IT in March – May 2017

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Highlights in general

• Elections to five Indian States – UP, Goa, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Manipur announced on January 4, 2017; five stage Elections stretch till March 8, 2017; results on March 11, 2017 were a resounding victory for the ruling party BJP

• Attack on professionals in USA of Indian origin - Srinivas Kuchibhotla in Kansas in February and Harish Patel in South Carolina in March - creates panic among Indian community in USA

• State Bank of India (SBI) creates history with the merger of five smaller banks (SBBJ, SBH, SBM, SBP and BMB) on April 1, 2017; joins the global Top 50 Club with 550+ million customers, 59,000 ATM's and 24,000 branches, 725+ million accounts and 180+ million transactions / day

• With President of India signing into law the four GST Legislations on April 13, 2017, GST is closer to ready

• India’s “South Asia Satellite” launched by ISRO on May 5, 2017

• China’s own passenger plane C919 launch on May 5, 2017

• Emmanuel Macron elected French President - youngest in decades - on May 7, 2017

• Ransomware virus impacts computers in nearly 100 nations on May 13, 2017

• Iran re-elects President Rouhani on May 21, 2017

• A terrorist shoot in London on March 22, 2017 kills 5; Manchester terrorist attacks in UK on May 22, 2017 kills 22

Products

• Lenovo launches Moto G5 in India in April 2017

• Microsoft launches Windows 10S and Surface Laptop on May 2, 2017

• Nokia 3310 launched in India at a special price of Rs 3,310 on May 16, 2017

• Google launches Android O on May 18, 2017

Markets

• Dow Jones broke the 21,000 mark the first time on March 1, 2017 after President Trump delivers his “Address to the Nation”

• India’s stock market indices BSE index Sensex and NSE index NIFTY reach record levels (29,500 and 9,100 respectively) on March 15, 2017 post State Election results; Sensex crossed 31,000 on May 26, 2017

• Snapchat IPO creates history; more than $ 24 Billion value on March 2, 2017, but loses steam in the next two weeks!

• TechMahindra acquires CJS (U-based healthcare IT Services company) for $ 110 million on March 6, 2017

• HP acquires flash-based storage company Nimble Storage (India-born Varun Mehta and Umesh Maheshwar founded) for $ 1 Billion on March 7, 2017

• Intel buys Israel-based computer vision company focused on autonomous vehicle (driver-less car) Mobileye for $ 15 Billion on Mar 13, 2017

• Idea and Vodafone India merge on Mar 19, 2017 to create the largest telecom operator in India with 400 million customers

• Airtel acquires Tikona’s 4G business for Rs 1,600 crores on Mar 23, 2017

• Tesla market capitalization exceeds GM in April 2017

• NASDAQ touched 6,000 first time ever on April 24, 2017

• HPE Services and CSC merge to become DXC Technology on Apr 3, 2017

• Cisco acquires SD-WAN Startup viptela on May 1, 2017 for $ 610 million, analytics startup Saggezza on May 4, 2017 (founded by India-born Arvind Kapur and Socka Suppiah) and AI start-up MindMeld for $125 Million on May 11, 2017

• Apple buys AI firm Lattice Data on May 13, 2017 for $ 200 million
Indian IT companies
- FlipKart acquires eBay India operations in April 2017
- IT companies’ talk of layoff causes fear psychosis with employees talking of “labour union” in May 2017
- Mobile wallet leader PayTM becomes a “payment bank” on May 23, 2017

MNC Companies in India
- Apple Accelerator to support iOS development by Indian developers starts operations in April 2017
- SAP invests $50 m in Bangalore innovation center; to hire 2,500 in 2 years
- Bosch to hire 3,000 engineers in India in Year 2017
- Shell announces a new a Tech Center in Bangalore (the third center globally after U.K. and Netherlands) on Apr 1, 2017
- Panasonic setting up R&D unit in Bangalore in association with Tata Elxsi
- Time Inc., starts Center of Excellence in Bangalore in April 2017
- Apple starts assembling iPhone SE in Wistron facility in Bangalore in May 2017
- Panasonic sets up Center of Excellence in partnership with TCS in India in May 2017
- General Motors decides to close down India ops; Volvo decides to start India operations, Kia Motors is talking of starting India operations - all in May 2017

Education & Research
- Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore is the 8th among the Top 10 global small universities (Best Small Universities in the World for 2017, Times Higher Education Ranking); tops the NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework) 2017 list announced on April 3, 2017 for the second time

People
- Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky visits India in March 2017 and talks positively about Indian market
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and PayTM Founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma in Times 100 "Most influential" 2017 list
- Apple’s Phil Schiller in Bangalore to launch Apple Accelerator program to support iOS and Spark programming language developers in early April 2017
- Australian PM and Bangladesh PM visit India in April 2017
- Mukesh Ambani in Forbes “game changers list” 2017

Telecom
- Tata DoCoMo imbroglio got over by April end with High Court ruling
- Idea and Vodafone India merge on Mar 19, 2017 to create the largest telecom operator in India with 400 million customers

Startup scene
- Mobile wallet leader PayTM becomes a “payment bank” on May 23, 2017
- SoftBank invests $1.4 Billion in PayTM and joins PayTM board in May 2017

Interesting mobile Apps
- Universal mobile banking App BHIM gets AADHAAR support; launched by PM on April 14, 2017

Interesting numbers
- 29 million handsets sold in India during Jan-Mar 2017
- India has 1170 mobile phone and 24 million landline subscribers on March 31, 2017 (TRAI Press release 37/2017 dated May 19, 2017)
- Forex reserves reach $373 Billion on May 5, 2017
- Indian bourses market capitalization touches $2 trillion in May (with Stock to GDP ratio of 0.88)
- 17 million Zomato users’ data was lost in May 2017
- On May 22, 2017 Xiaomi sells 250,000 RedMI 4 phones in 8 minutes!

Professor Sowmyanarayanan SADAGOPAN is the Director of IIIT-Bangalore. These are his personal views. He has been writing about IT in India for two decades, with monthly columns in Times of India (1999 – 2003), Financial Express (2004 - 2007), IT Magazine (2008 - 2011) and IEEE India Newsletter (2012 - 2015). He can be reached at ss@iitb.ac.in