

IT in March – May 2017



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Highlights in general

- **Elections to five Indian States** – UP, Goa, Punjab, Uttaranchal 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 Kuchibotla 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@iiitb.ac.in