the “people”, have become divided, and angry – **some shocked at army massacres, some shocked at Brotherhood**



violence – rioting ensues. The **release of Hosni (from prison to house arrest) is even scarier, because it shows the army/state is now so departed from/unafraid of public opinion that it is releasing the hated tyrant without punishment**. But we can still hope that **this will shock some Egyptians into sense, maybe call for an end to brainless violence** and ask the army some tough questions. Because **wherever Egypt is going, it is probably not democracy, but it can still aim for peace**.

Manning gets 35 years

The innocent-looking **young US Army Private Bradley Manning**, whose **story we have been following** since the beginning of IW, was finally **sentenced on Wednesday to a harsh 35 years in prison**. Considering that **he may have got over a 100**, and the fact that **he could be released within 7 years on parole** – its not as bad as it could have been. As we explained last time, **although he was cleared of the most serious charge of aiding the enemy, the young private who leaked hundreds of thousands of classified documents (Iraq and Afghanistan war related) to WikiLeaks was convicted on most other counts** – espionage, fraud, theft, etc. **For the first time, Manning said that he regrets his decision – 35 years in jail is not an enticing prospect** – especially since he wished to change both his name and his gender – which will have to wait till the end of his sentence. **Dishonorably discharged and serving this much time, his story is a blow to leakers and whistleblowers in the army, and a victory for American intelligence and internal security**.



Landing a Super Hercules At the World's Highest Airstrip

Last week the **understated Indian Air Force impressed the world**, and managed to land a massive **35,000 kg** (when empty) **C-130J transport aircraft** on the **Daulat Beg Oldie airstrip in Ladakh**. Apart from being a record for the IAF, and for the C-130, it is the **highest a plane this heavy** (or any heavier, for that matter) **has ever successfully landed**. Its very impressive for them – since **they are one of the least experienced air forces with that particular airplane** – and is also a very daring **no-nonsense message to China** from the world's largest democracy. For this airstrip is right next to the line of actual control in Lada-



kh, the site of a military standoff between the 2 nations in April, and landing a Hercules (which can carry 20 tons or 20,000 kg, by the way) there gives **enhanced airlift capability to supplement Indian ground forces with supplies and reinforcements incase of conflict**. They're getting serious alright, and **showing off the airpower to back it up** – it's also a landmark for the recently activated airstrip. **After China publicly admonished the idea of India activating advance landing**

positions near such a tense border, the IAF **has done just that, along with increasing its deployment** (of troops, supplies, weapons, and even tanks) **capabilities six-fold, and breaking a few world records along the way.**

CIA Admits to the Great Irani Mistake

www.time.com/archive



Finally, after years of everyone knowing about it – Obama even referring to it in his speech in 2009 – the **CIA have officially admitted to their role in Iran's 1953 coup** – which removed the democratically elected Prime Minister **Mohammed Mossadeq** from power and **put the tyrannical Shah of Iran on**

the throne. You'll understand what I'm talking about in a moment's time, but it may be a sign that they (the CIA) are at least admitting to their actions, if not being apologetic about them. Iran today is a troubled country – it **has been ruled by Shia Islamist autocrats for the last 24 years**, and is an **enemy most Western nations, Gulf countries** (its neighbours) **and most of the world**. But in 1953, it was not like this – **Iran was a peaceful nation**, center of the ancient Persian empire – and had just become free from invaders and autocrats, electing a new Prime Minister in 1951, and **returning to democracy**. **Immensely popular, PM Mossadeq promised to return Iran's oil to its people** – by nationalising a joint British-Iranian oil company (that later became British Petroleum) that used export most of the Iranian oil to the West. However, this

was not to the liking of the US, to whom most of the exports went, **and the UK**, who owned the company, and therefore, just to **save this oil company, engineered a coup de tat** that removed the illustrious PM from power and **brought back the unpopular Shah**. The **CIA documents**, of course, present them in very good light – **it was because he was a greedy PM and because of Cold War concerns** – but they also reveal how the **CIA spread false stories and lies about the Mossadeq before the coup**. And the fact remains that it came back to bite them – **after the US-backed Shah terrorized Iran for 25 years, it transformed from a peaceful nation of moderates to a nation of US-hating Shia radicals**, who **chucked out the Shah in the Islamic Revolution** – and **then took American diplomats hostage for over a year in the Iran Hostage Crisis**. The **US and Iran still hate each other**, and the peaceful Persians are **still ruled by auto-crats** – all because of that **one oil-driven mistake**. The admission does not change anything, but at least there is less lies, and **a little bit of honour from the agency.**

Catherine Legrand / CC



Shipping Through the Arctic: The North East Passage

Turkish Flame/Bobamneriopsis / CC 3.0

A Chinese cargo vessel that set sail for western Europe is the first ship attempting to sail via the icy northern sea route -that is via Japan, through the melting Arctic sea above Russia. This is significant as it opens up a brand new sea route that will shorten travel time between China and Europe by 12 to 15 days compared to the traditional route via the Suez Canal. More significant is the fact that the thickness of sea ice in this Arctic Sea area has reduced by as much as 40% due to global warming, thereby allowing the possibi-



Wikimedia Commons



ty of this previously unavailable route. The 19000 tonnes cargo ship which set sail on 8th August is expected to reach Rotterdam in the Netherlands by September 11th in a record journey of just over a month.

Meet the Olinguito Earth's Newest Mammal

Scientists have discovered a new species of mammal called the Olinguito (pronounced oh-lin-GHEE-toe). It's a small mammal that looks like a teddy bear with fluffy red-orange fur, a short bushy tail, and an adorable rounded face. The Olinguito, have been seen earlier but were considered to be members of their sister species, the olingos, however repeated studies and research have shown that it is in fact a new species -Olingos are larger, less furry and have longer faces than the Olinguito. The Olinguito primarily eats fruits, nectar but is a carnivore mammal as it also eats insects and its activity is most-

ly at night. The animal lives in the trees and can jump from one tree to another. The olinguito's appearance is that as a cross between a house cat and a teddy bear –and going by its adorable eyes and cute face –its bound to become a popular pet.



MarkGurney / CC 3.0

Leaders to Know

Barack Hussein Obama II

Barack Hussein Obama II (yes he is the second, his father was Barack Hussein Obama too) is **the 44th President of the US and the first African American one**. He just turned 52 (on 4th August) but he's been President since 2009 – he **became President when he was just 48**. Before becoming a Senator and then President, Obama **was a civil rights activist, attorney and Professor of Constitutional Law**. He studied at Columbia University and Harvard Law School. He was re-elected in 2013 and is **the first President since FDR** (who was President during the Second World War - **70 years ago**) **to win over 50% of the public vote in both elections**. **Obama inherited a real mess** – both economic and geopolitical from George Bush. The **biggest recession and economic crash since 1929** and **7 years of American war in Iraq and Afghanistan welcomed him**. The record is that he has **nursed America out of the depression (created jobs and brought down unemployment steadily for the last 4 years)**, **ended both wars and brought American troops home**. He has also **reformed Healthcare** and eliminated Osama bin Laden.

Mainly Obama is criticized for being too soft, too slow, and trying to avoid confrontations. However **he has always said that he believes in leadership by consensus and has achieved everything with broad bipartisan support**. His leadership style, very different from Bush can best be summarized as **“it's better to do the right thing slowly than to do the wrong thing fast”**. This is perhaps a better style for the socially networked politics of today than the “shoot first aim later” style of the 20th century and his predecessor. Much of Obama's success can be put down to his very sharp and wise wife of 21 years, Michelle, the First Lady, who has been his advisor and confidante politically. She is also from Harvard Law School and they met working for the same law firm in Chicago in 1992. We will wait and see what 'arguably' the most powerful man in the world does for the next 3 years of his Presidency. He may also need to learn golf since he will have finished his 8 years as President when he is only 55 years old. **The US still has to elect a woman to the highest office, let's see how long we have to wait for that to happen.**



Pete Souza / CC

Sources

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IAF Super Hercules - Times of India, India Today, Hindustan Times

CIA's Iranian Coup - The Weekly Standard, BBC, The Guardian, The WSJ

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