

IT in Jan-Mar 2018



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General

- European data privacy law **GDPR** kicks in on May 25, 2018
- Brexit Bill (that allows Britain to leave European Union) becomes a Law on June 26, 2018
- International Yoga Day on June 21, 2018 celebrated globally for four years adds to India's soft power
- India achieves **100% electrification** on May 1, 2018 with all villages connected to the grid; getting electricity to 100% households would be the next challenge
- India's Defence public sector unit **BEL** starts operation in Vietnam in June 2018
- April 2018 saw North and South Korea brooking peace and Indian PM and Chinese Premier talk of cordial relations; US President Trump annuals Iran nuclear deal on May 9, 2018 and meet North Korean President in June on June 12, 2018 and North Korea is reportedly giving up "go nuclear" path
- Several Government of India websites including Defence Ministry website saw a **cyber-attack** on April 6, 2018

Technology

- Indian Space organization **ISRO** launched IRNS 1I on April 12, 2018
- Flying car **Kitty Hawk Flyer** from **Google** with 20 mph speed, 20 min flying time and up to 10 feet high (needing no license) was demonstrated on June 4, 2018
- **India has 5 super computers** among the Top 500 list released on June 23, 2018
- **Google I/O** (May 8 -10, 2018), **Microsoft Build** (May 7 - 9, 2018) and **Apple WWDC** (June 4 - 8, 2018) demonstrated amazing technologies / products in the making; AI is at the center-stage
- **Microsoft** announces \$ 5 Billion investment in IoT
- **Delhi** vehicles run on **BS VI** fuel from April 1, 2018, two years ahead of plan to move by 2020

Markets

- **Microsoft** surprises everyone by buying **GitHub** for \$ 7.5 Billion on June 4, 2018
- **Wal-Mart** acquires 77% stake in Indian e-commerce start-up **FlipKart** on May 9, 2018 for \$ 16 Billion taking FlipKart value to \$ 20 Billion, making it the world's largest acquisition in e-commerce space
- Stockholm-based **Truecaller** acquires Indian payment start-up **Chillr** in India enabling Truecaller payment integration in India on June 13, 2018
- **Schneider** acquires Indian automation major **L&T Automation** division for \$ 2 Billion on May 1, 2018
- **PayTM** Bank gets ₹ 3,000 Cr. (\$ 445 Million) from **Softbank** on April 2, 2018
- Aneel Bhusri founded **Workday** buys **Adaptive Insights** for \$ 1.55 Billion on June 10, 2018
- French IT services company **Teleperformance** buys **Intelenet** for \$ 1 Billion in India in June 2018
- **HCL Tech** (India's No 4 IT Services company) buys German firm **H&D** on June 27, 2018

Products

- **Apple** announces **iOS 12**, **Watch OS 5** and **MAC OS Mojave** on June 4, 2018
- **Google** upgrades its flagship e-mail **Gmail** in April 2018, said to be a major upgrade since 2011; launches **Neighborly**, a hyperlocal app in India on June 25, 2018
- **OnePlus 6** launched in May 2018 in India crosses 1 Million sales within 22 days!

- **Nokia** released **Nokia 5.1**, **Nokia 3.1** and **Nokia 2.1** in Moscow on May 29, 2018
- **Huawei** (Huawei's most ambitious phone) and **Asus ZenFone Max Pro** (best value for money phone) were launched in India in April 2018

Indian IT Companies

- **TCS** posts good results for 3Q18; annual revenue for FY 2017-18 crosses \$ 19 Billion; market capitalization crosses \$ 100 Billion on April 23, 2018 and ₹ 7 Lakh Crores on May 25, 2018; announces buyback of Rs 15,000 Crores worth shares on June 15, 2018
- **Wal-Mart** acquires 77% stake in Indian e-commerce start-up **FlipKart** on May 9, 2018 for \$ 16 Billion taking FlipKart value to \$ 20 Billion, making it the world's largest acquisition in e-commerce space; **FlipKart** moves to its new campus in Bangalore with 8.75 Million square feet space to accommodate 7,600 staff
- **L&T InfoTech** joins **Billion Dollar club** in 2018 after crossing \$ 1 Billion turnover on March 31, 2018; opens **Johannesburg** facility with 250 seats in June 2018
- Ritesh Agarwal founded Indian room aggregator **Oyo** starts Chinese operations in May 2018 (earlier in Dubai, Malaysia, Nepal, Indonesia)
- **HCL** acquires **c3i** for \$ 60 Million on April 5, 2018; forms JV to acquire US-based **Actian** (with the world's fastest columnar database product Actian Vector) for \$ 330 Million in April 12, 2018
- NASDAQ-listed Indian IT Services biggie **Cognizant** enters the prestigious **Fortune 200 club** (at 195th position) on May 21, 2018; acquires Belgian Analytics & Advisory company **Hadera** on May 3, 2018;

MNC Companies in India

- **Analog Devices** expands India operations in April 2018 taking headcount from 450 to 1,000 in its new 1,75,00 sq. ft. facility in Bangalore; its Founder and Chairman, 83-year old EDA veteran **Ray Stata** visits Bangalore to launch the new facility, the third largest for the parent company
- **Benz India** rolls out 1,00,000th luxury car manufactured in India on May 28, 2018 while Suzuki rolls out 20,000,000th car on July 4, 2018!
- Chinese mobile major **Xiaomi** has 3 plants - Sri City, Sriperumbudur and NOIDA - in India with a capacity to produce 2 phones every second!
- **Apple** starts assembling iPhone 6S in India in Bangalore Wistron facility in April 2018
- **Automation Anywhere** (RPA biggie) to double India count and add 700 in Bangalore
- **Amazon** expands operations in India; warehouse headcount goes to 67 in April 2018
- **Uber Lite** (less than 5 MB) App with local Indian language support introduced in India in June 2018
- **Cisco** acquires **July Systems** in India in June 2018

Education & Research

- NIRF (National Institutional Rankings Framework) 2018 list of top ranking Institutions announced on April 2, 2018; IISc, IITM and IITB are the Top 3 Institutes. IITB (162), IITD (172) and IISc (190) make it to the Top 200 Global Universities in QS World University Ranking 2019 released on June 2, 2018
- This is the quarter for a range of Admission Test results; the "big daddy" amongst them, JEE Mains examination saw 11,48,000 students taking the exam in May with nearly 1,30,000 qualify to take JEE Advanced Exam held on June 4, 2018 with expanded list of 31,980 short-listed on June 12, 2018 (the list was 18,138 on June 4, 2018) for 10,988 seats across all 23 IIT's! NEET, the Admission Test for all medical colleges was held for the first time in all Indian States in May 2018 with 13,26,725 students competing for nearly 90,000 MBBS / BDS seats!

People

- On June 26, 2018 12-year old **R Pragganandhaa** from Chennai becomes the world's second youngest **Chess Grandmaster**
- **Debjani Ghosh** takes charge as **NASSCOM President** from R Chandrashekar on April 2, 2018
- Biocon Founder & Chair **Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw** invited to join the Governing Body of **MIT** for a 5-year term starting July 2018
- Social activist and **Sulabh** International founder **Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak**, gets Japan's prestigious **Nikkei Asia Prize** June 6, 2018
- Chennai-born **Dhivya Suryadevara** anointed as **CFO of General Motors** on June 11, 2018; interestingly, GM has a woman CEO! Indira Nooyi, CEO of Pepsi Cola is another Chennai-born CEO of Fortune 500 corporation!

- Four self-made Indians - **Ola Founder Bhavesh Agarwal**, actress **Deepika Padukone**, Microsoft CEO **Satya Nadella**, and **Cricket Captain Virat Kohli** – make it to **Time Magazine 100 Most Influential People list** of April 2018

Telecom

- **Vodafone-IDEA** (the merged entity of Birla owned IDEA with Vodafone India) is close to a reality on June 18, 2018 with DoT clearance almost there; it will be the largest telecom service provider in India with 427 million customers
- **Bharti Infratel** merging with **Indus Towers** on April 25, 2018 making it one of the largest tower companies in the world, with 163,000 towers

Startup scene

- Indian hotel room aggregator **Oyo** has 100,000 rooms in its inventory by June 2018; Taj group has just 17,000, the power of technology!
- **Siemens** acquires Los Angeles based IOT / Building Automation Start-up **J2 Innovations** in May 2018
- **Hero** Electronix (Part of Delhi-based auto major Hero group) acquires Gurgaon-based IOT start-up **Zematix** in May 2018
- **ABB Technology Ventures** acquires Bangalore-based IOT-based Dairy Automation startup **Stellapps** on June 1, 2018
- **PayTM** buys **Cube26** in June 2018
- Scandinavian company **Truecaller** acquires Indian payment **Chillr** in India in June 2018
- India's online travel aggregator **ClearTrip** acquires Saudi startup **FlyIn** in June 2018

Interesting applications

- Dibrugarh in Assam becomes the **400th Railway Station** on June 7, 2018 to get **free W-Fi** as announced by **Google CEO Sundar Pichai** way back in in 2016; executed in partnership with the public sector **RailTel** the service has 8 million unique users every month, a “lighthouse” project indeed
- **E-Way bill** for inter-State movement of goods under GST launched in Karnataka on April 2, 2018, the first State to do so; by June most States have implemented the same, including for intra-state goods movement.
- HPCL commissions **FastLane** - automation of fuel pumps with payment systems - using AGS Transact technology at 35 petrol pumps in June 2018 in Mumbai to start with; cost of pumped fuel will directly debit bank accounts and minimize fuel diversion

Interesting numbers

- Government of India achieves **fiscal deficit target** of 3.5% for financial year 2017-18
- Automotive major **Maruti Suzuki** cumulative production in India of cars crosses **200 million** in May 2018!
- **India's forex reserves** touch \$ 425 Billion for the first time in April 2018
- Mobile wallet company **PhonePe** gets 100 million subscribers by May 2018
- Reliance **Jio's** customer base touches 200 Million in June 2018

Professor Sowmyanarayanan Sadagopan is the Director of IIIT-Bangalore. He has been writing these columns since 90's with a focus in IT from an India perspective. These are his personal views. He can be reached at ss@iiitb.ac.in

These monthly / quarterly / yearly columns had appeared in Times of India, Financial Express for many years. IEEE India Newsletter also carries these articles regularly in the past few years.



UCLA researchers have developed an artificial intelligence (AI)-based device that can analyse data and identify objects at the "actual speed of light". To develop the device, they created a physical artificial neural network modelled on how the human brain works. The system identifies objects based on the light that the object reflects rather than waiting to form the image.